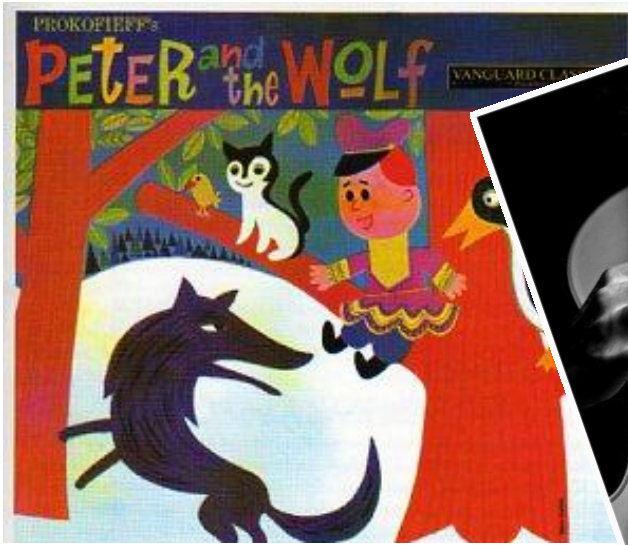


Brazos Valley Symphony



Annual Children's

Concert

Preparation Packet for Teachers

Monday, January 23, 2012

9:30 & 11:00 am

Rudder Auditorium

Texas A&M University

Blue Bell  Ice Cream



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS
A great nation
deserves great art.

This project is supported
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Overview

Everyone who is a part of the Brazos Valley Symphony is delighted that you and your students will be attending the 2012 Concert for Children. So that this experience will be a positive one for all, we offer this packet of information to help you prepare your students for the concert. These materials are arranged to facilitate selecting single pages to copy to or project.

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This packet and instructions for teachers about the BVSO Children's Concert on Jan. 23, 2012 can be downloaded from the Symphony's web site. www.bvso.org

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Fine Arts

The Brazos Valley Symphony's Annual Children's Concert provides a unique opportunity for students to practice the four basic strands outlined in the TEKS document: perception, creative expression and performance, historical and cultural heritage, and critical evaluation. You will find references in green to the TEKS criteria throughout this packet.

Chapter 117. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts

§117.15. Music, Grade 4.

(a) Introduction.

1) Four basic strands--perception, creative expression/performance, historical and cultural heritage, and critical evaluation--provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire. In music, students develop their intellect and refine their emotions, understanding the cultural and creative nature of musical artistry and making connections among music, the other arts, technology, and other aspects of social life. Through creative performance, students apply the expressive technical skills of music and critical-thinking skills to evaluate multiple forms of problem solving.

(2) By reflecting on musical periods and styles, students understand music's role in history and are able to participate successfully in a diverse society. Students analyze and evaluate music, developing criteria for making critical judgments and informed choices.

(b) Knowledge and skills.

(4.1) **Perception.** The student describes and analyzes musical sound and demonstrates musical artistry.

The student is expected to:

(A) categorize a variety of musical sounds, including children's and adults' voices; woodwind, brass, string, percussion, keyboard, and electronic instruments; and instruments of various cultures;

(B) use standard terminology in explaining music, music notation, musical instruments and voices, and musical performances; and

(C) identify music symbols and terms referring to dynamics and tempo, interpreting them appropriately when performing.

(4.4) **Creative**

expression/performance. The student creates and arranges music within specified guidelines.

The student is expected to:

(A) create rhythmic and melodic phrases;

and

(B) create simple accompaniments.

(4.5) **Historical/cultural heritage.** The student relates music to history, to society, and to culture.

The student is expected to:

(A) identify aurally-presented excerpts of music representing diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures;

(B) perform music and movement from diverse cultures;

(C) perform music representative of American and Texas heritage; and

(D) identify connections between music and the other fine arts.

(4.6) **Response/evaluation.** The student responds to and evaluates music and musical performance.

The student is expected to:

(A) apply basic criteria in evaluating musical performances and compositions;

(B) justify, using music terminology, personal preferences for specific music works and styles; and

(C) practice concert etiquette as an actively involved listener during live performances.

§117.18. Music, Grade 5.

(a) Introduction.

(1) Four basic strands--perception, creative expression/performance, historical and cultural heritage, and critical evaluation--provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire. In music, students develop their intellect and refine their emotions, understanding the cultural and creative nature of musical artistry and making connections among music, the other arts, technology, and other aspects of social life. Through creative performance, students apply the expressive technical skills of music and critical-thinking skills to evaluate multiple forms of problem solving.

(2) By reflecting on musical periods and styles, students understand music's role in history and are able to participate successfully in a diverse society. Students analyze and evaluate music, developing criteria for making critical judgments and informed choices.

(b) Knowledge and skills.

(5.1) **Perception.** The student describes and analyzes musical sound and demonstrates musical artistry.

The student is expected to:

(A) distinguish among a variety of musical timbres;

(B) use standard terminology in explaining music, music notation, musical instruments and voices, and musical performances; and

(C) identify a variety of music forms such as AB, ABA, rondo, and theme and variations.

(5.2) **Creative expression/performance.** The student sings or plays an instrument, individually and in groups, performing a varied repertoire of music.

The student is expected to:

(A) perform independently, with accurate intonation and rhythm, demonstrating fundamental skills and basic performance techniques;

(B) perform expressively, from memory and notation, a varied repertoire of music representing styles from diverse cultures; and

(C) demonstrate appropriate small- and large-ensemble performance techniques during formal and informal concerts.

(5.3) **Creative expression/performance.** The student reads and writes music notation.

The student is expected to:

(A) read standard notation;

(B) use standard symbols to notate meter, rhythm, and pitch in simple patterns (manuscript or computer-generated);

(C) read and write music that incorporates rhythmic patterns in various meters; and

(D) identify music symbols and terms referring to dynamics, tempo, and articulation.

(5.5) **Historical/cultural heritage.** The student relates music to history, to society, and to culture.

The student is expected to:

(A) identify aurally-presented excerpts of music representing diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures;

(B) describe various music vocations and avocations;

(C) perform music and movement from diverse cultures;

(D) perform music representative of American and Texas heritage; and

(E) identify concepts taught in the other fine arts and their relationships to music concepts.

(5.6) **Response/evaluation.** The student responds to and evaluates music and musical performance.

