The Plot Mixtape
(Extra-Credit)

THE ART OF THE MIXTAPE [...] Actors use a head shot photo with their résumé on the back when attempting to get auditions. For aspiring DJs, the mixtape is their head shot; a way of showing their skills to radio stations, club promoters, potential managers, and to music fans [...] by creating your own musical calling card-- your own mixtape.

--Luke Crisell, Phil White, and Rob Principe, *On the Record: The Scratch DJ Academy Guide*

Overview

Your mission (should you accept it) is to create a mixtape that 1) has an overarching concept, 2) analyzes the lyrics in terms of plot and theme, and 3) uses the lyrics to demonstrate understanding of the terms on the Plot Vocabulary sheet. Let's examine each of these requirements in turn...

The Concept (1)

Choose a concept that will unite all the tracks on your mixtape. It can be a single concept, a pair of closely related concepts, or a binary pair of opposites (examples: "love" or "finding love and sustaining love" or "love and hate"). I chose "Crime and Punishment" for my example mixtape. The concept must unite all the tracks by either title, prominence in the lyrics, or a theme inferred from the lyrics.

The rules for this section:

- no concepts to do with love or breaking up (too easy for rock, pop, r&b, and country compilations)
- no concepts to do with war (too easy given the number of protest songs written over the decades)
- no concepts to do with religion (too easy for country, gospel, bluegrass, and Christian related compilations)
- no concepts to do with patriotism (too easy for rock and country compilations)
- no concepts to do with dancing or partying (too easy for r&b or hip hop compilations)
- no concepts to do with living in the ghetto (too easy for hip hop compilations)
- no concepts to do with evil or the supernatural (too easy for metal compilations)

It's not that these songs can't exist on your mixtape, it's that this can't be what unites the tracks.

LABEL THE CONCEPT CLEARLY AT THE TOP OF THE WRITTEN PART OF THE ASSIGNMENT.

Lyrics (2) and Definitions (3)

For each track on your mixtape, identify: a) track number on your mixtape, b) the song, c) the original album title (if applicable), d) the original release date, e) the artist, and f) the artist or band's continent of origin. Example:

> Track One
> "Police on My Back" (from *Sandinista!* - 1980)
> By the Clash (Europe)

Under this use the following format (following the same example as above):

Literary term: flashback
Connection to mixtape concept:

       Though somewhat ill-defined in terms of detail, the flashback in the Clash's cover of "Police on My Back" (originally recorded by the Equals in 1967) helps to establish the narrator's attitude toward the law. The set-up is simple enough: there has been a murder, and the police are looking for the narrator (who is on the run). The flashback ("I been running Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday / Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, runnin"), however, reveals that far from an isolated incident, these sorts of issues with the law are a persistent problem. Though one is tempted to ask why the police seem so interested in the narrator (both now and then), the narrator deflects any sort of responsibility with the question, "What have I done?" This, coupled, with the narrator's perception of the seven-days-a-week police harassment, help to characterize the narrator as someone unwilling to question his own behavior, instead blaming others (in this case, the law) for his problems. Whether this is, in fact, a reasonable stance is an open question.

In other words, identify the term and connect it back to your concept by writing a short paragraph. Quotes from the lyrics are helpful, but not required. Explanation is required.

Under that, copy and paste the lyrics from one of the numerous lyrics sites on the internet. Under that, include English translations if your track is in a language other than English. Either translate yourself or use Google or Bing Translate (then clean up the grammar so that it is at least mostly readable).

The rules for this section:

- You may have multiple literary terms for a single track.
- All tracks must have at least one of the literary terms.
- The literary terms may not be repeated.
- The place of origin for the artist or band must be the generally agreed upon appellation. Having a Japanese drummer, for instance, does not make it a Japanese band.
- The literary terms do not have to be in alphabetical order, i.e., they should not dictate the mixtape song order.

Every single one of these terms must be used, or I will not bother grading your compilation:

ambiance	denouement
anticlimax	*deus ex machina* (not required; extra points)
atmosphere / mood	epiphany
climax	flashback
closure	foreshadowing
conflict (internal)	frame narrative
conflict (person vs. nature)	*in medias res*
conflict (person vs. person)	setting
conflict (person vs. society)	subplot

YOU MAY ONLY HAVE ONE TRACK PER ARTIST

Other Requirements and Turning It in

The combined length of your mixtape must be between 45 and 70 minutes. Anything more or anything less will **not** be graded. I also do **not** want printed copies of the written portion (send it electronically).

I will accept physical burned CDs for your compilation (including all the tracks as either a music CD or an easily identifiable list of files), or you may copy and paste files onto my computer from an external storage device. I will also accept a list of YouTube links that has a clearly defined tracklist (i.e., which link to click on first, second, etc.).

I will **not** accept proprietary file types that require me to install a new program to listen. I will **not** accept on-line platforms that force me to register on a web site. I will **not** accept a stack of your own CDs or a personal mp3 playback device with instructions about which tracks to listen.

Earning More Credit

Just doing the above correctly will earn you a B (though not doing it correctly will lose you points).

Points will be added for the following (allowing you to potentially earn an A):

- decades represented if they total more than three (e.g., tracks from the 60s, 70s, 80s, etc.)
- place of origin of the performers if the continents of origin number more than two (note: Central America is not a continent; it is part of North America)
- the mix tape is multi-genre
- you find a song with a true *deus ex machina*; this is harder than it might seem
- the mixtape actually "flows" as a integrated whole; this is going to be a purely subjective call, but things I will be looking for include: 1) variety in the types of tracks, 2) a mix of tempos (i.e., not all fast/ upbeat or all slow/ languid), 3) contrasts between tracks are interesting and not jarring, 4) transitions between tracks work (I actually edited a few of my tracks to have a defined fadeout, though I do not necessarily expect you to display the same obsessive attention to detail). **Full disclosure: I might not listen to more than a few seconds of each track (beginning and end-- to get a feel for the track and test the transitions), since I will probably view your choice of music as soulless, over-produced crap.**

Teacher Example and Due Date

In the tradition of not asking you to do anything I'm not willing to do myself, there will be a full example of a mixtape to download (track by track-- though the file tags are set up to make up a complete album in iTunes or similar platform) along with the written work on my web page.

This is due on October 1. **No late work will be accepted.** The grade will replace the lowest three units of credit **that are not a zero**. For example, say your lowest grade is a 60 on a timed writing. That would be counted four times in the gradebook, so if you made a 90 on the mixtape, then three fourths of that grade would now be a 90 (instead of a 60). If your three lowest grades were a 60, 60, and 64 on separate multiple choice quizzes, they would all become a 90.