

Hello Teachers!

This guide was created to help you make the most of your Class Notes Artists visit from Lux.

The goal of the concert experience is to inspire, motivate, and entertain students through live performance.

This curriculum is comprised of a PowerPoint presentation and this Teacher's Guide. The curriculum supports the concert experience by extracting several concepts or ideas directly related to the concert and its contents. Activities and information about these concepts align with Minnesota music standards and help make music come alive for students. These concepts provide focus and establish learning goals that connect to the concert experience.

Each concept is explored in three ways: Learn, Listen, and Do. Visuals, audio, and information for the Listen and Learn components are presented in the PowerPoint. Use this in the classroom to present and illustrate ideas. There are four Lesson/Activity plans that correspond with the Do section in this Teacher's Guide.

The core ideas/concepts for Class Notes Artists: Lux String Quartet are:

1. A string quartet consists of two violins, a viola, and cello. All are members of the string family.
2. Musicians in a string quartet must work together and communicate as a team.
3. String players use special techniques to create different moods and different styles of music.

Two related Class Notes Videos with curricula can also be shown to expand your teaching around the Lux quartet's visit: [What's in a Title?](#) uses the example of a string quartet to explain why Classical works are titled in the way they are and how to understand them. And [Choosing the Right Instrument for You: The Strings Family](#) explores string instruments' names, sounds, and structures. All other Class Notes Videos can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

We hope you find that these tools enrich the concert experience for your students.

# MOLD-A-MELODY

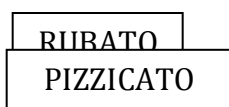
## LESSON/ACTIVITY PLAN

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will understand that musicians add expression to a melody by using special techniques, including: *rubato*, *vibrato*, *accents*, and *dynamics*.

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Start with a simple familiar classroom melody. *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* works for just about everyone. Together with students, sing the melody as “flat” and inexpressively as possible.
2. Introduce vocabulary using vocabulary cards:



Give brief, easy-to-understand descriptions of each. Flash cards to practice definitions. Listen to and/or watch examples of each. (Suggestions for definitions and examples below.)

- **Rubato** – slight changes in tempo; speed up/slow down
- **Portamento** – pitches that slide from one note to another
- **Vibrato** – a pitch pulsates or vibrates for expressive effect
- **Accent** – emphasis on a particular note
- **Dynamics** – the volume of music; loud/soft
- **Pizzicato** – plucking the strings to produce a sound
- **Arco** – using the bow on the strings to produce a sound

Rubato:

This is pianist Vladimir Horowitz playing a [Mazurka](#) by Frédéric Chopin. While listening and watching, notice how the music slows down.

Vibrato:

Vocal and string music include a lot of obvious, easy-to-hear vibrato. Watch the first minute of Steven Doane from Eastman School of Music to hear an excerpt of [The Swan](#) from *Carnival of the Animals* by Camille Saint-Saëns. Continue watching to find out more specifics about how vibrato is produced on a cello/string instrument.

Accents:

Watch conductor Michael Tilson Thomas conduct the San Francisco Symphony playing Igor Stravinsky's [Rite of Spring](#).

At about 3:30 minutes in, you will hear a great example of accents. Tilson Thomas's conducting cues give visual reinforcement. Listening to the full eight and a half minutes provides a wonderful opportunity to see and hear a vast array of instrument-specific techniques, such as pizzicato or trills. It's also a chance to practice instrument identification and see some great close-up shots of musicians playing their instruments.

Dynamics:

The Stravinsky piece listed above is also a great example of a pretty short piece that contains dynamic extremes. Another good example is Richard Strauss's [Also Sprach Zarathustra](#)

Or, juxtapose two pieces – one extremely quiet and the other very loud.

Quiet: Charles Ives's [The Unanswered Question](#)

Loud: Richard Wagner's [The Ride of the Valkyries](#) from *Die Walküre*.

If you have students with long attention spans, see if you can make it through all of Maurice Ravel's [Bolero](#), which begins very quietly and is basically one long, giant crescendo.

