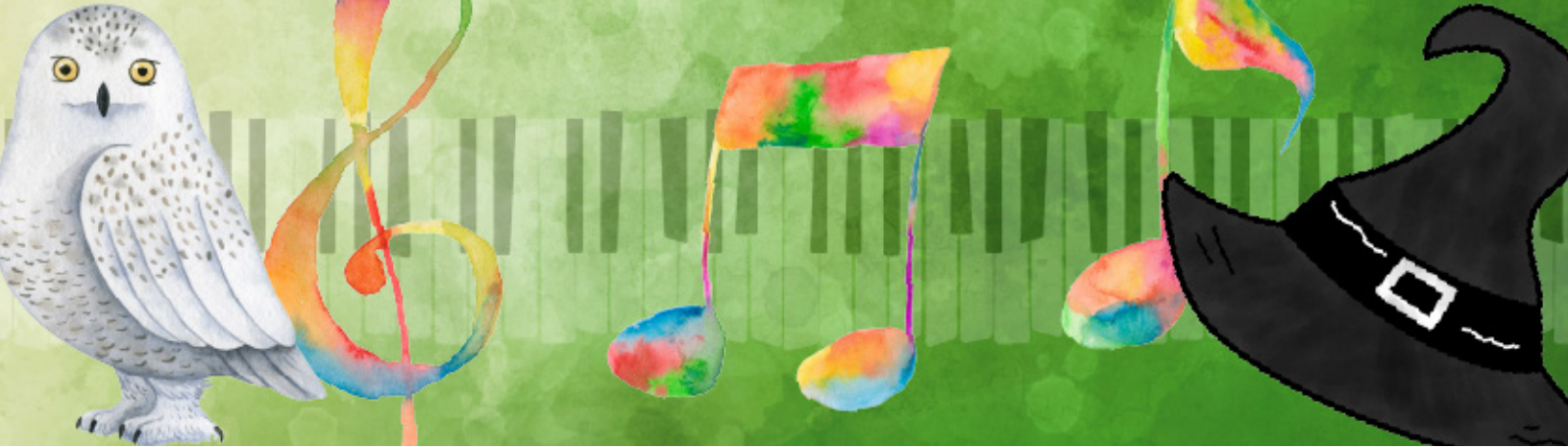




Wicked Good Music

2026.27
Concerts
for
Schools

M_SO MILWAUKEE
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA



Welcome!

On behalf of the musicians and staff of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, we are so excited to welcome you and your students to Allen-Bradley Hall at the Bradley Symphony Center for *Wicked Good Music*. We can't wait to have you here for a fun, educational, and engaging musical experience.

To help prepare your students to get the most out of this concert, this guide contains key background information and activities for all the featured musical selections and their composers. It is our hope that you will find this resource to be a valuable tool in preparing your students to enjoy *Wicked Good Music*. We will be using the National Association for Music Education lesson plan format as well as listing the corresponding national standards for both music and core subject areas as applicable. We invite you to review these materials and provide feedback – we want to know what you think!

You can also preview the concert repertoire by accessing the Spotify links embedded in this guide. More information about how to access the playlist is found below.

Special thanks to our MSO volunteers for their support of MSO Education initiatives. We thank the docents and ushers who generously give their time and talents every season.

Thanks to the following people for their contributions to these concert preparation materials:

Nathan Hickox-Young, MSO Concerts for Schools & Education Manager, content author
Courtney Buvid, MSO ACE & Education Manager, curriculum contributor
Laura Huebner, Dotted Design, graphic design

Again, we are so excited to welcome you and your students to the Bradley Symphony Center for this concert!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Whitney

Director of Education, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra

Audio Guide

The MSO uses Spotify as the Audio Guide to accompany this Teacher Resource Guide. A playlist for this concert has been created for your ease of use for listening to repertoire. There are also clickable Spotify icons next to the pieces in the guide that will take you directly to the musical piece.

To access the Spotify Playlist for this concert, please follow these instructions:

Click **Wicked Good Music***

OR

Visit the MSO's Concerts for Schools webpage [here](#) and start listening!

If you have any issues using Spotify, please contact the MSO Education Department at edu@mso.org.

**You will need to create an account with Spotify to access this free, ad-supported service. There are no entry fees to sign up.*

Get to Know Us!



About the Milwaukee Symphony

➤ *Learn more about the MSO's mission and history!*

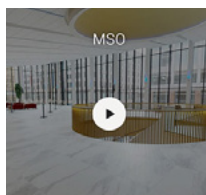
MSO Education Department

➤ *Learn more about our wide variety of programs and initiatives!*



About the Orchestra

➤ *Learn more about all of our musicians in the orchestra!*



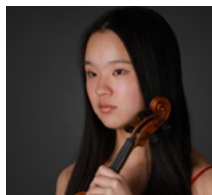
Bradley Symphony Center

➤ *Discover the home of the MSO by taking a virtual tour!*



About Ryan Tani

Now in his fourth season with the MSO and his second as its associate conductor, Ryan Tani has built a reputation for inventive programming, as well as an energetic connection with audiences in Milwaukee and beyond. At the MSO, he conducts a wide range of concerts – including education, family, pops, and classics – and has stepped in for Edo de Waart and led sold-out performances in his 2025 classics debut. **Read more >>**



About Malina Zhang

Malina Zhang, 16, is a junior at Neenah High School and began studying violin at age five with Dr. Yuliya Smead and currently studies with Professor Wen-lei Gu. In 2026 Malina won first prize in the 2026 Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra Audrey G. Baird Stars of Tomorrow Competition, and second prize in the ENKOR International Violin Competition. In 2025 she won the Miroslav Pansky Concerto Competition. Other honors include the 2026 WSMA Exemplary Performance Recognition Award, multiple first-place awards at the Fox Valley Music Teachers Association Young Artist Festival and being selected to the WSMA State Honors Orchestra for four consecutive years. Malina is a member of Fox Valley Symphony Youth Orchestra and the Neenah High School advanced string ensemble Touch of Class. She founded the Concordelle Quartet, a student-led volunteer string quartet that brings live music to nursing homes, hospitals, and community events.

Table of Contents

Program

Program Notes

Lesson Plan 1 - Creating a Me-Motif (GRADES 3-8)

Lesson Plan 2 - Ternary (ABA) Story-telling (GRADES 3-6)

Lesson Plan 3 - The Five (The Mighty Handful) (GRADES 6-8)

Lesson Plan 4 - Beethoven's Rhythms (GRADES 3-6)

Print and Online Resources

Worksheet & Answer Key

Glossary

Concert Preparation

We can't wait to welcome your class to the Bradley Symphony Center to hear the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra! Whether it's your first symphonic concert or you're a seasoned audience member, here are some suggestions on how to get the most out of the performance. There is always something new to learn and experience!

Before You Go

Listen to the pieces

- ◇ Have you heard any of these pieces before?
- ◇ Do you have a favorite?
- ◇ Is there a piece you are excited to hear live?
- ◇ Make thoughtful observations as you listen to the pieces. What instrument families do you hear? Changes in dynamics? Tempos?

Go deeper

- ◇ Read the biographies and program notes.
- ◇ Were there any composers you had never heard of before?
- ◇ Did you learn anything new or interesting that you didn't know before?
- ◇ Have fun in the [MSO's Bitmoji Classroom](#)! Full of interactive elements, including a virtual tour of the Bradley Symphony Center, rooms focused on the four families of the orchestra, and more!

