Sing Out Loud! Wordplay: Music Resources for English Language Teachers

Wordplay is an exciting collaboration between the U.S. Department of State's American English, American Music Abroad, and American Voices programs designed to bring music and lyrics into the English Language classrooms across the world!

In this webinar, we will:

• explore this new resource, which includes downloadable audio tracks, videos, and classroom-ready activities
• discuss the benefits of using music in the English language classroom, how to access these free materials, and how to use and adapt them for your own teaching context.
Katrina J. Schmidt

Katrina received her MA in TESOL at the New School and has taught for over 12 years in universities in the United States, Colombia, Mexico, and China. She has served as a U.S. Department of State English Language Fellow in Mexico, and she is currently an English Language Specialist in Brazil. Katrina works at Loyola University New Orleans in the Intensive English Language Program and as a consultant for FHI 360.

Katrina’s interests include materials design, technology in education, and social justice. In her spare time, she loves to travel, cook, and spend time with her husband.
Sing Out Loud Wordplay:
Music Resources for English Language Teachers

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In this session, we will...

Discuss the benefits of music for language learning

Learn about the Sing Out Loud: Wordplay project

Get ideas on how to use Wordplay in your classroom
Brainstorm

Why is music important when learning a language?
Music in the classroom...

• Creates a fun atmosphere

• Provides a feeling of community

• Incorporates students’ generational culture

• Reduces anxiety and increases motivation
Music in the classroom...

- Authentic Language
  - Vocabulary
  - Chunks of language
  - Slang
- Pronunciation practice
  - Prosody, stress, and intonation
  - Specific sounds
  - Connected speech
- Opportunities for memorization and retention
- Culture
Do you use music to teach about culture in your classes?
In this session, we will...

Discuss the benefits of music for language learning

Learn about the Sing Out Loud: Wordplay project

Get ideas on how to use Wordplay in your classroom
Sing Out Loud: Wordplay
Sing Out Loud

Thirteen bands and musicians from the United States have created songs for you to use in your classrooms!

• Different genres

• New, fresh approach
What type of music is your favorite?

What’s your students’ favorite?
Sing Out Loud

These materials are Creative Commons resources. That means they are...

• Copyright free
• Printable
• Downloadable
• Shareable
Sing Out Loud: Wordplay

Each artist has:

- A featured song - music video, lyrics only video, and audio file
- Video activities
- Lesson plans
- Glossary
- Artist bio
- Snapshot activities
- A printable materials package
Have you used teaching resources from the American English website?

What is your favorite resource?
Find Wordplay at American English
Find Wordplay at American English
Find Wordplay at American English

U.S. CULTURE, SONGS & GAMES

Resources about U.S. culture plus songs and games to use in the classroom.
Find Wordplay at American English

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Featuring artists from the American Music Abroad program, Wordplay links up the drivers of the English language with people learning it to create a fresh take on learning. It enhances our understanding of English in the way that it is spoken and adapted, especially through music.

Visit Website

Format: MP3, Text

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sub radio: What You Want to Hear
Download Worksheets and Audio at American English

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Sub radio: What You Want to Hear**

**Genre:** Indie Pop, Pop  
**Location:** USA  
**Group Size:** 5 members  
**Artist Homepage:** [https://www.sub-radio.com/](https://www.sub-radio.com/)

Silver Spring, MD-based Sub-Radio makes indie pop that grooves, stabs, winks, punches, and inspires. Founded by six childhood friends, they built a following in their hometown of Washington, D.C. on the strength of ecstatic live shows and a stream of releases. Following a national tour in 2019, their 2020 EP, produced by Andrew Maury (Shawn Mendes, Lizzo, COIN) and Mike Kamerman (Smallpools), takes the band in a bigger and brighter direction than ever.

Sub-Radio is Adam Bradley (vocals), Matt Prodanovitch (guitar, vocals), Michael Pereira (drums), John Pengay (keys, guitar, vocals), Barry Siford (bass), and Kyle Cochran (guitar, keys).

