

Dolly Parton - Modern Composer Study Curriculum

A Charlotte Mason-inspired Composer Study of Contemporary Artists

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Why Composer Study?

If we want to raise intellectually curious, creative children – we must introduce them to the works of intellectually curious, creative and inventive people. The arts and culture bring so much joy and awe to our lives.

In her book *Modern Miss Mason*, Leah Boden writes: “When we help children to connect with art, music, poetry, and plays, it heightens and increases what Charlotte referred to as their “Beauty Sense”. And beauty sense is what is required for us to truly grasp living insight. Charlotte described us all as having the “need to be trained to see, and to have our eyes opened before we can take in the joy that is meant for us in this beautiful life.”” (Leah Boden, p. 123, *Modern Miss Mason*).

Why Contemporary Artists?

One reason we learn the names of the plants in our backyard is so that we are acquainted with them, just as we are with people. It brings a feeling of home to a place, a certainty - to know what lives around you. The music that naturally surrounds your home - both within and outside its walls is also part of your child's world. In Charlotte Mason's day, she advocated for children to learn to recognize the work of great composers - so that when they were at a social event - they would recognize the music being played and feel like they are meeting an old friend. It is a pretty common human experience (I think) to be somewhere (like at a grocery store) and have a favourite song come on the speakers. “Oh I love this song!”, we say, and our day just gets a little bit better from hearing something familiar. In Charlotte Mason's day, it was perhaps more common to hear Beethoven or Bach or Rachmaninov at a social event, or while out in public. But I have never heard Bach in the cereal aisle. Have you?

Charlotte Mason died in 1922, and so many new genres of music have exploded onto the scene since then. Certainly there is value in exploring the music of great composers in classical music and opera - but if that's all we do in composer study, our students are missing out on a lot of art, culture, and human ingenuity, creativity and innovation. In this Contemporary Artist Composer Study curriculum series, we will learn about country, bluegrass, folk, pop, rock & roll, ragtime, r&b (rhythm and blues), jazz, soul, electronica, and more. We will learn about the artists that came up with music that no one had ever heard anything like it before. We will also consider the role of lyrics and song structure in contemporary music, as well as which instruments are included in the compositions.

How to Use This Curriculum

- **Weekly rhythm:** Listen, Read, Reflect, Discuss, Do (one song + one biography section each week).
 - I've found the key for our family is to choose a day for composer study. We also often listen to the song of the week and discuss the questions in the car on our way to weekly extra-curricular activities.
- **Tiered for ages:** choose the picture-book option for younger kids, or the longer biography for older students.
- **Flexible for your family:** skip or adapt weeks based on themes and comfort levels.
- **Commonplace book:** keep a simple notebook for favourite lyrics, quotes, sketches, and "wonder" questions.

Books to Read with this Curriculum

 Book Title	 Author/Illustrator	 Reading Level
Music: The Definitive Visual History	DK	All ages
Who is Dolly Parton	True Kelley (Who HQ Biography)	Ages 8–12
My Little Golden Book About Dolly Parton	Deborah Hopkinson, illustrated by Monique Dong	Ages 4–8
Coat of Many Colors	Dolly Parton	All ages

Living Books

Emily Kiser, podcast host of A Delectable Education, uses an acronym (L-I-V-I-N-G) to describe Living Books:

L: Literary Power

I: Ideas

V: Virtuous

I: Inspiring

N: Narrative

G: Generational

Books are “living” when they are written in **literary** language that isn’t dumbed down for children. They have big **ideas** that gives readers something to think about, wonder, imagine or ponder long after the story is over. The characters are not perfect but try to make the right choices, or there are consequences for poor choices. In short, they are **virtuous**. Living books are written by authors who are passionate and **inspired** by their subject and their enthusiasm flows from page to reader. Living books are **narrative** in that you can read them and then easily tell back what you read. They flow and are often written as a story. Lastly, living books are **generational** - they are the books that have been loved by your parents and your grandparents. They are books that adults and children enjoy reading together.

Sometimes it is difficult to find a living book about contemporary artists. The books I have chosen to share in my curriculums are ones that I did read with my children as we listened to these artists. We did find them engaging, inspiring, and well written. Where possible, I tied the song (either lyrically or the period it was written in) to the section of the biography assigned for each week. I have also included the DK Visual Encyclopedia as an overall resource for music education. There is a lot of interesting content inside, and it gives a chronological overview of how music has evolved over time, which helps families situate the music they are listening to in time relative to other music.

