

SPEAK UP, SING OUT

MUSIC CONTEST CURRICULUM



WRITING SONGS
OF CONSCIENCE

The **Speak Up, Sing Out Music Contest** asks students to become engaged in human rights by writing and producing an original song that inspires others to create change.

This songwriting curriculum introduces students to the concept of music as a force for change, and builds on key concepts that are introduced in the GRAMMY Museum's Sound of Conscience, Sounds of Freedom curriculum (<http://www.grammymuseum.org/education/for-teachers/curriculum-and-resources>), guiding students through the process of listening to and analyzing songs that inform, unite, inspire and confront.

Before your students begin composing their songs, make sure they have a basic understanding of human rights. The Speak Truth To Power (STTP) human rights curriculum (<http://rfkhumanrights.org/what-we-do/speak-truth-power/>), which introduces general human rights issues through the stories of some of the bravest people on earth and inspires students to take action, is a powerful and easy way to introduce human rights to your students. You can also review the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) with your students and ask them to give examples of where they believe human rights have been violated, locally or globally, and connect these violations with articles in the UDHR. Students can also find articles in the UDHR that relate to songs about human rights/social justice with which they are already familiar. The UDHR, STTP curriculum and the Rock Your World curriculum (<http://www.rock-your-world.org/curriculum>) are tools that will help students find human rights issues that inspire them, and inform their point of view. Once students have a good idea of what human rights issue their song will be about, this curriculum will serve as a guide that will help create a memorable song that inspires audiences and moves them to take action.

In this curriculum you will find five lessons:

1. LISTENING TO SONGS AS HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISTS:

Students will be guided through the process of listening to and analyzing songs that inform, unite, inspire and confront.

2. LISTENING TO SONGS AS SONGWRITERS:

Students will be guided through the process of reading songs to notice and name structures, techniques and devices, and annotating song lyrics to name specific structures and techniques.

3. STARTING TO COMPOSE:

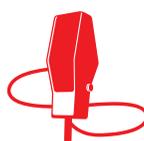
Students will begin exploring possibilities for their own songs, composing initial ideas connected to their purpose as songwriters. This section highlights the use of the writing process to compose with a purpose and audience in mind.

4. MEMORABLE AND THEMATIC THEMED CHORUS:

Students will focus on the connection between the chorus and the theme of a song. It will guide students as they work on composing and/or revising a chorus which is memorable and connected to their song's overall purpose and theme.

5. POETIC DEVICES IN SONGS:

Students will focus on the specific impact that poetic devices such as similes, metaphors, personification, alliteration and rhyme have on songs, as they integrate these poetic devices into their own songs.



1. LISTENING TO SONGS AS HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISTS

The GRAMMY Museum has an introductory lesson in their Songs of Conscience, Songs of Freedom Curriculum that introduces students to four purposes of political songs: To Inform, To Unite, To Inspire and To Confront. This lesson builds on that introduction, guiding students through the process of listening to and analyzing songs that inform, unite, inspire and confront.

<http://www.grammymuseum.org/education/for-teachers/curriculum-and-resources>

LESSON GRADE LEVEL:

- 6-12

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- How do songs inform? Unite? Inspire? Confront?
- What makes a socially conscious song effective?
- What do I notice about songs with different purposes?

RECOMMENDED TIME:

- 2 or more class periods

OBJECTIVES:

- After this lesson, students will be able to:
- Explain the impact of songs
- Read lyrics critically, identifying the political purposes of songs
- Analyze how word choice and melody contribute to a song's meaning

MATERIALS:

- Copies of completed handout from Grammy Museum - "Key Political Roles of Song"
- Copies of handout "Creating Meaning and Purpose with Words and Music"
- Copies of song lyrics

