BVSO Children’s Concert 2020

Preparation Packet for Teachers

Monday, January 27, 2020
9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Rudder Auditorium
Texas A&M University
Overview
Everyone who is a part of the Brazos Valley Symphony is delighted that you and your students will be attending the 2020 Children’s Concert. 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 or to project.

Here is what you’ll find:                           Page Number

   TEKS Information ................................................................. 3-8
   What is a Symphony Orchestra?.......................................... 9
   History of the Brazos Valley Symphony............................. 10
   About the Violin .................................................................. 10-11
   Some Important People in the Orchestra............................. 12
   Meet the Maestro ................................................................. 13
   Try Conducting the Orchestra ............................................. 13
   What to Expect at a Concert ............................................... 14
   January 27th Concert Program ........................................... 15
   Notes about the Composers ............................................... 16-17
   Description of Musical Pieces .......................................... 18-20
   Lesson Plans ........................................................................ 21-28
   Additional Activities ........................................................... 29
   Student Conductor Entry Form ........................................... 30
   How to Contact the BVSO .................................................... 31
   Supplemental Materials ....................................................... 32
This packet of instructions is for teachers about the BVSO
Children’s Concert on January 27, 2020
These and subsequent Art & Essay Contest guidelines can be downloaded from the Symphony’s website. 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: musical literacy; creative expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and response. You will find references in green to the TEKS criteria throughout this packet.


(a) Introduction.

(1) The fine arts incorporate the study of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts to offer unique experiences and empower students to explore realities, relationships, and ideas. These disciplines engage and motivate all students through active learning, critical thinking, and innovative problem solving. The fine arts develop cognitive functioning and increase student academic achievement, higher-order thinking, communication, and collaboration skills, making the fine arts applicable to college readiness, career opportunities, workplace environments, social skills, and everyday life. Students develop aesthetic and cultural awareness through exploration, leading to creative expression. Creativity, encouraged through the study of the fine arts, is essential to nurture and develop the whole child.

(2) Four basic strands--foundations: music literacy; creative expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and response--provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire. The foundation of music literacy is fostered through reading, writing, reproducing, and creating music, thus developing a student's intellect. Through creative expression, students apply their music literacy and the critical-thinking skills of music to sing, play, read, write, and/or move. By experiencing musical periods and styles, students will understand the relevance of music to history, culture, and the world, including the relationship of music to other academic disciplines and the vocational possibilities offered. Through critical listening, students analyze, evaluate, and respond to music, developing criteria for making critical judgments and informed choices.

(3) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.

(b) Knowledge and skills.

(1) Foundations: music literacy. The student describes and analyzes musical sound. The student is expected to:

(A) categorize and explain a variety of musical sounds, including those of children's voices and soprano and alto adult voices;
(B) categorize and explain a variety of musical sounds, including those of woodwind, brass, string, percussion, keyboard, electronic instruments, and instruments of various cultures;

(C) use known music symbols and terminology referring to rhythm; melody; timbre; form; tempo; dynamics, including crescendo and decrescendo; and articulation, including staccato and legato, to explain musical sounds presented aurally; and

(D) identify and label small and large musical forms such as, abac, AB, ABA, and rondo presented aurally in simple songs and larger works.

(2) Foundations: music literacy. The student reads, writes, and reproduces music notation using a system. Technology and other tools may be used to read, write, and reproduce musical examples. The student is expected to:

(A) read, write, and reproduce rhythmic patterns using standard notation, including separated eighth notes, eighth- and sixteenth-note combinations, dotted half note, and previously learned note values in 2/4, 4/4, and 3/4 meters as appropriate;

(B) read, write, and reproduce extended pentatonic melodic patterns using standard staff notation; and

(C) identify new and previously learned music symbols and terms referring to tempo; dynamics, including crescendo and decrescendo; and articulation, including staccato and legato.

