

How to Put On a Great Performance

Grade Level: Grades 6-12

Objective: Students will analyze and compare influential musical performances from across history and use this knowledge to create their tier list of musical performances..

Vocabulary: Beat, Rhythm, Rhythm Section, Tempo, Groove, Melody, Harmony, Rhythm, “The Pocket”, Chords, ‘Comps’, Subdivision, Metronome

Presentation Slides:
[Great Musical Performances](#)

Project Expectations:
[Tier List Critique Toolkit](#)

Assessments:
[Performance Critique Rubric](#)

National Core Arts Standards:

Creating

1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
3. Refine and complete artistic work.

Performing / Presenting / Producing

4. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Responding

7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.
8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

Connecting

10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context.



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Activities:

ONE: Anatomy of a Band

- Use the “Anatomy of a Band” tool in the [Build A Band App](#) to explore the primary instruments that create the rhythm section of a band.
- **Reflection Questions:**
 - What instruments can you identify (guitar, bass, keyboard, drums), and what role does each play in a groove?
 - These 4 instruments are called the rhythm section of a band. Are they all playing the same thing? How are their parts similar or different?
 - Which instruments have more active parts? Which instruments have more supportive or “back-up” roles?

TWO: Find the Pocket

- Students will be assigned into 4 groups to create a 4 beat rhythmic/melodic pattern (Ostinatos) for their instrument part (guitar, bass, piano, drums) using voice, body percussion or instruments (hand percussion or actual instrument). *If using pitched instruments set a key for the compositions
- Students will practice performing their ostinatos as a rhythm section while the teacher “conducts” the ensemble.
- **Reflection Questions:**
 - How did your ostinato represent your instrument’s role in the rhythm section?
 - What do we need to do in order to keep our rhythm section in time?
- Utilize a [Metronome](#) to support ensemble playing in tempo/“Find the Pocket”.
- **Reflection Questions:**
 - How did the metronome help you “Find the Pocket”?
 - How do you listen while playing your part?
 - Was there a particular instrumental part that helped you stay in the pocket?
- Use the “Find the Pocket” tool in the [Build A Band App](#) to explore each instruments role in the band to “Find the Pocket” for a great performance
- **Reflection Questions:**
 - How did you move each instrument to find the perfect groove?
 - What were you doing to an instrument’s performance when moving the slider?
 - Were the instruments playing noticeable behind or ahead of the beat to you?
 - What does it mean to “Find the Pocket” and how do you think you can find it when performing with an ensemble?

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Activities:

THREE: Influential Musical Performances

- Watch clips from influential performances after providing context for their impact.
- **Reflection Questions:**
 - What are some of the ways a live performance can make an impact? Social, Historical, Musical, Emotional, etc.
 - What about the performance was impactful to you?
 - Which performance resonated the most with you? Why?
 - What elements of the music were most influential for your decision?
 - What words would you use to describe the performance?
 - Did the performers “Find the Pocket?” How do you know?

FOUR: Tier List Critique Project

- Share [Tier List Video Example](#)
- Model the process of creating a Tier List in [TierMaker](#).
- Utilize and provide [this video](#) to students as a resource.
- Students should choose 5 of their own tiers and criteria for ranking to rank 5 their top 5 live performances, which can include but is not limited those already shared with the class
- Standards tiers are defined below, but students are not required to use these:
 - **S Tier (Supreme or God Tier)** - The highest possible ranking.
 - **A Tier (Excellent or Top Tier)** - Very high ranking, but slightly below S Tier.
 - **B Tier (Good or Mid-High Tier)** - Solid and dependable, but not exceptional.
 - **C Tier (Average or Mid Tier)** - Mediocre ranking.
 - **D Tier (Below Average or Low Tier)** - Below-average performance.
 - **F Tier (Failure or Trash Tier)** - The lowest possible ranking.
- Use [Tier List Critique Toolkit](#) to complete all project expectations before filming.

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Activities:

- Teach students **How to Screen Record (DI)**:
 - Model the process of simultaneously recording the screen and webcam to create the Tier List video. *This function can be done directly on a chromebook with no need to utilize additional software!
 - **For Chromebook Users:** Utilize this and provide [this video](#) to students as a resource. Note that students should make sure that the “webcam” and “record audio” settings are toggled on!
 - **For Mac Users:** Utilize [this video](#) to learn how to screen record on a mac.
 - **For Windows Users:** Utilize [this video](#) to learn how to screen record on a PC.
 - **Alternative Options:** Students can use one device to record from the webcam and simply show the partner’s device on screen where they can show the TierMaker and play any audio excerpts.

In modeling the video recording process, utilize the model script from the previous lesson to show students how to bring their script to life in their video.

Highlight the video project criteria in the [Project Rubric](#) as well as in the video checklist in the [Toolkit](#) as seen below:

- Video Checklist:
 - My video is at least 3 minutes long
 - The audience can hear my commentary on every performance
 - The audience can see the Tier List
 - The audience can see me
 - The audience can hear/see excerpts from the performance I am reviewing

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Influential Musical Performances by Date:

1. [Igor Stravinsky's The Rite of Spring Premiere](#)

- Paris, 1913
- This performance started a riot and revolutionized modern dance and music.
- [The ballet that incited a riot by TED-Ed](#)

2. [Marian Anderson performs at Lincoln Memorial](#)

- Washington D.C, 1939
- This groundbreaking performance of a Black woman to a segregated crowd at the Lincoln memorial was a public rejection of segregation that foreshadowed the Civil Rights Movement by more than 20 years.

3. [The Beatles' Rooftop Concert](#)

- London, 1969
- The Beatles' final live performance marks the end of an era and showcases their energy and cultural impact.

4. [Jimi Hendrix performs the Star-Spangled Banner at Woodstock](#)

- Woodstock, 1969
- Symbolically transformed the national anthem into a song of protest.

5. [Michael Jackson's Billie Jean Motown 25 Performance](#)

- Televised 1983
- The debut of the moonwalk transformed dance in popular music.

6. [Queen's Live Aid Performance](#)

- London, 1985
- Created the blueprint for the modern day arena concerts and festivals with the uniting of over 72,000 fans.

7. [Leonard Bernstein conducts Beethoven's 9th Symphony](#)

- East Berlin, 1989
- Brought together musicians from across the world in celebration of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

8. [Selena performs at Houston Astrodome](#)

- Houston, 1995
- Catapulted Latin music into the American mainstream and inspired a generation of crossover artists.

9. [Beyoncé - Coachella \("Beychella"\)](#)

- California, 2018
- Barrier breaking performance by the first Black woman to headline Coachella.

10. [BTS performs Dynamite at the VMAs](#) (No complete video available of that performance)

- Televised, 2020
- First performance by an Asian group on the VMA main stage.