

LEARNING RESOURCE  
- PRIMARY / LOWER  
SECONDARY -



West Australian  
Symphony Orchestra

# Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra

Learning Resource  
Primary/Lower Secondary



**Wesfarmers Arts**  
Principal Partner

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*The West Australian Symphony Orchestra respectfully acknowledges the  
Traditional Owners, Custodians and Elders of the Indigenous Nations across  
Western Australia and on whose lands we work.*

# CREATING THE CONCERT

## CONCEPT

The *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* performance presented by the West Australian Symphony Orchestra has been developed for WASO's 2021 Schools Season. This unique concert experience will explore the origins of this great music, the personalities of each instrument of the orchestra and how you can be a composer too! This program is sure to inspire budding musicians throughout the audience.

The concert content and resources align with the following essential topic areas:

- Introduction to the orchestra (sections and families)
- What can an orchestra sound like (character, tell a story)
- How does an orchestra affect us
- How does an orchestra do all of this

## INTERACTIVE COMPONENT – COMPOSER FOR WASO!

Prior to the concert, explore the sounds of the orchestra in your classroom. In this guided lesson plans provided, explore the instruments of the orchestra, how you can group them and create your own composition based on your imagination.

Please email your students responses to WASO's Education Manager, Rebecca Shakespeare (shakespearer@waso.com.au) by **10AM Friday 4 June** for your chance to have your worked performed by the West Australian Symphony Orchestra during the concert.

## CURRICULUM LINKS

The resources for this concert broadly link to the key elements of the West Australian Curriculum Y3-9.

## REPERTOIRE

**VINE V**

**BRITTEN** *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*

# West Australian Symphony Orchestra



From the centre of Perth to the furthest corners of our State, every year since 1928, we set hearts racing with extraordinary music and exhilarating performances for all West Australians to share.

West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO) is a for-purpose not-for-profit company that thrives on the enthusiasm, passion and support of our entire community. We harness this energy to create events and programs across the State to stimulate learning and participation in a vibrant cultural life.

We are both fierce advocates for our great classical musical heritage and passionate leaders in the commissioning and performance of new music by leading Australian and international composers. Every year we mobilise and nurture a new generation of young and emerging artists to help secure a bright future for music in Australia.

We create the spark that sets off a lifelong love of music because we believe it has the power to *touch the soul and enrich lives*.

Our resident company of full-time professional musicians are the beating heart of our organisation. The Orchestra plays a central role in the vibrancy of our creative state, and they are also supported by hundreds of visiting artists, alongside the volunteers of the WASO Chorus, to create exceptional performances for hundreds of thousands of people each year. Our Orchestra is led by Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser Asher Fisch. Israeli-born, Fisch is an internationally renowned conductor in both the operatic and symphonic repertoire, and is a frequent guest at the world's great opera houses including La Scala, the Bayerische Staatsoper and the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

We are proud to call Perth Concert Hall home.



# ARTIST INFORMATION



## Thaddeus Huang Conductor

Thaddeus Huang is one of Australia's most versatile and exciting young conductors. In 2020-2021 he serves as the West Australian Symphony Orchestra's Assistant Conductor and Emerging Conductors program mentor.

In 2019, Thaddeus made his Adelaide Symphony Orchestra debut in their *Mozart at Elder* and *Out of the CBD* series. Over two seasons he assisted Nicholas Carter, Dane Lam, and Mark Wigglesworth, and was rehearsal conductor for the ASO's celebrated Beethoven Piano Concerto Cycle concerts.

Abroad he has conducted the Moravian Philharmonic, Brasov Philharmonic, Shenyang Symphony, Venice Chamber Orchestra, musicians of the Orchestre de Paris, and the Royal Academy of Music. Opera projects he has worked on include the Australian premiere of Brett Dean's acclaimed *Hamlet* with Nicholas Carter, Harbin Symphony Orchestra's *Tosca* premiere with Muhai Tang, and WASO's *Fidelio* with Asher Fisch.

Strongly committed to youth music, Thaddeus has toured major venues and festivals in Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Tianjin with the Australian New Goldberg Orchestra, guest conducted young composer workshops with the Victorian College of the Arts, and was Assistant Conductor at the Australian Youth Orchestra's 2019 National Music Camp.



## Thea Rossen Presenter

Thea Rossen is a percussionist, composer and educator based in Melbourne. She is celebrated for her solo and chamber recitals and has attracted worldwide attention for her *Music for our Changing Climate*, a powerful performance exploring issues surrounding climate change developed with her ensemble the Ad Lib Collective throughout a residency at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Canada.

