



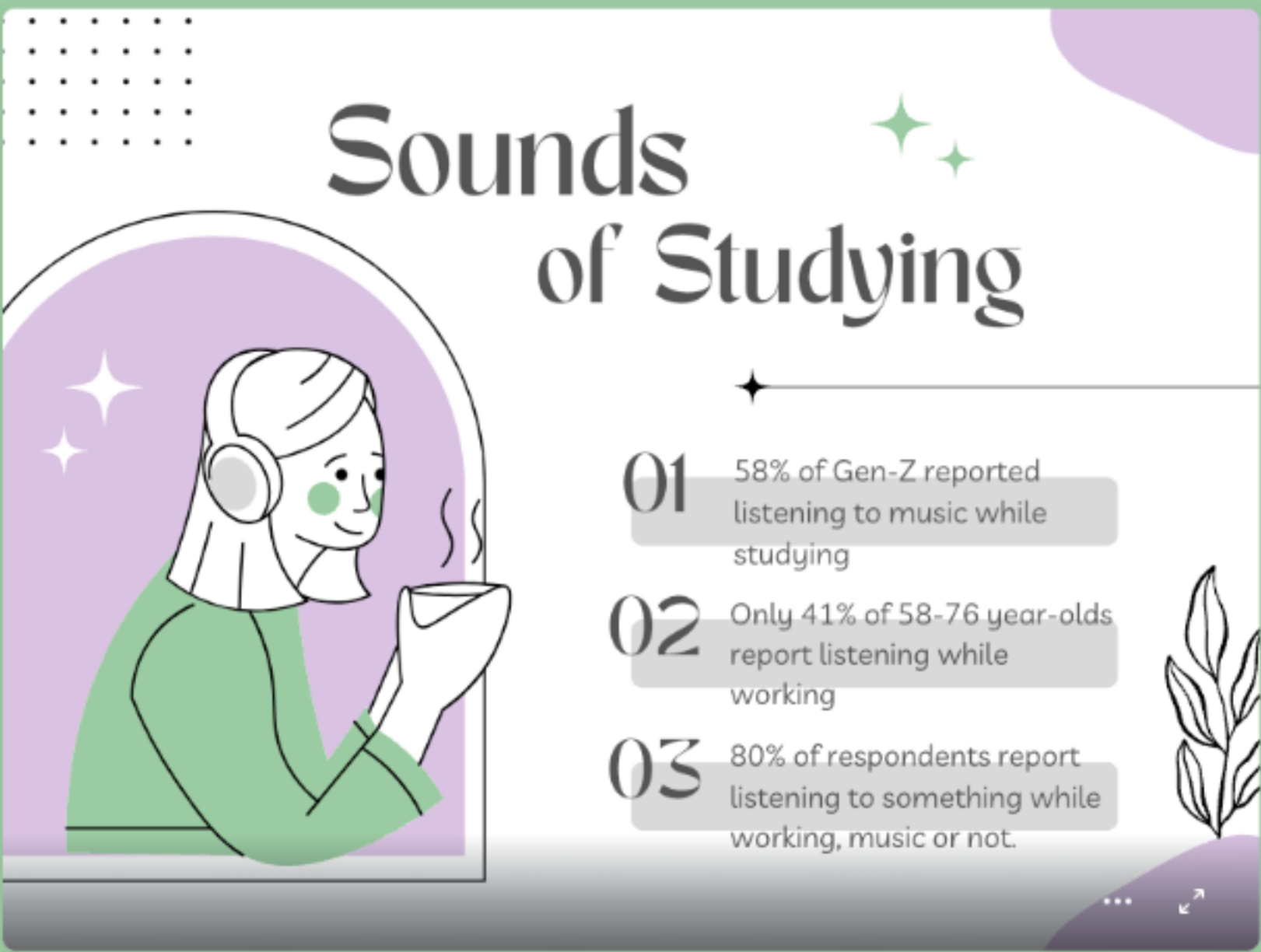
Does Listening to Music While Studying Really Help?

In the midst of finals, UMD students break down their study habits

The end of each college semester often comes with the excitement of prospective vacations, time with friends and (hopefully) a break from coursework and deadlines. It also means the arrival of the most notorious time of the year: finals week.

