

# Hopes and Doubts and Fears

a song by Alan Smith Robertson

<https://youtu.be/kwus3L4STzc>

## Pre-listening activities

- Look at the adverbs below. Do you know what they mean?
  - anxiously
  - awkwardly
  - badly
  - bravely
  - foolishly
  - quietly
  - sadly
  - silently
  - slowly
  - softly
  - fast
  - hard
  - well
- What actions can we describe with them?
  - eg. we wait anxiously for our exam results, we sing badly, we drive fast... etc.

Look at the lyrics to the song "Hopes & Doubts & Fears".

Can you put the adverbs from the first exercise into each of the gaps below?

Verse 1      She sat \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ reminiscing  
She then shed a tear, \_\_\_\_\_ glistening  
She \_\_\_\_\_ kissed the letter which said "goodbye"  
And as she \_\_\_\_\_ closed the door she felt alive

Verse 2      So \_\_\_\_\_, the boy with the flowers  
Smiled \_\_\_\_\_, feeling overpowered  
He took a deep breath as he approached the door  
He \_\_\_\_\_ knocked as his heart was beating more

Bridge      We all have hopes, and doubts and fears  
We all have days that end in tears  
But you miss all the shots that you don't take  
And they're the shots that you regret

Verse 3      I \_\_\_\_\_ failed in so many projects  
I \_\_\_\_\_ worked on things with no prospects  
But each time that I failed \_\_\_\_\_ and I fell \_\_\_\_\_  
I picked myself up, before I crashed  
It's better to have failed, at least I tried  
Because I face all my fears, and I won't hide  
Listen to this song and listen \_\_\_\_\_  
Because I think that it's shit, it's another fail.

Listen to check

## Post-listening activities

- This song's title is “hopes and doubts and fears”.

What things do you usually associate with these ideas?

What hopes do you have?

What fears do you have?

- The lyrics of this song are not very clear; they describe a situation, but they don't give us any context. We have to imagine the context.

What is happening in verse 1?

Who is the main character?

Why is she reminiscing? Why is she crying?

Why did the letter say goodbye? Who was the letter saying goodbye to?

How did she feel when she closed the door?

In verse 2, we have a description of “a boy with flowers”.

Why is he holding flowers? Who are they for?

Why is he so anxious?

- The lyrics contain the phrase: *“you miss all the shots that you don't take and they're the shots that you regret”*

What does this mean? Do you agree?

- Have you ever failed at something? Have you ever given something up? How did you feel?

- The song ends with the line: *“Listen to this song, and listen well Because I think that it's shit, it's another fail”*

Do you agree? Is this song shit? How would you improve it?

# Hopes and Doubts and Fears

a song by Alan Smith Robertson to practice adverbs of manner

<https://youtu.be/kwus3L4STzc>

Teacher's answer sheet. Length: approximately 40 - 50 minutes

*Notice: Both the song and this worksheet are designed for intermediate & upper-intermediate level students. You can and should adapt the exercises according to your students' level.*

## Pre-listening activities

- Look at the adverbs below. Do you know what they mean?
  - anxiously (nervously)
  - awkwardly (uncomfortably)
  - badly (not well / unsatisfactorily)
  - bravely (courageously)
  - foolishly (stupidly)
  - quietly (silently / in silence)
  - sadly (in a sad way)
  - silently (in silence)
  - slowly (not quickly)
  - softly (quietly and delicately)  
(in a careful and gentle manner)
  - fast (quickly)
  - hard (normally: with a lot of effort)  
(in the song: violently)
  - well (normally: correctly)  
(in the song: attentively)
- What actions can we describe with them?
  - anxiously: we waited anxiously for our exam results
  - awkwardly: he fell awkwardly to the ground and hit his head
  - badly: I sing very badly, so I'd prefer not to go to the karaoke with you tonight
  - bravely: the boy bravely walked out onto the stage and started to speak
  - foolishly: she foolishly let her baby brother look after the sweets
  - quietly: the two girls quietly played their game of chess
  - sadly: she sadly said goodbye to the man, before getting on the train
  - silently: the children studied silently
  - slowly: almost like a zombie, he slowly got out of bed
  - softly: he speaks so softly that I can hardly hear him / she softly caressed his head
  - fast: my dad drives really fast; one day he's going to have an accident
  - hard: we work hard / in rugby they play hard
  - well: he did his exam very well / listen well to what I'm telling you

*Notice that adverbs of manner usually go after the verb.*

*Placing the adverb before the verb normally puts extra emphasis on the adverb.*

*The adverbs "well", "badly", "hard" & "fast" are always placed after the verb.*

Look at the lyrics to the song “Hopes & Doubts & Fears”.

Can you put the adverbs from the first exercise into each of the gaps below?

Verse 1      She sat quietly, sadly reminiscing  
She then shed a tear, silently glistening  
She softly kissed the letter which said "goodbye"  
And as she slowly closed the door she felt alive

Verse 2      So awkwardly, the boy with the flowers  
Smiled anxiously, feeling overpowered  
He took a deep breath as he approached the door  
He bravely knocked as his heart was beating more

Bridge      We all have hopes, and doubts and fears  
We all have days that end in tears  
But you miss all the shots that you don't take  
And they're the shots that you regret

Verse 3      I badly failed in so many projects  
I foolishly worked on things with no prospects  
But each time that I failed hard and I fell fast  
I picked myself up, before I crashed  
It's better to have failed, at least I tried  
Because I face all my fears, and I won't hide  
Listen to this song and listen well  
Because I think that it's shit, it's another fail.

Listen to check

## Post-listening activities

- This song's title is “hopes and doubts and fears”.

What things do you usually associate with these ideas?

What hopes do you have? *I hope to...*

What fears do you have? *I'm afraid that...*

*Students' own answers*

- The lyrics of this song are not very clear; they describe a situation, but they don't give us any context. We have to imagine the context.

What is happening in verse 1?

Who is the main character?

*A woman*

Why is she reminiscing? Why is she crying?

*She is remembering the good times in her relationship / marriage*

*She is leaving her partner*

Why did the letter say goodbye? Who was the letter saying goodbye to?

*It is a goodbye letter for her partner*

How did she feel when she closed the door?

*“Alive”; which means “happy”, “lively” or “in good spirits”*

In verse 2, we have a description of “a boy with flowers”.

Why is he holding flowers? Who are they for?

*He is going to give them to a girl (and maybe ask her out on a date)*

Why is he so anxious?

*He is worried that the girl is going to reject him*

- The lyrics contain the phrase: “you miss all the shots that you don't take and they're the shots that you regret”

What does this mean? Do you agree?

*The first line is a quote by Wayne Gretzky; it means that you can't succeed if you don't try, which means you have to take action. The second line is a reference to a Mark Twain quote: “we regret the things we don't do more than the things we do.”*

*Ask your students if they agree with this idea.*

*Then ask them if they regret doing anything, & if they regret NOT doing anything*

- Have you ever failed at something? Have you ever given something up? How did you feel?  
*Students' own answers*

- The song ends with the line: “Listen to this song, and listen well  
Because I think that it's shit, it's another fail”

Do you agree? Is this song shit? How would you improve it?

*Students' own answers*