



# Ways to Listen: Strategies.Questioning

Integrating Listening and Responding to Music and Visual Arts.

## STEP 1: What you bring to a piece of music.

- What do you think of first when you listen to this piece of music?  
*Can you make a drawing about this using your favourite colours?*
- Why do you think it makes you think about that?
- Is there something you immediately like/dislike about it?
- Why do you think this is?

Does the piece of music remind you of anything?

- that is in the place where you live/your locality
- that is in your home
- about your family or friends
- about someone/something in your community
- about a person or place you know about
- that you have read about
- that you have seen/heard in a museum/gallery or at a concert?  
*Can you make a pencil drawing about what the piece of music reminds you of?*

Can you connect this piece of music to something?

- you have heard/seen on TV
- you have imagined
- you have fantasised/dreamt about
- you have heard on a film or video
- you have heard/seen on a software programme/game
- you have seen on the internet
- you have seen on holiday or in a place you have visited?  
*Can you make a charcoal drawing about what you saw/heard?*  
*Can you make a chalk drawing about your dream/fantasy?*

Does the piece of music remind you of anything that has happened to you?

- at home
- at school
- at play
- on holidays
- on any other occasion?  
*Can you make a series of cartoons about what happened to you?*



## **STEP 2: What a piece of music is about.**

What kind of music is this?

- a song – *Make a drawing to show the story of the song.*
- an instrumental piece – *Find a picture of a musical instrument, draw it.*
- a dance – *Make a drawing about yourself at a disco/dance?*
- a lullaby - *Draw a design for a newborn baby card.*
- a marching song – *Draw a picture about soldiers on parade.*
- a piece of traditional music? *Draw a portrait of a favourite traditional singer.*

What is happening in this piece of music?

Does it tell a story to you?

Can you retell this story?

*Can you draw the story of what is happening in the piece of music?*

Do you think this piece of music could mean something else?

What do you think the composer might have been thinking of when s/he created this piece of music?

*Can you draw a picture of what the composer might have seen in his/her mind's eye while composing this piece of music?*

What title/name would you give this piece of music? Why?

Look at the title the composer has given it.

Do you think this is a good title? Why?

Did the title that the composer gave it make you think/feel differently about it?

*Can you draw a design for a C/D cover for this piece of music?*

What do you think the theme of the piece of art is?

- seasons, war, leisure, movement, royalty, food, etc?  
*Can you think of any drawing or other piece of visual artwork that would go well with this piece of music?*

What type of work is it?

- SONG – ballad, love song, aria, etc. *Draw a picture to tell the song's story.*
- INSTRUMENTAL – orchestral, solo, group, rock band, etc.  
*Draw a picture of your favourite band.*
- CULTURE – from what part of the world?  
*Draw a picture about the part of the world that this music comes from.*
- TYPE – classical, jazz, popular, rock-n-roll, etc.

*Make collections of drawings, paintings, photos, etc of famous musicians or composers – use one of your favourite pictures as the basis for a piece of art.*



### **STEP 3: What can you hear in a piece of music (linked to the elements of music)**

## **PULSE**

- Does this piece of music have a steady pulse/beat?
- Can you clap or tap along to this beat?
- Can you march to this beat?
- Does this piece of music have no steady pulse or beat?
- Does this piece of music have a strong or a weak beat?  
*Can you make a drawing to show the pulse of the piece? Make patterns of lines in different colours to show this.*
- Is the beat like a march (two-beat)?
- Is the beat like a waltz (three-beat)?
- Is the beat like a jig (six-eight)?  
*Draw a picture to show the place or the occasion where this might be played or performed.*
- Is the beat an unusual one?
- Can you move to this beat?

