



Songwriting to Assess Concept Comprehension

May 3rd, 2023 TEACH CAMP



District CI & 5D+ Connections

STRATEGY #1: Support each student using the continuum of Tier I instructions and support.

P3: Design of performance task

SE2: Ownership of learning

SE3: Capitalizing on students' strengths

SE4: Opportunity and support for participation and meaning making

SE5: Student Talk

A4: Teacher use of formative assessments





Agenda & Goals



01

Listen & Sing

I can **analyze** the lyrics of a new song.

02

Create

I can **create** my own parody of a song to teach a concept of my choice.

03

Share & Teach

I can **perform** and **teach** my parody to another participant.

04

Assessment Ideas

I can **identify** different ways to utilize this strategy in my own classroom.



First things first... Why write a song?

“Listening to and performing music reactivates areas of the brain associated with memory, reasoning, speech, emotion, and reward. Two recent studies—one in the United States and the other in Japan—found that music doesn't just help us retrieve stored memories, it also helps us lay down new ones.”

- Dr. Anne Fabiny, Editor in Chief, Harvard Health Publishing & Medical School



First things first... Why write a song?

Music can...

- Accelerate learning.
- Help students to memorize learning material.
- Enrich learning experiences
- Motivate students to focus
- Build a supportive atmosphere
- Create a sense of community
- Foster individual expression and stimulate creativity



Plus, it's FUN!!!!





Listen & Sing

I can *analyze* the lyrics of a new song.

I can teach every concept,
Scaffolding what to do.

Pop songs make me feel adept
At counting syllables, too.

Yeah, I can be so creative,
Making sure each line rhymes.

Yeah, I can sing my new song anytime.

To the melody of the chorus from
“Flowers” by Miley Cyrus



Listen & Sing

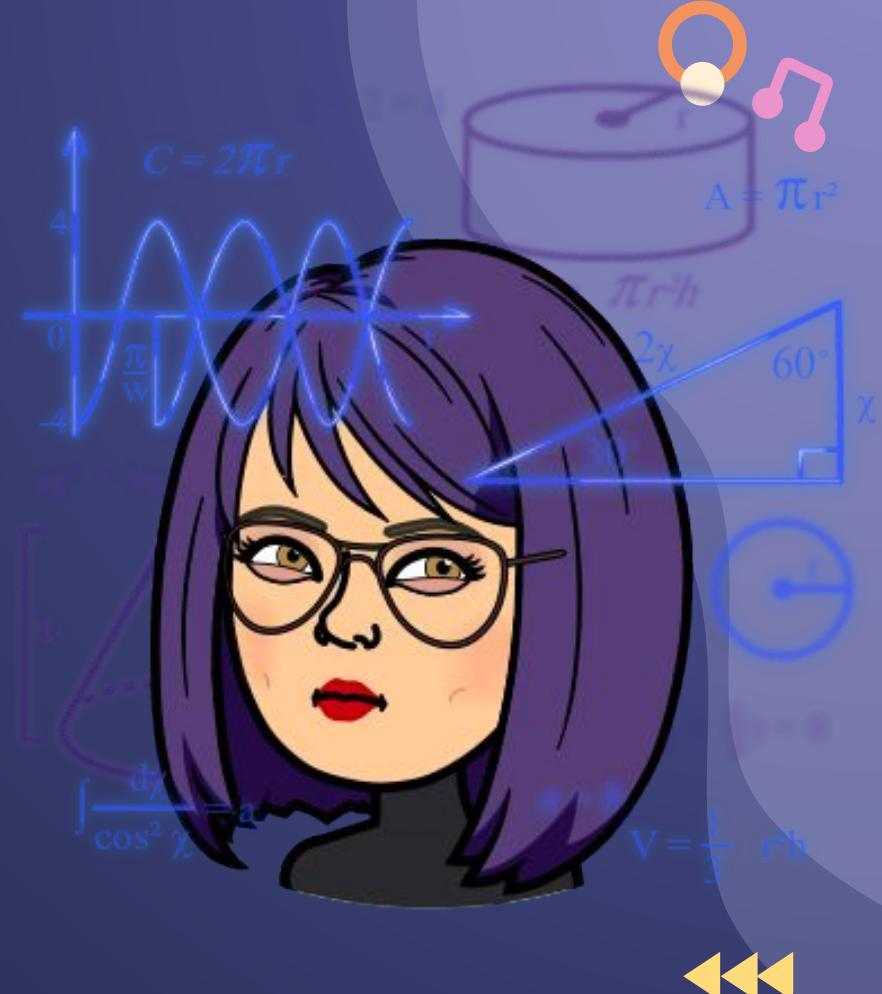
I can *analyze* the lyrics of a new song.

