



Magical Musical Tour: Using Lyrics to Teach Literary Elements

Overview

This series of lessons was designed to meet the needs of gifted children for extension beyond the standard curriculum with the greatest ease of use for the educator. The lessons may be given to the students for individual self-guided work, or they may be taught in a classroom or a homeschool setting. This particular lesson plan is primarily effective in a classroom setting. Assessment strategies and rubrics are included. The lessons were developed by Lisa Van Gemert, M.Ed.T., the Mensa Foundation's Gifted Children Specialist.

Introduction

Literary elements and terminology are the vocabulary of literary analysis, and fluency with them is crucial to a student's ability to enter the conversation about literature. This is an entire unit on literary elements that should be taught over an extended period of time. It is most effective broken down and connected to literature the students are reading.

Learning Objectives

After completing the lessons in this unit, students will be able to:

- Define and recognize literary elements
- Identify literary elements in use in literature
- Describe the authorial intent of figurative language

Preparation

- If no document camera is available, make overhead transparencies
- Gather songs
- Make copies of ancillary handouts (Literary Elements, Characterization, Character Analysis Handout and Analyze your Own)

Notes

- After completing the lessons in this unit, you may wish to use the Literary Elements Pyramid Game for review (instructions are in the Notes page of the first slide)
- The Analyze your Own assignment (an ancillary handout) is an optional activity that you can assign one or more times throughout the lesson plan



Materials

All songs are available through legal download. Please obtain music legally. Alternately, you could have students view videos of the songs on a site such as www.youtube.com.

Songs Needed:

1. "100 Years" by Five for Fighting
2. "Annie's Song" by John Denver
3. "The Dance" by Garth Brooks
4. "I am a Rock" by Simon & Garfunkel
5. "Cat's in the Cradle" by Harry Chapin
6. "Major Tom" by Peter Schilling
7. "Fast Car" by Tracy Chapman
8. "Someday" by Steve Earle
9. "Don't You Want Me?" by The Human League
10. "Breaking Us in Two" by Joe Jackson
11. "Higher Love" by Steve Winwood
12. "Please Come to Boston" performed by Kenny Chesney
13. "Walking in Memphis" by Marc Cohn
14. "I Love L.A." by Randy Newman
15. "Lullaby" by Shawn Mullins
16. "Summer Breeze" by Seals & Croft
17. "Brandy" by Looking Glass
18. "Richard Cory" by Simon & Garfunkel
19. "The Devil Went Down to Georgia" by The Charlie Daniels Band*
20. "Ironic" by Alanis Morissette
21. "Don't Take the Girl" by Tim McGraw
22. "Higher" by Creed

*obtain edited version

Other materials:

- white boards (optional)
- rope/yarn



Lessons with Coordinating Songs

Introductory Lesson:

“100 Years” by Five for Fighting

Supplementary Lessons:

1. Figurative Language Overview
2. Figurative Language: Simile:
 “Annie’s Song” by John Denver
3. Figurative Language: Metaphor:
 “The Dance” by Garth Brooks
 “I am a Rock” by Simon & Garfunkel
4. Figurative Language: Imagery
 “Summer Breeze” by Seals & Croft
5. Narration:
 First Person:
 “Cat’s in the Cradle” by Harry Chapin
 Third Person:
 “Major Tom” by Peter Schilling (also introduces suspense)
6. Conflict:
 External:
 “Fast Car” by Tracy Chapman
 Internal:
 “Someday” by Steve Earle
 “Higher Love” by Steve Winwood
7. Compare/Contrast:
 “Don’t You Want Me?” by The Human League
 “Breaking Us in Two” by Joe Jackson
8. Setting –
 “Walking in Memphis” by Marc Cohn
 “I Love L.A.” by Randy Newman
 “Lullaby” by Shawn Mullins
 “Summer Breeze” by Seals & Croft
9. Character
 Protagonist/Antagonist:
 “Brandy” by Looking Glass
 Foil:
 “Richard Cory” by Simon & Garfunkel
10. Plot:
 “The Devil Went Down to Georgia” by The Charlie Daniels Band
11. Irony
 “Ironic” by Alanis Morissette
 “Don’t Take the Girl” by Tim McGraw
12. Allusion
 “Higher” by Creed



Lesson 1. Introductory Lesson

Discuss the importance of vocabulary. Show the quote from Michener (see below). Ask if students would want a brain surgeon to operate on them who said, “Oh, I’m going to use this thingamajig to cut a hole in your whatchamacallit.”

- Brainstorm professions or activities that have their own vocabularies.
- Explain that literature is one of the domains that has its own vocabulary, and we all need to agree on the meaning of terms we use to talk about what we’re reading.
- Discuss how songs are literature because they are poetry. They have a rhythm, they often rhyme and they are a great place to find examples of literary elements and terms. Most songwriters would be ecstatic if they knew that you were looking at their songs this way, instead of just letting the words float in and out of your head randomly. You honor music when you view it this way.
- Play “100 Years,” showing overhead of lyrics without commentary.
- Next, play it again, this time using the lyrics that have the commentary, pausing and discussing it as you go through.



“But always he lacked the essential tool without which the workman can never attain true mastery: he did not know the names of any of the parts he was building, and without the name he was artistically incomplete. It was not by accident that doctors and lawyers and butchers invented specific but secret names for the things they did; to possess the name was to know the secret. With correct names one entered into a new world of proficiency, became the member of an arcane brotherhood, a sharer of mysteries, and in the end a performer of merit. Without the names one remained a bumbler or, in the case of boatbuilding, a mere carpenter.”

James Michener, *Chesapeake*



"100 Years" – Five For Fighting

I'm 15 for a moment,
caught in between 10 and 20.
And I'm just dreaming,
counting the ways to where you are.

I'm 22 for a moment,
and she feels better than ever.
And we're on fire,
making our way back from Mars.

15, there's still time for you,
time to buy and time to lose.
15, there's never a wish better than this,
when you only got a hundred years to live.

I'm 33 for a moment,
still the man, but you see I'm a they,
a kid on the way,
a family on my mind.

I'm 45 for a moment.
The sea is high,
and I'm heading into a crisis
chasing the years of my life.
15, there's still time for you,
Time to buy and time to lose yourself
within a morning star.
15, I'm all right with you.



15, there's never a wish better than this,
when you only got a hundred years to live.

Half time goes by,
suddenly you're wise.
Another blink of an eye,
67 is gone.
The sun is getting high,
we're moving on.

I'm 99 for a moment.
I'm dying for just another moment,
and I'm just dreaming,
counting the ways to where you are.

15, there's still time for you.
22, I feel her, too.
33, you're on your way.
Every day's a new day.
15, there's still time for you,
time to buy and time to choose
Hey 15, there's never a wish better than this,
when you've only got a hundred years to live.



"100 Years" – Five For Fighting

I'm 15 for a moment,
caught in between 10 and 20.

Who's the "I"? Who is the narrator?

And I'm just dreaming,
counting the ways to where you are.

Who's the "you"? Is it the same as the "she"?

I'm 22 for a moment,
and she feels better than ever.

Figurative Language: They're not literally on fire. What is he saying? Are they really returning from Mars?

And we're on fire,
making our way back from Mars.

15, there's still time for you,

time to buy and time to lose.

You can't literally "buy" time. What does he mean?

15, there's never a wish better than this,
when you only got a hundred years to live.

I'm 33 for a moment -



still the man, but you see I'm a they,

paradox

a kid on the way,
a family on my mind.

Notice the imagery of being an age for just a "moment." The fleeting nature helps create a sentimental, melancholy tone.

I'm 45 for a moment.

The sea is high
and I'm heading into a crisis,
chasing the years of my life.

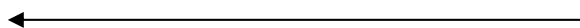
What is this sea? What is this crisis? How can you chase years? Do you see how this character is dynamic? He's changing.

15, there's still time for you,
time to buy and time to lose yourself
within a morning star.

Allusion: Astronomically, any star that rises after midnight is a morning star, although it usually refers to the planet Venus. Remember that Venus was the goddess of love. Why is that appropriate?

15, I'm all right with you.

15, there's never a wish better than this,





when you only got a hundred years to live.

Half time goes by,

suddenly you're wise.

Another blink of an eye,

67 is gone.

The sun is getting high,

we're moving on.

I'm 99 for a moment.

I'm dying for just another moment.

and I'm just dreaming,

counting the ways to where you are.

15, there's still time for you.

22, I feel her, too.

33, you're on your way.

If you have 100 years to live, what's half time?



Every day's a new day.

15, there's still time for you,

time to buy and time to choose.

Hey 15, there's never a wish better than this,

when you only got a hundred years to live.

Here's the theme: every day is a new day – a new moment. Notice use of "hey" – the narrator is trying to get attention. When the narrator addresses the audience or an inanimate object, it is called apostrophe.

Knowing the theme, who do you think the audience for this message is?

