

# Travel & Adventure Songs

**"Leaving on a Jet Plane"**

**"Somewhere Out There"**

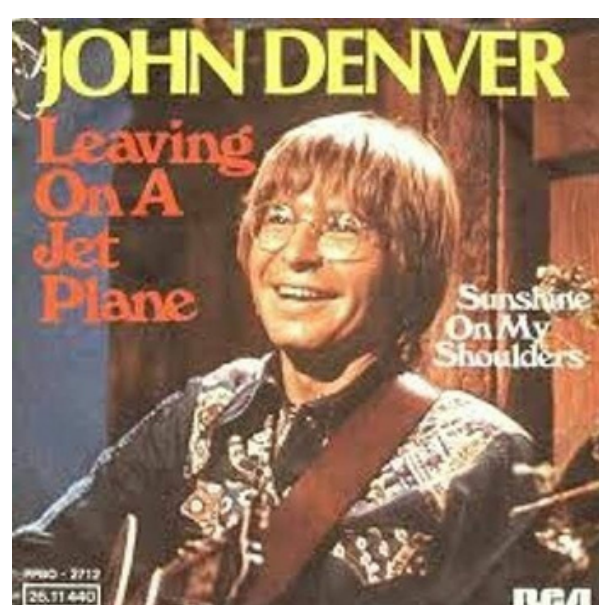
**"Route 66"**

**"The Trolley Song"**

**"Take Me Home, Country Roads"**

## The Adventurer

**These songs capture the excitement and thrill of embarking on a journey into either the known or even the unknown. The songs we will dig through today paint a vivid picture of the wide-ranging experiences and emotions associated with travel and adventure, from the thrill of setting off on a journey to the longing for home and everything in between.**



**Song: "Leaving on a Jet Plane" (1966)**

**Songwriter: John Denver**

***Brief Context:*** John Denver wrote and recorded "Leaving on a Jet Plane" in 1966, when he was just 23 years old. Originally titled "Babe, I Hate to Go" on his inaugural demo, his producer encouraged Denver to change the title to "Leaving on a Jet Plane" in 1967. The renowned trio Peter, Paul, and Mary released it as a single in 1969, marking their sole No. 1 hit on the *Billboard Top 100*. This rendition stood as their final chart-topping success and remains the only version of "Leaving on a Jet Plane" that ever charted.

***Activity:*** Singing

***What do you need?***

- Perfect Harmony "Leaving on a Jet Plane" video

**A Note from John Denver:**

"This is a very personal and very special song for me. It doesn't conjure up Boeing 707s or 747s for me as much as it does the simple scenes of leaving. Bags packed and standing by the front door, taxi pulling up in the early morning hours, the sound of a door closing behind you, and the thought of leaving someone that you care for very much. I was fortunate to have Peter, Paul and Mary record it and have it become such a hit, but it still strikes a lonely and anguished chord in me, because the separation still continues, although not so long and not so often nowadays."



# **Leaving on a Jet Plane**

**All my bags are packed, I'm ready to go  
I'm standing here outside your door  
I hate to wake you up to say goodbye  
But the dawn is breaking, it's early morn  
The Taxi's waiting, he's blowin' his horn  
Already I'm so lonesome I could cry**

**So kiss me and smile for me  
Tell me that you'll wait for me  
Hold me like you'll never let me go  
'Cause I'm leaving on a jet plane  
Don't know when I'll be back again  
Oh babe, I hate to go**

**There's so many times I've let you down  
So many times I've played around  
I tell you now, they don't mean a thing  
Every place I go, I'll think of you  
Every song I sing, I'll sing for you  
When I come back, I'll wear your wedding ring**

# **Leaving on a Jet Plane (pg. 2)**

**So kiss me and smile for me  
Tell me that you'll wait for me  
Hold me like you'll never let me go  
'Cause I'm leaving on a jet plane  
Don't know when I'll be back again  
Oh babe, I hate to go**

**Now the time has come to leave you  
One more time, let me kiss you  
Then close your eyes and I'll be on my way  
Dream about the days to come  
When I won't have to leave alone  
About the times when I won't have to say**

**Kiss me and smile for me  
Tell me that you'll wait for me  
Hold me like you'll never let me go  
'Cause I'm leaving on a jet plane  
Don't know when I'll be back again  
Oh babe, I hate to go**

**I'm leaving on a jet plane  
Don't know when I'll be back again  
Oh babe, I hate to go**



## **Song: "Somewhere Out There" (1986)**

**Songwriter: James Horner, Barry Mann, & Cynthia Weil**

***Brief Context:* "Somewhere Out There" was written for the soundtrack of the animated feature film, *An American Tail*, and was sung by Linda Ronstadt and James Ingram. Its lyrics depict the enduring love shared between two individuals parted by great distances, yet united by the hope of eventual reunion. Recognized at the 30th GRAMMY Awards, the song clinched two accolades: Song of the Year and Best Song Written Specifically for a Motion Picture or Television.**