As a soloist and chamber musician, Thea was a fellow at the Bang on a Can Summer Festival and a finalist for the Freedman Classical Music Fellowship in 2018. Thea has presented works at the Melbourne Recital Centre's Metropolis Festival, Peninsula Summer Music Festival and was presented by Play On as a featured artist in their sixth series. She is also a casual member of the percussion sections of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Orchestra Victoria. Most recently, Thea presented the premiere of *The Milk Carton Confessions* at Extended Play Festival in Sydney, a new solo show written by composer Michael Sollis.

During her time at the Australian National Academy of Music, Thea was awarded prizes for all of her solo recitals including Most Outstanding Performance and Best Program. Thea received her Bachelor of Music Degree with honours at the University of Western Australia studying with Dr Louise Devenish and Tim White.

# THOUGHTS FROM WASO'S MUSICIANS



**Brian Maloney**  
Percussion

**Q:** What should we listen out for when we hear the percussion in Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*?

**A:** **Brian:** In Britten's "*Young Person's Guide*" the composer showcases all the various sections of the orchestra by letting them play a variation of the main theme. In the case of the Percussion section, be sure to listen out for all the small (and not so small) instruments being played in the back of the orchestra throughout the piece, but especially during the Percussion Variation.

They'll include the timpani, bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, castanets, triangle and xylophone. You'll see percussionists begin to stand up at the back, and when that happens that generally means they're about to play.



**Semra Lee-Smith**  
Violin

**Q:** How does Britten show the character of the violin and string section in *Young Person's Guide*?

**A:** **Semra:** I think Britten shows the virtuosic nature of the violin in demonstrating its range by beginning the variation on the lowest note and then continuing to rise up high on to the E string. I think the string variation shows drama, athleticism and agility. Its versatility of sounds colours is also shown by using pizzicato in the lower strings.



**Jenna Smith**  
Trumpet

**Q:** What should we listen out for when the brass section in playing during *Young Person's Guide*?

**A:** **Jenna:** Words like bold, regal and sparkly describe the music the brass section plays in *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*.

The brass variation begins with the French horns. The French horns play accented notes to demonstrate the boldness mentioned above. They grow louder and louder in dynamic. I imagine someone climbing a mountain as they reach the peak of the crescendo. The horns then play beautiful chords softly and sweetly. Notice the contrast of the loud and soft playing here. There are some more loud, accented notes as the horns descend in pitch and dynamic like they're climbing down the mountain.

The trumpet variation is a lot of fun to play and sounds impressive. The playful fanfare with sparkly articulation captures the military style that we so often hear the trumpet play. The trumpets use double tonguing here which is a tonguing technique used for fast passages. Instead of tonguing each note with the syllable 'tu' they alternate 'tu ku tu ku' in order to play the fast semiquavers.

The low brass section (trombones and tuba) take turns playing loud, sustained notes that sound proud and regal. This is contrasted with more chorale-like passages at a soft dynamic. This moment is uplifting as it gets louder and louder and launches the piece into the percussion variation.

# THOUGHTS FROM WASO'S PRESENTER



**Thea Rossen**  
**Presenter**

**Q:** What are you most looking forward to about the *Young Person's Guide* concert?

**A:** **Thea:** I love listening to the layers of the orchestra build up in the final fugue of the piece. First the piccolo, then the flute and so on all the way to the huge sound of the tuba and timpani. As each instrument is added the sound is transformed into something different that grows and grows until you think it can't get any larger.

**Q:** What is your favourite instrument of the orchestra and what should we listen out for?

**A:** **Thea:** Even though I am a percussionist, in this piece, I love the brass section the best. Listen out for their beautiful, rich sound at the grand finale of the *Young Person's Guide*. This section of the music makes me feel like I am flying high in the sky and that anything is possible.

# SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

## Introduction to the composer

Learning Focus: Introducing students to the composer

Activity length: 30 minutes +  
Suitable pre-performance

### INTRODUCTION:

Ask students:

- When you write a story what do you have to do?
- When a composer writes a piece, what do you think they have to do?

Consider the similarities to the creative process of a composer

Narrative

How you want to tell  
the story

How you will write  
the story

What the characters  
will say, etc.

Tell students that this is similar to how music is created and the person who does this has a special name, they are a composer.

Introduce learning intention: Learning about the composer

### LESSON CONTENT:

As a class discuss:

What does it mean to be a  
composer?

How do you think a  
composer writes music?

What does a composer use  
to write music?

Introduce Benjamin Britten as the composer of *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*  
As a class discuss:

What do you think this  
piece is going to be about?

What story is the composer  
trying to tell?

Summarise the classes ideas and explain that Britten was trying to introduce all the instruments of the orchestra and show the different character of each instrument family.



# SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

## Introduction to the composer

This activity can be done in groups or independently:

Tell students we will be exploring the character Britten creates for each of the orchestra families. Play the suggested sections (below) for students, after each section ask students to reflect on:

What instruments is the composer writing about?

