

# NSF Young Festival Critic Competition

## LESSON PLAN: Writing a Review of a Music Concert

Year 3&4



### AIMS

- ♪ To explore a new piece of music
- ♪ To understand how to write a concert review
- ♪ To develop descriptive writing skills

### OUTCOMES

- ♪ To identify and make links between different musical features and emotions
- ♪ To share personal opinion about a piece of music
- ♪ To be able to create descriptive sentences with confidence

### Resources:

- ♪ NSF Website
- ♪ Links to selected NSF 2024 performers videos (at the bottom of this lesson plan)
- ♪ Smartboard (or other audio/video capability)
- ♪ Year 3&4 Young Festival Critic Worksheets
- ♪ Pens and pencils



## Introduction

### What is a Concert Review?

Teacher shares with children that:

*“A concert review is a way of sharing your thoughts and feelings about a musical performance with other people”*

*“You can find examples of written concert reviews printed in newspapers and magazines and on websites. Video and multimedia reviews, which are often shared by artists, critics and influencers, can also be found online in blogs, vlogs, music forums and social media platforms”*

*“Concert reviews should share information about the performance you have experienced and your own personal opinions about how the performers brought the music to life. They should use descriptive language to try to bring the performance alive in your writing. Most concert reviews include a star rating to highlight the quality of the concert and a recommendation about whether someone should consider going to another concert or listening to this ensemble again”.*

# Activity 1

## Guided Listening

Watch and listen to your chosen performance and ask the children to complete **Activity 1** on the worksheet.

Ask the students to answer this question while listening to your chosen performance as a class:

***“How does this musical performance make you feel, and why?”***

Share an example of a response that your children might give after they have listened to their chosen piece.

E.g. *“The performance made me feel happy because the speed (tempo) was really fast!”*

Teacher encourages children to think of other adjectives which could be used to replace the word ‘happy’. For example, ‘joyful’, ‘cheerful’...

The children can then sort the words in the adjective bank to fit under the correct headings, 'happy' or 'sad' and use these, and their own suggestions to offer their response to the class.



**EXTENSION:** More able children should be encouraged to give a reason for their choice of adjectives as part of their answer.

# Activity 2

## Listen Again...

Watch and listen again to your chosen performance and complete **Activity 2** on the worksheet.

Ask the children to think about this question:

***“What really stands out to you about the way the music is being performed?”***

Guide the children to really think about **HOW** the performers are sharing and communicating the music with the audience.

E.g. *“The players were smiling and enjoying themselves. They looked like they were having a lot of fun!”*

E.g. *“The percussion players played really loudly!”*



**EXTENSION:** More able children should be encouraged to include their opinion in their responses for example, *‘I Loved...’, ‘I was amazed by...’, ‘I was intrigued by...’*

# Activity 3

## Descriptive Writing

Ask the children to complete **Activity 3** on the worksheet by creating two different sentences that build upon a phrase (chosen by the class/teacher) which describes what they have seen and heard in the video performance.

E.g.

***The singer sang into the microphone.***

***“At the start of the song, the singer sang **soulfully** into the microphone”***

***“At the end of the concert, the singer sang **triumphantly** into the microphone”.***



# Writing a Concert Review

## A Template

Share an example of a concert review with the class to help guide them in writing their own review. They should include:

- ♪ **An Introduction** – When was the concert? Where was the concert? Who was performing? Why were they giving the concert? What was your overall impression of the concert?
- ♪ **A Description** – Share some details with the audience about what really stood out for you in the music and how the performers brought the music to life.

♪ **A Personal Opinion** – What was really successful in the performance? Were there any parts of the performance you thought could be improved?



♪ **A Final Recommendation** – Complete your star rating and let your audience know whether you recommend listening to this ensemble perform in the future.

E.g. EXEMPLAR

*“On Saturday night I heard a wonderful performance of Mozart’s Piano Sonata by the brilliant pianist Lang Lang. The concert was part of the Newbury Spring Festival and the concert was in a stunning dining room of an old, grand house. Some parts of the performance made me feel really calm and relaxed because the melodies were incredibly beautiful and the piano playing was really delicate. At other times I was blown away by the speed of the music. I was really impressed that Lang Lang played the long piece from memory without any mistakes! Sometimes, I felt like the playing could have been even louder and more powerful, especially in the faster parts. I would definitely recommend going to hear Lang Lang play if he is ever giving a concert near you, especially if it includes music by Mozart! 5 Stars.”*

## NSF Young Festival Critic Worksheet

### Year 3&4

**ACTIVITY 1** – Sort the adjectives below into the correct columns

Happy

Sad



**ST GABRIEL'S**  
NEWBURY

**Adjective Bank:** *jubilant, miserable, grumpy, cheerful, joyful, sombre, jolly, gleeful, melancholy, gloomy*

**ACTIVITY 2** – What stands out to you about the performance?

**ACTIVITY 3** – Create **two different** sentences which build upon the phrase your class has chosen to describe what you have seen and heard.

1. ....  
.....

2. ....  
.....



**A Concert Review by:**

**Concert Title and Date:**

