

YourClassical Class Notes

Nordstär Duo

Supporting Materials Packet



Nordstär Duo Renee Vaughan, Laura McKenzie
Photo Credit: Jenny Cvek

About the Performers:

Nordstär Duo consists of Renee Vaughan on nyckelharpa and Laura MacKenzie playing both the säckpipa (a Swedish bagpipe) and the wooden flute. Together, they share a passion for traditional Swedish folk music and its unique instruments. In their Class Notes Concert, they invite students to explore how traditional folk music connects with their own heritage, community, and sense of belonging.

Learning Goals:

1. Students will be able to identify the nyckelharpa and säckpipa by sight and sound and describe one way they are different from more familiar instruments.
2. Students will understand that Swedish music is a unique form of cultural expression, deeply connected to dance and storytelling.
3. Students will experience Swedish folk music firsthand by hearing and moving to a *polska* rhythm, and by participating in creating a *drone* to support a melody.

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) Music & Geography: Around the World
- 3) What is MELODY?



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.



MUSIC & GEOGRAPHY: Around the World

Age Range:	Elementary, Middle School, Grades 2-8
Learning Objective:	Students will demonstrate an understanding that artistic works are influenced by personal and cultural contexts.
Total Video Time:	37:35 for all examples
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 10 minutes for each genre

INTRODUCE music around the world with a game

1. Ask students to name a song, and then ask where it's from. Encourage them to research if they don't know.
2. Repeat several times. If examples seem to all be from a very specific time or place, encourage them to think of a song from someplace else.
3. After a few rounds, students will begin to draw the connection that music is a cultural expression, and that music comes from everywhere.

EXPLORE music around the world

1. Show students a blank map of the world [like this one](#). Explain that you will visit various locations. During each "visit" you will learn about a particular style of music that originated in that area. "Visits" might be spread out over several class periods.
2. Select locations/musical styles from the options below, or others of your own choosing:
 - [Traditional Ojibwe singing](#) - Minnesota/the Dakotas/Canada (Video approx. 11 minutes)
 - [Ragtime](#) - St. Louis, MO (Video approx. 2.5 minutes)
 - [Mariachi](#) - Mexico (Video approx. 3.5 minutes)
 - [Alpine yodeling](#) - Switzerland/Austria (Video approx. 3 minutes)
 - [Raga](#) - India (Video approx. 2 minutes)
 - [Tuvan throat singing](#) - Mongolia (Video approx. 4 minutes)
 - [Kwv Thxiaj](#) [kuh tsee-ah] - Southeast Asia (Video approx. 3 minutes)
 - [Taiko](#) [ty-koh] - Japan (Video approx. 8.5 minutes)
3. Once you select your places, mark the locations on a map.
4. Choose a country to "visit." Start by listening to music in that style.
5. Using the [included printable worksheet](#), fill out a fact grid, so that students learn core characteristics of each style. You may present the material to students or have them do research on their own.
6. Visit as many places as your time frame allows! Use [our completed grids](#) as a starting point for each culture.
7. If you wish, continue "visiting" countries/regions throughout the year. Customize the lesson by visiting a region that you or one of your students has lived in.

NAME: _____ CLASS: _____

Genre/Style	
Location	
Description of Music	
Fact #1	
Fact #2	
Fact #3	
Musical Example	

MUSIC & GEOGRAPHY CLASS NOTES PRINTABLE: AROUND THE WORLD www.classnotes.org

NAME: _____ CLASS: _____

Genre/Style	
Location	
Description of Music	
Fact #1	
Fact #2	
Fact #3	
Musical Example	

MUSIC & GEOGRAPHY CLASS NOTES PRINTABLE: AROUND THE WORLD www.classnotes.org

NOMBRE: _____ CLASE: _____

Genero/Estilo	
Ubicación	
Descripción de la Música	
Hecho #1	
Hecho #2	
Hecho #3	
Ejemplo Musical	

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NOMBRE: _____ CLASE: _____

Genero/Estilo	
Ubicación	
Descripción de la Música	
Hecho #1	
Hecho #2	
Hecho #3	
Ejemplo Musical	

MUSIC & GEOGRAPHY CLASS NOTES PRINTABLE: AROUND THE WORLD www.classnotes.org

Around the World

SAMPLE GRIDS (page 1)

