

Musical Rhetoric of Identity

The Basics

SUBJECT

English Language Arts

TARGETED GRADE LEVELS

English 9

English 11 AP Language and Composition

STANDARDS

(Common Core State Standards Initiative Grades 9-10, 11-12)

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.3 Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.3 Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.5 Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.6 Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

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The Lesson

The summer reading of the English 11 AP Language and Composition Course *Sophie's World* and the self-selected summer reading of English 9 encourage attention to one's social and emotional learning. English 11AP Language and Composition will have read *Sophie's World* (a novel about the history of philosophy) as summer reading homework. The first question asked of the main character in the book is "Who are you?" Thus, starting off the year with this question for my students is both practical and poignant in terms of the students starting a new year and enhancing their experience of the required curriculum reading. The following unit which focuses on issues of identity lays a foundation for effective and respectful communication in my literature classes throughout the year. A large part of my instructional practice depends upon the class's ability to participate actively and comfortably in class discussions. Additionally, building a student's sense of identity also helps build a student's understanding of literature. The ways in which a student's understanding of literature can be enriched by studying identity will vary from student to student, including but not limited to recognizing one's roots, biases, values, etc. The essential ideas that students will be exploring are that everyone has a unique identity worthy of discovery and acknowledgement, that knowing one's identity will facilitate one's direction in life, thus, having a positive effect on one's educational endeavors and more. The essential questions students will be answering are: Who am I? Where am I going? What do I want to do with my life? How can music help me figure out all of these questions? How have others used music to figure out and reveal who they are? The following songs will serve as primary sources dealing with the nature of identity: Mary J. Blige's "Take Me as I am," Helen Reddy's "I am Woman," Jordin Sparks's "I am Woman," Sly and the Family Stone's "I am Everyday People," James Brown's "Say it Loud – I'm Black and I'm Proud." Blige's and Sparks's songs will provide a modern hook for the lesson since students will be familiar with these songs from hearing them on the radio. Helen Reddy's

1972 song will be used to facilitate my lessons on the feminist movement and civil rights as well as reflect on gender identity. Sly and the Family Stone's and James Brown's 1968 songs will aid in student's understanding of the civil rights movement and connecting such historical movements to one's sense of identity.

Introduction

High school students entering ninth grade and eleventh grade face challenges in their unique identities. Ninth grades students, especially the lower level students disinterested in school, face the temptation to join a gang or get involved with the wrong crowd. Students with an insecure sense of their personal identity are especially susceptible to such "opportunities." Freshmen entering a new school are confronted with peer pressure of all sorts. Then, by junior year, these students are faced with the same peer pressures, but also the societal pressure to perform well on the SATs, APs, subject tests, ACT, HSPA, college applications, college essays, etc. These students need to confront themselves before others confront them. These students need to confront themselves with the big questions of life: *Who are you? Where are you going? What do you want to do with your life?* These questions need to be part of both an external class discussion mediated by a teacher and internally in each student's own brain. The questions need to be asked and answered by the students themselves before they are answered by the gangs, the drugs, the sex, and the violence. All of these students are thrown into a pressure cooker: *Where do I fit in? What college do I want to go? What college can I get into?* All of these questions boil down to: *Who am I? and Am I good enough?* Here's where songs come into play. Students (and people in general) respond with their deepest part to songs. Sometimes that response is love, sometime hate, sometimes indifference. Yet, invariably, students listen and then respond. Thus, listening to music in the classroom is an ideal way to engage students interactively and allow students to have a stake in their educational experiences. By comparing and contrasting Jordin Sparks's "I am Woman" to Helen Reddy's song of the same name, students will be able to learn about their own identities by first identifying the speakers' identities and then by either agreeing with or rejecting such affiliations. Additionally, by listening to and analyzing Sly and the Family Stone's "Everyday People," students will explore what the song means and how it leads to an important aspect of identifying one's self.

