

Student Companion Materials

Four workbooks for the eight-week professional-practice pilot

Learn yourself. Think together. Discover the need. Deliver responsibly.

01 Learning Preferences & Adaptability

Self-directed learning, Feynman teach-back, transferable production literacy.

02 Personal Creative Needs Assessment

Current state, desired future, gaps, priorities, resources, strategy, and purpose/fit.

03 Parallel Thinking & Creative Collaboration

Six Thinking Hats for songs, productions, teams, and creative decisions.

04 UAA Project Discovery & Creative Needs Assessment

Project intake, discovery, scope, technical needs, rights awareness, handoff, and closeout.

Learning Preferences & Adaptability

A workbook for becoming a self-directed creative learner.

Know how you learn so you can teach yourself what you do not yet know.

- Learning preferences are starting strategies, not permanent labels.
- The goal is adaptability: notice what works, test it, practice it, and change methods when the work changes.
- Use this workbook with a real topic from songwriting, production, engineering, performance, business, or another UAA project.

NAME

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Start Here

Use preferences, not labels.

Different tasks call for different learning routes. A student may want a visual map for signal flow, hands-on repetition for a recording workflow, discussion for songwriting feedback, and written notes for copyright or project-management concepts.

Starting route	What it can look like in creative work
Visual / spatial	Diagrams, session maps, arrangement maps, demonstrations, signal-flow drawings, seeing the whole system.
Auditory / verbal	Listening comparisons, discussion, explanation aloud, rhythm, critique, asking precise questions.
Read / write	Notes, checklists, documentation, lyrics, manuals, transcripts, rewriting ideas in your own words.
Hands-on / kinesthetic	Building a session, recording, editing, rehearsing, testing, performing, learning through a real task.

WORKING SEQUENCE

NOTICE -> TEST -> PRACTICE -> ADAPT

When I need to learn something difficult...

What conditions help me stay curious, focused, and willing to keep working when the first explanation does not land?

My Current Learning Profile

Use evidence from things you have actually learned.

What helps me learn fastest? Think about music, software, instruments, school subjects, sports, art, or anything difficult you learned. 	What makes me disengage? Pace, format, environment, ambiguity, repetition, distraction, unclear purpose, fear of being wrong?
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What do I do when I am confused?

Do I ask? Search? Experiment? Draw it? Find another teacher? Break it into pieces? Avoid it?

Route	Evidence from my life	How I can use it intentionally
Visual / spatial		
Auditory / verbal		
Read / write		
Hands-on / kinesthetic		

What changes by task?

Which learning route works for one kind of problem but not another?

Strategy Builder

Turn preference into practice.

Start with the route that feels natural, then add another. Important learning becomes stronger when you can encounter, use, and explain the idea in more than one way.

If I start here...	I can try this...	My version
Visual / spatial	Map the arrangement; draw signal flow; compare two session layouts; watch a demonstration.	
Auditory / verbal	Explain the idea aloud; A/B two choices; ask a precise question; discuss a production tradeoff.	
Read / write	Make a checklist; read documentation; rewrite the concept; label the steps in a workflow.	
Hands-on / kinesthetic	Build a small test; recreate one section; record a pass; edit a clip; try it in real conditions.	

THE FEYNMAN LOOP

Learn -> Explain simply -> Find the gap -> Return to the source -> Explain again

When one method stops working...

What will I switch to before deciding I cannot learn it?

What would prove I understand?

A test, a demonstration, a teach-back, or a reliable result.

The route I will use first

For the topic I am learning now, choose a first method and a backup method. Explain why.

Learning & Adaptability Audit

Turn self-awareness into creative resilience.

Question	My answer
1. Methods that help me learn	
2. Areas or formats I tend to avoid	
3. A professional/business topic I do not understand yet	
4. A technical or creative topic I need to learn	
5. Reliable sources, teachers, documentation, or mentors I can use	
6. How I will verify that I can actually use what I learned	

QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What do I need to learn next so I can become more useful to the people and projects I serve?

A current UAA example

Choose something real: tempo mapping, signal flow, vocal editing, arrangement, co-writing, routing, file delivery, copyright, collaboration, or another live need.

