



## WS20 HIGH SCHOOL Lesson Plan

April Ballard, M.Ed, BS

**April Ballard, B.S., M.Ed**  
**WoodSongs Classroom Project**

**Title: Guns & Peace**

**Subject: Guns and Violence**

**Length of Lesson: Two-Three Class Periods**

**Grade Level: 9th-12th**

**Introduction and Overview:** This lesson is designed entirely to deliver a message of peace and non-violence. The song, Gun, is written and performed by Michael Johnathon. The violence and tragedies that have happened in schools are devastating. We want to encourage a message of peace. Through this song, Michael Johnathon discusses that guns are not the "... piece that causes peace."

We, at WoodSongs, want to encourage a peaceful world, which starts with our homes and schools. We want students to feel safe to discuss and ask questions about their own safety. Students are encouraged to think about the second amendment and what it actually meant (based on the time it was written verses the times we have now).

Michael explains the lyrics to his song, Gun, in the following way: " The point of this song is not about the gun, it's about the gunman. People kill people, guns don't kill people. And I think that's the point of the lyric, but at the same time I am absolutely not in favor of the mass distribution of firearms. This demonstrates the difficulty of the problem which is what we want students to openly discuss inside the classroom using the song as a template."

GUN is designed as a class discussion using the song "GUN" as a template for thought and argument. Do guns kill people? Should guns be banned? What about the second amendment? Will banning guns change peoples mind about violence and killing? America is the most armed nation on earth and the American citizen is the biggest, armed military force on the planet: does that make us safer? Please encourage students to research articles that discuss this very sensitive topic so that they may remain current on these discussions.

Once students have listened to the song, there will then be a reflection time in which they write down their feelings. The teacher may include some fundamental questions such as, " What does the word peace mean to you?" "What are some ways that you may create and work for peace in your lives, school and community?" "What are some concerns that you have?" This is an opportunity for the students to share their worries and concerns.

This is obviously a very sensitive subject, and should be treated in a sensitive manner, which allows students to feel safe and heard.

**Activity 1:** After listening to the song, have a brief class discussion, where you ask the students questions. If they do not wish to share, they do not have to, but it may be a good time for them to be heard and to voice their concerns.

**Activity 2:** Activity 2 will focus on the art of the words through music. Students are encouraged to listen to the words of the song performed by Michael Johnathon. This activity will then ask students to write their own poem in which they share the message of peace. Also encourage them to write a

poem or short story that relays an important message, and with the idea that it could be created as a song eventually as well.

**Activity 3:** This activity will have students to explore the idea of how music and art bring people together. Students will research and find one song that demonstrates and relays a message of peace. The song will demonstrate a time in which music brought about peace. Students will create an artistic piece to accompany the song. Students are encouraged to be creative with their artistic design. Students should submit their ideas for initial approval and then design their art. Creativity is strongly encouraged throughout this process. This activity encourages students to think about how they may also create music and/or art to bring about peace. For reference, begin here with both the lyrics to Michael Johnathon's song, Gun, and also a quote from Martin Luther King Jr: <http://www.michaeljohnathon.com/gun/>

## TO PLAY THE SONG:

For reference, begin here with both the lyrics to Michael Johnathon's song, Gun, and also a quote from Martin Luther King Jr: <http://www.michaeljohnathon.com/gun/>

- **LYRICS**
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Don't point that gun  
Don't point that gun  
that aint the piece  
    that causes peace  
    Don't point that gun

Don't aim at me  
Don't aim at me  
Finally  
    set yourself free  
    Don't aim at me

I don't believe  
what I see  
Hot tempered world aimed right at me

Tell everyone  
put down that gun  
that ain't the piece  
that causes peace Put down that gun

I'm not your friend  
I'm not your friend  
I'm not your lover  
    I'm just your brother  
    But I'm not your friend