

Compose Your Song

Communication Skill:
Writing a song

Life Skill: Communicating with others – communicates appropriate verbal messages

Educational Standard:
NL-ENG.K-12.4 Youth use spoken, written, and visual language to communicate effectively

Success Indicator:
Composes and sings a song.

Singing a song, playing an instrument, making music—did you know that you can talk to others in a tune? They will hear you loud and clear. Music can help you feel happy, get energized or share your feelings. You can put your thoughts into words, tell a story, or teach a lesson. Did you ever think about being a songwriter? In this activity, you will learn how fun and easy it is to put your thoughts into words and your words into a song.

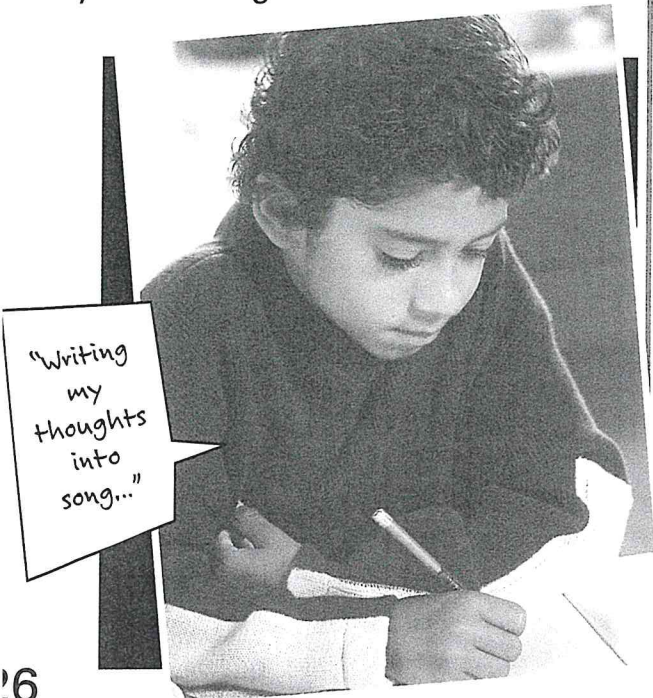
Making CONTACT

Have you noticed how song writers are able to communicate their ideas through their songs? Now, it is your turn to make your words and ideas sing by creating a song. Start by choosing a topic that will impact others in a positive way. What do you especially care about? Peace, kindness, helping others, honesty, family or saving our earth? Select a familiar song and then take the melody and replace it with words of your own. The more you practice the easier it will be. Before long, you will be able to compose a new melody to go along with your message.

Friends

Row, row,	Be, be,
Row your boat,	Be a friend
Gently down the stream	All across the land
Merrily, merrily	It's always good
Merrily, merrily	To have a friend
Life is but a dream.	Who needs a helping hand.

My Sample Song



“Writing my thoughts into song...”

Chat Room

Publicize It! share

- What was most difficult about writing a song?

Headline It! process

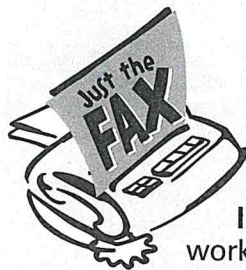
- What did you learn about delivering a message through this activity?
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Link It! generalize

- How can delivering a message in a different way help you share your feelings with others?
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Network It! apply

- In what other ways could you communicate your message to different audiences?
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Does Poetry Make the Song?

How well do you understand and appreciate poetry? Poetry can range from the funny **limericks** of Ogden Nash to the more serious works of such poets as Robert Frost or Carl Sandburg. Unlike other kinds of writing, poetry uses some type of rhyme or stress meter, has a natural rhythm and can be set to familiar melodies like nursery rhymes. Poetry creates an image that will remain long after the words are spoken or sung.

Tips to Writing a Catchy Song

A song needs to do three basic things to impress a listener.

1. Needs to draw the listener in with interesting **lyrics**.
2. Needs to be 'catchy', as a song must please the ear rather than just reading it like a poem.
3. Needs to have good sound structure.

Parts of a Song

1. A **stanza** is similar to a paragraph in a book. One or two stanzas making up the verse usually give the details of the song.
2. **Rhyme** patterns are the poetry of songs and should match other verses in a song. Usually rhymes come at the end of a line, but not always.
3. The chorus is a section of lines that generally contain the catchiest part of the song and often contains the title.

Upgrades

1. Read a variety of poems. Choose a poem and describe to your helper or a friend the scene or mood set by the poem. "I like to see it lap the miles" by Emily Dickinson is an excellent poem for this type of activity.

2. Listen to a favorite song. Interpret the message in your own words. Share it with your class or group.

3. Create a catchy **jingle** to market 4-H. See if a local radio station will use the jingle during National 4-H Week.

4. Design a campaign song for your club president that states his or her qualifications and persuades people to vote for him or her.

Activity written by Linda Strieter

• Lyric • Rhyme • Stanza

NOTE IT

Poetry Writing Tips (from *Poetry Starting From Scratch* by Michael A. Carey)

- Do more with less
- Start with basics—not rhyme
- Match sound with meaning
- Use rhythm & line breaks
- Compare with similes and metaphors
- Create vivid imagery
- Be specific
- Use memory
- Exploit the senses

LINGO • Jingle • Limerick