

Oral Presentation Guidelines

The ability to talk clearly and comprehensibly about music (and music-making) is a skill every musician needs! A clear-cut discussion of a specific piece allows you to understand it better, appreciate its importance or its background, and generally it helps you to like it more. Use these presentations as an opportunity to 'teach' your peers. Don't go too fast, but keep the time limit in mind (which, by necessity, will be strictly enforced). What can you do to make your discussion memorable and meaningful? Speakers who make the effort to be expressive often improve their ability to become expressive musicians, so there are fringe benefits to this process!

A one-page **handout** should be distributed to the class with each presentation; the caliber of the handout will figure into your grade, as will the presentation's content, organization, and delivery. Be prepared to answer questions; material from these presentations will magically appear on the exams. As usual, you should turn in a complete **outline** (an exact copy of the one you yourself are using during your presentation).

The handouts, as always, should be **hole-punched** and **stapled**, with **your name** clearly displayed at the top along with a title for your topic. The best handouts are not *too* wordy (i.e., avoid paragraphs of prose in the main body of your handout), but do include **all** the essential information about your topic. Double-sided printing is encouraged. I will announce the number of copies in class.

Individual Oral Presentation (5 minutes)

You will be assigned one Lied (German art song) from Schubert's famous Lieder cycle *Winterreise*. A separate page in this reader presents some background information about this poignant cycle. You will also find more information about the song cycle (and your specific song) in several books that are on Reserve in Kennedy Library. It is unlikely that you will need to do research beyond consulting the library materials and analyzing your Lied.

During your five-minute time allotment, you should introduce us to the most important features of your song. These features could be the form, the harmonic language, the text setting or examples of word-painting, unusual aspects of the song's history or background, a particularly beautiful melodic line or accompaniment figure, the unexpected twists, etc., etc., etc. You **cannot** talk about **all** these features in five minutes, so you must use your own judgment (yikes!) about what to address. (Remember that, if necessary, your handout could include additional particulars that you won't have time to discuss.) We will listen to your song in its entirety after your five-minute oral presentation (i.e., it does not count as part of the five minutes). **Be sure to say the German title of your Lied at least once during your presentation**; check pronunciation questions before you present.

On your **handout**, please include:

- a side-by-side translation (German and English) for your song (the Drinker translation at the back of our Dover score is pretty good, but there are many others that may be better; be sure to credit the translator of whatever version you use).
- your name fairly prominently at the top of your handout, along with
- the title of your song (with a translation of the title) and
- the number of the song within the cycle, prominently displayed.

(Typos and grammatical errors on the handout will cost you a quarter-point each; please proofread carefully—especially the German text. Yes, all diacritical marks need to be included.) **NOTE: your multiple handout copies are all due on Tuesday of Week 5.**

You will review your presentation in all its glory by watching the videotape made during class. The video will be placed on the MU 431 shelf in the Music Department office, and must be watched in Room 129E. There is a brief questionnaire at the end of this reader; it is due one week after your presentation. The questionnaire is ungraded, but a late submission will cost your presentation total one point per day, which will hurt your grade. A questionnaire which does not contain thorough, thoughtful responses will be returned for a "re-do."

Group Oral Presentation (25 minutes)

I will divide the class into five groups at the second class meeting. If you have preferred partners, please inform me of those preferences by **Sept. 24**; otherwise, I will assign people to groups myself. Group size will be determined by class enrollment; I expect that there will be 3-4 people per group. Everyone in the group needs to participate—as equally as possible—in the presentation.

Each group's assignment will vary somewhat, depending on the nature of the concert information they will be studying. In general, though, the groups will be expected to report to the class about the concerts' organizer(s), structure, and musical repertory; the groups may also be able to address information about the audience, the success of the concerts, and their impact. **Be careful not to spend *too much time on the concert presenter's biography***; it is more important that your peers have a good sense of what your **concerts** were like by the end of your presentation.

So that we can involve 'music' in these presentations, each group should also track down one piece that they **know** was performed at their concerts and play a recording of (or perform!) at least a portion of the work during their presentation. (This musical example needs to be included **within** the 25-minute allotment.) Please see me if you're having difficulties; I may be able to help.

In order to help me assess each member's contribution to the group effort, I am requiring 1) that each group keep **detailed minutes** of its meetings, and 2) that each person turn in an **individual write-up** detailing his or her activities in support of this project. Poor minutes will hurt the group grade, so identify a good secretary at the start of each group meeting, and it is wise to review the previous meeting's minutes for accuracy at the start of the next meeting; this review often helps the group get back on track quickly. (**Typed** versions of both items—the minutes and the personal write-ups—are due on the day of the presentation.) To arrive at each person's grade, I will average the 'group grade' with his or her 'individual grade.'

Your "process" should reflect your research skills as acquired in MU 320 and earlier classes in the music history series: your group should conduct its investigations systematically, beginning by consulting the New Grove articles listed below as well as the entry for your assigned concert presenter, plus any materials distributed to your group. You would then conduct subject searches of appropriate catalogs (Polycat, Link+, Melvyl, Worldcat) and article indices (*The Music Index*, RILM), and so forth.

Your group (once it is established) will be given a separate sheet with further instructions and research suggestions.

New Grove II articles for *everyone* to read:

Vol. 6 – "Concert (ii)," §1-4, and §5 (pp. 221-230 and p. 232)

Vol. 20 – "Recital" (pp. 913-915)