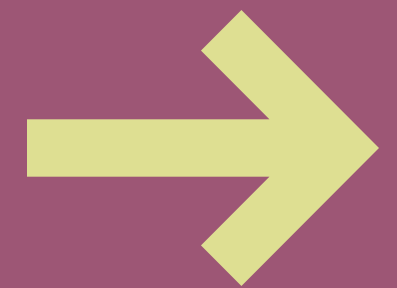


# Raising Our Voices



Exploring the profound connection between music and mental well-being, and its impact on our emotions and daily lives.



# Music & Mental Health

Exploring the **benefits** and techniques of music in mental health.

01

Music therapy helps improve **emotional well-being** through creative expression.

Raising Our Voices Course Overview

02

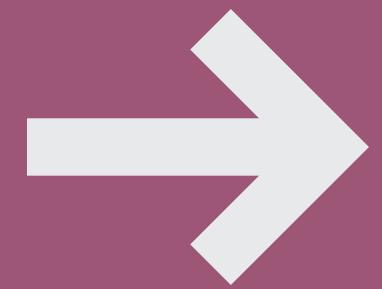
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Sample Lesson



# Music and Mood

Music has a profound impact on our emotions and mental health. It can uplift our spirits, ease anxiety, and enhance cognitive function, making it a powerful tool for emotional regulation. Through listening, singing, or playing instruments, individuals can safely explore and express their emotions. Music therapy harnesses this power to reduce stress, elevate mood, and promote healing by fostering a deeper connection to one's feelings and to others.



# Music's Positive Impact

Therapeutic Benefits: Utilizing music is a proven method that helps with trauma, reduces anxiety, and fosters resilience. It is used in hospitals, centers and schools through various means.

Connection & Belonging: Music fosters social bonds, enhances empathy, and creates inclusive spaces for people from diverse backgrounds.

Social Impact: Music serves as a tool for advocacy and social change, particularly among marginalized communities. It helps in expressing personal experiences and challenging societal injustices.

**"Raising Our Voices"** is an interactive, 8-week creative wellness course that explores the healing benefits of music and the arts as tools for emotional expression and mental well-being. Rooted in music therapy and creative arts practices, this program empowers participants to use voice, rhythm, movement, and visual expression to build confidence, process emotions, and improve daily coping skills. Participants will discover new ways to tell their stories, strengthen social connections, and practice self-awareness in a supportive, low-pressure environment. No artistic or musical experience required—just an open mind and a willingness to engage.



### **Week 1: Introduction to Expression**

- Icebreakers and group agreements
- Introduction to music and art therapy
- Guided mindfulness activity with calming music
- Journaling prompt: "What does my voice mean to me?"

### **Week 2: Finding Your Rhythm**

- Introduction to rhythm and percussion (body drumming, tapping)
- Group rhythm exercises
- Discussion: How rhythm supports emotional regulation and focus
- Reflection activity: How does rhythm affect your body and mood?

### **Week 3: Music, Poetry & Emotion**

- Listening to music from different genres and moods
- Emotional mapping activity: What emotions arise from different sounds?
- Poetry Prompt & Creative Response:
- Facilitator reads an emotional or evocative poem aloud
- Prompt: "What do you feel as you hear these words?"
- Participants create a response through art, song, or dance/movement, expressing the emotions evoked by the poem
- Voluntary sharing and group reflection

### **Week 4: Singing Our Stories**

- Vocal warm-ups and confidence-building exercises
- Group sing-along to an uplifting or familiar song
- Discussion: The role of voice and music in identity and healing
- Reflection prompt: "What story does your voice want to tell?"

### **Week 5: Creative Writing and Spoken Word**

- Introduction to basic lyric writing or free-form poetry
- Writing prompt: "If I had a microphone, I would say..."
- Supportive sharing circle (optional)
- Group discussion: The power of our personal narratives

### **Week 6: Visual Arts and Mood**

- Exploring how colors, shapes, and texture relate to emotions
- Art activity: Create an emotional self-portrait or "mood mandala"
- Group walk-through and voluntary discussion
- Reflection: "How did creating art help you express yourself?"

### **Week 7: Movement and Music**

- Movement warm-up (stretching, breathing with rhythm)
- Movement expression activity: moving to different types of music
- Partner/group mirroring or follow-the-leader games
- Reflection: "How does movement shift or release emotions?"

