



Smithsonian Folkways

Nobel Voices for Disarmament: 1901-2001

A Smithsonian Folkways Lesson

By Jessica Blackwood
Patricia Shehan Campbell
University of Washington

Suggested Grade Level: 7-12

Focus:

- Listening to Voices on a World History of Violence
- Thinking and Yearning for Peace

Skills:

- Listening
- Discussing
- Imagining
- Deciphering
- Comparing
- Contrasting
- Feeling

Materials from Smithsonian Folkways:

1. [Noble Voices for Disarmament: 1901-2001](http://www.folkways.si.edu/magazine-spring-summer-2013-peace-education-nobel-voices-disarmament/struggle-protest-spoken-word/article/smithsonian)
Free album stream available at:
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/magazine-spring-summer-2013-peace-education-nobel-voices-disarmament/struggle-protest-spoken-word/article/smithsonian>
2. [Broadside Ballads, Vol 2](http://www.folkways.si.edu/pete-seeger/broadside-ballads-vol-2/american-folk-struggle-protest/music/album/smithsonian)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/pete-seeger/broadside-ballads-vol-2/american-folk-struggle-protest/music/album/smithsonian>
3. [The Best of Broadside 1962-1988: Anthems of the American Underground from the Pages of Broadside Magazine](http://www.folkways.si.edu/the-best-of-broadside-1962-1988-anthems-of-the-american-underground-from-the-pages-of-broadside-magazine/folk/music/album/smithsonian)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/the-best-of-broadside-1962-1988-anthems-of-the-american-underground-from-the-pages-of-broadside-magazine/folk/music/album/smithsonian>
4. “Cold Snap”
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/ewan-maccoll-and-peggy-seeger/cold-snap/celtic-historical-song-world/music/album/smithsonian>
5. [Cancion Protesta: Protest Songs of Latin America](http://www.folkways.si.edu/cancion-protesta-protest-songs-of-latin-america/struggle-world/music/album/smithsonian)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/cancion-protesta-protest-songs-of-latin-america/struggle-world/music/album/smithsonian>

6. [How Many More?](http://www.folkways.si.edu/serious-bizness/how-many-more/african-american-music-folk-struggle-protest/music/album/smithsonian)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/serious-bizness/how-many-more/african-american-music-folk-struggle-protest/music/album/smithsonian>

Part I: Recording experiences of peace and disarmament

Classroom Rules for Peace

After listening to a selection of voices on various tracks (for example, Tracks 5, 8, 15, 31, 34), discuss the concept of thinking globally and acting locally for peace, tolerance, and respect. Have students assemble in small groups to draw up local classroom rules that will allow peace to flourish on the local level. Ask each group to decide on 3-5 “classroom rules for peace” and have them share these with the larger group. Note if there is an overlap of rules, and shape them in the direction of larger themes, such as:

- Respect each other’s opinion
- Listen to each other
- Let one person speak at a time

Post an agreed upon set of classroom rules for all to see.

Peace Keepers

Look up the lives of people who have been awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. Match biographical descriptions with photos and voices that are featured on [Nobel Voices for Disarmament: 1901-2001](#). Include people such as Philip Noel-Baker, Joseph Rotblat, Dr. Yevgeny Chazov and Dr. Bernard Lown, Jane Addams, Sean MacBride, Jody Williams, Kofi Annan, Alva Reimer Myrdal, Linus Pauling, and Alfonso Garcia Robles.

To learn about other prize winners, including Al Gore (2007), Jimmy Carter (2002), Nelson Mandela and F. W. de Klerk (1993), Aung San Suu Kyi (1991), Mother Teresa (1979), and Martin Luther King (1964), see:
http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/

Finish the Thought

Listen to several Nobel Laureates speak about arms, disarmament, and peace (via specific tracks, such as 3, 32, 36). Then pair the students in dyads to fill-in statements about peace and disarmament. The first student reads aloud the sentence, and the second student supplies an answer. Students should reverse roles intermittently so that each in the pair has the opportunity to begin or finish a sentence.

Sentence examples:

- The thing I love most about being alive today is _____.
- One reason for keeping the peace in the world today is because _____.

- When I think about nuclear weapons in the world today, I think that things are getting _____ (worse/better).
- I think that disarmament can be accomplished by _____.
- One active way in my own community to support disarmament is to _____.

