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## Excerpts from Lyrics for Songs in This Lesson

### Nas, "Bridging the Gap" (2004)

By Nasir Jones and Olu Dara

The blues came from gospel, gospel from blues  
Slaves are harmonizin' them ah's and ooh's  
Old school, new school, no school rules  
All these years I been voicin' my blues  
I'm a artist from the start, hip-hop guided my heart  
Graffiti on the wall, coulda ended in Spofford,  
Juvenile delinquent  
But Pops gave me the right type'a tools to think with  
Books to read, like X and stuff...

[Olu Dara—Nas' Father]

I was born in Mississippi, I was young and runnin' wild  
Moved to New York City, where I had my first child  
I named the boy Nasir, all the boys call him Nas  
I told him as a youngster, he'll be the greatest man alive...

[Nas]

Nas, Nas you don't stop, Olu Dara in the house, you don't stop  
Muddy Waters, Howling Wolf, you don't stop  
From the blues to street hop you don't stop

### Son House, "Death Letter Blues" (1968)

By Son House

I got a letter this mornin', how do you reckon it read?  
It said, hurry, hurry, yeah, your love is dead  
I got a letter this mornin, I say how do you reckon it read?  
You know it said, hurry, hurry, how come the gal you love is dead?

I grabbed up my suitcase and took off down the road  
When I got there she was layin' on a cooling board  
I grabbed up my suitcase and I took off down the road  
When I got there she was layin' on a cooling board



**Bessie Smith, “Homeless Blues” (1927)**

By Porter Grainger

Ma and pa got drowned, Mississippi you the blame  
My ma and pa got drowned, Mississippi you the blame  
Mississippi River, I can't stand to hear your name

Homeless, yes, I'm homeless, might as well be dead  
Oh you know I'm homeless, might as well be dead  
Hungry and disgusted, no place to lay my head

**Charley Patton, “Mississippi Bo Weevil Blues” (1929)**

By Charley Patton

Sees a little bo weevil keeps movin' in the air, Lordie  
You can plant your cotton and you won't get a half a bale, Lordie  
Bo weevil, bo weevil, where's your native home? Lordie  
“A-Louisiana raised in Texas, least is where I was bred and born,” Lordie...

Sucks all the blossom and leave your hedges square, Lordie  
Bo weevil, bo weevil, where your native home? Lordie  
“Most anywhere they raise cotton and corn,” Lordie  
Bo weevil, bo weevil, you oughta treat me fair, Lordie  
The next time I did you had your family there, Lordie

**Lightnin' Hopkins, “Cotton” (1959)**

By Lightnin' Hopkins, Mack McCormick and Roy Eldridge

I don't weigh but 95 pounds, 100 pounds is too much load for me to pull  
I don't weigh but 90 pounds, boy, 100 pounds is too much load for me to pull  
I get straightened up in the field — “Hey! Stoop down Lightnin', go ahead on boy and get  
your sack full”  
(spoken) They was talking about cotton

I stood straight up in the field, lookin' around trying to find me some shade  
Lord, have mercy, poor Lightnin' trying to find him some shade  
Poor mama sittin' down with her pencil and paper  
Figurin' up every dime that the family made