

Major Project

Crit #1

Nadia Jervier



DE/SCODED



Mission Statement

From hearing to understanding - discover the depth, feel the stories and experience hip hop differently.

Decoded empowers hip hop fans to move beyond simply hearing lyrics to truly understanding the intricacies behind bars, ultimately transforming how they connect with the music.



What is **DECODED**?



A web based platform designed to help *hip hop* fans explore the *depth* and the *artistry* behind hip hop lyrics.



Who is **DE/**CODED for?



Demographics

- **Age:** 20-35 years old, extended to late teens (16-19) & mid 40's
- **Gender:** Predominantly male but with a growing female audience
- **Language:** English speaking, as platform focused on American hip-hop
- **Location:** Urban areas / cities but global as hip hop has become a popular and universal genre
- **Education:** Mixed-level - students/working professional/creatives etc.



Interests

Music listening habits

- Regularly listen to music on streaming platforms
- Enjoy exploring lyrics, their meaning and engaging in hip hop culture

Media use & engagement

- Active on social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly twitter) & reddit for hip hop related content
- Watch behind the scenes content such as interviews, documentaries & album reviews

Perspectives

- Value hip hop as an art form and respect its cultural roots
- Interested in gaining a deeper understanding to the layers of lyrics
- Interest in the formation of lyrics without being aspiring artists



Motivations

Why they engage with decoded

- Transform listening experience
- Connect with artists intended idea
- Learn analytical skills
- Share knowledge



Challenges

- Find it hard to understand complex lyrics
- Lack analytical skills
- Disconnected from culture / history
- New fans overwhelmed by vastness of the genre



Sophia - *Curious Listener*

Background

- 23 year old University Student studying creative writing in Manchester
- Discovered hip hop through popular mainstream artists such as Drake & is now delving into underground and old school tracks
- Uses Spotify and often explores playlists generated by mood or subgenre

Motivations

- Wants to understand storytelling and use of poetry in hip hop - genuine interest that will help with her studies as well

Challenges

- Doesn't know where to start
- Struggles to interpret slang



Chris - *Long-time fan*

Background

- 35 year old, married marketing professional with 1 child, living in Hertfordshire
- Nostalgic about the hip hop he grew up listening to, in its golden era (90's-2000's)
- Enjoys exploring new music but appreciates songs with depth and meaning

Motivations

- Wants to reconnect with the artistry of hip hop after years of consuming just for entertainment

Challenges

- Finds existing platforms too shallow and sometimes inaccurate - more for the casual listeners
- Lacks tools to interpret modern tracks that may use new techniques or slang



Alex - *Newbie*

Background

- 19 year old, first year college student studying media studies
- Discovered hip hop through viral TikTok videos
- Curious about the genre

Motivations

- Wants to be able to keep up with a knowledge of popular songs - impressing friends and peers

Challenges

- Struggles to keep up with the quickly evolving sub genres and hip hop slang
- Finds it hard to differentiate between deeper track and more entertaining tracks



Why is **DECODED** needed?



- Lyrics are sometimes complex and misunderstood
- Current resources focus only on surface level explanations
- Passive listening habits

Lyrics are sometimes complex and misunderstood

- Lyrics are layered with linguistic techniques that often go unnoticed
- Some fans struggle to identify advanced techniques
- Lack of understanding leads to only surface-level engagement with hip hop
- Listeners miss emotional depth, social commentary, and cultural significance embedded in the lyrics
- Understanding gives listeners a greater appreciation for the artists craft, therefore a deeper connection
- By recognising techniques used, listeners can better grasp narratives/concepts/messages, improving their overall listening experience



Current resources focus only on surface level explanations

- Current resources offer sometimes inconsistent user-generated annotated lyrics
- Few educational resources are designed to help fans understand techniques in a structured and engaging way
- Disconnect from artists intended message and the hip hop as a genre in a broader cultural context
- Lack of analytical tools to independently interpret and engage with complex themes, wordplay and references.
- Over reliance on external explanations - missing the opportunity for personal discovery and interpretation
- Fans may find out *what* a lyric means but not *how* to interpret that for themselves

Passive listening habits

- Streaming platforms like Spotify / Apple Music / AmazonMusic encourage passive consumption
- Listeners often multitask while listening to music so have a reduced focus on the content of the lyrics
- Missed opportunities to explore meanings and depth of lyrics with passive listening or music being used as 'background noise'



