

Lyrics and Literature: Using Popular Music to Teach Prescribed Poetry

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Introduction



**PROBLEM:
DISENGAGEMENT WITH
PRESCRIBED POETRY**

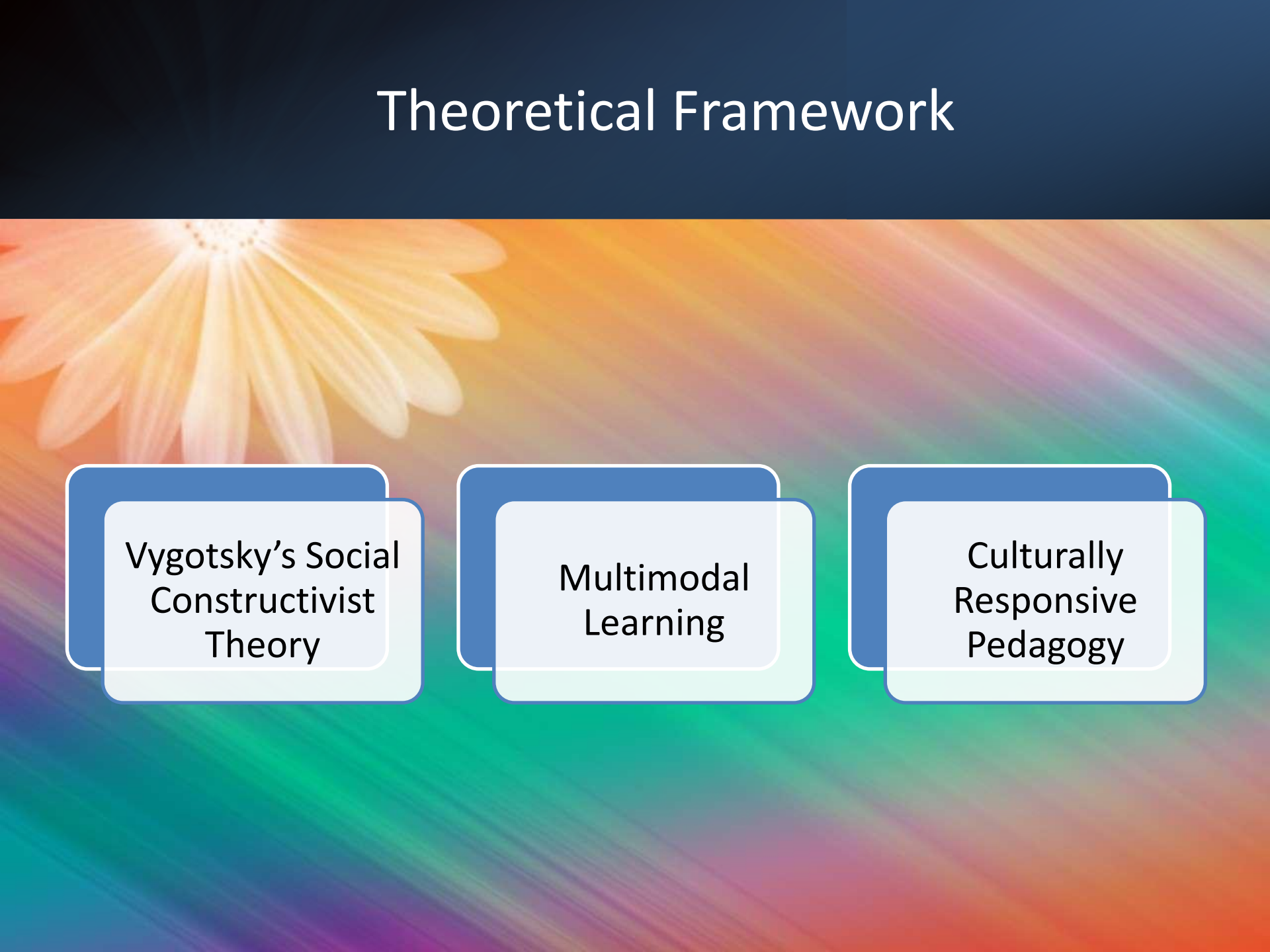


**RESEARCH GAP: LIMITED
CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE
STRATEGIES**



**CONTRIBUTION:
BRIDGING MUSIC AND
LITERATURE**

Theoretical Framework



Vygotsky's Social
Constructivist
Theory

Multimodal
Learning

Culturally
Responsive
Pedagogy

Rationale for Using Music



**REDUCES ANXIETY AND
RESISTANCE TO POETRY**



**IMPROVES
COMPREHENSION**



BUILDS CONFIDENCE



Method

- Identify a song similar in message and tone and is appropriate for classroom use.
- Provide lyrics to learners and play the song.
- Conduct a discussion on what the song is about.
- Read through the poem.
- Compare the poem and song.
- Analyse the poem using information from discussions.



