

Connecting Pop Lyrics to Literary Terms Guides Students to an Appreciation Of the Meaning of Figurative Language.

A LitTunes Lesson Plan Created by **Heather Baxter-Ewing**
www.littunes.com

Type of Activity:

Classroom Listening and Participation Activity
Individual Homework Activity

Approximate time:

Classroom Activity:

1 or 2 class periods depending on discussion

Homework Activity:

45 minutes (maximum)

Objective:

Students will learn the meaning of literary terms and discover how they're used in writing and lyrics. The class will participate by listening to musical selections and discussing how the lyrics connect to literary terms. Students will then find their own songs and identify the literary terms in the lyrics.

Materials:

Teacher:

musical selections and worksheets

Students:

worksheets, pencil, and computer access for homework

N O T E : This lesson plan asks the teacher to gather nine pop tunes to play in class. The nine tunes are referenced in the **Musical Literary Terms** worksheet, which is available for download through a link at the bottom of this page. One suggestion for gathering the tunes: Ask your students a day or two in advance of the lesson! Their resources in the arena of pop music are almost limitless.

Procedure:

1. Discuss how music lyrics are like literature.
2. Make connections in the discussion between poetry and music.
3. Talk about how figurative language livens writing and lyrics.
4. Hand out the **Musical Literary Terms** worksheet, which includes a word bank and a list of the nine songs.

5. Play the songs. Stop after each song and discuss its meaning. Prompt the students to tell you what they think the song is about.
6. Ask the students what literary term is being used in the song — either the entire song or a certain line that exhibits the literary term.
7. After you've played all of the songs and gone over the literary terms in each, give each student the **Homework** sheet. This sheet prompts students to find their own song and explain the literary term used and the song's meaning.

Summary:

This exercise is designed to get students to think about the music they listen to, examine the lyrics, and realize that literature is interesting — just like the music they hear. I was led to create this lesson through my passion for music, literature, and writing. I wanted my students to see the connection.

This lesson resonates with students because music holds such an important place in their lives. All the students who've participated in this lesson were able to make a connection in some way. I've seen students select everything from gospel music to childhood lullabies.

*Heather Baxter-Ewing
1 / 07 / 09*

EDITOR'S NOTE :

Heather Baxter-Ewing is a teacher of middle school English and creative writing with nine years of classroom experience. She earned her B.A. in Psychology from the University of Central Florida and her M.A. in English Education from the University of South Florida. She currently teaches at Admiral Farragut Academy in St. Petersburg, Florida. To contact Heather, please e-mail her at hewing@farragut.org

*LitTunes was launched on November 12, 2007.
We invite you to come back often as LitTunes
grows and develops. We also invite you to participate.
Contact Dr. Christian Z. Goering by E-mail at
chrisgoering@gmail.com*