



**APRA  
AMCOS**

# **SONG MAKERS**

## **STUDENT RESOURCES**

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## SESSION 1: WRITING A GREAT SONG IS A CRAFT.

The songs that work best are broad lyrically and have one strong concept in the metaphor. You have to sing [the metaphor] a lot of times in a lot of different ways. People like victory, victim to victory, and party time.

Sia, on writing hit songs

There are various elements that need to fall into place for you to have a career in the pop music industry, whether it is as a recording artist or writer. Regardless of which avenue you want to walk down, you need to have great songs. You can have an unbelievable marketing team but if you don't have songs that are going to resonate with an audience, then you won't develop a following. If you research the career stories of past and present song writers and artists, you will find that there are many different ways to write that song that will connect with people.



Finish this sentence – A song has the ability to: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Whilst songwriting is a personal experience, it is helpful to look at how others go about this process and gather different ideas and ways that you can write a song.

### WHAT DO GREAT SONGWRITERS SAY ABOUT SONGWRITING?



What does Robin Gibb have to say? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeqGCUoVAsE>

Watch this video clip and write down the key points.

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The Bee Gees were always heavily influenced by black music. As a songwriter, it's never been difficult to pick up on the changing styles of music out there, and soul has always been my favourite genre.

Robin Gibb



What does Bruce Springsteen have to say? <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-11657215>

Watch this video clip and write down the key points.

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How did Gotye create "Somebody I Used To Know"? [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3qd\\_Inzc-0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3qd_Inzc-0)

Why is the barn an important place for Gotye to work?

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How has Kimbra influenced this particular song? \_\_\_\_\_

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How does Gotye deal with live performances of this song? \_\_\_\_\_

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### WHAT IS THE SONGWRITING PROCESS?

As with any project, there is a process or an order. Whilst songwriting is a very organic experience, there is still a path to follow to achieve the goal of creating a pop song.

- Stage 1 - Create the song – that is melody, lyrics, chords and an idea on the style. This is all you need to have in the beginning.
  - Stage 2 – Arrange the song – select the instruments, recording techniques and have a mixing plan.
  - Stage 3 – Record the song / Create some different demos.
  - Stage 4 – Promote and perform the song.
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## SESSION 2: THE BLANK CANVAS - AN IDEAS THINK TANK

You wind up creating from silence, like painting a picture on a blank canvas that could bring tears to somebody's eyes. As songwriters, our blank canvas is silence. Then we write a song from an idea that can change somebody's life. Songwriting is the closest thing to magic that we could ever experience. That's why I love songwriting.

Rodney Atkins

### GROUP BRAINSTORMING

- General advice
- Ways to get started
- How a pop song works

### GROUP BRAINSTORMING SESSION

What is the best song structure to use for a pop song?

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What is a hook or top line in pop songs?

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What do you think is meant by "Don't bore us, get to the chorus!"?

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What is the one thing that is important in a song?

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## HOW POP SONGS WORK.

Watch “How Pop Songs Work – Part 2” from 0.00 – 3.30 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQbaDCFbSLO>

What important facts did you discover from this analysis of Knowing Me Knowing You by Abba?

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In groups, discuss this statement:

“What is a good bar length for a verse, chorus, pre chorus, middle 8 or bridge?”

Record your discussion.

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### WHOLE CLASS/GROUP PRACTICAL ACTIVITY

Begin with the Verse chord progression

I V vi IV

1 5 6m 4

Rearrange the chords for the Chorus

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Modulate to the relative key and write four new chords for the Bridge

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What factors did you have to consider when attempting to create these simple chord progressions?

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## SESSION 3: THE CO-WRITING PROCESS

You can only write good music if you're really self-aware about how you feel. I don't really believe that you have to be heart broken or particularly happy or sad. It all comes down to 'How are you harvesting life and trying to put it into music?'

