

Analyzing Your Pop/Rock Song

By Matthew Edwards

Author of "So You Want to Sing Rock 'N' Roll?"

1. Listen to the song and take in the overall feel
 - Does the text tell a story or set a mood?
 - Is the song melodic, rhythmic, or a combination?
 - What is the primary register?
 - Are there register changes/breaks? If yes, mark them in your music.
 - What is the perceived effort level?
2. Is the emphasis in the accompaniment primarily on 1 & 3 or 2 & 4?
3. Is the emphasis of the vocal line primarily on 1 & 3 or 2 & 4?
4. Mark rhythmic emphasis and accents in the music with "<" markings
5. Mark words and consonants that are emphasized by underlining them.
6. Is the diction crisp (active mouth) or understated (lazy mouth)?
7. How would you describe the tonal quality (bright, dark, neutral, etc.)?
8. What is the accent in this song (neutral, refined, Southern, British, other)?
9. Does the voice sound free (neutral/free-floating larynx) or constricted (high larynx)?
10. Mark onsets and releases other than clean (slides/scoops, fry, glottal, aspirate, etc.).
11. Draw in curves and lines any other phrasing choices.
12. Mark notes with vibrato or delayed onset vibrato (all others are assumed to be straight tone).