

TIN PAN ALLEY

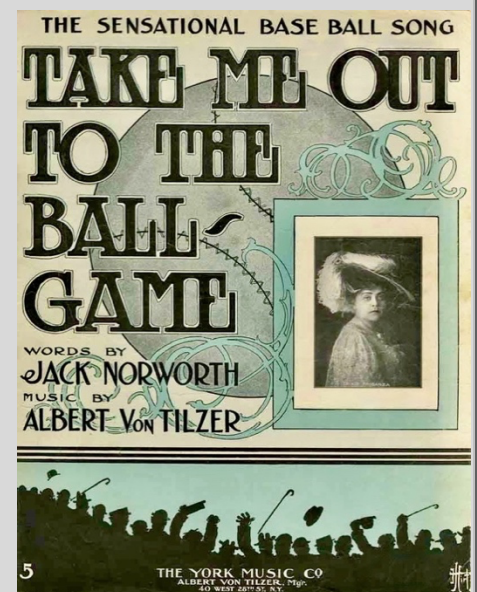
AMERICAN POPULAR MUSIC PROJECT

Repertoire Series

Take Me Out to the Ball Game

The Sensational Base Ball Song
(1908)

All content areas, especially Vocal Music
All grades, especially Upper Elementary/Middle School



Music by **Albert Von Tilzer**

Lyrics by **Jack Norworth**

Published by **The York Music Co., 40 West 28th St., New York City**

This wraparound was developed by
The Tin Pan Alley American Popular Music Project Education Committee
aligned to New York City Public Schools'
Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Music

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The Tin Pan Alley American Popular Music Project Repertoire Series aligns with the Strands and Benchmarks in the New York City Public Schools' *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Music*, and explores teaching opportunities for American popular song repertoire wrapped around all five strands of learning in music:

- I. Music Making
- II. Music Literacy
- III. Making Connections
- IV. Using Cultural and Community Resources
- V. Careers and Lifelong Learning

Where appropriate, opportunities are highlighted to teach this music with CR-SE, SEL and DEI&B.

Take Me Out to the Ball Game

Music by Albert Von Tilzer, Lyrics by Jack Norworth

Published in 1908 by The York Music Co., 40 West 28th Street, New York City

Enduring Understandings¹

- Music is universal. Popular music can be timeless and relevant to multiple generations.
- Music both reflects societal change and influences it.

Essential Questions²

1. How is this song both a nation-wide anthem to a popular sport and a song that represents of the cultural history of New York City?
2. How does an American popular song both reflect and influence social, political and cultural movements?

STRAND I: Music Making

This selection's key characteristics ("big ideas") and technical considerations include:

- 3/4 time that is felt as a quick waltz in "one."
- "Story" song: the chorus can and usually does stand alone in performance, but the "story" of the song is told through the verses, providing context and enriching the enjoyment of a well-known refrain.
- This iconic American popular song challenged notions of gender roles in 1908 and mirrored the evolving of the status for women in American society in the early 20th century.

¹ "Enduring refers to the big ideas, the important understandings, that we want students to 'get inside of' and retain after they've forgotten many of the details. . . . Enduring understandings go beyond discrete facts or skills to focus on larger concepts, principles, or processes." Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding by Design*, (Alexandria VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum, 1998), 10.

² Essential Questions are genuine questions that real people seriously ask, either in their work or in their lives- not a "teacherly" question asked only in schools. They are meant to be explored, argued, and continually revisited (and reflected upon) and have various plausible answers. Often the answers these questions, raise new questions, spark or provoke thought and stimulate students to engage in sustained inquiry and extended thinking. Essential Questions lead to transferable ideas within (and sometimes across) disciplines.

Instructional Unit Sequence:

1. Chorus (Strands 1 & 2)
2. Verses 1 and 2 (Strands 1, 2 and 3)
3. Strand Enrichment (Strands 3, 4 and 5)

Suggested unit time: 5-6 lessons

Structural considerations and technical challenges

- **Vocal range in published key of D Major:**
D4 to E5

STRAND II: Music Literacy

Key Music Literacy Considerations:

