DEALING WITH SONGS THROUGH THE FOUR SKILLS

Ana Paula Moreti
Graduada em Letras Português/Inglês (Unifran) e aluna do curso de Especialização em Língua Inglesa (Unifran).

Marina Gomes Branquinho Alonso
Graduada em Letras Português/Inglês (Unifran).

Márcia Helena Venâncio Faleiros
Mestre em Educação e docente dos cursos de graduação em Letras e Tradutor e Intérprete e da especialização em Língua Inglesa da Universidade de Franca (Unifran).

RESUMO


Palavras-chave: músicas; quatro habilidades; processo de ensino-aprendizagem; motivação.

ABSTRACT

In this article, we focus on raising possibilities to work with songs through the four skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking – in the teaching learning process. Through bibliographical research
based on Harmer (1998, 1991), Saslow, Ascher and Notapietro (2007), Scrivener (2005), Ur (2005), and others we came to the conclusion that songs can be useful in the teaching-learning process as teachers can use them, among other factors, to motivate students. We could also present, based on the ideas expressed by the authors we have already mentioned, some samples of song activities through which we can deal with the four skills.

**Keywords:** songs; four skills; teaching learning process; motivation.
INTRODUCTION

Throughout our English courses, we have noticed that songs are usually used as gap filling exercises, which work mainly with vocabulary and grammar. After doing a song activity in which the gap filling exercise was not part of the task, it aroused our curiosity to discover which other activities could be carried out by students through songs.

Therefore, the aim of this article is to show different activities through which songs can be used in the classroom, using not only the listening skill as in the gap filling exercises, but also all the other ones.

The methodological procedures were the bibliographical research based on authors such as Harmer (1998, 1991), Saslow, Ascher and Notapietro (2007), Scrivener (2005), Ur (2005), and others. We also present some sample activities that can be used by teachers having in mind the aim of this article.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ENGLISH TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

In the teaching-learning process both students and teachers gain some knowledge. Concerning the learning process, Scrivener (2005, p. 21) states that “people learn more by doing things themselves rather than by being told about them”. In addition, we cannot forget that teachers are learners as well, at least they learn how to improve their lessons every day.

When teaching, it is important to keep in mind that students are not passive and only receive information, they also participate in the teaching-learning process. It is also of great value to take into consideration that students are human beings and due to this fact they bring to classes their needs, fears, wishes, dreams and expectations.
If we give them opportunities, they will be able to make decisions on their own and take responsibilities for their learning.

Learning has its base on what we have learned through our living “New learning is constructed over foundations of our own earlier learning” (Scrivener, 2005, p. 21). All we have learned throughout our lives will be important in the teaching-learning process and consequently the new information will be gained differently by different students.

While teaching, teachers should use tools to expose their students to the target language, as sometimes students need to acquire language which can only be mastered by exposure. According to Scrivener (2005), this exposure is divided in two kinds: Authentic exposure and Restricted exposure.

Authentic exposure is when students are naturally exposed to language through materials which are not designed purposefully for language students, like songs, magazines, unabridged books, television news, etc.

Restricted exposure is the kind of exposure designed for learners, and most of the times, the attention is given to grammar structures. Materials for this kind of exposure are specially produced for the teaching and learning process.

Besides the exposure, according to Scrivener (2005), the feedback given to it by students is also important so that teachers know if the lessons have been successful or not. This feedback can be given by authentic and restricted outputs. While the authentic output is the one in which students use everything they know to talk about a subject, the restricted output is when students use only specific language they have already learned in order to avoid mistakes.

It is important to have a balance between Authentic and Restricted
exposure due to the fact that both promote a more complete learning. While one promotes the contact with real life situations and aspects of the language, the other promotes a study of the structures of the language.

It is known that when a child or an adult is exposed repeatedly to a language aspect, they acquire it unconsciously and in normal circumstances. It happens because they are motivated to learn it, they can produce the language themselves and they have the opportunity to use it to connect learning closely to acquisition.

We are aware of the fact that what happens inside the language classrooms in Brazil is learning, not acquisition, as it is not an unconscious process. However, we have to make use of authentic exposure and outputs to bring learning as close as possible to acquisition.

