

MUSIC TO EVOKE REACTION*

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1 ARTS AND CULTURE

2 Grade 9

3 CRITICAL AND CREATIVE REFLECTION

4 Module 12

5 MUSIC TO EVOKE REACTION

MUSIC

6 Activity 1:

7 To analyse how music can be used to evoke reaction

8 [LO 2.3, 2.10]

Can you imagine a film without sound? Almost impossible, as it is the music which causes you to shed a tear or makes you want to dance!

In this module we are going to take a closer look to determine how music is used in films to evoke a response from the viewer. It is the task of the writer to provide a suitable story for the script. The composer's responsibility is to create suitable music.

As introductory background, we shall first take a closer look at the development of films, to determine the function of music. Bear in mind the research done in Learning Module 1 (Dance).

Research on the development of the cinematographic film

The learners are divided into five groups: each group researches ONE of the following periods with regard to technology, genres, music and examples of films.

This research will give you a broad perspective and need not be done in great detail. The educator will advise you. After having a class discussion on the different periods, paste the information into your journal.

- THE SILENT PERIOD (1900 – 1930)
- THE GOLDEN PERIOD (1930 – 1960)
- THE SIXTIES (1960 – 1970)
- FROM THE SEVENTIES TO THE PRESENT (1970 –)
- ANIMATION AND CARTOONS

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How music is used to gain reaction

As you have been able to deduce from the discussion, music forms an essential element of any film. Initially music was just accompaniment for a visual product during the period of the silent films (to muffle the sound of reels being changed), but today it is an essential part of the entertainment.

Music increases the viewer's emotional reaction to the film.

- Creates atmosphere (romance or tension)
- Intensifies intrigue (sad or melancholic music)
- Intensifies action (agitated music)

Serves as advertisement and a source of income.

Step 1

To determine whether the members of your class consider film music to be important, each learner should complete the following questionnaire individually, by circling the correct answer.

After completion the answers can be discussed and opinions can be compared.

Do you buy any CD's with film music?	No	Yes	Often
What made you decide to buy the CD? the film, artist or both?	Film	Artist	Both
Do you enjoy listening to all the tracks on the CD or only a few?	All	Few	Just one
Do you experience any emotion while listening to specific tracks?	Yes	No	Sometimes
How well do you remember the scenes from the film which are enhanced by the music?	Very clearly	Relatively well	Vaguely
Do you think the film marketed the artist in this manner, or would you say that the film is popular owing to the popularity of the artist?	Film	Artist	Both

Table 1

Step 2

Conduct a survey of the most popular film music in your class.

List the films 1 to 5 and state the genre of each film e.g. drama, horror, romance, science fiction, etc. Why are these films the most popular? Discuss.

	Film	Genre
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Table 2

Step 3

* Catastrophic	** Average	*** Good	**** Excellent	***** A masterpiece
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Table 3

As a music critic for a FILM MUSIC COLUMN, rate and review the music of the film according to the above scale.

- This activity can be done individually or in groups.
- Choose a film of your own choice, **or**

Choose a film from a period given to you by the educator.

- Write a review of the music of the whole film or of a specific scene.
- Analyse how the music in the film (or scene) is used to gain reaction from the viewer.
- Use the given music elements and composition techniques as guidelines - not necessarily all of them.
- Your educator will advise you.
- For ideas for the layout or form of your interview, look at magazines, newspapers or the Internet.
- Paste the review into your learner journal.

Music-Elements

1. **Style and genre** (*zjaan'-re*)

- Which type of music is used? (Classic, Rock, Avant-garde, Church Music, Blues, Jazz, African, Gospel, etc.)
- Does it suit the genre of the film e.g. action, drama, adventure, science-fiction, fantasy, war, western, etc.?

2. **Theme, melody**

- Are there any main themes?
- Are they linked to specific characters (events and situations)?

3. **Rhythm and tempo**

- Is the music fast or slow? Is there a characteristic rhythmic pattern?

4. **Harmony and key**

- Is the music tonal? (in a major or minor key) or atonal (no key, e.g. notes in any order)?

5. Instrumentation and orchestration

- Instrumentation: Is the music vocal or instrumental? Is it electronic music? Which instruments are used for specific characters and situations? Orchestration: How are the instruments combined?

6. Texture

- Describe the texture: dense, thin, coarse, smooth, busy, sharp, raucous, silky, stark, velvety, tangled, etc.

7. Timbre (*Tam'bre*)

- Describe the colour of the sound: warm, cold, eerie, resounding, jingling, bright, piercing, echoey, muffled, metallic, etc.

8. Dynamics and expression

- Describe the intensity of the sound: hard or soft; happy or sad; etc.

9. Form

- Are there any specific structures used? AB, ABA, verse and refrain, etc.

10. Some compositional techniques

- Which techniques are used?
- Examples of techniques are repetition, imitation, syncopation, transformation, etc.

Step 4

- Have a class discussion and share your analysis with the other learners. Use a video or CD recording of the film as reference.

Reflection

Think about and reflect on your research, analysis and presentation and answer the following questions :

1. Which aids meant the most to you during your research?
2. Was the information which you found accurate and informative? Why / Why not?
3. Did this approach help you to improve your understanding of the aim, function and development of film music?

9 Assessment

Learning Outcome(LOs)
<i>continued on next page</i>

LO 2
REFLECTIONThe learner will be able to reflect critically and creatively on artistic and cultural processes, product and styles in past and present contexts.
Assessment Standards(ASe)
We know this when the learner:
COMPOSITE
2.3 analyses how cultures affect one another and undergo change;
2.4 discusses the role of technology over time in shaping processes and products in drama, dance, music and art;
2.5 discusses and interprets concepts of power, control and dominance in mass media and popular culture;
MUSIC
2.10 analyses how music is used in songs, rituals, public events, films, opera or advertisements to evoke response;

Table 4