

Three Session Residency Lesson Plan

by Brian Chevalier

Session #1

Goals:

Curricular: S.S., Science, ELA, etc.

Artistic: To write 1 song per class or grade.

- Set up rules.
- Introduction.
- "Can You Do" (A participation song) as an icebreaker activity and overview of the steps we will employ to write a song.
- Define and list our task! (Clap to model how words make rhythms.)
- Start / write "tool" list! (Lyrics, rhyme, melody, chords, beat, rhythm, feel, poetic devices, etc.)
- Reflect on what we have done so far (put words to music) and add syllables and rhyme / form to our songwriting "tool" list.
- Count how many syllables are in each line.
- We are going to use all of these ideas to write a song of our own.
- With older grades: Briefly explore alliteration, metaphor and simile via inquiry or "This Land Is Your Land".

Devises for songwriting we'll eventually be using: rhythm / accent, dynamics, tempo, timbre/ tone / inflection, melody, chords, story / info. / words, syllables, rhyme / form and perspective. (These aspects are discussed with appropriate grade levels only!)

Quickly introduce, using inquiry, what we are going to do (the writing process):

1. What kinds of things do you write in your class? (stories, etc.)
 2. Ask what the 1st thing they do is before they write something? (Brainstorm)
 3. We will brainstorm and write down rough ideas (w/o rhyme)
 4. We will turn these ideas into a poem. (rhymes and sloppy copy)
 5. Proofread and rewrite.
 6. Speak poem together w/ a beat.
 7. Add chords.
 8. Add melody or tune.
 9. Explore and add other appropriate musical devices.
 10. Perform, rewrite, arrange.
 11. Perform
- Introduce song topic.
 - Model difference between a verse and a chorus for older grades.
 - Brainstorm the concept of our verse and write ideas on board.
 - Consult my line of inquiry for each song, then:
 - Start writing: (Keep referring to the writing process!)
 - Brainstorm and chart info. / vocab. lists.
 - Point out important vocab. and model euphonious language.

- Write number of lines we'll writing on board.
- Story map: by writing short lines, containing the content, idea or information possibilities for lines of verse.
- Modeling of songwriting "tricks" or techniques happen as opportunities present themselves.
- Decide on (Make Choices) and write the content (rough draft / sloppy copy) of each line for our verse as a group, without rhyming yet, unless it just happens.
- (In K, make a rhyming list, then write the lines from this list; make the lines fit the rhyme words).
- Break up lesson with a kinesthetic activity.
- Look for good rhyming words and make a list. (Organizing)
- Finish 1st draft of verse, working on rhyme.
- Model how we use "musical devises" every day in our speaking (dynamics, tempo, etc) to show how I start hearing music as soon as we get any words down at all.
- Start clapping the language we have written.
- Start speaking language rhythmically.
- Work on rhythm / rewrite (keep chanting what we have) and work on choice of words (euphonious / colorful / descriptive language.) (Tap into perspective, if applicable, and if we haven't yet)
- Clap lyrics and discuss feel.
- Model how I flip flop (change order of / reorganize) ideas, lines and / or words to place a word that will offer good possibilities to rhyme with at the end of a sentence.
- Reflect on writing process.

Summary:

- Reflect on what we did today in terms of the writing process.
- Reflect on "tools" of songwriting we discovered today and how will be using them.
- Tell them what is happening next: we will be using this process and our "tools" to continue writing our song.

General:

- Guide them through the process I use to write songs, how I look at the information and language we have on our brainstorming / information list and what I do from there.
- Look for content patterns (who, what where, when, why, how) to guide content ideas for specific lines.
- Model what makes good first and last lines.
- Look for places to employ poetic devises. (Alliteration, inner rhyme, etc.)

Session #2

- Reflect on writing process and first session.
- Speak lyrics slowly with a beat.
- Rewrite: work with class, asking questions and offering choices to make pieces more lyrical, if applicable. (rhyme patterns, number of syllables and euphonious and colorful language, reversing words and / or ideas in lines to get a different word at the end or make line work better)
- Have class speak poem again w/ me.
- Model how I can communicate with music.
- Do Q and A with claps.
- Clap adjectives while speaking: "hideous", "beautiful" w/ appropriate rhythms.
- Ask for volunteers to make up some claps. (Clap a mood)
- We'll want to think about this as we sing and arrange our song.

- Do "Happy B'day" activity and finish writing "tool" list. (Maj./ min., Rhythm / feel, Tempo, vol. / dynamics, inflection - with appropriate grades)
- (If we're choosing an ethnic style of music for our song, play an example of that style of music, and explore, via inquiry how that style uses the "tools" of music)
- Model how I use "tools" of music in everyday speaking.

Make choices songwriters make, while speaking lyrics in appropriate # of beats per line:

- Employ tone / inflection while speaking our song
- Class chooses rough tempo.
- Class chooses overall vol. / dynamics for song.
- Class chooses Maj. or min. key for song: this is what songwriters do!!!!
- Add chords, stressing beat, while they speak. Offer as many chord options as possible. Class raises hands when they feel chords should change. (Model any stylistic chord progressions here, if applicable)
- Refine guitar rhythm and decide on style / feel of song while continuing to chant. (Don't accentuate any words with rhythm yet! Stretching, etc.)
- Scat melody possibilities and have them answer me. (Model stylistic idiosyncrasies here, if applicable)
- Class chooses 1st note of melody.
- Start class off and let them sing song, listening for where the melody goes.
- Sing back what I hear as an overall melody.
- Model how I use rhythm and melody to communicate my words.
- Edit: Pick out words or phrases we might try to accentuate with melody or rhythm.
- Tweak vocal rhythm / phrasing of lyrics.
- Refine melody: make decisions with the class about where the melody should go up and down, etc.
- Practice.
- Explain hooks: short and simple: often the title of the song: What could our title be?
- Add hook.

- What dynamics are we already using in our song: write them on chart.
- Add / refine dynamics to our song (write them on chart)
- Practice song.
- Record song.

Summary:

- Reflect on day via inquiry.
- Reflect on unit of study so far.
- Review concept of song.
- Tie what we've done into the writing process.

General

- The "tools" I choose to focus the most on will depend on the direction (stylistic, etc.) of our song. Different styles accentuate different tools.
- Model each device we apply to the song.
- Break up session with an activity.

Session #3

- Reflect on unit so far.
- Play and sing song.
- Do final rewriting, arranging (Ending, etc.) and tweaking of song.
- Practice song and record final version.
- Model and practice performance skills.
- Add any movement or sign language ideas to the song.
- Reflect on unit.