

Rondo Alla Turca

W. Mozart (1756-1791)

"Rondo Alla Turca" reveals an interesting story about a crazy king named Lou who mysteriously disappeared one evening before a royal gala. Your child helped bring this story to life by becoming one of the maids and butlers of King Lou's palace.

Together, the cleaning staff dusted and scrubbed the palace through while searching for clues to help solve the mystery. What possibly could have happened to this king who neglected his royal duties by singing and dancing to the music of his **favorite composer Mozart**? **Through drama, movement, song and instrumental play your child experienced Mozart's "Rondo Alla Turca" in a fun, interactive way!**

Musical Concepts explored in "Rondo Alla Turca":

Rondo Form: Your child discovered that a **rondo** is when certain sections of the music reoccur throughout the piece. Section A of this music is distinctly recognized by the students as the music which contains the beginning lyrics, "Can you find a clue" You may notice that Section B, "How he danced..." reoccurs consistently throughout the piece.

Phrasing: Through listening and responding to the hand drum stimuli, children experienced the phrases through movement. They felt where the phrases began and ended as they moved swiftly throughout the room.

Coda: This "**special ending**" was experienced and identified by your child when the entire village comes together at the end of the piece feeling exasperated as to the whereabouts of poor King Lou.

It is possible that your child experienced how to play **Section B**, "How he danced" on the school's **Orff instruments**. This accompaniment would have permitted the children to play in four parts. It takes real teamwork to play four sections together!

Composer: Discuss the life of **Mozart** with your child. You might be surprised to learn the following interesting facts: Mozart was called the "wonder child" because he began to compose at the age of 4! Imagine that!

Music Map: Although this piece seems complex, children rejoice when they see how simple it really is! Since it is a **rondo**, children really only have to be familiar with a few small sections which then reoccur throughout the piece. Sections A and B are fun for children to follow as they simply tap to the beat of the music. You will enjoy watching your child's conducting finger move about in any direction through Section C, our improvised section. The **final form** (order) of the music is: **A B C B A B Coda**

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Tritsch Tratsch Polka

J. Strauss (1825-1899)

Tritsch Tratsch Polka by **Johann Strauss** brings the intriguing story of a jealous ringmaster and a nice, hard working tightrope walker named "Johnny" to life. Through drama, song, creative movement and instrumental play, your child was able to recreate this circus scenario on his/her very own tightrope which was created on the classroom floor.

In section A of the music, all of the mean ringmasters snapped their whips in the air in hopes of scaring the poor little Johnnys off of their ropes. Johnny became more determined than ever not to fall off and, feeling frustrated with the ringmaster, began to tease and even show off on his rope.

With smoke now billowing out of his ears, the ringmaster tried to wiggle Johnny off his rope. Fortunately, Johnny was able to keep his balance and continue his routine.

Can you help your child act out section A? Let your child teach you how to act out the role of the mean ringmaster or little Johnny. To make this section even more fun, tape a piece of yarn or a skipping rope to the floor and let this be your tightrope!

In section B, the vendors of the circus suddenly make an appearance and try to sell their treats. Your child will demonstrate this section by strutting around pretending to sell peanuts, popcorn or cola. If you notice that a chase breaks out, be aware because someone took a treat and forgot to pay! Oh no!! Can you help chase down this person? Not wanting to lose out on any business, the vendors returned to their selling mode, shouting out to the crowd.

When you hear the music return to section A, be quick to find your rope again! At the end of the music, little Johnny wins and blows kisses to the crowd as the ringmaster becomes fuming mad! Can you see the smoke escaping from his ears?

Musical Concepts explored in Tritsch Tratsch Polka:

A B A Form: This is a great piece for children to experience A B A form, as both sections are so very different, and all children act out both sections.

Improvisation: This selection is filled with many wonderful moments for your child to create his or her own movements. Your child may surprise you with his/her theatrics as this is a very exciting, dramatic piece.

Music Map: This map is very easy to follow: children's conducting fingers follow the rhythmic markings of the piece.

Johann Strauss had a very interesting life. Be sure to ask your child about him!

For more information on this new exciting approach to classical music, feel free to visit the website at: www.funwithcomposers.com

Symphony no. 40

Mozart (1756-1791)

Symphony no. 40 is one of the world's most loved symphonies. In this selection, your child was able to learn all about Mozart through the lyrics, while becoming familiar with a number of significant musical concepts.