On Stage

Look around

- ◇ Have you been to the Bradley Symphony Center before?
- ◇ Are there any instruments you haven't seen before?
- ◇ What observations do you make about the orchestra and the conductor?
- ◇ Watch the conductor. Can you figure out which instruments will play by where they are pointing or looking?

Listen closely

- ◇ Can you name which instruments are playing based on how they sound?
- ◇ How do the different pieces make you feel?
- ◇ What instruments are used to create different sound effects?
- ◇ Listen for the melodies and try to remember one you'll be able to hum later.

Homeward Bound

Reflect

- ◇ Was there anything that surprised you during the concert?
- ◇ Did you have a favorite moment you'd like to tell your family about later?
- ◇ Was your experience different from your classmates?
- ◇ Do you have questions for the musicians? Or want to say "Thank You"? Send us a letter!

Mail: Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra
Attn. Education Department
212 W Wisconsin Ave
Milwaukee, WI, 53203

Email: edu@mso.org

Rules and Reminders

- ◇ No outside food or drink (except water) allowed in Allen-Bradley Hall.
- ◇ No flash photography or recordings.
- ◇ Visit the bathroom before the concert so you don't miss a moment of the action!
- ◇ Show your appreciation by clapping! When the conductor lowers their hands or baton, the piece is over. The orchestra appreciates your energy and support.
- ◇ If you get separated from your group, ask an usher for help.

Accessibility Resources

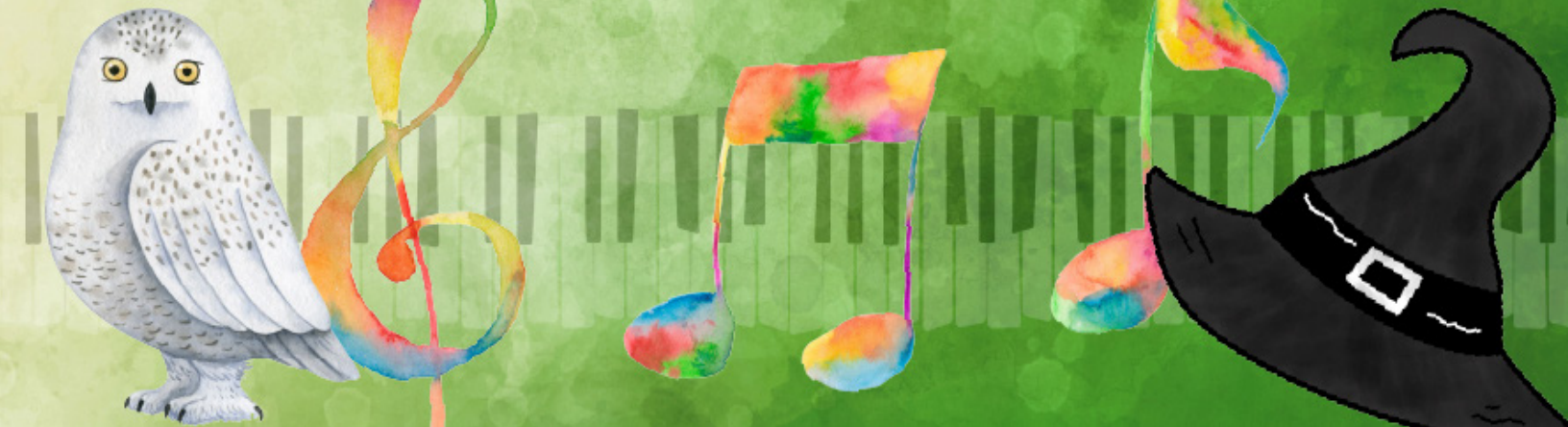
Social Narratives: Visit our KultureCity Venue page [here](#) to access the Bradley Symphony Center social story. A *Wicked Good Music*-specific social narrative will be available on our website prior to the concert.

- ◇ **Sensory Bags, Weighted Lap Pads, & Noise Canceling Headphones:** Sensory bags containing special KultureCity VIP badges, fidget tools, noise canceling headphones, and other resources are available for checkout, at no cost, on concert days. Noise canceling headphones and weighted lap pads can also be checked out individually. Find an usher or staff member on the concert day or make a request ahead of time by emailing Nathan Hickox-Young at hickoxn@mso.org. A photo ID will be requested as security.
- ◇ **Quiet Areas:** The Bradley Symphony Center has a Quiet Room located in the pre-theater lobby on the first floor. The Quiet Room, equipped with a sink, comfortable seating, and warm lighting, is available for anyone who needs a private space to escape for a few minutes. Additional Quiet Areas are located in the Historic Exhibit on the lower level and in the Phone Booth Area on the second level. These spaces can be an escape for those feeling overwhelmed for as little or as long as they need. If you need assistance finding any of these Quiet Areas, please find an usher or Front of House staff member.
- ◇ **Hearing Loop & Infrared Listening System:** Allen-Bradley Hall is equipped with a tele-coil or T-coil Loop system. No additional assistive listening devices are required for patrons with compatible hearing aids or cochlear implants. Allen-Bradley Hall is also equipped with an infrared listening system. Assistive listening devices are offered free of charge and can be requested from an usher or staff member on the concert day or by making a request ahead of time with Nathan Hickox-Young at hickoxn@mso.org. A photo ID will be requested as security.

Teachers – we value your feedback! Be sure to review these materials and let us know how your concert experience was following the performance. We want to know what you think! Preview the concert survey [here](#).



The Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra has partnered with KultureCity to make the Bradley Symphony Center and all of the programs and events that the venue hosts sensory inclusive.



Wicked Good Music

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra | **Ryan Tani**, conductor
Malina Zhang, violin

ROD TEMPERTON arr. Vinson

Thriller

MODEST MUSSORGSKY orch. Ravel

Pictures at an Exhibition

IX. Baba-Yaga - The Hut on Hen's Legs

JUAN PABLO CONTRERAS

La Silla ["The Saddle"]

JOHN WILLIAMS

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
Nimbus 2000 Theme

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 7 in A Major
 II. Allegretto

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

Symphony No. 10 in E minor, Opus 93
 II. Allegro

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Concerto No. 4 in D major for Violin and Orchestra
 I. Allegro
 Malina Zhang, violin

HECTOR BERLIOZ

Symphonie fantastique
 IV. March to the Scaffold: Allegretto non troppo

STEPHEN SCHWARTZ arr. Ricketts

Highlights from *WICKED*



The MSO thanks the following funders for their generous annual support that makes Concerts for Schools programming possible: United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF), Herzfeld Foundation, Hearst Foundations, The Quigg Fund, Educators Credit Union, and the de Hartog Family, Eleanor N. Wilson, and Irene Edelstein Memorial Funds as administered by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation.

Concerts for Schools is supported in part by grants from the Milwaukee Arts Board and the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin. Additional support provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and Milwaukee County Arts Fund (CAMPAC).

PROGRAM NOTES

Join the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra for a magical mix of some wickedly good music. From Classical to Pop, Berlioz to John Williams (and lots in between), you'll discover that great music crosses centuries and styles!

