

# Oklahoma Treasures

## Howdy Students and Teachers,



My name is Monty Harper. I'm a professional songwriter and I live in Stillwater, Oklahoma. I'm excited that I'll be visiting your school soon to help you celebrate the resources of our great state!

When I decided to write songs about Oklahoma's history, I began at the library. I read and read and read and read some more. I was looking for ideas that would make great songs for kids. A kids' song should be fun, exciting, interesting and clever. It should make you laugh, wonder, and ask questions.

Did I find anything like that in Oklahoma's history? Oh, yes, you bet! Our state history is full of incredible stories. I'll be sharing several songs with you, but we'll still barely even scratch the surface. I feel like I could write a hundred songs about Oklahoma with ideas left over!

These are some of the songs I plan to present during my program:

1. "The Howdy Song" by Monty Harper. We'll say "hello" to one another in many of the different languages spoken in Oklahoma.
2. "Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889" by Monty Harper. We'll imagine what it would've been like to take part in one of the most well-known and important events in our state's history.
3. "My Oklahoma Home, It Blowed Away" by Bill and Sis Cunningham. This is a folk song from the Dust Bowl days. It tells about hard times with heart and humor. You'll want to sing along!
4. "Boom Town" by Monty Harper. The various oil booms were exciting times that helped our state grow. We're gonna build a boom town, baby!
5. "The Wind Energy Song" by Monty Harper. Oklahoma is the 8th largest state in wind energy potential. During this song we will become an Oklahoma wind farm!
6. "Oklahoma Heroes at the Library" by Monty Harper. Can you guess which well-known Oklahoma hero I'm singing about in each verse?

Teachers, you may want to use this study guide before my program to familiarize students with concepts and events I'll be singing about. This is optional, but it will enhance students' enjoyment and understanding of the songs. You can also use these pages after the program to review and further discuss some of the topics.

There are even suggestions here for how your students can contribute their own ideas to the songs I'll be singing!

I hope my songs will inspire you to explore and learn more about the great state we live in. Always feel free to send me an email at [monty@montyharper.com](mailto:monty@montyharper.com) if you have any questions or suggestions.

Thanks, and I look forward to seeing you all soon!!

## “Howdy Song” Song Lyric

In Oklahoma we say "Howdy!" (Howdy)  
 In Oklahoma we say "Howdy!" (Howdy)  
 So when you meet your friend on the street,  
 you'll say "Howdy" if you're thinking on your feet.  
 It's a mighty fine way to share your day  
 with a fellow human being!

(Repeat this verse as many times as needed, replacing the words “Oklahoma,” “howdy” and “friend” with a new place or tribe and language each time.)

Suggested verses:

Mexico: *hola / amigo*

Germany: *guten tag / freund*

Japan: *konnichiwa / tomodachi*

China: *neehow / peng-you*

Africa: *jambo (or hodi) / rafiki (or sahib)*

Hawaii: *aloha / hoaloha*

France: *bonjour / ami*

Cherokee: *oh see yoh / ooh nah lee ee*

Chickasaw: *chokma / ikana*

In our great state we say all of these and more,  
 'cause people living here came here from every single shore.  
 Doesn't matter how you say "How do you do."  
 It's a happy little holler, makes the world a little smaller.  
 It's a message you send to connect to a friend.  
 It's a mighty fine way to share your day  
 with a fellow human being.  
 Howdy, Y'all!

## “Howdy Song” Discussion

Which languages and words from the song above are familiar to you?

Do you have any students in your class who speak a second language? Do you know anybody who does? Where are they from? What language do they speak?

See if you can find somebody to teach you how to say “hello” and “friend” in a new language. If you do, pass the new words on to Monty (monty@montyharper.com) and he'll add your new verse to the song when he performs it. You can also post your new verses to Monty's online songbook at

<http://montysongs.freeforums.org/>

## “Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889” Song Lyric

Fifty thousand Boomers are lined up to go  
What's your plan of action when the buglers blow?  
Getting in quick is the bottom line.  
It's the Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889.