A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

- Provide learners with the lyrics of the song, *Just the Way You Are* (Bruno Mars)
- Play the song as learners read the lyrics
- Play the song for the second time
- Facilitate a discussion on:
 - The message/themes of the song
 - The diction
 - The emotions experienced
 - Figures of speech

PRACTICAL EXAMPLE CONTINUED...



Read through the poem *Sonnet 18-Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day* (Shakespeare)



Facilitate a discussion on the similarities/differences between the song and poem



Analyse the poem using the information gained from discussions.



Present a post-reading activity to learners

Research Findings



**EVIDENCE OF IMPROVED
LEARNER MOTIVATION**



**RICHER CLASSROOM
DISCUSSIONS**



**DEVELOPMENT OF
CRITICAL LITERACY SKILLS**



LEARNER'S VOICE



I feel that music has improved my understanding of poetry in terms of tone and theme. I've noticed how a song and poem can convey the same message or have similar themes. The number of questions I got correct also improved.

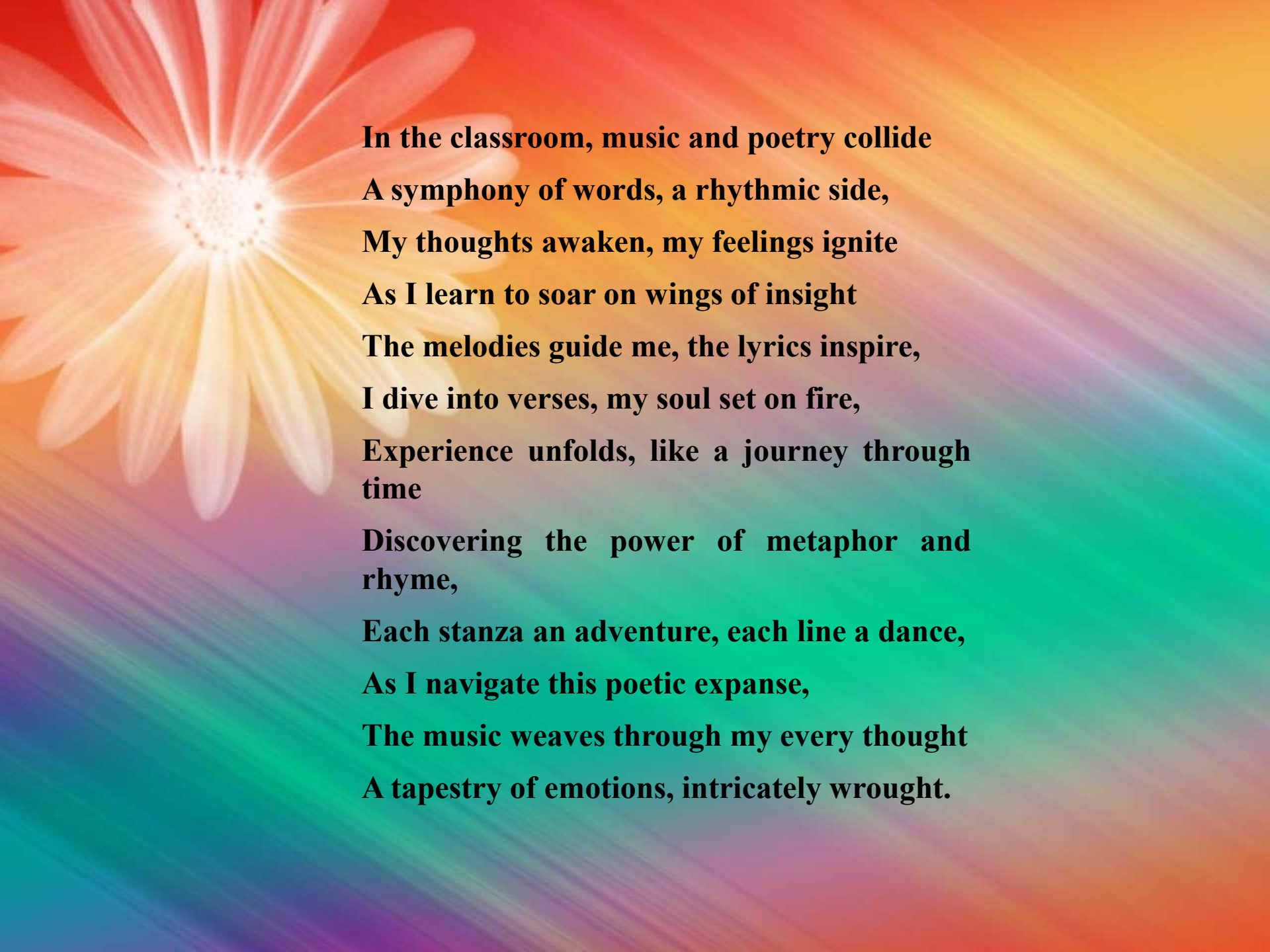




**Before poetry
was boring to
me but now, I
find it less
boring and I
end up
understanding
the message of
the poem
faster and
better.**

As someone who hated poetry, I started looking forward to literature lessons because I knew that we would be listening to a song. I was interested throughout the lesson and the use of music made it easier to understand the poems. There was something in the melody and rhythm of the music that gave me a sense of connection to the poems.



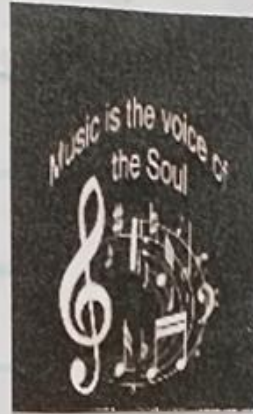


**In the classroom, music and poetry collide
A symphony of words, a rhythmic side,
My thoughts awaken, my feelings ignite
As I learn to soar on wings of insight
The melodies guide me, the lyrics inspire,
I dive into verses, my soul set on fire,
Experience unfolds, like a journey through
time
Discovering the power of metaphor and
rhyme,
Each stanza an adventure, each line a dance,
As I navigate this poetic expanse,
The music weaves through my every thought
A tapestry of emotions, intricately wrought.**