Why do think it was these instruments?

What did their sound make you think of?

What was your favourite section and why?

Bring students together for a brief show-and-tell session regarding their answers to the questions, and end by revealing to them the names of the family section that the composer was writing for in each excerpt.

### EXTENSION:

Ask students to use the biography links to research the composer and find out five fun facts. Stimulus questions could include:

What instrument did they play?

Where do they live?

What was the composers most famous work?

Ask students to create a poster presenting their research findings.

# SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

## Introduction to the orchestra

Learning Focus: Introducing students to instruments and families of the orchestra

Activity length: 30 minutes  
Suitable pre-performance

### INTRODUCTION:

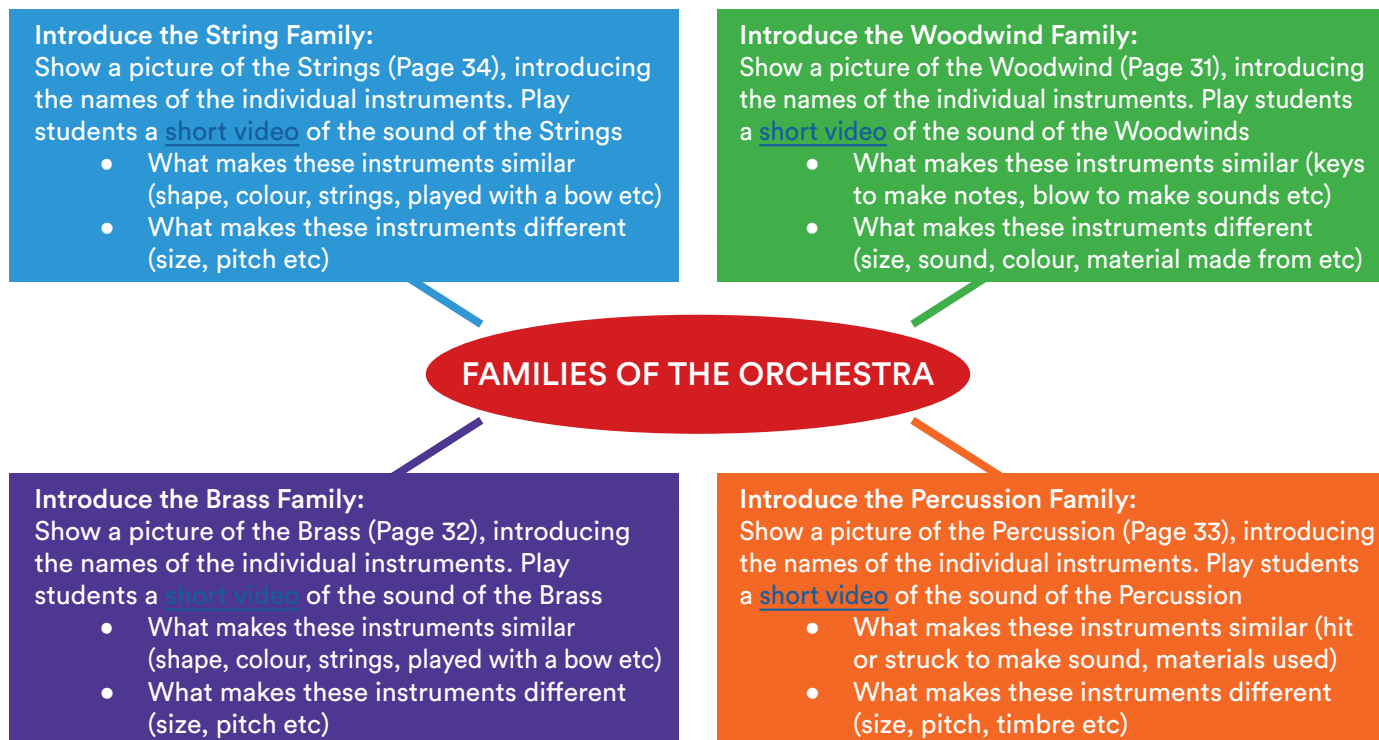
- Ask students ‘what makes a family’ considering the commonalities that tie a family together e.g. similar looks, connection to one another
- Tell students that this is similar in an orchestra. Instruments also belong to families, they are grouped based on the similarities they share.
- Introduce learning intention: Learning about the instruments and families of the orchestra.

### LESSON CONTENT:

Show students a picture of the orchestra (Page 30) with the colour coding for the instrument families. Take student through the names of each family writing them on the board.

Split students into groups to explore the instrument families providing students with the family video and section information sheet (Appendix 2).

Ask students to think about the similarities and differences within the instrument families.



# SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

## Introduction to the orchestra

Have a class discussion regarding students' responses to these questions for each of the instrument families.

