Inable

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON? by Florence Reece (Tune: "Lay The Lily Low"/"Jack Munro")

In 1931, coal miners in Harlan County were on strike. Armed company deputies roamed the countryside, terrorizing the mining communities, looking for union leaders to beat, jail, or kill. Coal miners fought back, and heads were bashed and bullets fired on both sides in Bloody Harlan. One day during this tense period Mrs. Reece, the wife of a striking coal miner, wrote the words to "Which Side Are You On?" The simple song tells why workers must join the union.

Come all you good workers, Good news to you I'll tell Of how the good old union Has come in here to dwell.

CHORUS:

Which side are you on? Which side are you on? Which side are you on? Which side are you on?

My dady was a miner, And I'm a miner's son, And I'll stick with the union 'Til every battle's won. They say in Harlan County There are no neutrals there. You'll either be a union man Or a thug for J. H. Blair.

Oh workers can you stand it? Oh tell me how you can? Will you be a lousy scab Or will you be a man?

Don't scab for the bosses, Don't listen to their lies. Us poor folks haven't got a chance Unless we organize.

- 1. What is the good news in the song?
- 2. In your opinion, who is J.H. Blair?
- 3. According to this song, why should workers join the union?
- 4. Which side are you on? Why?