

I can **LEARN** from my **MISTAKES.**

“Expect me to give my all. That’s what I do every time I have a show. Give my all.”

⚡ Bruno Mars

Everyone makes mistakes, but sometimes students get so focused on the error that they miss the valuable lesson that comes with it. In this unit, students will experiment with making mistakes and learn how to deal with them when they happen.

★ Reading Passage: Bruno Mars

The hitmaker’s first record deal fell apart just months after he signed it, but Bruno Mars didn’t let that mistake stop him from becoming an international superstar.

★ Short-Answer Activity: Making Mistakes

Reflecting on the story of Bruno Mars, students will write about what can be learned from making mistakes and then share their answers in small groups.

★ Small-Group Activity: Art in the Dark

Sometimes, students are afraid to make mistakes. So, to practice not being in control of everything, students will make something beautiful out of a mistake. Turn out the lights for the first two to three minutes of this activity and ask students to start creating their art. When you turn the lights back on, ask them to notice what they created and how it might be different from what they were envisioning. Can they find the beauty in it? Then have them finish their art with the lights on.

★ Whole-Class Activity: The Book of Mistakes

As a class, read *The Book of Mistakes* by Corinna Luyken. Afterward, some short-answer questions and a class discussion will help crystallize the lessons learned.

★ Journal Prompt: Mistakes or Lessons?

What can you learn from your mistakes? Students will reflect on what they have learned about the beautiful lessons that can be gained from making mistakes.

