



**Introduction to Music Unit for grades K-2**  
**on**  
***William Tell Overture: Finale***  
**by Gioachino Rossini**  
**Dr. Kay Edwards, Miami University**

**Unit Length**

There are 3 lessons in this unit for grades K-2. Lesson plans are designed for class periods of approximately 30-40 minutes. Teachers will need to adapt the lesson plans to fit their school resources and the individual needs of their students.

**Lesson Use**

These 3 lessons are designed for use by general music teachers. However, portions of the lessons could be used by classroom teachers as well.

**Standards**

[National Standards for Music](#) are indicated on each lesson. The 3 lessons combined address 8 of the 9 National Standards (all except #7).

[The Ohio Standards for Music](#) are indicated on each lesson also. Music teachers in other states can easily match their standards to those in this unit. The 3 lessons combined address all of the 5 Ohio Content Standards.

**Multiple Intelligences**

These lessons facilitate musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligence, 4 of the 7 intelligences originally identified by Howard Gardner.

**Overview**

Music Concepts and Objectives/Outcomes are indicated on each lesson. Over the 3 lessons, the Concept Areas of Rhythm, Melody, Expressive Qualities, and Tone Color are used. Skills developed over the 3 lessons are Singing, Moving, Listening, Playing Instruments, Creating, and Relating music to other subject areas such as history and literature.

- Lesson #1: Soft, Slow, and Smooth
- Lesson #2: Loud or Soft, Fast, and Separated
- Lesson #3: Listen, Move, Play
- Bonus Lesson #4: Sing an Opera!

**Prior Knowledge**

No prior knowledge on the part of the student is needed, although it is helpful to have had experience keeping a steady beat, moving to music, or playing unpitched percussion instruments.



## **Materials and Equipment**

Each lesson indicates the required materials and equipment. Whenever playing a recording, it is important to have a high-quality sound system and use a high-quality recording. The Classics for Kids CD or website can be very helpful in this regard! *Special note: Our recording of this work begins with the flute introduction to the English horn in the pastoral section, followed by the famous trumpet fanfare; it does not start with the very beginning of the overture. If using another recording, you will need to cue it to the appropriate starting place.*

## **Instructional Plans (Lesson Plans)**

Each lesson plan has been designed specifically for the grade K-2 age group, although music teachers may have to adapt portions of each plan. The plans have been "teacher-tested" and are easy-to-follow, set up in a format similar to many music series textbooks. Step-by-step guidelines are given under the "Sequence" portion of each lesson.

## **Supplementary Materials**

Some lessons include a listening map or other teacher resources. By clicking on the highlighted, underlined link at that point of the lesson plan, you can read the handout with Adobe Acrobat Reader and print it out for use in your classroom. You may wish to make an overhead transparency in addition to student copies.

## **Assessment/Evaluation**

Assessment strategies are included with each lesson. For grades K-2, simple rubrics tied to the specific objective/outcome of each lesson are sometimes included. Teachers may find it helpful to collect assessment on individual students over longer periods of time, assessing perhaps 8 students during each class, or whatever is practical to maximize instructional time for children to be actively involved.

## **Extensions**

Each lesson includes strategies for extending the lesson either that same day or on a separate day. Teachers may devise their own lesson extensions as they take advantage of the "teachable moments" that occur in their classrooms!



## EXPRESSIVE QUALITIES (Dynamics, Articulation), BEAT (Tempo) SINGING, LISTENING, MOVING

grades K-2

### Lesson Plan #1: Soft, Slow, and Smooth

- National Std. #1:** • Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
- National Std. #6:** • Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
- 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 composers and music from various historical periods; recognize how music and sounds are used in daily life and to express cultural aspects of things; sing, listen, and move to music from various historical periods.)
- Creative Expression and Communication. (Sing, maintaining a steady beat, alone and with others.)
- Analyzing and Responding. (Listen to varied repertoire and respond by analyzing and describing using correct terminology for contrasting elements of music for dynamics and tempo; identify music written for specific purposes.)
- Valuing Music/Aesthetic Reflection. (Respond physically, emotionally, and/or intellectually to a variety of age-appropriate music; demonstrate how music communicates meaning of text, feeling and moods or images.)

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

**Concept:** *Music can be soft, slow, and smooth. Music can be used for specific purposes for the time and place in which it was written. We can move our bodies in ways that match the music as we listen.*

**Objective/Outcome:** Students will sing softly and smoothly, with good singing voices. Students will identify soft dynamics, slow tempo, and smooth [articulation or style] of recorded music through movement and listening. Students will learn about the opening of the *William Tell Overture: Finale* by Rossini, what an overture is, and other biographical/contextual information.

