



zeum In-Depth Teacher Guide Music Video Production

In this field trip, your class will produce videos featuring original digital music and lyrics to uniquely and creatively relay their life and classroom experience. Combining aural, written, and visual elements, the workshop culminates in live performances captured on DVD. We provide the tools for students to become designers, creators, and inventors, but it requires creativity, communication, and collaboration throughout the entire process. Classes who come to the field trip prepared with **lyrics** and ideas about **music** and **choreography** produce the most successful and interesting videos. Because two-hours go by very quickly, your time at Zeum is best spent as directors, music producers and artists would spend their studio time: rehearsing and fine-tuning your performances. This guide is a concise introduction that prepares your class for a productive visit.

Checklist

- Introduce the field trip to the class
- Split students into groups (3-5 per group, 5 groups max)
- Brainstorm topics for lyrics
- Write lyrics
- Consider music that will accompany the words
- Collect/create any props or costumes you need
- Design your blocking and choreography

Let's Communicate!
Make the most of your visit by speaking with a Zeum Educator to customize your experience. Have special curricular or technological needs? Want to come back more than once? Let's talk.
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Learning Goals

All Zeum field trips are designed to accomplish the following goals:

- Develop 21st Century Literacies: Creativity, Communication, Collaboration.
- Support students' ability to integrate relevant content knowledge into a clear, concise, and engaging media project.
- Develop students' awareness and mastery of a concept-to-creation process of storytelling.
- Build students' repertoire of art, technology, and media skills.
- Practice reflecting on and speaking about their media through informal critiques.

Music Video Production also has additional goals, specific to the media, technology and outcomes developed during the field trip:

- Learn to communicate ideas through song/verse-chorus structure.
- Compose digital music that reflects the mood and theme of the lyrics.
- Produce a narrative or conceptual music video that supports the music and lyrics.

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Step 1. Introduce the Music Video Field Trip

In your upcoming visit to Zeum, you'll be recording digital music and designing choreography to accompany lyrics for your own music videos. You'll collaborate with your classmates to create two- to four-minute music videos, learning the basics of the production process from start to finish: writing your lyrics, composing music to play behind your words, choosing digital images for your backgrounds, picking costumes and/or props, creating choreography, performing a sound check, and then rehearsing and filming the final product.

A brief history of the music video. Music videos and their musical "short film" predecessors can trace their beginnings to as early as the 20s and 30s. Early incarnations of these "visual music" films include animated movies built around music (particularly Walt Disney and Warner Brothers cartoons), sing-along movies (a precursor to karaoke), and one-song "promotional clips." These "promotional clips," an ancestor of the modern day music video, were very popular among Jazz musicians of the era.

The 1980s saw three important innovations in the development of the music video: (1) an increase in affordable, easy-to-use video recording equipment, (2) the advent of green screen technology ("ChromaKey"), and (3) the launching of MTV. These three factors in combination with the rise of 1980s music video pioneers such as Michael Jackson and Madonna, eventually paved the way for the music video's position of prominence in American popular culture.

Almost 30 years after MTV's introduction, the creation of the music video is no longer limited to the music industry elite. With advancements in technology and the bursting popularity of video-sharing websites such as YouTube, youth in particular can very much become not only active participants, but the driving creative forces in producing awesome projects in this very dynamic art form.

Step 2. Break into Groups

Divide the class into groups of 3 to 5. If at all possible, please limit your class to no more than 5 groups total. Each group will collaborate to write a poem and decide on a way to transition from one poet's voice to the next for one cohesive piece. Groups can self-select based on shared interests or be formed and go from there.

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Step 3. Write Lyrics

See worksheet below: *Your Lyrics* (page 6)

It is not important that the poem rhyme. The worksheet *Your Poem* may prove useful in getting started on your first draft. The poem can take many different forms, including:

- A narrative poem, sharing an important event or circumstance
- A politically charged poem that clearly demonstrates a point of view on a topic, with evidence and facts to support their opinion
- A lyric poem inviting the listener into the imaginative reality of the poet's mind

The lyrics you write can be on any topic of your choosing, but whatever subject you choose should be meaningful to the group and can be delivered with energy and passion. Two groups could approach the same general topic from two distinct angles. Remind your students to be creative and work together. You can even tie the segment to something you're learning in the classroom – for example, a tribute to poets and writers of a specific era, or social issues you may be covering in your social studies unit.

Tip: Connect the field trip to your classroom curriculum. Here are some examples:

History/Social Studies: current events; prominent/significant individuals; gender roles across the globe; events that led to revolutions; efforts to achieve peace; historical moments...

Language Arts: dialogue between two characters; chapter from a novel; scene from a play; excerpts from journals; student-written creative story; autobiographical incidents...

Science: biological processes; global warming; food web; ecological forces...

Mathematics: relationships as arithmetic; geometric proofs...

Step 3. Consider Music

You will be composing your music out of digital music loops that will accompany your sung or spoken lyrics. Alongside the lines of your lyrics, jot notes about what emotions or settings the music should express. Think about instruments, tempos, and tones, how different sounds could overlay on one another, and where silence might be best.

Definition: A **loop** is a small section of sound that is repeated continuously.

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Step 4. Choose Your Music Video Style

Music Videos, like all video and film productions, come in varying styles. Depending on your music and content, they can be narrative, live action, animation, documentary, experimental, and conceptual. Some music videos also blend different styles, such as combining animation with live action. Through background selection, choreography, props and costumes, you can come up with your own unique music video.

Step 5. Collect Props and Costumes

Consider what kinds of characters you will feature in the video. Another part of the pre-production at Zeum is to pick out costumes and **props** to feature in the video.

Tip: If you need a specific prop or costume, consider bringing it with you, as Zeum might not have it in our sizable collection. In the past, some students have brought in objects like stuffed animals, play money and toy airplanes to add some visual interest to their newscast.

Step 6. Design Blocking and Choreography

How your performers stand and move in front of the camera adds interest to the video as well as corresponds to the style. This is called **blocking**. How will the artists be positioned? Where do the performers stand when reciting their lines of the lyrics? Are they close to the camera, or farther back?

If some students do not wish to be on camera, there are other roles they can take on during the field trip. Please ask your assigned Educator for ideas and further suggestions.

Some Helpful Links

- Wikipedia entry on the history of Music Videos: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Music_video
- Wikipedia entry on Lyricists: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyricist>
- *How to Write Lyrics for a Song* by Rob Colston: <http://ezinearticles.com/?How-to-Write-Lyrics-For-a-Song&id=425997>
- Kenn Nesbit's Online Rhyming Dictionary: <http://www.poetry4kids.com/rhymes>
- Glossary of terms used in film and television: <http://www.talentsconnection.com/lingo.asp>
- Poetic License Writing Exercises: http://www.itvs.org/poeticlicense/teach_writing.html
- Youth Speaks: Youth poetry events and workshops in the San Francisco Bay Area through the Youth Speaks organization: <http://www.youthspeaks.org>

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