

YourClassical Class Notes

# Lake Minnetonka String Quintet

Supporting Materials Packet



Lake Minnetonka String Quintet Nick Gaudette, Maisie Block, Chuck Krenner, Dave Block, Darin Anderson  
Photo Credit: Jenny Cvek

## About the Performers:

Classical training meets pop perfection! Five lifelong friends formed a string quintet together to share their love of music, friendship, and collaboration through performance. Playing custom arrangements by group members, no musical boundary is off-limits. They bring joy, energy, virtuosic string playing to any classroom or performance setting.

## Learning Goals:

1. Students will identify violin, viola, cello, and double bass by sight and sound.
2. Students will understand that musicians use ensemble skills to make music together.
3. Students will understand that musical elements contribute to emotional expression in music.

# 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) Instrument Exploration: double bass
- 6) What are ENSEMBLE SKILLS?
- 7) Music and Expression



# 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.



|                            |                                                                |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Age Range:</b>          | Elementary, Grades K-6                                         |
| <b>Learning Objective:</b> | Students will learn to identify the violin by sight and sound. |
| <b>Total Video Time:</b>   | 24:28 with all "extend" videos; 5:41 "explore" section only    |
| <b>Total Lesson Time:</b>  | 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 Anaïs 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 Anaïs Feller (video approx. 4 minutes).



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





|                            |                                                                  |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Age Range:</b>          | Elementary, Grades K-6                                           |
| <b>Learning Objective:</b> | Students will learn to identify the cello by sight and sound.    |
| <b>Total Video Time:</b>   | 8:21 "explore" section only; 18:53 including all "extend" videos |
| <b>Total Lesson Time:</b>  | 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](#).





# Double Bass

|                            |                                                                     |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Age Range:</b>          | Elementary, Grades K-6                                              |
| <b>Learning Objective:</b> | Students will learn to identify the double bass by sight and sound. |
| <b>Total Video Time:</b>   | 24:28 with all "extend" videos; 8:02 "listen" section only          |
| <b>Total Lesson Time:</b>  | Approximately 25 minutes                                            |

## INTRODUCE the double bass

The double bass (also called the string bass, or just bass) has the same basic shape as the violin, viola, and cello, it is just a lot bigger. It's about six feet tall, and bass players need to stand or sit on a special stool to play it. Because it's so big, it can make really low sounds. Bigger instruments make lower sounds.

## LISTEN to the sound of the double bass

1. Watch and listen to double bass player Jason Wells [tell you about his instrument](#) (video approx. 2 minutes).
2. When the composer Camille Saint-Saëns [kah-MEEL san-SAHN] decided to write a piece of music called *The Elephant*, he chose the double bass to capture the spirit of that big and playful animal. [Listen to the music](#) while you look at some cute elephant pictures (video approx. 2 minutes).
3. Like the other members of the string family, the strings of the double bass can be bowed or plucked. When the strings are plucked, it's called *pizzicato*. The double bass is often used in jazz music. In jazz, the pizzicato double bass sound is very common. Here is a well-known jazz song, [On the Sunny Side of the Street](#), played and sung by Esperanza Spalding and her band (video approx. 4.5 minutes). Look out for Spalding's bass solo at the 2:49 mark!

## EXTEND learning about the double bass

*Choose one or more activities to extend learning.*

1. Watch Jason Wells play double bass as part of Class Notes ensemble Wood N' Wind:
  1. [J.S. Bach - Sonata in e minor for flute and basso continuo, I. Adagio ma non tanto](#) (Video approx. 3.5 minutes)
  2. [J.S. Bach - Sonata in e minor for flute and basso continuo, II. Allegro](#) (Video approx. 3 minutes)
  3. [Béla Bartók - Romanian Folk Dances, movements II, IV, & V \(arr. Erik Brodin Higgins\)](#) (Video approx. 5 minutes)
2. Here is [one more example](#) of pizzicato double bass – look/listen out for drumming on the bass, and for one player to use a bow partway through (video approx. 4.5 minutes)!
3. Write down or tell someone three things you learned about the double bass.



# What are ENSEMBLE SKILLS?

|                            |                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Age Range:</b>          | Elementary, Middle School, High School                                                                                                    |
| <b>Learning Objective:</b> | Students will demonstrate ensemble skills through performance. Students will utilize multiple rehearsal strategies to refine performance. |
| <b>Total Video Time:</b>   | 18:37                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Total Lesson Time:</b>  | Approximately 25 minutes                                                                                                                  |

## DISCUSS ensemble skills

1. Ask, "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. After some discussion, ask, "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. Explain, "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 (video approximately 3.5 minutes).
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 (Video approx. 5 minutes)
- [Mill City String Quartet](#) performing music by Samuel Coleridge Taylor (Video approx. 4 minutes)
- [Imani Winds](#) performing music by Valerie Coleman (Video approx. 3 minutes)
- [Mill City String Quartet](#) performing music by DBR (Video approx. 3.5 minutes)



# MUSIC & MINDFULNESS: Music and Expression

|                              |                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Age Range:</b>            | Elementary, Grades K-5                                                                                                  |
| <b>Learning Objective:</b>   | Students will listen to Wolfgang Mozart's <i>Gran Partita</i> and understand the connection between music and emotions. |
| <b>Total Listening Time:</b> | 10:28                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Total Lesson Time:</b>    | Approximately 20 minutes                                                                                                |

## INTRODUCE & WATCH video on expression in music

1. Music helps us express ourselves and connect to our emotions. People write music to express themselves. People sing or play instruments to express themselves and connect to their feelings. People listen to music to connect to their emotions and feelings.
2. Watch [Class Notes: Expression in Music – Gran Partita, by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart](#) (video approx. 4.5 minutes).

## REFLECT on expression in music

After watching, think about the questions each student answered in the video. Here are the questions again. Answer them in a discussion with someone else, or journal your answers on a sheet of paper. You can listen to Wolfgang Mozart's music from the video while you reflect (audio embedded on website; audio approximately 6 minutes).

- What do you think Wolfgang Mozart was trying to express in the music you heard?
- How does Wolfgang Mozart's music make you feel?
- What do you want to express through music?

## EXTEND learning about expression in music

For older students, [find more activities related to this video here](#).