

# Rhyme On Time

## Get a Life Activity

### Activity Sheet #2 – Jason R. Levine

This activity is designed for high intermediate to advanced adolescents and adults to (1) increase their exposure to collocations with the verb ‘get’ and (2) to provide repetitive, contextualized practice with these collocations.

The activity is meant to be done across several class periods. Students may also want to do out of class practice with the song and video.

#### Procedure:

1. Tell your students they are going to watch a video of a song called, “Get a Life.” Explain that the song is a story and divided into three parts. Also explain that it is full of collocations with the verb “get.” (You may want to say “phrases” or “word combinations” instead of collocations.) Elicit “get” collocations from the class (e.g., “get ready, get a job”) and write them on the board.
2. Show Part 1 of the video (up until 1:51). Then ask students these questions (1) “What was difficult about the boy’s life before he left home?” and (2) “What was his life like at college?” Ask the students to consider these questions while they watch Part 1 a second time. Show Part 1 again.
3. Pair or group the students to discuss the questions. Then, distribute the Vocabulary and Comprehension Questions for Part 1.
4. Ask students to individually read the vocabulary and answer the questions for Part 1. Then show Part 1 of the video a third time. Ask students to compare and discuss their answers in pairs or groups.

5. Ask students to read the vocabulary and comprehension questions for Part 2 of the video. Then play Part 2 and repeat Step 4 above. (Part 2 begins at 1:56)
6. Ask students to read the vocabulary and comprehension questions for Part 3 of the video. Then Play Part 3 and repeat Step 4 above. (Part 3 begins at 3:45)
7. Distribute the lyrics to the song. (Note: sentence stress is marked in **bold**.)
8. Ideas for extension activities:
  1. Students build on the vocabulary lists by researching meanings for the other “get” collocations in the song.
  2. Students answer one of the following questions in a paragraph or short essay:
    - What message or messages are important in this song?
    - Compare your life (or the life of someone you know) to the life of the boy in the song.
  3. Students perform the song in groups of three (one student per verse).

## Vocabulary, Part 1

I <i>got to know</i> this kid.	I <i>began to know</i> him.
His mom <i>got on him</i> to get a job.	She <i>pressured him</i> to get a job.
He <i>got grief</i> from his friends.	His friends were <i>upset with him</i> .
He <i>got out of</i> hustling.	He <i>escaped</i> this way of life.

## Comprehension Questions, Part 1

1. What did the boy's mother do to "get him in line?"
  - a. She fought with him.
  - b. She told him not to rob.
  - c. She persuaded him to get a job.
2. Why did the boy's friends become "scared and insecure?"
  - a. They thought he wasn't tough enough.
  - b. They worried that their friendship would end.
  - c. The boy had hurt them in the past.
3. When the boy was in college, he \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. occasionally got into trouble with the police
  - b. was sometimes homesick
  - c. had difficulty with his studies

## Vocabulary, Part 2

It <i>got him down</i> .	It <i>made him depressed</i> .
Would he <i>get sucked in again</i> ?	Would he <i>be pressured to do it again</i> ?
He knew he'd <i>get behind</i> .	He knew he <i>could not keep up with</i> his work.

## Comprehension Questions, Part 2

1. When the boy first heard his mother was sick, he \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. borrowed money to buy a ticket
  - b. was so depressed he couldn't function
  - c. began writing poetry
2. What did the boy begin worrying about when he got home?
  - a. His relationship with his friends
  - b. Losing his job
  - c. Both a and b
3. "When people truly love you they get after you to listen." What does this mean?
  - a. People who care about you want to help you.
  - b. People who care about you want you to decide things on your own.
  - c. People who care about you want to listen to you.

