

Philosophy and Music

“I had so much to say, and no one to listen. And then it happened.”

—*Jerry Maguire*, 1996.

We’ve spent the first week reading and discussing ideas in literature and in history. We’re examining our values as a class and have begun to explore the dreams and values of other contemporary and historic Americans. Our focus has been the discovery of what it means to be an individual and an individual as part of a community. To do so, we’ve had to examine our own lives and our own search for truth, freedom, and meaning. While we haven’t come to a complete understanding of our place in the world, we’ve still had fun playing with ideas.

For this paper (which will also be delivered as a presentation), you will discover, define, and express your philosophy—that set of personal guidelines and revelations that provide meaning and purpose for your life. The purpose of your paper will be to state your philosophy clearly and profoundly. Essentially, you’ll need to ask yourself the following questions:

Who am I? What do I believe? What are my values?

Your philosophy will be stated, in part, by and through the lyrics of songs of your choice. In other words, if you had been born a song, what words and music would represent the way you interact with your world?

Choose music that illustrates how you live your life. The lyrics will be the specific details that support your commentary. For example, a song your Core teachers grew up hearing and believing was “Imagine” by John Lennon. In the song, Lennon sings, “You may say I’m a dreamer / But I’m not the only one.” In different ways, inspired by ideas like Lennon’s, we’ve spent a large part of our lives trying to see the meaningful side of life, and trying to connect with others who wished to do the same. And though not always successful, we developed a real desire to make the world a better, brighter place—we’ve tried to live the lyrics of a song that defined a part of our personal philosophies.

What lyrics help explain who and what you are, or who you hope to become? What lyrics define the person who looks back at you when you look into a mirror? It’s your task to take these challenging ideas, open some mental and spiritual windows, and offer us a look inside your world!

Your paper must be typed, three (3) to four (4) pages, in MLA format. Please credit the sources of your songs in parentheses after each musical quote. Remember to bring your music on the day of presentations (song clips consolidated on **CD/digital or voice memo recorded playlist** is the preferred format. See Murdock for tech assistance). You may weave your speech and music into any format that you wish, but you will be limited to a **seven (7)** minute presentation.