



Using Indie songs to enhance seventh-grade students' free poetry writing skills

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Abstract

Students in the seventh grade often experience challenges in composing free poetry, particularly in selecting appropriate diction, developing themes, and expressing ideas creatively in written form. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of using indie songs as a medium to enhance students' free poetry writing skills. Indie songs were selected as learning media because their emotional resonance and literary expressions in the lyrics can enrich students' vocabulary and strengthen the aesthetic quality of their poetic language. The research employed a Classroom Action Research approach conducted in two cycles involving 20 students. The procedure consisted of four stages: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data was collected through classroom observation and performance assessment of students' poetry writing. The findings demonstrate that the use of indie song media effectively improved students' ability to express ideas, select meaningful diction, and construct creative and coherent poems. The study highlights the pedagogical value of integrating music-based media in language learning to stimulate emotional engagement, expand linguistic resources, and develop students' creative writing competencies.

Keywords: classroom research; creative writing; diction; indie songs; poetry learning.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Humans have four language skills, also called the four single language skills. Receptive skills include reading and listening skills, while productive skills include writing and speaking skills. Writing is one of the basic skills of other language skills that students need to have. Poetry teaching is mandatory in the education curriculum at the junior high school level. In essence, poetry is a form of expression that moves the mind, triggers emotions, and stimulates imagination through writing in a rhythmic form (Pradopo, 2007). Learning to write poetry aims to train students' skills in imagining and processing them in the form of beautiful words (Gao et al., 2024). Nurgiyantoro (2010) defines poetry writing skills as human thinking and expressive activities supported by knowledge, language skills, and the application of good writing techniques. Poetry writing skills allow students to explore ideas, be creative with language, and express their feelings and thoughts beautifully and profoundly.

Learning activities that involve writing poetry help stimulate students' brains to think creatively and express their ideas and feelings in literary form, allowing readers to enjoy them. However, some students still face difficulties and obstacles when writing poetry. Based on the results of interviews conducted with Indonesian language teachers at Sunan Kalijogo Junior High School, it is indicated that many students in grade VIII, especially in class VIII Ibnu Sina, have difficulty writing poetry. The difficulties faced by students in eighth grade Sunan Kalijogo Blitar when writing poetry include: (1) students have difficulty finding or finding word choices that match their theme, (2) the themes chosen by students in writing free poetry tend not to vary or are monotonous, (3) difficulty finding inspiration in determining poetry ideas, (4) students have difficulty arranging words or making sentences, and (5) students have difficulty expressing their ideas in writing. Creativity and expression in writing poetry can be obstacles for teachers and students when relying on more than conventional teaching.

The lack of success in the learning process in schools and the low learning outcomes of students require solutions so that these problems can be resolved as quickly as possible (Muslich, 2007). Based on interviews and initial observation activities, it can be concluded that students' problems in writing poetry are caused by several factors, namely the limited vocabulary possessed by students and the use of learning media that has yet to be maximized. Media in learning is a crucial factor in achieving the success of the learning process (Koropasi & Retnantiti, 2023). Students' achievement of success in learning to write poetry must be supported by using media from the teacher. Motivation is a key factor in attaining success in writing (Alves-Wold et al., 2023). Yaumi (2018) stated that teachers should have adequate expertise in designing, developing, and utilizing learning media to increase student interest, attention, and motivation. Using learning media, teachers can stimulate student interest and create a more exciting and relevant learning environment. Also, research shows that music education positively influences reading and writing skills; integrating music in language teaching helps learners in rural schools to improve these skills, supporting the idea that song media could enhance poetry writing skills. (Yende, 2023)

Learning quality can be improved through the vital role of learning media (Zhang, 2024). Learning media can be a means or tool that sends messages or learning materials to recipients or students (Sanaky, 2013). In line with Sanaky's (2013) opinion, according to Safitri & Setyorini (2023), learning media is a tool to support learning activities by utilizing technological developments from teachers to students. Furthermore, a study with secondary students demonstrated that "perspective taking" (i.e., considering multiple viewpoints) is significantly associated with higher writing quality, suggesting that helping students see themes and perspectives might aid their thematic variety and expression in poetry (Kim et al., 2025). Optimally applied media in learning can help students be more creative in expressing the ideas and feelings they are experiencing. Learning media is needed to create an imaginative and inspiring learning atmosphere when writing poetry.

