CONCERT PREPARATION GUIDE

The Color Of Music

YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONCERTS OCTOBER 28-29, 2015 10AM & 11:35AM ORCHESTRA HALL

Prepared by the Minnesota Orchestra Collaborative Design Team & Education/Community Engagement Department
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

4  Preparing for the Field Trip
6  Preparing for the Concert
10  Concert Program
12  Meet the Performers
20  Meet the Composers
22  Standards Connection
24  Preparation Activities
24  Printables
40  About Orchestra Hall
Dear Teachers,

We want you and your students to have a GREAT DAY at Orchestra Hall.

Please help us by following these simple guidelines:

BEFORE YOU LEAVE SCHOOL
1) Please give a copy of your ticket to every bus driver and group leader on the day of the concert.
   • Tickets will be mailed to you approximately 2 weeks prior to the concert and will give detailed parking, arrival and seating instructions.

2) Please ensure all adults in your group are wearing the nametags provided.
   • Nametags will be mailed to you prior to the concert. Safety is our first priority at Orchestra Hall and we appreciate your help in ensuring a safe environment.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT ORCHESTRA HALL
3) Please keep a single file line from your bus to your assigned seats.
   • HOMESCHOOLERS: Please park private vehicles in nearby parking ramps.
   • SCHOOLS: Police officers and ushers will greet your bus as you arrive and help you park. You will be directed to your arrival door and led directly to your seats.

   • SEATING: We have assigned your school to a specific section of Orchestra Hall and a block of seats within that section. You are seated from front to back according to when you arrive.

ONCE YOU ARE SEATED
4) Please let the usher seat your group BEFORE:
   • Sending students to the restrooms (must be accompanied by an adult)
   • Re-arranging the seating of your students

Thank you for your cooperation! If you have any questions about the Minnesota Orchestra Young People's Concerts, please feel free to call the Logistics Coordinator at 612-371-5671. Enjoy the concert!

Jessica Leibfried
Director of Education
612-371-5650

Chris Johnson
Young People's Logistics Coordinator
612-371-5671
REVIEWS CONCERT ETIQUETTE
Use the concert etiquette chant below to review five behavioral expectations for the concert. At the end of the chant, have students make an “etiquette promise” by giving a high five to a teacher or parent. We love “high five students” at Orchestra Hall!

Number 1-eyes wide (to take it all in)
Number 2-ears open (for all that listenin’)
Number 3-voice off while the musicians play
Number 4-calm body in your chair, OK?!
Number 5 and the last, most important of this rhyme, Follow all these rules and you’ll have a great time, SHOW FIVE!

Videotape your class’ performance of the concert etiquette chant and send it to education@mnorch.org
Your video may be selected for our social media sites or for projection at the concert!
(Disclaimer: Teachers, by sending any video content to the Minnesota Orchestra, you acknowledge that all students recorded in the video have appropriate media releases on file at school.)

REVIEWS INSTRUMENTS OF THE ORCHESTRA
Go to page 8 to learn about the instruments of the orchestra. You’ll discover what the instruments look like and where they are located within the symphony orchestra! To hear what each instrument sounds like, visit:
http://www.dsokids.com/listen/by-instrument.aspx

CONNECT WITH THE MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA
Homeschool Families: We offer complimentary pre-concert workshops to help prepare your family for the Young People’s Concert. To register, visit our web site and click on the concert you are attending:
https://www.minnesotaorchestra.org/learn/teachers-students-and-parents/young-peoples-concerts

Schools: Our education staff offers complimentary student workshops to help prepare your students for the Young People’s Concert. Workshops are typically 30 minutes long and are scheduled on a first-come, first-serve basis. To register, email education@mnorch.org

Instrument demonstrations are available to students and families registered for a Young People’s Concert. Demonstrations are typically 30 minutes long and are scheduled on a first-come, first-serve basis.
To register, email education@mnorch.org

LISTEN TO THE MUSIC
To listen, click on the title of the piece of music on the program page.
(Disclaimer: These are YouTube links and have been vetted for their audio content. However, advertisements may appear on the screen prior to the video that contain unsuitable content for children so please plan accordingly.)

