

Havana Quartet

Supporting Materials Packet



Havana Quartet (Amaya Fuentes Sarria, Denise Hernandez Rabeiro, Ana Caridad Frometa Borrayo, Hansel Perez Carrero)

Photo Credit: Jenny Cvek

About the Performers:

Havana Quartet are a Cuban string quartet based in the Twin Cities, Minnesota. They perform classical, contemporary, and Cuban music, blending technical excellence with the vibrant rhythms and traditions of our cultural heritage. Their mission is to inspire audiences through engaging performances, educational programs, and meaningful musical experiences. Havana Quartet are available to present bilingual concerts in both Spanish and English.

Learning Goals:

1. Students will identify by sight and sound the instruments in a string quartet.
2. Students will describe cultural uses of Cuban music.
3. Students will experience and perform traditional Cuban rhythms through active participation.

Preparing for your Class Notes Concert

Thank you for signing up for a Class Notes Concert, brought to you by YourClassical MPR!

The Class Notes team has created two resources to help prepare for and extend the Class Notes Concerts experience:

1. **Meet the Artist PowerPoint.** Build excitement for the concert by introducing the ensemble in advance. Students will learn key information like instrumentation and style of music.
2. **Supporting Materials Packet.** The lessons in this packet come from the [Class Notes Lesson Library](#). The first lesson is designed to be a starting point for discussing audience behavior prior to the concert. All other lessons align with learning objectives for this artist. Use these before the concert to introduce an important musical concept or after the experience to reinforce learning. Every classroom is different. Teachers should customize all content to fit student needs.

After your Class Notes Concert, please fill out our teacher survey and have your students complete our student survey. Class Notes staff will send a link with instructions after your concert.

PACKET CONTENTS

- 1) What is an AUDIENCE?
- 2) Instrument Exploration: Violin
- 3) Instrument Exploration: Viola
- 4) Instrument Exploration: Cello
- 5) Music & Geography: Around the World



MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS: What is an AUDIENCE?

Age Range: Elementary, Grades K-3

Learning Objective: Students will demonstrate active listening and positive audience behavior in a concert setting.

Total Video Time: 5:29

INTRODUCE the concept of audience

1. Ask, "Have you ever been to a concert or performance?" Allow students time to respond.
2. Explain, "There are two main jobs at a concert: the job of the *performer*, and the job of the *audience*."
3. Ask students to share with a classmate about a time they watched a performance. What did the performer do? What did the audience do?

After some time for students to discuss with each other, encourage students to share out their experiences with the class, supporting and validating the variety of experiences.

4. Remind students, "There are many kinds of audiences. The type of concert influences how an audience responds."
5. As a classroom, create a chart listing positive and respectful audience behavior. Use the [sample chart](#) as a starting point.

LEARN about being an audience

1. Explain, "Sometimes an audience will dance and sing along with a performer. Sometimes it's the job of an audience to listen and notice as many sounds as possible. When we need to notice sounds, our own voices and body wiggles can keep us from hearing the performer. So it can be helpful to let out some wiggles and sounds before listening."
2. Learn to sing a song about being in the audience: "We Are The Audience." (Download the score [here](#).)
3. Watch our Class Notes Video: [What to do at a Concert](#).

EXTEND learning about being an audience

Choose one or more activities to extend learning.

1. Practice audience skills by utilizing one of our [Class Notes Virtual Concerts](#). In these lessons, teachers play the role of Concert Host, and students play the role of the audience.
2. Hold your own classroom concert! Assign performers, audience members, and observers. The job of the observers is to notice good audience behavior. (i.e. "I noticed STUDENT was watching the performer and not talking!")



Visuals: What is an AUDIENCE?

We Are the Audience when....