Up in Wichita folk'll explain  
You better get a ticket for the Santa Fe train  
They're packing them cars like sardine cans  
They'll be riding the rail  
Woo, woo!  
To the promised lands  
Will YOU ride the rail? Woo, woo!  
Getting in quick is the bottom line  
It's the Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889

I heard rumors flying on the wind  
Darn them Sooners - they's already in!  
All staked out before the break of dawn  
Now they're hiding in the bushes  
Shh shh!  
Until the race is on  
Will you ride in on the rail? Woo, woo!  
Will you hide in the bushes? Shh, shh!  
Getting in quick is the bottom line  
It's the Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889

I met a young Yankee with a confident air  
Spent three hundred dollar on a thoroughbred mare  
Well he may be first to reach his goal  
Unless he races that horse  
Giddyup, giddyup!  
Into a gopher hole  
Will you ride in on the rail? Woo, woo!  
Will you hide in the bushes? Shh, shh!  
Will you race in on a horse? Giddyup, giddyup!  
Getting in quick is the bottom line  
It's the Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889

I heard about a lady who peddled all the way  
Through the Cherokee Strip to be here today  
When the race takes off she'll be sweating in the heat  
Bouncing cross the prairie  
Boing, boing!  
On a bicycle seat

Will you ride in on the rail? Woo, woo!  
Will you hide in the bushes? Shh, shh!  
Will you race in on a horse? Giddyup, giddyup!  
Will you bounce in on a bicycle? Boing, boing!  
Getting in quick is the bottom line  
It's the Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889

I read it in the paper bout an Indiana man  
With big imagination and a high-falutin' plan  
If the breeze blows luck this flying buffoon  
Will float to a claim  
Whoosh whoosh  
In a hot air balloon!  
Will you ride in on the rail? Woo, woo!  
Will you hide in the bushes? Shh, shh!  
Will you race in on a horse? Giddyup, giddyup!  
Will you bounce in on a bicycle? Boing, boing!  
Will you fly in a balloon? Whoosh, whoosh!  
Getting in quick is the bottom line  
It's the Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889

Now here's a young lady says, "I got it made  
Got a team of horses I'm hitching to a blade  
Before the bugle fades I'll be claiming a place  
Gonna dig my plow  
H'ya, h'ya!  
Two steps into the race!"  
Will you ride in on the rail? Woo, woo!  
Will you hide in the bushes? Shh, shh!  
Will you race in on a horse? Giddyup, giddyup!  
Will you bounce in on a bicycle? Boing, boing!  
Will you fly in a balloon? Whoosh, whoosh!  
Will you dig in with a plow? H'ya, h'ya!  
Getting in quick is the bottom line  
It's the Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889

It's the Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889  
Fifty thousand Boomers are crowding that line  
Keep your eyes on the prize, your heart set to go  
What's your plan of action when the buglers blow?

## “Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889” Discussion

**Note to Teacher:** Time spent studying Monty’s song lyrics will enhance your students’ enjoyment of his upcoming live performance. It is suggested you start by reading the song out loud with your students. Following are several points of entry for discussion. Feel free to spend as much or as little time as you like and to adapt these ideas to your own grade level, style, or interest as needed. Have fun! Please send any questions, suggestions, or feedback to [monty@montyharper.com](mailto:monty@montyharper.com).

### Vocabulary

What interesting words or phrases can you find in this song? Look up any that you don’t know the meaning of. Which words are names of people, places or events in Oklahoma history?

**Interesting words:** bugler/bugle, sardine, staked out, bottom line, confident air, thoroughbred mare, gopher hole, giddyup, high-falutin’, buffoon, hitching, blade, plow

**Oklahoma history words:** Boomers, Santa Fe train, Land Rush (Land Run), Sooners, Cherokee Strip

**Other people and places:** Yankee, Indiana

### Setting

When and where does this song take place? The year is pretty obvious. See if you can find out the date and location of this singular event in history. Do you think the song happens before, during, or after the actual land run? What are some words in the song that tell you the answer?

**Answers:** The first Oklahoma land run took place at noon on April 22, 1889. A large area, known as the “Unassigned Lands,” was opened to settlement that day. The area included the present day cities of Stillwater, Guthrie, Kingfisher, Oklahoma City, and Norman. The song happens before the actual run.

### Transportation

What different strategies do people use in the song to run the race for land? Which of them do you think happened in the real land run? What other modes of transportation can you think of? Which were likely to have been used in the land run, more than one hundred years ago?

**Answers:** In the song, people ride the train, sneak in early, ride a race horse, ride a bicycle, fly a hot air balloon, and begin plowing right over the starting line. All of these were real strategies, although the hot air balloon was only rumored at the time in a European newspaper article - there was no balloon at the actual land run.

### Connections

Monty’s great grandmother Edna Brewer passed down a story about the Cherokee Strip land run in 1893. There was a woman whose father’s Kansas farm bordered Oklahoma. When the signal sounded, she simply stepped across the line and began plowing until she had created a border all the way around her claim. Monty adapted this family story for use in his song.

Does anyone in your class have an ancestor who took part in the land run? Can anyone share a family story about the land run or any other event in early Oklahoma?

Oklahoma City, Guthrie, Kingfisher, and many other Oklahoma towns sprang up in a single day during the land run. How was your city founded?

