

Hamilton: the Revolutionary Musical

A look at the lyrics of Broadway sensation, Hamilton, and its depiction of the American Revolution

Alexander Hamilton (01:00)

Written by Lin-Manuel Miranda

Performed by Leslie Odom, Jr., Anthony Ramos, Daveed Diggs, Okieriete Onaodowan, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Phillipa Soo, Christopher Jackson, OBC

- 1 How does a bastard, orphan, son of a whore
- 2 And a Scotsman, dropped in the middle of a forgotten spot
- 3 In the Caribbean by providence impoverished
- 4 In squalor, grow up to be a hero and a scholar?
- 5 The ten-dollar founding father without a father
- 6 Got a lot farther by working a lot harder
- 7 By being a lot smarter, by being a self-starter
- 8 By fourteen, they placed him in charge of a trading charter
- 9 And every day while slaves were being slaughtered and carted away
- 10 Across the waves, he struggled and kept his guard up
- 11 Inside, he was longing for something to be a part of
- 12 The brother was ready to beg, steal, borrow, or barter
- 13 Then a hurricane came, and devastation reigned
- 14 Our man saw his future drip, dripping down the drain
- 15 Put a pencil to his temple, connected it to his brain
- 16 And he wrote his first refrain, a testament to his pain
- 17 Well, the word got around, they said, this kid is insane, man
- 18 Took up a collection just to send him to the mainland
- 19 Get your education, don't forget from whence you came
- 20 And the world is gonna know your name
- 21 What's your name, man?
- 22 Alexander Hamilton
- 23 My name is Alexander Hamilton
- 24 And there's a million things I haven't done
- 25 But just you wait, just you wait
- 26 When he was ten his father split, full of it, debt-ridden
- 27 Two years later, see Alex and his mother bed-ridden
- 28 Half-dead, sittin' in their own sick, the scent thick
- 29 And Alex got better but his mother went quick
- 30 Moved in with a cousin, the cousin committed suicide

- 31 Left him with nothin' but ruined pride, something new inside
- 32 A voice saying, "Alex, you gotta fend for yourself"
- 33 He started retreatin' and readin' every treatise on the shelf
- 34 There would have been nothin' left to do for someone less astute
- 35 He woulda been dead or destitute without a cent of restitution
- 36 Started workin', clerkin' for his late mother's landlord
- 37 Tradin' sugar cane and rum and all the things he can't afford
- 38 Scammin' for every book he can get his hands on
- 39 Plannin' for the future see him now as he stands on
- 40 The bow of a ship headed for the new land
- 41 In New York you can be a new man (just you wait) [x4]
- 42 In New York, New York
- 43 Just you wait
- 44 Alexander Hamilton [x2]
- 45 We are waiting in the wings for you [x2]
- 46 You could never back down
- 47 You never learned to take your time
- 48 Oh, Alexander Hamilton [x2]
- 49 When America sings for you
- 50 Will they know what you overcame?
- 51 Will they know you rewrote your game?
- 52 The world will never be the same, oh
- 53 The ship is in the harbor now
- 54 See if you can spot him
- 55 Another immigrant comin' up from the bottom
- 56 His enemies destroyed his rep America forgot him
- 57 We, fought with him
- 58 Me, I died for him
- 59 Me, I trusted him
- 60 Me, I loved him
- 61 And me, I'm the damn fool that shot him
- 62 There's a million things I haven't done
- 63 But just you wait
- 64 What's your name, man? Alexander Hamilton

My Shot (07:31)

Written by Lin-Manuel Miranda

Performed by Lin-Manuel Miranda, Anthony Ramos, Daveed Diggs, Okieriete Onaodowan, Leslie Odom, Jr., and Original Broadway Cast

- 1 I am not throwin' away my shot
- 2 Hey yo, I'm just like my country
- 3 I'm young, scrappy and hungry
- 4 And I'm not throwin' away my shot
- 5 I'ma get a scholarship to King's College
- 6 I probably shouldn't brag, but dang, I amaze and astonish
- 7 The problem is I got a lot of brains but no polish
- 8 I gotta holler just to be heard
- 9 With every word, I drop knowledge
- 10 I'm a diamond in the rough, a shiny piece of coal
- 11 Tryna' reach my goal, my power of speech, unimpeachable
- 12 Only nineteen but my mind is older
- 13 These New York City streets get colder, I shoulder
- 14 Every burden, every disadvantage
- 15 I have learned to manage, I don't have a gun to brandish
- 16 I walk these streets famished
- 17 The plan is to fan this spark into a flame
- 18 But damn, it's getting dark, so let me spell out my name
- 19 I am the A-L-E-X-A-N-D-E-R we are meant to be
- 20 A colony that runs independently
- 21 Meanwhile, Britain keeps shittin' on us endlessly
- 22 Essentially, they tax us relentlessly
- 23 Then King George turns around, runs a spendin' spree
- 24 He ain't ever gonna set his descendants free
- 25 So there will be a revolution in this century
- 26 Enter me (he says in parentheses)
- 27 Don't be shocked when your history book mentions me
- 28 I will lay down my life if it sets us free
- 29 Eventually, you'll see my ascendancy
- 30 [chorus]
- 31 It's time to take a shot
- 32 I dream of life without a monarchy
- 33 The unrest in France will lead to anarchy?
- 34 Anarchy how you say, how you, oh, anarchy?
- 35 When I fight, I make the other side panicky
- 36 With my, shot

- 76 When are these colonies gonna rise up? [x4] _____
- 77 I imagine death so much it feels more like a memory _____
- 78 When's it gonna get me? _____
- 79 In my sleep, seven feet ahead of me? _____
- 80 If I see it comin', do I run or do I let it be? _____
- 81 Is it like a beat without a melody? _____
- 82 See, I never thought I'd live past twenty _____
- 83 Where I come from some get half as many _____
- 84 Ask anybody why we livin' fast and we laugh, reach for a flask _____
- 85 We have to make this moment last, that's plenty _____
- 86 Scratch that this is not a moment, it's the movement _____
- 87 Where all the hungriest brothers with something to prove went? _____
- 88 Foes oppose us, we take an honest stand _____
- 89 We roll like Moses, claimin' our promised land _____
- 90 And? If we win our independence? _____
- 91 Is that a guarantee of freedom for our descendants? _____
- 92 Or will the blood we shed begin an endless cycle of vengeance and death
with no defendants? _____
- 93 I know the action in the street is excitin' _____
- 94 But Jesus, between all the bleedin' 'n' fightin' _____
- 95 I've been readin' 'n' writin' _____
- 96 We need to handle our financial situation _____
- 97 Are we a nation of states? What's the state of our nation? _____
- 98 I'm past patiently waitin' I'm passionately mashin' every expectation _____
- 99 Every action's an act of creation _____
- 100 I'm laughin' in the face of casualties and sorrow _____
- 101 For the first time, I'm thinkin' past tomorrow _____
- 102 [chorus] _____

Who was Alexander Hamilton?

- Born: c1755, the island of Nevis, British West Indies
- Died: 1804, as the result of an infamous duel with Vice President Aaron Burr
- An indispensable aide to George Washington during the American Revolutionary War (1775-83)
- Principal author of the Federalist Papers (85 articles and essays written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay to promote the ratification of the US Constitution)
- A key figure in the ratification of the US constitution and a prolific writer in its defense
- The nation's first treasury secretary and a key architect of the modern financial system