I can teach every concept,
Scaffolding what to do.

Pop songs make me feel adept
At counting syllables, too.

Yeah, I can be so creative,
Making sure each line rhymes.

Yeah, I can sing my new song anytime.





Sing with me
this time!

Listen & Sing

I can *analyze* the lyrics of a new song.

I can teach every concept,
Scaffolding what to do.

Pop songs make me feel adept
At counting syllables, too.

Yeah, I can be so creative,
Making sure each line rhymes.

Yeah, I can sing my new song anytime.

To the melody of the chorus from
“Flowers” by Miley Cyrus



Create

I can **create** my own parody of a song to teach a concept of my choice.

Choose a concept	Think of the concept you want to teach. Create an objective “I can” statement to go along with it.
Scaffold your steps/actions	Write out a list of each step or action needed to reach your goal.
Choose a popular song	Select whatever song you’d like! I usually choose something my students are listening to.
Count the syllables in each line	Write out the original lyrics and label each line with its number of syllables. Sometimes the rhythm “adds” syllables (if a word is held out).
Make your steps rhyme	This is the trickiest part! You need to rewrite your steps/actions so they match the rhyme scheme of the original song.
Practice singing your song	Break it down and practice slowly at first. Once you are comfortable, find a karaoke or instrumental version of your pop song and sing along.

Create

I can **create** my own parody of a song to teach a concept of my choice.

Choose a concept.

Think of the concept you want to teach.

Create an objective “I can” statement to go along with it. These statements can be super specific, or a bit more broad.

Here are a few ideas:

“I can **sight read** a piece of music.”

“I can use a search engine to **research** information.”

“I can **describe** the relationship between the moon and Earth’s tides.”



2:00

Create

I can **create** my own parody of a song to teach a concept of my choice.

Scaffold your steps/actions.

Write out a list of each step or action needed to reach your goal.

Here is an example for the objective of today's presentation.

1. Choose a concept.
2. Scaffold your steps/actions.
3. Choose a popular song.
4. Count the syllables in each line.
5. Make your steps rhyme.
6. Practice singing your song.



Create

I can **create** my own parody of a song to teach a concept of my choice.

Choose a popular song.

Select whatever song you'd like!

I usually choose something that my students are listening to.

Here are a few options that I like to use:

Roar by Katy Perry

Flowers by Miley Cyrus

Brave by Sara Bareilles

Ho Hey by the Lumineers

Fight Song by Rachel Platten

Radioactive by Imagine Dragons

The options are endless!

It helps to use a song that has a chorus with at least the same amount of lines as you have steps/actions.

Create

I can **create** my own parody of a song to teach a concept of my choice.

Count the syllables in each line.

Write out the original lyrics and label each line with its number of syllables.

Sometimes the rhythm “adds” syllables (if a word is held out).

If this is the case, you can either add it as an extra syllable OR hold out a word in your own lyrics to match.

- 7 I can buy myself flowers
- 6 Write my name in the sand
- 7 Talk to myself for hours
- 7 Say things you don't understand
- 7 I can take myself dancing
- 7 And I can hold my own hand
- 10 Yeah, I can love me better than you can



Create

I can **create** my own parody of a song to teach a concept of my choice.

