

# Feelgood Songs 2:

## “Waterloo Sunset” Teacher’s Notes

Music has great power to inspire us and lift our mood. Which we could all do with a bit of at the moment. We were trying to think of work to set pupils at home that was positive and good for the soul: what better than a little soul music? So here is the first in a series of resources on feelgood songs. In this case, Nina Simone and her version of “Feeling Good”.

### AXE DU PROGRAMME

■ *Le village, le quartier, la ville / Espaces privé et espace public*

### OBJECTIFS

#### Objectifs linguistiques :

- Simple present
- Preterite and past perfect
- Wh-words / questions
- Contrast, opposition, concession
- Superlatives
- Feelings
- City life
- Personal opinion

#### Objectifs culturels :

- London
- Waterloo Station
- The Thames
- The year 1967 in music

#### Objectifs méthodologiques :

- *Comparer deux situations / donner son opinion*

#### Objectifs pragmatiques :

- *Mettre en ligne son avis au sujet d'une chanson*

### Biobox Transcript

#### THE YEAR 1967

Discover what happened in the music world in 1967.

**Rock music** was revolutionised.

Sophisticated sound effects gave birth to psychedelic or acid rock!

The sounds of the wah-wah pedal on the album *White Rabbit* hypnotized **Jefferson Airplane's** fans.

**The Beatles** stopped performing live and recorded two new albums in **Abbey Road Studios** in London.

The cover of **Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band** featured Albert Einstein, Bob Dylan, Marilyn Monroe, Oscar Wilde, Karl Marx...

**The Who's Sell Out** album parodied the Radio London DJs made famous by the film *Good Morning England* (2009).

**The Doors** made their way onto the musical stage with their first two albums in the same year. *The Doors* and *Strange Days*.

In June a three-day concert was held in California. **The Monterey Festival** became the template for future music events. 200,000 spectators answered the organisers' call to, "Be happy, be free, wear flowers, bring bells."

Over 30 artists played for free and the ticket money was given to charities.

**Jimi Hendrix** set his guitar on fire at the end of a wild and first major American performance!

**The Kinks** released their first great album *Something Else* with psychedelic songs such as "Lazy Old Sun".

"**Waterloo Sunset**", the last track on the album, became the British band's most popular song.

## Solutions

**Biobox 1.** psychedelic rock and acid rock  
2. two 3. Oscar Wilde, Marilyn Monroe 4. The Doors. 5. Radio London, a pirate radio station  
6. in California 7. destroyed his guitar  
8. "Waterloo Sunset".

**Fast Facts A. 1.** had been, formed 2. had/had had, became 3. were, spread 4. prohibited/had prohibited, started 5. recorded, had already made 6. directed, had composed 7. received 8. broke up, had gone

- B. 1.** What role(s) did Ray Davies play as a member of the Kinks?  
2. Which member of his family/Who founded the band with him? / did he found the band with?  
3. What is his nickname? / what was he nicknamed?  
4. How old was he when he first started to play the guitar? / When was he given his first guitar?  
5. Where does he come from?  
He comes from **London**. In fact, he still lives there, in Fortis Green which is not far away his birthplace.  
6. What are his most famous hit songs?  
7. What did Ray Davies do after the Kinks had disbanded?  
8. How did he raise money for New Orleans music education programmes?  
9. When was he knighted by Prince Charles?

**C.** "Waterloo Sunset is the last track on the 1967 album *Something Else*. It went to/ was N°2 in the British singles charts. It is a poetic song which/that pays tribute to London. Davies says that Waterloo Bridge is a significant place in his life. / Davies says Waterloo Bridge is a, "significant place in my life". When he was a child he had a bad injury. He spent time in/He was treated in St Thomas' Hospital and from his hospital room he could / he liked to look over the river. Later on, he walked with his girlfriend by the River Thames. When he was an art student, he went past/through Waterloo Station every day. The main characters in the song are actually his sister and her boyfriend.

## Listen to the song

- 1.** It is set in London/near Waterloo Station/ by the River Thames in the evening, at sunset.  
**2. Éléments de réponse :** The narrator, Terry and Julie. The narrator / the singer is gazing 'at the world from [his] window' whereas Terry and July are walking across Waterloo Bridge. He is reluctant to leave his flat and 'wander' about while Waterloo Station is busy with people moving in every direction. He feels just fine standing at his window and does not want to go out and mingle with the crowd. In fact, he says that he is too 'lazy' to do anything but stay home and watch people in the street. It seems that Terry and Julie also stand apart from the rest of the crowd as they are walking away from the passengers 'swarming' around the train station. The narrator feels the need to be on his own and so does the couple. They 'don't need no friends/As long as they gaze on Waterloo Sunset'. All of them enjoy being apart from the other Londoners and within their own little world, for them this is 'paradise'

**3. Éléments de réponse :** The narrator insists on the noise and confusion / great activity that he is observing around Waterloo Station. In the first stanza, he seems to be upset / annoyed / disturbed by the vibrancy of the city: its endlessly 'rolling' river, its 'busy' people and the bright lights of taxis. He clearly does not like this aspect of the city which makes him 'feel dizzy'. He describes people 'swarming like flies', which isn't a very positive description. However, he finds the sunset over Waterloo Station reassuring, it makes him feel 'fine'. Even though some aspects of the city may be disturbing, he does not 'feel afraid' when he gazes at the sunset... In the same way. Likewise, Terry and Julie 'feel safe and sound' when looking at the sun setting over the Thames.

**4. Éléments de réponse :** It's a pop song. I find / think that the atmosphere is quite dreamy and almost melancholic. In my opinion, the city makes the narrator quite anxious but he finds calm and happiness when he looks at the sunset.

**5. Réponse libre.**

## London

### Waterloo Station

most famous, largest, best-known/most well-known, busiest, most notable

### The Thames

longest, most iconic, most numerous, earliest, most memorable, most acclaimed