



Hegarty Piano Studio ~~ Nancy Hegarty, Teacher

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Recital Assignment: “Painting Paragraphs”

Due at your Next Lesson

100 - 500 Points possible

Every song tells a story, describes an emotion or mood, makes a point, or paints a picture in the listener’s mind. Pretend that the music you are playing is magically painting a picture that tells the story of the song. Tell me about the painting and the story. For example:

- What is the story line behind the music?
- Where is everything taking place?
- What is the “scene” or “situation” of the story (aka the music)?
- Is it animated or is it “real”?
- Are there people or animals or something else in the story?
- Try to describe the color, light/dark, speed, and/or movement of the music.
- What is happening in the story as the music plays along? What happens in the beginning of the song, the middle of the song, and the end of the song?
- What is the point or message of the story/music?

Be sure to tie the story to the music by saying something like “In the beginning of the song ...” & “when the chorus begins ...” or “when the music starts to get louder ...” or “when the big chords start to play ...”. **In order to get the full 500 points, what you write must somehow connect to what you’re playing in the song.**

Your paragraph does not have to be directly related to the reason the song was originally written – or to the words of the song if there are any. This is what **you** “see” when you hear the song you are playing. Write just one short paragraph per song – maybe three to five sentences.

What you write will be printed in the Recital programs, so please put some serious thought into this.

You can go onto www.HegartyPiano.com and to the Recital portion of the Student Page and check out sample “Painting Paragraphs” written by students in the past. Also, on the back of this paper are some helpful tips to help you get all the points.

Helpful tips for writing the Recital "Painting Paragraph":

- ☞ Start by giving a general description of the scene/situation of the song – what is the “subject matter” – what is the mood of everything?
- ☞ Then, if your piece has different sections in it, talk about each section and make a connection between what is going on in the music and what is going on in the painting’s story. If your piece has only one section, talk about the movement in that section.
- ☞ Remember that some of the “expression in music” is found in the speed or volume of the piece, or if it’s played legato or staccato (banging and clanging or sweet and singing or gloomy and sad). You can also talk in terms of how many notes are being played – or how few . . . or if there are a lot of chords . . . or if they are mostly high or low notes . . . and so on. You can also use “colors” to describe the music – or “textures” – or “emotions” – or ??
- ☞ Also remember that your music can be “painting” a story line . . . or just abstract images, shapes, and colors . . . or a real “scene” from life or the world around us.
- ☞ As you play your piece, try to really listen to the music. What images come to your mind as you hear the music flow?
- ☞ If you can, record yourself playing your pieces. If you can’t, play a professional recording of the song. And then listen to the music with your eyes closed and let your mind play along with the sound. What do you see? What do you feel? What do you think the music is saying?