Mother Culture Resources

Mother Culture is reading and learning for the parent’s own growth and enrichment. It helps you stay curious, grounded, and inspired as you guide your children.

- Dolly Parton Autobiography movie on Disney+
- 9 to 5 (movie)

- Dumplin' (movie)
 - Steel Magnolias (movie)
-

Week 1: Introduction - Who is Dolly Parton?

Read:

- Read pages 1–3 of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).
- Or pages 1–4 from *My Little Golden Book About Dolly Parton* by Deborah Hopkinson, illustrated by Monique Dong.
- *Note:* The Little Golden Book does not have page numbers, so I have numbered them starting with page 1 as a left-hand page with Dolly and her family on the porch.

Listen:

[Big Dreams, Faded Jeans by Dolly Parton](#) (released in 2022)



Reflect: (See lyrics on next page)

Discuss:

1. What does “bursting at the seams” mean?
Bursting at the seams is an idiom (a common phrase whose figurative meaning is different from the literal meaning). Here, it means overflowing and abundant. Faded jeans can literally burst at the seams because they’ve been worn so many times – and Dolly pairs that literal image with the idea of dreams so big they feel like they can’t be contained.
2. Do you have any big dreams? What are some things you could do to accomplish your dreams?
3. Deeper dive: Dolly references “Bobby McGee” (“Freedom’s just another word...”) in this song. Listen to *Me and Bobby McGee* by Janis Joplin and talk about how freedom might influence following your dreams. What connections do you hear between the two songs?

Do:

- Make a simple vision board. Brainstorm a few “big dreams,” then gather pictures or words from old magazines, printed images, or Pinterest pins that represent them. Glue them onto paper (or pin them digitally) so you can revisit your dreams over the coming weeks.

Big Dreams, Faded Jeans by Dolly Parton

Put on my jeans, my favorite shirt
Pull up my boots and hit the dirt
Finally doin' somethin' I've dreamed of
for years

Don't know quite what to expect
A little scared, but what the heck
My desire is always greater than my fear

Big dreams and faded jeans
Fit together like a team
Always busting at the seams
Big dreams and faded jeans

Just my old guitar and me
Out to find my destiny
Nashville is the place to be
For big dreams and faded jeans
Put out my thumb and wish for luck
To hitch a car, a semi-truck
Sooner or later one will catch me in their
beams

Then I'll be on my way at last
Find a future, lose a past
Waiting silent as the passion in me
screams

Big dreams and faded jeans
Fit together like a team
Always busting at the seams
Big dreams and faded jeans

May the stars that fill my eyes
Guide my path and be my light
And may God provide the means
To accomplish my big dreams, my big
dreams

Big dreams and faded jeans
Fit together like a team
Always busting at the seams
Big dreams and faded jeans

Like the song "Bobby McGee" (freedom's
just another word)
I'm just longin' to be free (to be free)
Take me where I wanna be
Big dreams and faded jeans

And there are many just like me
With big dreams and faded jeans
Mmh-mm-mm-mm
Mmh-mm-mm-mm
Big dreams, big dreams and faded jeans

Oh-oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh-oh
I'm just longing to be free
Take me where I wanna be
Big dreams and faded jeans

Week 2: Growing Up in Tennessee

Read:

- Read Chapter 1 (pages 4–19) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).
- Or pages 5–6 from *My Little Golden Book About Dolly Parton* by Deborah Hopkinson, illustrated by Monique Dong.

Listen:

[My Tennessee Mountain Home by Dolly Parton](#)



Reflect: *See lyrics on next page*

Discuss:

1. Where are the Great Smoky Mountains? Where are the Appalachian Mountains? (Find them on a map.)
2. A “hook” in music is a short riff or phrase that catches a listener’s ear. Often popular hooks have melodies that jump between low notes and high notes. Can you identify the hook in this song — the part that jumps out and might get “stuck in your head”?
3. Dolly uses descriptive lyrics to paint a picture of Tennessee, and she also uses one metaphor. What do you think the metaphor is?
Hint: “Life is as peaceful as a baby’s sigh.”

