Beyond the Notes: Reading the Musical Performances of Alan Gampel

A Joy2Learn Middle School English Language Arts Lesson Plan

Connection to Joy2Learn Professional Development

This lesson plan mirrors the instructional model introduced in the Joy2Learn professional development mini-workshop, *Reading Beyond the Page: Using the Arts to Build Observation, Interpretation, and Evidence-Based Reasoning in Middle School English Language Arts*. Students use one repeatable meaning-making routine:

NOTICE → INTERPRET → SUPPORT

After practicing the routine with music, students use TRANSFER as an instructional bridge: They apply the same thinking to a short written text. Discussion and writing are not separate steps in the framework; they are ways students develop and communicate their Notice-Interpret-Support thinking.

Grade Level

Grades 6-8

Time

60-75 minutes

ELA Focus

Close listening and close reading; inference; mood/tone; theme or central idea; evidence-based discussion and writing; transfer of comprehension processes across media

Learning Objectives

- NOTICE specific, relevant musical details and choices before deciding what they mean.

- INTERPRET what those details might communicate, using relevant knowledge and vocabulary.
- SUPPORT an interpretation with specific auditory evidence and explain how the evidence connects to the interpretation.
- TRANSFER the Notice-Interpret-Support routine to a short written text.

Common Core Alignment

Primary Alignment

- RL.6.1 / RL.7.1 / RL.8.1 - Cite evidence and draw inferences from text.
- SL.6.1 / SL.7.1 / SL.8.1 - Participate in collaborative discussions and support ideas with evidence.
- SL.6.2 / SL.7.2 / SL.8.2 - Interpret information presented in diverse media.

Supporting Alignment

- RL.6.2 / RL.7.2 / RL.8.2 - Determine theme or central idea.
- W.6.9 / W.7.9 / W.8.9 - Draw evidence from texts to support analysis and reflection.
- W.6.1 / W.7.1 / W.8.1 - Support claims with reasons and evidence, when an analytical response is used.

Materials

- Joy2Learn video clip: Gampel Bumblebee Performance: https://youtu.be/vDNOTgTB_3M?si=698Q5S8GjdU_zMIG
- Audio/video playback equipment
- Notice-Interpret-Support listening organizer or listening journal

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- Short written text for TRANSFER (poem, literary paragraph, or brief excerpt connected to the lesson focus)
- Optional: projected transcript/text and annotation tools

Lesson Launch: Introduce the Routine (5 minutes)

- Tell students: "Today we are going to practice a simple way of making meaning: first we NOTICE, then we INTERPRET, and then we SUPPORT our interpretation. Later, we will use the same thinking with written text."
- Display the routine:
    - NOTICE: What do I actually hear?
    - INTERPRET: What might those details suggest or communicate?
    - SUPPORT: What did I hear that makes me say that, and how does it support my idea?

NOTICE - Listen Closely (10 minutes)

- Play the Joy2Learn video clip: Gampel Bumblebee Performance: https://youtu.be/vDNOTgTB_3M?si=698Q5S8GjdU_zMIG. Students listen without taking notes. Ask them simply to attend to what they hear.
- Play the clip again. Students record details they can point to in the performance before deciding what those details mean.
- Possible noticing prompts:
    - Where does the music become faster or slower?
    - Where does it become louder or softer?
    - What sounds, rhythms, or patterns repeat?
    - Where do you hear contrast or change?
    - Where are there pauses, sustained sounds, or shifts in intensity?

    - What musical moment catches your attention most?
- Teacher reminder: "For now, describe what you can hear. If you say the music sounds sad, exciting, peaceful, or tense, you have already begun interpreting. We will get there next."
- Introduce musical vocabulary only as it helps students name what they actually hear (for example: tempo, dynamics, rhythm, repetition, contrast, pause). Avoid front-loading a long vocabulary list.

Teacher Modeling: Make the Thinking Visible (7 minutes)

- Replay a brief, clearly audible moment from the selected performance. Model the process using details that are genuinely present in that excerpt. Do not pre-script a musical feature that students cannot actually hear.
- NOTICE: "I am going to start with something I can point to in the performance. I hear _____. That is an observation, not yet a claim about what the music means."
- INTERPRET: "That detail makes me think the performer may be creating or communicating _____. I am saying may because this is an interpretation, not a fact."
- SUPPORT: "What makes me say that? I can return to the performance and point to _____. This supports my interpretation because _____."
- Emphasize: Evidence is not merely naming a detail. Students also explain how the detail supports the interpretation. Multiple interpretations may be reasonable when they account for the evidence.

INTERPRET: Construct Possible Meaning (10 minutes)

- Play the excerpt again. Students review their NOTICE notes and choose one or two details that seem significant.