*Note: Words in **bold** indicate that the definition can be found in the glossary.*



MICHAEL JACKSON
(1958-2009)



ROD TEMPERTON
(1949-2016)

Michael Jackson was born in Gary, Indiana to parents Joe and Katherine Jackson. He was one of nine children in what became an extremely musical family. Michael's career began at the young age of six, performing as the lead singer of the Jackson Five. The Motown group was comprised of the five brothers and managed by their father, Joe Jackson. Michael and his brothers produced many number one hits, including "I Want You Back," "ABC," and "I'll Be There." By 1978, Michael was working towards his solo career. That year he performed as the Scarecrow alongside Diana Ross in the movie musical *The Wiz*. In 1979 he released the solo album *Off the Wall* to great success, but *Thriller* (1982) fully established him as a solo performer. The album included some of his greatest hits, including "Beat It," "Billie Jean," and "Thriller." Michael Jackson has been deemed the King of Pop for transforming pop music and dance. He is the creator of the infamous Moonwalk and Anti-Gravity Lean. Jackson's untimely death in 2009 was mourned by many as he was preparing a comeback tour titled, *This Is It*.

Jackson's album *Thriller* was released in 1982 and is one of the best-selling albums in history. Containing iconic pop hits and producing groundbreaking music videos, the album won eight Grammy Awards, including Album of the Year. **Rod Temperton**, nicknamed "The Invisible Man," was the songwriter

of the hit single "Thriller." He was a successful songwriter, contributing numerous songs for Michael Jackson as well as Karen Carpenter, Aretha Franklin, and Donna Summer. Temperton was also responsible for naming both *Off the Wall* and *Thriller* albums. Following the release of the album came a 14-minute music video for the song "Thriller" in 1983. The music video was directed by John Landis and has a horror theme, depicting Michael as a werewolf and a zombie at different points. The style of the song is considered disco-funk and features instruments such as the synthesizer, saxophone, and trumpet. The beginning of the song sets a strong scene with an eerie build in dynamics and creeping ascending tones leading to a climax of descending chords at a fortissimo level!

Sound effects were a key element in the production of "Thriller" to add to the horror theme. Creaking doors, footsteps, thunder, and a howling wolf are among these sound effects. Another addition to the song was a narration by Vincent Price. Price was an American actor known for his involvement in horror films. While these special sound effects may not be used in the orchestra, listen for other ways the musicians create haunting sounds with their instruments.



Activity Idea

Tell students they are going to “produce” their own music video, using a common song most people know (it would be better if it was a song that doesn’t already have a music video they have seen, so they don’t have preconceived ideas of what it should be). Suggestions might be “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” “Take Me Out to the Ball Game,” or even “Happy Birthday.” Students work in groups to make the decisions about the production of their video. Is there a story? What’s the setting? Who will star in it? What characters will they play? Will they need costumes or props? What style will the song be performed in? Once complete, groups share their music video concepts with the class. For a larger project, groups could rehearse, perform, and record their music videos.

Resources

Michael Jackson, ‘Thriller’ music video (about 14 “)

PLEASE NOTE – some images may be frightening to some children. Please preview before showing to students.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOnqjkJTMAA>

Alternatively, here is a more family friendly shorter version:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4V90AmXnguw>

Stine, Megan. HG, Who. Qui, Joseph. *Who Was Michael Jackson?* 2015.



MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1839-1881)

Modest Mussorgsky was born in the Russian village of Karevo and began his musical studies at an early age. He began taking piano lessons with his mother at the age of 6 and showed promise as a composer. At 13, Mussorgsky entered the School for Cadets of the Guard to prepare for a military career, continuing a family tradition of military service, and went on to join the army. However, he remained very interested in music and began studying with the Russian composer Mily Balakirev. By the time he was 18, Mussorgsky resigned his post as junior officer of the Preobrazhensky Regiment to dedicate his life to music. Passionate about composing in a distinct style that portrayed Russian life vividly and realistically, he became known as one of the members of **"The Five,"** or **"The Mighty Handful."** This group was comprised of other composers who shared a strong interest in creating music that was uniquely Russian in nature including Mily Balakirev, Aleksandr Borodin,

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, and César Cui. The music of "The Mighty Handful" was far reaching, influencing other notable composers such as Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Shostakovich, and even the French composers Ravel and Debussy.

Even though his output of music was small, Mussorgsky wrote in many musical **genres** such as opera, orchestral music, and piano works. He is best known for the popular symphonic poem *Night on Bald Mountain*, his opera *Boris Godunov*, and the piano suite, *Pictures at an Exhibition*, written following the death of his friend Viktor Hartmann. The last few years of his life were dominated by solitude and, unfortunately, alcoholism. Mussorgsky died shortly after his 42nd birthday, leaving behind several unfinished works. Composer, and friend, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov revised and completed several of Mussorgsky's works for publication following his death.

"Baba-Yaga - The Hut on Hen's Legs" from *Pictures at an Exhibition* Spotify

Mussorgsky's friend Viktor Hartmann was an artist and architect who died unexpectedly at the age of 39. In February 1874, friends organized an exhibition of his artwork in St. Petersburg. Inspired by the event and wanting to honor his friend, Mussorgsky resolved to "draw in music" the best of his late friend's pictures and completed *Pictures at an Exhibition* in June. Originally for solo piano, the orchestrated version, completed by Maurice Ravel, is more commonly heard. Comprised of ten movements, each of the movements depicts one of the drawings or artworks on display. The "Promenade" movement appears several times in the piece and is meant to represent Mussorgsky walking among Hartmann's pictures.

"Baba-Yaga" ("The Hut on Hen's Legs") is the ninth of ten movements. Based on the Russian folklore character, Baba Yaga is a witch who lives in a hut that stands on hen's legs. She rides through the woods in the giant mortar and pestle she uses to grind the bones of children. This movement was inspired by Hartmann's design for an ornate clock in the shape of Baba Yaga's hut. Mussorgsky uses the influence of the clock in his metronome marking, a tempo of one bar

per second, another traditional symbol of mortality. The music is in ABA, or ternary form, and Mussorgsky expertly sets the spooky forest setting and spectacle of Baba Yaga's ride. In the initial A section, Baba Yaga is in flight and the whirlwind sounds of a chase can be heard. The B section is softer and slower but still menacing and frightening. Suddenly the A section repeats, indicating Baba Yaga has returned!

Activity Idea

Play Mussorgsky's "**Baba-Yaga - The Hut on Hen's Legs**" from *Pictures at an Exhibition* for students. Tell students that the movement and art by Viktor Hartmann was inspired by the Russian folktale, Baba Yaga. Introduce students to the folktale of Baba Yaga by listening to, or reading the transcription of the story, [here](#). Using the imagery from the folktale and emotions from the music, have students create an illustration from the story (Baba Yaga, the Hut on Hen's Legs, Vasilisa, the doll, etc.). Feel free to share student creations with the MSO education office!

Digital Resources

Kirill Petrenko & Berliner Philharmoniker:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sexGNFGYurE>

A shorter version of the Baba Yaga Story:

<https://www.worldstoriesbank.org/story/baba-yaga/>

Mussorgsky Biography:

<https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/media-and-interactives/artists/mussorgsky-modest/>



JUAN PABLO CONTRERAS (b. 1987)

Juan Pablo Contreras is a three-time Latin GRAMMY®-nominated composer and conductor who masterfully weaves Western classical and Mexican folk music into an exhilarating soundscape.

His music has been performed by 60 major orchestras across the United States, Mexico, Austria, Slovakia, Colombia, Spain, Argentina, and Venezuela, as well as in

prestigious concert halls such as Walt Disney Concert Hall, Carnegie Hall, and the Hollywood Bowl. He is renowned as the first Mexican-born composer to sign a record deal with Universal Music, to serve as Sound Investment Composer for the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and to win the Vilcek Prize for Creative Promise.

