

# 2022 TEACHER TRAINING COURSE USING MUSIC IN THE CLASSROOM

## INTRODUCTION

- Music can be a great resource for teachers – it can get the students involved in the lesson, especially if they can make their own input.
- Using contemporary music may be foreign ground for older generations, but it may be the only contact that many students have with English in their daily lives outside the classroom.
- Music is a great way to introduce students to informal English. Songs often use spoken forms (“wanna”, “gonna”, “shoulda”), and technically incorrect forms (double negatives), that may not be standard written English, but occur frequently in spoken English, particularly in films and TV series.
- Music can expose students to different accents. Think of great singers like Bob Marley, Johnny Cash, Bob Dylan and Amy Winehouse, not to mention hundreds of US and UK rappers, who sang as they spoke.

## IDIOMS IN MUSIC

- Many popular songs can be used to teach idioms in a fun way
- Which songs (old or new) can you think of which have idioms in their titles (or in the general lyrics)? Write them in the chat.
- Here are some I thought of:
  - “Poker Face” by Lady Gaga
  - “Let It Be” by the Beatles
  - “I Heard It Through the Grapevine” by Marvin Gaye
  - “Another One Bites the Dust” by Queen
  - “Easy On Me” by Adele
  - “Time Flies” by Drake
- Katy Perry - Roar: 1 Song with 18 idioms: <https://youtu.be/D-L4rwwXm90>

## STORYBOARD A MUSIC VIDEO

A storyboard is a short description of scenes in a music video.

In pairs, students can storyboard an existing music video, or choose a song and plan a new music video.

This is a sort of plan for the music director. In the boxes, the students can draw stick figures of scenes.

Here is an example of one video. <https://youtu.be/GWVMcigVt48>

- **Artist:** Måneskin
- **Song:** Chosen
- **Setting(s):** Backstage/Hotel Corridor?
- **Mood:** Energetic, Debauched
- **Characters:** Band members, bohemians
- **Story (if any):** none
- **B/W or Colour or other:** Red, black, yellow with colourful clothes. More colours at end.
- **Other:** Constantly panning left-->right

# 2022 TEACHER TRAINING COURSE USING MUSIC IN THE CLASSROOM

## X Factor Activity

- Why not plan an X Factor activity in the classroom? Get students talking about the music they love, possibly preceded by some exercises about music vocabulary.
- Instead of students performing, students have to speak about the music that they will play.
- It might be best if you don't play the music video, so that students just listen to the song itself.
- Maybe a Bluetooth speaker could be used, plus a student who has Spotify or another subscriber service (to avoid ads).

## Procedure

- Students choose a song and fill out the worksheet. (Teacher checks that not too many students are choosing the same song).
- A panel of 3 students, plus the teacher, is chosen as judges. It's probably best if these are among the highest level students in the class. They should change for each round.
- A student explains the name of the song, the artist, the genre, where/when it was heard first, what the student likes about it and how it makes the student feel.
- Student plays 20 seconds of the song to the judges.
- Judges give it a score of 1 – 10 (holding up fingers).
- Each judge comments on the song.
- After 4 students have played a song, the highest rated song is the winner of that round.
- Change judges and repeat.
- Final Championship Round – Play 20 seconds of the winning songs. Then all students vote on their favourite. (“Who liked song #1?”, “#2? Etc). Teacher counts votes. Song (and student) with most votes wins.

## Song Pictionary Activity

- What about playing Pictionary with song titles? Here is a version of the classic guessing game adapted for the English classroom.

## Procedure:

- Every student thinks of a song which can be described in Emojis (either the title, the video or the story/theme of the song)
- The class is divided into two teams: A and B.
- The teacher chooses one student from each team who stand up and approach the whiteboard.
- Student A (from team A) whispers/writes the name of his/her song to Student B (from team B) and the teacher.
- Student B has 10 seconds thinking time. When this is finished, the teacher passes him/her a whiteboard marker
- Student B has 2 minutes to draw pictures on the whiteboard to make his/her team guess the title of the song.
- Team B has to guess the name of the song by shouting out words (the teacher can give a 'thumbs up' if a word from the title is correct).
- If the teacher hears the full title, the team gets a point. Then Student B tells the teacher and Student A the name of his/her song, and the game continues. Then repeat until all students have played.

## Rules:

- No speaking by the drawer or the non-guessing team.
- No letters or numbers to be drawn.
- No acting or other help from the drawer.
- Only the teacher can decide if a student said a correct word from the title, or guesses the full title.

# 2022 TEACHER TRAINING COURSE USING MUSIC IN THE CLASSROOM

## Conclusions

- Music is not just something to be played or listened to. It is an opportunity to inspire kids to speak.
- Listening is just the first step!
- The emotions that music inspires are perfect to motivate quiet students to speak. See if your quiet students feel less inhibited when the topic changes to music.
- The best lessons involving music are those in which students get to choose their music. It may be an opportunity to reward a good class with some input into the lesson content!
- Music is a fantastic icebreaker – why not introduce a new topic with a topical song? Google “present perfect songs” (e.g., U2 – I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For”) or for literature you could use Kate Bush’s “Wuthering Heights” or “Sensual World” (Molly Bloom’s monologue from James Joyce’s “Ulysses”)

## USEFUL LINKS

The MLA Blog, by our sometime Webinar panelist Francesca Tamani, has several articles on teaching using music:

- <https://www.mlaworld.com/blog/lesson-plan-i-beatles-e-la-giornata-mondiale-della-pace/>
- <https://www.mlaworld.com/blog/lesson-plan-i-50-anni-dei-queen/>

<https://www.eslbase.com/teaching/using-songs-to-teach-efl>

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/conversation-lesson-music>

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/music-great>

<https://eslbrains.com/world-without-music/>

<https://www.eslcafe.com/resources/lesson-plans/music>

<https://songactivityfactory.com/>

<https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2017/10/17/efl-music-tips/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWBofOMDOHQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fwrD70WeSzs>

# MUSIC VIDEO STORYBOARD

Artist: \_\_\_\_\_

Song: \_\_\_\_\_

Setting(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Mood: \_\_\_\_\_

B/W or Colour or other: \_\_\_\_\_

Characters:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Story (if any):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

--	--	--	--

Scene start: _____ Duration: _____ Description: _____ _____ _____	Scene start: _____ Duration: _____ Description: _____ _____ _____	Scene start: _____ Duration: _____ Description: _____ _____ _____	Scene start: _____ Duration: _____ Description: _____ _____ _____
--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

Scene start: _____ Duration: _____ Description: _____ _____ _____	Scene start: _____ Duration: _____ Description: _____ _____ _____	Scene start: _____ Duration: _____ Description: _____ _____ _____	Scene start: _____ Duration: _____ Description: _____ _____ _____
--	--	--	--



**SONG TITLE:**

---

**ARTIST:**

---

**MUSICAL GENRE:**

---

**WHERE OR WHEN I HEARD THIS SONG FIRST:**

---

---

**WHAT I LIKE ABOUT IT:**

---

---

**HOW IT MAKES ME FEEL:**

---

---

---