

#CONCERTSFORKIDS

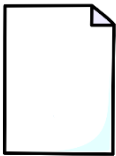
Activity Guide



Photo by Harris Ansari

Zeshan B

Suggested Materials



- Writing paper
- Pen, pencil, colored pencil, marker – any writing utensil
- A computer, tablet or phone with internet access and speakers

Listening Challenge

Listen to a clip of Zeshan B's *Cryin' in the Streets*: <https://youtu.be/ZdtzzQjbCio>. Close your eyes and think about the sounds you can hear.

What do you notice?

What instruments do you notice?

What different influences and styles do you hear?



Melismatic Singing

Zeshan B uses melismas in his songs. Melismas are commonly found in classical Indian music, Western classical music, gospel and R&B.

A **melisma** is a series of notes sung to one syllable of a word.

To learn more, watch this clip from Voice Council Magazine explaining melismatic singing: <https://youtu.be/PRS2grauL4I>.

Try melismatic singing yourself! Listen to the major scale: <https://youtu.be/vTJhpjIA0Fc>. Now sing it on your own, “Do, re, me, fa, so, la, ti, do”.



Now sing the notes again, but by stretching out one word. Instead of singing “do, re, mi” on the notes, pick “do”, and sing the notes by elongating the word so it has all of the notes in one syllable. This is melismatic singing.

Did you hear melismatic singing in the video of *Cryin’ in the Streets*?

Songs of Self

STEP 1



Think about the following statements. Write or draw your responses.

- I am powerful because...
- I am resilient because...
- I am unique because...

STEP 2



Find a song that connects to one of the prompts above or that you would like to rewrite. What in the song's lyrics connect to the prompt?

STEP 3



Look up the lyrics to the song and pick a few lines that you would like to rewrite. Rewrite the lyrics to include your response to one of the prompts above. For example, can you include "I am powerful because...." in your lyrics? Can you keep the same song structure?

Try singing or speaking your new lyrics out loud.

How does it sound? Do you need to change any words so it fits the structure better? Add different words to change how it sounds out loud.

Musical Styles

STEP 1

Pick a musical style you would like to explore:

- Classical Indian Music
- R & B
- Civil Rights Era Protest Songs

STEP 2

Find a clip in this musical style online and listen to it. Then, read and gather information about that style of music.

Here are some resources to get started:

<https://www.makingmusic.org.uk/resource/introduction-indian-classical-music>

<https://folklife.si.edu/talkstory/2016/tell-it-like-it-is-a-history-of-rhythm-and-blues>

<https://www.npr.org/2010/01/18/99315652/songs-of-the-civil-rights-movement>

STEP 3

What are three things you notice about this style of music?

List the instruments typically used in this style of music.



Write down three findings about the cultural/historical background of this style of music. For example, why was this music made? Who made it? When was it made?

Family Discussion Questions

What sounds and types of singing did you hear in Zeshan B's performance?

What musical styles did you hear?

What connects you to the lyrics of the song(s) you chose?

How do they connect to your uniqueness, your feeling powerful, your resilience?

How can lyrics be used to convey someone's story?

What lyrics did you generate to convey a part of your personal journey or story?

What would you want a listener to connect with in your lyrics?