Worksheet

Try a Song

Name: ___________________________     Date: ___________________________

1. Answer the following questions in as much detail as you can: What makes a song? What are its parts? What do all songs have in common?

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Pre-Assessment

2. Try to write your own song in the next five to ten minutes. Don’t worry about whether you do it right or wrong. There are no wrong answers. This should be your own song, not a song you know or have heard before.

Song Title: ___________________________     

Verse 1
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Chorus
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Verse 2
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

What Is Songwriting?
Worksheet

Songwriter Quotes

Name: ________________________________________________    Date: _________________________________

Read the following quotes from professional songwriters. After each quote, write what it teaches you about songwriting. Next, write one to three sentences in your journal about what you learned from reading the quotes.

1. “First of all, you have to trust yourself … The other thing that you have to do … Be sure to welcome failure. Always say, ‘You’re OK with me, failure.’ Because then you have no fear.” —Neil Young

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2. “You learn from experiences, and I suppose that’s where I color most of my music, from experiences. [But] part of it is reaching into oblivion for things that don’t exist.” —Pharrell Williams

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3. “I would recommend that they [songwriters] follow through if they have an idea. Don’t quit halfway through like a baby. Go through the whole shebang and carry it through instead of quitting halfway.”
—Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys

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4. “The rule is: Write bad songs, but write ’em. If you start writing bad songs, you start writing better songs, and then you start getting really good.” —John Mayer

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

5. “Some people don’t realize that [a song] needs to be edited. They think it’s good the way it is … Some people think they’re done with a song when I think they should go back and revise it. Even sometimes I’ll think a song’s done, but I have friends I work with who will tell me to revise.” —John Legend

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6. “A good portion of being available to be a writer is that emotionally you keep yourself open as a human being, you keep yourself healthy, you get enough rest, you get enough good food. Because without that you won’t have enough energy, and writing takes an enormous amount of energy.” —Janis Ian

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

7. “I think anyone could do it [songwriting]. I think a lot of people try to write songs that are a little out of reach. And they should just sit down and write what they know. And what they see.” —Loretta Lynn

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What Is Songwriting?