

# Window on the Work

McCallum Theatre Institute's  
Aesthetic Education Program  
2016 | 2017



## with special guest Carlos Medina

What is a **Window on the Work** — and why have one? Well, like windows in general, it provides a look in (or out!) at something. That something, in this case, is a work of art. The work of art in question will be studied in the classroom and then viewed — live. Classroom teachers, students, and teaching artists will be engaged, together, in determining what that study will ultimately look like. A document like the **Window on the Work** you hold in your hand at this moment will help you play your part in that process. It gives you not just one view but many views into the work of art. It supplies you with answers to the questions you raise. It inspires new questions, suggests new avenues of inquiry. It rounds out the picture. It sparks new ideas. See if the ideas below make sense to you.

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**In the planning phase,** Windows on the Work can help establish the most effective line of inquiry and richest unit of study

- answer questions about the work of art as they come up
- help you approach the work of art from various vantage points
- spark curricular connections

**During the unit of study,** Windows on the Work can

- help you expand the study in particular contextual areas
- become a reference for student use

**After the unit of study,** Windows on the Work can

- help keep the work of art alive in the classroom
- suggest pathways for further study
- help tie together strands of learning later in the year

# The Okee Dokee Brothers

TEXTS BY  
MARK ALMY,  
EXCEPT WHERE  
OTHERWISE CREDITED

with special guest Carlos Medina

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# The Work



The Okee Dokee Brothers in concert — Joe Mailander and Justin Lansing stride out onto the stage. Each good-looking in his own way, they greet the audience with an open, friendly demeanor. Joe's the one in the hat. Justin has the beard. They bounce up and down with the beat as they sing. Joe, the slightly more outgoing one, takes the lead when it comes to patter between numbers. Justin sports a twinkle in his eye, belying a sense of humor with an edge. When they sing, they are in perfect harmony. Although their music can be variously described as folk, country, Americana,

or old-timey, they are perhaps most strongly identified with bluegrass. What lifts their work above the usual run however is the way they interweave an engagement with nature throughout the songs they offer. Most of these songs they have lovingly crafted themselves. Some they have borrowed from various genres. Each piece is included because of the part it plays in telling the story of man's relationship with the natural environment. The concern with our natural environment is a vital theme affecting all our lives in these early decades of the 21st century. The Okee Dokes entreat us to go out into nature, and experience its treasures for ourselves. They may even be gently suggesting we try doing as they've done and create our own songs based on what we encounter in our travels.

The Okee Dokee Brothers address the topic: What Genre of music do we play?

Technically, we aren't playing purely folk, old-time, or bluegrass music. We believe our songs are a mix of these styles, as well as other influences. A modern classification for our music would be Roots or Americana music. Just as American musicians have done for centuries, we use the many types of music that have come before us to find our own path and craft our own sound.

## The repertoire

The tunes are simple, the lyrics playful, and the guys serve them up with an enthusiasm that is catching.

### ***Can You Canoe?***

We don't need a motor,  
We don't need a sail,  
We don't need no fins or gills,  
We don't need a tail,  
Let's just keep it simple,  
We'll each get an old paddle out to No Man's Lake  
And float till we can't no more.

The melody is simplicity itself and singable, the harmonies and the bluegrass-inflected accents reminiscent of country music. Its stripped-down sound, unplugged, and absent the overproduced flash so prevalent these days in popular idioms. The fellas, in closely-trimmed beards and backwoods caps, sway to the beat, and you could (if you close your eyes), imagine yourself out on the tundra, the plains, the prairie on a still and starry night.

### **Echo**

I came across a valley with a wide mountain view  
And sang out your name with a yodel-odel-lay-hee-hoo!

Here the rhythm takes on a greater percussiveness. Will they add in a drum for good measure? While all that yodeling is going on, you'll be hard pressed to sit still in your plush theater seat. At the very least, as your toes tap along, you'll likely begin to imagine yourself on the crest of a mighty mountain ridge, the joyous sounds of music rolling down broad swaths of hazy, blue forest.

