

## 10) Student Reflection and Careers in Songwriting

### OBJECTIVES

Students will reflect on their songwriting experience.

Students will be introduced to careers in songwriting.

### VOCABULARY

copyright, publisher, royalty

### PREPARATION

- Ensure students have access to computers or devices. The internet is needed to complete both the online Student Reflection and the career research activity.
- Students will reflect on the lyric-writing process by completing the **online Student Reflection** at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicStudent](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicStudent). A student handout with a QR code and website link is included for convenience.

- Teachers will complete the **online Teacher Evaluation** at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicTeacher](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicTeacher). If more than one teacher at your school taught the Words & Music lessons, each teacher should complete the online Teacher Evaluation.

### STANDARDS

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

#### CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions.

### FREE WRITE (5 minutes)

### GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

1. Ask students the following questions about their songwriting experience:

- Did you enjoy your songwriting experience? Why or why not?
- What was difficult about the songwriting process?
- What surprised you about songwriting?
- How did you feel when you completed your lyric? A sense of accomplishment? Surprised at what you created? Nervous to share your song with others?
- What did you learn about country music that you didn't know before?

### REFLECTION (10 minutes)

Students will reflect on the lyric-writing process by completing the **online Student Reflection**

at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicStudent](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicStudent). A student handout with a QR code and website link is included for convenience (see p. 59).

### BRAINSTORM (2 minutes)

Prompt: In your journal, write down as many jobs or careers in music as you can think of in one minute. Underline or circle any careers that you think are related to songwriting. Share a few careers with a partner when you are finished.

**ACTIVITY (20 minutes)**

1. Students may wonder how songwriters make money. Explain to students that a **copyright** gives songwriters the legal right to reproduce, distribute, and perform their original songs. Songwriters can grant those rights to others, such as a music publisher. Many professional songwriters sign a publishing deal with a music publisher. **Publishers** help songwriters by getting their songs recorded or “cut” by recording artists, thus generating income when the songs are streamed, sold on CD or vinyl, or used in other ways like in commercials, television, movies, or video games. Music publishers share a portion of such income with the songwriters. The portion of the income paid to songwriters is called a **royalty**. When a song is recorded and used, there are many different people and companies who may receive part of the income, including not only the songwriter and publisher, but also the artist, record label, producer, mixer, manager, and others.

**TEACHER TIP**

Any original song written has automatic copyright protection from the moment it is created and put in a “tangible” form (such as writing down the lyrics or recording the song). When you write down your lyrics or record it, you have automatic copyright protection. A copyright is an automatic right upon creation; you do not need to register it with the United States Copyright Office (or mail it to yourself, etc.). Songwriters can mark their song lyrics with the copyright symbol (©) and include the date of creation. For more information, see [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

2. Share the following with students:

There are many careers in the music business related to songwriting. Some careers are entirely creative—as in, jobs that involve the creation of music, which means writing the songs. For example, a staff writer is a songwriter who works for a publisher to create songs for commercial release. There are also other jobs that support and deal with the business aspects, like lawyers and accountants.

3. Have students conduct internet research on careers in the music business specific to songwriting.

Careers may include, but are not limited to:

- Entertainment Attorney
- Licensing Representative
- Lyricist
- Music Producer
- Music Therapist
- Music Teacher/Professor
- Performing Songwriter/Singer-Songwriter
- Publisher
- Recording Artist
- Song Plugger
- Staff Writer

Students should choose one career to research and record the following in their journals:

- Name of the career
- A description of the career
- Identify important skills and/or education needed for the career
- How does this career connect to songwriting?

## WEBSITES

The following websites provide information on various careers in songwriting:

### Berklee

[www.berklee.edu/careers](http://www.berklee.edu/careers)

This website provides a comprehensive list and thorough descriptions of careers related to songwriting in business, composition, design, education, health and wellness, performance, and production.

### Careers in Music

<https://www.careersinmusic.com/music-careers/>

This website explores careers related to songwriting with information on salary, career path, experience and skills, and education and training. Students can also explore music career paths based on interest using a fun, interactive questionnaire. (See “What are you most interested in?” at the top of the website.)

4. Assign students to small groups, then assign each group an industry in music as listed on the websites (i.e., business, composition, education, health, performance, production, etc.). In each group/industry, students can choose or roll a die to decide who has which career in that industry. Students will research and present their career to their group. After each student has presented their career, students will discuss how all careers relate and work together in the music business.

## TEACHER TIP

If time allows, students can create a presentation using computer software (like PowerPoint) to present their chosen careers to the class. If a student has a parent or relative in a related career, invite them to visit and discuss their job with the class.

## HOMEWORK

Assign students to write questions in their journals to ask the songwriter during the upcoming workshop. Questions can be about lyric writing, playing an instrument, performing live, the music business, or other related topics. Encourage students to think of inquiring questions beginning with “who,” “what,” “when,” “why,” and “how.” Students should bring their questions to the songwriter workshop.

## HELP US HELP YOU

Teacher feedback is essential in our measurement of program outcomes to ensure Words & Music effectively meets classroom needs and learning goals. Please complete the **online Teacher Evaluation** upon completion of the unit, after the songwriter session, at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicTeacher](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicTeacher) (QR code to the right). All teachers who participated in Words & Music should complete the teacher evaluation. Thank you for sharing this request and the assessment link with any additional teachers at your school who instructed Words & Music. We greatly appreciate your efforts in reporting accurate data, enabling this award-winning program to continue to be free or low cost for you and your students for years to come.



## CONTINUING OPPORTUNITIES

The following organizations provide opportunities for songwriters to interact with one another, get feedback on their songs, and further their songwriting pursuits:

### SoundCloud

[www.SoundCloud.com](http://www.SoundCloud.com)

This audio platform enables sound creators to upload, record, promote, and share original work.

### Nashville Songwriters Association International

[www.NashvilleSongwriters.com](http://www.NashvilleSongwriters.com)

This not-for-profit trade organization serves amateurs and professionals in all genres of music. Paid membership is required.

### Tennessee Songwriters Association International

[www.TennesseeSongwriters.com](http://www.TennesseeSongwriters.com)

This organization supports songwriters with a variety of services. Paid membership is required.

### TAXI

[www.Taxi.com](http://www.Taxi.com)

For a fee, TAXI connects artists, bands, and songwriters to people in the music business such as record company staff, publishers, and music supervisors.

### Songwriter Forums

A variety of songwriter forums exist to offer advice and feedback.



*Cindy Walker wrote songs for numerous cowboy movies in the 1940s. She composed lyrics on her typewriter, which is part of the collection of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.*



## Student Reflection

Congratulations on writing a song! Reflect on the lyric-writing process by completing the **online Student Reflection** before the songwriter program. Scan the QR code or visit the website below:



[www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicStudent](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WordsMusicStudent)