Make Learning Operational

One topic. One test. One teach-back.

The one topic I will learn now

Name the topic, why it matters to your creative work, and what will be different when you can use it.

Week	Focus	Evidence
1	Define the question and find a reliable source.	
2	Practice one small part of the skill.	
3	Use it in a real creative context.	
4	Teach it, verify it, and decide what comes next.	

What will prove I can use this?
A finished task, clear explanation, reliable decision, or better result.

Who or what benefits first?
A song, production, collaborator, department, performance, or studio project.

DAW-AGNOSTIC PRINCIPLE

Software changes. Production language, listening, workflow, communication, and judgment transfer. Learn the concept deeply enough that you can find the controls in another tool.

Teach, Transfer & Adapt

Make the learning yours.

Teach-back

Explain the topic as if you were helping someone who has no background. What is it? Why does it matter? What should they understand first?

How will this transfer?

Where will this new capability change a song, recording, workflow, conversation, or decision?

If the first approach fails...

What will I change: source, format, pace, environment, question, collaborator, or amount of practice?

I will learn	I will practice	I will verify	I will review

CLOSING PRINCIPLE

Thinking is a skill. Learning how you learn is how you stay adaptable when the work changes and the next problem has no familiar instructions.

Personal Creative Needs Assessment

A workbook for understanding where you are, where you want to go, and what you need next.

Before you diagnose a project, collaborator, or client need, learn to diagnose your own.

- 01 Current State
- 02 Desired Future State
- 03 Gap
- 04 Priorities
- 05 Resources
- 06 Strategy
- Closing: Purpose & Fit (Ikigai)

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Current State

Start with what is true now.

Use facts, examples, and evidence. This is not about proving that you already have everything figured out.

What am I making now? Songs, recordings, productions, performances, visual work, film, theatre, or other projects. 	What can I reliably do now? Skills, judgment, creative habits, technical abilities, communication, or things others already ask me to help with.
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What gives me energy? Work that makes you curious, alert, absorbed, or willing to keep solving. 	What drains me? Work, conditions, habits, or situations that reduce the quality of your attention.
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Area	What is true now?	Evidence / example
Time & school workload		
Creative skills		
Production / engineering skills		
Tools & access		
Portfolio / proof		
Network / collaborators		

Desired Future State

Choose a direction, not a permanent identity.

By the end of these eight weeks...

What would you like to be able to make, understand, finish, communicate, or contribute that you cannot do as well today?

Twelve months from now...

What kind of creative work, skill level, portfolio, collaborators, opportunities, or responsibilities would you like to have?

I want more of...	I want less of...

What would a good creative week look like?

Think about school, practice, writing, production, collaboration, rest, and time to explore.

What Success Means to Me

Success can mean more than one thing. Choose the measures that actually matter to your growth right now.

What success can mean	My version
Original voice / artistic growth	
Technical capability	
Collaboration	
Portfolio / completed work	
Leadership / responsibility	
Learning / experimentation	
Balance / sustainability	
Future opportunities	

The two success markers I care about most

Why do these matter during this pilot?

Gap

Name the distance between now and next.

Where do my current and desired states diverge?

Write the differences plainly. The gap is information, not a verdict.

Possible gap	Is it real for me?	What evidence do I have?
Skill or knowledge		
Portfolio / proof		
Confidence / communication		
Collaboration / network		
Tools / access		
Workflow / organization		
Time / consistency		
Clarity / direction		

What is already stronger than I think?

Name assets, experience, relationships, or evidence you can use now.

Root cause, not symptom

Keep asking why until the gap becomes something you can act on.

If nothing changes...

What opportunity, growth, or creative outcome might I miss?

Priorities

Choose what matters first.

A priority is not a list of everything you care about. It is a decision about sequence.

Priority area	Rank 1-8	Why now?	Tradeoff / constraint
Original voice			
Songwriting craft			
Production / engineering			
Collaboration			
Portfolio / completion			
Leadership / responsibility			
Learning / adaptability			
Balance / wellbeing			

My non-negotiables

What needs to be protected so the work remains healthy and worthwhile?

