

Wednesday Open Jam with AJ - Handout no: 3

Song Structure pt:2

Hello everyone. Hope you are safe and well.

Today I'd like us to continue looking at **Structure**, one of the important elements in music making. Structure refers to the overall plan of a piece of music. It is usually divided into sections e.g. **verse, chorus, bridge**. These sections can be seen as building blocks to be put together in a particular order to form a song.

I'd like us to continue looking at **Popular Song Structure**. In this handout we'll look at one of the most common forms:

Verse, Chorus, Bridge form (also referred to as ABC form)

To demonstrate this form I'm going to use the song *With A Little Help From My Friends* by The Beatles (please see the additional handout '*With A Little Help From My Friends Chords by The Beatles*')

In the last handout we explored some of the characteristics of a **verse** and a **chorus**, in this handout we'll do the same with the **bridge** (also referred to as the 'middle 8').

The bridge - a departure from what we've heard in a song, previously; both in terms of the lyrics and the music. Lyrically it's an opportunity for a new perspective on themes that have been established during the verses and chorus. Musically, it's a chance to offer the listener something they haven't heard before to keep the song interesting.

As mentioned above the bridge is also referred to as the 'Middle 8'.

Middle 8 – named as such because it tends to occur in the middle of a song, and typically (but not always) is 8 bars in duration.

The primary structural function of the bridge / middle 8 is to contrast with the verses.

With A Little Help From My Friends by The Beatles

Is the second song on the 1967 album *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* by The Beatles. It follows on from the title track.

The structure is as follows:

Intro (which in this case is a segue between this song and the previous)

Verse

Chorus

Verse

Chorus

Bridge

Verse

Chorus

Bridge

Chorus

Outro (which in this case is very similar to the chorus)

note - we'll look at the structural function of the **intro** and **Outro** in a future handout.

I hope you enjoy playing this song, it always puts a smile on my face to play it. I especially like the sentiment in the lyrics; that even in isolation, when the character in the song is asked 'are you sad because you're on your own' they reply 'No, I get by with a little help from my friends'.

I'll be back with some more important elements in music soon.

Until then, stay safe and well!

Take care

AJ