



Boosting Language and Literacy with
Common Core Standards & 21st Century Skills

Song Leading for Learning in the Classroom



GITC classroom teachers lead music making to promote their students' full engagement in learning ~ academic, social *and* artistic. Songs – both traditional and original- are the vehicles for this learning. Singing together fuels those vehicles. Strumming super charges them!

This process we call “Song-Based Learning” (SBL) supports all learners to achieve the goals of the Common Core Standards and 21st Century Skills such as critical thinking, creative problem solving, collaborating and communicating through strumming, singing and songwriting across the curriculum.

Embedded in lessons, songs empower teachers to:

- Prepare students for learning - set the mood and bring focus!
- Introduce a topic, fact set or skill to a captive audience.
- Teach and reinforce new understandings through imaginative and expressive language.
- Synthesize information from parts into a whole
- Develop vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension for all students ~ including students with special needs and English Learners



Leading through music also helps teachers establish a happy classroom when they:

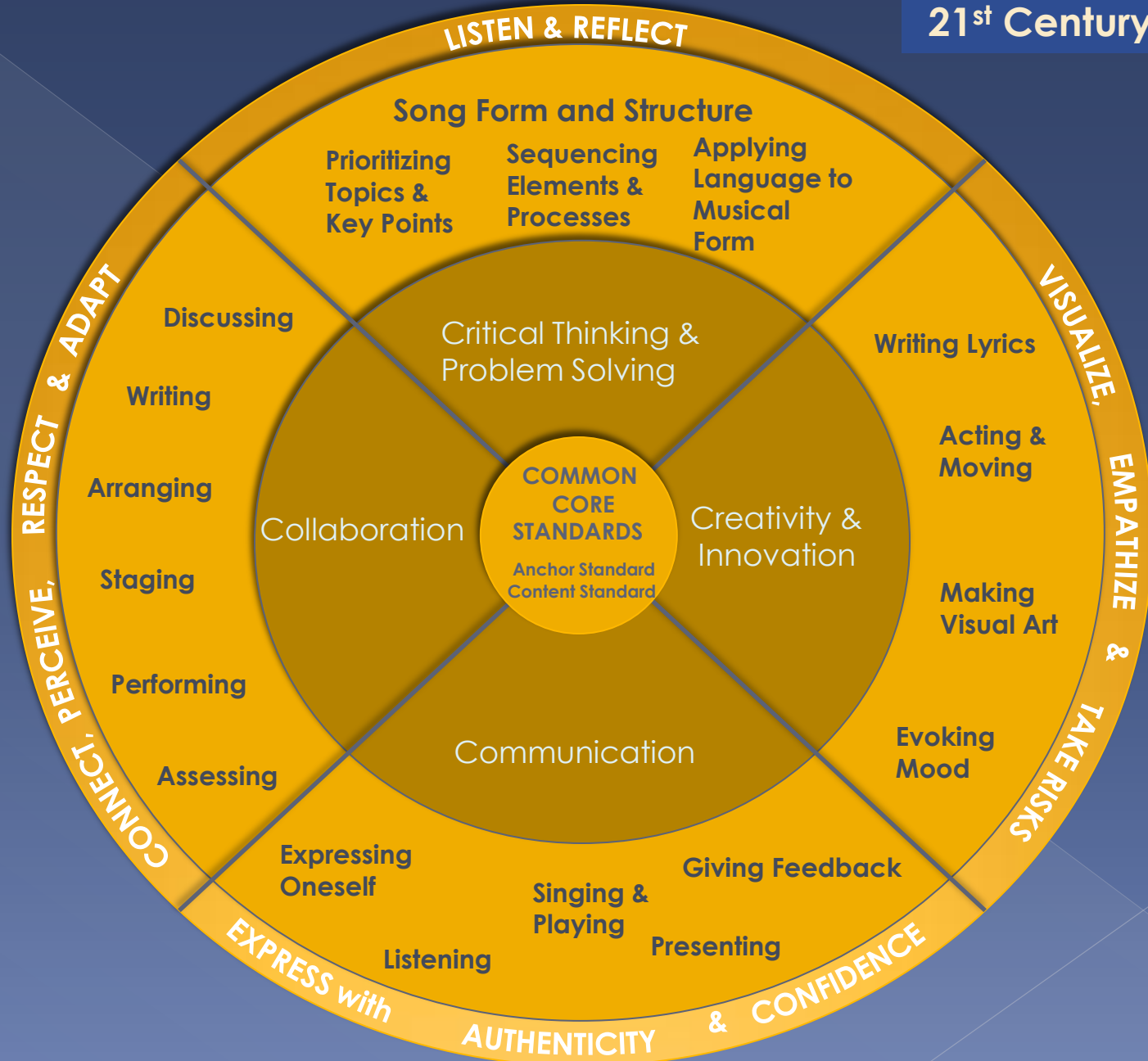
- Teach and practice classroom routines with positive songs.
- Ease transitions between activities with spontaneous, sung guidance and reminders.
- Uplift and engage students in learning throughout the day.
- Modulate energy levels in the room with musical dynamics.
- Instill a sense of belonging and unity through group singing.
- Build character and encourage civic responsibility with songs that express ideals and tell stories of greatness.

