

# THE WALRUS

## BEATLES SONGBOOK



### THEMES:

- Harmony
- Listening skills
- Lyrics
- Opposites
- Popular music
- Rock and roll
- Rhythm
- Sing-a-long
- Social change
- The Sixties
- Wordplay

### About the Performance

This new show developed by KBAM introduces the music of the Beatles to school audiences, inciting Beatlemania in a whole new generation.

Through high-energy sing-alongs and clap-alongs, students will experience the irresistible appeal of the iconic lyrics and music written by four lads from Liverpool.

With a few choice stories and facts brought to life for historical context, this show immerses students in some of the most unforgettable music of all time. [Grades K-7]

### About the Artists

*The Walrus* is actually a Vancouver-based rock band known as *No Island*. Formed in 2009, their original music is grounded in mainstream rock of the late 60s, 70s, and 80s and name the influences on their song writing as Toto, The Eagles, The Beatles, Supertramp, Haim, Billy Joel, and many others. They have performed live across Canada at a wide variety of venues.



The band consists of:

Andy Rice—keyboards, vocals

Max Ley—drums, vocals

Keith Sinclair—guitars, vocals

Rob Thompson—bass, vocals

Their latest album *Better Days* is available at:

<https://music.no-island.com/album/better-days-2>



## Activity Suggestions

### **Opposites Attract (20 minutes) [K-3] Song: Hello, Goodbye**

Discuss what opposites are and share some examples—if possible bring in a picture book about opposites. Let the class know that in the upcoming show the band will share a song about opposites written by the greatest band that ever lived! It will be up to them to listen for as many opposites as they can. Hand out pieces of paper to the class that have a line drawn down the middle and an opposite word written on each side (e.g. big/small, short/tall). Invite your students to draw an example of the opposites words they have on each side of the page. At any point as a movement break play Simon Says but with opposites (e.g. the teacher says “Simon says reach up high” and students must reach down low).

### **What’s This Nonsense? (30 minutes) [K-7] Songs: I Am the Walrus, Come Together**

Share a favourite nonsense poems with the class, such as *On The Ning Nang Nong* by Spike Milligan, *The Jabberwocky* by Lewis Carroll, or *The Jumblies* by Edward Lear. Engage students in thinking deeply about the poem by doing one or more of the following:

Invite students to say single lines or phrases of the poem out loud—varying speed, volume, and emphasis, or adding gestures, facial expressions, accents, movements, etc.

On the board, make a list of elements of the poem that seem normal (it is broken into lines, it is about a character, etc.) and that seem silly (made up words, characters doing odd things, objects being the wrong shape or colour, etc.).

Make a list on the board of made up words from the poem and ask students to select one and write their own definition for it. Then share them with the class, noting if there are any similarities in the students’ definitions for the same words.

Let students know that in the upcoming performance the band will share some nonsense songs written by the greatest band that ever lived!

### **Here’s Some Nonsense! (45 minutes) [K-7] Songs: I am the Walrus, Come Together**

As a follow up to the *What’s This Nonsense* activity (above), tell students they will be writing their own nonsense poem. For a younger class, write the poem together as a group. But first, try one or more of these nonsense poem warm-ups:

Make up a word with a letter drawn from a hat (and if they are feeling adventurous, add a meaning for the word).

Practice describing objects in ways that don’t make sense (e.g. “the scarf slithered and shimmied” or “the bulbous, barking bread machine”)

Introduce the concept of alliteration (“antsy alligators are awfully agitated”) and invite students to create their own examples.

Then invite students to write their own nonsense poem, giving them a starting phrase such as “T’was whispy walkabout on the frange...” or “Upon a garden path was I/Frumpting to and fro...” Invite student’s who’d like to to share their finished poems to read them out loud.

### **Peace In Bed (45 minutes) [4-7] Song: Revolution, Give Peace a Chance**

Read the following to the class: The 60s—when The Beatles became famous—were a time of a of social upheaval, including opposition to the Vietnam War later in the decade. Yoko Ono (a musician and performance artist) and John Lennon (member of the Beatles) were married near the end of the 60s, and they collaborated on many different projects together. One of those projects was called the *Bed In*. Shortly after their wedding, they invited the press to their honeymoon suite every day for most of the day for a week. When the press arrived, they were sitting in bed in their pajamas with the signs “Hair Peace” and “Bed Peace” posted above them. While their *Bed In* had many different interpretations, one was to advocate that Peace could be promoted while staying in bed, and that violent protest wasn’t a good way to create change. Another goal was to be silly in a way that caught people’s attention and got them talking about peace. Their *Bed In* certainly got the press talking and arguing! A while after Yoko and John’s first *Bed In* in Amsterdam they held a second one in Montreal, which led to the recording of the song “Give Peace a Chance.”

Share video clips of John and Yoko’s *Bed Ins*, including interviews with the press. If time, share a recording of “Give Peace a Chance.” Then have your class reflect on the following questions verbally or in writing:

What do you think Yoko and John’s goals were? What do you think they achieved?

What are similarities and differences between sit ins and Yoko and John’s *Bed In*? [Introduce sit ins to the class if this is a new concept to them] If you were to host an event to promote peace, what might you do to catch people’s attention and make sure the event was a success?