- Prompts:
    - What mood, idea, image, or movement might these details suggest?
    - What changes over the course of the performance?
    - How does what you know about the musical choices help you make sense of what you hear?
    - What is one possible interpretation rather than the one correct answer?
- Teacher note: Interpretation combines evidence with knowledge. Supply brief background knowledge or vocabulary when students need it to make increasingly precise interpretations; do not treat interpretation as unsupported personal reaction.

SUPPORT: Discuss and Explain Evidence (15 minutes)

- Students work in pairs or small groups using the same three questions:
    - NOTICE: What did you hear?
    - INTERPRET: What do you think it might suggest or communicate?
    - SUPPORT: What did you hear that makes you say that? How does that evidence support your interpretation?
- Add one discussion move:
    - BUILD / CHALLENGE: "Who heard it differently? What evidence supports that interpretation?"
- The teacher listens for the relationship among interpretation, evidence, and reasoning rather than for a single preferred interpretation.

Independent Evidence-Based Response (10-15 minutes)

- Students demonstrate the routine independently in a short response.

- Prompt: What is one idea, mood, or effect communicated by the performance? Identify at least two specific musical details and explain how each detail supports your interpretation.
- Suggested organizer:
    - NOTICE: Specific musical details I heard
    - INTERPRET: What I think those details might communicate
    - SUPPORT: The evidence and my explanation of how it supports the interpretation
- Creative writing may be offered as an extension, but the core task should remain evidence-based interpretation so the lesson directly rehearses the comprehension routine.

TRANSFER: Apply the Thinking to Written Text (15 minutes)

- Introduce a short written text connected to the lesson focus. The connection may be thematic (for example, change, tension, persistence, contrast, or resolution) or structural (for example, repetition, pacing, or shifts in tone).
- Tell students: "We are going to change the source, but not the thinking."

Routine	Music	Written Text
NOTICE	What musical details stand out?	What words, phrases, images, patterns, or details stand out?
INTERPRET	What might those details suggest?	What might those details suggest?
SUPPORT	What did you hear that makes you say that?	What in the text makes you say that? How does it support your interpretation?

- Students annotate or discuss the written text using the three moves, then write a brief interpretation supported with textual evidence.
- Transfer reflection: "What stayed the same about your thinking when the source changed from music to written language? What changed?"

Assessment

Formative

- NOTICE: Identifies specific, relevant auditory details before interpreting
- INTERPRET: Develops a plausible interpretation connected to evidence and relevant knowledge
- SUPPORT: Cites specific evidence and explains how it supports the interpretation
- TRANSFER: Applies Notice-Interpret-Support to the written text

Summative

- Listening organizer or journal
- Independent evidence-based response
- Brief written-text transfer response

Simplified Rubric

Criterion	Advanced	Proficient	Developing
NOTICE	Identifies precise, relevant musical details and patterns.	Identifies relevant musical details.	Identifies few or vague details.
INTERPRET	Develops a nuanced, plausible interpretation	Develops a plausible interpretation	Interpretation is unclear or weakly connected to details.

	connected to details and knowledge.	connected to details.	
SUPPORT	Uses specific evidence and clearly explains how it supports the interpretation.	Uses relevant evidence and explains the connection.	Uses limited evidence or does not explain the connection.
TRANSFER	Independently applies the routine to written text using specific textual evidence.	Applies the routine to written text with relevant evidence.	Needs support applying the routine to written text.

Reflection and Closure (5 minutes)

- Today I NOTICED...
- I INTERPRETED that to mean...
- The evidence that best SUPPORTED my interpretation was... because...\
- When I TRANSFERRED this thinking to written text, I...
- Close with: "Music and written language are different kinds of sources. What we practiced today was a habit of evidence-based meaning-making: attend closely, construct a possible meaning, and return to the source to support it. When we read, we use that same routine with words and sentences."

Connection to the Joy2Learn *Reading Beyond the Page* Professional Development

PD Framework	Classroom Application
NOTICE	Students listen closely and identify specific musical details before deciding what those details mean.
INTERPRET	Students use details, vocabulary, and relevant knowledge to construct possible meanings.
SUPPORT	Students return to the performance for evidence and explain how the evidence supports an interpretation through discussion and writing.
TRANSFER	Students apply Notice-Interpret-Support to a short written text. Transfer is the instructional bridge back to reading, not simply another step in arts analysis.

Teacher Notes

- Keep the routine cognitively simple. Analysis happens inside the movement from noticing to interpreting to supporting; it does not need to be taught as a separate step.
- Use discussion and writing as vehicles for the routine rather than as additional framework steps.
- Return students to observable auditory evidence before accepting an interpretation, while allowing multiple interpretations that are well supported.

- Build vocabulary and background knowledge when students need them to make more precise interpretations.
- Make transfer explicit. Do not assume that students will automatically apply arts-based meaning-making to reading; model and practice the same three questions with written text.
- The lesson complements reading instruction; it does not replace explicit instruction in decoding, fluency, vocabulary, knowledge, or other components of reading.