(3) Creative expression. The student performs a varied repertoire of developmentally appropriate music in informal or formal settings. The student is expected to:

(A) sing and play classroom instruments with accurate intonation and rhythm, independently or in groups;

(B) sing or play a varied repertoire of music such as American and Texan folk songs and folk songs representative of local cultures, independently or in groups;

(C) move alone and with others to a varied repertoire of music using gross motor, fine motor, locomotor, and non-locomotor skills and integrated movement such as hands and feet moving together;

(D) perform various folk dances and play parties;

(E) perform simple part work, including rhythmic and melodic ostinati, derived from known repertoire; and

(F) interpret through performance new and previously learned music symbols and terms referring to tempo; dynamics, including crescendo and decrescendo; and articulation, including staccato and legato.

(4) Creative expression. The student creates and explores new musical ideas within specified guidelines. The student is expected to:
(A) create rhythmic phrases through improvisation or composition;  
(B) create melodic phrases through improvisation or composition; and  
(C) create simple accompaniments through improvisation or composition.

(5) Historical and cultural relevance. The student examines music in relation to history and cultures. The student is expected to:

(A) perform a varied repertoire of songs, movement, and musical games representative of diverse cultures such as historical folk songs of Texas and Hispanic and American Indian cultures in Texas;  
(B) perform music representative of America and Texas, including "Texas, Our Texas";  
(C) identify and describe music from diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures; and  
(D) examine the relationships between music and interdisciplinary concepts.

(6) Critical evaluation and response. The student listens to, responds to, and evaluates music and musical performances. The student is expected to:

(A) exhibit audience etiquette during live and recorded performances;  
(B) recognize known rhythmic and melodic elements in aural examples using appropriate vocabulary;  
(C) describe specific musical events in aural examples such as changes in timbre, form, tempo, dynamics, or articulation using appropriate vocabulary;  
(D) respond verbally and through movement to short musical examples;  
(E) describe a variety of compositions and formal or informal musical performances using specific music vocabulary; and  
(F) justify personal preferences for specific music works and styles using music vocabulary.

Source: The provisions of this §117.115 adopted to be effective July 28, 2013, 38 TexReg 4575.

(a) Introduction.

(1) The fine arts incorporate the study of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts to offer unique experiences and empower students to explore realities, relationships, and ideas. These disciplines engage and motivate all students through active learning, critical thinking, and innovative problem solving. The fine arts develop cognitive functioning and increase student academic achievement, higher-order thinking, communication, and collaboration skills, making the fine arts applicable to college readiness, career opportunities, workplace environments, social skills, and everyday life. Students develop aesthetic and cultural awareness through exploration, leading to creative expression. Creativity, encouraged through the study of the fine arts, is essential to nurture and develop the whole child.

(2) Four basic strands--foundations: music literacy; creative expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and response--provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire. The foundation of music literacy is fostered through reading, writing, reproducing, and creating music, thus developing a student’s intellect. Through creative expression, students apply their music literacy and the critical-thinking skills of music to sing, play, read, write, and/or move. By experiencing musical periods and styles, students will understand the relevance of music to history, culture, and the world, including the relationship of music to other academic disciplines and the vocational possibilities offered. Through critical listening, students analyze, evaluate, and respond to music, developing criteria for making critical judgments and informed choices.

(3) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.

(b) Knowledge and skills.