Notice that there is a plot. What is the inciting incident, do you think?

Is this a coming-of-age story (a *bildungsroman*)? If so, what is the shift from boy to man?



Lesson 2. Figurative Language Overview

Before introducing the songs that contain similes and metaphors, spend one lesson on the following figurative language introduction.

Pre-assessment:

- Give students a list of 10 examples of figurative language (on page below). The students will mark them as metaphor, simile or personification using the letters *m*, *s* or *p*.
- Using a white board, read out the example and have students write the letter they chose on the board. Scan for correctness. Students getting nine or more correct will do the extension activity rather than the core activity. If you do not have individual white boards, use paper or verbal response.

Sub-objective I

Simile

Information with Examples or Model

- Display lines from Shelley's *Adonais* – Life, like a dome of many-colored glass/Stains the white radiance of Eternity.
- These lines are a simile: a comparison of two things indicated by the words *like*, *as*, *than*, or even a verb such as *resembles*. A simile expresses a similarity. For a simile to exist, the things being compared have to be dissimilar. It isn't a simile to say "your fingers are like mine" because that is a literal observation. It is true. But to say "your fingers are like sausages" is to use a simile.

Questions and/or Activities

- Display examples and have students indicate "S" for simile or "NS" for not simile on their white boards.

Sub-objective II

Metaphor

Information with Examples or Model

- Display "My love is a red, red rose."
- A metaphor is a statement that one thing *is* something else, which, in a literal sense, it is not. Is my love *really* a rose? No.
- A metaphor doesn't use *like*, *as*, *than*, or verbs such as *resemble*. It will often use some form the verb *to be*.

Questions and/or Activities

- Show examples on overhead and have students indicate "M" for metaphor or "S" for simile on their white boards.



**Sub-objective III
Information with
Examples or Model**

Personification

- Display lines “Death, be not proud, though some have called thee mighty and dreadful.”
- Can death really be proud? When we give a thing, an animal, or an abstract term such as *truth* or *nature* human characteristics, we call that personification.

**Questions and/or
Activities**

- Display examples and have students indicate “M” for metaphor, “S” for simile, or “P” for personification on their whiteboards. (serves as assessment)

Synthesis

- Now, we’re going to play “You’re the Poet.” I’m going to give you a line, and you’re going to pick words to fit it, creating a metaphor, simile or personification.
- Display prompts. Allow time for students to come up with words, and then call on them to share.



Mark each of the following as an example of metaphor (M), simile (S), or personification (P). When you finish, please turn your paper over.

1. Like a thunderbolt he falls _____
2. My love is like a red, red rose _____
3. My mother is a witch _____
4. Her love was stronger than rope _____
5. Her presence was a roomful of flowers/ Her absence is an empty bed _____
6. He was as rich as Hades _____
7. His words are honey to my ears _____
8. His car is as ugly as sin _____
9. This class is a bear _____
10. My teacher is an angel _____

Mark each of the following as an example of metaphor (M), simile (S), or personification (P). When you finish, please turn your paper over.

1. Like a thunderbolt he falls _____
2. My love is like a red, red rose _____
3. My mother is a witch _____
4. Her love was stronger than rope _____
5. Her presence was a roomful of flowers/ Her absence is an empty bed _____
6. He was as rich as Hades _____
7. His words are honey to my ears _____
8. His car is as ugly as sin _____
9. This class is a bear _____
10. My teacher is an angel _____



Simile

Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity.

(Shelley, *Adonais*)

1. My love has red petals and sharp thorns.
2. You're as mean as Hera.
3. He's wonderful.
4. This is taking longer than a 12-inning game.
5. This room is as messy as a dump!



Metaphor

Oh, my love is a red, red rose.

1. He is a pig.
2. He eats like a pig.
3. My son is as smart as a whip.
4. My sister's boyfriend is a cow.
5. She's a doll.



Personification

Death be not proud, though some have
called thee/

Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so –
(Donne, *Death Be Not Proud*)

1. Beauty followed her through her life.
2. My love is as endless as the sea.
3. Hope is the thing with feathers/That
perches on the soul.
4. My mother is a princess.
5. Spring stirs the soul.



You're the Poet

I am as tired as a _____.

My sister is a _____.

You're as cool as a _____.

The computer _____ at me.

This class is as _____ as a _____.

The rainbow _____.



Enrichment Activity

I. Simile and Metaphor: Identify the two things the poet is comparing and then describe what it is the poet thinks they have in common. Be specific. Place a star next to the example you think is most effective. Place a checkmark next to the example that you think has the most dissimilar subjects.

1. Think of the storm roaming the sky uneasily like a dog looking for a place to sleep in, listen to it growling.

– Elizabeth Bishop, *Little Exercise*

2. The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a cry of bugles going by. – Bliss Carman, *A Vagabond Song*

3. “Hope” is the thing with feathers –
That perches on the soul –
And sings the tune without the words –
And never stops at all.

– Emily Dickenson



II. You're the Poet!

Now you try it. Create an example of a simile, a metaphor and personification using the prompts given below.

1. Simile: My love is as _____ as a _____.
2. Metaphor: School is a _____.
3. Personification: The fog _____. (hint: begin with a verb)

Original Examples: Create a simile, a metaphor and an example of personification.

See if you can use one of each of the following in your examples: a color, a season and an animal.

1. Simile
2. Metaphor
3. Personification



Lesson 3. Simile

Simile

- Ask a student to define simile. Work until you get a good definition (comparison of two things using “like,” “as,” “than,” or a verb such as “resembles”).
- Remind students that the purpose of similes, like all figurative language, is to help the reader or hearer to truly feel what the writer is trying to convey. We use our senses to do that, so figurative language usually involves the use of senses.
- Explain that John Denver wrote this song for his first wife, Annie, and it went to Number 1 on the charts in 1974. Because students will probably not be familiar with his work, you may want to mention that he was killed in a plane crash in 1997 when the small plane he was piloting crashed into Monterey Bay off the coast of California.
- Play song with lyrics showing, then play again, pointing out and discussing similes. Hide the explanation at the end that mentions their divorce until after they have heard it all.



"Annie's Song" by John Denver

You fill up my senses like a night in the forest,
like the mountains in springtime,
like a walk in the rain,
like a storm in the desert,
like a sleepy blue ocean.
You fill up my senses, come fill me again.

Come let me love you,
let me give my life to you,
let me drown in your laughter, let me die in
your arms, let me lay down beside you,
let me always be with you.
Come let me love you, come love me again.

You fill up my senses like a night in the forest,
like the mountains in springtime,
like a walk in the rain,
like a storm in the desert,
like a sleepy blue ocean.
You fill up my senses,
come fill me again.



“Annie’s Song” by John Denver

You fill up my senses
like a night in the forest,

What is a night in the forest like? What senses would be engaged?

like the mountains in springtime,

What is the difference between the mountains in spring versus winter? How is this an appropriate image for love?

like a walk in the rain,

When is it fun to walk in the rain? What kind of rain works for this? How can a person make you feel like this?

like a storm in the desert,

What happens when it rains in the desert? What image of Annie is Denver trying to convey with this simile?

like a sleepy blue ocean.

Why a “sleepy” ocean? Why not a stormy ocean? Is the ocean always blue? So, why does he say she fills him up like a blue ocean? Why not green or grey?

You fill up my senses, come fill me again.

How does this line change for you when I tell you that John and Annie eventually divorced?



Lesson 4. Metaphor

- Ask a student to define metaphor. Work until you get a good definition (comparison of two things without using “like,” “as,” “than,” or a verb such as “resembles” – saying that something actually IS something else, not that it is just like it in some way).
- Remind students that the purpose of metaphors, like all figurative language, is to help the reader or hearer to truly feel what the writer is trying to convey.
- Challenge students to find out what “the dance” is being compared to in this song.
- Play “The Dance,” displaying lyrics.
- As for ideas on what “the dance” is. If a student comes up with “life” or “the good things in life,” discuss this idea. How is life a dance? Is it like a single dance or can it also be compared to a dance in the larger sense like a prom or homecoming event? If students do not come up with the metaphor, play the song again with the commentary lyrics, and then ask again at the end.
- Have students fill out the “life is” metaphor, and then pass it to another student. Have that student list three ways this metaphor is true.
- Another class period, play “I am a Rock.” Ask students to identify the figurative language used here. Bring out that it is a metaphor because he is saying that he actually is a rock, he is an island, not that he is simply like one.
- Play a second time with the commentary lyrics. Have student fill out the “I am a _____” metaphor, and then explain how it is true.



"The Dance" by Garth Brooks

Looking back on the memory of
the dance we shared 'neath the stars above...
For a moment, all the world was right.
How could I have known
that you'd ever say goodbye?

And now, I'm glad I didn't know
the way it all would end,
the way it all would go.
Our lives are better left to chance.
I could have missed the pain,
but I'd have had to miss the dance.

