



LISTENING GUIDE

“TAKE ON ME” BY A-HA

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.6)
- Computer or mobile device with Internet access

START

Ask your students to read “Listening Guide” on pages 20-21.

DEVELOP

Play “Take On Me” by A-ha (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?

Is the tempo fast or slow?

What genre is the song? How do you know?

What is this song about?

What is unique about Harket’s voice?

What changes during the chorus?

What changes during the bridge?

How does this song make you feel?

Do you like the song? Why or why not?

3. Ask students about A-ha and the story behind the song

How many band members are there in A-ha?

How many times was the song released and which release was the most successful?

What changed about the third release that took the song to a new level?

At what award show did the music video win six trophies?

What major milestone did the song and music video hit this February?

CLOSE

Play the original music video to “Take On Me,” which featured the original recording and was created in 1984. Then play the remake, released in 1985. Many believe the release of the new music video was the reason for the song’s enormous subsequent success.

Original video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liq-seNVvrM>

Remake:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djV11Xbc914>

What are the biggest differences between the two videos? What are the biggest differences between the two recordings? Do you believe the second one is better and deserves all of the hype? What’s so good about it? (Remember, this aired in the 80s, when computers and video recording and editing technology were much less advanced). Would you be impressed if this video was released today? What about the song itself?

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-39-6. Here are the quiz answers:

GOOD VIBRATIONS:

A LOOK INSIDE THE PIANO

- 1) One string.
- 2) Dulcimer and harpsichord.
- 3) Two or three, depending on the style.
- 4) The black keys.
- 5) Horizontally.
- 6) It is the structure that holds everything together.
- 7) Over 200.
- 8) The copper wire adds mass to the strings, which slows the vibration and helps to create lower pitches.
- 9) To stop the string from vibrating.
- 10) A hammer hitting a string.

FINNEAS

- 1) He is her older brother.
- 2) Finneas started writing music for himself at age 12, but when Billie was old enough they both began writing songs for her instead.
- 3) He released his first solo single in 2016.
- 4) Songwriter.
- 5) How to apologize, even when it’s hard.
- 6) He tries to recreate his relationship with Billie by getting to know them as much as possible in their limited time together.
- 7) Five.
- 8) Selena Gomez and Camila Cabello.
- 9) He and Billie released the theme song for the new James Bond movie, “No Time to Die.”
- 10) Subjective.