

## 1. **Gauge preliminary knowledge:**

**Lead a brief discussion prior to watching the first video.**

**Here are some topic suggestions:**

- Have you ever attended a live concert?
- What does it mean to play an instrument for a living?
- Do you/a family member play an instrument?
- What kind of music do you enjoy listening to?

## 2. **Assess knowledge retention:**

**Our videos are designed to be viewed in order. After watching each one, ask the following questions:**

**Video 1 - Strings:** <https://youtu.be/WoSsEXvzigA>

1. Which instrument has a somber, mellow tone?
2. Which instrument can use two bow holds?
3. Which instrument's range matches that of the human voice?
4. Which instrument has the highest pitch?
5. Put the instruments in order from highest to lowest pitch.
6. What do the string instruments have in common?
7. How would you describe the sound that string ensemble makes?

**Video 2 - Woodwinds:** <https://youtu.be/wpffZwmxYnM>

1. Which instrument provides the tuning note for the orchestra?
2. Which instrument requires the most air/breath support?
3. Which instrument is sometimes known as the joker of the orchestra?
4. Which instrument uses a single reed?
5. Put the instruments in order from highest to lowest pitch.
6. What do the woodwind instruments have in common?
7. How would you describe the sound that the woodwind ensemble makes?

**Video 3 - Brass:** <https://youtu.be/U3LL3vCL4K4>

1. Which instrument can play the lowest notes in the orchestra?
2. Which instrument does NOT use valves to change the pitch?
3. Which instrument often plays the main melodies?
4. Which instrument played music by W. A. Mozart?
5. Put the instruments in order from highest to lowest pitch.
6. What do the brass instruments have in common?
7. How would you describe the sound that the brass ensemble makes?

**Video 4 - Percussion:** <https://youtu.be/kABv5ofky0o>

1. What are some of the different ways to make sound on percussion instruments?
2. Which instruments use two mallets/drumsticks?
3. Name an instrument with indefinite pitch.
4. Name an instrument with definite pitch; does the pitch sound high, or low?
5. Which instrument has strings and felt-covered hammers?
6. What do the percussion instruments have in common?
7. How would you describe the sound that the percussion ensemble makes?

### 3. Talk/write like a musician:

How can we describe what we hear? Using words to explain sounds helps us communicate with other musicians, and it also helps us share our experience with listeners. Choose one or more ensemble/solo pieces from the videos, and lead a discussion/ask students to write about what they heard.

First, discuss the music in terms of the students' experience:

- What is the overall mood of this music?
- What sounds did you hear that convey that mood/emotion?
- How do you think the composer felt when writing this music?
- How does the music make you feel?
- Do you think this piece tells a story? If so, what could it be about?

Then, ask students to use the provided **GLOSSARY (page 4)** to describe what they heard using musical terminology:

- How can we describe the speed/pace of the piece?
- Discuss the volume. How did it change?
- What was the melody like? Who played the melody?
- How would you describe the overall sound?
- Using one sentence, how would you describe this piece to someone who has never heard it before?

### 4. Get creative:

These are opportunities for independent/group work that will allow students to apply what they have learned, and to express their own ideas:

- **Be a music critic:**

Pretend that one of the ensemble performances from the SSO videos took place at a live concert you attended. As a music critic, you have been asked to write a review of the performance, using musical terms from the glossary to describe melody, tempo and dynamics. Include lots of details! How did the music make you feel? What did you observe the performers doing? Provide enough details so that someone who didn't attend the concert will know what it was like - even what the concert hall looked like.

- **Film score → screenplay:**

Imagine that you have been asked to write the screenplay for a movie. However, this movie is being produced in an unconventional way. Instead of writing the story first and then selecting music to complement the screenplay, the producers have chosen the music in advance and asked you to write a story that fits the music.

Choose a piece that one of the SSO ensembles performed. If that piece was in the soundtrack for your film, what would your film be about? Write/draw detailed descriptions that will help your producers understand the setting, characters, and plot. **Resources:**

<https://kidskonnect.com/social-studies/film-scores/> (film scores)

<http://classicalkusc.org/kids/cuecreation/> (the creation of film music)

## 5. Who is behind the music?

The SSO string, woodwind, brass, and percussion ensembles performed pieces written by famous composers who lived at different times in history, and who wrote different styles of music. Here is more information about the ensemble composers/pieces in question:

### **Strings: W.A. Mozart**

[https://www.classicsforkids.com/composers/composer\\_profile.php?id=46](https://www.classicsforkids.com/composers/composer_profile.php?id=46)  
<https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Wolfgang-Amadeus-Mozart/353500>

### **Woodwinds: Simple Gifts**

[https://www.parksidecommunityschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/song\\_simple\\_gifts.pdf](https://www.parksidecommunityschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/song_simple_gifts.pdf)  
<https://songofamerica.net/song/simple-gifts/>

### **Brass: Henry Mancini**

<https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/Henry-Mancini/312332>  
<https://kidsconnect.com/social-studies/film-scores/> (film scores)  
<http://classicalkusc.org/kids/cuecreation/> (the creation of film music)

### **Percussion: John Philip Sousa**

<https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/John-Philip-Sousa/277145>  
[https://www.classicsforkids.com/composers/composer\\_profile.php?id=70](https://www.classicsforkids.com/composers/composer_profile.php?id=70)  
[http://www.americaslibrary.gov/aa/sousa/aa\\_sousa\\_subj.html](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/aa/sousa/aa_sousa_subj.html)

## **GLOSSARY**

(Source: The Oxford Dictionary of Music, Revised Edition; 1994)

### **Speed:**

**Tempo:** Time. The speed at which a piece of music is performed.

**Adagio:** At ease. Slow.

**Andante:** Moving along, flowing (slowish but not slow).

**Allegro:** Merry, ie. quick, lively, bright.

**Rhythm:** Covers everything pertaining to the *time* aspect of music.

### **Volume:**

**Dynamics:** The graduations of volume in music.

**Piano (dynamic):** Soft, quiet. Opposite of *forte*, loud.

**Mezzo forte:** Half-loud, i.e. neither loud nor soft.

**Forte:** 'Strong', i.e. loud.

**Crescendo:** Growing. Directive used by composers to indicate that a passage should gradually increase in loudness.

**Diminuendo:** Diminishing, i.e. gradually getting quieter.

### **More terms:**

**Ensemble:** Together. Any combination of performers, but especially a small group playing individual parts.

**Harmony:** The simultaneous sounding (i.e. combination) of notes, giving what is known as vertical music, contrasted with horizontal music.

**Melody:** A succession of notes, varying in pitch, which have an organized and recognizable shape.

Melody is 'horizontal', i.e. the notes are heard consecutively, whereas in harmony notes are sounded simultaneously ('vertical').

**Pitch:** The location of a sound in the tonal scale, depending on the speed of vibrations from the source of the sound, fast ones producing a high pitch and slow ones a low.

**Unison:** Sounding of the same note by all performers.

**Legato:** Bound together. Performed so that there is no perceptible pause between notes, i.e. in a smooth manner, the opposite of *staccato*.

**Staccato:** Detached. Method of playing a note (shown by a dot over the note) so that it is shortened - and thus 'detached' from its successor - by being held for less than its full value.