**The Vietnam War: Protest Music**

**Directions**: Read the lyrics to each song (attached on last page), then search for the song on the internet and listen to it. Finally, answer the questions for each song.

***Eve of Destruction***:

1. What does Barry McGuire mean when he says:
2. “You’re old enough to kill, but not for votin’”
3. “If the button is pushed there’s no runnin away”
4. What is the overall message of this song?

***Ballad of the Green Berets***:

1. How does this song make you feel?
2. How does the song portray soldiers?
3. Does this song support or condemn American Involvement of the Vietnam War?

-How do you know (give two specific examples from the song)?

***Ohio***:

1. Who are the soldiers Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young are referring to?
2. What do you think the artists mean by “tin soldiers”? (Hint: Tin is a cheap metal.)
3. What event is this song written for? How do you know? (Use specific examples

from the lyrics.)

***War***:

1. What is the overall message of this song? (Think about the tone as well as the lyrics.)

2. Choose 1-2 lines in the song that you feel send the strongest message.

Record them here:

-Why did you choose those lines?

-What message do they send?

-What is especially powerful about the lines you chose?

**Sum it all up**:

1. Why do you think so much music was written about the Vietnam War?

2. Why is music such an effective and powerful form of protest?

**Eve of Destruction-Barry McGuire, 1965**

The eastern world, it is exploding

Violence flarin', bullets loadin'

You're old enough to kill, but not for

votin'

You don't believe in war, but what's

that gun you're totin'

And even the Jordan River has bodies

floatin'

But you tell me

Over and over and over again, my friend

Ah, you don't believe

We're on the eve

of destruction.

Don't you understand what I'm tryin' to

say

Can't you feel the fears I'm feelin'

today?

If the button is pushed, there's no

runnin' away

There'll be no one to save, with the

world in a grave

[Take a look around ya boy, it's bound

to scare ya boy]

And you tell me

Over and over and over again, my friend

Ah, you don't believe

We're on the eve

of destruction.

Yeah, my blood's so mad feels like

coagulatin'

I'm sitting here just contemplatin'

I can't twist the truth, it knows no

regulation.

Handful of senators don't pass

legislation

And marches alone can't bring

integration

When human respect is disintegratin'

This whole crazy world is just too

frustratin'

And you tell me

Over and over and over again, my friend

Ah, you don't believe

We're on the eve

of destruction.

Think of all the hate there is in Red

China

Then take a look around to Selma,

Alabama

You may leave here for 4 days in space

But when you return, it's the same old

place

The poundin' of the drums, the pride

and disgrace

You can bury your dead, but don't leave

a trace

Hate your next-door neighbor, but don't

forget to say grace

And… tell me over and over and over and

over again, my friend

You don't believe We're on the eve Of destruction

Mm, no no, you don't believe

We're on the eve of destruction.

**Ballad of The Green Berets**, **SSgt Barry**

**Sadler, 1966**

Fighting soldiers from the sky

Fearless men who jump and die

Men who mean just what they say

The brave men of the Green Beret

Silver wings upon their chest

These are men, America's best

One hundred men we'll test today

But only three win the Green Beret

Trained to live, off nature's land

Trained in combat, hand to hand

Men who fight by night and day

Courage deep, from the Green Beret

Silver wings upon their chest

These are men, America's best

One hundred men we'll test today

But only three win the Green Beret

Back at home a young wife waits

Her Green Beret has met his fate

He has died for those oppressed

Leaving her this last request

Put silver wings on my son's chest

Make him one of America's best

He'll be a man they'll test one day

Have him win the Green Beret

**Ohio by Crosby, Stills, Nash, and**

**Young, 1970**

Tin soldiers and Nixon's comin'.

We're finally on our own.

This summer I hear the drummin'.

Four dead in Ohio.

Gotta get down to it.

Soldiers are gunning us down.

Should have been done long ago.

What if you knew her and

Found her dead on the ground?

How can you run when you know?

Na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na.

Gotta get down to it.

Soldiers are cutting us down.

Should have been done long ago.

What if you knew her and

Found her dead on the ground?

How can you run when you know?

Tin soldiers and Nixon's comin'.

We're finally on our own.

This summer I hear the drummin'.

Four dead in Ohio.

**War, Edwin Starr, 1970**

War...huh...yeah What is it good for?

Absolutely nothing Uh ha haa ha

War...huh...yeah What is it good for?

Absolutley nothing...say it again y'all

War..huh...look out... What is it good for?

Absolutely nothing...listen to me ohhhhh

WAR! I despise, 'cos it means destruction of innocent

lives, War means tears to thousands of

mother's eyes,

When their sons gone to fight and lose

their lives.

I said WAR!...huh...good God y'all,

What is it good for?

Absolutely nothing...say it again

War! Huh...What is it good for (Edwin

sings 'Wohh oh Lord' over the top)

Absolutely nothing...listen to me

WAR! It ain't nothing but a

heartbreaker,

War. Friend only to the undertaker.

Ohhh! War is an enemy to all mankind,

The thought of war blows my mind.

War has caused unrest within the

younger generation

Induction then destruction...who wants to die? Ohhh

WAR! good God y'all huh What is it good for?

Absolutely nothing...say it say it SAY IT!

WAR!...uh huh yeah hu!

What is it good for?

Absolutely nothing...listen to me

WAR! It ain't nothing but a

heartbreaker,

War! It's got one friend that's the

undertaker.

Ohhhh! War has shattered many a young

man's dream,

Made him disabled, bitter and mean,

Life is much too short and precious to

spend fighting wars these days.

War can't give life, it can only take

it away!

Ohhh WAR! huh...good God y'all

What is it good for?

Absolutely nothing...say it again

War!...huh...woh oh oh Lord

What is it good for?

Absolutely nothing...listen to me

War! It ain't nothing but a

heartbreaker,

War. Friend only to the

undertaker...woo

Peace lovin' understand then tell me,

Is there no place for them today?

They say we must fight to keep our

freedom,

But Lord knows there's got to be a

better way.

Ohhhhhhh WAR! huh...good God y'all...

What is it good for?...you tell me!

Say it say it say it saaaay it!

War! good God now...huh

What is it good for?

Stand up and shout it...NOTHING [END]