- Materials:**
- recording of *William Tell Overture: Finale* by Gioachino Rossini (available on the [Classics for Kids CD](#) or the [Classics for Kids website](#))
  - [mouse visual](#) or hand puppets (only the mouse is needed)
  - [pictures of Swiss Alps](#) and other pastoral scenes



- streamers (directions for making—see note below\*)
- [picture of Rossini](#)
- [flute and English horn pictures](#)
- [biography of Gioachino Rossini](#)
- [“Hush Little Baby” lullaby](#)
- [“Grizzly Bear” song](#) (for Extension)

### Sequence:

1. Introduce the [mouse visual](#) or puppet and have it talk or sing softly to the class. Choose a familiar song such as “Mary Had a Little Lamb” and invite the class to sing along softly with the mouse puppet or visual (you can begin on the note G or A). Have the class sing the song rather slowly and smoothly.
2. Next, play a segment of the beginning of the [recording of Rossini’s \*William Tell Overture: Finale\*](#) (from 0:00-2:55, as much as appropriate for attention span). While listening, display [pictures of the Swiss Alps and peaceful, pastoral scenes](#), perhaps with sheep or lambs, birds twittering about, and a shepherd or sheep-herder playing a flute or English horn (a larger oboe). Display [flute and English horn pictures](#). Tell them that the person who wrote this music (the *composer*) was describing these mountains and meadows to “set the scene”—to tell the audience where the story of this music and the music that will follow takes place. We call the opening music an *overture*.
3. Ask students to describe the music. After hearing several responses, guide them by asking, “Was the music loud or soft, compared to other music you’ve heard?” (soft) “Was the music slow or fast compared to other music you’ve heard?” (slow) Tell students that we call the speed of the music’s beat its *tempo*. “Was the music smooth or separated (choppy-sounding), compared to other music you’ve heard?” (smooth) “How would you move or dance to this music?” (smooth, flowing, small movements) “Today you get to use streamers to move to this music, to show that it is soft, slow, and smooth.” Review your classroom rules concerning movement. Explain that everyone moves silently while the music is playing and freezes in place when the music stops.
4. Distribute the streamers and have students find their own place scattered throughout the room. [Play the recording](#) and allow students to move freely in ways that match the music. After a short time, pause the recording (check that students freeze) and describe some of the movements you saw that matched the soft, slow, and smooth quality of the music. [Continue the recording](#) for awhile then pause it again, describing more of the movements that reflected the music. Encourage the children to explore low, medium, and high levels of movement with their bodies and to move their legs/feet as well as their arms/hands.
5. Divide the class in two groups (halves). One half will move (on your cue) to the solo flute; the other half will move to the solo English horn. When both instruments play, both halves will move. [Play the recording](#) from the beginning and give cues to each group when to move.

*Times for each section using Classics for Kids CD or website; may vary slightly on different recordings.*

0:00-0:10     flute introduction  
0:11-0:25     English horn solo



- 0:26-0:41 flute solo echoes  
0:42-0:55 English horn solo  
0:56-1:16 flute solo echoes  
1:17-2:55 English horn and flute obbligato; here, you may need to explain that the flute is playing lots of quick notes, like a twittering bird, but that the overall speed (*tempo*) of the piece is still slow.

[Note: If you wish, second graders could do “delayed mirroring” movements, similar to a canon, with partners rather than dividing the entire class in halves.]

6. With students sitting on the floor near you, tell the story about the *composer* Gioachino Rossini (show [picture of Rossini](#)), who wrote this music. Rossini lived from 1792-1868 and was born in Italy (find Italy on a world map). This particular music depicted the Swiss Alps, in the country called Switzerland (find Switzerland on a world map).

7. Share more biographical information on Rossini (see [biography of Gioachino Rossini](#)), including what it was like to be a musician in his time and what was happening in the world during his lifetime.

8. End the class by singing a soft, slow, smooth song that helps a baby fall to sleep. Ask the class if they know what this special type of song is called. (a lullaby) See if the class can guess your “secret song”; sing [“Hush Little Baby”](#) on the neutral syllable “loo,” beginning on the pitch C, D, or E. Lead the class in singing one or more verses of this American lullaby. Students can pretend to rock a baby back and forth slowly and smoothly to the beat as they sing.

