

SOUNDS LIKE TORONTO

Spaces / places

Grade 12 – English

Guiding Question: How do we write ourselves into spaces and places and how do they write onto us?

Description

This lesson offers students the chance to research one of the key people highlighted on the Sounds Like Toronto website, particularly in the [Belonging: Creating Community](#) stage but applicable elsewhere on the site. The timing, content, and delivery of the following should be shaped according to the class' timetable, class length, and age/ interests of participants. Please make adjustments, edits, and/or additions as you and your students see fit. Further inquiries into other artists and venues (as a way to explore specific neighborhoods) is recommended. There are also many other artists to choose from on the Sounds Like Toronto website.

Materials: access to smart devices (or computers) for research, projector or handouts, speakers to listen to music (or headphones), paper for students to take notes, writing utensils. Scroll through the section “Belonging”. Think about the music and art that has come and gone in Toronto and the music and art that is still to come!

Introduction/Minds On

Open discussion questions for students to start thinking about the city of Toronto as a place where people invent, produce art of infinite kinds, are inspired, make or find space to practice their art and be artists in a community.

- What does it mean to “belong” to a community? What does it mean for a community to belong to you?
- Can you think of examples of places in your school, neighborhood, or the city at large that are welcoming spaces? (The cafeteria? A local park? Jurassic Park/Maple Leaf Square outside of Scotiabank Centre?)
- Why do you think there are places of belonging and community? That is, why do they exist and who is responsible for the existence and upkeep of these spaces? (Were these created out of our desire to be together?)
- Are there places or spaces in the city where you are able to practice an art or your passion with others who share your passion? (This could be painting or playing music or skateboarding... There is no convention here.)

Body/Action

Activity/ Assignment: In small groups, research one artist from the [Belonging: Creating Community](#) section on the website [Jackie Mittoo](#), [Michie Mee](#), [Buffy Sainte-Marie](#), [Oscar Peterson](#), or [Jeremy Dutcher](#).

Students will answer the prompts below:

- What was the Toronto like when they made music in this city (population, local/national/global political climate, art, transit, etc.; Even look at your own neighborhood. What did it look like when this artist was originally in Toronto)?
- Consider the race, ethnicity, gender, and other aspects of the identity of the artist that are pertinent; how was this person received/ perceived at the time they were in Toronto and how would someone with their identity have been read and regarded?
- How did this person alter or add to music or politics in Toronto or Canada at all? How was this person altered by the city if at all?
- Why do you think this person is memorable and included in this online exhibit?
- What did you learn about Toronto and Toronto music in your research?
- Finally, listen to at least three songs by this artist and consider: What are your interpretations of and reactions to these songs? What are the topics or themes artist singing about? When or why would someone listen to this music? Describe your experience of listening and what their music evokes for you. Would you compare this person to an artist today (sound or lyrics or themes or otherwise)? Who and why?

Consolidation

Students consider how their expression of self (whether through clothes, singing, playing a sport, or just walking among many other actions and activities) exists in the city of Toronto. Answer for themselves how their own identity exists within and is celebrated or stifled, is welcomed or clashes with certain spaces and places in the city. Feel free to use the same guiding prompts for the research on an artist to explore their own experiences in the city.

For homework, students should think of a place or space in Toronto where they feel most themselves and write 100-250 words on how this space maps onto their lives and how their lives might alter the space. This should include who and how they are in that space, how it allows them to be a specific version of themselves, and the community they find and interact with there. Ultimately, students should consider how they are contributing to the city and how the city is influencing/contributing to their own lives.

Further inquiry section:

How might Toronto improve the way it accommodates the arts and the unanticipated changes they often inspire/ require/ insist on? Students can reflect on tensions between things they need of the city that the city doesn't offer or reciprocate.

Assessment

The work produced in this lesson does not need to be formally assessed (assessment of, evaluated), however, here are some suggestions for doing so.

If you wish to evaluate this work (assessment "of") it is suggested that you co-create success criteria along with students.

1. Brainstorm
2. Sort and Categorize
3. Make and post a T-chart
4. Add, revise, refine

From Gregory, K, Cameron, C., & Davis, A. (2011). *Knowing What Counts: Setting and Using Criteria*

A sample of Success Criteria (with rubrics) are given below for reference See below for curriculum expectations covered a sample of student created success criteria.

Sample Rubric

Criteria for Remix poems	4	3	2	1
Application of the creative process (evidence of generating ideas, reflection, revision, imagining, experimenting)				
Transfer of previous skills and knowledge (use of figurative and descriptive language)				
Effective word choice and use of syntax				
Creative (unique end product)				
Analysis (evidence of editing and effort in creating a unique piece of writing)				

CURRICULUM

We have listed grade 12 English curriculum objectives below; however, this work could easily be adapted for other grades and/or subjects.

ORAL COMMUNICATION

1. Listening to Understand: listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes

1.2 select and use the most appropriate active listening strategies when participating in a wide range of situations

1.4 identify the important information and ideas in oral texts, including complex and challenging texts, in a variety of ways

1.5 develop and explain interpretations of oral texts, including complex and challenging texts, using evidence from the text and the oral and visual cues used in it insightfully to support their interpretations

1.6 extend understanding of oral texts, including complex and challenging texts, by making insightful connections between the ideas in them and personal knowledge, experience, and insights; other texts; and the world around them

1.7 analyse oral texts, including complex and challenging texts, focusing on the ways in which they communicate information, ideas, issues, and themes and influence the listener's/viewer's response

2. Speaking to Communicate: use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes

2.3 communicate in a clear, coherent manner, using a structure and style effective for the purpose, subject matter, and intended audience

READING AND LITERATURE STUDIES

1. Reading for Meaning: read and demonstrate an understanding of a variety of literary, informational, and graphic texts, using a range of strategies to construct meaning

1.3 identify the most important ideas and supporting details in texts, including complex and challenging texts

1.7 evaluate the effectiveness of texts, including complex and challenging texts, using evidence from the text insightfully to support their opinions

1.8 identify and analyse the perspectives and/or biases evident in texts, including complex and challenging texts, commenting with understanding and increasing insight on any questions they may raise about beliefs, values, identity, and power

WRITING

1. Developing and Organizing Content: generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience

- 1.2 generate, expand, explore, and focus ideas for potential writing tasks, using a variety of strategies and print, electronic, and other resources, as appropriate
- 1.3 locate and select information to fully and effectively support ideas for writing, using a variety of strategies and print, electronic, and other resources, as appropriate
- 1.4 identify, sort, and order main ideas and supporting details for writing tasks, using a variety of strategies and selecting the organizational pattern best suited to the content and the purpose for writing
- 1.5 determine whether the ideas and information gathered are accurate and complete, interesting, and effectively meet the requirements of the writing task

2. Using Knowledge of Form and Style: draft and revise their writing, using a variety of literary, informational, and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose

- 2.4 write complete sentences that communicate their meaning clearly and effectively, skillfully varying sentence type, structure, and length to suit different purposes and making smooth and logical transitions between idea.