

## INSPIRING COMPOSER IN COLONIAL TIMES

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Student names

### LYRIC SHEET ASSIGNMENT

1. Read Patriotic lyrics aloud with a partner. Discuss meaning.
2. Mark each verse with appropriate description:
  - a) God deserves Colonist's thanks
  - b) Colonists are full of faith and courage
  - c) British troupes and young Colonists in battle
  - d) British officers plan offense
  - e) British forces fall back
3. Title this version in your own words.

## *Chester*

words and music by William Billings

\_\_\_\_\_ Student title

Verse 1    Let tyrants shake their iron rod,  
 And Slav'ry clank her galling chains,  
 We fear them not, we trust in God,  
 New England's God forever reigns.

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Verse 2    [Howe](#) and [Burgoyne](#) and [Clinton](#) too,  
 With [Prescot](#) and [Cornwallis](#) join'd,  
 Together plot our Overthrow,  
 In one Infernal league combin'd.

\_\_\_\_\_

Verse 3    When God inspir'd us for the fight,  
 Their ranks were broke, their lines were forc'd,  
 Their ships were Shatter'd in our sight,  
 Or swiftly driven from our Coast.

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Verse 4    The Foe comes on with haughty Stride;  
 Our troops advance with martial noise,  
 Their Vet'rans flee before our Youth,  
 And Gen'ral's yield to beardless Boys.

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Verse 5    What grateful Off'ring shall we bring?  
 What shall we render to the Lord?  
 Loud Halleluiahs let us Sing,  
 And praise his name on ev'ry Chord.

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The song was later provided with religious (as opposed to patriotic) words by [Philip Doddridge](#), and in this form is a favorite of [Sacred Harp](#) singers. The Doddridge words are as follows:

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Student title

Let the high heav'ns your songs invite,  
 These spacious fields of brilliant light,  
 Where sun and moon and planets roll,  
 And stars that glow from pole to pole.

Sun, moon, and stars convey Thy praise,  
 'Round the whole earth and never stand,  
 So when Thy truth began its race,  
 It touched and glanced on ev'ry hand.

4. Take turns reading the religious lyrics written after the Revolutionary War.
5. Title this version in your own words.

Enjoy two versions of Billings' *Chester*.

Youtube.com: The Boston Camerata-Cohen Chester (excellent choral version)

Youtube.com: Sacred Harp 479 Chester (state singing convention – religious text)

Answers:  
Lyric Sheet Assignment

Verse 1 – b)

Verse 2 – d)

Verse 3 – e)

Verse 4 – c)

Verse 5 – a)