Do:

- On a blank map of Tennessee, draw or paste images that match Dolly’s descriptions (porch, fireflies, honeysuckle, hills). See Appendix C.
- Label the Great Smoky Mountain range, and add a few words that capture the mood of the song.

My Tennessee Mountain Home by Dolly Parton

Sittin' on the front porch on a summer afternoon
In a straight back chair on two legs leaned against the wall
As I watch the kids a-playin' with their June bugs on a string
And chase the glowin' fireflies when evenin' shadows fall

In my Tennessee mountain home
Life is as peaceful as a baby's sigh
In my Tennessee mountain home
Crickets are singing in the fields near by

And honeysuckle vine clings to the fence along the lane
Their fragrance makes the summer wind so sweet
And on a distant hilltop, an eagle spreads its wings
And a songbird on a fence post sings a melody

In my Tennessee mountain home
Life is as peaceful as a baby's sigh
In my Tennessee mountain home
Crickets are singing in the fields near by

Walkin' home from church on Sunday with the one ya love
Just laughin', talkin', making future plans
And when you see the folks ain't lookin'
Well, you might steal a kiss or two
While you're sittin' in the porch swing, holdin' hands

In my Tennessee mountain home
Life is as peaceful as a baby's sigh
In my Tennessee mountain home
Crickets are singing in the fields near by
In My Tennessee mountain home

Week 3: Being Teased

Read:

- Read Chapter 2 (pages 20–30) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).
- And the picture book *The Coat of Many Colors* by Dolly Parton.

Listen:

[Coat of Many Colors by Dolly Parton](#)



Reflect: *See lyrics on next page*

Discuss:

1. How did Dolly’s perspective of her coat differ from the way other children saw it? Have you ever had a perspective that is different from someone else?
2. How can you celebrate the things that make you different from your friends?
3. What is something you like about yourself?
4. One lyric says, “One is only poor if you choose to be.” What are ways you can find wealth and abundance (having enough) without new clothes or money?
5. Has someone ever made something for you? What was it, and what did it mean to you?

Do:

- Find small bits of fabric or rags from old clothes and glue them into a “coat of many colors” collage, using the coat image below, or one you draw yourself. Alternately, use colored pencils or markers to color in the coat below.

Coat of Many Colors by Dolly Parton

Back through the years
I go wonderin' once again
Back to the seasons of my youth
I recall a box of rags that someone gave
us
And how my momma put the rags to use
There were rags of many colors
But every piece was small
And I didn't have a coat
And it was way down in the fall
Momma sewed the rags together
Sewin' every piece with love
She made my coat of many colors
That I was so proud of

As she sewed, she told a story
From the Bible she had read
About a coat of many colors
Joseph wore and then she said
Perhaps this coat will bring you
Good luck and happiness
And I just couldn't wait to wear it
And momma blessed it with a kiss

My coat of many colors
That my momma made for me
Made only from rags
But I wore it so proudly
Although we had no money
I was rich as I could be
In my coat of many colors
My momma made for me

So with patches on my britches
And holes in both my shoes
In my coat of many colors
I hurried off to school
Just to find the others laughing
And making fun of me
In my coat of many colors
My momma made for me

And oh, I couldn't understand it
For I felt I was rich
And I told 'em of the love
My momma sewed in every stitch
And I told 'em all the story
Momma told me while she sewed
And how my coat of many colors
Was worth more than all their clothes

But they didn't understand it
And I tried to make them see
That one is only poor
Only if they choose to be
Now I know we had no money
But I was rich as I could be
In my coat of many colors
My momma made for me
Made just for me

Week 4: On the Radio

Read:

- Read Chapter 3 (pages 30–41) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).
- Or pages 7–10 from *My Little Golden Book About Dolly Parton* by Deborah Hopkinson, illustrated by Monique Dong.

Listen:

[“You Gotta Be My Baby”](#) by Dolly Parton



Reflect: *See lyrics on next page*

Discuss:

1. Has anyone ever told you you were too young to do something? How did that make you feel? Did you try anyway?
2. How did Dolly’s family help her achieve her dream of becoming a singer?
3. Does anyone in your family have any big goals? How could you help them achieve them?

Do:

- Dolly’s first time singing on the radio was a song written and recorded by George Jones. Sing a “cover” of a song written by someone else — karaoke style! Look up a song you love on YouTube Music + “karaoke version” and enjoy singing along with the instruments.