During and after the 5-10 days that it should take to teach the following activities and lessons, I want my students to know that they can be whoever they want to be and that, yes, they are good enough. I want my students to be able to recognize how music relates to the people's identities of different time periods as well as how music relates to their own lives.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to define "identity," both in terms of their personal selves and in terms of the word itself, while analyzing the music and lyrics of songs that relate to the issues of personal, national, cultural, and communal identities.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Song Resource #1

Title: "Take Me as I Am"

Song Background: (Paragraph with citation)

This song is from Mary J. Blige's album *Breakthrough*. The song, like most of Blige's works, is very autobiographical. Blige samples Lonnie Smith's "Garden of Peace and was sued by Jay Ballard and Kim Jones for copying their song also entitled "Take Me as I am."

<http://www.maryjblige.com/biography>

<http://www.mtv.com/artists/mary-j-blige/>

<http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=8049>

<http://www.americansongwriter.com/2010/07/beyonce-mary-j-blige-embroiled-in-songwriting-controversy/>

Recommended Recording: Available for purchase on iTunes.

Song Resource #2

Title: "I am Woman"

Singer: Helen Reddy

Composer: Helen Reddy and Ray Burton

Song Background:

"I am Woman" (1972) was Helen Reddy's first number one record. She wrote the song with Ray Burton. "I first wrote the song in August 1970," explained Burton. "It was first released by Capitol Records in late 1970 as an album track on Helen Reddy's first album. It was what they call a 'sleeper' in the music industry. In other words, it sat on the album doing nothing for 2 years and then as the women's liberation movement gathered momentum, Capitol Records released it as a single. The women's liberation movement then adopted it as their anthem and the rest is history." Ironically, the male Burton helped to write the feminist anthem. An interesting fact about the song is that it was used in commercials for Burger King to promote their Double Whopper sandwich in 2007. The song was changed to "I Am Man," and explained that the burger was perfect to satisfy a man's appetite.

Paraphrased from the VAT binder

<http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=2226>

Recommended Recording: Available for purchase on iTunes.

Song Resource #3

Title: "I Am Woman"

Song Background:

When asked about the meaning of the song, Jordin Sparks explained, “I Am Woman' is a song about different aspects of the lives of women. It could be a mother, a performer, a woman working in a corporate space -- it's all about what we go through as women and how our lives are so crazy. Walk a mile in my shoes, or in my stilettos, if you dare and see what happens. It's all about the strengths that a woman has: how we can multitask and carry so much, yet still always be on point when we need to be and on cue when we need to be. It's all about the amazingness of a woman.”

<http://blog.music.aol.com/2011/05/05/jordin-sparks-i-am-woman-interview/>
<http://www.jordinsparks.com/us/biography>

Recommended Recording: Available for purchase on iTunes.

Song Resource #4

Title: “I am Everyday People”

Song Background:

This 1968 song was performed by Sly and the Family Stone, which was an integrated rock band fronted and inspired by a black bandleader—a groundbreaker particularly among hitmakers in the popular music scene. “Different strokes for different folks” became a catchphrase in 1969 and became the title of the 1980s sitcom “Different Strokes,” which is about a white man who adopts two black boys. Rolling Stone ranked this song #145 out of 500 of the greatest songs of all time. This is one of the most covered songs. There is a popular cover of the song by “Arrested Development.” It has also been used in Toyota and Smarties commercials.

<http://www.allmusic.com/artist/sly-the-family-stone-mn0000033161/biography>

Recommended Recording: Available for purchase on iTunes.

Extension Activity:

Compare and contrast Arrested Development’s “People Everyday” with Sly and the Family Stone’s “Everyday People.” How is sampling used? How are the themes similar yet different? How can these reflect the different times they came from (1960’s vs. 1990’s)?

Song Resource #5

Title: “Say It Loud - I'm Black And I'm Proud”

Song Background:

Written and performed by James Brown in 1968, this song became the unofficial anthem of the Black Power movement. In his 1986 autobiography Brown wrote: “The song is obsolete now... But it was necessary to teach pride then, and I think the song did a lot of good for a lot of people... People called “Black and Proud” militant and angry—maybe because of the line about dying on your feet instead of living on your knees. But really, if you listen to it, it sounds like a children’s song. That’s why I had children in it, so children who heard it could grow up feeling pride... The song cost me a lot of my crossover audience. The racial makeup

at my concerts was mostly black after that. I don't regret it, though, even if it was misunderstood.”