Effective learning media support understanding and stimulate students' motivation to participate actively in learning activities. Using song media as a tool for the learning process of writing free poetry can be an exciting and innovative form of learning media. Batubara (2020) revealed that using media can improve the quality of learning by activating various types of students' five senses during the learning process. Using song

media as a learning medium can activate several senses, namely hearing, sight, and feeling. Songs can help students be more involved and creative in writing poetry because students have a multisensory experience that stimulates thinking and feelings.

Song media can be a practical approach, especially if songs such as indie songs contain deep meaning and literary quality. Indie songs are independent music produced and distributed independently by musicians through independent labels to record and publish them. Indie musicians prioritize freedom in channeling their creativity so that indie songs have characteristics that other musicians do not possess. Permana (2023) argues that the theme in indie songs is not only about resistance but also has poetic lyrics, so it has become a new lifestyle trend. Indie song lyrics are rich in diction. In the lyrics, there are poetic and literary sentences. According to Sukamto (2021), the lyrics in indie songs are more frontal, expressive, and literary. Song lyrics that are rich in meaning, strong rhythm, and distinctive language style can be a source of inspiration for novice writers. Students can learn about using solid words, poetic structure, and how to express emotions through words.

1.1 Purpose of the study

Based on literature studies, there is relevant research, such as research conducted by Asih et al., (2022), who researched the influence of using the Laskar Pelangi song as learning media in class X of Senior High School, Sutikno (2018) conducted an experimental study on learning to write poetry in class V of Elementary School Gugus Putra Serang IV using children's songs as the medium, and Anggraeni (2016) conducted action research in class V Elementary School Muktiwari 02 using children's song media to improve poetry writing learning. The literature study of previous research was conducted to improve students' ability to write poetry using song media. The difference between this research and previous research lies in the type of research, research subjects, and types of songs chosen by the researcher. Similar research using song-learning media can produce positive results and have an impact on improving poetry writing learning.

This study uses indie songs as audio-learning media to stimulate students' imagination and as a learning aid for writing poetry. The flow of music will increase the brain's function to build students' imagination, and indie song lyrics containing poetic and literary words or sentences will help students' vocabulary mastery or acquisition in writing poetry. Sunan Kalijogo Junior High School was chosen as the research location because there is a problem with students' low skills in writing poetry. In addition, the application of song media has yet to be carried out at the school to improve learning outcomes in poetry writing. Subject teachers acknowledge that it is necessary to utilize media to overcome these problems. Thus, this study aims to describe and determine the effectiveness of using indie song media to improve the free poetry writing skills of class VIII Sunan Kalijogo Junior High School students.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study uses a classroom action research (CAR) design developed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988). The aim is to test new ideas in learning activities that are expected to improve the quality and learning outcomes in the institution. Classroom action research involves several stages, namely research planning, implementing actions, making observations, and reflecting.

2.1. Participants

The subjects of the study were 20 students of 7th 7th-grade junior high school, consisting of 11 males and nine females. The study was located at Blitar Regency, East Java. The data collected were in the form of free poetry texts of 7th-grade junior high school students, which were analyzed descriptively and by assessment. The research data sources came from process data sources that included the involvement behavior of class 7th-grade junior high school students during learning, and the result data sources were in the form of free poetry writing test results.

The researcher acts as a teacher during the implementation of the action. In contrast, the subject teacher and colleagues are observers in the research to provide assessment and input if there are deficiencies during the research process. In addition, colleagues also help document images during the research.

2.2. Data collection tools

Data collection techniques in this study include interviews with teachers, observation of the learning process, taking documentation, and conducting pre-tests and post-tests. In the data collection process, there are five supporting instruments in the form of interview result guidelines, field notes, observation sheets, poetry writing tests, and rubrics for assessing results. After the data is collected as a whole, data analysis is carried out. Analysis of the learning process is obtained from field notes and observation sheets that come from all activities and student involvement during learning activities. Learning outcomes are analyzed from the value of free poetry work; data assessment is focused on aspects of free poetry writing results, including titles, diction, imagery, figures of speech, rhymes, and stanzas.