### **Jamboree**

It don't look like much  
And it ain't no chore  
But while they're dancing  
They polish that floor.

The tempo has definitely taken a tick upward, and it seems clear that here we have a piece which calls for some mighty fancy foot work. The fingers strum away rapid-fire on the strings, the words come thick and fast, and the temperature in-house begins to rise as excitement mounts. If in earlier repertoire, we were gently encouraged to picture the Great Outdoors, Jamboree brings us all — attentive, present — into the hall itself for a communal music fest.

### **Haul Away Joe**

Goodbye and don't ya cry  
I'm goin' to Loui'siana  
Way haul away well haul away Joe  
To buy a dog and a muddy old hog  
And marry Suzy-Anna  
Way haul away well haul away Joe  
Way haul away we're bound for better weather  
Way haul away we'll haul away Joe.

In this rhythmic ditty we have an example of a song, which is not written by The Okee Dokee Brothers. Instead, it falls into the category of sea shanty, a traditional form of song associated with sailors, ships, and seas. Like other kinds of traditional music — folk songs, spirituals, and Christmas Carols, for example — shanties often cannot be traced back to a specific composer. In cases like that, the attribution will fall to that catch-all: anonymous. The original purpose of shanties was to hearten and give energy to the workers on board large merchant sailing vessels. In more recent times, shanties have been offered in classical vocal concerts, as well as in more informal settings, like campfire singing. *Blow the Man Down* is another well-known title in the genre.

### **Mr. and Mrs. Sippy**

Mister and Missus Sippy  
Got married in the fall  
Left the church that very same day  
For their honeymoon in St. Paul  
M-I-Double S-I-double S-I-P-P-I  
M-I-Double S-I-double S-I-P-P-I  
Sing it backwards I-P-P-I-Double S-I-Double S-I-M  
Sing it forwards

Once heard, this song can't be unheard. It's just too dog gone catchy and memorable. Easily it is among the most playful of the repertoire. Mr. and Mrs. Sippy has nothing in common with soulful longing for wilderness vistas and everything to do with a hoe down Terpsichore — and it will stay with you!

### **Rosita**

Rosita the skeeta  
Aint no skeeta sweeta  
But she's a man eata  
Rosita the Bug  
I tried keeping her away with bug spray galore  
But she kept on coming back for more  
So now I'm covered from head to toe  
With kisses from a mosquito

Another selection that meets with wide audience approval is this light apostrophe to the poor misunderstood mosquito. Of course, anyone who goes out into nature must come to terms with the skeeta. As far as formal elements are concerned, it's possible that this amiable piece contains more creatively-spelled words per stanza than any other. We'll let the teachers in the room decide what to make of that!

### **Lighten Your Load**

Ya gotta lighten your load, kid  
When ya hit the road  
I woulda thunk you'd knowed, kid  
Ya gotta lighten your load

No matter how much emphasis an Okee Dokee Brother playlist may place on the sheer fun factor, underneath it all the guys strike an almost philosophical tone. *In Lighten Your Load*, they raise echoes of such diverse voices as Thoreau and Rilke: you must change your life, make better choices, think and question.

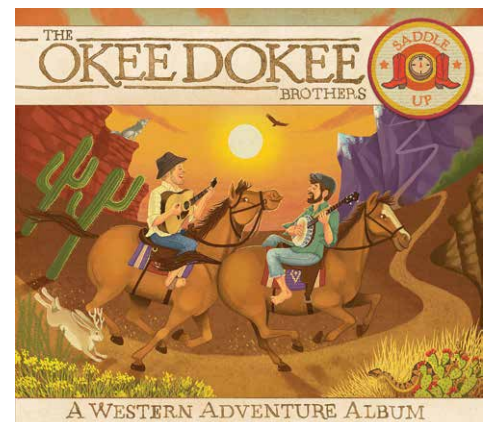
### **Along for the Ride**

Peter Pan could never understand  
Why Wendy Darling wanted more than Neverland  
A lost boy always makes it on his own  
So he never grew up and he ended up alone  
But I would rather have you sittin' here next to me  
Telling bedtime stories and singing harmony

How appropriate that this song is sung by a duo, since the main thematic thrust here is the value one finds in taking journeys in the company of another. Appropriate, too, that the musical side of things in this song veer in the direction of 70s folk-pop. You may find that its gentle nature, lightly strummed guitar rhythms, and sweet harmonization call the folksinger, Cat Stevens to mind. Does a strand of wistfulness weave its way through the fabric of this piece?