Adam Levine, songwriter

### WHAT DOES CO-WRITING ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE?

Read through this article and complete the STRUCTURED OVERVIEW  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-13975164>

#### FIND THE MAGIC INGREDIENTS:

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### WHERE DO YOU START?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### WHAT DO YOU WRITE ABOUT?

- \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
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## LYRICS TO WORLD WAR III

World war three Between you and me Under sheets The land and the sea  
And everybody wants a piece of the action Everybody wants a piece of the action

Don't bore us Get to the chorus There's so much more to come  
The battle's back in the saddle Just turn your back and run  
Away from the guns Away from the guns

World war two Was good for me and you It was won Despite world war one  
And everybody got a piece of the action Everybody got a piece of the action

Don't bore us Get to the chorus There's no more blood to run  
They're gearing up for a beating Just face the hills and run  
Away from the guns Away from the guns

The times we live in are very unforgiving Run away, run away, run away  
The times we live in are very unforgiving Run away, run away, run away

The times we live in are very unforgiving Run away, run away, run away  
The times we live in are very unforgiving Run away, run away, run away

Listen to World War III and in your groups discuss these questions:

How has the melody reflected the lyric content?

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How did the accompaniment support the concept?

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What style did it end up becoming?

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Did you think the accompaniment choice was effective?

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## SESSION 4: HOW TO WRITE POP SONGS?

- Group brainstorming on the top line
- Catchphrases: what are they and how are they useful?
- Dissecting the style
- What is Looping? Includes looping practice

