



This poem was written for one of my major assignments in Dr. Amanda Christie's morning English 100 section. As a

STEM major and enthusiast, it's not often that I'm given an opportunity to work on creative pieces. In this poem, I tried to blend together poetic devices with personal experiences to convey my passion for one of most coveted pleasures in life: music. It was a great project that allowed me to relax from studying, gym time, and tutoring, and explore an avenue of academia that I don't often venture down.

Music-Induced Emotions and the Inexplicability Thereof

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Music affects the emotions and outlooks of its listeners. Sad music can induce despondence, indifference, and depression, whereas lively music can encourage jubilation, excitement, and happiness. Music changes how listeners interpret their environment, from the people around them to the thoughts inside their heads. However, the mechanism by which this works is shrouded in mystery. Music's psychological, mechanical, and physiological influences are such a complicated, intertwined mess that if you asked someone to explain why you get the feelings you get when you listen to your favorite song, odds are they'll respond with "I can't explain it."

This slam poem, originally entitled "I Can't Explain It," seeks to capture and illustrate the inexplicable effects that different types of music have on one's emotions, as well as one's self- and local perception. This piece follows variations in the thoughts of a student sitting at the Campus Center of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa – one of the central hubs for student and faculty activity – as he peruses his iPod touch, scrolling and searching to find the perfect song at the perfect volume and, once it is found, basking in the wave of emotions it brings about.

I can't explain it.
It can't be explained.
Left, right, about 60 dB
Thumb up, thumb down
A C B D
Stop. Go.
Flush out, rush in
Waves, emotions
Images flowing like oceans.
The Center a battlefield,
Your classmates opponents
Stop. Skip.
Lethargy-bound, sad tones and
Self-loathing lyrics
Stop. Skip.
The beat bringing you up,
Carry you to higher places
While you're just sitting
Staring at nameless faces
While the crescendo drives you,
To transcendental spaces
With no movement on your part
You're just sitting there, patient
While all in your head
Nature's bulletproof remedy,
An anomalous construct

Focal to humanity
Paints a new world around you,
From green to blue to man dude
I— I just don't know how to say it.
Only a moment ago I wanted no more than
The day's end
To be curled up in bed,
Hugged by my blanket,
To run from As and Fs and 4s and dates
Yet, here I am,
Those urges subsided,
Impulses that pulsed oh so strongly,
Abated,
Suppressed,
Transformed, regressed
Into smiles and idols
Lyrically communicated,
Instrumentally instigated,
Compositionally undulated
In waves, emotions,
Images flowing like oceans,
Oceans that stop and go, the ebb and flow of which
You'll never know, yet always know that
No matter what you do, how high, how low
That music will always be with you
Be by your side, through dark and light
Can pull you up when you're feeling down
And pull you down when you're feeling up
It's a ride, it's a story
It's a newfound glory
In every song, sample, and let yourself never worry
About if you'll ever be alone, blind or naïve
In this cold, warm world
Because the music will guide you
But don't ask me why because...
I can't explain it.
It can't be explained.