



LISTENING GUIDE

“FIRE AND RAIN” BY JAMES TAYLOR

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.40 No.4)
- Computer or mobile device with Internet access

START

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

DEVELOP

- Play “Fire and Rain” by James Taylor (*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 adjectives would you use to describe this song?**
- What is unique about Taylor’s voice?**
- How does this song make you feel?**
- Do you like the song? Why or why not?**

3. Ask students about James Taylor and the story behind the song

- Ask students if anyone can describe the nature of the song. When it was first released, how did “Fire and Rain” rank on the charts?**
- What inspired Taylor to write “Fire and Rain?”**
- Who was a source of inspiration for Taylor?**
- What band was he a part of that was inspiration for the third verse?**
- Why is music an important outlet to express feelings?**

CLOSE

As a class, watch the official lyric video for “Fire and Rain.”

This video shows an acoustic solo performance of Taylor performing “Fire and Rain” in 1970.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEBIaMOmKV4>

Discuss Taylor’s motivation behind writing the song and how powerful music can be in expressing emotions. The goal is to get students thinking and talking about changes they want to see in themselves, expression of emotion, and any social emotional element you see fit for your classroom makeup.

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?**

WORD SEARCH SOLUTION

Word search is located on page 8