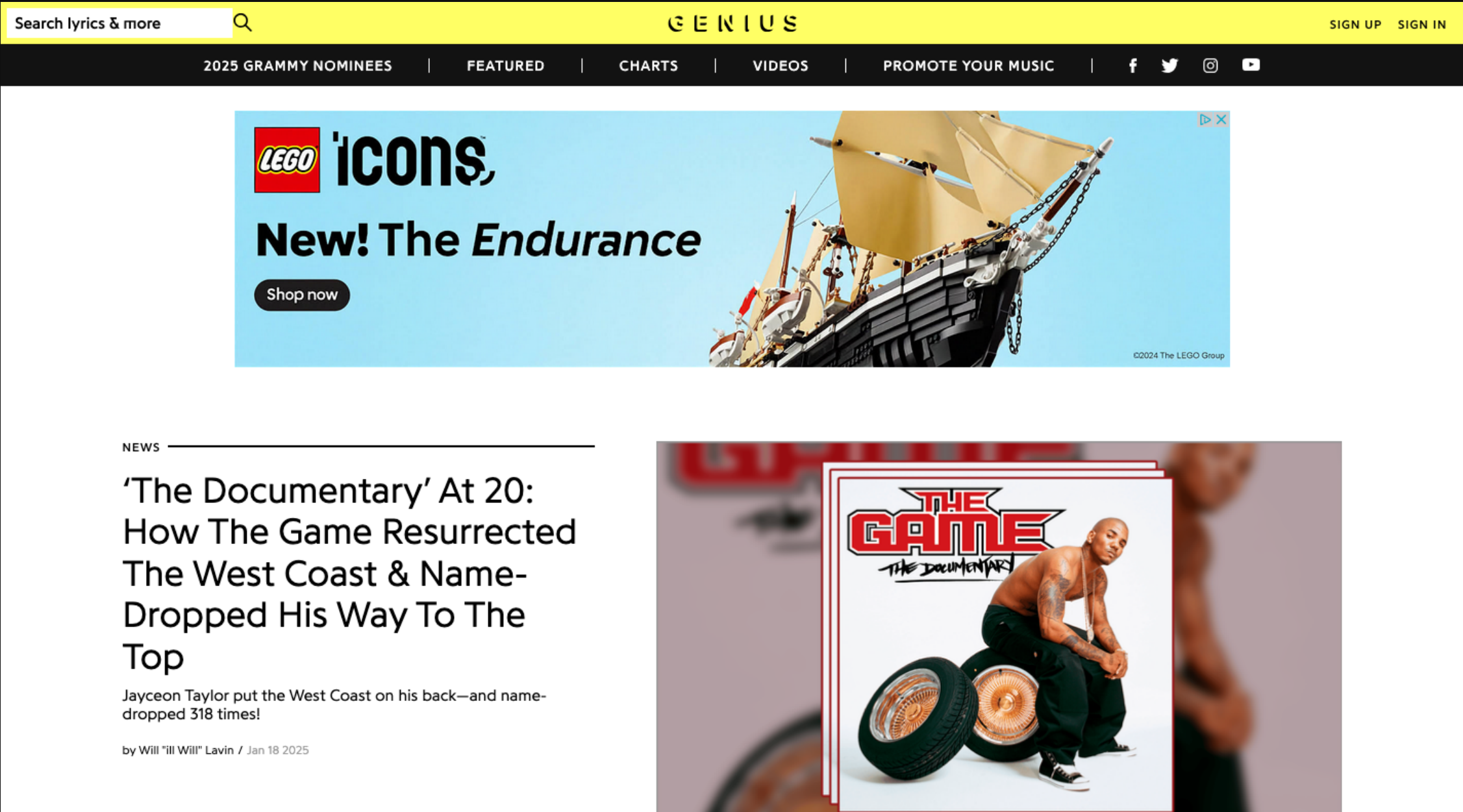
Bridge the gap between casual listening and a deep understanding of lyrics by providing tools, resources and educational content for lyrical exploration.



What is **DECODED** up against?

