



Alabama Public Television Education

## Song Lyrics Analysis: “I’ll Take You There” by the Staple Singers

“I’ll Take You There,” a song written by Al Bell, was recorded by the Staple Singers, a gospel group, at the Muscle Shoals Sound Studios. It became number one on the music charts for four weeks in May 1972 and won a Grammy. It is now in the Grammy Hall of Fame. The song invites the listener to seek Heaven and uses a “[call and response](#)” type of [chorus](#), in which a repeated chorus echoes a statement. In this song, the response is “I’ll take you there.”

Oh, mmm, I know a place

Ain't nobody cryin'

Ain't nobody worried

Ain't no smilin' faces, mmm, no

Lyin' to the races

Help me, come on, come on

Somebody, help me now (I'll take you there)

Help me, y'all (I'll take you there)

Help me now (I'll take you there)

Oh! (I'll take you there)

Oh! Oh! Mercy! (I'll take you there)

Oh, let me take you there (I'll take you there)

Oh-oh! Let me take you there! (I'll take you there)

Play your, play your piano now

All right, ah, do it, do it, come on now

Play on it, play on it, make daddy now

Daddy, daddy, daddy, play your

... Ooh, Lord, all right now

Baby, little lady, easy now

Now, come on, little lady, all right

Sock it, sock it, ah, oh, oh

I know a place, y'all (I'll take you there)

Ain't nobody cryin' (I'll take you there)

Ain't nobody worried (I'll take you there)

No smilin' faces (I'll take you there)

Uh, uh (Lysin' to the races) (I'll take you there)

Oh, no Oh! (I'll take you there)

Oh, oh, oh! (I'll take you there)

Mercy now! (I'll take you there)

I'm callin', callin', callin' for mercy (I'll take you there)

Mercy, mercy! (I'll take you there)

You oughta, you gotta gotta, let me, let me (I'll take you there)

Take you, take you, take you over there (I'll take you there)

Directions:

Before beginning, research the Staple Singers and answer these questions.

1. Who were they?
2. What kind of music did they sing?
3. When were they popular?
4. What was happening in the United States during this time period?
5. How do you think that the events of the time period influenced their music?

Using the lyrics provided above, answer the following questions.

1. Whose point of view is the song written from?
2. What is the musician asking the listener to do?
3. Highlight a phrase in the lyrics that might be related to the Civil Rights struggles of the 1970s.
4. Listen to the song and watch the official lyric video  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhHBr7nMMio>
5. What type of music do you think that this is? Is it blues, classical, folk, jazz, military, patriotic, rap, religious, or rock?
6. How do you think that the video illustrates the lyrics?

### Something to Think About

- Create a piece of artwork using any materials to illustrate the message of the song.
- Create a new title for this song.