

Teacher's Guide:
Exploring Migration and Identity Through "Ya Rayah"

In this activity, students explore the historical and cultural significance of the song "**Ya Rayah**," an iconic piece of music from the Maghreb region. Through listening, analysis, and discussion, students examine how the song reflects themes such as migration, identity, and longing.

At first, they are introduced to the song by watching the video and sharing their initial impressions. They then answer guided questions to better understand the context, message, and emotional impact of the song. As the activity progresses, students deepen their understanding by analyzing the lyrics and comparing the song to cultural expressions from their own communities, encouraging both critical thinking and cultural awareness.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the activity, students will be able to:

- Understand the historical context of "Ya Rayah"
- Identify themes of migration and identity in the song
- Analyze the cultural significance of the song in the Maghreb region
- Compare the song with cultural expressions from their own communities
- Reflect on how music expresses shared human experiences

Materials

- Student worksheet (Arabic and English versions)
- Video: "Ya Rayah" by Dahmane El Harrachi
- Lyrics worksheet

Part 1: Introduction

Purpose: Introducing the song and activating prior knowledge

What students do:

Students are introduced to the song “**Ya Rayah**” and begin reflecting on its cultural and emotional significance. Begin with a few guiding questions:

- What kind of emotions can music express?
- Why do some songs become important symbols of a culture or community?
- How can music reflect experiences such as migration, identity, or longing?

The teacher introduces the context of “**Ya Rayah**” as an iconic song from the Maghreb region that has become strongly associated with themes of migration and separation. Students listen to the song and share their first impressions of its tone, message, and emotional impact. Through this introduction, students begin to consider how music can preserve cultural memory and express shared human experiences.

Part 2: Research and Exploration

Purpose: Developing cultural knowledge through listening, reading, and lyrical analysis

What students do:

Students work individually or in pairs to explore the meaning and significance of the song “Ya Rayah.” They listen carefully to the song, examine its lyrics, and answer questions about its origins, themes, and cultural impact.

While engaging with the material, students identify key ideas related to migration, identity, nostalgia, and belonging. They also consider the historical and cultural background of the song and its importance within the Maghreb region. As they complete the worksheet, students gather information that will help them better understand how the song reflects both personal emotion and collective cultural experience.

Additional Activity: Completing the Lyrics

The teacher replays the song and asks students to complete missing words in the lyrics provided in the worksheet.

Students listen carefully and fill in the gaps while focusing on key vocabulary related to migration and identity.

Example of expected words:

- مسافر، تولى، رايو، قلبو

Part 3: Compare & Discuss

Purpose: Sharing ideas, developing cultural comparison, and reflecting on the role of music in society

What students do:

Students share their ideas with a partner or as part of a whole-class discussion. They explain what they learned about the themes and significance of “Ya Rayah” and compare the song with similar musical or cultural expressions from their own communities.

Through discussion, students reflect on the ways music can communicate emotions, preserve heritage, and connect people through shared experiences. They are encouraged to identify similarities and differences between “Ya Rayah” and other cultural expressions, and to think critically about how songs can become symbols of identity, memory, and migration.

Discussion questions:

1. What emotions and experiences are conveyed in the song “Ya Rayah”?
2. How does the song reflect the experience of migration and separation?
3. How is the song connected to the cultural heritage of the Maghreb region?
4. What similarities and differences exist between “Ya Rayah” and cultural expressions from your own community?
5. How can music serve as a bridge between people, cultures, and shared experiences?

Final Reflection

After the discussion, students reflect on the final question:

How does “Ya Rayah” help us understand themes such as migration, identity, and belonging?

Students should briefly explain their reasoning using the ideas gathered from the song, the worksheet, and the class discussion.

Student Worksheet & Answer Key

Activity 1: Watching the Video

Instructions:

Watch the video "Ya Rayah" by Dahmane El Harrachi. Then answer the following questions.

Questions:

1. What is "Ya Rayah"?
2. Who is the original singer of the song?
3. What are the main themes in the song's lyrics?
4. How does the song reflect the experience of migration?
5. What is the impact of the song on Maghreb culture?

Activity 2: Exploring the Lyrics and Themes

Instructions:

Listen to the song again and focus on the lyrics. Then answer the following questions.

1. What emotions and experiences are conveyed in the song?
2. How does the song reflect the cultural heritage of the Maghreb region?
3. Why do you think this song is still relevant today?

Lyrics

Ya rayah win msafar trouh taaya wa twali
Chhal nadmou laabad el ghafliin qablak ou qabli
Ya rayah win msafar trouh taaya wa twali
Chhal nadmou laabad el ghafliin qablak ou qabli
Chhal cheft al bouldan laamrine wa lber al khali
Chhal dhiyaat wqat chhal tzid mazal ou t'khali
Ya lghayeb fi bled ennas chhal taaya ma tadjri

Ya rayah win msafar trouh taaya wa twali
Chhal nadmou laabad el ghafliin qablak ou qabli
Aalach qalbek hzine waalach hakdha ki zawali
Matdoum achadda wila tzid taalem ou tabni
Maydoumou layyam walay doum seghrek ou seghri

Ya hlilou meskine li ghab saadou ki zahri
Ya rayah win msafar trouh taaya wa twali
Chhal nadmou laabad el ghafliin qablak ou qabli
Ya rayah win msafar trouh taaya wa twali
Chhal nadmou laabad el ghafliin qablak ou qabli