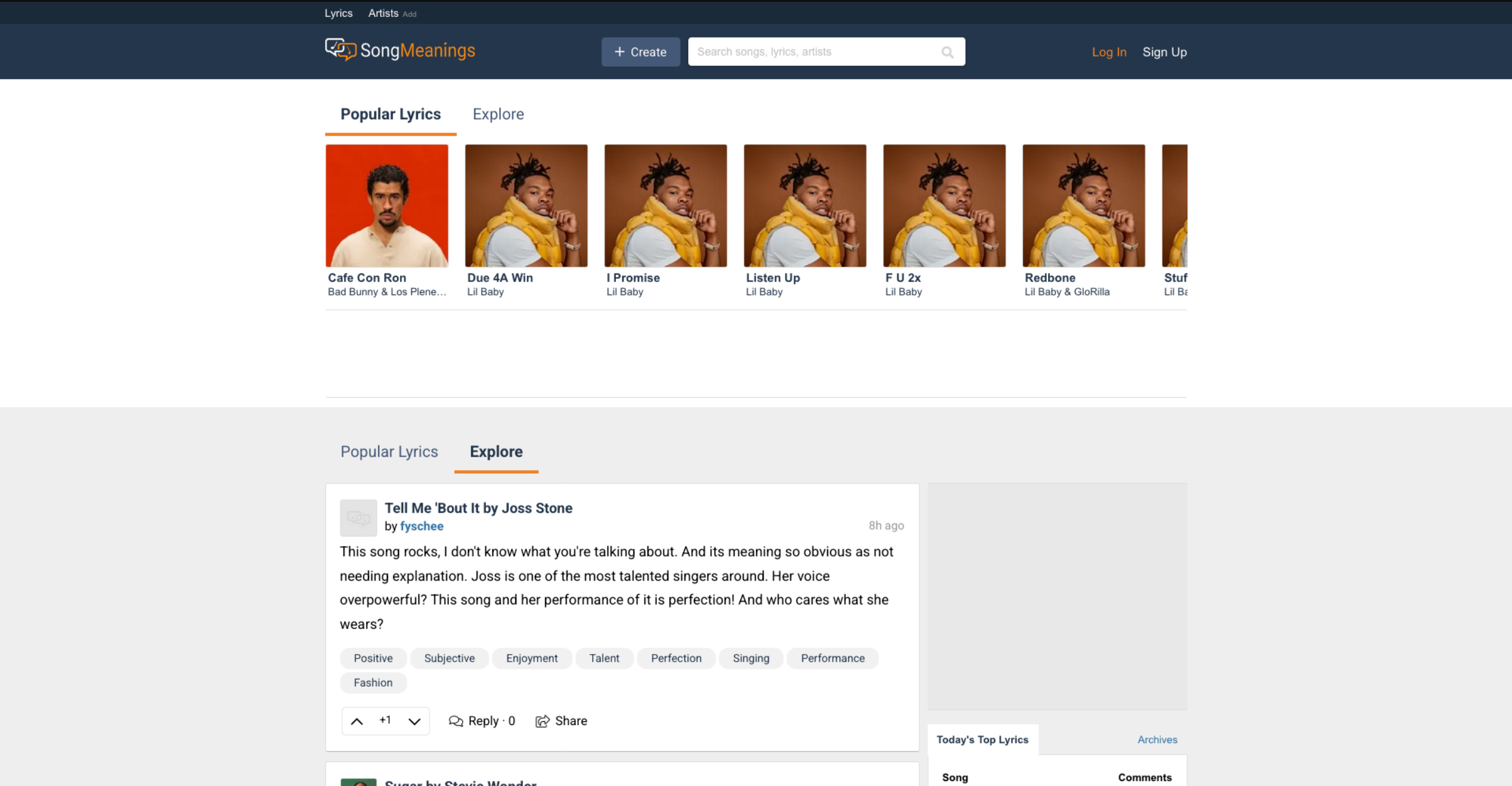


Websites



genius.com

A crowd-sourced website for annotating song lyrics

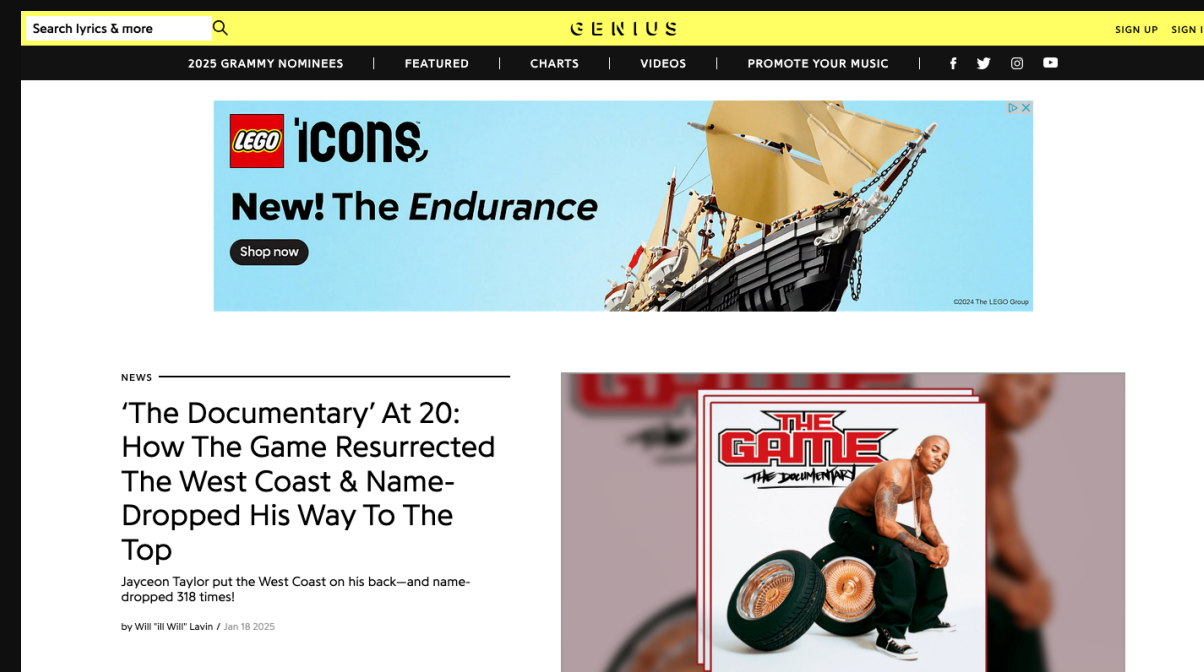


songmeanings.com

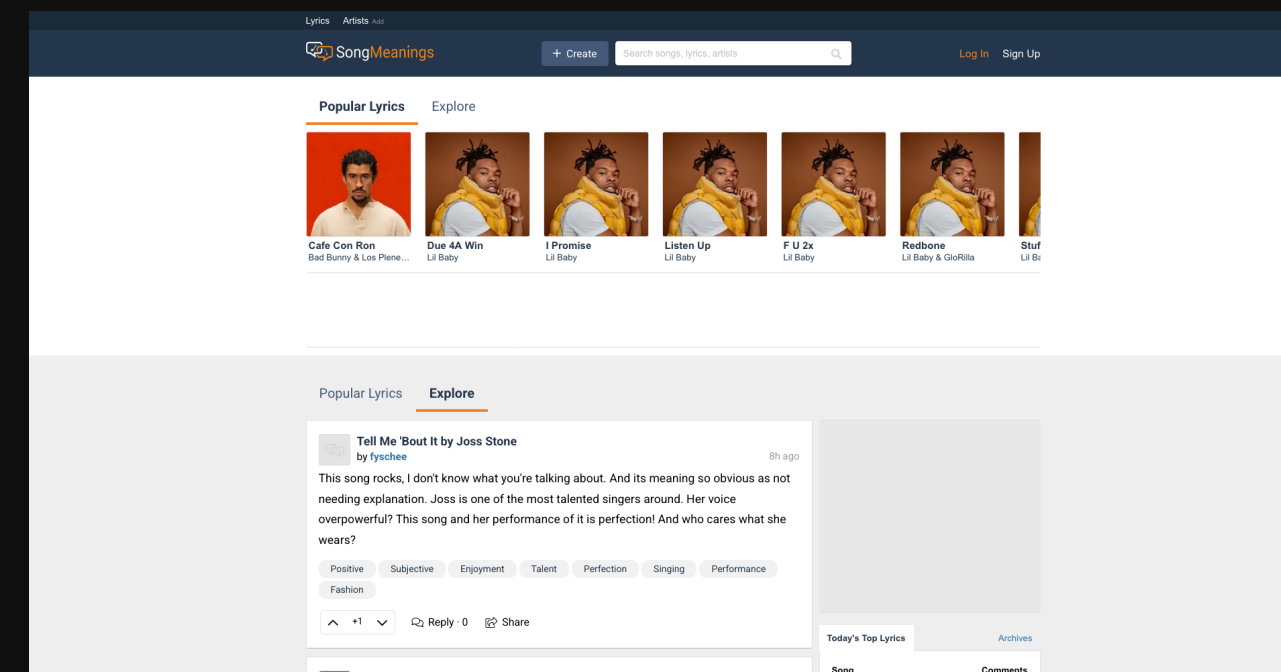
A community based website that allows fans to share and discuss interpretations of song lyrics



Websites



[genius.com](https://www.genius.com)



[songmeanings.com](https://www.songmeanings.com)

Strengths

- Simple text based format is easy for users to use
-

Weaknesses

- Covers all genres - not specify
-



Content platforms





Spited

@Spited · 101K subscribers · 507 videos

Spiteducation (or SpitEd) is a project through which I strive to "educate" fans of hip-hop a...[more](#)

[discord.gg/CJJAJKc](#) and 7 more links

Subscribe

Home Videos Shorts Playlists Community

LUPE FIASCO - DRILL MUSIC IN ZION

The August symbol **phonic**, power of a **blatnik**
To **head** steel, medical bill drill harmonics
Silver sonnets from the "bonne nuit" and bonnets
I leave a whole sleeve down in Condoleezza's comments
Copper ebionics, competent and gannet
Godzilla's economics rock gondolas 'til you vomit
Bigger than the tongue and write signatures with a Thomas
Great Wall of China climber and Bonnie Woo correspondent
Opera anyx, popular's for convicts
Stay below the dappler, turn Robotniks into Sonics
Positioned jostlers, monitor hegemonics
Robots make the robots that solder the electronics
Nostradamus couldn't bother to keep a promise
Logic's on the rocket, what profit defeats a conscience?
Searchkickdickmardbatakeantimalatidesfire.com/ent

Lupe Fiasco - Drill Music In Zion - Lyrics, Rhymes Highlighted (...)

