

## 9) Revision

### OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about the revision process as it relates to songwriting.

Students will revise their songs to meet Words & Music program standards.

Students will prepare their songs for submission to the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

### STANDARDS

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.5**

### VOCABULARY

cover songs, metaphor (review), point of view (review), revision, simile (review)

### PREPARATION

- Make copies of **Partner Revision Handout**.
- Make copies of **Songwriter Manuscripts** (in the Supplemental Materials). **Note:** You may choose to project these rather than photocopying.
- Reserve computers or computer lab for students to type their songs.
- Make copies of **Final Lyric Assessment Rubric** (in Supplemental Materials) to use in your evaluation of each student's final work.
- For advanced students, make copies of "Spotlight on Verses" in the Appendix.

### FREE WRITE (5 minutes)

### BRAINSTORM (5 minutes)

Review the two figures of speech, **simile** and **metaphor**. Explain that a simile is a descriptive comparison that uses "like" or "as." A metaphor makes similar comparisons without using "like" or "as."

**Prompt:** For the final brainstorm, work with a partner to write down as many similes and metaphors as you can in three minutes.

For the remaining time, allow students to share their favorite similes and metaphors with the class.

### ACTIVITY (35 minutes)

1. Share with students:

Just like any other style of writing, songwriting requires **revision** to make the song the best it can be. To revise lyrics, songwriters may do something as simple as swapping out a few words, or they might rewrite whole verses or the chorus. They have to be brave enough to accept feedback from other people and to consider changing words and phrases they may have thought were perfect. Professional songwriters often keep revising their work, even up to the last minute. Bob Dylan, for example, originally wrote the song "Tangled Up in Blue" in the third-person **point of view**, from the perspective of someone else. But then decided to change it to first person—from the "I" point of view—when he recorded it.

### TEACHER TIP

Encourage students to try writing their songs from a different point of view. A third-person perspective (in the voice of someone else) can allow students more creative license than writing in first person (as themselves). See "Spotlight on Point of View" in the Appendix.

**INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTION OPPORTUNITY**

Students interested in history may enjoy writing from the perspective of a person involved in a historical event, such as a Civil War battle or the sinking of the Titanic. You may wish to collaborate with a history teacher to create a point-of-view lyric-writing exercise.

2. Share examples of **Songwriter Manuscripts** (in Supplemental Materials) that demonstrate revision.
3. **Preparing students for the songwriter workshop:** Remind students that one reason they will want to polish their work is that the Words & Music unit culminates in a workshop experience with a professional songwriter. The writer will set a selection of student lyrics to music, performing those fully formed songs for the class. Prepare students for this experience by letting them know:
  - Not all students' songs will be arranged and performed by the songwriter.
  - This is a co-writing experience, since the professional songwriter is putting the students' lyrics to music. Therefore, the professional may take creative license with some of the lyrics or structural elements to make the words work better with music.
  - It is not uncommon for lyrics to be set to a variety of musical styles. Artists sometimes record **cover songs**, or remakes, arranging the same lyrics to fit jazz, rock, country, or another musical genre. Students should be encouraged to embrace this concept if their musical vision for their lyrics differs from the choices made by the professional songwriter.

**TEACHER TIP**

To further explore the concept of cover songs, introduce the song "I Will Always Love You," which was written and originally recorded by Dolly Parton and then later recorded by Whitney Houston. Play Parton's version, followed by Houston's version, and discuss their similarities and differences. Students may know other examples of cover songs that could enrich the discussion.

4. Distribute and review the **Partner Revision Handout**.

Students should take ten to fifteen minutes to thoughtfully complete the revision handouts. Remind them to take their task seriously; their objective is to offer constructive feedback that will improve their partner's work, not tear it down.
5. After students finish the **Partner Revision Handout**, they should follow its guidance and, if need be, make final changes to their song. They should then type or neatly print their lyrics and turn them in according to the deadline you set, following these **guidelines for submission to the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum**:
  - Lyrics must be typed or clearly printed (typed is preferred).
  - Lyrics should adhere to the following formatting requirements:
    - 12-point font, 1.5 spaced
    - Left justified (flush left)
    - Chorus indented once
    - Bridge indented twice

- Each set of lyrics should contain the following header information:
  - Student name(s)
  - School name
  - Grade level
  - Teacher name(s)
  - Date

Students may include a note to the professional songwriter, if they have a preferred song style. (This issue is also addressed in the last question on the **Partner Revision Handout**.)

### TEACHER TIP

If students finish early, ask them to write in their journal five to ten similes or metaphors that could fit in their song. They may want to revise their lyrics to include one or more of these new images.

*For advanced work on revision, see “Spotlight on Verses” in the Appendix.*

### HOMEWORK

Depending on the deadline you set, students may complete their revisions at home.

### INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTION OPPORTUNITY

Speak to the visual art teacher about a joint project that would allow students to create album covers or other work to illustrate their lyrics.

### SUBMITTING LYRICS

Lyrics are due at least two weeks before the scheduled Words & Music songwriter workshop. Compile the lyrics of each class into one document and attach it to an email. Send to [Lyrics@CountryMusicHallofFame.org](mailto:Lyrics@CountryMusicHallofFame.org)

### EVALUATING THE PROGRAM

Your feedback is essential in our measurement of program outcomes to ensure Words & Music effectively meets your classroom needs and our program goals. We ask that you and your students complete the **Teacher Evaluation** and **Student Reflection** following the unit (see lesson 10).

- Your students should complete the **Student Reflection** after their lyric submission but before the songwriter workshop at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicStudent](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicStudent).
- Please complete the **Teacher Evaluation** after completing the Words & Music unit and the songwriter session at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicTeacher](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicTeacher).

PARTNER REVISION HANDOUT

**Part 1: Partner Review and Feedback**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Read your partner's song lyrics.
2. Underline all the words that rhyme at the end of lines.
3. Count the syllables in each line, and write the number at the end. Remember to count the syllables as a singer would pronounce it (for example, "every" would count as two syllables because it is sung "evry").
4. What is the subject? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the theme? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What evidence makes you think this is the theme? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What line or lines do you like best and why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What line or lines could be more descriptive and would benefit from the use of a simile, metaphor, or sensory detail?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Reread the lyrics. Are there any phrases or lines that are clichés (already appear in many other popular songs)?  
If so, circle them.
10. Return the worksheet and the lyrics to the songwriter.

## PARTNER REVISION HANDOUT

**Part 2: Songwriter Feedback Response**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did your partner find rhyming words at the end of most of your lines? Y / N

- If “no,” consider adding more rhyming words.

2. Look at the number of syllables per line in your verses. Is the number about the same from line to line? Y / N

- If “no,” consider rephrasing the lines.

3. Is the number of syllables about the same in all the verses? Y / N

- If “no,” consider rephrasing the verses.

4. Did your partner correctly identify the theme? Y / N

- If “no,” consider rewriting parts of your chorus to clarify your theme.

5. Check to make sure your song has the following elements.

- Title
- Chorus
- Hook
- Verse(s)

6. Did your partner identify a line or lines from your song that could be improved with an inventive simile, metaphor, or sensory detail? Y/N

- If “yes,” try using a simile, metaphor, or sensory detail to rewrite the line or lines. Remember to count your syllables again when changing a line.

7. Look for anything your partner circled as a cliché (overused line or phrase). Did you intentionally use a cliché?

If not, try communicating it in a new or original way.

8. How do you imagine the music to your song? Would it be fast or slow? Would it be country, rock, blues, rap, jazz, samba, or something else? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_