Holding you, I held everything.
For a moment, wasn't I a king?
But if I'd only known how the king would fall...
Hey, who's to say?
You know I might have changed it all.

And now I'm glad I didn't know
the way it all would end, the way it all would go.
Our lives are better left to chance.
I could have missed the pain,
but I'd have had to miss the dance.
Yes, my life – it's better left to chance.
I could have missed the pain,
but I'd have had to miss the dance.



"The Dance" by Garth Brooks

Looking back on the memory of the dance we shared 'neath
the stars above,
For a moment all the world was right.
How could I have known that you'd ever say
goodbye?

Do you see
how this is a
literal dance?

And now I'm glad I didn't know
the way it all would end,
the way it all would go.
Our lives are better left to chance.
I could have missed the pain,
but I'd have had to miss the dance.

Here's the figurative
dance. Think of this
broadly. What would he
miss? How is it a dance?

Holding you I held everything.
For a moment wasn't I a king?
But if I'd only known how the
king would fall... Hey, who's to say?
You know I might have changed it all.
And now I'm glad I didn't know
the way it all would end, the way it all would go.

What type of figurative
language is he using
here?

Our lives are better left to chance.
I could have missed the pain,
but I'd have had to miss the dance.
Yes, my life, it's better left to chance.
I could have missed the pain,
but I'd have had to miss the dance.

What is the
message here?
Compare it to the
message in "100
Years."



“I Am a Rock” by Simon & Garfunkel

A winter's day
in a deep and dark December;
I am alone,
gazing from my window to the streets below
on a freshly fallen silent shroud of snow.
I am a rock.
I am an island.

I've built walls,
a fortress deep and mighty,
that none may penetrate.
I have no need of friendship;
friendship causes pain.
It's laughter and it's loving I disdain.
I am a rock.
I am an island.

Don't talk of love.
Well, I've heard the word before.
It's sleeping in my memory.
I won't disturb the slumber
of feelings that have died.
If I never loved I never would have cried.

I am a rock,
I am an island.



I have my books
and my poetry to protect me;
I am shielded in my armor,
hiding in my room, safe within my womb.
I touch no one and no one touches me.
I am a rock.
I am an island.

And a rock feels no pain.
And an island never cries.



“I Am a Rock” by Simon and Garfunkel

A winter's day
 in a deep and dark
December;
 I am alone,
 Gazing from my window to
 the streets below
 on a freshly fallen silent shroud of snow.
 I am a rock,
 I am an island.

The use of words like this creates what we call “tone” – the mood or feeling of the piece. What is a shroud? What is the tone of this song so far?

I've built walls,
 a fortress deep and mighty,
 that none may penetrate.
 I have no need of friendship;
 friendship causes pain.
 It's laughter and it's loving I disdain.
 I am a rock.
 I am an island.

Why does he build the walls?

What is he afraid of? How is he a rock? How is he an island?

Don't talk of love.
 Well, I've heard the word before.
 It's sleeping in my memory.
 I won't disturb the slumber
 of feelings that have died.
 If I never loved, I never would have cried.
 I am a rock,

Ah! A hint of some past pain. What do you think it was? A girl? Not winning the lottery? English class? Do you have pain sleeping in your memory? What wakes it up?



I am an island.

I have my books
and my poetry to protect me;
I am shielded in my armor,
hiding in my room, safe within my womb.
I touch no one, and no one touches me.
I am a rock.
I am an island.

More metaphor here: his books and poetry are shields and armor. How so?

And a rock feels no pain;
And an island never cries.

What is the effect or purpose of this last couplet here?
Shakespeare often ends important scenes with couplets, so pay attention to them because they're often a signal of a key idea.

The entire song is a metaphor. The man is a rock; he is an island. He starts the song saying he is; how does he prove it? What kind of picture do you get from him saying that, as opposed to him saying, "I'm kind of a loner"?



I am a(n) _____.

Ways in which this is true:

I am a(n) _____.

Ways in which this is true:

I am a(n) _____.

Ways in which this is true:

I am a(n) _____.

Ways in which this is true:

I am a(n) _____.

Ways in which this is true:



Life is a _____.

Ways in which this is true:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Life is a _____.

Ways in which this is true:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Life is a _____.

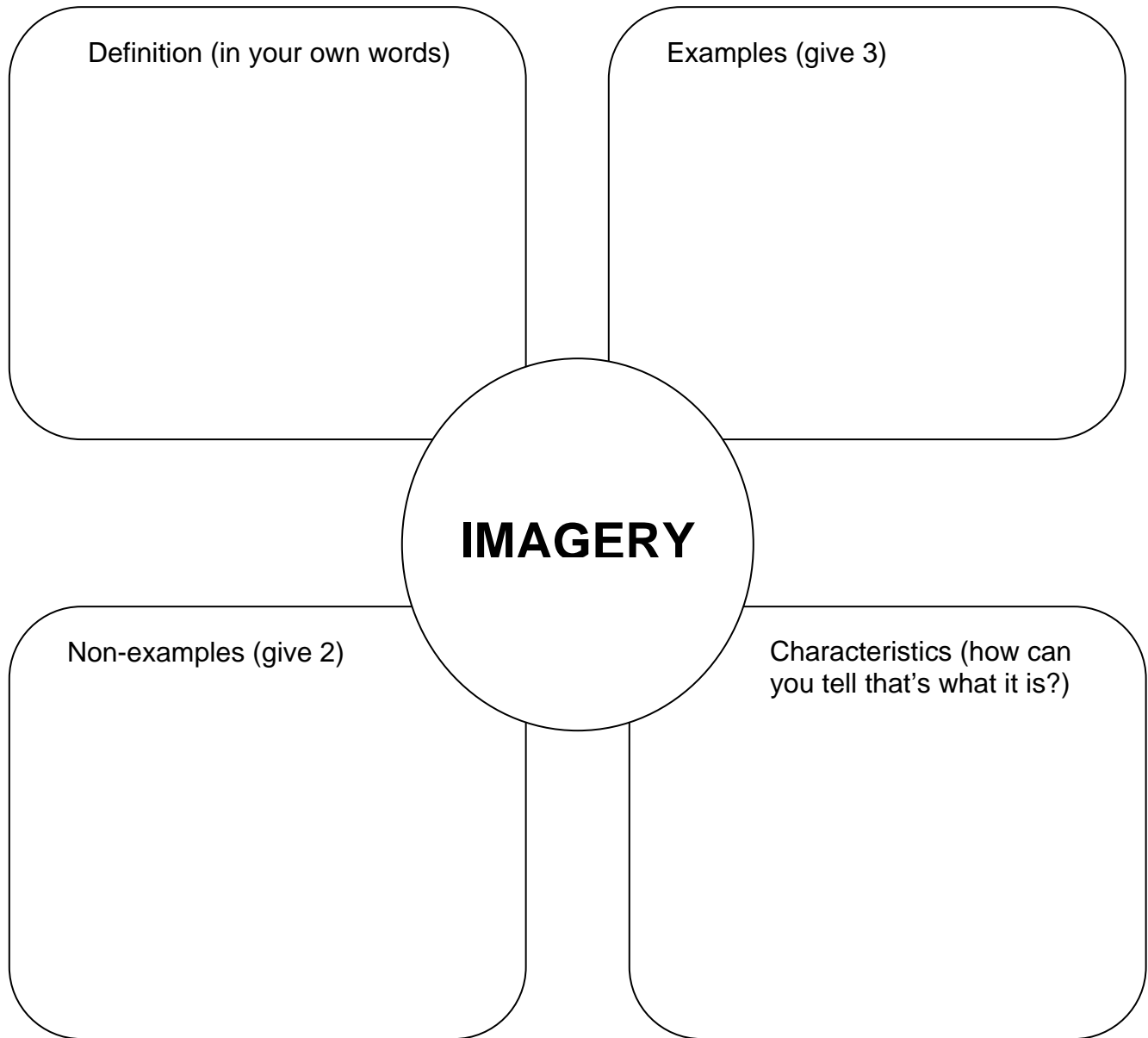
Ways in which this is true:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Lesson 5. Imagery

- Have students look up definition of imagery in a text book glossary or dictionary. Have them complete the Frayer Model vocabulary development tool below. Note: you can create your own Frayer model tool for any word here www.bit.ly/frayermodel.
- List the five main senses on the board.
- Play “Summer Breeze,” asking them to look for language that appeals to the senses.
- Play the song again, using a highlighter to note use of imagery the students identify. Analyze which senses are used most often. Why do you think that is?
- Discuss that imagery is one way authors convey tone. Tone is the author’s attitude towards the subject or story. In this song, what is the author’s attitude towards his home? What specific words tell you this? If the songwriters wanted to change the tone of this to very happy-go-lucky, what are some words they could substitute in?
- Also point out the wonderful personification of July dressed up and playing a tune.