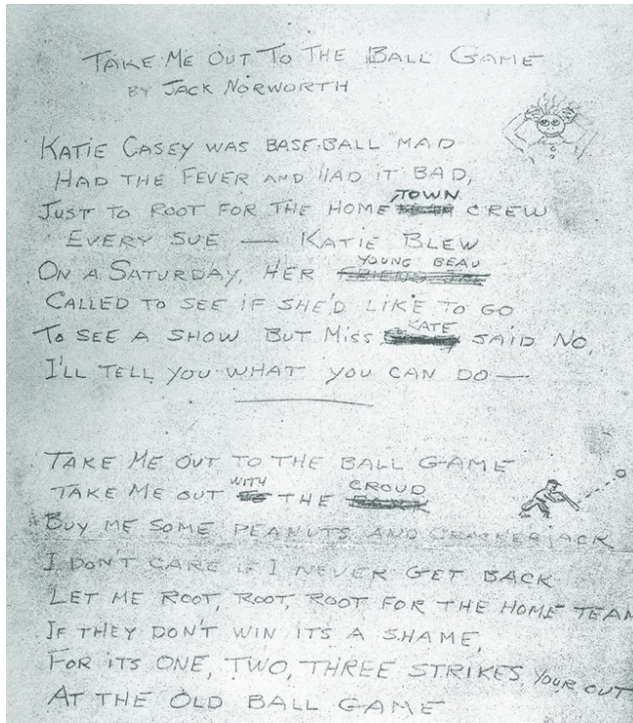
- 3/4 quick waltz in "one"
- Accent on lyric words "take" and "root" indicate a strong downbeat that supports the passion of the lyric.
- Parts of song: Introduction, Vamp, Verse, Chorus
- Below is a list of musical vocabulary words and terminology that pertain to this selection:

Waltz	Students will be able to count 3 beats to a bar and demonstrate a "strong-weak-weak" pattern as characteristic of this popular song form.
Tempo	Students will understand that a quick tempo is a required characteristic of this popular song form and will be able to explain how tempo works with the downbeat to propel the music.
In "One"	Students will demonstrate conducting a strong downbeat in both a 1-beat pattern and a 3-beat pattern.
Accent	Students will identify the accent symbol in the original score and demonstrate how it changes the musicality and dramatic effect in this song.
Vamp	Students will understand the bridging function of a vamp, particularly as it was used in vaudeville.
Verse	Students will examine how the story of the song is largely told in the verse.
Chorus	Students will understand how the chorus functions as the main part of the popular song form.
Hook	Students will be able to identify a hook ³ in the chorus and explain how a "catchy part" contributes to a song's commercial success.

³ Identifying a song's part of instant appeal as the "hook" can be subjective. There can be different opinions in class about what is the hook and students can be guided and encouraged to offer evidence to support their opinion. There could be more than one acceptable answer.

STRAND III: Making Connections

Background:



Jack Norworth's lyrics, National Baseball Hall of Fame Museum

- The song was published in 1908 by The York Music Co., 40 West 28th Street, New York City, at the peak of Tin Pan Alley, when it flourished on 28th Street, 1890-1910. The song is one of the most well-known from the Tin Pan Alley era, still sung today, and is a cultural cornerstone of American Popular Music.
- Jack Norworth (1879-1959) said he wrote the lyric on the New York subway. He had never attended a baseball game when he wrote it. His original lyric sheet is in the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum⁴
- The depiction of a strong female protagonist as the subject of the song reflected societal changes in acceptance of roles and behaviors for women in the United States.
- Vaudeville star and suffragist Trixie Friganza was the inspiration for Katie Casey, the outspoken, "baseball mad" main character in the song.

- Cracker Jacks were introduced at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair and first sold at some ballparks in 1907. After the product was made famous in Norworth's 1908 lyric, sales of the popcorn snack exploded. They are sold at baseball games across the nation today.⁵
- Edward Meeker's 1908 Edison record, the first recording of the song, was added to the Library of Congress' National Recording Registry in 2010⁶

Music History:

- Albert Von Tilzer (1878-1956) was both a composer and a publisher, co-founding The York Music Company in 1903 with his brother Harry Von Tilzer. Albert Von Tilzer ran his own vaudeville company⁷ and was a charter member of ASCAP, founded in 1914.
- The waltz in "one" was a prevalent form used in American popular song, published during the Tin Pan Alley era. Other prime examples include "The Bowery" (1891), "Daisy Bell" (1892) and "The Sidewalks Of New York" (1894).
- "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" was Jack Norworth's greatest hit, ranked in survey polls as one of the top ten songs of the twentieth century and is second only to "Happy Birthday" and "The Star Spangled Banner" as the most easily recognized songs in America.

⁴ Anna Laymon, "The Feminist History of 'Take Me Out to the Ball Game,'" *Smithsonian Magazine*, October 10, 2019.