## **DURATION**

- Can you hear patterns of long sounds?
- Can you hear patterns of short sounds?
- Can you imitate these sounds using vocal or found sounds?
- Can you imitate them using instruments?
- Can you hear patterns of rhythm in the piece?
- Can you imitate/perform these in a variety of ways?
- Can you hear periods of silence in the music?  
*Use various drawing tools and materials to create pattern pictures that you feel match the patterns in the music.*

# TEMPO

- Is the rhythm of the piece fast?
- Or is it slow?
- Is the melody fast or slow?
- Can you hear places where the music gets faster?
- Can you hear places where it gets slower  
*Use drawing pencils to make a drawing to show fast/slow parts of a piece.*

# PITCH

- Does a piece of music have high sounds?  
*Draw a cartoon picture of an opera soprano.*
- Does it have low sounds?  
*Draw the imaginary low sound monster.*
- Can you imitate the melody of the piece of music?
- Can you say if the melody of a piece of music has shape?
- Are there steps or leaps in the shape of the melody?  
*Can you make line drawings to show this shape?*
- Can you move to show this shape?
- Can you represent it on a staff?

# DYNAMICS

- Are there loud sounds in a piece of music?  
*Draw a set of patterns to represent loud sounds.*
- Are there soft sounds?  
*Draw a set of patterns to represent soft sounds.*
- How are these created (volume or use of different instruments)?
- Can you hear places where the music gets louder?
- Can you hear places where it gets softer (quieter)?  
*Can you make a drawing about a piece of music to show this?*
- Can you use these ideas of getting louder / getting softer while performing a piece of your own e.g. a sound poem or story  
*Make a set of drawings about your sound poem/story.*

- What would make you choose to do this?

## STRUCTURE STRUCTURE

- How does a piece of music start?
- How does it end/stop?
- What is the beginning like?  
*Make a drawing to show the scene at the beginning.*
- What is the middle/end like?
- Can you hear parts/sections that are repeated?
- Can you hear a unique/different section?
- Can you hear where the music is divided into different sections?
- What is the form of a piece of music e.g. ABA

## TIMBRE

- What instruments are used in a piece of music?
- Can you hear different families of instruments ( wind, percussion, etc )?
- Do you know what these instruments look like?  
*Can you find pictures of them and make drawings about them?*
- How are they played?  
*Draw pictures about musicians playing different instruments.*
- What kinds of sounds do different instruments/families make?  
*Draw designs to show the different types of sounds.*

## TEXTURE

- Can you hear single sounds in a piece of music?
- Can you hear combined sounds?
- Can you pick out what instruments are being combined?

# STYLE

- What style of music is this?
- Do you know another piece of music in a similar style?
- Can you hear the different in styles between two pieces of music?  
*Make a side-by-side drawing to illustrate two pieces.*



## **STEP 4. What can you find out about a piece of music ?**

**Can you find out when this piece of music was composed?**

**Do you know anything about this time?**

**Does the piece of music tell us anything about this time or about how people lived then? What? How?**

**Does the piece tell us in any way about the lives of people at that time?**

**Does it tell us anything about politics/religion/belief/science at that time?**

*Can you draw an imaginary scene to represent this time and place?*

***Integration with the History and Science curricula.***

**Does the piece of music tell us anything about where it was composed?**

**What are the clues in the piece?**

**Can you find some information about this place?**

**Does the piece of music make you want to be in that place?**

*Draw a picture about this place.*

***Integration with the Geography curriculum.***

**Can you find some information about the composer who wrote this piece?**

**Can you find other examples of his/her music?**

**What type of music did the composer like to create? Why?**

**Did the composer create the piece to please him/herself or was it made for someone else in particular?**

*Can you find a drawing/picture/photo of the composer and draw your own portrait of him/her.*

**Music History.**

**Does the theme of the piece of music relate to any of the other arts areas?**

**Does it link to anything about visual art/drama/literature/poetry?**

**Does it make you think about anything in these areas?**

*Find a drawing or other piece of visual art that you feel relates to the music.*

**Linkage with other Arts curricula.**



**When listening to music being performed live, things to discuss might include:**

- **where a piece of music is being performed ( as part of a collection of work by the same composer, as part of a selection of work from the same era, as part of a collection representing a movement in music or as part of a collection of work on the same theme ). *Draw the venue.***
- **what information the venue provides the listener with through labels, captions, wall texts, guidebooks or catalogues – how does this information help us? *Design a poster for a venue to advertise a performance.***
- **the environment in which the work is being performed, the background against which it is performed and the presentation/staging/ lighting on the piece – how do all of these effect how we listen to a piece or indeed participate in the performance? *Design a stage setting.***