### CONSOLIDATION:

Once students are familiar with each family, explain that these groups of instruments collaborate to play in the orchestra in the same way the students will play with their friends.

Assign a colour to each orchestra family and hand out corresponding coloured card or scarfs to your students.

Play excerpts of *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* asking students to raise their cards when they hear the family of instruments they have been assigned.

The following listening guide can be used as reference for this activity:

0.00 - 0.20:	Full Orchestra (all students cards shown)
0.24 - 0.42:	Woodwinds
0.49 - 1.04:	Brass
1.08 - 1.25:	Strings
1.27 - 1.40:	Percussion
1.44 - 2.02:	Full Orchestra (all students cards shown)

Ask students why they raised their card at particular times.

### EXTENSION:

Ask students to complete WASO's instrument family worksheets (pages 24-28)

# CONCERT PARTICIPATION

## Body Percussion

Learning Focus: Introducing student to the ideas of theme and variation and body percussion participation for concert

Activity length: 45 minutes +  
Suitable pre-performance

### INTRODUCTION:

Recap the instrument families listening activity playing 2-3 examples

Explain to students that each family played something similar and that this is called **Theme and Variation**

*Example in everyday can be cake: we all like cakes but there are lots of variations of these, chocolate, carrot, vanilla etc but they are all still cakes.*

### LESSON CONTENT:

As a class discuss the basic elements of theme and variation using young persons guide as the stimulus.

Explain to students that the composer wrote the different variations with different characters to reflect the characters of the different families. Some are energetic and lighter, some are heavier and darker in sound.

Using the theme and variation worksheet (page 19):

- Ask students to think of adjectives that describe each of the instrument families
- Following the listening guide ask students to write adjectives to describe how the theme is played by each family

0.00 - 0.20:	Full Orchestra (all students cards shown)
0.24 - 0.42:	Woodwinds
0.49 - 1.04:	Brass
1.08 - 1.25:	Strings
1.27 - 1.40:	Percussion
1.44 - 2.02:	Full Orchestra (all students cards shown)

- Prompt students with questions such as 'does the brass sound strong' or 'do the strings sound lyrical'

This activity can be done in groups or individually. Replay each section multiple times. Following this activity, ask students to share their responses with the class.

# CONCERT PARTICIPATION

## Body Percussion

### CONSOLIDATION:

Once students are familiar with the concept of theme and variation, extend this idea to body percussion and ask them to create their own versions of theme and variation from Britten's main theme using the body percussion.

Teach students the below body percussion pattern to the main theme of *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* as a full class.

*This will be used during the concert.*

= CLAP   
 = STOMP   
 = THIGH

$\text{♩} = 75$

Here is the tune can you clap a-long with me?

Once students have learnt the main body percussion theme, split into 4 groups and ask them to create their own variation on this theme. Assign each group a family of the orchestra and referring to their theme and variation worksheet, use the adjectives as a stimulus for their variation.

You can guide students to

Vary the tempo

Vary the dynamics

Vary the part of their body they use for each note

Bring the class back together and ask each group to share their variation.



# CONCERT PARTICIPATION

## Body Percussion

## CONCLUSION:

Listen again to the opening sections of Britten's *Young Persons Guide* and summarise for students the way that the composer has had to think about all of these elements when making the music, making these considerations of how each instrument sounds and when he uses them to describe each variation of his theme.

## EXTENSION:

As a class then perform your own theme and variation inspired by Britten's *Young Person's Guide* using the following guide:

- Original main theme body percussion as a class
- Group 1 – Woodwind
- Group 2 – Brass
- Group 3 – Percussion
- Group 4 – Strings
- Original main theme body percussion as a class

Conclude by asking students to consider the ways that they have had to think about all of these elements when making their variations. Ask them what they had to think about and why.

Listen again to the opening sections of Britten's *Young Persons Guide* and summarise for students the way that the composer has had to think about all of these elements when making the music, making these considerations of how each instrument sounds and when he uses them to describe each variation of his theme.

For more advanced students, try this advanced body percussion alongside the main theme. This will be referenced in the concert:

T.Rossen

3  
2

Clap Clap x4 Stomp Thigh Thigh Thigh Thigh Clap

Stomp Thigh Thigh Thigh Thigh Clap Stomp Thigh Thigh Thigh Thigh

Stomp Thigh Thigh Thigh Thigh

♩ = CLAP ♪ = STOMP 🦶 = THIGH

# CONCERT PARTICIPATION

## Composition Challenge

Learning Focus: Composing a piece of music for the West Australian Symphony Orchestra

Suitable pre-performance

### INTRODUCTION:

Remind students they'll soon be attending a performance given by the West Australian Symphony Orchestra which will include pieces of music called:

- Benjamin Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*

Explain to students that as part of the concert they have the chance to compose a piece of music for the West Australian Symphony Orchestra to play during the show.