The tradeoff I am willing to make

What will I postpone, simplify, or say no to so the top priority can win?

The one priority that must win during this pilot

If it wins, what will be observably different by the end of eight weeks?

Resources

Map what you have, what you need, and who can help.

Resource area	I have	I need	Next source / ask
Creative skills			
Production / engineering			
Tools / space / access			
Time / consistency			
Portfolio / proof			
Peers / collaborators			
Teachers / mentors			
Information / learning resources			

What can I learn or own myself?

Name the next skill, system, habit, or decision you can take responsibility for.

What responsibly requires another expert?

A teacher, producer, engineer, director, attorney, accountant, specialist, or collaborator.

NETWORK PRINCIPLE

Needing another person is not failure. Professionals become stronger by knowing who knows what they do not.

Strategy

Turn the assessment into a next move.

Desired result

What outcome would show that your top priority is moving?

Who benefits?

You, a collaborator, a song, a production, an audience, another UAA department, or a future opportunity?

What value will I create?

Complete: I can help _____ do / experience / achieve _____ by _____.

#	Move	Owner	By when	Evidence
1				
2				
3				

How will I measure success?

Name evidence, not just a feeling.

What conversation comes next?

Who needs to hear the plan, approve it, join it, or help you test it?

My eight-week commitment

Write a commitment you are willing to be held to. Add a review date and someone who can ask how it is going.

Purpose & Fit

Use Ikigai as a question, not a promise that one perfect answer exists.

For this class, Ikigai is a way to examine where energy, competence, service, and future sustainability may overlap. You do not need to decide your career now.

Area	Questions for me
What I love	What work, questions, sounds, people, or problems do I return to without being pushed?
What I can do well	What can I already do - or realistically learn - at a level other people can use?
What people / projects need	Whose goal, story, problem, performance, or future can I serve in a meaningful way?
What could sustain me over time	What could remain useful, valuable, employable, or worth developing even as tools and platforms change?

Where do these areas meet?

What would you keep doing if the job title, platform, DAW, or format changed?

From Purpose to Experiment

Turn purpose into something you can test.

Discovery question	My answer
Current position - Where am I starting from, in facts?	
Desired future - What am I deliberately trying next?	
Why - Why does this matter to me or others?	
Measurement - How will I recognize progress?	
Obstacles - What could prevent it?	
People - Who needs to participate, decide, teach, or be served?	
Worth - What makes this worth doing now?	
Fit - What part of the life or creative direction I want does this support?	

My purpose / fit statement

I am developing _____ for / with _____ so that _____ because _____.

This fits the direction I want by _____.

Eight-week experiment	Evidence I will look for	Review date	Keep / change / stop

CLOSING PRINCIPLE

Be on the hook. Do not cheat yourself. You are not choosing your entire future - you are choosing the next honest experiment.

Parallel Thinking & Creative Collaboration

Six Thinking Hats for songs, productions, teams, and creative decisions.

Move the team from defended positions to shared examination. One mode at a time. Everyone looks in the same direction together.

- WHITE - evidence
- RED - feeling
- BLACK - caution
- YELLOW - value
- GREEN - possibility
- BLUE - process

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Start Here

Think together without defending positions.

Traditional argument encourages people to choose positions and defend them. Parallel thinking asks the group to temporarily use the same thinking mode together, then switch modes together. The goal is not forced agreement. It is fuller examination before a decision.

Working rule	Meaning
Same hat together	The group examines one mode at a time. No one is assigned a permanent hat.
Separate the modes	Facts, feelings, caution, value, creativity, and process each get their own space.
Blue runs the process	Frame the question, choose the sequence, synthesize what was learned, and close with a next move.

IMPORTANT

The hats are not personality types. A strong collaborator practices all six modes.

The real problem or decision I want to examine

Choose a song, production, arrangement, project, collaboration, or team decision that actually matters.

The Six Modes

Use one mode at a time.