You Gotta Be My Baby *(written by George Jones)*

Oh you said you were my baby
Now I know that you're my baby
But it seems to be you got roaming eyes
If you want to be my baby
Then you got to be my baby
You can't keep your finger in two different lives
I remember how you pleaded
When my love you said you needed
And I believe without a doubt
So if you want to be my baby
Then you got to be my baby
And keep those kissing cousins out

Oh you know how when I said I was rolling low?
I get suspicious and I'm going to tell you so
If you want to be my baby
Then you got to be my baby
And be nobody's baby but mine

Just think about it

Now I heard there was another
So I went and asked your mother
If anybody hung around besides me
She gave me no satisfaction
And now I can't take no action
But I think I'll hang around and see

Week 5: Finding Love

Read:

- Read Chapter 4 (pages 42–51) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).
- Or pages 11–16 from *My Little Golden Book About Dolly Parton* by Deborah Hopkinson, illustrated by Monique Dong.

Listen:

[“If You Hadn’t Been There” by Dolly Parton](#)



Reflect: See lyrics on next page

Discuss:

1. Dolly released *If You Hadn't Been There* in 2025 shortly after her husband's passing. They were married for almost 60 years. Who do you know who has been married for a long time? How many years have they been married? Ask them what it's like to be married and if they have any advice on how to love others well.
2. Dolly credits her husband, Carl Dean, for being there for her throughout her career. Who in your life has been there through the ups and downs?
3. Carl Dean was famously reclusive and stayed out of the limelight. Why do you think some people prefer privacy, even when someone they love is famous?

Do:

- Write a thank you note to someone who cares about you. Tell them one specific way their support has helped you.

If You Hadn't Been There by Dolly Parton

If you hadn't been there
Where would I be?
Without your trust
Love and belief
The ups and downs
We've always shared
And I wouldn't be here
If you hadn't been there

If you hadn't been there
Well, who would I be?
You've always see the best in me
Your loving arms have cradled me
You held me close, and I believe

I wouldn't be here
If you hadn't been there
Holding my hand
Showing you care
You made me dream
More than I dared
And I wouldn't be here
If you hadn't been there

Oh, you are my rock
A soft place to land
My wings, my confidence
You understand
Your willingness
Beyond compare
No, I wouldn't be here
If you hadn't been there

I wouldn't be here
If you hadn't been there
Pushing me on
When I was scared
I thank God and you (thank God and you)
Oh, for your loving care
And for giving me love
With more to spare
You made me climb
And top the stairs
I wouldn't be here
I wouldn't be here
If you hadn't been there

I wouldn't be here
If you hadn't been there

Week 6: Feminist Icon

(Younger students may skip this week if it makes sense for your family.)

Read:

- Read a portion of Chapter 5 (pages 52–62) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).

Listen:

[Just Because I'm a Woman by Dolly Parton](#)



Reflect: *See lyrics on next page*

Discuss:

1. In *Just Because I'm a Woman*, Dolly is calling out the double standard of the 1960s. What does that mean?
2. Do you think there are still double standards between men and women today? Where do you see them?
3. How can you advocate for equality between the sexes in everyday life?
4. Has anyone ever called you a derogatory (mean) name? How did it make you feel? Is there a healthy way to respond — with confidence, boundaries, or even humor?

Do:

- Do some online research on the “pink tax.” Are there items that cost more just because they are marketed to women? Make a short list of examples you find.

Just Because I'm a Woman

by Dolly Parton

I can see you're disappointed
By the way you look at me
And I'm sorry that I'm not
The woman you thought I'd be
Yes, I've made my mistakes
But listen and understand
My mistakes are no worse than yours
Just because I'm a woman

So when you look at me
Don't feel sorry for yourself
Just think of all the shame
You might have brought somebody else

Just let me tell you this
Then we'll both know where we stand
My mistakes are no worse than yours
Just because I'm a woman

Now a man will take a good girl
And he'll ruin her reputation
But when he wants to marry
Well, that's a different situation

He'll just walk off and leave her
To do the best she can
While he looks for an angel
To wear his wedding band

Now I know that I'm no angel
If that's what you thought you'd found
I was just the victim of
A man that let me down

Yes, I've made my mistakes
But listen and understand
My mistakes are no worse than yours
Just because I'm a woman
No, my mistakes are no worse than yours
Just because I'm a woman

Week 7: A Star is Born - I Will Always Love You

Read:

- Read a portion of Chapter 5 (pages 63–65) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).

