

# 14

## LYRIC WRITING

### WHAT THIS EPISODE IS ABOUT

In this episode, students will learn a step-by-step process for writing song lyrics. By the end of the lesson, students will be able to

- ✎ define the terms *lyric*, *theme*, *verse*, and *chorus*
- ✎ apply the writing process to lyric writing
- ✎ write song lyrics that include a theme, hook line, verses, and chorus

### VIDEO SUMMARY

Jeff Chase, a professional songwriter, visits the writing club. Jeff describes the parts of a song and illustrates the elements with a performance of "This Land Is Your Land."

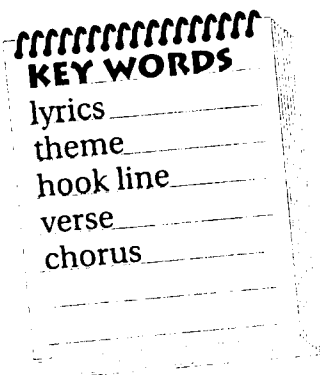
Brad is excited about the lyric-writing competition at the writing club, but he has trouble getting started. He listens to some songs recorded for the club by previous members.

Then Brad, Kyle, and Robin visit the Country Music Hall of Fame, where they learn about famous songwriters and see scraps of paper (napkins, matchbooks, postcards, etc.) with the original versions of song lyrics that were later made into hit records.

The three also tour a recording studio, where they meet Fred Bogert, a recording engineer.

Brad writes a rough draft of his song. After other club members read and respond to it, he makes revisions.

Sarah and Robin win the competition with their song about Sarah's grandmother, but, with the help of Fred Bogert, Brad still gets to record his song.



## BEFORE VIEWING THE VIDEO

Ask students to name some of their favorite songs. Ask, "What are the lyrics to those songs about?"

Ask students to define the terms *theme*, *verse*, and *chorus*. Then ask, "How does the songwriter decide the lyrics for a song? Are the lyrics as important as the music?"

Discuss how lyric writing is different from and similar to other kinds of writing.

## WHILE VIEWING THE VIDEO

1. After Brad says, "The trouble was, I just couldn't get started," PAUSE the video. Ask students to brainstorm a list of ideas for their songs.
2. After the scene in which Robin asks to accompany Brad to the Country Music Hall of Fame, PAUSE the video. Ask students to identify the theme of the song they are going to write. Once the theme is chosen, students should work on the hook lines for their songs.
3. After the restaurant scene in which Brad writes his lyrics, PAUSE the video. Ask students to write rough drafts of their songs. When the rough drafts are finished, have students share their songs with one another. Encourage them to offer constructive comments for revisions.

## AFTER VIEWING THE VIDEO

After all revisions to the lyrics have been made, the students may share their songs with the class. You may wish to invite a local songwriter or music teacher to set some of the lyrics to music.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Have the class brainstorm ideas for a song. Encourage students to collaborate in writing a song and to perform it at a student assembly.

## INTERNET RESOURCES

**Nashville Songwriters on Songwriting**  
<http://www.sesac.com/nashvill.htm>

**Lyrical Line**  
<http://www.lyricalline.com>

**The Muse's Muse**

*<http://www.musesmuse.com/infohome.html>*

**ASCAP**

*<http://www.ascap.com/ascap.html>*



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*The Book of Knowledge* Encyclopedia, Vol. T  
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*The Random House Book of Poetry for Children*  
edited by Jack Prelutsky, illustrated by Arnold Lobel  
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