



Year 9 Music: WORDS IN MUSIC

Key Information

Song has been a form of human **expression** for just about as long as we know (tablets from the 14th Century B.C. have been found with songs written on them). It is easy to see why people use songs to communicate their feelings, as **lyrics** can be very personal, and everyone has a voice – so we all have our own ready-made instrument! **Composing songs** relies on lyrics that matter to the writer, an accompaniment that is in keeping with the mood of the lyrics, and a well shaped melody line.

Art songs are Classical songs, usually just for voice and piano, that use poetic lyrics with lots of imagery, giving great opportunities for **word painting**. They were written to show off the intimate nature between a **vocal line** and its **accompaniment**.

Musical theatre developed from **Opera**, and told stories on stage with regular interjections of song to dramatize plot points. There has been huge development within the genre, and there are now many different types of musicals from the **Golden Age** to the **Mega Musical**.

Pop Songs today including **rapping** and **sampling** as well as traditional singing, and if you know how to play basic **major and minor chords**, you can learn most pop songs from a simple **lead sheet**.



Keyword	Meaning
Word painting	When the shape of the melody echoes what the lyrics are about
Strophic	A structure consisting of just repeated verses
Accompaniment	A song's 'backing': most commonly piano, guitar, band or orchestra, but can be any instruments really!
Major chord	Chord with a bright feel – bottom note, up 4 semitones to find the middle note, then up 3 more for the top
Minor chord	Chord with a sad feel – bottom note, up 3 semitones to find the middle note, then up 4 more for the top

Stretch and challenge

If you have become comfortable with the formation of major and minor chords, use this excellent music theory website lesson to help learn about formation of different types of chords: <https://www.musictheory.net/lessons/40>

Analysis

Read this article on **word painting** (<https://www.thesongwritingdesk.com/word-painting.html>) and watch this video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_MOMPMzR6oY) to understand how to analyse word painting in songs.

M	A	D	T	S	H	I	R	T
Melody	Articulation	Dynamics	Tempo	Structure	Harmony	Instruments	Rhythm	Texture
The main tune	How the music is played	The volume of the music	The speed of the music	The sections of the music and their order	The chords used	What instruments are used, and the sound produced	The patterns of sounds with the beat	Layers of music – how many and what each does

