

SOW Creative Singing Contest (SOW)

Briefing Session 18 March 2022

English Language Education Section & Arts Education Section

Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau



Aims of SOW Creative Singing Contest

The contest aims to:

- encourage students' creative expression through engaging them in **English lyrics writing** and **singing performance**;
- enrich students' English and music learning experiences;
- promote **Language across the Curriculum** and **cross-curricular collaboration** in schools; and
- nurture **positive values and attitudes** in students.

Entry Requirements

- **Secondary** students
- Individual or group basis (up to 5 members in each group including the lyricist(s) and singers)
- Each student, with a clear specified role, is allowed to participate in **ONE** entry only.
- A maximum of **TWO** entries per school
 - If a school submits two entries, each entry should be based on **a different melody**.
- All entries should be submitted through the schools of the students.

Performance of the Song

- Solo or in group of no more than 5 students
- Use the MMO(s) provided for the singing performance
- Choreography and movement would not be assessed though they might enhance the overall performance.
- The singing performance should be video-recorded for submission. Given the pandemic situation, **virtual choir performance** is encouraged for group entries.

Requirements for Lyrics

- Convey a **positive message** and promote **positive values and attitudes**

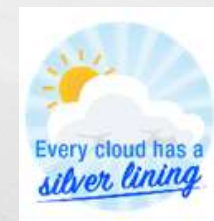
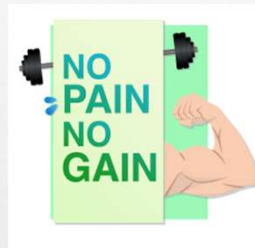
e.g.

A positive message	Positive values and attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be proactive• Be grateful• Treasure what we have• Stay positive and optimistic• ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perseverance• Respect and care for other• Diligence• Empathy• ...

- Include a quotable line that can highlight the key message of the song and serve as a **saying of wisdom**



e.g.



- Awareness of **song structure** (e.g. verse and chorus) may help students decide where best to feature the quote in the song.

Tips on Writing English Lyrics

5 Steps of Writing Lyrics

1. Listen to the music



2. Write down the ideas



3. Come up with a title



4. Start writing the lyrics



5. Edit, polish and enrich
the lyrics

2. Write down the Ideas

- Think about a **theme** you want to write about (e.g. friendship, hope, diligence, perseverance)
- **Brainstorm** words, phrases and sentences about the theme chosen, develop them into 1-2 short paragraphs
- **Break** the sentences into meaningful chunks
- **Rearrange** them to form new combinations

3. Come up with a Title

A good title:

- is **short** (e.g. 1-5 words), **catchy** and **memorable**
- **highlights** the **theme** of the song and **encapsulates** its **key message** in just a few words
- **stimulates** the **imagination** of listeners and **arouses** their **curiosity**
- can be formed by:
 - ✓ **action** words e.g. “**Help!**” by the Beatles, “**Imagine**” by John Lennon
 - ✓ **noun(s)/noun phrase(s)** e.g. “**Uptown Girl**” by Westlife, “**Someone Like You**” by Adele
 - ✓ a **question** e.g. “**How Deep is Your Love?**” by the Bee Gees
 - ✓ words describing an **image** e.g. “**Set Fire to the Rain**” by Adele
 - ✓ words describing a **situation** e.g. “**Locked out of Heaven**” by Bruno Mars
 - ✓ the most often repeated phrase or line