### **Bluegrass for Breakfast**

I woke up this morning  
'Cause bluegrass was coming from the kitchen  
The clankin' of pots and spoons  
Sounds like breakfast is a-fixin'  
You know it's bluegrass for breakfast  
Load up my plate real fine  
It's bluegrass for breakfast  
Big helpin's gonna make my eyes shine





In one video of this song, the guys define bluegrass as “like country only cooler.” Whether you subscribe to this view or not, your toes will be seriously challenged to remain immobile. Short and to the point, this hard-driving wakeup call is not going to land on anyone’s list of the most subtle music making. And why should it? No deep thinking here. It is just the pleasure of waking up to the aroma of bluegrass wafting in from the kitchen.

### **Mama Don’t Allow**

My Mama don’t allow no music played in here  
She don’t allow no music in here  
But what I care what she don’t allow  
I’ll play my music anyhow  
My Mama don’t allow no music played in here

Sometimes attributed to Charles “Cow Cow” Davenport, who recorded the piano solo *Mama Don’t Allow No Easy Riders Here* in 1929, this much-recorded piece appears to have been based on even older songs, *Mr. Crump Don’t Allow No Easy Riders* and *Mama Don’t Allow No Low Down Hangin’ Around*. Others who put out their own versions included Papa Charlie Jackson, Riley Puckett, Tampa Red & His Hokum Jug Band, Bill Boyd & His Cowboy Ramblers, Smiley Burnette, Washboard Sam, Doc Watson, Bo Diddly and Tennessee Ernie Ford. Colorful bunch!

### **Don’t Fence Me In**

Let me wander over yonder  
Till I see the mountains rise  
I want to ride to the ridge where the west commences  
Gaze at the moon until I lose my senses  
I can’t look at hobbles and I can’t stand fences  
Don’t fence me in

They didn’t write this one either. Cole Porter, the immortal Tin Pan Alley songsmith, did. But that didn’t stop the fellas from crafting their own Okee Dokee Brothers lyric as a third verse to this venerable classic. One of the most fun projects ever is putting together your own lyric to an established song. In fact, a little later in this Window on the Work, we’re going to explore how that very project might work in the classroom!

### **Boatman’s Dance**

Dance, boatman dance! Dance I say  
Dance, boatman dance, dance all night till the break of day  
The boatman dance, the boatman sing, the boatman do most anything.  
And when the boatman gets to shore, He rows his boat out on the dancing floor  
Hi ho the boatman row, floatin’ down the river on the Ohio!  
Hi ho, the boat man row, up an’ down the river on the Ohio!

Okay, this one goes way back — to 1843. Originally a minstrel song, it sings of the virtues of the Ohio River and how the boatman responds. It has been credited to one Dan Emmett. Minstrel shows purported to be about the black experience but were largely created and performed by white performers in blackface for white audiences. Fortunately this form of entertainment went out of style a long time ago, but some of the musical selections, re-purposed, have entered the general repertory. Boatman’s Dance is one such example. Opera singers like Thomas Hampson and William Warfield have sung the famous Aaron Copland arrangement. The Okee Dokee Brothers offer their own lively version for our delectation.

# The Artists



These two hearty outdoorsmen — Joe Mailander and Justin Lansing — hail from Minneapolis, Minnesota, having grown up first in Denver, Colorado. Traveling as they have, roughing it on the Mississippi, hoisting themselves up the Appalachian Trail, they encountered mountain musicians, whose musical influence had a telling effect when the fellas picked up guitar and banjo and sent a few licks sailing into the mists of wilderness. Back home, with their backpacks full of new repertoire, they enlisted the help of fellow musicians in the trade, as well as the steadying hand of producer Dean Jones, to develop the work along its current lines. Tracks were laid down, CDs shipped and tours booked.

