

# CONCERT GUIDE

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERT EXPERIENCE

## MUSICAL MENAGERIE

Available for free on-demand streaming  
at [This Is Minnesota Orchestra](#)

*Designed for students in grades 1-6*





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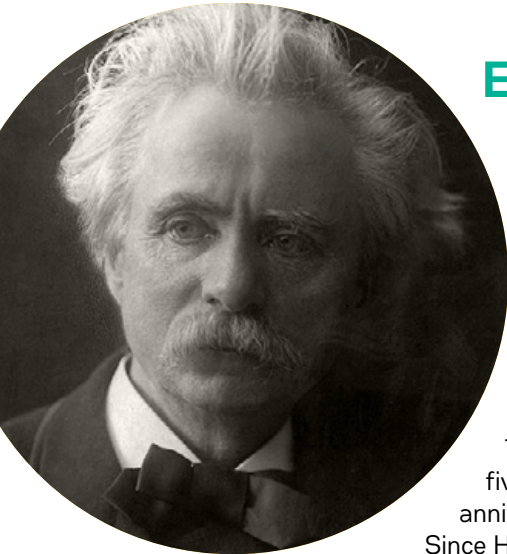
# Guide to the Orchestra



Visit our [Guide to the Orchestra](#) to learn about the instruments of the orchestra. You'll see photos of the instruments, descriptions, and short video demonstrations too!

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## Edvard Grieg

(1843-1907)

Edvard Grieg was not only a famous composer, but also a concert pianist. His first piano teacher was his mother, who taught him to play when he was six. Grieg was a champion of Norwegian culture, using Norwegian folk songs in his music and working with Norwegian writers and poets on plays and songs.

The *Holberg Suite*, written in 1884, is a suite of five movements written to celebrate the 200th anniversary of playwright Ludvig Holberg's birth.

Since Holberg was from the 1700s, Grieg based the piece on dance forms from that era. Grieg originally wrote this piece for piano and later adapted it for string orchestra. The eighth-note, two sixteenth-note "skipping" pattern that runs throughout gives the *Praeludium* a high-energy feel that sets the stage for this concert.

## Key Vocabulary

**Suite:** (pronounced "sweet") a collection of musical pieces that go together, often based on old-fashioned dance styles

**Prelude:** a piece of music that serves as an introduction to a set of pieces

**String orchestra:** an ensemble of musicians consisting of several instruments of the string family. Most commonly includes: violin, viola, cello and double bass

**Tempo marking:** words that a composer marks down on the music to tell performers how fast or slow to play

**Allegro vivace:** a tempo marking that means to play fast and with lively enthusiasm

**Gallop rhythm:** a musical pattern that sounds a little bit like a horse's gallop. In musical notation, it is usually written as a repeating pattern of an eighth note followed by two sixteenth notes

## Just Listen

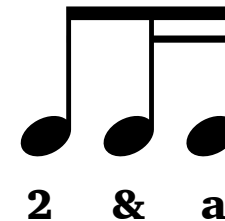
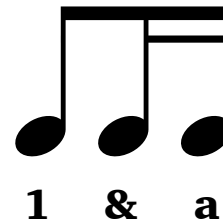
Have you ever felt excited at the beginning of something? Maybe you have felt eager thinking about an upcoming celebration or special event. Edvard Grieg captures the enthusiasm and energy of a new beginning by using the *Allegro vivace* tempo marking and by asking the musicians to play a gallop rhythm.

## Focus on gallop rhythm

- A gallop rhythm creates energy and excitement. Edvard Grieg used this rhythm in the Prelude from the *Holberg Suite*.
- Composers usually create a gallop rhythm by writing an eighth note followed by two sixteenth notes. Look at the circle example below.



- To play any rhythm well, it helps to count it. Look at the rhythm and say "ONE and a, TWO and a."



- Count the gallop rhythm a few times, and then try drumming along on a table, desk or your legs. Make sure you drum one sound for each syllable you say. Repeat over and over.
- Once you feel comfortable drumming along with your counting, gradually increase your tempo and see if you can go faster.
- Instead of counting numbers, you might also substitute words or names that have three syllables. A few that work well:

PINE-apple / STRAW-berry / FLO-rida / BI-cycle

- See if you can come up with some of your own words or names to fit the gallop rhythm.