24,026 views · 2 years ago

Highlighting the rhyme scheme of Lupe's first verse on Drill Music In Zion.

👤 Join the community Discord server:
<https://discord.gg/CJJAJKc>

SUBSCRIBE FOR MORE! Share the video with your friends!...

READ MORE

Videos



BLIND FURY

Blind Fury on Survival of the Illest Cypher BET Hip Hop...

3.4K views · 6 days ago



LUPE FIASCO

Lupe Fiasco - Palaces - Lyrics, Rhymes Highlighted...

4.6K views · 2 weeks ago



JEAN GRAE

Jean Grae on Assassins - Lyrics, Rhymes Highlighted...

10K views · 1 month ago



KENDRICK LAMAR

Kendrick Lamar on squabble up - Lyrics, Rhymes...

9.4K views · 1 month ago



KENDRICK LAMAR

Kendrick Lamar - tv off - Lyrics, Rhymes Highlighte...

10K views · 1 month ago

youtube.com/@Spited

YouTube channel dedicated to educate fans of hip-hop around the world about the skill of rhyming, creative process and other abilities.





The Lyricologist

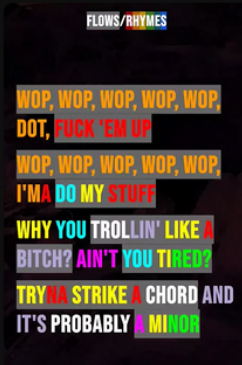
@thelyricologist5606 · 6.48K subscribers · 175 videos

The second home to Lyricology 101. ...[more](#)

Subscribe

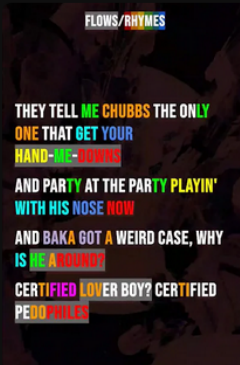
Home Videos Shorts Live Playlists Community

Shorts



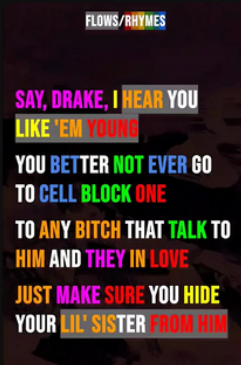
Pt. 6 #kendricklamar - Not Like Us rhyme, flo...

668 views



Pt. 5 #kendricklamar - Not Like Us rhyme, flo...

901 views



Pt. 4 #kendricklamar - Not Like Us rhyme, flo...

735 views



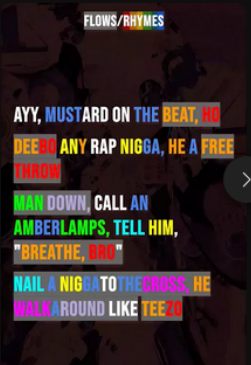
Pt. 3 #kendricklamar - Not Like Us rhyme, flo...

699 views



Pt. 2 #kendricklamar - Not Like Us rhyme, flo...

639 views



Pt. 1 #kendricklamar - Not Like Us rhyme, flo...

4.1K views

Videos



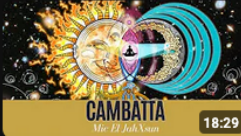
Eminem - Godzilla | Bar for Bar Breakdowns

645 views · 6 months ago



How to Rap as Fast as Eminem! | Advanced Rap Tips

524 views · 6 months ago



Cambatta - Mic El JahXsun PART 1 | Bar for Bar...

241 views · 6 months ago



Cambatta - Mic El JahXsun PART 2 | Bar for Bar...

151 views · 6 months ago



Kendrick Lamar - Not Like Us | Bar for Bar Breakdowns

1.2K views · 6 months ago



J Cole - Pt | Bar for Bar Breakdowns

624 views · 6 months ago

youtube.com/@thelyricologist5606

YouTube channel dedicated to breaking down lyrics and teaching rapping techniques.



A SPOTIFY PODCAST
by RINGER

Podcast

Dissect

Spotify Studios

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Our Favorite Music of 2024

Dissect

Cole and Cam award their favorite music of the year across a number of categories, including Favorite Albums, Favorite Songs, Favorite Underground Album, Most Surprising Album, and more. Listen to the playlist of songs...

17 Dec 2024 · 1 hr 39 min



About

Analyzing the music and meaning of one album per season, one song per episode. Join host Cole Cuchna as he dives deep into albums by Kendrick Lamar, Kanye West, Radiohead, Beyonc

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4.9 ☆ (16.9K) · Music · Pop culture

All Episodes



Our Favorite Music of 2024

Dissect

Cole and Cam award their favorite music of the year across a number of categories, including Favorite Albums, Favorite Songs, Favorite Underground Album, Most Surprising Album, and...

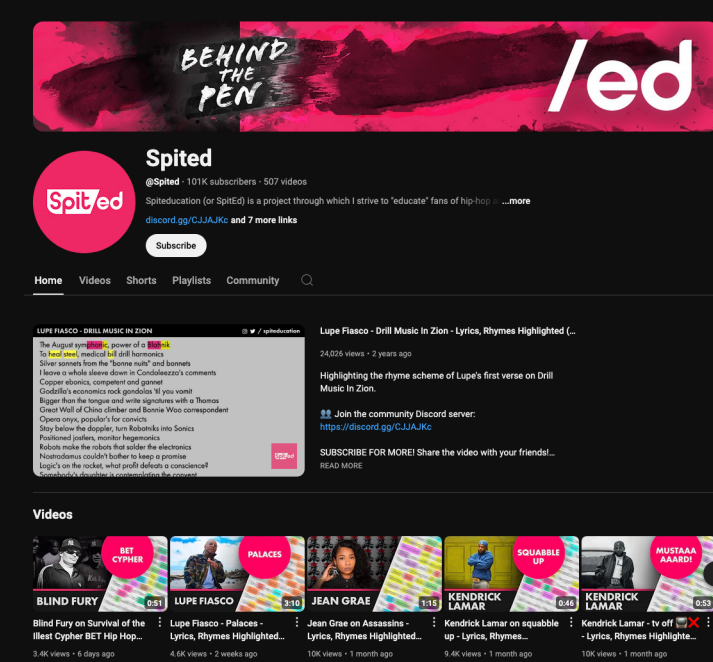
17 Dec 2024 · 1 hr 39 min

Dissect podcast on Spotify

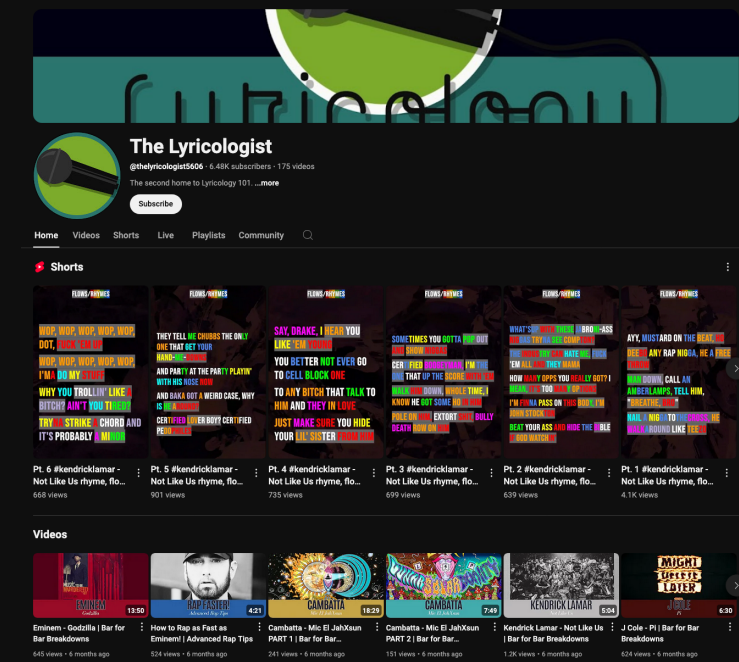
A structured podcast focused on analysing albums, song by song from a range of genres.



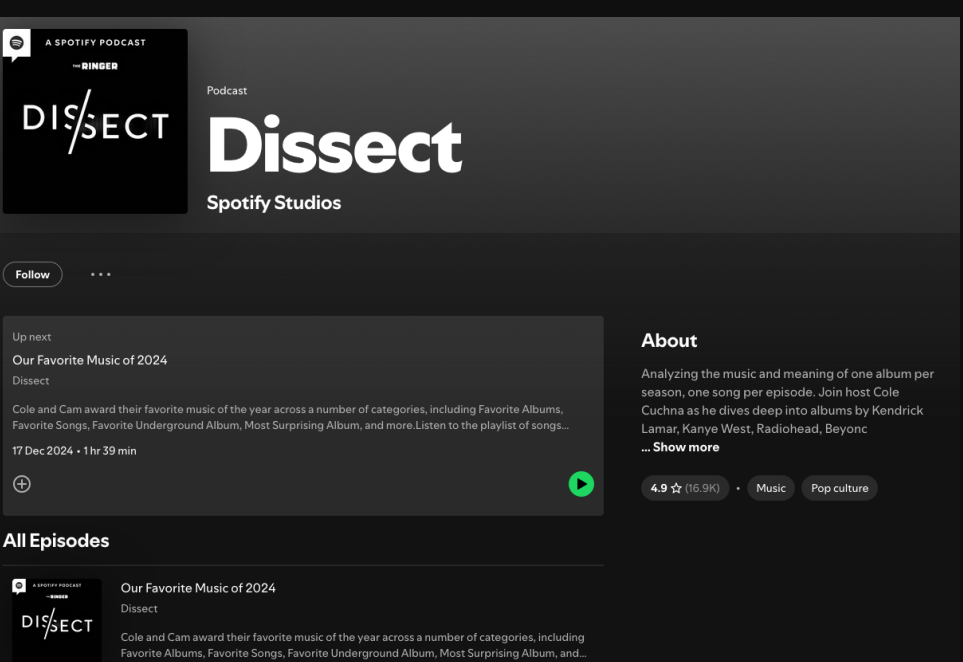
Content platforms



youtube.com/@Spited



youtube.com/@thelyricologist5606



Dissect podcast on Spotify

Strengths

- Free and easily accessibly
- Engaging for those who learn visually or auditory
- Episode style content is easily digestible

Weaknesses

- Passive experience - viewers watch but don't actively engage
- Limited depth - thorough analysis but doesn't teach techniques
- No structured learning
- Fixed content

Structured course

The screenshot shows the MasterClass website interface for the course 'Nas Teaches Hip-Hop Storytelling'. The top navigation bar includes the MasterClass logo, a 'Browse' dropdown, a search bar with the placeholder 'What do you want to learn today?', and links for 'At Work', 'View Plans', 'Log In', and a 'Sign Up' button. Below the navigation bar, a breadcrumb trail reads 'All > Music > Write & Compose Music > Nas Teaches Hip-Hop Storytelling'. The main content area features a large image of Nas in a red suit. To the right of the image, the course title 'NAS' is displayed in large white letters, followed by 'Teaches Hip-Hop Storytelling'. A description states: 'Grammy-winning rapper Nas shares his journey through the evolution of Hip-Hop, breaks down some of his biggest hits, and writes a brand-new song.' Below this is a prominent red 'Sign Up' button. Underneath the button, it says 'Starting at £10/month (billed annually) for all classes and sessions'. There are also icons for 'Sample' and 'Share'. At the bottom of the main content area, there are tabs for 'Class Info', 'Related', and 'FAQ'. Below the main content area, there is a section titled 'About this Class'. It includes a video player with a play button, a 'Class Sample' button, and a 'Browse Lesson Plan' section with a list of six lessons: 1. Meet Your Instructor, 2. Telling Your Life Story Through Music, 3. Rapping and Rhyme Schemes, 4. In the Studio: Writing an Original Rap Song, 5. In the Studio: Recording an Original Rap S..., and 6. Using Poetic Lyrical Techniques. Below the video player, there is a paragraph of text about Nas's career and the course's focus. At the bottom, it lists the instructor as 'Nas', the class length as '12 video lessons (1 hour 51 minutes)', the category as 'Music', and the topics covered as 'Write & Compose Music' and 'Unlock Musical Creativity & Expression'.

MasterClass

Browse

What do you want to learn today?

At Work View Plans Log In Sign Up

All > Music > Write & Compose Music > Nas Teaches Hip-Hop Storytelling

NAS

Teaches Hip-Hop Storytelling

Grammy-winning rapper Nas shares his journey through the evolution of Hip-Hop, breaks down some of his biggest hits, and writes a brand-new song.

Sign Up

Starting at £10/month (billed annually) for all classes and sessions

Sample Share

Class Info Related FAQ

About this Class

Class Sample

Browse Lesson Plan

1. Meet Your Instructor
2. Telling Your Life Story Through Music
3. Rapping and Rhyme Schemes
4. In the Studio: Writing an Original Rap Song
5. In the Studio: Recording an Original Rap S...
6. Using Poetic Lyrical Techniques

From the landmark album "Illmatic" in 1994 to the Grammy-winning "King's Disease," Nas has been exposing truth through rhymes and vivid street poetry for more than 25 years. Now he's sharing his journey, the evolution of Hip-Hop, and a brand-new song with you. Hip-Hop, lyricism, flow—learn how to tap into the power of your own voice and turn your experiences into music with one of rap's all-time greatest artists.

Instructor(s): **Nas**

Class Length: **12 video lessons (1 hour 51 minutes)**

Category: **Music**

Topics Covered: **Write & Compose Music** **Unlock Musical Creativity & Expression**

Masterclass

A structured video course where Nas teaches wordplay, storytelling, and the art of creating impactful ship hop lyrics.

Strengths

- Exclusive insights from someone with industry expertise
- Structured learning - easy to follow along & track progress

Weaknesses

- Cost
- Generalised content
- Single perspective
- Artist focused



DE/CODED's unique take



DECODED addresses the gap in the market by providing active learning tools that teach and allows users to build skills to independently interpret and understand hip hop lyrics.

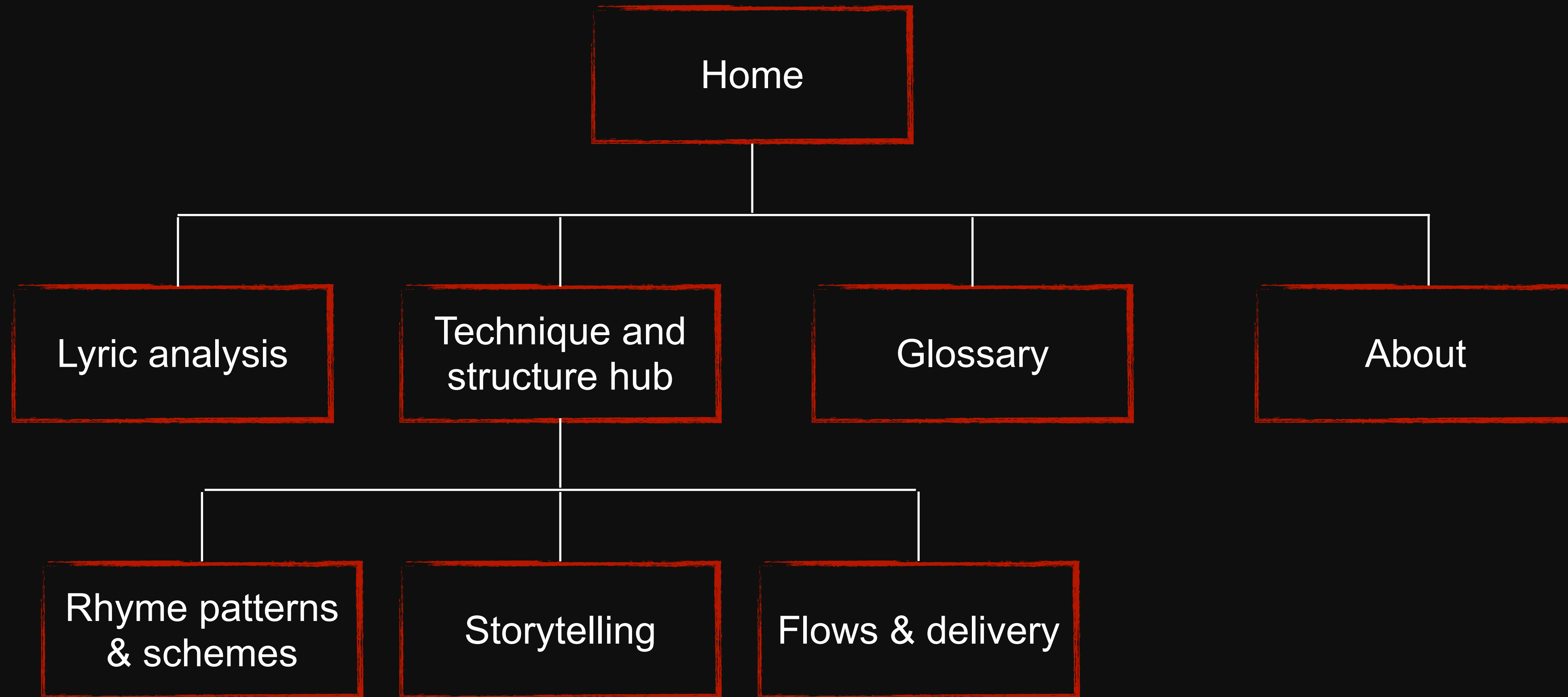


Core content

- Lyric analysis tool
- Techniques & structure hub
- Glossary



Site structure



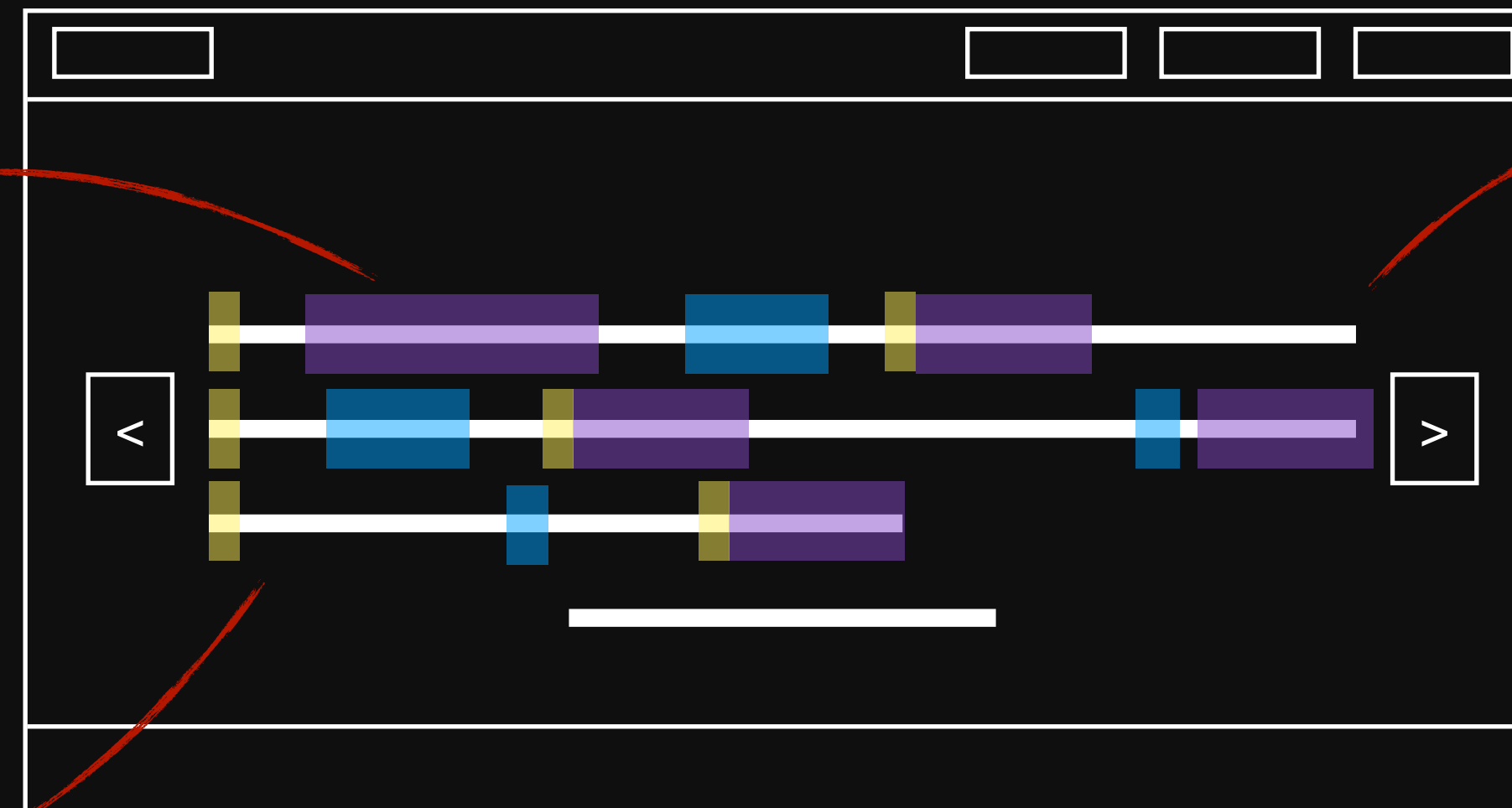
Lyric Analysis

Page dedicated to deciphering small sections of lyrics for their contents, formation & structure. It breaks down lyrics into visual layers, explaining wordplay, storytelling elements, rhyme schemes and poetic devices.

Colour coded
rhyme schemes

Small section of
lyrics to breakdown

Hover over / click
on words to reveal
annotations



Technique & Structure Hub

This is an educational section that begins to provide fans with an understanding of the building blocks of hip-hop lyrics.

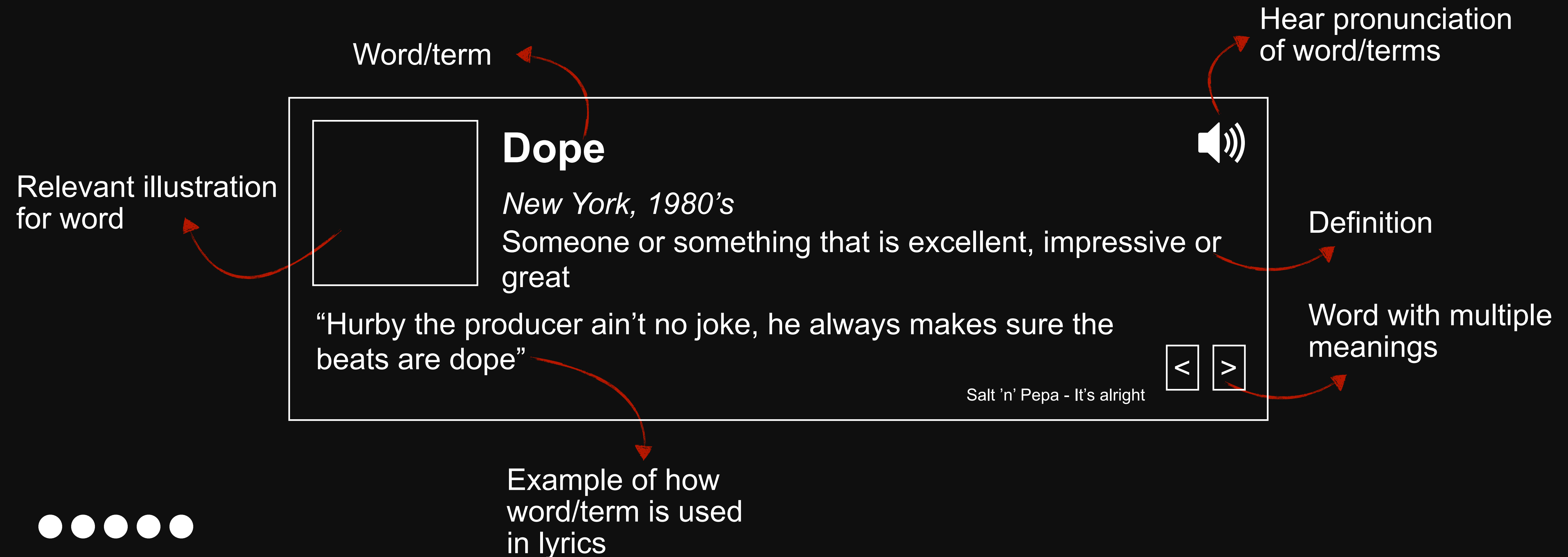
It will be formed of:

- Interactive examples
- Short lessons
- Guided exercises
- Quizzes



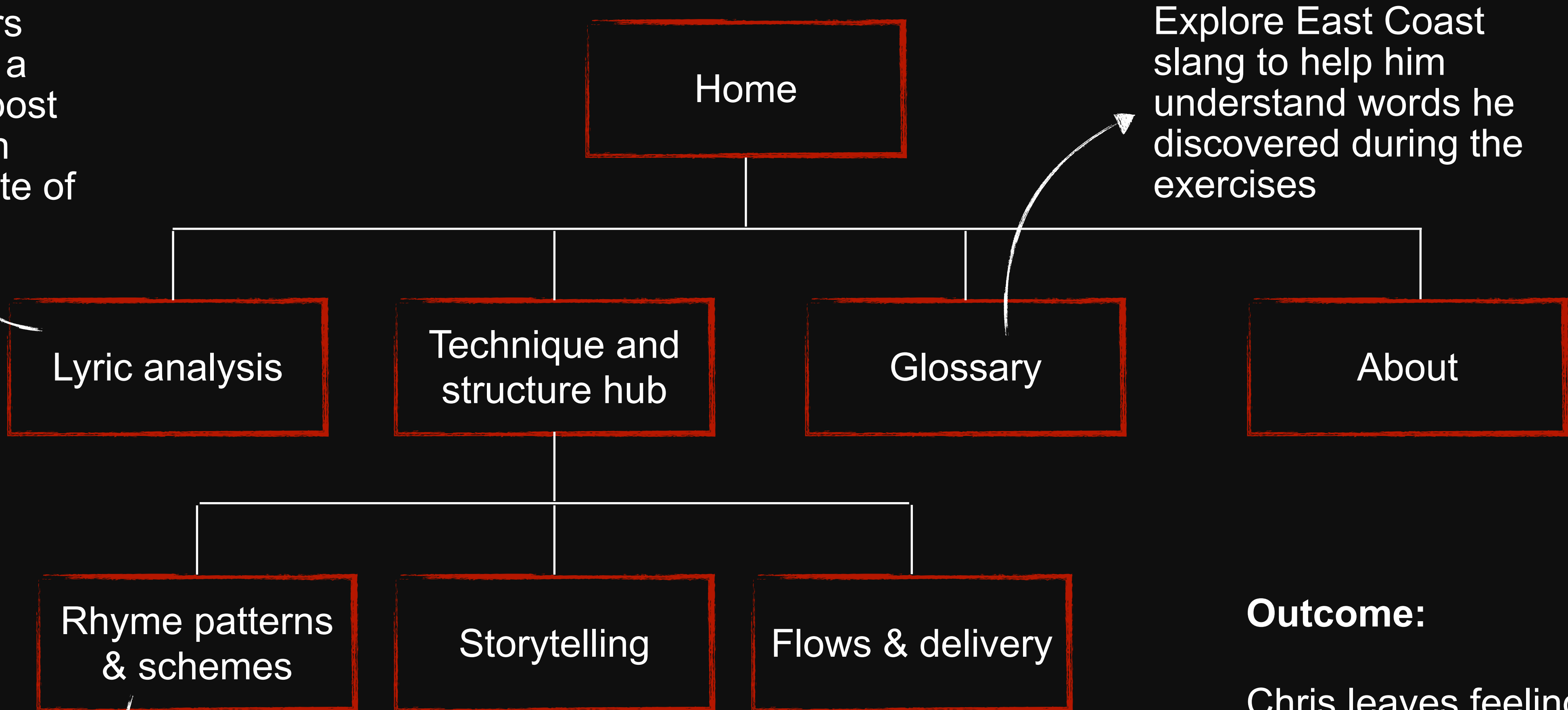
Glossary

Words and phrases used in lyrics – serving as a reference hub, simplifying the process of understanding slang and terms. The glossary is ordered alphabetically and can be searched and filtered by subgenere / region etc.



User Journeys

Chris discovers
decoded from a
social media post
breaking down
Nas's "NY State of
Mind"



Explore East Coast
slang to help him
understand words he
discovered during the
exercises

Rhyme patterns
& schemes

Storytelling

Flows & delivery

Inspired, looks to
learn more about
rhyme schemes

Outcome:

Chris leaves feeling more
connected to the music he
loves through new
appreciation for the lyrical
techniques used



DECODED

Strengths

- Niche
- Interactivity
- Tailored and focused
- Scalability
- Cultural relevance

Weaknesses

- Potential cross over of content between sections
- Users passive learning habits
- Finding a balance for audience



DECODED

Opportunities

- Expansion
- Community
- Integration
- Partnerships

Threats

- Competition
- Copyrighted material
- Retention



Thank you, any questions?

