



LISTENING GUIDE

“I WON’T BACK DOWN” BY TOM PETTY

Meets National Core Arts Standards 5, 7, 9, and 11

OBJECTIVES

- Develop and refine artistic work for presentation (Pr5)
- Perceive and analyze artistic work (Re7)
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work (Re9)
- Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding (Cn11)

MATERIALS

- Music Alive! magazines (Vol.39 No.4)
- Computer or mobile device with Internet access

START

Ask your students to read “Listening Guide” on pages 18-19.

DEVELOP

PLAY “IWon’t Back Down” by Tom Petty (Hear the Music track 2 on musicalive.com) while having the students follow along with the timeline.

2. Ask students about the song

What instruments do you hear in the intro?

In the intro, are there long notes, short notes, or both?

How would you describe the tone of Petty’s voice?

What is this song about?

What do the lyrics make you think of?

Does the instrumentation ever change?

What changes during the chorus?

How does this song make you feel?

Do you like the song? Why or why not?

3. Ask students about the story behind the song

What influenced Petty to write “IWon’t Back Down?”

What was the name of the band he was in before The Heartbreakers?

What is the name of Petty’s first solo album?

What is a memory Petty has of the day he recorded “IWon’t Back Down?”

What is the message of the song and on what kinds of occasions is it typically played?

CLOSE

Listen to the song again, have students count how many times they hear the words “won’t back down” occur throughout the entire song (21 times).

Why is a song that repeats the same phrase so many times so impactful?

Do you think a song that repeated some other phrase 21 times could’ve had the same success, or is there something special about the words and meaning behind “I won’t back down?” What do those words mean to you? What do you think of when you hear them?

Come up with some other short yet meaningful phrases that you could write a song about.

ASSESS

Did the students follow along with the Listening Guide?

Did they listen to the song using the timeline?

Did they answer the supplemental questions?

QUIZ ANSWERS

This month’s quizzes are available at musicalive.com/the-quiz-zone-39-4. Here are the quiz answers:

AMERICAN FOLK

1. Folklore: the traditional beliefs and customs of a community; Volk: German word meaning “the people as a whole”

2. In the slave fields in the south, when workers would sing renditions of spirituals

3. Bluegrass, country, gospel, blues

4. The hopes, sorrows and convictions of working-class America

5. “This Land Is Your Land”

6. The 1960s

7. Bob Dylan was known for pioneering the sound of modern folk, his songwriting skills, and playing the electric guitar during the 1965 Folk Festival

8. The 1990s

9. Jazz and classical

10. Beyoncé writes and performs songs about social justice, pride and community, which were the building blocks of traditional folk music in the south

4. Arrangement describes how the song is structured, orchestration is about which instruments are used and which notes they play

5. A microphone, a computer or cell phone, a DAW

6. Reverb, sound effects, loops, digital instrument sounds

7. Mixing is when an engineer manipulates the sound levels of each track in the project

8. Mastering happens after mixing, to make sure each track is the correct volume and in the proper format

9. Work with an aggregator or distribution service

10. No. Some songs take different paths

LUKE COMBS

1. 2014

2. He was told his songs “weren’t good enough”

3. Classic country, southern-fried soul and a hint of modern R&B

4. He dedicates all of his time to the music instead of flashy performances

5. The Way She Rides

6. Shania Twain

7. Best New Artist

8. Eric Church

9. “She Got The Best of Me,” “Beautiful Crazy,” “Can I Get An Outlaw,” “Hurricane”

10. Subjective

A SONG IS BORN

1. Songwriting, Arrangement/Orchestration, Production/Recording, Mixing, Mastering, Distribution

2. iZotope is an American audio technology company that develops and manufactures music creation hardware and software

3. Remember a meaningful event or a strong emotion, experiment with weird sounds and rhythms