### Questions/Closure:

Ask class to describe what they learned in music class today in order to tell their classroom teacher, a parent, or a friend and to describe how they learned these things. Review the terms *tempo*, *composer*, and *overture*.

### Evaluation/Assessment:

1. Observe students’ understanding of soft, slow, and smooth as demonstrated through movement and singing, noting whether they demonstrate it “all of the time,” “some of the time,” or “not consistently yet.”
2. Call on several students to answer your questions (without raising their hands, with everyone having the answer “ready”) regarding Rossini and the beginning of the *William Tell Overture: Finale*.

### Extension:

1. Listen to other overtures by Rossini such as those for *The Barber of Seville*, or *The Thieving Magpie*.
2. Play a singing game that uses both soft and loud, such as [“Grizzly Bear”](#) or the ever-familiar song, “John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith.” (Emphasize good singing in a full voice for the loud part rather than shouting!)
3. Engage the class in locomotor movement to other pieces that are soft, slow, and smooth such as “The Swan” or “Aquarium” from *Carnival of the Animals* by Saint-Saëns, or, lead a Dalcroze-type activity using contrasts of soft and loud, slow and fast, or smooth and separated while playing the piano or another classroom instrument.



4. Listen to another orchestral piece that depicts a pastoral scene or meadow, such as the movement entitled "In the Meadow" (Aufderheide) from *Symphony Fantastique* by Berlioz, "Morning" from *Peer Gynt Suite* by Grieg, or a section from *Symphony No. 6 "Pastoral"* by Beethoven.

**\*Directions for making streamers:**

Purchase "scrunchies" (elastic pony tail holders) so that you will have at least one per child. Purchase different colors of thin ribbon and cut the ribbon into strips, approximately 2 feet in length. Tie the end of each ribbon onto the "scrunchie" in various places. Children can now slip the streamer onto their hand or wrist. If you wish, make 2 streamers per child.



## EXPRESSIVE QUALITIES (Dynamics, Articulation), BEAT (Tempo) SINGING, LISTENING, MOVING

grades K-2

### Lesson Plan #2: Loud or Soft, Fast, and Separated

**National Std. #1:** • Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

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

**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 composers and music from various historical periods; recognize how music and sounds are used in daily life and to express cultural aspects of things; sing, listen, and move to music from various historical periods.)

• Creative Expression and Communication. (Sing, maintaining a steady beat, alone and with others.)

• Analyzing and Responding. (Listen to varied repertoire and respond by analyzing and describing using correct terminology for contrasting elements of music for dynamics—loud/soft and tempo—fast; identify music written for specific purposes.)

• Valuing Music/Aesthetic Reflection. (Respond physically, emotionally, and/or intellectually to a variety of age-appropriate music; demonstrate how music communicates meaning of text, feeling and moods or images.)

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

**Concept:** *Music can be loud or soft, fast, and separated (not smooth). Music can be used for specific purposes for the time and place in which it was written. We can move our bodies in ways that match the music as we listen.*

**Objective/Outcome:** Students will sing loudly/softly and quickly/slowly, with good singing voices. Students will identify loud and soft dynamics, fast tempo, and separated [articulation or style] of recorded music through movement and listening. Students will learn about the most famous, main section of the *William Tell Overture: Finale* by Rossini, what an *overture* is, and other biographical/contextual information.

**Materials:** • recording of *William Tell Overture: Finale* by Gioachino Rossini (available on the [Classics for Kids CD](#) or the [Classics for Kids website](#))



- [lion and mouse visuals](#) or hand puppets (Teacher's Resource for Dynamics)
- [rabbit and turtle visuals](#) or hand puppets (Teacher's Resource for Tempo)
- [pictures of Swiss Alps](#) and other pastoral scenes
- [listening map for William Tell Overture: Finale](#)
- [picture of Rossini](#)

