

4 Low Pitches

Supporting Materials Packet



4 Low Pitches Melissa Morales, Colleen White, Stacie Traill, Julia Heinen,
Photo Credit: Jenny Cvek

About the Performers:

4 Low Pitches Bass Clarinet Quartet who love to spotlight the beauty of flexibility of the bass clarinet. Featuring music of diverse composers and arrangers, these virtuosic performers present an exciting and energetic program. Their enthusiasm for exploring the world of collaboration, community, and the clarinet is infectious.

Learning Goals:

1. Students will identify the bass clarinet by sight and sound and explain how the instrument makes a sound.
2. Students will identify fundamental contrasts in dynamics and articulation.
3. Students will understand that various musical elements contribute to emotional response 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: Clarinet
- 3) What are DYNAMICS?
- 4) What are STACCATO and LEGATO?
- 5) Music and Emotions



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 clarinet by sight and sound.
Total Video Time:	10:32
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 20 minutes

EXPLAIN the clarinet

1. The clarinet is a long, straight, *cylindrical* tube, meaning it is shaped like a cylinder. The clarinet is usually made of African hardwood and has a bell that flares at the bottom. At the top of a clarinet, there is a mouthpiece with a single reed attached by a ligature. When a player blows on the reed, it vibrates and creates a sound. Even though it is a complex instrument, there are three main parts.
2. Look at [these images](#) and think about how these three parts would fit together to make a clarinet. The bell in a clarinet does not have a clapper (or the piece of metal inside) to make it ring. Remember, the cylinder, the bell, and the mouthpiece of a clarinet are all made of wood. The clarinet belongs to the woodwind family because its sound is made when wind (or breath) makes a piece of wood vibrate.
3. Look at the parts of the [clarinet on the diagram](#). Can you draw your own picture of a clarinet? Here is a really good [step-by-step guide to help you draw your own clarinet](#). Can you label at least a few of the parts? Be sure to include the mouthpiece, the keys, and the bell.

EXPLORE the sound of the clarinet

1. [Here is a piece for solo clarinet](#) (video approx. 3 minutes). As you listen, think of three words that describe the sound of the clarinet. Write them down, say them out loud, or tell somebody what you think the clarinet sounds like.
2. The clarinet has a nickname. Sometimes it's called a "licorice stick." Can you think of why it might have this nickname? Look at your picture of a clarinet and then at [this picture](#) if you need a hint.
3. Listen to a famous clarinetist, Anthony McGill, share [some of his thoughts](#) on teaching and performing music (video approx. 1.5 minutes).
4. Listen to McGill again [here, playing Solo de Concours by Andre Messager](#) [may-sah-zhay] (video approx. 6 minutes). The clarinet has a very wide range, meaning it can play very high notes and very low notes. Notice the [melodic contour](#), or the shape of the melody, in this piece.
5. Write down or tell someone three things you learned about the clarinet.



What are DYNAMICS?

Age Range: Elementary, Grades K-3

Learning Objective: Students will be introduced to the fundamental concept of dynamics in music. Students will learn the terms and symbols for piano (*p*) and forte (*f*) and demonstrate understanding of their meaning through active listening and music making.

Total Listening Time: 2:14

Total Lesson Time: Approximately 25 minutes

EXPLAIN dynamics

The sample script below introduces the idea of dynamics in music. Personalize and modify as needed.

Raise your hand if you've ever heard LOUD music. (*Pause for hands.*) Raise your hand if you've ever heard quiet music. (*Pause for hands.*) I bet we've all heard music that is loud, soft, or somewhere in between.

Musicians use the word 'dynamics' to describe the volume level of music. Let's practice saying that word together a few times. (*Say it slowly with students two or three times.*) "Today we will talk about two different dynamic levels: forte and piano.

Musicians use the word forte (for-TAY) to describe loud music. Forte is the Italian word for loud. A fancy letter *f* tells musicians to play loudly, or at a forte dynamic level. When musicians see this symbol (*hold up forte cue card*), they play or sing forte, or loudly.