Listen:

[I Will Always Love You by Dolly Parton](#)



Reflect: *See lyrics on next page*

Discuss:

1. Dolly wrote this song as she was deciding to go separate ways from Porter Wagoner, who gave her her big start. Have you ever had to say goodbye to someone, something, or somewhere because it was best for you?
2. Dolly famously turned down Elvis Presley, who wanted to record a cover of *I Will Always Love You*, because he wanted publishing rights. What does it mean to believe your work has value – and to protect it?
3. Dolly invested money from Whitney Houston's version into an office building in a historically Black neighborhood in Nashville, sometimes called "The House that Whitney Built." Why do you think giving back (philanthropy) matters? What does your family do to help others?

Do:

- Listen to [Whitney Houston's version of "I Will Always Love You."](#) How are the two versions the same? How are they different? Which one do you prefer – and why?



I Will Always Love You by Dolly Parton

If I should stay
Well I would only be in your way
And so I'll go, and yet I know
I'll think of you each step of the way

And I will always love you
I will always love you

Bitter-sweet memories
That's all I'm taking with me
Good-bye, please don't cry
'Cause we both know that I'm not
What you need

But I will always love you
I will always love you

And I hope life, will treat you kind
And I hope that you have all
That you ever dreamed of
Oh I do wish you joy
And I wish you happiness
But above all this
I wish you love
I love you

I will always love you
I, I will always, always love you
I will always love you
I will always love you
I will always love you

Week 8: Bigger Dreams

Read:

- Read Chapter 6 (pages 66–72) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).

Listen:

[Jolene by Dolly Parton](#)



Reflect: *See lyrics on next page*

Discuss:

- Jolene (1973) is one of Dolly Parton’s biggest hits — a song that crossed over from country radio to pop. Dolly wrote “Jolene” on the same night as “I Will Always Love You.” Imagine having two great ideas in one night! Has there ever been a time when your mind was just full of ideas? What did you do with those ideas?

Do:

- Listen to a few covers of “Jolene,” like Miley Cyrus and The White Stripes. How are they the same? How are they different? Which version surprises you most?

[Jolene - Miley Cyrus](#)



[Jolene - the White Stripes](#)



Jolene by Dolly Parton

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene
I'm beggin' of you, please don't take my
man

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene
Please don't take him just because you
can

Your beauty is beyond compare
With flaming locks of auburn hair
With ivory skin and eyes of emerald green
Your smile is like a breath of spring
Your voice is soft like summer rain
And I cannot compete with you, Jolene

He talks about you in his sleep
And there's nothin' I can do to keep
From cryin' when he calls your name,
Jolene
And I can easily understand
How you could easily take my man
But you don't know what he means to
me, Jolene

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene
I'm begging of you, please don't take my
man

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene
Please don't take him just because you
can

You could have your choice of men
But I could never love again
He's the only one for me, Jolene
I had to have this talk with you
My happiness depends on you
And whatever you decide to do, Jolene

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene
I'm begging of you, please don't take my
man

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene
Please don't take him even though you
can

Jolene, Jolene

Week 9: Hollywood Dolly

Read:

- Read Chapter 7 (pages 73–83) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).

Listen:

The movie *9 to 5* starring Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin, and Dolly Parton was about inequality for women in the workplace. Dolly agreed to be in the movie if she could write the theme song:

[“9 to 5”](#) by Dolly Parton



Reflect: See lyrics on next page

Discuss:

1. What do you think she means by a “cup of ambition”? Why?
2. Dolly composed the rhythm for this song by brushing her long fake fingernails across each other. Can you hear a sound in the song that reminds you of fingernails? What is it?
3. *9 to 5* was one of the highest-grossing movies of 1980 with a female-led cast. How have things changed for women in films since 1980? What about in the workforce?

Do:

- Watch *9 to 5* (PG), *Steel Magnolias* (PG), or *Coat of Many Colors (G)* (2015) if age-appropriate for your students. ([Common Sense Media](#) can help you decide.)