The guys are stoked by the idea that music like theirs can inspire folks of all sorts — but perhaps particularly kids and their parents — to get out and experience nature. In taking this tack, Joe and Justin are banking on youngsters gaining greater respect for the natural world, their communities, and themselves. How smart is that? Take the message to the youngest generation, get them on board, and the process begins to take on some of the characteristics of planting a forest, seedling by seedling, doesn't it?

Well, if you do responsible work which has good value for folks, the collateral rewards are often pretty great, too! Along the way they've been showered with accolades and awards. At the 55th Annual Grammy awards, their CD *Can You Come?* took Best Children's Album. A Parent's Choice Award soon followed, and *USA Today* called the release their "favorite album of 2012." Here are some of the places they've performed (in no particular order — but do notice the variety of venues!): New York's Symphony Space, Minnesota Zoo, Winnipeg Folk Festival, Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts and the Minnesota State Fair. They're pretty popular in Minnesota, by the way; state governor Mark Dayton proclaimed August 20th The Okee Dokee Brothers Day.

Ask which of them is Okee and which is Dokee, and they typically reply, "It's complicated." Pressed to divulge the origins of the name, they say, "It was either going to be The Okee Dokee Brothers or Wood Chuck Chuck. We couldn't decide because we were both kind of bad, so we flipped a coin, then arm wrestled, then did eeny meeny miny moe, then rolled some dice, then consulted tarot cards, then conducted a survey, then analyzed the results of that survey with a team of geologists. They said Wood Chuck Chuck, so we went with The Okee Dokee Brothers." Okay, let's try again. Are they actually brothers? To this final question, they settle for the simple, and truthful, answer: no. But they have known each other since the tender age of 3 — and they don't mind sharing that they do "sometimes squabble like brothers."

In a more sober moment, the lads reflect. "There's an old saying that goes something like 'write about what you know.' We decided that the best way to write a collection of songs about an adventure is to actually have that adventure in real life! Of course, you don't have to canoe down a river or hike through the mountains to find inspiration for your own adventures. You can start by simply exploring the world around you; the world that you know. Go to a park or take a walk through your neighborhood, an adventure can be anywhere! What ways do you interact with nature?

We do hold ourselves to a higher standard of taking a little more time, thought and effort to put the kids first and say, "They can handle this and we don't need to be completely silly, wacky or off the wall." Some kids like that stuff and there's plenty of media out there for them. But at the same time, our fans, we're expecting them to grow into our lyrics. If they don't understand something, they can ask and start a conversation, so that listening to our music is an experience of growth."



# Craft

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You may already know that the Mississippi River is the 4th longest river in the world. Its length is, in a sense, extended even further by the abundance of tributaries which flow into its mighty contours. Barges can travel great distances on this “highway.” Of course, barges are like the semis of the river way — and canoes like that which The Okee Dokee Brothers navigated are more like bicycles, comparatively speaking. You can bet they moved to the “slow lane” any time they encountered one of these behemoths transporting goods!

## **Say The Okee Dokee Brothers:**

Canoeing is quite a workout! Not only are you using paddles to propel the canoe forward in the water, but the paddles also steer the craft left and right. That can be trickier than it sounds when the river’s current is strong. We kept all of our gear in the canoes, too, so everything was packed in waterproof bags just in case we tipped!

Our first adventure album, *Can You Canoe?*, was written on a 30-day canoe trip down the Mississippi River. The river starts at Lake Itasca, in Minnesota, and flows south into the Gulf of Mexico. Did you know it takes a drop of water around 90 days to travel the entire river? That’s an awfully long time to be in a canoe, so we decided we’d only canoe the Upper Mississippi River, which stretches from Lake Itasca to Saint Louis, Missouri. Our canoe trip lasted thirty days, during which time we camped. Even though it’s made of water, the Mississippi often functions like a highway! Large boats, known as barges, transport goods from destination to destination. And since so many other rivers flow into the Mississippi (these are called tributaries), the barges can travel a very long distance. Our canoes were very small compared to those large barges, so we stayed well out of their way.

