

## Spotlight on Verses

### POWER POSITIONS

This lesson will give you another tool for examining your lyrics, as you revise your work in Lesson 9.

The brain processes information we hear differently than information we read. When we hear a song (versus reading a lyric), our brains place more emphasis on the first and last lines of a section. For this reason, the first and last lines of a verse are called power positions.

The power positions in a verse contain its main message and they complement each other. In this way, the verse should still make sense—even without the lines in between. In other words, the power positions contain the main ideas, and the middle lines fill out the details.

### EXAMPLE

In “Bless the Broken Road,” the power positions are in boldface. Try reading all the lines of the verses. Then read just the power positions. Does the verse still make sense without the other lines? For an audio example of this song, locate the Rascal Flatts recording.



*Marcus Hummon (left) and Jeff Hanna wrote “Bless the Broken Road” with Bobby Boyd. A #1 for Rascal Flatts, the ballad explains how breakups and broken dreams can lead to love.*

## Bless the Broken Road

*Bobby Boyd/Jeff Hanna/Marcus Hummon*

**I set out on a narrow way many years ago**

Hoping I would find true love along the broken road

But I got lost a time or two

Wiped my brow and kept pushing through

**I couldn't see how every sign pointed straight to you**

Every long lost dream led me to where you are

Others who broke my heart they were like northern stars

Pointing me on my way into your loving arms

This much I know is true ...

That God blessed the broken road

That led me straight to you

**I think about the years I spent just passing through**

I'd like to have the time I lost and give it back to you

But you just smile and take my hand

You've been there you understand

**It's all part of a grander plan that is coming true**

Every long lost dream led me to where you are

Others who broke my heart they were like northern stars

Pointing me on my way into your loving arms

This much I know is true ...

That God blessed the broken road

That led me straight to you

Yeah

Now I'm just rolling home into my lover's arms

This much I know is true...

That God blessed the broken road

That led me straight to you.

That God blessed the broken road

That led me straight to you.

### ACTIVITY

1. Look at a verse you have already written or write a new verse. Examine the first and last lines, then answer the following questions:
  - Does their meaning connect in some way?
  - Does the verse still make sense with only the power positions?
  - Can you rearrange the lines to put better ones in the power positions?
  
2. Look at the verses of some of your favorite songs. Do they use power positions?