These procedures are very helpful for the acquisition of a language although they “can be difficult to replicate in the classroom” (HARMER, 1998, p. 24).

Having in mind a successful language learning, students will have to “be motivated, be exposed to language and be given chances to use it” (HARMER, 1998, p. 25). To provide students with these characteristics Harmer (1998) suggests the use of three elements called ESA, which stands for Engage, Study and Activate. They will be better discussed on the next topic.

THE ESA ELEMENTS

As mentioned before, ESA stands for Engage, Study and Activate. Engage is when teachers try to involve their students, making them emotionally interested in what is happening in the classroom.

Some activities and materials used in lessons that Engage students according to Harmer (1998, p. 25) are: “games (depending on age
and type), music, discussions (when handled challengingly), stimulating pictures, dramatic stories, amusing anecdotes etc.” Learners do better when engaged and as a consequence the language learning will be more successful.

The Study element has its main focus on the construction of the language. Some typical areas through which you Study the language according to Harmer (1998) are: the difference between vowel sounds, the practice of the third person singular, paragraph organization, etc.

Harmer (1998, p. 26) states that “successful language learning in a classroom depends on judicious blend of subconscious language acquisition (through listening and reading, for example and the kind of study activities we have looked at here)”.

The Activate element deals with communication. According to it, students will not worry about grammar structures or restrictions concerning them, they will use any language they have learned so far as in real life situations.

Some exercises which are designed to Activate students’ knowledge, also according to Harmer (1998), are debates and discussions.

Although sometimes it is not possible to use all the ESA elements during the class, Harmer (1998, p. 26) claims that “[...] students always need to be Engaged, if possible, so that they can get the maximum out of the learning experience”.

There are different ways of working with these three elements. The ESA Straight Arrows sequence is when the order of the elements is ENGAGE, STUDY and ACTIVATE, which may be tiring as it will always be the same order.
Another way of working with ESA is the *EAS(A) Boomerang sequence*. In this sequence first we have the ENGAGE, then ACTIVATE, STUDY and ACTIVATE.

When used, this sequence is more concerned about the students’ interests. The language that will be taught is the one that students have used in the *ACTIVATE*. “In some ways this makes much better sense because the connection between what the students need to learn and what they are taught is more transparent” (HARMER, 1998, p. 28). As the author says, this sequence may be more appropriate with intermediate and advanced students.

In lessons in which you have a mixture of procedures, the *EAASASEA(etc) Patchwork sequence* is more appropriate.
These kinds of classes

[...] are very common, especially at intermediate and advanced levels. Not only do they probably reflect the way we learn – rather chaotically, not always in a straight line – but they also provide an appealing balance between Study and Activation, between language and the topic (HARMER, 1998, p. 30).

To conclude, Harmer (1998, p. 37) observes that no matter which method

[...] teachers prefer, the three elements described here – Engage, Study and Activate – are the basic building blocks for successful language teaching and learning. By using them in different and varied sequences, teachers will be doing their best to promote their students’ success.

By using the elements, specially the Engage one, teachers will also motivate their students which is something very important in the teaching-learning process.

**MOTIVATION**

Motivation is one of the factors that should be taken into account
while learning a language as it makes the language learning process more effective and interesting.

 [...] students who felt most warmly about a language and who wanted to integrate into the culture of its speakers were more highly motivated (and learnt more successfully) than those who were only learning language as a means to an end (HARMER, 1998, p. 8).

As we can see, motivation is a very determinant factor in language teaching. “Learner motivation makes teaching and learning immeasurably easier and more pleasant, as well as more productive: hence the importance of the topic for teachers” (UR, 2005, p. 274).

Although people think that the most successful students are those who have a great facility for learning, the ones who have some typical personal characteristics that are associated to motivation are actually the ones who seem to learn better.

Learners may have different reasons for studying a language. Scrivener (2005, p. 63) points out some of them: “[…] (to get an exam pass, to enter university, to get promotion, to please their parents, etc). Others may be studying just for rewards within the work itself (the fun of learning, setting oneself a personal challenge, etc.).”

No matter what the reason is, we can come to the conclusion that highly motivated students do better than the ones who are learning a language for the sake of it. Therefore, it is one of the teachers’ job to generate the necessary motivation in their students.

