Guided listening party assignment

**In this assignment you will:**

1. Develop vocabulary for talking about music articulately
2. Hone your microscopic listening skills
3. Develop collaborative skills and skills for respectful discussion

**Instructions:**

For this assignment, pair up with a partner of the same TA section.

1. With your partner, choose a short piece of music (approx. 5-10 min) together that is not within either of your usual musical tastes (i.e. it should be outside both of your comfort listening zones), but that is interesting to both of you.
2. *Familiarization.* Get together and listen to the piece several times, jotting down and then discussing your reactions and impressions of the piece. What moods/emotions/images/sensations/etc. does it evoke and at what places? How are these evoked musically, referring to the elements of music? What stands out as interesting to you?
3. *Microscopic listening.* Separately and in your own time, listen to the piece by yourself several times intently and choose a 15 to 20-second moment in the piece that is the most outstanding to you personally. Describe what you hear using the vocabulary and concepts that we have learnt in class so far. Ask yourself what is happening according to each element of music. Your reasoning should have some logical argument that relates to your answer in 2), even though it is subjective. For instance, it could be because it is the moment that evokes the mood/emotion/image the most exquisitely (through, say, a build-up of texture, or a change in harmony/dynamic/melodic shape, etc), the most intense moment, the calmest moment, etc.
4. *Discussion.* Get together with your partner again. Take turns explaining your reasoning for why you think your moment is the most outstanding. After each person gives their point of view, respectfully discuss to come to a decision as a pair on one agreed-upon outstanding moment (this could be either one of your moments, or even a new moment should the discussion head this way).

**Listening party report due:**

Include the title, performer(s), and (if any) composer(s) of the piece for your assignment. Include a link to a recording.

Include your names and TA section.

1. Separately, each person writes a (minimum) 100-word response explaining why you chose this piece. How does it differ from and is similar to music that you usually listen to? How is it outside of your “comfort zone”?
2. Together, write a (minimum) 250-word response for 2. What are your reactions and impressions? What moods/emotions/sensations/images/etc. does it evoke and at what places? How are these evoked? Include exact timings of the recording when describing particular moments (e.g. 0’56’’-1’04’’).
3. Separately, each person writes a (minimum) 250-word response for 3. Include the exact timings for your moment.
4. Together, write a (minimum) 250-word reflective write-up of 4, detailing how you came to the conclusion for an agreed outstanding moment.

**Style and Content:** Polish your prose so that it is grammatically correct and reads well. Any mistakes or typos that spell-check should have caught will be docked at least one grade.

**Formatting:** Use 12-point font, double-spaced. Submit as .doc file.

**Citations:** You are not expected to do research for this assignment. However, if you do use outside sources, you must cite them. Using someone else’s ideas without acknowledge is plagiarism and is a serious offence. Papers with plagiarism will be given an automatic fail. Faculty members are REQUIRED to report all instances of plagiarism to the Dean of Students.

Refer to “Plagiarism” section in the syllabus.

**Assignment rubric:**

*Specific to each numeric response:*

* Demonstrates thoughtful selection of assignment piece (i)
* Demonstrates in-depth and reflective listening, and thoughtful, vivid references to musical and extra-musical phenomena (ii)
* Demonstrates repeated, intent, detailed and focused listening (iii)
* Demonstrates lively discussion resulting in mutual learning and understanding of each other’s subjective musical experiences (iv)

*General:*

* Includes clear, thoughtful articulation of one’s listening using vocabulary and concepts learnt in class so far
* Demonstrates a cogent, understandable, and articulate writing style