Pizzicato:



Watch a few examples so that students understand what *pizzicato* looks and sounds like. Here's "[Allegro Pizzicato](#)" from Béla Bartók's *String Quartet No. 4*.

Arco:

Watch a contrasting *arco* example, the "*American*" *String Quartet*, by Antonín Dvořák. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pV-kbAydckw>

3. Once students are familiar with the terms and their definitions, repeat the simple melody/song, applying one (or more) of the techniques discussed in class.
4. Continue to use the flash cards over time with various classroom repertoire and listening activities. Use in both singing and instrumental activities whenever possible.

#### STANDARDS:

1. Grades 4 – 5. Artistic Foundations. 1. Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of the arts area. Music. 4.1.1.3.1. Describe the elements of music including melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, tone color, texture, form and their related concepts.
2. Grades 4 – 5. Artistic Foundations. 2. Demonstrate knowledge and use of the technical skills of the art form, integrating technology when applicable. Music. 4.1.2.3.2. Sing and play alone and in a group demonstrating proper posture, breathing, technique, age-appropriate tone quality and expressive intent.

# PEGS, NECK, BODY, TAIL

## ACTIVITY/LESSON PLAN

### OBJECTIVE:

1. Students will recognize and identify verbally and through song the following parts of the violin, viola, and cello: pegs, neck, body, tail, fingerboard, *f* holes, bridge, and scroll.

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Sing “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes” with your students. Tell them that this song, one they’ve probably known for years, can really help learn the parts of a string instrument.
2. If you have access to a violin, hold it up and point to each part, deliberately and slowly, as you sing to the same “Head, Shoulders” tune:

Pegs, Neck, Body, Tail, Body, Tail.  
Pegs, Neck, Body, Tail, Body, Tail.  
Fingerboard, *F* Hole, Bridge, and Scroll,  
Pegs, Neck, Body, Tail, Body, Tail.

If you don’t have access to a real violin, a blown up picture or poster works too. This works with cello or viola too.

3. Repeat by asking a volunteer to come up and point to the parts as the class sings. Or ask a volunteer to sing while you point. Get gradually faster.

## STANDARDS:

These activities incorporate aspects of the following Minnesota State Standards for the Arts.

1. K–3. 1. Artistic Foundations. Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of the arts area. Music. 0.1.1.3.1. Identify the elements of music, including: melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, tone color, texture, form and their related concepts.
2. K–3. 1. Artistic Foundations. Demonstrate knowledge and use of the technical skills of the art form, integrating technology when applicable. Music. 0.1.2.3.2 Sing and play with accurate pitch, rhythm and expressive intent.
3. K–3. 3. Artistic Process: Perform or present. 1. Perform or present in a variety of contexts in the arts area using the artistic foundations. Music. 0.3.1.3.1. Sing and play a varied repertoire that includes simple rhythms and melodies.

# NAME A STRING INSTRUMENT

## LESSON/ACTIVITY PLAN

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will successfully name the instrumentation of a string quartet.
2. Students will correctly identify violin, viola, and cello by sight and sound.

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Start with instrumentation of the traditional string quartet. Create a bulletin board with pictures but no labels. Create instrument name labels separately and ask students to attach labels correctly. Finished product might look like this:



2. Work on visual identification by repeating the first activity with each instrument alone.
3. Move on to aural identification. Find a variety of music with solo violin, viola, cello, or an ensemble piece that prominently features one of those instruments. Here are some suggestions for each instrument:

Violin:

- Felix Mendelssohn: *Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64*
- Jay Ungar: *Ashokan Farewell*
- Nicolo Paganini: *Caprice No. 24*

Viola:

- Arnold Bax: *Viola Sonata in G minor*
- Hector Berlioz: *Harold en Italie*

Violin and Viola:

- W.A. Mozart's [Sinfonia Concertante](#), K. 364 features a brilliant "conversation" between the violin and viola. Here's a great performance, with the violin/viola dialogue starting around 2:30.

