

MORE Listening Fun!

By Dan Fee and Denise Gagné

Active listening lessons with PARACHUTES, PAPER PLATES, SCARVES and RIBBONS that will engage your students and get them excited about listening to classical music!

Includes:

- lessons aligned to national standards
- reproducible composer biographies
- audio CD
- PowerPoint to aid in teaching the routines and concepts
- movies about the composers
- QuickTime videos of each activity
- reproducible visuals to aid in teaching concepts

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Themes & Variations

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Listening Log

Title: _____

Composer: _____

1. What does this music make you think of? Why?

7. What are some instruments that you hear?

2. What is the mood of the piece?
How is the mood achieved?

8. Is the music in a major or minor key?

3. Describe the tempo:

9. What are 2-3 criteria you could use to evaluate this performance if you were an adjudicator in a festival?

4. Describe the dynamics:

5. Describe the texture of the music
- do many instruments play or just a few? _____

10. Did you enjoy the performance? Tell why or why not?

6. Are the notes in the music played smoothly or are they separated?

LESSON PLAN #1

“Bourrée” from *Music for the Royal Fireworks* by George F. Handel

CONCEPT

Learning about the Baroque Period of music.

Learning about dynamics.

OBJECTIVE

The student will develop an appreciation for the Baroque Period in music by learning its characteristics and listening to a sample of its music. In addition, knowledge of G.F. Handel, a key composer, will be gained. The students will be able to identify the dynamic level of the example.

NATIONAL STANDARD

9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.

PROCEDURE

1. Play “Bourrée” from the accompanying CD. Tell the students you will be asking an important question when the music is finished.
2. Ask the students if they think the music is “old” or “new.” They will most likely realize that the music is from long ago. Inform them that the music they heard is from the Baroque Period of music, some 300 years ago. Provide them with the following facts:
 - The Baroque Period is from approximately 1600-1750.
 - Most of the music comes from European countries.
 - Composers you might know from this period are J.S. Bach and G.F. Handel. Handel wrote the music you just heard. (Show posters or Internet images of both composers.)
 - Music from the Baroque Period often featured a harpsichord, a bass instrument providing the main pitches (basso continuo) and sudden changes in dynamics.
 - The music will tend to sound “fancy/ornate” to our ears.
3. Play the music again and ask the students if they heard any of the qualities mentioned. (The most obvious is the sudden dynamic changes.)
4. After handing out the dynamics manipulatives, play the music one more time, instructing the students to hold up (or point to) the appropriate dynamic level. You may lead them in this, if needed.
5. Share with the students that this music was written for a special fireworks display ordered by the King of England, Handel’s boss, to celebrate the end of a war. Unfortunately, the fireworks caused a nearby building to catch on fire and Handel’s music was never performed that night!
6. Ask the students to draw a quick picture of the scene they imagine at the Royal Fireworks display. Tell them to include a fancy/ornate building on fire, fireworks in the sky and G.F. Handel somewhere off to the side. Including King George II is optional. On the back of the paper, ask them to list two qualities of Baroque music. Play “Bourrée” while they are drawing. You may also want to play “La Rejouissance,” also from Fireworks music. There is a famous piece of artwork of the fireworks display. You can find it on-line at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Music_for_the_Royal_Fireworks.

ASSESSMENT

The above picture and facts will serve as assessment. Observation is used to assess the success of signaling the correct dynamic level.

pp

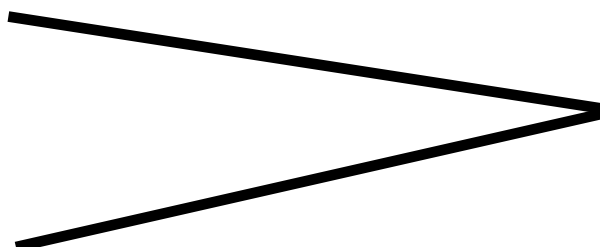
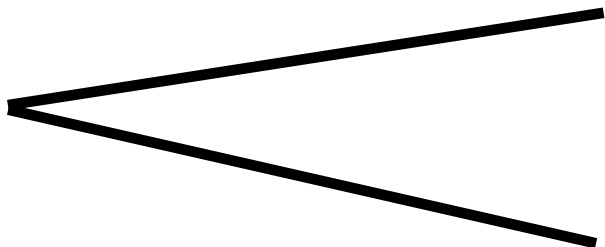
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BIOGRAPHY: George Frideric HANDEL

Born: February 23, 1685 in Halle, Germany

Died: April 14, 1759 in London, England

Baroque Period

Even though George Frideric Handel was born in Germany, he is considered to be one of England's greatest composers because he spent most of his adult life, and therefore his most productive period in composition, in England. He is known for writing many Italian operas and a number of English oratorios, including his most famous work, *Messiah*.

