

Listening and Responding to Music

Question Cards: Second Level

Use these questions to explore a variety
of different styles of music

Before Listening

(Optional - you may want to listen to the music first.)

Before you listen to the music, look at the name and/or a picture of the performer / group / composer:

- Have you heard music by this singer/group/composer before?
- What type of voices/instruments do you think you will hear?
- What can you predict about the style of the music?

Look at the title of the music:

- What can you predict about how the music will sound?
- Where in the world do you think this music is from?
- Do you think you will like this piece of music? Why/why not?

Thoughts and Feelings

- How does the music make you feel?
- What did you think about as you listened to the music? Did you imagine a colour, picture or a story in your head?
- What words could you use to describe the mood of the music?
- Have you heard any music which sounds like this before?
- What did the music remind you of?
- What did you notice about the music?
- Does the mood of the music stay the same all the way through? If it changed, how did it change?
- What do you like or dislike about the music and why?
- If you were writing the script for a movie using this music, what would the movie be about?

Instruments and Voices

- Did you hear any instruments?
- Were there lots of instruments, just a few or only one? (Is it a soloist or a group, e.g. an orchestra, a band, a chamber group?)
- Can you name any of the instruments? How are they played?
- Did you hear any voices? Were they male/female/children's voices?
- Were there lots of voices, just a few or only one? (Choir/soloist?)
- Did you hear any voices/instruments that were very high or very low pitched?
- Is there a main instrument or voice that plays/sings the melody?

Tempo and Dynamics

(speed and volume)

- Was the music fast (allegro) or slow (andante), or somewhere in between (moderato)?
- Did the tempo change? Was there an accelerando (getting faster) or a ritardando (getting slower)?
- Was the music loud (forte) or quiet (piano)?
- Did the dynamics change? Was there a crescendo (getting louder) or diminuendo (getting softer)?

Beat, Rhythm and Melody

- Does the music have a strong beat? Can you tap the beat on your knees or play it on a percussion instrument?
- Are there any repeated rhythms? Can you tap a rhythm you hear?
- Can you make up another rhythm that fits with the music and play along?
- Is there a main instrument or voice that plays/sings the melody?
- Can you sing or hum part of the melody?
- Can you work out part of melody on a xylophone or chime bars?
- Do the instruments and/or voices play/sing longer, sustained legato (smooth) notes or more staccato (short and detached) notes?

Structure and Texture

- Is there more than one section? How does the music change in each section?
- Was there a repeat of any section? If it is a song, are there verses and a chorus?
- Was it binary form (A-B)?
- Was it ternary form (A-B-A) (also known as sandwich form)?
- Can you make up movements to match different sections of the music?
- Is there a main instrument or voice that plays/sings the melody?
- Is there an accompaniment (instruments/voices in the background which support the main melody)?
- Are the instruments/voices playing in unison (all play the same thing at the same time) or are there different pitches and/or rhythms being played/sung together?