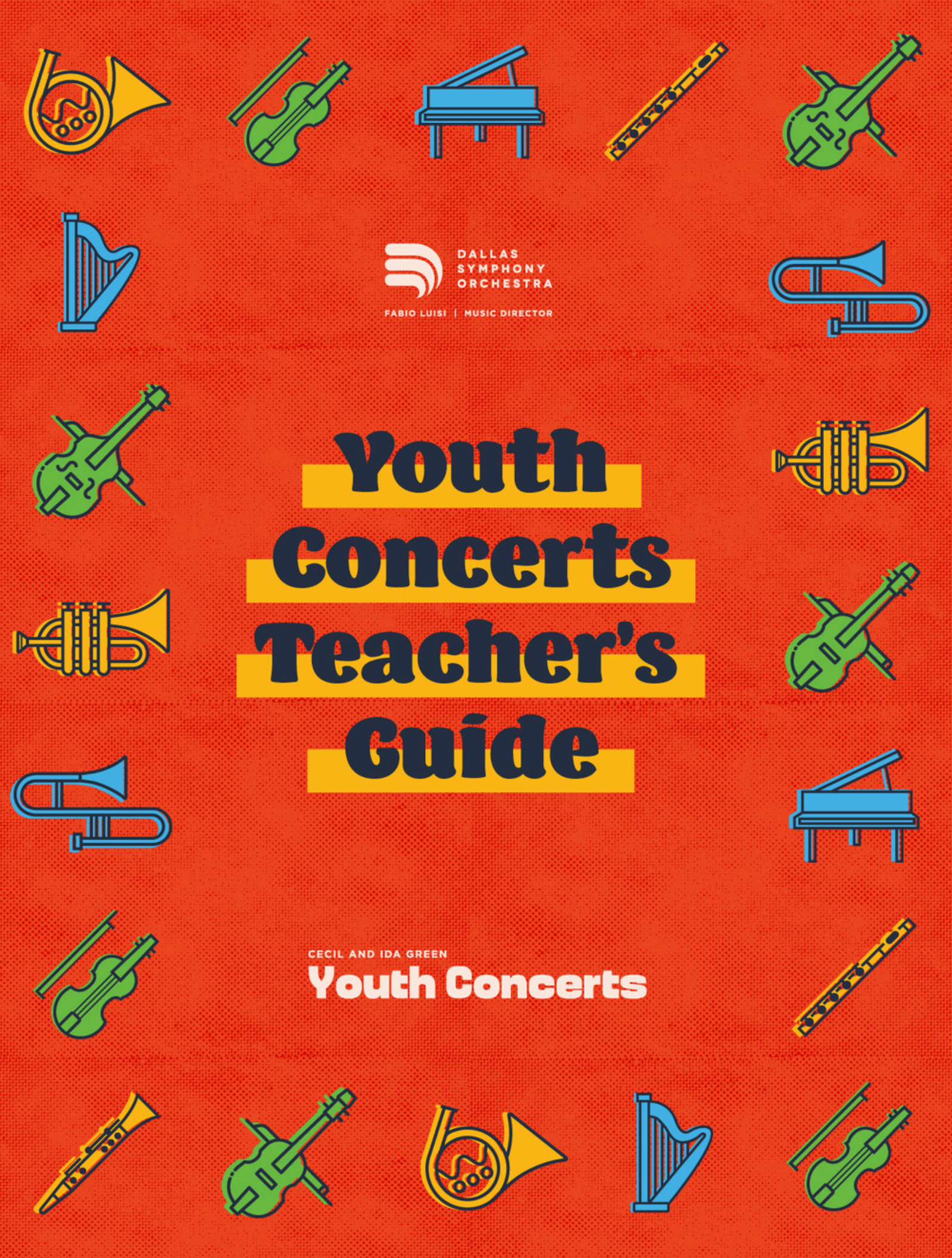




Youth Concerts Teacher's Guide

CECIL AND IDA GREEN
Youth Concerts



The Dallas Symphony Orchestra Presents:
Postcards from Around the World
October 28 and 29, 2026

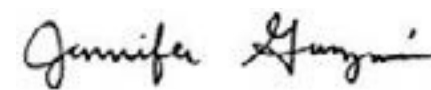
Dear Music Educators,

We are delighted to welcome you to the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center for this Dallas Symphony Orchestra's first Cecil & Ida Green Youth Concert of the 2026-27 season!

In *Postcards from Around the World*, you'll explore how composers use music to tell stories about places, cultures, and traditions from across the globe. You'll hear the powerful sounds of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky, the vibrant dances of Arturo Márquez, the beautiful melodies of Indian-American composer Reena Esmail, and a programmatic piece highlighting a voyage out at sea with Welsh composer Katie Jenkins (who will be with us at the concert!).

Thank you for joining us on this musical journey. We look forward to being together this October for the concert!

Musically yours,



Jennifer Guzmán, Thomas & Roberta Corbett Director of Education

j.guzman@dalsym.com

214-871-4019

To contact sales, please reach out to Groups@dalsym.com or call 214-849-4376

VISIT THE DALLAS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S EDUCATIONAL WEB SITE:
www.DSOkids.com

Activities for *Postcards from Around the World* teacher's guide were prepared by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra's Curriculum Development Team: Tony Driggers, Jen Guzmán, and Sarah Hatler.

This volume of the teacher's guide was produced and edited by Dallas Symphony Orchestra Education Staff Members Sarah Hatler and Jen Guzmán. Materials in this teacher's guide can be photocopied for classroom use. If you have any questions about the concerts or material in this guide, please email

Sarah Hatler at s.hatler@dalsym.com.



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YouTube Playlist & Composer Biographies

In the following lessons of this Teacher Guide, the playlist will be referenced and can be found here:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIn1z_eTQBcHdmLOJ6x05YRy_9R6JHs8p

The tracks in this playlist include repertoire that will be performed at the Youth Concert you and your students will be watching, so we encourage you to listen to these pieces in advance to familiarize yourselves with the music. Click on the names of the composers to read their biography!

