

2) Parts of a Song

OBJECTIVES

Students will demonstrate an understanding of new vocabulary and concepts related to parts of a song.

Students will listen to songs and identify their elements.

STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5

VOCABULARY

bridge, chorus, hook, outline, subject, theme, title, verse

PREPARATION

- Make copies of **“This” Student Lyric Sheet** and **Song Structure Practice Homework**.
- Locate audio or video version of “This” performed by Darius Rucker.
- For students interested in writing story songs, make copies of **Story Song Template** (in Supplemental Materials).

FREE WRITE (5 minutes)

Every day, students will spend five minutes free writing. During this time, they do not need to worry about conventions like spelling or punctuation. Encourage students to:

- Write about anything that is on their minds.
- Focus on writing for the entire five minutes.
- Keep their pen or pencil moving the whole time.

TEACHER TIP

Students may feel overwhelmed when they first start free writing. They may feel like they do not know what to write. The following ideas may help:

- Do the free write with the students and read yours aloud as an example of the different shapes a free write might take.
- Remind students that as long as they are writing something, they are doing well.
- Remind students that the most important thing about free writing is simply getting words onto the page.
- Allow students to volunteer sharing their free writes. Create a safe environment by setting classroom expectations for being kind and respectful to others as their peers share personal experiences. By sharing, students will develop social and emotional learning competencies such as self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship skills.

DISCUSS HOMEWORK (5 minutes)

Ask students to share their responses to the songwriter quotes. Point out common themes as students share what they learned about what it takes to be a songwriter.

BRAINSTORM (5 minutes)

Prompt: In your journal, write everything you know about the parts of a song in one minute.

Afterward, divide the class into small groups and ask each group to compile a master list.

Ask groups to share their findings with the class. Make note of which parts the students mention so you can prepare for the next activity.

ACTIVITY (30 minutes)

1. Review or introduce the parts of a song, but do so briefly. Do not provide information that reiterates what students have already demonstrated they know. Each of these parts will be discussed in more detail in the second part of the activity, so students need to have only a cursory understanding at this point.
 - The **title** is the name of the song.
 - The **subject** is the topic of the song.
 - The **theme** is the message of the song.
 - The **hook** is the part of the song that catches, or “hooks,” a listener's attention and makes the song easy to remember. The title and hook are often the same, and the hook is usually repeated throughout the song. The title, theme, and hook should work together to let listeners know what the song is about.
 - The **verse** communicates the details of the song's subject, such as who, what, when, where, why, and how. Songs usually have multiple verses.
 - The **pre-chorus** is a short section that serves as a transition from the verse to the chorus. It further explains the verse and sets-up the theme, or message, of the chorus. The pre-chorus lyrics can be the same each time (like the chorus tends to be) or it can change (like the verse). The pre-chorus usually has a different melody from the verse and chorus. Note that not all songs have a pre-chorus.
 - The **chorus** is the part that is repeated throughout the song. It is usually simpler than the verses, and it often contains the hook. In ancient Greek plays, a group of singers, called a “chorus,” appeared between every act to summarize what had just occurred on stage.
 - The **bridge** introduces a twist or new idea on the subject. It usually occurs toward the end of the song, and it has a different melody from the verses and chorus. Note that not all songs have a bridge.
2. Distribute **“This” Student Lyric Sheet**. Listen to the song as a class and ask students to identify the song parts by filling in the blanks on the lyric sheet. Then listen to the song again, pausing as directed on the Teacher's Lyric Sheet to discuss song structure and parts as a class.
3. Share this information with students:

Songwriters usually organize the content of their songs in some way, and the most common form is an outline. This is an abbreviated approach to how essay writers organize their ideas into paragraphs and a thesis statement.

Ask students the following questions:

- What was the main idea of the song “This”?
- How was that communicated in the chorus?
- What was verse 1 about? Verse 2? The bridge? What was the purpose of the pre-chorus? Provide textual evidence for your answers.

Once students have generated responses, use them to model an outline on the board for “This.”

Give students the following prompts to practice outlining a song:

- Pick a topic for a practice song. This does not have to be the topic of your final song.
- Write a title, which can be a word or a phrase that has to do with the topic selected.
- Write a song outline. As you organize your ideas, think about what you learned from listening to “This.”

