

SONGWRITING VOCABULARY

BEAT

The rhythmic movement, or is the speed at which a piece of music is played. An example of beat is the beating of a heart.

BRIDGE

Commonly 2 or 4 lines long and typically has an even number of lines. It is often used to contrast with and prepare for the return of the verse and the chorus.

CHORDS

A group of (typically three or more) notes sounded together, as a basis of harmony.

CHORUS

Usually the most memorable part of a song, it is repeated several times. The main theme is expressed in the chorus and the title of the song is usually included in the chorus as well.

HARMONY

The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions.

LYRICS

The words of a song.

MELODIC HOOK

Repeated melodic, lyrical and rhythmic devices that are a very memorable part of most pop songs.

MELODY

The rhythmic succession of single tones organized as an aesthetic whole. The melodic line is the most specific component of melody. Its rise and fall can be interpreted as a reflection of changes in the state of mind engendering the melody.

PHRASE

A series of notes or "musical meter" that has a complete musical sense of its own.

POETRY

An imaginative awareness of experience expressed through meaning, sound, and rhythmic language choices so as to evoke an emotional response. Poetry has been known to employ meter and rhyme, but is not necessary.

PRE-CHORUS

Also known as the "climb," this part of the song differs melodically and lyrically from the verse and comes before the chorus. It heightens the anticipation for the coming chorus and is typically 2 lines.

SONG STRUCTURE

Also known as the "form" of a song, the structure refers to the sections that make up the piece. In a song, some sections are usually repeated.

The most common structure in pop songwriting:

verse - chorus - verse - chorus - bridge – chorus

TITLE

The name given to a song that represents the work overall.

VERSE

Tells a story and gives listeners more insight leading to the main message of the song and it moves the story forward. A song may have a number of verses, depending on the form, consisting of several lines each.