Throughout the piece, children sang, acted and played through the music as they listened to the orchestral music. Vocals were added to the first recording of this music and then removed so that your child could experience the music as it was originally intended.

Concepts explored in Symphony no. 40:

- Lyrics which contained facts about Mozart's life were added to the fast rhythms of the main theme in the first section. Children sang through this section, learning the importance of using all their mouth muscles (all 150 of them) to help articulate the words.
- Children learned how to **sing through the phrases** properly, sneaking a breath before the phrase was to begin and singing through to the end of the phrase without any noticeable "stops."
- **Conducting:** Ask your child to demonstrate how to conduct in "**Cut**" (2/2) time. Children will enjoy showing how to make the backward "Js" as they conduct first in an **accented** manner, and then in a more **legato** manner.
- **Crescendos:** Children were quick to identify the **crescendos** in the music as they moved from a very soft (**piano**) dynamic to a very loud (**forte**) dynamic. Children displayed their understanding of a **crescendo** by having their hands grow from a small position to a large position, along with the music.
- **Descending patterns:** The music contained a few different sections which involved **descending** runs of music. The children identified these **descending** patterns and were able to display them with their bodies by having their hands move from a high to a low position.

Music Map: The music of Symphony no. 40 has been "illustrated" through the use of a "Bubble Map." The children were able to follow through bubbles 1-5, which corresponded to the first three minutes of the symphony.

Instrumental Play: The children played along to the phrases of the music on non-pitched percussion instruments. Very focused listening was a pre-requisite because children were asked to play only on specific parts! You will be amazed at how your child will be able to follow this sophisticated selection using their simple bubble map!

Ask your child to tell you a little about **Mozart**, the composer of Symphony no. 40. Enjoy!
For more information on this new approach, visit www.funwithcomposers.com

Persian March

J. Strauss (1825-1899)

If you recently heard your child shouting out, "Ahoy Mate!" it might be because he or she recently sailed the seas while listening to **Johann Strauss's "Persian March."** The Persian March will have your child walking, skipping, jumping and searching the seas as only a pirate would.

The **Persian March** unveils the story of the Sneaky Sam and its crew. Children love having the opportunity to act as pirates of the sea, especially when they are aboard a fun-oving, adventurous ship like the Sneaky Sam!

Musical Concepts explored through the Persian March:

Phrasing: Your child learned how to sing and move through the phrases of this selection.

Dynamics: **Forte** and **Piano** (loud and soft)

Improvisation: In Section D, children have the opportunity to create their own movements as they search for the infamous "Bad Bart." Once it's spotted, they shiver in fear and then unanimously decide that they have nothing to fear after all! They continue to search the seas for treasures and other interesting sights.

Patterns and Sequence: The movement for the **Persian March** was introduced through the hand drum stimuli. Your child first listened to the patterns played on the hand drum and then, through the discovery method, was able to determine the required steps and their sequence.

When all the children were comfortable with their movement sequence for one section, they were asked to listen to the sequence played for the next section. This process requires active listening and critical thinking, both very important life skills.

Music Map: Using your conducting finger, follow the squiggles and lines to the rhythms of the **Persian March**. In Section D, tap the images to the pulse of the music.

Composer: **Johann Strauss** led a very interesting life. Although he had a father who was a famous musician, Johann was forbidden to take music lessons himself. Are you wondering how Johann became a famous musician, then? Take time to ask your child about Johann's life, and you will discover the secret that Johann and his mother shared.

If your child brought home the image of Strauss, keep it somewhere visible so your child will be reminded of this interesting composer and the wonderful music he shared with the rest of the world. Perhaps your child can color it while listening to Strauss's music!

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Fossils Camille Saint-Saens (1835-1921)

Children have the opportunity to become skeletons and pirates aboard a long lost ship as they search for the missing music of their **favorite composer, Camille Saint-Saens.**

The quick sounds of the xylophones imitate the music of the bones as skeletons dance and whisper, "**Listen to the bones, listen to the bones, listen to the sound of the rattling bones.**" Pirates not wanting to appear frightened mimic the skeletons' rhythm pattern with their bodies. Listen to the music and your child will explain the sequence of events as they unfold in this **rondo.**

Musical Concepts explored in Fossils:

Rondo Form: **Fossils** is an excellent example of a rondo. It demonstrates a definite pattern as Section A reoccurs throughout. **The final form is: A B A C A**

Dynamics: This selection is filled with contrasting dynamics ranging from a very loud (**fortissimo**) level to the very quiet (**pianissimo**) section where the pirates are trying to scare each other.