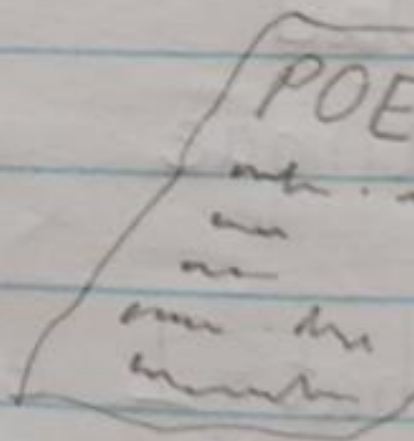
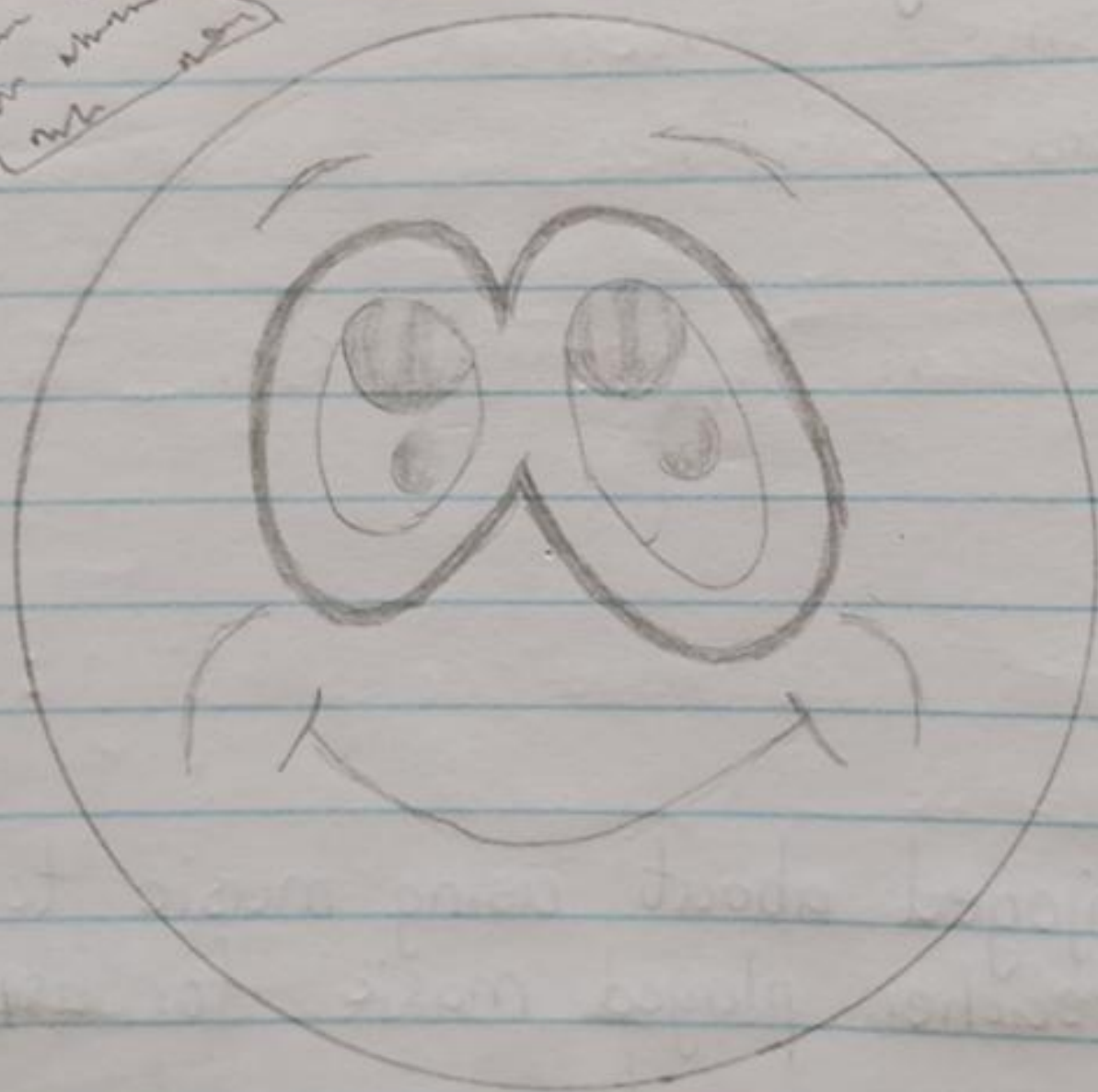
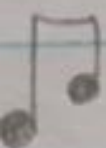
