

Songcraft with Clay Cook

Forest School Modalities for Deeper Learning

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Examples of the 7 Modalities in Story Arts?

Discuss – Socratic discussion

Explore – Products to explore, online research

Make – Student deliverables from the challenge

Share – Exit ticket or other sharing opportunities, pair & share, sharing work or reflections

Evaluate – feedback

Reflect – 3, 2, 1 (3 things that surprised you, 2 takeaways, 1 question) or other opportunities for reflection

Submit – what is submitted for feedback

Lesson 1 – Music Production and Guest Speaker

Discuss

What is more important to you in a song? A catchy beat or meaningful lyrics? Why? What do you think makes a good melody? What is it about a melody that makes you want to sing along?

What music production and songwriting career are you most interested in? Why?

Can you find someone in your class interested in the same area?

Explore

Video introduction to Clay Cook, professional musician, who offers insight into the music industry and the minutiae of songcraft.

Make

Lyric writing sprint- The most successful songwriters use imagery to paint a visual picture that the listeners can imagine as they hear the story. We will practice this through short writing sprints about different objects. The instructor will name an object and learners have two minutes to write down as many observations as possible about that object and any connections that come to mind.

Share

Partner pair and share- What song have you recently heard for the first time? Share the title, artist, genre, and what you liked/disliked about the song with a partner.

Instructor will select a few groups to share their ideas with the class.

Learners will also share one idea or phrase that came from their lyric writing sprint.

Evaluate

Learners will offer feedback and helpful suggestions to shared lyric ideas.

Reflect

Learners will reflect on their lyric sprints, circling any interesting thoughts or phrases that they might use to begin constructing their lyrics.

Learners are also asked to reflect on the importance of focusing on the senses when presented with two different lyric sets at the closing.

Submit

A <30 second recording of reading or singing a phrase from the lyric sprint activity.

Lesson 2 – Song Challenge

Discuss

Learners divide into Creative Teams to brainstorm additional lyrics for the song. They will participate in a brainstorming session for each of the songcrafting storytelling concepts explored (Universal Theme, Songform, Storyline and Thinking Like a Filmmaker).

Explore

Learners will explore new lyrics written by Clay Cook. Learners will also explore songcrafting storytelling concepts such as Universal Theme, Songform, Storyline and Thinking Like a Filmmaker.

Make

Now that learners have an idea for their story and understand how songs use rhythm and patterns, it's time to put it all together and make their verse! Taking their groups' story details (what you see, hear, smell, feel, or touch), arrange them into 8 lines. As a group, work on creating ending rhyme patterns, alliteration, internal rhyme, and repetition. Brainstorm individually, and then work together as a group to combine ideas!

Share

If time allows, creative teams can share their progress with one another. This will also be an excellent opportunity for feedback.

Evaluate

If time allows, creative teams can share their progress with one another and provide feedback on each other's lyrics.

Reflect

After watching the video, learners are given a copy of the Chorus Lyrics and given time to reflect upon the meaning of the song and what kind of story they would craft around the provided chorus.

Submit

Creative teams will submit their verse at the end of the session.

Lesson 3 – Critiques and Tweaks

Discuss

Class discussion

- Is feedback on your art more useful when it comes from a close friend or a stranger?
- Would you rather be given positive feedback or authentic feedback?
- What is an example of feedback you have received that did not feel good? What is an example of a critique you found helpful?
- What mindfulness techniques can you use when receiving feedback to help you stay calm and focus on listening for ways to make your song better?

Explore

Learners will follow a sequence for artistic feedback inspired by Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process (4 steps for critique: *Celebrate, Share, Questions, Suggestions*).

Make

Learners will craft feedback to use as they continue to work on their song.

Share

Groups will pair up to share their verse ideas, using the Formative Rubric to give and receive feedback.

Evaluate

First, the Artists will perform the verse for the Listeners, speaking the words in rhythm to a steady beat. Then the teacher will ask learners to:

1. Celebrate: Listeners share what was awesome!

2. Share: Artists share their experiences and intentions for the work-in-progress. Then the artist asks the Listener for specific feedback needs.
3. Questions: Next, Listeners ask neutral questions (no opinion connected to the question) to gather more information about the work and/or process.
4. Suggestions: Finally, listeners are given time to share opinions about the areas on the formative rubric. The artist absorbs and reflects on these opinions and decides if and how to incorporate them.

Reflect

Songwriting groups should review feedback and adjust their song as needed.

Submit

Learners share or post their verse somewhere that allows comments and ask viewers to share constructive critiques OR send it to friends and family requesting feedback.

Lesson 4 – Record, Edit, Reflect

Discuss

Class discussion

- Do you think musicians make more money going on tour performing live or remotely selling their songs online?
- Where do artists record their music? What technology do they use?
- Do you think auto-tuning is good or bad for the music industry?

Explore

Learners are encouraged to think like a production team. As a group, they will explore their roles within the production cycle.

Make

At the end of today's session, the goal is for each production group to have a finished recording of their song with accompanying album artwork.

Share

Groups will share their finished songs with the class.

Evaluate

Using the summative rubric, they will make additional adjustments to create a high-quality final product.

Reflect

Groups will listen to their recording and review their album cover artwork.

Submit

Have students turn in their audio files. If time allows, give feedback using the summative rubric and ask them to make any edits as desired. Upload the final version of the songs to a shareable folder or online streaming platform (with parent permissions). Plan a release party inviting friends and family to hear your music!