The Mississippi River is the 4th longest river in the world. It is 2,552 miles long! The river runs through, or borders, ten states: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Canoeing the Upper Mississippi meant we traveled through Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri.



The Appalachian Trail runs some 2,100 miles as it snakes its way through fourteen states — from Georgia to Maine. The following fact from The Okee Dokee Brothers' study guide caught our attention: "The total elevation gain from Georgia to Maine is the same as climbing Mount Everest 16 times!" We're working up a sweat just typing those words! Going from one end to the other, we are told, can take as much as seven months out of your life. On the other hand, no one says you have to hike the whole thing. Every year, millions of hearty souls traverse some portion or other.

The trail was completed in 1937. Volunteers are an important part of the force that keeps the trail in tiptop shape. Although black bears roam many of the areas through which the trail threads, The Okee Dokee Brothers say:

We didn't see any black bears, but we did encounter a herd of wild ponies. Ponies look like small horses that are in desperate need of a haircut! We also encountered some of the millions of hikers, but luckily not all at the same time. Most people who hike the trail wind up acquiring a trail nickname. These are usually descriptive and humorous nicknames, like "Slow and Steady," "Tumbleweed," and "Pack Rat". We gave ourselves nicknames too: Joe was "Flatfoot", on account of his clogging skills, and Justin was "Cricket."

We hiked for thirty days along parts of the trail in Tennessee, Virginia and North Carolina. We carried everything we needed in our backpacks: tents, clothes, food, and cooking gear. Because the trail meanders through 14 different states, the natural surroundings vary greatly. Sometimes the weather was hot and humid, while other times the weather was very cold and rainy. All of these environmental changes meant we had to pack more gear. Hiking all day with a heavy backpack is hard work!



# Roots

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## Appalachian music

Appalachian music originated in the Appalachian region of the U.S. No surprise there, right? You may be interested to learn that ballads, fiddle music, and other traditional forms from the British Isles fed like tributaries into this New World musical stream. Other influences include church hymns and blues. By the time someone had the great idea to record Appalachian music; it was the 1920s, when the recording industry was in its relative infancy. These recordings helped spread the unique sounds of this backwoods art form — and it influenced, in turn, genres of music like old time, country, and bluegrass. Appalachian music had a hand in the American folk music revival of the 1960s. The banjo, fiddle, dulcimer, and guitar are instruments perhaps most closely linked to this strain of music.

## Folk music

As a rule, folk songs are songs whose original composer is unknown. They weren't written down to begin with, and as they've been performed over the ages by various singers — the folk — they've evolved. Generally, folk music has been associated with the working classes. In the sixties, singers like Joan Baez and Bob Dylan spearheaded a revival of interest in the genre that lifted them out of niche performance and endowed them with the spirit of the time.

## Old-time music

This is a style of music which was developed to accompany folk dance in the American tradition, most particularly perhaps that of the Appalachian Mountains. Its roots are both African and European traditional music. Fiddle as a rule plays the lead, and a banjo is never far away!

## Bluegrass

When we speak of bluegrass, we are referring to a genre of music which is relatively recent in origin. In fact, Bill Monroe started a band in the 1940s called The Bluegrass Boys, whose style combined elements of blues, country, folk and old-timey. Its popularity continues today. Acoustic instruments rule: the fiddle, banjo, guitar, bass and mandolin.

## Instruments

**Fiddle** — also known as the violin in more classical venues, the fiddle is the smallest of the stringed family instruments. Britain's fiddlers have had, over the long haul, quite an impact on American folk music.

**Guitar** — the earliest versions of guitar-like instruments hail from the Renaissance. That hole in the middle of the wooden guitar makes the sound louder and warms up the tone. This is one of the most essential instruments when it comes to roots and Americana music.

