


# THE NEW YEAR'S EVE SONG

 EXPLAINED

1. HOW DO YOU USUALLY CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S EVE?
2. HAVE YOU EVER SUNG THE SONG "AULD LANG SYNE"? KNOW THE WORDS?
3. WHAT NEW YEARS TRADITIONS DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OR DO?

## 1 Before Watching

1. WHO FOUND THE SONG "AULD LANG SYNE"? WHERE WAS HE FROM?
2. WHY DID THE AUTHOR LEAVE IN THE ORIGINAL SCOTS WORDS?
3. WHO POPULARIZED THE SONG FOR AMERICAN AUDIENCES. HOW?
4. WHAT DOES THE SONG ASK US TO DO?

## 2 While Watching

1. WRITE DOWN 3 THINGS YOU LEARNED ABOUT THIS SONG.

2. HOW MANY STARS DO YOU GIVE THIS VIDEO? WHY?




## 3 After Watching

1. WHERE WAS "AULD LANG SYNE" A NATIONAL ANTHEM ONCE?
2. WHAT WAS THE PROFESSION OF THE AUTHOR?
3. WHAT KIND OF MOVIE SCENES DID THE SONG APPEAR IN USUALLY?
4. WHY HAS THE SONG BECOME SO POPULAR. NAME SOME REASONS.

## 4 Review

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1

## Before Watching

1. WHO FOUND THE SONG "AULD LANG SYNE"? WHERE WAS HE FROM?

**Robert Burns. Scotland.**

2. WHY DID THE AUTHOR LEAVE IN THE ORIGINAL SCOTS WORDS?

**To preserve the Scottish heritage.**

3. WHO POPULARIZED THE SONG FOR AMERICAN AUDIENCES. HOW?

**Guy Lombardo on his public radio show.**

4. WHAT DOES THE SONG ASK US TO DO?

**To remember people from the past and raise a toast to them.**

2

## While Watching

1. WRITE DOWN 3 THINGS YOU LEARNED ABOUT THIS SONG.

2. HOW MANY STARS DO YOU GIVE THIS VIDEO? WHY?



3

## After Watching

1. WHERE WAS "AULD LANG SYNE" A NATIONAL ANTHEM ONCE?

**Suth Korea until 1948.**

2. WHAT WAS THE PROFESSION OF THE AUTHOR?

**A poet.**

3. WHAT KIND OF MOVIE SCENES DID THE SONG APPEAR IN USUALLY?

**Emotional movie scenes.**

4. WHY HAS THE SONG BECOME SO POPULAR. NAME SOME REASONS.

**Simple melody. Easy to remember and adapt. Nostalgic, sentimental.**

4

## Review



# The New Year's Eve Song

## EXPLAINED

The stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve usually sounds like this: This is Auld Lang Syne, a song that represents the emotional conclusion to another year. But it might surprise you to know, it's also a soccer anthem in the Netherlands. Or in Japan, it's a traditional song about fireflies. And the original was written centuries ago, as a Scottish celebration song.

So how did this song, that's managed to spread across the world, become the song we sing when the ball drops? What does this song mean? My whole life, I don't know what this song means. Auld Lang Syne

A lot of people share this confusion about Auld Lang Syne, because the lyrics are sort of hard to figure out. Let's start with the title. Auld Lang Syne. Individually these words mean "Old Long Since", which taken together, translate to something like "For old time's sake."

It's written in Scots, a language spoken by about a million people in Scotland today. The rest of the lyrics are a mix of English and Scots words, like "And there's a hand, my trusty feire, And we'll tak' a right gude-willie waught,". What is that? So "feire" means friend. "Tak' a right gude-willie waught," so, a waught related to the word "draft," in English, would be a good pint of beer I imagine.

This song asks you to remember people from your past and raise a toast to them, which made it a popular song to sing at New Year's and other celebrations. And that line about taking your friend's hand? That's related to a traditional dance British people still do today.

