

The Paper Clips

Supporting Materials Packet



The Paper Clips (Ben Bussey, Lauren Husting, Brooklynne Audette, Chris Allen)
Photo Credit: Travis Anderson

About the Performers:

The Paper Clips are a trombone quartet dedicated to connecting the threads of classical and contemporary music in fun, engaging, and informative performances for audiences of all ages. In their Class Notes Concert, The Paper Clips will engage students through performance and participatory activities and build excitement for instruments in the trombone family.

Learning Goals:

1. Students will identify by sight and sound the instruments in the trombone family and understand how a trombone player produces sound on their instrument.
2. Students will understand how musicians use ensemble skills to balance and blend sounds.
3. Students will learn to identify consonant and dissonant sounds 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: The Brass Family
- 3) Instrument Exploration: Trombone
- 4) What are ENSEMBLE SKILLS?
- 5) What is HARMONY?



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.



INSTRUMENT EXPLORATION: The Brass Family

Age Range: Elementary, Grades K-6

Learning Objective: Students will learn how to make a sound on a brass instrument and hear recordings of various brass instruments.

Total Video Time: 17:29

INTRODUCE the brass family

"The brass family is one of the four main instrument families in the orchestra. The main instruments in the brass family are the trumpet, the trombone, the French horn, the euphonium, and the tuba."

LISTEN to the brass family

1. Let's start with the trumpet, which is shown in [this picture](#). Let's [listen to the trumpet](#), playing together with a harp.
2. Now we'll look at the [trombone](#). Here is [a trombone solo, featured in a jazz piece](#).
3. Next is the [French horn](#). Listen to the [French horn play this solo](#) from *Star Wars*.
4. Now it's time for a much bigger instrument, the [euphonium](#)! [Listen to the sound of the euphonium here](#).
5. And finally, the biggest member of the brass family, the [tuba](#). Hear the Minnesota Orchestra's Steve Campbell [play the tuba here](#).

PRACTICE skills for playing a brass instrument

1. "Do you know how to make a sound on a brass instrument? You need to blow on it, but you need to do something else, too. You need to buzz your lips inside the mouthpiece!"
2. Only a trained brass teacher can teach students how to properly buzz their lips. The following fun activities help give students an idea about how to start buzzing.
3. Start with kazoos! If you don't have kazoos on hand, make them by covering one end of a toilet paper tube with wax paper and securing it in place with a rubber band. Playing a tune on a kazoo gives students an idea of what buzzing feels like on the mouth and lips. But there is a key difference between making a sound on a kazoo versus a brass instrument. To play a kazoo, the player must hum/sing into the instrument. Brass players do not do this - they use their wind, or breathing.
4. Move from kazoos to zerberts (or raspberries, or whatever term you like to use for creating a seal between your mouth and forearm and blowing.) After the first zerbert, try to do the same thing with just your mouth - in other words, with no arm.
5. Try buzzing lips into various tube-shaped objects, including an actual brass mouthpiece, if you have access to one.
6. Once students have a little experience with buzzing, ask them to try experimenting with different speeds. Notice the difference in sound between fast and slow buzzing.
7. [Watch this tutorial](#) about buzzing to get an idea of what brass players need to do to get some really good buzzing going.



Age Range: Elementary, Grades K-6
Learning Objective: Students will identify the trombone by sight and sound.
Total Video Time: 10:39

INTRODUCE the trombone

“What do you know about the trombone? What does it look like? What does it sound like? To which instrument family does it belong?”

WATCH & LEARN about the trombone

1. Learn a little about the trombone by watching [this video](#) featuring Minnesota Orchestra trombone player, R. Douglas Wright.
2. The trombone is part of the brass family. It is used in many *genres*, or styles of music, including jazz! A famous trombone player called Trombone Shorty started playing when he was 4! [See a picture](#) of him playing early on!
3. [Watch a video](#) of Trombone Shorty playing at the White House. He plays a song that includes call and response. Try to echo his singing when that part comes up!
4. The trombone is also part of the orchestra. Composer Gustav Mahler featured trombones in this short section of his second symphony. As you watch, see how many other instruments you can name. You might also pretend to play your air trombone along with the players in the video!
5. [Watch](#) the New York Philharmonic play part of Mahler’s 2nd Symphony.