Each student has their own method of preparing for exams, whether it's planning weeks ahead or cramming the night before. Many finals week traditions have remained the same for decades, however, college students in recent years have had access to a unique study tool: music streaming platforms.

According to [Music Gateway](#), nearly 60% of college students find listening to music while studying to be helpful.

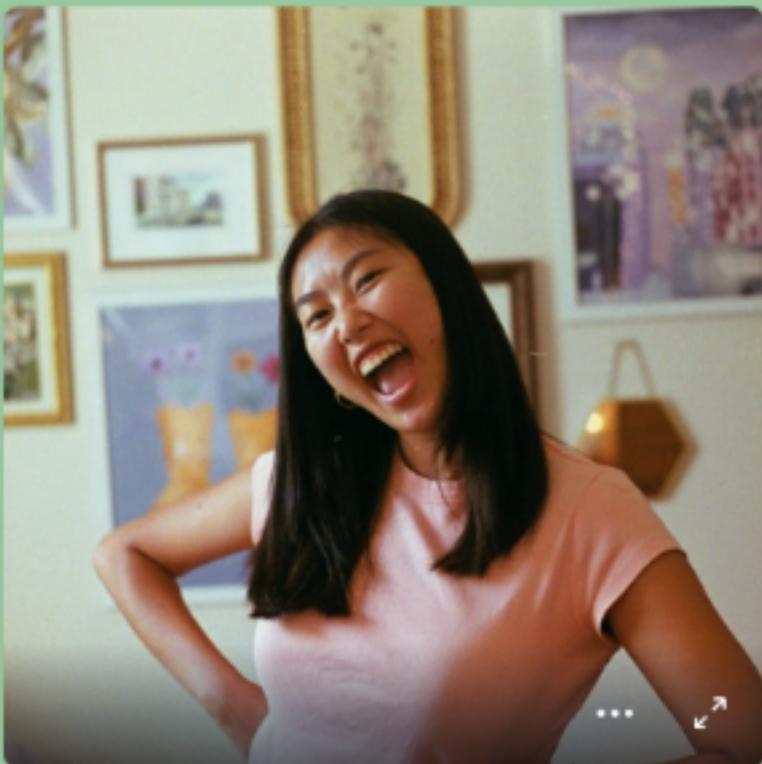


Sophomore biochemical engineering major Mikaela Truong says she spends more time studying at the library than she does in her own apartment. During the long hours and late nights cramming for exams and working on homework, her customized Spotify playlists are what get her through each semester.

Featuring artists such as Hippo Campus, Bad Suns, Lorde, and Maggie Rogers, Truong's playlists are curated to match her moods, studying or not. With most of her coursework being math and science, Truong says it's easy to study along with music since she writes minimally.

"I feel so much more productive if I have music playing," Truong said. "Certain genres make it easier to really get lost in what I'm doing."

