

Q1.

Evelyn Glennie autobiography

Evelyn Glennie is a well-known musician who plays many different percussion instruments. She published her autobiography, *Good Vibrations*, in 1991. These are extracts, adapted from her book. Here, Evelyn describes how she first became inspired to take up percussion instruments and how she 'hears' music, even though she is deaf.

People often ask me why I decided to take up percussion. It's difficult to say why exactly. I always knew that I wanted to be a musician, but my enthusiasm for percussion may have dated back to the time in my childhood when I went to a local competition and saw Isabel, a young girl, playing the xylophone. She was brilliant, just amazing, and I thought, 'I didn't realise a xylophone could do this.' Once I went to secondary school I found there were many more percussion instruments to discover, which may be why I was so determined to try them.

I remember going through to the percussion room. It was tiny, with one window, and what I saw was a xylophone, a couple of hand-tuned timpani (often known as kettle drums), a drum kit, an upright piano, books and papers stacked in heaps, a great long cupboard for more papers, and bits of instruments everywhere; the room was so small and so crowded that I could hardly move.



timpani

xylophone



Mr Forbes, my teacher, told me to play some notes on the xylophone. You can usually tell when you test someone like this whether they have natural ability simply by the way they handle the sticks. I'd never used sticks before but I picked them up and played with no stiffness or awkwardness.

I know how music sounds by what I feel. I can sense musical sound through my feet and lower body, and also through my hands. I can

identify different notes according to which part of my foot feels the vibrations and for how long, and by how I experience the vibrations in my body.

Mr Forbes taught me how to develop my senses. He used to tell me to put my hands on the wall outside the music room and then he would play two notes on two drums and ask me, 'Okay, which is the higher note?' I'd tell him which I thought it was, and he'd ask me, 'How do you know?' So I'd tell him I could feel it maybe in the upper part of my hand, while I felt the other note all the way down to my wrist. Or we'd discuss what was happening in my feet and legs as I played the drums, or listened to a piece of music. Similarly, I always knew when a door banged or the phone rang, and my ability to sense sound developed as I became more and more dependent upon it.

Anyone can experience these effects, of course; if you put your hands on both sides of a piece of paper when a radio is on, you can feel the vibrations coming through the paper, and most young people have experienced the vibrations that pour through the lower limbs at the strong bass beats of a 'high-powered' disco.

Music isn't just a question of sounds. The thing about playing percussion is that you are not just creating sound, not just playing notes or beating out a pattern. You are creating emotions from inside yourself that can be sometimes beautiful and uplifting but are, sometimes, ugly or disturbing. To be a good musician, music has to come from deep inside you, from a seed growing in your heart.

Q2.

1. Mr Forbes taught Evelyn to develop her senses.

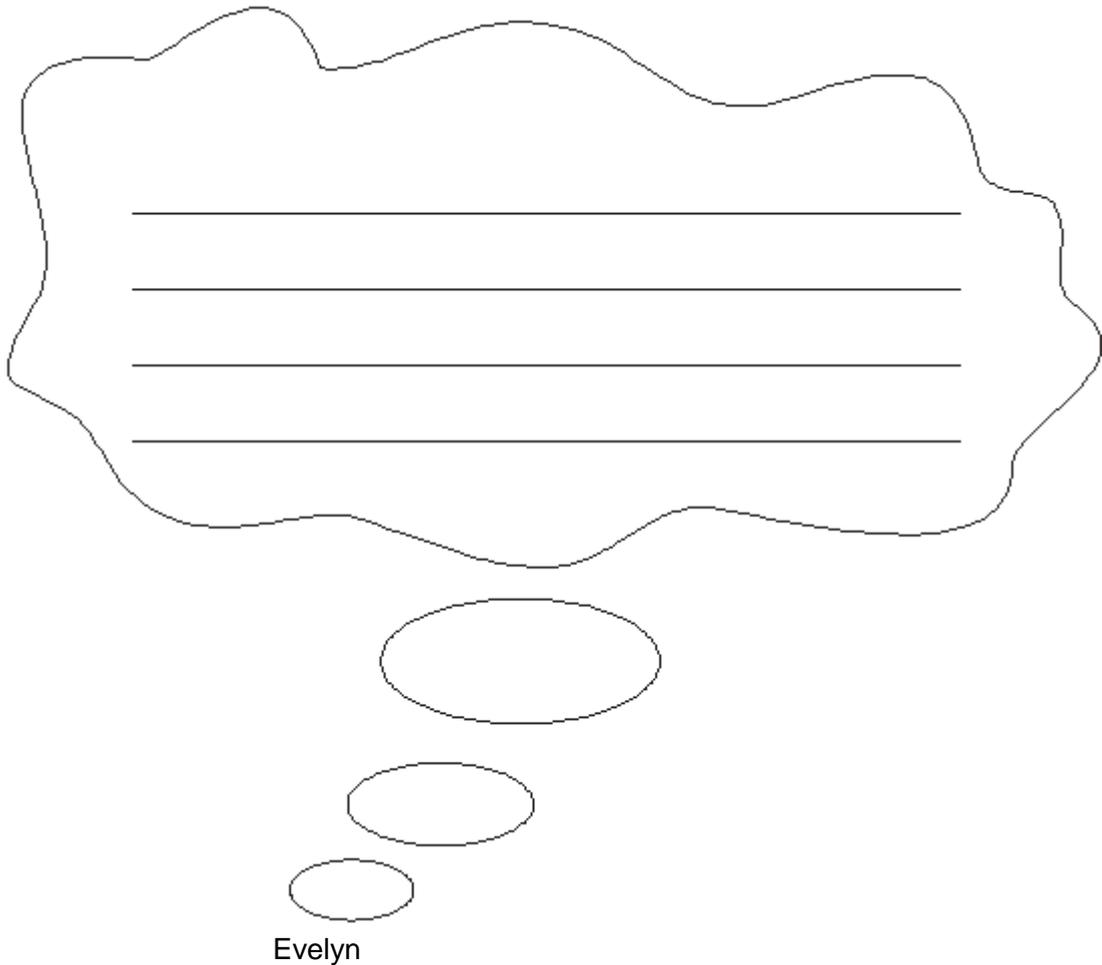
For what other reasons is Mr Forbes important in Evelyn's life?

