

**Alabama Symphony Orchestra  
2025/2026 Teaching Guide**



Alabama  
Symphony  
Orchestra

# Alabama Symphony Orchestra

“Around the World with the ASO”

Christopher Confessore, Conductor



Activities to prepare and inspire your visit to the orchestra:

Created by Mrs. Deanna Bell and Mrs. Betty Wilson

## Concert Program:

1. John Stafford Smith/Arthur Luck – “The Star-Spangled Banner”
2. John Philip Sousa – “Hands Across the Sea”
3. String Demo: “Eine Kleine Nachtmusik”
4. Woodwind Demo: “Hungarian Dance No. 5”
5. Brass Demo: “Turkish March”
6. Percussion & Harp Demo: “Musette in D Major”
7. Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky – “Suite from Swan Lake”
8. Edvard Grieg – “Suite No.1, from Peer Gynt”
9. Myroslav Skoryk -- “Melody”
10. Edward Elgar/Schmid Adolf – “Pomp and Circumstance”
11. Ernesto Lecuona/Gould, Morton -- “Andalucía”
12. Lin-Manuel Miranda/Campbell, Paul -- "How Far I'll Go" from Moana
13. Jacques Offenbach/Carl Binder -- “Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld “

## Lesson Objectives:

- Students will listen actively and describe how the music makes them feel.
- Students will identify musical contrasts (soft/loud, fast/slow, high/low).
- Students will explore “musical concepts” through movement and creative thinking.
- Students will identify the instruments of the orchestra.

## Alabama Course of Study:

- Scan QR Code for the New and Updated Standards



# 1. John Stafford Smith/Arthur Luck – “The Star-Spangled Banner”

A long time ago in 1814, during a war, a man named **Francis Scott Key** watched a big battle. When morning came, he saw the American flag still flying. He was so inspired that he wrote a poem about it—and later it became our national anthem!

## 1. Listening (2 minutes)

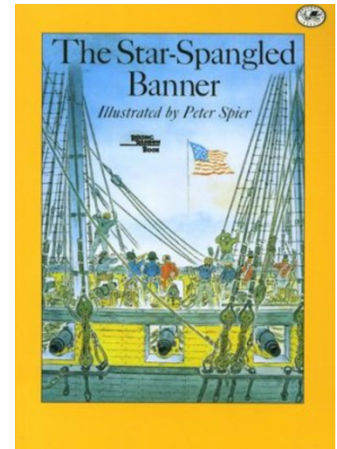
“The Star-Spangled Banner” by John Stafford Smith, Luther College Symphony Orchestra

[https://youtu.be/7UZ6srQSF2w?si=\(u7RJM8TsgKtx6YW5](https://youtu.be/7UZ6srQSF2w?si=(u7RJM8TsgKtx6YW5)

## 2. Read and View (5 minutes)

The Star-Spangled Banner – by Peter Spier - Read Aloud

[https://youtu.be/FVPrpkjNE4s?si=i\\_EnDjDpLL7sATmE](https://youtu.be/FVPrpkjNE4s?si=i_EnDjDpLL7sATmE)



## 3. Sing Along, Rehearse, and Present (13 Minutes)

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
what so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight  
O'er the ramparts we watch'd were so gallantly streaming?  
And the rocket's red glare, the bomb bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,  
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

## 4. Complete a Word Search and discuss vocabulary. (10 Minutes)

### The Star-Spangled Banner – Word Search

Find these words:

STAR, SPANGLED, BANNER, FLAG, BRIGHT, GLEAMING, ROCKETS, BOMBS, FREE, BRAVE,  
NIGHT, DREAM, WAVE, GLORY, PROUD

B	R	A	V	E	N	I	G	H	T
S	T	A	R	G	L	O	R	Y	P
P	R	O	U	D	F	R	E	E	A
A	N	N	E	R	W	A	V	E	N
N	G	L	E	A	M	I	N	G	E
G	L	A	G	R	O	C	K	E	T
L	E	O	M	B	S	D	R	E	A
E	D	R	I	G	H	T	F	L	A
D	E	A	M	B	O	M	B	S	G
B	A	N	N	E	R	S	T	A	R

## 5. Have students select words from the song and create their own word search. (15 Minutes)

## 2. John Philip Sousa – “Hands Across the Sea”

### 1. Listening (3 minutes)

“Hands Across the Sea March” by John Philip Sousa  
Clear Lake Symphony Orchestra  
[https://youtu.be/9P66me\\_YoF4?si=WEeBIUuerPgUjLny](https://youtu.be/9P66me_YoF4?si=WEeBIUuerPgUjLny)



### 2. History Connection: (7 minutes)

Composed by John Philip Sousa in 1899, "Hands Across the Sea" is a renowned military march inspired by an English play quotation, "A sudden thought strikes me—let us swear an eternal friendship," which was printed on the sheet music. It was written to bolster international friendship after the Spanish-American War.

