

BONO

CLASSROOM PREMIERE: April 15 at 4am ET/PT

CLASSROOM ENCORE: August 6 at 4am ET/PT



How did a rambunctious working-class kid from Dublin, Ireland named Paul Hewson end up as an international rock star who went on to earn three Nobel Peace Prize nominations, and achieve status as one of the most newsworthy people on earth?

With a mix of determination, talent, intellectual curiosity, and diplomatic savvy, Bono has been able to harness his enormous appeal as a musician to engage others in a long-term commitment to help end poverty worldwide. *Biography: Bono* follows Bono's evolution as a rock musician from his early years in U2 through the worldwide popularity of the band in the 1980s with albums such as *The Unforgettable Fire* and *The Joshua Tree*.

Following his route from stardom to political dedication, this documentary explores how and why Bono took up the cause of eradicating poverty and AIDS throughout the world. Students will learn how Bono's pledge to end poverty has inspired his new organization, DATA, which stands for Debt, AIDS, Trade and Africa. This documentary also highlights the ways this organization, with Bono at the helm, addresses key areas of concern for 21st-century citizens. Rather than just a face on a campaign, students will learn how Bono has devoted himself to the careful study of poverty, its causes, and innovative methods of curbing its effects both now and in the future. This one-hour program will give students the opportunity to think about and discuss how people choose to focus their energies on certain issues of significance, how celebrity status can be used to affect politics, and how Bono has used the power of music to build coalition and bring about change.

Curriculum links

Biography: Bono would be useful for courses in Global Studies, American Studies, Health and Technology, Economics, Current Events, and Ethics. It is appropriate for eighth grade and above.

Vocabulary

Using the dictionary at www.merriamwebster.com, an Internet resource such as www.history.com, or an encyclopedia, students should define or explain the significance of the following terms:

coalition	deprivation	lyricist	rudderless
conscience	galvanize	negotiate	tour-de-force
conviction	humanitarian		

Discussion questions

1. Based on what you learned from this documentary about Bono's childhood, what role do you think his upbringing played in his decision to join a rock band? What do you think he found appealing about being a musician and singing in a band?
2. In this documentary viewers learn that Bono made a demand early on in U2's career that the band retain creative control over its music. What does this mean, and how do you think it influenced the band's music?
3. How do you think Irish history and politics influenced Bono's dedication to political involvement and social issues?
4. What kinds of messages did U2's early music transmit to fans? How did their music connect with or reflect the band's commitment to social issues?
5. What were some of the music events Bono participated in during the 1980s that were devoted to making change in the world? Do you think these events were important and do you think they achieved their goals? Discuss.
6. The narrator in this documentary suggests that music can provide the inspiration for unity and a shared commitment to social change. Do you agree with this idea?
7. In this documentary, the narrator suggests that Bono realized that to make big changes in the world he would have to ask big questions and demand big answers. What do you think this means? Can you give an example that illustrates this idea?
8. Why and when did Bono decide to dedicate himself to the issue of HIV and AIDS in Africa? What methods has he encouraged politicians and organizations to use to combat this problem?
9. One of the most important skills Bono seems to possess is the ability to bring people together for a common cause – to build coalitions. What kinds of coalitions has he developed? Who are some of the individuals Bono has called upon to help make change, and why do you think he chose these people?
10. What is the mission of Bono's new organization DATA? If you were to form a global organization dedicated to a cause, what would it be?

Extended activities

1. Bono is one among many celebrities and politicians who have dedicated time and energy to helping eliminate world poverty and debt. Ask students to break up into groups of four or five. Then, ask them to choose four or five other individuals who have become change makers in the contemporary world. Ask students to write



British Prime Minister Tony Blair (C), Irish singer Bono (R) and US Microsoft chairman Bill Gates (L) during a press conference about Africa at the World Economic Forum in Davos, 27 January 2005. Photo: PIERRE VERDY/AFP/Getty Images

a synopsis of these individuals and their efforts to address a social issue or set of issues. Then, ask students to create presentations in PowerPoint format, on posterboard, or in short oral presentations. Students can share these projects with the larger class or group.

2. One could argue that all of Bono's work falls under the umbrella of "human rights." Yet the terms of human rights are always changing, and the definitions of the rights all people deserve change over time. Ask students to brainstorm their own definition of human rights. Keep a list of the "human rights" students think are most important and record them on the classroom board. Then, ask students to create a ranking of the top five human rights. Ask students to locate the "UN Declaration on Human Rights" at the library or using the Internet. Then, ask them to compare the rights outlined in this document to the ones they listed in class discussion.
3. Bono has founded a political organization called DATA which is focused on ending "extreme poverty" and AIDS in Africa. Many of the pressing concerns facing our world today are addressed by DATA and similar organizations. Key concepts and organizations include debt cancellation, globalization, extreme poverty, HIV/AIDS, trade, G8 Summit, transparency, and development. Ask students to choose 10-15 of these or similar concepts and create a glossary defining these terms. Students can illustrate these glossaries with images relevant to the terms if possible. As an alternative, students may want to choose one of these issues or concepts and write a short essay of 3-5 pages defining the issue and discussing its significance.
4. There are many pressing global and domestic issues which have risen to prominence in our world today. This documentary highlights the ways Bono has organized for change. Ask students to create their own campaign or motto for change based on an issue of importance to them. Then, ask students to design a posterboard advertising their organization or motto. Teachers can ask students to present their concepts beforehand in order to make sure they are appropriate.

Websites & books

WEBSITES

The official website of the DATA organization: www.data.org

The World Health Organization: www.who.int/en/

The official U2 website: www.u2.com

BOOKS

Assayas, Michka. *Bono: In Conversation with Michka Assayas* (Riverhead, 2005).

Bono. *On the Move* (Thomas Nelson, 2007).

Clapham, Andrew. *Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2007).

Roosevelt, Eleanor, et al. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Appleswood Books, 2000 edition).