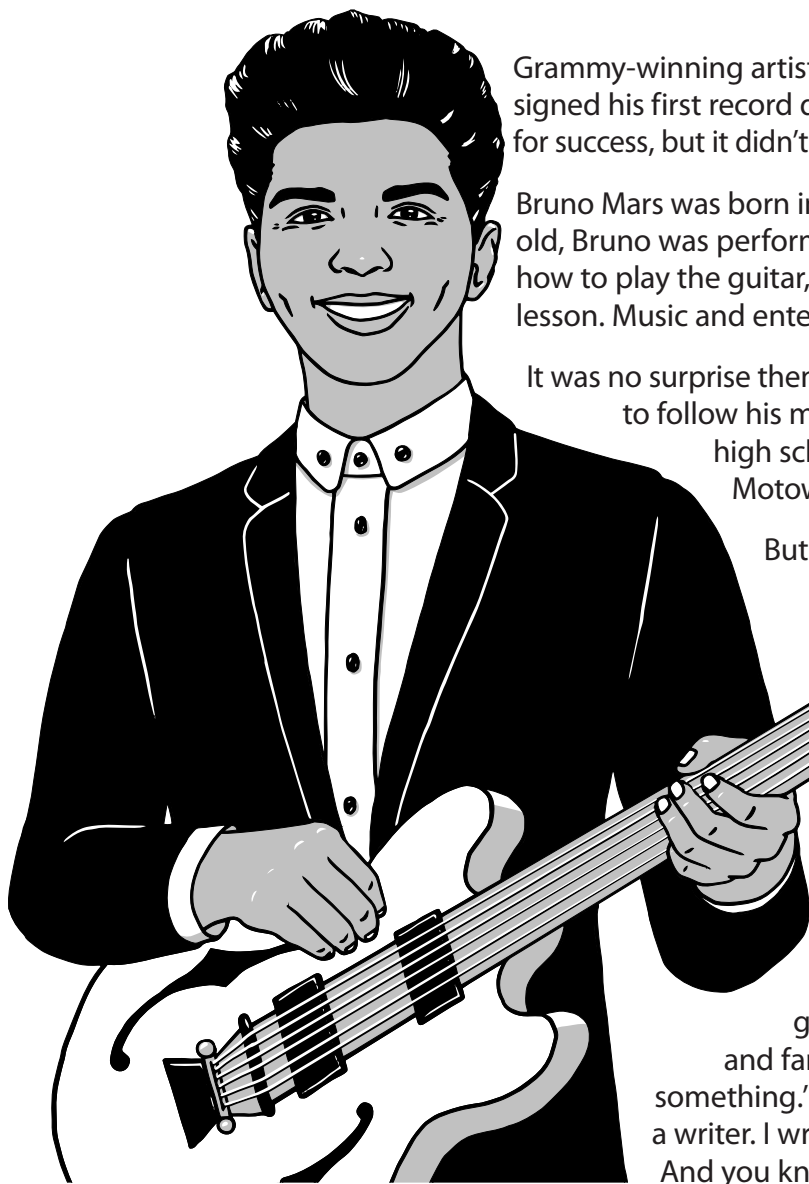
★ Growing Beyond

Challenge your students to create more art from “mistakes.” Prepare some blank pieces of paper ahead of time, with interesting rips or folds, blots of ink or paint, or other alterations that may look like mistakes. Break the class up into small groups and distribute the “mistakes,” asking them to turn them into their own pieces of art. Ask them to encourage one another as they create. Display their finished art in the classroom as a reminder that mistakes can turn into something beautiful.

Name: _____

Date: _____

BRUNO MARS



Grammy-winning artist Bruno Mars was just 18 years old when he signed his first record deal with Motown Records. He was destined for success, but it didn't come without a few mistakes along the way.

Bruno Mars was born in Hawaii to a musical family. From four years old, Bruno was performing on stage with his family. He learned how to play the guitar, piano, and drums without taking a single lesson. Music and entertainment were just always around him.

It was no surprise then that Bruno wanted to move to Los Angeles to follow his musical dreams as soon as he was done with high school. Right away, he was offered a deal with Motown Records, and he didn't hesitate to sign it.

But the deal fizzled out, and by the time Bruno was 19, Motown had dropped him. Surely, a part of him must have felt as though moving to LA and trying to be an artist had all been a mistake. This could have devastated Bruno, but instead, he let it fuel his desire to work harder.

"I didn't want to give up. My goal was, 'I'm not going to go back home. I'm not going back to Hawaii and face my friends and family saying it didn't pan out. I've got to do something.' I think I grew. I grew as an artist. I grew as a writer. I wrote songs every day. I started producing. And you know, practice is what you need."

Bruno started writing and producing songs for other artists, which helped him make a name for himself. Within a few years, he was offered a new record deal at Atlantic Records.

Soon after came a string of number-one hits, awards, and sold-out tours. Bruno is one of the best-selling artists of all time, and he has won more than 10 Grammy Awards, including Album of the Year and Song of the Year. He also performed in the half-time show of the Superbowl.

But none of that would have happened if his first record deal with Motown hadn't flopped. Today, Bruno says he is sort of grateful that deal never worked out. "It was my fault. I wasn't ready yet. And because the thing with Motown didn't work, that's how I became a producer, that's why I have a story."

Name: _____ Date: _____

MAKING MISTAKES

Directions: Thinking about Bruno's story, answer the questions below. Then form a group with two to three other students and discuss your answers.

1. Do you think Bruno signing his first deal with Motown Records was a mistake? Why or why not?

2. Bruno said that he didn't want to go home and face his family and friends after being dropped by Motown. If you were Bruno's friend at that time, what is one thing you would have said to him about the deal falling apart?

