1950-1989  WE DIDN'T START THE FIRE

The students will receive:
1. Lyrics to *We Didn't Start the Fire*
2. Directions
3. Rubric that will be used to grade their songs

Procedure:

- Distribute a printout of Billy Joel's *"We Didn't Start the Fire"*. The lyrics of this song refer to 21st century headline events between 1949 to 1989.
- Tell students that as they listen to the song, they need to circle the events or people they recognize.
- When the song is over, go through it and see what the students know.
- Then ask, "What would people sing about for these last 20 years? What's been going on in society that's noteworthy?" Make a list of their ideas on the board to help everyone get started (Terrorist Osama/President Obama...).
- Let them listen to the song several more times during the class period so they can make sure they have the rhythm down.
- Give students research time in lab to brainstorm ideas from last 20 years. Encourage them to talk to parents.
- Students in groups of 5 or less will work on writing several more verses to the song and present to the class.
- Presentations may be made in live, video taped, or recorded on ipods or CDs.
- All students will grade based upon rubric.
Billy Joel's "We Didn't Start the Fire"

Harry Truman, Doris Day, Red China, Johnnie Ray
South Pacific, Walter Winchell, Joe DiMaggio

Joe McCarthy, Richard Nixon, Studebaker, television
North Korea, South Korea, Marilyn Monroe

Rosenbergs, H-Bomb, Sugar Ray, Panmunjom
Brando, "The King and I," and "The Catcher in the Rye"

Eisenhower, vaccine, England's got a new queen
Marciano, Liberace, Santayana goodbye

CHORUS
We didn't start the fire
It was always burning
Since the world's been turning
We didn't start the fire
No we didn't light it
But we tried to fight it

Josef Stalin, Malenkov, Nasser and Prokofiev
Rockefeller, Campanella, Communist Bloc

Roy Cohn, Juan Peron, Toscanini, Dacron
Dien Bien Phu falls, "Rock Around the Clock"

Einstein, James Dean, Brooklyn's got a winning team
"Davy Crockett," "Peter Pan," Elvis Presley, Disneyland

Bardot, Budapest, Alabama, Khrushchev
Princess Grace, "Peyton Place," trouble in the Suez

CHORUS
Little Rock, Pasternak, Mickey Mantle, Kerouac
Sputnik, Chou En-Lai, "Bridge on the River Kwai"

Lebanon, Charles de Gaulle, California baseball,
Starkweather homicide, children of thalidomide
Buddy Holly, "Ben Hur," space monkey, Mafia
Hula hoops, Castro, Edsel is a no-go

U2, Syngman Rhee, payola and Kennedy
Chubby Checker, "Psycho," Belgians in the Congo

CHORUS

Hemingway, Eichmann, "Stranger in a Strange Land"
Dylan, Berlin, Bay of Pigs Invasion

"Lawrence of Arabia," British Beatlemania
Ole Miss, John Glenn, Liston beats Patterson

Pope Paul, Malcolm X, British politician sex
J.F.K. blown away, what else do I have to say

CHORUS

Birth control, Ho Chi Minh, Richard Nixon back again
Moonshot, Woodstock, Watergate, punk rock

Begin, Reagan, Palestine, terror on the airline
Ayatollah's in Iran, Russians in Afghanistan

"Wheel of Fortune," Sally Ride, heavy metal suicide
Foreign debts, homeless Vets, AIDS, Crack, Bernie Goetz

Hypodermics on the shores, China's under martial law
Rock and Roller cola wars, I can't take it anymore

We didn't start the fire
It was always burning since the world's been turning.
We didn't start the fire
But when we are gone
It will still burn on, and on, and on, and on...
WE DIDN'T START THE FIRE by Billy Joel
Billy Joel has said, "I'm a history nut. I devour history books. At one time I wanted to be a history teacher." According to his mother, he was a bookworm by the age of seven.
I had turned forty.

It was 1989 and I said "Okay, what's happened in my life?" I wrote down the year 1949. Okay, Harry Truman was president. Popular singer of the day, Doris Day. China went Communist. Another popular singer, Johnnie Ray. Big Broadway show, South Pacific. Journalist, Walter Winchell. Athlete, Joe DiMaggio. Then I went on to 1950.

You are going to continue Billy's Song by adding your own verses!

1. You will start writing your song using historical events from your lifetime. You may chose to start where Billy left off at 1990.
2. You will need to research 25-30 items and understand the significance. That's 15 items per decade.
3. You may work alone or with a maximum of 3 partners.
4. You will create a song with at least three stanzas using the beat and chorus from We Didn't Start the Fire.
5. You will turn in your lyrics typed with all group members names identified with what they contributed.
6. Check the rubric to understand what you are graded on.

Presentation: You will perform live or pre-record (video, cd or phone) your song using the karaoke version of We Didn’t Start the Fire.

Resources:

Video of song  http://yeli.us/Flash/Fire.html

Research by years  http://www.infoplease.com/yearbyyear.html

Karaoke Version

http://briangriggs.com/2008/05/08/we-didnt-start-the-karaoke/
### Music - Composition: We Didn't Start the Fire - Student Song

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>3 - Exceptional</th>
<th>2 - Good</th>
<th>1 - Fair</th>
<th>0 - Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The song contains at least two stanzas (4 lines each) and a chorus.</td>
<td>The song contains two stanzas with 3 lines each and a chorus.</td>
<td>The song contains either 2 stanzas or 1 stanza and a chorus.</td>
<td>The song is incomplete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhythm</strong></td>
<td>The song has a clear rhythm and beat throughout, and the lyrics fit the beat.</td>
<td>The song has a clear rhythm and beat, but the song does not fit the music throughout the song.</td>
<td>The song has a rhythm and beat, but it is inconsistent with the lyrics.</td>
<td>The song has no beat or rhythm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhyme</strong></td>
<td>The song has a clear rhyming pattern throughout the song.</td>
<td>The song has a clear rhyming pattern throughout more than 50% of the song.</td>
<td>The song has a rhyming pattern throughout 25%-50% of the song.</td>
<td>The song does not contain a rhyming pattern in at least 24% of the song.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
<td>All events in the song happened during the student's lifetime. At least 15 events are included in the song.</td>
<td>All events happened during the student's lifetime. At least 10 events included in the song.</td>
<td>All events happened during the student's lifetime. At least 7 events included in the song.</td>
<td>There are one or more events in the song that did not happen during the student's lifetime and/or there are less than 6 events named in the song.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hard Copy</strong></td>
<td>The student turned in a very legible copy of their song.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>The student turned in a copy of their song, but it is not well presented.</td>
<td>The student did not turn in a copy of their song.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
<td>The student presents his/her song to the class very enthusiastically!</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>The student presents his/her song to the class.</td>
<td>The student did not present his/her song to the class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>