La Silla ["The Saddle"]



La Silla ["The Saddle"] was inspired by a horse racing event in Monterrey, Mexico as well as a natural 'saddle' (ridge) in the mountains nearby. A local ranch and this mountain feature share the *La Silla* name. The work features a bold fanfare and a lyrical theme, under the rhythmic excitement akin to riding on horseback.

Activity Idea

Listen to Aaron Copland's piece "Hoe-down":  Spotify

This is another piece that contains depictions of horseback riding. Have your students listen to Aaron Copland's "Hoe-Down" and have them compare and contrast the two works. Do they hear any similar rhythms or instruments?

Resources

Visit the composer's website to read more about him and this work:

<https://www.juanpablocontreras.com/>

The South Bend Symphony Orchestra, with Fernanda Lastra, performs *La Silla*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIJAwwXXSKZo>



JOHN WILLIAMS (b. 1932)

John Williams grew up around music and film. As a child he learned to play piano, clarinet, trombone, and trumpet, and his father played drums for many of the famous Warner Brothers cartoons. After serving in the Air Force in the early 1950s, Williams attended the Juilliard School, where he studied piano and composition. Soon after, he moved to Los Angeles, beginning what is widely regarded as one of the most successful careers in Hollywood history.

Williams is best known for his movie music. He has **composed** music for almost 80 movies, including the *Harry Potter* films, *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*, *Jaws*, the *Indiana Jones* movies, and all the *Star Wars* films. Like all skilled composers, Williams has developed his own special style, including a natural ability to write musical themes or **motifs** that immediately bring to mind a specific character.

Nimbus 2000 Theme



The music of John Williams has been an integral part of countless beloved movies for almost forty years. Williams frequently uses leitmotifs (melodies designed to represent characters or ideas) in his film music that create lasting impressions of memorable scenes and characters.

The Nimbus 2000 is the name of Harry Potter's flying broomstick. Given Harry's wooden broomstick, it is fitting that this piece features the woodwind section of the orchestra! This section of the orchestra is defined by instruments that you blow air into rather than buzzing your lips or using strings. Instruments include the flute, oboe, clarinet, English horn, bassoon, and even the recorder! Listen for how the piece starts with just the flutes and oboes, then slowly adds the other members of the woodwind section.

Activity Idea

Listen to some of the other famous film score music that John Williams has written ("Imperial March" from *Star Wars*, "Leia's Theme" from *Star Wars*, "Shark Theme" from *Jaws*, etc.). What connections can you find between all of these pieces of music? Think about instrumentation, tempo, and articulation. Next, think of the characters that these scores are meant to reflect, how does John Williams use music to embody a character?

Resources

John Williams "Nimbus 2000 Theme." Deutsche Grammophon Conducted by John Williams
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=362w3vjvsGE>

Music Express Magazine Interview with John Williams:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNX2rNaCDso>



LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany in 1770. Entering a musical family, his father was his first music teacher. At age 22 Beethoven traveled to Vienna to study with famed composer Franz Joseph Haydn. In 1796, he began to lose his hearing, and by 1814 was completely deaf. As his illness progressed, he struggled emotionally and increasingly avoided social gatherings. Despite his hearing loss, Beethoven continued to compose groundbreaking works including his Symphony No. 9 and *Missa Solemnis*.

Living during a time of many exciting changes, Beethoven was greatly affected by both the American Revolution (1776) and the French Revolution (1789). He strongly believed that free governments needed to replace kings, queens, and emperors. The Industrial Revolution (1760) was also sweeping across Europe during his lifetime

where invention, science, and industry flourished.

Beethoven is considered by many to be the bridge between the **Classical** and **Romantic** periods. While his musical background was rooted in the traditions and structures of the Classical period, his compositional style evolved throughout his lifetime, introducing changes and innovations that ushered in the Romantic period. Beethoven's third symphony, "Eroica," was one of his first compositions to signal this change.

Beethoven died in 1827, leaving the legacy of nine **symphonies**, many **string quartets**, piano **sonatas**, **concertos**, two **masses**, his **opera** *Fidelio* and one **ballet**. 250 years later, Beethoven is still considered to be one of the greatest composers of all time.

Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Opus 92, Mvt. II



It took Beethoven over four years to finish his seventh symphony. Completed in 1812, he dedicated the work to Count Moritz von Fries. The symphony premiered in Vienna on December 8, 1813, at a charity concert for soldiers wounded during a battle against Napoleon. This joyful work has a spontaneous feeling. The piece is known for its prominent use of **rhythmic** devices.

The second movement was immediately popular at the symphony's premiere, with the audience insisting on an encore. Marked **Allegretto**, the movement features a repeated rhythmic pattern of a quarter note, two eighth notes, and two quarter notes. Beginning in the low strings, the rhythm gets passed around to each section of the orchestra, resulting in variations on this rhythmic pattern. A brief coda ends the second movement.

Activity Idea

Access <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffYKCNY6kUk> to listen to the second movement of this symphony while watching a well-done Listening Map. The map uses different lines of color to represent different instruments. Students can watch how the orchestration grows and changes while they listen.

Resources

A brief Beethoven biography:

<https://www.carnegiehall.org/Explore/Articles/2021/04/30/Beethoven-A-Brief-History>

A longer Beethoven biography:

<https://www.thespco.org/listening-library/composer-guides/ludwig-van-beethoven/>

Paavo Järvi and the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sv2QnrCJNk0>



DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)

Shostakovich was born in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1906. His father was an engineer and his mother was a piano teacher and began teaching him when he was 8 years old. Shostakovich proved to be a child **prodigy** at piano and composition, entering the Petrograd (St. Petersburg) Conservatory at age 13. He composed his First Symphony as his graduation work at age 19. The work gained him international recognition when it was performed in Berlin in 1927 and had its United States **premiere** the year after. He continued to gain popularity with his compositions but was not always supported by the Soviet government. He was officially denounced by the Soviets twice, first in 1936 and again in 1948. Shostakovich returned to the Conservatory as a composition teacher

until he was forced to resign after his second denunciation. He was ridiculed by his government for not writing “music for the masses” that the government approved. After Joseph Stalin’s death in 1953, Shostakovich felt freer to share his music again. When Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic toured Russia in 1959, Shostakovich congratulated them on their performance of his Fifth Symphony in Moscow. In order to become the General Secretary of the Composer’s Union, he joined the Communist Party in 1960, despite his issues with the government. He passed away in 1975 due to lung cancer. Shostakovich wrote 15 symphonies, six concertos, chamber music, two operas, and music for numerous films.

Symphony No. 10, II. Allegro Spotify

Dmitri Shostakovich finished his 10th Symphony in 1953, just a few months after the death of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin. Shostakovich had a turbulent relationship with Stalin’s regime – after he had been publicly denounced, his official status was reduced to that of a “non-person” because of unfavorable reactions to some of his compositions by the Soviet leadership. In a memoir of Shostakovich published in 1979, the composer is stated as saying that the 10th Symphony was his musical depiction of Stalin. While some scholars have called this claim into question, there is no doubt that the overall mood of the symphony is tragic. The second movement, which according to the memoir is the actual depiction of Stalin, is short (only about four minutes) but violent. Written in scherzo form, it features syncopated rhythms and a driving, relentless motive. It seems to march across the landscape, destroying everything in its path.

