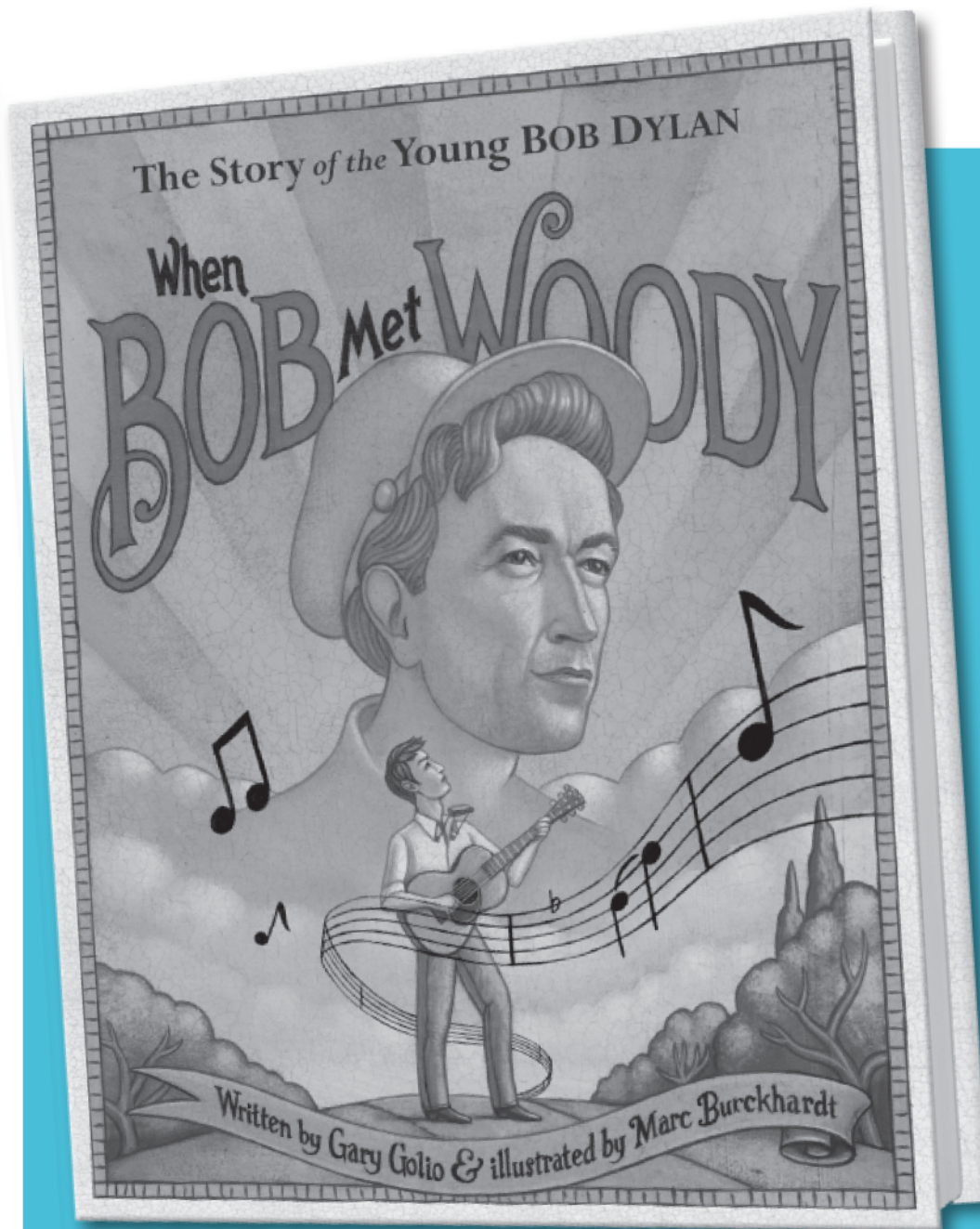


WHEN BOB MET WOODY



curriculum connections

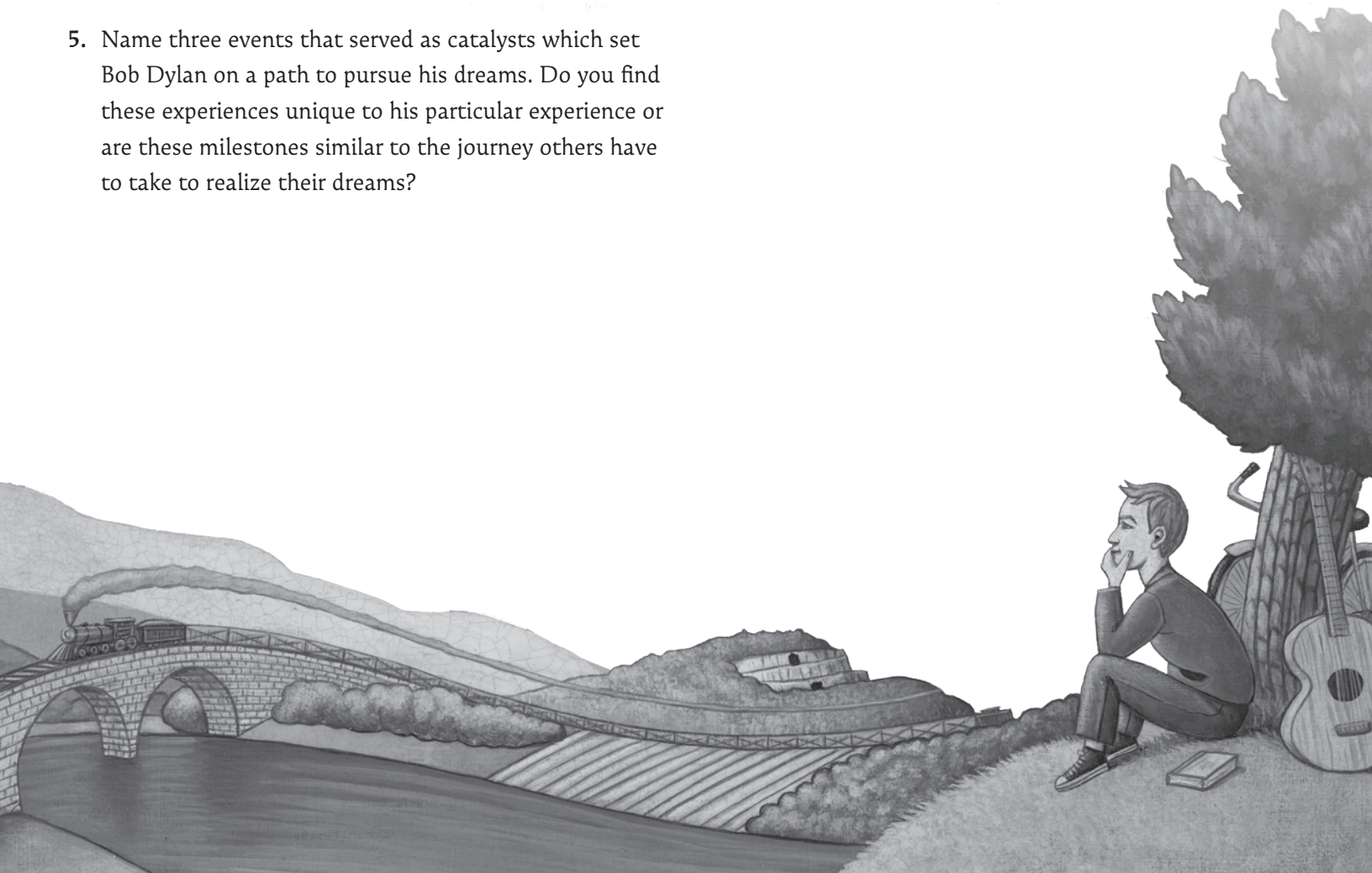
- ❖ Music
- ❖ American History
- ❖ Biography

All Ages

Written by Gary Golio & illustrated by Marc Burckhardt

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The book opens with “Bob floated into this world on waves of sound...to the music of ships’ bells, seagulls’ cries, and the rhythm of rumbling freight cars...”
In what ways does this introduction help readers predict and understand the role music will have on Bob Dylan’s life?
2. What is your assessment of Bob’s early life?
In your opinion, did he have a happy childhood and adolescence? Why or why not?
3. In what ways is Bob’s early relationship with his father similar to the experiences of most teens?
4. Through his childhood and adolescence, the biography asserts that Bob Zimmerman often stood out and seemed “different” than his peers; do you agree with this assessment? Offer specific examples which support your position.
5. Name three events that served as catalysts which set Bob Dylan on a path to pursue his dreams. Do you find these experiences unique to his particular experience or are these milestones similar to the journey others have to take to realize their dreams?
6. Describe the transformation of Bob Zimmerman to Bob Dylan. What does Bob’s decision to change his name in honor of his favorite poet signify?
7. Based on the biography, in what ways is Bob Dylan’s life similar to the life of Woody Guthrie?
8. As Bob becomes more connected to Woody’s music and experiences, he embellishes his own life story. What might be the motivation for doing so?
9. In your opinion, what impact does Woody Guthrie’s music and life have on Bob Dylan? Do you believe Dylan’s music would have taken the same course without this influence?
10. Given that *When Bob Met Woody* focuses on Dylan’s adolescence and early career, what other obstacles and challenges do you predict the musician faced later in life?