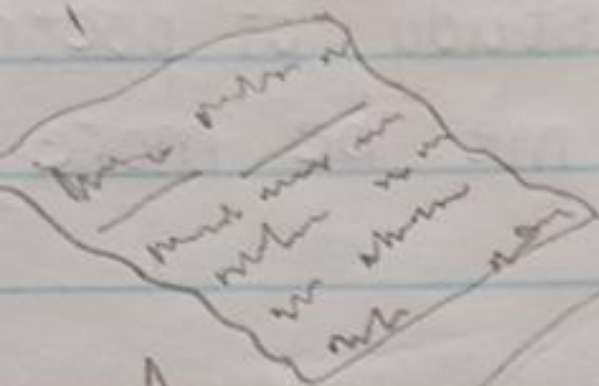
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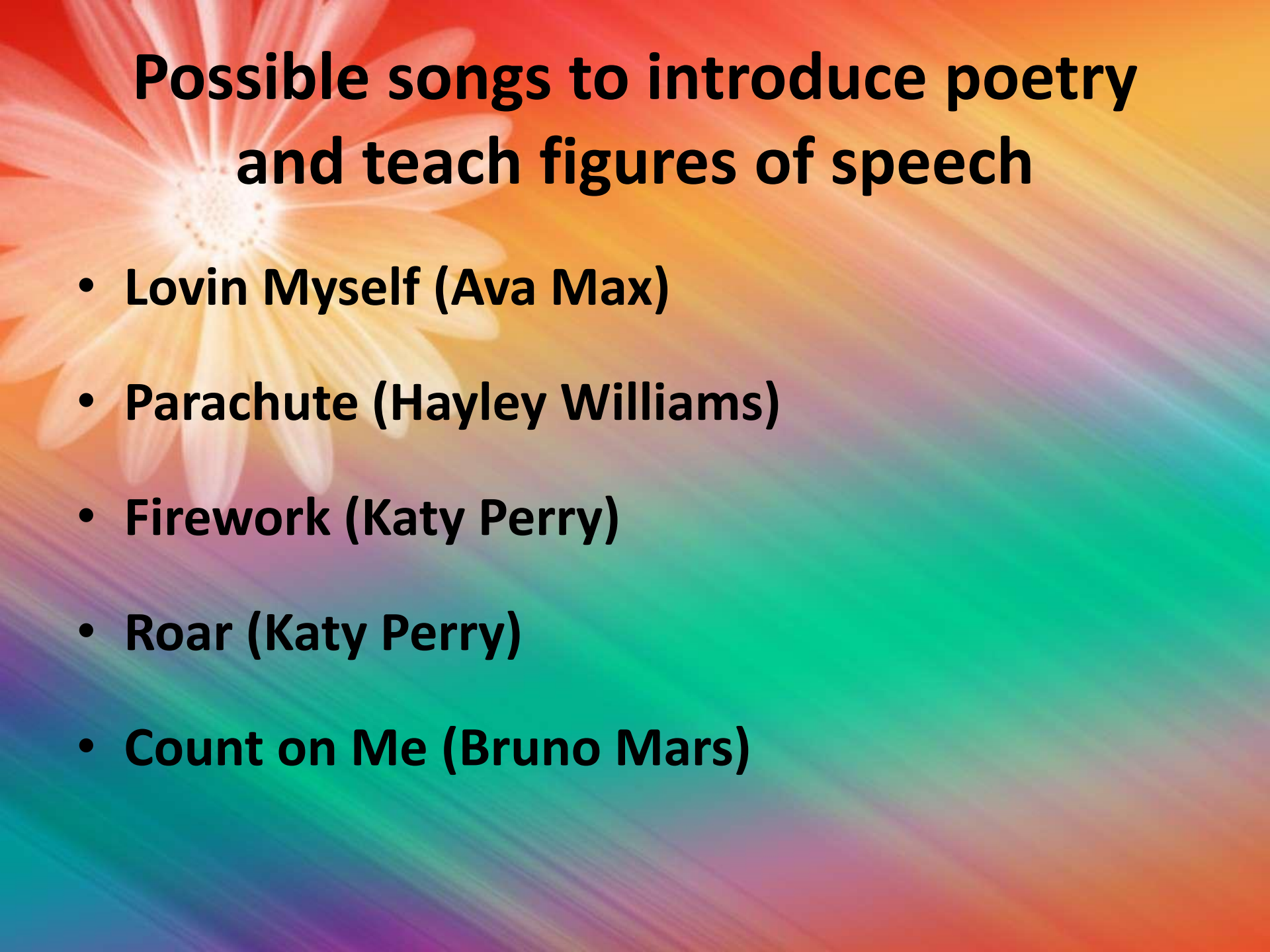
HAPPY