- Premiere: April 21, 1899, at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia.
- Inspiration: The title was inspired by a line from a play by John Hookham Frere, reflecting a sentiment of international friendship rather than just the Spanish-American War, as sometimes assumed.
- Performance: It was an immediate success, requiring three encores at its premiere.
- Style: Known for its lively, fast-paced, and patriotic feel, representing the best of Sousa's work at the turn of the 20th century.

### 3. Vocabulary and Movement: (15 minutes)

- March
- Tempo
- Steady beat

Have students stand and march safely in place or in a circle.

- March on the beat
- Practice high knees vs. low knees.
- Practice loud and quiet marching
- Students pretend to play band instruments
- Use rhythm sticks to tap the beat
- Older students step left-right to match phrasing

### 4. Musical Form and Listening (5 minutes)

- Raise hands when they hear the main melody return
- Listen for loud vs. soft sections

### 5. View and Discuss (5 minutes)

John Philip Sousa: <https://youtu.be/v0yimWe7FE?si=to34GiPYM9XdEsbH>



### 3. String Demo: “Eine Kleine Nachtmusik”

#### 1. Listening: (8 minutes)

Audio:

<https://youtu.be/oy2zDJPIgwc?si=cgKBIO8aRKG7vtzB>

Digital Mapping:

<https://youtu.be/tSL5-wxgvFY?si=m1EhzFrMecbAlnR6>

#### 2. Read aloud (14 minutes)

by Lisa Weinhold, Principal Flute from the ASO

<https://youtu.be/N1cXE3Guslw?si=SM-M6ljhB1nJKFI6>

#### 3. Learn about Mozart (2 minutes)

- His full name was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- He lived over 250 years ago
- He started playing music when he was about 5 years old
- He wrote hundreds of songs before he was an adult
- People still listen to his music today!

“Mozart was a child prodigy—that means he was *really* good at music when he was still a kid, just like you!”

#### 4. Creative Draw (5 minutes)

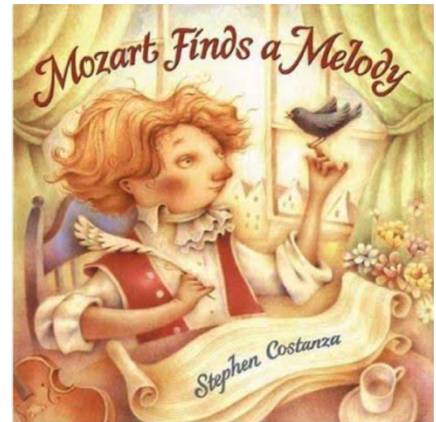
- Ask students to draw what the music makes them think of.
  - Colors
  - Animals
  - Feelings
  - Stories

#### 5. Learn about the String Family in the Orchestra

<https://aptv.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/meet-the-strings-video/oso-virtual-instruments/>

#### 6. Color and Create (15 minutes)

- Students can color a worksheet
- Students can draw the instruments
- Students can create their own string family poster



## 4. Woodwind Demo: “Hungarian Dance No. 5”

1. Listening (4 minutes)

<https://youtu.be/91EyYvG7sl8?si=3KR7qovnfFazAriq>

2. Body Percussion Game (4 minutes)

<https://youtu.be/ajsikN3wtf8?si=ol-kzzYwXOHV2Caf>

3. Movement with Scarves: (4 minutes)

<https://youtu.be/oqHkyH-vktY?si=H1xK55UbTOfWUNAA>

4. Learn about the Woodwind Family in the Orchestra (5 minutes)

<https://aptv.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/oso-25-il-virtualinstwinds/meet-the-woodwind-interactive-lesson/omaha-symphony-virtual-instruments/>

5. Read and learn about Brahms: (10 minutes)

<https://www.classicsforkids.com/composer/johannes-brahms/>

6. Rhythm and Tempo Practice and Play-Along (8 minutes)

<https://youtu.be/hxOuDHKoPls?si=DKKDanwYNqaEdjni>

7. Color and Create (15 minutes)

- Students can color a worksheet
- Students can draw the instruments
- Students can create their own woodwind family poster

8. Complete a Word Search of Instrument Names (5 minutes)

**Woodwind Instruments Word Search**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

P I C C O L O Q W E R T  
L K J H G F D S A O B O  
U Y T R E C O R D E R E  
T R E W Q A S D F G H E  
E N G L I S H H O R N X  
C V B N M K L J H G F C  
L A S A X O P H O N E L  
A S D F G H J K L Z X A  
R T Y U I O P L K J H R  
I O B A S S O O N G F I  
N P O I U Y T R E W Q N  
E L K J H G F D S A Q E  
T M N B V C X Z L K J T

**Find these words:**  
FLUTE, CLARINET, OBOE, BASSOON, SAXOPHONE, PICCOLO,  
RECORDER, ENGLISH HORN



## 5. Brass Demo: “Turkish March”

1. Listening, Alliance Brass (4 minutes)  
<https://youtu.be/G-lbUbvluueA?si=4eRiMHnE9x9jmRID>
2. Read and learn about Ludwig van Beethoven.  
<https://youtu.be/SS-NXzVxz6Y?si=woDnwsixA7xrUebr>
3. Teacher Questions (3 minutes)
  - Have you ever heard marching music?
  - Where do people march? (parades, band, soldiers)



A **march** is music with a strong, steady beat for walking.  
 Tell students: “Today we will listen to a famous march by Beethoven.”

4. Body Percussion Activity (4 minutes)

Play “**Turkish March.**” Students: Sit quietly and tap steady beat on knees.

5. Movement Activity (10 minutes)

Tell students: "Let's march like the music!"  
 Students: Stand. March in place. Swing arms.  
 Optional: Choose a student leader to lead the class parade.

6. Learn about the Brass Family in the Orchestra (5 minutes)  
<https://aptv.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/meet-the-brass-video/omaha-symphony-virtual-instruments/omaha-symphony-virtual-instruments/>

7. Color and Create (15 minutes)

- Students can color a worksheet
- Students can draw the instruments
- Students can create their own brass family poster



8. Complete a Word Search of Instrument Names (5 minutes)

### Brass Instruments Word Search

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

T R U M P E T X L K J H  
 O P L K J H G F D S A T  
 R E U P H O N I U M U T R  
 M W Q A Z X S W E D B O  
 B U G L E R T Y U I O M  
 O I U Y T R E W Q P N B  
 N O P L K J H G F R E O  
 E A S D F G H J K O T N  
 F R E N C H H O R N X E  
 C V B N M Q W E R T C S  
 O I U Y T R E W Q O X L  
 R T U B A S D F G R Z K  
 N M L K J H G F D N X J

Find these words:  
 TRUMPET, TROMBONE, FRENCH HORN, TUBA, CORNET,  
 EUPHONIUM, BUGLE

## 6. Percussion & Harp Demo: "Musette in D Major"

1. Learn about the Brass Family in the Orchestra (5 minutes)

<https://aptv.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/meet-the-percussion-family-video/omaha-symphony-virtual-instruments/omaha-symphony-virtual-instruments/>

2. Learn about the Harp in the Orchestra (5 minutes)

<https://aptv.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/meet-the-harp-video/oso-virtual-instruments/omaha-symphony-virtual-instruments/>

3. Listening (5 minutes) Harpsichord

<https://youtu.be/izMntvru-Ko?si=9yjEQFL6KX1wwj7i>

4. Read and learn about Bach (5 minutes)

[https://youtu.be/V5ijybKeAp8?si=Yn1JSzb\\_eCWkve16](https://youtu.be/V5ijybKeAp8?si=Yn1JSzb_eCWkve16)

5. Game: "Tick-Tock-Ticky" Rhythm Echo (Rhythm Training)

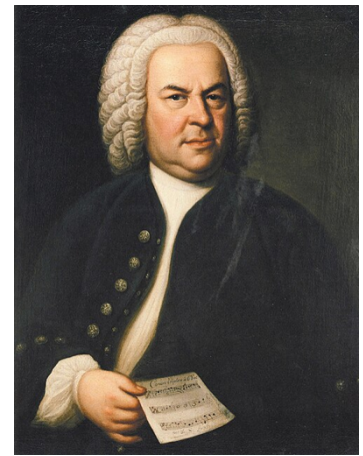
This activity uses vocalization to teach the tricky sixteenth-note rhythms in the piece.

- The Activity:

- Teach the children the rhythm words:
  - TA (Quarter note)
  - TI-KI-TI-KI (Four sixteenth notes - sounds like "ticky-ticky")
  - TI-KI-TI (Two sixteenths + one eighth - sounds like "tick-a-tee").
- The Echo Game: The teacher (or parent) says/taps a measure: "TA, TI-KI-TI-KI, TA, TI-KI-TI-KI!"
- The kids echo it back while tapping their shoulders.
- Repeat, focusing on the high-energy, fast notes in the first four measures.

6. Color and Create (15 minutes)

- Students can color a worksheet
- Students can draw the instruments
- Students can create their own percussion family poster



## 7. Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: Suite from Swan Lake op.20

1. Learn about the composer: (2 minutes)

<https://youtu.be/2hm1xBhiXuc?si=BYb5wqPg-kfUsswV>

2. Listening (3 minutes)

<https://youtu.be/B8KdNLd32fQ?si=Pb9YB36K7CrZETNN>

This piece is a high-energy, cheerful, and fast-paced dance that stands out from the graceful, slow swan music. It is often described as a, "romantic," "spirited," and "charming," Italian-style dance (Tarantella) that brings joy to the ballet.

3. Lesson Activity (25 minutes)



### Identify Instruments and Rhythm Practice

Play the first 30 seconds of the piece. Ask students to identify which instrument is "singing" the lead part.

- **Fact Check:** It's a **Cornet** (very similar to a trumpet!).
- Show a picture of a trumpet
- **Action:** Have students mimic holding a trumpet, pushing the three valves in time with the music.



### Rhythmic Foundation

The piece starts with a very distinct descending sixteenth note rhythm in the solo.

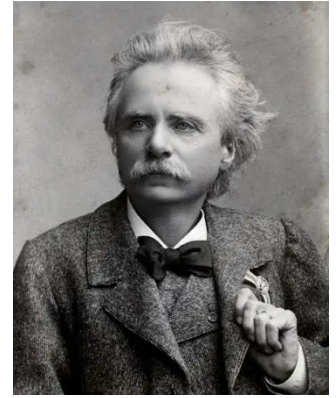
- **The "Pizza" Rhythm:** Practice the rhythm: "I like pepperoni pi...zza" Pat the words: "I like pepperoni" Clap for "pi...zza." (The word pizza will become a partner clap later.)
- **Interactive:** Half the class claps the steady beat (the heartbeat), while the other half pats and claps the "I like Pepperoni pi...zza" rhythm. Switch roles.
- Listen carefully and count how many times they hear the "Pizza" theme and identify which one is different (4th and 8th). Use the phrase "I like pepperoni now" or let the students create a different phrase.
- When the theme is repeated, the cornet plays the Pizza rhythms differently. "I like pi...zza, I like Pepperoni pi...zza, I like pepperoni pi...zza, I like Pepperoni now."

### Movement Activity: The Italian Village Square

This piece is a folk-inspired dance.

- **Section A (The Stately Dance):** Students find a partner and practice the rhythms they prepared. Instead of clapping they will do a partner clap with both hands.
- **The Transition:** The music begins to get faster. Introduce the word **Accelerando**. Students turn their partners with palms together in a circle for 8 beats then reverse. Repeat getting faster.
- **Section B (The Finale):** As the tempo increases, students can picture the pizza delivery driver speeding through town to get the pizzas delivered on time. Students can jog in place. By the end, they are "running" in place or patting their laps to mimic running to match the tempo (Prestissimo) of the finale.

## 8. Edvard Grieg: Suite No.1, from Peer Gynt, op.46



### 1. Listening Map: (3 minutes)

<https://youtu.be/jqOn5gu4wTY?si=4sME43iXlcbfHo6X>

### 2. Vocabulary (2 minutes)

- Composer
- Mood
- Orchestra
- Calm
- Sunrise

Teacher says: “Today we will listen to music that sounds like the sun coming up in the morning.”

Ask: “How do you feel in the morning? (Sleepy, Calm, Happy?)”

Tell students: “Edvard Grieg wrote music that tells a story.”

### 3. Movement Activity (10 minutes)

Students pretend to:

- Sleep on the floor
- Slowly wake up as music begins
- Stretch
- Stand
- Walk slowly



Teacher says: “Move like the sun is rising.”

### 4. Scarf Activity (5 minutes)

Students:

- Use scarves
- Move slowly and smoothly
- Show rising sun

### 5. Watch Jim Gamble Puppet Productions: The Adventures of Peer Gynt (25 minutes)

<https://youtu.be/PVexe6qcXJw?si=E0m-BthBfpvwi5NV>

## 9. Myroslav Skoryk -- "Melody"

This lesson plan introduces students to the emotionally expressive work "Melody" by Ukrainian composer Myroslav Skoryk. It focuses on active listening, recognizing mood/dynamics, and connecting emotional expression in music to personal experience.



### 1. Introduction & Context (5-7 minutes)

- **Hook:** Ask students: "Can music make you feel sad, even if you are happy? Can music feel like a hug?"
- **Brief Composer Background:** Introduce Myroslav Skoryk, a famous Ukrainian composer. Explain that he wrote this in 1981, and it is known as a "spiritual anthem" of Ukraine because it is very emotional and sincere.
- **Set the Scene:** Ask students to listen for the "story" the music is telling.

### 2. Active Listening: First Listening (10 minutes)

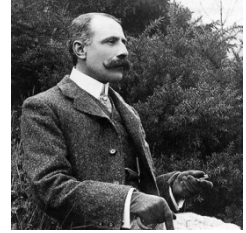
- **Activity:** Have students sit comfortably with eyes closed or draw while listening to the first 2-3 minutes.
- **Focus Questions:**
  - What instruments do you hear? (Violin, cello, piano, flute)
  - Is the tempo fast or slow? (Slow - *Adagio*)
  - What is the main emotion?
- **Discussion:** Ask students to share their feelings. *Anticipated answers: Sad, lonely, calm, peaceful, remembering.*

### 3. Listening & Movement/Drawing: The Structure (15 minutes)

- **Activity:** Tell students the music has a main melody that hides and comes back (A-B-A form).
- **Guided Listening:**
  - **Part 1 (Opening):** Students move their arms slowly (like conducting) or draw lines on paper matching the melody's rise and fall.
  - **Part 2 (Middle):** Ask if it got louder or softer? (It gets more intense/louder).
  - **Part 3 (Return):** Ask when the main, quiet tune comes back.
- **Vocabulary Focus:** Introduce *Melancholy* (sad but beautiful) and *Dynamics* (loud/soft).

## 10. Edward Elgar/Schmid, Adolf: *Pomp and Circumstance*, op.39

**Interesting facts:** Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934) was an English composer. He had piano and violin lessons as a child but taught himself how to play many other instruments. He became the very first Professor of Music at the University of Birmingham in England.



### 1. Introduction/The Hook.

**Listening (Focus on Dynamics):** Play the Trio/ “B” section (the famous part).

<https://youtu.be/Spx4kmY67Wc?si=V0EHfs2EGIDGoAMp>

Ask the students:

- "Does this music sound like a birthday party, a nap, or a royal parade?"
- Explain that this music is used for very important moments, like graduations or when a King or Queen enters a room.
- Ask students to listen and decide if the music is loud or quiet. Ask them to show you with their hands (hands up for loud, hands down for quiet).

### 2. Exploring Form and Tempo (10–15 minutes)

**Movement Activity (Identifying Form):** Explain that the song has different sections.

- **Section A (The Fanfare):** Imagine fireworks for a special event. Students can take their fingers and mimic the rhythms, picturing different shapes in the air.
- **Section B (The Trio):** When the music becomes softer and smoother (the middle, lyrical part), the students will march with pride.
- **Section A (Repeat of the Fanfare):** Repeat of the Firework with even bolder movements with a recap of the marching Trio to the end.
- **Tempo Check:** Ask students to describe the tempo of the music. Which parts were faster/slower.

### 3. Expressive Qualities (10–15 minutes)

- **Creative Movement (Identifying Mood):** Discuss the mood of the sections. Which section sounded excited/happy? How would they describe the mood of the B section? How did they feel when moving to the march? Is it happy, sad, excited, or serious? (It is majestic, proud, formal).
- **Scenario:** Pretend the music is being played as a special king or queen enters the room, or as someone very important walks by. How would you move to show how important and majestic the music sounds?

