

## 10 Daily Lyric Writing Exercises with Emma McGann - Cheat Sheet

These writing exercises are fast-paced and intense - the aim here is to heighten your creativity and break you into a new routine of daily lyrics writing. Each exercise lasts 3 minutes each. Make sure you return tomorrow and re-do each exercise. It's only 30-40 mins of your day - so give your imagination the workout it deserves.

With this cheat sheet you'll find instructions for each exercise, helpful tips and room on each page to complete your notes. So print this bad boy off and let's get started!

**Check off each day below when you've finished your exercises!**

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
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### Ex 1. WORD ASSOCIATION

Choose **ONE** of these words.

**CASTLE DREAM PURPLE ELEPHANT MEETING ENVELOPE CONNECT THUNDER**

This will be your master word. If you've already done this exercise before, choose a different word than the one you used the first time. When the time begins, write down as many words associated with that one word as possible. Be open-minded here - there are no wrong answers. Set a timer for 3 minutes. Begin when you're ready.

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***TIP:** What feelings does your chosen word inspire? What colours are associated with it? Are there any words that would logically fit before or after your chosen word?*

## **Ex 2. GHOST WRITER**

In 'Ghost Writer' you'll have 3 minutes to re-write lyrics to a chorus that already exists. Choose one of the choruses from these songs to re-write... or go with a random song of your choice.

**Shawn Mendes - 'Stitches'**

**Rihanna - 'Umbrella'**

**Green Day - 'Basket Case'**

Now display your chosen chorus somewhere where you can see it, open it up in a separate tab or write it down. If you can, try and re-write lyrics that will work with the existing rhythm and melody of the original song. Again, keep an open mind here and have fun with this! Set a timer for 3 minutes and begin when you're ready

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***TIP: Try singing the melody of the original song with your new lyrics... do they work rhythmically? Does anything sound too much out of place?***

### **Ex 3. MEMORY LANE**

Think of one memorable thing that has happened to you in the last year. In your mind go back to that moment. Descriptively write down as much information about that memory as possible. Consider, where you were, why you were there, how you felt, what you could see, hear, taste and smell. Once you have a memory in mind, begin your timer and get writing!

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***TIP:*** When writing reflectively it's important to recognise what influence the experience you're writing about had on you in the first place. Think about that.

#### **Ex 4. STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

For this exercise there are no writing prompts whatsoever. Instead, you'll be simply writing down whatever comes to mind... you can format it as a story, or just a string of words that jump into your head. They don't necessarily have to connect or rhyme at all. Just let your words or ideas spill onto the page... try not to feel self-conscious about this. It doesn't need to make sense... think of it as a writing workout for your brain. And remember, you only have 3 minutes... so don't overthink. Set the timer for 3 minutes and begin!

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***TIP: Don't worry if you hesitate in this exercise. If you're still struggling, look around the room you're in for inspiration, or think of an event that's happened today.***

**Ex 5. RHYME IT**

Choose **ONE** of the following words to work with in the exercise.

**ABOVE**   **TRAP**   **ROAD**   **FLOOR**   **BESIDE**   **TONIGHT**   **SOUND**   **MISS**

Once the timer begins write down as many words as you possibly can that rhyme with your chosen word. When you can't think of anymore... begin to write down some phrases using the words you'll already written down. Set 3 minutes on the timer and go!

<b>WORDS</b>	<b>PHRASES</b>

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***TIP:*** When rhyming it helps to think alphabetically - start from 'A' in your head and write down as many rhymes as you can think of with each letter.

## Ex 6. WRITING PROMPTS

Choose **ONE** prompt below for this exercise. When the timer begins, jump straight in and try your best at writing a verse or chorus with your chosen writing prompt as the focus.

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING WRITING PROMPTS



Once you've chosen your prompt, set your timer for 3 minutes and begin!

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**TIP:** Writing fictionally with your writing prompt might open up new ideas. You don't have to personalise it. Create a story behind the prompt you're writing with.

## Ex 7. PICTURE THIS

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING IMAGES



Take a few moments to have a good look at your chosen image. When the timer starts try writing down as many lyrical phrases as possible that are linked to that image. You don't necessarily have to rhyme here. This is more about the association between the image and your lyrics. Aim for at least **15 phrases...** or go ahead and write a short verse if you're feeling confident! Set your timer for 3 minutes and jump in!

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**TIP:** *Imagine what your image might look like with a different perspective. E.g. are you writing from the perspective of someone lighting the chinese lanterns or someone who spots them from a distance?*

### **Ex 8. RHYME SCHEME**

Choose **ONE** of the following rhyme schemes to follow for this exercise. When the 3 minute timer begins, try writing a short verse or chorus using your chosen rhyme scheme. The subject matter can be anything you choose, as long as you follow the rhyme scheme itself. If you finish before the timer runs out, test yourself further and write another one.

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING RHYME SCHEMES

A B A B

A A B C C B

A B C B

A B B A C C

A A B A A B

A B B A

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**TIP:** It helps to plot out your rhyme scheme vertically down your page in a margin before you begin.



## **Ex 9. POINT OF VIEW**

For this exercise we'll be doing a bit of ghost writing again! But this time there's a twist. Choose one of the following songs to work with for this exercise.

**1D - 'Story of my Life'**   **Kelly Clarkson - 'Because of You'**   **Foo Fighters - 'The Pretender'**

If you can open your chosen verse in a separate window, or write it down somewhere where it's in view. When the timer starts, re-write the verse with a different point of view. Consider who the original lyrics are addressing and switch it up. Is it written in first person? Maybe the conditions within the lyrics have changed... be creative here. If you're unsure, watch me first as an example. Or if you're feeling confident. Jump right in!

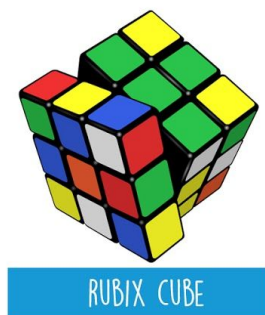
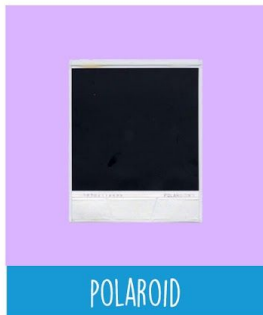
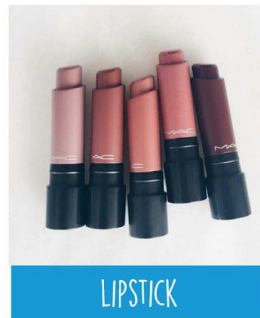
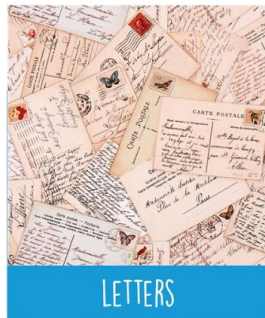
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***TIP:*** Try this exercise out with one of your favourite songs. How drastically does it change your connection with the song?

## Ex 10. THE SUITCASE

For this challenge we'll be writing descriptively from a visual prompt and our aim here is to have a short verse or chorus that follows a rhyme scheme finished in under 3 minutes.

You find a suitcase. Inside are 8 items. These items are your choices of visual prompts to use. Choose your own rhyme scheme to use for this exercise and use as many or as little of the items as you choose.



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**TIP:** Why are the items in the case? Who do they belong to? Why is the case lost? Where did you find it? How can you use these items in real life? How could they be connected?