

Backyard Light Show

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- **Identify** the properties of light and the characteristics of country music.

OVERVIEW

Welcome to "Backyard Light Show!" Gather your family and loved ones to discover how to create a light show at home, featuring popular country music songs. Invite the neighbors and friends over to enjoy the light show or have them join in on the fun! Your family will use lighting applications, and/or other lighting sources from around the house to enhance a musical experience for your audience members. Your family will be challenged to create a light show that sets the stage for a live country music concert.

Your family will decide if they want to work in small groups, pairs, and/or create a show together. Consider having other families or friends join in the planning process! Identify the song(s) that will be featured in the light show. Each group will listen closely to song lyrics to determine the mood of the music. This will help you design the lighting experience for audience members. Consider lighting effects that you can include to draw in the audience and allow them to experience the mood of the song. Collectively, decide how the stage or theater should be set up to enhance the light show experience.

As you enjoy each light show, you will use a rubric and score card to determine who created the best "Backyard Light Show!" In your scoring, you will consider the properties of light and how that knowledge was used to enhance the musical experience for audience members.

This activity encourages you to enjoy music together as a family. Regardless of the genre, we hope that music brings your family and friends together to share in the joy that is music.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

When light travels to objects, sometimes the light is reflected, refracted, or absorbed. When light hits a rough surface, only part of the light is absorbed, and the other light is scattered; this is called absorption. When light hits smooth shiny surfaces such as metal or water, light is bounced off and it is called reflection. An example of reflection is how the moon does not create its own light; instead, it reflects the light from the sun off its surface. Refracted light is bent as it passes from one substance into another. For example, light travels faster through air than it does through water, which will often create the illusion that water in a pool appears to be less deep than it is.

Transparent objects are clear or see-through and allow light to travel through them. Translucent objects allow some light to pass through but distort images on the other side. Translucent objects reflect and absorb light. Opaque objects absorb light and do not allow light to pass through.

Lighting properties, set, and sound are all crucial to setting the mood or tone of a successful production. You will get to see this in action, since your family has been given a backstage pass to "The Ultimate Country Music Experience"—[CMA Fest](#). CMA Fest is the longest-running country music festival in the world, including more than 80,000 fans from all 50 states and fans from 39 different countries!

Note: *The majority of CMA Fest is free to attendees, made possible by the more than 300 country music artists who donate their time and talent every year! CMA Fest ensures funding for the [CMA Foundation](#); an organization that gives back to music education programs!*

MATERIALS

- Speaker and device of your choice or a computer
- Backyard Light Show Capture Sheet
- Lighting tools: Flashlights, holiday lights, dance lights, solar lights, LED lights, or other available lighting

BACKYARD LIGHT SHOW INSTRUCTIONS

- Before creating your family's "Backyard Light Show," watch the *CMA Topic Series Video: This is STEAM Country*, featuring Alec Takahashi. Begin a family discussion using the following questions:
 - What patterns or light properties were you able to distinguish?
 - What does a Lighting Director and Lighting Designer do?
 - Where did you see the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) throughout the video?
 - How did Alec become a Lighting Director?
- Explain to your family that lighting is vital to producing successful concerts and helps to produce different moods or emotions for audience members.
- Decide who will work together for this interactive family activity.
- Use the Backyard Light Show Capture Sheet to begin planning your light show.
- Break up into groups or work together to choose the song(s) that will be used to create a musical experience.
- Determine how lighting tools or stage elements can be used to enhance the mood of the music chosen.
- Find a location to set up your "Backyard Light Show!" Consider an outside space like a backyard, patio, or even a dark room inside the home.
- Begin setting up your "Backyard Light Show!"
- Invite family members, neighbors, and friends over to enjoy the show!
- Use the Backyard Light Show Capture Sheet to determine how each group did.
- Have fun encouraging each other as you create a country music experience! Discuss how to make the experience even better next time.
- Consider other ways you could enhance musical experiences using lighting, at home, school, church, or other venues.
- Visit the site [CMAWorkingInHarmony.com](#) for more CMA STEAM Country Activities.

Backyard Light Show

Let's go behind the scenes and step into the role of Lighting Director and Lighting Designer!

Collaborate with your family members to put your creativity to the test! As a family, you will consider how light properties can be used to enhance a concert-going experience for your audience.

INSTRUCTIONS

- As a family, select a song from among those provided.
- Listen to the song lyrics, then decide what special effects you would like to create using the lighting instruments selected.
- Select other ways to use your lighting and set to create a mood. These decisions will create the desired effects and audience response.
- Lighting effects can take an average performance to new heights and evoke emotion from audience members.
- Use the chart below to help you create your live performance.
- Use the rubric below to determine who created the best "Backyard Light Show!"

SETTING THE STAGE

Group/Team/ Family	Lighting Materials used	Song and Artist	Stage/Theatre Set-Up	Mood

Backyard Light Show

RUBRIC

	Excellent 1	Good 2	Fair 3
Our lighting elements helped enhance the country music song.			
Collaboration and creativity were used to create the ultimate audience experience.			
Our creation evoked emotions from audience members.			

SCORECARD

Group / Team / Family	Score