Discovering the Peace-keeping Profile of the United Nations

Listen to Kofi Anan, former secretary-general of the United Nations, reflect upon having received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001 (Tracks 31, 38). Alone or in pairs, search for resources that describe the United Nations.

- What are the goals of the United Nations? (the assemblage of nations for peace, based on principles of justice, human dignity, and the well-being of all people)
- How many nations are members of the United Nations? (185)
- How does the United Nations function? (Like a world parliament, in which every country, large or small, rich or poor, has a single vote.
- While none of the decisions taken by the Assembly are binding, these resolutions carry the weight of world governmental opinions)
- Where is the United Nations headquartered? (In New York City, although the land and buildings are international territory)
- Describe one historical moment at which the United Nations functioned as peace-keeper of a multi-national conflict (Various, as in the case of the Korean War, the Israeli-Palestine conflicts, the Northern Ireland situation, and many others)
- Visit one of the most informative, education-oriented, sites about the U.N. <cyberschoolbus.un.org>.

Music that Protests War and Injustice

Listen to a compilation of songs that protest war, violence, and injustice. Pete Seeger sings "Hard Rain's Gonna Fall," in protest to nuclear arms, on *Broadside Ballads, Vol. 2* and *The Best of Broadside 1962-1988: Anthems of the American Underground from the Pages of Broadside Magazine*. Also on *The Best of Broadside*, Phil Ochs expresses his convictions of the Vietnam War in "We Seek No Wider War". Other singers, poets, and speakers offer commentary on civil rights and racial injustice, as well as calls for peaceful coexistence and social equality. Listen to some of the 162 recordings of "protest songs" on Smithsonian Folkways, including *Cold Snap* (Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger), *Cancion Protesta: Protest Songs of Latin America* (Various Artists), and *How Many More?* (Serious Bizness).

Part II: Experiences keyed to individual recording tracks

Probe students about information related to specific album tracks. Many tracks, though not all, are listed below.

Track 1

- Who is Michael Douglas? (American actor and film producer, and United Nations Messenger of Peace)
- What films do you identify with Mr. Douglas? (Examples include his role as actor in *Romancing the Stone* and *The War of the Roses*, and as producer of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*)
- What does Mr. Douglas do as the United Nations Messenger of Peace? (He spreads the messages of peace, goodwill, and the work of the United Nations.)
- How does the violin's melody make you feel? (Various answers will emerge, probably including "sad", "lonely", "poignant", "reflective" and "thoughtful".)

Track 3

- Who was Alfred Nobel who instituted the Nobel Prize? (He was a Swedish chemist, living 1833-1896, who established a foundation for honoring outstanding individuals every year from throughout the world in the fields of physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, and peace.) http://nobelprize.org/alfred_nobel/ for a full biography and portraits
- As you listen to Philip Noel-Baker, what does the sound of his voice tell you about him? (That he was British, and probably an experienced speaker; he carefully forms his words, and stops briefly between phrases, as if to give his listeners a chance to think about the content of his presentation.)
- For more info, see the following publications by Philip Noel-Baker: [Disarmament \(1926\)](#) and [The Arms Race Programme for World Disarmament \(1958\)](#).

Track 4

- Who was Joseph Rotblat? (He was a nuclear physicist, born in Poland, who later lived in England and the United States. He and the Pugwash conferences were co-recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995.) <http://www.ppu.org.uk/learn/infodocs/people//pp-rotblat.html>
- Why did he, once working on the Manhattan Project in New Mexico destined to develop the atomic bomb, leave the project? (He decided that he would rather dedicate his life to preventing wars, especially since the Germans in World War II had discontinued their pursuit of the atomic bomb.)
- What were the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs? (Co-founded by Joseph Rotblat, they were meetings of scientists in the 1950s to consider cooperative solutions to security that would not involve weapons of mass destruction.) Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs: <http://www.pugwash.org/>

Track 5

- What was Joseph Rotblat's concept of nuclear deterrence? (In 1939, he worried that perhaps the only way that Hitler would not use his bomb was if there were another bomb, developed by the U.S., that could threaten his annihilation. [But in fact, Rotblat learned that Germany did not develop the bomb.]
- Do you think that Rotblat believed in nuclear deterrence? (No, in the end he thought it was a no-win excuse for producing bombs.)

