OBJECTIVES
Students will demonstrate an understanding of new vocabulary and concepts related to parts of a song.

Students will listen to songs and identify their elements.

VOCABULARY
bridge, chorus, hook, outline, theme, title, verse

PREPARATION
• Make copies of the “Don’t Laugh at Me” Student Lyric Sheet, Song Outline Worksheet, and Song Structure Practice Worksheet.
• Locate audio or video version of “Don’t Laugh at Me” performed by Mark Wills.

Note: You may wish to ask your librarian to locate a copy of the Don’t Laugh at Me book meant to accompany the song.

STANDARDS
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1
Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2
Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5
Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5
Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

FREE WRITE (5 minutes)
Every day, students will spend five minutes free writing. During this time they do not need to worry about conventions like spelling or punctuation. Encourage students to:
• Write about anything that is on their minds.
• Focus on writing for the entire five minutes.
• Keep their pen or pencil moving the whole time.

TEACHER TIP
Students may feel overwhelmed when they first start free writing. They may feel like they do not know what to write. The following ideas may help:
• Do the free write with the students and read yours aloud as an example of the different shapes a free write might take.
• Remind students that as long as they are writing something they are doing well.
• Remind students that the most important thing about free writing is simply getting words onto the page.

DISCUSS HOMEWORK (5 minutes)
Ask students to share their responses to the songwriter quotes. Point out common themes as students share what they learned about what it takes to be a songwriter.

BRAINSTORM (5 minutes)
Prompt: In your journal, write everything you know about the parts of a song in one minute.

Afterward, divide the class into small groups and ask each group to compile a master list.

Ask groups to share their findings with the class. Make note of which parts the students mention so you can prepare for the next activity.
ACTIVITY (30 minutes)

1. Review or introduce the parts of a song, but do so briefly. They will be discussed in more detail in the second part of the activity.
   - The **title** is the name of the song.
   - The **theme** is the main subject of the song.
   - The **hook** is the part of the song that catches, or “hooks,” a listener’s attention and makes the song easy to remember. The title and hook are often the same, and the hook is usually repeated throughout the song. The title, theme, and hook should work together to let listeners know what the song is about.
   - The **verse** uses details to support the title, theme, and hook. Songs typically include multiple verses, which usually incorporate important information about the song’s subject, such as who, what, where, when, why, and how.
   - The **chorus** conveys the main subject of the song. The chorus is usually simpler than the verses, and it often contains the title. In ancient Greek plays, a group of singers, called a “chorus,” appeared between every act to summarize what had just occurred on stage. In much the same way, the chorus of a song summarizes the main subject while the verses provide the supporting details.
   - The **bridge** introduces a twist that gives an unexpected perspective on the theme. It usually occurs toward the song’s end, and it has a totally different melody from the verses and chorus. Not all songs have a bridge.

2. Distribute “Don’t Laugh at Me” Student Lyric Sheet. Listen to the song as a class and ask students to identify the song parts by filling in the blanks on the lyric sheet. Then listen to the song again, pausing as directed on the **Teacher’s Lyric Sheet** to discuss song structure and parts as a class.

3. Explain that a song **outline** is a rough sketch of what the lyrics will communicate. Outlining a song is a useful way to help writers organize their thoughts. Distribute the **Song Outline Worksheet** and review these directions:

   Circle one of the subjects that you would like to use to practice what you have learned about song structure. This does not have to be the topic of your final song. This is just practice. The title can be one word, or it can be a phrase that has to do with the subject you picked. The chorus should be about the main subject of your song. For the verses, think about what details you can use to support the idea in your chorus. Fill in your outline on the next page.

This is an example of a student outline:

   Title: I Love My Mom
   Verse 1 topic: Things I like about my mom
   Chorus main subject: How much I love my mom
   Verse 2 topic: Things my mom does for me
   Chorus main subject (repeated): How much I love my mom
   Verse 3 topic: Things I like doing with my mom

HOMEWORK

Distribute the **Song Structure Practice Worksheet** so students can apply what they have learned about structure to a song of their choice. Review the worksheet directions:

First, print out or write down the lyrics to one of your favorite songs. This song should be appropriate for school use. Second, label the following parts of a song on the lyrics you choose: title, verse, chorus, bridge, hook. Finally, write a sentence that identifies the theme of the song.
I’m a little boy with glasses
The one they call the geek
A little girl who never smiles
’Cause I’ve got braces on my teeth
And I know how it feels
To cry myself to sleep.

I’m that kid on every playground
Who’s always chosen last
A single teenage mother
Tryin’ to overcome my past
You don’t have to be my friend
Is it too much to ask?

I don’t laugh at me, don’t call me names
Don’t get your pleasure from my pain
In God’s eyes we’re all the same
Someday we’ll all have perfect wings
Don’t laugh at me.

I lost my wife and little boy
Someone crossed that yellow line
The day we laid ’em in the ground
Is the day I lost my mind
Right now I’m down to holdin’
This little cardboard sign.

[Chorus:]
I’m fat, I’m thin, I’m short, I’m tall
I’m deaf, I’m blind, hey aren’t we all?

[Chorus:]