1. P. I. Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 4, Finale
2. Reena Esmail Ram Tori Maya
3. Beethoven Symphony No. 5, First movement
4. Marquez Danzon No. 2
5. Mendelssohn Symphony 3 Scherzo
6. TRAD. Flowers in Spring
7. Katie Jenkins Transatlantic Voyage

Concert Etiquette

1. The use of cameras and recorders is prohibited.
2. Please turn off cellular phones and any other electronic devices.
3. Students and teachers should remain in their seats for the entire concert.
4. Restrooms are located on all levels and should be used for urgent needs only. If students must visit the restroom, please have an adult accompany them.
5. Students not maintaining acceptable standards of behavior will be asked to leave, and may jeopardize their school's future attendance at DSO events.





Concert Guidelines for Teachers

Before the Concert

Please contact groups@dalsym.com or call 214-849-4376 at least one week prior to your Youth Concert experience if you need to confirm or make changes to a reservation. Inform them if you do not need to use our bus parking. Please prepare your students by using materials in this book.

Students should be briefed on concert etiquette in advance.

Please contact groups@dalsym.com or call 214-849-4376 at least one week before the concert if your group includes any students or teachers with special needs, including wheelchairs, or if you are in need of infra-red headsets for the hearing impaired.

The Day of the Concert

Before leaving school, please allow time for students to visit the restroom. Learn your bus driver's name and be sure you can recognize him/her and can recognize your bus.

Plan to arrive at the Meyerson at least thirty minutes before concert time.

Upon Arrival at the Meyerson

If you arrive by bus, please DO NOT UNLOAD BUSES UNTIL YOU ARE GREETED BY A DSO STAFF MEMBER. After drop-off on Flora St., buses will stage on Jack Evans and Woodall Rodgers Frontage Road.

Homeschool and car drivers can park in HALL Arts Parking:

This seven-level, underground facility offers an abundance of covered parking spaces for your convenience by the hour, the day. Inside the facility are multiple elevator banks providing safe and covered access to Dallas' most desirable entertainment and cultural venues. Parking is available to Arts District visitors and DSO Patrons on levels 5, 6, and 7. Accessible parking is available on levels 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Check in with a volunteer in the main lobby; a volunteer will guide your group to your seating area. (Seating sections are assigned on the basis of group size).

All students should be in their seats at least five minutes before the concert time.

No food or drink, including chewing gum, is permitted in the concert hall.

During the Concert

The use of cameras and recorders is prohibited.

Please turn off cellular phones and any other electronic devices.

Students and teachers should remain in their seats for the entire concert.

Restrooms are located on all levels and should be used for urgent needs only. If students must visit the restroom, please have an adult accompany them.

Students not maintaining acceptable standards of behavior will be asked to leave, and may jeopardize their school's future attendance at DSO events.

After the Concert

Please remain in your seats until your school is dismissed.

Upon dismissal, listen carefully and follow instructions for departing the building.

Back at School

Refer to this guide or www.DSOkids.com for follow-up activities.

Student letters/artwork expressing reactions to the concert are appropriate. Email to S.Hatler@dalsym.com.

Mailing Address:

Attn: Youth Concerts

Dallas Symphony Orchestra

2301 Flora St., Schlegel Administrative Suites

Dallas, TX 75201



Who's Who



Shira Samuels-Shragg began her tenure as assistant conductor of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra at the start of the 2024/25 season. Previously, Shira served as the assistant conductor for the Spokane (WA) Symphony, and for the Plano (TX) Symphony. A musician deeply dedicated to diversity in the orchestral world, Shira was delighted to be one of four conductors selected for The Dallas Opera's 2024 Hart Institute for Women Conductors, and to be chosen as a mentee with the Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship. Shira is passionate about sharing the wonders of music with young audiences and has led education concerts, sensory-friendly events, and family-oriented programs for over 80,000 students and their families. Additionally, she is the co-founder and music director of the Plano Symphony's Summer Youth Orchestra Camp, and served as the assistant conductor for National Youth Orchestra USA 2022, where she returned as associate conductor in 2024. Other recent engagements include guest conducting concerts with the Corpus Christi, Irving, and South Bend symphonies, and serving as cover conductor for the St. Louis Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, and New York Philharmonic. In May of 2022, Shira graduated with her Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from The Juilliard School, where she studied with Maestro David Robertson. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Swarthmore College, where she studied conducting with Andrew Hauze and piano with Marcantonio Barone. Born and raised in Los Angeles, in her free time Shira enjoys going to yoga classes and continuing her quest to find the best breakfast tacos in Texas.





Strategies for Mindful Listening

Adapted from *Settle Your Glitter - A Social Emotional Health Curriculum* by Momentous Institute 2015

What is Mindful Listening?

Mindful Listening helps students choose on which sound their attention should be focused. When a student trains his/her brain to concentrate on specific sounds, sensory awareness is heightened. Monitoring the auditory experience, and noting what they focus on and respond to, helps build self-management and self-awareness skills.

How do I practice mindful listening with my students?

Play a piece (or excerpt) from an upcoming DSO Youth Concert and have the students:

- Sit up tall like a mountain and think of the spine as a stack of coins.
- If seated in a chair or bench, feet are flat on the floor or hanging calmly and still. If seated on the floor, make sure legs and feet are still.
- Hands are resting gently on the lap or knees.
- Eyes are softly closed or their gaze directed downward.

What do I say during the mindful listening activity?

Say things such as, "As you listen, remember to breathe in and out deeply and focus on the music." "What pictures do you see in your mind?" "Does it tell a story?" "Notice how your body feels (in the chair, on the floor...etc.)." "What colors do you see?" "What images?" "If this music was found in a movie, what would be happening?" "What mood does the music evoke?" "How does this music make you feel?"

What do I do if my students have trouble with mindful listening?

