

“Making Noise: The Podcast” by Ben Kuebrich
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“Soundwriting and Resistance: Toward a Pedagogy for Liberation”

Making Noise: The Podcast

The idea of “making noise” in this unit refers to political disruption/interruption through music. We will analyze the ways that artists interrupt and disrupt political debate, policy, powerful interests, and the enforcement of laws through their music. You will collaborate in groups of 2-3 to create a podcast that describes, analyzes, and demonstrates this disruption. You will have guidance but also creative license in how you use the song to comment on contemporary issues.

You have free reign to pick a song that “makes noise,” but here are some sample songs to research and consider within their rhetorical, social, and political context:

- Beyonce “Formation”
- Kendrick Lamar “Alright”
- Mos Def “New World Water”
- Dead Kennedys “Holiday in Cambodia”
- Malvina Reynolds “Little Boxes”
- System of a Down “Boom”
- Tupac “Trapped”
- Phil Ochs “When I’m Gone”
- Nina Simone “Mississippi Goddam”
- Jimi Hendrix “Machine Gun”
- M.I.A. “Paper Planes”
- Patti Smith “Radio Baghdad”
- Bright Eyes “When the President Talks to God”
- The Coup “Strange Arithmetic”

By the end of this unit, you will:

- Analyze one song with political and social context
- Work collaboratively with 1-2 peers
- Write and record audio commentary
- Edit clips of music
- Mix a podcast episode

The above list mixes contemporary music from songs dating back to the early 1960s protest tradition. You may use either a contemporary song or a song from another era, but you must use it to comment on contemporary affairs and to spread awareness on current movements and political resistance.

Please consider these questions as you create your podcast:

Does the song itself create a cultural (and thus political) disruption?

What issues, histories, and contexts does the song comment on?

What is the background of the artist and/or artists who made the song?

What does a deep analysis of the lyrics reveal?

How does the music contrast with or reinforce the message in the lyrics?

What does the song ask of the audience? What does the song ask of you?