Recommended Recording: Available for purchase on iTunes.

<http://www.allmusic.com/artist/james-brown-mn0000128099/biography>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Say_It_Loud_%E2%80%93_I%27m_Black_and_I%27m_Proud
Brown, James, with Bruce Tucker. James Brown: The Godfather of Soul (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986), 200.

Other Resources

Source #6

Title: *Sophie's World*

Author: Jostein Gaarder

Rationale for Use of Source:

English 11AP Language and Composition will have read *Sophie's World* (a novel about the history of philosophy) as summer reading homework. The first question asked of the main character in the book is “Who are you?” Thus, starting off the year with this question for my students is both practical and poignant in terms of the students starting a new year and enhancing their experience of the required curriculum reading.

Source #7

Title: *American Popular Music*

Author: Larry Starr and Christopher Waterman

Rationale for Use of Source: An excerpt of this work deals with how people relate to the music they hear and how music and identity are related.

LIST OF FOCUS QUESTIONS:

Students will ponder/discuss/write about:

Identity Focus Questions:

- Who are you?
- Who do others think you are?
- Who do you want to be?
- What are the different types of identity? Personal? National? Cultural? Societal?
- How does “who” you are depend upon who you are with?

- How does what you want dictate who you are?
- Does what you get depend upon who you are?
- How (to what extent) do your actions define who you are?

Musical Focus Questions:

- What emotions are expressed by the song (lyrics and/or music)?
- What detail did you notice in the song that sparked that emotional feeling for you? (answers could refer to or describe a specific phrase in lyrics, feel of the beat or rhythm, tempo, vocalists' style of singing is rough then smooth, etc.)
- To whom is the song addressed?
- What issues, problems, or events are presented in the song? Does the song seem to be written in response to a specific event?
- What points of view or attitudes are revealed?
- What were the circumstances at the time the song was released?
- Does this song suggest any solutions to the issues/problems addressed?
- How effective is this song as a social protest?
- What, if any, relevance does this song have to American society today?
- Where and when do you think you might hear this song?
- What is the purpose of that song, and how is that purpose achieved through music and lyrics?
- What parts of the song still sound interesting or relevant today? What parts sound dated?

Personal Musical Connections Focus Questions:

- What ring tones do you have for different people on your phone?
- Why this tone/song? Why not another tone/song?
- Do any of your friends have a specific ring tone/song for you? If so, what is it and why do they associate that song with you?
- What is your theme song?
- Find an instrumental song (no lyrics) that could be your theme song? Why this song? What about this song can you relate to?
- What would be the soundtrack of your life?
- What would be the soundtrack of different characters we have read about, for example, Edna Pontellier? Jay Gatsby? Jake Barnes? Tom Joad? Et al.
- Can you match up a song with each of the stages of life in Shakespeare's "Seven Ages of Man" poem? What stages have their been in your life already? What songs would you associate with those specific stages?

PROCEDURES:

Day 1:

Vocabulary: identity, "everyday people," "different strokes," "scooby dooby doo-bee," folks

- Part 1

- Quick Write #1: What is meant by the word “identity”?
- Class discussion
- Quick Write #2: Who are you?
- I will write this, too. Then, I will share, asking students if they would like to as well.
- Part 2:
 - Read Lyrics (“Everyday People”)
 - Listen to the song (don’t write anything) (“Everyday People”)
 - Listen to the song again noting speaker’s identity and purpose, paying close attention to the musician’s use of both language and instrumentation (“Everyday People”)
 - Class discussion
- Part 3:
 - View visuals including
 - Watch the youtube video.
 - Does your perception of identity or the song change after also seeing the performers?
 - Class Discussion
 - Use a graphic organizer to compare the reading, listening, and seeing of the music.