This type of activity is very personal and takes a lot of practice. If students seem like their attention is faltering, say, "If your mind wanders, that is ok – that's what minds do...just bring your attention back to the music. Notice how your body feels right now – at this very moment. Again, let your mind see the colors, pictures and moods in the music."

How does the mindful listening end?

After listening for 1-2 minutes, lower the volume of the music slowly and say, "When you are ready, slowly open your eyes."

What now?

Talk about all of the student responses. Remember that there are no "wrong" answers – use open-ended questions to expand the activity. Try using these questions in response to your students:

- What did you hear that made you think of that?
- Tell me more about what in the music made you feel (happy, sad, lonely, afraid, etc.).
- Can you add more details to that?
- What did the composer/musician do to make you think of that?

Extension

This mindful practice can be used every day. Have relaxing and calm music playing as your students enter the room each day. Have them learn the mindful listening procedure and eventually it will become natural. This is a great way to start their music learning day – mind sharp, body relaxed, and brain ready for learning.



Cultural Traditions

Learning Objective

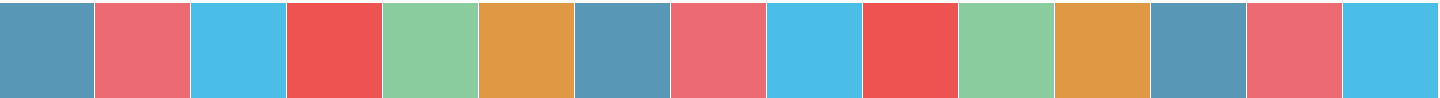
Students will develop an understanding that all groups, from families to countries, naturally develop traditions and identifiable cultural characteristics.

Pre-Assessment

Tell students that they will soon attend an orchestra concert called *Postcards from Around the World* in which each piece will attempt to capture the distinctive sounds, rhythms, and traditions of places across the globe.

Beginning the lesson with what they know, ask students if any of them have a family tradition they could share, perhaps around holidays, seasonal changes, or other special occasions. Keep track of responses. Ask students if they can say how their tradition started? When and why did they start? Pay special attention to traditions that are unique to that family such as a certain way they do a tradition or perhaps something no one else does. Try and understand how the tradition started.





Teaching Sequence

- 1. Now zoom out a bit and see if students can name some local traditions from their community. Examples might be spring break, a local music festival, an art event, or perhaps a food-based celebration like a Dia de los Muertos festival.
- 2. Continue to zoom out to discuss state events like Texas Folk Festival or Texas State Fair, then national traditions such as Veterans Day, religious holidays, Father’s/Mother’s Day, the Super Bowl – anything that many people throughout the state or country observe.
- 3. Continue the discussion with traditions/holidays that can be specifically identified with a certain whole country. For example, July 4th and Veterans Day are unique to the US, but Thanksgiving, though started in the US, is more widespread. Christmas and Hanukah, however, have nothing to do with a certain country and are celebrated worldwide. A country could have observances centered around a shared event like a victory or tragedy.

Culminating Sequence

Continue by discussing how countries can become known for certain distinctive sights, sounds and traditions. Latin countries are known for music with a strong percussion element, which also influences their national dances like the Salsa. Traditional Chinese music is identifiable by a certain melodic structure – a five note system called pentatonic – as well as certain distinctive instruments. Listen to traditional Chinese song, Flowers in Spring.

Evaluation

Did students develop an understanding that all groups, from families to countries, naturally develop traditions and identifiable cultural characteristics?



Extension Activity

Ask students to choose an interesting tradition that is distinct and identifiable to a certain country and write a report about it.

TEKS

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| FA.M.3.b.5B/C | ELAR.4.7G |
| FA.M.3.b.6 | ELAR.4.10A/F |
| ELAR.3.1A | FA.M.5.b.5B/C |
| ELAR.3.6E/G/H/I | ELAR.5.1A |
| ELAR.3.7A/G | ELAR.5.6E/G/I |
| ELAR.3.10A/F | ELAR.5.7G |
| FA.M.4.b.5C/D | |
| ELAR.4.1.A | |
| ELAR.4.6E/G/I | |





Exploring the Rhythmic Motif in Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5

Learning Objective

Students will be able to recognize the motif in Beethoven’s 5th symphony, 1st movement.

Vocabulary

Motif – a repeated musical idea

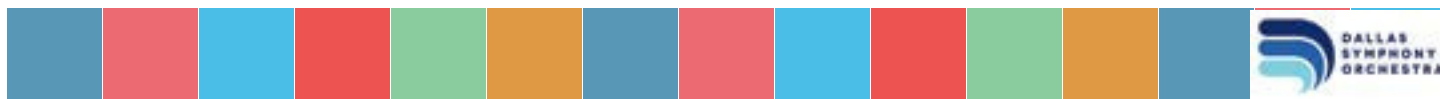
Rhythm – patterns of long and short sounds

Resources

- [Beethoven’s 5th Symphony, 1st movement Graphic Representation](#)

Pre-Assessment

1. Ask students to look around the classroom for patterns. Discuss their findings.
2. Tell students that patterns can be found everywhere, especially in art and architecture.
3. Show the students the following examples of artwork and buildings that have definite patterns.
 - a. [Three Flags by Jasper Jones](#)
 - b. [Bird-Fish by M.C. Esher](#)
 - c. [Hotel Novatel in Paris](#)
 - d. [Federal Plaza in New York](#)
 - e. [Brick Ceiling in Iran](#)
4. Tell them that when they come to the Meyerson for the Dallas Symphony Orchestra concert, they will see subtle patterns of circles and squares throughout the lobby and within the concert hall.



