

See What I Hear

This exercise demonstrates relationships between music and colour, emotion and imagery. Students will listen to different passages of music and visually depict what they hear.

Objective:

- Understand how music and visual arts can communicate and represent similar events, scenes, emotions, or ideas.

Curriculum:

- Music and Art.

Classroom Materials:

- Laurentien® coloured pencils, musical recordings and audio equipment.

The Lesson:

Discuss generally the principles of design in music (unity, variety, repetition, emphasis, pattern). Explain that students will now be using principles of design and elements of visual arts (line, colour, texture, space) to convey the expressions of different pieces of music. For example, classical music might inspire a student to draw soft blue and green waves or a romantic scene; while a rap song may result in a pattern of bold shapes and colours. Go over different visual elements and the kinds of emotions they elicit; for example, what emotions are expressed by different colours?, by different kinds of lines? As a class, experiment with different shapes; fill and/or decorate them in various colours to compare the different feelings they convey.

You may wish to duplicate the next page and distribute it to students, or use blank drawing paper for this activity.

Play two or four short musical selections for students, giving them time to reflect on what they hear and to visually convey with Laurentien® coloured pencils what is expressed in the music. On the lines provided on the next sheet, they can write down the names of the pieces and any notes they may have. While listening to the music, they can begin to work on their drawings, expressing the emotions and images elicited by what they hear. You may wish to play the selections more than once. Students can then present their interpretive drawings to the class, and discuss similarities and differences among the drawings.

As a follow-up activity, students can write some reflections on music videos or CD cover designs: how are colour and form used to represent a particular song or CD? How do you feel about the video director's/CD designer's use of visual elements?

Musical Suggestions:

"Gettin' Jiggy Wit It," Will Smith; Theme from "Superman," John Williams; "Walter Music," G.F. Handel; "Fanfare for the Common Man," Aaron Copland; "Rhapsody in Blue," George Gershwin; "Somewhere" from "West Side Story," Leonard Bernstein; "In A Sentimental Mood," Duke Ellington/John Coltrane; "Geronimo's Laughter," Cusco; "Orinoco Flow," Enya.

See What I Hear

Grades 7-8
Art and Music