**I feel, as a songwriter, it's one of the hardest things to do  
- to sit down and say how you feel.**

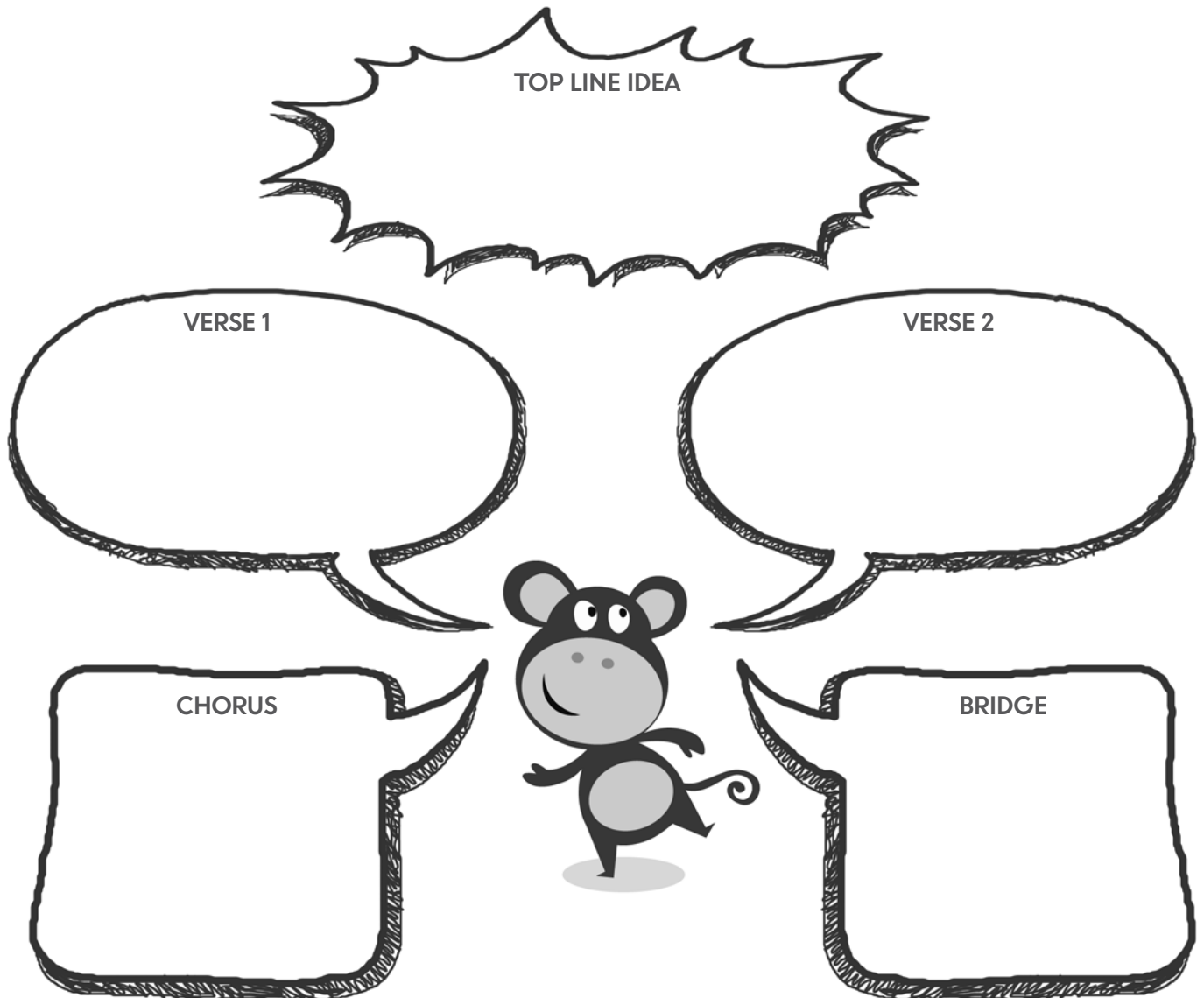
Bruno Mars

### TURN TO SESSION 2 – WAYS TO GET STARTED.

Watch the video How to write songs with Carla Marie Williams and add her suggestions to the list you have already started. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4dPIpX9JNY>.

### WHERE TO FIND A TOP LINE?

Using the magazines and papers given to you, find a top line. In the space below, brainstorm that top line. Try to develop a story where the first verse sets the scene, the second verse goes into more detail and the bridge is the antithesis of what is going on.





**DISSECTING THE STYLE: WHAT'S IN IT? (I would make this landscape)**

Listen to the different pop styles and see if you can identify some on the musical features that are unique to these types of music. With the section “techniques used”, try to identify which rhythms are used in the piano and guitar parts or which notes of the chord the bass player is using. Perhaps you can identify the parts of the drum kit used or the type of electronic drum beat used.

Songwriter	Song Title	Style	Instrumentation (Performing Media)	Roles of the layers (Texture)	Techniques used	Melodic features (Pitch/ Rhythm)
Bruno Mars	When I Was Your Man	Pop Ballad				
Taylor Swift	Love Story	Country Rock				
Black Eyed Peas	I Gotta Feeling	Hip Hop				
Katy Perry	Unconditionally	Pop				
Guy Sebastian	Who's That Girl	Electo RnB				
Ed Sheeran	The A Team	Pop Folk				
Train	Hey Soul Sister	Roots Rock				

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Back in the Fifties, the songwriter was rendered invisible.  
Now the songwriter is there in the forefront.

will.i.am

**WHAT'S LOOPING?**

What is looping? \_\_\_\_\_

Why is it useful for a songwriter? \_\_\_\_\_

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**WHOLE CLASS/GROUP PRACTICAL ACTIVITY**

Using the four chords used in Session 2, improvise some melodies over the top. If you don't sing, then improvise on your instrument. For a bit of fun, get the singers to try and sing the instrumental improvisation. Record your session for future reference.

What did you notice about this activity?

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What did you find useful from this activity?

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Being a songwriter does not rely on an audience or other band members or a camera. I can just sit in a room and write songs.

Rick Springfield

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## SESSION 5: THE LAST WORD...

The immediacy of the technology of the web allows us, as songwriters, to write something very sharp and quick. That has a lot to do with helping a songwriter be more reflective of reality, instead of being in an area where you have to process things.

Chuck D

### WHAT IS DEMOING?

Watch the SongMakers Clip No 2 ([http://youtu.be/uJkK\\_HY8bc](http://youtu.be/uJkK_HY8bc)) and answer these questions:

What is demoing and why is it important?