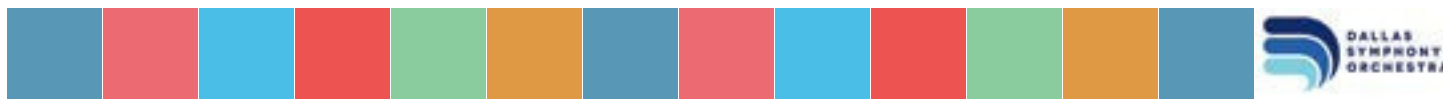
Teaching Sequence

1. Play the opening 25 seconds (22 measures) of Beethoven’s 5th Symphony, movement 1. Ask students if they recognize the piece and/or the composer. Play again and ask students to listen for a part of the music that repeats. Hear all answers.
2. Explain that the pattern is *short, short, short, long*. Explain to the students that this repetitive pattern is called a motif.
3. Play the first 25 seconds from Beethoven’s 5th Graphic Representation linked above, and direct students listen and watch (the visual will be a new element at this point in the lesson).
4. Ask students to count the number of times the motif is used (the answer is 14 times). Watch as many times as needed, perhaps five times or more.

Culminating Sequence (taken from [Carnegie Hall’s Link Up concert guide](#))

Play “forbidden motif” game

- Ask students to repeat the motif’s pattern after you by clapping short-short-short-long (short is notated with one clap, long is notated with one clap followed by closed hands moving in a circle to represent that the long sound continues)
- Tell students that the motif is now forbidden, and when they hear it they should remain silent.
- Lead the students through a series of call and response patterns, reminding them to echo back all patterns except the forbidden motif. If they play the forbidden motif they are out of the game. Keep going until one “winner” remains.





Extension Activity (taken from Carnegie Hall’s Link Up concert guide)

Play “pass the motif”

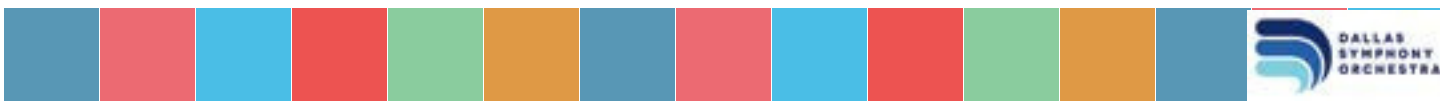
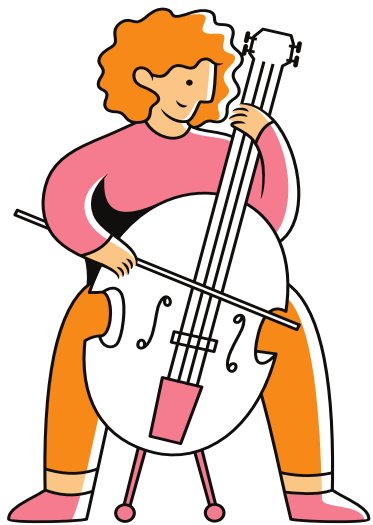
- Sit in a circle, with one person holding a small object such as a ball or an eraser, which represents the motif.
- Play the whole Symphony No. 5 audio track.
- Each time the motif is heard, the person holding the object should pass the object to his or her neighbor.
- When the motif is not heard, the person holding the object should hold onto it until the motif is heard again.

Evaluation

Were students able to recognize the motif in Beethoven’s 5th Symphony?

TEKS

FA.M.3.b.2
FA.M.3.b.6B
FA.M.3.b.6D
FA.M.4.b.6B/C/D
FA.M.5.b.6B/C/D



See The Lovely Birch Tree

Learning Objective

Students will identify and become familiar with musical themes in Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 4.

Vocabulary

Theme – a recognizable musical idea or melody

Fragment – a portion of a melody

Resources

- Recording of Finale from Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 4, pg . 3

Pre-Assessment

Tell students that you will play the first 34 seconds of Symphony No. 4, 4th movement by the Russian composer, Pyotr Tchaikovsky. Tell them to silently listen for two distinct musical themes which will be discussed afterward.

Play the excerpt. Repeat.

Guide students to identify the very first theme from :09 - :21, and the second melody from :23 - :34. Play the excerpt again and together with the class, identify the themes as they’re played. Ask students to describe the melodies, observing that the first one is fast and exciting, while the second by contrast is slower and calmer.





Teaching Sequence

1. Tell students that the opening theme they heard is one of the most famous and recognizable passages in symphony music. The second is the melody of a well-known Russian folk song.
2. Ask students to compare the two passages – how are they similar and different? What do they remind them of?
3. Share that the second of the two themes is the tune of a beloved Russian folk song called “The Birch Tree.” The song is about how lovely the tree is, how beautifully the leaves dance in the wind, and that it will be used for making musical instruments.

Here are a couple of versions of the song –

[The Birch Tree Russia Folk Song in English](#) – child solo unaccompanied
[The Little Birch Tree - YouTube](#) – unison childrens chorus, Mary Goetze arrangement

Culminating Sequence

Tell students that you will now play the whole movement (only about 8 minutes long). Ask them to listen and watch for how the theme is passed around the orchestra and played by various instruments. Notice that sometimes only a part is played – called a fragment – or it is altered in various ways. Ask students to share their thoughts about how the theme changes during the movement and how the first theme recurs throughout.