When introducing a new piece of music to your students, consider asking the following questions to create an inquiry-based, focused discussion in class.
(Review these questions prior to listening to the music for the first time.)
1) What did you hear?
2) What did you hear that makes you say that?
3) What more did you hear?

Pop Goes the Weasel-Sing this classic children’s song before you come to the concert! Lyrics:
All around the mulberry bush,
the monkey chased the weasel;
the monkey thought ‘twas all in fun,”
Pop! Goes the weasel.

☐ I can...sing Pop Goes the Weasel.

Beethoven’s famous “Ode to Joy” will be arranged by Jocelyn Hagen for small ensembles of Minnesota Orchestra musicians and performed on the concert. Review the melody in advance!
https://youtu.be/BVL7pLwzct0

☐ I can...hum the “Ode to Joy” melody.

CHECK OUT THE PREPARATION ACTIVITIES!
All activities are aligned with Minnesota State Standards.
Click here for an interactive guide to the orchestra.
THE COLOR OF MUSIC

Shostakovich

Festive Overture

English Nursery Rhyme/Singing Game
featuring YOU, THE AUDIENCE!

Pop Goes the Weasel

Beethoven, arr. Hagen

Ode to Joy
featuring music of local composer/arranger Jocelyn Hagen

Grieg

Peer Gynt Suite No. 1 “Anitras Dance”

Mussorgsky, orch. Ravel

Pictures at an Exhibition “Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks”

Copland

Fanfare for the Common Man

Shostakovich

Piano Concerto No. 2, 1st movement
featuring YPSCA School Music Audition Winner, Zhen Tu

Bernstein

West Side Story “Mambo”
featuring movers from Black Label Movement

The concert program is subject to change.

Learn more about the composers [here](#)
• The Minnesota Orchestra began as the “Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra” in 1903.
• Re-named “Minnesota Orchestra” in 1968, the ensemble plays nearly 175 performances a year and has toured to Australia, Canada, Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East!
• There are approximately 85 musicians in the orchestra.
• The Minnesota Orchestra won a Grammy Award for “Best Orchestral Performance” in 2014 for their recording of Sibelius’ Symphonies No.1 and 4.
• Our musicians are the best at what they do and dedicate their lives to music making. However, they are also athletes, teachers, volunteers, pet-owners, environmentalists, and more!

Learn more here: [http://www.minnesotaorchestra.org/about/who-we-are/artists-and-performers/orchestra-musicians](http://www.minnesotaorchestra.org/about/who-we-are/artists-and-performers/orchestra-musicians)
MEET THE PERFORMERS

RODERICK COX
ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

• Roderick grew up in Macon, Georgia.
• He was hired as the Minnesota Orchestra’s new assistant conductor in June, 2015, and conducts our Young People’s Concerts, family concerts, outdoor concerts and more!
• Roderick is a winner of the 2014 Robert J. Harth conducting prize from the Aspen Music Festival—a great honor.
• He has a love of contemporary music and has led orchestras in the performance of new works by living composers.
• Roderick recently moved to Minneapolis, MN. Give him a big ‘welcome to Minnesota’ when you see him!