## “Boom Town” Song Lyric

Big big news, the kind I like  
Wildcatter made an oil strike  
I'm heading for the field to learn some more  
Gonna take me out a lease on that reservoir  
There's black gold gushing from the number one rig  
You don't wanna miss this it's gonna be big

### *Chorus:*

Boom town, boom town; We're gonna build a boom town, baby!  
Boom town, boom town; We're gonna build a boom town, baby!  
There's a fortune to be found  
Pumping money from the ground  
In our boom town, boom town; We're gonna build a boom town!

Jobs jobs jobs for tough young men  
Hauling pipe and lumber in  
Putting up derricks, breaking down soil  
Driving down drill bits, pumping up oil  
Come pitch your tent and earn your pay  
Roustabouts are starting out at six bucks a day in our

### *Repeat Chorus*

Derricks bloom like daisies; Popping up all over  
Tanks are overflowing; Spilling down the river  
Oil fills every plate cup and pitcher  
Everybody's busy; Everybody's richer

Bang bang bang our boom town grows  
Now we've got two picture shows  
Twelve rooming houses, five pool halls  
Restaurants built with wood plank walls  
The future of our city burns bright and clear  
A man'll be proud to raise a family here in our

### *Repeat Chorus*

Tonkawa, Garber, Glenpool, Tulsa, these are boom towns baby  
Bartlesville, Healdton, Drumright, and Oilton, these are boom towns baby  
Shamrock, Cromwell, Oklahoma City, Burbank, Cushing, Seminole, Wewoka  
These are boom towns baby; Oklahoma boom towns  
Oklahoma boom towns, baby; Gonna build a boom town!

## “Boom Town” Discussion

**Note to Teacher:** Time spent studying Monty’s song lyrics will enhance your students’ enjoyment of his upcoming live performance. It is suggested you start by reading the song out loud with your students. Following are several points of entry for discussion. Feel free to spend as much or as little time as you like and to adapt these ideas to your own grade level, style, or interest as needed. Have fun! Please send any questions, suggestions, or feedback to [monty@montyharper.com](mailto:monty@montyharper.com).

### Vocabulary

What is a boom town? What other words in the song are related to oil exploration and drilling? Look up any that you don’t know the meaning of. Do you know more oil-related words that aren’t in the song?

**Oil words:** wildcatter, lease, reservoir, black gold, derricks, roustabouts

**Familiar words with a special oil-related meaning:** strike, field, rig, bits

### Setting

In what year do you think this song takes place? What are some words in the song that might help you make a good guess? Make a guess - how close did you get?

Can you guess where the song takes place? Do you think it’s a real town?

**Answers:** Monty began writing this song by reading about actual events in the early history of Drumright, OK in 1912 and 1913. The words *picture show, rooming house, pool hall, and wood plank walls* might have helped you guess that it took place nearly 100 years ago. Monty decided not to use any details that revealed the specific time and location of the boom town in the song. That way the song represents any Oklahoma boom town from the early part of the 20th century.

### Environment

As the Cushing oil field was developed, oil became so plentiful they couldn't pipe it away fast enough. Three to four hundred barrels a day were wasted! The Cimmaron River ran black with oil! How do you think people felt about that at the time? How does Monty express this in the song? How would people feel about it if the Cimmaron river ran black with oil today?

**Answer:** People at the time were excited. The excess oil represented their prosperity and good fortune. Today such a mess would be considered wasteful and harmful to the environment!

### Economy

Why is oil so valuable? What do we use it for? Do an online search to see how many products you can list that are made using oil. Can you list 25? 50? 100?

**Answer:** We use petroleum to make many different things, including gasoline, heating oil, electricity, plastics, drugs, and cosmetics.

### Geography

Find each of the cities Monty lists at the end of the song on a map of Oklahoma and mark each with a map pin. What can you say about where in Oklahoma the oil is located?

What role did oil play, if any, in the development of your city? Was your city a boom town? What role does oil play now?

