

Vocabulary

n.) blessing(s) v.) bless	v.) transpose	v., n.) score (in music)
v.) obsess (over <s.t.> Simp. Past, adj.) obsessed		n.) royalties

Reading



Irving Berlin

"Count Your Blessings (Instead of Sheep)" is a popular song written by **Irving Berlin** for the 1954 movie *White Christmas*.

Berlin is probably the most famous songwriter in American pop music history, and his personal story is truly fascinating. He was born in 1888 in the Russian Empire, in what is now called Belarus. He died in 1989 in the U.S.A., at *101 years old!*

Some More Irving Berlin Facts:

- He never understood music very well: He could only play in one key, and used a **special piano** that could be transposed with a shift lever. *See a picture of a **transposing piano** below!*
- Because of this lack of musical knowledge, he hired others to score his songs. One of his hires was **George Gershwin!** *Again, below....*
- Sadly, he became mentally ill in his later years. Although he was rich, he constantly obsessed over money. He stayed in his apartment and called his agent three or four times a day to talk about royalties.



A Transposing Piano



The Gershwin Brothers

OUR LOVE IS HERE TO STAY *G. GERSHWIN*

C⁷ G⁹ Gmi⁷ C⁷ F⁶ Ami D⁷



Song Vocabulary

n.) bankroll	n.) nursery	v., n., adj.) slumber
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Count Your Blessings (Instead of Sheep)

by Irving Berlin (Sung by Diana Krall —or— Bing Crosby)

When I'm worried and I can't sleep
I count my blessings instead of sheep
And I fall asleep
Counting my blessings

When my **bankroll** is getting small ↘
I think of when I had none at all
And I fall asleep
Counting my blessings



I think about a nursery and
I picture curly heads
And one by one I count them as they
Slumber in their beds

If you're worried and you can't sleep
Just count your blessings instead of sheep
And you'll fall asleep
Counting your blessings!

Questions (post-listening)

- What is “counting sheep”?
- What are *your* blessings in life? Care to count some off for us?
- Do you know any other songs with a message like this one?

Activity

- Team up with a partner (or two) and share stories of your life’s blessings with each other.