Learn more here: http://www.roderickcox.com/
MEET THE PERFORMERS

BLACK LABEL MOVEMENT
GUEST ARTISTS

- Black Label Movement was created in 2005.
- Artistic director, Carl Flink, was born in the Twin Cities. After seeing the movie “Singin’ in the Rain” at age 8, he came home and danced every day after that.
- Carl was also a star soccer player and a lawyer before becoming a dance professor at the University of Minnesota.
- The movers of Black Label Movement are known for their incredibly athletic dance movement. They try and push the limits of what’s physically possible.
ZHEN TU

ZHEN TU
GUEST ARTISTS

• Zhen was born in China in 1999. She started playing piano one month before her 4th birthday and moved to the United States approximately one year later.
• Her younger brother Timmy is 11 years old and plays piano and clarinet.
• Zhen is a PSEO student at the University of Minnesota, where she has been studying piano with Lydia Artymiw, Distinguished McKnight Professor of Piano, since 2011.
• She won the YPSCA School Music Audition competition in 2015.
• Zhen speaks fluent German and Chinese (in addition to English) and loves to read.
Modest Mussorgsky was born in Russia. His mother gave him his first piano lessons. Mussorgsky went to a military boarding school and then joined the army. But he left to become a composer. He was very patriotic and wrote a lot of music about Russian history and folk stories. He had a hard time making a living as a composer so he got a government job but spent his spare time writing music.

Joseph-Maurice Ravel was born in France. He is best known for his piece of music Bolero. The success of this piece came as a great shock to Ravel, who had originally thought that orchestras would refuse to play it. He was expelled from his school, the Conservatoire de Paris, because he wasn’t meeting their requirements, but he kept composing. Ravel made a lot of money by arranging Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition and later made a four month tour to America where he met George Gershwin and found that music critics were much more accepting of his compositions.

Aaron Copland was born in America. He is one of the most famous American composers of all time. Copland went to France when he was a teenager where a famous female musician and composer, Nadia Boulanger, helped him discover his own style. Copland wrote a lot of music for ballets with American themes like Billy the Kid, Rodeo, and Appalachian Spring. One of his most famous compositions is Fanfare for the Common Man. He wrote it after the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra asked several composers to write fanfares during World War II.

Dmitri Shostakovich was born in Russia. He finished his first symphony when he was only 19 years old! Shostakovich struggled to express himself and his true creativity due to the strict controls on music by the country’s dictator, Joseph Stalin. Worried that he would be put in jail, Shostakovich started composing “safe” music with hidden meanings so he wouldn’t get in trouble. He became unhappy and bitter and died at the age of 69.

Leonard Bernstein was born in America. His father sold wigs and beauty supplies and wanted Leonard to take over the family business. But, Leonard went to Harvard and majored in music instead. He got his big break at 25 years old when, at the last minute, he stepped in to conduct a concert in Carnegie Hall that was broadcast live over the radio. The audience went wild and he even made the front page of the newspaper the next day! Leonard Bernstein was a great teacher and was the first person to broadcast Young People’s Concerts live on television. In fact, Bernstein’s commitment to teaching young people about classical music is the reason most orchestras around the world have Young People’s Concerts!
Preparation Activities support learning in the following areas:

**CREATE**
- Create or make in a variety of contexts in the arts area using the artistic foundations.

**ARTISTIC LITERACY**
- Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of the arts area.
- Demonstrate knowledge and use of the technical skills of the art form, integrating technology when applicable.
- Demonstrate understanding of the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts that influence the arts areas.

**FOUNDATIONS**
- Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of the arts area.
- Demonstrate understanding of the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts that influence the arts areas.

**RESPOND**
- Respond to or critique a variety of creations or performances using the artistic foundations.

**PERFORM**
- Perform or present in a variety of contexts in the arts area using the artistic foundations.

For general information on concert etiquette and the symphony orchestra, please see “Preparing for the Concert” on pages 6–7.
Shostakovich’s Festive Overture

ABOUT THE MUSIC
Festive Overture was premiered in Moscow at the Bolshoi Theater in 1954. The Bolshoi’s conductor, Vassili Nebolsin, asked Shostakovich to write the overture in just three days! The piece begins with a brass fanfare, is followed by a fast melody in the winds and a luscious, lyrical section led by the cellos. The brass fanfare returns at the end and leads to a dramatic grand finale. Although this is a standard piece of orchestral repertoire, it has been transcribed for concert band as well.