(1) Foundations: music literacy. The student describes and analyzes musical sound. The student is expected to:

(A) distinguish among a variety of musical timbres, including those of children’s voices and soprano, alto, tenor, and bass adult voices;

(B) distinguish among a variety of musical timbres, including those of woodwind, brass, string, percussion, keyboard, electronic instruments, and instruments of various cultures;

(C) use known music symbols and terminology referring to rhythm; melody; timbre; form; tempo, including accelerando and ritardando; dynamics; articulation; and meter, including simple and compound, to explain musical sounds presented aurally; and

(D) identify and label small and large musical forms such as abac, AB, and ABA; rondo; and theme and variations presented aurally in simple songs and larger works.
(2) Foundations: music literacy. The student reads, writes, and reproduces music notation using a system. Technology and other tools may be used to read, write, and reproduce musical examples. The student is expected to:

(A) read, write, and reproduce rhythmic patterns using standard notation, including syncopated patterns, and previously learned note values in 2/4, 3/4, or 4/4 meters as appropriate;

(B) read, write, and reproduce extended pentatonic and diatonic melodic patterns using standard staff notation; and

(C) identify and interpret new and previously learned music symbols and terms referring to tempo, including accelerando and ritardando; dynamics; articulation; and meter, including simple and compound.

(3) Creative expression. The student performs a varied repertoire of developmentally appropriate music in informal or formal settings. The student is expected to:

(A) sing and play classroom instruments independently or in groups with accurate intonation and rhythm;

(B) sing or play a varied repertoire of music such as American folk songs, patriotic music, and folk songs representative of local and world cultures independently or in groups;

(C) move alone and with others to a varied repertoire of music using gross motor, fine motor, locomotor, and non-locomotor skills and integrated movement such as hands and feet moving together;

(D) perform various folk dances and play parties;

(E) perform simple two-part music, including rhythmic and melodic ostinati, rounds, partner songs, and counter melodies; and

(F) interpret through performance new and previously learned music symbols and terms referring to tempo, including accelerando and ritardando; dynamics; articulation; and meter, including simple and compound.

(4) Creative expression. The student creates and explores new musical ideas within specified guidelines. The student is expected to:

(A) create rhythmic phrases through improvisation and composition;

(B) create melodic phrases through improvisation and composition; and

(C) create simple accompaniments through improvisation and composition.

(5) Historical and cultural relevance. The student examines music in relation to history and cultures. The student is expected to:
(A) perform a varied repertoire of songs, movement, and musical games representative of diverse cultures such as historical folk songs of Texas and America and European and African cultures in America;

(B) perform music representative of Texas and America, including "The Star Spangled Banner";

(C) identify and describe music from diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures; and

(D) examine the relationships between music and interdisciplinary concepts.

(6) Critical evaluation and response. The student listens to, responds to, and evaluates music and musical performances. The student is expected to:

(A) exhibit audience etiquette during live and recorded performances;

(B) identify known rhythmic and melodic elements in aural examples using appropriate vocabulary;

(C) describe specific musical events such as changes in timbre, form, tempo, dynamics, or articulation in aural examples using appropriate vocabulary;

(D) respond verbally and through movement to short musical examples;

(E) evaluate a variety of compositions and formal or informal musical performances using specific criteria; and

(F) justify personal preferences for specific music works and styles using music vocabulary.

Source: The provisions of this §117.118 adopted to be effective July 28, 2013, 38 TexReg 4575.
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. When this happens, the ensemble is called a “String Orchestra.” When composers include woodwind, brass, and percussion, as well in their work, it is called 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 addition to string instruments in Sergei Prokofiev’s “Peter and the Wolf.”
About the BVSO

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

The Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra (BVSO) was formed in 1981 by the merger of the College Station Chamber Orchestra and the Brazos Symphony.

The BVSO is a professional orchestra comprised of musicians from Bryan/College Station, as well as throughout Texas. Professional musicians come from all over Texas to audition to play with the BVSO. The Orchestra presents seven concerts 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 Association of the Symphony Orchestra organization (FASO) sponsors an annual concerto competition for talented young musicians, as well as the Children’s Concert.

About the Violin

Violins are a mainstay of the orchestra. You may have noticed that there are more violins in an orchestra than any other instrument. The violin is a member of the string family. String instruments are played by plucking or drawing a bow across their tuned strings.

