



Song Analysis

Name: _____

Directions: Read the song lyrics below and respond to the questions.

"Five Feet High and Risin'"

By Johnny Cash

My mama always taught me that good things come from adversity if we put our faith in the Lord. We couldn't see much good in the flood waters when they were causing us to have to leave home. But when the water went down, we found that it had washed a load of rich black bottom dirt across our land. The following year we had the best cotton crop we'd ever had.

I remember hearing:

How high's the water, mama?
Two feet high and risin'
How high's the water, papa?
Two feet high and risin'

We can make it to the road in a homemade boat
That's the only thing we got left that'll float
It's already over all the wheat and the oats,
Two feet high and risin'

How high's the water, mama?
Three feet high and risin'
How high's the water, papa?
Three feet high and risin'

Well, the hives are gone,
I've lost my bees
The chickens are sleepin'
In the willow trees
Cow's in water up past her knees,
Three feet high and risin'

How high's the water, mama?
Four feet high and risin'
How high's the water, papa?
Four feet high and risin'

Hey, come look through the window pane,
The bus is comin', gonna take us to the train
Looks like we'll be blessed with a little more rain,
Four feet high and risin'

How high's the water, mama?
Five feet high and risin'
How high's the water, papa?
Five feet high and risin'

Well, the rails are washed out north of town
We gotta head for higher ground
We can't come back till the water comes down,
Five feet high and risin'

Well, it's five feet high and risin'

What events inspired this song?

How does the use of dialogue contribute to the story?

What do the lyrics tell you about the type of people affected by these events?

How does the music of the song help you visualize what happened?

What details are included in the song's lyrics to help you visualize what happened?

On the back side of this paper, draw a picture of something described in this song.