Musicians use the word piano (pee-AHN-oh) to describe quiet or soft music. Piano is the Italian word for soft. A fancy letter *p* tells musicians to play softly, or at a piano dynamic level. When musicians see this symbol (*hold up piano cue card*), they play or sing piano, or softly.

Let's try saying each word when I hold up each card. When I flash the forte card, let's use a forte voice (*demonstrate controlled louder volume on the word forte*) and when I flash the piano card, let's use a soft, piano voice. (*Model softer sounds on the word "piano." Flash each card a few times, saying the matching word at an appropriate dynamic level.*)

EXPLORE dynamics

1. Explain that we can play our "lap drums" (*hands on thighs*) at different dynamic levels- piano and forte.
2. Model/demonstrate a steady beat at a *forte* dynamic level, then *piano*. Remind students that if the *forte* lap drum hurts your legs, it's too loud!
3. Practice each dynamic level using lap drums, then use cue cards to prompt *forte* and *piano* playing. If you notice students slowing down when they play *piano*, encourage them to keep the beat steady - don't slow down!
4. Mix in a blank card that means to STOP. This will help regulate activity and cultivate ensemble skills.
5. Try this activity with other forms of body percussion, found objects, and/or classroom instruments as appropriate.

(Lesson continues on next page)



MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS: **DYNAMICS, cont.**

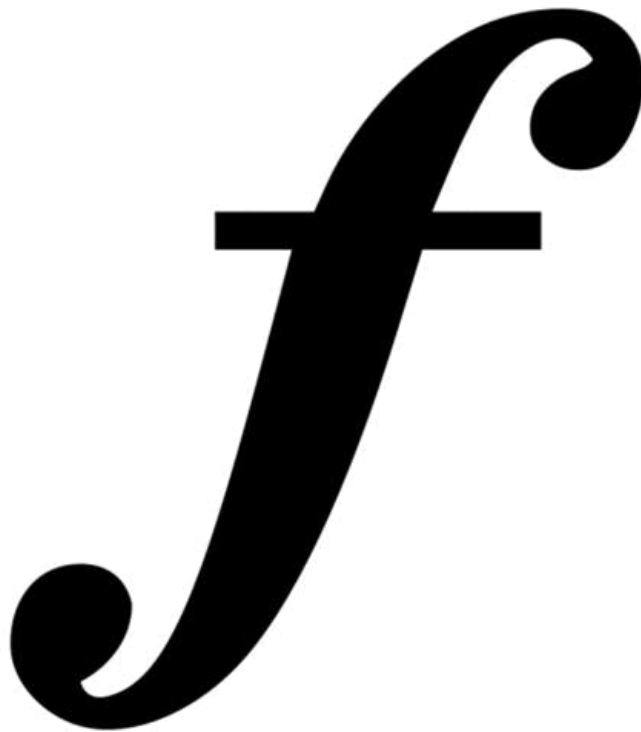
EXTEND learning about dynamics

Choose one or more activities to extend learning.

1. Using index cards and markers, ask students to make their own *f* and *p* flash cards.
2. With either printed flashcards from the [included printable](#), or from flash cards made by students, invite students to test listening skills with some music that switches back and forth between *piano* and *forte* [[audio embedded on lesson page](#); approximately 2 minutes].
3. Explain to them: "Every time we hear *piano*, flash your *p* card, and when we hear *forte*, flash the *f*!"
4. You may want to repeat the excerpt a few times, since students will have a better understanding of the relational connection of the dynamics after the first listen.

Printable Flash Cards

What are DYNAMICS?

A large, bold, black cursive lowercase letter 'f' is centered within a thick black rectangular border. The letter features a prominent loop at the top and a smaller loop at the bottom.A large, bold, black cursive lowercase letter 'p' is centered within a thick black rectangular border. The letter has a thick vertical stem and a large, rounded loop on the right side.



What are STACCATO and LEGATO?

Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-6
Learning Objective:	Students will be able to explain staccato and legato articulations. Students will respond to pieces of music featuring staccato and legato.
Total Listening Time:	8:56
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 25 minutes
Note to Teachers:	Determine if it's better for students to learn about both concepts in one day or if it's better to split into two lessons (one for staccato, one for legato). Continue reviewing the concept throughout the school year.

INTRODUCE staccato and legato

Here is sample language to introduce the fundamental concept of articulation, beginning with staccato/legato. Modify as necessary.

1. Music is full of opposites: high and low, loud and soft. (*Use your voice to reinforce each concept. Say "high" in a high voice, etc.*) Did you ever notice that sometimes music can sound smooth, and sometimes it sounds bumpy?
2. Here are some smooth, connected sounds. (*Demonstrate by playing a few connected notes on a piano, keyboard, classroom instrument, or by using your voice. Examples should be short.*) If I add some space or separation between each note, it sounds bumpy. (*Play same phrase with staccato articulation. Repeat a few times.*)
3. Musicians call smooth connected sounds *legato* (leh-GAH-toe). When they see a smooth line like this (*hold up [legato cue card](#)*) connecting the notes in their music, they know to sing or play *legato*.
4. When I hold up the *legato* card, practice saying *legato* with me. (*Do this a few times.*)
5. Musicians call those bumpy, bouncy sounds *staccato* (stah-KAH-toe.) When they see dots like these (*flash [staccato cue card](#)*) under or over notes, they know to play or sing *staccato*.
6. Let's add try making a smooth motion when we see the *legato* card, and a short, bumpy motion when we see the *staccato* card. (*Demonstrate a legato motion by using a hand or a few fingers to paint broad strokes in the air. Demonstrate a staccato motion by using a few fingers to "hop" up and down your forearm.*)

Note to teachers: Extend this activity by using large-motor movements, like pretend ice-skating for *legato* and whole-body hopping for *staccato*. Add in a "freeze" if necessary to encourage regulated movement. Adjust as necessary to include all learners.

(Lesson plan continues on next page)



STACCATO and LEGATO, cont.

EXPLORE making staccato and legato

1. We can sing *staccato* and *legato*. Let's practice singing staccato. (*Select a simple, familiar classroom song and lead the class singing it with short, chopped words.*) Now let's try the same song, *legato* this time. (*Repeat, singing legato. Exaggerate the differences to reinforce comprehension.*)
2. Using the [legato and staccato cue cards](#), prompt students to play body percussion, found objects, or classroom instruments. For percussion-related instruments, *legato* might seem tricky at first. Encourage students to get creative. *Legato* on a hand drum might mean dragging a finger across the head of the drum. *Legato* using rhythm sticks might mean rubbing one stick down the length of the other.

