

Introduction to the additional songs

We recorded five collections of songs that appeared on vinyl albums, some of them later on cassettes, and one or two even made it to Compact Disc (CD) format.

Three of those albums, *Mister Monday*, *Goodbye Rainbow* and *Same Time, Same Place* were published by Longman ELT. As I have mentioned elsewhere, the third of these albums was designed to accompany a course series called *Mainline*, written by ELT guru Louis Alexander.

At the moment, I don't have digital versions of any of the songs from *Same Time, Same Place*, but getting them is top of my TO DO list, and I hope to add some to this collection.

The other two vinyl albums that we produced were *My Friend Jack* and *New Places, New Faces*, which I wrote for German publisher Cornelsen to accompany their course material

The idea of writing songs to accompany course material became quite fashionable in the 1970s and 80s, and a lot of ELT writers decided to add songs to their course material. Peter Viney wrote the definitive blog about this. You can find out about lots of other collections here:

<https://peterviney.com/about/elt-articles/time-for-a-song/>

Meanwhile, here are some of the other songs I wrote to accompany other people's course material.

It Makes Me Mad

People walk down the street and drop litter at your feet

Everybody throws away things they bought yesterday

Don't worry about the waste from your factory

You can throw it into the sea

It makes me mad, it makes me angry (1)

When I think of all the things that we could do (1)

To make the world a better place for the human race (1)

City streets are full of cars trying to find a place to park

And juggernauts with heavy loads drive along our country roads

They've got to get there today

So let's build another motorway

It makes me mad, it makes me angry (2)

When I think of all the things that we could do (2)

To make the world a better place for the human race (2)

To make the world a better place for the human race (3)

Vocals and lead guitar: Matthew Devitt

Musical arrangement and instrumentation by Richard Vranich

Note about the song

This is a topic-based song, which highlights two environmental problems — waste and traffic/road building.

Key vocabulary — litter, waste, juggernaut.

The word *juggernaut* can refer to a powerful force, but also to a large heavy vehicle, especially an articulated lorry, which is the case here.

Teaching idea

I have used this song a lot in workshops and this is my favourite activity.

Print out the words and cut them into individual lines. There are fifteen altogether. As you can see from the lyric sheet, some of them are repeated, and the repeated lines are numbered. Keep the number in the individual lines when you print out the word sheet.

Hand out a line each to fifteen students. Ask them to stand in a line and read their lines out. Ask them if they think any of the lines go together. Encourage them to ask their classmates to repeat the line if necessary.

Then play the song, and tell the class to get into the right order.

Play the song again. Students should wave their piece of paper if they're in the right place, or re-position if they aren't.

Just In My Imagination

Grammar point: reported speech

I was walking down the road the other day

When a woman appeared in front of me

She wanted to know where I was going

She wanted to know my name

I asked her why she wanted to know, but she didn't say

I told her I didn't want to answer, I asked her to leave me alone

Then I walked past her and continued along the road

But when I looked over my shoulder, she wasn't there

One minute she was talking to me

Then she disappeared into thin air

Was she real or just in my imagination?

Did she speak to me or was it all a dream?

Was she real or just in my imagination?

Did she speak to me or was it all a dream?

I told my story to a policeman, he asked me if I was feeling OK

I could see he didn't believe me, so I began to walk away

But when I looked over my shoulder, he wasn't there

One minute he was talking to me, then he disappeared into thin air

Was he real or just in my imagination?

Did he speak to me or was it all a dream?

Were they real or just in my imagination?

Did they speak to me or was it all a dream? All a dream

Vocals: Matthew Devitt

Musical arrangement and instrumentation by Richard Vranich

Notes about the song

The song illustrates various forms of reported speech, and there's also a chance to talk about ghosts and related topics.

Before I suggest an activity, I want to tell you something about the writing. The original lyric at the end of the first verse was:

I asked her why she wanted to know, but she wouldn't say

For some reason, the editor persuaded me to change it to

But she didn't say

The difference in meaning between those two phrases is enormous. *She wouldn't say* indicates a reluctance to give the information. *She didn't say* makes it sound much less important. In the context of the song, the original lyric would have been much better.

If you use the song with a class, I'd be happy if you tell them about that change and, if necessary, explain the difference between the two expressions.

Teaching idea

Before listening to the song, I recommend letting students read the words and ask them to turn the examples of reported speech into direct speech. You can give them the first one and ask them to work out the rest themselves. Remember that *She wanted to know* is a disguised question:

She wanted to know where I was going

Where are you going?

This exercise isn't as easy as it looks. There's a reported command hidden in there:

I asked her to leave me alone.

