

# NSF Young Festival Critic Competition

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

Year 5&6



### AIMS

- ♪ To explore a new piece of unfamiliar music
- ♪ To understand how to write a concert review
- ♪ To develop reflective and creative writing skills

### OUTCOMES

- ♪ To identify and make links between different musical features and emotions
- ♪ To share and justify a personal opinion about a piece of music
- ♪ To use alliteration effectively in a short sentence

### Resources:

- ♪ NSF Website
- ♪ Links to selected NSF 2024 performers videos (at the bottom of this lesson plan)
- ♪ Smartboard (or other audio/video capability)
- ♪ Year 5&6 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.”*

*It is important that a concert review is informative and persuasive and that you justify your opinions about how the performers brought the music to life with clear and specific reasons for your reaction. Most concert reviews include a star rating to highlight the quality of the concert and a recommendation about whether their audience should consider going to another concert or listening to this ensemble again”.*

# Activity 1

## Analysing a Music Review

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 calm and relaxed because the violin players played their quiet (piano) sounds so softly”*

The children can circle the emotions they feel when listening to the music, add new words if they are able, and give a reason for their choice based on how the musicians have performed.

**EXTENSION:** More able children should be encouraged to use musical vocabulary in their responses (see glossary).

# 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. *“I loved the way that the players were smiling and communicating with each other. They looked like they were having a lot of fun!”*

E.g. *“The percussion players put a lot of effort into the loud (forte) crashes in the instruments!”*

**EXTENSION:** More able children could be encouraged to use similes and metaphors in their descriptions of how the musicians have performed.

# Activity 3



## Descriptive Writing – Alliteration

Guide the children to complete **Activity 3** on the worksheet by creating three alliterative phrases to describe what they have seen and heard in the video performance.

E.g.

1. *The smooth, soft string sounds.*
2. *The masterful musicians.*
3. *The deafening drums.*

# 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

*Last Friday night I was treated to a spectacular musical performance as part of the Newbury Spring Festival. The performers were a group of singers called Voces8 and they were singing incredibly beautiful music by a range of different composers from the Renaissance times right up to pop songs from today. I was impressed by how the group were able to change their sound and singing style to make each new piece sound fresh but thought the older repertoire was better suited to the venue. My favourite piece in the performance was 'The Deer's Cry' by Arvo Part. I thought the music was mesmerising and the singers were incredibly focussed, almost like they were meditating. There were scary silences at the start of the piece which built up from a soft piano to a rich and powerful forte at the climax. It was like they were taking me on a musical journey and back again to silence and I was truly transported to a new musical world for a few minutes. I definitely recommend that anyone who*

can go to hear a Voces8 concert buys a ticket as soon as possible. In the meantime, I can't wait to explore more of their recordings online. 4 Stars



## NSF Young Festival Critic Worksheet

### Year 5&6

**ACTIVITY 1** – Circle the words which match your emotions when you listen to the performance

calm

energised

thoughtful

cheerful

joyful

sad

hopeful

**EXTENSION** – You may want to add your own choice of emotions here:

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

**ACTIVITY 3** – Create a short phrase using **alliteration** to describe what you have seen and heard in the performance

1. ....

2. ....