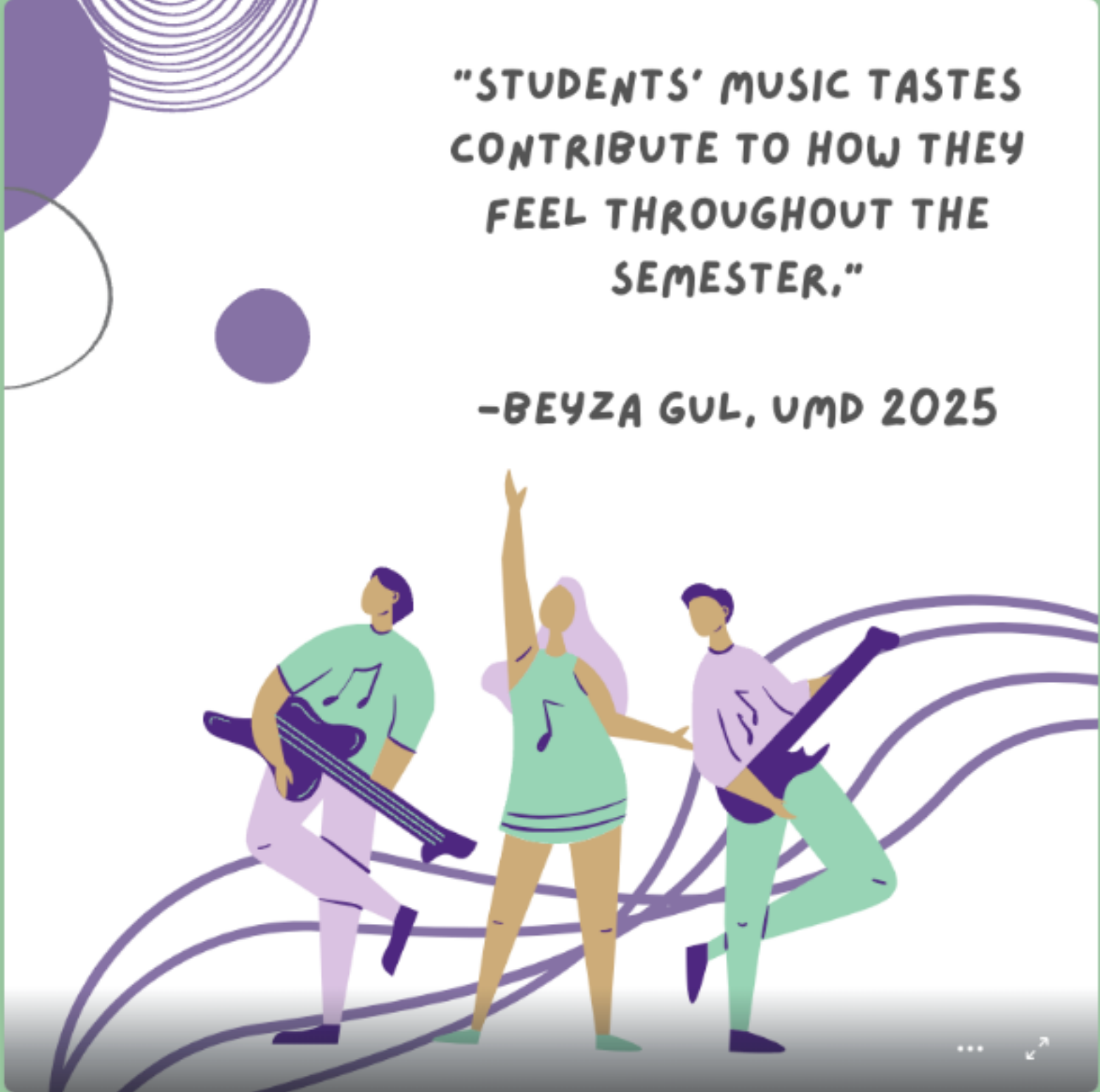
Being a part of the engineering fraternity [Theta Tau](#), Truong is used to studying in groups, adjusting to loud noises in order to get work done.



While some students find the lyrics of their favorite artists to be soothing while trying to work, others find the lyrics to be distracting.

