

**Blood, Sweat &
Tears**

Spinning Wheel

**70's
Super
Group**



A musical institution, Blood Sweat & Tears has left an indelible mark on the American music scene since 1968. One of the greatest horn bands in the history of popular music, BS&T's alumni roster reads like a Who's Who of the world's greatest jazz and rock musicians. Inspire your students with these couple of activities centred around their hit single, "Spinning Wheel."

ACCESS AREA FILE



You will need a copy of the song to complete these activities.

- **Reading and Questions**
- **Listening Activity**
- **Composition Activity**



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Spinning Wheel

Blood, Sweat & Tears (also known as "BS&T") is an American music group, originally formed in 1967 in New York City. Since its beginnings in 1967, the band has gone through numerous iterations with varying personnel and has encompassed a multitude of musical styles. What the band is most known for, from its start, is the fusing of rock, blues, pop music, horn arrangements and jazz improvisation into a hybrid that came to be known as "jazz-rock". Unlike "jazz fusion" bands, which tend toward virtuosic displays of instrumental facility and some experimentation with electric instruments, the songs of Blood, Sweat & Tears merged the styling's of rock, pop and R&B/soul music with big band, while also adding elements of 20th Century Classical and small combo jazz traditions. As BS&T has evolved through the years, it has maintained its commitment to high standards by including in its current roster the most talented musicians available.

Starting out in Greenwich Village in New York, the band won world-wide acclaim, becoming the first in many categories: first band to tour behind the Iron Curtain, first band to have 3 hit singles from the same record, first band to combine rock with jazz and of course Sunday night Woodstock, YES the real Woodstock. Racking up sales in the millions, BS&T earned multiple gold albums, 10 Grammy nominations and won 3 Grammy Awards, including the most prestigious of them all, Album of the Year.

A band with a social conscious, BS&T teamed up with the Berklee College of Music in Boston to form the Elsie Monica Colomby music scholarship award. This is a lifetime scholarship awarded yearly at the college to deserving students to help some of their daily expenses. BS&T helps other communities as they did after the devastation caused by hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005 when BS&T donated money to replace musical instruments and had the entire high school marching band join them on stage for a jam session—a night those kids and some very proud parents will never forget.

"Spinning Wheel" was penned during the David Clayton—Thomas Era. Blood, Sweat & Tears, the group's self-titled second album, was produced by James William Guercio and released in late 1968. The album was much more pop-oriented, featuring decidedly fewer compositions from within the band. (David Clayton-Thomas, however, had already mounted a solo career as a singer/songwriter over this same time period, beginning with an album released in 1969 by Decca). The record quickly hit the top of the charts, winning Album of the Year at the Grammy Awards over The Beatles' Abbey Road, among other nominees. Blood, Sweat & Tears spawned three major hit singles: a cover of Berry Gordy and Brenda Holloway's "You've Made Me So Very Happy", Clayton-Thomas' "Spinning Wheel", and a version of Laura Nyro's "And When I Die." All three singles reached #2 on Billboard magazine's Hot 100 survey. The commercial and critical acclaim enjoyed by the band in 1969 culminated in an appearance at the Woodstock Festival, in which the band enjoyed headliner status.

1. What style of music do Blood, Sweat and Tears play? _____
2. How is their style different from Jazz Fusion? _____

3. Who wrote "Spinning Wheel"? _____
4. Name two of the bands most amazing accomplishments. _____

Spinning Wheel

Listen to "Spinning Wheel" by Blood, Sweat and Tears and answer the questions.

1. How does the song start?

2. List the instruments in order of entry.

3. Explain the role of each instrument and explain what rhythms each instrumental layer is using.

4. Describe the tone colour of the horn section and the other individual instruments.

5. Explain how this section is different from the first.

6. Explain the chord structure in this new section.

7. Listen to the verse and work out the melody of this section.

WHAT GOES UP MUST COME DOWN SPIN NING WHEEL GOT TO ROUND

TALK IN BOUT YOUR TROUBLES IT'S A CRYING SIN RIDE A PAIN TED PO NY LET THE SPIN NING WHEEL SPIN

Spinning Wheel

Listen to “Spinning Wheel” by Blood, Sweat and Tears and answer the questions. **(0.00—0.27) Intro and verse 1**

- How does the song start? **Piano plays a long chord. Horns play a long note and gradually crescendo and end with a syncopated rhythmic pattern on the chordal note they played.**
- List the instruments in order of entry. **Piano, Horn Section(trumpet, trombone, saxes), Voice, bass, cowbell, drums and tambourine.**
- Explain the role of each instrument and explain what rhythms each instrumental layer is using. **Piano holds a chord (cue). Horns play crescendo on long note and then syncopated accented pattern on chord note (variety—repeated tone), Voice sings melody (small range and stepwise). Left hand of piano and bass play a repeated pattern (ostinato) using crotchet and two quavers over the same chords (harmony). Cowbell plays accented crotchets (pulse, interest) drums play small cue then a straight 8ths time pattern (set pulse and drive), and tambourine plays a shaking quaver pattern (pulse, variety)**
- Describe the tone colour of the horn section and the other individual instruments. **Horn Section (brassy, sharp), Voice (raspy, nasal), bass (echoy and dense), piano (warm), cowbell (sharp, harsh), Tambourine (metallic, rattly)**

Listen to “Spinning Wheel” by Blood, Sweat and Tears and answer the questions. **(0.27—0.46) Verse 2**

- Explain how this section is different from the first. **The horns play accented stabs or a small syncopated fill pattern after each phrase of the singer. This is accented by drum cues on the crash cymbal and toms.**

Listen to “Spinning Wheel” by Blood, Sweat and Tears and answer the questions. **(0.47—1.31) Bridge**

- Explain the chord structure in this new section. The song is in E major at the start of the verse. The bridge section starts with a descending chord pattern - Cadd2, Bbadd2, Abadd2, Gadd2. This pattern is played twice then the chords ascend—Ab, Bb, C, Dadd2. This is then followed by Am (5th of D and 4th of E) and F7 (flat 2nd of E major).
- Listen to the verse and work out the melody of this section.

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Below is the chord progression of the verse. Explain the chord relationships and write out the chords in the space provided.

Below is the chord progression of the bridge. Explain the chord relationships and write out the chords in the space provided.

In groups, choose one Chord Progression and write a counter melody that could be performed with the song. Perform your new counter melody with your own choice of accompaniment.