Make your steps rhyme

This is the trickiest part! You need to rewrite your steps/actions so they match the rhyme scheme (and number of syllables) of the original song.

I like to color code by rhyme schemes! Slant rhymes count, too.



- 7 I can buy myself **flowers**
- 6 Write my name in the **sand** ←
- 7 Talk to myself for **hours**
- 7 Say things you don't **understand** ←
- 7 I can take myself **dancing**
- 7 And I can hold my own **hand** ←
- 10 Yeah, I can love me better than you **can** ←

If there is a group of four words that rhyme, you can break them into two smaller groups to make it easier when writing your song!

Create

I can **create** my own parody of a song to teach a concept of my choice.



Make your steps rhyme

This is the trickiest part! You need to rewrite your steps/actions so they match the rhyme scheme (and number of syllables) of the original song.

Now that the original song is color coded, it's time to write our own rhymes!

- 7 I can buy myself **flowers**
- 6 Write my name in the **sand**
- 7 Talk to myself for **hours**
- 7 Say things you don't **understand**
- 8 Yeah, I can take myself **dancing**
- 7 And I can hold my own **hand**
- 10 Yeah, I can love me better than you **can**



- 7 I can teach every **concept**
- 6 Scaffolding what to **do**
- 7 Pop songs make me feel **adept**
- 7 At counting syllables **too**
- 8 Yeah, I can be so **creative**
- 6 Making sure each line **rhymes**
- 10 Yeah, I can sing my new song **anytime**

Notice how this line has six syllables instead of seven? That's because I hold out the word "sure" longer than the others.



Create

I can **create** my own parody of a song to teach a concept of my choice.



Practice singing your song

Break it down and practice slowly at first. Once you are comfortable, find a karaoke or instrumental version of your pop song and sing along.

Sometimes the version you find won't match up perfectly with the original. That's okay! Just make adjustments as needed.

I can teach every concept,
Scaffolding what to do.

Pop songs make me feel adept
At counting syllables too.

Yeah, I can be so creative,
Making sure each line rhymes.

Yeah, I can sing my new song anytime.

To the melody of the chorus from
"Flowers" by Miley Cyrus



Share & Teach

I can **perform** and **teach** my parody to another participant.

Break down the song into smaller sections, and try teaching it repeat-after-me style.

- Echo one line at a time
- Combine parts so you're singing two lines at a time
- Double it again so you're signing four lines
- Finally, combine all of the lines so you're singing the entire chorus together

ooo
ooo



Share & Teach

I can **perform** and **teach** my parody to another participant.

You can also teach your songs...

- With pictures
- With movement
- Peer-to-peer
- In small groups
- As a whole class
- One verse/chorus at a time
- As an entire song

ooo
ooo



Share & Teach

I can **perform** and **teach** my parody to another participant.



Perform

Sing your song to a partner of your choice.



Teach

Teach them how to sing it! Break it down, line by line.



Switch

Let the other participant perform and teach their song.



ooo
ooo





Assessment Ideas

I can identify different ways to utilize this strategy in my own classroom.



Memorization

Students utilize a prewritten song to help them remember a concept.



Small Groups

Students create parodies in small groups to present information.



Solo

Students create their own parodies to demonstrate their comprehension.



Create

Students create their own songs WITHOUT using a popular song!
(This one is a challenge!)



oo
oo
oo

Assessment Ideas

I can **identify** different ways to utilize this strategy in my own classroom.

Memorization

This can either be a song that you have written, or that you've borrowed from someone else.

There are HUNDREDS of videos on YouTube and Tiktok that teachers have created for you to use!





Assessment Ideas

I can identify different ways to utilize this strategy in my own classroom.

Small Group

This can take place of things like book reports, presentations, analyses, etc.

I find that this works best when students are given a specific topic.

What are some topics you think you might use this strategy to assess?



