



**TIMBRE, RHYTHM, PITCH  
MOVING, LISTENING  
grades 3-5**

**Lesson Plan #3: History and Musical Machines**

**National Std. #6:** Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.

**National Std. #3:** Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments

**National Std. #7:** Evaluating music and music performances

**National Std. #8:** Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.

**National Std. #9:** Understanding music in relation to history and culture

**Ohio Standards:**

- Historical, Cultural and Social Contexts. (Identify, listen and respond to music of different composers.)
- Creative Expression and Communication. (Improvise and compose simple rhythmic and melodic phrases and ostinati.)
- Connections, Relationships and Applications. (Interpret music through dance and drama; describe how knowledge of music connects to learning in other subject areas; discuss how culture influences music.)

**Multiple Intelligences:** Musical, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Interpersonal

**Concept:**

Music can portray mechanical objects. A composer's music can reflect inventions being used in society at the time. A composer can use folk songs or a story for a musical composition.

**Objective/Outcome:**

Students will respond to selections depicting moving objects; students will create their own "movement machine" in small groups and evaluate other small groups; students will know about the life of Kodály and be able to recognize a specific composition by him; students will understand the relationship between folk music, stories, and musical compositions.

**Materials:**

- recording of "Viennese Musical Clock" from the Hány János Suite by Zoltán Kodály (available on the [Classics for Kids CD](#) or the [Classics for Kids website](#))
- [biography of Zoltán Kodály](#)
- story of *Hány János*\* (scroll down to the end of this lesson)
- recording of "Pacific 231" by Honegger (optional)
- recording of "Short Ride in a Fast Machine" by John Adams (optional)
- recording of "The Iron Foundry" or "The Steel Foundry" by Alexander Mosolov (optional)



**Sequence:**

**Reading/Literature and History connection**—Have half of the class read the story of *Háry János* (see below) while the other half of the class reads the [biography of Zoltán Kodály](#). Using the technique of THINK-PAIR-SHARE, pair students from each half of the class and give them time to each share what they have read; each pair of students can then brainstorm answers to the following questions: What part of the story is depicted by the “Viennese Musical Clock” movement of the entire work *Háry János*? How might events in Kodály’s life have affected his musical compositions?

**2. Science connection**—A clock is a machine. Ask the class the following questions about machines, making a list of their answers on the board:

(a) What are some ways that machines start working? (wind up, plug in, turn dial on, add piece by piece and last piece sets in motion)

(b) What are some ways that machines stop working? (wind down, unplug, turn dial off, get faster and spin out of control, take apart, etc.)

(c) What are the names for different parts of machines? (gears, levers, dials, pistons, etc.)

(d) What kinds of different sounds could we use to portray a machine? (try to get a variety of rhythms, pitches, and timbres)

If possible, look at the moving parts of a mechanical (wind-up) clock or other small “machines.”

**3. Dance/Drama connection**—Allow students to work in small groups of 4 or 5, creating their own Human “Movement-Machine.” They will decide as a group what sounds each part of the machine (each person) will make, how their machine will start, and how it will stop. Encourage students to use three levels of motion (low to ground, middle, and standing), and a variety of sounds/movements. They may think of a title for their machine if they wish.

Circulate around the class as groups work. Choose one group (perhaps the first one ready) to be the A Section, another as B, C, D as an extended rondo form. Have each group perform for the class in its order; the class may evaluate each group using criteria determined in advance and written on the board (see examples below under “Assessment”).

4. In addition to “[Viennese Musical Clock](#),” listen to other recordings depicting machines if possible, such as those compositions listed in the **Materials** section of this lesson. You may wish to “choreograph” a piece with some of the “Movement-Machines” or to create a whole-class machine.

**Closure/Questions:**

What have you learned about today? How does music apply to other subject areas such as literature, history, science, and drama? Tell your neighbor something you learned about the composer Kodály; have your neighbor tell you something you learned about his composition, *Háry János*.

**Assessment/Evaluation:**

Check for understanding throughout lesson. Assess student groups on not only musical/movement skills demonstrated (e.g., a variety of sounds, a variety of movement levels, a beginning and ending, creativity and interest) but also social skills such as group cooperation (sharing everyone's ideas, including everyone in the group, time management, working together effectively). You may wish to have each group self-assess on these skills also.

**Extensions:**

1. What are some other life-stories of composers that you know and how was their music affected? (one example might be Beethoven going deaf; his music contains many contrasts of loud and soft) Sometimes might a composer's music be an escape from negative things going on in his/her life? (yes)
2. Can you think of any examples of pop/rock music that use a famous melody?
3. Listen to another clock-related piece such as Haydn's "Clock" Symphony No. 101 or The Syncopated Clock by Leroy Anderson.

**(Folk music and story connection)**—Listen to examples of folk music in compositions by composers such as Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*, Beethoven's *Wellington's Victory*, or pieces by Brahms or Bartok. Listen to examples of stories set to music such as *Peter and the Wolf* by Prokofiev



## **Story of Háry János** (pronounced yaw'n'-osh)

Háry János was an old man who made up stories about exciting things he had done as a young person. Most of the stories were not true or were exaggerated. Zoltán Kodály wrote this music in 1926 to accompany an opera based on a poem written by someone with the first name of János.

At the very beginning of this suite (collection of pieces) is a big “musical sneeze,” which tells the listener that things probably didn’t happen the way they will be told. After the “Prelude” comes “Viennese Musical Clock,” where Háry is at the court of the Emperor of Austria and he hears the giant clock in Vienna strike noon. According to Háry, the Emperor then sent him on errands or adventures of glory.

The next movement is “Song,” which uses a Hungarian hammered dulcimer called a cimbalom. A Hungarian folk tune is used in this movement. In the next movement, “Battle and Defeat of Napoleon,” Háry makes the ridiculous claim that he alone defeated Napoleon’s army. The music starts with a march, then has brass fanfares. Trombones play some sliding sounds, as if to say, “No way!”

The “Intermezzo” comes next, in the style of a Hungarian dance, again using the cimbalom. The music has two sections that repeat often in this very pretty movement.

The last movement is “Entrance of the Emperor and His Court.” After a march section, this finale uses parts of themes used in previous movements. You can hear the final bells that sound like the clocks in Vienna again.