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### Learning Checklist

- I can count and play gallop rhythms.
- I can increase *tempo* to play faster.







## Antonio Vivaldi

(1678–1741)

Antonio Vivaldi was a composer, violinist and devout Catholic priest. His father, who was a barber before becoming a professional violinist, taught Vivaldi to play the violin and then toured Venice playing the violin with his young son. He was ordained at age 25 and was soon nicknamed *il Prete Rosso*, "The Red Priest," because of his red hair. That same year Vivaldi became *maestro di violino* (master of violin) at an orphanage in Venice. Vivaldi's output was enormous, writing more than 500 concertos, about 46 operas and a large body of sacred choral music, not to mention other works like *sinfonias*, *sonatas* and chamber music.

*The Four Seasons* is Vivaldi's best-known work. This is a set of four concertos, each concerto having three movements. Each movement is associated with a sonnet that describes the musical picture being painted. He was one of the first composers to try and represent specific images with his music; in the first movement of *Spring* there are birds, the murmuring of streams and thunderstorms.

## Key Vocabulary

**Movement:** one section or part of a larger work of music

**Improvisation:** making up musical sounds on the spot

**Melodic contour:** the shape of the melody, or tune, that moves higher or lower

**Harpsichord:** a keyboard instrument popular in Europe during the Baroque era, or between the years 1600–1750

## Just Listen

Notice the different ways the violins imitate bird song in this piece. Pay attention to the *melodic contour*, or the shape, of the violin's melody. You will also see and hear the harpsichord, which is an ancestor to the modern piano.

## Focus on *timbre* and identifying the flute and the oboe

- In "Spring" from Antonio Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, the solo violinists get to imitate bird songs. You can *improvise*, or make up, your own melodies that sound like birds.
- First, think about how a bird's call might sound. If weather and safety allow, go on a nature walk and listen to as many birds as you can.

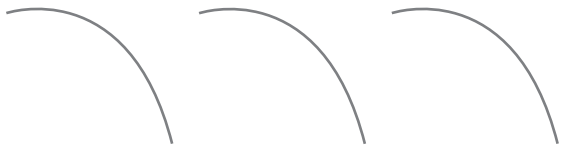



If you can't go outside to listen, there are places you can go online to [hear bird calls](#).

Write down words that describe what you hear. Maybe you notice the shape of a bird's melody. Here are some questions to think about when trying to figure out the shape of a bird's call:

- Does it repeat one note a lot?
- Does it move from a low sound to a high sound, or does it move from a higher sound to a lower one?
- Does the sound leap from low to high, or does it move just a little bit higher, one step at a time?

After you write descriptive words, use [Printable #1](#) to draw the shape, or *contour*, of these melodies. Look at the filled out worksheet on the next page for a sample.

## BIRD SONG LISTENING SHEET

DESCRIPTIVE WORDS	MELODIC CONTOUR/SHAPE
Starts high, holds high note, glides down fast	
Short, high chirp, repeats in patterns of three, with a short rest in between	
Jagged, shrill, alternates between two pitches	
Buzzing, wobbly sound that gradually gets lower	

- Next, use your finger to trace the bird song shapes and see if you can make your voice match the movement and shape.
- If you have an instrument that plays a melody, see if you can recreate this melodic shape on the instrument.
- With your voice or a melodic instrument, try new shapes. Can you imagine what kind of bird might match your new shape? Maybe it will be an imaginary bird with a very unusual bird call.

### Learning Checklist

- I can notice, describe, and imitate a variety of melodic shapes with my voice and on instruments.
- I can improvise my own melodies.





### Grace Williams

(1906–1977)

Grace Williams is generally regarded as Wales' most notable female composer, and the first British woman to score a feature film. As a girl, she learned piano and violin, playing piano trios with her father and her brother, and accompanying her father's choir. In 1926 she began attending the Royal College of Music in London, where she studied with Ralph Vaughan Williams. In 1932 Williams began teaching at Camden Girls' School and the Southlands College of Education. During World War II, the students were evacuated, and Williams began composing. In 1945, she returned to her hometown, remaining there for the rest of her life, dedicating herself full-time to composition.

