

Classics for Kids



Felix Mendelssohn

“Scherzo” from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

Felix Mendelssohn
Born: February 3, 1809
Died: November 4, 1847

Felix Mendelssohn was one of the most loved and successful composers of the 19th century. Born in Hamburg, Germany, he began his musical career, like Mozart, as a child prodigy. Unlike Mozart, however, Mendelssohn’s family was wealthy and able to provide young Felix and his sister, Fanny, with a well-rounded education. Lea Mendelssohn taught her children to play the piano and encouraged them to learn composition as well. Later, Felix and Fanny traveled to Paris for more advanced music lessons. There they studied many of the great composers, including Mozart and Bach. The two siblings stayed close friends throughout their lives.

Returning to Berlin at the age of nine, Mendelssohn began to perform publicly as a pianist. By the time he was a teenager he had already

written some of his greatest music, including symphonies, operas, and works for piano and violin. He was also a wonderful visual artist and became well-known as a conductor. When he was just 20, Mendelssohn put together and conducted the first performance of Johann Sebastian Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* since Bach had died.

In 1841, Mendelssohn was named director of the music section of the Academy of Arts in Berlin, becoming the personal composer for King Frederick of Prussia. It was the King who asked him to compose the incidental music for a performance of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

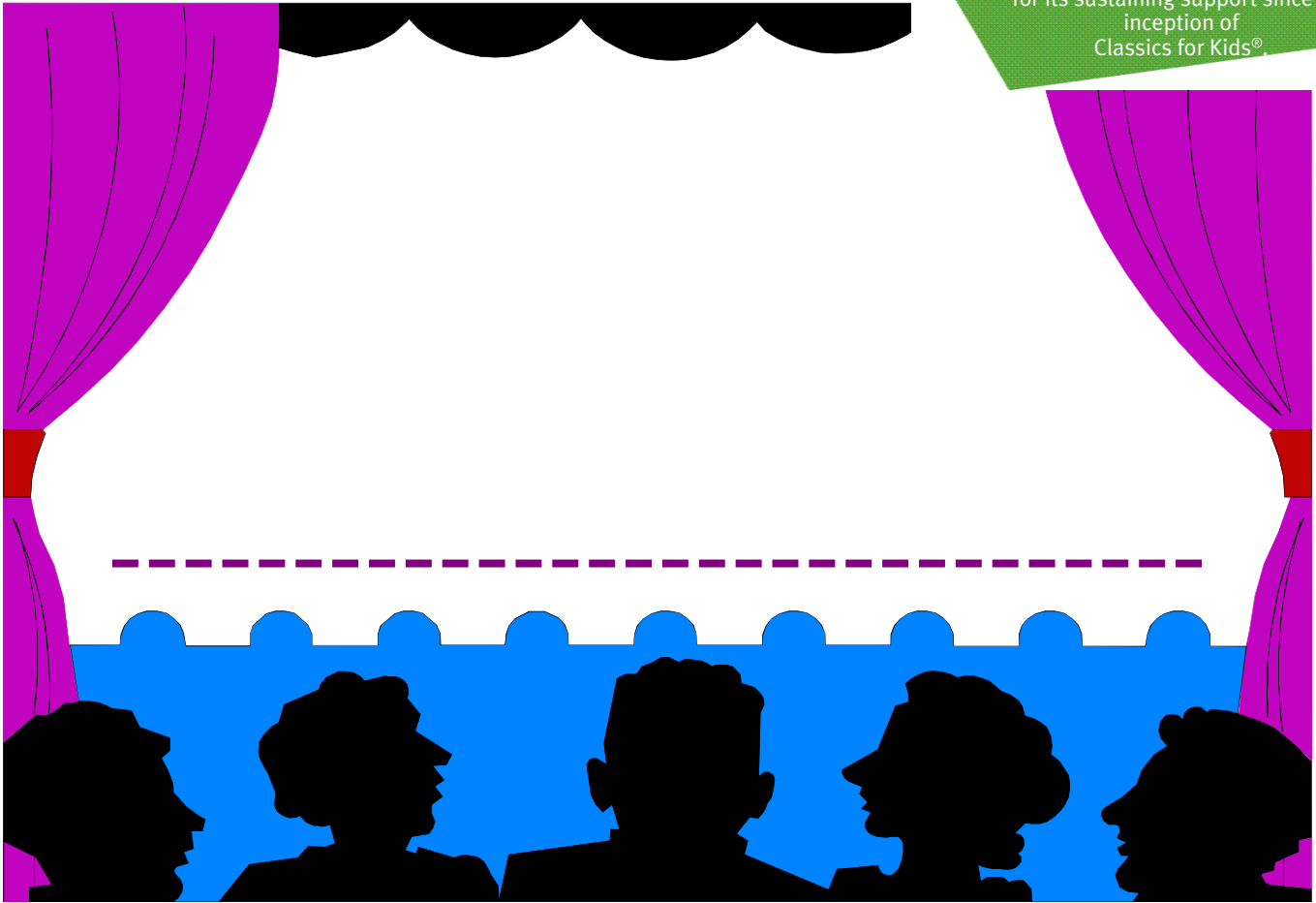
Mendelssohn’s music paints the magical world of the fairies. The “scherzo” is mostly about the fairy servant, Puck, who loves to play jokes. It is the flute that plays Puck’s theme. Listen to the music and let your imagination picture this clever fellow.