9 to 5 by Dolly Parton

Tumble out of bed and I stumble to the kitchen
Pour myself a cup of ambition
And yawn and stretch and try to come to life
Jump in the shower and the blood starts pumpin'
Out on the street, the traffic starts jumpin'
With folks like me on the job from nine to five

Workin' nine to five, what a way to make a livin'
Barely gettin' by, it's all takin' and no givin'
They just use your mind and they never give you credit
It's enough to drive you crazy if you let it
Nine to five, for service and devotion
You would think that I would deserve a fair promotion
Want to move ahead but the boss won't seem to let me
I swear sometimes that man is out to get me
They let you dream just to watch 'em shatter
You're just a step on the bossman's ladder
But you've got dreams he'll never take away
In the same boat with a lot of your friends
Waitin' for the day your ship'll come in
And the tide's gonna turn an' it's all gonna roll your way

Working nine to five, what a way to make a livin'
Barely gettin' by, it's all takin' and no givin'
They just use your mind and you never get the credit
It's enough to drive you crazy if you let it
Nine to five, yeah, they got you where they want you
There's a better life and you think about it don't you
It's a rich man's game no matter what they call it
And you spend your life puttin' money in his wallet
Nine to five, what a way to make a livin'
Barely gettin' by, it's all takin' and no givin'
They just use your mind and they never give you credit
It's enough to drive you crazy if you let it
Nine to five, yeah, they got you where they want you
There's a better life and you think about it don't you
It's a rich man's game no matter what they call it
And you spend your life puttin' money in his wallet

Week 10: Dollywood and the Imagination Library

Read:

- Read Chapter 8 (pages 84–90) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).

Listen:

[Love is Like a Butterfly by Dolly Parton](#)



Reflect: *See lyrics on next page*

Discuss:

1. Dolly Parton does not know how to read or write music — she writes songs by heart and plays by ear. Do you know how to read music? Have you ever learned to do something in a different way than other people?
2. Dolly has released 49 solo studio albums. That's a lot of work! What is something you've created a lot of, or something you've worked hard to learn?
3. Dolly built Dollywood to create jobs and lift up the community she grew up in. If you had a lot of money to spend to create jobs in an impoverished area, what would you do?
4. Through the Imagination Library, Dolly mails free books to children every month from birth until age 5 — that's 60 books. Did you ever receive books in the mail? How did it feel?
5. How has reading and writing been part of your family story? Who taught you? Who are you helping now?

Do:

- If your child is eligible, sign up to receive a book each month from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Or write an imaginary letter to an ancestor about how you learned to read and write — they'd be proud of you!

Love Is Like a Butterfly by Dolly Parton

Love is like a butterfly
As soft and gentle as a sigh
The multicolored moods of love are like its satin wings
Love makes your heart feel strange inside
It flutters like soft wings in flight
Love is like a butterfly, a rare and gentle thing

I feel it when you're with me
It happens when you kiss me
That rare and gentle feeling that I feel inside
Your touch is soft and gentle
Your kiss is warm and tender
Whenever I am with you, I think of butterflies

Love is like a butterfly (soft and gentle as a sigh)
The multicolored moods of love are like its satin wings
Love makes your heart feel strange inside
It flutters like soft wings in flight
Love is like a butterfly, a rare and gentle thing

Your laughter brings me sunshine
Every day is springtime
And I am only happy when you are by my side
How precious is this love we share
How very precious, sweet and rare
Together, we belong like daffodils and butterflies

Love is like a butterfly
As soft and gentle as a sigh
The multicolored moods of love are like its satin wings
Love makes your heart feel strange inside
It flutters like soft wings in flight
Love is like a butterfly, a rare and gentle thing
Love is like a butterfly, a rare and gentle thing
(Love is like a butterfly)

Week 11: A Living Legend

Read:

- Read a portion of Chapter 9 (pages 91–97) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).

Listen:

[Islands in the Stream by Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers](#)



Reflect: See lyrics on the following page

Discuss:

Dolly loves doing duets with others. A duet is when two singers or musicians perform together. They often harmonize — singing different but complementary notes that sound good together. Can you pick out the harmony Dolly sings on the chorus? What about the melody Kenny Rogers sings?