The student is expected to:

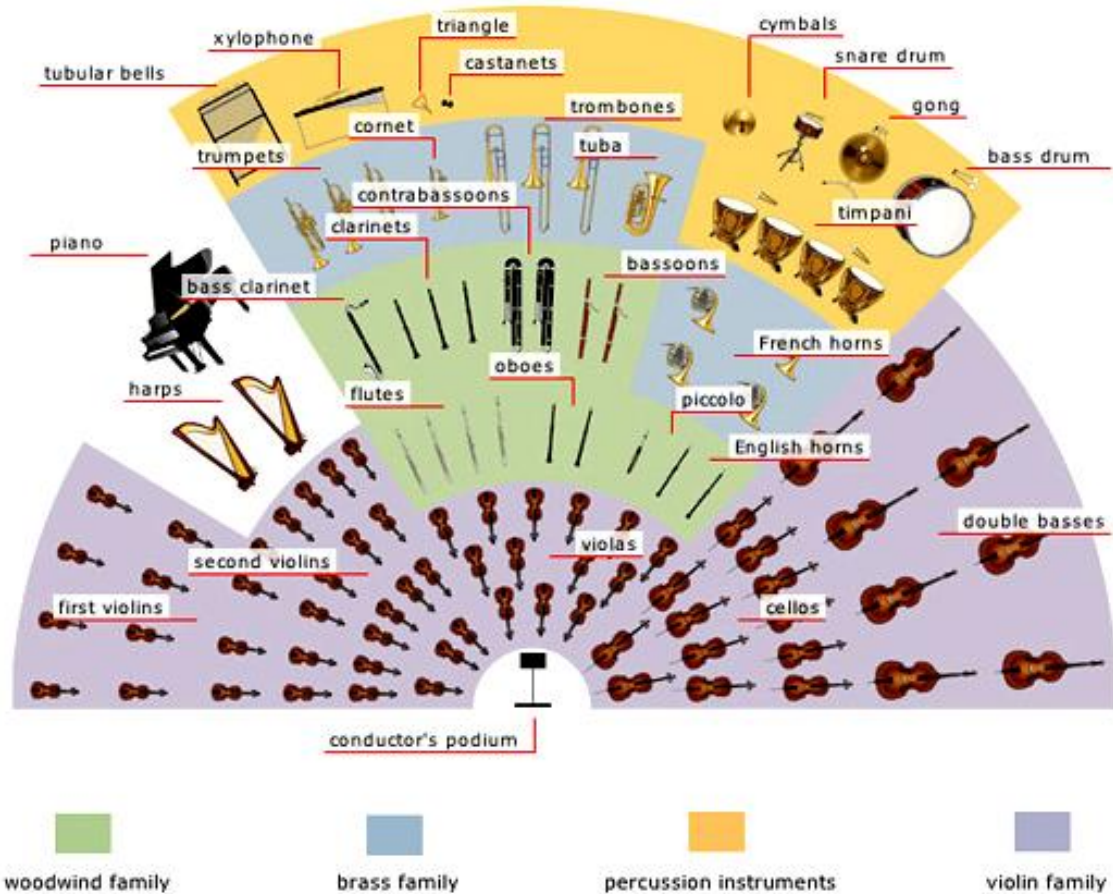
(A) apply criteria in evaluating musical performances and compositions;

(B) evaluate, using music terminology, personal preferences for specific music works and styles; and

(C) exhibit concert etiquette as an actively involved listener during varied live performances.

What is a Symphony Orchestra?

A symphony orchestra is a large group of musicians who play together on various instruments, usually including strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion. Here is a diagram of the seating arrangement of an orchestra. It may vary slightly depending on how many players there are and what instruments are actually needed to play a piece of music.



Sometimes, just the violin family plays a work. The composer didn't write any parts for the woodwind or the brass players. When this happens, the ensemble is called a "String Orchestra," rather than a "Full Orchestra." One of the pieces you will hear at this concert: Leroy Anderson's "Plink, Plank, Plunk!" is written for string orchestra. You will hear wind instruments in the other works in the concert.

TEKS 117.15 (4.1/A)

TEKS 117.18 (5.1/A)

About the BVSO

Most symphony orchestras are located in large cities like Dallas and Houston. We are very lucky to have a fine symphony orchestra right here in Bryan/College Station.



The Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra (BVSO), currently celebrating its thirtieth consecutive season, was formed in 1981 by the merger of the College Station Chamber Orchestra and the Brazos Symphony. There have been some special events to mark this milestone. There was even a birthday cake at the first concert of this season.

The BVSO is a community orchestra comprised of dedicated and talented musicians from Bryan-College Station, as well as Texas A&M University students, staff and faculty. Musicians from other cities are hired to complete the instrumentation. The Orchestra presents five to six performances each season, playing the full range of musical periods and styles. Educational activities include annual concerts for 4th and 5th graders and “Symphony Goes to School” visits. The Friends of the Symphony Orchestra organization (FASO) sponsors an annual concerto competition for talented young musicians.

About the Piano

Franco Bettati, the soloist who will be featured in this concert, plays the piano, which is a member of the percussion family. Percussion instruments are played by being struck, shaken, or scraped. In the orchestra, the percussion section provides a variety of rhythms, textures and tone colors.

Before 1700, the standard keyboard instrument was the harpsichord. The player sits in front of the keyboard of a harpsichord and presses keys to make sounds, much like a pianist does. But the sound of a harpsichord is produced when a plectra plucks a string. A harpist plucks the strings of her instrument, and the harpsichord mechanism does the same thing. There is no way for the harpsichordist to play louder or softer.

The piano, first known as the pianoforte evolved from the harpsichord around 1700 to 1720, by Italian inventor Bartolomeo Cristofori. You may know that the musical term for “soft” is *piano*, and the musical term for “loud” is *forte*. This new keyboard instrument could play both soft and loud, so it was called a *pianoforte*. The name has been shortened, so we know the instrument as the *piano* today.

Over the next 100 years, the piano replaced the harpsichord as the standard keyboard instrument. Haydn and Mozart wrote keyboard sonatas in the mid-eighteenth century that could be played on either instrument, but when Beethoven wrote sonatas in the mid-nineteenth century, he wrote them for the piano.



TEKS 117.15 (4.1/A)

TEKS 117.8 (5.1/A)

Important People in the Symphony Orchestra

TEKS 117.18 (5.5/B)

There will be lots of people to look at in the orchestra, but you'll want to pay special attention to three of them.

The Conductor: This is the person who stands in front of the orchestra. He leads them so they know when and how to play, he may make some announcements to the audience about the music and he thanks the audience for their applause. He or she is often addressed as “Maestro” or “Maestra.” The BVSO has had three conductors in its 30 year history: Harold Turbyfill, Franz Krager, and its current Music Director/Conductor, Dr. Marcelo Bussiki.