Activity Idea

Shostakovich is one of the most famous examples of someone being persecuted by their government for their art form. Can you think of any other figures in history who have been persecuted or silenced by their government for their art? This doesn’t have to just be music, think about theatre, dance, visual art, or even literature.

Resources

The Orquesta Sinfónica Simón Bolívar conducted by Gustavo Dudamel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ZbJJOE9zNjw>



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born on January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria. His father Leopold was a famous violinist. The Mozarts had 7 children, but only two of them lived to be adults: Wolfgang and his older sister, Marianne (nicknamed Nannerl). Both children were musical **prodigies**, able to play advanced pieces from a young age. Their father, Leopold, saw an opportunity, and decided to take both his children on tour throughout Europe. They toured for almost 10 years (1762 to 1771) and played before some of the most famous courts in Europe. While on tour, both Mozart children began composing and were influenced by the music of all the different areas of Europe that they visited. When Nannerl turned 18, she was no longer allowed to perform in public and while she certainly helped Wolfgang with his compositions, none of her works survived.

When Mozart was a teenager, he spent many years in Italy writing operas. He returned to Salzburg as a court musician for the Prince-Archbishop but disliked it. After being fired in 1781, he moved to Vienna and became a **freelance musician**. As a freelance composer, Mozart expected

his music to be performed to please his audience and to make him money. Even though he was popular, he was not financially successful and was working constantly: teaching music lessons, performing and conducting concerts, as well as composing. These opportunities awarded him status and ironically, somewhat extravagant gifts, but not a steady salary. "No money but a fine gold watch," he writes in a letter. "What one needs on a journey is money; and let me tell you, I now have five gold watches."

He married Constanze Weber in 1782, but Mozart's health was failing and keeping up with all of his work was exhausting. In September of 1791, he became ill while visiting Prague. He eventually died in December of the same year. Mozart was buried in a common grave, meaning he did not have a tomb stone to identify where his body was actually buried. Even though his life was so short, he managed to compose over 600 works in every **genre** known to him: **symphonies, concertos, operas, chamber music, sonatas**, church music, songs, and more.

Concerto No. 4 in D major for Violin and Orchestra, I. Allegro



At just 19 years old, Mozart composed four violin concertos over the span of nine months. While these were not his first works to be published, they were among the first of his works to gain widespread acclaim. Each of his five concertos has its own style and feeling. The first two are very much in the style of Mozart's predecessors such as composers Bocherinni and Tartini but Mozart's unique touch quickly begins to become more prevalent in his remaining violin concerti.

The start of the movement you will hear begins with a fanfare that sounds like it was written for a trumpet! It's lively and exciting and is quickly followed by a more playful theme containing a trill, which is a technique in which the musician alternates between notes very quickly. Listen to how Mozart uses lines of longer notes to contrast short, separated notes!

Activity Idea

In April of 2026, our soloist Malina Zhang competed in our Stars of Tomorrow concerto competition and won the opportunity to play on this concert. Read more about Malina in the **Get To Know Us** section. Using the glossary, have a discussion with your students about what a concerto is, and what criteria you might use to judge a concerto competition.

Resources

Information from Carnegie Hall on Mozart's Violin Concertos:

<https://www.carnegiehall.org/Explore/Articles/2024/10/08/Guide-to-Mozart-Violin-Concertos>

Information from the Hollywood Bowl specifically on Mozart's 4th Violin Concerto:

<https://www.hollywoodbowl.com/musicdb/pieces/4576/violin-concerto-no-4-in-d-k-218>

Noa Wildschut performing the full concerto with the Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fuk2q_41W_A



HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

Hector Berlioz was born in La Côte Saint-André near Lyon in France. He never learned to play the piano, but instead learned to play the guitar, flute, and flageolet (a wind instrument). His father was a doctor, and in 1821, Berlioz traveled to Paris to study medicine. While in Paris, he attended his first opera, and became engrossed by music, sitting for hours in the library copying a number of musical scores, and in 1824 he left medicine to study music at the Conservatoire. Berlioz attended two Shakespeare plays, *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*, in late 1827 and the woman portraying Ophelia and Juliet was Irish actress Harriett Smithson, whom Berlioz became infatuated with. She, however, was put off by Berlioz's enthusiasm and refused to meet him. Smithson became the main inspiration for the *Symphonie fantastique*. In 1830, Berlioz won the Prix de Rome composition competition and studied in

Rome for two years as his prize. After his return to Paris, another performance of *Symphonie fantastique* was held, with Smithson in attendance. Realizing the work was about her, she agreed to meet Berlioz. The pair began a relationship and married in 1833, but later divorced.

When not composing, Berlioz was a prolific writer and was frequently sought after as a music critic for publications. In 1844, Berlioz published his *Grand Traité d'Instrumentation et d'Orchestration Modernes* (Treatise on Instrumentation and Orchestration). This book explains the composing practices of the time, breaking the orchestra into sections: wind instruments, strings, and percussion. Despite a few changes to instrument manufacturing, this text is still considered one of the best comprehensive guides to orchestration.

Symphonie fantastique "March to the Scaffold"

Composed in 1830, the work is subtitled an "Episode in the Life of an Artist." The piece included a written program by Berlioz himself, which like an opera summary, explained the drama of each of the five movements being expressed in the music. This autobiographical program shows the artist's obsession with his beloved, who ignores him. In the first movement, he dreams of her with an associated musical idea (*idée fixe*). The *idée fixe* was a term Berlioz came up with, meaning a fixed idea. The 40-measure melody is chromatic, jagged, yearning upwards and falling in despair. It reappears in each movement virtually unchanged.

Berlioz's Program:

The composer's intention has been to develop various episodes in the life of an artist, in so far as they lend themselves to musical treatment. As the work cannot rely on the assistance of speech, the plan of the instrumental drama needs to be set out in advance. The following program must therefore be considered as the spoken text of an opera, which serves to introduce musical movements and to motivate their character and expression.*

**This program should be distributed to the audience at concerts where this symphony is included, as it is indispensable for a complete understanding of the dramatic plan of the work.*

Movement 4: March to the Scaffold

He (the artist) dreams that he has killed his beloved, that he is condemned, led to the scaffold and is witnessing his own execution. The procession advances to the sound of a march that is sometimes somber and wild, and sometimes brilliant and solemn, in which a dull sound of heavy footsteps follows without transition the loudest outbursts. At the end of the march, the first four bars of the idée fixe reappear like a final thought of love interrupted by the fatal blow.

What to listen for:

Listen for the drums which begin the march of the fourth movement, quickly joined by the timpani, cornets and others. The horns are next to follow, blasting the march theme. At the end of the movement, the idée fixe (fixed idea) is played by the clarinet and is abruptly cut off by a G minor chord. This forte chord and the following pizzicato notes represent the artist's final moments. The victorious final measures convey the cheering of the onlookers.

Activity Idea

Similar to an idée fixe or a leitmotif, athletes sometimes choose a "walk-up" song to represent themselves as they get ready to play. Have your students choose a song that they feel represents them, or that they identify with. Why did they choose this song to represent themselves?

