

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. How long is each songwriting session and how many sessions to write a song?

We generally write the songs in two 60-minute sessions though with the younger children it is better to do three 40-minute sessions. This allows time for exploration, brainstorming, voting, writing the first section of lyric and melody.

The second session begins with a review of the previous day's work and then the remaining sections of the song are composed, and recorded for rehearsal purposes.

2. How many children can participate in each session and how does it work?

With online sessions, we prefer to work with 15 children at a time to give them plenty of individual attention. We can work with the students from their homes or work remotely with them from their classrooms depending on the structure the school has chosen.

There are two Kid Pan Alley songwriters present for each session and we ask that you have a staff person or parent observe the session.

As an educator, this is a golden opportunity to observe your students in a new learning environment, making connections to their background knowledge, incorporating current learning and working together as a learning community. While discipline is rarely an issue, your presence ensures that the songwriting session meets with minimal interruptions. Please help us keep the focus on the children by avoiding talking to colleagues while the session is in progress. And please remember that while it's fine for the teacher to throw in an occasional idea, it is the children who are writing the song.

3. When will the sessions be scheduled?

KPA coordinates with school administration and team leaders to create the schedule. Most often, school appointed coordinator (music or lead teacher) creates a schedule that works around lunch, recess and planning time.

4. What happens if a child is absent for one of the sessions?

We encourage the classroom teacher to use the lyric sheets and recordings to practice with their class. It is inevitable that some children will be absent or required to miss a session for educational services. We do not exclude these children and do everything possible to make sure they are a part of the creative process.

5. Can I get a copy of the lyrics and the song to practice with my students?

A copy of the lyrics and a recording of the finished song performed by the KPA songwriters is provided to teachers and students once the second songwriting session is complete. If you would like to include the children's voices on the recording, they can be

recorded as they sing along with the track and then we will sync their voices to the recording. The lyrics and recording are sent electronically so that the teacher can use their computer to play the song for their students.

7. Do my students have to sign the release form to participate?

Release forms are required for students to participate in the program. We recognize that some of the forms get lost in the book bags or forgotten at home. A verbal agreement obtained by school staff is accepted. Please let us know at the beginning of the class if there is a child who can't be photographed.

8. How do I justify the loss of instructional time?

Instructional time is precious and many teachers are concerned regarding the time away from a curriculum pacing guide or preparation for a pending assessment. The KPA songwriting process aligns with the language arts curriculum at every grade level. Students are learning about language, poetry, rhyme and finding their collective voice.

It can be compared to the concept of authors purpose, creative writing and learning to generate and expand ideas. Of course, writing a song is fun, but do not let it fool you, the process is jammed packed with experiences that reinforce language arts concepts. For struggling readers and writers, it is a fun way to practice emerging skills in a safe, and supported large group environment.

9. How can I use songwriting in my classroom if I am not a musician?

As mentioned above, the songwriting process is reproducible. Students can create their own song based on any concept that is being taught. It is a great alternative project and does not require the teacher to have any music skill. The most important quality that the teacher needs is the willingness to include it as a way of students expressing themselves and conveying what they have learned. Most schools have a music teacher that can assist them with a simple accompaniment or even a parent with musical background that can volunteer some time.

Not all songs need accompaniment. Students can use this process to create poetry, write a short story, or to write from a prompt. The process is versatile.

10. Are special education and limited English speaking students included?

All students are included in the songwriting residency. It is an inclusive program. If there are any accommodations that are required by an IEP or 504 plan, the KPA staff will work with the teacher to ensure that the accommodations are being met during the residency program.