Improvisation: This piece allows children the opportunity to show off their theatrical side through acting out different characters in the story. One lucky student will be chosen to be the Captain and take a stroll through the old shipwreck. Your child will easily recognize this section as it is the only section which is played on the **clarinet.** What will he or she find? Listen to the music and you will see!

Instrumental Play: Let your child demonstrate the rhythm of Section A by playing it on a **homemade instrument.** Turn over a big soup pot and play the rhythm on your new drum, or take two wooden spoons/utensils and tap the rhythm on a hard floor.

Music Map: This music map is a **heartbeat tapping sheet!** It is easy to follow, and gives children a visual reminder of the simple sequence of the music. In Section C, take a walk with your fingers as the Captain explores the shipwreck. Beware...you never know who may be around the corner!

Composer Facts: Did you know that Camille Saint-Saens was born in **Paris, France** and was able to **read and write by the age of three?** Ask your child about other interesting facts about this composer. You may like to color Saint-Saens' image while listening to **Fossils** and **Aquarium.**

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Aquarium

Saint-Saens (1835-1921)

Aquarium by Camille Saint-Saens is a melody which is known and loved by many. This piece evokes images of all types of sea creatures as they swim throughout the sea.

Your child was able to become one of these interesting creatures in class, and swam smoothly along to the waves in the music. If you listen closely, you will hear the tale of how these creatures of the sea were feeling scared of a giant octopus in the ocean depths. Together the creatures visited this giant octopus, and soon discovered that he was really a very gentle creature.

In the music, you will hear where the sea creatures swim around, up and down to the flow of the music. The giant octopus in the middle of the group of sea creatures was re-created by many children. They discovered how to make an eight-armed giant by working together.

Listen to the music with your child and see if you can hear the captivating story.

Musical Concepts explored in Aquarium:

Ascending and descending: Children learn the difference of going from a low to high position (*ascending*) and then from a high to low position (*descending*). They experience these two terms through movement.

Legato vs. staccato: Through a movement warm up, and then once again in the music, your child will experience the smooth *legato* feel of the music. Although there are no short, detached *staccato* sections in the music, your child was introduced to this term through the movement warm ups.

Music Map: This easy-to-follow map reinforces the story for your child. Through this map, he or she will easily be able to tell you the story as it unfolds throughout the music.

Camille Saint-Saens: Let your child tell you the story of this French composer who is most well known for his works "**Carnival of the Animals.**" "**Fossils**" is one other selection from the "Carnival of the Animals" which has been included in the *Fun with Composers* series. This celebrated collection of pieces contains humorous tales of many of children's favorite zoo animals . It is a favorite for children of all ages!

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Anitra's Dance

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

The exciting, fast tempo of Anitra's Dance makes this piece fun for children ages 8+. In this selection, your child will become a secret agent who is searching for the secret formula. Teams of agents are on the lookout since no one is certain who is an authentic agent or who may be a double agent. No one knows who really has the formula...could it be you?

Anitra's Dance is a piece which brings out a real dramatic flair in students. The quick lyrics and movements present a real challenge to children, and the intriguing story line captivates their imaginations!

Musical concepts explored in Anitra's Dance:

Dynamics: This piece is filled with contrasting dynamic levels, ranging from **pianissimo** (very soft) to **fortissimo** (very loud).

Crescendo and Decrescendo: A **crescendo** is when the sound level moves from a soft to loud dynamic. On the contrary, a **decrescendo** is when the music moves from loud to soft. These dynamic markings contribute to the piece's suspenseful nature, keeping it fun and interesting for all.

Tango step/waltz step: Children move to the pulse of the music in Section A as they march forward in a tango stance with their partners. In Section B, children will waltz around the room, moving to a simple step- toe- toe pattern with their partners. With both steps, children will move to the pulse of the music.

Music Map: This music map reinforces the sequence of events which take place in the music. Although it is a longer selection, it is still relatively easy to follow through the simple visuals and markings found in the map.