### Vocabulary, Part 3

She'd <i>get over</i> her disease.	She would <i>get better</i> .
She was <i>barely getting on in her years</i> .	She was <i>not very old</i> .
His aunt <i>got fed up</i> with him.	She <i>got really frustrated</i> with him.
He finally <i>got the point</i> .	He finally <i>understood</i> .
His promised <i>to get on track</i> .	He promised <i>to focus</i> on his work.
He <i>got off to a difficult start</i> .	He <i>had a difficult childhood</i> .

### Comprehension Questions, Part 3

1. When he got home, did his friends try to connect with him?
  - a. Yes, they did.
  - b. No, they didn't.
  - c. It isn't clear whether they did or they didn't.
2. How did the boy feel when his mother died?
  - a. Angry
  - b. Afraid
  - c. Both a and b
3. How was he able to "get back on track"?
  - a. He feared his friends would pressure him to drop out of college.
  - b. He found out he might not receive financial aid.
  - c. His aunt convinced him to return to college.
4. According to the story, even if you "get off to a bad start" you can still make it if you \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. focus only on what it takes to survive
  - b. work hard to do your very best
  - c. follow other people's advice

## Answer Key - Comprehension Questions

### Part 1

1. c
2. b
3. b

### Part 2

1. a
2. a
3. a

### Part 3

1. b
2. c
3. c
4. b

## Get a Life (Part 1)



I **got** to know this **kid** when I **got** to junior **high**.  
He used to **get** into **trouble**, get in **fights**, and get **high**.  
But when he **got** a little **older**, he **got** more **mature**.  
His **mom** got him in **line** so his **vision** wouldn't **blur**.  
She **got** on his **case** to get **straight** and get a **job**,  
so **they** could get **by** without **having** to **rob**.  
Every **night** when he got **off**, he'd **get** out his **notebook**  
and get **busy** writing **rhymes** because **he** was no **crook**.  
He got a **look** at **universities** and **got** some **applications**,  
got **approval** from his **teachers** to **get** their **recommendations**.  
He got **grief** from his **friends**; he got **insulted** and got **hurt** when  
they got **scared** and **insecure** because they **knew** he would **desert** them.

As we get **older**, we get **wiser** but we **often** get **lost**.  
I hope you **get** what I'm **saying**; I hope it's **getting** **across**.  
When **people** truly **love** you, they get **after** you to **listen**.  
You **might** just get a **clue** and **see** what you've been **missing**.

Sure **enough** he got a **scholarship** and **got** into **college**.  
He got **down** to **studying** and **building** **knowledge**.  
He got **ahead**, got out of **hustling** with **thugs** on his **block**,  
getting **hassled** by **cops**, getting **locked** up on **cell** blocks.  
He got **along** with the **students** in his **dorm**,  
got **sun** on the **quad** when the **weather** got **warm**.  
He got **used** to life on **campus**, got **adjusted** really **fast**,  
got the **schedule** that he **wanted** with the **poetry** **class**.  
He got **books** from the **library**, got **into** his **studies**, though  
at **times** it got **rough** when he got **homesick** for his **buddies**.  
**Still**, he'd gotten a **ticket** to get **out** and get **away** from it  
**all**, but got a **shock** when one **morning** he got **up** and got a  
**call** from his **aunt** who had **discovered** his **mom** had gotten  
**sick**. She said, "**Quick**, you've got to **get** to your **mother**."

## Get a Life (Part 2)



As we get **older**, we get **wiser** but we **often** get **lost**.  
I hope you **get** what I'm **saying**; I hope it's **getting across**.  
When **people** truly **love** you, they get **after** you to **listen**.  
You **might** just get a **clue** and **see** what you've been **missing**;  
so get **on** with your **life**; stop **trying** to get **even**,  
getting **back** at him or **her** to get **revenge** for no good **reason**.  
There's **no** getting **away** from the **fact** that life is **short**.  
We **all** get to the **point** where we **need** to get support.

