



## Nina Simone and the civil rights movement

The 91st anniversary of the birth of "The High Priestess of Soul" Nina Simone is a great occasion to consider her role as an activist and civil rights in history. Nina Simone participated in the American Society of African Culture conference in 1961 along with other intellectuals such as Langston Hughes and James Baldwin. This experience marks the beginning of her involvement in the Civil Rights Movement.

### B1 LEVEL – NINA SIMONE IN 10 SONGS

- [Watch the video up to 1.20](#) and fill in the table

NAME	
PLACE OF BIRTH	
EDUCATION	
NAME OF FIRST ALBUM	

# News

- YEAR 1963 – Nina Simone released her first protest song. Consider these newspapers. Why do you think she wrote her first protest song in 1963?

<https://www.rarenewspapers.com/view/615979>

<https://bplonline.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p4017coll2/id/552/>

- Watch the video from 1.20 to the end

The song she released is Mississippi Goddam. Listen to the song and fill in the blanks



Vai al video

The name of this tune is \_\_\_\_\_ Goddam  
And I mean every word of it

Alabama's gotten me so upset  
Tennessee made me lose my rest  
And everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam

Alabama's gotten me so upset  
Tennessee made me lose my rest  
And everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam

Can't you see it  
Can't you feel it  
It's all in the air  
I can't stand the \_\_\_\_\_ much longer  
Somebody say a \_\_\_\_\_

Alabama's gotten me so upset  
Tennessee made me lose my rest  
And everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam

This is a show tune  
But the show hasn't been written for it, yet

Hound \_\_\_\_\_ on my trail  
School children sitting in jail  
Black cat \_\_\_\_\_ my path  
I think every day's gonna be my last

Lord have mercy on this land of mine  
We all gonna get it in due time  
I don't belong here  
I don't belong there  
I've even stopped believing in prayer

Don't tell me  
I tell you  
Me and my \_\_\_\_\_ just about due  
I've been there so I know  
They keep on saying "Go slow"

But that's just the trouble  
"Do it slow"  
Washing the windows

# News

"Do it slow"  
Picking the cotton  
"Do it slow"  
You're just plain rotten  
"Do it slow"  
You're too damn lazy  
"Do it slow"  
The thinking's crazy  
"Do it slow"  
Where am I going?  
What am I doing?  
I don't know  
I don't know

Just try to do your very best  
Stand up be counted with all the rest  
For everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam

I bet you thought I was kiddin' didn't you

Picket lines  
School boycotts  
They try to say it's a communist plot  
All I want is \_\_\_\_\_  
For my sister, my brother, my people, and me

Yes, you lied to me all these years  
You told me to wash and \_\_\_\_\_ my ears  
And talk real fine just like a lady  
And you'd stop calling me Sister Sadie

Oh, but this whole \_\_\_\_\_ is full of lies  
You're all gonna die and die like flies  
I don't trust you any more  
You keep on saying "Go slow"  
"Go slow"

But that's just the \_\_\_\_\_  
"Do it slow"  
Desegregation  
"Do it slow"  
Mass \_\_\_\_\_  
"Do it slow"  
Reunification  
"Do it slow"  
Do things gradually  
"Do it slow"  
But bring more tragedy  
"Do it slow"  
Why don't you see it?  
Why don't you feel it?  
I don't know  
I don't know

You don't have to live next to me  
Just give me my equality  
Everybody knows about \_\_\_\_\_  
Everybody knows about \_\_\_\_\_  
Everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam, that's it

- Highlight the references to the historical events mentioned before

## B1/B2/C1 LEVEL – TEACHING WITH PROTEST SONGS: NEW YORK TIMES FOR TEACHERS

<https://archive.nytimes.com/learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/02/04/lesson-plan-teaching-with-protest-music/>

## B2/C1 TEACHING WITH MOVIES – THE HELP

Watch the trailer of the movie and answer the questions

- Describe the setting
- Find some evidence to speak about the problem of racial discrimination
- Briefly summarize the story

Watch the movie and write a short essay

TITLE: Discrimination and activism in “the Help”

In copertina: [Nina Simone](#)