

Dear Holly and Kevin, The students in my class wanted to thank you so much for leading them in this concert and experience!

They recorded a few video messages about what they liked and learned. The first 7 videos on our class blog talk about the concert. (A few students are in several videos because they just wanted to keep talking about it!)

<https://blog.seesaw.me/hornof16/#/>

Please enjoy the videos (and feel free to write a comment or two--they love responses!)

Also, in addition to all the science learning that my students gained from the songs, one very big impact I saw in my classroom is that many students gained skills and confidence in their oral language. All year I have been working very hard with my students to improve their speaking and presentation skills. Many of them were very timid when presenting, even when just presenting to small groups of other students. I don't know where and how the magic took place, but there was something about the practices and the concert that raised the proficiency in their oral language and presentation skills and bolstered their confidence.

After the concert, many students are now animated and energized in front of groups (and in front of a camera, as you will see from some of these videos!) At the beginning of the year, I could not publish many of their videos on the blog, because so their speech was so monotone and unenthusiastic and not ready for public viewing!

As a specific example, there were 3 students in my class who were presenters at the Salish Sea concert. All of these students were very reluctant to speak in front of the class at the beginning of the year. When asked to be in the spotlight for your concert, they were still reluctant, but I was able to convince them by pointing out examples of how their presentations skills had grown this year in our classroom. (Because of this, I think the concert came at the perfect time of the year.) Ever since their great success of presenting at the practices and the concert, these students now speak confidently and enthusiastically in front of the class or camera. And of course their excitement is contagious, so there is a very positive buzz in the room now around presentations and public speaking.

This is just one small part of all the benefits. Thank you from all of us!

Michelle Hornof
5th grade teacher