He'd just **gotten** his **very** first **A** on a **poem** when he  
got **packed** but **lacked** the funds to **get** back home.  
He got a **loan** from this guy **Nick** and then **alone** he got a **ticket**  
at the **airport** all he could **think** of was his **mother** getting **sick**.  
It got him **down**; it got him **stressed**, but he'd get **passed** the depression.  
For **years** from his **mother** he'd **gotten** so many **blessings**.  
He **got** himself **mentally** prepared to get the **job** done;  
he **got** aboard the **plane** and then got **off** when it got **in** at 1:00.  
He got a **cab** but when he **got** to his **apartment**,  
got to **thinking** that it **felt** like he was **right** back where he'd **started**.  
Would he **get** sucked **in** again to **life** with his **hustling** friends,  
who **now** had got the **ends** to cop a **Beemer** or a **Benz**?  
Would he **get** to the **end** of the **term** and get good **grades**,  
so he'd still **qualify** in **May** to **get** financial **aid**?  
He **knew** he'd get **behind** and it'd be **hard** to catch **up**.  
He **might** get in a **rut** and get **stuck** and then  
**what** would his **mom** say **then**? And **where** would he **be**?  
Without **getting** a **degree**, a **career** he'd never **see**.

As we get **older**, we get **wiser** but we **often** get **lost**.  
I hope you **get** what I'm **saying**; I hope it's **getting across**.  
When **people** truly **love** you, they get **after** you to **listen**.  
You **might** just get a **clue** and **see** what you've been **missing**.  
If you **try** to get **away** with **not** working **hard** and  
get **around** responsibilities, you're **bound** to get **jarred**  
or even **scarred** by reality. **Don't** get me **wrong**:  
to get **behind** the right mentality, you've **got** to get **strong**.

## Get a Life (Part 3)

His **mom** had gotten pneumonia; she could **barely speak**.  
He stayed and **never** left her **side** for the **next** twelve **weeks**.  
If his **friends** had **called**, he wouldn't have **gotten** the **phone**;  
but **no** one got in **touch**, though they **knew** he had come **home**.

He never **once** got the **feeling** that his **mom** would **die**.  
She'd get **over** her **illness** and get **better** by and **by**.  
But it **wasn't** to **be**. She passed **away** one **night**.  
She was **barely** getting **on** in her **years**, not **quite**  
fifty-**one**; it wasn't **right**; the **tears** he couldn't **fight**;  
he got **upset**; he felt **fright** and full of **spite**, **ready**  
to **ignite**. No **appetite**, he **couldn't** eat a **bite** or  
get to **sleep** at **night**; he lay **awake** until **daylight**.  
He **didn't** try to **write**; he couldn't **get** himself to **do**  
a **freaking thing**. His **aunt** got **fed up** with him; she **said**  
she had to **bring** him to his **senses** and **get** him on a **plane**.  
She **got** him to **do** it, though he **protested** and **complained**.  
She said, "You've **got** to get **moving**, get **going**, get your **life** back."  
He **finally** got the **point**; he **promised** to get on **track**,  
and, in **fact**, back at **college** the **textbooks** he **attacked**.  
He got **right** to **work**, allowing **nothing** to **distract** him from  
his **goal** of getting **through** freshman **year** so he could **get**  
to be a **sophomore** and **steer** his **way** to graduation day,  
so **poor** he wouldn't **be** anymore.  
And get **this**: that's **just** what he **did**.  
Today he's got a **house**, a **PhD** and three **kids**.

As we get **older**, we get **wiser** but we **often** get **lost**.  
I hope you **get** what I'm **saying**; I hope it's **getting across**.  
When **people** truly **love** you, they get **after** you to **listen**.  
You **might** just get a **clue** and **see** what you've been **missing**.  
From the **get** go, he got **off** to a **difficult** start.  
He'd "get **nowhere** in **life**," or **so** people **thought**.  
But when you've **got** the **will** and the **drive** to do **more**  
than just **survive** on this **Earth** you feel **intensely** alive;  
you **get** up the **courage** to get **focused** and **strive**.  
Peace to **those** who shun **strife**, out there **getting** a **life**.