

**North Winds:
Meet the Woodwind Family
Educational Guide, Grades PreK-3**



About the Performance

Flute, Clarinet, and Bassoon voices are famously colorful and create a lively mix of sounds, songs and sights for the enrichment of very young students. Melodies, rhythms, movement and demonstrations are combined in this 30-minute program that introduces PreK-3rd graders to the woodwind family of instruments. Experienced performers and educators, North Winds musicians guide students through an exploration of range, tempo, pattern recognition, storyline, and other key ingredients that go into performing live music by composers of every sort. Three more instruments are added to surprise and delight: Piccolo, Alto Saxophone, and Tenor Saxophone.



About the Artists

North Winds is comprised of New England's best professional wind instrumentalists. Passionate about education as well as performance, this exciting ensemble introduces students to an important family of orchestral instruments and demonstrates the ability of instrumental music to create characters and tell stories.

Program Learning Goals

1. To become familiarized with woodwind instruments.
2. To explore basic musical concepts, including range, tempo, pattern recognition, melody, and meter.
3. To make visual and emotional connections with music.

Essential Questions

1. What instruments are in the woodwind family and how are they related?
2. What are the components of a musical composition?
3. How can music help us to express ourselves?

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Vocabulary

- **Woodwind instruments:** musical instruments sounded by blowing air into or across a mouthpiece
- **Beat:** the steady pulse of a song or piece of music
- **Tempo:** the speed of a song or piece of music
- **Melody:** a series of notes that creates the main part of a song or piece of music
- **Range:** the distance between the lowest and highest notes an instrument can play
- **Pattern:** a piece of visual or audio information that repeats
- **Theme:** the primary melody of a piece of music
- **Variation:** a change in the melody, harmony, or rhythm of a theme

Key Facts and Context for Students

What is classical music?

Classical music is a very broad term. It includes music originally written, or **composed**, in **Europe** over many hundreds of years, but is now played all over the world. Classical music is performed with instruments, voices, or both! Usually musicians read music written on pages of **sheet music** which tells them what to play and how to play it. Some of the most famous **composers** of classical music include Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Featured Instruments in this Performance:



Clarinet



Flute



Piccolo



Saxophone



Bassoon

Pre-Performance Discussion Questions

- What do you know about classical music? What would you like to know? How could you find out more?
- What woodwind instruments do you know? How are they played?
- How does music make you feel?

Pre-Performance Activity: Musical Groupings

Learning Goal:

To learn about different groupings of musical ensembles.

Materials:

Musical Groupings Worksheet (see page 4),
Musical Groupings Worksheet Answer Key (see page 5)

Directions:

1. Tell students that they are going to see a performance by a woodwind ensemble. What do they think that means? Which instruments do they think will be played? How many musicians do they think will perform?
2. Explain that musical groups use specific words to describe the size of the ensemble and its instrumentation.
3. Tell students the number of performers in a musical group can differ. Write “solo,” “duo,” “trio,” “quartet,” and “quintet” on the board. Discuss how many people are in each type of ensemble (solo: 1, duo: 2, trio: 3, quartet: 4, quintet: 5).
4. Play a grouping game with the class. Call out the names of musical ensembles (duo, trio, etc.) and have students form small groups with the correct number of people.
5. Tell students musical instruments are grouped into different families depending on the materials they are made from and/or how they are played.
6. Fill out the Musical Groupings Worksheet (as a large group or in small groups, depending on student age). Look up any unfamiliar instruments to figure out which instrument family they belong to.
7. Review the answers for the Musical Groupings Worksheet with the class. Which instruments did students know? Which instruments were unfamiliar?



Name: _____

Musical Groupings Worksheet

Directions: Place the instruments listed below into their musical instrument families.

Instruments:

Violin

Clarinet

Timpani

Bassoon

Drums

Trombone

Cello

Xylophone

Saxophone

Cymbals

French Horn

Double Bass

Tuba

Viola

Flute

Trumpet

String Family

Woodwind Family

Brass Family

Percussion Family

ANSWER KEY

Name: _____

Musical Groupings Worksheet

Directions: Place the instruments listed below into their musical instrument families.

