

A Tribute to Dolly Parton

"My Tennessee Mountain Home" | LISTENING & DISCUSSION

"Jolene" | SINGING

"9 to 5" | MOVEMENT

"Light of a Clear Blue Morning" | SINGING & DISCUSSION

"Islands in the Stream" | SINGING & DISCUSSION

Dolly's Music Across Generations

Dolly Parton's music tells stories of home, love, determination, and hope. From her Tennessee childhood to the promise of a brighter day, her songs invite us to reflect on the people and experiences that shape our lives.

From her country roots to her familiar pop hits, Dolly's distinctive voice and heartfelt storytelling touched listeners across generations. This month, we honor her memory and celebrate the warmth, humor, and heart that live on through her music.



Song: "My Tennessee Mountain Home" (1972)

Songwriters: Dolly Parton

Brief Context:

Dolly Parton wrote "My Tennessee Mountain Home" about her childhood in rural East Tennessee. Released on her 1973 album of the same name, the song paints a picture of front porch swings, mountain breezes, and walks home from church. These everyday details celebrate the comfort of home and the lasting importance of her roots.

Activity: Listening and Discussion

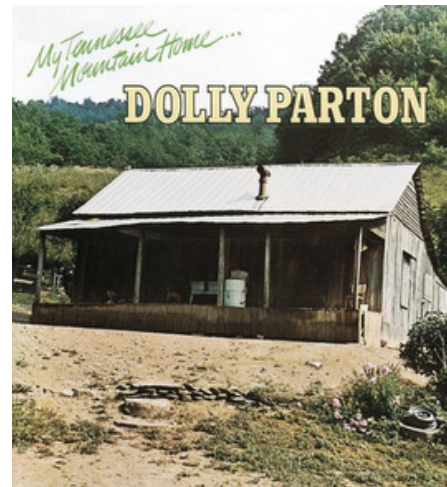
What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "My Tennessee Mountain Home" video ([YOUTUBE](#))

Suggested Discussion

An artist or song can become especially meaningful because it reminds us of someone we love.

Tell someone about an artist or song that is important to you because of a family member or friend.



Song: "Jolene" (1973)
Recording: Dolly Parton

Brief Context:

Dolly Parton wrote and recorded "Jolene" in 1973, turning a heartfelt plea about love into one of her best-known songs. The name came from a young fan she met while signing autographs, while the story was inspired by a bank teller who showed an interest in her husband. "Jolene" reached No. 1 on the country chart in 1974 and became one of her signature songs, recorded by artists across musical styles and generations.

Activity: Singing

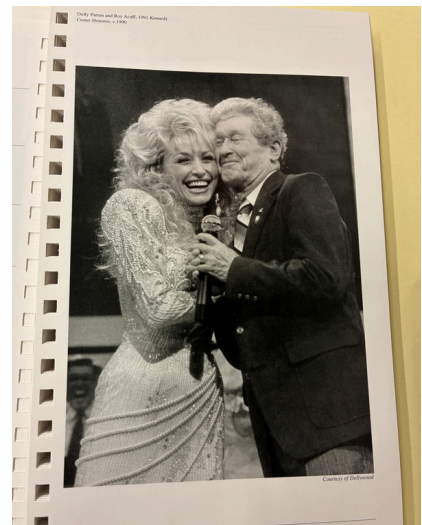
What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "Jolene" video ([YOUTUBE](#))
- Perfect Harmony "Jolene" lyrics

Collections Spotlight

The lasting success of "Jolene" helped make it a fitting choice for Dolly Parton's 2006 Kennedy Center Honors tribute. A production page preserved in the Songbook Library & Archives' Ray Charles Collection lists the song in a bluegrass medley alongside "My Tennessee Mountain Home."

Learn more at [TheSongbook.org/DollyParton](https://thesongbook.org/DollyParton)



Jolene

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene

I'm beggin' of you, please don't take my man

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene

Please don't take him just because you can

Your beauty is beyond compare

With flaming locks of auburn hair

With ivory skin and eyes of emerald green

Your smile is like a breath of spring

Your voice is soft like summer rain

And I cannot compete with you, Jolene

He talks about you in his sleep

And there's nothin' I can do to keep

From cryin' when he calls your name, Jolene

And I can easily understand

How you could easily take my man

But you don't know what he means to me, Jolene

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene

I'm beggin' of you, please don't take my man

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene

Please don't take him just because you can

Jolene

You could have your choice of men

But I could never love again

He's the only one for me, Jolene

I had to have this talk with you

My happiness depends on you

And whatever you decide to do, Jolene

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene

I'm beggin' of you, please don't take my man

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene

Please don't take him even though you can

Jolene, Jolene

Song: "9 to 5" (1980)

Songwriters: Dolly Parton

Brief Context:

Dolly Parton wrote "9 to 5" for the 1980 film of the same name, in which she also starred. The song talks about the challenges working women face, especially in offices, as they seek fairness and respect. Parton's catchy tune and lyrics resonated with listeners, making it a chart-topper and earning nominations for awards like the Academy Award and GRAMMYS.

