



Lesson Plans: Listening & Responding to *Eye of the Hawk*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers can help students comprehend and respond to various elements and components that make up *Eye of the Hawk* before introducing the piece as well as when bands are working on it. Here are two approaches to use when introducing and working on the piece with your ensemble.

1. Listen before Learning: Students follow a “map” of the music while listening and note the musical landmarks. This helps them construct a mental framework for perceiving the whole composition.
2. Listen while Learning: As they learn *Eye of the Hawk*, students can return to the recording, listen again to the whole work, and then create/invent/apply (both musical and non-musical descriptive words) to describe their impressions of the various sections of the music. This activity will help students to interpret and translate the music on a personal level.

OVERVIEW LESSON #1

Listen Before Learning: After the teachers opens the lesson with a short listening challenge, students follow one of the two “maps” along with the music to identify key sections and landmarks.

LEARNING GOAL

BEFORE seeing the score or parts, students will note musical details and structure by listening and following an outline or map of the piece.

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- Paper or electronic copies of student [Listening Map](#) or the Listening Map from the Teacher’s Guide
- [Recording of Eye of the Hawk](#) (click link to download or email BandQuest@composersforum.org for a free Catalog CD)
- Pencils

PROCESS

1. Introduce the title of their new band piece and play mm. 1 through 11 to focus attention and interest.
 - Ask students to describe the sounds and instruments they notice, and speculate about what mood the music conveys.
 - Listen again.
2. Display or distribute copies of the student map. Direct students to scan the page and describe what they notice about the map with some details. What drew their attention?
3. Read the descriptions of selected sections of the map.

4. Listen to all of *Eye of the Hawk* and challenge students to stay on track as they follow the map along with the recording. As they listen, they can circle or check details they noticed. After listening, discuss the musical details that drew their attention. Listen a second time.

ASSESSMENT

Ask students to listen and keep track of where they think they are in the piece by moving a pencil point or other marker along the map as the music plays. Observe their ability to track where they are in the piece as it unfolds.

EXTENSION

Both versions of the listening maps highlight the music vocabulary students will use as they rehearse and perform *Eye of the Hawk*. Assign a related homework project directing students to find and write definitions for the bolded/underlined terms.

OVERVIEW LESSON #2

Listening while Learning: Writing Musical Impressions

This lesson is intended as a response activity for students who are currently rehearsing the piece. As they learn more about *Eye of the Hawk*, encourage them to think about the many ways writers describe music in program notes, blogs, websites, newspaper reviews, and in arts and music sections of popular magazines. Focus on the use of descriptive and figurative language. The students will then create descriptive phrases for key sections of the music using language that invites others to read their descriptions. Because of the interdisciplinary connections to language arts, consider partnering with the Language Arts teachers in your school for this lesson.

LEARNING GOAL

Using the musical evidence they hear plus their imaginations, students will use describe their own ‘musical impressions’ of the piece using descriptive, figurative language.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- [Recording of Eye of the Hawk](#) (click link to download or email BandQuest@composersforum.org for a free Catalog CD)
- Paper or electronic copies of student [Listening Map](#) or the Listening Map from the Teacher’s Guide
- *Eye of the Hawk* Program notes by Susan Botti
- Paper or electronic copies of examples of figurative language used in articles about music ([There are examples included in the Teacher Resource](#))
- Writing materials
- *In Your Own Words* Writing Assignment sheet

PROCESS

Decide if this is a homework assignment, or an in-class lesson. Determine if you will use one or both of the Listening Maps as examples of the use of figurative language to describe *Eye of the Hawk*.

1. Ask students to describe the term 'figurative language.' Use the definition here to help them recall what they know. Display the examples included in this lesson to help them focus on the main idea of using figurative language to describe music.
2. Divide into partners. As they listen to the recording, ask them to follow the map, note the figurative language used in addition to the technical musical terms, and individually circle words/phrases of interest.
 - After listening, students will discuss what they noticed and liked with their partner.
 - Ask students to share a few examples around the room.
3. Tell students that the writer who wrote about *Eye of the Hawk* could have used many other similes, metaphors, and examples of figurative language to appeal to a listener's senses and imagination. Their assignment is to work together to write interesting descriptive words and phrases to create an alternative, colorful description of the music. They will use the work sheet to document their ideas.
4. Reconvene as a class and ask for volunteers to read some of their descriptions aloud, linking them to specific sections of the music. Post the written work on the board.
5. Their work can be used for the Write Your Own Program Notes lesson found in the Interdisciplinary Lessons folder of this curriculum.

Figurative Language

Figurative language is the use of words that appeal to the senses and go beyond their actual meaning. They help readers and listeners gain new insights into the objects or subjects in the work. Similes, metaphors, hyperbole, personification, symbolism, alliteration, onomatopoeia, and idiom are all examples of figurative language. Those who write about music – a very intangible thing – like to use figurative language to help listeners connect with musical works.

EXTENSIONS

- Display student writing in the classroom, or at a concert that includes *Eye of the Hawk*. Or print selected phrases in your program.
- Assign students the task of writing a descriptive paragraph about another musical work from the band repertoire, one of their choosing. Or write a descriptive paragraph about a well-known work by a significant composer.
- Ask students to select a piece of music in their favorite genre or artist and challenge them to use their musical vocabulary plus descriptive language to write about the music.

