

Name _____

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.

They say in Harlan County
There are no neutrals there.
You'll either be a union man
Or a thug for J. H. Blair.

CHORUS:

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

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

My dady was a miner,
And I'm a miner's son,
And I'll stick with the union
'Til every battle's won.

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?