The guy who popularized this song was one of Scotland's most famous exports: Robert Burns. Burns was a poet writing in the 1700's, just after Scotland and England unified to create the kingdom of Great Britain. He witnessed the decline of traditional Scottish culture in favor of English norms. So he devoted the end of his life to preserving this dying culture, by traveling the country to collect traditional poetry and songs to get them published. Auld Lang Syne was one of those songs.

In a 1793 letter to his music publisher George Thomson, Burns claimed he wrote down the lyrics after hearing an old man singing it. He called Auld Lang Syne "an old song about the olden times." And he made sure Thomson kept the Scots words in the song, arguing "There is a naievete, a pastoral simplicity, in a slight intermixture of Scots words and phraseology."

And this song, Auld Lang Syne, is doing a great job of tying in with the original idea of collecting folk songs, preserving heritage, celebrating heritage.



# The New Year's Eve Song

## EXPLAINED



Auld Lang Syne was republished in countless song books worldwide over the centuries and because of Burns, the Scots words are still in there. And even if you don't know the history behind them, you can still sort of figure out what the song is saying. Anyway, it's about old friends.

Why has a song that people don't really understand become so widespread? Why is it so popular? For starters, the melody of Auld Lang Syne is simple, making it easy to sing along to and easy to adapt into other musical styles. Which is why it can become a soul song, or a bluegrass song, or rock 'n roll. And because it's uncomplicated and melodic, the song was easy to put with different lyrics. Like in the US in the Civil War era, it became a song about a wish for the war to end. And it was also a popular anti-slavery ballad.

It took on new meanings in languages in other parts of the world, which is why it's in places you might not expect, like that soccer anthem in the Netherlands. Or a graduation song in parts of Asia. And it was South Korea's national anthem until 1948.

No matter what the language or lyrics are, Auld Lang Syne's popularity also has something to do with its nostalgic feeling. The song itself is often used in the popular context in an even more overtly sad way. If you look at the words, it's quite nostalgic as a song and that's its attraction. Which is why it started showing up in countless classic movies, usually to mark an emotional scene. Like in this 1937 Shirley Temple movie, when her character consoles a dying soldier by singing Auld Lang Syne.

Mr New Years Eve And the director Frank Capra used it for sentimental moments in at least 3 of his films. But in the US, the song is best known for one thing: "Happy New Year." And for that, we can thank Mr. New Year's Eve himself, Guy Lombardo.

In 1928, Lombardo and his orchestra, The Royal Canadians, started a popular New Year's Eve radio show, broadcast from the Roosevelt Hotel in Manhattan. This meant that Americans all over the country tuned in from their home radios to listen to the same music on New Year's Eve.

And at the stroke of midnight, Lombardo played their version of Auld Lang Syne. Lombardo continued that tradition for nearly 50 years and when Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve started on TV in 1973, he would play Auld Lang Syne at midnight too. And after Clark, Ryan Seacrest did the same.

So now at midnight, right after the ball drops, this is what you hear. It's still Lombardo's version. And this is why, for many, the song is so singularly associated with the nostalgia of another year past. So when this new year rolls around, even if you don't know all the words, sing along anyway. You won't be alone.

# Auld Lang Syne

by Robert Burns – 1788 

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And never brought to mind?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And auld lang syne?

## CHORUS:

For auld lang syne, my dear,  
For auld lang syne,  
We'll tak a cup of kindness yet,  
For auld lang syne!

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,  
And surely I'll be mine,  
And we'll tak a cup o kindness yet,  
For auld lang syne!

We twa hae run about the braes,  
And pou'd the gowans fine,  
But we've wander'd monie a weary fit,<  
Sin auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidl'd in the burn  
Frae morning sun till dine,  
But seas between us braid hae roar'd  
Sin auld lang syne.



And there's a hand my trusty fiere,  
And gie's a hand o thine,  
And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught,  
For auld lang syne



## Vocabulary

auld lang syne - times gone by  
be - pay for  
braes - hills  
braid - broad  
burn - stream  
dine - dinner time  
fiere - friend  
fit - foot  
gowans - daisies  
guid-willie waught - friendly drink  
monie - many  
morning sun - noon  
paidl't - paddled  
pint-stowp - pint tankard  
pou'd - pulled  
twa - two

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