Instruments:

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| Violin | Clarinet | Timpani | Bassoon |
| Drums | Trombone | Cello | Xylophone |
| Saxophone | Cymbals | French Horn | Double Bass |
| Tuba | Viola | Flute | Trumpet |

String Family

Violin
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

Woodwind Family

Flute
Clarinet
Saxophone
Bassoon

Brass Family

Trumpet
Trombone
French Horn
Tuba

Percussion Family

Drums
Cymbals
Timpani
Xylophone

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Pre-Performance Activity Extensions

- Listen to “Peter and the Wolf” by Sergei Prokofiev. Where have students heard this type of music? What does it make them think about and feel? What instruments do they hear?
- Talk about playing instruments. Does anyone in the class play an instrument? What is it like to practice an instrument? Why do you have to practice so much? What instrument(s) are you interested in playing?



Post-Performance Discussion Questions

- What instruments did North Winds use in their performance? How were they played?
- What did you notice in the performance? What did you see and hear?
- What are the parts of a musical composition? How do they all work together to create a piece of music?

Post-Performance Activity: Variations and Repetitions

Learning Goal:

To explore the basic ideas of repetition and variation in literature and music.

Materials:

Fairytales, such as:

- “The Three Little Pigs”
- “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”
- “Jack and the Beanstalk”

Recordings of popular children’s songs, such as:

- “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”
- “Down By the Bay”
- “The Wheels on the Bus”

Recordings of students’ favorite songs, speakers/equipment to play recordings

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Post-Performance Activity, continued

Directions:

1. Discuss the words “theme” and “variation.” What do they mean in literature and music?
2. Read a fairytale (or multiple tales) to the class. Was a phrase or idea repeated? How did it change when repeated? How did the repetition affect the story?
3. Play a “round-robin” story game. One person begins the story. The next person tries to repeat what the previous person said and add a little more. Keep going around the circle with everyone repeating, then adding to the story. Note how the story changes as it moves from person to person.
4. Listen and sing along to popular children’s songs. What repeats in each song?
5. Make a list of students’ favorite songs and select a few to play for the class. Try to select songs across several genres. What repeats in each song?
6. Discuss the use of repetition in music and literature. Do students like when things repeat? Does it make the music, or literature more or less interesting?

Pre-Performance Activity Extensions

- Write a review of the North Winds’ performance. What did you like? Were there any surprises? What are your favorite instruments?
- Research flutes from different places and periods. How do the flutes vary from country to country and era to era?
- Pick a famous classical music composer to research. What was their life like? What is their music like? Were they famous in their lifetime? Why is their music popular today?



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Further Resources

- [The Kennedy Center's Digital Classical Music Collection](#)
- Cline-Ransome, Lesa: *The Story of the Saxophone*, Holiday House (2023)
- Hood, Susan: *Ada's Violin: The Story of the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay*, Simon & Schuster Books For Young Readers (2016)
- Levine, Robert: *A Child's Introduction to the Orchestra*, Black Dog & Leventhal (2019)
- Marsalis, Wynton: *Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp!: A Sonic Adventure*, Candlewick Press (2021)
- Speed Shaskan, Trisha: *Opening Night With the Woodwind Family!*, Picture Window Books (2010)



Curricular Connections

Arts Standards: Music

Creating

- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. (M.Cr.01)
- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. (M.Cr.02)

Performing

- Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. (M.P.06)

Responding

- Perceive and analyze artistic work. (M.R.07)
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. (M.R.08)
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. (M.R.09)

Connecting

- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. (M.Co.10)
- Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical contexts to deepen understanding. (M.Co.11)

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Curricular Connections, continued

English Language Arts and Literacy Anchor Standards

Speaking and Listening

- Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. (SL.PK-12.2)
- Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric. (SL.PK-12.3)

Language

- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. (L.PK-12.3)
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings. (L.PK-12.5)

History and Social Science

PreK

- Topic 1: Civics: fairness, friendship, responsibility, and respect (HSS.Pre-K.T1)
- Topic 3: History: personal experiences and memories (HSS.Pre-K.T3)

K

- Topic 1: Civics: classroom citizenship (HSS.K.T1)
- Topic 3: History: shared traditions (HSS.K.T3)

Grade 1

- Topic 1: Civics: communities, elections, and leadership (HSS.1.T1)
- Topic 3: History: unity and diversity in the United States (HSS.1.T3)

Grade 2

- Topic 3: History: migrations and cultures (HSS.2.T3)

