



如果华中有春夏秋冬

Group 5-05

Tan Chun Ern | 3A217

Chin Cherng Yuen | 4S204

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Objectives

Our objectives are to firstly, record the time we studied in HCI by writing songs. Secondly, we also want to convey positive messages to encourage fellow students and motivate them to face the challenges of their growth in school.

Research

Learning Composing Skills

We had a lack of experience composing music. We have never really composed our own song, complete with its background music before. At best, we have only tried our hand at composing lyrics in the past, and even then, it was just for fun and we have never really comprehended how to make good lyrics. Hence, we looked up on the internet to find some pointers and tutorials for how to compose good songs. We learnt about the various common song structures, tips and tricks to compose a good set of lyrics in Chinese amongst others before starting to compose our own songs.



These are some of the Youtube videos that we learned how to compose music from.



作词技巧大全，写好歌词必须懂的知识！

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These are some of the websites we learned how to compose a good set of lyrics in Chinese from.

Reference Songs

In addition, we also researched and referenced many different songs to learn how they compose the background track they use for their songs, which instruments they use, chord progressions and their lyrics as inspirations for our songs.

1st song: 春

For this song, our inspiration for using the piano as our main instrument, as well as its accompaniment pattern for our intro, verses and outro was highly referenced to spring bgm music. Meanwhile, our choice of instruments for this piece is greatly influenced by 等你下课 by 周杰伦. The use of piano, violin and a light dose of drums was improvised from it, with the reference song replacing piano with guitar. This combination allowed us to get the relaxed feel we want for our song.



2nd song: 夏

We got our inspiration from 吴青峰's 蜂鸟 when creating 夏。The lyrics of the song is about the legend of a hummingbird, about how although it is a very small bird, it is still able to do great things, and never stop flying to make sure that its job is done. This inspired us to write a song about a student that keeps working hard to achieve his goals.



3rd song: 秋

In the production of 秋, the inspiration came from the MV of a chinese song 那些年。 In the MV, many scenes show a person reminiscing about his past and the hardships he faced to come to where he is now. This gave us an inspiration to write a song about something most students feel is the source of most of their difficulties in high school, exams. From a musical perspective, the song had a bittersweet feel to it, which we also tried to emulate in our song. Another song to have influenced this song is 绅士. Our chord progressions for the verse of our song was directly referenced to this song in particular.



4th song: 冬

For this song, the inspiration mostly came from 3 songs, 最好的夏天 by 肖战, 明天你好 by 牛奶咖啡 and 等你下课 by 周杰伦. The first song greatly influenced the choice of instruments we used for the song, which is pure guitar, as it gives a reminiscing feel to the song, which is suitable as the song describes the memories friends have made together. The second song influenced the lyrics of our song greatly. It talks about looking forward to the future and pushing forward whatever you do, which formed the main content for our lyrics. The third song gave us one of our main themes in the song too, the promise made by friends under the starry sky.



Process Documentation

1. Deciding Themes For Our Songs

At first, we decided to just write the songs by writing down our daily school life. However, we think that will be too random, and we wanted a way to structure our songs and experiences into a certain theme, so we brainstormed for ideas and we got two. We can use the different weather patterns in Singapore or the four seasons as our theme. Finally, we decided to use the four seasons that are more flexible and can suit the broad variety of experiences we will write in our songs.

2. Finding Applications & Equipment for Composing

We decided to use Bandlab to compose our songs, as the controls on the application were pretty intuitive compared to other composing applications, it was a free app, and it was widely available compared to applications like garageband which was only available to Apple users, which none of us were. We borrowed a digital keyboard from the music room in school to compose our songs. Although compared to the piano, the range of notes which we could play for our chords were considerably smaller, and the dynamic sensors on the keyboard were starkly different from the piano and needed some getting used to, we made do with it and managed to compose our songs with the keyboard.