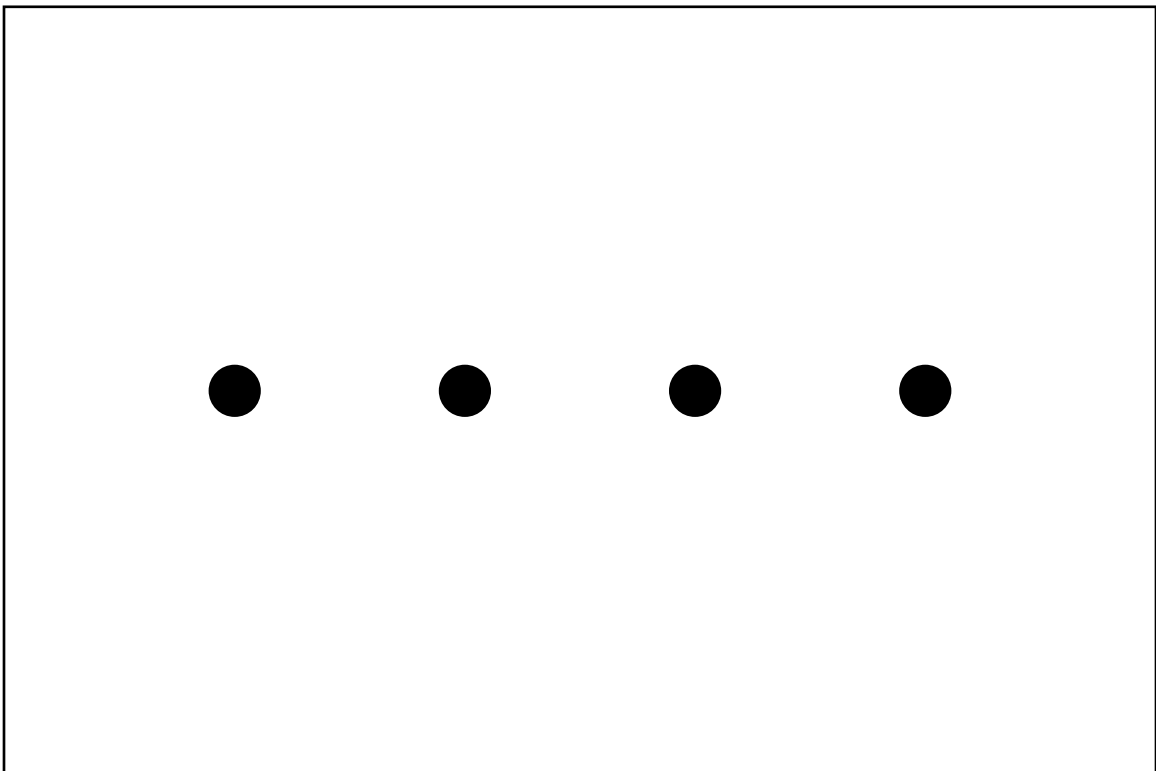
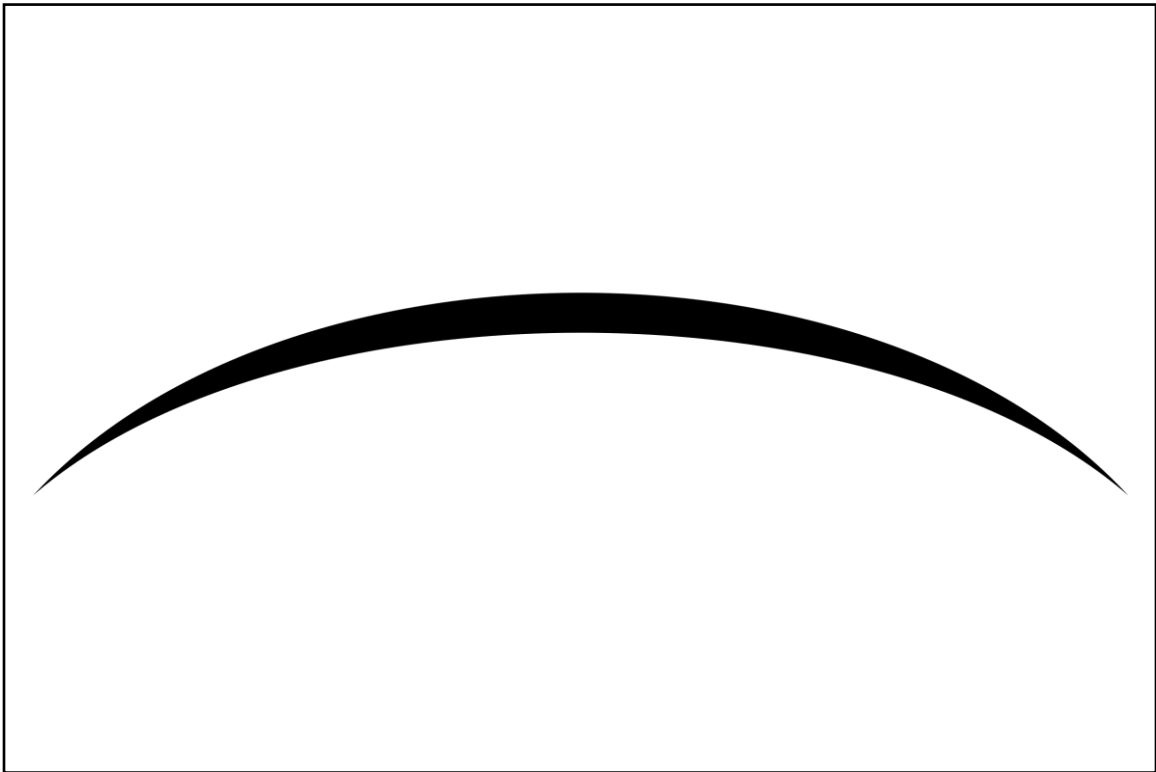
LISTEN to staccato and legato