Day 2: “I am Woman” by Helen Reddy; “I am Woman” by Jordin Sparks

Vocabulary: invincible vs. invisible, conviction

- Play the introductory instrumental notes of each song
- Pause before lyrics begin, ask students
What do you hear? Who do you think is playing the music? What do you anticipate will happen next?
- Compare and Contrast the beginnings of the songs.
- Have students silently read the lyrics of the song.
- Ask what kind of music does this song remind you of? What is the motivation of the people singing it? Who might have sung this song in the 1960s? How do you think this song was meant to be performed? Did this song represent all African Americans?
- Ask for a student volunteer to read the songs aloud.
- Ask students if there is a purpose for the song? Ask the students what seems to be the purpose of this songs?
- Have students listen to the songs.
- Ask students what strikes you most about this songs?
- What musical phrase is especially memorable? What makes it so memorable: melody, rhythm, lyrics? A combination? Where does the phrase occur? How often does it or similar phrases recur?
- Now ask again is there a purpose? What seems to be the purpose? What elements of the song make you say this? Sound? Speed? Key, etc.? What is the purpose of the song: to entertain, convince or persuade, express an emotion, encourage, tell a story, commemorate, etc.? What is the singer trying to make the listener do, think, or feel?

- Ask the students if they could not understand the words, what would they feel or understand?
- Ask students what is the difference between reading the song and listening to the song?
- How does the music reinforce or help to tell the message of the song?
- What physical movement could you see associating with this song?
- How popular was the song? Why was the song popular? What needs did it fill in its audience?
- How do all of these issues relate to identity?
- What is the identity of the singer?
- Have students work in groups to fill out Song Comparison Graphic Organizers, comparing the songs played in class and their own “theme” songs.

CLOSURE:

Day 1’s Closure:

Students will interview family members or friends outside the class about what their theme songs would be. Students would document these “oral histories” and present them in class. Also, students would answer focus and procedural questions not answered in class for homework.

Day 2’s Closure:

Class discussion and exit note cards (students will write questions or comments on a note card and hand it in at the end of the lesson).

EVALUATION:

Day 1’s Assessment would be a *Rhetorical Analysis Essay*:

Choose a song that represents one or more aspects of your identity. Read and listen to the song carefully. Then, in a well-developed essay analyze and compare the rhetorical strategies in your song and the rhetorical strategies used in one of the five songs in class. Support your analysis with specific references from the song, both in terms of what you read in the lyrics and heard in the recordings.

Day 2’s Evaluation:

Compare and Contrast, using a song comparison graphic organizer to gather your thoughts first, the two versions of “I am Woman.” Are the two songs representative of their time periods? Write a 5 paragraph essay explaining your assertions.

REFLECTION:

If students can learn who they are, they will be able to resist negative peer pressure and follow the lights that are inside of them. The process of creating this lesson showed me the dynamic ways that music can be used in the classroom. I discovered, thanks to Susan, the wonderful resources www.allmusic.com/. I will continue to work on my daily procedures, adjusting to the specific needs of this year’s students.

Musical Source #1

Full Lyrics to Mary J. Blige's "Take Me As I am":

[Verse 1:]

She's been down and out
She's been wrote about
She's been talked about, constantly
She's been up and down
She's been pushed around
But they held her down, NYC
She has no regrets
She accepts the past
All these things they
helped make to make she
She's been lost and found
And she's still around
There's a reason for everything

You know I've been holdin on.
Try to make me weak,
But I still stay strong.
Put my life all up in these songs
Jus so you can feel me.
so you can get the real me

[Chorus:]

So take me as I am,
or have nothing at all.
Just take me as I am,
or have nothing at all.

[Verse 2:]

Now she's older now
Yes, she's wiser now
Can't disguise her now
She don't need
No one tellin her
What to do and say
No one tellin her
Who to be
She's on solid ground
She's been lost and found
Now, she answers to G-O-D
And she's confident
This is not the end

Ask me how I know
Cause she is me.