### Sequence:

1. Introduce the [lion puppet or visual \(Teacher's Resource for Dynamics\)](#) and say that when a lion roars, it is loud compared to a mouse. Choose a familiar song such as "Yankee Doodle" (you can begin on the note G) and invite the class to sing along loudly *with good singing and "inside" voices* along with the lion puppet or visual. (You may need to demonstrate "good, loud singing." Next, introduce the [mouse puppet \(Teacher's Resource for Dynamics\) or visual](#) and have it talk or sing softly to the class. Invite the class to sing along softly with the mouse puppet or visual.
2. Beginning with both puppets behind your back, play a game of "switch" where you sing "Yankee Doodle" softly throughout the first phrase ("Yankee Doodle went to town a-riding on a pony") as you display the mouse puppet until the second phrase ("stuck a feather in his hat and called it macaroni"), when the lion puppet is displayed instead and the children sing loudly. (If desired, "switch" again in different places in the song, or have student leaders use the puppets.)
3. Explain that we call the loud and soft of music its *expression* or *dynamics*. If desired, explain the Italian terms *forte* and *piano* and their corresponding dynamic markings for loud and soft, respectively. Tell the class that the special music we will hear today has both soft and loud sections.
4. Next, using your [rabbit and turtle visuals \(Teacher's Resource for Tempo\)](#) or hand puppets, sing "Yankee Doodle" fast (with the rabbit) or slow (with the turtle). Ask students if they can figure out why you changed speeds and what the two pictures might mean. Then ask if they know the story of the Tortoise (like a turtle) and the Hare (like a rabbit). Give a brief [synopsis of the story](#) if you wish, emphasizing that although a rabbit could move slowly if it wanted to, it is known for moving quickly, as in the famous story of The Tortoise and the Hare. Introduce the term *tempo*, meaning the speed of the beat. Tell the class that the special music we will hear has a slow section and a fast section. (See Bonus Lesson #4 to create an opera of this story.)
5. Play a brief segment of the beginning of the [recording of Rossini's William Tell Overture: Finale](#) (from 0:00-1:16, as much as appropriate for attention span). While listening, display [pictures of the Swiss Alps and peaceful, pastoral scenes](#), perhaps with sheep or lambs, birds twittering about, and a shepherd or sheepherder playing a flute or oboe/English horn. Tell them that the person who wrote this music (the *composer*) was describing these mountains and meadows to "set the scene"—to tell the audience where the story of this music and the music that will follow takes place. We call the opening music an *overture*. Next, play a brief segment of the fast and most-famous section of the overture (from 2:56-3:24). Tell them that the composer was describing a "call to arms," or a "wake-up call"



for men to get on their horses and be prepared to protect themselves, their family, and their country.

6. Ask students to compare the two sections. After hearing several responses, guide them by asking, "Was the second music loud or soft, compared to the first music you heard, or were there changes back and forth from loud to soft to loud again?" (loud in the beginning, but changes back and forth later). "Was the second music slow or fast compared to the first music?" (fast) Tell students that we call the speed of the music's beat its *tempo*. "Was the second music smooth or separated (jumpy or choppy-sounding), compared to first music you heard?" (separated) "How would you move or dance to the second music?" (jumpy, very quick galloping, pretend to be horses or riding on horses)

7. [Begin the recording](#) at 2:56 (the brass fanfare) again, and lead students in this section of the music. If you wish, use students' ideas for ways to tap the beat that you gather ahead of time, to avoid talking over the music, or, you can tapping the quick beat (quarter note=120) in various places on their body to fit the form of the music; change to patting the beat differently with each main select student leaders and assess their beat competency (see Assessment section).

*Times for each section using Classics for Kids CD or website; may vary slightly with different recordings.*

2:56	Introduction (brass fanfare)
3:10	A–main theme (soft, louder at end of theme)
3:17	A–main theme repeated, piccolo added
3:23	B theme (loud)
3:30	B theme repeated
3:36	transition (soft)
3:43	A theme returns
3:50	A repeats
3:57	C theme (loud)
4:04	C theme repeated
4:10	D theme, violins (soft)
4:20	D theme, second section
4:34	C returns (loud)
4:40	C repeats
4:47	B returns (loud)
4:53	B repeats
4:59	transition returns (softer)
5:06	A returns
5:13	A repeats, instruments added
5:19	Ending, part #1
5:38	Ending, part #2
5:56-6:19	Coda, final ending

8. Display the [listening map](#) for *William Tell Overture: Finale* (as a transparency on an overhead projector, if possible). Demonstrate how to use the map as a "tapping page" to tap the beat on the figures. During the Introduction/brass fanfare, the children will tap on the trumpet (2:56-3:09 on the recording); upon



your verbal cue for section A, they tap on the figure of the man on the horse with a flag (3:10-3:22); during section B and the transition that follows, they tap on the second figure of the man on the horse holding a bugle (3:23-3:42). Upon your verbal cue, the children then tap on the section A figure (3:43-3:56). Only this much of the recording is used for the listening map; highlight the A-B-A form of this part of the music. If you wish, explain the repeat sign.

