

Merseyside Music Education HUB Alliance Toolkit Strand Songwriting

Songwriting Study Guide 4

**Video 4: Chords sequences and methods of
presenting accompaniment**

Tutor notes:

Key idea learning sequence 1: Writing chords in sequence	Notes or resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to the student what happens underneath the lyrics and melody in a song. • Show the student examples of how chords are the harmonic structure that underpin a melody in a song. 	V4S1-S4
Student activities:	
<p>The student should annotate the slides:</p> <p>Study the music for the song “Can’t Stop The Feeling” by Justin Timberlake.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It’s a “C” chord with non-chord notes in the bassline for bars 2, 3 and 4. <p>Study the music for the song “Uptown Funk” by Bruno Mars.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It’s a simple sequence; there are two chords right through the song. <p>Study the song “What Makes You Beautiful” by One Direction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In C Major, those chords are C, F and G, as these are the 1st, 4th and 5th degrees of scale (primary chords). <p>Another commonly used chord is Chord vi, which, in C major, is the chord A minor.</p> <p><i>These terms are fully explained in the Glossary of Songwriting Terms.</i></p>	V4S1 V4S2 V4S3 V4S4

	<p>Complete Exercise 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to play some chords on a keyboard or guitar. • Practice playing a series of two or more chords (chord sequence). 	<p>V4S5</p>
	<p>Listen to “Soundtrack To Your Life” on the video.</p> <p>The learner annotates that the chorus is based around using two chords with changing the chord in the final bar to get harmonic interest.</p> <p>The learner annotates that the Hook of the song can be identified around the activity of walking through the museum. Again using only two chords.</p>	<p>V4S6</p> <p>V4S7</p>
	<p>Complete Exercise 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice developing a chord sequence for each of the sections of your song. 	<p>V4S8</p>

Tutor notes:

Key idea learning sequence 2:

A chord becomes an instrumental part

Notes or resources

- Demonstrate how to develop chords into instrumental parts.
- Look at some case study songs that illustrate this process.

“Imagine” by John Lennon is a good example.

- It’s based around chord I and chord IV in the key of C major, so C and F major.

It’s simple but made interesting by Lennon playing a quaver or 1/8 note alternating pattern, with a melodic aspect using C major 7 chord to lead into F, and a short chromatic phrase to come back out of the loop before repeating.

“Someone Like You” by Adele

- The piano part uses arpeggiation where the chord is broken into individual notes played in a sequence.

“Foundations” by Kate Nash

- The piano part starts by playing held triad chords before developing into a more distinctive rhythmic pattern for further interest.

Another example is “I Am The Resurrection” by The Stone Roses

- This song uses a repeating bass riff (you might know this as a device from classical music – an ostinato). A riff is a melodic line used as an accompanying musical idea.
- Try using a riff based upon a chord.

Observe the accompaniment parts in the recording session for “Soundtrack To Your Life”.

Recap the accompanying parts.

V4S9

V4S10

V4S11

V4S12/13

V4S14

VS415

Student activities:

Complete Exercise 3:

- Experiment with rhythmic, harmonic and melodic devices to create an accompaniment for your song.

V4S16

Tutor notes:

Recap

You have learnt about four types of accompanying parts:

- Alternating notes within a chord, such as in Imagine
- Arpeggiation is where a chord is broken and played in a repeated shape of individual notes
- Distinctive rhythmic pattern, such as in “Foundations”, where the chord is played in a specific, repeated pattern.
- A riff, where a melodic line is created from a chord or key and played repeatedly as an accompanying part.

This Study Guide is to be used in conjunction with the Songwriting videos:

Credits

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