“Summer Breeze” by Seals & Croft

See the curtains hanging in the window
in the evening on a Friday night.
A little light a-shining through the window
lets me know everything’s alright.

Summer breeze makes me feel fine
blowing through the jasmine in my mind.
Summer breeze makes me feel fine
blowing through the jasmine in my mind.

See the paper lying on the sidewalk,
a little music from the house next door.
So I walk on up to the door step,
through the screen and across the floor.

Summer breeze makes me feel fine
blowing through the jasmine in my mind.
Summer breeze makes me feel fine
blowing through the jasmine in my mind.

Sweet days of summer, the jasmine's in bloom.
July is dressed up and playing her tune.
When I come home from a hard day’s work,
and you're waiting there, not a care in the world.



See the smile a-waiting in the kitchen,
food cooking and the plates for two.
Feel the arms that reach out to hold me
in the evening when the day is through.

Summer breeze makes me feel fine
blowing through the jasmine in my mind.
Summer breeze makes me feel fine
blowing through the jasmine in my mind.



Lesson 6. Narrative Voice

- Distribute Explanation of Narrative Voice handout (below) and discuss using analysis questions (answers: 1 – first person; 2 – third omniscient; 3 – third limited; 4 – third objective; 5 – third limited).
- Using a piece of rope, have groups demonstrate the four types of narration. Lay the rope out in a circle on the floor. Designate one student as the narrator and three others as characters A, B, and C (print out the role signs below, punch holes in the top of the page where the white circles are, string through with yarn/string, and have students wear them to identify themselves). Say the name of one type of narrative voice, and have the students act out what that looks like.
 - If the narrator is inside the story, the narrator should stand inside the circle with the characters
 - If the narrator is outside of the story, the narrator should stand outside the circle.
 - If the narrator can read the character's mind, the character should face the narrator.
 - If the narrator cannot read the character's mind, the character should have his/her back to the narrator.
- Play "Cat's in the Cradle" and have students discuss first person point of view (POV). How do we know that it's first person? What are two clues?
- Play "Major Tom." (Use the Peter Schilling version – not the David Bowie version.) Have the students prove that the POV is third person omniscient. Identify at least one instance when the mind of "control" and the mind of Major Tom are understood.
- The song "Major Tom" is a great example of the building of suspense. This is pointed out in the lyrics explication.

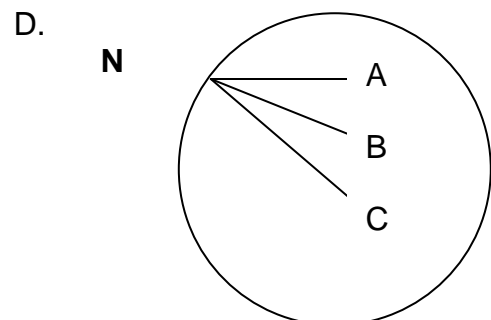
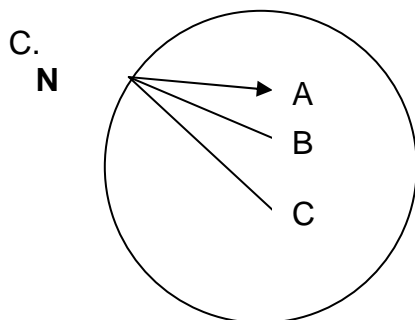
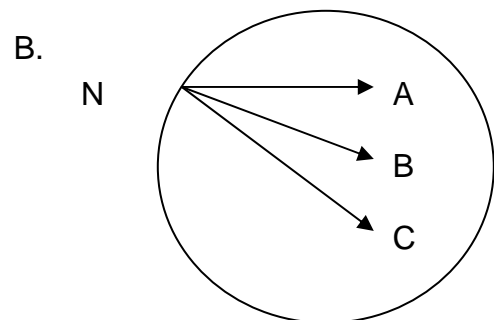
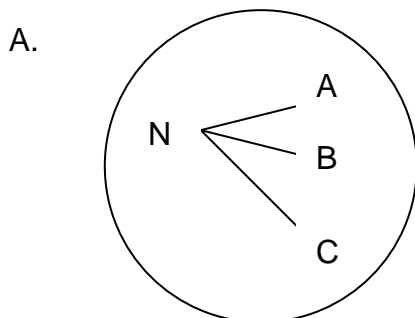


An Explanation of Narrative Voice

The **point of view** of a story is the relationship between the narrator and the story, including the characters in it. You are required to know four types of point of view.

- A. **First Person Narrative**: the main character tells his own story. The narrator refers to himself by using the pronoun “I.”
- B. **Third Person Omniscient**: The narrator is all-seeing, all-knowing. All thoughts are revealed. The author enters the characters’ minds as an observer of the inner man. The story is told in the third person (he/she/it/they).
- C. **Third Person Limited Omniscient**: The story is told in the third person, but as seen through the eyes of one character only. The author only enters the mind of one character, not all of them. This is the most common form of point of view.
- D. **Third Person Objective**: The story is told in the third person and the thoughts of the characters are not revealed. The objective viewpoint is often called the “door keyhole technique” because it’s like looking at the story playing out in front of you as if you were looking through the keyhole of a door. The characters reveal themselves through what they say about themselves and others and through their actions.

In the diagrams below, the large circle represents the story; the N shows the relationship of the narrator to the story; A, B, and C are characters. If the line from the narrator to the character ends in an arrow point, then the narrator can enter that character’s mind.





Playing with Narrative Point of View

Using your “An Explanation of Narrative Voice” handout as a reference, circle the best answer the questions below.

1. If you are a narrator and you want to be in your story, which is the right narrative point of view for you?

First Person

**Third Person
Omniscient**

**Third Person
Limited**

**Third Person
Objective**

2. If you really like reading minds, which is the best narrative point of view for you?

First Person

**Third Person
Omniscient**

**Third Person
Limited**

**Third Person
Objective**

3. If you are the narrator, and you are in the story and then you shift to being outside the story and able to look into the mind of only one character, to which narrative point of view did you switch?

First Person

**Third Person
Omniscient**

**Third Person
Limited**

**Third Person
Objective**

4. The narrator of a story is unreliable because she can't read the minds of any of the characters and keeps misunderstanding their motives. Which point of view should she switch to in order to be able to read the minds of all of the characters?

First Person

**Third Person
Omniscient**

**Third Person
Limited**

**Third Person
Objective**

5. If a narrator is clearly biased in favor of the point of view of one particular character, which point of view is the narrator most likely using?

First Person

**Third Person
Omniscient**

**Third Person
Limited**

**Third Person
Objective**



NARRATOR





● ●
CHARACTER

B





“Cat’s in the Cradle” by Harry Chapin

My child arrived just the other day.
He came to the world in the usual way,
but there were planes to catch and bills to pay.
He learned to walk while I was away.
And he was talkin' 'fore I knew it, and as he grew
he'd say "I'm gonna be like you, Dad.
You know I'm gonna be like you."

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little Boy Blue and the man on the moon.
“When you comin' home, Dad?”
“I don't know when, but we'll get together then.
You know we'll have a good time then.”

My son turned ten just the other day.
He said, "Thanks for the ball, Dad, come on let's play.
Can you teach me to throw?"
I said, "Not today. I got a lot to do."
He said, "That's okay."
And he walked away, but his smile never dimmed,
and said, "I'm gonna be like him, yeah.
You know I'm gonna be like him."

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little Boy Blue and the man on the moon.
“When you comin' home, Dad?”
“I don't know when, but we'll get together then.
You know we'll have a good time then.”



Well, he came from college just the other day,
so much like a man I just had to say,
"Son, I'm proud of you, can you sit for a while?"
He shook his head, and he said with a smile,
"What I'd really like, Dad, is to borrow the car keys.
See you later. Can I have them, please?"

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little Boy Blue and the man on the moon.
"When you comin' home, Dad?"
"I don't know when, but we'll get together then.
You know we'll have a good time then."

I've long since retired; my son's moved away.
I called him up just the other day.
I said, "I'd like to see you, if you don't mind."
He said, "I'd love to, Dad, if I can find the time.
You see my new job's a hassle and kids have the flu.
But it's sure nice talking to you, Dad.
It's been sure nice talking to you."

And as I hung up the phone, it occurred to me -
he'd grown up just like me.
My boy was just like me.
And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little Boy Blue and the man on the moon.
"When you comin' home, Dad?"
"I don't know when, but we'll get together then.
You know we'll have a good time then."



“Major Tom” by Peter Schilling

Standing there alone, the ship is waiting.
All systems are go. “Are you sure?”

Control is not convinced,
but the computer has the evidence,
No need to abort.

What could be more suspenseful than a spaceship about to launch when mission control thinks there may be a problem?

The countdown starts.
Watching in a trance,
the crew is certain.

Nothing left to chance,
all is working.
Trying to relax, up in the capsule,
"Send me up a drink,"
jokes Major Tom.
The count goes on.

