

I divided the class into groups of three, and told them that everyone should be taking notes on the subsequent group discussion. Then I gave them the following prompt:

*Imagine you're talking with a friend on campus who has no musical background. They ask you the following questions:*

*What is music analysis?*

*How do you do music analysis?*

*Why should you do music analysis?*

Groups had 10 minutes to brainstorm answers to all three questions.

I then reorganized the groups following the 'jigsaw' discussion style. In each group, participants numbered off 1 through 3. Then all the 1s formed a new group, all the 2s, and all the 3s. Each new group was assigned a single question from the original three, and had to summarize all existing responses and add any new ones, before writing all responses on the board.

The class's answers are recorded below.

*1. What is music analysis?*

- the breaking down of music into its most basic components in order to better understand its qualities (happy, sad, major, minor, tempo)
- a sense that there are different qualities one might look for (e.g. structure vs. emotion; looking for structure vs. looking for the relationship between different things)
- there are different possible answers

*2. How do you do music analysis?*

- break down into small pieces/sections
- find structure/skeleton
- find patterns, see what stays the same and what changes
- figure out the 'root' like in English class (e.g. breaking down a complicated word to something simpler)
- categorizing
- the way it sounds
- considering history/historical style/genre
- considering composer qualities (i.e., composer style)
- considering composer intention

*3. Why should you do music analysis?*

- to understand the structure and intention behind the music
- apply to performing, compositing and arranging
- to learn how individual parts work together and how one person's part fits into the whole (e.g. in band/orchestra)
- as a guide to performance decisions
- because it's fun
- to be able to give advice to artists (performance directions)
- to learn what's pleasing to a particular culture or species