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This video talked about two ways to demo. What were they?

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Where would you introduce this technique in your song writing process?

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You are now at a cross roads. Do you:

### WHICH WAY

**Start writing the song and only  
create the structure, chord  
progression, melody and lyrics**

**Sit through one more session  
about the Arranging and Recording  
Process and then start writing**

Whatever you choose to do, it must be a whole class decision.

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## THE RECORDING PROCESS

Watch the SongMakers Clip No 6 (<http://youtu.be/TKGukCODwoA>) and answer these questions:

In what order are you going to record your song?

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Are you going to record using a click track or some metronome? What are the advantages of your decision?

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What is a mix plan and why do you need to use it?

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Why is "Listening" the key to learning how to mix?

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**Getting inspired from older style music and making it into something new is one of my favourite things in the world to do.**

Louis Schoorl, Australian songwriter

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## SESSION 7 SO YOU HAVE A GREAT SONG...SO NOW WHERE?

I saw Damien Rice in Dublin when I was 13, and that inspired me to want to pursue being a songwriter... I practised relentlessly and started recording my own EPs. At 16, I moved to London and played any gigs I could, selling CDs from my rucksack to fund recording the next, and it snowballed from there.

Ed Sheeran

- Promotional tools
- Ownership and copyright
- Your digital footprint
- The “business” of songwriting

### **CLASS DISCUSSION: You have a great song... so now where?**

What marketing tools are at your disposal?

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Watch SongMakers Clip No. 7 (<http://youtu.be/41XiRFDOx9U>) and make notes related to these questions.

What can you do with the demo?

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How do you know you have a hit song?

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The “Business” of Songwriting.

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You need a good digital footprint

**OWNERSHIP AND COPYRIGHT WITH APRA AMCOS**

Go to <http://apraamcos.com.au/about-us/> and see if you can find out the answers to these questions.

Who are APRA AMCOS? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is the difference between APRA and AMCOS?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What does copyright mean and why is it important to know about it?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Go to Copyright/FAQs - <http://apraamcos.com.au/about-us/faqs/music-creators/>

Who owns the copyright of a song?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How long does copyright last?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are the three music industry groups of rights?  
a. \_\_\_\_\_  
b. \_\_\_\_\_  
c. \_\_\_\_\_

What about copyright on the Internet? What facts were you not aware of?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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What are Royalties?

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What is the difference between APRA Royalties and AMCOS Royalties?

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Go to International Copyright and Royalties –

<http://apraamcos.com.au/about-us/faqs/international-faqs/>

Who are CISAC and BIEM and what do they do?

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Below is a copy of the “Guide to Registering Your Music Online”. Read through this information and finish the sentence:  
It is important to register your music because

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## **GUIDE TO REGISTERING YOUR MUSIC ONLINE**

### **WRITTEN SOMETHING LATELY? TELL US!**

Once you become a member, it’s important that you keep us up-to-date with any songs you write or works you compose. We can’t pay you if we don’t know what you’ve written.

### **HOW TO TELL US ABOUT YOUR WORKS**

You can tell us what you’ve written by registering your works with APRA AMCOS. You can register your works online, through the writers login . If you don’t have access to a computer, you will need to complete local index cards. Please contact us for a supply of cards.

### **YOU DO NOT NEED TO REGISTER YOUR WORKS IF:**

You are represented by a music publisher. In this case, your publisher will register your works with us. You will need to keep your publisher up-to-date with your works

You write jingles or music for broadcast commercials and community service announcements on commercial radio or commercial free-to-air TV. You should complete a Jingle Reporting Form to tell us about the jingles you have written.

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## WHICH WORKS SHOULD YOU REGISTER WITH US?

It's best to register any work that you have created or helped to create. You should also register any songs that you have co-written with other writers. In this case, you need to give us details about the co-writer(s). If your co-writers are not APRA AMCOS members, they can join APRA AMCOS via our online application form .

