

[music playing]

Hi. I'm Kate Stower from the Minnesota Historical Society, and I'm here today to talk with you about analyzing audio recordings. The Library of Congress is a wonderful resource for finding audio recordings to use in your classroom. If you go to loc.gov/audio you'll find over nineteen thousand audio recordings available online. All of these are searchable by date or location. Or if you go to "part of", those are the smaller collections that you can search.

The first thing that we think about in audio recordings is music. And indeed, the Library of Congress web site is a wealth of music resources. So, all kinds of fun songs of various languages, cultures, and music types. Some of the most popular collections are the Songs of America and the National Jukebox. But there are also other kinds of audio recordings in the collections. So, let's take a listen for some of these other sorts of audio resources.

(Speeches)

"Yesterday, December 7th, 1941, a date which will live in infamy, the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan."

(Oral Histories)

"Yes. Quilting in general has, has ceased. You hardly ever hear tell anyone making a quilt."

(Poetry)

"I hear American singing. The varied carols I hear. Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be, blithe and strong. The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam."

(Radio Shows)

"Here we are once again, neighbors, the Pine Valley Boys. And it's all brought your way this morning by the Jim Walter Corporation. We hope you'll stick around with us and enjoy the show, 'cause we got some numbers lined up that we think you will enjoy. So stick with us, and we're going to carry on here for about thirty minutes or so."

All right. So as you can hear, those are really powerful when we get to hear from the words of the people in these, living in these different times. So, think about speeches. Think about poetry. Think about these different kinds of audio that we can bring into the classroom, and really make history come alive for our students.

So, this morning I'm going to walk you through a process of analyzing a piece of music. And we're going to start by analyzing the sheet music. So, today we're going to be looking at a song that is called "Don't Bite the Hand That's Feeding You". We're going to start by analyzing the sheet music. And then we'll actually listen to the audio recording.

We're going to be using this primary source analysis tool from the Library of Congress. And these are downloadable tools that go along with different kinds of primary sources. So, indeed they have a primary source analysis tool that is specific to sheet music. And they also have a separate one that is specific to audio recordings. So, this is the interactive audio, or, sorry, interactive analysis tool. You can

go into the web site, type in your observations, your reflections, and your questions, and then you can either download it, print it, or E-mail it. So, this is the one we're going to be using.

And whenever we are doing this kind of analysis of primary sources, first we do our observations. And so, our observations are anything that we can put our finger on in that primary source. Then we do our reflections. Reflections are really about inferences. So, what do I think I know about this source already? And as I'm making those inferences, I want to constantly be asking myself, or asking my students: What makes you say that? So, thinking about your justification for your reflections or your inferences. And then finally, what are the questions that you have about this primary source?

As I mentioned, there are these guides for teachers that list all kinds of guiding questions that you can use with your students. Here's the teachers' guide for analyzing sheet music. And in the teacher's guide for analyzing sheet music, a couple of the questions that we might want to ask as we're looking at sheet music: What names or places appear in the lyrics? What designs or images do you see? Who do you think was intended to sing or play this? What historical period do you think this is from? And, some questions, starting with: Who? What? When? Where? Why? And How? So, this is the piece of music that we're going to be looking at today. It's called "Don't Bite the Hand That's Feeding You."

So, let's take a closer look. What do we notice about this piece of music? First of all, I notice this gentleman in the center. He looks like he is dressed up in a suit or a tuxedo. Across the photograph, it says "Ed Morton". I also notice that up at the top, it says "originally introduced by Ed Morton". So I'm thinking that that means that Ed Morton is the probably the singer who sang this when it first came out. And I also notice how fancy it is. Look at this border around the edge. I also notice this kind of scrollwork around the photograph and across the bottom. So this looks very sophisticated, or very fancy to me.

On the second page, you'll see at the very top "Song that should be in every home". So there's some previews of different songs, and it also makes me wonder if this is part of a collection, maybe implying that this is a song that should also be in every home.

On the first page of the sheet music itself, I notice that at the top, it says "tempo di Marcia". Now I don't know what that means. But I think it has something to do with how fast it is. I also notice at the bottom, it says "copyright MCMXV. Now, my roman numerals are a little bit rusty, so I can't remember exactly when that is. But I would like to know when this, when this song came out.

I see some references to Mike Shore and Uncle Sammy. Now on the second page, I notice some things on the second page as well. It says "then go back to your home o'er the sea", and "but how they abuse and revile him." OK, so somebody is doing something that others disapprove of. And "to the land from where you came". And it makes reference to "old Glory", "the red, white and blue", and then on this last page it's a collection of different music folios, and it's by the same publisher of the publisher that was listed on the front page. So it looks like this is a major publisher of music during this time.

