

## TEACHER'S GUIDE

# Vanessa Hudgens—“Sneakernight” Songwriting Skill — Elaboration

### STUDENT OBJECTIVES

- Identify elaboration with sensory details
- Identify elaboration with incidents and examples
- Use elaboration strategies
- Revise writing to include elaboration
- Evaluate the effect of elaboration on personal writing

### RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- Guided Lyrics – Using Sensory Details, Incidents, and Examples
- Student Activity – Revise Using Elaboration

#### Additional Online Support:

- [www.holtmcdougal.hmhco.com](http://www.holtmcdougal.hmhco.com)
- [www.BlueNoseEd.com](http://www.BlueNoseEd.com)

## Teach

1. **Introducing Elaboration:** Elaboration is the process of adding further detail to enliven plain declarative statements or ideas. Remind your students that elaboration is important in songwriting, because it allows a songwriter to include information that helps the listener experience the emotion that the song is communicating. If a song declares “I’m worried,” the listener will understand the emotion at a basic level. But if a song describes a loved one waving goodbye from a bus window as he or she heads to the front during wartime, the listener will understand the song on a much more profound level. Tell the students that in songwriting, there are two basic modes of elaboration: **elaboration with sensory detail**, and **elaboration with incidents and examples**.
2. **Teaching Elaboration with Sensory Details:** Ask students to list the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell). Explain that sensory details are descriptive details that appeal to one or more of the five senses. Adding sensory details can help songwriters flesh out general statements and help listeners form mental pictures.

**EXAMPLE** Draw the following chart on the board. Ask the questions and fill in the blanks in the chart. Finally, with the students’ help, revise the original sentence so that it comes alive due to the inclusion of more sensory details.

Original Sentence	What Does the Boy Look Like?	What Sounds Can the Boy Hear?	What Is the Boy Walking On?	What Smells or Tastes Might the Boy Notice?	Rewritten Sentence, Including At Least Three New Sensory Details
<i>The boy walked to the car.</i>					

3. **Teaching Elaboration with Incidents and Examples:** Remind the students that an “incident” is a brief account of a single event. An “example” is a specific person, place, object, or event that illustrates a general statement. Acknowledge that songwriting is often a matter of communicating strong emotions. It is generally not necessary to support one’s arguments by strictly providing evidence, as in a formal essay. But remind the students that even the most emotional songs often describe an incident—a break-up, or the invention of a new dance. And in the verses of a song, songwriters often provide examples that validate the emotional points they are making.

**EXAMPLE** Draw the following chart on the board, and work through it with the students to invent incidents and examples that support the claims made in the “choruses” in the first column.

“Chorus”	Supporting Incident	Supporting Example
1. “You don’t love me anymore! / You once thought I was funny, but now you think I’m a bore.”	1. “When we went out last Friday night / You were so late, we got in a fight.”	1. “You leave your clothes all over the floor / And when I knock, you won’t answer the door.”
2. “I’m the best rapper in the whole high school / I drop mad knowledge, while the others only drool.”	2.	2.
3. “We’re so in love, it ain’t funny / We don’t even need money.”	3.	3.
4. “When you left me, at first I was sad / But I got used to it, and now I am glad!”	4.	4.
5. “We got guitars, and we’re all good friends / And when we rock, the fun never ends!”	5.	5.

4. **Guided Practice:** How to use the Guided Practice Worksheet

Step 1 Hand out a copy of the worksheet to each student

Step 2 Guide students through the call-out questions. Encourage them to come up with more than one answer to each question.

Step 3 Elaborate! Have students fill in the “Elaboration” chart, using “Sneakernight” as an inspiration to write lyrics that feature vivid sensory impressions and well-chosen incidents and examples.

Use the “You Try It!” worksheet to help students revise their lyrics to include elaboration.

**QUICK CHECK** Have students define “elaboration.” Then have them define “sensory details,” “incidents,” and “examples,” and describe how to elaborate upon their lyrics by using all three.