3. RESULTS

The implementation of free poetry writing learning for 7th-grade junior high school students using indie song media was carried out based on the RPP prepared to refer to the Indonesian language subject syllabus. The research was carried out for two weeks. Each meeting was held with a time allocation of 2 x 40 minutes.

3.1. Implementation of free poetry writing learning using Indie song media

The implementation of learning is carried out by the RPP, designed by the researcher, and approval is obtained from the subject teacher. The learning activity of writing free poetry using Indie song media consists of an introduction, core, and closing. The following explains the implementation of learning activities for writing free poetry using Indie song media for 7th-grade junior high school students during cycles I and II.

In the first meeting of the cycle, preliminary activities were carried out with a time allocation of 15 minutes, introducing the researcher to the students, explaining the learning objectives, and conducting a question-and-answer session with students regarding the difficulties that students faced while writing poetry. The core activities were carried out with a time allocation of 60 minutes. The researcher, who acted as a teacher during the teaching and learning process, explained the poetry material presented in the form of a PowerPoint in front of the class; after explaining the material, the teacher showed several examples of poetry on the projector screen and conducted a question and answer session with the students, the teacher introduced the concept of writing free poetry using song media to the students. The students were asked to form groups, and the teacher distributed group question worksheets to each group of students. Before working on the questions, the teacher will play two indie songs entitled *Mendarah and Seperti Rahim Ibu* in front of the class; then, the teacher will conduct a question-and-answer session to stimulate students to express their opinions about the songs they have just heard. After that, the teacher will ask students to have a discussion to answer the question worksheet. Through collaboration in groups, it is hoped that students can more easily train themselves in learning to write poetry using indie song media before continuing to practice writing poetry individually. The group of students who have finished working on the questions will present in front of the class to get responses and appreciation from other groups and the teacher. The last activity, namely the closing of the 5-minute time allocation, is carried out by students concluding the first meeting's lesson material, and the teacher appreciates the students' performance during the learning process.

In cycle I of the second meeting, the preliminary activity, which was a time allocation of 15 minutes, began with the teacher explaining the learning objectives and giving comprehension questions about the purpose of writing poetry to stimulate students to actively express their opinions during the learning process. The core activity was carried out with a time allocation of 60 minutes; the teacher explained the steps to write free poetry using song media to students, and then the teacher played an indie song entitled *Beranjak Dewasa* accompanied by a video display of the song on the projector screen and conduct a question and answer session with students about the theme of the song, emotions or feelings conveyed by the singer to the listener, and the meaning of the indie song. The song was not played only once but was played a maximum of three times if students felt it was not enough; before the second song was played, students were asked to make a vocabulary table and determine the theme; poetry writing was carried out

for 20 minutes with the help of a vocabulary table that students got from the lyrics of the indie song that had previously been played. Furthermore, students will read the results of their poetry in front of the class to get responses and appreciation from other groups and the teacher. Because the learning time was short, the teacher closed activities by appreciating student performance during the learning process.

In cycle II, the first meeting, preliminary activities with a time allocation of 15 minutes were carried out by the teacher, explaining the learning objectives; then, students were invited to discuss the obstacles that they faced when implementing the practice of writing poetry using indie song media in the previous meeting. The core activities were carried out with a time allocation of 60 minutes; the teacher reviewed the material that had been studied and held a question-and-answer session with students. Furthermore, the teacher prepared an indie song video that would be played in front of the class. Students were asked to form groups, and the teacher distributed group question worksheets to each group of students; before working on the questions, the teacher would play two indie songs entitled *Senja di Ambang Pilu* and *Puisi Alam*. Then, the teacher held a question-and-answer session to stimulate students to express their opinions about the songs they had just heard. After that, the teacher would ask students to have a discussion to answer the question worksheet. Through group collaboration, it is hoped that students can more easily train themselves to write poetry using indie song media before continuing to practice writing poetry individually. Groups of students who have finished working on the questions will present in front of the class to get responses and appreciation from other groups and the teacher. The final activity, namely closing the 5-minute time allocation, is carried out by students concluding the lesson material for the third meeting, and the teacher appreciates the students' performance during the learning process.