KEY VOCABULARY
Overture
An overture means “opening piece” and is a signal to the audience to stop talking and pay attention. It usually precedes a bigger musical work like an opera or a ballet. It’s kind of like the previews at a movie theater!

Fanfare
A short piece of music that is often patriotic, heroic, or ceremonial and typically played by brass instruments. Trumpets are especially important in fanfares. In fact, trumpet players used to play short fanfares to get a crowd’s attention and announce the arrival of a king and queen! Within Festive Overture, you’ll hear a fanfare. Can you find the two places where that happens?

Melodic Direction
The pathway of pitches in a melody—upward, downward, horizontal (or “stays the same”) and any combination of these.

ACTIVITY #1
FOCUS ON THE FOUR FAMILIES OF INSTRUMENTS
☐ I CAN name the four families of instruments in an orchestra.
☐ I CAN identify characteristics of each family of instruments.

A) Predict!
Members of a family typically share something in common. Perhaps it’s eye color, hair color, mannerisms, or even hobbies. Just like families, instruments share similar characteristics too. We call them instrument families!

- Discussion: Think about your own family. What do you have in common? What differences do you have?
- Brainstorm: Think about an instrument that you know already. What material is it made of—wood or metal? How is the sound made—with a bow, by blowing air into it, or by striking it? Draw your instrument and label it. (Printable #1)
- Activity: Show the class your picture, describe your instrument and hang it on a wall or blank space. After all of the pictures are up on the wall, begin grouping instruments together into families. Make sure you have a rationale or justification for grouping instruments together!

B) Check!
- Look at the pictures of each instrument family provided on page 26.
- Check the instruments families you just grouped together by comparing them to the pictures provided.
- Challenge: Where do instruments like the harp, contrabassoon, saxophone, bass clarinet, gong, baritone, or piano belong? Why?

C) Learn More!
- Learn more about the instruments of the orchestra on page 8.
- Listen to audio clips of each instrument here:
  http://www.dsokids.com/listen/by-instrument.aspx

PREPARATION

RESPOND

FOUNDATIONS
☐ I CAN hear and identify at least three instruments in the music.
☐ I CAN hear the trumpets playing a fanfare.

INTRODUCTORY
LISTEN to Shostakovich’s Festive Overture.
https://youtu.be/1gDZTah8J2A
PREPARATION

A) Prepare!
- Teachers, before students listen to the music, sing or play both excerpts below and have students imitate you.
  - Each excerpt represents an example of melodic direction that can be heard frequently throughout Festive Overture. (Excerpt 1= Upward Melodic Direction) (Excerpt 2= Downward & Upward Melodic Direction)
  - Note: Pitches have been transposed to F Major for ease of transfer onto Orff instruments if desired.
- Repeat multiple times, as needed, until students can identify both types of melodic direction.

B) Present!
- Give students their “listening job” by asking them to search for the two types of melodic direction as they listen to the music.
  - Assign a movement or hand signal for each type of direction so students can show you when they are hearing it. (For example, have them point up to the sky when they hear upward melodic direction.)
- Listen multiple times, as needed.
- Challenge: Have students listen and respond to the music with eyes closed.

C) Practice!
- Have students improvise new melodies using the types of melodic direction they’ve investigated.
  - After improvising several new melodies, students select their favorite one to share.
  - “Pair and Share”. Students play their new melody for a partner.
  - The partner guesses which type(s) of melodic direction they used.

ACTIVITY #2
FOCUS ON MELODY
☐ I CAN identify two types of melodic direction in Festive Overture.
☐ I CAN improvise a melody using skips and steps.
Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite No. 1 “Anitras Dance”

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Playwright Henrik Ibsen wrote a play in 1875 based on Danish folk hero, Peer Gynt. In the story, Peer, a young and adventurous man, encounters an Arabic princess named Anitra. She charms him with her dancing and, in a rather sneaky way, convinces him to give her his valuable possessions and wealth.

KEY VOCABULARY

Pizzicato
a playing technique in which a string player plucks the strings of their instrument with their fingers

Arco
a playing technique in which the bow is drawn across the strings

Staccato
short, crisp, detached sounds

Legato
long, flowing, connected sounds

Listen!
• While listening to “Anitras Dance,” have students find the steady beat and join you in a “pat snap snap” body percussion pattern.
• Display or pass out copies of the Listening Guide. (Printable #2)
• Have students follow along with the guide. Try this a couple of times so they become familiar with it.

Discuss!
• Ask students to describe elements of music that they heard: dynamics, tempo, form, melody, etc.
• Use a series of three questions for the discussion—What did you hear? What did you hear that makes you say that? What more do you hear?

Explore!
• Ask students to focus on the form. Have them demonstrate understanding by putting their hands on their heads when they hear “A sections” and on their knees when they hear “B”.
• As a class, create a “word bank” to describe the A Section and B Section.

Move!
• Split the class into groups. Designate one group A1 (the first A section), one group B, and one group A2 (the second A section). Teachers, you may want to break up the B Section into three groups as well since it is a longer section. Use the Listening Guide to help students visualize exactly what part of the music they are responsible for.
• Have the groups use the word bank and experiment with movement that fits their section of music.
• Try using scarves and other materials to add some visual elements to the movement!
• Perform as a class.

Extension: Videotape your class’ creation and send it to education@mnorch.org. Your video may be selected for our social media sites or for projection at the concert! (Disclaimer: Teachers, by sending any video content to the Minnesota Orchestra, you acknowledge that all students recorded in the video have appropriate media releases on file at school.)

ACTIVITY #1

FOCUS ON FORM

☐ I CAN identify the A section and B section of “Anitras Dance.”
☐ I CAN perform a “pat snap snap” body percussion pattern to the steady, triple meter.

A) Listen!

B) Discuss!

C) Explore!

C) Move!

WORD BANK SAMPLE

Now it is your turn! Use these as a starting point and add to them.

A SECTION   B SECTION
Playful   Romantic
Lighthearted   Dark

Listen to Grieg’s “Anitras Dance.”
https://youtu.be/gcEnSITNaGk
Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition “Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks”

ABOUT THE MUSIC
After Mussorgsky’s friend, visual artist Viktor Hartmann, passed away, a collection of his paintings were displayed in a local gallery. Inspired by 10 of these paintings, Mussorgsky wrote a piano piece called “Pictures at an Exhibition” which was later arranged for full orchestra by Maurice Ravel. You’ll be hearing Ravel’s full orchestra arrangement of “Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks” when you come to the Young People’s Concert at Orchestra Hall. The painting below was really more of a sketch of costume ideas that Hartmann was putting together for a children’s ballet production.

KEY VOCABULARY

Single Reed
A clarinet and saxophone use a single reed, which is one flat piece of wood that is held to the mouthpiece with a metal clamp called a ligature. The reed vibrates as air passes between the reed and mouthpiece.

Double Reed
An oboe and bassoon use double reeds, which is two pieces of wood wound together with string and then inserted into the instrument. The reeds vibrate together as air is blown between them.

Trill
A trill is a playing technique in which a musician “flutters” quickly back and forth between two pitches.

ACTIVITY #1

DESCRIPTING THE MUSIC

A) Predict!
- Before telling students the title of this piece or anything about it, show them this short video of a baby bird hatching out of its shell. [https://youtu.be/FDK6LrVWh3k]
- Watch the video again. Have students put the story in order. [Printable #3]
- Have students discuss the video and story order.

B) Imagine!
- Ask students to imagine the sounds they would use if they composed a piece of music inspired by the story of chicks hatching. Have students write their ideas in the Venn Diagram. [Printable #3]. Consider dynamics, tempo, instrumentation, form, texture, etc.

C) Compare and Contrast!
- Play “Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks”. Have students describe Mussorgsky’s music and write their answers in the Venn Diagram.
- Compare what was similar and what was different.

ACTIVITY #2

FOCUS ON FORM AND RHYTHM

A) Investigate!
- Tell the students to listen to the music and focus on the form.
  - Play the first 30 seconds and label it “A.”
  - Play the whole piece and tell students to raise their hands any time they hear the ‘A’ section.
  - Have the students try and identify the form of the piece. (ABA)
- Introduce the Listening Guide [Printable #4].
  - Listen while following along with the Listening Guide.
  - Discuss the form.
- Isolate the “A” section
  - Have students listen for the quarter note pattern in the woodwinds and the eighth note pattern in the pizzicato strings.
  - Have students chant “egg” for each quarter note and “hatching” for each series of eighth notes.

B) Create!
- Split the class into small groups. Each group takes the 4-measure “egg” “hatching” rhythm pattern of the A section and creates their own composition! Use any of the following: movement, pitched percussion, unpitched percussion, scarves or other visuals, chanted words, etc.
- Design a rubric as a class and give feedback after each performance.
- Extension: Videotape your class’ creation and send it to education@mnorch.org. Your video may be selected for our social media sites or for projection at the concert! (Disclaimer: Teachers, by sending any video content to the Minnesota Orchestra, you acknowledge that all students recorded in the video have appropriate media releases on file at school.)
ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #3
FOCUS ON DOUBLE REEDS
☐ I CAN define what a single reed is and how it makes sound.
☐ I CAN define what a double reed is and how it makes sound.

A) Make Your Own Double Reed!
• Materials Needed: Plastic drinking straws, scissors
• Take a plastic drinking straw and use your scissors to cut the end into a point. (It helps to flatten the straw while cutting it.)
• Place the straw between your lips, press down lightly and blow. You should get a buzzing sound!
• Try cutting the straw into different lengths. What happens to the sound? Does it get higher? Lower?

PREPARATION

STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM

PLEASE RESPOND BELOW USING WORDS OR PICTURES
ABOUT THE MUSIC
In 1942, Eugene Goossens, conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, commissioned multiple composers to write rousing fanfares that would inspire patriotism among his fellow Americans. One of these composers was Aaron Copland. His “Fanfare for the Common Man” became one of America’s most iconic and patriotic pieces of music.

KEY VOCABULARY
Fanfare
A short piece of music that is often patriotic, heroic, or ceremonial and typically played by brass instruments. Trumpets are especially important in fanfares. In fact, trumpet players used to play short fanfares to get a crowd’s attention and announce the arrival of a king and queen!

Texture
Texture in music is created by the number of voices or instruments playing and how their melodies, rhythms and harmonies interact with each other.

“Fanfare for the Common Man” became one of America’s most iconic and patriotic pieces of music.
Copland’s Fanfare for the Common Man

ACTIVITY #1

**DESCRIPTING THE MUSIC**

- I CAN describe what I hear using music vocabulary.
- I CAN define texture.

**A** Speculate! (Shhhhh. don’t tell students anything about the music yet!)

- Post the following three questions and review with students prior to listening:
  - 1) What do you notice about the music?
  - 2) What questions do you have about the music?
  - 3) What do you think Copland is trying to tell us in this music?

- Listen to the music.

- Discuss the questions above as a class and record student responses so everyone can see them. (Don’t reveal the title yet!)

- After students have speculated about the music, reveal the title and the context behind the music.

- Discuss why Copland would write such a heroic fanfare for “the common man.”

**B** Focus on Texture!

- Have students watch the YouTube video “Fanfare for the Common Man” performed by the New York Philharmonic: [https://youtu.be/FLMVB0B1Ts](https://youtu.be/FLMVB0B1Ts)

- Use the “Touch Charts” ([Printable #5](#)) and have students point to the instruments they are hearing and seeing.