*Sea Sketches* is a suite of five movements for string orchestra and dedicated to her parents. The last movement, *Calm Sea in the Summer*, evokes strong imagery by using slow, luscious harmonies to create a sense of calmness, swaying step-wise motion to give a sense of the sway of the sea, and the occasional upward leap like a wave coming up to the shore. It is a phenomenal example of musical imagery.

### Key Vocabulary

**Movement:** one section or part of a larger work

**Sketch:** In visual art, a quick drawing meant to capture the spirit or mood of the subject. In music, a short composition meant to capture the spirit or mood of the subject. Sometimes, sketches are turned into longer, more formal works.

### Just Listen

This movement is called "Calm Sea in Summer." As you listen and watch, think about what things in the music make it sound calm.

### Focus on descriptive language

- *Calm Sea in Summer* is a musical sketch that depicts a certain mood of the sea.
- The French painter Gustave Courbet also loved the sea, and painted many seascapes. Look at the five Courbet paintings below.



*The Wave* (1866)



*The Beach at Normandy* (1867)



*The Calm Sea* (1869)



*The Stormy Sea* (1869)



*The Beach at Trouville* (date unknown)

## Williams: *Sea Sketches* for String Orchestra, V. Calm Sea in Summer

Answer the following questions through journaling or discussion:

- Which painting looks most like the "Calm Sea in Summer"? Explain your answer. There is no right or wrong answer—only opinions.
- List some elements that describe each painting.
- Is there more than one that looks calm?
- Compare and contrast the two paintings that look most different.
- Can you imagine a musical sketch for each painting?
- Think of a musical title for each painting. Imagine what that music would sound like. Use musical vocabulary to describe how you think each painting would sound.

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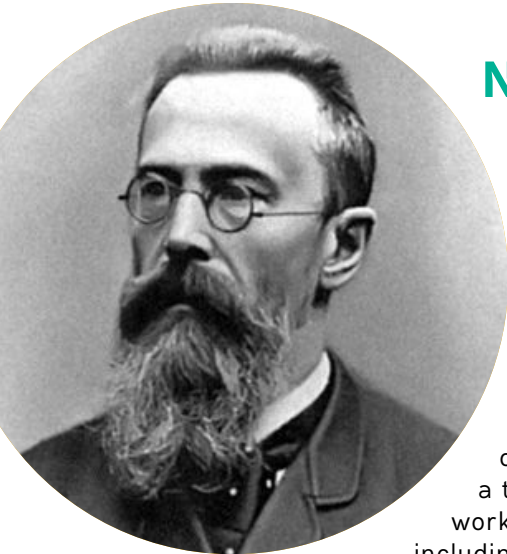
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### Learning Checklist

- I can make connections between visual art and music.
- I can compare and contrast visual images with musical sounds.





## Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

(1844-1908)

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov was a Russian composer famous for his orchestration (arranging music for an ensemble). His textbook on orchestration is still used by many colleges to this day. He was one of the "Mighty Five"—a group of five Russian composers who worked to combine traditional elements of Russian music with Western compositional style, often using Russian folk melodies. As a teacher and mentor, Rimsky-Korsakov worked with many young Russian composers including Igor Stravinsky.

*Flight of the Bumblebee* was composed for the opera *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*, based on a Russian fairy tale. *Flight of the Bumblebee* is part of Act 3 in the opera, when the Prince is turned into a bee so he can fly away to visit his father (the Tsar) without being noticed. Korsakov uses fast, chromatic patterns in the melody to sound like a bee buzzing around in the air.

## Key Vocabulary

**Wind quintet:** an ensemble of five musicians playing the following instruments: flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon and horn

**Tempo marking:** words that a composer marks down on the music to tell performers how fast or slow to play

**Vivace:** a tempo marking that means "fast and lively"

**Moderato:** tempo marking that means a medium speed—not too fast and not too slow

## Just Listen

Imagine a bumblebee flying around. You might imagine the bee flying fast, way up high, then diving low. The bee's buzzing sound might get louder when it flies closer to your ear, then a little quieter when it flies further away. Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov captured all of this in his music.

## Focus on *vivace* tempo

At the beginning of *Flight of the Bumblebee*, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov wrote the tempo marking *Vivace*, which means "fast and lively."

- Think of a list of movement activities. See the example below for ideas. Add your own ideas too!