In cycle II, the second meeting, the preliminary activity, which was a time allocation of 15 minutes, began with the teacher explaining the learning objectives. The teacher motivated the students that writing poetry would be easy for students if they dared to express themselves through beautiful words and were not afraid to imagine, play with words, and express their feelings in poetry because everyone has extraordinary creative potential within themselves. The core activity was carried out with a time allocation of 60 minutes; the teacher explained the steps for writing free poetry using song media to the students, then the teacher played an indie song entitled *Zona Nyaman* and *Kereta Melayu Juga Cepat* accompanied by a video display of the song on the projector screen and conduct a question and answer session with students regarding the theme of the song, emotions or feelings conveyed by the singer to the listener, and the meaning of the indie song. The song was not played only once but was played a maximum of three times if students felt it was not enough; before the second song was played, students were asked to make a vocabulary table and determine the theme, and poetry writing was carried out for 20 minutes with the help of a vocabulary table that students got from the lyrics of the indie song that had previously been played. Next, students will read their poetry in front of the class to get responses and appreciation from other groups and the teacher. The last activity, specifically, the closing with a time allocation of 5 minutes, is carried out by the teacher conducting a question-and-answer session regarding students' responses and opinions while learning to write poetry using indie media, as well as appreciating students' performance during the learning process.

Table 1

Observation Results of the Learning Process of Writing Free Poetry Using Indie Song Media Cycle I and Cycle II

Aspects of observed	Cycle I	Cycle II
Students pay attention to the teacher when the teacher explains	20	20
Students answer the teacher's questions	12	14
Students ask questions to the teacher	3	4
Students submit their opinions	6	10
Students work on group assignments	20	20
Students work on individual assignments	20	20
Information		
Number of Students: 20		

3.2 Learning outcomes: writing free poetry using indie song media

Before conducting research with indie song media, the researcher conducted initial observations in 7th-grade students of Sunan Kalijogo as a pre-cycle activity to assess the initial conditions of learning to write free poetry before implementing learning media, and as a basis for comparison to measure improvements after the implementation of the action. The following (as seen in Table 2) are the results of the increase in the average value of 7th-grade junior high school students learning to write free poetry during pre-cycle cycles I and II.

Table 2

Results of Average Values of Free Poetry Writing Learning for 7th-grade students of Sunan Kalijogo.

Pre-cycle_Cycle I	Cycle II	
54.95	68.75	85.2
Percentage increase:	25.09%	23.94%

In the pre-cycle, the average value of students was 54.95; after the implementation of the cycle I action, the average value of students became 68.75. The average value increase from the pre-cycle to cycle I was 13.8 or 25.09%. In cycle II, the average value of students learning to write free poetry was 85.2; from cycle I to cycle II, the average value of students increased by 16.45 or 23.94%. The percentage of increase occurred more in the results of cycle I compared to cycle II; the difference in the increase at the beginning can occur due to several factors: (1) novelty effect: students are more responsive to changes or new media that are implemented, this novelty effect can provide initial encouragement and a more significant increase in the initial cycle of action, (2) adjustment (adaptation): cycle I involves initial adjustments to new changes in learning (use of indie song media) students adapt to these changes, the increase is seen to be higher. However, when the adjustment process has occurred, entering the next cycle (cycle II), the increase is not as large as in cycle I. This occurs because changes have become routine in learning activities so that this condition can create stability in student responses, the impact is seen as more stable and consistent when students adapt to the changes, and (3) better understanding: after implementing the actions of cycle I, researchers gain a better understanding of the obstacles or shortcomings faced during the learning process, which then affect the next cycle (cycle II). The obstacles that have been overcome in the previous cycle impact the next cycle, so the increase appears lower because some problems have been identified and addressed, but this results in a more sustainable increase.

Table 3 shows that there was an increase in learning outcomes after the implementation of actions during cycles I and II.