This is an example of a student outline:

Title: Beach Trip

Verse 1 topic: Things I love about going to the beach

Chorus theme: How much I love the beach

Verse 2 topic: Things I like to do at the beach

Verse 3 topic: Why I don't want to leave the beach

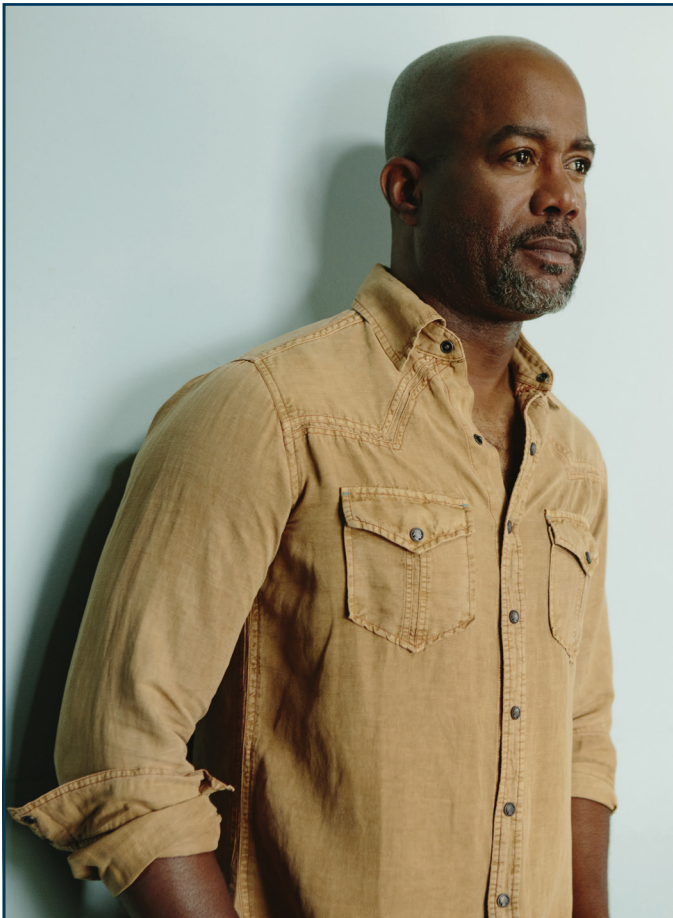
Note: Some students may wish to write an outline for a story song, in which the beginning, middle, and end of a story make up the verses, and the theme of the story is communicated in the chorus. See **Story Song Mini-Lesson** in Supplemental Materials.

HOMEWORK

Distribute the **Song Structure Practice Homework** so students can apply what they have learned about structure to a song of their choice. Remind students to choose songs appropriate for school use. Review the directions:

Print out or write down the lyrics to one of your favorite songs. Label its parts, and then identify the song's theme. Cite evidence from the text to support your answer about the theme. Pay attention to how the songwriter's ideas are organized, and use what you have learned about song structure to outline the song.

If you want a challenge, pick two or three more songs and outline them as well.



Darius Rucker first attained multi-platinum status in the music industry as the lead singer and rhythm guitarist of award-winning Hootie & the Blowfish. Since reintroducing himself as a country artist, he has had hit singles including “Come Back Song,” “This,” “Alright,” “It Won’t Be Like This For Long,” and “Don’t Think I Don’t Think About It.”

ANSWER KEY TO “THIS” STUDENT LYRIC SHEET

- Song Parts (top to bottom): Verse, Pre-Chorus, Chorus, Verse, Pre-Chorus, Chorus, Bridge, Chorus
- Fill in the Blank: 1. Title, 2. Chorus, 3. Verses, 4. Theme, 5. Subject, 6. Bridge, 7. Hook, 8. Pre-Chorus

TEACHER'S LYRIC SHEET

This

Kara Dioguardi / Frank Rogers / Darius Rucker

Got a baby girl sleeping in my bedroom
 And her momma laughing in my arms
 There's a sound of rain on the rooftop
 And the game's about to start
 I don't really know how I got here
 But I'm so glad that I did
 And it's crazy to think that one little thing
 Could have changed all of this

Maybe it didn't turn out like I planned
 Maybe that's why I'm such, such a lucky man

For every stoplight I didn't make
 Every chance I did or I didn't take
 All the nights I went too far
 All the girls that broke my heart
 All the doors that I had to close
 All the things I knew but I didn't know
 Thank God for all I missed
 'Cause it led me here to this