9. Next, distribute copies and have students use their own copy of the listening map while listening to the recording. You may wish to guide their tapping by simultaneously tapping on the overhead transparency so that students can “check” to see if they are in the right place. [Note: The music begins immediately with the tapping; encourage the class to “catch up” if they miss the first beat or two.] On another hearing, the students can tap by themselves. As they do, circulate around the room to check for students’ understanding and assess (see Assessment section).

10. [If time permits] “Today you get to move around the room to this music, to show that it is fast and jumpy...Was the music always loud?” (no) “How can we show the soft sections with our movements?” (can make small movements or tiptoe—but there are many sudden changes back to loud and this will be difficult) Review your classroom rules concerning movement. Explain that everyone moves silently while the music is playing and *freezes* in place when the music stops.

11. Have students find their own place scattered throughout the room. [Play the recording](#) and allow students to move freely in ways that match the music. After a short time, pause the recording (check that students *freeze*) and describe some of the movements you saw that matched the quality of the music. Continue the recording for awhile then pause it again, describing more of the movements that reflected the music. Encourage the children to explore low, medium, and high levels of movement with their bodies and to move their legs/feet as well as their arms/hands. If you wish, make a game of Stop and Start by continuing to pause the recording and having the students freeze.

12. With students sitting back in their regular places, tell them this famous music was written by composer Gioachino Rossini (show [picture of Rossini](#)). Mr. Rossini lived from 1792-1868 and was born in Italy (find Italy on a world map). The story behind this particular music took place in the country called Switzerland (find Switzerland on a world map).

### Questions/Closure:

Ask class to describe what they learned in music class today in order to tell their classroom teacher, a parent, or a friend and to describe how they learned these things. Review the terms *expression*, *tempo*, *composer*, and *overture*. Also review the last name of the person who composed this music (Rossini)

### Evaluation/Assessment:

1. Observe students’ understanding of loud/soft, fast, and smooth/separated as demonstrated through movement and singing, noting whether they demonstrate it “all of the time,” “some of the time,” or “not consistently yet.” If you wish, have



individual students sing “Yankee Doodle” loud/soft or fast/slow upon your cue and take note their responses using these three indicators.

2. Observe students’ ability to keep a steady beat by patting their bodies or tapping the listening map, noting whether they demonstrate a steady beat “all of the time,” “some of the time,” or “not consistently yet.”
3. Call on several students to answer your questions (without raising their hands, with everyone having the answer “ready”) regarding Rossini and the most famous section of the *William Tell Overture: Finale*.

**Extension:**

1. Listen to other overtures by Rossini such as those for *The Barber of Seville* (very well-known and was used in a classic Bugs Bunny cartoon where Bugs in a barber) or *The Thieving Magpie*.
2. Play a singing game that uses both soft and loud, such as [“Grizzly Bear”](#) or the ever-familiar song, “John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith.” (Emphasize good singing in a full voice for the loud part rather than shouting!)
3. Engage the class in locomotor movement to other pieces that are fast such as “Fleet-Footed Animals” or “Aviary” from *Carnival of the Animals* by Saint-Saëns, or, lead a Dalcroze-type activity using contrasts of soft and loud, slow and fast, or smooth and separated while playing the piano or another classroom instrument.
4. Listen to another orchestral piece that depicts riding on horses such as *Light Cavalry Overture* by Van Suppé, or the piano piece “The Wild Horseman” by Robert Schumann.



## RHYTHM (Steady Beat, Fast Tempo); TONE COLOR MOVING, LISTENING, PLAYING

grades K–2

### Lesson Plan #3: Listen, Move, Play

- National Std. #6:** • Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.  
**National Std. #2:** • Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.  
**National Std. #7:** • Evaluating music and music performances.

**Ohio Standards:** • Historical, Cultural and Social Contexts. (Sing, listen, and move to music from various historical periods and by different composers; recognize how music and sounds are used in daily life.)  
• Creative Expression and Communication. (Play a variety of classroom instruments with proper technique.)  
• Analyzing and Responding. Listen to varied repertoire and respond by analyzing and describing music using correct terminology. (Identify contrasting elements of music, fast/slow, dynamics; use musical terms; identify selected musical instruments; identify music written for specific purposes.)  
• Valuing Music/Aesthetic Reflection. Students demonstrate an understanding of why people value music and a respect for personal music preferences. They also evaluate their own response to music.

