



### PENNY LANE by The Beatles

#### A lesson about the simple present tense used in descriptions (Chapter 1)

#### Notes for the Teacher

##### 1. The Song

Do a search on the Internet to find the song “Penny Lane” by The Beatles. When you search, be sure to include the title and the name of the artist.

##### 2. Song background

You are going to hear a song by The Beatles, a very successful musical group from England that played music throughout the 1960s.

This song, “Penny Lane,” is about a neighborhood in Liverpool, England where the members of The Beatles grew up. In the song, the neighborhood is described as a happy, friendly place. It is a suburban neighborhood.

The words paint a picture of the everyday lives of the people who live on Penny Lane. In this lesson, we’ll focus on the simple present tense, which is used to express actions that happen often or things that are generally true.

##### 3. Grammar background

Tell your students to concentrate on the use of the **simple present** tense in this song. Remind them that the simple present tense is the **simple form** of the verb, except when the subject is 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, then we add an -s. Write these examples on board and ask for volunteer to write other example sentences.

*People often **laugh** at clowns.*

*A barber **cuts** people’s hair.*

You can find more information about the simple present tense in Chapter 1 of *Understanding and Using English Grammar*.

##### 4. Vocabulary

These are some of the words you may want to discuss during your lesson.

- **suburban**: close to a city, but not in it
- **mack**: a type of raincoat (in British English)
- **poppy**: a type of flower
- **hourglass**: a glass container with sand in it that can be used to measure time
- **behind someone’s back**: to say something about a person when they are not there
- **roundabout**: a traffic circle
- **trim**: to cut a small amount



## **PENNY LANE** by The Beatles

### **Student Worksheet**

#### **While you listen**

1. Listen through the song once for meaning. You will hear about Penny Lane and the people who live there. Try to imagine what Penny Lane looks like. Don't look at the text yet; practice your listening skills!
2. Now listen again for verbs in the simple present tense. Write down as many as you can while you listen.

Present Tense Verbs:

3. Listen one more time and look at the lyrics. Underline all the simple present tense verbs as you hear them. Check your list. How did you do?

#### **After you listen**

##### **1. Things to think about and discuss**

In pairs, small groups, or as a whole class, share your answers to these questions.

- Which residents of Penny Lane are mentioned? List three of them.
  
- Do you think Penny Lane is a place you would want to live? Why or why not?



## **PENNY LANE** by The Beatles

### **Student Worksheet page 2**

#### **2. Grammar**

Look for three different uses of the simple present tense in “Penny Lane.”

1. To show repeated, habitual action.

Which verbs fit into this category?

List them here. Then share your answers with the class.

2. To describe conditions or situations that exist, stative verbs, such as *be*, *have*, *feel*, *like*, and *know* are used. Find three stative verbs and write them here.

3. To describe the scene. Find three lines of lyrics that use the simple present to do this. List them here.

Now find one verb in the present progressive. Discuss why this tense is used.

#### **3. Speaking & Writing**

In pairs, small groups, or as a whole class, share your answers to this question:

Imagine that you are a character who lives on Penny Lane. If you were in the song, what would it say about you?

Now write a short paragraph with a few details that describe you and your life on Penny Lane.