The record of the first bowed string instrument in Europe comes from the 9th century. The violin was developed in Italy in the early 1500s. The kind of wood that is used to make a violin and small differences in how the wood is carved can make a big difference in how the instrument sounds. Violins that are hand-made by master craftsmen are quite prized. Andrea Amati was the first Italian to develop the violin in the mid-1500s, but the most famous maker was Antonio Stradivari (1644–1737). Some of Stradivari’s instruments still exist today. They’ve been played for 300 years and still sound wonderful!

The length of a string determines its pitch. When the violinist draws the bow across an open string, or plucks that string with a finger, the string vibrates and a pitch sounds. If the violinist places a finger firmly on the string, holding it down on the fingerboard, it shortens the length of the string that can vibrate. Now when the violinist draws the bow across the string or plucks it, a different pitch sounds. Because the vibrating string is shorter, this new pitch is higher than the first one.

Check https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNXInTF3ixg&feature=fvsr for a short video that shows a violinist demonstrating tone, scale, and the basic tips for playing the violin.
Important People in the Symphony Orchestra

There will be many people to focus on 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. This is the conductor. He or she is often addressed as “Maestro” or “Maestra.” The BVSO has had three conductors in its 38 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 acts as a liaison between the conductor and the orchestra. The concertmaster is the confident violinist who strides across the stage after everyone else, lifts his bow, waits for an oboe to sound ‘A’ and tunes the orchestra. When the conductor strides out, the concertmaster is the only one who gets to shake his hand. The concertmaster of the BVSO is **Javier Chaparro**. Previously, he was with the Sinfonica Nacional in Lima, Peru, the fine Arts Theatre Orchestra in Mexico City, and the Austin Symphony Orchestra.

**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 has not been announced by the publication of this packet and will be announced at a later date. That is because the Youth Concerto Competition was rescheduled from February to November. The winner of the 2019 competition will be invited to play with the symphony orchestra at the Children’s Concert on January 27th. The winner will also be invited to compete in the Juanita Miller Youth Concerto Competition in Dallas, Texas in January.

Every year, The Friends Association of Symphony Orchestras (FASO) sponsors the **Youth Concerto Competition** for young people in the Brazos Valley who are proficient on their instruments.
Meet the Maestro

Dr. Marcelo Bussiki is the current music director/conductor of the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra and has been in the position since 1996. He is the Dean of Visual and Performing Arts at Blinn College. Born in Cuiaba, capital of MatoGrosso State in Brazil, Bussiki left home at age 14 to study at the Brazilian Conservatory of Music in Rio de Janeiro and continued his conducting studies under Maestro Roberto Duarte at Rio de Janeiro Federal University.

Bussiki was awarded knighthood in the Ordem de Merito de MatoGrosso in recognition of his pioneering work in cultural expansion and musical education. He received the title of ‘Oficial’, the highest honor that the executive power can confer upon an artist in Brazil.

Bussiki came to the United States in 1992 under a scholarship from the Brazilian government and studied at the Moores School of Music at the University of Houston. From 1994-1996, he directed that university’s New Music Ensemble, developing an extensive repertoire of modern and contemporary music. He received a doctorate of musical arts in conducting from the University of Houston in 1998.

During his tenure with the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra, Marcelo Bussiki has been in demand as a guest conductor in Texas and out of state. Bussiki conducts several concerts a year at the International Festival Institute at Round Top, Texas. He was conductor for the first International Guitar Festival in 2005 and again in 2006 and 2007. In 2014, Bussiki was honored as “Artist of the Year” by The Arts Council of Brazos Valley. This year, Dr. Bussiki begins his 23rd season as the artistic leader of the BVSO.

You have a Chance to Try Conducting!

Maestro Bussiki will draw the name of one student and ask him/her to conduct Plink, Plank, Plunk! by Leroy Anderson. Each teacher is encouraged to coach his or her students in how to beat in 2/4 time, how to begin the piece, how to end, etc; then may choose two names to place in the drawing as you enter the auditorium. Please 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 the recording of this piece by listening here: 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.
What to Expect at a Concert

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 to speak in low voices. 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 in the audience:

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. You may 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.

