

YourClassical Class Notes

Heartstrings

Supporting Materials Packet



Heartstrings Julia Peterson, Joe Peterson
Photo Credit: Jenny Cvek

About the Performers:

Julia & Joe Peterson are a multi-instrumental duet based in Milaca, MN. They play a wide variety of styles, including classical, jazz, blues, rock, country, world beat, reggae, folk, and more. As Heartstrings, they primarily play American folk music, also known as roots music. In their Class Notes Concert, Heartstrings will play several instruments, including cello, guitar, harmonica, violin, and piano/keyboard.

Learning Goals:

1. Students will identify several instruments by sight and sound, including cello, violin, and guitar.
2. Students will be able to define melody and accompaniment and identify the difference between them.
3. Students will be introduced to the concept of improvisation and observe how musicians improvise together.

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: cello
- 3) Instrument Exploration: guitar
- 4) Instrument Exploration: piano
- 5) Instrument Exploration: violin
- 6) What is MELODY?
- 7) What is IMPROVISATION?



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 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](#).



Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-6
Learning Objective:	Students will learn to identify the guitar by sight and sound.
Total Video Time:	12:07
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 20 minutes

INTRODUCE the guitar

Look at a [picture of a guitar](#) and ask: "Does anyone have a guess what instrument this is? That's right, it is a guitar. Have you seen or heard a guitar before? There are many different kinds of guitars. The guitar in this picture is called a classical acoustic guitar. What are some things you notice when you look at it?"

LEARN how the guitar makes sound

1. Ask students if they've ever stretched out a rubber band and plucked it. Explain that a guitar makes sound in the same way. There are six strings stretched over a hollow *body*, usually made of wood.
2. If you'd like to incorporate hands-on learning, stretch six rubber bands over an open shoebox to demonstrate the concept. Allow students to experiment and explore. Notice that thicker rubber bands make different sounds than thinner ones.
3. On a guitar, each string is a different thickness, so they each make a different sound. Demonstrate on a guitar if possible. Notice that the strings are held in place by *pegs*. If you turn a peg to tighten a string, it makes the sound a bit higher. If you turn the peg to make the string looser, the sound gets lower.
4. If you press your finger on a string and pluck that string, just one part of the string vibrates and that changes the pitch, or the note. Guitarists learn exactly where to put their fingers to play certain pitches/notes.

WATCH & LISTEN to the guitar

1. Guitarist Joel Spoelstra demonstrates his instrument in [this short video](#) (video approx. 2 minutes).
2. In [this video](#) the musician Prince plays an electric guitar (video approx. 3 minutes). An electric guitar is hooked up to an amplifier, which connects the guitar to an electrical current, which changes the sound.
3. In [this video](#) notice how guitarist Milena Petković plays the guitar in different ways to make different sounds (video approx. 8 minutes). Sometimes she plucks on string, sometimes she strums all strings at once.

REVIEW what you learned about the guitar

1. Can you name some different parts of the guitar?
2. How does a guitarist make a sound on a guitar?
3. What can a guitarist do to play different pitches/notes?
4. Can you think of some instruments that are related to a guitar?



Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-6
Learning Objective:	Students will demonstrate basic understanding about how the piano works.
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 30 minutes
Note to Teachers:	We encourage you to customize this lesson to fit your needs, resources, and teaching style. This lesson is designed to be a starting point. For younger learners, keep it simple! You might skip ahead to the hands-on learning. For older students, you can dive deeper into how sound is created. If possible, demonstrate the hammers and pedals in real life.

INTRODUCE the piano

- Raise your hand if you have seen a piano in real life. *(Pause.)*
- Keep your hand up if you have played a piano in real life. *(Pause.)*
- Keep your hand up if you've taken piano lessons. *(Pause.)*
- It looks like almost everyone has seen a piano, and many have played or even taken lessons!
- Today we'll learn a little about how the piano works and have a chance to take turns playing it!

EXPLORE the sounds of the piano

If possible, demonstrate on a real piano. If you don't have access, [download our Piano Visuals](#) to show pictures of the hammers, pedals, and keys.

The piano is one of many keyboard instruments. Keyboard instruments usually have **keys** that look like this.