### **Week 8: Showcase and Reflection**

- Recap of each week's themes and activities
- Final sharing: Participants present a song, art piece, movement, or written work they created or were most proud of
  - Group collaborative art or music activity
- Journaling: "How has raising your voice changed you?"
  - Group celebration and closing affirmation



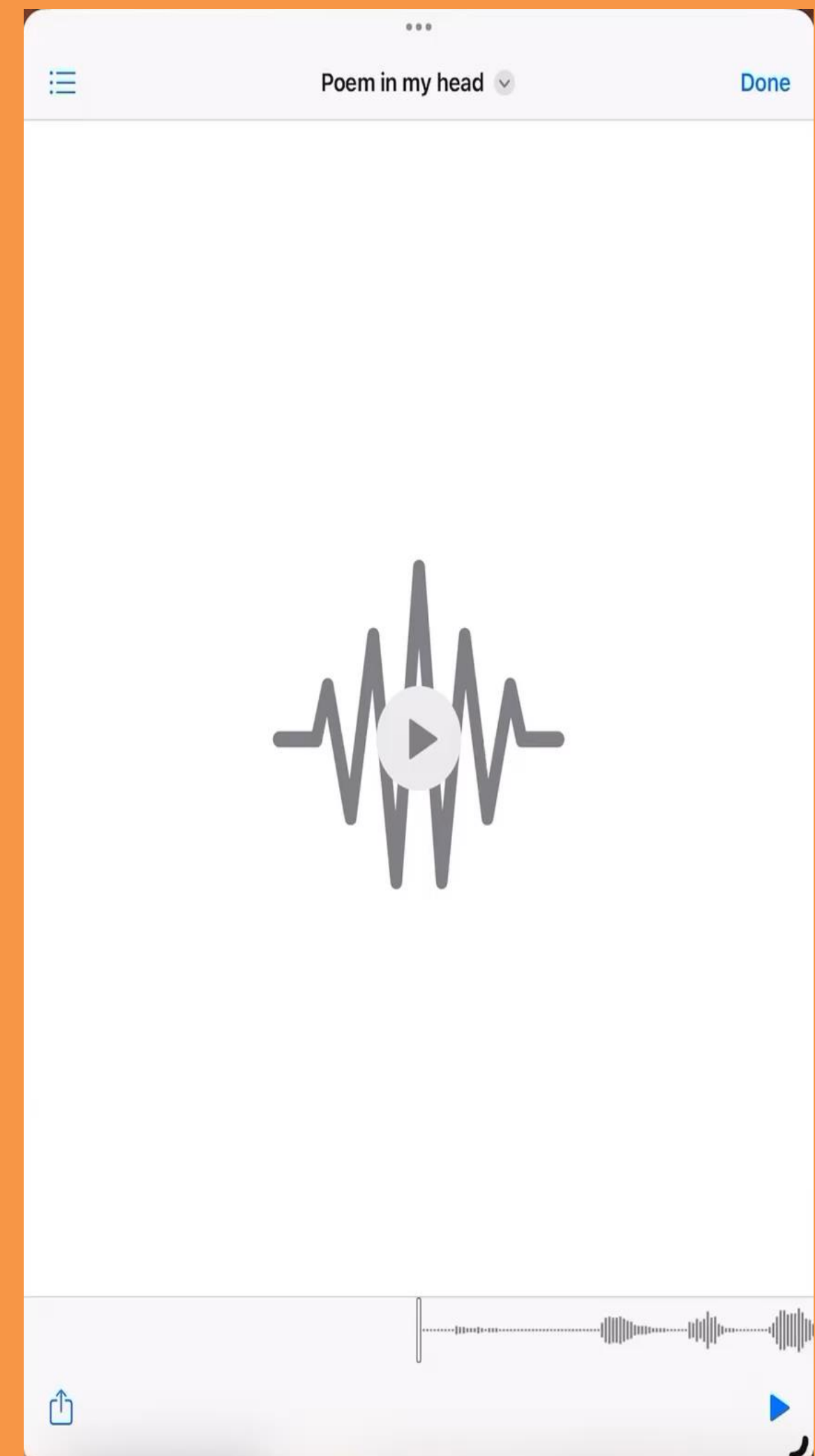
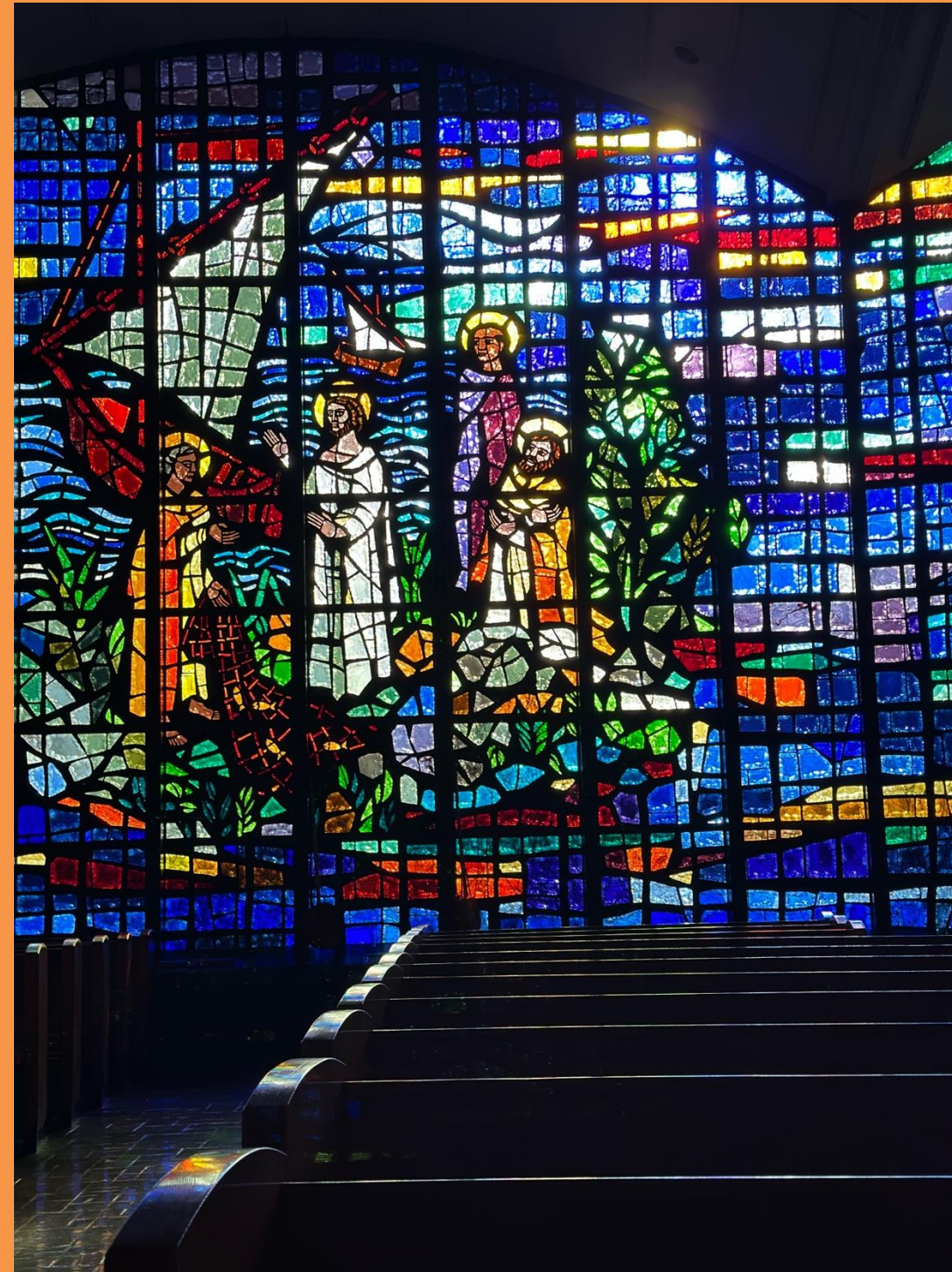


# A Dream Within a Dream

BY EDGAR ALLAN POE

Take this kiss upon the brow!  
And, in parting from you now,  
Thus much let me avow —  
You are not wrong, who deem  
That my days have been a dream;  
Yet if hope has flown away  
In a night, or in a day,  
In a vision, or in none,  
Is it therefore the less *gone*?  
*All* that we see or seem  
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar  
Of a surf-tormented shore,  
And I hold within my hand  
Grains of the golden sand —  
How few! yet how they creep  
Through my fingers to the deep,  
While I weep — while I weep!  
O God! Can I not grasp  
Them with a tighter clasp?  
O God! can I not save  
*One* from the pitiless wave?  
Is *all* that we see or seem  
But a dream within a dream?





Thank you

**ABIGAIL AVILES**

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