Figure 1

Increase in Average Value of Free Poetry Writing Learning for 7th-grade students of Sunan Kalijogo

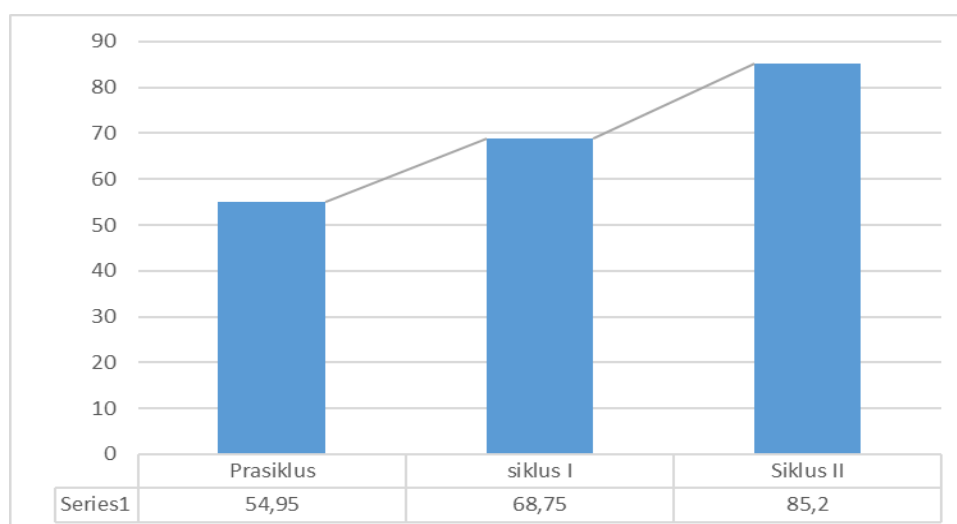


Figure 1 shows that there was an increase in the average value of free poetry writing skills in class VIII, Ibnu Sina. The minimum passing grade of the Indonesian language subject in 7th-grade students is 75; this minimum grade has not been achieved during the pre-cycle and cycle I, with an average grade of 54.95 and 68.75. However, the minimum passing grade of the Indonesian language subject in 7th-grade students can be achieved in cycle II with an average grade of 85.2.

The improvement of students' skills can also be seen based on aspects of poetry, including the title, diction, imagery, figurative language, rhyme, and stanza aspects. The following are the average results of the improvement in writing free poetry based on aspects of poetry.

Table 3

Results of the Average Value of Poetry Aspects for 7th-grade students of Sunan Kalijogo

Aspects of Poetry	Pre-cycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
Title	3.1	3.75	4.6
Diction	2.45	3.45	4.35
Image	2.65	3.35	3.75
Figure of speech	2.15	2.8	3.4
Rhyme	2.5	3.1	4.55
Verse	3.75	4.25	5

Information
Maximum score: 5

Table 3 shows that the title aspect at the pre-cycle to cycle I increased by 0.65 or 20.97%, while cycle I to cycle II increased by 0.85 or 22.67%. The diction from pre-cycle to cycle I increased by 1.00 or 40.82%, while cycle I to cycle II increased by 0.9 or 26.09%. The pre-cycle to cycle I imagery increased by 0.7 or 26.42%, while cycle I to cycle II increased by 0.4 or 11.94%. In figurative language, from pre-cycle to cycle I increased by 0.65 or 30.23%, while cycle I to cycle II increased by 0.6 or 21.43%. The rhyme from pre-cycle to cycle I increased by 0.6 or 24%, while cycle I to cycle II increased by 1.45 or 46.77%. The verse from pre-cycle to cycle I increased by 0.5 or 13.33%, and from cycle I to cycle II, it increased by 0.75 or 17.65%.

Based on the percentage of improvement described above, the most significant improvement after implementing Indie Song Media in learning to write free poetry occurred in the aspect of rhyme, as much as 2.05. The second increase occurred in the aspect of diction, as much as 1.9. The third increase occurred in the aspect of the title, as much as 1.5. The fourth increase occurred in the aspect of figures of speech and stanzas, as much as 1.25. The fifth increase occurred in the aspect of imagery by as much as 1.1.

Figure 2

Increase in the Average Value of Poetry Aspects of 7th-grade students of Sunan Kalijogo.



Figure 2 shows an increase in the aspect of poetry after the implementation of the action.

4. DISCUSSION

Observations on the results of the learning process were carried out during the learning activities. Based on the observation results shown in Table 1, after the implementation of the action, students became more active and involved during the learning activities. Increased student involvement during the learning process can occur because students are interested and enthusiastic about using indie songs as a learning medium. In addition, Griffie (1992) explained that song or music media are used to create a positive atmosphere and pleasant classroom atmosphere (classroom atmosphere) and motivate and maintain student interest in learning conversation, vocabulary, grammatical structure, pronunciation, pattern practice, and strengthening memory (teaching and student interest).

