

Dancing In The Street

Listen and Appraise Step 4

Ain't No Mountain High Enough sung by Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell

You will see the tabs *Listening*, *Appraising*, *Extended Listening*, *Fast Facts* and *History* on the screen.

Listening

Play the song, find and move to the pulse. Use the on-screen questions (see below) as a focus. Talk about them after listening.

- How does the song make you feel?
- Does the song tell a story?
- What does the song make you think of?
- How old do you think this piece of music is?

Appraising

After listening to the song, answer the on-screen questions. Click 'Show answer' and an answer will appear! These questions are for all abilities. Encourage the use of correct musical language when responding.

- Did the tempo stay the same all the way through the song? *Yes, the tempo stayed the same.*
- In music, dynamics means how loud or quiet the music is. What are the dynamics in this song? *The dynamics build in the chorus and in the outro.*
- Can you identify the different instruments / voices that you heard? *Rhythm section (keyboard, drums, bass guitar, electric guitar, tambourine, celeste), string section, male lead vocal and female lead vocal. They sing a duet.*
- Did all the instruments and voices play or sing throughout the song? *No. The two lead vocals sing separately in the verses and in harmony together in the chorus. The string section are not always in the arrangement. The texture changes from the introduction to the verse and in the verse and chorus and bridge.*
- What is the style of this music? *This music is categorised as Soul but called Motown, a label that was created in 1960 by Berry Gordy in Detroit, USA.*

Here are some style indicators:

A rhythm section playing, laying down the groove with a funky bassline and a tambourine sounding over the top. You will often hear a brass section playing punchy riff-based rhythms and sometimes violins playing long high notes.

- How is the song put together?

The structure of the song:

Introduction

Verse 1

Chorus

Verse 2

Chorus

Bridge

Verse 3

Chorus

Outro

- Did you hear a riff, hook or a solo in this song?

The vocal hook is "Ain't no mountain high enough". The rhythm section play a riff all the way through the song. It stands out in the introduction. The string section play this too during the song.

- Did you like the song?

It doesn't matter if you like or don't like a song or a piece of music. Think about the reasons why you do or don't.

Extended Listening

This is an Extension Activity that can be used as necessary to challenge the more able (and inquisitive) members of the class/group. It requires a deeper understanding of musical terminology. Remember to use the keywords tab on the bottom right of the screen.

Extended Listening will take you through the song structure as the song is playing showing keywords on the screen that relate to each section of the song. Before, after or during listening, discuss what to listen out for and what to remember in relation to the keywords on the screen. All the information you need is in the grid on the following page.

Song Section	What to Listen For, What to Remember	Key Word Cloud (Onscreen Text)
Introduction	LISTEN OUT FOR: The short introduction with the male vocalist starting to sing at the end. The rhythm section riff with a celeste (a keyboard that sounds like a glockenspiel) playing over the top. The drums playing a pattern with sticks on the metal part/the rim of the drum rather than the skin.	Texture, Timbre, Rhythm Section, Riff Tempo, Structure
Verse 1	LISTEN OUT FOR: Male vocal joined by female, when 2 people sing together, it's called a duet. The timbre of the accompanying strings.	One Male and one Female Vocalist, Duet, Melody, Rhythm Section, String Section, Riff
Chorus	LISTEN OUT FOR: Both sing together in harmony, changing the timbre of the music. The texture of the music changes here as the drums start to play 'time' with a strong backbeat. All this increases the dynamics. Accompanying strings create a gorgeous timbre. "Ain't no mountain high enough" is the hook here.	Hook, Dynamics, Male and Female Vocalists, Harmony, Texture, Backbeat, Time, String Section
Verse 2	LISTEN OUT FOR: The drums stop playing 'time' so the texture changes back. The male and female vocalists sing separately again. The timbre of the accompanying strings.	Hook, Male and Female Vocals, Texture, String Section, Riff, Duet
Chorus	LISTEN OUT FOR: Both vocalists singing together in harmony, changing the timbre of the music. The texture of the music changes here as the drums start to play 'time' with a strong backbeat. All this increases the dynamics. Accompanying strings create a gorgeous timbre. "Ain't no mountain high enough" is the hook here.	Timbre, Harmony, Male and Female Vocals, Time, Backbeat, String Section, Hook
Bridge	LISTEN OUT FOR: The different melody line that builds into the verse.	Dynamics, Structure
Verse 3	LISTEN OUT FOR: The drums stop playing 'time' so the texture changes back. The male and female vocalists sing separately again. The timbre of the accompanying strings.	One Male and one Female Vocalist, Duet, Melody, Rhythm Section, String Section, Riff
Chorus	LISTEN OUT FOR: Both vocalists singing together in harmony, changing the timbre of the music. The texture of the music changes here as the drums start to play 'time' with a strong backbeat. All this increases the dynamics. Accompanying strings create a gorgeous timbre. "Ain't no mountain high enough" is the hook here.	Timbre, Harmony, Male and Female Vocals, Time, Backbeat, String Section, Hook
Outro	LISTEN OUT FOR: building dynamics.	Building dynamics

Fast Facts

Information about the song:

- Ain't No Mountain High Enough is an RnB/Soul song.
- The song was first successful as a 1967 hit single recorded by Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell, becoming a hit again in 1970 when recorded by Diana Ross.
- The song became Diana Ross' first solo number-one hit and was nominated for a Grammy Award.

History

Pictorial contextualisation of the song and style.