Choose one or more activities to extend learning.

1. Listen to these two pieces of music from *Carnival of the Animals* and ask students to figure out which is *staccato* and which is *legato*. [[Audio links embedded in website version of lesson](#); audio lengths approx. 1 minute and approx. 3.5 minutes.] Hint: Kangaroos are *staccato*, Swan is *legato*. Listen again and move around the room like those animals.
2. Show students the notation of *legato* and *staccato* using the pictures below. Play a game of "I Spy" using [Prelude No. 2 by Ruth Crawford Seeger](#) (video approx. 2.5 minutes). The video shows the music, so students can look for the *legato* arc and the *staccato* dots.
3. Listen to [this music](#), by Antonio Vivaldi (video approx. 2 minutes). Do you notice that one musician is playing a smooth, *legato* melody, while the others are playing a *staccato* accompaniment underneath. (*For older students, ask half the class move to the staccato part while the other half to move to the legato part.*)

Printable Flash Cards

STACCATO and LEGATO





MUSIC AND MINDFULNESS: Music and Emotions

Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-6
Learning Objective:	Students will describe emotions experienced when listening to a musical selection.
Total Video Time:	10:54 for "connect" section only; 19:22 including all videos
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 25 minutes

INTRODUCE emotions through discussion

1. Ask, "How many different feelings, moods, or emotions can we come up with? Let's make a list."
2. Once you have generated a list, go through each word and discuss what kind of music might express that emotion, mood, or feeling.

CONNECT emotions with music

1. Create, print, or project a blank listening chart like the one [attached](#).
2. Listen to a diverse selection of music. (See list below for suggestions.)
3. Think about what emotions you hear and feel. Use vocabulary words to describe each piece. The list of feelings the class brainstormed might help.
4. Draw a picture to go along with each. As you listen and write, consider:
 - Does the emotion or feeling change throughout the piece?
 - What musical techniques did the composer use to create these feelings or emotions?
 - Can you use any music vocabulary words when you describe the emotions or feelings you hear?
 - Does the title of the piece give you any clues?

Repertoire suggestions:

- [Lines](#) by Mary Ellen Childs (video approx. 3.5 minutes)
- [Yearning for the Peace](#) by Tan Dun (video approx. 3.5 minutes)
- [Mercury, the Winged Messenger](#) by Gustav Holst (video approx. 4 minutes)

MORE emotions in music

Choose one or more activities to extend learning.

1. Watch the Class Notes Videos [A Journey Through Musical Emotion](#) (video approx. 4 minutes) and [A Recipe for Emotion in Music](#) (video approx. 4.5 minutes).
2. Invite students to bring their own songs or pieces to listen to together as a class!
 1. Set clear parameters on what music is classroom-appropriate and ask students to submit names of songs (artist included, if possible) for you to put into a playlist.
 2. With each student's musical choice, repeat the "connect" activity above, having students listen, write, and draw their emotional ideas.
 3. After each selection, invite the class to discuss what they felt in response. You may also invite the student who brought that selection to share what the selection means to them.

Printable Listening Grid - Blank

MUSIC AND EMOTIONS

Title	Emotions/ Feelings/Moods	Comments/ Pictures