When to clap: 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 don’t like the music that much, it's nice to thank the musicians for playing.

After the Concert
Which pieces did you like best? Were you able to see all the instruments? Was the concert what you expected? Discuss how the music affected you emotionally with your friends and your teacher.
BRAZOS VALLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
The Children’s Concert ~ January 27, 2020
Performances at 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

TEKS 117.115 (5) C
TEKS 117.118 (5) C

PROGRAM

Guest Soloist

*Winner of the 2019 FASO Youth Concerto Competition to be Announced in November*

**Plink, Plank, Plunk!**

*Student Conductor*

**Leroy Anderson**
(1908 – 1975)

**Peter and the Wolf**

*Featuring the dancers of Ballet Brazos*

*A division of Brazos Valley Performing Arts*

**Sergei Prokofiev**
(1891-1953)

About the Music.

**Leroy Anderson** was from the United States of America. He was a composer of short, light concert pieces, many of which were introduced by the Boston Pops Orchestra during the 20th century. He composed “Plink, Plank, Plunk!” in 1951. It was used throughout the 1950s as a theme song for a CBS television panel show named *I’ve Got a Secret.*

**Sergei Prokofiev** was from Russia. He wrote “*Peter and the Wolf*” in 1936 in two weeks. It was written for a children’s theatre in Moscow as an introduction to the orchestra with each character representing an instrument or group of instruments.

These composers were from different continents during the 20th century, but their lives and music crossed borders and have reached people all around the globe. Learning about their music may inspire you to learn more about their countries.
Leroy Anderson, born June 29, 1908, was an American composer of short, light concert pieces, many of which were introduced by the Boston Pops Orchestra. John Williams described him as "one of the great American masters of light orchestral music."

Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts to Swedish parents, Anderson was given his first piano lessons by his mother, who was a church organist. He continued studying piano at the New England Conservatory of Music. In 1925 Anderson entered Harvard University, where he studied musical harmony, counterpoint, canon and fugue, orchestration, composition, and double bass. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, Magna cum laude in 1929 and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. In Harvard University Graduate School, he studied composition with Walter Piston and Georges Enescu and received a Master of Arts in Music in 1930.

Anderson continued studying at Harvard, working towards a PhD in German and Scandinavian languages. Anderson spoke English and Swedish during his youth and eventually became fluent in Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, German, French, Italian, and Portuguese. At the time he was working as organist and choir director at the East Milton Congregational Church, leading the Harvard University Band, and conducting and arranging for dance bands around Boston. In 1936 his arrangements came to the attention of Arthur Fiedler, who asked to see any original compositions. Anderson's first work was the 1938 Jazz Pizzicato, but at just over ninety seconds the piece was too short for a three-minute 78-RPM single of the period. Fiedler suggested writing a companion piece and Anderson wrote Jazz Legato later that same year. The combined recording went on to become one of Anderson's signature compositions.

In 1942 Leroy Anderson joined the U.S. Army, and was assigned in Iceland with the U.S. Counter Intelligence Corps as a translator and interpreter. In 1945 he was reassigned to the Pentagon as Chief of the Scandinavian Desk of Military Intelligence. However his duties did not prevent him from composing, and in 1945 he wrote "The Syncopated Clock"and "Promenade." Anderson became a reserve officer and was recalled to active duty for the Korean War. In 1951 Anderson wrote his first hit, "Blue Tango," earning a Golden Disc and the No. 1 spot on the Billboard charts. His pieces and his recordings during the fifties conducting a studio orchestra were immense commercial successes. "Blue Tango" was the first instrumental recording ever to sell one million copies. His most famous pieces are probably "Sleigh Ride" and "The Syncopated Clock." In 1950, WCBS-TV in New York City selected "Syncopated Clock" as the theme song for The Late Show, the WCBS late-night movie. Mitchell Parish added words to "Syncopated Clock", and later wrote lyrics for other Anderson tunes, including "Sleigh Ride", which was not written as a Christmas piece, but as a work that describes a winter event.

