



## Theme Song Essay

Everyone listens to music, right? Whether it's pop, rock, rap, jazz, classical, indie, hip-hop, house, folk, country, or a plethora of other genres, everyone is drawn to a particular sound or instrument or style. This first essay will ask you to consider all of the genres and bands and artists and songs you've heard and choose *one song* that speaks to you personally—to a particular time in your life (past or present) or to your life in general.

**Assignment:** Write an essay describing *one song* that best represents your life or one aspect of your life or your personality—who you are as a student, artist, athlete, person, etc. This essay should quote specific lyrics that tie to an event (or events) in your life, demonstrating why you feel this particular song best represents *you*.

Keep in mind: you should refrain from writing about romantic relationships, because those tend to focus on the other person rather than you. See the “No Love Policy” in the syllabus for more information. Also, please choose only one song. This essay should be fun, yet challenging, because, well, we've heard and know so many songs! Don't limit yourself to what's popular right now or what you hear on the radio. Do some digging (check out YouTube, RollingStone, Amazon's music section, iTunes, etc.)—maybe you'll find a song that you've never heard before but that fits you perfectly.

### Your essay should:

- Include a clear thesis, point, or focus (i.e., which song represents you and why).
- Be organized with an introduction, body, and conclusion to structure the essay.
- Incorporate specific narratives (stories) that reinforce your point.
- Integrate specific lyrics that support your point.
- Be comprised of at least 3 pages (about 1000 words).
- Demonstrate your ability to use grammar, punctuation, and formatting suitable for college.

### Format:

- Include a header (i.e., your last name and page number in the upper right corner of every page).
- Include a heading (i.e., your name, my name, the class, and the date on the upper left side of the first page of the essay)
- Use a standard font like Times New Roman in 12pt size.
- Double space your essay.
- Set line spacing at 0pt.
- Cite the sources where you obtained the lyrics.
- Integrate lyrics.

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Keep your Head Up: My Personal Theme Song

Who am I? This is a question that I have asked myself many times, only this time, it was asked by a college professor. The assignment, pick a personal theme song, “one that speaks to me personally,” and then write a three page paper about how it represents my life. I immediately

- What I mean is that you need to introduce any quotes that you use, rather than including a “floating quote” that doesn’t incorporate your own words.
  - ☹ Avoid floating quotes: “Four years of college and plenty of knowledge / Have earned me this useless degree.” When I hear this lyric, I remember wondering what I could do with my English degree once I decided to forgo teaching high school English.
  - ☺ Use integrated quote: When Princeton sings, “Four years of college and plenty of knowledge / Have earned me this useless degree,” I remember wondering what I could do with my English degree once I decided to forgo teaching high school English.

**Cover Letter:** Along with this essay, please include a paragraph or two that will serve as a reflective cover letter. This is a letter to me directing my attention to specific portions of your essay and explaining your composing process. You may want to consider what worked well, what could have been more successful, what you’re most proud of, any unforeseen complications that arose while completing your project, or any remaining questions that you may have. This should be the first page of your essay. Your essay (with the heading and title) will begin on page 2. (Please note: the student sample essays provided include cover letters that also discuss Peer Workshops, because those classes met face-to-face. You are required to submit a separate document regarding your Peer Workshops, so you don’t need to discuss them in your cover letter.)

**\*\*\*Remember:**

- ✓ When saving your essay, please choose .doc or .docx.
- ✓ Please title your document using your first name. Ex: JenCthemsong.doc
- ✓ After revising, please title your document to reflect that it’s a revision. Ex: JenCEssay1Revision.doc
- ✓ Submit your cover letter and essay as *one* document. Your cover letter should be the first page, with your essay beginning on the second page.

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Effective Communication (Written/Oral /Reading/Listening)
- Information Literacy
- Critical Thinking
- Global and Diversity Awareness
- Civic, Professional, and Ethical Responsibility
- Rhetorical Knowledge
- Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing
- Knowledge of Composing Processes
- Collaboration
- Knowledge of Conventions