Shoveling snow	Dancing	_____
Push-ups	Jumping Jacks	_____
Vacuuming	Walking up or down stairs	_____

- Pick an activity and start to do it (or pretend to do it, if you don't have a snow shovel or a vacuum). Begin at *Moderato*, or medium-speed tempo. Ask a friend, classmate, teacher, or someone at home to say "VIVACE!" When you hear vivace, continue the activity at a much faster, more energetic pace.
- Use a piece of music to guide the speed of your movement ([Hungarian Dance No. 5 by Johannes Brahms](#) is short but changes tempo a lot). Pick an activity and see if you can change your movement each time you hear a tempo change.

## Learning Checklist

- I can describe and move to a variety of tempos.
- I can explain the meaning of vivace and other tempos and demonstrate understanding of tempo through physical movement.





## Maurice Ravel

(1875–1937)

In the 1920s and '30s, Ravel was regarded as France's greatest living composer, developing a unique voice and incorporating elements of different genres and styles into his works. During World War I, Ravel tried to join the French Air Force but was rejected because of his age and a minor heart complaint. After several unsuccessful attempts to enlist, Ravel finally joined the Thirteenth Artillery Regiment as a lorry driver in March 1915. The war took a heavy toll on Ravel's physical and emotional health.

*Le Tombeau de Couperin* is a suite, originally written for solo piano, based on traditional Baroque suites. Each movement is dedicated to a friend of Ravel's who died in the war. Rigaudon is in memory of Pierre and Pascal Gaudin—two brothers and childhood friends of Ravel who were killed by the same shell. The movement is in ABA form, with a softer middle section. Instead of being mournful, this movement captures the bright youthful energy of the two brothers.

## Key Vocabulary

**Suite:** (pronounced "sweet") a collection of musical pieces that go together, often based on old-fashioned dance styles

**Movement:** one section or part of a larger work

**Rigaudon:** a lively dance style popular in Europe during the Baroque era (1600–1750)

**ABA form:** a pattern in music where we hear one set of musical ideas, then something different, then a return to the first musical idea

**Wind quintet:** an ensemble of five musicians playing the following instruments: flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon and horn

**Timbre:** (pronounced "tamper") the unique, special sound of any musical instrument

## Just Listen

As you listen to Rigaudon from *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, notice that the music starts fast and lively. In the middle section, the music is slower, quieter, and more calm. Toward the end, the more energetic music returns. In music, this is called an ABA pattern.

## Focus on tempo and character

- Notice that the melody, or tune, is passed around between instruments. Use our [instrument guide](#) to learn about the five instruments in a wind quintet, listed below:

Flute / Clarinet / Oboe / Bassoon / Horn

- Using the wind quintet instrument flashcards ([Printable #2](#)), listen to "Rigaudon" and notice the unique timbre, or special sound, of each instrument. When you see and hear an instrument play the melody, flash that instrument's card. Sometimes it switches fast!
- After listening, use adjectives and descriptive words to put each instrument's unique *timbre*, or sound, into words. Write your adjectives on the back of your flashcard.

## Learning Checklist

- I can identify by sight and sound the instruments in a wind quintet.
- I can identify contrasting sections of a musical selection through active listening.
- I can demonstrate understanding of ABA form.



## Jack Stamp

(b. 1954)

Jack Stamp is currently serving as International Composer in Association to the world-renowned Grimethorpe Colliery Brass Band. He spent the prior three years as adjunct faculty at UW-River Falls. He is active as a guest conductor, clinician, adjudicator, and composer throughout North America and Great Britain. His compositions have been commissioned and performed by leading military and university bands across the United States.

Red Cedar Lake is in Wisconsin, and the piece *Eagles on Red Cedar Lake* was written for the Uptown Brass, whose members are Minnesota Orchestra musicians. Stamp takes advantage of the triumphant sound of the brass quintet to create a majestic soundscape. The opening theme is developed in different ways during this short piece that ends with bold chords and a driving rhythm in the tuba.

## Key Vocabulary

**Brass quintet:** an ensemble of five brass musicians. The instruments in a brass quintet are: two trumpets, horn, trombone and tuba

## Just Listen

Notice the majestic sounds in this piece. As you listen, imagine a beautiful bald eagle soaring over a lake.