### LESSON CONTENT:

Have a whole class discussion about

What does it mean to 'compose' music

A composer chooses particular instruments to write for – what instruments can they remember from the orchestra

How else have we explored making music e.g. body percussion, voice etc – is this composing too?

Restate the learning intention and introduce the composition process:

- Replay the orchestra sections for each family asking student to imagine that the sections are accompanying a movie scene
- Explain to students that the composer changes the instruments and feel of the music several times, musicians play differently in each variation. The conductor and score help the musicians to determine how to play these changes

As a class or in groups brainstorm what these movie scenes could be for each variation, ask students to refer to the adjectives on theme and variation worksheet.

Ask students to imagine they are creating their own movie scene with its own musical accompaniment that has a variation in it. Students can think about the following elements for the accompanying music:

Character/Mood

Instrumentation

Dynamics

Description of what is happening musically

Use the Composition Challenge worksheet (page 20-21) to capture student ideas in writing.

# CONCERT PARTICIPATION

## Composition Challenge

### GRAPHIC SCORE:

**For younger students or students not familiar with musical notation,** you may like to use the template provided for their picture and description or create a simple graphic score.

**For older students or students familiar with musical notation,** you may like to ask them to create a short 12 bar notated accompaniment, 6 bars of their theme and 6 bars of their variation. Alternatively, they may like to experiment with a more developed graphic score and written instructions.

**For more advanced students,** encourage them to explore this exercise in more detail by learning about the range and particular techniques associated with each instrument – you may like to have them experiment with a combination of notation, graphic scores and written instructions.

Choose the clearest and most developed composition to submit to WASO for the composition challenge. Email submissions to [shakespearer@waso.com.au](mailto:shakespearer@waso.com.au) by 10AM on Friday 4 June.

# SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

## Post-Concert Reflection

Learning Focus: Reflecting on our experience at WASO's concert

Activity length: 15-20 minutes  
Suitable post-performance

### INTRODUCTION:

Remind students that they have recently attended the WASO Education Concert of Benjamin Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*.

### LESSON CONTENT:

Play Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* whilst students are completing the task during the lesson.

Ask students to complete the following reflective question in their workbooks or use the WASO Concert Reflections worksheet (page 22-23)

What did you enjoy most about the WASO Concert?

What did you learn when you saw WASO play at Perth Concert Hall?

What would you have liked to learn more about in the concert?

What did you find most interesting at the concert?

As a class, ask students to share some of their reflections and write these on the board. Collate students remaining questions that WASO can answer and send these to [shakespearer@waso.com.au](mailto:shakespearer@waso.com.au) - we'll do our best to get you some answers!

### EXTENSION:

- For older students, ask them to work in groups or individually create a PowerPoint to share their reflections and present their ideas to the class.
- Ask students to think about their experience and write a review of the concert as though they are a music journalist.

# Appendix 1

## Worksheets



# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA Theme and Variation Worksheet

Listen to the main theme and variation from *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, use describing words share your thoughts on each section of music that you hear:

Word suggestions:

Loud	Heavy	Fast	Soft
Happy	Light	Excited	Surprised
Sad	Cheerful	Angry	Bold

**FULL ORCHESTRA:**

**WOODWIND:**

**BRASS:**

**STRINGS:**

**PERCUSSION:**

# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA Creative Composition Worksheet

Imagine that you are creating your own movie scene with one of the families of the orchestra playing the accompanying music. Draw a storyboard of your movie scene, what happens at the beginning and then what changes and happens next:

### SCENE 1 (THEME)

### SCENE 2 (VARIATION)

Think about the music that will be accompanying your storyboard, what character and mood do you want the music to have?

The family of the orchestra for my musical accompaniment is

---

I chose the \_\_\_\_\_ family because

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# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA Creative Composition Worksheet

The graphic score for my theme is:

**THEME**

I want the musicians to play:

---

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The graphic score for my variation scene is:

**VARIATION**

I want the musicians to play:

---

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# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA Concert Reflections worksheet

We hope that you enjoyed attending *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* concert.  
Take some time to think about your experience.

What did you enjoy most about the concert?

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What did you learn about when you saw WASO?

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# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA Concert Reflections worksheet

What did you find most interesting about the concert?

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What burning questions do you still have for the orchestra?

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## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA

### Introduction to the Orchestra - Information Sheet

A Symphony Orchestra, like the **West Australian Symphony Orchestra**, is a large group of musicians who play different instruments together.

The instruments in an orchestra all belong to different **families**. The instruments in each different family all have things in common like how they make sound, the materials they are made from, how you play them and what they sound like when you listen to them.

There are four different instrument families in the orchestra

Do you remember the names of these instrument families?

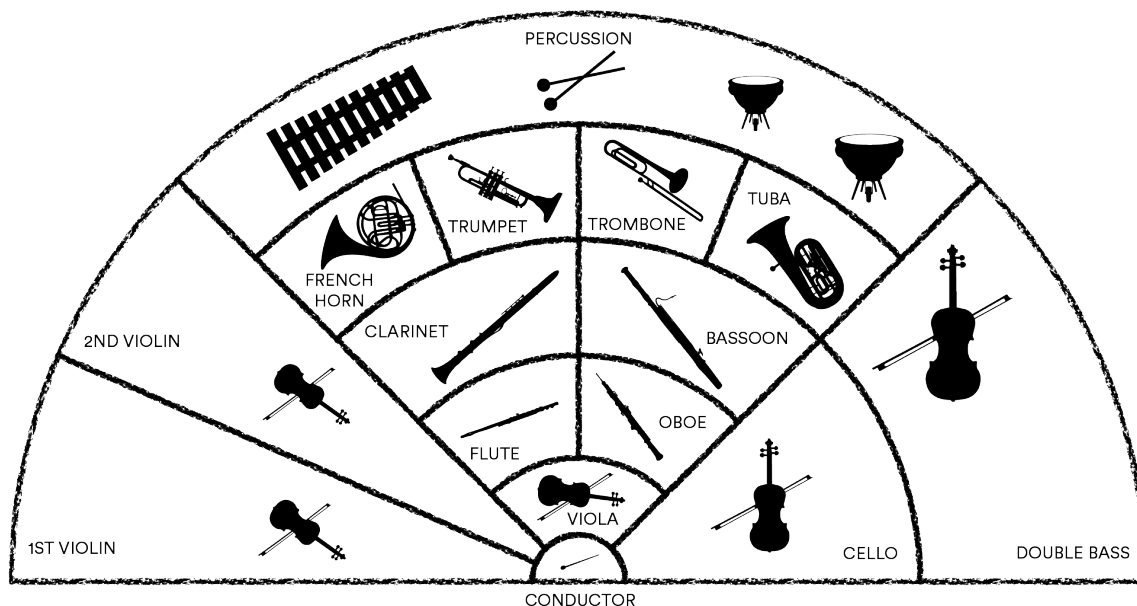
**STRINGS**

**WOODWIND**

**BRASS**

**PERCUSSION**

Now let's see where these families sit when a symphony orchestra plays together:



Find the instruments in the family that are made of wood that you play with a bow, colour these in **Blue**. These instruments sit at the front of the orchestra.

Find the instruments that you blow to make sound and are made of wood or metal. These instruments sit behind the Strings section, colour the instruments of this family in **Green**.

Find the instruments that sit at the back of the orchestra, are made of metal and you blow into to make sound. Colour the instruments of this family in **Purple**.

Finally, find the instruments that you have to hit or strike to make a sound. They sit at the very back of the orchestra on the left. Colour the instruments of this family in **Orange**.

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA

### Woodwind Worksheet

The four instruments in the Woodwind family are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

The highest instrument in the Woodwind family is the \_\_\_\_\_.

The lowest instrument in the Woodwind family is the \_\_\_\_\_.

My favourite instrument in this section was the \_\_\_\_\_.

Describe the sound of this instrument using three describing words (adjectives),

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the sound when all of the Woodwinds played together using three describing words (adjectives)

\_\_\_\_\_

The sound of the Woodwinds made me think of

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA Brass Worksheet

The four instruments in the Brass family are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

The highest instrument in the Brass family is the\_\_\_\_\_.

The lowest instrument in the Brass family is the\_\_\_\_\_.

My favourite instrument in this section was the\_\_\_\_\_.

Describe the sound of this instrument using three describing words (adjectives),

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the sound when all of the Brass played together using three describing words (adjectives)

\_\_\_\_\_

The sound of the Brass made me think of

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA Percussion Worksheet

The four instruments in the Percussion family are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

My favourite instrument in this section was the\_\_\_\_\_.

Describe the sound of this instrument using three describing words (adjectives),

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the sound when all of the Percussion played together using three describing words (adjectives)

\_\_\_\_\_

The sound of the Percussion made me think of

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA Strings Worksheet

The four instruments in the Strings family are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

The special instrument in the Strings family is the \_\_\_\_\_.

My favourite instrument in this section was the \_\_\_\_\_.

Describe the sound of this instrument using three describing words (adjectives),

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the sound when all of the Strings played together using three describing words (adjectives)

\_\_\_\_\_

The sound of the Strings made me think of

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Appendix 2

## Resources

# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA THE ORCHESTRA



STRINGS

WOODWIND

BRASS

PERCUSSION

STRINGS

WOODWIND

BRASS

PERCUSSION

# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA The Woodwinds



**FLUTE**

The instruments in the woodwind family from the highest sound to the lowest sounds are:  
Piccolo, Flute, Oboe, Cor Anglais, Clarinet and Bassoon.



