

Gratitude in Perfect Harmony

"I've Got Plenty to Be Thankful For"
"Count Your Blessings (Instead of Sheep)"
"The Frim Fram Sauce"
"We Are Family"
"Thank You for Being a Friend"

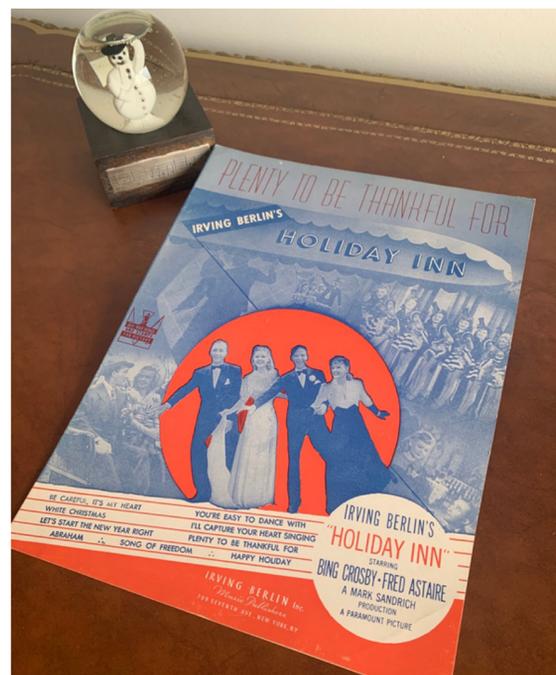
"I've got plenty to be thankful for . . ."

Here at the Great American Songbook Foundation, we are always thankful for receiving treasures from American music history. We also love preserving them! One of our favorite items is the snow globe featured below. Irving Berlin gifted it to Rosemary Clooney at the end of filming the holiday classic *White Christmas*. It is inscribed with the opening musical phrase of "White Christmas."

Take time today to think about a cherished heirloom in your life!



**A promotional headshot of Bing Crosby from the 1950s
(Songbook Library & Archives)**



**Sheet music from Holiday Inn and a snow globe once owned by Irving Berlin
(Songbook Library & Archives)**



Song: "I've Got Plenty to be Thankful For" (1942)
Songwriter: Irving Berlin

Brief Context: "I've Got Plenty to be Thankful For" was a song recorded in 1942 by Bing Crosby for the musical film *Holiday Inn* also starring Fred Astaire. The movie received an Academy Award for Best Original Song ("White Christmas"), Best Score, and Best Original Story. The songs from the movie were so popular, Decca released a special "Song Hits from Holiday Inn" record that included longer versions of many songs, including "I've Got Plenty to be Thankful For." This record was Bing's third studio album and featured his first release of the popular "White Christmas."

Activity: Listening

Fun fact:

Segments of the film are introduced by shots of a calendar with a visual symbol representing a given holiday. For the month of November, an animated turkey is shown running back and forth between the third and fourth Thursdays until finally it shrugs its shoulders in confusion. This is a mocking reference to the "Franksgiving" controversy when President Franklin D. Roosevelt tried to expand the Christmas shopping season by declaring Thanksgiving a week earlier than before, leading to Congress setting Thanksgiving's present date by law.



[Watch the sequence.](#)

Song: "Count Your Blessings (Instead of Sheep)" (1952)
Songwriter: Irving Berlin

Brief Context: Irving Berlin is certainly known for his holiday music! "Count Your Blessings (Instead of Sheep)" is a song from the 1954 movie "White Christmas" starring Rosemary Clooney and Bing Crosby. At one point, Berlin was struggling with insomnia brought on by stress when his doctor recommended "counting his blessings." The comment was clearly a source of inspiration for Berlin, as he went on to incorporate it into this song and one of the most popular holiday movies of all time. Though originally performed as a Christmas song, there are no references to the holiday at all. This song has been recorded by not only Rosemary Clooney and Bing Crosby, but also Eddie Fisher, Sonny Rollins, Andy Williams, and Jimmy Durante, among others.

Activity: Singing and engaged discussion

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "Count Your Blessings (Instead of Sheep)" video
- Perfect Harmony "Count Your Blessings (Instead of Sheep)" lyrics

Suggested discussion prompts

As we celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday each November, we often reflect on things, or people, in our lives we are thankful for.