**Banjo** — the festive banjo comes to us from Africa, brought to America on slave ships. You can find instruments very similar to it today in Africa. Reduced to its simplest elements, it features a drum, across whose head strings are stretched, and a handle attached. Banjos can have anywhere from four to six strings, and show up a lot in bluegrass, Irish, country and folk styles of music.

**Bass** — this largest member of the string family can also produce the lowest sounds of any. A bassist can draw a bow across the strings, pluck them, or — in decidedly un-classical style — slap them.

**Homemade instruments** — since traditional folk music was often played in places where professionally crafted instruments were scarce, folks would often cobble together instruments from items they had at home.

Some examples of these are:

**Spoons** — you hear these in bluegrass a fair amount. How does it work? Hold two spoons in one hand and clack them together, either against your free hand or your knee.

**Bones** — like the spoons, you need a pair of them. Rib bones of a cow generally, cut down to a manageable length. Modern “bones” are usually manufactured from smooth wood.

**Feet and hands** — you got ‘em! Don’t fergit ‘em! After all, they are almost surely the very oldest (and simplest) percussion instruments. Lots of different dance styles in various cultures feature clapping, stomping, snapping and tapping. Irish step dance, tap dance, flamenco, malambo, kathak and gumboot dance are some examples.

**Cajón** — Spanish for “box,” a cajón is fundamentally a box of wood with a sound hole in its side. You sit on top and slap and tap with your hands. The very first Cajónistas were African slaves in Perú.



# Responses

## What teachers are saying about The Okee Dokee Brothers

“I like the idea of noticing nature, writing from our ‘noticing’ experiences and working in a collaborative team. I attended the performance with my students in 2015 and loved it. I like the video presentation moving behind the musicians, and we all enjoyed clapping along with the music. I was thrilled to experience the performance again.”

— DIANA WHITCOMB, SUNNY SANDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

“The Okee Dokee Bros’ show was an outstanding crowd participation event. I loved them! I really want to incorporate music in as many subject areas as I can and write lots of parodies with the students. I have been thinking about this for years and this performance and workshop have encouraged me to finally do it!”

— POLLYANNE WILSON, CORAL MOUNTAIN ACADEMY

“The geography of their travels would be a great study topic in the Social Studies realm. Map work and regional culture studies would enhance students’ understanding of culture, lifestyles, and history of music origins. I thoroughly enjoyed the performance and appreciated the Q & A session with the artists.”

— DOUG MESSERSMITH, SUNNY SANDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

“The performance was simply wonderful. The time flew by from the first song until the last song. It was a time of happiness. I definitely plan to explore the instruments and the whole bluegrass sound. Students need to understand that music evokes mood and conveys messages. I will guide them through creating simple melodies and lyrics for themselves.”

— DANIEL McCULLOR, LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

“I thoroughly enjoyed it. One of the most entertaining performances the McCallum Theatre Institute has offered. Put these boys on the permanent roster! Songwriting and making the connection to Nature will be very meaningful to students. I used to sing every day in the earlier years of my teaching career. Alas, state testing pushed that aside, but after this experience; I will be bringing song back to the classroom.”

— RITA MENZEL, WASHINGTON CHARTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

# Sample Lessons

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**Classroom teachers ask us: what can we do with our students to help get them ready for experiencing the performance? Check out these ideas:**

**Teacher-led lessons connected with The Okee Dokee Brothers might include:**

## **Start by asking questions**

When you’ve gone exploring in outdoors places with family or friends, where have you gone? Besides desert, what are some other natural environments? What did you see, hear, feel, smell, etc.?

## **Add in some context**

The Okee Dokee Brothers go canoeing or hiking for long periods of time. They meet fellow travelers, sometimes fellow musicians. They turn their experiences of nature into songs with lyrics that tell about those experiences.

Have students individually think about some time they were out in nature, and jot down a few notes about the experience.

Next, in pairs they receive a sheet with Work of Art-excerpted texts below. With their partner, they read aloud and see what they can discover about the forms & content of these lyrics.

