# Songwriting series

Part 2 (of 4) Storytelling through song



 Last time we covered the basic rules of songwriting and the common structures of songs.

 I asked you to start thinking about the stories you might want to tell in a song.

 Great songwriting is also great storytelling, because if we're not connecting to the story, then it's just background noise.

Country artist, Eric Church, wrote a song about this. He sings:

*"Funny how a melody sounds like a memory"* 

Listen here: <u>https://youtu.be/l2gGXIW6wSY?t=26</u>

Now let's make our songs come to life.

Storytelling

Take that idea that you want to write about and try to fill up about 2 sides of A4 with words, sentences, phrases, even sketches, anything related to that initial idea.

A few ways to do this which might be helpful are:

- Free write for 5 minutes anything and everything that comes to mind when you think about your song idea.
- Word association
  - Ask a family member or friend to play it with you, or challenge yourself to get to five words without stopping
- Music

Step 1: The idea

- Find some music related to your topic and use it as inspiration
- Look to other art forms for inspiration
  - Photos, paintings, films

Make notes about the type of song you want it to be: slow, fast, happy, sad etc. You might also want to add the genre you intend to write in, or the instruments you'd like to hear.

Take as long as you need with the research part. It will be worth it to come back to your songwriting with a good mix of ideas and perspectives.

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Picnics in the garden-
Sunshine.
long walks in the countryside.
Missing billidays and farming ment
Dug. All duing wr nur and
Appreciating / noticing the view
Time. Day nolls into day.
Nowhere to be but here. Justicity of
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hids playing at liding bites. Changing times. We're been through werse, we can get through this.
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Sharing happiness with you.
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Going to blas on my goals.
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images of fields + planes. The views, the works.
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Watching you grow up instead of from for away. (afor)
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Happy but Maghthil. Replective. Upbeart but calm.
what was really important.
Where has all this time gone.
We don't nutive the days plying by.
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we don't shop to watch the dighidils grow.

SUMMEr	Time	Fear	Flowes
Seaside	Days	Heartbeat	Grow
Sand	Days Short	SKII	water
outdours	Long	Storten Stand	Rain
Sunshine	Far	Down	Clouds
stay	Close	Wait	sky

#### Buller Seboshan

"Anothe sunny day".

Fast drums. In the garden. 'I tack a photograph of yar'. Albic Window. Stretting 'on a sunday crening buts n'ng at in the dusk "Pick II for toutball". 'Press up in yar' - Sarcashic. ' beautiful face that ward take you places'. Themar - slow beat. Keyboard. 'I wish you mere here, we would have had a lot to talk about'. Trumpet.

thish vocals + harmonics.

When we go back to normal /ar lires - who were we then? Were we happy? Were we alwake? Pid we forget who we were? What was important. Did any of that poor really matter anyway?

Shimming Nells. River. Workyaul. Sheam. Wird blowing away the.... Having no idea we where going way the fast Wishing are lines away. So we slaw down. Show down and just be us. Sunlight on the works. Shadows through the mels. Place. We'll find it jus

## ←Word association

#### ← Ideas from listening to music

### Next, go through and highlight your favourite words/sentences/ideas

Step 2:
Review

being at home for He summer.
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Surshine.
long walks in the countryside.
Missing biddays and family neals.
July. All doing ar war mining
Apprecialized Indians the views
Nowhere to be but nere. Nowhere I a
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Reminds us what's really impertung
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The fire will been on thing of the man will read in plotter)
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Close than ere.
Time on our hands and lone in our hearts
Watching you grow up instead of from for a way. (afor)
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Happy but Maghthl. Replective. Upbeart but calm.
What was really important.
Where has all mis hime gave.
We don't rubie the days plying by.
we don't shop to workch the displudits grow.
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Summer	line	Fear	Flowes
seaside	Days	Heartbeat	Grow
Sand	Short	SKII	water
Outdours	Long	Sterrer Stand	Rain
Sunshine	Far	Down	Clouds
Stay	Close	Wait	sky
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Wind blowing away the... Having no idea me whe going way two fas Wishing ar lines away. So we slaw down. Show down and just be us. Sunlight on the work. Shadows through the meds. Place. We'll find it jus What story are you telling?

Step 3: The story What is the beginning, middle and end of that story?

Write a brief outline of what's going to happen in your story in each section. For now let's start with a simple structure:

Verse 1 – Chorus - Verse 2

With optional sections added in if you feel you want to and have enough content. **Pre-chorus – Bridge** 

My example: A song about being at home for the summer and realising we had been going through life so fast we had been missing some of the important things.

**Verse 1** – We're at home. We're happy, we're healthy. We're enjoying a slower pace of life.

Pre-chorus – this time has opened our eyes

**Chorus** – Why couldn't we see this before? We've been wishing our lives away.

**Verse 2** – Regret – the things we've missed.

**Bridge** – some of the things we've noticed during this time are...

Go back to your notes and starting with the bits you've highlighted, copy them over into what you now know to be the relevant section, i.e. verse, chorus...

Decide on tense and POV

- Past/present/future
- I/you/they

Does anything jump out at you as a title?

For any of your notes that you've copied across that are already in full or part sentences, take the last word in that line and brainstorm a list of words that rhyme with it.

(Tip: rather than just hard rhymes, like 'cat' and 'hat', try to think of some soft rhymes, like 'time' and 'sight'.)

My example:

Step 4: Build

- First person (I/we)
- Present tense but reflecting on the past
- Working title: We'll never have this day again

#### Notes/ideas sorted into verse/chorus etc.

A song about being at home for the summer and realising we had been going through life so fast we had been missing some of the important things.

Sky - Why, might, sight, hight, light, mine

Verse 1 – We're at home. We're happy, we're healthy. We're enjoying a slower pace of life.

Being at home for the summer Sun is shining **Picnics in the garden** Long walks in the countryside Noticing the views, noticing the sky

**Time stands still** 

Pre-chorus – this time has opened our eyes These are changing times Never felt so alive Closer than ever

alive, times Chorus – Why couldn't we see this before? We've been wishing our lives away. Day rolls into day

We'll never get this time back The sun will keep on shining, and the moon will keep on glowing in the beautiful night sky, but we'll never have this day again.

 $\leftarrow$  Rhyming words