Evaluation

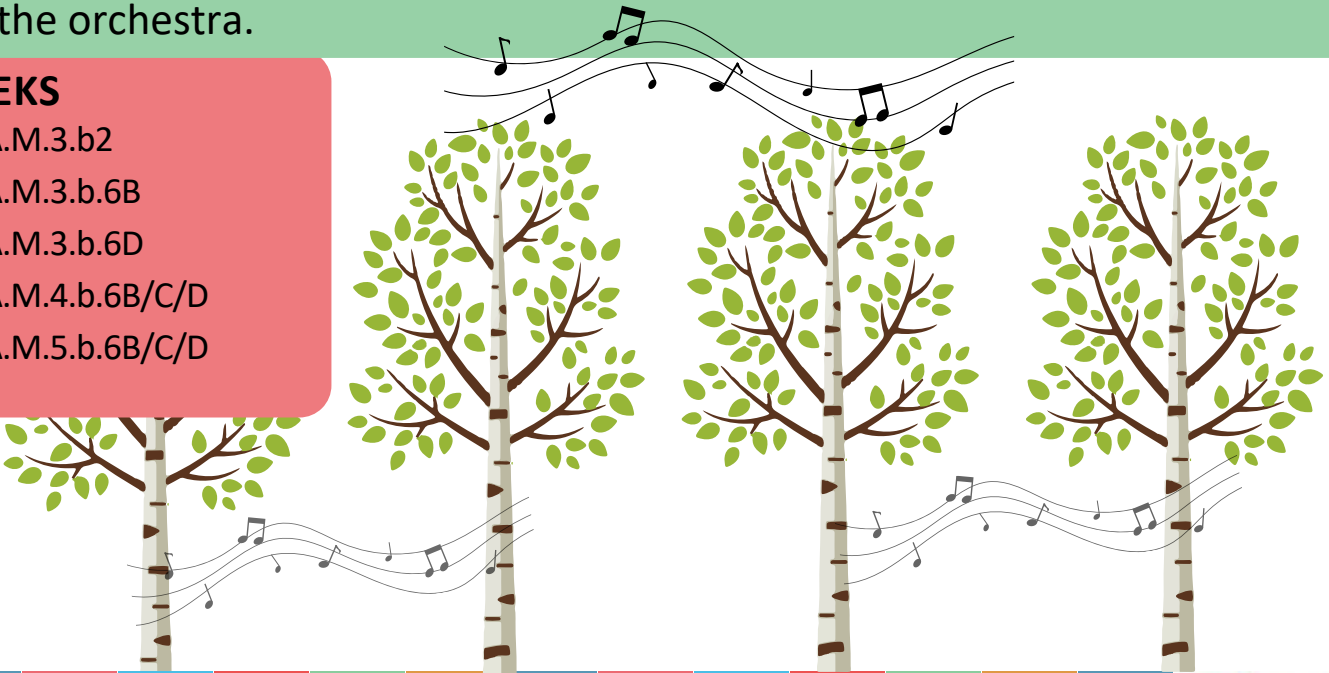
Did students identify and become familiar with musical themes in Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 4?

Extension Activity

Not so much an extension, but an alternate way of thinking about the lesson. Teach “The Birch Tree” song (easily accessible with a quick internet search) to your students so that they can sing it with some confidence. Then play the symphony, allowing the students to observe where the tune happens. Have them compare how Tchaikovsky uses the tune – how fast for example – to the actual song. Discuss why Tchaikovsky would have used this tune. Why use a beloved tune that would’ve been recognizable to 19th century Russian listeners? Then enjoy the Symphony No. 4 finale with that context. Observe where the tune is played in full, but also notice that there are numerous times where only a fragment is played, or it’s played higher or lower in pitch. Notice how the tune is played on many different instruments in the orchestra.

TEKS

- FA.M.3.b2
- FA.M.3.b.6B
- FA.M.3.b.6D
- FA.M.4.b.6B/C/D
- FA.M.5.b.6B/C/D





My Postcards from Around the World

Learning Objective

Students will illustrate the music from pieces they will hear at the youth concert.

Resources

- YouTube playlist, pg. 3
- Paper or Postcard on pg. 18, Pencils/Crayons/Markers for drawing a “postcard”

Pre-Assessment

Tell students that composers often write music that reflects their personal heritage, traditions, or cultural pride. Some examples of this from the youth concert they will be attending are Tchaikovsky’s use of a Russian folk song in his Symphony No. 4, Marquez’s use of syncopated dance-like rhythms in Danzon No. 2, and the use of the pentatonic (5-note) scale common in Chinese music like Flowers in Spring.

Note: You may choose to listen to one piece per class and do this lesson multiple days in a row with different music.

Teaching Sequence

1. Tell the class that today they will listen to a piece from the concert they will attend and draw an illustration on a postcard that reflects their vision of the music. Pass out the supplies needed. Postcard template is on page 18.
2. Choose any of the pieces from the YouTube playlist to play for the students.
3. Ask students to close their eyes and listen. Ask guided questions while they listen such as, “What instruments do you hear? Is this music fast or slow? Does it have any distinct characteristics? Can you hear the melody?”



Culminating Sequence

Ask students to make a drawing on their postcard of what they thought about while listening to the music. Ask students to share their drawings and tell the story behind their illustration.

Evaluation

Did the students illustrate their version of the music they heard?

Extension Activity

1. Create a “Postcards from Around the World” wall by posting the student drawings in your classroom.

TEKS

- FA.T.1.b.4B
- FA.M.3.b.1.C
- FA.M.3.b.2C
- FA.M.3.b.5C
- FA.A.3.1B
- FA.A.3.3
- FA.M.4.b.5
- FA.M.4.b.6
- FA.T.4.b.1C
- FA.A.5.1B
- FA.A.5.3D
- FA.M.5.b.1C



POSTCARD

[Dashed box for address]

[Five vertical lines for address]

[Horizontal line for message]