Sound on a piano is made by pressing the keys. There are tiny hammers covered with soft felt. When you press a key, the **hammer** hits a metal string, and the vibration of that string is what we hear. *(Show students hammers on a real piano or show page 2 of the Piano Visuals.)*

Pianos also have **pedals**. Pressing different pedals changes the strings in different ways that affect the sound. For example, pressing one pedal makes the sound quieter. *(Demonstrate if possible.)* Pressing another pedal makes each note ring out longer. *(Demonstrate if possible.)* Pedals on a piano look like this. *(Show students the pedals on a real piano or show page 3 of the Piano Visuals.)*

(Lesson continues on next page)



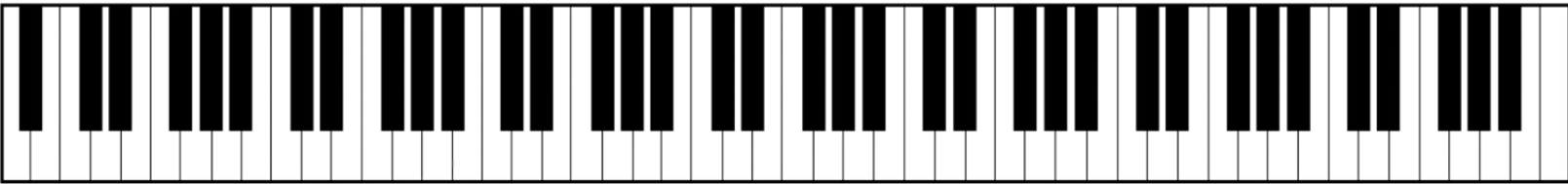
EXPLORE the sounds of the piano, cont.

1. [Look at the picture](#) of the keyboard again. Do you notice a pattern? The black keys alternate between groups of two and groups of three.
2. Print copies of [this worksheet](#) for students. Ask students to circle all groups of two in red. Then, circle all groups of three in blue.
3. If you have access to a piano or keyboard, ask students to hold up their index and middle finger, like a “peace” sign.
4. Taking turns at the piano, ask students to use those two fingers to gently bounce up and down on groups of two black keys. Depending on developmental stage, try each hand alone or both hands together.
5. Use a steady beat chant to regulate playing: “Groups of two, kangaroo!” Use the imagery of a hopping kangaroo. Remind students that kangaroos shouldn’t hop too far off the ground.
6. Students who are not in line for the piano can practice hopping back and forth between the two sets of double black keys on their printed piano.
7. Repeat this activity by adding the ring finger and using the three interior fingers to find groups of three. “Groups of three, hop like a bunny!”
8. Allow students to start creating their own music. An easy way to start is by playing only black keys. “Black Key Music” can be played alone or with others.
 1. One player can start a pattern of sounds using the lower register (“see if you can find the low notes!”) while the other can play a melody using the high notes.
 2. Explain that this music is **improvised**, or that we just make it up as we go, so there are no wrong notes.
 3. Guide and structure exploration by giving a title to each improvisation. “Elephant Music” on the black keys might sound slow and heavy, using low notes in the bottom register. “Hummingbird Music” might be high, light, and fast.
 4. Integrate music vocabulary to help reinforce meaning and terminology.

EXTEND learning about keyboard instruments

The organ is another kind of keyboard instrument. Check out [Part One](#), [Part Two](#), and/or [Part Three](#) of Class Notes Video Series: The Organ. After watching, compare and contrast the piano and the organ.