Cello:

- J.S. Bach: Any of the *Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello*
- Camille Saint-Saëns "The Swan" from *Carnival of the Animals*
- Edward Elgar: *Cello Concerto in E minor, Op. 85*

EXTENSIONS/MODIFICATIONS/NOTES:

1. Repeat the sequence of activities with any kind of performing ensemble: SATB vocal ensemble, brass quintet, jazz combo, rock band. Take note of any variations in instrumentation of common ensembles.
2. Use the activities—especially the listening/aural identification component—to study any specific piece in greater depth and really hone students' instrument identification skills. A few fun examples to try:
  - a. Steve Reich: *Music for 18 Musicians*
  - b. Darius Milhaud: *La Creation du Monde (Creation of the World)*,
  - c. Igor Stravinsky: *L'Histoire du Soldat (A Soldier's Tale)*
  - d. Franz Schubert: *Trout Quintet*
  - e. Edgar Varèse: *Poème électronique*
  - f. Henry Cowell: *The Banshee*\*



\*The Cowell piece is for solo piano but uses unorthodox techniques. It will challenge students listening skills in a new way.

#### STANDARDS:

These activities include aspects of the following Minnesota State Standards for the Arts.

1. K–3. 4. Artistic Process: Respond or Critique. 1. Respond to or critique a variety of creations or performances using the artistic foundations. Music. 0.4.1.3.1. Compare and contrast the characteristics of a variety of musical works or performances.
2. Grades 4–5. Artistic Process: Respond or Critique. 1. Respond to or critique a variety of creations and performances using the artistic foundations. Music. 4.4.1.3.1. Justify personal interpretations and reactions to a variety of musical works and performances.



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# CAN YOU CUE?

## LESSON/ACTIVITY PLAN

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will understand the function of cueing in a small-ensemble setting.
2. Students will demonstrate cueing technique in classroom performance.

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Explain that when musicians perform together, they must give signals, or cues, to one another so that they start together and stay together throughout a performance. It's a way of communication and working together. The process of cueing might include an exaggerated nod of the head; a sharp, audible inhalation; and/or deliberate eye contact.
2. Watch one or more videos of string quartets with students. Observe the performers' body language and eye contact. Sometimes you will see very obvious examples of cueing, though often this cueing is subtle, requiring close attention to discern and highlight.

Here's Brooklyn Rider playing the [String Quartet in G minor](#) by Claude Debussy.

And here is the Parker Quartet playing Béla Bartók's first [string quartet](#).

It's easier to notice obvious cues in the Brooklyn Rider performance. The Parker Quartet's cues are more subtle. Every string quartet has its own cueing style and habits.

3. Integrate cueing into classroom performance. Group students into quartets and ask them to choose a favorite classroom piece to perform. They may choose to sing, play on classroom instruments, or combine the two. Remind them that they must be able to start together on their own. Circulate among the groups during rehearsal time and help each quartet refine their cueing technique. Complete the activity by asking each group to perform for the class. Give feedback regarding cueing.

## STANDARDS:

These activities incorporate aspects of the following Minnesota Standards for the Arts:

1. K–3. Artistic Foundations 2. Demonstrate knowledge and use of the technical skills of the art form, integrating technology when applicable. Music. 0.1.2.3.2. Sing and play with accurate pitch, rhythm, and expressive intent.
2. K–3. Artistic Process: Perform or Present 1. Perform or present in a variety of contexts in the arts area using the artistic foundations. Music. 0.3.1.3.1 & 0.3.1.3.2. Reflect on a performance based on the feedback of others.
3. Grades 4–5. Artistic Foundations. 2. Demonstrate knowledge and use of the technical skills of the art form, integrating technology when applicable. Music. 4.1.2.3.2. Sing and play alone and in a group demonstrating proper posture, breathing, technique, age-appropriate tone quality and expressive intent.
4. Grades 4–5. Artistic Process: Perform or Present. 1. Perform or present in a variety of contexts in the arts area using the artistic foundations. Music. 4.3.1.3.2. Revise performance based on the feedback of others and self-reflection.
5. Grades 6–8. 3. Artistic process: Perform or Present. 1. Perform or present in a variety of context in the arts area using the artistic foundations. Music. 6.3.1.3.1. Rehears and perform music from a variety of contexts and styles alone or within small or large groups.



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