

The Piano Recital

Genre: Fiction Reading Level: 490L

Emma's hands trembled as she sat backstage, waiting for her turn to	12
perform. She had practiced her piano piece hundreds of times, but now, with	24
a room full of people waiting to hear her play, she felt her confidence	38
melting away like ice cream on a hot day.	47
"Emma Chen," the announcer called. Her heart pounded as she walked	58
onto the stage. The bright lights made it hard to see the audience, which	72
was actually a relief. She sat down at the grand piano and placed her	86
fingers on the cool, smooth keys.	92
For a moment, Emma's mind went blank. She couldn't remember how the	105
song started. Panic rushed through her body. Then she closed her eyes and	118
took a deep breath, just like her piano teacher, Mrs. Rodriguez, had taught	131
her. She thought about the music, not the audience.	140
Suddenly, her fingers knew what to do. They moved across the keys with	154
grace and confidence. The melody flowed from the piano, filling the	165
auditorium with beautiful sound. Emma forgot about being nervous. She was	176
lost in the music, enjoying every note.	183
When she played the final chord, the room exploded with applause.	194
Emma stood up and bowed, a huge smile spreading across her face. She had	208
done it!	210

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:

1. How did Emma feel before her performance? Use details from the text.
2. What technique did Mrs. Rodriguez teach Emma that helped her during the recital?
3. What does the author mean when she writes that Emma's confidence was "melting away like ice cream on a hot day"?
4. How did Emma's feelings change from the beginning to the end of the passage?