Handel's father was a barber and a surgeon and strongly encouraged his son to become a lawyer. He banned Handel from practicing music, but Handel could not be swayed, and found ways to practice secretly on the clavichord that was stored in the family attic. He also studied music theory by candlelight, late at night in his room. Finally, after hearing Handel play, a duke who was a patient of Handel's father, convinced the senior Handel to allow his son to study music.

Handel began music studies in Germany, but soon went to Italy to learn more about opera. When he arrived back in Germany four years later, he became a court composer for a prince who later became the King of England. Handel continued working for the new king as court composer.

Handel mastered several instruments including the violin, oboe, organ, and harpsichord, but his skills at the keyboard were soon overshadowed by his skills at composing opera. His first opera, *Rinaldo*, written in 1771, was a huge success. Italian opera became very popular in England, due in large part to Handel's success and ability at composing such works. When the English people tired of opera, Handel began writing in a new genre (which he created) called oratorio. The English people adopted this tradition as their own.

One of Handel's most famous pieces, *Messiah*, was written near the end of his career. When the King of England first heard this work, it is said that he was so impressed that he rose to his feet during the *Hallelujah Chorus*. Another legend says that because of the length of *Messiah*, the king stood to stretch. Because the king rose, everyone in the hall was obligated to do the same. Standing during the *Hallelujah Chorus* is a tradition that continues today!

Toward the end of his life, Handel suffered from increasing blindness. Eventually, he had to dictate his musical ideas to a friend who wrote them down. In early April of 1759, Handel became ill while conducting a performance of *Messiah*. He died just a few weeks later with over 3000 people in attendance at his funeral.

About the Music

Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks* was written in 1749 to celebrate the end of an 8-year war. There was to be a huge celebration and Handel was in charge of writing the music for it! King George of England, however, wanted music with "no fiddles." (violins) Because the performance was to be out of doors, Handel needed to be sure that the sound would be loud enough. Handel's ensemble included brass instruments, oboes, bassoons and timpani. A public rehearsal of Handel's Fireworks Music one week before the performance drew 12,000 people and caused a 3-hour traffic jam on the London Bridge! When the day finally arrived for the first official performance of *Music for the Royal Fireworks* a small enclosure (pavilion) caught on fire due to falling fireworks. Handel and his musicians had been playing here just one hour earlier!



MUSICAL MOVEMENT GUIDE - RIBBONS

“Bourrée,” from *Music for the Royal Fireworks*

by George F. Handel

MATERIALS

One ribbon for each student. Ribbons that are one meter or three feet in length work well in the classroom.

FORMATION

Have students space themselves far enough apart that the ribbons won't hit any other students.

MOVEMENT

Lead the students through the suggested movement the first time that you try this. This will give them some ideas of what they can do with the ribbons and will help them to become familiar with the piece. Another time, have the students create their own movements with the ribbons. Have them use both non-locomotor and locomotor movements.

See the lesson on form that follows.

A Section		
0:01-0:12	20 beats	wave ribbon overhead
0:13-0:25	20 beats	wave ribbon low, in response to change in dynamics
B Section		
0:26-0:35	8 beats	stir fast - 8 right 8 left 8 right 8 left
0:36-0:45	8 beats	large circles in front - 4 right 4 left
0:46-0:55	8 beats	stir fast - 8 right 8 left 8 right 8 left
0:56-1:05	8 beats	large circles in front - 4 right 4 left
A Section		
1:06-1:18	20 beats	wave ribbon overhead
B Section		
1:19-1:28	8 beats	stir fast - 8 right 8 left 8 right 8 left
1:29-1:40	8 beats	large circles in front - 4 right 4 left