



Top Tips for Songwriting from Marty Longstaff of The Lake Poets

1. **THEME** - Think about something that you care about, that has moved you or that you want to raise awareness of. For example, you might care about animal welfare, or you might have been moved by a sad story you read about someone during the First World War. When you have a theme that you hold dear to you, words come easily.
2. **IMAGINATION** - Your imagination is a powerful tool and to write a good song you need to use it. Try to think a little differently to others and see different takes on things. If your songs theme is about a soldier, try to think about what he is thinking and feeling, or what his family back home are thinking and going through. Put yourself in the shoes of another and dream.
3. **STYLE** - Pick a style of music you like and then write a song like that. You might like sad mellow piano songs, or loud noisy guitar songs. You might like happy, bouncy pop music, or heavy, rhythmical hip-hop. Once you have style in your mind the process of getting a 'feel' for your song comes quickly.
4. **WORD POWER** - Use tricks and techniques you know from English class such as rhyme, alliteration, metaphor, and simile to add flavour to your writing. Be descriptive, contrast and compare, make full use of adverbs and adjectives, and get your point across as concisely as you can. You don't have long in a 3 minute song to make a point, and these features of language help your words stay in the mind of the listener.
5. **HAVE FUN** – Song writing is meant to be fun, it's meant to be expressive and it's meant to make you feel good. If you aren't having fun, step back and look for another route to get where you want to be. There are no rights or wrongs when it comes to being yourself and saying how you feel about something.

Visit our website for more Top Tips on creating Poetry, Art, Speech and Song or to enter our 2019/20 International Competition. Deadline: 20 March 2020.

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