⁵ "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." *Performing Arts Encyclopedia*, Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200153239>

⁶ National Recording Registry, Library of Congress.

⁷ Deane L. Root "Von Tilzer Albert," *Oxford Grove Music Online*.

<https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780195313734.001.0001/acref-9780195313734-e-41806>

Interdisciplinary (connection to other subject areas):

- Social Studies: The depiction of a strong, outspoken female character in this 1908 song could have been influenced by his songwriting partner, Broadway and vaudeville star, Nora Bayes (1880-1928), whom he married the year the song was published. Bayes herself was an accomplished composer and broke barriers as both a songwriter and performer, but it was Trixie Friganza (1870-1955), an actress and suffragist, who was dating Norworth prior to his marrying Bayes, that historians believe inspired Norworth with her progressive ideas and was the model for the outspoken Katie Casey.⁸
- Friganza would have to fight another twelve years for Women's Right to Vote when the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution ratified that right on August 18, 1920.⁹

SEL (Social Emotional Learning) Connections¹⁰

Possible self-esteem; self-awareness; resilience; social-awareness; and/or conflict-resolution skills:

- Understanding this fictional song connects to real-life women who saw themselves as equal to men in the United States prior to the 19th Amendment.
- Identifying with a fictional character who is comfortable with being an "other" in a mainstream culture, and being outspoken about it, defending her personal interests, regardless of judgement.

STRAND IV: Using Cultural and Community Resources

SPOTLIGHT ON DEI&B

How can purposeful practices in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEI&B), as well as in SEL, advance students' learning in the arts; guide students to a better understanding of themselves and peers; and engage them in their thinking about power, equity, and anti-oppression? (See Strand V as well.)

Everyone belonged on Tin Pan Alley. In an era often strictly segregated by skin color and ethnicity, Tin Pan Alley represented a fully integrated industry of Americans of European, Jewish and African descent, all collaborating together to create popular music that was sung and played all across the United States. Albert Von Tilzer (born Albert Gumm) had his first song hit, "Teasing" (1904) with Cecil Mack (1883-1944), an African-American lyricist, who himself would found the Gotham-Attucks Music Publishing Company in 1905, the first major African-American-owned publishing house, right next door to Von Tilzer's York Music Company at 42 West 28th Street from 1905-1910.

⁸ Laymon.

⁹ 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Women's Right to Vote (1920), National Archives.

<https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/19th-amendment#:~:text=Passed%20by%20Congress%20June%204,women%20the%20right%20to%20vote.>

¹⁰ Social And Emotional Learning (SEL) is defined by CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) as an integral part of education and human development. SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships. For more information visit: NYCPS SEL InfoHub <https://infohub.nyced.org/in-our-schools/programs/race-and-equity/social-emotional-learning> and Toolkit Resources: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/12bbe88e-696b-497b-8582-7338d3785ce4>

- Important recordings to know
 - Edward Meeker (Edison Records, 1908) – first recording of the song
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T0ytGaO2uXU>
 - Haydn Quartet (Edison Records, 1908) with onscreen lyrics
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSGUK9n3IJQ>
 - Gene Kelly & Betty Garrett, stars of film version, MGM Records, 1949.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnHJnAl4Ds4>
- Local performances / venues / cultural institutions
 - Field trip to 28th Street, between Broadway and 6th Avenue, to view the buildings that housed the former publishing houses of Tin Pan Alley, such as 40 W. 28th Street, where the York Music Co. was located.
 - Sketch and song performed by the TADA! Youth Theater on Tin Pan Alley Day 2021. TADA! is also located on 28th Street, a block away from where "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" was published.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQSw1T7kl1Y>
- Internet video clips / other media
 - "Take Me Out to the Ballgame (Dodger Stadium, 10/16/2013)"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKtT2nHudYQ>
 - Inspired by the song itself, the film of *Take Me Out to The Ball Game*, MGM, 1949, has a feminist plotline about a woman who owns an all-male baseball team in early 1910s.



- Frank Sinatra and Gene Kelly perform the title song in *Take Me Out To The Ball Game* as a Bowery-style vaudeville waltz "in one," MGM, 1949. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2luDoV9TI>

Movie poster for *Take Me Out to The Ball Game*, MGM, 1949

STRAND V: Careers and Lifelong Learning

- Jack Norworth and Nora Bayes were singer-songwriters who worked at a time when these two professions were usually taken by different people. Songwriters generally did not perform, though it was common in vaudeville for performers to write their own material. The couple would write Norworth's next most popular hit, "Shine On, Harvest Moon," the same year as "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." Bayes performed "Shine On, Harvest Moon" as a headliner in the *Ziegfeld Follies of 1908*.¹¹
- Jack Norworth gave back. He donated all his "Ball Game" song royalties to the ASCAP Foundation to support future generations of American songwriters.¹²



Jack Norworth and Nora Bayes, c. 1910, J. Willis Sayre Collection of Theatrical Photographs, Washington University.

