

INSTRUCTIONS:

Break the class into groups of 4. Tell them they are going to **read the lyrics of a song and try to guess the name of the song & singer / band.** The first group to decipher the code and guess the song and/ or singer wins the challenge.

Hand out the slips of paper (PS: Take a deep breath. Students' first reaction when they see the phonetic transcription is memorable. But have faith. They overcome the shock quite quickly because a great deal of students can identify most of the phonetic symbols at this level.)

Let them work for about 10 minutes. Move around and check they are on task. If a group gets the answer earlier than estimated, ask them to look for the full lyrics online and discuss the message of the song.

When time's up, check the answers and reward the winning team. Play the song and ask each group to choose the line they like best (if you use this activity to boost their motivation at the beginning of the course) or do other follow-up activities (idioms/ specific vocab/ pronunciation).

Since I designed this activity for the welcome session, the focus was on having fun and listening to an inspirational song. The transcription shouldn't be a real challenge for them. I've selected different songs for each group.

GROUP 1

SONG CHALLENGE	
dəʊnt ju 'wɪri baʊt ə θɪŋ kɒz 'ɛvriθɪŋz 'gɒnə bi ɔ:l'raɪt 'ɛvriθɪŋz 'gɒnə bi ɔ:l'raɪt ɪts gon' bi əʊ-, bi 'əʊ'keɪ (eii) wɜ:k hɑ:d, plɛɪ hɑ:d, ðæts ði 'əʊnli weɪ (eii) 'aɪmə lɪv maɪ laɪf laɪk 'ɛvri deɪz ə 'hɒlədeɪ (eii) taɪm tə 'seɪlɪbreɪt (eii), taɪm tu 'elɪvert həʊld ʌp, weɪt [Spanish: tres, cuatro, cinco, seis] teɪk ɪt tə ðə tɒp, tɒp, tɒp, laɪk, u: wi dəʊnt stɒp, stɒp, ki:p ɒn 'mu:vɪn 'meɪkɪn mu:vz teɪk ə ʃɒt, ʃɒt, teɪk ə ʃɒt, teɪk ə fju: wi gon' ki:p ɒn 'du:ɪn wɒt wi du: kɒz 'ɛvriθɪŋ wɪl bi: əʊ, əʊ-əʊ, əʊ-əʊ, əʊ-əʊ keɪ, eii-eii, eii-eii, 'əʊ'keɪ	

Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=me19SUmWu2s>

<https://tophonetics.com/>

GROUP 2

SONG CHALLENGE	
aɪ nəʊ ju fi:l ɪt (fi:l ɪt) ɪf ju bi'li:v ɪt ðen ju kæn ðəz nəʊ 'ri:zʰn ðæt ðɪs laɪf kɑ:nt bi: (ɪ'lektɹɪk) əʊ, aɪ kæn si: ɪt, si: ɪt ɪf ju bi'li:v ɪt ðen ju kæn ðəz nəʊ 'ri:zʰn ðæt ðɪs laɪf kɑ:nt bi: (ɪ'lektɹɪk) lɒŋ rəʊd, 'gʊtə weɪz tə gəʊ teɪk ə bɪg step, bæt jə nɒt ə'ləʊn kɒz wi gɒt i:tʃ 'lðə ðəz səʊ mʌtʃ ju:l dɪ'skʌvə həd strɒŋ, bæt jə hɑ:t s 'strɒŋgə steɪ kɑ:m 'wɔ:kɪŋ θru: ðə faɪə aɪ nəʊ jə 'gʊnə meɪk ɪt aʊt ðeɪl traɪ tə brɪŋ ju daʊn (əʊ) bæt ju:v gɒt ðə 'paʊə naʊ	

Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oipTpT5i-PI>

<https://tophonetics.com/>

GROUP 3

SONG CHALLENGE	
ɪts tu: tʌf? nəʊ ɪks'kju:zɪz! nəʊ ɪks'kju:zɪz!!! ju:v gɒt tə bi 'ru:θləs!!! ðɪs ɪz ə 'nju:ə ju:, ə 'strɒŋgə 'vɜ:fʰn get bæɪk ɒn træɪk... stɪk tə jə 'pɜ:pəs rɪ'membə ðæt ðə ki: z kən'sɪstʰnsɪ ðə 'hɑ:də ðə 'bætʰl ðə 'swi:tə ðə 'vɪktəri rɪ'membə wɔɪ ju 'stɑ:tɪd θɪŋk ə'baʊt ɪt 'evri 'mɔ:nɪŋ ju wɪl meɪk ɪt θru: ðə 'hɑ:dʃɪps ɪf ju pʊt ɔ:l əv jə hɑ:t ɪn səʊ rɪ'membə wɔɪ ju 'stɑ:tɪd! 'nʌθɪŋ greɪt s 'gəʊɪŋ tə kʌm ɪf ju kwɪt aɪ nəʊ ɪts hɑ:d. aɪ nəʊ ju ə taɪəd. aɪ nəʊ ɪt si:mz ɪm'pɒsəbʰl, bæt ju məst ki:p 'gəʊɪŋ! stɪk ɪt aʊt... ənd get jə rɪ'wɔ:d.	

Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HoFizLtAZMo>

<https://tophonetics.com/>

GROUP 4

SONG CHALLENGE

aɪ breɪk trə'dɪʃən
 'sʌmtaɪmz maɪ traɪz ər ,aʊt'saɪd ðə laɪnz
 wi:v bi:n kən'dɪʃnd tə nɒt meɪk mɪ'sterks
 bət aɪ kɑ:nt lɪv ðæt weɪ
 'steərɪŋ ət ðə blæŋk peɪdʒ br'fɔ: ju:
 'əʊp'n ʌp ðə 'dɜ:ti 'wɪndəʊ
 let ðə sʌn ɪ'ljʊ:mɪnɪt ðə wɜ:dz ðæt jʊ kəd
 nɒt faɪnd
 'ri:tʃɪŋ fə 'sʌmθɪŋ ɪn ðə 'dɪstəns
 səʊ kləʊz jʊ kən 'ɔ:lməʊst teɪst ɪt
 rɪ'li:s jər ,ɪnhɪ'brɪʃnz
 fi:l ðə reɪn ɒn jə skɪn
 nəʊ wʌn els kən fi:l ɪt fə ju:
 'əʊnli jʊ kən let ɪt ɪn
 nəʊ wʌn els, nəʊ wʌn els
 kən spi:k ðə wɜ:dz ɒn jə lɪps
 drentʃ jɔ:'self ɪn wɜ:dz ʌn'spəʊkən
 lɪv jə laɪf wɪð ɑ:mz waɪd 'əʊp'n
 tə'dɛɪ z weə jə bʊk br'gɪnz
 ðə rest s stɪl ʌn'ɪtən

Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFFBSntZgs>

<https://tophoneitics.com/>

KEY:

GROUP 1

SONG CHALLENGE	
dəʊnt ju 'wɒri baʊt ə θɪŋ kɒz 'evriθɪŋz 'gɒnə bi ɔ:l'raɪt 'evriθɪŋz 'gɒnə bi ɔ:l'raɪt ɪts gon' bi əʊ-, bi 'əʊ'keɪ (eii) wɜ:k hɑ:d, pleɪ hɑ:d, ðæts ði 'əʊnli weɪ (eii) 'aɪmə lɪv maɪ laɪf laɪk 'evri deɪz ə 'hɒlədeɪ (eii) taɪm tə 'seɪləbreɪt (eii), taɪm tu 'elɪveɪt həʊld ʌp, weɪt [Spanish: tres, cuatro, cinco, seis] teɪk ɪt tə ðə tɒp, tɒp, tɒp, laɪk, u: wi dəʊnt stɒp, stɒp, ki:p ɒn 'mu:vɪn 'meɪkɪn mu:vz teɪk ə ʃɒt, ʃɒt, teɪk ə ʃɒt, teɪk ə fju: wi gon' ki:p ɒn 'du:ɪn wɒt wi du: kɒz 'evriθɪŋ wɪl bi: əʊ, əʊ-əʊ, əʊ-əʊ, əʊ-əʊ keɪ, eii-eii, eii-eii, 'əʊ'keɪ	Don't you worry 'bout a thing 'Cause everything's gonna be alright Everything's gonna be alright It's gon' be o-, be okay (ayy) Work hard, play hard, that's the only way (ayy) I'ma live my life like every day's a holiday (ayy) Time to celebrate (ayy), time to elevate Hold up, wait Tres, cuatro, cinco, seis Take it to the top, top, top, like, ooh We don't stop, stop, keep on movin' makin' moves Take a shot, shot, take a shot, take a few We gon' keep on doin' what we do 'Cause everything will be Oh, oh-oh, oh-oh, oh-oh Kay, ayy-ayy, ayy-ayy, okay

Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=me19SUmWu2s>

GROUP 2

SONG CHALLENGE	
ɪ ju fi:l ɪt (fi:l ɪt) bɪ'li:v ɪt ðen ju kæn həʊ 'ri:zən ðæt ðɪs laɪf kɑ:nt bi: (ɪ'lektrɪk) ɪ kæn si: ɪt, si: ɪt bɪ'li:v ɪt ðen ju kæn həʊ 'ri:zən ðæt ðɪs laɪf kɑ:nt bi: (ɪ'lektrɪk) əʊd, 'gɒtə weɪz tə gəʊ ə bɪg steɪp, bət jə nɒt ə'ləʊn vi gɒt i:tʃ 'ʌðə əʊ mʌtʃ ju:l dɪ'skʌvə strɒŋ, bət jə hɑ:t s 'strɒŋgə kɑ:m 'wɔ:kɪŋ θru: ðə faɪə ɪ jə 'gɒnə meɪk ɪt aʊt tri:t tə brɪŋ ju daʊn bət ju:v gɒt ðə 'paʊə naʊ	I know you feel it (feel it) If you believe it then you can There's no reason that this life can't be (electric) Oh, I can see it, see it If you believe it then you can There's no reason that this life can't be (electric) long road, gotta ways to go Take a big step, but you're not alone 'Cause we got each other There's so much you'll discover Head strong, but your heart is stronger Stay calm walking through the fire I know you're gonna make it out they'll try to bring you down (Oh) but you've got the power now

Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojpTpT5i-PI>

GROUP 3

SONG CHALLENGE	
its tu: tʌf? nəʊ ɪks'kju:zɪz! nəʊ ɪks'kju:zɪz!!! ju:v gɒt tə bi 'ru:θləs!!! ðɪs ɪz ə 'nju:ə ju:, ə 'strɒŋgə 'vɜ:ʃən get bæk ɒn træk... stɪk tə jə 'pɜ:pəs rɪ'membə ðæt ðə ki: z kən'sɪstənsi ðə 'hɑ:də ðə 'bætəl ðə 'swi:tə ðə 'vɪktəri rɪ'membə waɪ jʊ 'stɑ:tɪd θɪŋk ə'baʊt ɪt 'evri 'mɔ:nɪŋ ju wɪl meɪk ɪt θru: ðə 'hɑ:dʃɪps ɪf ju pʊt ɔ:l əv jə hɑ:t ɪn səʊ rɪ'membə waɪ jʊ 'stɑ:tɪd! 'nʌθɪŋ greɪt s 'gəʊɪŋ tə kʌm ɪf ju kwɪt aɪ nəʊ ɪts hɑ:d. aɪ nəʊ jʊ ə taɪəd. aɪ nəʊ ɪt si:mz ɪm'pɒsəbəl, bət ju məst ki:p 'gəʊɪŋ! stɪk ɪt aʊt... ənd get jə rɪ'wɔ:d.	It's too tough? No excuses! No excuses!!! You've got to be ruthless!!! This is a newer you, a stronger version Get back on track... Stick to your purpose Remember that the key is consistency The harder the battle the sweeter the victory Remember why you started Think about it every morning You will make it through the hardships If you put all of your heart in So remember why you started! Nothing great is going to come if you quit I know it's hard. I know you are tired. I know it seems impossible, But you must keep going! Stick it out... and get your reward.

Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HoFizLtAZMo>

GROUP 4

SONG CHALLENGE	
aɪ breɪk trə'dɪʃən 'sʌmtaɪmz maɪ traɪz əɪ 'aʊt'saɪd ðə laɪnz wi:v bi:n kən'dɪʃnd tə nɒt meɪk mɪ'steɪks bət aɪ kɑ:nt lɪv ðæt weɪ 'steəriŋ ət ðə blæŋk peɪdʒ bɪ'fɔ: ju: 'əʊpən ʌp ðə 'dɜ:ti 'wɪndəʊ let ðə sʌn ɪ'ljʊ:mɪneɪt ðə wɜ:dz ðæt ju kəd nɒt faɪnd 'ri:ʃɪŋ fə 'sʌmθɪŋ ɪn ðə 'dɪstəns səʊ kləʊz ju kən 'ɔ:l'məʊst teɪst ɪt rɪ'li:s jəɪ 'ɪnhɪ'bɪʃnz fi:l ðə reɪn ɒn jə skɪn nəʊ wʌn els kən fi:l ɪt fə ju: 'əʊnli ju kən let ɪt ɪn nəʊ wʌn els, nəʊ wʌn els kən spi:k ðə wɜ:dz ɒn jə lɪps drenʃ jɔ:'self ɪn wɜ:dz ʌn'spəʊkən lɪv jə laɪf waɪd ɑ:mz waɪd 'əʊpən tə'deɪ z weə jə bʊk bɪ'ɡɪnz ðə rest s stɪl ʌn'raɪtən	I break tradition Sometimes my tries are outside the lines We've been conditioned to not make mistakes But I can't live that way Staring at the blank page before you Open up the dirty window Let the sun illuminate the words that you could not find Reaching for something in the distance So close you can almost taste it Release your inhibitions Feel the rain on your skin No one else can feel it for you Only you can let it in No one else, no one else Can speak the words on your lips Drench yourself in words unspoken Live your life with arms wide open Today is where your book begins The rest is still unwritten

Resources:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFFBSntZgs>