

North Winds: *Peter and the Wolf* Educational Guide, Grades K-8



About the Performance

North Winds brings this classic musical story to life! Composer Sergei Prokofiev's famous composition ingeniously highlights each character in the story through the distinct voices of flute, oboe, clarinet, French horn and bassoon.



About the Artist

North Winds is comprised of five of New England's best professional wind instrumentalists. Passionate about education as well as performance, this exciting quintet 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

This program instills imagination and creativity with a performance of "Peter and the Wolf." Students will learn how musicians make their sounds, introducing them to the "nut and bolts" of making music. "Peter and the Wolf" is a perfect blend of words and music, with each instrument bringing to life an array of emotions and characters.

Essential Questions

1. Each woodwind family member has a role to play. This is true in all groups, and in all aspects of society. How does a composer, or writer, or any artist sort out and assign roles?
2. Sound is vibration, so how does each woodwind instrument create and shape vibrations?
3. What instrument do you imagine yourself playing?

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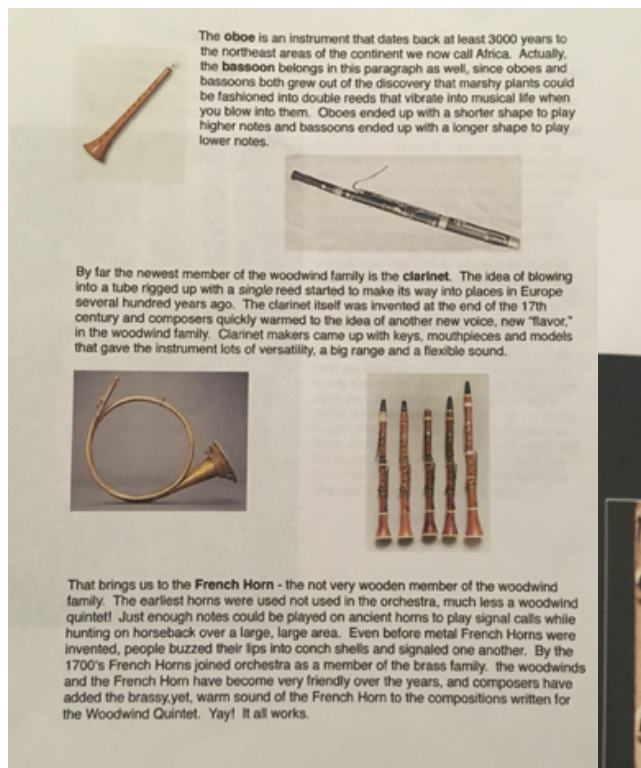


Vocabulary

- Ensemble terms: Solo, Duet, Trio, Quartet, Quintet, Sextet, Septet, Octet, Nonet,
- Families of the Orchestra: Strings, Woodwinds, Brass, Percussion
- Instrument names: Flute, Recorder, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, French Horn
- Technical Terms: Vibration, Single Reed, Double Reed, Mouthpiece, Keys, Valves

Key Facts and Cultural Context for Students

What Are Woodwinds?



Click here for info on the origins of the orchestra:

<https://www.liveabout.com/what-is-an-orchestra-2456541>



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Pre-Show Activity:

- Interview your (extended) family members to learn about what instruments they played, what were their favorite songs and what styles of music they have preferred over the years.
- The book “The Philharmonic Gets Dressed” is also a good book to read before this program

Post-Show Activity: Write a Story Inspired by the Performance

- Can you take a favorite story and imagine, decide, what character would be portrayed by each woodwind voice?
- Write your own story with a cast of creatures, people and places and pick some music pieces, excerpts, that brings the story to life.
- Learn a song on the recorder
- Draw a picture of each woodwind instrument or of an orchestra, or a band
- Listen to 10 minutes of music each night that is not Pop or electronically generated, and write a brief description of your impression.

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Further Resources



This is a link to Jan Brett describing her book writing process, and its ties to the BSO family of instruments and instrumentalists:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAUlg_V3gHQ&feature=youtu.be



This is a link to a story NWQ oboist Andrea Bonsignore wrote and plays with her bassoonist husband after imaging what songs bring the story and characters to life:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAUlg_V3gHQ

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"Peter and the Wolf"
by Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

PROKOFIEV the Composer

The creative force behind "Peter and the Wolf" is a man named Sergei Prokofiev. In 1936 he was asked to write a symphonic work that would be an enjoyable way for children to experience the colorful voices of orchestra instruments. Prokofiev wrote the story's words AND all of the notes the musicians play. He composed a unique tune, or theme, for each character - and chose just the right instrument to "sing" the theme when the character appears in the storyline. Peter's theme is played by the upper voices of the string section. Grandfather is portrayed by the bassoon's low gruff notes. The clarinet plays the cat, the flute the bird. Alas, the poor duck is portrayed by the plaintive notes of the oboe. And watch out for that wolf! Enter the French Horn...

Sergei himself fell in love with music as a very young boy living in a small town in eastern Ukraine. His mother was an accomplished pianist, and her beautiful playing planted the seed, the desire, within her son to be a musician for the rest of his life.

Sergei's mother found every way possible for him to study with good teachers, eventually sending Sergei to the the music conservatory in St. Petersburg. This was the beginning of a lot of travel to distant places throughout Prokofiev's career as a musician. During Prokofiev's lifetime it was not a simple matter to be an outstanding composer, work in your studio and write lots of pieces for people to play. The world all around Prokofiev was in turmoil. Two world wars created disruption and hardship on many continents. Artists in every country were trying to express the changes going on in culture, politics, business, technology. It reminds me a lot of the speed of change and challenges we all face in the world today.

Prokofiev met artists in every genre and worked with orchestras in Russia, England, France, Italy, the United States - and all of these artists influenced one another. To the right is my favorite picture of Prokofiev. It is a lovely pencil drawing by the French artist Henri Matisse.

Prokofiev wrote music that is a bridge between traditional practices of the late 1800's and music that "exploded" with ideas explored by 20th century musicians. Melody, harmony and rhythm were evolving in new, modern ways. Prokofiev's music is often very bold and dramatic one moment, then tender and delicate the next moment. Full of contrast and always unpredictable, Prokofiev's compositions remain spellbinding and fresh many years after they were written.

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Curricular Connections

Music K-8

Creating

3. Refine and complete artistic work. Explore different musical ideas by experimenting with the voice or instruments. (M.Cr.03)

Responding

8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. Explain how a musical work is connected to the particular cultural and historical context where it was created. (.M.R.08)

Connecting

10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. (M.Co.10)

11. Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical contexts to deepen understanding. Identify how musical ideas and traditions migrate with the people who originated them to affect other cultures, historical periods, and musical genres and styles (e.g., immigrant European folk music). (.M.Co.11)