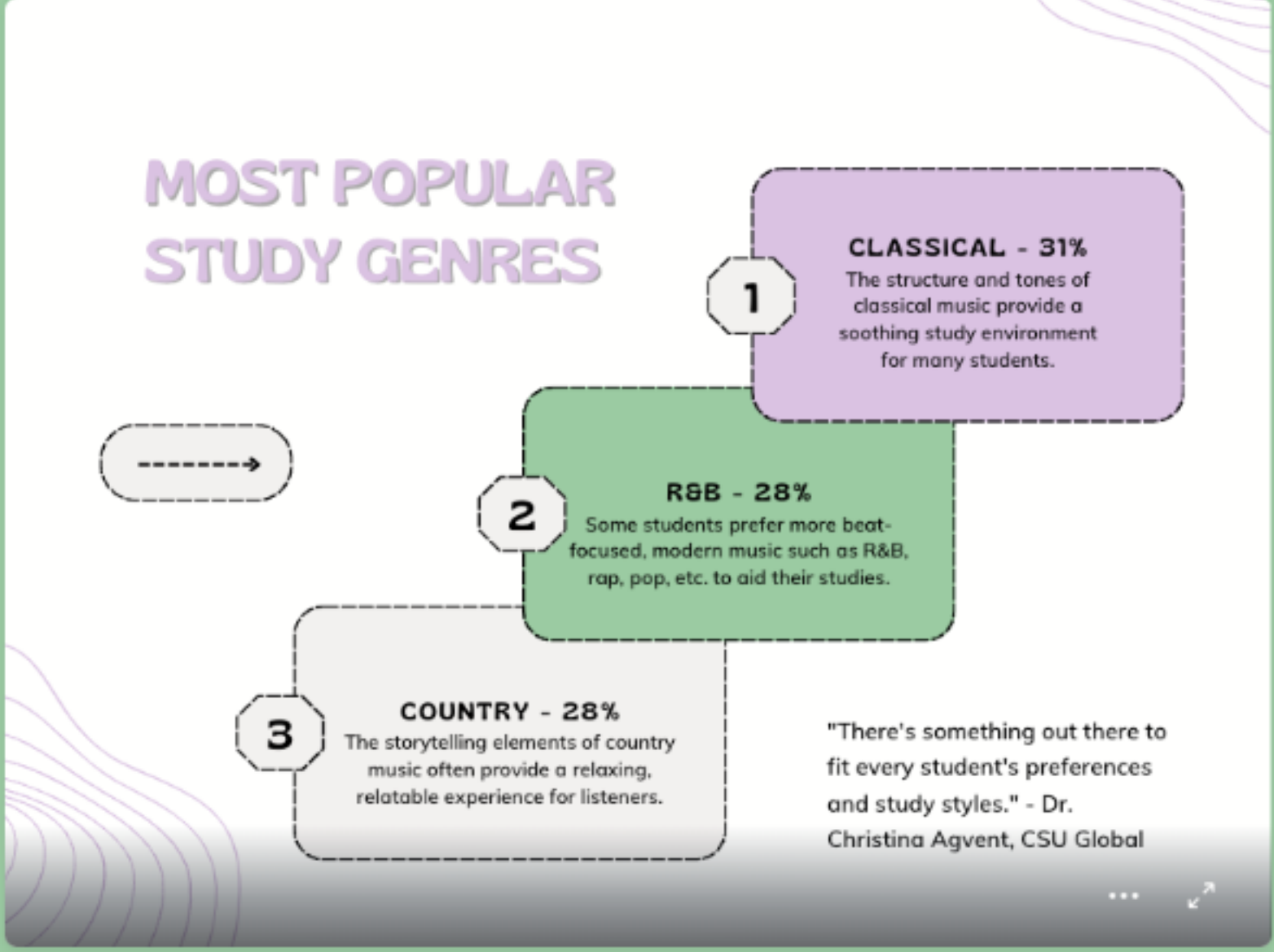
"If I do listen to music, it has to be instrumental or something really boring," said Beyza Gul, a sophomore economics and chemistry double major.

Gul, who enjoys crafting playlists for every new semester and attending concerts on a monthly basis, said her love for music would interfere with her need to work quickly, especially around tight deadlines.



According to a study by [Texas A&M University's Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences](#), listening to music while working on another task such as studying is challenging for humans. The concept of multitasking is a "fallacy" due to attention being a limited resource, said cognitive psychologist Brian Anderson.

However, students at UMD's most frequented study spots and libraries are rarely seen without a pair of headphones or earbuds, so what are they listening to?



A poll conducted by [Colorado State University Global](#) found that out of 2,000 participants, even those who did not listen to music while studying still chose some noise over silence. 30% voted in favor of ambient nature sounds, 26% for "real-life" sounds and 24% for podcasts.

Whether listening to music while studying is beneficial to one's academic performance or not, it's uncommon to find a college student without a favorite tune. Of the students from the CSU Global study who do listen to music while studying, classical music was the most popular genre reported at 31% of respondents.

"Even if it's not while they're working, I think students' music tastes contribute to how they feel throughout the semester," Gul said.

So does listening to music help students' academic performance or not?

Ultimately, each student chooses which study method works best for them. Lyrics that prove to be a distraction for some, may be motivators for others. Other students need no noise entirely.

