



Class 1 Assignment

Unblocking, connecting with intuition

*Write, record, and upload a song to songs.schoolofsong.org based on the following prompt before the next class song-share. Remember that the point of this assignment is to **finish a song**, and that's it. It's not going to be the best song you've ever written; that's not the point. Just finish something (anything!), and bring it to the song-shares on Saturday.*



Unblocking

We're going to start this month off with an intention to *unblock* ourselves to allow us to connect with our curiosity. Set an intention for this month to address any blockages that you are holding. As Adrienne said in lecture,

"Songwriting can't be isolated – it has to be part of your whole being, and practiced holistically. If your lens is blurry, or dirty it'll get in the way, it'll stand between you and a clear translation of what you're looking at or paying attention to."

Only you can truly know what you need to feel 'unblocked'. Here's what Adrienne suggests:

"Begin by journaling on where you're at in this moment. Check in with your body, your mind, your heart, how you're feeling."

If you feel in touch with your imagination and your curiosity, and you feel receptive and playful – great. You're ready to get started."

If you don't, try to figure out what it is you need to get there. For everyone it's different, but for me, it's my basics. While I'm trying to write, I will:

- *get a good night's sleep every night*
- *try to wake up and first thing play a little music before talking, and write down my dreams every morning*
- *cook meals with a lot of love*
- *drink a lot of water*
- *refrain from junk food / alcohol*
- *stretch*

It also doesn't have to be all of these things at once – it could be something small, like sit for 5 minutes in silence, some form of meditation. Or read some poetry before sleeping."

With this daily healthy feeling in my body, I'll have a writing routine and sit down for a set amount of time every day."

Songwriting prompt

With this at our foundation, the writing assignment is as follows:

Begin with a free write. Set a timer for 10 minutes. Write everything that you're thinking about without filtering at all. Write continuously for the whole time, don't drop your pen until the timer goes off. If you want something to spark your freewrite, write on this photograph by [Genesis Baez](#) (optional).

For the music, we're going to challenge you to write with either

- 1) a new tuning if you play guitar (check out [Adrianne's video on alternate tunings](#)), or
- 2) a new instrument entirely (if you only have one instrument, try writing *just* with your voice!).

Starting in unfamiliar territory like this is a great way to let yourself be guided solely by your intuitive compass. Pick up your instrument; move away from sounds that feel bad, and go towards sounds that feel good. This is different from *evaluating*. Write now, evaluate later. For the lyrics, riff on the freewrite, similarly letting yourself be guided by your intuition.

If you'd like more detailed, step by step instructions on how to complete your song, go to the next page.

Here are some suggested tunings from Adrianne:

EADGBD,
DADGAD,
DADF#GG,
DGDF#AD,
DGDF#GD,
CGDGGG,
CGDF#AD,
CGDGAD,
CGDGGD

More detailed prompt

Freewrite

Before thinking about lyrics for the song, just begin with a free write. Do not worry about being poetic or 'lyrical'. Set a timer for 10 minutes. First, [look at this photo](#), and respond to the following prompts:

- What do you see in the photo? be as detailed as possible.
- What do you imagine is just outside of the frame?
- Write hyper zoomed in – looking out from the cellular / molecular level. What's your perspective now?
- Write hyper zoomed out – down from the atmosphere. What's your perspective now?

Set these words aside for now, we'll return to them in a bit.

Writing with a new tuning / new instrument

In lecture, Adrienne talked about the importance of developing your "intuitive compass" for songwriting – being able to feel what attracts you and what repels you.

For the music, we're going to challenge you to write with either

- 1) a new tuning if you play guitar (check out [Adrienne's video on alternate tunings](#)), or
- 2) a new instrument entirely (if you only have access to one instrument, try writing *just* with your voice!).

Starting in unfamiliar territory like this is a great way to let yourself be guided solely by your intuitive compass.

Creating the Song

Record the entire process of exploration – an iPhone voice memo works great. This is just so you can revisit an idea later on in the process.

Sit with your instrument and just listen to the sounds in your room for about 30 seconds. When you feel ready, place your hands randomly on your instrument – this could be a random guitar chord, random piano chord etc. Whatever sound comes out, just listen... don't judge as good or bad, just listen. Keep your hands in the same place and play it again... don't judge, just listen. On the third strum... examine how you feel. If it feels

good or exciting...keep playing it! If it doesn't feel good, try moving just one finger. How does it feel now?

Continue with this process. Move away from sounds that feel bad, and go towards sounds that feel good. This is different from *evaluating*. Write now, evaluate later. Letting yourself be guided purely by your intuition. Keep exploring sounds until you find a repeatable section that you can loop. Record it!!

Now start to explore lyrics by singing excerpts from your freewrite over the musical progression. We're going to follow the same process by letting the words morph as you go into whatever feels good to sing.

Continue with this process of exploring, evolving, and documenting. Follow it until it evolves into something that makes you feel good. Don't worry about the form or structure. Don't worry about the names of notes or chords. When you have a little something that you can play and that you want to play again, you've got a song!