

STUDY GUIDE



DISCIPLINE:
LITERARY ARTS

ARTIST:
JUSTJAMAAL THEPOET

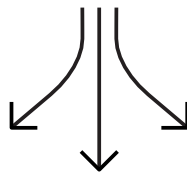


The following package is provided as a supplemental resource to enhance and support the artist’s visit.

It includes curricular connections, assessment strategies, and suggested classroom extensions. All materials are intended for use at the teacher’s discretion and may be adapted as necessary to suit the specific needs of the students.

THIS STUDY GUIDE

Discipline / Artist Example:



**Curriculum
Connections**



Suggested Classroom Extensions



**Assessment
Strategies**

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STUDY GUIDE: LITERARY ARTS

SONGWriters UNITE!

Program Overview

Artist Name: JustJamaal ThePoet

Artist Bio: JustJamaal ThePoet is an award-winning poet, educator, and performer who served as Ottawa’s poet laureate (2017–2019) and Carleton University’s Artist in Residence (2019–2020). Co-founder of Origin Arts + Community Centre, he connects deeply with audiences through workshops and performances on topics like emotional growth, parenting, and world issues. He lives in Ottawa with his wife and six children.

Program Description: Participants will learn the framework that songwriters use to create lyrics for a song. Students will explore song themes, melody composition, songwriting structures and language selection that they will use to create songs of their own. From exploration to development to presentation, this workshop invites students to find their muse, write it out in a song and share their lyrics!

Artistic Discipline: Literary Arts

Recommended Grade Levels: 4 – 12

Session Logistics: In person or online



Cultural Context: Black Legacy, North American History

Vocab bank/glossary: [Click here](#)



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Curriculum Connections

Learning Themes:

- Strand A – Creating and Presenting
 - Apply the creative process to create and perform music for a variety of purposes, using the elements and techniques of music. (Grades 4-8)
 - Use a variety of techniques and technological tools when performing music and composing and/or arranging music. (Grades 9-12)
- Strand B – Reflecting, Responding, and Analysing
 - Apply the critical analysis process to communicate their feelings, ideas, and understandings in response to a variety of music and musical experiences. (Grades 4-8)
 - Demonstrate an understanding of how performing, creating, and critically analysing music has affected their skills and personal development. (Grades 9-12)
- Use a variety of tools, techniques, and technologies to create integrated art works/productions that communicate specific messages and demonstrate creativity. (Grades 9-12)

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Extend the Learning (Discussion Prompts)

Here are optional discussion prompts to extend the artist session in the classroom. These are recommended and are not mandatory. Please use what is best for your classroom. You can also find suggested activities in the additional resources package.

GRADES
4-6

Pre

- How do you think songs are different from poems?
- What do you think a songwriter needs to think about before writing?

During

- How did you choose the theme or idea for your song?
- Did you notice how rhythm and melody help shape your lyrics?

Post

- What part of songwriting was easiest or hardest for you?
- How did sharing your lyrics feel?
- If you could write another song, what would it be about?

GRADES**7-8****Pre**

- What makes a song lyric powerful or memorable?
- How do songs use storytelling techniques to connect with the listener?

During

- How did melody influence the way you structured your lyrics?
- How did group sharing or feedback affect your creative choices?

Post

- What did you learn about your own writing style through songwriting?
- What role do emotions play in writing lyrics?

GRADES**9-12****Pre**

- What do you think are the core elements of great songwriting?
- In your opinion, how do songs reflect the culture or generation they come from?
- How can songwriting be used to explore or process personal or social issues?

During

- What choices did you make around rhythm, melody, or phrasing to fit your theme?
- How did you balance creativity with structure in your lyrics?

Post

- What impact did writing and sharing your lyrics have on you as a writer?
- How might you use songwriting as a tool for storytelling, activism, or healing?

LITERARY ARTS OVERVIEW

Literary Arts education consists of storytelling, poetry, and creative writing and is foundational to developing literate, reflective, and critically engaged members of society. By engaging with diverse stories, students gain insight into complex perspectives and histories, fostering inclusion and emotional resilience. Writing and sharing stories also supports mental health and builds a sense of community and belonging.

The creative and critical analysis process guide students in imagining, crafting, and reflecting on literary work. These frameworks align with MASC's core values and, when paired with artist-led sessions, empower students to become thoughtful creators and engaged learners.

Literary arts naturally support cross-curricular learning. In social studies, students explore historical context through narrative; in science they use writing to explain concepts. These interdisciplinary links help students see knowledge as interconnected and relevant to real-world applications.



APPENDIX

Vocabulary bank/glossary:

- **Lyrics:** The words of a song that tell a story or express feelings.
- **Theme:** The main idea or message in your song (like love, hope, change, identity).
- **Melody:** The tune or musical flow that carries the lyrics.
- **Song Structure:** The way a song is organized, often using verses, choruses, and bridges.
- **Verse:** A section of a song that usually changes each time and adds new details.
- **Chorus:** The repeating part of a song that shares the main message and is often the catchiest.
- **Bridge:** A short section that sounds different and adds contrast to the verse and chorus.
- **Metaphor:** A comparison that says something is something else to create a strong image or idea.
- **Rhyme:** When words sound the same at the end (like “fire” and “desire”).
- **Imagery:** Descriptive language that helps the listener see, hear, or feel what you’re writing about.
- **Hook:** A catchy line or melody that grabs the listener’s attention—often in the chorus.

Student Health and Well-Being

How did today's activity make you feel (body and mind)?

- Choose a colour to describe that feeling. Use one word to describe how your energy changed after the activity.

Mini-Activity: Feelings Freeze Frame (Tableau)

- Ask students to create a freeze-frame (tableau) that shows how they're feeling right after the activity.
- Then, they can:
 - Share it with a partner or small group
 - Draw their freeze-frame in a journal
 - Write or talk about what made them feel that way

Additional Resources

- Assessment Guide
- Cultural Protocol/Sensitivity Guide
- Evaluation Document
- Resource Database for Further Learning