Countdowns are a great way to create suspense. Sometimes an author will use time (especially a specific time like “10:22 a.m.”) to create suspense.

4 3 2 1
Earth below us
drifting, falling,
floating weightless
calling, calling home...

Second stage is cut.
We're now in orbit.
Stabilizers up,
running perfect.

Nothing is ever perfect. Using the word “perfect” here creates suspense because the audience knows it almost tempting fate to say that.



Starting to collect requested data
"What will it affect when all is done?"
thinks Major Tom.

Back at ground control,
there is a problem.
"Go to rockets full."
Not responding.
"Hello, Major Tom, are you receiving?"
Turn the thrusters on. We're standing by."
There's no reply.

Disaster begins. In the German version, the word used is "panic" (*panisch*) instead of problem. Which one is stronger? Would you agree that silence can be the most terrifying sound of all?

4 3 2 1
Earth below us
drifting, falling,
floating weightless
calling, calling home...

Across the stratosphere
a final message...
"Give my wife my love."
Then nothing more.

Again, the silence.

Far beneath the ship,
the world is mourning.
They don't realize he's alive.
No one understands, but Major Tom sees.
"Now the life commands.
This is my home. I'm coming home."



Lesson 7. Conflict

- Have students get out their Literary Elements and Terminology Handout and discuss conflict. Emphasize the difference between internal and external conflict. Make sure that students understand that every story has a conflict and that identifying the conflict will help them find the theme.
- Play “Fast Car” once through, displaying the lyrics, asking students to identify at least two conflicts in the song and what types of conflict they are.
- Play the song again, with the commentary lyrics displayed and discuss.
- Play “Someday” and have students work in pairs to identify conflicts. Compare them to the conflicts in “Fast Car.”
- Play “Don’t You Want Me?” and ask students to identify the conflict in this song.
- Bring out the differences between the conflicts in the songs.
- Play “Breaking us in Two” by Joe Jackson, comparing the conflict in it with “Higher Love” by Steve Winwood.
- Discuss songs in terms of conflict, using chart.
- For assessment, display lyrics and play “Please Come to Boston.” Have students identify the internal and external conflicts.
- Note: This is a good element to assign students to find their own examples of in songs they listen to.
- Note: Point out that although they are not required to be able to identify it, song lyrics and poems are common places in literature that you find the second person narrative voice (“you”).



“Fast Car” by Tracy Chapman

You got a fast car.
I want a ticket to anywhere.
Maybe we make a deal.
Maybe together we can get somewhere.

Any place is better.
Starting from zero got nothing to lose.
Maybe we'll make something.
But me myself I got nothing to prove.

You got a fast car.
I got a plan to get us out of here.
I've been working at the convenience store.
Managed to save just a little bit of money.
Won't have to drive too far -
just 'cross the border and into the city.
You and I can both get jobs,
and fin'lly see what it means to be living.

See, my old man's got a problem.
He lives with the bottle, that's the way it is.
He says his body's too old for working.
His body's too young to look like his.
My mama went off and left him.
She wanted more from life than he could give.
I said, "Somebody's got to take care of him."
So I quit school, and that's what I did.

You got a fast car.



Is it fast enough so we can fly away?
We gotta make a decision.
We leave tonight or live and die this way.

‘Cause I remember when we were driving,
driving in your car,
speed so fast I felt like I was drunk.
City lights lay out before us -
and your arm felt nice wrapped round my shoulder.
And I had a feeling that I belonged.
And I had a feeling I could be someone, be someone, be
someone.

You got a fast car.
We go cruising to entertain ourselves.
You still ain’t got a job,
and I work in the market as a checkout girl.
I know things will get better -
You’ll find work and I’ll get promoted.
We’ll move out of the shelter,
buy a big house and live in the suburbs.

‘Cause I remember when we were driving,
driving in your car,
speed so fast I felt like I was drunk.
City lights lay out before us -
and your arm felt nice wrapped round my shoulder.
And I had a feeling that I belonged.
And I had a feeling I could be someone, be someone, be
someone.



You got a fast car.
I got a job that pays all our bills.
You stay out drinking late at the bar,
see more of your friends than you do of your kids.
I'd always hoped for better -
thought maybe together you and me'd find it.
I got no plans; I ain't going nowhere,
so take your fast car and keep on driving.

'Cause I remember when we were driving,
driving in your car,
speed so fast I felt like I was drunk.
City lights lay out before us -
and your arm felt nice wrapped round my shoulder.
And I had a feeling that I belonged.
And I had a feeling I could be someone, be someone, be
someone.

You got a fast car.
But is it fast enough so you can fly away?

You gotta make a decision:
you leave tonight or live and die this way.



“Fast Car” by Tracy Chapman

You got a fast car.
I want a ticket to anywhere.
Maybe we make a deal.
Maybe together we can get
somewhere.

What’s the conflict here? She wants to go “anywhere.” What does that say about where she is?

Any place is better.
Starting from zero got nothing to lose.
Maybe we’ll make something.
But me myself I got nothing to prove.

If she’s not living now, how does she feel? What type of conflict is that?

You got a fast car.
I got a plan to get us out of here.
I’ve been working at the convenience store.
Managed to save just a little bit of money.
Won’t have to drive too far -
just ‘cross the border and into the city.
You and I can both get jobs,
and fin’lly see what it means to be living.

New conflict. What is it?

See, my old man’s got a problem.
He lives with the bottle, that’s the way it is.
He says his body’s too old for working.
His body’s too young to look like his.
My mama went off and left him.
She wanted more from life than he could give.
I said, “Somebody’s got to take care of him.”



So I quit school, and that's what I did.

Here's an instance of one conflict leading to another. Her dad's alcoholism is what type of conflict? (Hint: It can be more than one.) What are the types of conflict going on here with her mother? Then what did that conflict lead to?

You got a fast car.
Is it fast enough so we can fly away?
We gotta make a decision.
We leave tonight or live and die this way.

Key Idea: A decision is always required when there's a conflict.

'Cause I remember when we were driving,
driving in your car,
speed so fast I felt like I was drunk.
City lights lay out before us -
and your arm felt nice wrapped
round my shoulder.
And I had a feeling that I belonged.
And I had a feeling I could be
someone, be someone, be someone.

Was she? If she wasn't really drunk, what do we call it when she says she feels "like" she was?

You got a fast car.
We go cruising to entertain ourselves.
You still ain't got a job,
and I work in the market as a checkout girl.
I know things will get better -
You'll find work and I'll get promoted.
We'll move out of the shelter,

How has her situation changed? What conflicts does she have now that she didn't have before?



buy a big house and live in the suburbs.

'Cause I remember when we were driving,
driving in your car,
speed so fast I felt like I was drunk.
City lights lay out before us -
and your arm felt nice wrapped round my shoulder.
And I had a feeling that I belonged.
And I had a feeling I could be someone, be
someone, be someone.

What good is a
fast car that isn't
going anywhere?

You got a fast car.
I got a job that pays all our bills.
You stay out drinking late at the bar,
see more of your friends than you do of your kids.
I'd always hoped for better -
thought maybe together you and me'd find it.
I got no plans; I ain't going nowhere,
so take your fast car and keep on driving.

Compare and contrast this conflict to the one with her father. Is this one harder? Easier? More damaging? Less?

'Cause I remember when we were driving,
driving in your car,
speed so fast I felt like I was drunk.
City lights lay out before us -
and your arm felt nice wrapped round my shoulder.
And I had a feeling that I belonged.
And I had a feeling I could be someone, be someone,
be someone.



You got a fast car.
But is it fast enough so you can fly away?
You gotta make a decision:
you leave tonight or live and die this way.

In the first lines of the song, she asks, "Is it fast enough so **we** can fly away." Why is it **you** here?

The repetition of the image of the fast car in the song is what we call a "motif." It repeats itself over and over, changing purposes through the song. We saw this to some extent in "The Dance." What is the role of the car here? How does it change through the song? How does she see the car at first? How does that change by the end of the song?



“Someday” by Steve Earle

There ain't a lot that you can do in this town.
You drive down to the lake, and then you turn back around.
You go to school, and you learn to read and write,
so you can walk into the county bank and
sign away your life.

Now I work at the fillin' station on the Interstate.
I'm pumpin' gasoline and countin' out-of-state plates.
They ask me, “How far into Memphis, son,” and,
“Where's the nearest beer?”
And they don't even know that there's a town around here.

Someday I'm finally gonna let go,
'cause I know there's a better way.
And I wanna know what's over that rainbow.
I'm gonna get out of here someday.

Now my brother went to college 'cause he played football.
But I'm still hangin' round 'cause I'm a little bit small.
But I got me a '67 Chevy, she's low and sleek and black.
Someday I'll put her on that interstate and never look back.

Someday I'm finally gonna let go,
'cause I know there's a better way.
And I wanna know what's over that rainbow.
I'm gonna get out of here someday.