Completed Grid: Ojibwe Singing

Genre/Style	TRADITIONAL OJIBWE-ANISHINAABE MUSIC
Location	Parts of Minnesota and Canada, surrounding Lake Superior
Description of Music	Songs from the Ojibwe-Anishinaabe: This music is often vocal and uses instruments such as rattles, shakers and drums.
Fact #1	The number four is an important element in Ojibwe-Anishinaabe music and culture. It represents balance.
Fact #2	Music is used from many things in Ojibwe-Anishinaabe culture: teaching, celebration and traditional ceremonies.
Fact #3	You should ask permission to perform a song someone else has written.
Musical Example	Video: Teaching Appreciation and Understanding for Native American Music and Culture

Completed Grid: Ragtime

Genre/Style	RAGTIME
Location	St. Louis, Missouri, USA
Description of Music	Music characterized by a syncopated melodic line and regularly accented accompaniment.
Fact #1	Was most popular during the early years of the 20 th century.
Fact #2	Scott Joplin was a famous ragtime composer.
Fact #3	Gets its name from its "ragged," or syncopated rhythms.
Musical Example	Video: Scott Joplin's Maple Leaf Rag

Around the World

SAMPLE GRIDS (page 2)

Completed Grid: Mariachi

Genre/Style	MARIACHI
Location	Mexico
Description of Music	Folk music from Mexico. There are variations in the music depending on the precise region of the origin within Mexico.
Fact #1	Instrumentation usually includes violin and guitar and sometimes trumpet.
Fact #2	Some Mariachi music uses <i>false</i> vocals.
Fact #3	Mariachi music is often used in celebrations or special events, like weddings, holidays or funerals.
Musical Example	Video: Mariachi Sol De Mexico

Completed Grid: Yodeling

Genre/Style	ALPINE YODELING
Location	Switzerland, Austria
Description of Music	Form of singing developed in rural areas of the Alps.
Fact #1	Involves fast changes between high and low pitches.
Fact #2	Singer must switch register, which is a practiced skill.
Fact #3	Was originally developed as a form of communicating over long distances.
Musical Example	Video: Franz Lang- Jodlersang und Zitherklang

Around the World

SAMPLE GRIDS (page 3)

Completed Grid: Raga

Genre/Style	RAGA
Location	India
Description of Music	A traditional melodic pattern that is a fundamental part of Indian classical music.
Fact #1	Uses a series of five to nine notes as a basis for composition, then improvisation.
Fact #2	Specific ragas can be associated with certain times of day or seasons.
Fact #3	There are regional differences between ragas and raga interpretation.
Musical Example	Video: Ravi Shankar- Tenth Decade

Completed Grid: Throat Singing

Genre/Style	TUVAN THROAT SINGING
Location	Mongolia, Siberia, Russia, Tuva
Description of Music	A style of singing in which the singer produces two pitches at the same time, creating harmony.
Fact #1	Attempts to mimic or imitate sounds of nature
Fact #2	The singer produces a fundamental pitch and then a particular <i>overtone</i> , part of the harmonic series.
Fact #3	There are different ways of categorizing the variations of Tuvan throat singing.
Musical Example	Video: Tuvan Throat Singing

Around the World

SAMPLE GRIDS (page 4)

Completed Grid: Kwv Thxiaj

Genre/Style	KWV THXIAJ (pronounced “k-ou ts-ee-ah”)
Location	Southeast Asia, including Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, parts of China
Description of Music	Vocal folk music of the Hmong people.
Fact #1	Sung by both men and women of all ages.
Fact #2	This music is for voice only. The vocal quality is raw, powerful, and loud.
Fact #3	The language in these songs is referred to as “paj lug,” or “flowery language.” It is often used for courting.
Musical Example	Video: Kwv Txhiaj

Completed Grid: Taiko

Genre/Style	TAIKO
Location	Japan
Description of Music	Percussion-based music usually played in an ensemble using a variety of instruments.
Fact #1	Has ancient origins.
Fact #2	Has been used for many purposes, including communication, use in military activities, and use for theatrical accompaniment.
Fact #3	Styles vary by region.
Musical Example	Video: Kodo – “O-Daiko”



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!