**OBOE**

**COR ANGLAIS**

Just like the Strings, the **smaller** instruments in the woodwind family are **higher in pitch**. The **bigger** and longer instruments are deeper and **lower in pitch**.



**CLARINET**

The instruments in the **WOODWIND** family all used to be made of wood however today they are made of wood and metal.  
The **oboe**, **clarinet** and **bassoon** are all made of **wood**.  
The **flute** is made of **metal**.  
The instruments are played by **blowing into or across a mouthpiece**. Keys are pressed down to change notes.



**BASSOON**

Mouthpieces for some Woodwind instruments use a thing piece of wood called a reed.  
The clarinet uses a single reed, this is one piece of thin wood. The oboe and bassoon a double reed made of two piece joined together.  
To make a sound on the flute you blow across the metal hole in the mouthpiece to make the sound.



# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA The Brass



TRUMPET

Most brass instruments have **valves** (like buttons). They change note or 'pitch' by pressing the valves and buzzing your lips harder or softer.

The instruments of the **BRASS** family can play louder than any other in the orchestra. The Brass instruments in the orchestra are the **French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone and Tuba**. The instruments in this family are made of **Brass** or **metal**. Brass instruments are essentially long metal tubes with a bell-like shape at the end. The tube is curved and twisted into the instruments.



TROMBONE

Instruments in the Brass family make sound by **blowing into a mouthpiece**. The sound starts at the lips with brass instruments making a **buzzing sound**. The mouthpiece helps to amplify the buzzing sound made by the lips.



FRENCH HORN

The instruments of the Brass family make a strong musical statement with a very distinct sound. **Trumpets** are characterised by **bright and crisp sounds**. **French Horns** have a more **tender and mellow sound**. **Trombones** have a **powerfulness** to its sound, they have the unique ability to produce **glide sounds**. Tubas are the "**Big Brothers**" of the brass family, making a **deep and rich sound**.

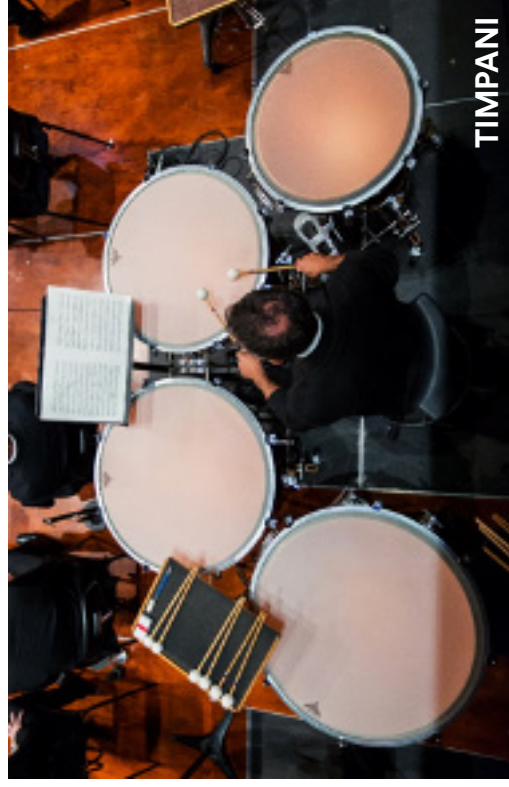


TUBA

# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

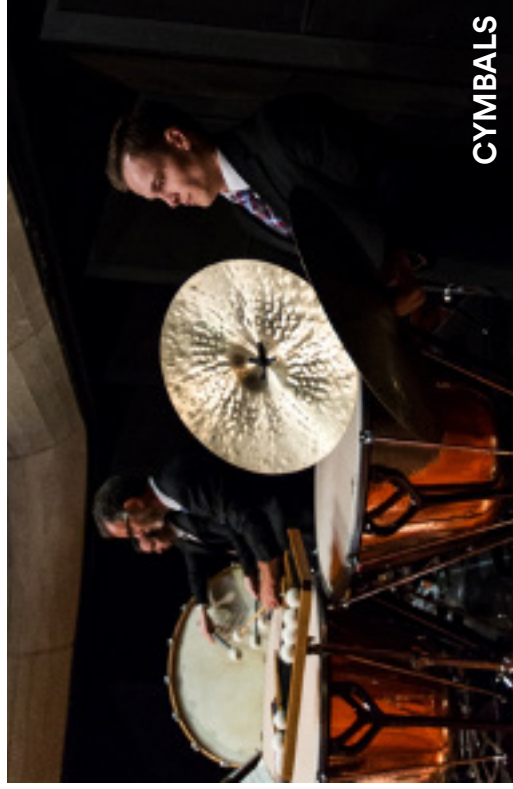
## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA The Percussion

The **PERCUSSION** family is the largest in the orchestra. Percussion instruments are any instrument is hit, shaken or scratched to make its sound. It takes a lot of practice to be a percussionist because hit an instrument in the right place, at the right time and with the right amount of force.