“Someday” by Steve Earle

There ain't a lot that you can do in this town.
You drive down to the lake,
and then you turn back around.
You go to school and you learn
to read and write,
so you can walk into the county bank
and sign away your life.

What's the conflict here?
Is it internal, external, or both?

What he mean by this?

Now I work at the fillin' station on the Interstate,
pumpin' gasoline and countin' out of state plates.
They ask me, “How far into Memphis, son,”
and, “Where's the nearest beer?”
And they don't even know that there's a town around here.

What is ironic about his working at a gas station on the highway?

Someday I'm finally gonna let go,
'cause I know there's a better way.
And I wanna know what's over that rainbow.
I'm gonna get out of here someday.

Allusion:
over the rainbow to the pot of gold

Now my brother went to college
'cause he played football.
But I'm still hangin' round
'cause I'm a little bit small.

Brother uses talent to leave.



But I got me a 67 Chevy,
she's low and sleek and black.
Someday I'll put her on that interstate
and never look back.

His brother uses talent to leave; he is going to use transportation.

Someday I'm finally gonna let go
'Cause I know there's a better way
And I wanna know what's over that rainbow
I'm gonna get out of here someday

Do you think he is going to do it? When? Is "gonna" a promise kind of word?



“Don’t You Want Me?” by The Human League

You were working as a waitress in a cocktail bar
when I met you.

I picked you out, I shook you up, and turned you around -
turned you into someone new.

Now, five years later on you've got the world at your feet.
Success has been so easy for you.

But don't forget it's me who put you where you are now,
and I can put you back down, too.

(Chorus)

Don't, don't you want me?

You know I can't believe it when I hear that
you won't see me.

Don't, don't you want me?

You know I don't believe you when you say that
you don't need me.

It's much too late to find
you think you've changed your mind.

You'd better change it back, or we will both be sorry.

Don't you want me baby? Don't you want me? Oh

Don't you want me baby? Don't you want me? Oh

I was working as a waitress in a cocktail bar,
that much is true.

But even then I knew I'd find a much better place,
either with or without you.

The five years we have had have been such good times.



I still love you.
But now I think it's time I lived my life on my own.
I guess it's just what I must do.

(Chorus)

Don't you want me baby? Don't you want me? Oh
Don't you want me baby? Don't you want me? Oh

After "Fast Car," the conflict in here should be easy to identify. How do the two people in the song see the conflict differently? Is it common to see both sides of a conflict in a song? Is the male narrator in love and desperate, or is he threatening her? How far apart are those things?



“Breaking Us in Two” by Joe Jackson

Don't you feel like trying something new?
Don't you feel like breaking out or breaking us in two?
You don't do the things that I do.
You want to do the things I can't do -
always something breaking us in two.

You and I could never live alone,
but don't you feel like breaking out
just one day on your own?
Why does what I'm saying hurt you?
I didn't say that we were through -
always something breaking us in two.

They say two hearts should beat as one for us.
We'll fight it out to see it through.
I say that won't be too much fun for us ...
though it's oh so nice to get advice, it's oh so hard to do.

Could we be much closer if we tried?
We could stay at home and stare into each other's eyes.
Maybe we could last an hour.
Maybe then we'd see right through -
always something breaking us in two.



“Higher Love” by Steve Winwood

Think about it: there must be higher love
down in the heart or hidden in the stars above.
Without it, life is wasted time.
Look inside your heart, I’ll look inside mine.
Things look so bad everywhere.
In this whole world, what is fair?
We walk blind, and we try to see.
Falling behind in what could be.

Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Where’s that higher love I keep thinking of?

Is it internal or external
conflict going on here?
What is it that he wants?
What is he really seeking?

Worlds are turning, and we’re just hanging on,
facing our fear and standing out there alone.
A yearning, and it’s real to me.
There must be someone who’s feeling for me.

Things look so bad everywhere.
In this whole world, what is fair?
We walk blind and we try to see.
Falling behind in what could be.

Is that true? Is there
someone for
everyone? Is there
just one person?

Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Where’s that higher love I keep thinking of?



Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Bring be a higher love
I could rise above on a
higher love.

He thinks he would be able to rise above his yearning if he had this "higher love." Do you agree?

I will wait for it.
I'm not too late for it.
Until then, I'll sing my song
to cheer the night along.
Bring it...oh bring it...

Remember that conflict involves decision. What is his decision here?

I could light the night up with my soul on fire.
I could make the sun shine from pure desire.
Let me feel that love come over me.
Let me feel how strong it could be.

Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Where's that higher love I keep thinking of?



Song	Internal (man vs. self)	External (which type[s]?)	Decision
“Fast Car”			
“Someday”			
“Don’t You Want Me?”			
“Higher Love”			



“Please Come to Boston” by Kenny Chesney

“Please come to Boston for the springtime.
I'm staying here with some friends
and they've got lots of room.
You can sell your paintings on the sidewalk
by a café where I hope to be working soon.
Please come to Boston.”

She said, “No, boy you come home to me.”

She said, “Hey, ramblin' boy, why don't you settle down?
Boston ain't your kinda town.
There ain't no gold, and there ain't nobody like me.
I'm the number one fan of the man from Tennessee.”

“Please come to Denver to see the snowfall.
We'll move up into the mountains so far that we can't be
found. Throw ‘I love you’ echoes down the canyon,
and then lie awake at night ‘til they come back around.
Please come to Denver.”

She said, “No, boy you come home to me.”

She said, “Hey, ramblin' boy, why don't you settle down?
Denver ain't your kinda town.
There ain't no gold, and there ain't nobody like me.
I'm the number one fan of the man from Tennessee.”



Now this drifter's world goes 'round and 'round,
and I doubt if it's ever gonna stop.
And of all the dreams I've lost and found,
and all that I ain't got,
I need someone to cling to, somebody I can sing to.

“Please come to L.A. to live forever.
A California life alone is just too hard to live.
We’ll live in a house that looks out over the ocean,
and there's some stars that fell from the sky livin’ up on a hill
Please come to L.A.”

She said, “No, boy you come home to me.”

She said, “Hey, ramblin' boy, why don't you settle down?
L.A. ain't your kinda town.
There ain't no gold, and there ain't nobody like me.
I'm the number one fan of the man from Tennessee.
I'm the number one fan of the man from Tennessee.”



Lesson 8. Setting

- Ask if any of the students have ever watched *Survivor*. Ask if they think the show would be as interesting if it were set in the some small town in the middle of nowhere with a Walmart and nothing else. Would they be interested in “Survivor: Walmart Edition?” Discuss the ways in which the setting is crucial. Would it be different if parent lost a child in the halls of this school versus losing him in the middle of the Sahara desert? Why?
- Explain that setting is the world in which the story exists. It is the place, the time, the culture, and the environment in which a story occurs.
- Some authors describe the setting with a lot of detail, and others let the reader find out about the setting in bits and pieces.
- Frequently in music there is a setting for the song. Explain that you are going to play a song about a place, and you want them to look for things in the song that are specific to the setting.
- Play “Walking in Memphis” by Marc Cohn. Count the number of things the students recorded.
- Show the commentary lyrics that have the clues underlined and compare the clues detected, discussing the types of details he uses to describe Memphis. Ask if this is what everyone who lived in Memphis would emphasize (blues, music, etc.). Explain that the same setting can be seen in different ways by different people.
- Play “I Love L.A.” by Randy Newman and then play “Lullaby” by Shawn Mullins. Discuss the different ways they see the same place. What details do they use to support their views of the same town?
- Have students write a description of their town or school that is positive (in the vein of “I Love L.A.”) and then one that is negative like “Lullaby.”
- Note: You can pair this lesson with a comparison reading of a traditional version of *Cinderella* and a reading of *The Persian Cinderella* by Shirley Climo. The settings can be compared and discussed.



“Walking in Memphis” by Marc Cohn

Put on my blue suede shoes, and I boarded the plane.
Touched down in the land of the Delta Blues
In the middle of the pouring rain
W.C. Handy, won't you look down over me?
Yeah, I got a first class ticket,
but I'm as blue as a boy can be.

Then I'm walking in Memphis,
just walking with my feet ten feet off of Beale.
Walking in Memphis, but do I really feel the way I feel?

Saw the ghost of Elvis on Union Avenue.
Followed him up to the gates of Graceland,
then I watched him walk right through.
Now security they did not see him.
They just hovered 'round his tomb.
But there's a pretty little thing waiting for the King
down in the Jungle Room.

Then I'm walking in Memphis,
just walking with my feet ten feet off of Beale.
Walking in Memphis, but do I really feel the way I feel?

They've got catfish on the table, they've got gospel in the air
and Reverend Green be glad to see you when you haven't
got a prayer. But, boy, you've got a prayer in Memphis.



Now Muriel plays piano every Friday at the Hollywood.
And they brought me down to see her
and they asked me if I would do a little number.
And I sang with all my might, and she said, "Tell me are you
a Christian, child?"
And I said, "Ma'am, I am tonight."