## Focus on fast and slow

- Notice that the melody, or tune, is passed around between instruments. Use our [instrument guide](#) to learn about the following instruments:

Trumpet / Horn / Trombone / Tuba

- Using the brass quintet instrument flashcards ([Printable #3](#)), listen to "Eagles on Red Cedar Lake" and notice the unique *timbre*, or special sound, of each instrument. When you see and hear an instrument play the melody, flash that instrument's card.
- After listening, use adjectives and descriptive words to put each instrument's unique *timbre*, or sound, into words. Write your adjectives on the back of your flashcard.

## Learning Checklist

- I can identify by sight and sound the instruments in a brass quintet.
- I can explain how brass players produce a sound and buzz my lips like a brass player.



## Anthony DiLorenzo

(b. 1967)

Anthony DiLorenzo is an Emmy-winning composer, trumpet soloist and Grammy-nominated recording artist. His career began growing in popularity in the 1990s with his original compositions written for brass. In addition to DiLorenzo's original works for the concert stage, his work in film and television spans 30 years, writing music for film trailers and themes for sports shows such as ABC network's college football.

Since its premiere, *Fire Dance* has become part of the standard brass quintet repertoire used in competitions, festivals and brass workshops worldwide. The piece is a showcase of brass musicality and technique. Featuring many key changes and rhythmic variety, this piece is playful, menacing and wild.

## Key Vocabulary

**Technique:** all the physical stuff a musician needs to do with their body to make a great sound come out

**Virtuosity:** the skill of playing a very difficult piece extremely well. A very skilled musician can be called a virtuoso

## Just Listen

This piece is known for its virtuosity, which means the players must have advanced technique to perform it well and with accuracy.

## Focus on sound production on a brass instrument

- To make a sound on their instrument, brass players must buzz their lips into their instrument's mouthpiece. The vibration of the buzzing lips makes the brass instrument vibrate, and a sound is produced.
- Experiment with buzzing your own lips. Press your lips together and blow. Let just enough air escape so you hear a sound and feel a tickle on your lips.
- Once you master buzzing, think about how brass players buzz into a mouthpiece. The mouthpieces of different brass instruments are different sizes. Look at the picture below.



- Curl up your fingers into a fist, and try buzzing your your lips into the space, like you see below.



- As you buzz into your fist, notice the way it sounds. Loosen your fist a bit, like you are expanding the size of your mouthpiece, and buzz again. Does it sound different? Is the sound higher or lower? Continue to experiment by creating different shapes with your hand.

## Learning Checklist:

- I can explain how brass players buzz their lips to produce a sound on their instrument.





## Steve Reich

(b. 1936)

Steve Reich is an American composer and major figure in minimalist music. By using limited musical material—such as repetitive patterns or pulses, steady drones or constant harmony—minimalist music attempts to get the listener to focus on the activity of listening itself and on the internal processes of the music.

*Duet for two violins* features two violins passing short melodic segments back and forth, while a body of strings drones and pulses below; sometimes they finish each other's phrases or sing out in a quick call-and-response, while other times they overlap, complementing each other.

## Key Vocabulary

**Dialogue:** In music, when two musicians trade bits of melody back and forth, like a conversation

**Call and response:** in music, when one musician sings or plays a musical idea, and another musician or group of musicians answers back, either by echoing that same musical idea, or by responding with another musical idea

**Minimalism:** a style of music that includes short musical ideas repeated over and over, sometimes with slight variations

**Phrases:** in music, a musical idea or thought

**Improvisation:** making up musical ideas on the spot

## Just Listen and Watch

This music has a feeling of constant movement. Notice that phrases, or musical ideas, overlap in a way that creates waves of musical motion.

## Focus on improvising Call and Response phrases

- Sing the following phrase, using any pitches or notes you want. No need to make it fancy; you can even just sing the same note over and over. Make sure you use your singing voice.

*What did you eat for breakfast?*

Find a partner to answer back:

*I ate \_\_\_\_\_!*

If you are in a classroom with several students, choose one "caller" to sing the question, and go around the circle, taking turns responding with the answer.

- Get creative and think of new call and response patterns. Look at a few more examples below to get an idea.

