

## Analysis Project: The Shape of Music around You

- **Purpose:** Use your knowledge of popular music forms to analyze the formal sections in a popular song of your choice; post your observations on an online discussion board; comment on your peer's projects.
- **Project Components:**
  - Part 1: Video URL and analysis posted on Canvas
  - Part 2: At least two peer comments due on Canvas
- **Project Description:**

This project will be completed in two parts; see the separate deadlines above. There are no small groups, as all students will be part of the same discussion board.

### ○ PART 1: VIDEO URL AND ANALYSIS POST

Think of a popular song (as defined in class) that you know well, which is freely and legally available online. For example, many popular artists and groups have official managed YouTube channels, such as:

- <https://www.youtube.com/user/justintimberlakeVEVO/videos>
- <https://www.youtube.com/user/beegeestv/videos>
- <https://www.youtube.com/user/LukeBryanVEVO/videos>

If the song or video contains explicit content, please indicate this in your Discussion Board submission.

Copy the URL to your chosen song, and paste it into your Discussion Board submission post. Hyperlink the URL for ease of access.

In your analysis, first label the overall form, selecting only one of the following:

- Strophic
- AABA
- Verse-Chorus (or Verse-Chorus-Bridge)

Each of these forms can be modified with introductions, instrumental breaks, pre-choruses, and many other variations. Simply select the label above that best fits your song.

Next label each formal section of the song, noting where on the track time each section starts. For example, your analysis might begin:

- 0:00 Intro
- 0:08 Verse 1
- 0:47 Chorus

Using terminology discussed in class, make an argument for *why* you chose the overall form you did, and *why* you chose your various section labels. What musical or lyrical characteristics are present in the verse that makes it verse-like, or in the bridge that makes it bridge-like? This component makes up the largest portion of your project grade. Answer in two to three short paragraphs, and use complete sentences.

Finally, if you have anything to add about why you chose this particular song, its meaning to you, when you first encountered it, or other comments of interest to your classmates, please to add them at the end.

*(continued)*



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### ○ PART 2: PEER COMMENTS

All class members are required to view their colleagues' posts and comment thoughtfully on their work. Ask questions, and respectfully confirm or challenge their claims. Participation in this discussion is part of the project grade. For full credit, each student must create at least two high-quality reply posts. Repeat posts to the same classmate are encouraged but do not count toward the two required posts. In the interest of equal participation, please reply to someone whose post doesn't yet have any replies.

Have fun with these discussions! Feel free to indicate your opinion of the song, other music by the same group or artist, or what other music it reminds you of. Just remember, your replies will be graded on their analytical content. Comments such as "I agree" do not count as high-quality. If you don't find any disagreement, you could expound on what features of the music create the sense of a Chorus as opposed to a Verse or a Bridge/Release, or consider whether the song would work better in a different form.

#### • Grading:

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ○ 10% – URL Posted               | Posted URL links to a watchable video of a popular song                 |
| ○ 10% – Analysis: Form Label     | Formal label is correct   |
| ○ 20% – Analysis: Section Labels | Section labels (Verse, Chorus, Bridge) are correct                      |
| ○ 30% – Analysis: Reasoning      | All labels are sufficiently argued using terminology discussed in class |
| ○ 30% – Peer Comments            | Active participation in comments; $\geq 2$ high-quality posts           |

#### • Bonus Points:

Up to 10% bonus points may be earned on this project if you employ significant creativity and effort in analyzing and discussing your chosen song. In particular, I am imagining a submission that includes not only the written analysis, but also a detailed visual aid (graph) as well. Physical items will not be graded, so make sure any such added component is a digital file or link attached to your Discussion Board post.

If this interests you, you might want to check out the Variations Audio Timeliner. If you have your audio recording on your hard drive as an MP3, WAV, or MIDI file, you can plug that file into this software, create section label graphics, and watch the form progress in real-time while the song plays. While exploration of this sort is highly encouraged, no guidance on using this or any other unfamiliar technology will be given by your instructor.

<http://variations.sourceforge.net/vat/index.html>