

Singing the Words

Lyric Writing in the Classroom

Stuart Stotts

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Lyric Writing

- In this workshop, lyric writing is the art of putting words to music.
- Some lyric writers work differently, creating lyrics first and then putting music to the words.
- This is not our approach.
- We start with the music created, and then write lyrics.

2

Workshop

We will

- Learn vocal warm-ups
- Create original single lines to a song.
- Create original verses to a folk/pop song.

3

Words make you think a thought.

Music makes you feel a feeling.

A song makes you feel a thought.

E. Yip Harburg



4

Scientists have discovered that the same areas of the brain that are involved in processing emotion are also involved in processing memory.

Ruth Weiss

5

Lyrics are not poems. They need air and music to give them life.

Stephen Sondheim



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Standards

Music

State

Common Core



7

Sing with your kids.




8

Warming Up






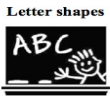
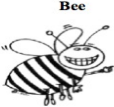


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Psychological Warm Up

I can't wait to sing with you



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<p>Nutcracker</p> 	<p>Hum</p> 	<p>Alien</p> 
<p>Snake</p> 	<p>Throw the ball</p> 	<p>Letter shapes</p> 
<p>Bee</p> 	<td> <p>Cat and Dog</p>  </td>	<p>Cat and Dog</p> 

11

Chorus/Verse

12

So Many Ways to Be Smart

So many ways to be smart.
 So many ways to be smart.
 With your hands, your feet
 Your head, your heart.
 So many ways to be smart.

13

Lyrics

- Words to songs
- Someone created them.
- Style/Genre
- Chorus/Verse

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Personal Meaning

What song's lyrics have meant
 something to you personally?
 Why?

15

Meaning

- Words true
- Original
- Clever or Funny
- Poetic
- Match feeling of music
- Simple

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Rhyme

- Unusual or interesting rhymes
- Forced rhymes
- Multi-syllabic
- Internal rhyme
- Rhyme schemes

17

Rhythm

- Words/Syllables fit easily and naturally
- Accents fit melody

18

So many ways to be smart.
 So many ways to be smart.
 With your hands, your feet, your head, your heart.
 So many ways to be smart.

19

Let's Analyze a Song

- What is the song about?
- Emotion?
- Number of lines in verse?
- Rhyme pattern?
- Syllables/rhythm in each line?

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Writing Single Lines

21

I'm On My Way

Old spiritual song
 Adapted in the Civil Rights Movement

22

I'm On My Way

I'm on my way... (I'm on my way)
 Down to Canaan Land... (Down to Canaan Land) 3x
 I'm on my way, glory hallelujah I'm on my way.

23

Analyze a Song

- What is the song about?
- Emotion?
- Number of lines?
- Rhyme pattern?
- Syllables in each line?

24

New Lines

- Rhythm
- Meaning

25

Reflection

How would it be to lead this activity with your students?

Is there a connection between this process and other writing activities?

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Stand Up

Stand up for yourself,
Stand up for someone else,
Stand up for you and me,
Stand up, so we'll be free!

27

Have courage in your heart
Don't play a part
in putting others down
Stay calm and cool
Don't be cruel
Be the bravest kid in town.

28

28

Be a leader,
don't be a teaser
Do not feed the fire.
You'll get burned
When the tables get turned.
Lift your friends up higher.

•

29

29

When you fight
You're not always right
You should listen too
It takes two sides
To realize
Both ideas will do

30

30

When you're done
 Agree on one
 You're not always the boss
 Share a thought
 And what you've got
 Get your idea across.

31

31

Everybody's Got (something to give)

Easily Adapted
 Folk/Pop Style

32

Everybody's got something to give 2x
 No matter who you are,
 No matter where you live
 Everybody's got something to give

33

Helen Keller had a teacher
 When she was 5 years old
 Helped her with communication
 Made her strong and bold

34

We can share our food traditions
 Brought from Mexico
 Making salsa and horchata
 Cooking what we know

35

Albert Einstein's famous equation
 $E = mc^2$
 He was way too busy thinking
 To even comb his hair.

36

Analyze a Song

- What is the song about?
- Emotion?
- Number of lines?
- Rhyme pattern?
- Syllables in each line?

37

New Verses

- Content
- Brainstorm
- Write
- Rehearse
- Revise
- Share

38

- Determine Importance is critical
- Vocabulary

39

If someone you see seems different
Stand up and be kind.
Get to know some more about them
Don't leave them behind.

We can meet the world with kindness
Flashlights in the dark.
Lifting up each others' spirits
Give the world a spark.

You don't have to be prim and perfect
Popular or smart
You can just be strong and willing
With a hopeful heart.

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Songwriting Rubric
Stuart Stots

	Diamond	Ruby	Quartz	Shale	Teacher Strategy
Songwriting Structure	Verse fits meter of lines and follows rhyme scheme. Verse uses unusual rhyme or internal rhyme.	Verse fits meter with one exception. Rhymes are appropriate.	Verse fits pattern with some exceptions. At least one rhyme set is appropriate.	Lines have no regular meter pattern. There is no rhyme.	Work with group to edit their verse.
Arts Integration Content	Verse incorporates two significant ideas from text. All facts are accurate.	Verse incorporates one significant idea from text and all facts are accurate.	Verse includes inaccurate facts, and significance is questionable.	Verse bears no relation to subject matter.	Review concepts covered.
Presentation of Song	Verse is easily heard and understood, and is sung with energy and excitement.	Verse is easily heard and understood.	Verse is whispered or sung with uncertainty.	Group looks sullen and refuses to sing.	Have group sing into a tape recorder, redo vocal warm-ups. Probe personal history to discover root of aversion to singing.
Participation in Group	Everyone participated in the creation and presentation of the verse.	All but one person participated.	One person did all the work.	No one did any work, and group members blame each other.	Send students to principal for attitude adjustment. Review "I Care" rules.

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Opera Day



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Substitute Apology

We're sorry for our behavior
 Please forgive us today
 We will be good and always listen
 We don't always act this way.
 Sorry we promise not to be rude
 Please come to Mosby Woods and stay
 We will be your favorite class
 Come back any day

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Substitute Apology

We're sorry for our behavior
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Student Work

Ludwig was a great musician
 Stayed up all night practicing.
 He went deaf when he turned twenty
 Could not hear a single thing.

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Student Work

Beethoven's teacher let him di-
 rect the orchestra sometimes.
 He went deaf when he was twenty
 but heard music in his mind.

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Sing

With Your Kids!



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Words make you think a thought.
 Music makes you feel a feeling.
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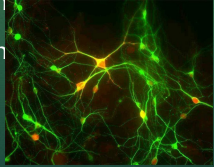
E. Yip Harburg



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Singing is Good for Your Brain

Science has the answer; it's easy to explain.
Singing is good, singing is good, singing is good
For your brain. For your brain
For your brain. For your brain



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