SONGS FROM THE GRAMMY MUSEUM

INFORM	UNITE	INSPIRE	CONFRONT
<p>MY CITY WAS GONE (PRETENDERS) <i>*Articles 13, 17, 21</i></p>	<p>SAY IT LOUD, I'M BLACK AND I'M PROUD (JAMES BROWN) <i>Articles 2, 4, 23</i></p>	<p>GET UP, STAND UP (BOB MARLEY) <i>Articles 19, 21, 28, 30</i></p>	<p>WAR (EDWIN STARR) <i>Articles 1, 5, 21, 28</i></p>
<p>STREETS OF PHILADELPHIA (BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN) <i>Articles 2, 5, 25</i></p>	<p>AN OPEN LETTER TO NYC (BEASTIE BOYS) <i>Articles 1, 2, 21, 28</i></p>	<p>PRIDE (IN THE NAME OF LOVE) (U2) <i>Articles 2, 5, 21, 28</i></p>	<p>KILLING IN THE NAME (RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE) <i>Note: look for "clean" version</i> <i>Articles 1, 2, 5, 9</i></p>
<p>HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN? (DARRYL WORLEY) <i>Articles 5, 19, 21</i></p>	<p>WAITING ON THE WORLD TO CHANGE (JOHN MAYER) <i>Articles 19, 21, 28</i></p>	<p>WE SHALL BE FREE (GARTH BROOKS) <i>Articles 2, 18, 25, 28</i></p>	<p>NOT A PRETTY GIRL (ANI DIFRANCO) <i>Articles 1, 2, 19, 28</i></p>

*UDHR articles that relate to the themes and issues within the song

STUDENT SKILLS:

- Critical thinking
- Comparing and contrasting
- Interpreting information

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9

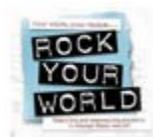
Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

DAY ONE LESSON DESIGN:

- Explain to students that they will continue analyzing socially conscious songs from the initial GRAMMY Museum lesson to determine purpose. In addition to categorizing songs, they will also be thinking about how word choice and melody contribute to a song's meaning.
- Remind students that their task is to identify whether a song is intended to inform, to unite, to inspire or to confront, and review the songs previously discussed.
- Share the lyrics of "Glory" by John Legend and Common (or another song you have selected for this lesson). Explain that students will not yet be listening to the song so that they can focus specifically on the lyrics alone, without music.
- After reading through the lyrics for "Glory" once, model how you would categorize the song by purpose and read through the text once more. Underline words and/or phrases that have a powerful impact, writing down the emotions you think the lyrics seek to inspire from the audience. For example, the opening lyric, "One day, when the glory comes / It will be ours, it will be ours" creates hopeful emotions.
- Model how you would use the "Creating Meaning and Purpose with Words and Music" handout to synthesize your thinking from annotations.
- In pairs or small groups, students will read and annotate the rest of the song (and others) by completing the graphic organizer to categorize and analyze songs. Make a point of noting that many songs can fit in multiple categories.

DAY TWO LESSON DESIGN:

- Explain that you will be looking at how music /melody carries an emotional weight that adds to the meaning and purpose of song lyrics.
- Remind students about "Glory" or the song you started with in the previous lesson, reviewing your thinking about the song's purpose and how word choice contributes to meaning.
- Ask students to identify what musical genres they know. As students contribute genres to the list, chart them, aiming to solicit a list including hip-hop, rap, country, folk, gospel, heavy metal, and electronic. If students are unsure you can get them started by suggesting a few examples.
- Ask students to turn and talk about what genre they expect the song to be / what they expect the song to sound like.
- After discussing and sharing your own expectations, play a recording of the song.
- Model your own thinking about how the music /melody contributes to the meaning and purpose. For example, the opening of "Glory" features a strong repeated rhythm played on the piano. The deep tone of the music and the how John Legend sings with conviction add to the hopeful vision of the lyrics. (Consider listening to the song in small sections multiple times to fully consider the impact of music throughout.)
- Use the "Creating Meaning and Purpose with Words and Music" handout to synthesize your thinking from annotations.
- Working with the same partners / groups from the previous day, have students start by revisiting the lyrics they read, identifying what genre they think each song will be and what they expect each song to sound like.
- Students will then listen to and analyze the songs, using the handout to capture their thinking.



2. LISTENING TO SONGS AS SONGWRITERS

This section will guide students through the process of reading songs to notice and name structures, techniques and devices, annotating song lyrics to name specific structures and techniques.

LESSON GRADE LEVEL:

6-12

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

What can I learn about songs by studying lyrics as a writer would?