Hakdha rad el qalb bel djbine sabhane el aali
Ya rayah win msafar trouh taaya wa twali
Chhal nadmou laabad el ghafliin qablak ou qabli
Ya rayah win msafar trouh taaya wa twali
Chhal nadmou laabad el ghafliin qablak ou qabli
Ya rayah win msafar trouh taaya wa twali
Chhal nadmou laabad el ghafliin qablak ou qabli
Ya rayah win msafar trouh taaya wa twali
Chhal nadmou laabad el ghafliin qablak ou qabli

يا الراح
يا الزايح وين مسافر تروح تعيا وتولي
شحال ندموا العباد الغافلين قبلك وقبلي
يا الزايح وين مسافر تروح تعيا وتولي
شحال ندموا العباد الغافلين قبلك وقبلي
شحال شفت البلدان العامرين والبر الخالي
شحال ضيعت اوقات وشحال تزيد ما زال تخلي
يا الفايب في بلاد الناس شحال تعيا ما تجري
بيك وعد القدرة ولي زمان وانت ما تدري
يا الزايح وين مسافر تروح تعيا وتولي
شحال ندموا العباد الغافلين قبلك وقبلي
يا الزايح وين مسافر تروح تعيا وتولي
شحال ندموا العباد الغافلين قبلك وقبلي
يا مسافر نعطيك وصايتي اذيتها على بكري
شوف ما يصلح بيك قبل ما تببع وما تشري
يا الناييم جاني خبرك كيما صرالك يصري لي
هكذا راد وقدر في الجبين سبحان العالي

علاش قلبك حزين وعلاش هكذا كي الزاوالي
ما تدوم الشدة والى قريب تعلم وتدري
يا الفايب في بلاد الناس شحال تعيا ما تجري
يا حليلو مسكين اللي غاب سعدو كي زهري
يا الزايح وين مسافر تروح تعيا وتولي
شحال ندموا العباد الغافلين قبلك وقبلي

شحال ندموا العباد الغافلين قبلك وقبلي
يا الزايح وين مسافر تروح تعيا وتولي
شحال ندموا العباد الغافلين قبلك وقبلي
يا الزايح وين مسافر تروح تعيا وتولي
شحال ندموا العباد الغافلين قبلك وقبلي
يا الزايح وين مسافر تروح تعيا وتولي
شحال ندموا العباد الغافلين قبلك وقبلي

Activity 2B: Completing the Lyrics

Listen again and fill in the missing words:

وين الراج يا _____

وتولي تعيا تروح _____

يدير واحد كل _____

في ويبقى _____

Activity 3: Cultural Comparison

Instructions:

Compare "Ya Rayah" with a song or cultural expression from your own community.

When students complete the comparison chart, they should use the "Ya Rayah" column to summarize what the song communicates about each theme, using ideas from the lyrics, the video, and the previous activities.

In the "Your Culture" column, students should write from their own cultural perspective. Rather than choosing another song, they should explain what "Ya Rayah" makes them think, feel, or understand about migration, identity, emotions, and cultural meaning as someone from a different cultural background.

Encourage students to reflect personally and identify similarities or differences between the song's message and their own perspective.

Comparison Chart

<i>Theme</i>	<u>Ya Rayah</u>	<u>Your Culture</u>
Migration		
Identity		
Emotions		

Final Reflection

Question: How does "Ya Rayah" help us understand themes such as migration, identity, and belonging?

Sample Responses

The answers below represent key ideas students may identify from the song, the lyrics, and the class discussion. Students may express these ideas using different wording based on their interpretation.

Activity 1: Watching the Video

1. What is "Ya Rayah"?

- A well-known Algerian song
- An iconic song from the Maghreb region
- A song associated with migration, exile, and longing

2. Who is the original singer of the song?

- Dahmane El Harrachi

3. What are the main themes in the song's lyrics?

- Migration
- Separation
- Nostalgia
- Longing
- Identity
- Belonging

4. How does the song reflect the experience of migration?

- It describes the pain of leaving home
- It reflects separation and emotional struggle
- It shows feelings of exile, uncertainty, and regret

5. What is the impact of the song on Maghreb culture?

- It has become an important cultural symbol
- It reflects shared experiences in the region
- It is remembered for its emotional and historical significance

Activity 2: Exploring the Lyrics and Themes

1. What emotions and experiences are conveyed in the song?

- Sadness
- Nostalgia

- Loneliness
- Regret
- Longing for home
- Emotional pain linked to exile and separation

2. How does the song reflect the cultural heritage of the Maghreb region?

- It addresses migration, an important historical and social reality in the region
- It reflects strong ties to homeland, memory, and community
- It is part of the musical and cultural memory of the Maghreb

3. Why do you think this song is still relevant today?

- Migration is still an important issue today
- Many people still experience displacement and separation
- Its themes are universal and continue to connect with listeners

Activity 2B: Completing the Lyrics

Expected words:

- مسافر
- غافل
- رايو
- قلبو

Activity 3: Cultural Comparison

Students' answers will vary depending on the song or cultural expression they choose.

In the "Ya Rayah" column, write what the song expresses about each theme based on the lyrics, the video, and the class discussion.

In the "Your Culture" column, write what the song makes you think, feel, or reflect on from your own cultural background. You should explain how you understand these themes as someone from a different culture.

Theme	Ya Rayah	Your Culture
Migration	Leaving home, exile, separation	Answers will vary
Identity	Connection to homeland, roots, belonging	Answers will vary
Emotions	Sadness, nostalgia, regret, longing	Answers will vary

Final Reflection

Question: How does "Ya Rayah" help us understand themes such as migration, identity, and belonging?

Sample response ideas:

- The song shows the emotional effects of migration
- It helps explain the pain of leaving one's homeland
- It reflects how identity remains connected to home and culture
- It shows how music can express belonging, memory, and shared human experience