Resources

An extensive review of Hector Berlioz:

www.hberlioz.com

Leonard Bernstein on the Idée Fixe:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIZSwGz6xzo>

Sir Simon Rattle and the London Symphony Orchestra:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=598i8b3HGrw>



STEPHEN SCHWARTZ (b. 1948)

Stephen Schwartz wrote the music and lyrics for the current Broadway hit *Wicked* and has also contributed music and/or lyrics to *Godspell*, *Pippin*, *The Magic Show*, *The Baker's Wife*, *Working* (which he also adapted and directed), *Rags*, and *Children of Eden*. He collaborated with Leonard Bernstein on the English texts for Bernstein's *Mass* and wrote the title song for the play and movie *Butterflies Are Free*. For children, he has written songs for two musicals, *Captain Louie* and *My Son Pinocchio*. He has also worked in film, collaborating with Alan Menken on the songs for Disney's *Enchanted* as well as the animated features

Pocahontas and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and writing the songs for the DreamWorks animated feature *The Prince of Egypt*. His first opera, *Seance on a Wet Afternoon*, was produced at Opera Santa Barbara and New York City Opera. A book about his career, *Defying Gravity*, has been released by Applause Books. Mr. Schwartz has been inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame and the Songwriters Hall of Fame and has been given a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Schwartz's honors include three Academy Awards, four Grammy Awards, and a tiny handful of tennis trophies.

Highlights from *WICKED*



Wicked is filled with engaging music and an intriguing story line based on the infamous Wicked Witch of the West from *The Wizard of Oz*. Winner of three 2004 Tony Awards, *Wicked* is a Broadway phenomenon that looks at what happened in the Land of Oz but from a different angle. It is a tale about friendship, love, and the shades of gray between good and evil. Arranger Ted Ricketts has taken many of the themes and most famous songs from the musical and arranged them for full orchestra without a vocal soloist.

Activity Idea

Using the glossary, define the term arrangement with your students. What other words might you call an arrangement used in popular music; a remix? a cover? Have your students take a song that they are very familiar with and make an arrangement of it for your music class.

Resources

Extensive information on Stephen Schwartz:

<https://stephenschwartz.com/>

Atlanta Philharmonic Orchestra and Amy Wilson:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU8sw7KKuSI>



Lesson 1 – Creating a Me-Motif

Subject

General
Music

Level

3-8

Duration

45 minutes

Materials

MSO Me-Motif Worksheet

An instrument to play your student's compositions

Audio capabilities to play examples (optional)

Lesson Objectives/NAfME Standards

MU:Cr1.1.3a Improvise rhythmic and melodic ideas and describe connections to specific purpose and context (such as personal and social).

MU:Cr2.1.3b Use standard and/or iconic notation and/or recording technology to document personal rhythmic and melodic musical ideas.

MU:Cr3.1.2a Interpret and apply personal, peer, and teacher feedback to revise personal music.

Summary of Tasks

1. Using the glossary, explain to your students what a leitmotif is. It may be helpful to play popular examples such as "Hedwig's Theme" from *Harry Potter*, "Imperial March" from *Star Wars*, or "Mario's Theme" from *Super Mario Bros*.
2. Review with your students the names of the notes on the staff.
3. Review basic rhythmic components such as quarter notes, half notes, and eighth notes.
4. Today, each student will make their own Leitmotif based on their birthday. (It may be helpful to do your birthday in front of the class together to demonstrate.) First, create your melody based on your 8-digit birthday and the following chart. Each number has been assigned a note name.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
C	D	Eb	E	F	G	Ab	A	Bb	B

For example, if your birthday is 02/07/2000, your series of notes will be: C, Eb, C, A, Eb, C, C, C

Then have your students write out these notes on the staff.

At this point, your student can choose the rhythm of their leitmotif; it may be helpful to narrow the options to half notes, quarter notes, and eighth notes. Each of the notes can have the same rhythm (all quarter notes) or each can be different. Have your students bring their newly composed leitmotif up to you and play their piece for the class.

Assessment

Students will be graded on the completion of the worksheet, which can be turned in. Alternatively, if you would like to create longer melodies, you could have the students work in pairs and turn in one worksheet.

Take Home/Extension Tasks

If your students are struggling to write the notes on the staff, you may want to play the melody from the note names. Alternatively, if your students are finished early, they can add artistic elements to their melody such as dynamics or rhythm. Likewise, they also could create a harmony line to their melody using a friend/family member's birthday and the selected notes provided.

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra Me-Motif Worksheet

Name_____

Date_____

1. Today we will create our own Leitmotifs! First, write out your 8-digit birthday.
(For example, if your birthday is February 7th, 2000, then your 8-digit birthday will be 02/07/2000.)

Write your 8-digit birthday here: _____

2. Using the table of selected notes, create the notes of your melody based on your 8-digit birthday.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
C	D	E $\flat$	E(♯)	F	G	A $\flat$	A(♯)	B $\flat$	B(♯)

For example, if your birthday is 02/07/2000 then the notes of your melody will be:

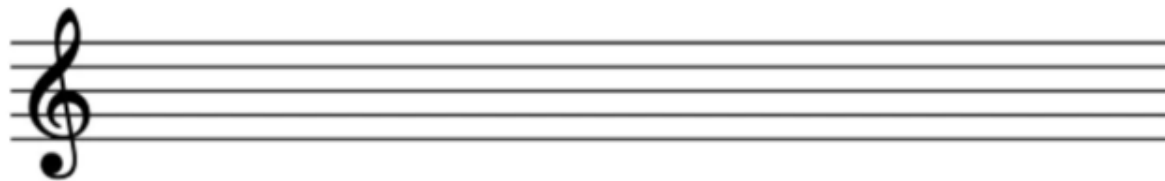
C, E $\flat$, C, A, E $\flat$, C, C, C

Write the notes of your melody here:_____

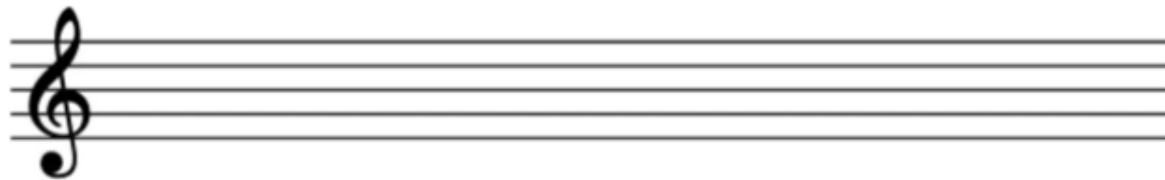
3. 

A musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). It contains ten notes, each corresponding to a digit from 0 to 9. The notes are: C (first space), D (second space), E $\flat$ (second space with a flat), E (third space with a sharp), F (first space), G (second space), A $\flat$ (second space with a flat), A (third space with a sharp), B $\flat$ (third space with a flat), and B (fourth space with a sharp). The notes are grouped by vertical lines below them: C, D, E $\flat$, E, F, G, A $\flat$, A, B $\flat$, B.

Write the notes of your melody on the blank staff below. You can use the staff above as a reminder of what each of the selected notes looks like on the staff.



4. Decide what rhythm you want your notes to be played in. Will your melody be all quarter notes for a steady rhythm, or will you include half notes for a gentler line? Write your final composed melody here:



(Optional) As an added challenge, could you add artistic elements to your melody such as crescendo, decrescendo, staccato, or accelerando?

Lesson 2 – Ternary (ABA) Story-telling

Subject

General
Music

Level

3-6

Duration

30-45 minutes

Materials

- Paper and Colored Pencils for each student
- Audio and Visual Capabilities
- Access to the folktale of Baba Yaga [here](#). Alternatively, a shorter version can be found [here](#).

Lesson Objectives/NAfME Standards

MU:Re7.1.4a Demonstrate and explain how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, purposes, or contexts.

