

# SONGWRITING WORKSHOP

Instructor: Mrs. Lisa Forkish  
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Fall 2014- Spring 2015  
Wed Period 8-9 in RM 322

## **Course Description:**

Whether you are a beginning songwriter, just a lyricist, just a composer, or someone who has never written a song in your life, this elective workshop-style class will provide students with techniques and tools for writing a great song. In this course, students will learn about song form and structure, melody, rhyme scheme, use of imagery and metaphor, lyric setting, harmonizing a melody, basic song notation, chord progressions, accompaniment, song performance and more. This course is open to both instrumental and vocal music students. Basic guitar/keyboard/ukulele or other chordal instrument skills recommended but not required. Instrumentalists with willingness to sing also recommended, but not required.

## **Course Objectives:**

Each week, students will learn new songwriting tools and will be given class time to apply learned techniques to their writing. Students will be assigned a small weekly writing assignment and will also participate in regular in-class sharing and performances of songs in progress. Students will gain confidence through sharing their work in a classroom setting and will be provided with constructive feedback by the instructor, as well as their peers. Students will complete a midterm and final project each semester and will complete the year with at least one full song.

## **Grading Criteria:**

All students will be graded on the following:

- Attendance and Participation (15 pts. per day)
  - 5 points off for each tardy
  - 5-10 points off for unsatisfactory classroom behavior

*Note: see handbook for Vocal Department behavior expectations*
- Written Assignments: (25 points each)
- Mid-term Presentation(50 points)
- Final Presentation (100 points)

## **Course Policies:**

- Students will respect and follow all OSA policies outlined in the student handbook. Students will arrive on time, prepared and focused.
- Students who are absent are given a 0/15 for the day.
- Students with excused absences that meet the notification requirements stated in the OSA handbook, will receive an EX/15, provided that they provide VM teacher with either email or hand-written note from parent to verify that absence was excused.

- No late homework will be accepted unless the student has an excused absence (list of approved excused absences can be found in the student handbook).
  - Note: For an excused absence, a student must turn in the assignment the day after he/she returns to school. There are no exceptions.
- Students are expected to take pride in their classroom by keeping it neat and clean.
- Students must be seated and ready with all necessary materials by the second bell. Students who do not arrive on time are considered tardy and will lose 5 participation points for the day.
- No eating, chewing gum, or use of cell phones in the classroom. Failure to adhere to these rules may result in deducted daily participation points.

**Required Materials:**

- Pencil and eraser
- Songwriting notebook
- Folder/binder for hand-outs
- Rhyming dictionary, thesaurus and/or smart phone/laptop/tablet (use of these devices will be allowed with instructor permission)