Sing a Song and get along  
Way down to Sarasota  
Then hop a barge up through the arch  
And back to Minnesota

It's a small and simple song  
It's so soft and sweet  
It's a slow and soothing song  
So I can sing you to sleep

I'll take the bow brother, you can take the stern  
I'll move us forward, while you choose when to turn  
Let's just keep it simple, we all need a friend  
In this current moment instead of lookin' around the bend

M-I-Double S-I-double S-I-P-P-I  
M-I-Double S-I-double S-I-P-P-I

Rosita the skeeta  
Aint no skeeta sweeta  
But she's a man eata  
Rosita the Bug

Gather these observations aloud. (Hint: rhythms, stressed/unstressed syllables, rhyme and near rhyme, repetition of an entire line, creative spelling, slang or informal language, simplicity, lines of differing lengths, etc.) Any other things we might know about lyrics in general?

### **Language Arts project**

In pairs: Together, in the same spirit of collaboration as The Okee Dokee Brothers, write a four-line lyric based on some part of your notes.

Volunteer pairs are encouraged to share aloud. Guide student noticing of word choice and theme through your questioning.

# Resources

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## **Read it here!**

### ***Why Should I Protect Nature?***

By: Jen Green

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Publisher: Barron's Educational Series, 2005

ISBN-10: 0764131540

Part of a child's development is asking questions and learning about the environment. Including amusing pictures and simple text, this book shows the importance of protecting nature.



***Kids' Outdoor Adventure Book: 448 Great Things To Do In Nature Before You Grow Up***

By: Stacy Tornio

Publisher: Globe Pequot Press, 2013

ISBN-10: 0762783524

"Outdoor experiences can help to make kids smarter, healthier, and happier. But what is there to do outdoors? Everything! Here's a fun, practical guide, bursting with ideas and inspiration for everyday adventures."

— Kenn and Kimberly Kaufman, naturalists and authors of the *Kaufman Field Guide* series

***The Nature Connection: An Outdoor Workbook for Kids, Families, and Classrooms***

By: Clare Walker Leslie

Age Range: 8 and up

Publisher: Storey Publishing, 2010

ISBN-10: 1603425314

A practical, engaging and inexpensive guide that makes nature study fun and relevant to everyday existence, *The Nature Connection* is a book that will get the entire family involved in discovering all the exciting things taking place outside the house.

***Honky-Tonk Heroes and Hillbilly Angels: The Pioneers of Country and Western Music***

By: Holly George-Warren

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers, 2006

ISBN-10: 0618191003

"Concise but thorough, this picture book discusses the evolution of a distinctive American music style through a chronicle of its biggest stars."

— *School Library Journal*

***Ellie's Long Walk: The True Story of Two Friends on the Appalachian Trail***

By: Pam Flowers

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Publisher: Westwinds Press, 2012

ISBN-10: 0882408852

"Ellie's Long Walk is the true story of two friends, how their relationship began and the close trust and bond that developed over the course of their long walk on the Appalachian Trail in 2008. One of them is Pam Flowers, an intrepid hiker who lives in Alaska. The other is her dog, Ellie, aka Eleanor Roosevelt, a puppy she adopted and trained to partner her on this 2,000-mile journey."

— *The Midwest Book Review*

***The Mississippi: America's Mighty River***

By: Robin Johnson

Age Range: 10 and up

Publisher: Crabtree Publishing Company, 2010

ISBN-10: 0778774678

Introduces the Mississippi River, describing its sources, its course through ten states, its history, travel and commerce on the river, and the threats represented by pollution.

## Hear it too!

### ***Through the Woods***

Label: Okee Dokee Music, 2014

ASIN: B00IKLHPWJ

### ***Can You Canoe?***

Label: Okee Dokee Music, 2012

ASIN: B007OAOJUW

### ***Take it Outside***

Label: Okee Dokee Music, 2010

ASIN: B003X56YLI

### ***¡Excelente Fabuloso!***

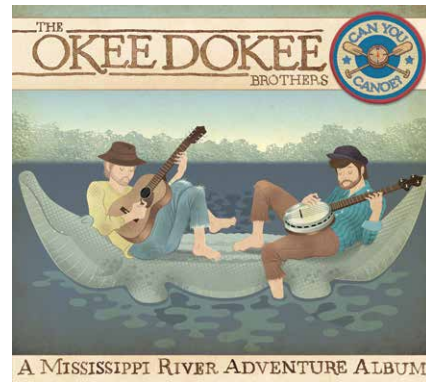
Label: CD Baby, 2010

ASIN: B0049VGR6M

### ***Kids with Beards***

Label: CD Baby/INDYS, 2008

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## On the Web

### **The Okee Dokee Brothers website**

[www.okeedokey.org](http://www.okeedokey.org)

Lots of info. Join their mailing list!

### **The Okee Dokee Brothers' Mississippi River Adventure Blog**

<http://mississippialbum.blogspot.com>

Here's a typical entry — "Day 29. In the middle of the Mississippi, on a small sandbar, we made our camp. We were 100 miles away from St. Louis — so close we could practically smell the Gateway Arch. We were just zipping up our tents for the night, feeling very positive that we were going to make it. You could say we were

### **The Okee Dokee Brothers' Appalachian Trail Adventure Blog**

<http://appalachianalbum.blogspot.com>

"We started at a beginning. We're not exactly sure where our particular beginning was, but it was definitely a beginning. There were questions, apprehensions, and the all too familiar sense that we needed to get somewhere. Where should we go?"

### **The Okee Dokee Brothers' YouTube page**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/OkeeDokeeBros>

Enjoy their music videos — and other shenanigans!

### **Kenny Salwey, Mississippi River Expert**

<http://bit.ly/1kTK78x>

The Okee Dokee Brothers interview Mr. Salwey. Find out what they learned!

### **David Holt, an expert in Mountain Music**

<http://bit.ly/1nhqdHL>

The Okee Dokee Brothers interview Mr. Holt too. Don't miss it!!

### **The Bluegrass-playing Wright Family**

<http://bit.ly/1kTJtYu>

The Okee Dokee Brothers interview the whole doggone family. Watch it now!

### **William Cook speaks about the Washboard**

<http://bit.ly/Qg2wLA>

Yep, you guessed it. The Okee Dokee Brothers interview Mr. Cook about the washboard — or was it Mr. Washboard about the cook?



# Glossary

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**Acoustic instrument** — an instrument that sounds rich and musical without amplification.

**Adventure album** — a collection of music written about & inspired by an outdoor adventure.

**Amplification** — the act of making something louder.

**Arrangement** — an arrangement is a musical re-conceptualization of a previously composed work.

**Bones** — a form of percussion, played with the hands. Originally actual bones, now usually made out of wood.

**Canoe** — a narrow boat with pointed ends, often made from materials like aluminum, wood, or fiberglass. The people riding in the canoe propel the boat with paddles.

**Chorus** — the part of a song that is repeated several times and delivers the main message of the song.

**Clogging** — using your feet to make the beat for music. A style of dancing.

**Electric instrument** — an instrument that must be amplified to make sound.

**Fiddlesticks** — delicate sticks that are used to tap out a rhythm on the strings of a fiddle.

**Folk music** — traditional music used as a means to tell stories.

**Gear** — the tools, items, and equipment that a person might take on their adventure. Possible gear includes a tent, a camera, snacks, extra clothes.

**Harmony** — pitches that sound nice with the main melody.

**Hike** — a long walk, usually through nature. (Hiker — a person going on a hike.)

**Lyrics** — the words to a song.

**Melody** — the main musical part of a song; the tune.

**Old-time music** — music inspired by the music of the Appalachian Mountains.

**Paddle** — the object used by a canoe's passengers to propel the craft. A pole with a broad, flat fin at one end.

**Songwriting** — The act of composing lyrics and/or music.

**Spoons** — a form of percussion; two spoons clacked together.

**Verses** — the story parts of a song. Typically non-repeating.

**Yodel** — a style of singing where the voice shifts quickly from low to high.