Then I'm walking in Memphis,
just walking with my feet ten feet off of Beale.
Walking in Memphis, but do I really feel the way I feel?
(repeat)

Put on my blue suede shoes, and I boarded the plane...
Touched down in the land of the Delta Blues
in the middle of the pouring rain...
Touched down in the land of the Delta Blues
in the middle of the pouring rain...



“Walking in Memphis” by Marc Cohn

Put on my blue suede shoes
and I boarded the plane.

reference to Elvis song

Touched down in the land of the Delta Blues
In the middle of the pouring rain.

W.C. Handy, ~~won't you look down over me?~~

father of blues music

Yeah, I got a first class ticket,
but I'm as blue as a boy can be.

Then I'm walking in Memphis,
just walking with my feet ten feet off of
Beale.

home of the blues, the birthplace of rock

Walking in Memphis, but do I really feel the way I feel?

Saw the ghost of Elvis on Union Avenue.

main street

Followed him up to the gates of Graceland,
then I watched him walk right through.

Elvis's home

Now security, they did not see him.

They just hovered 'round his tomb.

But there's a pretty little thing,

waiting for the King down in the Jungle Room.

famous room in the basement of his house

When I was walking in Memphis,
just walking with my feet ten feet
off of Beale.

Walking in Memphis, but do I really feel the way I feel?



They've got catfish on the table.
They've got gospel in the air.
And Reverend Green be glad to see you
when you haven't got a prayer.
But, boy, you've got a prayer in Memphis.

Now Muriel plays piano
Every Friday at the Hollywood.
And they brought me down to see her,
and they asked me if I would
do a little number.
And I sang with all my might.
And she said, "Tell me are you a
Christian, child?"
And I said, "Ma'am, I am tonight"

When I was walking in Memphis,
just walking with my feet ten feet off of Beale.
Walking in Memphis, but do I really feel the way I feel?

Put on my blue suede shoes and I boarded the plane...
Touched down in the land of the Delta Blues
in the middle of the pouring rain...
Touched down in the land of the Delta Blues
In the middle of the pouring rain ...

Now he references African-American cultural influence in Memphis, including the church and its music. Listen for the shift to the more churchy-sound of the music.

He feels as if he's 10 feet off the ground when he's in Memphis, yet the tone is somewhat melancholy. How can you be both glad to be someplace and also sad?



“I Love L.A.” by Randy Newman

Hate New York City.
It's cold and it's damp,
and all the people dressed like monkeys.
Let's leave Chicago to the Eskimos.
That town's a little bit too rugged
For you and me, you bad girl...

Rollin' down the Imperial Highway,
with a big nasty redhead at my side,
Santa Ana wind blowin' hot from the north,
and we was born to ride.

Roll down the window, put down the top,
crank up the Beach Boys, baby,
don't let the music stop.
We're gonna ride it till we just can't ride it no more.

From the South Bay to the Valley,
from the West Side to the East Side,
everybody's very happy,
'Cause the sun is shining all the time.
Looks like another perfect day.
I love L.A. (We love it)
I love L.A. (We love it)

Look at that mountain!
Look at those trees!
Look at that bum over there, man, he's down on his knees.
Look at these women!
There ain't nothin' like 'em nowhere.



Century Boulevard! (We love it)
Victory Boulevard! (We love it)
Santa Monica Boulevard! (We love it)
Sixth Street! (We love it, we love it)
We love L.A.
(We Love It)
I Love L.A.
(We Love It)
I Love L.A.
(We Love It)



“Lullaby” by Shawn Mullins

She grew up with the children of the stars in the
Hollywood Hills and the Boulevard.
Her parents threw big parties, everyone was there.
They hung out with folks like Dennis Hopper, and
Bob Seeger, and Sonny and Cher.

Now, she feels safe in this bar on Fairfax, and from the
stage I can tell that she can't let go and she can't relax.
And just before she hangs her head to cry,
I sing to her a lullaby.

I sing...

“Everything's gonna be all right, rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye.
Everything's gonna be all right, rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye.”

She still lives with her mom outside the city,
down that street about a half a mile.
And all her friends tell her she's so pretty,
but she'd be a whole lot prettier
if she smiled once in a while.
`Cause even her smile looks like a frown.
Yeah, she's seen her share of devils in this angel town.

Everything's gonna be all right, rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye
everything's gonna be all right, rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye



I told her, "I ain't so sure about this place.
It's hard to play a gig in this town and keep a straight face.
Seems like everyone here's got a plan.
It's kind of like Nashville with a tan, but,

Everything's gonna be all right, rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye.
Everything's gonna be all right, rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye.

Everything's gonna be all right, rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye.
Everything's gonna be all right, rock-a-bye, rock-a-bye."



Lesson 9. Characterization

- Use the Characterization Handout through the course of this lesson as an analysis tool. You may also wish to use the Character Analysis Printable.
- Play “Brandy,” and discuss the two characters in the song. Who is the protagonist? Who or what is the antagonist? Who do we sympathize with? Are the characters flat or round? Are they static or dynamic?
- Play “Richard Cory,” and give students time to analyze the characters (both the narrator and Richard Cory) using their notes. Emphasize how the narrator is a foil to Cory.
- Note: This would be a good lesson to have students find a song of their own that describes a character and have them analyze it using the handout for guidance (answering some of the same questions discussed in class).



"Brandy (You're A Fine Girl)" by Looking Glass

There's a port on a western bay,
and it serves a hundred ships a day.
Lonely sailors pass the time away,
and talk about their homes

Notice the setting here; how does it influence the characters?

And there's a girl in this harbor town,
and she works, laying whiskey down.
They say, "Brandy, fetch another round."
She serves them whiskey and wine.

The sailors say, "Brandy, you're a fine girl.
What a good wife you would be.
Yeah, your eyes could steal a sailor
from the sea."

Why her eyes? How are eyes similar to the sea?

Brandy wears a braided chain
made of finest silver from the north of Spain,
a locket that bears the name
of a man that Brandy loved.

Why does she still wear the locket?

He came on a summer's day -
bringing gifts from far away.
But he made it clear he couldn't stay;
no harbor was his home.
The sailor said, "Brandy, you're a fine girl.
What a good wife you would be.



But my life, my lover, my lady, is the sea."

Yeah, Brandy used to watch his eyes
when he told his sailor's story.

She could feel the ocean fall and rise;
she saw its raging glory.

But he had always told the truth,
Lord, he was an honest man,
and Brandy does her best to understand.

Notice the
role of the
eyes again.
Notice how
she can see
what he sees.

At night, when the bars close down,
Brandy walks through a silent town,
and loves a man who's not around.
She still can hear him say - she hears him say,

"Brandy, you're a fine girl.
What a good wife you would be.
But my life, my lover, my lady, is the sea."

How can the
sea be a
man's wife?
What does he
mean by this
metaphor?

"Brandy, you're a fine girl
What a good wife you would be.
But my life, my lover, my lady, is the sea."

There is a saying: "Well done is better than
well said." How does that apply here?



“Richard Cory” by Simon & Garfunkel

They say that Richard Cory owns
one half of this whole town,
with political connections to spread his wealth around.
Born into society, a banker's only child,
he had everything a man could want: ←
power, grace, and style.

Is that really
everything someone
could want?

But I work in his factory, and I curse the life I'm living,
and I curse my poverty,
and I wish that I could be,
oh, I wish that I could be,
oh, I wish that I could be
Richard Cory.

What is it about Richard
Cory's life that this
person wants?

The papers print his picture almost everywhere he goes:
Richard Cory at the opera!
Richard Cory at a show!
And the rumor of his parties,
and the orgies on his yacht!
Oh, he surely must be happy
with everything he's got.

Is that true? If you have
a lot of money, are you
always happy?

But I work in his factory, and I curse the life I'm living,
and I curse my poverty, and I wish that I could be,
oh, I wish that I could be, oh, I wish that I could be
Richard Cory.

He freely gave to charity; he had the common touch.
And they were grateful for his patronage,



and they thanked him very much.
So my mind was filled with wonder when the evening
headlines read:

"Richard Cory went home last night,
and put a bullet through his head."

Do you see the irony in
this? The other man envies
him, and yet Richard Cory
is despondent.

But I work in his factory, and I curse the life I'm living,
and I curse my poverty, and I wish that I could be,
oh, I wish that I could be, oh, I wish that I could be
Richard Cory.

We learn about Richard Cory only from the
narrator. He himself never speaks nor describes
himself. How does that influence how well we can
understand the character?

Have you noticed that even when terrible things
happen to celebrities, people still envy them?
Why is that?



Lesson 10. Plot

- Using literary term handout, discuss plot development.
- Play “The Devil Went Down to Georgia.”
- Play again, marking plot stages.