POSTCARD

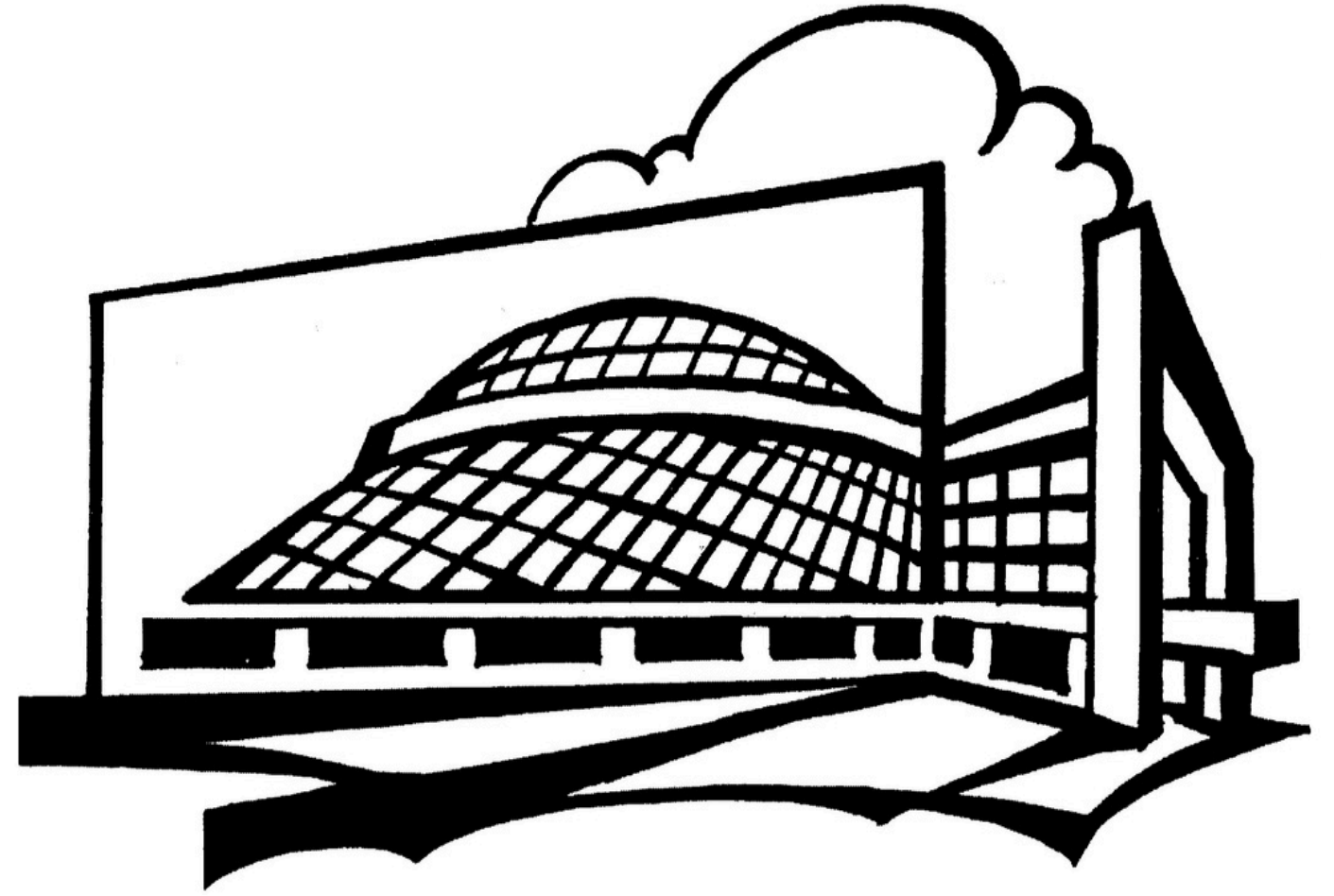
[Dashed box for address]

[Five vertical lines for address]

[Horizontal line for message]