Mode	Question	Creative example
WHITE - Evidence	What do we know? What is verified? What is missing?	What tempo, range, deadline, technical requirement, or director note is actually known?
RED - Feeling	What is the immediate reaction?	Does this chorus feel exciting, confusing, flat, vulnerable, wrong, or unresolved?
BLACK - Caution	What could fail?	Will the arrangement fight choreography? Is the session too fragile? Are rights/permissions unclear?
YELLOW - Value	What could work?	What is strong, useful, compelling, memorable, or worth protecting?
GREEN - Possibility	What else could we try?	New structure, harmony, sound palette, co-writer, performance choice, or smaller experiment.
BLUE - Process	What are we deciding and what happens next?	Choose the next test, owner, deadline, and what remains open.

DO NOT USE A HAT TO WIN

Black is not the skeptic's job. Green is not the "creative person's" job. Everyone practices every mode.

Run a Session

Frame, examine, create, decide.

Step	Purpose
BLUE OPEN	Define the question, scope, time, and desired outcome.
WHITE GROUND	Establish facts, evidence, assumptions, and missing information.
RED SURFACE	Capture reactions, instincts, tension, excitement, and hesitation.
YELLOW VALUE	Identify benefits, strengths, opportunities, and what should be protected.
BLACK TEST	Expose risks, constraints, ethics, weaknesses, and failure points.
GREEN CREATE	Generate alternatives, combinations, reframes, and experiments.
BLUE CLOSE	Synthesize, decide, assign ownership, define the next test, and record open questions.

Facilitator

Who will keep the group in the current mode and move the sequence forward?

Recorder

Who will capture decisions, questions, and next actions?

Sequence I will use and why

A tense group may need Red early. A vague problem may need more White. A stuck group may need Green before judgment.

Song / Production Lab

Use all six modes on one real creative issue.

The question we are actually trying to answer

Write it as a decision or problem, not a position to defend. Example: What production direction best serves the song and performance?

WHITE | What is true?

RED | What is the reaction?

BLACK | What could go wrong?

YELLOW | What value is here?

GREEN | What else is possible?

BLUE | What do we do next?

Team Lab

Move from positions to shared examination.

TEAM RULE

Disagreement is useful. Defending identity is not. Let every mode have its turn before judging the decision.

Decision / creative question

Examples: Which chorus? Which arrangement? Which production approach? What should change for the performer? How should we deliver for the project?

Mode	What it revealed	What changed in our thinking
White		
Red		
Black		
Yellow		
Green		
Blue		

The decision we can support

State the decision, the evidence behind it, the risk that remains, and the next test.

Project Discovery & Client/Collaborator Work

Use the hats after you understand the need.

Parallel thinking does not replace discovery. First understand what the director, performer, department, collaborator, or project actually needs. Then examine possible responses.

SEQUENCE

DISCOVERY -> DEFINE -> THINK -> STRATEGY -> TEST -> FEEDBACK

Discovery check	Question
Current state	What is happening now?
Desired future	What does the project partner want to be true?
Success measure	How will they know it worked?
Underlying need	What is actually preventing the desired result?

Mode	Use it to test the response
WHITE	What evidence supports this approach? What remains unknown?
RED	How may performers, audience, director, team, or stakeholders react?
BLACK	What risk, technical issue, ethical concern, deadline, or rights issue must be addressed?
YELLOW	What value could this create?
GREEN	What alternative or smaller experiment could create the same value?
BLUE	What strategy is responsible to test next, and how will we measure it?

SERVE THE PROJECT, NOT THE IDEA

Do not use the response to force the discovery. Use discovery to determine whether the idea serves the objective.

Reflection & Thinking Contract

Practice the modes you avoid.

The mode I overuse What kind of thinking do I default to under pressure? 	The mode I avoid Which mode feels slow, uncomfortable, unnecessary, or unfamiliar?
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What does my team need more of?

Facts? Honest reactions? Caution? Optimism? Creativity? Process? Name the evidence.

I will frame	I will listen	I will switch modes	I will close

The next live decision where I will use this

Name the song, session, project, meeting, or production decision. Who needs to be in the room? What would a useful outcome be?

CLOSING PRINCIPLE

Parallel thinking is not agreement. It is disciplined examination before decision.

Framework note: Based on Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats method.

UAA Project Discovery & Creative Needs Assessment

A project-intake workbook for understanding what another person, production, or department actually needs.