Track 6

- What is the essence of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto? (To call into question the perils of having developed the atomic bomb, by assembling scientists to study solutions to the arms race.)
<http://www.pugwash.org/about/manifesto.htm>

Track 7

- Who was Cyrus Eaton? (An industrialist living in the U.S., who offered his summer retreat in Pugwash, Nova Scotia, as a location for conferences of scientists to study the responsibilities to humanity in the control of the newly invented weapons of mass destruction.)
<http://www.deepcove.org/bio.html>

Track 8

- What is the mission of the Red Cross? (It is an international organization that provides assistance to victims of violent conflict. It is not owned or operated by any one national group, but is a neutral and independent, nongovernmental organization, NGO.)
- Learn about the Red Cross, including its disaster services, preparedness, and opportunities for volunteering: <http://www.redcross.org>

Track 9

- Who was Henri Dunant? (A French businessman who lived between 1828-1910, and founded the International Committee of the Red Cross, ICRC.)
- What inspired Dunant to establish the Red Cross? (On a business trip in 1859, he found himself on a battleground of the Austro-Sardinian War, where thousands of dead and wounded soldiers laid waiting for help that did not come. He mobilized locals to help people regardless of whose "side" they were on, and toiled throughout his lifetime to guarantee the humane treatment of the wounded and prisoners of war.)
- Has anyone in your family volunteered for the Red Cross?

Track 10

- What is neutrality? (A means of aiding victims of conflict, and not taking sides with any party. Still, it does not prevent advocating a position.)
- Would you agree with the premise of neutrality, as defined in this way? (Various answers may emerge.)

Track 11

- What was the function of the Geneva Protocol of 1925? (To ban the use of chemical and biological weapons, “asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases” and “bacteriological methods of warfare”).
- Has it been successful in banning such weapons? (Stockpiles of chemical weapons have been significantly reduced, but not eliminated. For example, there was the use of chemical gases by Iraq on its Kurdish citizens in 1988).
- Read about the Geneva Protocol:
<http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/geneva/index.html>

Track 15

- An article in The New England Journal of Medicine, published in May 1962, speculates about the extent of damage to Boston if a 20-megaton bomb were to be dropped. Describe the human and ecological consequences of such a scenario. (Answers vary depending on the distance of people and objects from the ground-burst.)
- Imagine that such a bomb were to be dropped in your own city. What buildings would be demolished if it fell at the geographic center?
- What damage would occur further away from the center of your city?
- Study a map of your city and calculate distance from the center to understand the full impact of a “limited thermonuclear attack.”

Track 24

- What was the task of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, as noted in its preamble to the resolutions of 1915? (To declare its multi-national members as united in striving toward the great ideals of civilization and progress, seeking humane treatment of individuals of all nations, and seeking the end to war and bloodshed.)

Track 25

- What does Jane Addams report of the activity of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom? (That WILPF was collecting public opinion in many countries on disarmament to provide background for delegates to a major disarmament conference headed by Herbert Hoover in 1932.)
- Describe the sound quality of this recording of Jane Addams. Explore radio and recording technology in the early 1930s, as compared to now. Recognize that this time brought the advent of the first long-playing phonograph record (1931), the first color sound cartoon (1930), the first air mail service across the Atlantic Ocean, and the discovery of nuclear fission by Otto Hahn, Lise Meitner, and Fritz Strassman (1939).
- Learn more about the life and times of Jane Addams, the first American woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize (1931):
<http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/Addams>

Track 27

- Do you agree that we are “numbed or terrified by [our] own impotence in the face of disaster”? What actions by individuals might give this impression? What actions are being taken by individuals, groups in the world, or in your own community, that contradicts this statement? (Various answers may emerge.)
- Sean MacBride said that “the rising generations are dismayed and deceived by the world we have created for them.” Do you feel this way? Why or why not? (Various answers may emerge.)
- What does Sean MacBride mean when he mentions “the doomsday world in which we live”? (A world in which nuclear bombs are manufactured.)
- What “weapons and metals of warfare” does MacBride mention that have been outlawed through international law? (Aerial bombings from balloons, dum-dum bullets, bombing of hospitals and civilian targets.)
- Why were they banned? (They do not discriminate between soldiers and civilians.)
- What weapons continue to be produced, even though they are “the most cruel, terrible, and indiscriminate weapons of all time”? (Nuclear weapons)