Learning through music helps students understand the new Common Core and develop 21st Century Skills



GITC's Learning Wheel for Common Core Content Standards (CCSS) &

21st Century Skills



Teachers Tap into Their Own Creativity So Students Can, Too!

➤ Together, teachers experience collaborative music making in their free trainings with us.

➤ When they learn to strum and sing, they tap into their own deep creativity.

➤ Next, they learn ways to facilitate this activity for their students by leading and writing songs on topic.

➤ Once students can sing and compose lyrics with their class, they learn to work in songwriting teams collaboratively.

➤ During collaborative songwriting, students engage in many processes that are key 21st century skills. You will find some of these listed on our Songwriting Wheel.



➤ The creative process brings students into artistic discussion, problem solving, brainstorming, writing, editing and revising, and ultimately into creating and performing a finished musical composition.

➤ Presenting their song to the class also helps students improve their communication skills.

Critical Thinking

To compose a song together:

- **Students team up to create new Lyrics for Learning** about specific **lesson content**. They work with an existing melody or invent a new one. We suggest 20 basic “starter” songs.
- **This means students must identify, discuss, evaluate, group and sequence the lesson content into lyrics.**
- **Writing about the lesson content teaches the chosen content standard.**
- **Learning deepens** when students find a creative way to express these ideas together.
- **And the lyric writing itself addresses grade level ELA Common Core standards.**
- **This fully engages students in critical thinking and problem solving** as they transform their understanding of essential knowledge into authentic, original, creative **expression through language and music**.



These students have just strengthened their **English Language skills** by creating a **limerick** together. They've set their *Lyrics for Learning* to music and **sung their original song to their class**. They will remember this experience **always**.

Communication & Critical Thinking

When students collaborate, they also communicate, create and think critically together in the process of writing songs. They ask each other:

- What is **most important** to include in our song?
- How will we **communicate** the essential understandings of the content we are studying?
- How will we **prioritize** and **sequence** the content that we **decide** to sing about?
- What **details** are important to **describe**?
- How can the **music** and the **repetition of some lyric lines** help promote the **messages of the lesson** and **assist in memorization**?
- How will we **apply spoken language** to the melodic contour, rhythms and meter of the song?

Through the songwriting process,
These students are having a wonderful time.
Making music is CONTAGIOUS.



Creativity

Students **blend logic** and **intuition** as they **brainstorm** and refine lyrics that convey key points and develop **enduring understandings** through **expressive language** and music.



Communication

Students learn to **listen to each other** and to **express their creative ideas openly** to one another.

They strive for **clear and respectful communication**.

They learn the **importance of valuing** each member of **the group**.



Project Based Learning & Life Skills

In **songwriting and performing together**, students learn to both **offer and consider constructive criticism**. They discover what they can do differently to support others.

They develop **the courage to speak up** for themselves, **sing out** with conviction, and **overcome shyness**.



Thank you for taking time to
see how GITC is helping teachers & students
integrate singing & songwriting
with Lyrics for Learning
into academic lessons that boost literacy each day.

With your support, more students are going to
fall in love with learning this year!

Please find us online at
guitarsintheclassroom.org
facebook.com/guitarsintheclassroom
and tell us what you think!