

a. Teaching artist name (group): MN Sinfonia

b. Title of lesson: Instruments of the Orchestra

Descriptive Overview: Students sort a given set of instruments using a variety of criteria and discuss their solutions to creating subgroups of the larger category. Students name and identify orchestral instruments from visual representations and generate questions they have about orchestral instruments.

c. Description of arts learning community:

Grades K – 6 classroom group (25 – 30 students)

d. Time required for lesson: 45 - 60 min which can be split into two lessons

e. Resources and equipment required:

Sets of cards printed with instruments of the orchestra in color
– 1 set for each pair of students in class (template provided by Sinfonia)

resource: <https://www.thehomeschoolzone.com/Letters/PictureWords/PictureWords-Music.htm>

f. Learning goals for arts learners:

Students will classify instruments of the orchestra by at least two characteristics.

3rd grade students will compare and contrast different classification systems.

Students will be able to name / identify instruments of the orchestra when shown a visual.

g. Lesson tasks and activities toward outcomes:

- Teacher will give an example before students begin to work by showing students a slide with 8 instruments and asking the class to group the instruments by shape: circle, triangle, rectangle/square.
 - After sorting, teacher asks “how else could we sort these instruments into groups?” – generate a list of possibilities on the board (this may not be necessary for 3rd grade students depending on their prior experience with grouping objects into categories)
- Each pair of students will be given a set of cards and asked to sort them into 3 to 6 groups based on a single criteria.
 - K-1 students should sort 10 to 12 instruments that include classroom instruments they are familiar with such as tambourine and triangle;
 - Grades 2-3 can sort the entire orchestra: 20 to 25 – teacher uses judgment how many instruments to include for a 10 minute sorting task.
- Each pair decides what criteria they will use to sort. Allow 10-12 minutes for students to work.
- Give each group a piece of paper to write down their groupings and the instruments included in that group. For K-1 students, they can be given smaller versions of the instrument cards that can be glued onto the page. 3-5 min
- Students share their classifications with the class.
- Discussion: K-2: Teacher leads a discussion about similarities and differences between the classifications (compare/contrast).

Instruments of the Orchestra – MN Sinfonia – Lesson Plan Grades K - 6

- Grade 3-4: Two pairs of students join to make a group of 4 and compare / contrast their 2 classification systems. Teacher ensures groups have used different classifications.
- Grades 5-6: view this [presentation](https://www.slideshare.net/sandramorgan16547/classification-of-instruments-revised-nov2013) on the classification of instruments by the Sachs-Hornbostel system. (<https://www.slideshare.net/sandramorgan16547/classification-of-instruments-revised-nov2013>) Discuss how this system is similar to and different from (compare/contrast) the common classification of orchestral instruments into strings, brass, woodwinds and percussion families. Lesson for grades 5-6 can skip seating chart of orchestra if this is familiar to them.
- Teacher presents / reminds students of traditional families of the orchestra and which instruments these include. (grades K – 4)
 - <https://www.mydso.com/dso-kids/learn-and-listen/instruments>
- Teacher shows visual of typical orchestra seating chart. Students identify the orchestral instrument families in the seating chart, noting that most instrument families are seated together in the orchestra.
 - <https://www.mydso.com/dso-kids/visit-the-symphony/orchestra-seating-chart>
- Students sort their cards into orchestral instrument families. (grades K – 4)
- All students generate questions they have about orchestral instruments. Encourage older students to reference their own experience performing music when generating questions. These questions are shared with the class and saved on a chart for the class to use when the Sinfonia musician visits the classroom on “Sinfonia Day” at school.

Resources:

<https://flashcard.online/musical-instruments-flashcards/> (includes non-orchestral instruments)

<https://www.mnsinfonia.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/MN-Sinfonia-Instrument-Coloring-Book.pdf>

h. Evaluation methods for assessment of learning goals:

- Students correctly identify an instrument of the orchestra and its orchestral family when shown a visual by teacher or another student.
 - Resource: <https://quizlet.com/13210076/instruments-of-the-orchestra-flash-cards/>
- Students will describe the way they sorted the instruments into groups (which characteristics they sorted by – for example shape / size / color / how sound is produced = orchestral instrument family)
- Students can state the classification criteria (how an instrument produces sound) for the traditional orchestral instrument families.

EXTENSION:

Instruments of the Orchestra – MN Sinfonia – Lesson Plan Grades K - 6

Read the book by John Lithgow, The Remarkable Farkle McBride. Notice how the author uses words to show the different sounds of each instrument.

Resource for book (publisher's website with information and videos)

<https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/The-Remarkable-Farkle-McBride/John-Lithgow/9780689835414>

For grades 4 & up, consider the book:

The Composer is Dead by Lemony Snicket. Notice how the sounds of the instruments are described. This book is full of puns and references that may need explanation for students.

Resources for teaching around this book are here:

<http://files.harpercollins.com/PDF/TeachingGuides/0061236276.pdf>

i. Lesson alignment to state/national educational standards (school based projects) or community learning goals.

MN Music standards: (2018)

3.A.1.1 – 1. Use foundational knowledge and skills while responding to, creating, and presenting artistic work.

Science standard: (2009)

0.2.1.1.1 – Objects can be described in terms of the materials they are made of and their physical properties: (Benchmark – Sort objects in terms of color, size, shape, and texture, and communicate reasoning for the sorting system.)