Track 28

- Listen to the statement. “Every 20 minutes, someone is either killed or maimed by a landmine.”
- Listen multiple times and reflect upon the tone of the reader’s voice (Michael Douglas) in bearing the substance of the message.
- Write the statistic on a piece of paper.
- Who are the victims?
- Where do they live?
- To learn more about landmines and what kids can do to help make the world safe from landmines, visit:
<http://www.cyberschoolbus.un.org/sds/introduction/index.asp>

Track 29

- What international law is Jody Williams referring to when she mentions “this weapon that we believed was illegal”? (According to International Law, weapons that kill indiscriminately are illegal. Landmines kill whomever steps on them, whether they are or are not combatants).
- In 1997, Jody Williams’ International Campaign to Ban Landmines was able to gather the support of 150 countries to ban landmines. Forty-four nations, including the United States, have not signed the treaty. Why might the President of United States refuse to sign the treaty?
- Do you think that landmines are necessary weapons? Why or why not? (Various answers may emerge.)
- Jody Williams says that the “normal image of people trying to disarm the world” is “a bunch of tree-hugging pansies.” Is that the image that comes to mind when you think of people working toward disarmament? What group does Williams mention that challenges that notion? (The Vietnam

- Veterans of America Foundation, one of the two organizations which founded the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.)
- How did the members of the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation feel about landmines while they were in combat?
 - How did they feel at the time of the formation of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines? Why do you think they changed their minds? (They first saw them as “just another weapon,” but later began to realize that “...the fighting forces go home...landmines have been laid in the ground and they stay there...”)
 - As Jody Williams explains, what is the basic difference between firearms and landmines after a conflict is over? (“...the rifle goes home with soldier... landmines have been laid in the ground and they stay there, for decades and decades and decades.”)

Track 30

- What does former U.S. president Bill Clinton say should be top priorities for the global community? (He speaks of (1) an illegal arms and deadly materials control effort that we all participate in; (2) to better account for, store, and safeguard materials with massive destructive power, (3) strengthen the biological weapons convention, (4) pass the comprehensive test ban treaty, and (5) ultimately eliminate the deadly scourge of landmines.)
- Of these five, which is the most important to you (if any)? (Various answers may emerge.)
- Why do you think Clinton mentions the size of the destructive materials (a child’s lunchbox, a can of soda)? (Various answers may emerge.)

Track 31

- Kofi Annan asks the question “...if we didn’t have the guns, do you think there would be war?” What do you think? Should guns be illegal? (Various answers may emerge.)
- For lesson plans about small arms distribution, and for a web quest about child soldiers, visit:
<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/dnp/sub2.asp?ipage=smallarms>

Track 33

- In her book, The Game of Disarmament (1976), Alva Reimer Myrdal observes that the nuclear arms race is steadily accelerating and spreading nuclear weapons to an increasing number of countries. Is the momentum continuing? Make a list of nations with nuclear weapons, and create a timeline of when each country attained status as a nuclear weapons state.
- Resource (PBS):
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/indepth_coverage/military/proliferation/map_flash.html

Track 34

- What is the view of Linus Pauling, scientist, peace activist, and Nobel Prize winner (1954) on the future use of nuclear weapons? (Pauling maintained that the world had matured from a primitive period where disputes between nations were settled through war and the use of nuclear weapons.)
- Were his projections correct? (Yes and No. Yes, in that no nuclear weapons have been used since his projection in 1954. No, in that wars have continued to be waged.)
- Read the biography of Linus Pauling:
http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/chemistry/laureates/1954/pauling-bio.html
- Books by Linus Pauling include: A Lifelong Quest for Peace: A Dialogue (1992) and No More War (1958).

Track 35

- John F. Kennedy speaks to the risks of an infinite arms race in 1961. He says, “the goal of disarmament is no longer a dream.” What progress was made during his presidential term to slow the building of nuclear arms? (The Partial Test Ban Treaty (1963), which led to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty of 1968).
- Read about the 1963 treaty, a watershed in its time:
<http://www.state.gov/t/isn/4797.htm>
- Search the news for information about nations that have recently signed, or refused to sign, the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. Which nations have not signed? Which original signatories are upholding their promise to refuse to test nuclear weapons?
- Signators reference: <http://www.state.gov/t/isn/4797.htm#signatory>

Track 38

- Former Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, was widely acclaimed for his diplomatic efforts to keep peace among nations, to revitalize the United Nations by raising funds, streamlining its agencies, linking it more closely to the World Bank.
- What serious situations does he refer to—in 2001, in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America? Have any of these been resolved peacefully? (Various answers will emerge.)