### ***Activity:* Listening**

#### **What do you need?**

- **Perfect Harmony "Somewhere Out There" video**

#### **Linda Ronstadt**

**Linda Ronstadt is arguably one of the most versatile vocalists of the modern era. With worldwide album sales totaling of over \$50 million, at least 31 gold and platinum records, and 10 GRAMMY Awards to her credit, her contributions represent diverse genres of rock, Latin, and Broadway. Ronstadt was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2014 and was awarded the Songbook Hall of Fame New Standard Award in 2014.**



**Song: "(Get Your Kicks on) Route 66" (1946)**

**Songwriter: Bobby Troup**

***Brief Context:*** "Route 66" is a popular rhythm and blues song, composed in 1946 by American songwriter Bobby Troup. Troup got the idea for the song on a cross-country drive from Pennsylvania to California. Through good fortune, Troup got the attention of Nat King Cole, who liked the song idea, recorded it, and released it as a single. The song has since become a standard with several renditions appearing on the record charts.

***Activity: Movement***

***What do you need?***

- **Perfect Harmony "Route 66" video**

***Suggested Seated Movement***

**Follow Perfect Harmony leader Idrienne or create your own seated movement!**

**Use movements like . . .**

- **Climbing an invisible rope**
- **Neck rolls and stretches**
- **And get your kicks....on Route 66 with a kick line!**



**Song: "The Trolley Song" (1944)**

**Songwriters: Hugh Martin & Ralph Blane**

***Brief Context:*** Judy Garland, a distinguished member of the Songbook Hall of Fame, propelled "The Trolley Song" to fame with her rendition in the film *Meet Me in St Louis*. The inspiration for the song struck songwriter, Ralph Blane, when he stumbled upon a picture of a trolley car in a book at the Beverly Hills Public Library, bearing the caption, "Clang, Clang, Clang, Went the Trolley."

***Activity:* Singing and Discussion**

***What do you need?***

- Perfect Harmony "The Trolley Song" video
- Perfect Harmony "The Trolley Song" lyrics

***Suggested Discussion Prompt***

There are many ways to travel when you're going on an adventure, whether by car, bus, plane, boat, train, or in this case ... trolley!

If you were planning a trip right now ...

Tell someone about where you might go and how you would plan to get there!



# **The Trolley Song**

**With my high-starched collar and my high-top shoes**

**And my hair piled high upon my head**

**I went to lose a jolly hour on the trolley**

**And lost my heart instead**

**With his light brown derby and his bright green tie**

**He was quite the handsomest of men**

**I started to yep so I counted to ten**

**Then I counted to ten again**

**"Clang, clang, clang" went the trolley**

**"Ding, ding, ding" went the bell**

**"Zing, zing, zing" went my heartstrings**

**From the moment I saw him I fell**

**"Chug, chug, chug" went the motor**

**"Bump, bump, bump" went the brake**

**"Thump, thump, thump" went my heartstrings**

**When he smiled I could feel the car shake**

**He tipped his hat and took a seat**

**He said he hoped he hadn't stepped upon my feet**

**He asked my name, I held my breath**

**I couldn't speak because he scared me half to death**



# **The Trolley Song (pg. 2)**

**"Buzz, buzz, buzz" went the buzzer**

**"Plop, plop, plop" went the wheels**

**"Stop, stop stop" went my heartstrings**

**As he started to go then I started to know how it feels**

**When the universe reels**

**"Buzz, buzz, buzz" went the buzzer**

**"Plop, plop, plop" went the wheels**

**"Stop, stop, stop" went my heartstrings**

**When he started to leave I took hold of his sleeve**

**with my hand**

**And as if it were planned, he stayed on with me**

**And it was grand just to stand with his hand holding mine**

**To the end of the line**

**Song: "Take Me Home, Country Roads" (1971)**

**Songwriter: Bill Danoff, Taffy Nivert & John Denver**

***Brief Context:*** "Take Me Home, Country Roads," also known simply as "Country Roads," was released as a single performed by John Denver. The song stands out as one of Denver's classics, maintaining its popularity even in contemporary times. The inspiration for the song stemmed from Danoff's childhood in Massachusetts, although he initially hesitated to write about it due to his belief that the word "Massachusetts" lacked musicality. Initially the song was intended for Johnny Cash, but Danoff & Nivert ultimately redirected their plans when Denver expressed an affinity for the song.

***Activity:* Listening**

***What do you need?***

- **Perfect Harmony "Take Me Home, Country Roads" video**

***Archives Artifact***

In 1979 "John Denver and the Muppets: A Christmas Together" graced the airwaves on December 5th. Mainly centering on holiday music, Denver and his newfound puppet friends perform several holiday favorites.

The Songbook's Ray Charles ("The Other Ray Charles") was a music consultant for the Muppet programming in the early 1970s. His collection includes photos of John Denver with the Muppets for numerous collaborations.







***John Denver in the top center between his Muppet friends including Miss Piggy and Animal. Jim Henson (creator of the Muppets) is shown bottom center.***



***John Denver recording "The Christmas Wish" with Kermit the Frog.***