You know I've been holdin on.
Try to make me weak,
But I still stay strong.
Put my life all up in these songs
Jus so you can feel me.
so you can get the real me

[Chorus:]

So take me as I am,
or have nothing at all.
Just take me as I am,
or have nothing at all.

Source: <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/maryjblige/takemeasiam.html>

Source #2

Helen Reddy, "I am Woman"

I am woman, hear me roar
In numbers too big to ignore
And I know too much to go back an' pretend
'cause I've heard it all before
And I've been down there on the floor
No one's ever gonna keep me down again

CHORUS

Oh yes I am wise
But it's wisdom born of pain
Yes, I've paid the price
But look how much I gained
If I have to, I can do anything
I am strong (strong)
I am invincible (invincible)
I am woman

You can bend but never break me
'cause it only serves to make me
More determined to achieve my final goal
And I come back even stronger
Not a novice any longer
'cause you've deepened the conviction in my soul

CHORUS

I am woman watch me grow
See me standing toe to toe
As I spread my lovin' arms across the land
But I'm still an embryo
With a long long way to go
Until I make my brother understand

Oh yes I am wise
But it's wisdom born of pain
Yes, I've paid the price
But look how much I gained
If I have to I can face anything
I am strong (strong)
I am invincible (invincible)
I am woman
Oh, I am woman
I am invincible
I am strong

<http://www.lyricsdepot.com/helen-reddy/i-am-woman.html>

Source 3

Singer: Jordin Sparks

Lyrics:

[Chorus:]

I am (I am) woman (woman)
I am (I am) woman (woman)
I'm a woman
I'm a woman
Yes I am
Ain't nobody else can do it like we can
Said I am (I am) woman (woman)
I am (I am) woman (woman)
I'm a woman
I'm a woman
Yes I am
Ain't nobody else can do it quite like, like we can

[Verse 1:]

It ain't easy walkin' in stilettos
But somebody gotta do it

Spend a day in my shoes
Then see what the hell I go through
It's so rigorous
Doing what I do
Always on point
Always on cue
Life's so hectic
Call it a zoo
Think you understand
If you only knew

[Chorus:]

I am (I am) woman (woman)
I am (I am) woman (woman)
I'm a woman
I'm a woman
Yes I am
Ain't nobody else can do it like we can
Said I am (I am) woman (woman)
I am (I am) woman (woman)
I'm a woman
I'm a woman
Yes I am
Ain't nobody else can do it quite like, like we can

[Verse 2:]

I need fashion, elegance
Is a passion
I built this body to relax it
Try to bring me down
I'm a get the last laugh in
Don't need to talk
I speak with actions
I've perfected the laws of attraction
I'm the whole package plus satisfaction
Let it take yourself
'Fore you get what you asking
Don't get it twisted
Give your self a caution
Respect it's all that I'm asking
Women bless life, equals alright
No woman no life
I like to see him try

[Chorus:]

I am (I am) woman (woman)

I am (I am) woman (woman)
I'm a woman
I'm a woman
Yes I am
Ain't nobody else can do it like we can
Said I am (I am) woman (woman)
I am (I am) woman (woman)
I'm a woman
I'm a woman
Yes I am
Ain't nobody else can do it quite like, like we can

[Bridge]

Say yeaahhh, yeaahh (yeaahhh, yeaahh)
Say yeaahhh, yeaahh (yeaahhh, yeaahh)
Say yea yea yea, (yea yea yea)
Say yea yea yea, (yea yea yea)
Say I'm a woman, I'm a woman (I'm a woman, I'm a woman)
Say I'm a woman, I'm a woman (I'm a woman, I'm a woman)
I am woman
I am woman
I'm a woman
I'm a woman
Yes I am
Ain't nobody else can do it like I can

[Chorus:]