However, there are different kinds of motivation. If we have in mind a student who is learning English because they want to pass an exam or another one who is learning for the fun of learning we come to two different kinds of learners: an extrinsically and an intrinsically motivated learner.

Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation is the subject of the next topic.
**EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION**

“Extrinsic motivation is that which derives from the influence of some kind of external incentive, as distinct from the wish to learn for its own sake or interest in tasks” (UR, 2005, p. 277).

Some examples of external incentive are related to the people’s attitude who are close to the students, such as parents’ view of the culture of the language. Furthermore, previous experiences that students had as language learners may also affect their wish to learn another language. One example of how it may happen is the success or failure of their experiences, if they succeeded, they will probably be successful, and if they failed, they expect to fail again (HARMER, 1991).

This kind of motivation, besides the external factors, depends not only on the student, but also on the teacher’s actions to raise it. One way of raising students’ motivation is to

[…] do our best to ensure that students view the language and the learning experience in a positive light. We can do this by creating a positive attitude to the language and its speakers, and we can try to be certain that we are supportive and encouraging to our students rather than critical and destructive (HARMER, 1991, p. 4).

As we could notice, extrinsic motivation depends on external factors which make it more difficult for the teacher to provide it. However, we cannot neglect it, we need to have a positive attitude towards it.

**INTRINSIC MOTIVATION**

Intrinsic motivation is “[…] the generalized desire to invest effort
in the learning for its own sake – is largely rooted in the previous attitudes of the learners” (UR, 2005, p. 280).

This kind of motivation provides high educational achievement and enjoyment for students. What makes intrinsic motivation different from extrinsic motivation is the fact that students are the agent of it.

Furthermore, according to Faleiros (2004) intrinsic motivation can also be affected by other factors in the classroom, such as its atmosphere, the method used and teachers’ attitudes which involve their enthusiasm and their own motivation1.

It is important that teachers have a good relationship with their students, otherwise students will not feel motivated at all to continue studying, and they will dislike the idea of learning a new language “[...] and its cultural, politic and ethnic associations [...]” (UR, 2005, p. 280), which are part of the intrinsic motivation.

Besides this good relationship among students and teachers, the latter should also motivate students through interesting and different kinds of activities, such as “[...] personalization, varied topics and tasks, clear goals and entertainment” (UR, 2005, p. 281).

When varying topics and tasks, relating activities to students’ lives (personalization) and giving them clear objectives and goals during the lessons, students will feel more interested and motivated in participating in classes.

Another way of arousing interest is through the entertainment which “[...] produces enjoyment [...]” (UR, 2005, p. 281) and motivation because it is related to things which are part of students’ everyday lives like movies, video clips, stories, jokes and songs.

As we can see, songs can be a very useful tool for teachers and will be approached on the next topic.

---

1 Version made by the authors.
SONGS IN THE CLASSROOM

Among other tools, songs are a way to arouse intrinsic motivation, as they can increase students’ interest in the learning process. Besides being interested in songs, students, mainly teenagers, seem to be exposed to them all day long.

The importance of using songs in the classroom as part of the learning process is that when students work on them, they seem to be more likely to retrieve vocabulary, not only for the sake of it but also to develop the other skills. Ward (2005, p. 190) agrees with it when he says that “Songs provide a means of learning new vocabulary in context, and words learnt this way are rarely forgotten.” Moreover, it is a kind of authentic language which brings students closer to real life lexicon.

Whenever students are able to link what they are learning to their real lives, they show more interest in it and they will probably learn more because they feel motivated.

Songs have great value in language instruction. Pop songs can be used in many ways to enhance the teaching and learning process, to motivate students, to provide a change of pace in the classroom to reduce students’ native-language accents, and to reinforce vocabulary and grammar (SASLOW, ASCHER; NOTAPIETRO, 2007, p. 23).

Usually, songs are used as a relaxing activity or, as Scrivener (2005, p. 338) advocates “[...] a ‘filler’ activity to change the mood or pace of a lesson.” Songs can be used with these purposes but teachers should realize that songs can be much more useful, therefore they should be part of the teaching-learning process. Although nowadays many coursebooks bring songs as part of their content, teachers should give students authentic songs as well, due to the fact that they can be more updated. To make the most of songs in the classroom, teachers should be aware that “Interesting lyrics and clarity of vocals help to
make a song into appropriate classroom material” (SCRIVENER 2005, p. 338).