- Discuss the following question—how does the texture change throughout this piece?

ACTIVITY #2

**FOCUS ON HEROES AND MELODIC LEAPS**

**A** Compare and Contrast!

- Listen to the “Theme from Superman” and compare/contrast to Copland’s “Fanfare for the Common Man.”

One piece of music was inspired by a hero with super powers while another was inspired by the “everyday hero.” What do they have in common? What’s different?

- Use the Venn Diagram ([Printable #6](#)) to compare/contrast.

- Discuss what made the music sound so heroic. Listen again, if needed.

- Examples: slow tempo, brass instruments, big leaps in the melody…

- Teachers, make sure students begin discussing the large skips, or leaps, in the melody.

**B** Heroic Leaps!

- After students have observed that big leaps are prominent in both melodies, use the notation below to show the arc of each melody.

  - Note: “Theme from Superman” has been transposed.

  - Have students point out where there are large skips, or leaps, in the melody.

  - Split the class into small groups.

  - Discussion: Name some people who are heroes to you. What do they do that is heroic?

  - Make a list as a group.

  - Share with the class.

**C** Create!

- Students select one hero from their list and create:

  - Theme music for their hero using pitched instruments

  - Visual representation of their hero (movement or a frozen shape or acting out a heroic deed)

  - Perform for the class.

*Theme from Superman*

*Fanfare for the Common Man*
Shostakovich’s Piano Concerto No. 2, 1st movement

ABOUT THE MUSIC
Shostakovich composed this piece in 1957 for his son, Maxim, in honor of his 19th birthday. Unlike many of Shostakovich’s compositions, his Piano Concerto No. 2 is uncharacteristically jolly and joyful. Maxim premiered the piece at his graduation ceremony at the Moscow Conservatory.

KEY VOCABULARY
Cadenza
A cadenza is the part of a concerto where the soloist gets to “show off” and the orchestra rests. (Listen for the piano cadenza at approximately 4:45 in the YouTube link below.)

Bernstein’s West Side Story “Mambo”

ABOUT THE MUSIC
West Side Story was premiered in 1957, coincidentally, the same year as Shostakovich wrote his Piano Concerto No. 2. With music by Leonard Bernstein, lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and choreography by Jerome Robbins, West Side Story became one of the greatest musicals of all time. Inspired by Shakespeare’s “Romeo and Juliet,” the story is set in the Upper West Side of New York in the 1950s and tells the tale of young love and the rivalry between two gangs—the Jets and the Sharks. Tony, a former member of the Jets, falls in love with Maria, whose brother is the Sharks’ gang leader. During the “Mambo,” the two gangs have a “dance-off” and go back and forth trying to one-up each other. At the very end, Tony sees Maria for the first time and is struck by her beauty.

ACTIVITIES

PREPARATION
Shostakovich’s Piano Concerto No. 2, 1st movement

ACTIVITY
☐ I CAN describe how a piano works. (88 keys; strings inside the piano are struck by hammers; 3 foot pedals to make pitches shorter or longer)

ACTIVITY
☐ I CAN hear the piano cadenza.

LISTEN
Listen to Shostakovich: https://youtu.be/ITSr2oz15Xs

PLAY!
Listen and watch as the Venezuelan Youth Orchestra performs Bernstein’s “Mambo!” https://youtu.be/WWs9G-c_pcs

[During the “Mambo,” the two gangs have a “dance-off” and go back and forth trying to one-up each other.]

DANCE!
The mambo is a Latin dance of Cuba characterized by its rock steps, side steps, kicks and flicks of the feet, and distinctive hip movement. Rather than starting on beat one, the dancer is challenged to wait for one beat and start their movement on beat 2. Watch these kids dance a mambo! https://youtu.be/ERVyi1D72sk

Spotlight on Youth Performers

Listen to Bernstein’s “Mambo” https://youtu.be/Bp5SWYX5x55

ACTIVITY
☐ I CAN hear the musicians shout “Mambo!” (And I can do it too! This would be good to try with your students in advance.)

ACTIVITY
☐ I CAN show that I’m listening carefully to the music by moving my body to the steady beat, the melody, the rhythm or instruments I hear.

PREPARATION
West Side Story

LISTEN
Listen to Bernstein’s “Mambo”: https://youtu.be/Bp5SWYX5x55
PRINTABLES
Draw your favorite instrument in the box and answer the questions below.

Name of Instrument: __________________________________________________________________

This instrument is made of:  Wood  Metal    Other:____________________________________

To make sound on this instrument, a musician uses:  A Bow      Air Mallets/Sticks  Other:____________________________________

INSTRUMENT INTRODUCTION

LISTENING GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

A Section
(0:10-0:47)

B Section
(0:47-1:40) & (2:04-2:54)

A' Section
(1:40-2:03) & (2:55-3:31)

CODA

Unison Pizzicato

Unison Pizzicato

Unison Pizzicato

Copycat

Major

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BIRD WATCHING
Watch the video of a baby bird hatching from its shell and put the sentences in order below. Number 1 is already done for you.
https://youtu.be/FDKglfWheol

1. ___ Baby bird breaks the shell open.
   ____ Mom keeps baby warm again.
   ____ Baby bird cries and opens its mouth for food before taking a nap.
   ____ Mom takes part of the shell away.
   ____ Baby bird gets out of shell.
   ____ Baby bird opens its mouth and cries.
   ____ Mom gets rid of the rest of the shell.

THINK LIKE A COMPOSER
Think about what kind of sounds you would want to use if you were writing a song about a bird hatching. Put these words in the left circle. In the right circle describe the kinds of sounds you heard Mussorgsky use. Were there any similarities?

A Section
(0:00-0:30)

B Section
(0:30-0:52)

A Section
(0:52-End)
Listen to Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man" and point to the picture of the instruments you hear.

Compare/Contrast Copland’s “Fanfare for the Common Man” with John Williams’ “Theme from Superman.”
Welcome to Orchestra Hall, home of the Minnesota Orchestra since 1974, known as one of the best acoustic spaces in the world. In 2012, the hall was renovated to create long-awaited upgrades and additions throughout the building. As you walk into the lobby area and into the auditorium, here are some things to look for:
Look for a one inch gap as you walk through the lobby doors into the ring corridor. Orchestra Hall is actually two separate buildings separated by one inch gap that is filled with a special material to block noise and vibrations from going inside the auditorium.

The small holes in the brown paneling on the lobby walls absorb sound so everyone can talk to their friends at the same time without having to shout!

Yes, Orchestra Hall has lockers! But instead of putting school books in them, audience members put their coats in these lockers during concerts.

We thought about getting rid of them during the renovation but discovered that having coats in the lockers actually helps to sound-proof the auditorium because they soak up sound.

There are 114 cubes on the ceilings and walls. Instead of absorbing sound like in the lobby, the cubes bounce the sound all over the place so everyone can hear our orchestra play. But that also means that if you talk from your seats the musicians can hear you too!

Fuzzy carpeting on the walls is another soundproofing element of the ring corridor.
Why cubes? Well, when they were first building Orchestra Hall the architects kept envisioning a shape on the walls and ceiling but couldn’t decide what to use. One of the architects went home to have dinner with his family and as he described the problem with the hall, his kids responded “It could be like Fantastic Four superhero ‘The Thing!’”

He loved the idea so much that he added cubes on the wall and ceiling, giving the hall its iconic “Thing-inspired” look!

Learn more about the hall: [http://www.minnesotalandscap.org/images/pr/pdf/renovation_project_facts.pdf](http://www.minnesotalandscap.org/images/pr/pdf/renovation_project_facts.pdf)