

# INTRO TO SONGWRITING

WITH DAN

**WHAT IS A SONG???**

**You tell me :)**

Songs are ancient and  
ultimately for every song  
in the thousands of years  
people have been writing  
them:

**Songs tell stories.**

# SONGS CAN:

- > Speak to people on a very deep level
- > Bring people together (morale boost)
- > Help people feel closer to their country (National Anthem)
  - > Rally people against their country/governments
  - > Create communities
  - > Define an era in someone's life
- > Simply make people just want to boogie....or give themselves whiplash (moshing).

**Music and songs are a powerful tool to affect change**

# ABOUT ME

How I got started up to now.

# MY FIRST SONG (AGE 11)

## The fat cat blues

verse 1

I've got this cat he's really fat

I've got this cat he's really fat

" " " " he's a total prat.

So fat, so fat what can I do

Chorus: I've got the fat cat blues, The fat cat blues  
fat-cat-blues

verse 2  
I feel sorry he got ran over by a lorry

I feel sorry he got ran over by a lorry

So sorry, so sorry what can I do

So sorry, so sorry what can I do

Chorus x2

# HOW SONGS WORK

# SONGS HAVE A STRUCTURE

Simple Example:

**Intro | Verse 1 | Chorus | Verse 2 | Chorus | Verse 3 | Chorus x 2 | Outro**

Or:

**Intro | Verse | Bridge\* | Chorus | Verse | Bridge\* | Chorus |  
Instrumental | Chorus x 2 | Outro**

**\*You can think of a bridge like a break that we do, to connect another section**

Or

**Verse 1 | Verse 2 | Verse 3 | Verse 4**

**WHAT SONGS DO YOU LIKE?**

## WHAT INSTRUMENTS TO USE?

**ANY!**

You can use a guitar/piano/ukulele/bass...just your voice.

You can write a song using any instrument or no instrument.

**If you only know 3 chords, use those. Thousands of songs have been written with 3 chords.**

**DEVELOPING  
YOUR SONGWRITING  
SKILLS**

## GET YOUR RHYME ON

Develop your vocabulary. You don't have to be a good speller. Look up different words and 'synonyms', find different ways of saying things and different rhymes...songs need to rhyme. Songs don't necessarily have to rhyme all the time ...but rhyme is important.

As you get more experienced, you'll be able to write in a more complex way.

# BULDING A SONG

**Object:** The sun

**Feeling:** sad but I know I will feel happier in the future.

The sun is nice. The sun is bright. The sun is my favourite kind of light < simple

The glowing sun is nice on my skin. I close my eyes and think of him < a bit more complex

A shining orb of wonder (the sun)

Lights up my soul (makes me feel good)

Acting as a ladder to get me out of this hole. <even more complex

(reinforces the point and adding in more description to the story i.e. I feel sad but the sun makes me feel better)

# EXAMPLE

**You can always scale it back if you feel like it's too much...**

**Simple is sometimes better.**

I read from the songwriter Leonard Cohen, the key is in the detail...the more you describe a situation or an object the better someone can create an image in their mind.

**Or you can be cryptic about it. You can sing a song about someone and they'll never know mwahaha!**

**SOMETHING SILLY**

**Name a random object, something silly and I'll try  
and write something on the spot.**

**Feel free to shout out and help.**

## Words We Shouted Out:

A shark smiling  
St Anne's (Satan)  
Pencil sharpener  
Cabbage  
Beige  
Giraffes Neck

## The Beige Human/Sky Sharks Are Here

I sharpened the shark's teeth with a pencil sharpener  
So sharp it could shred cabbage  
I felt like a marine carpenter  
It came from St Anne's, well savage.

The shark was ready to bite  
A tall giraffes neck  
I turned a sickening colour of beige  
and I thought "Oh heck"

Sky sharks are here  
Sky sharks are here  
Sky sharks are here  
I have no fear  
Of the sky sharks that are here!

# SONGWRITING TASK

**LET'S HAVE A GO AT WRITING THIS WEEK**

## **1. Pick a mood.**

What are we all feeling at the moment? Even if we don't feel good, something more positive.

## **2. Let's pick some words.**

We'll settle on a few common words.

### 3. Chords to use (if you have a guitar or piano or ukulele)

G major, C major & D major (if you have an instrument.)

#### Options:

- > Have a go at writing some lyrics
- > Have a go at writing melody and lyrics
- > Have a go at writing a whole song

We'll get together on Thursday and share if we want to and talk about our experience writing.

If you get stuck we can help each other.

**No singing or performing required 😊**

# TOP SONGWRITING TIPS & THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. Listen to lots of songs that you like and read the lyrics
2. You can be as honest/open as you like or as cryptic
3. Tell a story
4. Explore different ways of describing the same thing. You can expand and be as simple or complex as you like
5. Develop and write different structures
6. Collaborate and with others. It's a great skill to develop. They might write the melodies and you might write the words
7. Be honest
8. Write bad songs! Just write...