It is important to have in mind that only songs, although they can be very “[...]valuable for developing certain capacities[...]” (MUR-PHEY, 1998, p. 6), will not make students able to learn and use a language. Therefore, it is necessary to make a connection between the songs and the use of the language.

DEALING WITH THE FOUR SKILLS THROUGH SONGS

Songs can be used in many different ways. As most teachers know, the most common one is the gap-filling activity, but there are many other ways of using them. It is worth connecting songs with the four skills: listening, writing, speaking and reading so that students do not feel bored working only with the listening skill through the activity mentioned before.

Among different ways of using songs in the classroom, Coffey (2000) suggests transforming a song into a poem to connect songs with the Reading skill. Doing so it would make students read it and interpret it through comprehension questions made by the teacher. After working with it through the task created by the teacher, if students do not realize it is a song, the teacher can tell them. Later on students can listen to the song and sing along. It is also possible to transform a song into a letter.

For the Writing skill, Saslow, Asher and Notapietro (2007) suggest making students write a letter to one of the song’s character or write a story based on the song. It is also possible to use a song which talks about something that make students reflect and have a critical view of that, and then ask them to write an essay. Based on this, the
teacher can give the lyrics to the students and play the song. After that, the whole class will talk about the song so that everyone has a clear understanding of what the song is about. Finally, students are supposed to write an essay on the topic given by the teacher.

The Listening skill can be developed through a gap-filling exercise because students firstly have to listen to the song, and then write what is missing in the lyrics. Also, through the listening skill, songs can help in the process of the study of pronunciation. According to Ebong & Sabbadini (2008), while students listen to a song, they can realize the sounds of the words, the stress in words and other aspects of pronunciation.

As communication is part of the Activate element (Harmer, 1998), songs can be used to develop the Speaking skill. To do so, it is possible to promote this communication through a debate about a song that brings a polemic theme which may divide people in different and controversial points of view so that they can talk about the topic.

DEALING WITH SONGS THROUGH THE FOUR SKILLS: SAMPLES

Taking into consideration the suggestions above which integrate the four skills with songs and the fact that activities with songs highly motivate students, as we have already mentioned, we will present some ideas to explore songs in the classroom.

The first activity suggested here involves the Writing skill. Based on the ideas of Saslow, Asher and Notapierto (2007) who suggest writing a letter in reply to a character or song, we prepared an activity for the song Substitute for love by Madonna. The aim of the activity (see Appendix 1 for the activity and lyrics) is to give students enough knowledge and support to develop their ideas to write an essay.
The activity also deals with Speaking as the first part generates a discussion on the topic.

As Harmer (1998) says, communication is very important to the *Activate* element. Based on his statement, a song activity with this purpose can be developed through the Speaking skill. To illustrate the activity, the chosen song was *Sunday, bloody Sunday*, sang by U2 (see appendix 2) which deals with a polemic theme and can be used to promote a debate. This activity involves the *Engage* and *Activate* elements, mentioned before by Harmer (1998). Discussions will *Engage* students, because they will be preparing themselves to do the task. The *Activate* element, which is when students produce the language based on what they have learned, will be part of the development of the Speaking skill, due to the fact that students will be able to use the language as free as possible, and will not worry about specific bits of language.

According to Harmer (1998), to study a language, it is also important to study its sounds, which is part of the *Study* element as it deals with the construction of the language. To develop this, Listening can be great help because students will be in contact with real spoken English. As an example, we chose a song in which the pronunciation aspects will be worked. The name of the song is *Song for a winter’s night*, sang by Sarah Mclachlan (see appendix 3). Based on Ebong & Sabbadini (2008), songs can be used to work with pronunciation.

Concerning Reading, Coffey (2000) suggests the transformation of a song in a poem or story. Taking his idea into consideration, a Phill Collins’s song, *Against all odds* (see appendix 4), will be transformed into a letter, and students are supposed to answer comprehension questions as if it was a reading comprehension exercise.

