

# The Whole World, Continents, & Oceans

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**Subject:** Social Studies

**Year:** 2015  
**Grade:** 2nd

**Artform:** Music  
**Duration:** 20 - 30 minutes

## OVERVIEW

Students sing the spiritual, “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands,” and then create lyrics to reflect what they know about various features of the world, such as continents, oceans, the equator and poles.

## SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

- Notation and recording of [He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands](#) (Click on the title for notation and lesson ideas, Click on Play 1 for a recording with vocals, and on Play 2 for a recording without vocals (accompaniment only). If you are sufficiently confident to learn this song from the music notation, the activity can be done without any recordings, although the recorded accompaniment contributes significantly to the effectiveness of the lesson. It is helpful to have the notation projected while teaching the lesson so students can follow the lyrics while singing it the first time.)
- White board or document camera to project ideas students generate for new lyrics
- Suggested: Sound system to play digital music recording of He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands

## FINE ART STANDARDS

### SINGING

Sing in a natural voice free from strain. Use the body to feel the beat of the music.

## INTEGRATED STANDARDS

### SOCIAL STUDIES

Geographic Skills: Continents, Oceans, poles and the equator

## OBJECTIVES

Students will sing a well-known spiritual from American history while reviewing key information they have learned about continents, oceans, and/or poles and the equator.

## TEACHING AND TIMELINE

### INTRODUCTION:

Project the lyrics of the song, and sing or play a recording (Play 1) of all the verses of the song, He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands. Invite the students to join you in singing along as soon as they are comfortable. In keeping with the style of the music, have the children move to the beat of the music and as they listen to, learn, and sing it. Help the children find patterns in the lyrics and melody as you sing the song with them again and discuss it. You may wish to note that the lyrics are metaphorical and refer to the feeling that many people have that they do not need to go through life all alone.



## **DEMONSTRATION:**

This sample lesson plan will be written as if the lesson is focused on continents. The lesson can just as easily be structured around oceans, the poles and equator, or all of the above.

Model changing the lyrics of the song to create a new verse. You may choose to either name all seven continents in this verse, or focus on the characteristics of one continent. This example will proceed as if focusing on a one continent per verse.

Create new lyrics for one verse, focusing on the characteristics of a single continent. It is helpful to first brainstorm a list of words that might fit in with the theme of the verse and then select words from that list that fit with the melody. Make the syllabic emphasis of the words match the music as much as possible so the lyrics sound natural. You may decide whether you want each line to end in “in His hands” or if you are willing to let the new lyrics create a new rhyming scheme.

Students might create something like:

- He’s got South America in his hands,
- He’s got the Amazon and jungles in his hands,
- He’s got the Andes and equator in his hands,
- He’s got the whole world in his hands.

After completing a first draft of a verse, sing it with your students. The “Play 2” recording is accompaniment only and has no recorded words to interfere with your new lyrics. Decide whether the lyrics are satisfactory or if they need revision. Revise, if necessary, until you are satisfied, then sing the verse for enjoyment.

## **WORK PERIOD:**

Repeat this process for as many additional verses as desired. The recording has five verses.

## **CLOSURE/SUMMARY:**

Sing and enjoy the verses you have created. See if the children can remember what they wrote without having to look at the lyrics. Help students remember to use natural singing voices and relax their bodies to move with the beat of the music as they sing.



### INTEGRATION INFORMATION

This song, about the whole world, is particularly appropriate for creating verses about specific continents or oceans of the world.

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How do continents and/or oceans fit into the whole world?
- What unique contributions does each one make to the world?

### HISTORICAL ELEMENT

Spirituals hold an important place in American history, and are especially significant in black history and the civil rights movement. Many of our most cherished styles of modern American popular music have their roots in spirituals and gospel music.

This lesson would be especially appropriate in February during Black History Month.

### VOCABULARY

- Continent
- Ocean
- Pole
- Equator

### DIFFERENTIATION

When soliciting ideas for the song, accept input from children of all abilities. Writing ideas on the brainstorming list first, before trying to fit them into specific spots in the verse, allows every child's idea to be honored, whether or not it fits into the exact meter of the text. Some children who may not necessarily excel in many academic settings often do excel at generating creative ideas to contribute to a class project.

### ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Music: listen for students to use a natural singing voice, free from strain.

Observe that students move with the beat.

Social Studies: Observe whether students suggest correct information to include in their new verses.

After students are comfortable with the format of this activity additional verses could be created by students individually or in small groups.