## REGISTER YOUR MUSIC IN 4 EASY STEPS!

### 1. Gather your information

APRA member number and nine digit IPI number (password)

All details about your music: titles, approximate durations, full name(s) of co-writer(s), performer name

### 2. Login to the works registration facility

Select 'Songwriters & Composers' from the login page. Enter your member number, surname and password at the login screen. From the **Members Menu**, select Works - New Registrations.

### 3. Complete the works registration screen

1. **Work Title:** enter the name of the work
2. **Alternate Title:** if the work is known by another name, enter it in this field (optional).
3. **Performer:** enter band/performer name (optional).
4. **Duration:** enter the approximate duration of the work (optional). Note: **The format must be mm:ss.** (e.g. 3:30 for 3 minutes and 30 seconds and 10:25 for 10 minutes and 25 seconds).
5. **Sharers:** Your name will automatically appear in the 'Sharer 1' field. If the work was co-written (up to 5 writers), enter the full names of your co-writer(s), in the sharer fields below your name. Note: Names must be entered as Surname then First Name(s). Please submit a local index card for works with 6 or more writers.
6. **Category:** Choose the correct writing category for yourself and your co-writer(s) by clicking on the drop-down list box. s Composer - composed the melody, s Author - wrote the lyrics s Composer/Author - both s Arranger - made an arrangement of a non-copyright work
7. **Percentage:** By default, 100% will be allocated to you but you can change this if the work is co-written.
8. **Other information** (top right hand corner): Published - check this box if you or any of your co-writers have signed an agreement with a music publishers Co-written - check this box if there is more than one writer for the works Non-copyright arrangement - check this box if you are registering an arrangement of a non-copyright work. Note: you may not make arrangements of works which are still in copyright without the consent of the copyright owner.
9. **Register** any additional works: If you have multiple works with identical composer and percentage details, you can register up to 6 additional works by entering the titles and durations into the fields at the bottom of the screen.

### 4. Click submit!

You will then receive a confirmation message. Once again you have the option to register other works – simply click '**More Registrations**', or click '**Main Menu**' then '**Logout of CMS**' to exit.

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## LIVE PERFORMANCE RETURNS

Read through this article from the APRA Website which explains LPR's.

Songwriters who play live can be paid for their efforts by submitting an APRA Live Performance Return (LPR), usually before August 31 of any year. You must be an APRA member.

APRA members should register all the songs they've played live in pubs, clubs and other public venues over the past financial year, so songwriters can receive payments for the performance of their original music in November. LPRs have supported the business and the craft of songwriters throughout Australia's live music scene, paying for everything from new guitars through to touring costs.

"It really is a godsend," said Kevin Bennet, long-time APRA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander member who has reaped the rewards of submitting a Live Performance Return since the 1980s.

"It was an amazing feeling getting it out of the blue," Kevin said. "I splurged my first LPR straight away on a better amp and a better guitar – it provided me with everything to get set up basically."

"If you're playing music live and you're not submitting your LPRs, you're crazy," Kevin said.

Last year, APRA collected and distributed more than \$4 million to APRA members who perform live.

"It felt good to be paid for doing something I loved," said Tim Hart of Boy & Bear.

"Without this definite source of income, we wouldn't be able to plan ahead with regard to touring and living."

**A young songwriter shouldn't think he or she doesn't stand a chance because someone has big corporate people behind him. Never look at it like that.**

Ronald Isley

## THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

- Have you ever Googled yourself?
- Have you ever checked your virtual identity?
- Did you know that every time you go online, you leave a digital footprint?
- Did you know that whatever you do online is pooled together in a dossier which is traceable by others?

What is a digital footprint?

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If you are an A & R Representative at a big Recording Company and a new songwriter comes into your office, the first thing you are going to do is see what is on the internet about this person. When you type the artists name into google:

- What is the first thing you want to see?
- What social media sites are you hoping to find them on?
- Which sites are the market leaders in music?