Do:

- Watch [a short video](#) about how to sing harmony.
- Then try a “harmony game” at home: one person sings a note, and someone else tries to find a harmony note that sounds good with it.



Islands in the Stream by Kenny Rogers
and Dolly Parton

Baby, when I met you there was peace
unknown

I set out to get you, with a finetooth
comb

I was soft inside

There was something going on

You do something to me that I can't
explain

Hold me closer and I feel no pain

Every beat of my heart

We got something going on

Tender love is blind

It requires a dedication

All this love we feel needs no
conversation

We ride it together, ah-ah

Making love with each other, ah-ah

Islands in the stream

That is what we are

No one in between

How can we be wrong?

Sail away with me

To another world

And we rely on each other, ah-ah

From one lover to another, ah-ah

I can't live without you if the love was
gone

Everything is nothing if you got no one

And you just walk in the night

Slowly losing sight of the real thing

But that won't happen to us and we got
no doubt

Too deep in love and we got no way out

And the message is clear

This could be the year for the real thing

No more will you cry

Baby, I will hurt you never

We start and end as one

In love forever

We can ride it together, ah-ah

Making love with each other, ah-ah

Islands in the stream

That is what we are

No one in between

How can we be wrong?

Sail away with me

To another world

And we rely on each other, ah-ah

From one lover to another, ah-ah

Sail away

Oh, come sail away with me

Islands in the stream

That is what we are

No one in between

How can we be wrong?

Sail away with me

To another world

And we rely on each other, ah-ah

From one lover to another, ah-ah

Islands in the stream

That is what we are

No one in between

Week 12: Still Dreaming

Read:

- Read a portion of Chapter 9 (pages 98–105) of *Who is Dolly Parton* by True Kelley (Who HQ biography).

Listen:

[Light of a Clear Blue Morning by Dolly Parton](#) (original recording)



[Light of a Clear Blue Morning by Dolly Parton ft. Lainey Wilson, Miley Cyrus, Queen Latifah & Reba](#) (released in 2026)



Reflect: See lyrics on the following page

Discuss:

1. Have you ever told a friend or family member that everything is going to be all right? What were they worried about? Tell the story of how you encouraged someone to persevere through a hard time.
2. Dolly isn't afraid to try new things. She was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2022, and she released *Rockstar* — her first rock album — at age 77. Why do you think trying new things matters, even when you're older?
3. Have you ever tried something new (a new food, a new hobby, a new style, a new genre of music)? How did it make you feel?

Do:

- Listen to a few songs from Dolly Parton's *Rockstar* album. How is the sound different from other songs you've heard in this course?

[We Are The Champions - Dolly Parton](#)



Light of a Clear Blue Morning by Dolly
Parton

It's been a long dark night
And I've been a-waiting for the morning
It's been a long hard fight
But I see a brand new day dawning
I've been looking for the sunshine
You know I ain't seen it in so long
But everything's gonna work out just fine
And everything's gonna be all right
That's been all wrong

'Cause I can see the light of a clear blue
morning
I can see the light of a brand new day
I can see the light of a clear blue morning
Oh and everything's gonna be all right
It's gonna be okay

It's been a long long time
Since I've known the taste of freedom
And those clinging vines
That had me bound, well I don't need 'em
I've been like a captured eagle
You know an eagle is born to fly
Now that I have won my freedom
Like an eagle, I am eager to fly

'Cause I can see the light of a clear blue
morning
I can see the light of a brand new day

I can see the light of a clear blue morning
Oh and everything's gonna be all right
It's gonna be okay

I can see the light of a clear blue morning
I can see the light of a brand new day
I can see the light of a clear blue morning
Oh and everything's gonna be all right
Everything's gonna be all right
Everything's gonna be all right
It's gonna be ok

'Cause I can see the light of a clear blue
morning
I can see the light of a brand new day
I can see the light of a clear blue morning
And everything's gonna be all right
Everything's gonna be all right
Everything's gonna be all right
It's gonna be okay

'Cause I can see the light of a clear blue
morning
I can see the light of a brand new day
I can see the light of a clear blue morning
And everything's gonna be all right
Everything's gonna be all right
Everything's gonna be all right
It's gonna be okay

Appendix A: Chronological List of Songs

Year	Song Title
1959	You Gotta Be My Baby
1968	Just Because I'm a Woman
1971	Coat of Many Colors
1973	My Tennessee Mountain Home
1974	I Will Always Love You
1974	Jolene
1974	Love is Like a Butterfly
1977	Light of a Clear Blue Morning
1980	9 to 5
1983	Islands in the Stream
2022	Big Dreams, Faded Jeans
2025	If You Hadn't Been There

Appendix B: Dolly Parton Party

Put on your Dolly Parton playlist. Put on your fanciest frocks. Make some southern Appalachian comfort foods and invite some friends over for a party!