**Resources**

- Sub radio: All Activities
  - Text (PDF)
- Sub radio: What You Want to Hear
  - Song (MP3)

**Format:** MP3, Text
Visit the Wordplay Website

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Wordplay Resources

• Worksheets with Lesson Plans
• Audio
• Music Videos
• Karaoke Videos
• Musician Videos
• Snapshots
• Short 30-Second Videos

Remember, you can download the worksheets and audio files!
Choose an Artist

LANGUAGE PACKAGES

BLACK ALLEY
Band, Drums, Gogo, Hood Rock, Trap

SETH GLIER
Piano, Songwriter

GINA CHAVEZ
Folk, Latinx, Pop

BEN WILL
Funk, Hip Hop, Jazz, R&B

TONEY MEMMEL AND HIS BAND
Singer, Songwriter

TAMARA MADE
Pop, Soul

SUB-RADIO
Indie Pop, Pop

LOHAI
Jazz, Pop

Scroll to the bottom of the Wordplay website to find the language packages!
Featured Song

Listen online or download to save!
Do you use audio or video in your classes?
Featured Karaoke Video
What genre/style of music is Sub-Radio?
Would your students like this song?
Downloadable Content

Wordplay is brought to you by ECA/AUL, American Music Abroad, and American Voices.

Download Full Lesson Package

We have created lesson plans and a video series to use in the classroom. Scroll down to see all lesson materials or download the full package here.
Worksheets

LESSON PLANS
Download these lesson plans for use in the classroom. Refer back to the videos above while teaching. These publications are available free of charge online: http://www.americanenglish.state.gov

Scroll to the bottom of the artist’s page to find the individual worksheet activities!
Lesson Plans

Step by step instructions

Lesson Plan

1. Print the second page of this activity for all students.
2. Visit thelyricsproject.org/package/black-alley and watch the video “Be Me.”
3. Ask students to take 1-2 minutes to look at the song lyrics before listening.
4. Play the song and ask students to change the underlined words into the slang or shortened words they hear in the song. You can choose to provide your students with a word bank. (Ex. Trying to → trynna)
5. Put students into groups of 2-3 to check answers.
6. Project the lyrics gap-fill sheet on the board, and ask students to come to the board to fill in the missing words, or list the numbers on the board and ask students to write the answers for each number.

Worksheets have lesson plans!
Lesson Plans

• Ideas for different levels

• Online Teaching Tips

More Challenging

Create a Gratitude Wall in the classroom, and tape students’ sentences to the wall. Students can add more sentences about what makes them happy throughout the week.

Online Tip

Create a Padlet board (https://padlet.com/) and ask students to write 5 sentences about what makes them happy. Then ask them to read their classmates’ sentences and look for similar answers.
Glossary

View word definitions on the website or download the worksheet!

PROGRAM MATERIALS
Click the tabs below to access all the materials for Wordplay.

| LESSON PLANS | LYRICS | GLOSSARY | ICONS |

A2 LEVEL WORDS

chuch
noun
A building used for Christian religious ceremonies

history
noun
Past events or the study of past events

lies
verb
To say or write something that is not true

repeat
verb
To happen or do again

rock
verb (informal)
To affect or influence someone or something powerfully

noun
An opportunity or responsibility to do or use something before or after other people

B1 LEVEL WORDS
VIDEO ACTIVITIES

SONG INSPIRATION
Black Alley talks about the story behind their song.

ABOUT MY INSTRUMENT
How the drums work with Black Alley’s style.

SPOKEN VS. WRITTEN
How speaking differs from writing, especially through lyrics.

SONG WRITING PROCESS
How Black Alley writes their songs through storytelling.

CULTURE REFERENCES
How “Be Me” is about being your authentic self.

HOOD ROCK STYLE
Black Alley’s unique genre of trap, rock, and gogo.
1. What does “we gon’ be alright” mean?

2. Why did she choose to sing the words “we gon’ be alright” like this?
Snapshot Activities

SNAPSHOTS

CLICK TO WATCH!
Short question videos to use in the classroom to start new conversations in a modern “Stories” format.

The short games can be used with the Snapshot videos for a quick activity in the classroom.

SNAPSHOT ACTIVITIES

SNOWBALL FIGHT
Students try to match answers to with the students who wrote them.

STAND WHERE YOU STAND
Students move to a specific spot in the room, and stand together to show answers to a prompt.

QUIZ, QUIZ, TRADE
Students ask and answer a series of set questions in pairs.

CHOREOGRAPHY
Students compete to remember gestures and sounds created for common vocabulary.

COUNT ME IN
Students compete to make small groups as quickly as possible.

30-second videos with short classroom activities
Snapshot Activities

Snowball Fight

Materials Needed
- small piece of paper (1 per student)

Step 1
The teacher writes 3-5 of the prompts from Snapshots! videos on the board.

My favorite food is ________.
My favorite city is _________.
My favorite holiday is _________.
My favorite animal is _________.
My favorite exercise is _________.

30-second videos with short classroom activities
Snapshot Activities

30-second videos with short classroom activities
In this session, we will...

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Sing Out Loud Wordplay

Many different types of English language activities for different levels of students!