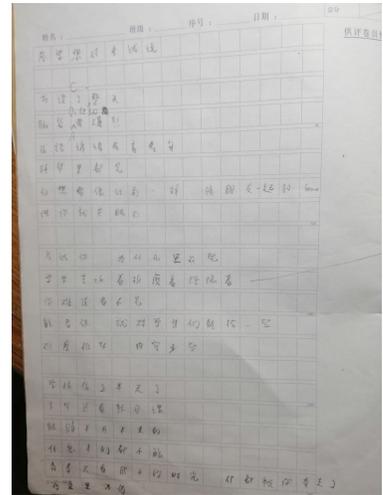
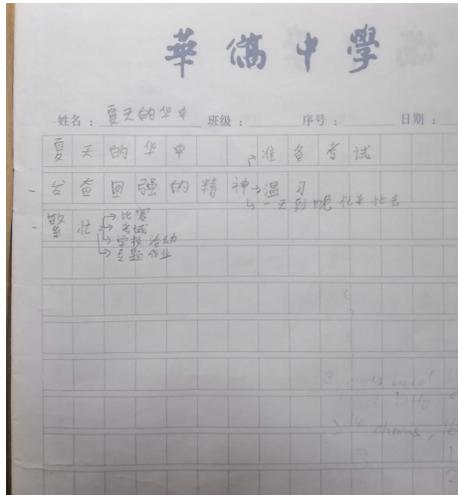
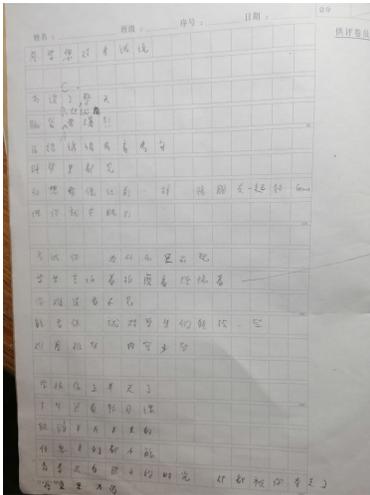


BandLab

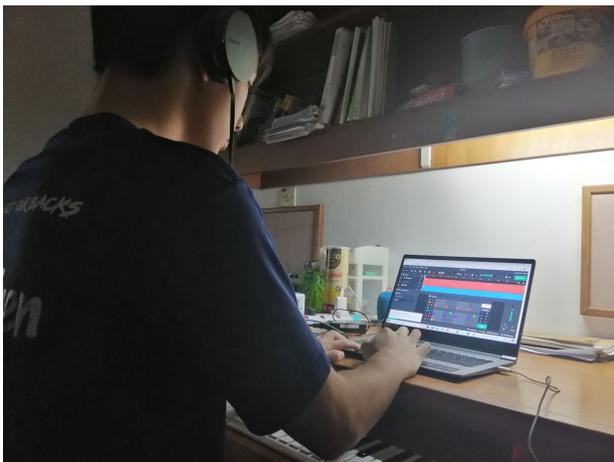


3. Composing The Songs

Finally, we chose to compose our songs by creating the lyrics first, then create tracks that fit the lyrics of the songs, so that the music supports and supplements the lyrics of the songs well by providing an appropriate mood for the songs. When composing the songs, we also referred to songs by other artists.



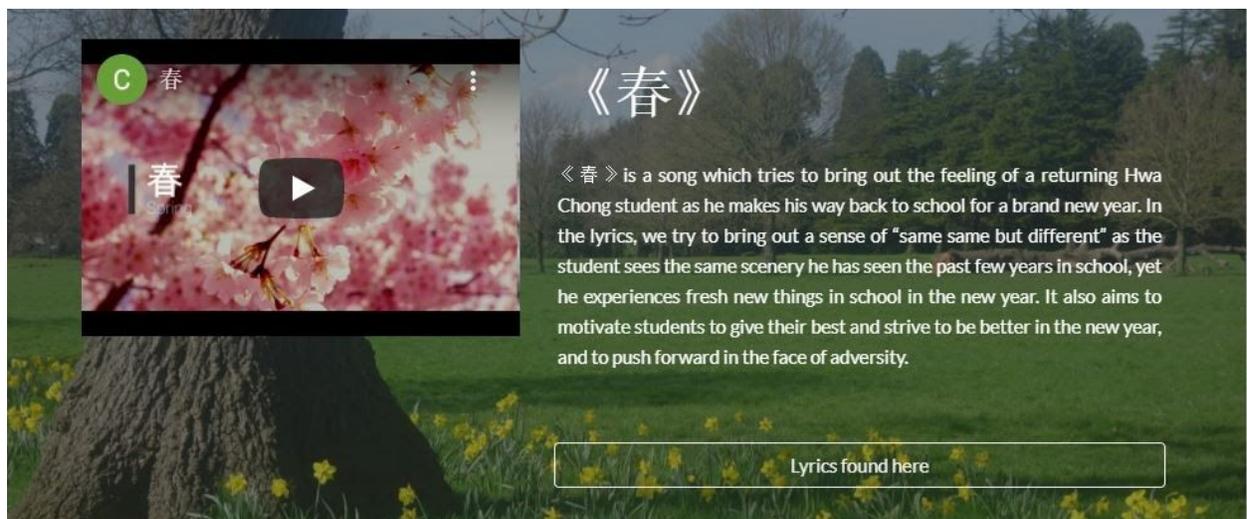
These are some of the pictures of our sketches. We wrote down our ideas before we started writing our lyrics for each song.



