

# UNIT 5 : PROTEST SONGS

## STEP 3 : Exploring protest songs...

### 1. Protest songs over the years...

a) READ these extracts of protest songs. FIND the topic and what is the message of the singer.

<b>YOU DON'T OWN ME</b> Lesley Gore (1963)	<b>ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL</b> Pink Floyd (1982)	<b>AMERICAN IDIOT</b> Green Day (2004)
You don't own me I'm not just one of your many toys You don't own me Don't say I can't go with other boys And don't tell me what to do Don't tell me what to say And please, when I go out with you Don't put me on display 'cause You don't own me Don't try to change me in any way You don't own me Don't tie me down 'cause I'd never stay [...]	We don't need no education We don't need no thought control No dark sarcasm in the classroom Teachers leave them kids alone Hey, teachers, leave them kids alone  All in all it's just another brick in the wall All in all you're just another brick in the wall  [...]	Don't want to be an American idiot Don't want a nation under the new media And can you hear the sound of hysteria? The subliminal mind-fuck America  Welcome to a new kind of tension All across the alien nation Where everything isn't meant to be okay Television dreams of tomorrow We're not the ones who're meant to follow For that's enough to argue [...]
<b><u>Topic of the song :</u></b>	<b><u>Topic of the song :</u></b>	<b><u>Topic of the song :</u></b>
<b><u>Message of the song :</u></b> Lesley Gore doesn't want ...  ... in order to...	<b><u>Message of the song :</u></b> The band ...	<b><u>Message of the song :</u></b> The singer ...

b) Which extract do you prefer ? Why ?

### 2. « STRANGE FRUIT », Billie Holiday, 1931.

a) LISTEN to this song.

What instruments do you recognize ?

How does it make you feel ? Why ?



b) Now WATCH the video.

What can you see ? What is the topic of this song ? What did you recognize ? What is the context of this song ?

c) READ the lyrics.

*Southern trees bear strange fruit  
 Blood on the leaves and blood at the root  
 Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze  
 Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees*

*Pastoral scene of the gallant south  
 The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth  
 Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh  
 Then the sudden smell of burning flesh*

*Here is fruit for the crows to pluck  
 For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck  
 For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop  
 Here is a strange and bitter crop.*



Match each illustration with an expression from the lyrics :


d) What do you notice ? In your opinion, why did Billie Holiday decide to do this ?

e) What is the purpose of this song ? What is the goal of Billie Holiday ?

### 3. CONCLUSION :

*A singer decides to write a protest song because...*

*In order to convey his/her message, a singer has several « weapons » :*

*First, an artist can use .....*

*Then, a songwriter can also use .....*

*Finally, the message of the song can also be staged in a .....*

*In conclusion, I think protest songs are .....*