



## **Lessons in Life**

*By Bridgette Bryant & Daniel Ho*

Bridgette Bryant's voice is at once clear, powerful, and soulful in this R&B folk mix. In *Lessons in Life*, Bryant reminds us that life lessons are not always easily mastered, and encourages respect for all creatures, large and small. *Lessons in Life* comes from the album of the same name, in which Bryant and co-writer Daniel Ho use songs to teach children about respecting others and themselves, among other life lessons.



## ***Song 1: Lessons in Life***



### **ACTIVITY MENU**

#### **PRE-LISTENING**

Four Corners  
Unscramble the Sentences  
Picture Dictation

#### **LISTENING**

Relax and Enjoy!  
Listening Gap-Fill  
Find the Mistakes

#### **SINGING**

Sing Along With Me  
Show Me the Word  
Disappearing Song

#### **POST-LISTENING**

Speaking: Silly Story  
Reading: Main Ideas and/or Specific Details  
Writing: Paragraph Posters



## Lessons in Life: Lyrics

by *Bridgette Bryant*

(2:26)

- 1      Having a friend is like planting a flower  
        Show love and kindness it one day will bloom  
        Let's be aware as we walk on this planet  
        Even the tiniest creature needs room.
- 5      Lessons in life aren't always so simple  
        Nothing you're given will ever come free  
        Even the smallest of gifts deserves "thank you"  
        I respect you and you respect me  
        I think of you and you think of me.
- 10     Remember everyone here is important  
        When you're forgotten, it makes you feel sad  
        Know that you matter and you make a difference  
        Let no one shame you or make you feel bad.  
        Lessons in life aren't always so simple
- 15     Nothing you're given will ever come free (nothing ever gonna come to you freely)  
        Even the smallest of gifts deserves "thank you"  
        I respect you and you respect me  
        I think about you and you think about me. (I think of you and you think of me)
- 19     Lessons in life aren't always so simple  
        Nothing you're given will ever come free  
        Even the smallest of gifts deserves "thank you"  
        I respect you and you respect me  
        I think of you and you think about me. (I think of you and you think of me)



## Post-listening - Speaking 4: Silly Story

**Purpose:** To tell stories, and practice using new vocabulary in sentences

**Level:** 2 and above

**Time:** 15 – 20 minutes

**Preparation and Materials:** Choose 15 – 18 key content words from the songs (either verbs or nouns) and write them on small cards. Each group of five students will need one set of cards.

### Instructions:

1. Divide students into groups of five. Have them sit around a table or move their desks to face each other. Place the pack of cards face down in a stack on the table or desk, so that the students cannot see the words.
2. Tell the students that they are going to tell a story using the words on the cards. The first person in the group selects the top card and makes up a sentence using that word. Example: If the word is *rain*, the first student might say, *Once upon a time a little girl was walking in the rain.*
3. The second person then selects the next card. That person must continue the story by making up a sentence using the word on the card. Example: If the word is *yellow*, the person might say, *The little girl was wearing a yellow coat.*
1. Students continue telling the circle story until they have gone through all of the cards.
2. At the end of the activity, you can ask a few groups to tell what happened in their stories.

### Modifications:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>A.</b> + <i>extension</i><br>+ <i>writing</i><br>+ <i>time</i>                                | Ask the students to write down their stories. Post all of the stories on the walls around the classroom. Ask the students to read the other stories and vote on which one is the best, the funniest, or the most creative.  |
| <b>B.</b> - <i>difficulty</i><br>+ <i>scaffolding</i><br>+ <i>materials</i><br>+ <i>pictures</i> | Include both a small picture and the written word on each card.   |
| <b>C.</b> - <i>difficulty</i><br>+ <i>writing</i><br>+ <i>time</i>                               | Give each group a smaller set of words. Have students write down their sentences/short stories. Have each group share their short story. Then, as a class, come up with transition sentences that link all of the short stories together into one longer story.   |
| <b>D.</b> + <i>humor</i>   | <b>Modifications (cont.)</b><br>To make a really silly story, have the first student follow Step 2 above. Then, have the second student choose a card, but this time they must <i>repeat</i> the sentence that the first student came up with, replacing one word in the sentence with the word on the card. Repeat until all of the word cards have been used, and a really strange story results. |
-

## Lessons in Life: Silly Stories

<b>friend</b>	<b>love</b>	<b>lessons</b>
<b>respect</b>	<b>gifts</b>	<b>walk</b>
<b>kindness</b>	<b>flower</b>	<b>think</b>
<b>feel</b>	<b>creature</b>	<b>give</b>
<b>planet</b>	<b>deserve</b>	<b>everyone</b>



## Motivation through Music

When life is difficult, people sometimes use songs and music as tools to bring a little happiness back into their lives. People may also use songs and music to help remind themselves about the important things in their lives. We call this type of music ‘motivational music’ because it gives listeners **encouragement**<sup>1</sup> to act or think in a certain way. This type of music can **leave a lasting impression**<sup>2</sup> on our lives. *Lessons in Life* is a great example of the kind of motivational music that is popular in America today.



Often these songs encourage the listener to do what is right or think more positively about life. For example, *Lessons in Life* reminds us that the lessons we learn as we go through life aren't always simple or easy to learn, such as respecting even the smallest creature. The purpose of these lines might be to encourage us to work hard at learning these lessons and being a good person. However, each person may understand the message of a motivational song in a different way. We all hear the same song, but we all have different lessons to learn in life and so we take away something different from the song.

Motivational songs have simple tunes that often use repeated words and rhythms. This means that anyone can remember and sing the song. This type of motivational music is not new. In fact, motivational music has a long history in the United States. For example, during the American Revolution (1775 – 1783) when the American colonies fought an important war for independence from British rule, American soldiers sang motivational songs such as *Yankee Doodle*. This song was first sung by the British to make fun of the American soldiers (the word ‘doodle’ refers to someone who is **simple-minded**<sup>3</sup>). However, the American soldiers soon stole the song, changed some of the words, and used the song to make fun of the British soldiers instead. What a switch! *Yankee Doodle* quickly became a song that motivated the American soldiers. Although it was a difficult time, this **light-hearted**<sup>4</sup> song helped **lift their spirits**<sup>5</sup> because it became a symbol of their pride and **patriotism**.<sup>6</sup>



Today, it is common for popular music from movies to become national symbols of hope, motivation, and determination. For example, singer and actress Judy Garland made the song *Over the Rainbow* famous in the 1939 movie *The Wizard of Oz*. In the song, Garland sings about finding a place in the world where skies are blue, bluebirds fly, and troubles “melt away,” or disappear. The song was very **influential**,<sup>7</sup> perhaps because it expressed the country's **longing**<sup>8</sup> and hope for a better world during war time.

<sup>1</sup> **encouragement** the act of giving hope and support to another person  
<sup>2</sup> **leave a lasting impression** to have a strong influence that remains for a long time  
<sup>3</sup> **simple-minded** not intelligent, lacking good judgment  
<sup>4</sup> **light-hearted** happy, cheerful, not serious  
<sup>5</sup> **lift (someone's) spirits** to make someone feel happier or better; to cheer up someone  
<sup>6</sup> **patriotism** love that people feel for their country  
<sup>7</sup> **influential** having the power to move or change others  
<sup>8</sup> **longing** to want something very much