RECOMMENDED TIME:

2 or more class periods

OBJECTIVES:

- After this lesson, students will be able to:
- Identify and analyze how songs are structured
- Notice and name techniques and devices used in song lyrics

STUDENT SKILLS

- Critical thinking
- Comparing and contrasting
- Interpreting information

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.5

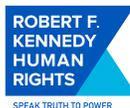
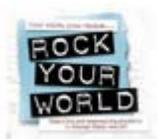
Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

MATERIALS:

- Copies of “Glory” and other selected song lyrics
- Copies of “Things to Consider When Reading Lyrics as a Songwriter”

LESSON DESIGN:

- Explain to students that writers of all genres study the works of others to learn more about their craft. When doing so, writers notice and name all that they can, thinking critically about how a piece works. As songwriters, they will be doing this essential work by dissecting songs, considering how they are structured and what techniques and devices they use.
- After reviewing with students “Things to Consider When Reading Lyrics as a Songwriter” and emphasizing that they should use these questions to guide their thinking, students should name and consider everything that they notice about the lyrics they read.
- Referring to “Glory” or another song previously studied with students, model how you would reread the lyrics as a writer would - annotating the text, trying to figure out how the piece ‘works’. (See “Glory” model for “Things to Consider When Reading Lyrics as a Songwriter” below. The model provides thorough examples to each question. You and your students may notice additional examples for each question.)
- Working individually, students should revisit a song they selected, using the questions to reread the lyrics as a writer would, annotating the text, trying to figure out how the piece ‘works’.
- In partners or small groups, students meet with others who analyzed the same song, sharing their findings.
- Have students go through this process with a few songs before coming together as a class to discuss. Then the class can generate a list of conclusions about what songs must do and what they might do.



3. STARTING TO COMPOSE

This section will guide students as they begin exploring possibilities for their own songs, composing initial ideas connected to their purpose as songwriters. This section will highlight the use of the writing process to compose with a purpose and audience in mind.

LESSON GRADE LEVEL:

6-12

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

How can the writing process help with songwriting?

RECOMMENDED TIME:

2 or more class periods

OBJECTIVES:

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Brainstorm ideas for songs
- Begin composing songs

STUDENT SKILLS:

- Critical thinking
- Decision making
- Writing and application of the writing process

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING

Production and Distribution of Writing:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4](#)

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.5](#)

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6](#)

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Range of Writing:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.10](#)

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

MATERIALS:

- Copies of handout “Initial Song Brainstorm”
- Copies of annotated texts and handouts from previous lessons

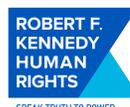
LESSON DESIGN:

- Explain to students that they will be making the jump from studying songs to writing songs, starting by considering song topic and purpose.
- At this stage, students may or may not have settled on a topic for their song, though they should select one topic to start exploring. Explain that they will begin by brainstorming ideas for songs with various purposes about their selected topics. It is possible that a student selected topic may imply only one purpose.
- Using a topic of your own, use the organizer to model for students how you would begin brainstorming song ideas.
- Students will work on brainstorming their own ideas for their selected topics.
- Students share initial ideas in small groups.
- Once students have settled on a topic and purpose, they should begin drafting their song.

RESOURCES:

<http://www.world-of-songwriting.com/index.html>

[Link to Bandslam Video about Songwriting](#)



4. MEMORABLE AND THEMATIC CHORUS

This section will focus on the connection between the chorus and the theme of a song. It will guide students as they work on composing and/or revising a chorus which is memorable and connected to their song's overall purpose and theme.

LESSON GRADE LEVEL:

6-12

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

What is the function of a chorus in a song?
How can I write a chorus that captures my message and has an impact on my audience?

RECOMMENDED TIME:

2 or more class periods

OBJECTIVES:

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Write and revise a chorus that is memorable and connected to the overall theme of a song

STUDENT SKILLS:

- Critical thinking
- Decision making
- Writing and application of the writing process

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING

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Range of Writing:

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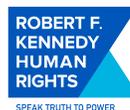
Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

MATERIALS:

- Copies of completed "Initial Song Brainstorm" and any additional process work completed
- Copies of previously annotated lyrics

LESSON DESIGN:

- Show the Bandslam video again or remind students of the content. Point out to that the Bandslam video begins by talking about the main idea of a song - suggesting that as a listener, you should think about what the songwriter is trying to tell you. A good way to do that is to pay attention to the chorus of a song. This will usually connect to the song's overall message and purpose.
- Demonstrate this for students by revisiting a song studied as a class, rereading the lyrics and discussing how the chorus is connected to the overall theme and message.
- In partnerships or small groups, students reread lyrics they previously studied, this time specifically to consider how the chorus is connected to the overall message / meaning of the song.
- As a class, discuss what various groups noticed about the role of the chorus in various songs.
- Explain to students that one way to approach songwriting is to begin with a chorus, using the chorus as the foundation of the song overall.
- Using the "Initial Song Brainstorm" you completed from the previous lesson, model how you would begin experimenting writing a chorus for your song.
- Students continue working on song composition, focusing on writing or revising a chorus that has a message and is memorable.



5. POETIC DEVICES IN SONGS

This section will focus on the specific impact that poetic devices such as similes, metaphors, personification, alliteration and rhyme have on songs, guiding students as they integrate these poetic devices into their own songs.

LESSON GRADE LEVEL:

6-12

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

What role do poetic devices play in song lyrics?

RECOMMENDED TIME:

2 or more class periods

OBJECTIVES:

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Use poetic devices to draft and revise lyrics

STUDENT SKILLS:

- Critical thinking
- Decision making
- Writing and application of the writing process

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR READING

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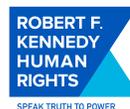
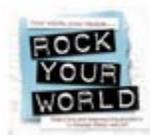
Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

MATERIALS:

Copies of previously annotated lyrics

LESSON DESIGN:

- Show the Bandslam video again or remind students of the content. Point out to that after talking about the main idea of a song, the video focuses on using poetic devices in lyrics. This is because poetic devices pack a powerful punch (note the alliteration), creating images for the listener and making a song more memorable.
- Demonstrate this for students by revisiting a song studied as a class, rereading the lyrics and discussing how the poetic devices contribute to the overall song.
- In partnerships or small groups, students reread lyrics they previously studied, specifically to consider the impact the poetic devices have on the song.
- As a class, discuss what various groups noticed about the role of the poetic devices in various songs.
- Explain to students that songwriters consider poetic devices as they compose and as they revise their lyrics. Using the draft you have for your song, model how you would add lines that have poetic devices and / or revise lines with poetic devices in mind.
- Students continue working on song composition, focusing on integrating poetic devices into lyrics.



CREATING MEANING AND PURPOSE WITH WORDS AND MUSIC

SONG	HOW WORDS CONTRIBUTE TO MEANING AND PURPOSE	HOW MUSIC CONTRIBUTES TO MEANING AND PURPOSE
TITLE: PURPOSE:		

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN READING LYRICS AS A SONGWRITER

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW THE SONG IS STRUCTURED? HOW MANY VERSES DOES THE SONG HAVE? HOW MANY TIMES IS THE CHORUS REPEATED? DO YOU SEE ANY PATTERNS?

DOES THE SONG USE RHYME? WHERE? TO WHAT EFFECT?

DO YOU SEE OTHER POETIC DEVICES IN THE LYRICS? SIMILES? METAPHORS? PERSONIFICATION? ALLITERATION? TO WHAT EFFECT?

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT THE WORD CHOICES IN THE LYRICS OF THIS SONG?

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN READING LYRICS AS A SONGWRITER

This worksheet has been filled out using the lyrics from the song "Glory" performed by Common and John Legend. Students can also use the lyrics from the 2015 winning song, "Invisible" written by Jade Rhodes, to better understand why her piece of music is memorable. www.speakupsingout.org

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT HOW THE SONG IS STRUCTURED? HOW MANY VERSES DOES THE SONG HAVE? HOW MANY TIMES IS THE CHORUS REPEATED? DO YOU SEE ANY PATTERNS?

The song starts with the chorus which is unusual. As a whole - the chorus is repeated three times through part of the chorus, "We'll cry glory, oh glory" are repeated two additional times during the song. The song switches from a gospel like feel when John Legend sings to verses where Common raps, integrating the two genres. There are two rapped verses. There is also a 'bridge' after the second chorus. The song ends with the line, "When the war is done, when it's all said and done / We'll cry glory, oh glory."