CALM









Possible songs to introduce poetry and teach figures of speech

- **Lovin Myself (Ava Max)**
- **Parachute (Hayley Williams)**
- **Firework (Katy Perry)**
- **Roar (Katy Perry)**
- **Count on Me (Bruno Mars)**

Possible songs to use in a Grade 10 English Home Language Poetry Classroom

POEM	SONG
SONNET 18	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE (BRUNO MARS)/ PERFECT (ED SHEERAN)/A THOUSAND YEARS (CHRISTINA PERRI)/ ALL OF ME (JOHN LEGEND)
A CAGED BIRD	I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS (ALICIA KEYS)/ FREEDOM (BEYONCE)/BORN THIS WAY (LADY GAGA)/ FIGHT SONG (RACHEL PLATTEN)
THE ROAD NOT TAKEN	BOULEVARD OF BROKEN DREAMS (GREEN DAY)/THE CLIMB (MILEY CYRUS)/ I LIVED (ONE REPUBLIC)/ FAST CAR (TRACY CHAPMAN)
A YOUNG MAN'S THOUGHTS...	GLORY (COMMON AND JOHN LEGEND)/ THEY DON'T CARE ABOUT US (MICHAEL JACKSON)
TELEPHONE CONVERSATION	BLACK OR WHITE (MICHAEL JACKSON))
REAPERS IN A MIELIEFIELD	I CAN'T BREATHE (H.E.R)
HOPE IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS	SKYSCRAPER (DEMI LEVATO)/ STRONGER (KELLY CLARKSON)
HOW NOT TO STOP	I WON'T GIVE UP (JASON MRAZ)/FIX YOU (COLDPLAY)