The Concertmaster: Another important person is the Concertmaster. This person sits in the very first chair of the first violin section, just to the conductor's left. He tunes the orchestra and acts as a liaison between the conductor and the orchestra. The concertmaster of the BVSO is Javier Chaparro.

The Soloist: Often, the orchestra hosts a soloist for one of the works on the program. This is a person who is a very accomplished player on his or her instrument. The soloist plays a piece that is accompanied by the orchestra, but features the solo instrument. The soloist you will hear at this concert is Franco Bettati and he plays the piano.

The son of Ricardo and Andrea Bettati, Franco is a Senior at A&M Consolidated High School. He started his music lessons at age 11 and studies piano with Elena Reece and organ with Alan Strong.



He describes himself as an avid participant in French Symposium, the Junior Chemical League, Science Bowl and the Debate Team. He has won second place in the National Piano Institute Young Artist Competition, first place in the Beryl Baty Scholarship Auditions and has participated in the prestigious Juanita Miller Concerto Competition sponsored by the Texas Association of Symphony Orchestras.

Every year, the BVSO holds a competition for young people who are proficient on their instruments. Franco is the 2011 Youth Concerto Competition winner.

Meet the Maestro



Maestro Marcelo Bussiki comes to the Brazos Valley Symphony with an impressive musical background, having served as the Music Director and Conductor of Symphony North of Houston, 1995-96 Season Conductor for the Houston Civic Symphony, and Conductor of Santa Ursula University Chamber and Symphonic Choirs in Rio de Janeiro. Dr. Bussiki's passion for music began at an early age. At 14, he moved from his home in Cuiaba, Brazil to study at the Brazilian Conservatory of Music in Rio de Janeiro. He continued his conducting studies under Maestro Roberto Duarte at the Rio de Janeiro Federal University and upon graduation was named Music Director of the orchestra of the Mato Grosso Federal University. For his pioneer work in music cultural expansion, Bussiki was awarded the knighthood of the "Ordem do Merito de Mato Grosso." He received the title of Oficial, the highest honor that the executive power can bestow upon an artist in Brazil. Upon his arrival in Houston, he was awarded the Schlisser Conducting Fellowship. Bussiki is Chairman of the Fine Arts Department at Blinn College in Bryan.

Try Conducting the Orchestra!

Maestro Bussiki will draw the name of one student and ask him/her to conduct Plink, Plank, Plunk! by Leroy Anderson. Each teacher is invited to coach his or her students in how to beat in strict 2/4 time, how to begin the piece, how to end, etc; then may choose two names to place in the drawing box at the entrance to the auditorium. Please enter only the names of students who have shown an ability to do this. At the beginning of the performance, a name will be drawn and that student



will come backstage, ready to take the baton and lead the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra. Students may practice by conducting a recording of this piece, found at: <http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank>



Maestro Bussiki will conduct the opening chords of the piece, then the student conductor will take over as the first theme begins.

A tip from the maestro: *Think about the music before you begin.*

TEKS 117.15 (4.5/B)

TEKS 117.18 (5.2/C)

What to Expect at a Concert

TEKS 117.15 (4.6/C) TEKS 117.18 (5.6/C)

Before the Concert

Going to a concert is not like going to a movie. There are real people on the stage, and just as you can see and hear them, they can see and hear you. When you enter the concert hall, there may be some musicians already on stage. They are tuning their instruments and warming up, much as athletes warm up before a big meet. The difference is that the musicians need to be able to hear what they are doing, so it is important for the audience not to get too loud. While you are waiting for the concert to begin, you can read over the program to learn more about what you are about to hear. It is also a good idea to review what you know about the instruments of the orchestra and where they are located on the stage.

You will know that the concert is about to begin when the concertmaster walks out onto the stage. The concertmaster is the last member of the orchestra to arrive on stage. Usually the audience applauds at this time to let the concertmaster, and the entire orchestra, know that they are looking forward to the concert. The concertmaster helps to tune the orchestra by asking the oboe player to play the pitch "A." Usually the brass and woodwinds tune first; they make sure the "A" they play on their instruments matches the oboe's "A." Next, the strings tune. When everyone is ready, they are quiet. Then the conductor will come out on stage, and you may applaud again. Often the concertmaster will stand and signal the entire orchestra to stand. This is a way to honor the conductor, and also to acknowledge the audience's applause.

During the Concert

When you watch a live concert, it is not the same as watching a concert on TV. Remember: the performers can hear you! If you make noise or wiggle a lot or play with an electronic device, it distracts the performers and makes it hard for the musicians to hear each other, and it interferes with the music for the people around you.

Here are some ways that you can be a good listener:

Use your musical memory: Listen for repetition and change. Often you will hear a melody repeated and altered in a composition. Listen to how the composer first presents the tune, and/or rhythm and then later brings it back.

Notice tone color: Instrumental sounds are carefully selected and combined to express various moods and colors. Ask yourself why the composer chooses these particular instruments to express feelings. Notice which instruments are playing a melody. Maybe you will hear the melody again, but played by a different instrument.

Focus on details: Notice rhythmic patterns, tempo, melodies, harmony, dynamics, etc. Observe just one or two elements for awhile. Follow a melody as it moves through the orchestra. Notice when the string players use *pizzicato* or *arco* techniques.

Be aware: How does the music affect you emotionally?

You will know when to clap at the end of a piece because the conductor always lowers her or his arms and turns around. Sometimes the conductor will lower her or his arms, and the music will stop, but the conductor will not turn around. This is not the right time to clap, because it means there are more sections, or movements, of the same piece to be played. When the piece is completely over, the conductor always turns around and bows. When you clap, or "applaud," you are telling the musicians that you are glad they played for you. Even if you didn't like the music that much, it's nice to thank the musicians for playing.

After the Concert

You will have a lot to talk about after the concert. Which pieces did you like best? Were you able to see all the instruments? Was the concert what you expected? Talk about it with your friends and your teacher.

BRAZOS VALLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Concert for Children - January 23, 2012

Performances at 9:30 and 11:00 am

TEKS 117.15 (4.5/A)

TEKS 117.18 (5.5/A)

PROGRAM

Take the Orchestra Out to the Ball Game

World Premiere

*Daniel Dorff
(b. 1956)*

Concerto in F

Mvt. I: Allegro

performed by Franco Bettati, Piano, Winner of the 2011 Youth Concerto Competition

*George Gershwin
(1898 – 1937)*

Plink, Plank Plunk!

Student Conductor

*Leroy Anderson
(1908 – 1975)*

Peter and the Wolf

With dancers from Center Stage Productions

*Sergei Prokofiev
(1891 – 1953)*

About the Music

Three of the works you will hear on this program were written in the twentieth century. Three of them were written by American composers. Three of them were written by classically-trained composers. Two of them were written specifically for children. The composer of one of the pieces is still living, and one of the pieces will feature dancers.

All of works on this program will involve children or youth in this performance: the audience has a part in “Take the Orchestra out to the Ballgame,” High School Senior Franco Bettati is the soloist in “Concerto in F,” “Plink, Plank, Plunk” will be led by a student conductor and local youth will be the featured dancers in “Peter and thw Wolf.” You will be attending a concert that has been designed especially for you!

At this concert, you will experience something that not many people have a chance to experience. You will get to hear a world premiere! That means that you will be hearing the very first performance of a piece of music – a piece that no audience has ever heard before.

It’s interesting to note that all of the composers represented in this concert lived in the 20th century and their lives overlapped each others’. Prokofiev was the oldest and Dorff is the youngest. Three of them lived through World Wars I and II. Sergei Prokofiev and George Gershwin were very close to the same age, but lived vastly different lives. Leroy Anderson’s life overlapped Gershwin’s and Prokofiev’s as well as Mr. Dorff’s. So this concert represents about 100 years of music.

About the Composers

Leroy Anderson was born in 1908 in Cambridge, Massachusetts of Swedish immigrant parents. Much of his life span overlapped with George Gershwin's.



He received most of his musical training in Cambridge at the New England Conservatory of Music and at Harvard University.

Anderson also studied languages at Harvard, and eventually mastered Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, German, French, Italian, and Portuguese in addition to the English and Swedish of his upbringing. Not thinking that a career in music held much promise, Anderson intended to become a language teacher. Luckily, he changed his mind and decided to give music one last try.

Anderson's arrangements for the Harvard Band brought him to the attention of Arthur Fiedler, conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra. A long collaboration began as Anderson wrote *Orchestral Miniatures* for the Boston Pops to premier.

World War II interrupted Anderson's career as he was drafted and sent to Iceland, where he served as an interpreter for the US Army. He resumed his relationship with Maestro Fiedler and the Boston Pops after the War, and many of his *Orchestral Miniatures* made the *Hit Parade* in the 1950s. His music was heard in movies and on the airwaves and his composition "Plink, Plank, Plunk!" served as the theme song for the popular TV game show "I've Got a Secret."

Although he tried his hand at composing for Musical Theatre and for Orchestra, Leroy Anderson's light classical works are his legacy and are still recognized and enjoyed throughout the world. He died in 1975.

Daniel Dorff was born in New Rochelle, NY in 1956; acclaim came early with First Prize in the Aspen Music Festival's annual composers' competition at age 18. He received degrees in composition from Cornell and University of Pennsylvania where he studied saxophone. In 1996, Dorff was named *Composer-In-Residence* for Symphony in C (formerly Haddonfield Symphony), in which he played bass clarinet from 1980 through 2002.



Mr. Dorff serves as Vice President of Publishing for Theodore Presser Company; he is a sought-after expert on music engraving and notation, and has advised the leading music notation software companies.

His music has been performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Baltimore Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Aspen Music Festival, Spoleto Festival, and Eastman Wind Ensemble; chamber concerts of the Chicago Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, and Oregon Symphony; on the Chicago Symphony Radiothon, by clarinetists of the Chicago Symphony and Berlin Philharmonic, and now by the Brazos Valley Symphony!



George Gershwin was born in Brooklyn in 1898, the second of four children from a close-knit immigrant family. He began his musical career as a song-plugger on Tin Pan Alley, but was soon writing his own pieces. Gershwin's first published song, "When You Want 'Em, You Can't Get 'Em," demonstrated innovative new techniques, but only earned him five dollars. Soon after, however, he met a young lyricist named Irving Ceaser. Together they composed a number of songs including "Swanee," which sold more than a million copies.

In the next few years, Gershwin wrote many popular songs, as well as a Broadway musical and a short opera, then in 1924 began his collaboration with his brother, lyricist Ira Gershwin. While continuing to compose popular music for the stage, Gershwin began to lead a double life, trying to make his mark as a serious composer.

When he was 25 years old, his jazz-influenced "Rhapsody in Blue" premiered in New York, and Gershwin followed this success with his orchestral work "Piano Concerto in F, Rhapsody No. 2" and "An American in Paris". Serious music critics were often at a loss as to where to place Gershwin's classical music in the standard repertoire. Some dismissed his work as banal and tiresome, but it always found favor with the general public.

In the early thirties, Gershwin experimented with some new ideas in Broadway musicals that dealt with social issues of the times. "Of Thee I Sing" was a major hit and the first comedy ever to win the Pulitzer Prize. In 1935 he presented a folk opera "Porgy and Bess" in Boston with only moderate success. It is now recognized as one of the most important works of American opera.."

In 1937, after many successes on Broadway, the brothers decided go to Hollywood. After becoming ill while working on a film, George had plans to return to New York to work on writing serious music. He planned a string quartet, a ballet and another opera, but these pieces were never written. At the age of 38, he died of a brain tumor. Today he remains one of America's most beloved popular musicians.

Sergei Prokofiev was born in an isolated rural estate in Ukraine, then part of the Russian Empire in 1891. He displayed unusual musical abilities by the age of five, so his mother arranged for him to study music.

He entered the St. Petersburg Conservatory at the age of 13, where he was younger than most of his classmates, and was viewed as eccentric and arrogant. He graduated in 1914 with the highest marks in his class, a feat which won him a grand piano.



Soon after he graduated, he traveled to London and made contract with an impresario who commissioned Prokofiev's first ballet. That proved to be a productive genre for the composer, who continued writing ballets for the next 35 years.

During World War I, Prokofiev returned to the Conservatory to avoid being drafted. During this time he wrote his first symphony, the *Classical*. This was his own name for it, and he explained that it was written in the style that Joseph Haydn would have used if he had been alive at the time. The form was classical, but the melodies and harmonies were modern. This style became known as *Neoclassicism*.

Prokofiev toured the United States, and spent several years in Paris, but yearned to return to his homeland. He finally did so in 1935, and was subject to the scrutiny of the Soviet Union's "Composers' Union," formed to keep track of the artists and their doings. It was at this time that Prokofiev composed some music for children, including "Peter and the Wolf."

The German invasion of Russia in 1941 and the country's involvement in World War II brought some relaxation of the government's watch over composers that allowed Prokofiev to compose a number of avant-garde works. When the War ended, however, censorship returned and Prokofiev fell into disfavor. Soviet Orchestras were afraid to play his music and concert halls would not program it.

