

- The Sound Of Music Summary Part I
- The Sound Of Music Part II: Bismillah Khan

The Sound Of Music Summary Part I

Evelyn Glennie is a world-renowned multi-percussionist who has mastered thousands of musical instruments despite being profoundly deaf. She learned to perceive sound through vibrations felt by her body rather than through her ears. At the age of eleven, Evelyn's hearing impairment was discovered. Although her teachers discouraged her musical ambitions, Ron Forbes recognized her talent and encouraged her to sense music differently. This guidance was pivotal in her development as a musician.

Evelyn attended the prestigious Royal Academy of Music, where she achieved the highest marks in the institution's history. Her dedication and determination helped her overcome challenges, leading to her receiving the Royal Philharmonic Society's Soloist of the Year award in 1991. Beyond concerts, she performed free shows in hospitals and prisons and inspired many, especially deaf and differently-abled children, proving that limitations can be overcome with perseverance.

Key Words

- **Multi-percussionist:** A musician skilled in playing multiple percussion instruments.
- **Profoundly deaf:** Having a severe or complete inability to hear.
- **Interpreting:** Understanding or explaining the meaning of something.
- **Highly respected or esteemed:** Having a great reputation and admiration.

Practice Set

Level 1 – Easy

- Who is Evelyn Glennie and what is unique about her musical ability?
- What advice did Ron Forbes give to Evelyn?

Level 2 – Moderate

- Explain how Evelyn Glennie perceives sound despite her deafness.
- Describe the significance of Evelyn's achievements at the Royal Academy of Music.

Level 3 – Challenging

- Discuss how Evelyn Glennie's story serves as an inspiration to differently-abled individuals.
- Analyze the role of determination and support in Evelyn's success.

Answer Key

- **Level 1:** Evelyn Glennie is a multi-percussionist who plays many instruments despite being profoundly deaf. Ron Forbes advised her to feel sound through her body instead of listening with her ears.
- **Level 2:** Evelyn senses vibrations through her body to interpret sound. Her top marks at the Royal Academy of Music highlight her exceptional talent and dedication.
- **Level 3:** Evelyn's story shows that disabilities can be overcome with determination and support, inspiring others to pursue their dreams despite challenges.

Quick Reference

- Evelyn Glennie – Deaf musician who feels sound through vibrations.
- Ron Forbes – Teacher who encouraged Evelyn to sense sound differently.
- Royal Academy of Music – Institution where Evelyn excelled.
- Royal Philharmonic Society's Soloist of the Year – Award received by Evelyn.

Glossary

- **Multi-percussionist:** A musician who plays many percussion instruments.
- **Profoundly deaf:** Unable to hear at all or with great difficulty.
- **Interpreting:** Understanding the meaning of something.
- **Esteemed:** Highly respected.

The Sound Of Music Part II: Bismillah Khan

This section highlights the origin of the Shehnai and the life of the legendary Shehnai player, Bismillah Khan, who was awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honor, for his dedication to music and love for the country.

The Shehnai evolved from the Pungi, a musical instrument banned by Emperor Aurangzeb due to its shrill and unpleasant sound. A barber from a family of musicians modified it, and its sound was appreciated by the emperor, making it part of the royal Naubat. Since it was first played in the king's chamber by a barber (nai), it was named Shehnai. Traditionally, the Shehnai was played in temples and on auspicious occasions, believed to bring good fortune. However, it was considered incomplete as a solo instrument until Bismillah Khan changed this perception.

Bismillah Khan was born in 1916 in Dumraon, Bihar. From a young age, he sang devotional songs at the Bihariji Temple and later moved to Banaras, where he trained under his uncle Ali Baksh. He practiced extensively by the River Ganges, drawing inspiration from its flowing waters. He received the best performer award at the All India Music Conference in 1930 and later won prestigious awards including the Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri, and Padma Vibhushan. He was the first Indian to perform at Lincoln Center in the USA and was honored internationally.

Bismillah Khan remained deeply connected to Banaras and declined offers to settle abroad. He also contributed music to films but preferred to keep his focus on pure music, which he considered his soul and life.

Key Words

- **Shrill:** A high-pitched and unpleasant sound.
- **Nuances:** Subtle differences or details in meaning or sound.
- **Ramparts:** Defensive walls surrounding a fort or castle.
- **Chartbuster:** A very popular or successful song.
- **Auspicious:** Signifying good fortune or favorable outcomes.

Practice Set

Level 1 – Easy

- Who was Bismillah Khan and what instrument did he play?
- What is the origin of the Shehnai?

Level 2 – Moderate

- Explain why the Pungi was banned and how it transformed into the Shehnai.
- Describe Bismillah Khan's connection to Banaras and its influence on his music.

Level 3 – Challenging

- Discuss the significance of Bismillah Khan's contributions to Indian music and culture.
- Analyze how Bismillah Khan changed the perception of the Shehnai as a musical instrument.

Answer Key

- **Level 1:** Bismillah Khan was a famous Shehnai player. The Shehnai originated from the Pungi, which was modified and appreciated by Emperor Aurangzeb.
- **Level 2:** The Pungi was banned due to its shrill sound but was improved by a barber to become the Shehnai. Bismillah Khan's music was deeply influenced by Banaras and

the River Ganges.

- **Level 3:** Bismillah Khan elevated the Shehnai to a respected solo instrument and became a symbol of Indian culture and music, inspiring many.

Quick Reference

- Bismillah Khan – Legendary Shehnai player awarded Bharat Ratna.
- Shehnai – Musical instrument evolved from the Pungi.
- Banaras (Varanasi) – City closely associated with Bismillah Khan.
- Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri, Padma Vibhushan – Awards received by Bismillah Khan.

Glossary

- **Shrill:** High-pitched and unpleasant sound.
- **Nuances:** Subtle distinctions in meaning or sound.
- **Ramparts:** Fortification walls.
- **Chartbuster:** A very popular song.
- **Auspicious:** Favorable or lucky.