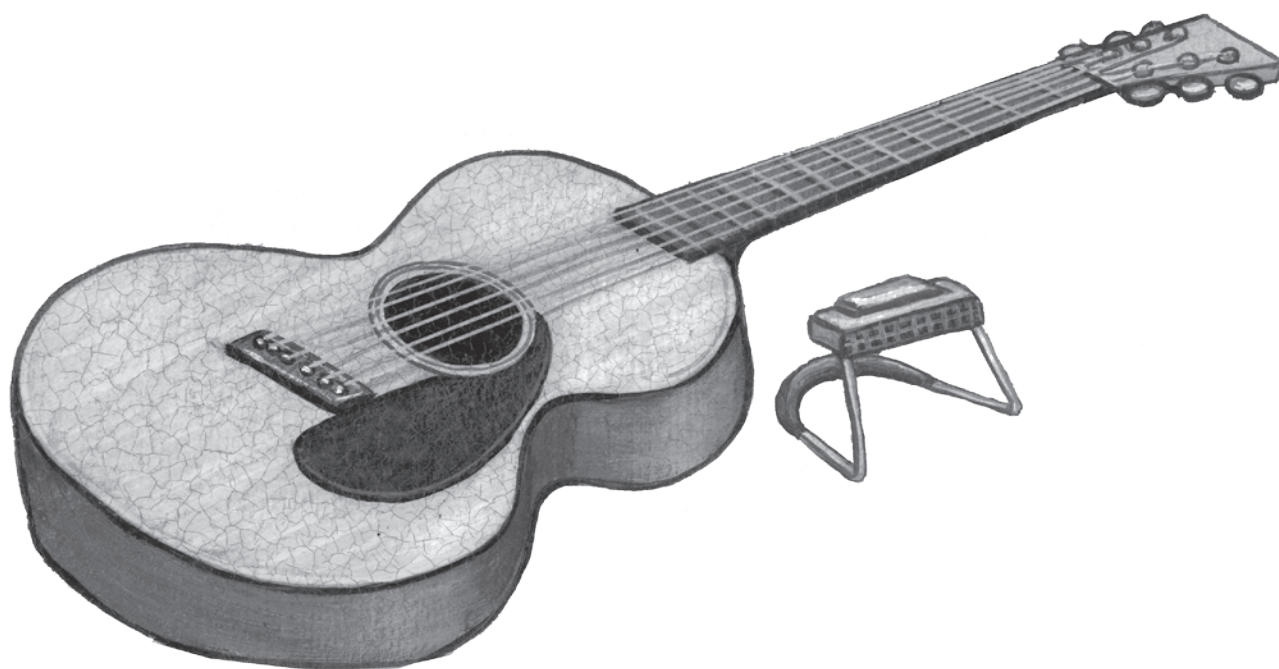


CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS: READING, WRITING, AND RESEARCHING

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNGER READERS:

Before reading *When Bob Met Woody*, play Woody Guthrie’s “This Land is Your Land” for your students. Play the song twice—during the first run through, have students simply listen to the song. When finished, brainstorm ideas and reactions by soliciting responses from students (to do this, consider asking simple questions such as “Did you like the song? Why or why not?”, “How did this song make you feel?”, or “What do you think the songwriter is trying to make listeners understand by writing this song?” During the second playing, make the lyrics available to the students (either by projecting them or providing a paper copy). After the second listening experience, return to the working brainstorming list and further develop these ideas. Next, read *When Bob Met Woody* to the class. After reading and discussion, share a musical selection from Bob Dylan using the same procedure (share the song twice and offer the lyrics for the second time). Have students create a Venn diagram, detailing the similarities and differences between Guthrie’s and Dylan’s music.

After reading *When Bob Met Woody*, ask students to think about how Bob Dylan pursued his dream of being a folk songwriter and singer. While brainstorming together, make a list of qualities he exhibited that allowed him to realize his dream. Next, ask students to consider their dreams. What do they want to become? Have them make a T-chart, listing their dream or goal at the top and then create a personalized list of the qualities and resources they will need to achieve this goal. Finally, after the lists are complete, distribute construction paper and have them select a symbol for their goal (for example, Dylan’s symbol might likely be a guitar). After drawing their symbol in the center of the page, have them include their qualities and resource list within the symbol—to enhance the activity, offer them the opportunity to visually enhance their images with various art supplies.



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR OLDER READERS

As a pre-reading activity, have students complete an anticipation guide structured in the following manner:

Before Reading	After Reading	Statements
		Being “different” always leads to unhappiness.
		Following your dreams requires great sacrifice.
		A strong role model can directly influence the choices an individual makes.
		Success is always tied to knowing the right people.
		Using music as a means of social commentary is always welcome.

Instruct students to complete the guide by placing a “+” sign in the box next to the statements for which they agree, and a “0” next to those for which they disagree. They must commit to agreement or disagreement—there are no conditional responses. Students should be assured that there are no correct or incorrect positions.