Anderson started the work during a heat wave in August 1946. The Boston Pops' recording of it was the first pure orchestral piece to reach No. 1 on the Billboard Pop Music chart. From 1952 to 1961, Anderson's composition "Plink, Plank, Plunk!" was used as the theme for the CBS panel show I've Got A Secret.

Anderson's musical style employs creative instrumental effects and occasionally makes use of sound-generating items such as typewriters and sandpaper. In 1958, Anderson composed the music for the Broadway show Goldilocks with orchestrations by Philip J. Lang. Even though it earned two Tony
awards, *Goldilocks* did not achieve commercial success. Anderson never wrote another musical, preferring instead to continue writing orchestral miniatures.

In 1975, Anderson died of cancer in Woodbury, Connecticut, and was buried there. For his contribution to the recording industry, Leroy Anderson has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame at 1620 Vine Street. He was posthumously inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1988 and his music continues to be a staple of "pops" orchestra repertoire. In 1995 the new headquarters of the Harvard University Band was named the Anderson Band Center in honor of Leroy Anderson. The Leroy Anderson House in Woodbury, Connecticut has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**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.
Descriptions of the Musical Pieces

TEKS 117.115 (5) C (6) B, D
TEKS 117.118 (5) C (6) B, D

Plink! Plank! Plunk! (1951) by Leroy Anderson
http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank (3:02 minutes)

“Plink, Plank, Plunk!” is a piece with 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 (1936) by Sergei Prokofiev

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ueGfjBKbiE  (27:38 minutes)

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 in ends up being a hero!

It is also an entertaining way to learn how instruments sound, because each character in the story is represented by a different instrument of the orchestra. So, the bird’s theme is played on the flute, and the duck is played on the oboe. A clarinet represents the cat and a bassoon is Peter’s grandfather. French horns portray the wolf and the strings play Peter’s theme. The blast of the hunters’ shotguns is sounded by the kettle drums.

A narrator describes each scene in the story, then the instruments paint the pictures in sound.

Here is the 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.

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 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."

Just then grandfather came out. He was angry because Peter had gone in the meadow. "It is the 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. 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 hungry eyes.

In the meantime, Peter, without the slightest fear, stood behind the 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 over 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, this side and that.

How that bird teased the wolf! And how the 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 were grandfather and the cat.

Grandfather shook his head discontentedly. "Well, if Peter hadn't caught the wolf? What's 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 and add your own lessons to connect to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Supplemental material for class or individual study is included at the end of this section.

Lesson One
TEKS 117.115 (1) B (5) C
TEKS 117.118 (1) B (5) C

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!. [3 minutes]

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 on page 32 of this guide. This technique is called *pizzicato*. When string players play their instruments with their bows, the technique is called *arco*. [5:20 minutes]

Explain that students will be attending a live concert of the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra on [January 27th](https://www.bvsymphony.org) 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 lessons.

The Program

Project or print the copy of the Program. Briefly discuss the order of the concert while guiding your students through the program. A Concert program is a list of the music being performed, the composers of the music, recognition of any solo performers, as well as the order of the performance. Often, there will also be additional information about the performing orchestra, the conductor, notes about the music, as well as the solo performer.

What is a Symphony Orchestra?

Project or print copy and distribute page 9 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! [3:02 minutes]

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 pages 16-17 of this guide. Read it together as a class.
Lesson Two

TEKS 117.115 (1) B (5) C
TEKS 117.118 (1) B (5) C

Discussion

Distribute or project pages 12-13 of this packet to the students. Ask a student to read aloud the section about Maestro Bussiki to the students while the others follow along on their papers. Ask for questions or comments when they are finished.

