

### Activity Type

Reading, writing,  
listening and speaking  
activity

### Language Focus

Love

Critical thinking

Metaphors

### Aim

To think about and  
discuss the topic of love  
and understand peoples'  
different interpretations  
of what love is.

### Preparation

Make one copy of the  
lesson for each student.

Also, prepare a copy of  
the song 'The Rose'. The  
song has been covered  
by many artists such  
as Westlife and Bianca  
Ryan and is available on  
YouTube.

### Level

Intermediate

### Time

90 minutes

### Introduction

This compelling three-page lesson helps students to think about and discuss the topic of love and understand peoples' different interpretations of what love is.

### Procedure

Introduce the activity by writing the question "What is love?" on the board. Have the students share their ideas and get feedback from around the class.

Next, hand out a copy of the lesson to each student.

Read the story together as a class. After each paragraph, review its contents and meaning, and deal with any problematic words that arise.

Students then answer a set of reading comprehension questions based on the story. When the students have finished, go through the answers with the class.

#### Answer key

1. Magdalena by Danny O'Keefe.
2. She had to keep reciting them.
3. She was driving her car.
4. Ten minutes.
5. That something was going to happen with the song.
6. Michele Brouman
7. They thought it was dull and a hymn and NOT rock and roll and totally wrong.

Afterwards, the students listen to a song based on the text and complete a gap fill. When the students have listened to the song two times, they compare and discuss their answers with their classmates. The students then listen to the song one more time and the answers are elicited from the students.

#### Answer key

- |          |           |            |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| 1. reed  | 5. dance  | 9. long    |
| 2. bleed | 6. chance | 10. strong |
| 3. need  | 7. give   | 11. snow   |
| 4. seed  | 8. live   | 12. rose   |

When all the answers have been checked, discuss the meaning of the song with the students.

Next, have the students answer the discussion questions and then talk about their answers in small groups.

Finally, have a class feedback session and discuss the students' answers to the questions.

**A. Read the story.****How "THE ROSE" came to be by Amanda McBroom**

I was driving down the freeway one afternoon, sometime in 1970-something.

I was listening to the radio. A song came on the radio. It was "Magdalena" by Danny O'Keefe, sung by Leo Sayer. I liked it immediately. My favorite line was "Your love is like a razor. My heart is just a scar." I thought, "Ooh, I love that lyric."

As I continued to drive down the road the thought came, I don't agree with the sentiment. I don't think love is like a razor. (I was younger then.) What, then, do I think love is? Suddenly, it was as if someone had opened a window in the top of my head. Words came pouring in. I had to keep reciting them to myself as I drove faster and faster towards home, so I wouldn't forget them. I screeched into my drive way, ran into the house, past various bewildered dogs and cats and husbands, and sat down at the piano. Ten minutes later, THE ROSE was there.

I called my husband, George, into the room and played it for him, as I always did with my new songs. He listened, and quietly said to me, "You've just written a standard." I protested that no one but my pals would ever hear it. (This is long before I had ever recorded anything.) He said, "Mark my words, something is going to happen with this song."

A year or so later, a great young songwriter named Michele Brouman, who became my primary musical collaborator and best friend, said "Listen. There is this movie coming out called "The Rose". They are looking for a title song. Do you want me to submit this to them?" I had never really tried to submit this song to anyone. I didn't consider myself a songwriter at the time. So I said, "Sure." Originally the film had been called THE PEARL, which was Janis Joplin's nick name. But her family refused permission to use that name. Lucky for me. "Pearl" is MUCH harder to rhyme.

She submitted the tune to the producers, who HATED it. They thought it was dull and a hymn and NOT rock and roll and totally wrong. They put it in the reject box. But the divine Paul Rothchild, who was the music supervisor on the film, and had been Janis Joplin's producer, hauled it out and asked them to reconsider. They again said no. So he mailed it to Bette. She liked it, and that's how it got into the film and changed my life forever.

I have never written another song as quickly. I like to think I was the window that happened to be open when those thoughts needed to come through. I am eternally grateful... to Bette... to Paul Rothchild... to Bill Kerby, who wrote the screenplay... to my friend who first submitted it for me... and to the Universe for speaking to me in the first place and for showing me what I truly believe.

**B. Answer the questions about the story.**

1. What song inspired Amanda to write "The Rose"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What did she have to do so she wouldn't forget the words? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What was she doing when she thought of the lyrics to her song? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How long did it take to compose the song? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What was her husband's prediction for the song? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Who suggested submitting her song? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What did the producers think of her song? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**C. Now, listen to the song "The Rose" and complete the missing words in the gap fill.**

Some say love, it is a river  
That drowns the tender (1) \_\_\_\_\_  
Some say love, it is a razor  
That leaves your soul to (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Some say love, it is a hunger  
An endless aching (3) \_\_\_\_\_  
I say love, it is a flower  
And you, it's only (4) \_\_\_\_\_

It's the heart, afraid of breaking  
That never learns to (5) \_\_\_\_\_  
It's the dream, afraid of waking  
That never takes the (6) \_\_\_\_\_

It's the one who won't be taken  
Who cannot seem to (7) \_\_\_\_\_  
And the soul, afraid of dying  
That never learns to (8) \_\_\_\_\_

And the night has been too lonely  
And the road has been too (6) \_\_\_\_\_  
And you think that love is only  
For the lucky and the (10) \_\_\_\_\_

Just remember in the winter  
Far beneath the bitter (11) \_\_\_\_\_  
Lies the seed that with the sun's love  
In the spring, becomes a (12) \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Answer the discussion questions and then talk about your answers in a small group.**

1. What do you think of the song?

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2. Do you think love can hurt? Give reasons for your answer.

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3. What do you think is the songwriter's idea of love from listening to the song?

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4. Are you lucky in love? Give reasons for your answer.

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5. What metaphors are used in the song? Do you agree with them? Why (not)?

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6. Write your own metaphors for love and share them with your group.

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