MU:Re7.2.5a Demonstrate and explain, citing evidence, how responses to music are informed by the structure, the use of the elements of music, and context (such as social, cultural, and historical).

MU:Cn11.0.6a Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

Summary of Tasks/Actions:

1. Distribute paper and colored pencils to your students.
2. Tell your students to draw three large boxes, each of these boxes will contain a scene or background.
3. Play them Mussorgsky's **"Baba-Yaga - The Hut on Hen's Legs"** from *Pictures at an Exhibition* from the beginning to the 1'17" mark. If possible, don't give too much context on the piece, just tell the students that this is a piece of music based off a painting. After just listening the first time, explain to your students that they are to draw in the first box a visual representation of what they heard. What kind of landscape might Mussorgsky been picturing when he composed this part of the piece? Play that section of the piece again.
4. Play them the second section (from 1'17" to 2'40") and again ask them to draw in the second box a scene to go along with the music.
5. Lastly, play the third and final section (2'40" to 3'40"). Note that in the original piece, this movement is attacca with the final movement of the work so I would suggest stopping at the 3'40" mark. Once again, ask them to draw a scene to match what they have heard.
6. Have some of your students share out their drawing and lead a discussion. Do the first and the third section look and sound similar? What adjectives would you use to describe each of the sections?
7. Define ternary form in music using the glossary. It may be helpful to give examples of things in our daily life that reflect ternary form such as a sandwich cookie. (A being the first cookie, B being the cream in the middle, and A being the second cookie.)
8. Play the full piece once again and see if your students can point out when the B section occurs, and when the A section comes back.
9. Using your students' drawings, have your students write a short story wherein the first part of the story takes place in the first scene, the second part of the story takes place in the second scene, and the third part of the story takes place in the first scene again.

10. Tell them the folktale of Baba Yaga and show them the painting that this piece is based on:



11. Lead a discussion with your students. Does the painting that Mussorgsky was inspired by look anything like your drawings? Why or why not? (Hint: This was originally the design for a clock that was inspired by the story of Baba Yaga, rather than an actual depiction of the character.)

Assessment

Student may turn in their short stories and drawings for evaluation. Participation in the discussion can also act as informal assessment.

Take Home/Extension Tasks

This piece of music is only one movement of *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Have your students listen to the other movements and subsequently research the paintings or stories that inspired them.



Lesson 3 – The Five (The Mighty Handful)

Subject

General
Music

Level

6-8

Duration

Multi-day
project

Materials

Biographical information on Mussorgsky – MSO
Teacher Guide

Rubric for presentations

Chromebooks or laptops

Art materials (optional)

Lesson Objectives/NAfME Standards

MU:Re7.1.6a Demonstrate and explain, citing evidence, how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, purposes, or contexts.

MU:Re7.2.6a Demonstrate and explain, citing evidence, how responses to music are informed by the structure, the use of the elements of music, and context (such as social, cultural, and historical).

MU:Cn10.0 Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

Summary of Tasks

1. Have a class discussion around the following prompts:
 - a. What does a composer do?
 - b. Can we name any composers?
 - c. What would you like to learn about composers?
2. Introduce Mussorgsky and his traits as a composer, making sure to highlight his Nationalist composing style.
3. Tell students that Mussorgsky was a member of “The Five” or “The Mighty Handful.” This was a group of Russian composers who were all passionate about portraying Russian life vividly and realistically in their music.
4. Divide students into groups to research a member of “The Five.” This can be random or assigned.
5. Have each group prepare a Google Slides or PowerPoint presentation that contains the following:
 - a. Short biography of the composer
 - b. Basic information
 - c. Listening examples
 - d. Opinions on composer and/or music
 - e. Words to know (optional)
 - f. Fun facts (optional)
6. When complete, have groups present their composer to the class.

Assessment

Student presentations will act as the assessment; an additional assessment for knowledge may be given at the conclusion of each group presentation.

Take Home/Extension Tasks

Each group may create a trading card for their composer listing pertinent information and a picture.

Lesson 4 – Beethoven's Rhythms

Subject

General
Music

Level

3-6

Duration

15 minutes

Materials

Audio capabilities to play the music

Optional instruments to play the melody

Lesson Objectives/NAfME Standards

MU:Pr4.2.3a Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance.

MU:Pr4.2.3b When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic patterns and melodic phrases using iconic and standard notation.

MU:Pr5.1.3b Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities, and identified performance challenges.

MU:Pr4.1.4a Demonstrate and explain how the selection of music to perform is influenced by personal interest, knowledge, context, and technical skill.

Summary of Tasks

1. First review with your class your system for counting rhythm. (This could be Kodály, numbers, etc.). Then, have your class learn the following rhythmic pattern via clapping or an instrument:



2. After your students have mastered this rhythm pattern (part 1), introduce this next rhythmic pattern:



3. Once your students have mastered each of these patterns, split the class in half and have them play their rhythms together.
4. Once your students have mastered the rhythm of each of these, teach them the following melody to go along with the rhythm. Solfege syllables are included for ease but feel free to use whatever note learning method your class is used to. This also could be accomplished with mallet instruments if available.



5. Once your students have mastered this melody teach them this second melody:



6. Once again, split the class in half and have them sing or play this phrase.
7. Listen to the beginning of the 2nd Movement of Beethoven's 7th Symphony. Do your students recognize the melody and the harmony parts?
8. Lastly, after your students are comfortable with each of these parts, as well as playing them together, explain that as Beethoven grew older, he became almost completely deaf, so he had to hear the music in his head. This is called audiation. Lead an exercise with your class in which you start singing or playing the parts they have learned, then stop singing or playing out loud but still making music in your head and then start playing again. Are you able to stay together while you are just using audiation? How do you think this loss of hearing affected Beethoven's compositions?

Assessment

Informal assessment here would be appropriate based on student participation and accuracy of rhythm.

Take Home/Extension Tasks

The melody provided has been paired down slightly from the original to make it more accessible, but if your students are advanced, feel free to use this version that more closely resembles the original. Note the accidentals and grace notes:

$\text{♩} = 60$

Part 1

Do Ti Re Do Ti Ti Do Do Do Do Re Ri Mi Mi Mi Fa Mi Re Re Mi Mi

Part 2

Mi Mi Mi Mi Mi Mi Mi Mi Mi Mi Mi Fi Sol Sol Sol Sol Sol Sol

General Print and Online Resources

Instruments and the Orchestra

Koscielniak, Bruce. *An Introduction to Musical Instruments and the Symphony Orchestra: The Story of the Incredible Orchestra*. 2000.

Levine, Robert. *The Story of the Orchestra*. 2001. General, child-friendly guide to the orchestra, instruments, and composers. CD included.

[The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra by Benjamin Britten. Game.](#) Interactive website that introduces and describes the instruments of an orchestra through numerous mini-games.

[Utah Symphony/Utah Opera Instruments of the Orchestra Video Series](#) (short videos profiling musicians and their instruments in the orchestra).

[Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra Bitmoji Classroom](#). Interactive website.

Composers, Pieces, and General Background

[Dallas Symphony Orchestra Kids website.](#) Composer list includes pages on Mozart, Grieg, Debussy, and Rimsky-Korsakov.

[Kennedy Center.](#) Composer biographies and general music education resources.