DOES THE SONG USE RHYME? WHERE? TO WHAT EFFECT?

Yes! Sometimes there are 'near rhymes' like in the chorus "comes" and "won". In the verses that are rapped, various patterns are used. Sometimes the end word of consecutive lines rhyme, like, "regal / eagle peaceful." Sometimes inner rhyme is used, like in "Enemy is lethal, a king became regal." Other words may not obviously rhyme on paper, but sound like rhymes when Common sings them for example, from dark roads he rose to become a hero.

The rhyming contributes largely to the rhythm. The words that rhyme are also the words that tend to be emphasized when sung - so it makes these words stand out as especially meaningful.

DO YOU SEE OTHER POETIC DEVICES IN THE LYRICS? SIMILES? METAPHORS? PERSONIFICATION? ALLITERATION? TO WHAT EFFECT?

The poetic devices in the song create images, make parts of the song memorable, help us understand ideas, have emotional impact, create sensory images, add to the rhythm of the song.

Repetition is used for end words like "up" and "us" and start words like "that's why". "Glory" is repeated throughout the song.

Some examples of alliteration are "Hands to the Heavens," "Sins that go against our skin become blessings," "Justice is juxtaposition in us / Justice for all just ain't specific enough."

Some examples of metaphors are "The movement is a rhythm to us," "Our music is the cuts that we bleed though," and "his power was the people."

An example of a simile is "freedom is like religion to us."

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT THE WORD CHOICES IN THE LYRICS OF THIS SONG?

There are many allusions in the song including to Jesus Christ, to Rosa Parks, to Martin Luther King, Jr., to Jim Crowe, to Ferguson, to Selma and to "The Battle Hymn of the Republic".

The allusions are all used to highlight events in history as they relate to current events. The song has a clear call to action, "New we right the wrongs in history / No one can win the war individually / It takes the wisdom of the elders and young people's energy / Welcome to the story we call victory." The chorus and the last two lines emphasize a hopeful view for the future.

INITIAL SONG BRAINSTORM

USE THIS CHART TO BRAINSTORM IDEAS FOR YOUR SONG TOPIC WITH VARIOUS PURPOSES.

SONG TOPIC: _____

<p>TO INFORM:</p>	<p>TO UNITE:</p>
<p>TO INSPIRE:</p>	<p>TO CONFRONT:</p>

SONG LIST

Imagine (*John Lennon*)
Peace Train (*Cat Stevens*)
P.L.U.C.K. (*System of a Down*)
If Everyone Cared Lyrics (*Nickleback*)
Stand Up For Love (*Destiny's Child*)
You Might Die Trying (*Dave Matthews Band*)
Man In The Mirror (*Michael Jackson*)
Black Or White (*Michael Jackson*)
We Are The World - (*U.S.A. for Africa*)
War (*Bob Marley and the Wailers*)
So Much Trouble in the World (*Bob Marley*)
For What It's Worth (*Buffalo Springfield*)
How Long (*Jackson Browne*)
Hell Is For Children (*Pat Benatar*)
Mr Wendal (*Arrested Development*)
Renegades Of Funk (*Rage Against The Machine*)
Meant To Live (*Switchfoot*)
Why (*Tracy Chapman*)
Where is the Love (*Black Eyed Peas*)
Perfect World (*Indigo Girls*)
We Got the (*Beastie Boys*)
World on Fire (*Sarah McLachlan*)
Change the World (*P.O.D.*)
What's Goin' On (*Marvin Gaye*)
Wooden Ships (*Crosby, Stills & Nash*)
Waitin' on the World to Change (*John Mayer*)
Change the World (*Eric Clapton*)
If I Had a Hammer (*Pete Seeger/Peter, Paul & Mary*)
We Shall Overcome (*Civil Rights "anthem"*)
Siyahamba (*S. African anti-apartheid hymn*)
Which Side Are You On? (*Pete Seeger*)
Something Inside So Strong (*Labi Siffre*)
Everything Possible (*Flirtations*)
Follow the Drinking Gourd (*Underground Railway*)
Takin' it to the Streets (*Doobie Brothers*)
Strange Fruit (*Abel Meeropol*)
Carefully Taught (*Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein II*)