Southern Tomato Pie

Tomato pie is a regional staple that makes the absolute best of fresh summer tomatoes and mayonnaise.

Ingredients

- 4-5 ripe tomatoes (sliced and drained on paper towels)
- 1 pre-baked 9-inch pie crust
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup shredded Monterey Jack or mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup diced green onions
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Layer the tomato slices and green onions into the baked pie crust, lightly seasoning with salt and pepper as you layer.
2. In a separate bowl, mix the mayonnaise, cheddar, and Monterey Jack cheese together.
3. Spread the cheese-mayo mixture evenly over the top of the tomatoes.
4. Bake at 350°F for about 35 minutes until the top is bubbling and golden brown.

The Old Mill Corn Chowder

This iconic dish from Pigeon Forge relies heavily on fresh or frozen corn and a rich, creamy broth.

Ingredients

- 2 cups chopped onion
- 2 cups chopped mixed red and green bell peppers
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 4 cups corn (fresh off the cob, or frozen/drained canned)
- 2 cups whole milk or heavy cream
- 3 tablespoons flour (for thickening)
- Salt, pepper, and a pinch of sugar to taste

Instructions

1. Sauté the onions and bell peppers in butter in a large pot until tender.
2. Add the chicken broth and corn, bringing the mixture to a slow simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Whisk the flour into your milk/cream until smooth, then stir it into the pot.
4. Simmer on low until the soup thickens to your liking. Season with salt, pepper, and a pinch of sugar.

Smoky Mountain Sweet Tea

Cool off with this quintessential mountain porch drink.

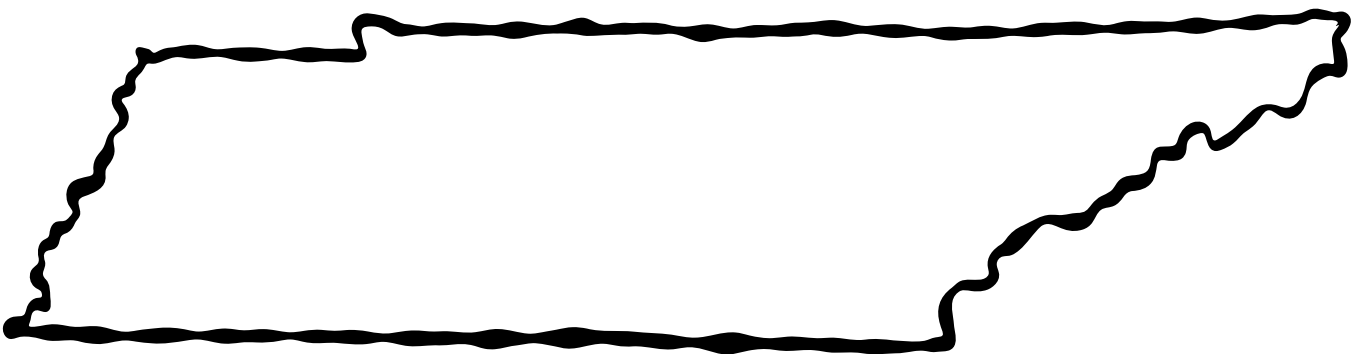
Ingredients

- 6 black tea bags
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1/8 teaspoon baking soda (this cuts the bitterness of the tea)
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- Cold water (to fill pitcher)

Instructions

1. Steep the tea bags in 2 cups of boiling water for 10 minutes, covered.
2. Remove the tea bags and discard them.
3. Stir in the baking soda and sugar until completely dissolved.
4. Pour the concentrate into a 2-quart pitcher, fill the rest of the pitcher with cold water, and refrigerate until chilled.

Appendix C: Map of Tennessee for Week 2



Appendix D: Coat Colouring Page for Week 3