So, let's go back to our observe reflect question tool and see if we can fill this in. So, what are some of the things that we noticed? We noticed the fancy design, a man in a suit, we noticed the tempo di Marcia, we noticed some of those other references, the language that they were using that might indicate a place or a person. Some reflections. I think that this might be about the U.S. because of the references to Uncle Sam, old Glory, and the red, white and blue, which are all symbols of the U.S. I also think that this song was aimed at immigrants because of the message "go back to your home o'er the

sea”, so kind of making reference to immigrants that have come here from other places. And some questions that I had: Where did people listen to this song? Was it on the radio? Was it in concerts? And then, when was this song written? So, I picked up on those roman numerals, but I can’t remember exactly when that is.

And if I go to the Library of Congress web site, I can fill in all of my observations, my reflections, and my questions. And I can download this, as I have, and saved it to my computer. Or I also could e-mail it to either myself or I could e-mail it to my teacher. So that’s a great option also.

Now that we have looked at the sheet music, let’s take a closer listen to the audio recording of this song and see if that adds anything to our analysis. So again, the Library of Congress has a teacher’s guide specifically for sound recordings. And some of the questions that they want us to focus in on as we’re listening to an audio recording: What do you hear? Is this an interview? Singing? Do you hear instruments? Do you hear background noise? Does it sound like a studio recording, or is it just off the street? Do you think you could dance to this music? Who do you think would be interested in hearing this? And then finally, those questions, starting with: Who? What? When? Where? Why? And How? So, let’s take a listen to this audio recording of “Don’t Bite the Hand That’s Feeding You”, and while you’re listening, we’ve already looked at the sheet music using our eyes. But now we’re going to use a different sense. Now we’re just going to use our ears. So, I would like you to close your eyes, and just listen to the audio recording.

[intro music playing] “Last night as I lay a sleeping, a wonderful dream came to me. I saw Uncle Sammy weeping for his children from over the sea. They had come to him friendless and starving, when from tyrant’s oppression they fled. But now they abuse and revile him ‘til at last in just anger he said: If you don’t like your Uncle Sammy, then go back to your home o’er the sea, to the land from where you came, whatever be its name, but don’t be ungrateful to me. If you don’t like the stars in Old Glory, if you don’t like the red, white and blue, then don’t act like the cur in the story. Don’t bite the hand that’s feeding you.”

OK. So we’re going to go back to our primary source analysis tool, and think about what did we observe as we were listening to this? What did we hear? I thought that I heard singing. But I also thought that I heard some instruments in the background, and I thought they might be brass instruments. I also noticed that it was a fast tempo. And you also could hear quite a bit of static or scratchiness in the background. Now some reflections that I had, I think people played this music at home because it sounds like a record album. You could hear that kind of repeated scratchiness as if it was a record album being played. I also think people could dance to this song because it’s very lively. And some questions that I had: Why did the author write this song? Was it a response to an event? And “How popular was this song?”

So here again, I’ve entered all of my observations, reflections, and questions into the primary source analysis tool. I downloaded it and saved it on my computer.

And now I want you to think about what was different about listening to the song versus reading the lyrics? It’s a different experience. It’s going to appeal to your audio/visual learners. And you know, for me when I heard this song for the first time, it was very different than how I expected it to sound. When I read the lyrics on the page, I thought, this is a very threatening message, kind of ominous. And then when I heard the music, it was so bouncy and sort of lively and upbeat. So for me, it was a really good

example of why we need to be pulling in audio clips into our classroom, because sometimes things hit you much differently when you're listening to them than when you see them on the page.

So now, consider an upcoming unit that you have in your classroom. How might you be able to incorporate audio recordings or music into your curriculum? And secondly, how could you use the observe-reflect question tool with your learners?

Now a couple other ideas of how you might use audio recordings in your classroom. To wrap up this webinar, I'm going to end with two last clips that you might want to consider. One is we're celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the United States' involvement in World War I. And so, a great song to use with your World War I unit is "Over There". And secondly, the last one that I'll share with you today is on the Great Depression or the Dust Bowl, a wonderful song by two little girls, who are singing about the government camp. So, take a listen to these, and thanks for joining me today to talk about audio recordings.

[instrumental music playing]

'This is Mary Campbell. This is Betty Campbell. We're from the Shafter Government Camp. We're going to sing a government camp song. It was written by my sister and I. [singing] Over in the government camp, that's where we get our government stamps, over in that little rag house home. Over in Unit One, there's where the people have their fun, over in that little rag house home. Over in Unit Two, there's where the people don't wear any shoes, over in that little tin house home. Over in Unit Three, there's where the people live in jamboree, over in that little rag house home. Over in Unit Four, people don't live there anymore, over in that little rag house home. Over in..'' [music fades out]