After reading some authors’ ideas concerning the use of songs, it is
possible to notice that songs can be used not only as a relaxing and gap-filling activity, but also as something that can play an important role in the teaching-learning process as it motivates students and entertain them (UR, 2005).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this article was to show that it is possible to work with songs not only as a gap filling exercise, but also to integrate them with the four skills – listening, reading, speaking and writing.

According to the theory we have already discussed, we have noticed that besides making the teaching learning process more interesting by motivating students as they are part of the learners’ lives, songs can also make it more meaningful. For instance, songs can help students learn and retrieve vocabulary more easily, which leads to the conclusion that whenever students are able to link what they are learning to their real lives, they usually show more interest in it and they will probably learn more because they feel motivated. Songs are part of their lives and they are also examples of real language.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


COFFEY, S. ‘Turn, turn, turn.’ Alternative ways of presenting songs, MET, v. 9, p. 31-34, April, 2000.


**APPENDIX 1**

**Activity:**

- Give students the lyrics;
- Tell them that they are going to listen to a song and they should concentrate on the message it puts across;
- Play the song;
• Make a discussion for a better comprehension of it through questions or statements prepared by the teacher;
• Ask students to write an opinion essay based on what they have learned through the discussion.

**Topic for the essay:**

In the song, the woman regrets about giving more importance to her professional life than her personal life which is something very common nowadays. What is your opinion about it? Do you think it is worthy to leave your personal life behind? Support your ideas with examples taken from the song and the discussion.

**Model to follow:**

Introduction: Paragraph 1 – state the topic and your opinion clearly.

Main body: Paragraph 2 - viewpoint 1 & reason/example
Paragraph 3 – viewpoint 2 & reason/example
Paragraph 4 – viewpoint 3 & reason/example
Paragraph 5 – opposing viewpoint & reason/example.

Conclusion: Final paragraph – summarize/restate opinion

**Points to consider:**

• Decide whether you agree or disagree with the topic, then make a list of your viewpoints and reasons.
• Write well-developed paragraphs, joining the sentence with
appropriate linking words and phrases. Do not forget to start your paragraph with a topic sentence which summarizes what the paragraph is about.

• Linking words and phrases should also be used to join one paragraph with the other.

**Source:** *Model to follow and Points to consider.* CCBEU’s preparatory handout for the ECPE examination.

**SUBSTITUTE FOR LOVE**

Madonna

I traded fame for love
Without a second thought
It all became a silly a game
Some things cannot be bought

I got exactly what I asked for
Wanted it so badly
Running, rushing back for more
I suffered fools so gladly
And now I find
I’ve changed my mind

**CHORUS**

The face of you
My substitute for love
My substitute for love
Should I wait for you
My substitute for love
My substitute for love

I traveled round the world
Looking for a home
I found myself in crowded rooms
Feeling so alone

I had so many lovers
Who settled for the thrill
Of basking in my spotlight
I never felt so happy

CHORUS

Mmmmm, ooohhh, mmmmm
Famous faces, far off places
Trinkets I can buy
No handsome stranger, heady danger
Drug that I can try
No ferries wheel, no heart to steal
No laughter in the dark
No one-night stand, no far-off land
No fire that I can spark
Mmmmm, mmmmm

CHORUS

Now I find I've changed my mind
This is my religion

APPENDIX 2

Activity:
• Give students the lyrics;
• Play the song;
• Make a discussion with the whole class so that students really understand the song;
• Divide the class into two groups (if it is a large class, students should be divided into more groups so that everybody has the chance to participate in the discussion);
• One group will be in favor of the war, and the other will be against it;
• Give them five minutes to discuss within their groups the arguments they are going to use;
• Give them samples of language used for expressing opinion and ways of agreeing and disagreeing (see box below).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expressing opinion and agreement with an opinion</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expressing opinion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I (personally) think/believe/feel...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In my (personal) opinion/view...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To my mind...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d say that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s quite obvious that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As I see it...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m pretty/quite sure that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expressing agreement with an opinion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exactly/ quite/ absolutely/ definitly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right/ All right/ You’re quite right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree (entirely)/I think so, too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s just/exactly what I think/thought/was thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You took the words out of my mouth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Polite ways of disagreeing</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I couldn’t agree more, but...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s a good idea, but... / Yes, that’s quite true, but...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see what you mean, but... / I see / Take your point, but...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well, you have a point here, but...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perhaps/Yes, but don’t you think...?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But surely...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgive me if I’m wrong, but...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personally, I’m more inclined to agree with... (someone else)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Boxes adapted from *Conversation and Dialogues in action.*
SUNDAY BLOODY SUNDAY

