

HANDOUT

What If I'm Stuck?

Here are helpful strategies if you get stuck during your songwriting:

1. **Cut yourself some slack:** There are no mistakes in the creative process! Try not to judge your ideas, especially during the brainstorming and writing stage. Follow where your ideas lead you. You can always change what you've written later if you don't like it.
2. **Don't forget to outline your song:** Outlining what you want to say in each verse and in the chorus will help you organize your thoughts. It also will help you keep the "big picture" in mind as you're concentrating on word choices, descriptions, and all the other details. Your teacher has a Songwriting Outline Handout for further help.
3. **Change your starting point:** Some people start with the chorus; others start with the first verse or even a random place in the song. You may not even know where you are starting, but if you're stuck, try starting somewhere else.
4. **Daydream:** Let your mind wander a little as you think about your topic. What images, stories, people, or memories come to mind? Close your eyes and imagine yourself in the situation.
5. **Forget the beat:** Don't worry too much about making your lyrics fit the rhythm if it is tripping you up. There are lots of ways to say the same thing, so just get your ideas down on paper. Then you can always go back later and make the words fit the rhythm.
6. **Get help!** Ask for feedback and help from other students (just remember to be respectful of classmates' writing time).



Paul McCartney and John Lennon's melodic music for the Beatles charmed fans globally. The partnership is credited with dozens of songs, including "Can't Buy Me Love" and "Help."