

# Introduction to Mass Communication: Writing Assignment #1

## The Walk Up Song

It's likely that if you've ever been to a major or minor league baseball game you've heard at least one player's walk up song. Song may be a generous term. Walk up music ranges anywhere from 15 to 45 seconds. It's usually played when a batter comes up to the plate to hit.

Despite the name, the use of music to introduce players or teams is not limited to baseball. Consider the Seattle Seahawks. The team has used "Bittersweet Symphony" as a theme song for years.

## What does the music say?

It's not surprising, then, that social media loving fans express feelings — good and bad — about walk up music. The players choose the songs for specific reasons, even the off-kilter music. A 2013 San Jose Mercury News article discussed how Giants player Brandon Crawford's batting average jumped 20 points after he started using Kelly Clarkson's "Stronger." The lyrics:

***"What doesn't kill you makes you stronger  
Stand a little taller  
Doesn't mean I'm lonely when I'm alone  
What doesn't kill you makes a fighter  
Footsteps even lighter  
Doesn't mean I'm over cause you're gone ..."***

What does a song say about a person? What assumptions can be made about personality? What does it say to the **masses**? To **small groups**? To **individuals**? Is there a **message**, or is it just entertainment?

## Assignment

**PREWRITE:** Choose your own walk up song. Examine the lyrics that connects it to you. In 200 words, provide brief analysis as to why you chose the song. *Refrain from selecting songs using profanity.* Bring in either a **written** YouTube link or a downloaded version of the song to play on your phone. Two copies are required: one to turn in at the beginning of class, another for reference. *You will be talking about your selection.*

## DUE SEPTEMBER 13 AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS

**PAPER:** Elaborate on your prewrite, using it as a base for your paper. After class discussion, analyze the song from a mass communication perspective using your peers' thoughts. *If your song is not played in class due to time constraints, ask a group of friends for analysis.* Consider: If the **receiver** didn't know you, what **stereotypes** could they infer? Why? What would the lyrics tell them about your personality? Why? What **messages** are being sent?

Finally, select a secondary type of communication from the **McQuail Model of Communication** — **intra-personal, interpersonal** or **group** — and describe how your song would be interpreted in a more limited setting. **Example:** Interpersonal use could be someone using your song as a ring-tone for you.

**Minimum formatting expectations:** Two **FULL** pages, double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, standard MLA style. Points will be deducted for improper grammar, misspelled words and significant style errors.

**DUE SEPTEMBER 27 BY 9 A.M. TO TURNITIN.COM (SEE SYLLABUS FOR CLASS INFO)**