U2

I can’t believe the news today
I can’t close my eyes and make it go away

How long?
How long must we sing this song?
How long, how long?
Cause tonight we can be as one
Tonight

Broken bottles under children’s feet
And bodies strewn across a dead end street
But I won’t heed the battle call
It puts my back up, puts my back up
Against the wall!

* Sunday, bloody sunday (3x)

And the battle’s just begun
There’s many lost
But tell me who has won?
The trenches dug within our hearts
And mothers, children, brothers, sisters torn apart

* Sunday, bloody sunday (2x)

How long
How long must we sing this song?
How long, how long?
Cause tonight we can be as one
Tonight

* Tonight (4 x)

Wipe the tears of your eyes
Wipe your tears away
Wipe your tears away
Wipe bloodshot eyes

* Sunday, bloody sunday (6 x)

And it’s true we are immune
When fact is fiction and TV is reality
And today the millions cry
We eat and drink while tomorrow they die
The real battle just begun
To claim the victory Jesus won
On a sunday, bloody sunday

* Sunday, bloody sunday (5 x)

**APPENDIX 3**

**Activity:**

- Give students a copy of the lyrics with the words they are going to use in bold;
- Before listening to the song, ask students to complete the chart with the words in bold (as they have already learned diphthong pronunciation);
- Listen to the song and check;
- Teacher checks again.

Put the words in bold in the lyrics in the right column according to the diphthong sounds:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>əu</th>
<th>əi</th>
<th>ɔi</th>
<th>3i</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Silence</td>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow</td>
<td>Night</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoke</td>
<td>Rising</td>
<td></td>
<td>Windowpane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know</td>
<td>Lines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windowpane</td>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Sigh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SONG FOR A WINTER’S NIGHT
Sarah McLachlan

The lamp is burning LOW upon my table top
The SNOW is softly falling
The air is still within the SILENCE of my room
I hear your VOICE softly calling
If I could only have you near
To breathe a SIGH or two
I would be happy just to hold the hands I love
On this winter’s NIGHT with you
The SMOKE is RISING in the shadows overhead
My glass is almost empty
I read again between the LINES upon each PAGE
The words of love you sent me
If I could KNOW within my heart
That you were lonely too
I would be happy just to hold the hands I love
On this winter’s NIGHT with you
The FIRE is dying now, my lamp is growing dim
The SHADES of NIGHT are lifting
The morning LIGHT steals across my WINDOWPANE
Where webs of SNOW are drifting
If I could only have you near
To breathe a **SIGH** or two
I would be happy just to hold the hands I love
On this winter’s **NIGHT** with you
And to be once again with you

**APPENDIX 4**

**Activity:**
- Students read the letter;
- Answer the comprehension questions;
- Teacher corrects it;
- By the end of the exercise, tell students it is a song and play it so that they sing along.

**Questions:**
1. What’s the man looking for?
2. Do you think they were together for a long or a short period of time? Why? Can you find a passage which illustrates it.
3. Does he regret something he did or didn’t do? Where can we find this piece of information in the letter?
AGAINST ALL ODDS

Phill Collins

Dear,

How can I just let you walk away? Just let you leave without a trace? When I stand here taking every breath with you. You’re the only one who really knew me at all. How can you just walk away from me? When all I can do is watch you leave? Cuz we shared the laughter and the pain and even shared the tears. You’re the only one who really knew me at all.

So take a look at me now, cause there’s just an empty space and there’s nothing left here to remind me, just the memory of your face. Take a look at me now, cuz there’s just an empty space and you comin back to me is against all odds and that’s what I’ve gotta face.

I wish I could just make you turn around, turn around and see me cry. There’s so much I need to say to you, so many reasons why. You’re the only one who really knew me at all.

Take a good look at me now, I’ll still be standing here and you comming back to me is against all odds. It’s a chance I have to take.

Just take a look at me now.

Love,

Phill