

Irving Berlin: “How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning”

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Song	“How I Hate to Get up in the Morning” by Irving Berlin
Activities	Kevin McCaughey
Audio	song

Pre-Text Activity

1. Read the Introductory Text on Irving Berlin

Irving Berlin, perhaps America’s most famous songwriter, was born in Siberia. His family immigrated to America when he was about six years old, during the Pale of Settlement (or Черта Оседлости).

Berlin had 282 hits in the Top 40 charts, and 35 number one hits.

Irving served in the U.S. army in World War I. He had always been, however, a late riser, so it was very difficult for him to wake up at dawn. He composed one of 1918’s most popular songs “Oh, How I Hate to Get up in the Morning.”

2. Warm-up Questions

1. How about you? Do you hate to get up in the morning? Describe how you wake up. Do you jump out of bed, do you struggle, do you reset the snooze button on your alarm clock?
2. Describe a typical morning from the time you wake up until the time you leave your house.
3. Do you like going to be in the evening? Not everyone does! Describe how you get ready for bed.
4. Do you think people who are early to rise get more work done than people who sleep in (sleep late)? Are early risers somehow more responsible? Why or why not?

Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning

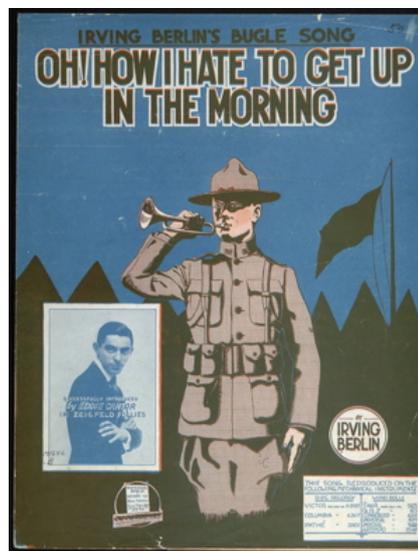
Written by Irving Berlin

[Listen to cool scratchy version sung by Arthur Fiedler](#) (2:52)

Replace the missing words.

words

- bugler* = the man who plays the bugle, a military horn like a trumpet
a hard blow = something unpleasant, difficult to accept
reveille = (pronounced *revelee*)
amputate = to cut off
foe = enemy



From Library of Congress

The other day I (1) _____ to meet a soldier friend of mine
He'd been in (2) _____ for several weeks and he was looking fine
His (3) _____ had developed and his cheeks were rosy red
I asked him how he liked the (4) _____, and this is what he said:

“Oh! how I hate to get up in the morning
Oh! how (5) _____ love to remain in bed
For the (6) _____ blow of all, is to hear the bugler call
You've got to get up, you've got to get up, you've got to get up this morning!

Some day I'm going to (7) _____ the bugler
Some day they're going to find him dead
I'll (8) _____ his reveille, and step upon it heavily
And (9) _____ the rest of my life in bed.”

A bugler in the army is the (10) _____ of men
He (11) _____ the boys at five and then goes back to bed again
He doesn't have to (12) _____ again until the afternoon

If ev'ry thing goes well (13) _____ me I'll be a bugler soon.

“Oh! how I hate to get up in the morning

Oh! how I'd love to remain in bed

For the hardest (14) _____ of all, is to hear the bugler call

You've got to get up, you've got to get up, you've got to get up this morning!

Oh! boy the minute the battle is over

Oh! boy the minute the (15) _____ is dead

I'll put my uniform away, and move to Philadelphia

and spend the rest of my life in bed.”

*The mp3 file comes from www.firstworldwar.com, an archive of multimedia material pertaining to the First World War.

Post-Text Activities

3. Song Translation Game

“Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning” is a war song, a happy and funny one, for sure, intended to bring some lightness into the lives of soldiers. Russia has tons of war songs: patriot, happy, tragic.

Each student should think of one of these Russian songs and translate a few lines into English. Write them down. Then read them out loud to the class. Classmates will then identify the original Russian song.

You will want to choose songs that others know, but not the best-known song of all. You see, you want to choose a song that other students will not choose. The more different songs in the game, the more fun it is.

If you can't think of a war song, any song will do.

4. Comparing War Songs

Compare Soviet and US war songs. How are they different? How are they similar?

You'll find lyrics to US war songs at
<http://www.fortunecity.com/tinpan/parton/2/ww2.html>.

For instructions on writing a comparative essay, go to the Write Room: The Comparative Essay.

Answers & Extras

More on Irving Berlin

Want to listen to more about Irving Berlin? Go here for a VOA article about him:

<http://voanews.com/specialenglish/archive/2003-05/a-2003-05-09-2-1.cfm>

Answers to Song Gap-Fill

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. chanced | 9. spend |
| 2. camp | 10. luckiest |
| 3. muscles | 11. wakes |
| 4. life | 12. blow |
| 5. I'd | 13. with |
| 6. hardest | 14. blow |
| 7. murder | 15. foe |
| 8. amputate | |