- We **listen** to and **notice** sounds.
- We research in advance: Who is visiting your school? Where are they from? What type of music can you expect?
- We follow directions on where and how to sit so you can see and hear.
- We are curious! What questions would you ask the performer?
- We notice the *timbre*, or unique and special sounds, made by each instrument or voice.
- We make predictions. What do you think will happen next?
- We share your experience with someone at home.
- We show appreciation at the end by clapping.



Visuals: What is an AUDIENCE?

We Are the Audience

K. Condon

Voice

We are the aud - i - ence, it's our job to li - i - sten, Let all your

6

Vo.

wi - ggles out be - fore the mu - sic be - e - gins. (WIGGLE!!!) We are the

11

Vo.

aud - i - ence, it's our job to li - i - sten. Feel your bo - dy qui - et down,

16

Vo.

so sounds can co - ome in.

Suggestion for song usage:

The first time the song is introduced, ask students to watch and listen, and encourage them to keep a steady beat (maybe by rhythmically bouncing one fist on top of another.) Perform just the first half of the song. When you get to the "wiggle" part, ask them to join you. Repeat the first part of the song again- this time they can join you in the singing. After the second wiggle, explain, "This time the song starts the same, but ends differently." Slow down and get considerably quieter on "Feel your body quiet down..." so that you are at a slow whisper by the end of the song.



Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-6
Learning Objective:	Students will learn to identify the violin by sight and sound.
Total Video Time:	24:28 with all "extend" videos; 5:41 "explore" section only
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 30 minutes

INTRODUCE the violin

Have you ever heard of a violin? What do you know about the violin? What do you wonder about the violin?

EXPLORE the sound of the violin

1. The violin is the smallest member of the string family. Instruments in the string family make their sound when a string is plucked or pulled by a bow.
2. [Watch](#) violinist Huldah explain her instrument (video approx. 2.5 minutes).
3. This [piece of music](#) is for violin and stomping foot! It is performed by a young violinist named Anais Feller (video approx. 3.5 minutes).
4. Tell a neighbor (or write down) three things you noticed about the piece, the performer, or the violin.

EXTEND learning about the violin

Choose one or more of the following activities to extend learning.

1. Make your own box violin! Learn about instrument construction and the violin by creating your own. [Here's a tutorial](#) to help you (video approx. 10 minutes).
2. [Listen](#) to violinist Erika explain how she changes pitch on her instrument (video approx. 2 minutes).
3. [Learn](#) the difference between the Baroque violin and the modern violin (video approx. 2.5 minutes).
4. [Listen](#) to *Estonian Lullaby*, performed by Anais Feller (video approx. 4 minutes).



Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-6
Learning Objective:	Students will learn to identify the viola by sight and sound.
Total Video Time:	10:05 or 12:21, depending on video chosen in “explore” section
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 20 minutes

INTRODUCE the viola

Look at [this picture](#). Do you think the two instruments are the same? Can you name some similarities? Do you notice any differences?

EXPLORE the sound of the viola

1. The smaller instrument in the picture is the violin. The slightly larger instrument is the viola (vee-OH-lah). The viola is a member of the string family. It looks a lot like the violin. Since it is slightly bigger than the violin, it can play a little lower- but not quite as high.
2. [Watch this video](#) about the viola, featuring Kirsti from the Lux String Quartet (video approx. 3 minutes).
3. Show this video, [Capriccio in C minor, Op. 55](#) (video approx. 5 minutes), or this video, [Peace](#) (video approx. 7.5 minutes), both featuring young violist Steven Baloue.
4. Write down or tell someone three things you learned about the viola.

EXTEND learning about the viola

Choose one or more activities to extend learning.

1. [Watch violist Valerie](#) talk about the viola (video approx. 2 minutes). She explains the technique *sul ponticello*. Ask students if they can explain what that means and describe how it sounded.
2. Play a round of “Name That String Instrument.” Remind students that the [cello](#) shares the same shape as the violin and viola, but is even bigger, and therefore lower.
3. Choose pieces for solo violin, viola, or cello and ask students to guess which instrument they hear. Ask them to explain their answers. Use [this playlist](#) or create your own.



Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-6
Learning Objective:	Students will learn to identify the cello by sight and sound.
Total Video Time:	8:21 "explore" section only; 18:53 including all "extend" videos
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 25 minutes

INTRODUCE the cello

Say to students, "Have you ever heard of an instrument called the cello? Whisper to a neighbor what you think the cello looks like and which instrument family it belongs in. If you don't know, make a prediction!"

EXPLORE the sound of the cello

1. The cello is a member of the string family. Instruments in the string family make their sound when a string is plucked or pulled by a bow. The cello is much larger than the violin and can make really low sounds.
2. [Listen](#) to Mikey from Heliopsis describe their instrument (video approx. 1.5 minutes).
3. Listen to composer and musician Zoë Keating describe and play her original piece for cello, [Escape Artist](#) (video approx. 7 minutes).
4. Use the following questions to guide discussion or journaling:
 - In the beginning of the video, the composer explains the title. Can you think of a time you wanted to escape something?
 - Zoë mentions moving between a city and a forest. Where do you want to live? What does it sound like there?
 - Did it surprise you that one person could create so many layers of sound? Can you guess how she does it?

EXTEND learning about the cello

Choose one or more activities to extend learning.

1. Enjoy [this light-hearted video](#) featuring 2CELLOS playing *Pirates of the Caribbean* (video approx. 3 minutes).
2. Ask students to move gracefully in a circle, like swans gliding around a pond while listening to [The Swan from Carnival of the Animals](#) (video approx. 2.5 minutes).
3. Continue learning about the cello by watching [Class Notes: Technique, Virtuosity, and Soul](#) featuring cellist Nygel Witherspoon (video approx. 4.5 minutes).
4. Learn more about composer and musician [Zoë Keating](#).



MUSIC & GEOGRAPHY: Around the World

Age Range:	Elementary, Middle School, Grades 2-8
Learning Objective:	Students will demonstrate an understanding that artistic works are influenced by personal and cultural contexts.
Total Video Time:	37:35 for all examples
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 10 minutes for each genre

INTRODUCE music around the world with a game

1. Ask students to name a song, and then ask where it's from. Encourage them to research if they don't know.
2. Repeat several times. If examples seem to all be from a very specific time or place, encourage them to think of a song from someplace else.
3. After a few rounds, students will begin to draw the connection that music is a cultural expression, and that music comes from everywhere.

EXPLORE music around the world

1. Show students a blank map of the world [like this one](#). Explain that you will visit various locations. During each "visit" you will learn about a particular style of music that originated in that area. "Visits" might be spread out over several class periods.
2. Select locations/musical styles from the options below, or others of your own choosing:
 - [Traditional Ojibwe singing](#) - Minnesota/the Dakotas/Canada (Video approx. 11 minutes)
 - [Ragtime](#) - St. Louis, MO (Video approx. 2.5 minutes)
 - [Mariachi](#) - Mexico (Video approx. 3.5 minutes)
 - [Alpine yodeling](#) - Switzerland/Austria (Video approx. 3 minutes)
 - [Raga](#) - India (Video approx. 2 minutes)
 - [Tuvan throat singing](#) - Mongolia (Video approx. 4 minutes)
 - [Kwv Thxaij](#) [kuh tsee-ah] - Southeast Asia (Video approx. 3 minutes)
 - [Taiko](#) [ty-koh] - Japan (Video approx. 8.5 minutes)
3. Once you select your places, mark the locations on a map.
4. Choose a country to "visit." Start by listening to music in that style.
5. Using the [included printable worksheet](#), fill out a fact grid, so that students learn core characteristics of each style. You may present the material to students or have them do research on their own.
6. Visit as many places as your time frame allows! Use [our completed grids](#) as a starting point for each culture.
7. If you wish, continue "visiting" countries/regions throughout the year. Customize the lesson by visiting a region that you or one of your students has lived in.