

Come back home

a song by Alan Smith Robertson

<https://youtu.be/rAazJuNeJx0> (original version)

<https://youtu.be/WvQhiHW5qn0> (acoustic version)

Pre-listening activities

Look at the lyrics below, which question words do you think go into each gap?
Sometimes there is more than one possible question word

Hey there, my dear! Welcome back home!

_____ have you been?

Did you have fun?

_____ did you go away for so long?

_____ have you seen?

_____ have you done?

And _____ did you come back home?

My life was empty when you left, you took your song away from me

I wish you didn't have to leave the nest, but birds like you cannot be caged

_____ have you learnt?

_____ jobs have you worked?

Did you conquer the world?

_____ heads have you turned?

And _____ hearts did you break along the way?

_____ are you staying?

_____ are you leaving again?

And _____ did you come back home?

My life was empty when you left, you took your song away from me

I wish you didn't have to leave the nest, but birds like you cannot be caged

And again you have gone, and again my heart broke

_____ way did you go?

_____ could you leave me alone?

This time _____ are you gonna be away?

_____ are you coming back home?

Oh! and _____ did you come back home?

I was so happy 'til you left, you took your song away again

I wish you didn't have to leave the nest, but birds like you cannot be caged

My life is empty now you've left, you took your song away again

I wish you didn't have to leave the nest, but birds like you cannot be caged

Listen to the song to check.

Look at the questions from the song below. Match them with an appropriate answer.

Where have you been?	A few, but I'm concentrating on my career
Did you have fun?	I have started working in a bank
Why did you go away for so long?	I need money
Who have you seen?	I was busy
What have you done?	I went north
And why did you come back home?	I'll be back next Friday afternoon
How much have you learnt?	I'm sorry, but I have to live my own life
How many jobs have you worked?	I've learnt a lot about life and responsibility
Did you conquer the world?	Just for the weekend
How many heads have you turned?	Nobody famous
And whose hearts did you break along the way?	Not yet, but I have a lot of followers on tiktok
How long are you staying?	On Sunday evening
When are you leaving again?	One boy asked me out. I said no. He cried.
Which way did you go?	Three; a babysitter, waitress & then a cashier
How could you leave me alone?	To the supermarket
This time how long are you going to be away?	Until next weekend
When are you coming back home?	Yes, I did. In fact, I had a great time!

Post-listening activities

Who do you think is asking the questions in this song? Who is he/she talking to?

Are you still living with your parents? If not, when you left home did your parents cry? Did **you** cry?

Are you a parent? Have your children left home yet?

If they have, did you feel as strongly as the narrator of the song?

If they haven't left home yet, how will you feel about it?

What are the advantages (and disadvantages) to leaving home? And to staying at home?

Role play

You are going to do a role play with a partner.

- One of you will be the parent. Your son or daughter left home home recently.
- And the other will be the son or daughter. You have come home for the weekend.

If you are the parent:

- How do you feel about your son or daughter coming home for the weekend?
- Think about the questions you would like to ask about his/her new life
- Think about how you can help or what advice you could give

If you are the son or daughter:

- Why did you come home? are you homesick? do you need money? food? your clothes washed?
- Think about how you would answer your parent's questions about your new life
- Has it been difficult to live on your own? Do you even want to continue living on your own?
- What advice could you ask your parent?

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a song by Alan Smith Robertson designed to practise the interrogative

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Pre-listening activities

Look at the lyrics below, which question words do you think go into each gap?
Sometimes there is more than one possible question word

Depending on your students' level, you may have to provide them with a list of question words to choose from. Don't correct your students if they give an acceptable alternative question word, but notice the difference in meaning.

Hey there, my dear! Welcome back home!

WHERE have you been?

Did you have fun?

WHY did you go away for so long?

WHO have you seen?

WHAT have you done?

other acceptable QWs

how

-

what / how much

how much

And WHY did you come back home?

My life was empty when you left, you took your song away from me

I wish you didn't have to leave the nest, but birds like you cannot be caged

when

HOW MUCH have you learnt?

HOW MANY jobs have you worked?

Did you conquer the world?

HOW MANY heads have you turned?

And WHOSE hearts did you break along the way?

HOW LONG are you staying?

WHEN are you leaving again?

what

what, which

whose, which

how many

where

what time

And WHY did you come back home?

My life was empty when you left, you took your song away from me

I wish you didn't have to leave the nest, but birds like you cannot be caged

when

And again you have gone, and again my heart broke

WHICH way did you go?

HOW could you leave me alone?

This time HOW LONG are you gonna be away?

WHEN are you coming back home?

-

-

-

why

Oh! and WHY did you come back home?

I was so happy 'til you left, you took your song away again

I wish you didn't have to leave the nest, but birds like you cannot be caged

My life is empty now you've left, you took your song away again

I wish you didn't have to leave the nest, but birds like you cannot be caged

when

Listen to the song to check.

Look at the questions from the song below. Match them with an appropriate answer.

Where have you been?	<i>To the supermarket</i>
Did you have fun?	<i>Yes, I did. In fact, I had a great time!</i>
Why did you go away for so long?	<i>I was busy</i>
Who have you seen?	<i>Nobody famous</i>
What have you done?	<i>I have started working in a bank</i>
And why did you come back home?	<i>I need money</i>
How much have you learnt?	<i>I've learnt a lot about life and responsibility</i>
How many jobs have you worked?	<i>Three; a babysitter, waitress & then a cashier</i>
Did you conquer the world?	<i>Not yet, but I have a lot of followers on tiktok</i>
How many heads have you turned? *	<i>A few, but I'm concentrating on my career</i>
And whose hearts did you break along the way?	<i>One boy asked me out. I said no. He cried.</i>
How long are you staying?	<i>Just for the weekend</i>
When are you leaving again?	<i>On Sunday evening</i>
Which way did you go?	<i>I went north</i>
How could you leave me alone?	<i>I'm sorry, but I have to live my own life</i>
This time how long are you going to be away?	<i>Until next weekend</i>
When are you coming back home?	<i>I'll be back next Friday afternoon</i>

* *Notice: to turn someone's head = to attract a lot of attention*

Play the song again so the students can check their answers for themselves

Post-listening activities

Who do you think is asking the questions in this song? Who is he/she talking to?

Your students probably won't know the answer to this question; first let them try to guess. Then, ask them if they understand the line: "I wish you didn't have to leave the nest". They may know "nest" and think that the song is about a bird, but just like in many other languages, "leave the nest" can also refer to when children are old enough to leave home.

Are you still living with your parents? If not, when you left home did your parents cry? Did **you** cry?

Are you a parent? Have your children left home yet?

If they have, did you feel as strongly as the narrator of the song?

If they haven't left home yet, how do you think you will feel about it?

What are the advantages (and disadvantages) to leaving home? And to staying at home?

Role play

You are going to do a role play with a partner.

- One of you will be the parent. Your son or daughter left home home recently.
- And the other will be the son or daughter. You have come home for the weekend.

If you have an odd number of students, form a group of three with two parents

If you are the parent:

- How do you feel about your son or daughter coming home for the weekend?
- Think about the questions you would like to ask about his/her new life
- Think about how you can help or what advice you could give

If you are the son or daughter:

- Why did you come home? are you homesick? do you need money? food? your clothes washed?
- Think about how you would answer your parent's questions about your new life
- Has it been difficult to live on your own? Do you even want to continue living on your own?
- What advice could you ask your parent?