Once students have had the opportunity to complete the guide, the teacher reads each statement aloud and has students who agree show it by standing or raising their hands. Each student should be permitted to provide their rationale for agreeing if they wish.

POST READING ACTIVITIES

Woody Guthrie’s music and legacy were truly inspirational to Bob Dylan during his early days as a musician. Ask students to consider their future career aspirations. After selecting a particular career goal, have them research a leader in their chosen industry. After gathering basic biographical information about this role model, as well as reading any previous interviews given by this individual they can locate, have students create an original interview script (Q and A) listing the questions they would ask of this person. After drafting their inquiries, have them use their original questions and “answer” these in the voice of the role model/authority. To enhance this activity, offer students the opportunity to digitally record or film both parts of the Q and A and share with the class.

Using the Library of Congress’s The American Folklife Center (<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/index.html>), have students research the role of folk music in the larger context of folklife. Ask students to consider the following: Besides music, what are other significant components of folklife? Why is folklife so an essential part of societies? Working in small groups, have each team select a different contribution to explore and after collecting their findings, allow them the opportunity to share their knowledge and understanding with the class.



WHEN BOB MET WOODY

In *When Bob Met Woody*, readers learn that the poetry of Dylan Thomas was largely influential on Bob's early life and his new stage moniker was directly inspired by the poet. After placing students in small groups, allow them to explore the life and work of Dylan Thomas. After investigating Thomas' poetry, have groups search for connections between what they know about Dylan's life and why they believe Thomas' poetry was important to him. Have each group share a selected Dylan Thomas poem with the class. After the reading and using what they learned from *When Bob Met Woody*, have each group offer specific examples of why they believe their chosen poem would have been significant to a young Bob Dylan.

Along with Woody Guthrie, other notable American musicians and singers influenced the kind of music Bob Dylan would ultimately make. Have students select one of the following performers and research their contributions to the American music scene.

- Muddy Waters
- BB King
- Hank Williams
- Odetta
- Lead Belly
- Joan Baez
- Pete Seeger

Using a digital presentation model of their preference, have them highlight general biographical information about their selected performer (including a musical sample if available).

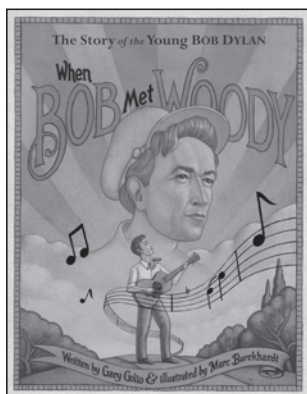


In addition, have each group make connections and detail why they believe this performer was influential to Dylan.

Bob Dylan has been called “the voice of a generation”, and over the years, several of his legendary songs have been adopted as peace anthems during troubled times in American history as well as throughout the world. Ask students to consider the reason Dylan's music inspires civil action. Working in pairs, have the teams research important concerts or performance events during his career. After learning about his important performances, have students create either an original concert poster OR a concert t-shirt using selected slogans and lyrics from Dylan's work. To enhance the activity, hang the posters and host an art gallery event highlighting students' work. As a grand finale, close the event with a fashion show, allowing students to model their concert t-shirts on the classroom “catwalk”.

The power of music cannot be understated; after experiencing *When Bob Met Woody*, readers are left with a better understanding of its power to connect individuals with each other and the world at large. After leading a discussion about the topics and themes of songs by writers such as Bob Dylan and Woody Guthrie, have students create a CD with an original playlist of their choosing which is representative of the personal challenges and experiences they have faced in life. In addition to selecting a musical biography for themselves, have each of them create original art for the jewel case and on the interior, and after including appropriate artist information, offer an explanation for the selection of each song.

about the book



“Hey hey, Woody Guthrie, I wrote you a song...” When Bob finished, Woody’s face lit up like the sun. Bob Dylan is a musical icon, an American legend, and, quite simply, a poet. But before he became Bob Dylan, he was Bob Zimmerman, a kid from rural Minnesota. This lyrical and gorgeously illustrated picture book biography follows Bob as he renames himself after his favorite poet, Dylan Thomas, and leaves his mining town to pursue his love of music in New York City. There, he meets his folk music hero and future mentor, Woody Guthrie, changing his life forever.

When Bob Met Woody

Written by Gary Golio, Illustrated by Marc Burckhardt

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about the author

Gary Golio is a visual artist, music enthusiast, and a clinical social worker, and the author of three children’s books. He lives in New York’s Hudsons Valley with his wife Susanna Reich—also a children’s book author—and their creative cat Chloe. His website is www.garygolio.com.



about the illustrator

Marc Burckhardt lives in Austin, Texas, the “live music capital of the world.” He once got to meet the great Johnny Cash. He is the illustrator of three picture books and many album covers, and his clients include *Rolling Stone*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, Sony and the *New York Times*. His website is www.marcart.net.