### 4. Assessment

- Informal Assessment (Observation): Observe if students can correctly switch between the Fireworks (A) and marching (B) movements when the musical sections change.
- Verbal Check (K-1): Ask individual students to identify if the music is loud or quiet, or fast or slow.

# 11. Ernesto Lecuona/Gould, Morton -- “Andalucía”

## 1. Introduction (5 minutes)

### Teacher says:

Today we are listening to a piece called “Andalucía.” It was written by a composer from Cuba and arranged for orchestra. The music is inspired by Spain, a country known for exciting dances and rhythms.



### Show map and explain:

- Andalucía is a region in southern Spain
- The music sounds dramatic and energetic, like a dance

### Ask students:

- Have you ever heard Spanish music?
- What instruments do you think you might hear?

## 2. Listening Activity (10 minutes)

<https://youtu.be/bA4ehUm4qAI?si=mAMaiC3Di6YHVsmS>

### First Listening: Mood

Ask students to listen quietly.

After listening, ask:

- Is the music fast or slow?
- How does it make you feel? (excited, nervous, happy, dramatic)
- Does it sound like a dance?

## 3. Movement Activity (10 minutes)

Play the music again.

Students may:

- Use scarves or hands for expressive movements
- Freeze when the music gets quieter
- Move faster when the music speeds up
- Explain how dancers match their movements to the music.

## 4. Rhythm Activity (Optional – 5 minutes)

Students:

- Tap the beat on knees
- Play rhythm instruments along with music
- Notice loud vs. soft parts
- Explain **dynamics** (loud and soft).

## 12. Lin-Manuel Miranda/Campbell, Paul -- "How Far I'll Go" from Moana

Sing A Long: <https://youtu.be/cPAbx5kgCJo?si=RPncRX-krmYwRIFt>

I've been staring at the edge of the water  
'Long as I can remember, never really knowing why  
I wish I could be the perfect daughter  
But I come back to the water, no matter how hard I try  
Every turn I take, every trail I track  
Every path I make, every road leads back  
To the place I know, where I cannot go, where I long to be  
See the line where the sky meets the sea? It calls me  
And no one knows, how far it goes  
If the wind in my sail on the sea stays behind me  
One day I'll know  
If I go, there's just no telling how far I'll go  
I know everybody on this island seems so happy, on this island  
Everything is by design  
I know everybody on this island has a role on this island  
So maybe I can roll with mine  
I can lead with pride; I can make us strong  
I'll be satisfied if I play along  
But the voice inside sings a different song  
What is wrong with me?  
See the light as it shines on the sea? It's blinding  
But no one knows, how deep it goes  
And it seems like it's calling out to me, so come find me  
And let me know  
What's beyond that line? Will I cross that line?  
The line where the sky meets the sea? It calls me  
And no one knows, how far it goes  
If the wind in my sail on the sea stays behind me  
One day I'll know  
How far I'll go



## 13. Jacques Offenbach/Carl Binder: “Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld”

Listen: <https://youtu.be/gnrhP0mdyuY?si=89NW-aCPmXyPh5tY>



### 1. Introduction (5 minutes)

#### Teacher says:

- This piece is an overture—music that introduces a story in an opera.
- The composer, Jacques Offenbach, was known for writing funny, playful music.
- The story is about Orpheus and the Underworld, so the music can sound silly, fast, or dramatic.

#### Discussion question:

- What instruments do you expect to hear in an orchestra?

### 2. Listening Activity (10 minutes)

#### First Listening: Focus on Mood

- Play the recording once without interruption.
- **Ask students:**
  - How does the music make you feel? (excited, funny, dramatic, energetic)
  - Is the music fast or slow?

### 3. Movement Activity (10 minutes)

#### Play the music again:

Students can:

- March, tiptoe, spin, or freeze to match the music’s changes
- Move faster when the music speeds up, slower when it gets quiet

### 4. Vocabulary:

- Tempo = speed of the music
- Dynamics = loud and soft

### 5. Rhythm and Instrument Exploration (5 minutes)

- Clap or tap along with the beat
- Use rhythm instruments to echo the playful patterns
- Notice sudden changes in tempo and dynamics







