

## MUSIC LESSON PLAN

**Date:** Prior to attending the concert performance of “GIVE ME SPACE!”

**Grade Level/Subject:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade/Music

**Co-Teaching Model Utilized:** As desired; Music teachers and classroom teachers may wish to collaborate in presenting the lesson.

### Main Idea

Tone color; Composers choose instruments to express their musical ideas just as visual artists choose colors or media to present their ideas.

### Standards

Music: Responding: Anchor Standard 8-Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. Demonstrate and describe how the expressive qualities (such as dynamics and tempo) are used in performers’ and personal interpretations to reflect expressive intent.

### Objectives

1. Students will be able to identify the four instrument families of the orchestra: strings; woodwinds; brass; percussion.
2. Students will describe how the instruments in each family produce sound.

### Vocabulary

Orchestra – a large group of musicians that play string, brass, woodwind and percussion instruments and perform music written for specifically for them.

### Accommodations

Captioning may be needed for hearing-impaired or LEP students

### Assessment Measures

Formative: Asking questions to check understanding

Summative: Check to see if students can identify which family an instrument belongs in

### Materials

Audiovisual equipment with Internet access

Diagram showing typical orchestra seating

Posters or pictures of orchestral string, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments

## PROCEDURES & TIMELINE

### Introductory Set

Ask the students: “What are the different positions on a baseball or football team?” Discuss the different skills needed by catchers, pitchers, quarterbacks, or linemen.

Relate this to the positions of instruments within an orchestra: how an instrument is made and how it produces sound determines its role within the orchestra. Each instrument is part of a team.

An *orchestra* is a team of musicians who play instruments and perform music written for those instruments.

### Work Session

Remind students that all sounds are produced by vibrations that we hear with our ears and sometimes feel in our bodies, too. Sounds can be high or low, loud or soft, and have qualities that allow us to tell one instrument from another, or even one person’s voice from someone else’s. Instruments produce sounds by being stroked (strings), blown (woodwinds and brass), or struck (percussion).

As each instrument family or section is described, refer to a poster or visual image

String instruments include the violin, viola, cello, double bass, and harp. All except the harp are played with a bow. Generally speaking, the larger the instrument, the lower the sound it produces. **Show BBC National Orchestra video of string section (3:04).**

Woodwind instruments are made of wood, except for the flute (now made of metal), and the musician blows air into the instrument. This family includes the flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon. **Show BBC video of the woodwind section (2:51).**

Brass instruments are made of metal and the player blows air into a cup-shaped mouthpiece. They are also louder than the woodwinds and usually sit behind them on the stage. The brass family includes the trumpet, trombone, horn, and tuba. **Show BBC Orchestra of Wales video of brass section (1:57).**

Percussion instruments are the most diverse section in the orchestra. Most of them cannot play a melody as other instruments can. Sound is produced as the player strikes or shakes the instrument. This family includes drums, cymbals, keyboard instruments, and many smaller instruments such as the triangle. **Show Detroit Symphony Orchestra video “A Day in the Life of the DSO Percussionists” (2:49).**

To demonstrate how these instrument families work together in the orchestra, there are a few options:

- Watch a video of an orchestra performing one of the movements from ‘The Planets’ by Gustav Holst or any work that highlights different sections and instruments.

- Watch or listen to a performance of *A Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* by Benjamin Britten. Example: Backstage with Bleeckie – The Dallas Symphony Orchestra and Britten's *The Young Person's Guide* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12d1CiTRwJw>; 14:19 video)
- Watch the Australian video "George Meets the Orchestra" (6 minutes).

### Closure

To see what the students recall about the four families of instruments, divide the class into four groups and assign each one an instrument family to watch or listen for. Show pictures of the various instruments and have the students stand up or mime playing the instrument when they see one from their family. Better still would be to have them respond to audio clips of instruments or sections in the orchestra.

### Lesson References

George Meets the Orchestra: An Introduction to the Orchestra for Children  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0Jc4sPOBEE> (6-minute video produced by the Sydney Opera House in Australia)

Backstage with Bleeckie – The Dallas Symphony Orchestra and Britten's *The Young Person's Guide* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12d1CiTRwJw> (14:19 video)

Strings – BBC National Orchestra of Wales  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MP2\\_6OLumma](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MP2_6OLumma) (3:04 video)

Brass – BBC National Orchestra of Wales  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yE0aSxziNdY> (1:57 video)

Woodwinds - BBC National Orchestra of Wales  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEt1Mm8sSkA> (2:51 video)

Percussion – Detroit Symphony Orchestra: A Day in the Life of the DSO Percussionists  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVmxrhrN9ds> (2:49 video, shot with GoPro camera)

Gustav Holst's 'The Planets': a guide  
<https://www.classicfm.com/composers/holst/pictures/holsts-planets-guide/> (online article with pictures of the planets in our solar system)