1. John Henry was a little baby boy,
   You could hold him on the palm of your hand,
   And his Papa cried out this lonesome farewell,
   Son you’re gonna be a steel driving man lord, lord,
   Son you’re gonna be a steel driving man.

2. John Henry went up on the mountain,
   Looked down on the other side,
   Lord the mountain was so tall John Henry was so small,
   He laid down his hammer and he cried poor boy,
   Laid down his hammer and he cried.

3. John Henry walked through the tunnel,
   Had his captain by his side,
   The last words that John Henry said was bring me,
   Cool drink of what ‘for I die lord, lord,
   Cool drink of what ‘for I die.

4. Talk about John Henry as much as you please,
   Say and do all that you can,
   There never was born in these United States,
   No such a steel driving man lord, lord,
   No such a steel driving man.

5. John Henry told his captain,
   I want to go to bed,
   Lord fix me a pallet, I want to lay down,
   Got a mighty roaring in my head lord, lord,
   Mighty roaring in my head.