Mrs. Robinson
Words and music by Paul Simon, from Bookends

Though "Mrs. Robinson" won two Grammys and was a huge hit for Simon and Garfunkel, Paul Simon initially wanted to scrap the song. It was only at director Mike Nichols's insistence that the song initially came to life in the soundtrack to the movie The Graduate. In its initial form, "Mrs. Robinson" was spare on lyrics. It wasn't until its inclusion on Bookends in March 1968 that Simon filled out the lyrics and the song turned into the familiar version most people know.

Simon strummed huge chords on a 12-string guitar with a capo on the second fret. If you have trouble grabbing the D/F, D7/F, or C/G chords, just play standard D, D7, and C chords, respectively. At the beginning of each verse, Simon strums only the open E string (labeled as an E chord in the chart below). Because 12-string guitars have octave pairs on the lowest four strings, you hear E octaves here, instead of just one note. He punctuates the end of each verse's first line with a big E7 chord before moving on to A7. Notice how he also jumps to those E octaves after the Am chord in the second-to-last line of each verse. When you're singing solo, you may want to keep strumming an Am chord here, depending on how this sounds to you. If you're playing with other guitarists, one person can try the opening riff below, while the other plays rhythm.

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Chorus

G    Em
And here's to you, Mrs. Robinson,
G    Em    C/G        D/F
Jesus loves you more than you will know, whoa, whoa, whoa
G    Em
God bless you, please, Mrs. Robinson
G    Em    C/G    Am
Heaven holds a place for those who pray, hey, hey, hey

G    E7
1. We'd like to know a little bit about you for our files
A7
We'd like to help you learn to help yourself
D/F    G    C/G    C/B    Am    E
Look around you, all you see are sympathetic eyes
E7    D7/F
Stroll around the grounds until you feel at home

Repeat Chorus

G    E7
2. Hide it in a hiding place where no one ever goes
A7
Put it in your pantry with your cupcakes

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D/F    G    C/G    C/B    Am    E
It's a little secret, just the Robinsons' affair

E7    D7/F
Most of all you've got to hide it from the kids

Repeat Chorus (Koo koo ka-choo, Mrs. Robinson...)

E    E7
Sitting on a sofa on a Sunday afternoon
A7
Going to the candidates' debate

D/F    G    C/G    C/B    Am    E
Laugh about it, shout about it, when you've got to choose
E7    D7/F
Every way you look at it, you lose

Chorus

G    Em
Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio
G    Em    C/G    D/F
A nation turn its lonely eyes to you, woo, woo, woo
G    Em
What's that you say, Mrs. Robinson?
G    Em    C/G    Am    E
Joltin' Joe has left and gone away, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey