

This one-page column will present practical teaching tips in sufficient detail that ChE educators can adopt the tip. The focus should be on the teaching method, not content. With no tables or figures the column should be approximately 450 words. If graphics are included, the length needs to be reduced. Tips that are too long will be edited to fit on one page. Please submit a Word file to Phil Wankat <wankat@ecn.purdue.edu>, subject: CEE Teaching Tip.

CELEBRATING ChE IN SONG

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Every semester I survey my students to learn why they chose to attend UA, why they chose to major in chemical engineering, and what kind of career they aspire to. I also ask about their major interests and hobbies. I found that chemical engineering students organized COE Does ART, an official campus organization in which engineering students put on a musical each semester. Several chemical engineering students competed in a recent university “battle of the bands” as members of the rock group Liquid Metal. Others are members of the university’s marching band, sing in a musical, write short stories, create art, or make crafts. Engineering is an incredibly creative profession so it should not surprise anyone that their activities outside the classroom reflect very creative personalities. Can we harness this creativity for the benefit of chemical engineering education?

Many years ago, *CEE* published the poem “The Reynolds’ Number Song”^[1] that humorously celebrates the Reynolds Number. Since most current students enjoy rap music, I found it useful to modify the poem slightly and perform it in class as the “Reynolds Rap” (pun intended). Imagine the class pounding out a rhythm on their desks and joining me in the chorus, “Take a ‘d’ times a ‘v’ and a rho by a mu, put them all together with a little bit of glue, now you got a number gonna see you through, and tell you what the [insert colorful language of your choice] fluid’s gonna do.” It is certainly hard to forget the equation after that exercise!

In the fall of 2006, I recorded the “Reynolds Rap” in my home studio and played it for my 90 freshmen in the Introduction to Chemical Engineering seminar. During the 2007 summer lab several students asked me to write a song about distillation columns, suggesting the title “Steppin’ Off the Stages.” Since our end-of-summer-lab picnic was themed The Fiesta before the Siesta, I set it to a Latin rhythm and played it at the picnic. The students very much enjoyed both songs, and many downloaded them.

These songs are available free as MP3 downloads at <<http://www.myspace.com/ChemERocks>> for your listening pleasure and—if you dare—to use in your classroom. I believe there are many would-be rock stars in the profession that have also written or will write a chemical engineering-themed song. Make a good recording and send me the MP3 file and lyrics by e-mail (alane@eng.ua.edu), and you just might find it posted on this Web site and played on chemical engineers’ iPods around the globe!



Figure 1. Doobie ‘Doghouse’ Wilson (AKA Alan Lane) with his dobro.

REFERENCES

1. Harriott, P., “The Reynolds’ Number Song,” *Chem. Eng. Ed.*, **8**(1), 12 (1979) □

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