Amateurs prescribe from assumption. Professionals ask questions, listen, diagnose, and define the work before they execute it.

- Use for Cats and other UAA productions, departments, collaborators, and approved studio projects.
- This is not a sales form. It is a listening and project-definition tool.
- The goal is to leave discovery knowing what success means, what is actually needed, who decides, and what remains unknown.

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Project Snapshot

Start with the request, then find the real need.

Field	Notes
Project / production	
Department / collaborator	
Primary contact	
Student team / lead	
Date of discovery	
Target deadline / event date	

What are you asking us to help with?

Capture the request in their words before reframing it.

Why does this project matter?

What story, performance, audience, event, learning goal, or larger objective does it serve?

Desired Future & Success

Understand the outcome before discussing the solution.

What do you want to be true when this is finished?

Describe the desired future state.

Who is it for?

Audience, performers, director, students, faculty, families, public release, internal rehearsal, etc.

How will you know it worked?

What would success look, sound, or feel like? What evidence would show the goal was met?

What must remain?

Elements that cannot be lost: story, character, melody, timing, identity, technical requirement, etc.

What is flexible?

Elements open to experimentation, reinterpretation, alternate versions, or student proposals.

Creative & Technical Needs

Separate the need from the first solution that comes to mind.

Area	Questions / requirements
Songwriting / composition	Original song? Rewrite? Additional section? Lyric or melody problem? Character/story requirement?
Production / arrangement	Style, era, instrumentation, density, energy, references, transitions, dance counts, rehearsal needs?
Recording / engineering	Who is performing? What needs to be captured? Room, microphones, session time, monitoring, editing?
Post / mix / delivery	Mix, instrumental, stems, clean version, playback, alternate length, master, loudness/reference requirements?
Visual / media support	Artwork, photography, video, EPK, social assets, projection, titles, metadata?
Interdepartmental dependencies	Theatre, dance, stage tech, film, visual art, business, faculty approvals, other teams?

Reference material

What examples, demos, scripts, rehearsal videos, temp tracks, notes, files, or assets already exist?

Constraints, Rights & Decisions

Professional work becomes clearer when limits are visible.

Question	Answer / owner
What is the real deadline?	
What milestones happen before the deadline?	
Who gives creative notes?	
Who has final approval?	
What resources are available?	
What resources are not available?	
What technical constraints matter?	
What school policies or permissions apply?	
Are copyrighted works, scripts, recordings, artwork, likenesses, or protected IP involved?	
Who will verify any required rights / permissions before public use or release?	

RIGHTS-AWARENESS STANDARD

Students identify the question and escalate it. They are not expected to provide legal conclusions.

Define the Work

Convert discovery into a clear brief.

The underlying need

What problem, gap, or desired result are we actually serving?

Our proposed response

What do we think should be created or tested next? Keep this proportional to what discovery supports.

Deliverable / test	Owner	Due	Approver	Status

In scope	Out of scope / not yet approved

Open questions

What must still be answered before work can move safely?

Production Handoff & Review

Make the next action visible.

Handoff item	What another student/team needs to know
Creative intent	
Tempo / meter / key / structure	
Session / file location	
Version / date / naming	
Required stems / exports	
Credits / contributors	
Known issues / unresolved questions	
Next action / owner / deadline	

What changed after feedback?

Record the note, what changed, and why. Separate a creative revision from a new request that changes scope.

What did we learn about the need?

Did the original request change after discovery or testing? What did we misunderstand at first?

Closeout & Case Study

Finish the work professionally and keep the learning.

Closeout check	Complete / notes
Final deliverables approved	
Files clearly named and stored	
Stems / alternates delivered if required	
Credits and contribution record complete	
Permissions / public-use questions resolved by appropriate adult/authority	
Project partner knows where final files are	
Team knows what remains open	

What did success mean on this project?

What evidence shows whether the work served the objective?

What did I contribute?

Name the work, judgment, communication, or problem solving you personally owned.

What would I do differently next time?

Workflow, communication, creative process, technical approach, scheduling, or collaboration.

CLOSING PRINCIPLE

Serve the project. Protect trust. Credit everyone. Deliver what people can actually use.