Johnny B. Goode (1958)
Chuck Berry

LISTEN FOR
- Clever lyrics lacking innuendo
- Driving guitar solos, including short bursts in chorus
- Elements of R&B (12-bar blues, blue notes, electric guitar)
- Elements of country (text, vocal delivery)

CREATION

Songwriters       Chuck Berry (lyrics, music)
Label, Record     Chess 1691
Musicians         Chuck Berry (electric guitar, lead vocal), Lafayette Leake (piano), Willie Dixon (acoustic bass), Fred Below (drums)
Producer          Leonard and Phil Chess
Recording         Chess Studios (Chicago); January 1958; mono
Charts            Pop 8, R&B 5

MUSIC

Genre             Rock ‘n’ roll
Form              Simple verse-chorus (12-bar blues)
Key               B major
Meter             4/4 (drums tend to shuffle)
### LISTENING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Lyric Cue</th>
<th>Listen For</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:00</td>
<td>Intro (12)</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Famous guitar intro using double stops on high strings. Hold. 4 bars stop time before band enters.</td>
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<tr>
<td>.034</td>
<td>Chorus (12)</td>
<td>“Go, Go Johnny”</td>
<td>Vocal punctuated by Berry’s characteristic guitar bursts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>0:51</td>
<td>Verse 2 (12)</td>
<td>“He used to carry”</td>
<td>Country influence in Berry’s vocals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:08</td>
<td>Chorus (12)</td>
<td>“Go, Go Johnny”</td>
<td>As before. Notice the shuffle groove in the drums (high hat), esp. at 1:08.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>Verse 3 (12)</td>
<td>“His mother told him”</td>
<td>As before.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:18</td>
<td>Chorus (12)</td>
<td>“Go, Go Johnny”</td>
<td>As before, driving to end.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LYRICS

Deep down in Louisiana close to New Orleans
Way back up in the woods among the evergreens
There stood a log cabin made of earth and wood
Where lived a country boy name Johnny B. Goode
Who never ever learned to read or write so well
But he could play the guitar just like ringing a bell

Go go, go Johnny go go
Go Johnny go go, go Johnny go go
Go Johnny go go, Johnny B. Goode

His mother told him someday he would be a man
And you would be the leader of a big old band
Many people coming from miles around
To hear you play your music when the sun go down
Maybe someday your name would be in lights
Saying Johnny B. Goode tonight

Go go, go Johnny go go
Go Johnny go go, go Johnny go go
Go Johnny go go, Johnny B. Goode

He used to carry his guitar in a gunny sack
And sit beneath the trees by the railroad track
Oh, the engineers would see him sitting in the shade
Strumming with the rhythm that the drivers made
People passing by, they would stop and say
Oh my, what that little country boy could play

Go go, go Johnny go go
Go Johnny go go, go Johnny go go
Go Johnny go go, Johnny B. Goode

Go go, go Johnny go go
Go Johnny go go, Johnny B. Goode

Go go, go Johnny go go
Go Johnny go go, Johnny B. Goode
SOURCES