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

**Concept:** *Music can have a steady beat, which we can show with our movements. Instruments (and voices) have unique sounds, called tone color.*

**Objective/Outcome:** Students will use body motions to the beat and play unpitched percussion instruments to the beat.

- Materials:**
- recording of *William Tell Overture: Finale* by Gioachino Rossini (available on the [Classics for Kids CD](#) or the [Classics for Kids website](#))
  - unpitched percussion instruments (drums, triangles or finger cymbals, woodblocks or rhythm sticks, maracas, sandblocks or guiros)
  - [teacher's resource for unpitched percussion instruments](#)
  - [story of William Tell](#)
  - vocal tone color singing game "[Doggie, Doggie](#)" for Extension)



## Sequence:

1. Begin by stating that if all goes well, everyone will get a turn to play an instrument today. The class should show you they understand how to keep the beat with some very exciting and well-known music.
2. [Play the first minute or so of recording](#), beginning at the brass fanfare at 2:56. Lead the class in ways to pat or tap the beat with both hands patting simultaneously. Switch to other body parts to fit the form or phrasing of the music. Pause the recording and ask for a show of hands of how many people have heard that music before. Tell them that it is a very famous piece called the *William Tell Overture: Finale* (and that it was once used in a TV show called “The Lone Ranger”).
3. Next, tell the class that today everyone will get to be the leader and come up with a way to pat or tap the beat. Give them some “think time” to come up with one idea (and maybe an extra one in case someone else does their idea). As their signal to you that they have their idea ready, they can stand up and make a circle.
4. Tell the class that when you make a sound on an instrument that you have (such as a hand drum), that signal will mean it is the next person’s turn to lead the class with a way to keep the beat. When everyone is ready, start the recording at 2:56, the brass fanfare, which you can use as an introduction for everyone to nod his head to feel the quick pulse of the music. Then, begin with the child on your left; everyone follows that child’s motion to the beat. Then give the instrument cue to go on to the next person; do this in a way that fits the general formal structure of ends of sections or phrases, or, just change leaders every 16 beats. If a child’s motion is not on beat, play your instrument softly to emphasize the beat of the music. You may wish to assess beat competency of individual students during this time (see Assessment section).  
*Times for each section using Classics for Kids CD or website; may vary slightly on different recordings.*

2:56	Introduction (brass fanfare)
3:10	A—main theme (soft, louder at end of theme)
3:17	A—main theme repeated, piccolo added
3:23	B theme (loud)
3:30	B theme repeated
3:36	transition (soft)
3:43	A theme returns
3:50	A repeats
3:57	C theme (loud)
4:04	C theme repeated
4:10	D theme, violins (soft)
4:20	D theme, second section
4:34	C returns (loud)
4:40	C repeats
4:47	B returns (loud)
4:53	B repeats



4:59	transition returns (softer)
5:06	A returns
5:13	A repeats, piccolo added
5:19	Ending, part #1
5:38	Ending, part #2
5:56-6:19	Coda, final ending

(When you finish, you may choose to ask what it is about this music that people like, or what it is that they like. “Why did people like this music so much that they used it as a TV show theme song?” This can make a nice discussion.)

5. If the class has done an excellent job to this point of the lesson, praise them and tell them that soon they will get to play an instrument.
6. Review the sounds of various classroom percussion instruments and the correct way to play each one. Tell the class that just like each of our voices sounds unique and special, the sound of each type of instrument is unique, too; we call the unique sound of each instrument and voice *tone color*. As you review the sound of each instrument, ask the class to name the instrument, then show the corresponding visual for that instrument (see [Teacher's Resource for unpitched percussion instruments](#)—you may wish to enlarge each picture).
7. Distribute the unpitched percussion instruments that are available such as hand drums, triangles and/or finger cymbals, woodblocks and/or rhythm sticks, maracas, and sandblocks and/or guiros. Allow each “section” (group of children all playing the same instrument) a very brief time of exploration and individual play that stops upon your signal (such as flicking the light off and on).
8. Have each “section” of instruments practice playing softly to the approximate speed of the recording, first without the recording. Explain that each “section” of instruments will play only when you hold up the card for that instrument; when a new card is held up, only that instrument group plays. Next, play the recording beginning at 2:56, changing instrument sections to fit the formal structure of the music or every 16 beats.
9. Have each “section” put away their instruments; have children gather on the floor near where you are sitting. Ask they have heard of the word legend. “What is a *legend*?” (a story that has been passed down for generations, and there is no way to know if it is true; a person can also be referred to as a legend) A legend is a type of story. The music you heard today is music first written to be played right before an opera begins. “What is an *opera*?” (a play where all the words are sung) The music that is played right before an opera begins and the curtains open is called an *overture*.