- **Who, or what, are you feeling thankful for this year?**
 - **Suggested prompts:**
 - **Family**
 - **Friends**
 - **Pets**
 - **Autumn Leaves**
- **Why do you feel thankful for these things?**



Count Your Blessings (Instead of Sheep)

**When I'm worried and I can't sleep
I count my blessings instead of sheep
And I fall asleep counting my blessings
When my bankroll is getting small
I think of when I had none at all
And I fall asleep counting my blessings**

**I think about a nursery and I picture curly heads
And one by one I count them as they slumber in their beds
If you're worried and you can't sleep
Just count your blessings instead of sheep
And you'll fall asleep counting your blessings**

**When I'm worried and I can't sleep
I count my blessings instead of sheep
And I fall asleep counting my blessings
When my bankroll is getting small
I think of when I had none at all
And I fall asleep counting my blessings**

**I think about a nursery and I picture curly heads
And one by one I count them as they slumber in their beds
If you're worried and you can't sleep
Just count your blessings instead of sheep
And you'll fall asleep counting your blessings**

Song: "The Frim Fram Sauce" (1945)
As performed by: Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong

Brief Context: 1945's "The Frim-Fram Sauce" is a jazz song, made famous by The Nat King Cole Trio and performed by a variety of musicians over the years from Ella Fitzgerald (with Louis Armstrong) to Diana Krall. "The Frim-Fram Sauce" is considered a novelty song and is best remembered for its silly lyrics by Redd Evans. The narrator speaks to a waiter in a restaurant, as if in the process of ordering food.

Activity: Movement (upper body)

What do you need?

- "The Frim Fram Sauce" Perfect Harmony video

Suggested Seated Movement

1. L Hand reaches out then pulls in toward body to make bowl, R Hand makes fist for spoon
2. Stir to the beat
3. Throw R Hand outward (repeat L Hand)
4. 2 Hands make Big Bowl, R Hand reaches up to grab spice/shake into bowl (repeat L Hand)
5. Stir to the beat
6. Throw R Hand outward (repeat L Hand)
7. Shake finger to the beat, then rub tummy
8. L Hand pushes out with all 5 fingers (repeat R Hand)
9. Both Hands move upward and then circle downward to lap
10. One hand is out flat like a fish, Other hand sprinkles spices, both hands pat spices into fish
11. Stir to the beat
12. Throw R Hand outward (repeat L Hand)
13. Swing both hands toward Left - 4 x's (repeat R)
14. Hands in front criss-crossing over each other moving Upward then Downward
15. Hands land on lap, clap & pat 3x's
16. Smile!



**Song: "We Are Family" (1979)
Made Popular by: Sister Sledge**

Brief Context: "We are Family" is a popular disco song by the sister group Sister Sledge. The four sisters were close and grew up singing together in Philadelphia. In 2002, the Sledge Sisters stated: "We're proud of ['We are Family'] because it gives us a familial connection with our fans, who often share stories with us about their own families."

Activity: Singing & Engaged Discussion

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "We are Family" video
- Perfect Harmony "We are Family" lyrics sheet

Suggested Discussion Prompts

Getting together with family is especially meaningful during the holiday season.

- **What are some holiday traditions you and your family celebrate each year?**
 - **Suggested prompts:**
 - **Baking holiday cookies**
 - **Opening presents early**
 - **Holiday sing-a-longs**
- **How does celebrating these traditions each year make you feel?**

This resource made possible by



We are Family

We are family

I've got all my sisters with me

We are family

Get up everybody and sing

Everyone can see us together

As we walk on by

And we fly just like two birds of a feather

I can't tell no lie

Oh, all of the people around us say

Can they be that close

And let me state for the record

We're giving love in a family dose

We are family

I got all my sisters with me

We are family

Get up everybody and sing

Living life is fun and we've just begun

To get our share of the world's delights

(High) high hopes we have for the future

And our goal in sight

No, we don't hesitate

That is a part of our golden rule

Have faith in you and the things you do

You won't go wrong

This is our family jewel

We are family

I got all my sisters with me

We are family

Get up everybody and sing

Song: "Thank You for Being a Friend" (1978)
From the television show *The Golden Girls*

Brief Context: "Thank You for Being a Friend" is best known as the theme song for the NBC sitcom *The Golden Girls*, which follows the lives of four friends, Rose (Betty White), Dorothy (Bea Arthur), Sophia (Estelle Getty) and Blanche (Rue McClanahan) navigating relationships at an older age. It was written by singer-songwriter Andrew Gold in 1978 and according to Gold was "just this little throwaway thing" that took him "about an hour to write."

Activity: Listening

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "Thank You for Being a Friend" video

Fun Fact

Musician Andrew Gold, who wrote "Thank You for Being a Friend", also had success working with other musicians on their songs. Gold is credited with making Songbook Hall of Fame member Linda Ronstadt a household name. He played on five of her albums, contributing the iconic instrumental breakdown on Ronstadt's 1975 song, ["You're No Good."](#)