Music in the Air

My Trip to the
Dallas Symphony Orchestra



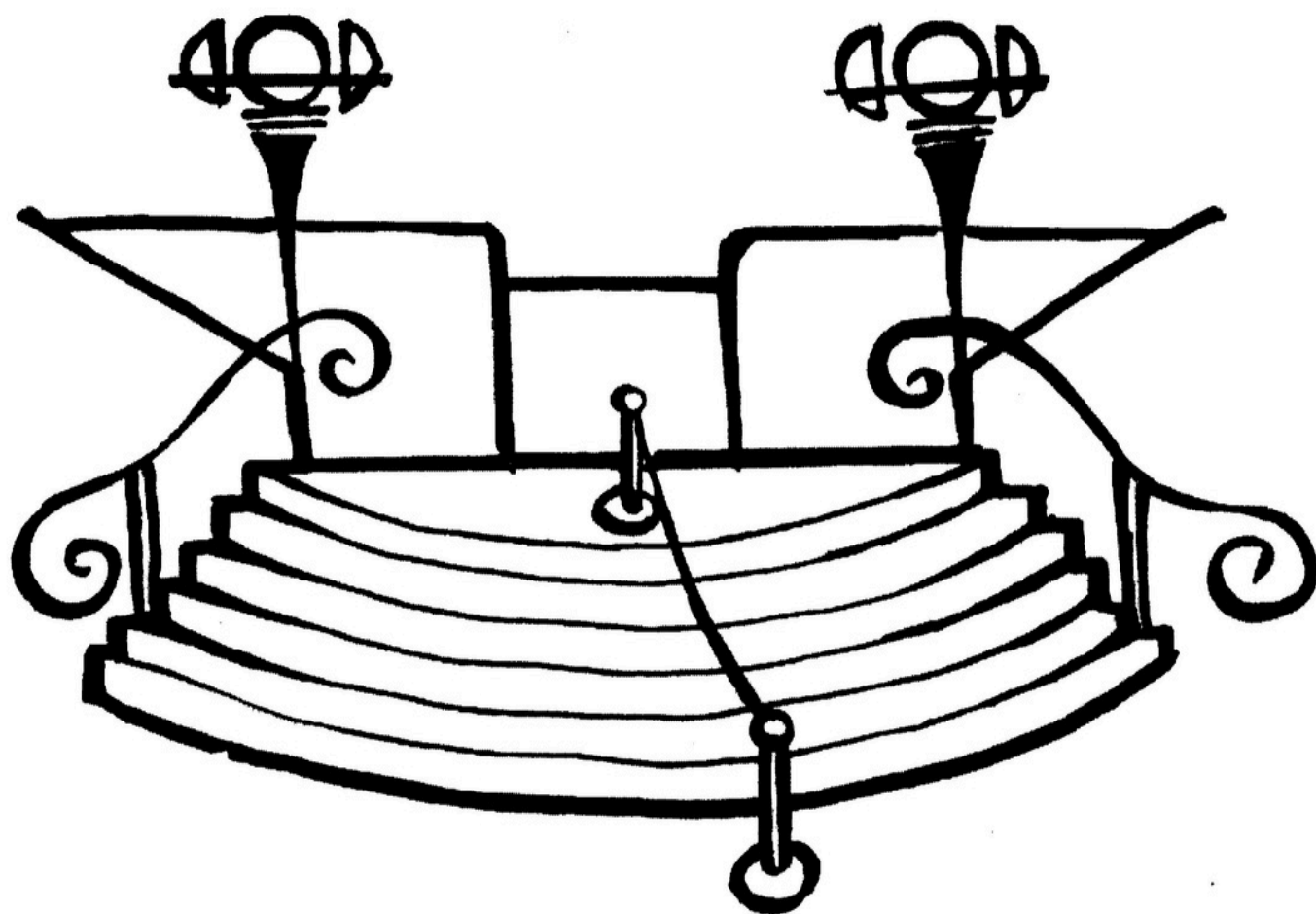
Hay música en el aire

*Mi excursión a la orquesta sinfónica
de Dallas*

I traveled with my class to the Morton H. Meyerson
Symphony Center.

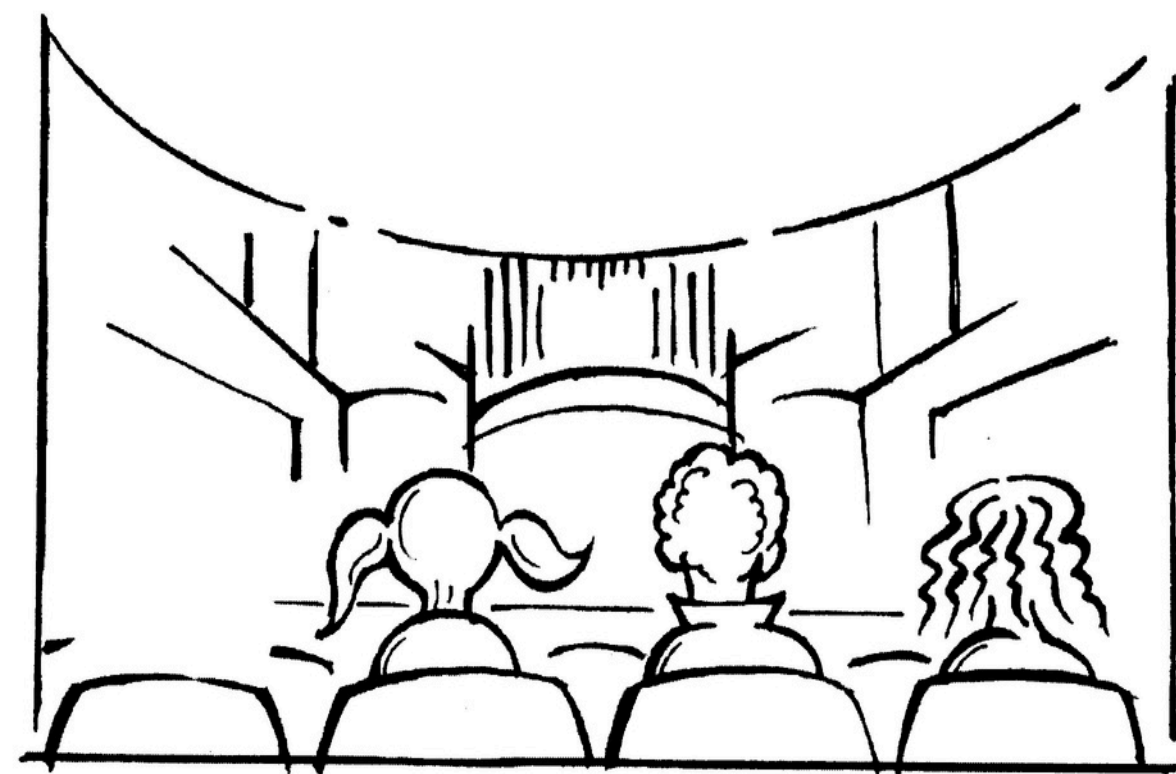
We went to hear a concert of music played by many in-
struments.

*Tomé un paseo con mi clase al Centro Sinfónico
Meyerson. Fuimos a escuchar un concierto de música con
muchos diferentes instrumentos.*



I walked with my class up the steps to the place where
we would sit.

