

“WE DIDN’T START THE FIRE”

A SONG BY BILLY JOEL

**A FOUR DECADE HISTORY
1949-1989**

ABOUT THE SONG

- The song was released in 1989.**
- It is a list of historical events and personalities from 1949 until 1989.**
- The lyrics are proved to be a good summary of the history of that era.**
- A lot of references are made to the Cold War, a problem Joel's generation inherited.**

The chorus part

There has always been unrest in the world. Nothing done in the recent years is directly responsible for the problems in the world.

**The problems stem from events in the past.
Each generation attempts to fix the issues of the last.**

Nothing is going to have any long term effects.

The video clip

**The goal of the American Dream:
a home, children and careers
mixed up with the troubled social times of the
second half of the 20th century.**

Steps followed

- asked the students if they had ever heard this song.
- showed them the video clip.
- handed out the copies with the lyrics.
- played the song and they read along.
- asked them to suggest their own ideas on this project.
- divided them in 6 groups ; each one was assigned a separate section to find photos, information etc.
- encouraged them to make the most of the available resources (history books, school library, the net.)
- asked them to complete the research in a month's time.

AIMS

- To develop language skills.**
- To acquire knowledge through research.**
- To develop a smooth cooperation among them.**
- To communicate information and knowledge.**

HOW THE STUDENTS WORKED

- **Looked up** in history books to gather information.
- **categorized** the items (events, conflicts, culture, athletes, others.)
- **selected** relevant information and pictures from the Internet.
- **wrote down** a short paragraph for each topic.

•**created** six Pp presentations using the photos, one for each section. The Pp presentations were created by the students with learning difficulties.

•**labeled** the places of conflicts on a world map.

•**their final product** was a flip book with pictures and information.

•**each group** taught the class their part of the song.

WHAT THEY FOUND DIFFICULT.

- **Rather difficult vocabulary**
- **Unknown items**

WHAT THEY ENJOYED MOST.

- The research they conducted.**
- Cooperation**
- The final product of their project**

WHAT REALLY WORKED.

- **The theme was quite challenging.**
- **The cooperation among the members of the groups was excellent.**
- **Their willingness to work on this project.**

NEXT TIME

To carry out a project on the next two decades, 1990-2000 and 2000-2010, and to connect the subjects of the song “We didn’t start the fire” to current events.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL OF VELVENDO

3rd class students

Teacher: Andreadou-Fragoudi Barbara