3. What lesson do you think Bruno learned from his mistakes?

4. Do you think you can learn from the mistakes you make? Why or why not?

5. After his deal fell through, Bruno said he wouldn't give up. Do you think he had a good attitude? Why or why not?

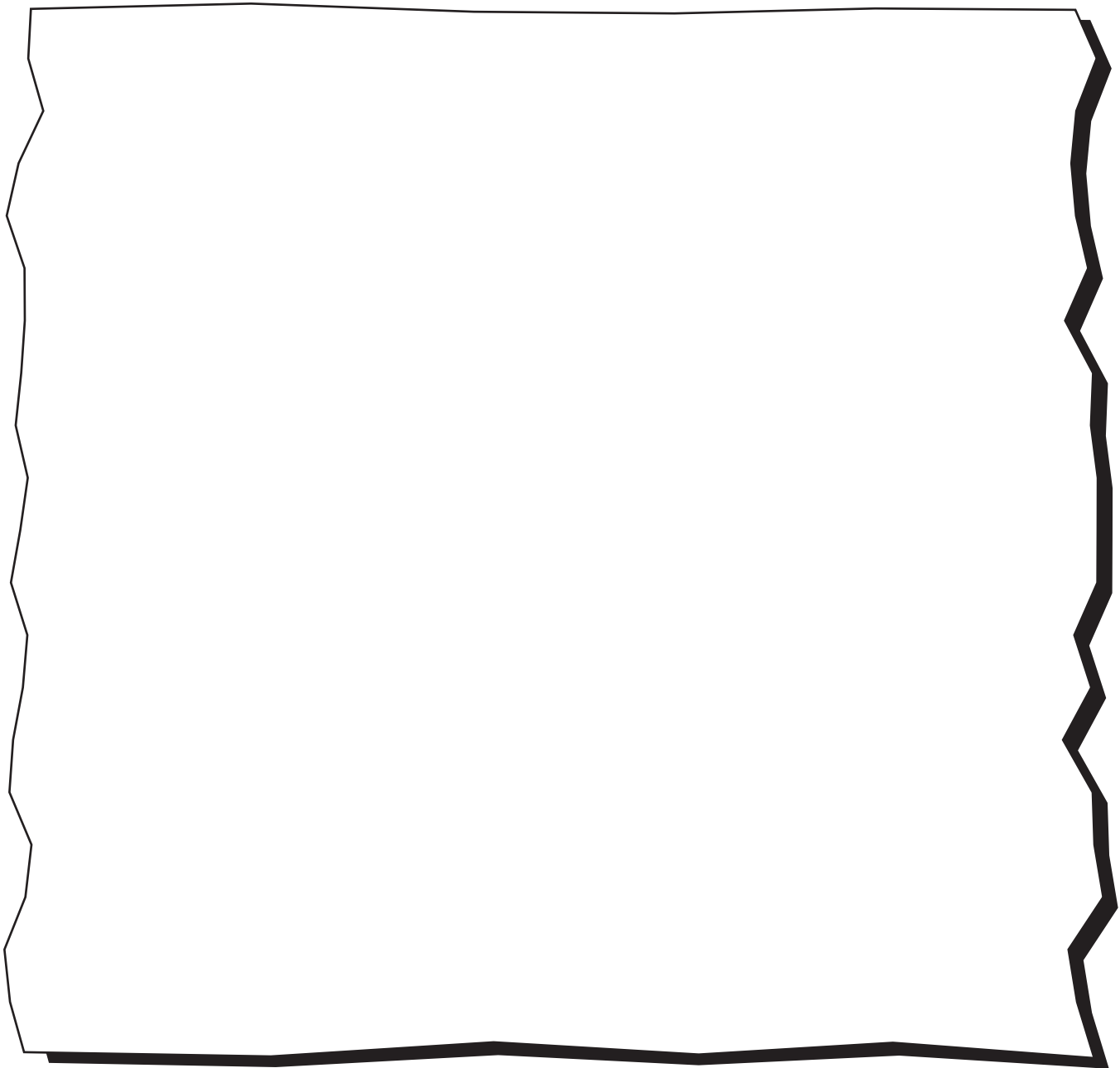
Name: _____ Date: _____

ART IN THE DARK

Have you ever been so afraid of messing up that you didn't even want to do something? It's important to remember that everyone makes mistakes. To get used to how it feels to make a mistake, you are going to practice messing up.

Directions: While waiting for instructions, think about these questions: What does a perfect day look like for you? What are you doing? What are you wearing? Who is with you?

When you're told it's time to begin, draw your perfect day below.



Name: _____ Date: _____

THE BOOK OF MISTAKES

In *The Book of Mistakes*, the artist makes many mistakes. But the artist also ends up creating something beautiful out of those mistakes.

Making a mistake once doesn't mean we will never make one again. In fact, making mistakes is how we learn valuable lessons. Mistakes teach us to go more slowly, try again, and attempt a different strategy next time.

How do you react when you make a mistake? Do you learn from it and try to turn it into something beautiful?

Directions: Write your answers to the questions below. Then share your answers in a class discussion.

1. What do you say to yourself when you make a mistake?

2. What do you say to other people when they mess up?

3. When you make a mistake, do you try again or do you give up? Give an example.

4. What is one thing you would like to improve but are afraid you will mess up?

Name: _____ Date: _____

..... MISTAKES OR LESSONS?

Albert Einstein said, "A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new."

Thinking about what you learned, both from Bruno Mars's story and *The Book of Mistakes*, what do you now know about making mistakes that you didn't know before?

What is one mistake you have made that taught you a valuable lesson?
