

## INFLUENCE DETECTIVE (TEACHER NOTES)

Artist and Song	Similarities	Differences
<p><b>A-ha:</b> "Take on Me"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tempo (~170 BPM)</i></li> <li>• <i>Drum machine sounds</i></li> <li>• <i>Drum pattern</i></li> <li>• <i>Synth tones and melody</i></li> <li>• <i>Long intro with synth melody before vocals</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Key</b> (which affects the song's mood/vibe): "Take on Me" is in A major, while "Blinding Lights" is in C minor.</p> <p>Hearing different characteristics among keys is subjective, but you can have students get the general sense by asking them to consider whether the music feels "happy" or "joyful," compared with feeling "sad" or "spooky." This is a broad generalization, but it can jump-start the conversation.</p>
<p><b>Michael Sembello:</b> "Maniac"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tempo (~160 BPM)</i></li> <li>• <i>Drum machine sounds</i></li> <li>• <i>Drum pattern</i></li> <li>• <i>Synth tones and melody</i></li> <li>• <i>Long intro with synth melody before vocals</i></li> </ul>	<p>"Maniac" has a pulsing 16th-note bassline, whereas "Blinding Lights" has sustained bassline notes.</p>
<p><b>Rod Stewart:</b> "Young Turks"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tempo (~160 BPM)</i></li> <li>• <i>Drum machine sounds</i></li> <li>• <i>Drum pattern</i></li> <li>• <i>Synth tones and melody</i></li> <li>• <i>Long intro with synth melody before vocals</i></li> </ul>	<p>"Young Turks" has a pulsing 16th-note bassline, whereas "Blinding Lights" has sustained bassline notes.</p> <p>"Young Turks" also includes an electric guitar.</p>

See the next page for more notes that can be used in class discussion.

## Other Notes

- The tempo for “Blinding Lights” is approximately 170 BPM.
- All these songs utilize a drum machine with a very basic pattern that never changes throughout the song.
- All these songs feature the synthesizer along with a prominent melody line that recurs throughout the song.
- A long instrumental intro before the vocals enter is not as common in modern pop music, but “Blinding Lights” does have an intro that’s on the longer side:
  - “Blinding Lights” has 12 bars.
  - “Take on Me” has 24 bars.
  - “Maniac” has 16 bars.
  - “Young Turks” has 16 bars.
  - A general sampling of modern pop music finds that vocals generally enter after 4–8 bars.