GUIDED PRACTICE

**Vanessa Hudgens—“Sneakernight”  
Songwriting Skill - Elaboration**

**Using Sensory Details, Incidents, and Examples**

**ACADEMIC VOCABULARY**

**Elaboration:** the process of adding further detail to plain statements or ideas

**Sensory Details:** details that appeal to one or more of the five senses

**Incident:** a brief account of a single event

**Example:** a specific person, place, object, or even that illustrates a general statement

**DIRECTIONS** Read the lyrics to “Sneakernight” by Vanessa Hudgens. Where does this song use sensory details, incidents, and examples? How does the use of these modes of elaboration affect the emotional impact of the song?

**Vanessa Hudgens**

**Sneakernight**

Put your sneakers on, Put your sneakers on  
We're goin' dancin' all night long

I got somewhere to be, I want you to come with me  
See I've put my sneakers on, Cause I'm gonna keep dancin'  
After they all go home

So are you ready? Did you eat? Do you have the energy?

Are you reloaded? Are you able to stay on your feet?  
Don't want you passing out after a couple hours of beats...  
We're keep going, And going, And going, Yeah, Cause

[Chorus:]

Basically what we're gonna do is dance [3x]  
It will come easily when you hear the beat, oh  
Basically what we're gonna do is dance [2x]

All you gotta do is take a chance  
Yeah that's right, it's sneaker night

So now they're closing, Close it up,  
Shut it down, go home now  
But this far from the end, Second round, Ding,  
It's about to begin  
Cause I got comfortable full  
Where the weather is nice  
So let's take it outside  
The... slam, hands clap  
And the beatbox, and it's all right

**1: Elaboration—1<sup>st</sup> Verse** What incidents and actions does the songwriter use to establish the emotional tone of the song? Are there any sensory details? Could more sensory details be added? If so, where?

**2: Elaboration—Chorus**

Choruses are often effective even if they are quite simple. But some choruses do use sensory details to reinforce the emotion of the song. Can you think of any sensory details that would be good in this chorus?

**3: Elaboration—2<sup>nd</sup> Verse**

What sensory details does the songwriter use? Can you imagine an incident that would fit into this verse?

[CHORUS]

Don't you even worry about other plans  
Yeah, that's right it's sneaker night!

When the sun goes down, Oh we wake up  
I got no sleep. Ha! No need  
No compliment staying away  
When the beat is like an earthquake

We're unstoppable, we're uncontrollable  
Just admit it, You can't stop it, It's addictive

[CHORUS]

Put your sneakers on...Let's go all night long...

**DIRECTIONS**

**First**, choose lyrics from “Sneakernight” that use sensory details, incidents, and examples. Use these lyrics as models to help you brainstorm ideas for your own lyrics.

Lyrics from “Sneakernight”	My Own Lyrics That Use Sensory Details, Incidents, and Examples

**Second**, choose lyrics from “Sneakernight” that are more simple and declarative. Revise these lyrics by adding sensory details, incidents, and examples. How does your revision change the emotions that are communicated by the song?

Simple, Declarative Lyrics from “Sneakernight”	My Revision of These Lyrics that Adds Sensory Details, Incidents, and Examples

**YOU TRY IT!**

**Songwriting Skill – Elaboration**

**GOAL**

**Elaboration**, in songwriting, is the process of adding sensory details, incidents, and examples to lyrics to make them more emotional and vivid.

**DIRECTIONS** Select lyrics that you have been working on either in this or in previous exercises. Write them in the top box. Use the graphic organizer to revise your writings, first by adding sensory details, and next by imagining an incident or example that would make the lyrics more vivid and emotionally powerful. Then evaluate your revised lyrics.

<b>My Lyrics</b>

↓

<b>Revise - Adding Sensory Details</b>

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<b>Revise - Using Incidents and/or Examples</b>

<b>Evaluate – What is the impact of elaboration?</b>