### CALL

*What's your favorite color?*

*What time do you go to bed?*

*What do you want for your birthday?*

### RESPONSE

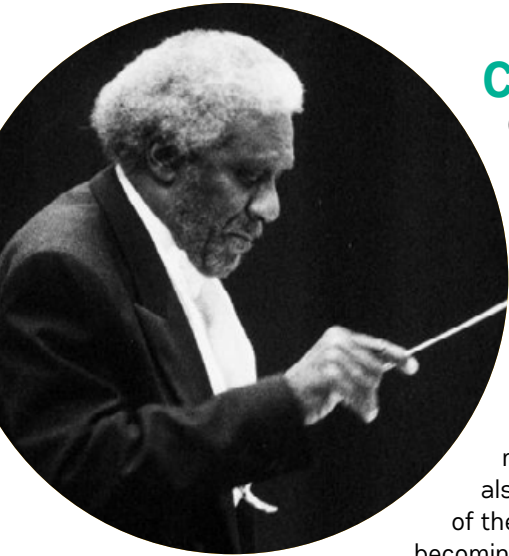
*I like \_\_\_\_\_!*

*I go to bed at \_\_\_\_\_!*

*I want \_\_\_\_\_!*

## Learning Checklist:

- I can improvise call and response patterns together with others.



## Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson

(1932–2004)

Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, named after composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, was born in Manhattan. His mother was a piano teacher, church organist, and director of a theater company. Perkinson attended the Manhattan School of Music and later taught at Brooklyn College. Perkinson wrote a great deal of classical music but was equally well-versed in jazz and popular music. Alongside composing, Perkinson was also a conductor, cofounding the Symphony of the New World in New York in 1965 and later becoming its Music Director. Perkinson's music has a blend of Baroque counterpoint, American Romanticism, and other styles such as the blues and spirituals.

Perkinson wrote his *Sinfonietta No. 1* for Strings in 1954, when he was 22, but it was not performed until 1966. The *Sinfonietta* shows influence from many of the styles mentioned earlier, particularly the counterpoint of J.S. Bach and American Romanticism. It also features many characteristics that Perkinson would develop throughout his career, including dissonance and metrical ambiguity.

## Key Vocabulary

**Allegro furioso:** a tempo marking that tells musicians to play fast and lively, with energy and passion

**Accent:** a note or several notes that have more emphasis than the surrounding notes

## Just Listen

This piece is fast and full of energy. Notice that some notes kind of "pop" out. They are a bit louder than the other notes around them. Composers tell musicians to play a note with more volume or emphasis by adding an accent mark.

## Focus on creating accents

- Remember that an accent is a note with extra volume or "punch." It sticks out from the surrounding notes.
- Composers use the > symbol to indicate that a note should have an accent, or be played with more force.
- Notice the accents above the notes below. Can you imagine how this would sound? Try drumming the pattern on your lap.



Musicians would count this pattern by saying:

**ONE** ee and ah **TWO** ee and ah **THREE** ee and ah **FOUR** ee and ah

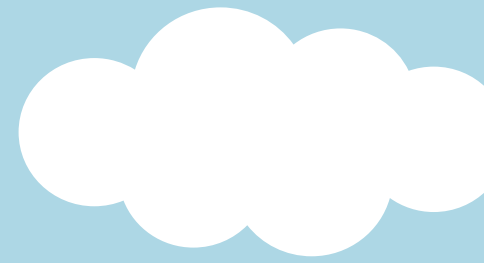
Each of the numbered beats has an accent, so those numbered beats would be louder.

- In the "Rondo" from his *Sinfonietta* for Strings, No. 1, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson sometimes put accents in unexpected places, which helps give the music extra energy.
- Try playing an "accent game" with others. Choose one person to be the "Accent Maker." Everyone else gets to try to find the accents. On a small hand drum, or on their lap, the Accent Maker plays a slow, steady stream of notes. Every once in a while, they should mix in a very loud note—an accent! When that happens, all the listeners get to "poke" the air, showing they heard the accent. With practice, try gradually increasing the tempo.

## Learning Checklist:

- I can listen and respond to accents in music.