- Vocabulary
- Speaking
- Listening
- Writing
- Grammar
- Pronunciation
Have you used music in your English classes before? If so, what topics have you taught using music?
Example Activity: Lyrics Gap

WORDPLAY Irregular Past Lyrics Gap Beginner/Intermediate
“Tell me what you want to hear” Sub-Radio

Activity Summary
✓ Practice listening for irregular past tense verbs.

Lesson Plan

Print enough lyrics gap-fill sheets for each student.

1. Give each student their own lyrics gap-fill sheet.
2. Ask them to take 1-2 minutes to look at the song lyrics before listening.
3. Play the song and ask students to fill in the missing irregular past tense words. Play the song a second time to complete the worksheet.
4. Put students into groups of 2-3 to check answers.
5. Project the lyrics gap-fill sheet on the board, and ask students to come to the board to fill in the missing words, or complete write the numbers on the board and ask students to write the answers for each number.
Let’s try an activity!

Long night, _______________ up in the details

Texts, calls and emails from my broken friends

Long time since I ________________ I could fix them

Now everything is ________________ up, man it never ends
What adaptations could you do to make this activity less challenging?

Long night, _____________ up in the details
Texts, calls and emails from my broken friends
Long time since I _________________ I could fix them
Now everything is _________________ up, man it never ends
Ooh, call up everyone I know and tell them
I love ’em and their problems
Hey, are we all as lonely as we say
Is a phone call all it takes?
Adaptation idea

★ Less Challenging

Give students the present tense verb forms of the words before listening to the audio.

Answer key:

1. caught  
2. thought  
3. mixed  
4. felt  
5. could  
6. did  
7. put
What language skills are you using to do this lyrics gap activity?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner/Intermediate Level Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How do you prefer to talk to your friends? Do you use text messages, phone calls, or e-mail? Why?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you think siblings (brothers and sisters) can be friends? Why or why not?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What type of activities do you like to do with your friends?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Are you a good friend? Why or why not?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Can men and women be friends? Why or why not?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you prefer to do activities in big or small groups? Why?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Think of someone who is a good friend. What</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Would you prefer to</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Is it important to have things in common with your friends?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You are going to search for a musician or band that is new to you. Please fill out this chart with their information. You can use music websites, social media, or suggestions from friends or family to find a new musical artist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of musician or band:</th>
<th>Genre/style of music:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you find this musician/band?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What song(s) did you listen to from this musician/band?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Would you recommend this musician/band to your friends? Why?</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Simile Activity

Lesson Plan

1. Print the similes worksheet on the next page of this activity for all students before class.

2. Before watching the video, tell students that they will need to write down a definition of a simile as they watch the video.

3. Play the video once while students take notes.

4. Tell students to check their answers with a partner and then check their answers with the class.

5. After defining what a simile is, give students the similes worksheet. They can work individually or in small groups.
Simile Activity

We use similes to describe two things using the words *like* and *as*. Using similes can make our writing more descriptive and interesting.

Find the similes that use the word *like* in the song “Blade of Grass.” How many similes did you find? ______ Check your answer with a partner.

Underline the similes in the examples below. Then complete the following sentences to create your own similes using the words *like* and *as*.

Examples:

    Her eyes are as bright as the sun.

    Last night, I was so tired that I slept like a baby.
Let’s try an activity!

1. My mouth is as dry as ____________________.

2. Last night, I ate dinner like ____________________.

3. I swim like ____________________.
In this session, we will...

- Discuss the benefits of music for language learning
- Learn about the Sing Out Loud: Wordplay project
- Get ideas on how to use Wordplay in your classroom
What type of Wordplay material would you like to use in your classroom?
Thank you!

Discuss the benefits of music for language learning

Learn about the Sing Out Loud: Wordplay project

Get ideas on how to use Wordplay in your classroom
References


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Thank you!

Questions or concerns?
Email: americanenglishwebinars@fhi360.org

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https://openenglishcommunity.org/page/american-english-webinar-series/

AE website: americanenglish.state.gov
AE YouTube channel: youtube.com/StateAmericanEnglish
AE for Educators Facebook page: facebook.com/AmericanEnglishforEducators
AE Facebook page: facebook.com/AmericanEnglishatState
Reflection Questions

1. What styles of music might your students enjoy working with in English language classes? How can you learn about their interests?

2. What things might you need to consider when previewing music content for use in your classes? What support might you need to offer students during activities that involve music-based content?

3. Which activities shared today might you use or adapt in class? What content offered by Sing Out Loud: Wordplay would be a good fit for your teaching objectives and student interests?