Composer Facts: Grieg was born in Bergen, Norway in 1843. His father was a merchant and his mother a talented pianist. Grieg was the fourth of five children in his family. His mother gave him lessons when he was six years old, and after years of practice, Grieg's talent was recognized and he went to study at the prestigious "Leipzig Conservatory." Grieg loved his homeland, and was always drawn to the folk stories and folk songs which were such a great part of the Norwegian culture. Grieg's music is most enjoyable to listen to --every piece seems to tell a tale!

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Hungarian Dance no. 5 Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

In this lively selection, your child has been taken back to **medieval times** to sing, dance, and act as Vladimir, the dancing knight who didn't like to fight.

Vladimir was assigned to protect the king, and if any enemy were to make it to the castle, Vladimir would perform fast kicks and twirls to send him or her tumbling down the hill into the dreaded moat. No one ever made it out of the icky, sticky moat which was filled with alligators! Soon people came from all around the country to watch Vladimir in action.

If you play **Hungarian Dance no. 5** for your child, you might be surprised as they march, kick, swirl and polka their way through this well known classical selection.

Musical Concepts explored in Hungarian Dance no. 5:

Sound qualities: Your child will have experienced a wide range of sound qualities through movement. From fast and light polka steps, slow and heavy breathing breaks, to the brisk marching tempo, contrasting sound and movement qualities were experienced first hand.

Phrasing: Children were able to feel the phrases of the music, as they moved about, changing directions at the endings of each phrase.

Polka step: Through mirroring the teacher and their partners, your child was introduced to the basic polka step. Beginning very slowly, they moved right, left, right, placing the accent on their first step. This naturally took them to their other foot where they moved left, right, left, placing the accent this time on their first "left" step. This step lends itself to a side-to-side motion. Ask your child to demonstrate this step for you.

Music Map: The **Hungarian Dance no. 5's** map is simple and easy to read. Your child will be able to tap along to the heartbeat in Section's A,C and D and then follow the squiggles, markings and images to the rhythms in Section B.

Composer Facts: Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany six short years after Beethoven died. Brahms began learning how to play the piano at the age of five, taught by his father who was a musician as well.

Through the course of his life he composed many beautiful pieces, but destroyed many of them before he died because he did not want the world to see what he considered an imperfect work. Ask your child what other pieces he may have composed that you would be familiar with. There is a special lullaby which we are sure you may know!

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Habanera

Georges Bizet (1838-1875)

Through Bizet's **Habanera** your child became familiar with one of the world's most loved operas, "Carmen." Its main character, Carmen, is a beautiful, spirited gypsy who seems to cast a spell on Jose, a guard across from the factory where she works.

Jose falls in love with Carmen and helps her escape prison by releasing her from his protection. Jose is then sent to prison himself. When he is released, he becomes very jealous when he realizes that there may be another love interest in Carmen's life.

The opera comes to a shocking end when Jose, in a jealous rage, ends the lives of both Carmen and her love interest.

Concepts explored in Habanera:

- Children learned the melody line of the love song, *Habanera*, and then sang, danced, acted and played out the roles of its two main characters, Jose and Carmen.
- Children were introduced to the melody line on the soprano recorder. Phrasing, accents, repeats, dynamic levels, accidentals and special endings were all reviewed through the soprano recorder section.
- **Active Listening:** The children were introduced to many of the instruments in the orchestra, specifically the string and woodwind families. Students listened to the distinct sounds of the double bass, cello and violins, and were also introduced to the oboe which is a woodwind instrument.

Music Map:

The music map helps children understand the form or order of the piece. In *Habanera*, children learned to listen for the special introduction played on the double bass, and then continued with Section A being played on the violins.

Using their conducting fingers, children followed through the orchestral music with the help of the teacher. The music map involves many little lines and squiggles which correspond to the rhythm of the music.

Composer: Bizet is best known for his opera *Carmen*. It is a very spirited opera and is one of the world's favorites! During his short life he wrote many operas, but none thrilled audiences quite like *Carmen*. Bizet was born into a musical family. His father was a singing teacher and a composer and his mother a pianist. At 19, he won a prize for his first opera. Bizet spent his life composing symphonies, piano compositions and operas. Unfortunately, since *Carmen* did not become popular until shortly after his death, he never realized his true success as a composer.

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