

The '4b Video Story Board Working Copy' example, and the '4c Final P.M. Video Story Board' may be useful if students wish to create a music video instead or as well. See 'Movie Maker Video Project' tab on website.

WRITING A CURRICULUM RELATED SONG

(Original activity sheet generated January 6, 2014 by Art Koop. See www.arturostreasure.com)

Do you have a student who has the ability and desire to **write music**, who you would like to offer the opportunity to apply those qualities to an assignment in your subject, but you don't know where to begin? Perhaps you have those qualities yourself, and would like to integrate them with your teaching in a non-music subject? Here's a **proposed process** which has worked for me. It can be used as a class activity if you are able to lead it, or as an alternative project for a particular student or group of students willing to rise to the challenge.

STEP 1; Identify a **list of unit-specific terms** that ought to be included in the song. A student or group should not have to use all of the terms, but choose a number which could realistically be integrated into a song of reasonable length. Most of the terms should be used in the song in a way that relates directly and appropriately to the subject matter, but altering the terms or employing artistic license for one or two of them should be allowed, as long as the student or group identifies the alteration in a post-project document (*).

Example: For the **song 'Prime Minister'** (<http://www.arturostreasure.com/> , http://arturostreasure.com/music/lyrics/Prime_Minister.pdf) , the terms relevant to the Canadian political system that were included were;

'center' (oblique reference to the political spectrum), government, political party, leadership convention, election, Prime Minister, Cabinet, Senator, money bill, Parliament, federal (level of government), House of Commons, democracy – 13 terms in all. Now, I wrote the song as an adult teacher, after students identified the terms, so the average high school student might only be required to choose perhaps at least 10 terms out of a list of 15 or so. Also, the term 'coup' was used in hyperbole, and the terms federal, government, and House of Commons were all altered in usage and/or form.

STEP 2; Choose a perspective. For the listed example, an actual Prime Minister was not chosen as a reference point (although a ballad style which directly tells the story of a particular Prime Minister would also be acceptable). Instead, the idea of the Prime Minister's role being assigned to a person who served as a subject of fascination/obsession by the narrative persona offers a kind of context for the content. A song which merely chants out terms and definitions is okay, but if a student wants to be able to sing the song outside the class context, a more artistic treatment may be preferable. The more freedom that can be extended to the composer/lyricist, the better – although of course within a framework of respect for the subject and those within the class and community.

(Another example is 'Here Now – Canadian Identity Song' – also available on <http://www.arturostreasure.com/>)

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STEP 3; Set and understand the expectations for the project. A proposed assessment rubric is provided. This will help guide students to understand how much time they should take on the project, and what they need to accomplish.

STEP 4; Write the song. This may take time... a student who wishes to take on this challenge may want to propose a realistic framework for completing the assignment. 'Real' musicians also face deadlines and time pressures, especially if they hope to experience some level of financial success. Students should also not worry about 'wasting' good music on a subject-related song; if they hope to be musicians, they will need to be able to generate many artistic ideas, and should develop confidence that they can succeed beyond creating one or two good songs if 'it' is in them.

STEP 5; Submit the song, lyrics and music and post-project explanation sheet, or present the music to the class. Identify the subject-related terms by marking them in some way, either by highlighting or circling or underlining. The assessment rubric chosen should also be attached.

POST-PROJECT EXPLANATION SHEET

The following terms were used directly and appropriately in my curriculum related song.

Term 1: _____ Meaning: _____

How the term's meaning was shown in the song (quote portion of lyrics and explain)

Term 2: _____ Meaning: _____

How the term's meaning was shown in the song (quote portion of lyrics and explain)

Term 3: _____ Meaning: _____

How the term's meaning was shown in the song (quote portion of lyrics and explain)

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Term 4: _____ Meaning: _____

How the term's meaning was shown in the song (quote portion of lyrics and explain)

Term 5: _____ Meaning: _____

How the term's meaning was shown in the song (quote portion of lyrics and explain)

Term 6: _____ Meaning: _____

How the term's meaning was shown in the song (quote portion of lyrics and explain)

Term 7: _____ Meaning: _____

How the term's meaning was shown in the song (quote portion of lyrics and explain)

Term 8: _____ Meaning: _____

How the term's meaning was shown in the song (quote portion of lyrics and explain)

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Term 9: _____ Meaning: _____

How the term's meaning was shown in the song (quote portion of lyrics and explain)

Term 10: _____ Meaning: _____

How the term's meaning was shown in the song (quote portion of lyrics and explain)

The following terms were used by oblique reference, or as hyperbole, or as puns, or in some other way employing artistic license;

Altered Term 1: _____ Use: _____

Explanation: _____

Altered Term 2: _____ Use: _____

Explanation: _____

Altered Term 3: _____ Use: _____

Explanation: _____

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