

Songwriting Course outline - 6 Week workshop series  
Neil Herd / Shapeshifter Productions Jan 2018

Central idea –

To boost confidence and help participants develop a writing routine and generate at least one song idea in each session.

*Ability to sing, play an instrument or read music not necessary!*

- although the main aim will be to create new material from scratch, there will be scope to share works in progress
- each session will start with sharing of works in progress / songs from previous week's session

Ground rules: Constructive criticism and positive feedback – we will be commenting on each-other's work – we'll concentrate on "strengths" and "suggestions for rewrites" to keep this constructive and supportive.

Prior to first session – please email a couple of sentences about where you currently see yourself as a songwriter and where you'd like to get to over the six weeks of the course.

Some "ingredients" to consider:

*Rhyme, emotion, strong titles, images, repetition, the unexpected / original twist*

Schedule

Week 1 introductions, Song analysis, identifying goals,  
Warm up / idea generating exercises  
Working from a familiar source – well known stories to kick start ideas / encourage fresh perspectives.

Week 2 – Identify & utilise the key elements of successful songs –  
Working from a familiar song keeping the shape,  
Looking at how the story is told – introducing co-writing.

Week 3 Generating Ideas from pictures – writing without instruments, using random / cut-up techniques

Week 4 Generating tunes from speech – making lyric and melody work together – prosody, using real-life language.

Week 5 – Getting things finished, editing and rewriting, getting unstuck, finding ways to change direction / "middle 8s and bridges"

Week 6 – Hearing the songs created, identifying next steps.