



MEET THE COMPOSER: Jennifer Higdon

Age Range:	Elementary, Middle School, High School
Introduction:	Composers write music, just like authors write books. In the Class Notes “Meet the Composer” series, we will learn a little bit about the achievements, backstory, and influences of a variety of composers. Get ready to learn about these influential composers and listen to some of their music.
Total Video Time:	11:51
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 20-25 minutes

BACKGROUND on Jennifer Higdon

Jennifer Higdon was born in 1962 in Brooklyn, New York. As a child she moved around, living in Georgia and Tennessee. She was surrounded by visual artists and rock music, but she did not have much exposure to classical music until she joined concert band in school, first playing percussion and then flute. She studied flute performance in college and was encouraged by her flute professor to try flute composition. Jennifer Higdon continues to teach and compose in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

MUSIC of Jennifer Higdon

1. Jennifer Higdon got her start in music by playing in concert band in school. Here is a piece she composed for concert band. It's called *Rhythm Stand* because in addition to their band instruments, the musicians also play their stands!

[Rhythm Stand](#). Composed 2004. Video approx. 2.5 minutes.

2. Jennifer Higdon has experience playing percussion. This piece features two percussion soloists together with a full symphony orchestra.

[Duo Duel](#). Composed 2020. Video approx. 3.5 minutes.

3. Jennifer Higdon has said that rock and folk music influence her compositions. This piece is performed by the ensemble Time for Three, a group who also blends different genres, or styles of music. As you listen and watch Time for Three perform together with an orchestra, see if you notice the influence of rock or popular music.

[Concerto 4-3, I. The Shallows](#). Composed 2007. Video approx. 6 minutes.



MEET THE COMPOSER:

Jennifer Higdon, cont.

CREATE, CONNECT, & RESPOND to Higdon's music

1. In the second listening example above, one of the performers plays a xylophone. Make your own xylophone with the Class Notes lesson [Build Your Own Xylophone](#) or learn more about mallet instruments in general with the Class Notes lesson [Instrument Exploration: Mallet Instruments](#).
2. Jennifer Higdon got her start in music by playing in band. If you are new to a band instrument, check out the [Beginning Band lessons](#) in the Class Notes lesson library.

Jennifer Higdon

FAST FACTS

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