Prokofiev died at the age of 61 on March 5, 1953: the same day as Joseph Stalin. Prokofiev had lived near Red Square, and for three days the throngs gathered to mourn Stalin, making it impossible to carry Prokofiev's body out for the funeral service at the headquarters of the Soviet Composer's Union. Paper flowers and a taped recording of the funeral march from his ballet *Romeo and Juliet* had to be used, as all real flowers and musicians were reserved for Stalin's funeral

Listening to the Music

TEKS 117.15 (4.1/A & B)

TEKS 117.18 (5.1/ A, B, C)

Take the Orchestra Out to the Ball Game - Dorff

<http://tinyurl.com/tothegame>

This YouTube clip is a recording of the original song, written in 1908 by Jack Norwoth. This version is sung by Edward Meeker, a popular singer of the day. His version had two verses, each followed by the famous refrain. Very few people know the verses now, but the refrain is sung by all the fans at every baseball game! Daniel Dorff has used the refrain as the theme for a set of variations for orchestra.

TAKE THE ORCHESTRA OUT TO THE BALLGAME is one of several short pieces that Daniel Dorff wrote for the Philadelphia Orchestra's "Sound All Around" series for young listeners - that commission was for narrator and 5 musicians; the performance you hear on January 23 will be the **premiere** of the new orchestration!

The piece is so new that there is no recording available, But you can learn the song "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," read about the variations, and talk about what you think they'll sound like. The story line leads the audience through the variations on the song:

1. **Theme:** The orchestra's baseball team is about to play the local professional team, and the music describes several scenes and moods along the way. As a result, first we hear the familiar song and it gets in our ears.
2. **Variation 1:** The percussionist is so excited that he dances with joy, and we hear the theme as a xylophone solo, fancied up. The musicians may recognize that it's in the style of "Nola," an old xylophone classic.
3. **Variation 2:** When the orchestra's baseball team gets to the stadium too early (because musicians always get there early to warm up!) they detour to a jazz club, and we hear a cool jazz version of the Ballgame song.
4. **Variation 3:** For a big contrast, the first-chair bassist's family didn't get to the game on time, and he was sad, so we hear a slow, minor bass solo on the Ballgame theme. Musicians will hear that it's inspired by the big bass solo from Lt. Kije.
5. **Variation 4:** Then it's game time and a big happy ending, and a little extra ornamentation from the trumpet like Carnival of Venice.

This allows the familiar song to be heard as recognizable despite various mood changes.

But wait! There's more!

Before the music begins, the narrator will rehearse the audience in holding up 1, 2, and 3 fingers when they hear the part of the song with "1, 2, 3 strikes you're out." You will want to listen carefully so that you'll be ready for your part!

Concerto in F - Gershwin

<http://tinyurl.com/GershPnoCon>

Composed in 1925. Premiered on December 3, 1925 in New York, conducted by Walter Damrosch with the composer as soloist.

Walter Damrosch, conductor of the New York Symphony and one of this country's most prominent musical figures for the half-century before World War II, was in the audience when George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* exploded on the musical world on February 12, 1924. He recognized Gershwin's genius (and, no doubt, the opportunity for wide publicity), and approached him a short time later with a proposal for another large-scale work. A concerto for piano was agreed upon, and Gershwin was awarded a commission from the New York Symphony to compose the piece, and also to be the soloist at its premiere and a half dozen subsequent concerts.

Like most Broadway composers, Gershwin had relied on others to orchestrate his works. An orchestrator decides which instruments will play which parts. But Gershwin wanted this new concerto to be entirely his own work, so he bought a book about orchestration and set about learning the techniques of writing for the symphony orchestra. He originally planned to call it "New York Concerto," but finally settled on Concerto in F.

Gershwin provided a short analysis of the Concerto for the *New York Tribune* of November 29, 1925, just four days before the work's premiere:

"The first movement employs a Charleston rhythm. It is quick and pulsating, representing the young, enthusiastic spirit of American life. It begins with a rhythmic motif given out by the kettledrums, supported by other percussion instruments and with a Charleston motif introduced by bassoon, horns, clarinets and violas. The principal theme is announced by the bassoon. Later, a second theme is introduced by the piano."

Noting the brilliant natural talent displayed in the Concerto, radio announcer Milton Cross wrote, "[The flaws in Gershwin's large works] become insignificant when placed beside the many strong points: the amazing melodic inventiveness; the never-failing freshness of ideas; the basic feeling for rhythm; the extraordinary instincts which dictated the proper effect and the precise means; the unflinching inspiration in getting the idea required by the big moment. His talent, in short, was a conservatory in itself."

Plink, Plank, Plunk - Anderson

<http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank>

"Plink, Plank, Plunk!" is a piece that has lots of popular appeal. Its ABA form begins with a melody in G Major that is repeated, a middle section in the dominant key of D major, then a return of the opening section.

The piece is written for String Orchestra, so no wind instruments play. The violins, violas, cellos and basses do not use their bows, but play the entire piece *pizzicato*, which means the players pluck the strings with their fingers. Sometimes, the players hold their instruments in the usual playing position and sometimes they lay them across their laps like guitars when they play *pizzicato*.



You will also hear some special sound effects in the middle section of the piece. The composer indicated that the players should make a whistling sound here by turning their instruments over and rubbing their fingers very quickly along the back. Sometimes, orchestras add to the fun by adding train whistles, cow bells or other sounds here, and don't be surprised if you see the bass players twirl their instruments around. (Those bass players will do anything for attention!)

This is the piece that one student will have the chance to conduct, so practice beating 2/4 time! Maestro Bussiki will be on hand to help the student conductor get started.

Peter and the Wolf - Prokofiev

Sergei Prokofiev wrote "Peter and the Wolf" as a present for the children of Moscow. It is a story about a young boy who doesn't always do the right thing, but ends up being a hero! An introduction to the piece can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/PeterIntro>

It is an entertaining way to learn how instruments sound, because each character in the story is represented by a different instrument of the orchestra. You can see the instruments playing each character's theme at <http://tinyurl.com/PeterCharacters>

the strings play Peter's theme
the bird's theme is played on the flute
the duck is played on the oboe
a clarinet represents the cat
a bassoon is Peter's grandfather
the blast of the hunters' shotguns is sounded by the kettle drums
french horns portray the wolf

Then the story begins. **Here is the narrator's story as Prokofiev wrote it:**

Early one morning, Peter opened the gate and went out into the big green meadow.

On a branch of a big tree sat a little bird, Peter's friend. "All is quiet, All is quiet" chirped the bird happily. Yes, all is quiet.

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterPt2>

Just then a duck came waddling round. She was glad that Peter hadn't closed the gate and decided to take a nice swim in the deep pond in the meadow.

