



Classroom Worksheet

Jazz Etiquette

Believe it or not, there is **etiquette** about when to clap and how to clap whenever there is music being performed live!

At a classical music concert, we clap when the conductor first comes out and after each piece. We hold our clapping until the end of the piece and the tricky part is knowing when the real ending comes (not just a dramatic pause) because it's distracting to the musician (and the other listeners) to have clapping at the wrong place. The musicians (and vocalists) usually bow to us at the very end while we clap. By standing up and clapping (it's called a "standing ovation") we're saying we really liked it and giving the ultimate compliment to the musicians. After that, they just might play an "encore" (it means "again").

At a live jazz concert, there's quite a bit more clapping involved and it might even seem like interrupting. And it may seem less formal. The reason is that jazz requires a musical and emotional connection between the musicians and the audience. Jazz musicians want you to tell them when you like what they're playing, when you connect. One way to do this is to clap after a solo. Be careful though. You need to know when a solo is really over. When you clap at the end of one solo you can sometimes cover up the beginning of another musician's solo (it's okay but keep it brief so you can hear the next solo). Of course, it's courteous to clap for every solo. And the musician will nod to thank you for your applause.

Another way to connect with jazz musicians while they're performing is to make an appreciative, respectful comment when the music gets especially exciting or creative, like "oh yes" or "uh huh" or "yeah"—just something short and sweet to acknowledge the musician and the thing you liked. It's like congratulating the musician with a high five!

Naturally, you clap at the end of each tune and at the very end of the concert or show. Jazz musicians like standing ovations too and will play an encore if there's time in the set. The most important thing when listening to jazz is to sit back, feel the music and respond the way you feel!