

“Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-RILFygCkk>

Behind the Meaning

The inspiration for this song, released in the early 1970s dates back to the 1800s. In a love story that appeared in *Reader's Digest* there is a soldier coming home from Andersonville Prison in the Civil War and he was going to Pennsylvania. He told his girlfriend in a letter, 'I'll understand if I should stay on the stagecoach (כירכרה). But if I shouldn't, tie a big yellow handkerchief on the big oak tree outside of town. And then I'll know if it's there, I should get off, but I'll understand that you found someone else in the last three years.'

In the song from the 1970s, a man who spent three long years in prison is now trying to take stock of the relationship with his girlfriend. He uses the yellow ribbon as a barometer for whether or not he is welcome back home. The man peeks out the bus window and sees 100 ribbons tied around the tree for a very heartwarming ending.

Cultural Impact

While the symbol of the yellow ribbon has been around since the Civil War, the Library of Congress claims that only because of this song did it become famous. In 1981, tying a yellow ribbon around trees became very popular following the Iran Hostage Crisis in 1979. The hostages were welcomed home with this symbol.

The Yellow Ribbon in Israel Today

These past few days, we have witnessed the appearance of the yellow ribbon, in response to the hostages who were kidnapped and taken to Gaza on Oct. 7. However, few Israelis understand this unusual tradition. Now you are among the few who know why!

Questions:

1. The tradition of tying a yellow ribbon around a tree began from a song.

TRUE OR FALSE

2. In the original story, tying a yellow ribbon around a tree meant that the character should stay on the stagecoach.

TRUE OR FALSE

3. What does *taking stock* mean in the 2nd paragraph?

- a. decide to end
- b. evaluate
- c. devote himself to
- d. none of the answers are correct

4. The 100 ribbons in the song represent the girlfriend answering with:

- a. A resounding "no"
- b. A "no"
- c. A resounding "yes"
- d. A "yes"

5. The tradition of tying a yellow ribbon around a tree is strictly an American tradition.

TRUE OR FALSE