

Soundtracks for... Concert Review

by Mark McKergow

One simple and productive way to introduce music into your classroom is to close your lesson with a concert review

The idea of using a 'concert review' process to end a lesson is usually attributed to Bulgarian learning pioneer Dr Georgi Lozanov¹, who was noted for using readings over classical music as part of his 'suggestopaedia' method. The passive concert reading featured slow and relaxing music, often Baroque music by composers such as Albinoni and Pachelbel. (Lozanov's early work was carried out in the Eastern Bloc of the 1960s, where the range of recorded music available was very limited, particularly by the standards of today. No Chill-Out compilation CDs then!)

This practice was taken up by other practitioners including Colin Rose², who has included the method in his many publications. Concert review is to allow learners to review the content of your lessons for a few moments at the end, whilst slow, steady and relaxing music is played in the background.

There are several possible ways to do this:

- Ask the class to relax, perhaps closing their eyes, and listen to the music. The teacher then summarises the main points of the lesson or course so far, for perhaps three to five minutes. This version closely resembles Lozanov's method.
- Ask the class to review their notes and perhaps answer some questions in writing, while similar music is played. I often ask pupils to think about and list the three most important things to remember from the lesson, as well as things they would like to know more about. This can be less intimidating – for both teacher and learners.
- Play the same music while displaying key slides, diagrams, charts etc for everyone to look at and review. This could be the same slides etc used earlier in the lesson.

To find out more about using music in your classroom, read Mark's introductory article 'Scoring with Music' in Issue 5 of **TEX**. The other features in this series are:
Soundtracks for Welcoming – Issue 6
Soundtracks for Relaxing – Issue 7
Soundtracks for Energising – Issue 8
Soundtracks for Concentrating – Issue 9
Soundtracks for Visualising – Issue 10

What music should I choose?

Generally your chosen music should be something slow and steady (60 to 70 beats per minute). This signals a new phase of the lesson to your students and it also calms their heart rate, breathing and physiology – it may even affect their brain waves. This is all a marked shift from the usual hubbub and bubble of classwork, and helps to get everyone's attention. It also finishes the class on a relaxed and peaceful note.

My favourite pieces for concert reviews include:

- Pachelbel's famous Canon in D (part of the 'Lind Institute's Largo CD, and available in many versions)
- Tomaso Albinoni, Adagio from Oboe Concerto in D Minor, Op.9, No.2 (my own personal favourite, just the right length and pace, available on the Lind Institute's Classical Melodies CD)

This is the last article in this series. I do hope that these columns have helped you to choose your own music for the classroom. Consider the mood and feel you want to generate then imagine yourself as a film director, planning background music. What would you choose? Be bold, find some CDs and go for it! **TEX**

References

1. You can find more information about Dr Lozanov, including his recent writings, at <http://dr-lozanov.dir.bg>
2. Colin Rose, *Accelerated Learning*, Aston Clinton: Accelerated Learning Systems, 1985

Mark McKergow is a speaker, author and learning consultant. His website www.mckergow.com contains more information and research on music and learning, as well as links to CD, book and web sources.