After we finished the lyrics of a song, we constructed and tried out different ideas for the music, and chose the one that best fits the lyrics.

Production

Our final product is a website displaying our four songs with their short introductions. Below are some pictures of our website's interface





《夏》

《夏》 is written to describe the busy school life of students as teachers pick up the pace in teaching and activities start kicking off one after another after the comparatively lax start to the year. Therefore, the second song is mostly describing the busy life of a Hwa Chong student, as he goes about juggling his many activities and commitments with his schoolwork and busy schedule. We also included some important values, to remind Hwa Chong students that despite being busy made us very tired, we must not forget what we are busy for and we must have the perseverance and persist until the day of success.

Lyrics found here



《秋》

《秋》 is about the heartfelt voice of a student that is facing the pressure from the exams, which is a shared sentiment among many students in Hwa Chong. He has a lot to complain, but at the end of the song he still shows that he knows that exams are ultimately beneficial for him and he should try to do his best. Our intention is to use this song to remind students that hardships we face are events that will push us past our limits and allow us to improve ourselves, so that students will not feel discouraged and continue working hard to overcome their hardships.

Lyrics found here



《冬》

《冬》 talks about the importance of friendship and its heavy influence in our school lives, be it in creating good memories together or motivating each other to overcome our challenges. The song encourages students to treasure their friendships with their friends and to remember the good memories they have had with their friends when they ultimately graduate from high school, and to continue to forge stronger bonds with their friends even if they are apart, to prevent them from losing their bonds of friendship with their precious friends.

Lyrics found here

The link to our website can be found here:

<https://sites.google.com/student.hci.edu.sg/fourseasonsofhc2020/home>

Reflections

Strengths & Weaknesses of Our Project

Our songs were closely related to Hwa Chong students, using different scenes and experiences from school life, which is good considering they are our target audience, and our song can hence resonate with them. We also tried out many new ideas like combinations of different instruments, and how they can be used to create different moods for our songs, bringing about diversity of ideas to our project.

However, one of the weaknesses of our project is that our songs might not be relatable to non - Hwa Chong students as the lyrics are mostly about our experience when we are studying in Hwa Chong. Therefore this means that the number of our audience might be very small.

Challenges We Faced

We faced a lot of problems when composing the songs. One of them is lack of experience composing songs, or making background tracks, so we had to start from scratch and learn the techniques from the ground up. We had a lack of equipment to record our tracks too. Both of us live in boarding school, with no private instruments at our disposal. Due to Covid-19, the music room in boarding school was closed, hence we did not have any physical musical instruments to compose our songs. In the end, we managed to borrow a digital keyboard from the music room in school to compose our songs. There were many problems with composing digitally, such as a reduced range of notes to compose with, and weird dynamics sensors resulting in the dynamics of our tracks being all over the place at first. However, we made do with it, persevered and managed to compose our songs with the keyboard.

What We Learnt From This Project

Through this project, we learnt that it is important to be flexible and have patience. Due to the Covid-19 situation, we have faced a lot of inconvenience and challenges when doing the project. However, we are able to find solutions for those difficult situations through different ways or help from our mentor, such as borrowing us a digital keyboard from the music room to allow us to continue composing our songs despite not having physical instruments with us. Also, despite all the difficulties that we faced, we are not discouraged by them and are able to deal with them as we keep reminding ourselves to be patient and work hard. In addition, we have also learnt the importance of teamwork. There were many times where we fell out with each other due to

disagreements on certain things. However, in the end, we still came back together to come up with a solution to the problem. Without teamwork, the work would not be done well or in time.

Citations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbmWdKOmEBc> (Song structure in music explained)

<https://www.bilibili.com/read/cv3281533/> (作词技巧大全，写好歌词必须懂的知识!)

<https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/84447980> (作词入门必备：教你4步打好作词基础!)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfXdP7nZliE> (等你下课 by 周杰伦)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqjgLbKZ1h0> (那些年 by 胡夏)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmokuFu_kOw(蜂鸟 by 吴青峰)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5oC_mM0k7Gw (最好的夏天 by 肖战)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EA71rLoY5s> (明天你好 by 牛奶咖啡)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=26&v=gFiMkOA-iXs&feature=emb_title
(spring bgm music)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVwDp115iI8> (Five Tips To Make Simple Chord Progressions Sound Advanced)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ndp0sZ5LyvI> (绅士 by 薛之谦)