## “The Wind Energy Song” Song Lyric

This is the sun shining down on Earth

This is the warmth of the  
sun shining down on Earth

This is the air rising up through the  
warmth of the  
sun shining down on Earth

This is the wind blowing in beneath the  
air rising up through the  
warmth of the  
sun shining down on Earth

This is the rotor spinning in the  
wind blowing in beneath the  
air rising up through the  
warmth of the  
sun shining down on Earth

This is the generator running on the  
rotor spinning in the  
wind blowing in beneath the  
air rising up through the  
warmth of the  
sun shining down on Earth

This is electricity flowing from the  
generator running on the  
rotor spinning in the  
wind blowing in beneath the  
air rising up through the  
warmth of the  
sun shining down on Earth

This is the light from the lamp I lit with  
electricity flowing from the  
generator running on the  
rotor spinning in the  
wind blowing in beneath the  
air rising up through the  
warmth of the  
sun shining down on Earth

This is the book I'm reading in the  
light from the lamp I lit with  
electricity flowing from the  
generator running on the  
rotor spinning in the  
wind blowing in beneath the  
air rising up through the  
warmth of the  
sun shining down on Earth

What is the title of the  
book I'm reading in the  
light from the lamp I lit with  
electricity flowing from the  
generator running on the  
rotor spinning in the  
wind blowing in beneath the  
air rising up through the  
warmth of the  
sun shining down on Earth?

*This is the Sun Shining Down on Earth* is the  
title of the  
book I'm reading in the  
light from the lamp I lit with  
electricity flowing from the  
generator running on the  
rotor spinning in the  
wind blowing in beneath the  
air rising up through the  
warmth of the  
sun shining down on Earth

## “The Wind Energy Song” Discussion

**Note to Teacher:** Time spent studying Monty’s song lyrics will enhance your students’ enjoyment of his upcoming live performance. It is suggested you start by reading the song out loud with your students. Following are several points of entry for discussion. Feel free to spend as much or as little time as you like and to adapt these ideas to your own grade level, style, or interest as needed. Have fun! Please send any questions, suggestions, or feedback to [monty@montyharper.com](mailto:monty@montyharper.com).

### Vocabulary

Look up each of the following words. What does each word have to do with wind energy?

**Wind energy words:** energy, electricity, generator, rotor

### Science

Use these questions to launch an investigation or to review. Lots of helpful information can be found online if you search for “wind energy.”

What is electricity? What do we use it for? What makes the wind blow? How does a wind turbine convert the kinetic energy of wind into mechanical energy? How is mechanical energy converted into electricity?

### Environment

Use these questions to launch an investigation or to review.

What is a fossil fuel? How do fossil fuels effect the environment? What is renewable energy? What is clean energy? Investigate each of the following energy sources. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?

Where does your city get its power? Is it generated by a renewable resource or by fossil fuels?

**Energy sources:** Fossil fuels, solar, wind, hydroelectric, geothermal, nuclear, tidal

### Geography

The state of Oklahoma ranks 8th in the nation for wind energy potential. Find Oklahoma wind farms on a map and mark each with a map pin. What can you say about where in Oklahoma wind is located?

Search online for an Oklahoma wind power map. Where would be a good place for a new wind farm?

Is there a wind farm near your city? If so, what does it look like? Draw a picture or write a poem to describe it.

**Some Oklahoma wind farms:** OMPA near Woodward, Blue Canyon Power north of Lawton, Weatherford Wind Energy Center, Berger Wind Power Headquarters, Centennial Wind Energy Project in Harper County

## “Oklahoma Heroes at the Library” Discussion

### Note to Teacher and Students

Each verse in this song gives you clues about a real-life Oklahoma hero. During Monty’s program you will be asked to listen carefully, try to figure out who Monty is singing about, raise your hand quietly when you know the answer, and say the person's name together at the end of the verse.

To make sure you know the people Monty might sing about, play this matching game...

### Matching Game

Try this individually or as a group. See if you can match each name below to the correct description:

Wiley Post	This country singer started out at the Tumbleweed in Stillwater and became the fastest-selling solo musician in history with more than 70 hit songs in the 1990s.
Will Rogers	This daring airplane pilot was the first to fly solo around the world. His plane was called <i>The Winnie Mae</i> .
Garth Brooks	This Cherokee Indian was the only known person in history to single-handedly invent a written language.
Sequoyah	This gymnast is the most decorated in America, with seven olympic medals and nine world championship medals.
Pistol Pete	This entertainer began as a trick roper on Vaudeville. He became a famous humorist and Hollywood star in the 1920s and 1930s.
Shannon Miller	This lawman was the best shot in the Oklahoma territory. His likeness is now the OSU mascot.

### Further Discussion

For each name above, try to answer these questions: Why is the person well-known? What makes them a hero? Use the Internet or the library to look up more information.

### Who are your Oklahoma heroes?

Send an email to Monty about your class's favorite Oklahoma hero. Include your hero’s accomplishments. Tell what makes this person a hero. Monty will do his best to write a brand new verse about your hero to sing during his performance!

Better yet, after Monty’s visit, you can request instructions for writing your own “Oklahoma Heroes” verse. Send it to Monty and he’ll post your verse on his website, or you can post it yourself to his songbook at <http://montysongs.freeforums.org/>