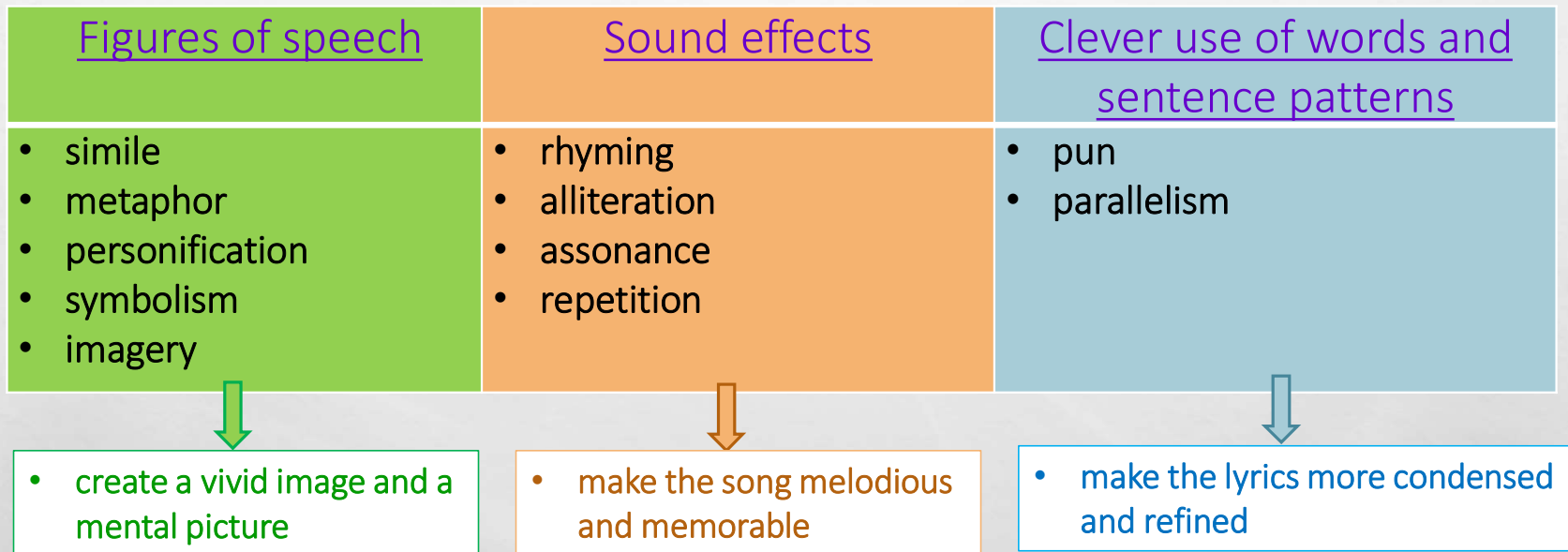
4. Start Writing the Lyrics

- Hum the melodies or write while playing with the instruments
- Understand the song structure to know:
 - where to put the **verse**, **chorus**, etc.
 - when to **change** and **repeat**
- The lyrics can begin with:
 - a **story** to share (e.g. “The Sound of Silence”)
 - a **lesson** to teach (e.g. “I Hope You Dance”, “The Bare Necessities”)
 - a **scene** to picture (e.g. “Vincent”)

5. Edit, Polish and Enrich the Lyrics



- Show creativity in the language use
- Make effective use of any of the following literary devices to enhance the song:



Simile

- Compare two things which have something in common, using the words “like” or “as”

Roar

Now I'm floating like a butterfly
Stinging like a bee I earned my stripes



comparing oneself to two insects and what they are capable of doing to convey that the speaker deserves respect and recognition

You hear my voice, you hear that sound
Like thunder gonna shake the ground



comparing one's voice to thunder to show power and self-confidence

Metaphor

Figures of speech

- Make a statement that says one thing is another, **without** using the words “like” or “as”

I Hope You Dance

And when you get the choice to *sit it out or dance*

(*Time is a wheel in constant motion always rolling us along*
Tell me who wants to look back on their years
And wonder where those years have gone)

using an extended metaphor to highlight the key message of the song:

- *sitting out = missing out*
- *dancing = taking chances*
- *a constant rolling wheel = time is irreversible*

Count on Me

If you ever find yourself lost in the dark and you can't see
I'll be *the light to guide you*

using a comparison to show a good friend brightens up your life and guides you when you are lost

Personification

- Give some **human characteristics** to something that is not human, such as animals, objects and non-living things

The Bare Necessities (from The Jungle Book)

I mean the bare necessities
Old Mother Nature's recipes
That brings the bare necessities of life



animating nature to show how it provides us with all we need and nurtures lives

Symbolism

Figures of speech

- Represent an idea through **symbols**

e.g. the red colour symbolises danger; evergreen trees symbolise immortality

I Hope You Dance

I hope you never fear those **mountains** in the distance
Never settle for the path of least resistance

suggesting “obstacles in life” and creating a concrete image

Imagery

- Use descriptive language that draws on the **five human senses**, i.e. sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch

The Bare Necessities (from The Jungle Book)

The bees are buzzing in the tree
To make some honey just for me
When you look under the rocks and plants
And take a glance at the fancy ants
Then maybe try a few