I am (I am) woman (woman)
I am (I am) woman (woman)
I'm a woman
I'm a woman
Yes I am
Ain't nobody else can do it quite like we can
Said I am (I am) woman (woman)
I am (I am) woman (woman)
I'm a woman
I'm a woman
Yes I am
Ain't nobody else can do it quite like we can
I am (I am) woman (woman)
I am (I am) woman (woman)
I'm a woman
I'm a woman
Yes I am
Ain't nobody else can do it quite like, like we can

<http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/jordinsparks/iamwoman.html>

Source #4

Singer: Sly and the Family Stone

Lyrics:

Sometimes I'm right and I can be wrong
My own beliefs are in my song
The butcher, the banker, the drummer and then
Makes no difference what group I'm in
I am everyday people, yeah yeah
There is a blue one who can't accept the green one
For living with a fat one trying to be a skinny one
And different strokes for different folks
And so on and so on and scooby dooby doo-bee
Oh sha sha - we got to live together
I am no better and neither are you
We are the same whatever we do
You love me you hate me you know me and then
You can't figure out the bag I'm in
I am everyday people, yeah yeah
There is a long hair that doesn't like the short hair
For bein' such a rich one that will not help the poor one
And different strokes for different folks
And so on and so on and scooby dooby doo-bee
Oh sha sha-we got to live together
There is a yellow one that won't accept the black one
That won't accept the red one that won't accept the white one
And different strokes for different folks

Source:

http://www.oldielyrics.com/lyrics/sly_and_the_family_stone/everyday_people.html

Source #5

Singer: James Brown

Lyrics:

Uh, with your bad self
Say it louder (I got a mouth)
Say it louder (I got a mouth)

Look a'here, some people say we got a lot of malice
Some say it's a lotta nerve
I say we won't quit moving

Til we get what we deserve
We've been buked and we've been scorned
We've been treated bad, talked about
As just as sure as you're born
But just as sure as it take
Two eyes to make a pair, huh
Brother, we can't quit until we get our share

Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud
Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud, one more time
Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud, huh

I've worked on jobs with my feet and my hands
But all the work I did was for the other man
And now we demands a chance
To do things for ourselves
we tired of beating our heads against the wall
And working for someone else

Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud
Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud
Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud
Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud, oo wee

Oo wee, ou're killing me
Alright uh, you're out of sight
Alright, so tough, you're tough enough
Oo wee uh, you're killing me, oow

Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud
Say it louder,
I'm black and I'm proud

Now we demand a chance to do things for ourselves
We tired of beating our heads against the wall
And working for someone else
A look a'here,
One thing more I got to say right here

Now, we're people like the birds and the bees
We rather die on our feet,
Than keep living on our knees

Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud, hu
Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud, hu
Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud, Lord'a Lord'a Lord'a
Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud, ooooh

Uh, alright now, good Lord
You know we can do the boog-a-loo
Now we can say we do the Funky Broadway!
Now we can do, hu
Sometimes we dance, we sing and we talk
You know I do like to do the camel walk
Alright now, hu alright,
Alright now, ha

Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud
Say it louder,
I'm black and I'm proud, let me hear ya
Say it louder,
I'm black and I'm proud
Say it louder,
I'm black and I'm proud

Now we's demands a chance to do things for ourselves
We're tired of beating our heads against the wall
And working for someone else, hu
Now we're our people, too
We're like the birds and the bees,
But we'd rather die on our feet,
Than keep a'living on our knees

Say it louder,
I'm black and I'm proud
Say it louder,
I'm black and I'm proud, let me hear ha', huh
Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud, hu
Say it louder,

I'm black and I'm proud
Say it louder,
I'm black and I'm proud

Oooow, oo wee, you're killing me, alright
Uh, outa sight, alright you're outa sight
Oo wee, oh Lord,
Oo wee, you're killing me
Oo wee, oo wee, oo wee, oo wee, ow

Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud, hu
Say it louder,
I'm black and I'm proud , Lord I feel it
Say it loud,
I'm black and I'm proud
Say it louder,
I'm black and I'm proud

<http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/jamesbrown/sayitloudimblackandimproud.html>