“The Devil Went Down to Georgia” by The Charlie Daniels Band

The devil went down to Georgia.
He was looking for a soul to steal.
He was in a bind 'cause he was way behind.
He was willin' to make a deal.

When he came across this young man
sawin' on a fiddle and playin' it hot.
And the devil jumped up on a hickory stump and said, "Boy,
let me tell you what. I guess you didn't know it, but I'm a
fiddle player, too. And if you'd care to take a dare, I'll make a
bet with you. Now you play a pretty good fiddle, boy, but
give the devil his due. I bet a fiddle of gold against your
soul, 'cause I think I'm better than you."

The boy said, "My name's Johnny, and it might be a sin, but
I'll take your bet, you're gonna regret, 'cause I'm the best
that's ever been."

Johnny you rosin up your bow and play your fiddle hard.
'Cause hell's broke loose in Georgia,
and the devil deals it hard.
And if you win, you get this shiny fiddle made of gold.
But if you lose, the devil gets your soul.

The devil opened up his case and he said,
"I'll start this show."
And fire flew from his fingertips as he rosined up his bow.
And he pulled the bow across his strings,



and it made an evil hiss. Then a band of demons joined in, and it sounded something like this.

When the devil finished, Johnny said, "Well you're pretty good ol' son. But sit down in that chair, right there, and let me show you how it's done."

Fire on the mountain, run boys, run.
The devil's in the house of the risin' sun.
Chicken in the bread pan, pickin' out dough.
"Granny, does your dog bite?"
"No, child, no."

The devil bowed his head
because he knew that he'd been beat.
And he laid that golden fiddle
on the ground at Johnny's feet.
Johnny said, "Devil, just come on back if you ever want to try again. 'Cause I told you once, you son of a gun, I'm the best that's ever been."

And he played:
Fire on the mountain, run boys, run.
The devil's in the house of the risin' sun.
Chicken in the bread pan pickin' out dough.
"Granny, does your dog bite?"
"No, child, no."



Lesson 11. Irony

- Using literary elements handout, discuss the three types of irony – verbal, situational and dramatic.
- Play “Ironic” and have students identify the types of irony in the song. One reason this song is a good example is that her tone itself is ironic. Point out how she says, “It figures.” Tally the uses of situational and verbal irony, and then compare the results.
- Play “Don’t Take the Girl” and ask students to identify the underlying irony in the song (the boy changes his mind completely about her – situational). Be sure to discuss how the character of Johnny is dynamic, but the girl remains static.
- Discuss if they think it is dramatic irony or not (arguable!).



“Ironic” by Alanis Morissette

An old man turned ninety-eight.
He won the lottery, and died the next day.
It's a black fly in your Chardonnay.
It's a death row pardon two minutes too late.
Isn't it ironic? Don't you think?

It's like rain on your wedding day.
It's a free ride when you've already paid.
It's the good advice that you just didn't take.
Who would've thought? It figures.

Mr. Play-It-Safe was afraid to fly.
He packed his suitcase and kissed his kids good-bye.
He waited his whole d*** life to take that flight.
And as the plane crashed down, he thought,
“Well isn't this nice?”
And isn't it ironic? Don't you think?

It's like rain on your wedding day.
It's a free ride when you've already paid.
It's the good advice that you just didn't take.
Who would've thought? It figures.

Well, life has a funny way of sneaking up on you
When you think everything's okay,
and everything's going right
And life has a funny way of helping you out when
You think everything's gone wrong,



and everything blows up in your face.

It's a traffic jam when you're already late.

It's a no-smoking sign on your cigarette break.

It's like ten thousand spoons when all you need is a knife.

It's meeting the man of my dreams,
and then meeting his beautiful wife.

And isn't it ironic? Don't you think?

A little too ironic? And, yeah, I really do think...

It's like rain on your wedding day.

It's a free ride when you've already paid.

It's the good advice that you just didn't take.

Who would've thought? It figures.

Life has a funny way of sneaking up on you.

Life has a funny, funny way of helping you out ...
helping you out.



“Don’t Take the Girl” by Tim McGraw

Johnny's daddy was taking him fishin'.

He was eight years old.

Little girl came through the front gate
holdin' a fishin' pole.

His dad looked down and smiled,
said, "We can't leave her behind.

Son, I know you don't want her to go,
but someday you'll change your mind."

And Johnny said, "Take Jimmy Johnson.

Take Tommy Tompson. Take my best friend, Bo.

Take anybody that you want as long as she don't go.

Take any boy in the world.

Daddy, please, don't take the girl."

Same old boy, same sweet girl,

ten years down the road.

He held her tight and kissed her lips in
front of the picture show.

Stranger came and pulled a gun,
grabbed her by the arm, said,

"If you do what I tell you to, there won't be any harm."

And Johnny said, "Take my money.

Take my wallet. Take my credit cards.

Here's the watch that my grandpa gave me.

Here's the key to my car.

Mister, give it a whirl.

But, please don't take the girl."



Same old boy, same sweet girl.
Five years down the road.
There's gonna be a little one,
and she says it's time to go.

Doctor says, "The baby's fine, but you'll have to leave,
'cause his mamma's fading fast."
And Johnny hit his knees, and there he prayed,
"Take the very breath you gave me.
Take the heart from my chest.
I'll gladly take her place if you'll let me.
Make this my last request.
Take me out of this world.
God, please don't take the girl."

Johnny's daddy was taking him fishin'
when he was eight years old.



Lesson 12. Allusion

- Explain that allusion is a reference to something in literature or history or mythology or religion or cultural knowledge that assumes the reader or hearer knows what it refers to.
- For example, if I say it is raining so hard I should build an ark, what is that a reference to? (Noah's ark).
- Explain that you are going to play a song that has a core allusion.
- Play the song, and then ask if they can identify the allusion. Ask them to rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, how well they understand what's going on in the song.
- Play the song again, discussing the allusions using the commentary sheet. Play the song again and ask them to rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, how well they understand what's going on in the song.
- Explain that this shows just one small example of how understanding allusions can increase your understanding of what you read.



"Higher" by Creed

When dreaming, I'm guided to another world
time and time again.

At sunrise, I fight to stay asleep 'cause
I don't want to leave the comfort of this place.
'Cause there's a hunger, a longing to escape
from the life I live when I'm awake.

So let's go there. Let's make our escape.
Come on, let's go there. Let's ask, "Can we stay?"
Can you take me higher, to a place where blind men see?
Can you take me higher, to a place with golden streets?

Although I would like our world to change,
it helps me to appreciate those nights and those dreams.
But, my friend, I'd sacrifice all those nights
if I could make the Earth and my dreams the same.
The only difference is to let love replace all our hate.

So let's go there. Let's make our escape.
Come on, let's go there. Let's ask, "Can we stay?"
Can you take me higher, to a place where blind men see?
Can you take me higher, to a place with golden streets?
So let's go there. Let's go there.
Come on, let's go there. Let's ask, "Can we stay?"

Up high, I feel like I'm alive for the very first time.
Set up high, I'm strong enough to take these dreams and
make them mine.



Set up high I'm strong enough to take these dreams and
make them mine.

Can you take me higher,
to a place where blind men see?
Can you take me higher,
to a place with golden streets?

Can you take me higher,
to a place where blind men see?
Can you take me higher,
to a place with golden streets?



"Higher" by Creed

When dreaming, I'm guided to another world
time and time again.
At sunrise I fight to stay asleep
'cause I don't want to leave the comfort of this place.
'Cause there's a hunger, a longing to escape
from the life I live when I'm awake.

So let's go there.
Let's make our escape.
Come on, let's go there.
Let's ask, "Can we stay?"

Can you take me higher,
to a place where blind men see?
Can you take me higher,
to a place with golden streets?

Where's a place that is high, blind men see, and has streets paved with gold?

Although I would like our world to change,
it helps me to appreciate
those nights and those dreams.
But, my friend, I'd sacrifice all those nights
if I could make the Earth
and my dreams the same.

Is he literally in another world? No, this is figurative language.

Is he literally hungry? Look at the word(s) that shows you what he means by hunger.

So, what does he want? He wants to make what on earth?



The only difference is
to let love replace all our hate.
So let's go there.
Let's make our escape.
Come on, let's go there.
Let's ask, "Can we stay?"

What does he
think it will
take to make
that happen?

Can you take me higher,
to a place where blind men see?
Can you take me higher,
to a place with golden streets?

What does it
take to stay
in heaven?
Do you think
he really
wants that?

So let's go there, let's go there.
Come on, let's go there.
Let's ask, "Can we stay?"

Up high I feel like I'm alive for the very first time.
Set up high, I'm strong enough to take these dreams
and make them mine.
Set up high, I'm strong enough to take these dreams
and make them mine.

Why do people feel
powerful when
they are higher
than others?

Can you take me higher,
to a place where blind men see?
Can you take me higher,
to a place with golden streets?

To whom do you
think he's asking
this question?