The use of indie song media has a significant impact on the aspect of rhyme and diction of students' poetry; this impact can be based on the fact that song media, especially lyrics in songs, tend to emphasize linguistic aspects such as rhyme and diction. According to Nur'aini, the language used in the lyrics is carefully chosen to create beauty and provide the desired nuance, sound accuracy, and aesthetic power. (Nur'aini, 2022) Song lyrics often utilize words with sounds (voices) that are unified and have a rhyme pattern in the lyrics, so that students find it easier to capture and use them in writing poetry.

This study shows an increase in the aspect of poetry after the implementation of the action. This increase is due to changes in the learning process, where previously, teachers generally only gave students the task of making poetry without utilizing supporting facilities or learning media to help the process. In order to facilitate and stimulate students to be more creative and inspired, teachers should use media in learning (Sutikno, 2018).

Using indie songs as a learning medium can improve students' poetry writing skills because (1) using indie song media as an aid during learning activities not only stimulates interest but can also arouse students' interest in learning. Students' interest in music and songs makes them more enthusiastic about getting involved in free poetry-writing activities using indie song media. According to Siburian (2019), using songs as a learning aid can arouse interest and give birth to creative ideas while learning to write poetry. (2) Indie songs contain emotional expressions and creativity. When students listen to music or song lyrics, students will be stimulated to express their feelings, ideas, and imaginations in a freer and more creative way. Juwita and Nasution (2018) stated that by using song media, the learning atmosphere in the classroom can be more relaxed and stimulate students' imagination, which can influence the results of the compositions they make. (3) Indie songs have messages or stories that contain deep emotions and meanings. Song accompaniment can improve concentration, memory, and emotional intelligence; song media can influence students' feelings during the learning process (Hidajati & Ariska, 2022). Students can more easily relate to and express their emotions and personal experiences in poetry. (4) Music in indie songs has a certain rhythm that can influence how students write poetry. The rhythm or rhythm of the music from the song being played can create calm and inspiration so that students' creativity is more organized (Abadi & Jayanti, 2022). Indie songs can inspire students in the use of rhythm and rhyme patterns. (5) Indie songs can also improve students' vocabulary understanding because indie song lyrics contain interesting, beautiful, and literary words. This is in line with Nursyaidah (2019), who said that choosing songs with poetic lyrics can help students gain capital in vocabulary learning. Lyrics in indie songs can be a provision for students' vocabulary, which will improve the use of poetic diction.

The results of this study complement the findings in the studies (Anggraeni, 2016; Isyanti, 2022; Silalahi & Haryadi, 2015; Susanti, 2014), which focused on the use of songs as a medium to improve learning to write poetry. The results of the study showed that the potential for improving learning to write poetry is not only using children's songs, medley songs, and coronavirus pandemic songs, but also through indie songs.

5. CONCLUSION

The implementation of classroom action research for seventh-grade students demonstrated significant improvement in free poetry writing skills through the use of indie song media. The application of this

instructional approach in two cycles resulted in enhanced student engagement and achievement. Progress in the learning process was reflected in increased student activity and participation, while improvement in learning outcomes was evidenced by higher average scores and stronger performance in poetry writing criteria.

Initial assessment through a pre-test revealed that the baseline proficiency of students remained below the established minimum competency score of 75. Subsequent cycles produced consistent improvement, culminating in full attainment of the minimum passing criteria by all participants. The highest poetry writing scores increased from 66 in the pre-cycle stage to 83 in the first cycle and 93 in the second cycle, while the lowest scores improved from 46 to 60 and subsequently to 80. These findings confirm the effectiveness of indie song media as a learning tool for enhancing free poetry writing abilities among junior high school students.

The outcomes of this study contribute to the broader understanding of creative language learning strategies and provide a potential model for integrating music-based media into language instruction. The results may also serve as a reference for future research focusing on similar pedagogical innovations or the development of other language skills. Considering the limitations related to the small sample size, further research employing alternative methodologies, such as experimental designs, is recommended to produce more comprehensive and generalizable findings. Expanded investigations of this nature can strengthen the theoretical and practical implications of using song media to improve poetry writing proficiency in educational contexts.

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