*Subí los escalones con mi clase al lugar donde nos íbamos
a sentar.*

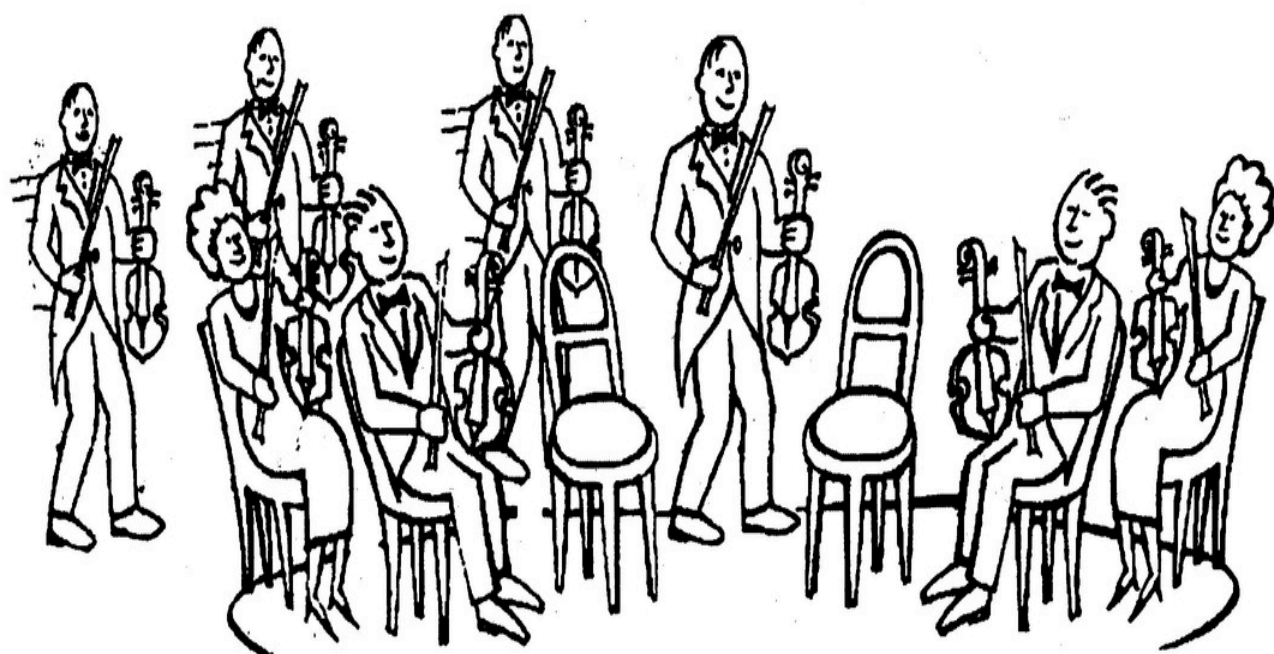


Here we are sitting in our seats waiting for the concert
to begin.

(Draw yourself in the empty seat.)

*Aquí estamos en nuestros asientos esperando que empieze
el concierto.*

¿Puedes adivinar quién soy yo?



Out come the musicians. They carry their instruments
with them.

The musicians are all on stage now.

*Aquí vienen los músicos. Llevan sus instrumentos
con ellos.*



Look! Here comes the Concertmaster.
His job is to play the tuning note for the orchestra.
He plays a violin. We clap for him.

*Los músicos están todos acomodados. ¡Mira! Aquí viene el
Maestro del Concierto. El da el tono de afinación
para toda la orquesta. El toca el violín. Le damos un
aplausos.*



Now the musicians are ready. They wait for their conductor.

Here he comes. We clap for him.
We know the concert will now begin.

Ahora los músicos están listos para tocar.

Esperan al Director.

Le damos un aplauso. Ahora sabemos que va a empezar el concierto.

I hear such beautiful music.
Here are some of the instruments I see and hear:

Yo escucho la música tan hermosa. Éstos son algunos de los instrumentos que veo y oigo.





My friends and I clap after each piece we hear.

(Draw yourself in the empty seat.)

There is music all around us.

There is music in the air.

Aplaudimos después de cada pieza. La música nos rodea.

Hay música en el aire.

Flat Beethoven!

Cut out Ludwig van Beethoven and take him with you on all of your adventures! Be sure to snap a picture of Flat Beethoven in his new environs and send them to Sarah Hatler at s.hatler@dalsym.com. Your picture could be featured on DSOKids.com. Get creative!



DSO
Kids

Did You Know?

- Beethoven was born on December 16, 1770 in Bonn, Germany
- At age 12, he earned a living by playing organ and composing
- One of his favorite foods was macaroni and cheese
- His Third Symphony, *Eroica*, was so original that it inspired many others to change the way they wrote music
- He is famous for his unique and innovative musical style
- Many say that Beethoven had a nasty temper and unpleasant personality
- He was deaf when he composed his Ninth Symphony and never got to hear it performed live

Postcards from Around the World



DallasSymphonyYouthConcert
Meyerson Symphony Center

3min



Like

Comment



We love to see you enjoying our Dallas Symphony concerts. Remember this special moment by drawing and captioning your favorite part of this youth concert, *Postcards from Around the World*, in the frame on this page. If you would like your picture to be shared on DSOKids.com, please ask your teacher or parent to email our drawing to Sarah at S.Hatler@dalsym.com or mail to :

Sarah Hatler
Dallas Symphony Orchestra
2301 Flora St.
Dallas, TX 75201



Full STEAM Ahead

Check out our [virtual Full STEAM Ahead](#) series to find out how making music is connected to science, technology, engineering, and math. You'll hear DSO musicians performing and speaking about their musical experiences, and see interesting visual demonstrations of sound.



Full STEAM Ahead was founded by women business leaders from AT&T, Capital One, NCJW Dallas and Texas Instruments to promote arts education and equal opportunity for girls in the world of STEAM.



About the Morton H. Meyerson Center

One of the world's greatest concert halls, the Meyerson Symphony Center was made possible through the efforts of the citizens of Dallas. Over ten years were spent in the planning and construction of the Meyerson, which opened on September 6, 1989.

World-renowned architect and major arts supporter I.M. Pei was chosen to design the building, working closely with acoustician Russell Johnson. Pei's design combines basic geometric shapes, with a rectangle (the concert hall) set at an angle within a square (the outer walls). Segments of circles also enclose the building.

In the concert hall, every detail was designed to make the sound or acoustics as perfect as possible for orchestral music. For example, the heating and air conditioning system is located in a different building so that no vibrations from the machinery can be felt in the concert hall. Acoustical features include:

- Double sets of doors at all entrances
- Terrazzo and concrete floors
- Mohair fabric on the seats
- Walls covered with African Cherrywood
- Sound-absorbing curtains which can be drawn over the walls
- A reverberation chamber with 72 acoustical doors used to "tune" the hall
- The canopy over the stage, which can be raised and lowered to enhance the sound

Fun Facts about the Meyerson!

The Meyerson Symphony Center has:

- 2,056 seats
- 30,000 sq. ft. of Italian travertine marble
- 22,000 limestone blocks from Indiana
- 35,130 cubic yards of concrete
- 918 panels of African cherrywood around the concert hall
- 216 panels of American cherrywood around the stage
- 62 acoustical curtains
- 4 canopies with a combined weight of 42 tons
- 72 concrete acoustical doors, each weighing up to 2.5 tons
- 50 bathrooms
- An 85 foot high ceiling in the concert hall
- A 40 foot hollow area under the stage to increase resonance
- An organ with 4 keyboards, 61 keys, 32 pedals, 84 ranks, 65 stops and 4,535 pipes



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