2 marks

2. The percussion room made a big impression on Evelyn the first time she saw it.

What do you think her thoughts were as she looked around?

Write her thoughts in this bubble.



2 marks

3. When Evelyn lifted the sticks, she played with no stiffness or awkwardness.

What did this show?

1 mark

4. When Evelyn performs she often takes off her shoes.

Why?

1 mark

5. What do you think Evelyn meant by *a seed growing in your heart*?

1 mark

6. Evelyn's autobiography is called *Good Vibrations*.

Why is this a good title for her book?

2 marks

7. Why do you think many people admire Evelyn Glennie?

3 marks

8. *You are creating emotions from inside yourself that can be sometimes beautiful and **uplifting**...*

Give the meaning of the word *uplifting* in the sentence.

1 mark

Mark schemes

Q2.

1. Award **1 mark** for each point from the categories below, to a maximum of **2 marks**:

- music teacher, eg: taught her how to play percussion
- support / encouragement, eg: worked with her to develop her sense of feeling / he believed in her even though she was deaf
- initiated her career, eg: introduced her to percussion / discovered her ability to play xylophone
- inspiration, eg: he helped her realise that she could play music.

Answers must come from two different categories to be credited with two marks.

Do not accept: he taught her / he was her teacher.

up to 2 marks

2. Award **2 marks** for references to feelings (awe / inspiration / possibility) that the room evoked, eg:

- It's great to be surrounded by all these amazing instruments
- I can't wait to play all these instruments!
- What a small room! I'm so excited that I could be playing all of this
- Wow! This is great. This is like a dream come true!

Award **1 mark** for references only to the physical attributes (clutter / size) of the room, eg:

- It's so small. How can anyone play in here?
- There's too much in here. I can't move.

Answers may be expressed in the third person.

Do not accept responses that are very close to the original text with no further interpretation, eg: *It's tiny, with one window / It's so small and so crowded that I can hardly move.*

up to 2 marks

3. Award **1 mark** for referring to natural talent, eg:

- she had ability to play
- she was a natural
- she definitely had inspiration for music

1 mark

4. Award **1 mark** for reference to feeling the vibration, eg:

- so that she can feel the vibrations of the instruments
- so that she can tell which note she's playing
- so that she knows what sound and beats she's making.

1 mark

5. Award **1 mark** for answers that give a plausible interpretation of the image with reference to at least one of the following ideas:

- emotion / passion
- creation
- talent / practice
- inspiration.

Examples:

- music comes from a deep place in your heart and soul
- you're like a seed growing into a tree and that means your musical talent is growing
- she means that you have to have the talent and if you go on with it, you'll get better
- you have to use your heart to play good music

Do not accept answers that are very close to the original text without further interpretation, eg: *music isn't just a question of sounds / music has to come from deep inside you.*

1 mark

6. Award **2 marks** for answers which attempt to explain the whole phrase in the context of Evelyn's life (ie attempt to explain the 'good' as well as 'vibration'), eg:

- her success as a musician is all due to her ability to create and hear music through vibration
- because she said that's how she plays music, by feeling the vibrations so good vibrations means good music
- it has a double meaning. She is getting good vibrations from enjoying her music and feeling the vibrations from the instruments
- she uses vibration to play music and that's been good for her as it has made her career.

Award **1 mark** for answers which make a connection **either** between Evelyn / her autobiography, music and vibration **or** between Evelyn / her autobiography, deafness and vibration, eg:

- she hears music by feeling vibrations
- it is about vibrations and how Evelyn uses instruments
- the book is about music and music is made by vibration

- she plays music by feeling the vibrations and they feel good
- as she's deaf she has to rely on vibrations
- it is a good title for her autobiography as she is deaf and all she can feel are vibrations.

Do not accept answers which do not create a link between three elements, eg: *because her songs vibrate / because she feels good vibrations.*

up to 2 marks

7. Possible points might refer to Evelyn's:

- musical ability
- sensory ability
- determination / perseverance
- professional success
- inspiration to others.

Award **3 marks** for answers which provide substantial coverage of at least two points, eg:

- I think many people admire her because she is such a talented person and she can sense the notes through her body and it is very interesting, almost as if she is psychic. Also many people may just learn from her example (sensory ability and inspiration)
- because at the age of 12 she lost her hearing but she carried on playing instruments and that must have been hard but she learnt about beats and notes through the vibrations in her body (determination and ability)
- she is admired because she is so talented in percussion and yet she is deaf. People must love the sounds and emotions she makes, plus all the prizes she has won (musical ability and professional success).

Award **2 marks** for answers which **either** explore one of the points above in more detail / with textual support **or** explore two of the points superficially, eg:

- because she is a great musician and also because she can't hear but she still performs and plays successfully (musical ability and determination)
- she never gave up and followed her ambition to become a musician although she was deaf (determination)
- because even though she's a deaf woman she can play an instrument and somehow be very good at it (musical ability).

Award **1 mark** for answers which are **either** very general **or** refer to a very specific detail relating to one of the points above, eg:

- she gives around a 110 concerts a year (success)
- she plays percussion even though she is deaf (perseverance)
- she is a very good and talented musician (musical ability).

up to 3 marks

8. Award **1 mark** for:

- make you feel good / make you feel better.

1 mark