The opera is called *William Tell*, named after the main character in the story or legend. William Tell helped lead a revolt (a type of war) against a mean leader. Part of the legend is that the mean leader caught William Tell and his son and told William that his son wouldn't be killed if William could use a bow and arrow and shoot the arrow through an apple placed on his son's head...and he did it! (Instead, if you wish, you may use [the story of William Tell](#); scroll down the activity page to find this.)

**Closure/Questions:** What is the term we use to refer to the unique sound of



everyone's voice and each instrument's sound? (tone color) What famous piece of music did we keep the beat with today, using our bodies and instruments? (*William Tell Overture: Finale*) What is a legend? (a story passed down) What is an opera? (a play where the words are sung)

**Assessment/Evaluation:** Check for beat competency and correct usage of percussion instruments. You may wish to use a rubric such as \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name) can do "all or most of the time," "some of the time," or "not yet." You may wish to videotape the lesson and review it later for this purpose. Check for understanding of the terms *opera*, *overture*, *legend*, and *tone color*.

**Extensions:**

1. Tap the beat or play instruments to the beat of other "horse-related" music such as *Light Cavalry Overture* by von Suppé.
  2. Play an instrument-identification game by making a set of the [Teacher's Resource for unpitched percussion instruments](#) for each child, cutting up into individual instrument "cards" and placing these in plastic baggies. Small groups of children (or just one child) can play an instrument behind the piano or other visual barrier. Upon your signal, everyone holds up the card for the instrument they hear.
  3. Play a voice-identification singing game such as [Doggie, Doggie](#), where the students are sitting in a circle and their eyes are covered. One child is the Doggie in the middle of the sitting circle with the bone behind him/her. The teacher taps a child sitting in the circle to go up and take the bone and go back to their place. The "Doggie" sings the third line, asking who has the bone; the child who now has it sings the last line. The "Doggie" guesses who it is by the sound of his/her voice.
1. Ask the classroom teacher or librarian to share other books about Rossini or the legend of William tell, such as *William Tell* by Leonard Everett Fisher (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1996) or *William Tell* by Felicity Trotman (Raintree Children's Books, 1987).



**MELODY  
LISTENING, SINGING, PLAYING**

**grades K–2**

**Bonus Lesson Plan #4: Sing an Opera!**

- National Std. #6:** • Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
- National Std. #1:** • Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
- National Std. #2:** • Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of 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.

- Ohio Standards:** • Historical, Cultural and Social Contexts. (Recognize how music and sounds are used in daily lives; identify, listen and respond to music of different composers.)
- Creative Expression and Communication. (Sing, alone and with others; use the head voice to produce a light, clear sound and maintain appropriate posture; improvise on selected lyrics (text); play a variety of classroom instruments with proper technique; sing with expressive qualities [an above-grade level skill, grade 3], improvise simple phrases.)
  - Analyzing and Responding (Identify when an individual is performing; recognize and discuss individual and group music performance.)
  - Valuing Music/Aesthetic Reflection (Participate in developmentally appropriate music activities; attend live music performances and demonstrate audience behavior appropriate for the context and style of music performed; demonstrate how music communicates meaning of text, feelings and moods or images.)
  - Connections, Relationships, and Applications: Identify similarities and differences between music and other arts disciplines (Use music and/or found sounds together with dance, drama and visual art; recognize connections between music experiences and another curricular subject such as English language arts; identify various uses of music in their cultures.)

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

**Concept:** *An opera is a story-play where all the words are sung; we can make up our own opera using a famous story we know.*

**Objective/Outcome:** Students will sing an improvised “opera.”

**Materials:**

- recording of *William Tell Overture: Finale* by Gioachino Rossini (available on the [Classics for Kids CD](#) or the [Classics for Kids website](#))
- pitched percussion instruments (resonator bells, xylophones, etc.) or unpitched percussion instruments (drums, triangles, woodblocks, rhythm sticks, maracas, guiros, etc.)
- [story of William Tell](#)
- [story of The Tortoise and the Hare](#)
- [rabbit and turtle visuals \(Teacher's Resource for Tempo\)](#)

**Sequence:**

1. As students enter the classroom, [play the first minute or so of the recording](#), beginning at the brass fanfare at 2:56 (if you are using another recording, cue it to the famous brass fanfare). Lead the class in ways to pat or tap the beat with both hands patting simultaneously. Switch to other body parts to fit the form or phrasing of the music (if you wish, consult Teacher Resource below). Pause the recording and ask for a show of hands of how many people have heard that music before. Tell them that it is a very famous piece called the *William Tell Overture: Finale* (and that it was once used in a TV show called “The Lone Ranger”).