TIMPANI

The most common instruments in the orchestra are **cymbals**, **bass drum**, **timpani**, **xylophone**, **gongs**, **triangle** and **snare drum**. Unlike most players in the orchestra a percussionist will usually play lots of different instruments in one piece of music.



CYMBALS



BASS DRUM

TIMPANI

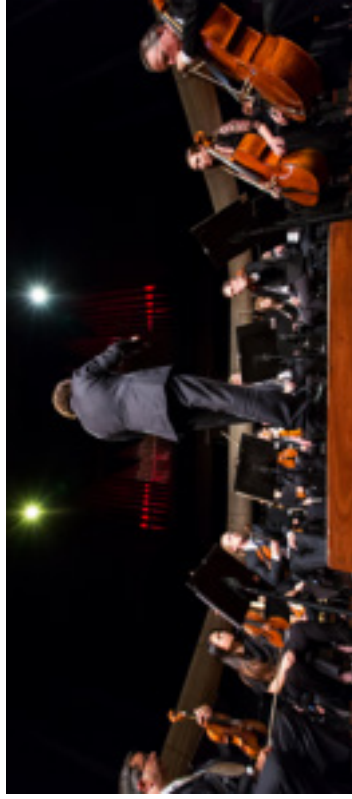
The Percussion instruments in the orchestra keep the rhythm, makes special sounds and add colour. Some percussion instruments can play different notes like the xylophone, this is called **tuned** percussion. Some percussion instruments are **untuned**. This means they do not have a distinct pitch, think about the sound of a drum or cymbals.



# 2021 Education & Community Engagement

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA The Strings

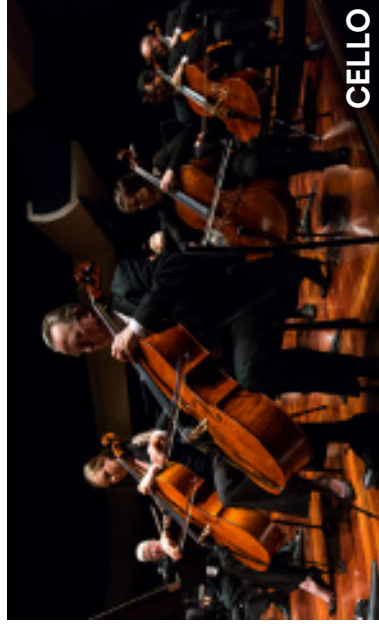
The **STRINGS** family has the most players in the orchestra. There are four instruments in this family, the **VIOLIN** is the smallest and highest. The **VIOLA** is the bigger siblings of the violin and is slightly lower. The **CELLO** is larger again sounding most like the human voice. The lowest and largest **DOUBLE BASS** of the string family.



The Strings sit closest to the conductor in the orchestra. Their sound is often made by drawing a **bow** across the strings to make them **vibrate to create the notes**, this make longer notes. String players can also pluck the strings with their fingers to make short and snappy notes.



The larger the instruments in the String family become the lower their sound becomes. **Violins** and **Violas** make **higher-pitched** sounds. The larger **Cello** and **Double Bass** make **low** rich sounds.



The instruments of the Strings family are all **wooden** and use **strings** to make their sound.

## YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA

### Introduction to the Composer - Information Sheet

Today you will be exploring what a composer is, how they make their music and who the composer was for *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. You will discover about Benjamin Britten, his life and what the piece is about.

### What is a Composer?

A composer is the person who writes the music for an orchestra to play.

### What does it mean to be a composer?

Being a composer is like being a story writer but with music. When you write a story there are different steps you follow when creating your story like these:

1. You have an idea
2. You think about the characters for your story and the setting
3. You come up with the narrative
4. You create a beginning
5. You write the middle parts of your story with the action
6. You create the conclusion or ending to your story

This can be the same for a composer writing their music. **Composers are our musical storytellers.** They create the story of the music and decide what characters should enter at different point, how it should begin and how it should end. They do this by writing notes for the musicians to play and the musicians of the orchestra become our storytellers.

For **Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra** a gentleman called **Benjamin Britten was the composer** who wrote this musical story. He was a very talented person, [click here](#) to read more about the composer.

When you have read about the composer **create a poster sharing five interesting facts you learnt.**



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West Australian  
Symphony Orchestra