Like the girl that I loved in high school
 Who said she could do better
 Or the college I wanted to go to
 Till I got that letter
 All the fights and the tears and the heartache
 I thought I'd never get through
 And the moment I almost gave up
 All led me here to you

I didn't understand it way back when
 But sittin' here right now, it all makes perfect sense

Every stoplight I didn't make
 Every chance I did or I didn't take
 All the nights I went too far
 All the girls that broke my heart
 All the doors that I had to close
 All the things I knew but I didn't know
 Thank God for all I missed
 'Cause it led me here to this

How I cried when my momma passed away
 And now I got an angel looking out for me today
 So nothing's a mistake

Every stoplight I didn't make
 Every chance I did or I didn't take
 All the nights I went too far
 All the girls that broke my heart
 All the doors that I had to close
 Everything I knew but I didn't know
 Thank God for all I missed
 'Cause it led me here to this
 It led me here to this

Pause the song when you see this symbol: 

BEFORE LISTENING

Discuss the **title** of the song.

1. Ask students what they think this song is going to be about, based on the title.
2. Prompt students to look for places where the title appears as they listen to the song.

Prompt students to listen for the short **pre-chorus** that will transition to the chorus. Notice that the melody will change in the chorus.

DISCUSS CHORUS

1. Prompt students to discuss the **theme**. Ask for textual evidence for their ideas.
2. Instruct students that the theme is the message of the song.
3. Ask students to identify the **hook** (the part that is repeated or makes the song easy to remember).
4. Discuss whether the chorus is simpler than the verses.
5. Prompt students to notice that the title is found in the chorus.

Prompt students to listen to the way the music stays the same in the second **verse** even though the words change.

DISCUSS BRIDGE

1. Prompt students to notice the way the melody changes, and that the bridge is shorter than the verses and chorus.
2. Ask students to discuss the new or different idea presented in the bridge.

AFTER LISTENING

Discuss the way the verses contain supporting details for the **subject**. Ask students for textual evidence to support their ideas.

STUDENT LYRIC SHEET

This

Kara Dioguardi / Frank Rogers / Darius Rucker

Name: _____

Date: _____

Got a baby girl sleeping in my bedroom
 And her momma laughing in my arms
 There's a sound of rain on the rooftop
 And the game's about to start
 I don't really know how I got here
 But I'm so glad that I did
 And it's crazy to think that one little thing
 Could have changed all of this

Maybe it didn't turn out like I planned
 Maybe that's why I'm such, such a lucky man

For every stoplight I didn't make
 Every chance I did or I didn't take
 All the nights I went too far
 All the girls that broke my heart
 All the doors that I had to close
 All the things I knew but I didn't know
 Thank God for all I missed
 'Cause it led me here to this

Like the girl that I loved in high school
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How I cried when my momma passed away
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 Thank God for all I missed
 'Cause it led me here to this
 It led me here to this



FILL IN THE BLANKS	
	1. The _____ is often the same as the hook.
	2. Each _____ has the same words.
	3. The _____ have different words but the same tune.
	4. The _____ is the message of the song.
	5. The verses give supporting details about the _____, or topic, of the song.
	6. The _____ introduces a slightly different idea. It is shorter than the verses and chorus.
	7. The _____ catches a listener's attention and is usually repeated throughout the song.
	8. The _____ is a short transition from the verse to the chorus.

WORD BANK
Bridge, Chorus, Hook, Subject, Theme, Title, Verses, Pre-Chorus

HOMEWORK

Song Structure Practice

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer the questions below on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Print out or write down the lyrics to one of your favorite songs. This song should be appropriate for school use.
2. Label the following parts on the lyrics:
 - Title
 - Verse
 - Pre-Chorus
 - Chorus
 - Bridge
 - Hook
3. What is the theme of the song? Why do you think so? Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.
4. Paying attention to how the songwriter's ideas are organized, use what you have learned in class about song structure to outline the song.

Challenge: Pick two or three more songs and outline them, as well.

REMINDER

- The **title** is the name of the song and often appears in the chorus.
- The **theme** is the message of the song.
- The **pre-chorus** is a short transition from the verse to the chorus of the song.
- The **hook** is the part of the song that is repeated often and is easily remembered. The hook usually has all or part of the title in it.
- Each **verse** has different words but the same tune.
- Each **chorus** has the same words.
- The verses give supporting details for the **subject**.
- The **bridge** introduces a slightly different idea. It is often shorter than the verses and chorus.