REVIEW learning about the trombone

Choose one or more activities to extend learning.

1. Check students’ comprehension by discussing or journaling the following questions:
 - To which instrument family does the trombone belong?
 - How do trombone players make a sound on their instrument?
 - How do trombone players change the pitch, or notes, that they play?
 - How would you describe the sound of the trombone?
2. Continue learning using the Class Notes lesson all about the [Brass Family](#).



What are ENSEMBLE SKILLS?

Age Range: Elementary, Grades K-5

Learning Objective: Students will demonstrate ensemble skills through performance. Students will utilize multiple rehearsal strategies to refine performance.

Total Video Time: 18:37

DISCUSS ensemble skills

1. "When musicians play together, how do they start at the same time? How can they be sure to play at the same speed, or *tempo*, so that they can stay together?"
2. Listen to students' responses. If they answer that this is the job of the conductor, acknowledge that this is correct, but then ask further.
3. "What if it's a small group that doesn't have a conductor?"

PRACTICE ensemble skills

1. Remind students that when musicians play together but don't have a conductor to lead them, they must give signals, or *cues*, so that they start together and stay together through a performance. It's a way of communication and working together.
2. "Here are four ways musicians give cues so that they play well together."
(Briefly explain and demonstrate each technique for students.)
 - A. Eye Contact
 - B. Head nod and/or body movement
 - C. Sharp in-breath, or inhale
 - D. Constant listening.
3. Instruct students to watch for eye contact and body movement in [this video](#) featuring a string quartet. (3:30 min.)
4. Place students into small groups and ask them to choose a favorite classroom piece to perform. They may choose to sing, play on classroom instruments, or both.
5. Remind them that they must be able to start together on their own.
6. Circulate among the groups during rehearsal time and help each group refine their cueing technique.
7. Ask each group to perform for the class. Give feedback regarding cueing.

OBSERVE ensemble skills

Choose one or more performances to watch. Notice and discuss ensemble skills.

- [Lux String Quartet](#) performing music by Gyorgy Ligeti (5 min.)
- [Mill City String Quartet](#) performing music by Samuel Coleridge Taylor (4 min.)
- [Imani Winds](#) performing music by Valerie Coleman (3 min.)
- [Mill City String Quartet](#) performing music by DBR (3:30 min.)



MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS: What is HARMONY?

Age Range:	Elementary, Middle School; Grades K-8
Learning Objective:	Students will demonstrate understanding of the basic concept of harmony in a musical context. Students will improvise to create simple harmonies using visual prompts.
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 25 minutes

INTRODUCE idea of harmony

1. If a melody is a single line of or pitches that can move from high to low (or vice versa), what would it sound like if two melodies were layered on top of each other, or played at the same time?
2. Remind students that music is made up of many parts. Rhythm and steady beat are the parts of music that make us want to move. Melody is the part that we can sing. Melodies can go high and low.

EXPLORE idea of harmony

1. Melodies are easily represented by lines. Look at the line [in this image](#) and imagine what the melody would sound like. It would start low, then get higher, and lower again, moving like gentle waves. Melodies can have so many different shapes.
2. Guide students to vocalize in response to the shape [in the image](#). First model the melody for students and then ask them to join in on repetitions. Ask a student volunteer to trace along the line to determine the tempo, so that all viewers understand the correlation between the visual and the sound. Reinforce this activity by using the image as a prompt for improvisation on classroom instruments such as a bell set or a keyboard.
3. We can use voices and instruments to add layers to a melody. Look at [this image](#). We see the same melody, but there is a layer with dots underneath.
4. This time, ask a student or the class to sing that same melody (the black, wiggly line). While students are singing, demonstrate alternating between two pitches (one high, one lower) for the dots. Teacher or student volunteers can trace along with images to ensure the group is moving from left to right at the same [tempo](#).
5. Try using various instruments/voices to “perform.” Use a [slide whistle](#) for the line, and two differently pitched [boomwhackers](#) for the dots, as shown in [this image](#).
6. Point out the [vertical alignment of the two “lines”](#) (noting dots aren’t the same as a line, but they move from left to right underneath the line). In those spots, shown by beige stripes, we hear two different pitches at once. That’s harmony!
7. In music, there are many different kinds of harmony. Harmony of all kinds has to do with how different pitches work together at the same time.