# PRINTABLES





# BIRD SONG LISTENING SHEET

DESCRIPTIVE WORDS	MELODIC CONTOUR/SHAPE

# WIND QUINTET FLASHCARDS



FLUTE



CLARINET



OBOE

# WIND QUINTET FLASHCARDS



**BASSOON**



**HORN**



# BRASS INSTRUMENT FLASHCARDS

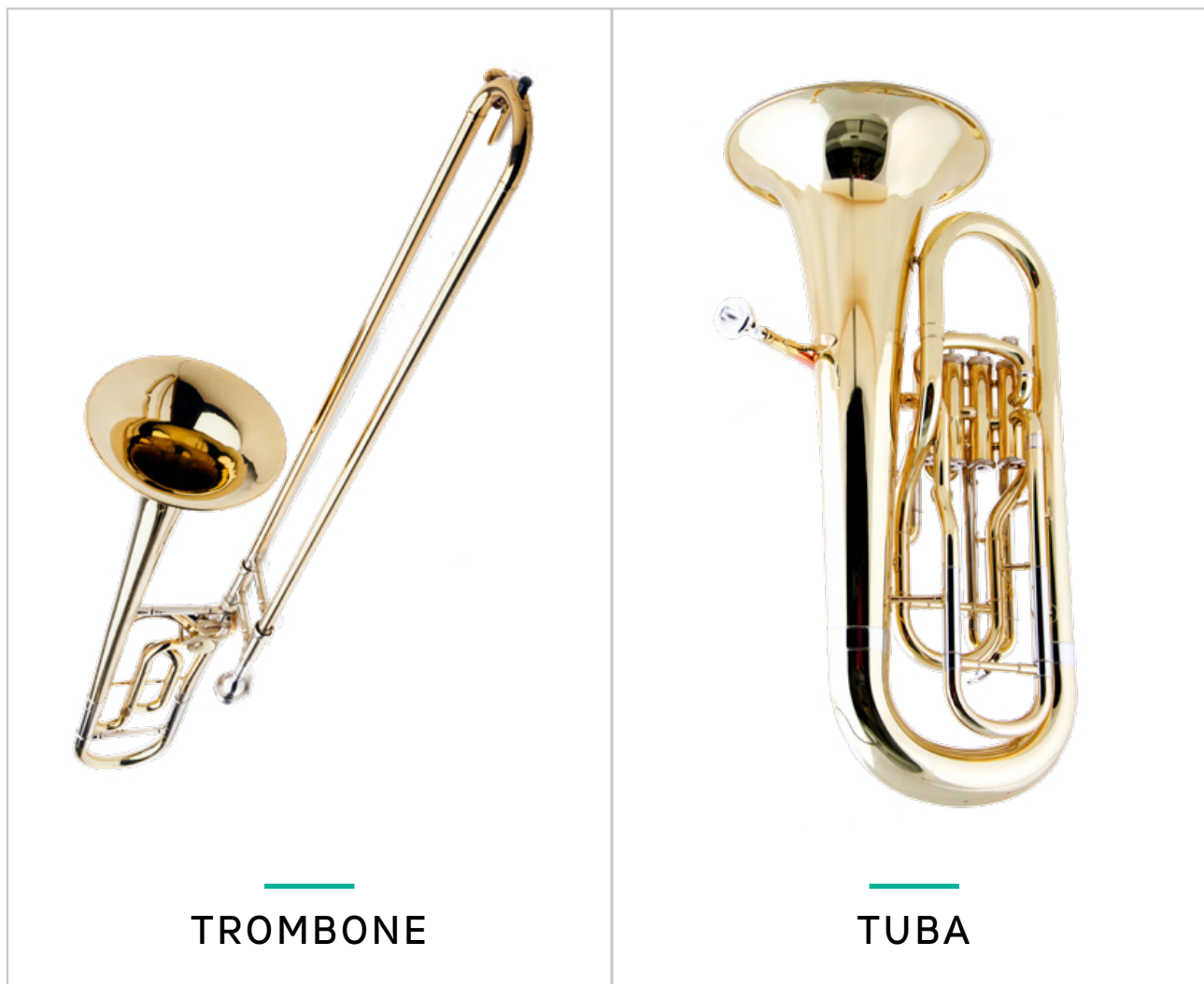


TRUMPET



HORN

# BRASS INSTRUMENT FLASHCARDS



TROMBONE

TUBA