Possible songs to use in a Grade 11 English Home Language Poetry Classroom

POEM	SONG
LONDON 1802	WHERE IS THE LOVE (BLACK EYED PEAS)/ WAITING ON THE WORLD TO CHANGE (JOHN MAYER)/MAN IN THE MIRROR (MICHAEL JACKSON)
EATING POETRY	RADIOACTIVE (IMAGINE DRAGONS)/ VIVA LA VIDA (COLDPLAY)
I REMEMBER DISTRICT 6	HOMELESS (PAUL SIMON & LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO)
THE WOMAN	STRONGER (KELLY CLARKSON)/TIL IT HAPPENS TO YOU (LADY GAGA)
HANGING FIRE	BREATHE ME (SIA)/ THE A TEAM (ED SHEERAN)
DA SAME DA SAME	BLACK OR WHITE (MICHAEL JACKSON)
ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH	PRAYING (KESHA)/GHOST TOWN (ADAM LAMBERT)/ YOUTH (DAUGHTER)
THE RIDE	FAST CAR (TRACY CHAPMAN)
THE SECOND COMING	RADIOACTIVE (IMAGINE DRAGONS)/ BLINDING LIGHTS (THE WEEKEND)
WE WEAR THE MASK	FAKE SMILE (ARIANA GRANDE)

Possible songs to use in a Grade 12 English Home Language Poetry Classroom

POEM	SONG
SONNET 130	PERFECT (PINK)/ JUST THE WAY YOU ARE (BRUNO MARS)/ BEAUTIFUL (BAZZI & CAMILA CABELLO)
THE CHILD WHO WAS SHOT DEAD..	PRAYING (KESHA)
AT A FUNERAL	RISE UP (ANDRA DAY)
POEM OF RETURN	HOME (PHILIP PHILIPS)
TALK TO THE PEACH TREE	BLOOM (PAPER KITES)
PRAYER TO MASKS	THIS IS ME (KEALA SETTLE)
THIS WINTER COMING	WINTER (TORI AMOS)/FIX YOU (COLDPLAY)
SOLITUDE	STAY (RIHANNA & MIKKY EKKO)
THE MORNING SUN IS SHINING	SUNFLOWER (POST MALONE & SWAE LEE)
IT IS A BEAUTEIOUS EVENING...	WATERMELON SUGAR (HARRY STYLES)/ ADORE YOU (HARRY STYLES)
FERN HILL	CASTLE ON A HILL (ED SHEERAN)
THE SHIPWRECK	BREATHE ME (SIA)

POSSIBLE CHALLENGES

POOR DISCIPLINE

A LACK OF RESOURCES

SURROUNDINGS

DIFFERENT MUSICAL PREFERENCES

Implications for Teaching

CAN EASILY BE
INTEGRATED
INTO CURRICULA

STUDENT-
CENTRED
LEARNING

DIFFERENTIATED
ENTRY POINTS

FOSTERS A LOVE
FOR LITERATURE

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graph TD; A[CAN EASILY BE INTEGRATED INTO CURRICULA] --- B[FOSTERS A LOVE FOR LITERATURE];
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Conclusion



**KEY MESSAGE: MUSIC +
LITERATURE = MEANINGFUL
CONNECTIONS**



**TEACHING POETRY AS LIVED
EXPERIENCE, NOT DISTANT
TEXT**



**CALL TO EDUCATORS:
EMBRACE CULTURAL
RELEVANCE**

**“Music can minister
to minds diseased,
pluck from the
memory a rooted
sorrow, raze out the
written troubles of
the brain, and with
its sweet oblivious
antidote, cleanse the
full bosom of all
perilous stuff that
weighs upon the
heart.”**

**Adapted from
Macbeth- William
Shakespeare**

Q&A



QUESTIONS / DISCUSSION