In the “Scherzo,” we hear a flute solo which introduces the character Puck. Mendelssohn’s music paints Puck in a magical land of fairies. Puck is a free spirit who tries to do the right thing and make people happy but seems to cause confusion instead. He is a magical creature. You can create your own magical world. Below you will find several fanciful characters. On the next page you will find a stage. Cut out each character and paste it onto a popsicle stick to create a puppet. Carefully cut across the dotted line to create an opening for your puppets in the stage. Listen to Mendelssohn’s music and let your imagination take you into your own “dream.”

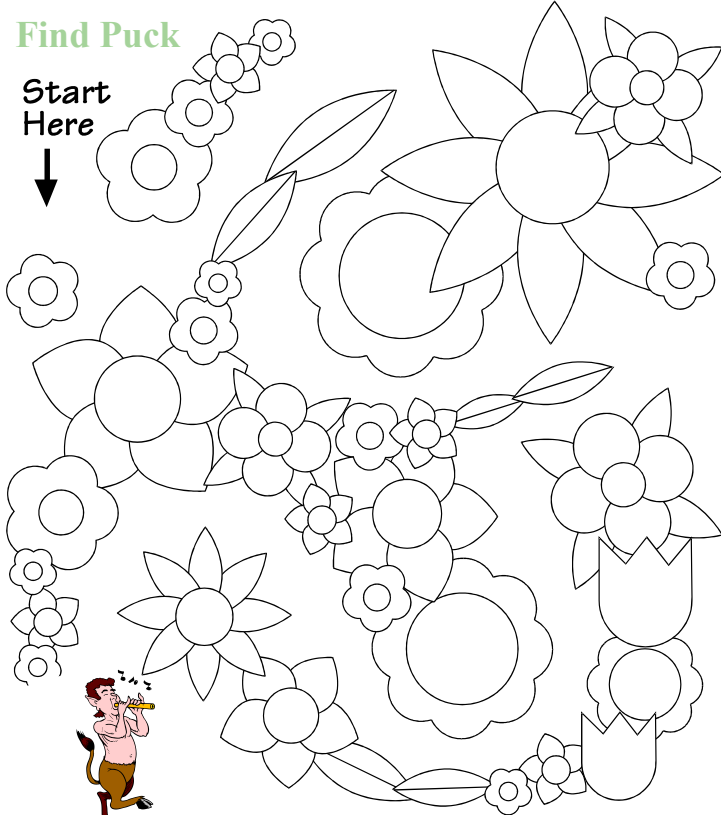


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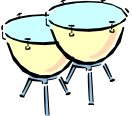





Find Puck

Start
Here



You found me! Now you can color the flowers
in my magical garden

Match-up
Match the name of the
instrument with its picture

	Cello	
	Timpani	
	Viola	
	Violin	
	Flute	
	Chimes	
	French Horn	