- Sight – bees, the tree, rocks, plants, ants
- Sound – buzz of bees
- Smell – sweet scent of honey
- Taste – honey



- Creating a clear picture of the abundance of natural resources
- Bringing out the message that nature will provide us with all we need and there is no need to worry about not having enough

Rhyming

- Use words that end with the same sound

I Hope You Dance

I hope you never fear those mountains in the *distance* (A)
Never settle for the path of least *resistance* (A)
Living might mean taking chances, but they're worth *taking* (B)
Loving might be a mistake, but it's worth *making* (B)

Roar

I went from *zero*
To my own *hero*

You hear my voice, you hear that *sound*
Like thunder gonna shake the *ground*



make the song more
catchy, musical and
memorable

Sound effects

Note:

☒ Perfect rhymes
in neat rhyming
patterns/schemes
are not a must.

Alliteration

Sound effects

- Use words which start with the same consonant sound

Count on Me

If you're **tossing** and you're **turning** and you just can't fall asleep
I'll **sing** a **song** beside you

The Bare Necessities (from The Jungle Book)

Wherever I **wander**, **wherever** I roam
I couldn't be fonder of my big home
The **bees** are **buzzing** in the tree
To make some honey just for me



making the song more
melodic and
memorable

Assonance

Sound effects

- Repeat vowel sounds in words that are close together

Count on Me

You can count on **me** like one, two, **three**
I'll be there
And I know when I need it, I can count on **you** like four, three, **two**
And you'll be there



(internal rhyme)
making the song more
harmonic and catchy

Repetition

- Repeat some words or lines throughout the song

I Hope You Dance

And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance
I hope you dance... I hope you dance
I hope you dance... I hope you dance

Count on Me

You can count on me 'cause I can count on you



- making the song more catchy and memorable
- emphasising the key message

Pun

Clever use of words
and sentence patterns

- Use a word that has more than one meaning or words that have different meanings but sound the same

The Bare Necessities (from The Jungle Book)

I mean the *bare* necessities
That's why a *bear* can rest at ease
With just the bare necessities of life



- impressing the listener with the clever and humorous use of words
- creating double meanings to provoke listeners' thoughts

Parallelism

Clever use of words
and sentence patterns

- Repeat phrases, clauses or sentences that are similar in structure and meaning

I Hope You Dance

*Living might mean taking chances, but they're worth taking
Loving might be a mistake, but it's worth making*



- creating a neat and refined pattern
- projecting an air of wisdom

Important Remarks

- Teaching the literary terms is not a must. Instead of teaching the terms, teachers can recategorise the literary devices using general terms, e.g.
 - Making effective comparisons
 - Making use of repetition (in sounds and structures)
 - Making use of word play and vivid description
- There is no need to include all literary devices in the lyrics. Overuse of these devices may render the lyrics unnatural.

Song Structure

Song Structure – Melody 1



Intro – **A1 (Verse)** – **B1 (Pre-chorus)** – **C1 (Chorus)** – **Music Break (MB)** –
B2 (Pre-chorus) – **C2 (Chorus)** –
C3 (Chorus with extension) – **Outro**

Intro (Bars 1-4) –
A1 (Verse) (Bars 5-8) –
B1 (Pre-chorus) (Bars 9-17) –
C1 (Chorus) (Bars 18-26) –
Music Break (MB) (Bars 27-29) –
B2 (Pre-chorus) (Bars 9-17) –
C2 (Chorus) (Bars 18-30 [to 2nd ending]) –
C3 (Chorus with extension) (Bars 31-40) –
Outro (Bars 41-44)

Song Structure – Melody 2



Intro – **A1 (Verse)** – **B1 (Chorus)** – **Music Break (MB)** –
A2 (Verse) – **B2 (Chorus)** – **C (Bridge)** –
B3 (Chorus) – **Coda** – **Outro**

Intro (Bars 1-4) –
A1 (Verse) (Bars 5-16) –
B1 (Chorus) (Bars 17-25) –
Music Break (MB) (Bars 26-28) –
A2 (Verse) (Bars 5-16) –
B2 (Chorus) (Bars 17-29 [to 2nd ending]) –
C (Bridge) (Bars 30-33) –
B3 (Chorus) (Bars 34-42) –
Coda (Bars 43-45) –
Outro (Bars 46-48)

