

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Introduction to the orchestra

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

Activity length: 30 minutes
Suitable for PP-YR6

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](#) 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 [Section Information Sheet](#).

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

Introduce the String Family:

Show a picture of the Strings, introducing the names of the individual instruments. Play students a [short video](#) of the sound of the Strings

- What makes these instruments similar (shape, colour, strings, played with a bow etc)
- What makes these instruments different (size, pitch etc)

Introduce the Woodwind Family:

Show a picture of the Woodwind, introducing the names of the individual instruments. Play students a [short video](#) of the sound of the Woodwinds

- What makes these instruments similar (keys to make notes, blow to make sounds etc)
- What makes these instruments different (size, sound, colour, material made from etc)

FAMILIES OF THE ORCHESTRA

Introduce the Brass Family:

Show a picture of the Brass, introducing the names of the individual instruments. Play students a [short video](#) of the sound of the Brass

- What makes these instruments similar (shape, colour, strings, played with a bow etc)
- What makes these instruments different (size, pitch etc)

Introduce the Percussion Family:

Show a picture of the Percussion, introducing the names of the individual instruments. Play students a [short video](#) of the sound of the Percussion

- What makes these instruments similar (hit/struck to make sound, materials used etc)
- What makes these instruments different (size, pitch, timbre etc)

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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 cards 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. This orchestral work features all four instrument families.

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

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 0.05 - 0.27: | Woodwinds |
| 0.28 - 0.48: | Brass |
| 0.48 - 1.05: | Strings |
| 1.08 - 1.25: | Percussion |
| 1.25 - 1.44: | Full Orchestra (all students cards shown) |

Ask students why they raised their card at particular times.