Activity: Movement

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "9 to 5" video ([YOUTUBE](#))

Suggested Seated Movement

Follow Perfect Harmony leader Renée or create your own seated movement.

Use movements like . . .

- Pat your legs.
- March in place.
- Shimmy your arms up your body and shake your hands.

Make It Your Own

Choose the movements that feel comfortable for you. Try smaller motions, move at your own pace, or enjoy listening and watching.



Song: "Light of a Clear Blue Morning" (1977)

Songwriters: Dolly Parton

Brief Context:

Dolly Parton wrote "Light of a Clear Blue Morning" as she began a new chapter following the end of her longtime musical partnership with Porter Wagoner. Released on her 1977 album *New Harvest...First Gathering*, the song expresses a sense of freedom and renewed hope. Its image of morning light offers reassurance that difficult times can give way to a brighter future.

Activity: Singing and Discussion

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "Light of a Clear Blue Morning" video ([YOUTUBE](#))
- Perfect Harmony "Light of a Clear Blue Morning" lyrics

Suggested Discussion

Dolly Parton has written and recorded so many songs that have become meaningful to listeners around the world.

Tell someone about your favorite Dolly Parton song and what makes it special to you.



Light of a Clear Blue Morning

**It's been a long dark night
And I've been a-waitin' for the morning
It's been a long hard fight
But I see a brand new day dawning
I've been looking for the sunshine
You know I ain't seen it in so long
But everything's gonna work out just fine
And everything's gonna be alright
That's been all wrong
'Cause I can see the light of a clear blue morning
I can see the light of a brand new day
I can see the light of a clear blue morning
Everything's gonna be alright
It's gonna be okay
It's been a long, long time
Since I've known the taste of freedom
Those clinging vines
That had me bound, well, I don't need 'em
Oh, I've been like a captured eagle
An eagle's born to fly**

Light of a Clear Blue Morning

**Now that I have won my freedom
Like an eagle, I am eager for the sky
'Cause I can see the light of a clear blue morning
I can see the light of brand new day
I can see the light of a clear blue morning
Everything's gonna be alright
That's been all wrong
I can see the light of a clear blue morning
I can see the light of brand new day
I can see the light of a clear blue morning
Everything's gonna be alright
Everything's gonna be alright
Everything's gonna be alright
It's gonna be okay
Yes I can see the light of a clear blue morning
Yes I can see the light of a brand new day
Yes I can see the light of a clear blue morning
And everything's gonna be alright
Everything's gonna be alright
Everything's gonna be alright
It's gonna be okay**

Song: "Islands in the Stream" (1983)

Songwriters: Barry, Robin, and Maurice Gibb

Brief Context:

Written by Barry, Robin, and Maurice Gibb of the Bee Gees, "Islands in the Stream" became a hit duet for Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers in 1983, reaching No. 1 on both the country and pop charts. Their distinctive voices blend in a song about love, trust, and supporting one another, making it one of their best-known collaborations.

Activity: Singing and Discussion

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "Islands in the Stream" video ([YOUTUBE](#))
- Perfect Harmony "Islands in the Stream" lyrics

Suggested Discussion

Dolly Parton is known not only for her music, but also for her kindness and support of other people. Her example reminds us that even a small act of care can make a difference in someone's day.

Tell someone about one thing you could do today to show kindness or support to someone else.



Islands in the Stream

**Baby, when I met you there was peace unknown
I set out to get you with a fine tooth comb
I was soft inside, there was somethin' going on
You do something to me that I can't explain
Hold me closer and I feel no pain
Every beat of my heart
We got somethin' goin' on
Tender love is blind
It requires a dedication
All this love we feel
Needs no conversation
We ride it together, ah-ah
Makin' love with each other, ah-ah
Islands in the stream
That is what we are
No one in-between
How can we be wrong?
Sail away with me to another world
And we rely on each other, ah-ah
From one lover to another, ah-ah**

Islands in the Stream

**I can't live without you if the love was gone
Everything is nothin' if you've got no one
And you did walk in tonight
Slowly losing sight of the real thing
But that won't happen to us, and we got no doubt
Too deep in love and we got no way out
And the message is clear
This could be the year for the real thing
No more will you cry
Baby, I will hurt you never
We start and end as one, in love forever
We can ride it together, ah-ah
Makin' love with each other, ah-ah
Islands in the stream
That is what we are
No one in-between
How can we be wrong?
Sail away with me to another world
And we rely on each other, ah-ah
From one lover to another, ah-ah**

Islands in the Stream

Sail away

Oh, come sail away with me

Islands in the stream

That is what we are

No one in-between

How can we be wrong?

Sail away with me to another world

And we rely on each other, ah-ah

From one lover to another, ah-ah