

Flipside Percussion

Supporting Materials Packet



Flipside Percussion (Steve Roehm, Erik Schee)

Photo Credit: Jenny Cvek

About the Performers:

Flipside Percussion feature Steve Roehm (vibraphone), and Erik Schee (marimba). Their musical backgrounds include orchestral percussion, jazz combos, and rock drum set. Flipside Percussion present a wide range of musical styles with a focus and emphasis on improvisation. In their Class Notes Concert, Flipside Percussion will play original tunes and identify and explain their instruments. They will also introduce the concept of improvisation and explain how they work together to improvise.

Learning Goals:

1. Students will identify by sight and sound several percussion instruments, including marimba and vibraphone, and understand how each instrument makes its sound.
2. Students will demonstrate understanding of improvisation through active listening and participatory activities.
3. Students will understand the concept of subdivision and experience and perform macro and micro beats together with Flipside Percussion.

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: Mallet Instruments
- 3) What is IMPROVISATION?
- 4) What are ENSEMBLE SKILLS?



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.



INSTRUMENT EXPLORATION: Mallet Instruments

Age Range: Elementary, Grades K-6

Learning Objective: Students will learn about four mallet instruments.

Total Video Time: 24:16

Note to Teacher: This lesson features orchestral mallet instruments. Adapt and modify the lesson to demonstrate on Orff instruments if you have access. If not, use our mallet instrument visuals to show a picture of each instrument.

INTRODUCE mallet instruments

Today we will learn about four different kinds of mallet instruments. Let's practice saying their names together:

- Glockenspiel
- Xylophone
- Vibraphone
- Marimba

EXPLORE mallet instruments

While explaining each instrument, show students the image of that instrument or demonstrate on classroom instruments if available.

1. Mallet instruments are a part of the percussion family. First, let's learn about the glockenspiel. The glockenspiel is also known as the 'bells.' It has thin metal bars that are different lengths. Smaller bars make higher sounds, and longer bars make lower sounds. The bars on top are organized like the black keys on a piano.

[Listen to the glockenspiel](#) from Mozart's opera, *The Magic Flute*. (1 min.)

2. Xylophones have bars made of wood. Like the glockenspiel, the notes get higher as the bars get smaller. There are many different kinds of xylophones, and orchestral xylophones are different than the xylophones you might see in a music classroom.

[Listen to the xylophone](#) in "Fossils" from *Carnival of the Animals*. (2 min.)

3. The vibraphone has bars made of metal. There are resonators, or tubes, underneath each bar and inside each tube is a little valve that rotates when you flip on a switch to turn the motor on. It creates a very special effect. The vibraphone also has a pedal that helps the notes ring for a very long time.

[Listen to the vibraphone](#) in this solo by Gary Burton. (4 min.)

4. Like the xylophone, the bars on the marimba are made of wood. The main difference between the xylophone and the marimba is that the marimba is much bigger. Since the marimba is bigger, it plays lower sounds.

[Listen to the marimba](#) in *Dream of the Cherry Blossoms*, by Keiko Abe. (5 min.)



INSTRUMENT EXPLORATION: Mallet Instruments

RESPOND to mallet instruments

Choose one or both of the following activities to extend learning.

- If you have access to mallet instruments, play a game of **"Follow the Feet!"**
 1. Choose one student to be leader. Other students will have mallets and instruments.
 2. The leader pretends to step on a giant, imaginary mallet instrument while others follow the leader's foot movements with their mallets.
 - If the leader runs from left to right, others might quickly play from low to high.
 - If the leader jumps up and down, others might bounce mallets on repeated notes.
 - If the leader suddenly stops, students stop.
 - If you have a limited number of instruments/mallets, students can alternate between real instruments and playing "air xylophone."
- Listen to the first two minutes of [Clockwise in Motion](#). Ask students to respond to the dynamic changes. When the music gets softer, they can show quiet dynamics with hands close together and expand their hands wider apart as the music gets louder.



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: 8:13

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](#) or [Kroehm Duo](#) explain how they improvise.
2. Listen to [There's No Tellin'](#) by Kroehm Duo. 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>



What are ENSEMBLE SKILLS?

Age Range: Elementary, Grades K-5

Learning Objective: Students will demonstrate ensemble skills through performance. Students will utilize multiple rehearsal strategies to refine performance.

Total Video Time: 18:37

DISCUSS ensemble skills

1. "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. "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. "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. (3:30 min.)
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 (5 min.)
- [Mill City String Quartet](#) performing music by Samuel Coleridge Taylor (4 min.)
- [Imani Winds](#) performing music by Valerie Coleman (3 min.)
- [Mill City String Quartet](#) performing music by DBR (3:30 min.)