○○
○○
○○

Assessment Ideas

I can identify different ways to utilize this strategy in my own classroom.

Solo

This allows students to research/demonstrate things that they are interested in, giving them ownership of their own learning.

I like to have students submit these on FlipGrid or Google Classroom instead of singing in front of the entire class.

Lines & Spaces

Lines say “Every good,
Burger deserves fries.”

Spaces spell “face.”
x2





Assessment Ideas

I can identify different ways to utilize this strategy in my own classroom.

Create

This one is a challenge for a few different reasons.

They have to create their own melody AND rhythms.

They don't have anything to base it off of.

There's not a specific accompaniment recording for them to sing along with.

For these reasons, I like to give students a chord progression recording to use.

Search "major chord progression backing track" for something that sounds happy, or "minor chord progression backing track" for something that sounds sad. If you want to have a little extra fun, search "blues backing track."

This option is great for students who prefer to rap rather than sing!



Start time: 6:15pm / End Time: 6:27pm 

Concept: "I can sight read a new piece of music."
Song: Golden Hour by JVKE

Original lyrics:
1 It was all alone with the love of my life
6 She's got glitter for skin
8 My radiant beam in the night
9 I don't need no light to see you shine
5 It's your golden hour
4 You slow down time
5 In your golden hour

Steps: 1) Check key/time signatures
2) Clap + count
3) Sing + finger
4) Play

My lyrics: *or a new song*
1 I need to learn how to sight read new pieces
6 Check the time and key first
8 Time to sing and finger along.
9 You don't need no time to hear me play,
5 'Cause I can sight read
'Cause I will sight read.



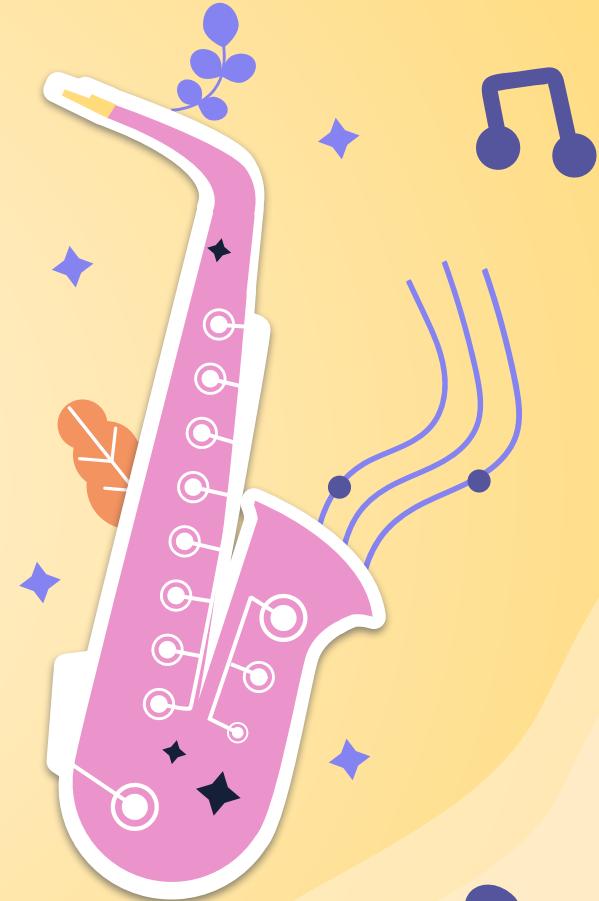
"I can sight read a new piece of music."

Check the time and key first,
Time to sing and finger along.
You don't need time to hear me play,
'Cause I can sight read.
Give me the day,
'Cause I will sight read.



This doesn't have to take forever!

Questions?



Thanks!

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

Erin Emery-Dumas

Music Educator, Haverhill Elementary

eemery@portageps.org

CREDITS: This presentation template was created by [Slidesgo](#), and includes icons by [Flaticon](#), and infographics & images by [Freepik](#)

