



Protest songs

Music has long been a medium by which people have chosen to communicate their thoughts and feelings about issues that are important to them. They have written songs to protest about key issues and some of these songs have become synonymous with political campaigns that have changed history. There have been anti-slavery songs, freedom songs, songs about peace and songs about individuals that have changed a generation. Some of the many charity songs that have appeared in recent times have also protested about the inequality, injustice, violence and gun/knife crime that can be found in our world.

The following are some protest songs from the last few decades:

- The Wall – Pink Floyd
- Imagine – John Lennon
- Sunday Bloody Sunday – U2
- Blowin' In The Wind – Bob Dylan
- Glad To Be Gay – Tom Robinson (a Quaker)
- American Idiot – Green Day
- Fight The Power – Public Enemy
- Guns of Brixton – The Clash
- Free Nelson Mandela – The Special AKA

The lyrics to these songs can be found via an internet search and could be displayed for the young people to look at and discuss.

A Canadian musician, Dave Carroll, alleged he had his very expensive guitar broken by an airline at an airport. The airline wouldn't give him any compensation so he told them that he was going to write a protest song about his experience. He did so and put his song on the internet. To date around 8 million people have currently viewed the song. Experts estimate that the bad publicity has cost the airline millions of dollars. To have replaced his broken guitar would have cost around \$3,500! To listen to his song on the web, search for Dave Carroll music.

Modern technology means our protests can reach a large number of people quickly and potentially have a massive impact. Discuss with the young people if there is anything they would like to protest about. Could they write a song and/or post a video on the web to highlight their protest?