Keys of a Piano



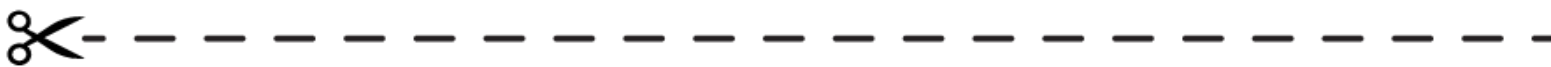
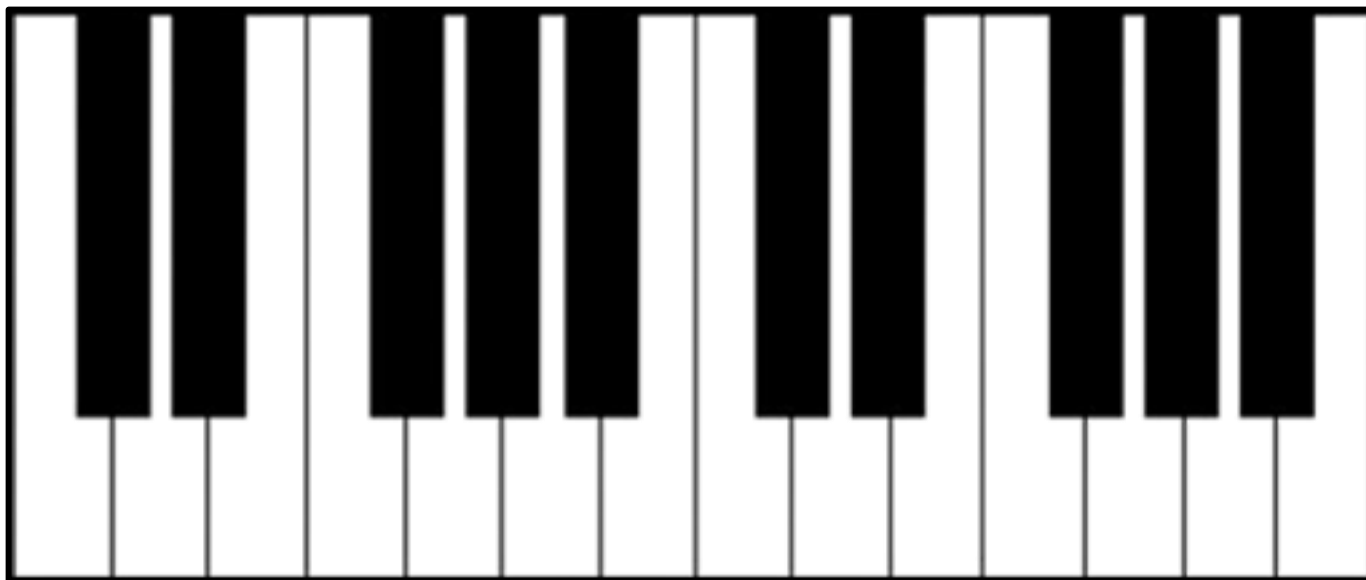
Hammers



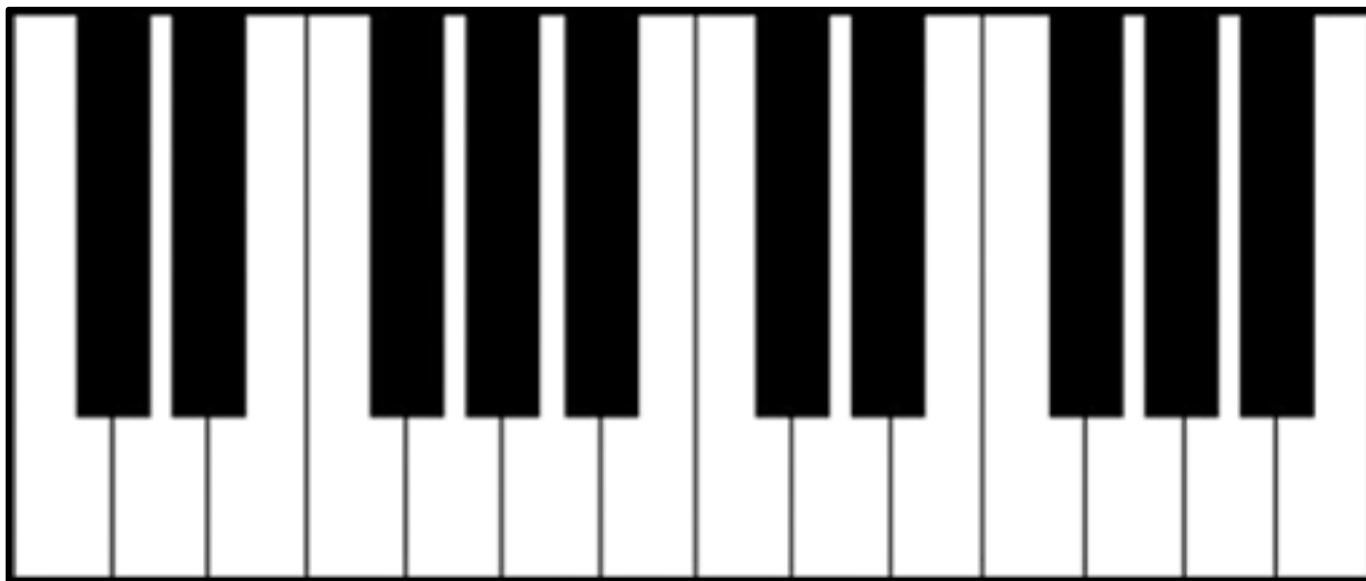
Pedals



NAME: _____ CLASS: _____



NAME: _____ CLASS: _____





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 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).



MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS: What is MELODY?

Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-5
Learning Objective:	Students will learn about melody by distinguishing it from beat and rhythm, and explore melodic contour by vocalizing and drawing their own melodic shapes.
Total Video Time:	9:59
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 35 minutes, or two 20-minute lessons

INTRODUCE melody through experimentation

1. Have students find a small percussion instrument, like a shaker, a hand drum, or a found-object homemade instrument. (Homemade percussion instruments like [these mini tin can drums](#) or [this homemade tambourine work well](#).)
2. Ask them, "Can you play *Happy Birthday* with these instruments?"
3. Give them some time to try.
4. Explain, "No, because they can't play what are called 'melodies.' They don't have high notes and they don't have low notes."
5. Explain that music is made up of many different parts. Rhythm and beat are the parts of music that makes us want to move and dance. Melody is the part that we can sing. Melodies can go high and low. Any instrument that can make high and low notes can play a melody.
6. Check comprehension by asking:
 "Can a violin play a melody?" (*Wait for students to respond: yes!*)
 "Can a snare drum play a melody?" (*Wait for students to respond: no!*)

EXPLORE melody through music-making

1. Say to students, "Experiment with your voice. See how high your voice can go, then how low." If you have slide whistles or kazoos on hand, students can try it with that too!
2. Using paper, have students draw a variety of lines with different shapes (see samples [here](#)).
3. Instruct, "Now, trace a finger in the air, following the shape of the line, moving from left to right. Try to use your voice to follow that line as well."
4. Give students some time to try that out.
5. If it's working well, say, "Now try it a few different ways:
 - "Repeat, varying the tempo, or speed.
 - "Repeat a shape two times in a row and notice that it's a pattern.
 - "Do two lines in a row, making a two-part melody."
6. "Have you noticed that the shape of the melody can be really different? We call this contour (con-TOUR.) Here are a few common kinds of melodic contour:
 - "Stepwise: Notes move up and down in steps, like a staircase.
 - "Leaps: Notes jump around, from low to high.
 - "Ascending: starting lower and moving higher.
 - "Descending: starting higher and moving lower."

(Lesson continues on next page)



MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS: **MELODY, cont.**

EXTEND learning through listening

1. Listen to a few examples of pieces with clear melodies:
 - In [Lama Bada Yatathama](#), the melody is passed around between the different instruments, with the clapping providing rhythm (video approx. 2.5 minutes).
 - In [Ngoma ya Tumbuluko](#), the cello plays the melody with the mbira supporting (video approx. 4.5 minutes).
 - In [Earth](#), flute plays melody and harp supports (video approx. 3 minutes).
2. As you listen, have students try to describe the melody. They may use that tracing finger in the air to try to follow the melodic contour!



MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS: What is IMPROVISATION?

Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-6
Learning Objective:	Students will learn or review the term "improvisation" and generate musical ideas using musical ideas using a limited set of rhythms or pitches.
Total Video Time:	5:37 or 6:10, depending on explanation video chosen
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 25 minutes

DEFINE & DEMONSTRATE improvisation

1. Explain that improvisation is when you make something up on the spot. There are several different ways to improvise. Today we will try one way. The good thing about improvisations is that there is no wrong way to do it.
2. "I can improvise a rhythm by tapping a pattern on my lap."
(*Demonstrate a short, improvised rhythm.*)
3. "I can improvise a melody by singing random notes any way I want."
(*Sing a short, improvised melody.*)
4. "If it's hard to get started, I can pick just a few notes."
(*Choose two notes on a keyboard or mallet instrument and play them in an improvised sequence.*)

CREATE improvised music

1. Using a keyboard or mallet instruments, ask students to take turns playing "black key music" (*music using only the black keys*).
2. Suggest prompts like "elephant music" (*slow and low*) or "hummingbird music" (*fast and high*). Voices can improvise "elephant" and "hummingbird" music too!
3. You might identify a pattern of notes and ask students to create a melody using only a few notes, such as C, E, and G.

EXTEND improvisation

Choose one or more activities to extend learning.

1. Watch the artists from [Heliopsis](#) (video approx. 2.5 minutes) or [Kroehm Duo](#) (video approx. 2 minutes) explain how they improvise.
2. Listen to [There's No Tellin'](#) by Kroehm Duo (video approx. 3.5 minutes). Ask students to show you with a signal (*such as wiggling fingers*) every time they think they hear improvisation.
3. Ask older students to notate their improvisations. Use an ABA grid to structure ideas. Encourage students to consider instrumentation, duration of sound, dynamics and tempo. See the completed grid below as an example.

A	B	A
Tambourine: 10 shakes <i>Allegro and forte</i>	Piano: C-E-G patterns <i>Legato and piano</i>	Tambourine: 10 shakes <i>Allegro and forte</i>