Wicked Good Music Worksheet

Short Answer

1. What does the conductor do with his or her hands or baton to show the piece is over?

2. What did Mozart say he had 5 of, but still no money?

3. What world leader is Shostakovich's 10th Symphony a musical depiction of?

4. What did Hector Berlioz go to school for before he studied music?

5. Which composer(s) on this program are still alive?

6. How many composers on this program composed music for films?

7. What musical form was "Baba-Yaga" composed in?

8. How many pieces on this program are arrangements?

Word Bank:

Three	John Williams	Raises them	Four
Ternary Form	Napoleon	Two	Military Operations
Juan Pablo Contreras	Medicine	Stalin	Gold Watches
Cuckoo Clocks	Lowers them	Sonata Form	Five
Baking	Stephen Schwartz		

Wicked Good Music Worksheet Answer Key

1. Lowers them
2. Gold Watches
3. Stalin
4. Medicine
5. John Williams, Juan Pablo Contreras, and Stephen Schwartz
6. Three
7. Ternary Form
8. Two

Glossary

Accompaniment: Instrumental or vocal parts that support a more important part.

Allegretto: A moderately quick tempo. Brisk and animated.

Arrangement: A musical adaptation or reworking of an existing work.

Ballet: An artistic dance performed to music using very precise, formalized steps.

Beat: The unit of musical rhythm.

Cadence: A sequence of notes or chords comprising the close of a musical phrase.

Chord: Three or more musical notes played at the same time.

Chamber Music: music written for a small ensemble, typically with one player per part, and designed for performance in a smaller space like a room or chamber.

Classical Era or Period: The time in music history from the early 1700s to early 1800s. The music emphasized the use of formal structures while offering variety and contrast within a piece. Composed works were expressive and polished, with clearer divisions between sections and lighter textures.

Compose: The act of writing music.

Composer: A person who writes music.

Composition: An original piece of music.

Concertmaster: The leader of the first violins of an orchestra and an assistant to the conductor.

Concerto: A composition written for a solo instrument and orchestra. The soloist plays the melody while the orchestra plays the accompaniment.

Conductor: One who directs a group of performers. The conductor indicates the tempo, phrasing, dynamics, and style with gestures and facial expressions.

Conservatory: A college for the study of classical music or other arts.

Crescendo: A gradual increase in the volume of music.

Debut: A person's first appearance or performance in public.

Decrescendo: A gradual decrease in volume.

Director: A person who guides the making of a film. The director controls a film's artistic and dramatic aspects.

Duet: A performance by two people.

Duration: The time that a sound or silence lasts, represented by musical notes and rests with fixed values with respect to one another and determined by tempo.

Dynamics: Loudness or softness of a composition. The symbols in sheet music indicating volume.

Ensemble: A group of two or more musicians.

Excerpt: A smaller musical passage taken from a larger movement or work.

Flat: A symbol showing that the note is to be lowered by one half-step.

Folklore: The traditional beliefs, customs, and stories of a community transmitted orally from generation to generation.

Form: The structure of a piece of music.

Forte: A dynamic marking indicating to play loud.

Fortissimo: A dynamic marking indicating to play very loud.

Freelance Musician: A musician that works on a project basis rather than being employed by a single entity. They may teach lessons, perform at events, or write music to make their living.

Genre: A category that identifies a piece of music as belonging to a certain style or tradition.

Harmony: The pleasing combination of two or three pitches played together in the background while a melody is being played. Also refers to the study of chord progressions.

Incidental Music: Music used in a film or played as background music to enhance a particular atmosphere.

Instrumentation: Arrangement of music for a specific combination of instruments.

Key: The system of notes or pitches based on and named after the key note.

Key signature: The flats and sharps at the beginning of each staff line showing the key in which the piece is to be played.

Legato: Indication to a musician to perform in a smooth, flowing manner, without breaks between notes.

Major: One of two modes of the tonal system. Music in major keys has a positive, affirming character.

Mass: A religious work, usually containing all the pieces of a traditional catholic mass service.

Melody: A succession of pitches in a coherent line; the principal part of a composition.

Minor: One of two modes of the tonal system. Can be identified by a dark, melancholic mood.

Motif/Motive: Primary theme or subject.

Movement: A separate section of a larger composition.

Natural: A symbol showing that the note is returned to its original pitch after it has been raised or lowered.

Notation: The methods of transcribing music into print.

Opera: A drama where the words are sung instead of spoken.

Opus: A musical work, abbreviated to Op. Often used with a number to designate a work in its chronological relationship to a composer's other works.

Orchestra: A large group of instrumentalists playing together.

Orchestration (v. orchestrate): Arranging a piece of music for an orchestra.

Overture: The musical introduction to an opera, ballet, or play.

Patron: A person who financially supports a composer or artist.

Piano: A dynamic marking indicating to play softly.

Pianissimo: A dynamic marking indicating to play very softly.

Pitch: The frequency of a note determining how high or low it sounds.

Pizzicato: A technique where a stringed instrument is played by being plucked, rather than bowed.

Premiere: The first official performance of a work.

Prodigy: A person, especially a young one, endowed with exceptional qualities or abilities.

Program music: Music that is descriptive, narrative, or that develops a nonmusical subject.

Quartet: A set of four musicians who perform compositions written for four parts.

Repertoire: A collection or body of standard works performed regularly.

Rest: A period of silence in a musical line.

Rhythm: Pertaining to time, played as a grouping of notes into accented and unaccented beats.

Romantic Era or Period: The time in music history during the early 1800s to early 1900s. Composers explored new realms of sound to convey originality and individuality. The music was characterized by an emotional, expressive, and imaginative style.

Scale: Any set of musical notes ordered by pitch.

Scherzo: Literally translating to "joke," scherzos are lively and fast works, usually taking place in one of the middle movements of a symphony.

Score: The depiction, often in book or bound form, of a musical work containing all the parts stacked vertically and rhythmically aligned. (v. scored: To write or arrange for a specific instrument or instruments.)

Sharp: A symbol showing that the note is to be raised by one half-step.

Solo: Music performed by only one instrument or voice. (n. soloist: The person performing the solo line.)

Sonata: Music of a particular form typically consisting of four movements. Each movement differs in tempo, rhythm, and melody, but they are bound together by subject and style.

Songwriter: A person who composes words, music, or both, especially for popular songs.

Staccato: Indication to a musician to perform each sound with sharp, detached breaks between notes.

Staff: Five horizontal parallel lines and spaces between them on which musical notation is written.

String Quartet: A small chamber music ensemble consisting of 2 violins, 1 viola, and 1 cello.

Symphonic Poem (tone poem): An instrumental composition intended to portray a particular story, scene, or mood.

Symphony: Three to four movement orchestral piece, generally in sonata form.

Tempo: Indicating speed.

Ternary Form: A musical form in which an A section opens the piece, there is a contrasting B section, and finally the A section returns at the conclusion of the work.

Texture: The way in which tempo, melody, and harmony are combined in a composition that determines the overall quality of the sound in a piece. Often described in relation to density as thick or thin or in relative terms such as by the number of parts or voices present.

Theme: A melodic or sometimes harmonic idea presented in a musical form.

The Mighty Handful: A group of young Russian composers dedicated to developing a uniquely Russian style of classical music.

Timbre: The quality that makes a particular musical sound have a different sound from another, even when they have the same pitch and loudness.

Time Signature: Numeric symbol in sheet music determining number of beats per measure.

Tone: A note or pitch. Also, the quality and character of sound.

Tritone: An interval of three whole tones (an augmented fourth).

Waltz: A dance or piece of music typically using the 3/4 time signature.

Western Music: Music that comes from the styles and traditions of Europe as well as the western hemisphere.