Song Structure – Melody 3



Intro – **A1 (Verse)** – **B1 (Chorus)** – **Music Break (MB)** –
A2 (Verse) – **B2 (Chorus with extension)** – **Rap** –
Pre-chorus – **B3 (Chorus)** – **Coda**

Intro (Bars 1-4) –
A1 (Verse) (Bars 5-12) –
B1 (Chorus) (Bars 13-15) –
Music Break (MB) (Bars 16-19) –
A2 (Verse) (Bars 5-12) –
B2 (Chorus with extension) (Bars 20-26) –
Rap (Bars 27-30) –
Pre-chorus (Bars 31-34) –
B3 (Chorus) (Bars 35-40) –
Coda (Bars 41-44)

Awards and Prizes

- Outstanding Award*: HK\$2,000 book vouchers per entry
- Commendable Award: HK\$1,000 book vouchers per entry
- The Audience Award*: HK\$2,000 book vouchers per entry
- A certificate and a music product for all winning students

*The awardees may be invited to a recording session or a public performance, if the situation allows. The performance clips will be broadcast on the Education Bureau YouTube channel.

Adjudication

- All entries will be assessed based on the following criteria:
 - ✓ **content** and **message** of the song
 - ✓ **language use** in the lyrics
 - ✓ **musicality** of the performance including expression, interpretation and ensembleship (applicable for group entry only)
 - ✓ **performance techniques**
 - ✓ **creativity** and **originality** of the performance

Musicality and Performance Techniques

- Musicality and performance techniques are different in its substance.
- **Musicality** means the **interpretation and emotions** displayed and conveyed in a music performance.
- **Performance techniques** are **the skills required to make music**.
- In reality, a music performance **can be very emotional but lack technical accuracy** or **technically “perfect” but without much emotion**.

Musicality and Performance Techniques

- Generally speaking, performance techniques are objective and measurable, e.g. accuracy of rhythm and pitches while musicality is more subjective and related to the emotional aspect.
- If a music performance places too much focus on the performance techniques, it will be like a robot. If musicality is exaggerated or unnatural, it will be too vulgar. Hence, striking a balance between musicality and techniques is of the utmost importance, and it is an ART.

Submission of Entries

- Submit the entry/entries **by hand** to the EDB
 - The original copy of the completed Entry Submission and Declaration Form
 - A CD-ROM or flash drive (with the name of the school) containing
 - song lyrics in WORD and PDF formats with **literary devices highlighted and labelled** and **the quotable line(s) underlined**
 - a video recording of the singing performance in mp4 format



Appendix 2c
Campaign on "Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom 2021/22" (SOW 2.0) – SOW Creative Singing Contest

Entry Submission and Declaration Form
(Original copy to be submitted by hand on or before **6 May 2022 (Friday 6 July 2022)**)

We declare that the English lyrics submitted are original work. We also understand that we are liable for any legal actions against us caused by any copyright infringement. Moreover, we authorize the Education Bureau the right to edit, modify, publish and use any entries, including the English lyrics and its performance in any forms for display and educational purpose, and has the final decision of the above actions. However, the student writer(s) still own(s) the copyright of the English lyrics.

Entry No. 1 - Song Title				
Student name in English (as in ID card)	Level	Role (e.g. lyricist, writer, lead singer, backing singer)		Signature
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Entry No. 2 - Song Title				
Student name in English (as in ID card)	Level	Role (e.g. lyricist, writer, lead singer, backing singer)		Signature
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Name of Teacher in English	Subject (e.g. Music)	Contact No.	Email Address	Signature

Name of School : _____
Name of School Head : _____
Signature of School Head : _____
Date : _____

School Chop

Submission deadline: 6 July 2022 (Wed) 5pm

Public polling for the Audience Award: July – August 2022

Announcement of results: By the end of August 2022

Intellectual Property

- All entries should be original and have not been publicised on any occasions.
- The content of the entries should not infringe any copyright and publication rights.
- For details, please visit https://www.ipd.gov.hk/eng/pub_press/publications/IP_e.pdf



For more information:

- Competition website:

https://www.edb.gov.hk/sow_singcon



- Updated Annex 2 to the EDBCM No. 39/2022



- About the SOW 2.0 Campaign:

✓ EDBCM No. 154/2021

✓ SOW website: www.edb.gov.hk/sow



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