

# The Power of Lyrics - How Songs Influence Us




Name:

Date:



## What influence can song lyrics have and what hidden messages are there?

Songs are more than just a melody. Their lyrics have the power to awaken emotions, shape opinions, and spark thought. They often reflect social issues, personal experiences, or political messages. While some statements are clearly recognizable, others hide between the lines. Song lyrics can carry conscious messages about topics like love, protest, or identity, but they can also contain subconscious content - such as stereotypical gender roles, consumer behavior or ideological stances.

 **Brainstorming Assignment:** When does a phrase (e.g., a proverb, an idiom) have a special meaning and why are some sentences particularly memorable?

 **Write your answer here.**

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 **Assignment:** Watch the YouTube video carefully. Note down spontaneous impressions and initial interpretations of the song in bullet points.



## Youtube: Taylor Swift - Anti-Hero (Official Music Video)

To watch the youtube video just scan the QR code.

<https://youtu.be/b1kbLwwqugk?feature=shared>

 **Write your answer here.**

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 **Assignment:** Now watch the video a second time and read the lyrics in parallel. Then, work in pairs. Discuss which central phrase or central theme the song deals with and what their meaning could be.

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Ich konnte die vollständigen Lyrics von "Anti-Hero" von Taylor Swift nicht direkt abrufen. Du kannst die Lyrics auf folgender [Genius-Seite](#) finden.

**Überschrift:** Taylor Swift - Anti-Hero

I have this thing where I get older but just never wiser.  
Midnights become my afternoons.  
When my depression works the graveyard shift,  
All of the people I've ghosted stand there in the room.  
I should not be left to my own devices.  
They come with prices and vices, I end up in crisis.  
(Tale as old as time)  
I wake up screaming from dreaming.  
One day I'll watch as you're leaving,  
'Cause you got tired of my scheming.  
(For the last time)  
It's me, hi, I'm the problem, it's me.  
At tea time, everybody agrees.  
I'll stare directly at the sun but never in the mirror.  
It must be exhausting always rooting for the anti-hero.

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 **Assignment:** Answer the questions briefly and precisely.

**What does the line 'I have this thing where I get older but just never wiser' suggest about the speaker's personal growth?**

The line implies a feeling of stagnation in personal development. Despite aging, the speaker feels they haven't gained wisdom or maturity, highlighting a sense of frustration with their lack of progress.

**How does the imagery of 'ghosted people standing in the room' reflect the speaker's emotional state?**

The imagery suggests a haunting presence of past relationships or regrets that the speaker cannot escape. It indicates a feeling of guilt or unresolved issues that linger in the speaker's mind, contributing to their depression.

**What is the significance of the phrase 'It's me, hi, I'm the problem, it's me' within the song?**

This phrase highlights self-awareness and acceptance of personal flaws. The repetition suggests a recurring acknowledgment of being the source of one's own issues, emphasizing the theme of self-reflection and accountability.


**Why does the speaker mention staring directly at the sun but never in the mirror, and what does it symbolize?**

Staring at the sun symbolizes confronting external challenges, while avoiding the mirror suggests an inability to face one's inner self. This contrast indicates the speaker's struggle with self-acceptance and the tendency to focus on external perceptions rather than introspection.

**What does the theme of 'rooting for the anti-hero' reveal about societal expectations and personal identity?**

The theme suggests a contradiction between societal norms and individual identity. The idea of supporting an 'anti-hero' implies embracing imperfection and rejecting conventional ideals, which reflects the speaker's desire to be accepted despite their flaws.



 Reflection and Discussion in Plenum: Subsequent discussion of the results. Each group presents its findings. Discuss the following aspects together:

- What surprised you most about the other groups' presentations? Was there a research finding that changed your original assessment of the topic?
- How does the music change the effect of the lyrics? Can a critical text still convey its message in a danceable song?
- To what extent can songs influence public opinion on a topic? Can they change language or establish new idioms?
- What role do such memorable phrases play in our everyday lives, in politics, or in social media?

 **Write your answer here.**

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## Model Answer for the Teacher!!

### Analysis of Themes in Taylor Swift's "Anti-Hero"

#### Personal Growth: "I have this thing where I get older but just never wiser"

The line suggests a sense of stagnation in the speaker's personal development. Despite aging, the speaker feels they have not gained wisdom or maturity, indicating a cycle of repeating past mistakes or failing to learn from experiences. This can reflect feelings of frustration and self-awareness about one's shortcomings.

#### Emotional State: "Ghosted people standing in the room"

The imagery of "ghosted people standing in the room" paints a picture of haunting memories or unresolved personal issues. It reflects the speaker's emotional state of feeling burdened by past actions, guilt, or relationships that have ended without closure. This may symbolize the weight of regret and the presence of unaddressed emotions.

#### Self-Recognition: "It's me, hi, I'm the problem, it's me"

This phrase is significant as it demonstrates the speaker's acknowledgment of their role in personal or relational issues. It highlights self-awareness and the acceptance of one's flaws and mistakes. The repetition emphasizes a candid admission, suggesting a struggle with self-identity and the impact of one's actions on others.

#### Symbolism: "Staring directly at the sun but never in the mirror"

The act of staring at the sun but avoiding the mirror symbolizes a reluctance to face one's true self. The sun, often a representation of truth and enlightenment, contrasts with the mirror, which reflects reality. This indicates avoidance of self-reflection and an unwillingness to confront personal truths or flaws.

#### Societal Expectations: "Rooting for the anti-hero"

The theme of "rooting for the anti-hero" reveals a critique of societal expectations and notions of heroism. It suggests that society often supports or sympathizes with flawed individuals, recognizing the complexity of human nature. This reflects a broader commentary on personal identity, where individuals may feel pressured to conform to idealized standards while grappling with their imperfections. Taylor Swift's "Anti-Hero" delves into themes of self-awareness, emotional struggles, and societal perceptions, capturing the intricacies of personal identity and growth.