- Trixie Friganza (1870-1955) was both a performer and a social activist. She sang "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" on the vaudeville stage in 1908 even while she fought for women's right to vote. Artists can have influence on society beyond entertainment.



Trixie Friganza making a suffrage speech, October 28, 1908. Billy Rose Theatre Collection The New York Public Library.

¹¹ The sheet music cover for "Shine On, Harvest Moon," published by Jerome Remick, states it was sung by both Norworth and Bayes "in *The Follies of 1908*," but it was actually only interpolated after the *Follies* left New York to tour. According to surviving programs, Bayes likely sang it as a solo, beginning in Washington D.C. in April 1909 – Norworth was not on the *Follies* tour.

¹² "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." Performing Arts Encyclopedia.

CR-SE INQUIRY IN STRAND V¹³

- As mentioned above for DEI&B in Strand IV, R. C. MacPherson (Cecil Mack) (1883-1944) collaborated with Albert Von Tilzer on Von Tilzer's first song hit, "Teasing."¹⁴ Widespread racism existed across American society in the early 20th century and this was also reflected in some American popular song lyrics and sheet music covers of the day. But at the same time, Tin Pan Alley was an early model industry of what desegregation could look like fifty years before U.S. laws began to codify desegregation. Cecil Mack would publish many white and Black songwriter collaborations at his own Gotham-Attucks Music Publishing Company.
- Cecil Mack gave back. As a successful publisher and songwriter, he assembled a community of African American artists to form The Frogs the same year "Take Me Out To The Ball Game" was published. This theater network fostered an explosion of artistic achievements more than a decade before the Harlem Renaissance it anticipated.

INQUIRY QUESTION: How does today's music industry continue to break down and challenge social and economic injustice? What artists today can you identify that are challenging existing norms?



R. C. MacPherson (Cecil Mack) (lower right) in 1908 as charter member of The Frogs, an organization for African American theater professionals and founder of the Gotham-Attucks Music Publishing Company. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Photographs and Prints Division, New York Public Library.

- This Repertoire Beyond School...
 - 115 years after the song was published, Met and Yankee Stadium crowds all know the words to the chorus and sing along to the song every time it is played at a baseball game.

¹³ Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education (CR-SE) Framework is outlined and available for download at <https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/crs/culturally-responsive-sustaining-education-framework.pdf>

¹⁴ Root, "Von Tilzer Albert."

POSSIBLE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Watch the TADA! Youth Theatre Ensemble perform their sketch built around "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." Divide the class into groups to create their own scenes about youth empowerment over conflict or obstacles in the Tin Pan Alley era.
- Have a student conduct the ensemble "in one" and distinguish between a simple gestural downbeat motion and that of an accented downbeat "in one" as notated in the score.

POSSIBLE ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

- Have the students write journal entries or exit slips about what they felt in the scene they devised. Could they relate their scene to a modern day incident where they personally felt held back. How did their own community of friends play a part in resolving the conflict?
- Play several Tin Pan Alley waltzes and have the students explore which are better conducted to an "in one" pattern or to a 3-beat pattern. Students will be able to listen to the tempo of a waltz and determine which should be conducted "in one."

Faster waltzes include:

- The Bowery (1891)
- Daisy Bell (1892)
- The Sidewalks Of New York (1894)

Slower waltzes include:

- After the Ball (1892)
- The Band Played On (1895)
- Let Me Call You Sweetheart (1910)

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND DISCOGRAPHY

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[out-Ball Game-180973307/](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/feminist-history-take-me-out-Ball-Game-180973307/)

Audio

Edward Meeker (Edison Records, 1908) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T0ytGaO2uXU>

Haydn Quartet (Edison Records, 1908) with onscreen lyrics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSGUK9n3IJQ>

Video

"Take Me Out to the Ball Game." Sketch and song performed The TADA! Youth Theater at Tin Pan Alley Day 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQSw1T7kl1Y>

"Take Me Out to the Ball Game" as performed by Frank Sinatra and Gene Kelly in *Take Me Out To The Ball Game*. MGM, 1949. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-r2luDoV9TI>