*Times for each section using Classics for Kids CD or website; may vary slightly with different recordings.*

2:56	Introduction (brass fanfare)
3:10	A—main theme (soft, louder at end of theme)
3:17	A—main theme repeated, piccolo added
3:23	B theme (loud)
3:30	B theme repeated
3:36	transition (soft)
3:43	A theme returns
3:50	A repeats

2. Have children gather on the floor near where you are sitting. Ask they have heard of the word legend. “What is a *legend*?” (a story that has been passed down for generations, and there is no way to know if it is true; a person can also be referred to as a legend) A legend is a type of story. The music you heard today is music first written to be played right before an opera begins. “What is an *opera*?” (a play where all the words are sung) The music that is played right before an opera begins and the curtains open is called an *overture*. The opera is called *William Tell*, named after the main character in the story or legend. William Tell helped lead a revolt (a type of war) against a mean leader. Part of the legend is that the mean leader caught William Tell and his son and told William that his son wouldn’t be killed if William could use a bow and arrow and shoot the arrow through an apple placed on his son’s head...and he did it! If you wish, you may use [the story of William Tell](#) (scroll down the activity page to find this) or books on William Tell for young readers such as *William Tell* by



Leonard Everett Fisher (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1996) or *William Tell* by Felicity Trotman (Raintree Children's Books, 1987).

3. Emphasize that in an opera all the words are sung instead of spoken. Now, see if they can guess what famous story (or fable, which has a moral to the story) you are thinking of after you give them some clues. The story has to do with going fast or slow....any guesses? This story has to do with two animals, one that goes fast and one that goes slow....the tortoise and the hare. (Explain that a tortoise is similar to a turtle and a hare, spelled h-a-r-e, is similar to a rabbit. Today you will use pictures of a turtle and rabbit instead. Display [rabbit and turtle visual using Teacher's Resource for Tempo.](#))

4. Tell the story of [The Tortoise and the Hare](#). Ask students to think about what kinds of things the tortoise would say during the story. Do the same thing with the hare, the friends of the tortoise (what kinds of animals might those be?), and the crowd cheering at the race. What would those same comments sound like if they were sung instead of spoken? Give a few examples, vocally improvising using So, Mi, La—or any other pitches. Ask for student volunteers to do the same. Encourage creativity and praise their efforts.

5. Choose student volunteers to be each character, including friends of the tortoise (and perhaps friends of the hare), someone who starts the race, someone who declares the winner at the finish line, and the animal audience at the race. Give everyone who wants to participate a job. You can also add musicians who will play an *overture* before the opera begins using pitched or unpitched percussion instruments, or, create special musical themes for the tortoise and the hare and incorporate other sound effects throughout the opera. (Other students can be the audience for the opera, but save this option for last...you could also have someone in charge of turning off part of the lights.)

You could even use simple props or costume items such as a finish line, numbers for the racers to wear, a "bunny ears" headband or the rabbit and turtle visuals cut out and pinned to hats, or other items. Perform the improvised opera!

6. Ask the class to evaluate the opera they put together today. What would we change if we wanted to perform it for an audience? What was a strength (something good) in our opera? What is a suggestion to make it even better? Have the students self-evaluate how they did for their particular part, emphasizing that it took everyone to do the opera because everyone's job is important.

**Closure/Questions:** What famous piece of music did we keep the beat with today, using our bodies? (*William Tell Overture*) What is a *legend*? (a story passed down) What is an *opera*? (a play where the words are sung) What famous story or fable did we perform as an opera today? (The Tortoise and the Hare)

**Assessment/Evaluation:** Check for the ability to vocally improvise and make written notes as to which children did this today. Check for understanding of the terms *opera*, *overture*, and *legend*. Take notes from the class evaluation and the individual self-evaluation regarding the opera.



**Extensions:**

1. Perform another improvised opera to a famous story such as *The Three Bears*.
2. Listen to other orchestra pieces about turtles and an animal that jumps a lot, such as "Turtles" and "Kangaroo" from *Carnival of the Animals* by Camille Saint-Saëns.