If you have access to a computer, google some different artists like:

- a group or artist that are new to the music market place (5 Seconds of Summer)
- an artist or band that have been around for the last 5 years (Bruno Mars/Train)
- a current music reality TV show contestant like X-Factor and The Voice

What are the common sites that seem to be on the first page? \_\_\_\_\_

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## SESSION 8 THE SKY IS THE LIMIT IN THE TECHNOLOGY AGE

Writing for somebody else is really fun 'cause I consider myself a songwriter first and foremost.

Kesha

### SAMPLING AS AN OPTION

Watch Gotye talking about his influences in songwriting. What did you find interesting?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4g4mMvd07E>

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Watch Gotye talking about his sampling style of music creation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpGCqtNBKBI>

What technique does Gotye use with his songs?

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What is your definition of sampling?

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What is Ableton Live?

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What did you notice about the song when you listened to it? How would you describe its style?

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How long was the sample?

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How did Gotye put together the samples from Harry Belafonte's Banana Boat Song?

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What quality did the sample end up taking on?

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Watch Imogen Heap talking about the audio process. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvVInJClzk>

What did you find interesting about what she had to say?

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Watch Gotye talking about sampling equipment. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTKcab7-mII>

How does he apply the use of electronics in composing and live performance?

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What does this gadget do?

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How do you think it could be useful?

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## **DON'T BE AFRAID TO EXPERIMENT**

Watch Gotye's Documentary about the writing of Eyes Wide Open – How he incorporates the Winton Musical Fence and his move away from sampling. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b\\_iuE\\_L2wys](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_iuE_L2wys)

Watch Gotye talking about singing and how it helps him to write. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4ny8iKqT7I>

## **I WANT TO BE A SONGWRITER**

If you want to be a songwriter then just write. Be like Robert Conley and write four or five songs a week. Use some of the tips discovered in this project and start writing. Write with friends and perform the songs every chance you get.

The Music Industry has many opportunities for Songwriters. Here are just a few...

**Performers** - Performing songwriters create and perform their own music. They write both lyrics and music. They are strong on their instrument and have good vocal ability. Performing writers may work as a solo act or as a member of a band.

**Staff Writer** - Staff songwriters are hired by record companies, music publishers, producers and other production groups. As a staff writer all music that they create is owned by who they're working for, they automatically sign over all copyright. Staff writers may receive a weekly wage, or contracted to write "work for hire" pieces.

**Freelance** - Freelance writers work for themselves or may work under a part time contract with various companies. Generally, securing single song agreements.

**Jingle Writer** - Jingle writers specialise in writing music for TV and radio commercials. They must be able to write to their clients directions.

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**Producer** - Producers develop their own material from start to finish. They write the material and develop the concept for how the song will be arranged and recorded, hire musicians and engineers, and oversee the production of the material.

**Lyricist** - Lyricists only write lyrics. They usually co-write with someone who composes music.

**Composer** - Composers create instrumental pieces, either to stand alone or to be combined with lyrics. They may compose scores for film, TV or radio.

If you need ways to practice your craft then watch the video “Elton John – Starting With Chords”. Write down your thoughts or comments.

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## SURVEY / PLENARY

Simply circle the number that best describes how you feel about the truth of the statement. Remember 1 stands for “nope, not me” and 5 is “that is me”.

At the start of the project I didn't think I was going to be able to do this	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the songwriting project	1	2	3	4	5
I know how to start writing a song	1	2	3	4	5
I am interested in writing with other people	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what is needed to secure my rights as a songwriter	1	2	3	4	5
Since completing the project I am interested in writing my own songs	1	2	3	4	5
Since completing the project I want to try to record my own songs	1	2	3	4	5
I am very interested in a career as a songwriter	1	2	3	4	5
I want to hear my songs on the radio	1	2	3	4	5

Finish these sentences:

My favourite part of the entire project was \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

The one thing I will always remember from this course is: \_\_\_\_\_

**You always have to work to become a better singer, songwriter and performer.**

Luke Bryan

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