Seeing the duck, the little bird flew down upon on the grass, settled next to her and shrugged his shoulders. "What kind of bird are you if you can't fly?" said he. To this the duck replied "What kind of bird are you if you can't swim?" and dived into the pond.

They argued and argued, the duck swimming in the pond and the little bird hopping along the shore.

Suddenly, something caught Peter's attention. It was a cat crawling through the grass.

The cat thought; "The bird is busy arguing, I'll just grab him. Stealthily she crept towards him on her velvet paws.

"Look out!" shouted Peter and the bird immediately flew up into the tree, while the duck quacked angrily at the cat, from the middle of the pond. The cat walked around the tree and thought, "Is it worth climbing up so high? By the time I get there the bird will have flown away."

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterPt3>

Just then grandfather came out. He was angry because Peter had gone into the meadow. "It is a dangerous place. If a wolf should come out of the forest, then what would you do?"

But Peter paid no attention to his grandfather's words. Boys like Peter aren't afraid of wolves.

But grandfather took Peter by the hand, locked the gate and led him home.

No sooner had Peter gone, than a big grey wolf came out of the forest.

In a twinkling the cat climbed up into the tree. The duck quacked, and in her excitement jumped out of the pond. But no matter how hard the duck tried to run, she couldn't escape the wolf.

He was getting nearer, nearer, catching up with her.

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterPt4>

Then he got her and with one gulp swallowed her.

And now, this is how things stood: the cat was sitting on one branch, the bird on another, not too close to the cat.

And the wolf walked round and round the tree, looking at them with beady eyes.

In the meantime, Peter, without the slightest fear, stood behind the closed gate watching all that was going on.

He ran home, got a strong rope. and climbed up the high stone wall.

One of the branches of the tree around which the wolf was walking stretched out over the wall.

Grabbing hold of the branch, Peter lightly climbed over on to the tree. Peter said to the bird: "Fly down and circle round the wolf's head. Only take care that he doesn't catch you."

The bird almost touched the wolf's head with his wings while the wolf snapped angrily at him, from this side and that.

How that bird teased the wolf! And how that wolf wanted to catch him! But the bird was clever, and the wolf simply couldn't do anything about it.

Meanwhile, Peter made a lasso and carefully letting it down and down and down, caught the wolf by the tail and pulled with all his might.

Feeling himself caught, the wolf began to jump wildly trying to get loose.

But Peter tied the other end of rope to the tree, and the wolf's jumping only made the rope round his tail tighter.

Just then the hunters came out of the woods, following the wolf's trail and shooting as they went.

But Peter, sitting in the tree, said: "Don't shoot! Birdie and I have already caught the wolf. Now help us take him to the zoo."

Now just imagine, just imagine the triumphant procession. Peter at the head. After him the hunters leading the wolf. And winding up the whole procession grandfather and the cat.

Grandfather shook his head discontentedly. "Well, if Peter hadn't caught the wolf? What then?"

Above them flew Birdie chirping merrily. "My, what brave fellows we are, Peter and I! Look what we have caught!"

And if one would listen very carefully, he would hear the duck quacking inside the wolf, because the wolf, in his hurry, had swallowed her alive.

Lesson Plans

This suggested teaching plan divides the material into four full lessons. Please feel free to adapt for your own particular time frame. Supplemental material for class or individual study is included at the end of this section.

Lesson One

TEKS 117.15 (4.1/A, B) (4.5) (4.6 A)

TEKS 117.18 (5.1/A, B) (5.2/C) (5.5/B)

Listening

Ask the students to listen and figure out how the sounds are being made in this music.

Play Leroy Anderson's Plink, Plank, Plunk!. <http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank>

Discuss what they heard. Did anyone know that the sound was made by string instruments being plucked? Show students the photos of a violinist and 'cellists plucking their instruments. (p. 32 of this guide). This technique is called *pizzicato*. When string players play their instruments with their bows, the technique is called *arco*.

Explain that students will be attending a live concert of the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra on January 23, and that they will enjoy the concert most if they know what to expect, so they will be learning about the orchestra and its music during the next few classes.

What is a Symphony Orchestra?

Project or print, copy and distribute page 3 of this packet. Discuss the instrument families (string, woodwind, brass and percussion) and have students note how they are grouped together in the seating arrangement.

Review what students already know about the instruments. Review how the size of the instrument is related to its pitch.

Ask the students to find (in the diagram) where the conductor stands. Remember that term – we'll be talking more about the conductor later!

Listen again to Anderson's Plink, Plank, Plunk!. <http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank>

Make sure the photos of *pizzicato* playing are visible while the music is being played.

Note that the composer of Plink, Plank, Plunk!, Leroy Anderson, was an American composer, born in Cambridge, MA. Find Cambridge on a map. Distribute or project Anderson's biography on page 12 of this guide. Read it together as a class.

Movement

The composer of another work that you will hear on January 23 - the “Concerto in F” for Piano - is George Gershwin, who is better known for his popular music than for his serious music. The Charleston was one dance that was popular when Gershwin was writing songs.

Learn to dance the Charleston

Start with feet together.

Step back with your right foot.

Kick back with your left foot.

Step forward with your left foot. You should be back where you started.

Kick forward with your right foot.

Repeat.

Add Arms

As you kick back with your left foot, swing the opposite arm (your right arm) back. Swing your left arm forward when you kick forward with your right foot. You are swinging your arms opposite of your feet-just like you would naturally if you were walking, but exaggerate the motion, and swing them high.

Switch it up with alternative arm movements. Holding your arms straight out in front of you, bend your elbows so that your arms are at a 90-degree angle.

Swing your forearms in a circle, towards the right, then towards the left.

Partner the arm moves with the kick step, and you are dancing the Charleston.

Put it to music:

This is “Carolina Stomp,” a fine Charleston dance tune, played on a mechanical piano called a pianola.

<http://tinyurl.com/CaroStomp>

Listening

Introduce **Peter and the Wolf**

Explain that Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev wrote this story about a young Russian boy by using both words and music. Ask a student to find Russia on a map, and note where it is in relation to the USA.

Each of the characters in the story is represented by a different sound. Introduce the characters by showing a picture of the character and a picture of the instrument that portrays the character. (p. 33 of this guide).

Read the story of Peter and the Wolf (found on p. 17 of this packet) as a class. Distribute pictures of characters/instruments to students, asking them to hold up the appropriate pictures as characters are mentioned.

Listen to the sounds the instruments make and the themes they play.

