

AUDIO SCRIPT

LISTENING

Task 1.

Speaker 1: Classical music's often seen as old-fashioned, and though there's people everywhere who go to concerts, and some classical musicians are big-name stars, it doesn't really excite young people that much. They prefer pop music or more modern stuff. But the truth is, it's hard to interpret complex music, even with the best teacher in the world, unless you start training early on in life. Luckily for me, I came to this conclusion myself when I was in my early teens. And when I said I wanted to become a classical guitarist, my parents rather reluctantly went along with the idea and bought me some lessons. Since then, I've played almost every day.

Speaker 2: I bought my first classical recording aged fourteen. It was a violin concerto by a Russian composer. Although my school had a strong arts focus, I had no particular interest in classical music till one day when I heard a big rock star going on about the most exciting piece of music ever written. Being a fan of his music, I felt I had to hear it. By the third listening, I was convinced he was right. What's more, I found I really had an urge to play the violin myself and found myself a teacher. Despite my dad's complaints about the noise I produced, I practiced every day at home. I've never looked back.

Speaker 3: At my school, I was made to learn the recorder and I had to practice every day. The sound I produced was so dreadful that whatever piece of music I was supposed to be playing was hard to recognise, despite all the efforts made by our music teacher, who'd actually been quite a famous musician himself when younger. It took a while, but I recovered from that and got to know the work of some of the top composers, thanks to my uncle. That got me excited enough to beg to have piano lessons when I was about 12. After that everything just took off. Now here I am getting quite well known as a concert pianist.

Speaker 4: At school, our music teacher tried to get us into classical music without much success. He just seemed to go for the most unexciting pieces. It was me who noticed classical music turning up in movies, cartoons and stuff. Like, I remember one day hearing a really famous classical piece being played on a commercial trying to attract young kids to some fast food place. You'd think things like that would be enough to put anyone off classical music. But they had the opposite effect on me, encouraging me to want to learn to play and seek out a good teacher, which is what I did, much to my mum's amazement, I remember.

Speaker 5: Although my dad had taught me to play the flute at an early age, I didn't get interested in learning to play classical music then. I wasn't willing to try and understand it and didn't realise you have to do that in order to enjoy it. As a kid I wanted something that made me jump and got me going, made me feel happy or enthusiastic, so I resisted the efforts of my teacher to introduce me to classical music. She got there in the end though, by sheer persistence, convincing me that there's great excitement to be found in the joy of playing something difficult and doing it well.

Task 2.

Presenter: Welcome to Travel Stories. My guest today is Chris, who finds hitchhiking a great way of travelling long distances. He's hitchhiked 25,000 km around Europe and the Middle East. Last month he broke his own record by hitching 2,500km from Warsaw to Barcelona in 34 hours.

Chris: It's no big deal, really. Some people have hitchhiked around the world.

Presenter: Chris, I think one question many people would like to ask is, isn't it dangerous?

Chris: Well, if you choose to hitchhike, you make a decision to rely on other people's goodwill. So far, the worst that's happened to me was hitchhiking a lift with a reckless driver. I feel quite safe hitchhiking in Europe and the Middle East, I probably wouldn't do it in the USA, but perhaps that's

only because of all the bad things that happen to hitchhikers in American films. And I suppose a male hitchhiker has less to fear than a girl.

Presenter: What's the best place to hitch a lift?

Chris: You should stand somewhere where the driver can see you, from a long way off, and where they can stop safely. On motorways, hitchhiking isn't allowed, but standing at the exit of a petrol station is a good idea. If you don't get a lift, then at least you've got somewhere to rest, to have a bite to eat, to hide from the rain, and with a bit of luck, you can be picked up even at night, because the light from the filling station allows drivers to take a good look at you and decide you're not a criminal.

Presenter: What do you like about hitchhiking?

Chris: It's a great way to travel because you never know what's going to happen and even a short trip can turn into an adventure. Also, if you're broke, it's nice to be able to get really far on no money at all. But the best thing for me is meeting incredible people, people I'd never have met otherwise. A musician from Mozambique, an Albanian construction worker who talked to me about Albanian novelists, A French Foreign Legion soldier. Some gypsies who bought me a coffee and drove me through Serbian countryside in a decrepit pick-up at 30 kilometres an hour.

Presenter: Are people generally kind?

Chris: I've received so much disinterested help I could write an uplifting book about human kindness. I remember how in Hungary, a man with a little boy bought me dinner in a restaurant, even though we could only communicate using gestures and the names of footballers. Once, just outside Paris, which incidentally is not a good place for hitchhikers, a Turkish guy drove 50 kilometers out of his way to get me to the first metro station, because, he said, it was against his religion to leave me by the road at nightfall. Truck drivers have called their colleagues on the radio to ask if any of them are going my way. I could go on forever. Oh, and I really like this one. I've got this lift with a big truck, and the driver offers me the peach he has on the dashboard. I say, but what about you? It's the last one. And he says, eat up, son. There's 20 more tons in the back.

Presenter: Chris, thank you very much.