Have a student read aloud the next section about the BVSO’s Concertmaster Javier Chaparro and discuss the differences and similarities in their respective roles.

Listening

Ask the students to listen to a piece they’ve heard before. Play Anderson’s Plink, Plank Plunk! http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank (3:02 minutes)
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 the Plink, Plank, Plunk! piece when the class goes to hear the orchestra perform on January 27th.

Maestro Bussiki, who normally conducts the orchestra, will draw the name of a student in the audience and that student will be able to conduct the orchestra in Plink, Plank, Plunk! at the concert. It’s important to practice in case your name is picked, so 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 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 (3:02 minutes)
Lesson Three

TEKS 117.115 (1) B (6) A, D
TEKS 117.118 (1) B (6) A, D

Conducting

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

Discussion

Distribute or project page 14 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.
Lesson Four

TEKS 117.115 (1) B (5) C (6) B,C,D,F
TEKS 117.118 (1) B (5) C (6) B,C,D,F

Discussion

Distribute or project the biography of Sergei Prokoviev from page 17 of this guide. Read it together as a class.

Listening

Listen to Prokofiev’s “Peter and the Wolf”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ueGfjBKbiE (27:38 minutes)

Note that this piece was designed to introduce children to the sounds of orchestral instruments.

Explain that Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev wrote this story about a young Russian boy by using both words and music. 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.

Read the story of Peter and the Wolf found on p. 19-20 of this packet as a class. Distribute pictures of characters and instruments to students from pages 26-28 of this packet, asking them to hold up the appropriate pictures as characters are mentioned.

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, 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.
Discussion
Distribute page 15 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 allows the audience to know what pieces will be played and in what order they will be played.
Read “About the Music” as a class. Invite questions or comments. Compare and contrast the time periods when the composers lived, their home countries, their styles of music, and their experiences as young children when they were growing up. Ask students to explain their preferences so far in these musical works and why.
Additional Activities


Feel free to share these links to the music with classroom teachers to play as background music during students’ study times. The more familiar the students are with the music, the greater will be their appreciation and enjoyment of the concert. Also, share with art teachers and counselors as appropriate.

Plink, Plank, Plunk!  http://tinyurl.com/PlinkPlank  (3:02 min.)
“Peter and the Wolf”  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ueGfjBKbiE  (27:38 minutes)

Students might wish to learn more about the composers whose works will be played at this concert.

Some web sites to start with:
Sergei Prokofiev  https://www.classicsforkids.com/composers/composer_profile.php?id=51

The works that you will hear at the concert on January 27th were written closely apart in the same decade, but on different continents.

Peter and the Wolf (1936)
Plink, Plank, Plunk! (1951)

Find out what else happened in those years.
You could refer to the book Timetables of History by Bernard Brun or check an electronic timeline, such as http://www.timelineindex.com/content/home/forced to find out what happened in our state and the world in each of those years.

Make your own Set of Variations!
Start with a theme. You could use “Plink, Plank, Plunk” 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.

Themes of Peter and the Wolf
http://www.philtulga.com/Peter.html

The theme of Peter and the Wolf seems to be “you can’t be a hero if you don’t take a risk,” but why do you think your parents or grandparents warn you about taking risks in your life?

What if Peter hadn’t taken the risk and caught the wolf? How might the story have ended?

If you were to introduce a new character to the story, who would be the character and what instrument would represent the character and why? How would this new character change the end of the story?

What life lessons can be learned from the story of Peter and the Wolf? Encourage the art teacher to have students illustrate their own special favorite themes/lessons learned from this classic.
Be sure to complete a Student Conductor Form for any student who shows an aptitude for conducting.
How to contact the BVSO
(for questions about this concert or to arrange for BVSO musicians to visit your school)

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Resources used in this packet are courtesy of Wikipedia.org, YouTube.com and Google Searches
Supplemental Material

Playing *Pizzicato*