Listening to the song

If students have already done the grammar-oriented exercise, they can forget about the grammar and think about the story when they listen. Is it a ghost story? Is it a dream? Is the singer having some kind of breakdown? Ask the students to discuss the location and try to describe the characters.

January February

Simply the months of the year, repeated!

Sung in a reggae style by Gillian Bartlam

Backing vocals by Matt Devitt and Richard Vbranch

Arrangement by Richard Vbranch

What Would You Do?

Grammar point: Second conditional

What would you do if you woke up one morning

And found that everybody knew your name?

If you were a famous movie star, would you be very different?

Or would you try to stay the same?

Would you stay the same or would you change?

And would you try to change the world?

When your friends were near, would you say hello?

Or would your old friends disappear?

What would you say if people looked up to you?

And they wanted you to tell them what to do?

Would you tell them if you didn't know the answers?

Would you be brave enough to tell them 'I don't know'?

I don't know

If you had a million dollars, would you give it all away?

Would you think about tomorrow or spend it all today?

If you were rich, do you think you'd be really happy?

What would you do if somebody told you

That you could have anything at all?

Would you think about the world and help other people?

Or would you build a house and live like a king behind its walls?

Lead vocal: Gillian Bartlam

Piano: Nigel Stewart

Guitar: Kieran Fogarty

Saxophone: David Fitzgerald

Notes about the song

Lots of second conditional examples in the song.

This song can generate a lot of discussion if you ask the class to consider particularly the lines that are written in italics.

Put the class in groups to begin with and then let them compare their answers.

Fear of Flying

I've got to leave for the airport

It's almost time to catch my plane

Time is running out for me

I've got to leave again

Tomorrow I'll sing for some different people

In a town a thousand miles away

They don't know what it's like for me

Flying every day

I've flown a thousand times before

And every time it's the same

I get so scared, oh so scared

Every time I board that plane

The stewardess smiles but it makes no difference to me

When the plane takes off

It isn't where I want to be

I sit in my seat, and never move

My hands are icy cold

People tell me there's no danger

But fear of flying is all I know

Fear of flying is all I know

Fear of flying

Fear of flying

Fear of flying

Vocals: Ken Wilson

Backing vocals: Dede Wilson

Acoustic guitar: Kieran Fogarty

Piano: Nigel Stewart

Flute: David Fitzgerald

Drums: Ray Duffy

Notes about the song

This is one of the topic-based songs that I wrote. I can't remember what the remit was, it may have been 'transport' but it may also have been 'fear'. Anyway, I wrote a song about my personal problem with flying.

I didn't actually fly in a plane until I was 24, and only then because my wife Dede insisted that we go to visit her family, who lived in Canada. My first flying experiences were hellish and I always asked for an aisle seat and tried not to look out of the window.

After that, new directions in my working life meant that I had to fly regularly and, although I calmed my fears a bit, I was still extremely anxious. Then one day, on a flight from Madrid, I was asked to swap seats with another passenger so that he could sit next to his wife. My new seat was a window seat and I really thought I was going to have serious problems. Instead, I looked out of the window at a glorious cloudscape and fell in love with window seats and flying in general. Nowadays I get anxious if I DON'T have a window seat!

Teaching idea

1. The title of the song is *Fear Of Flying*. Before listening, ask the class to predict any words or phrases they think they might hear. Then listen to the song, and tell them to make a note of any words and phrases that tell you how the singer feels.
2. Listen to the song and answer these questions:
 - Does the singer often fly?
 - What do you think his profession is?
 - What is the purpose of this and his other flights?

Let students answer the question and also imagine what they can about the singer's life and whether he likes what he does.

Aliens

Last night I was sitting by my window

I was looking at the stars, what an incredible sight

When suddenly I felt the wind blow

And then I got the most terrible fright

A silver spaceship was heading my way

Faster than the speed of light

It stopped right outside my window

I couldn't see anything, it was so bright

I'm not sure that I believe you, it all sounds a bit strange to me

I don't know if I believe you —is what you're saying really true?

I covered my eyes with my hands

And when I looked again, I couldn't believe it

The flying saucer landed in the street

I was the only one who was there to see it

The street was full of alien creatures

They were walking around, they weren't making a sound

They got back into the spaceship and silently it left the ground

Now I believe in aliens, if you don't believe me, I don't care

I believe in aliens, I know other people are living out there

Vocals: Anya Hayes and Brian Bowles

Arrangement by Richard Vbranch

Notes about the song

I was absolutely delighted when I was able to ask my daughter Anya to sing on one of our collections. This is my favourite of the four or five songs she did for me

Teaching idea

Discussion point — does anyone in the class believe in aliens?