ASSESSMENT

The students' written work provides evidence of students understanding and ability to describe and analyze musical elements and characteristics as well ask their skill in responding to and interpreting a musical work through text. Assess their work by applying existing class/course rubrics in these areas.

TEACHER RESOURCE:

EXAMPLES OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE USED BY MUSIC WRITERS

Examples to use when helping students understand the concept of writing about music with figurative language.

Dreams of Rain by Alan Fletcher

*"The new work on the opening concert was "Dreams of Rain," a piano trio by Alan Fletcher... (who) said the music was inspired by climate change and its consequences...As the title suggests, the work is a response to the drought, not a depiction of it, and indeed, "Dreams of Rain" opens with an **explosive** chord, followed by rapid, repeating **violin arpeggios that suggest the longed-for rain**, rather than the drought. Those arpeggios crop up throughout the piece, in the piano and cello lines as well, surrounding more **introspective and appealingly tactile passages** that evoke anticipation and, at times, tension. The work's ending is oddly inconclusive, but **dreams** often are..."¹*

Piano Concerto No. 5 by Ludwig Von Beethoven

In program notes for a San Francisco Symphony Orchestra performance of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5, "The Emperor," the eminent music writer, Michael Steinberg, described the opening:

*"Beethoven...introduces the piano sooner than an audience of 200 years ago expected to hear it—and not with a lyric or thematic statement, but in a series of flourishes. The orchestra offers three sonorous chords, the piano responding to each with **fountains and cascades of broken chords, trills, and scales**. Each of the three **"fountains"** produces new pianistic possibilities..."²*

Fanfare Ritmico by Jennifer Higdon

*"**Surging, clipped passages punctuate, intersect and overlap** each other in this five-minute work, which, as its title suggests, is infused with a propulsive rhythmic drive fueled by the piano and an array of drums."*

—Denver Post³

¹ Review by Allan Kozinn in the Portland Press Herald, <http://www.pressherald.com/2015/08/16/concert-review-classics-new-works-create-compelling-mix-for-portland-chamber-music-festival/>

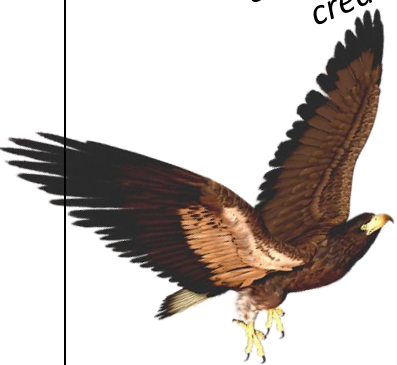
² <http://www.sfsymphony.org/Watch-Listen-Learn/Read-Program-Notes/Program-Notes/BEETHOVEN-Concerto-No-5-in-E-flat-major-for-Piano.aspx>

³ Quoted on Jennifer Higdon's website, <http://jenniferhigdon.com/orchestralreviews.html#fanfareritmico>

OPENING

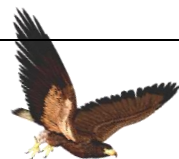
- Wind chimes break the silence with magical ringing & jingling.
- Cabasas & shakers play a steady pulse.
- A bass drum leaps in from out of nowhere with a drum roll that increases-then decreases in intensity.
- Drums erupt into a rhythmic fanfare.
- Anticipation builds when the music blossoms into a crescendo. The band plays an enthusiastic upward melody.

The music is not a picture of the hawk, but instead expresses the emotions of the creature.



Eye of the Hawk Listening Map

Imagine the world as observed through the eyes of the hawk...



SOARING

The hawk "owns the air" as it drifts and rides the air currents.

- After the reaching melody, flutes, clarinets, & vibraphone play rippling, fluttering notes, choosing their own tempo, tones, & order. This is the first **aleatoric** passage in the piece.
- Other instruments play sustained long tones.
- In the slow section changing pitches move upward from low brass and woodwinds, through middle voices & into the upper winds – building layers of texture like paint on a canvas. While upper woodwinds hold their top notes at full **ff**, saxophones & vibraphones play another aleatoric passage in a fast tempo.
- A transition unfolds, almost like a church hymn with chorale chords & a moving bass-line. A simple melody flows from high to low instruments, ending with a timpani roll connecting to the next section.

SEARCHING

The hawk surveys the landscape & finds its prey.

- The mood changes as percussion swings into a funk **groove**.
- A lyrical melody flows over the groove & vibraphone & woodwinds play another fluttering, rippling passage – like swirling wind.
- The lyrical melody continues with a thicker texture. Low bass clarinets play the ripples.
- The trumpet takes over the melody & the music grows more intense. Both the volume & the passion escalate.
- Drama takes center stage with faster moving rhythms & dynamics. They signal the approaching musical crest – the adrenaline flows.
- A climax is reached as **LOUD** 16th notes in lower instruments are answered by strong accented chords in the higher instruments. A loud trill and an upward thrusting **fff** notes signal that the hawk finds its prey.
- At the top of the passage, wind players 'bend' the pitch, dynamics retreat, and the hawk moves on.



SEARCHING AGAIN

The hawk takes to the sky.

- Music returns to the funk groove & the lyrical melody. Dynamics soften.
- The fluttering, rippling section appears as the hawk again searches the earth below.
- Final measures evaporate quietly into the distance with gently resonating tam tam.