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterCharacters>

- the strings play Peter's theme
- the bird's theme is played on the flute
- the duck is played on the oboe
- a clarinet represents the cat
- a bassoon is Peter's grandfather
- the blast of the hunters' shotguns is sounded by the kettle drums
- french horns portray the wolf

Lesson Two

TEKS 117.15 (4.1/A, B) (4.5/A)

TEKS 117.18 (5.1/ A, B) (5.2/C) (5.5/A)

Listening

The composer of Peter and the Wolf was Sergei Prokofiev. He was born in Russia, and part of his life overlapped both George Gershwin's and Leroy Anderson's lives.

Distribute or project Prokofiev's biography found on p. 13 of this guide, and read as a class. Note that Prokofiev wanted to provide a way for children to understand music.

Print and cut apart the pictures of Peter and the Wolf characters and instruments, and display them in a mixed arrangement.

Ask students if they remember which instrument went with which character. Have students take turns matching one character with its instrument.

When all pictures have been matched, leave them on display and ask students to listen carefully to Peter and the Wolf.

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterCharacters>

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterPt2>

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterPt3>

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterPt4>

Discussion

Distribute or project page 8 of this packet to the students. Ask a student to read aloud the first sentence about special people. Invite the students' questions or comments.

Read the next paragraph, about Maestro Bussiki to the students while they follow along on their papers. Again, ask for questions or comments when you are finished.

Continue to read the next section about the BVSO's Concertmaster Javier Chaparro.

Listening

Ask the students to listen to a piece they've heard before. Play Anderson's Plink, Plank Plunk!

<http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank>

As everyone listens, begin conducting in 2/4. Silently encourage the students to imitate what you are doing.

Conducting

When the music has finished, explain that you are conducting, as if you were standing in front of the orchestra. Explain that a student will be able to conduct the Brazos Valley Symphony in this piece when the class goes to hear the orchestra on January 23. (Refer to the last section of page 9.)

Maestro Bussiki, who normally conducts the orchestra, will draw the name of a student at the concert, and that student will be able to conduct the orchestra in this piece at that concert. It's important to practice so if your name is picked, you'll know what to do.

Break down the parts of the conducting pattern, noting that:

The right hand keeps the beat.

Beat one is always down and out to the right.

Beat two is always back up to where the pattern started.

The tempo doesn't get faster or slower, but stays steady.

Play Anderson's Plink, Plank, Plunk! once again, asking students to conduct the entire piece.

<http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank>

Lesson Three

TEKS 117.15 (4.1/A, B) (4.3) (4.4/A) (4.6/C)

TEKS 117.18 (5.1/A, B) (5.2/C) (5.3/A, B) (5.6)

Conducting

Play Anderson's Plink, Plank, Plunk! (<http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank>) once again, asking students to conduct the entire piece.

Watch and correct any students who need help, then compliment them.

Explain that besides keeping the orchestra going throughout the piece, the conductor needs to show the orchestra when to start playing and when to stop together, so you are going to practice that.

To start: The entire orchestra plays the opening chords of this piece, so before you begin, make sure all the players are looking at you, and have their instruments in playing position.. Put your right hand in the air where it would be when you end beat one. Think the tempo of the piece without moving.

Count “one, two, one, two” to yourself, then as you are counting, move your right hand up on beat TWO. When you bring your hand back down on beat ONE, the orchestra will play.

Your hand will come back up on beat TWO, which is a rest, so don't be surprised that nobody plays on that beat. Keep beating a steady tempo. You and the orchestra will be off to a fine start.

Take turns starting the other students in your class. They can say or sing, “Plink!....Plank!....Plink, plank, plunk!” as you conduct them.

To stop: On the last beat (beat ONE of the last measure) simply stop your hand as the orchestra plays the last note. Don't move! Count to three slowly, then put your arms down and turn around to acknowledge the applause!

Play Anderson's Plink, Plank, Plunk! (<http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank>) once again, asking students to conduct the entire piece, and adding the starting and stopping.

Discussion

Distribute or project page 10 of this guide. Ask the students to read it silently, or take turns reading it, or follow along as you read it. Pause at the end of each section – “Before the Concert,” “During the Concert” and “After the Concert,” and ask if the students can picture what will happen and if they have questions or comments.

Listening

At the concert on Jan. 23, you will hear pianist Franco Bettati play George Gershwin's Concerto in F. Project or distribute p. 5 of this guide and read about Frankie together.

A Concerto is a piece that is written for a solo instrument with orchestral accompaniment. The orchestra plays the beginning of the piece, or the introduction, then the solo instrument begins with the first main musical theme. The musical material is developed, often the orchestra imitates what the solo instrument does, and the solo instrument shows off what it can do.

Because George Gershwin was so familiar with American popular music, he brought some jazzy ideas to this work. Remember learning the Charleston? You'll probably feel like you could dance the Charleston to parts of this concerto.

This video gives you a great view of the conductor, the soloist and even some of the orchestral musicians.

Listen and watch.

<http://tinyurl.com/GershPnoCon>

Movement

Review the Charleston: <http://tinyurl.com/CaroStomp>

When you are confident with the basics, watch this video for some new ideas to add variety.

<http://tinyurl.com/CharVari>

Lesson Four

TEKS 117.15 (4.1/A, B) (4.5/A)

TEKS 117.18 (5.1/A, B) (5.2/C) (5.3/A, B)

Discussion

Distribute or project the biography of Daniel Dorff from page 12 of this guide. Read it together as a class. Note that this composer is the one living composer who is represented in this concert. He lives in Philadelphia, PA. Ask a student to find Philadelphia on a map and note its relationship to Texas. Which baseball team do you suppose he roots for?

Do you remember watching the video that showed all the variations on the Charleston? Just like the dance can be changed up, musical themes can be changed up. That's the technique Mr. Dorff used to write "Take the Orchestra Out to the Ball Game."

Sing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." <http://tinyurl.com/tothegame>

Distribute or project Mr. Dorff's description of "Take the Orchestra Out to the Ballgame" on p. 15.

Listening

Watch and listen to Gershwin's Concerto in F. Ask students to notice that the piano soloist has his part memorized. Watch for the cadenza. This is a part that is included in nearly every concerto where the soloist really gets to show off. Sometimes the composer writes out the notes for a cadenza, and sometimes the soloist makes up, or improvises, what he or she will play for the cadenza. The soloist that you see in this video made up his own cadenza. <http://tinyurl.com/GershPnoCon>

Conducting

Have the class sing the opening theme on "Plink!....Plank!....Plink, Plank, Plunk!" Ask a promising student to practice showing the class when to sing by conducting them. You might need to review how to do this from Lesson Two. Ask other promising students to try, explaining that this is like starting the orchestra.

Play Anderson's "Plink, Plank, Plunk." (<http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank>). The class should conduct the entire piece.

Discussion

Distribute page 11 of this guide. Note how the pieces and the composers are listed at the top of the page. It is typical to receive a list like this when one attends an orchestra concert. This list is called a "Program," and it lets the audience know what pieces will be played and in what order they'll be played.

Read "About the Music" as a class. Invite questions or comments.

Listening

Review the characters of “Peter and the Wolf” and the instruments that represent them.

Have the class count off by sevens, then ask the students to rearrange themselves so that those who share a number are seated together.

Assign each number a character, not necessarily in order, e.g.

1. Cat
2. Peter
3. Bird
4. Wolf
5. Grandfather
6. Duck
7. Hunters

As the recording of “Peter and the Wolf” is played, ask each group to stand when the theme of their character is played.

Additional Activities

Feel free to share these links to the music with the students' classroom teachers to play as background music during study times. The more familiar the students are with the music, the greater their appreciation and enjoyment of the concert.

Take Me Out to the Ballgame - <http://tinyurl.com/tothegame>

Concerto in F – <http://tinyurl.com/GershPnoCon>

Plink, Plank, Plunk! – <http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank>

Peter and the Wolf - <http://tinyurl.com/PeterCharacters>

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterPt2>

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterPt3>

<http://tinyurl.com/PeterPt4>

Students might wish to learn more about the four composers whose works will be played on this concert. Some web sites to start with:

Leroy Anderson – <http://leroyanderson.com/>

Daniel Dorff – www.danieldorff.com

George Gershwin - www.gershwin.com

Sergei Prokofiev – <http://www.prokofiev.org/>

The works that you will hear on the concert on January 23 were written over a 77 year period.

Concerto in F – 1925

Peter and the Wolf – 1936

Plink, Plank, Plunk! – 1951

Take the Orchestra out to the Ballgame - 2002

Find out what else happened in those years. You could check a timeline, such as

<http://www.timelineindex.com/content/home/forced> or find out what happened in Texas in each of those years, or what important sports stories occurred at those times.

TEKS 117.15 (4.5) TEKS 117.18 (5.5)

Make your own Set of Variations! TEKS 117.15 (4.4) TEKS 117.18 (5.3)

Start with a theme. You could use “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” or any other song you like to sing.

Decide how you can add variety to it. You might sing it as a solo, or have a group sing it. How could you change the dynamics? Change the tempo, or even the meter. You could add some accompaniment, either with your body or with instruments. Try a variety of different accompaniments.

Try each of your variations out, pick the best four, then decide in what order they should be performed. Like Mr. Dorff, you might want to write a story to explain the variations.

Related material:

Plink, Plank, Plunk! was the theme song for the TV show “I’ve Got a Secret,” which was popular during most of the 1950s and 1960s. You can watch part of an episode from this show at <http://tinyurl.com/PianoSecret>

Play a virtual Piano - <http://tinyurl.com/playthispiano>

Disney produced an animated version of “Peter and the Wolf.” It takes some liberties with Prokofiev’s original, but is fun to watch. It’s in two parts on YouTube:

<http://tinyurl.com/DisneyPeter1>

<http://tinyurl.com/DisneyPeter2>

Three of the composers represented in this concert lived during both World War I and World War II. Mr. Dorff lived during the Vietnam War. Google searches for those events will lead you to lots of material on the wars and life in the countries that were involved in them. You might even search to find what music was popular during each of those eras. Compare it with popular music of today.

You can find more resources about concert etiquette here:

<http://tinyurl.com/conEtt3>

TEKS 117.15 (4.6/C)

TEKS 117.18 (5.6/C)

How to contact the BVSO

(for questions about this concert or to arrange for BVSO musicians to visit your school)

BVSO OFFICE
909 Southwest Pkwy E.
College Station, TX 77840

Phone: 979.696.6100
Fax: 979.696.6684
Email: office@bvso.org

Web Site: www.bvso.org

Office hours:
M-F: 9:00am - 4:00pm

BVSO Concert Schedule

Call the BVSO office at 979-696-6100 for tickets

Nov 6, 2011 | 5:00pm | Rudder Auditorium: Mendelssohn: *Elijah, Op. 70*

Considered by many to be Mendelssohn's masterpiece, *Elijah's* dramatic and moving music and words are brought to life on the stage by the joint forces of the Brazos Valley Symphony, the Brazos Valley Chorale, the Texas A&M Century Singers, and four exciting vocal soloists. Our collaborative concerts are always a wonderful experience, don't miss this one! JESS WADE, conductor.

Dec 11, 2011 | 5pm | Christ United Methodist Church: Brass and Organ Spectacular

"Holiday Brass & Organ Spectacular," featuring BVSO Brass musicians, James Faith on organ, and the Sanctuary Choir of Christ United Methodist Church at 5 p.m. on Sunday, December 11 at Christ United Methodist Church, College Station. Come celebrate the joyous sounds of the season with this holiday musical treat. Perfect for family and friends spending the holidays together!

Feb 19, 2012 | 5:00pm | Rudder Theatre: From Waltz to Tango

Get ready for an exciting evening with internationally acclaimed Italian saxophonist, Federico Mondelci. The Brazos Valley Symphony hosts this musical master as he performs works from the movie score of "Four Pictures from New York". You will not want to miss this opportunity to hear music that ranges from one of the definitive works for strings by Tchaikovsky to an arrangement of Argentine composer Piazzolla's hauntingly beautiful Tango Suite.

With International Guest Artist *Federico Mondelci, saxophone*

Mar 25, 2012 | 5:00pm | Rudder Theatre: The Americas and Beyond

Come on a journey of that will take us into the realm of Spanish, Cuban, Brazilian, and American music. Works by composers from each of these countries will be featured in this musically demanding concert. Guest artist, Guitarist Chad Ibison, the winner of the 2011 Texas A&M International Guitar Symposium and Competition, will perform what many consider to be the most beautiful and stirring guitar concerto in his debut performance with the Brazos Valley Symphony.

With *Chad Ibison, guitar* and winner of the TAMU International Guitar Symposium & Competition

Apr 22, 2012 | 5:00pm | Rudder Theatre: The Grand Finale

Our 30th season ends in a dramatic finale with works ranging from contemporary composer, Craig Biondi, to romantic era composer Tchaikovsky. Lulu Chang, Grand Prize Winner of the 2010 Juanita Miller Concerto Competition, will perform Prokofiev's technically demanding Piano Concerto No. 1. Then, Maestro Bussiki brings the season to a close with one of Tchaikovsky's most beloved works, Symphony No. 6.

Supplemental Material

Playing *Pizzicato*



Peter and the Wolf

Characters and Instruments

