

Red Thread

Supporting Materials Packet



Red Thread (Sarah Larsson, Dex Wolfe; Kat Parent and Rada Kolarova not pictured)

Photo Credit: Jenny Cvek

About the Performers:

Red Thread is a contemporary folk group featuring voice, acoustic guitar, and electronic loops/production. Fusing storytelling, humor, and exploration of immigrant roots, Red Thread's music is full of intricate vocal harmony. Their music explores the cultural influences of European-descended roots music, including Balkan, Yiddish, Irish, Scandinavian, and Americana folk songs.

Learning Goals:

1. Students will hear music from a European heritage folk tradition and understand its function (e.g. a work song or a lullaby.)
2. Students will understand that folk music styles are developed in a place and can travel, just like people.
3. Students will understand that singing a song is a form of storytelling and will actively sing story song in at least two non-English languages.

Preparing for your Class Notes Concert

Thank you for signing up for a Class Notes Concert, brought to you by YourClassical MPR!

The Class Notes team has created two resources to help prepare for and extend the Class Notes Concerts experience:

1. **Meet the Artist PowerPoint.** Build excitement for the concert by introducing the ensemble in advance. Students will learn key information like instrumentation and style of music.
2. **Supporting Materials Packet.** The lessons in this packet come from the [Class Notes Lesson Library](#). The first lesson is designed to be a starting point for discussing audience behavior prior to the concert. All other lessons align with learning objectives for this artist. Use these before the concert to introduce an important musical concept or after the experience to reinforce learning. Every classroom is different. Teachers should customize all content to fit student needs.

After your Class Notes Concert, please fill out our teacher survey and have your students complete our student survey. Class Notes staff will send a link with instructions after your concert.

PACKET CONTENTS

- 1) What is an AUDIENCE?
- 2) Music & Geography: Around the World
- 3) Music & Literacy: Create a Musical Story
- 4) Instrument Exploration: Guitar



What is an AUDIENCE?

Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-3
Learning Objective:	Students will demonstrate active listening and positive audience behavior in a concert setting.
Total Video Time:	5:29

INTRODUCE the concept of audience

1. Ask, "Have you ever been to a concert or performance?" Allow students time to respond.
2. Explain, "There are two main jobs at a concert: the job of the *performer*, and the job of the *audience*."
3. Ask students to share with a classmate about a time they watched a performance. What did the performer do? What did the audience do?

After some time for students to discuss with each other, encourage students to share out their experiences with the class, supporting and validating the variety of experiences.

4. Remind students, "There are many kinds of audiences. The type of concert influences how an audience responds."
5. As a classroom, create a chart listing positive and respectful audience behavior. Use the [sample chart](#) as a starting point.

LEARN about being an audience

1. Explain, "Sometimes an audience will dance and sing along with a performer. Sometimes it's the job of an audience to listen and notice as many sounds as possible. When we need to notice sounds, our own voices and body wiggles can keep us from hearing the performer. So it can be helpful to let out some wiggles and sounds before listening."
2. Learn to sing a song about being in the audience: "We Are The Audience." (Download the score [here](#).)
3. Watch our Class Notes Video: [What to do at a Concert](#).

EXTEND learning about being an audience

Choose one or more activities to extend learning.

1. Practice audience skills by utilizing one of our [Class Notes Virtual Concerts](#). In these lessons, teachers play the role of Concert Host, and students play the role of the audience.
2. Hold your own classroom concert! Assign performers, audience members, and observers. The job of the observers is to notice good audience behavior. (i.e. "I noticed STUDENT was watching the performer and not talking!")



Visuals: What is an AUDIENCE?

We Are the Audience when....

- We **listen to** and **notice** sounds.
- We research in advance: Who is visiting your school? Where are they from? What type of music can you expect?
- We follow directions on where and how to sit so you can see and hear.
- We are curious! What questions would you ask the performer?
- We notice the *timbre*, or unique and special sounds, made by each instrument or voice.
- We make predictions. What do you think will happen next?
- We share your experience with someone at home.
- We show appreciation at the end by clapping.



Visuals: What is an AUDIENCE?

We Are the Audience

K. Condon

Voice

We are the aud - i - ence, it's our job to li - i - sten, Let all your

6

Vo.

wi - ggles out be - fore the mu - sic be - e - gins. (WIGGLE!!!) We are the

11

Vo.

aud - i - ence, it's our job to li - i - sten. Feel your bo - dy qui - et down,

16

Vo.

so sounds can co - ome in.

Suggestion for song usage:

The first time the song is introduced, ask students to watch and listen, and encourage them to keep a steady beat (maybe by rhythmically bouncing one fist on top of another.) Perform just the first half of the song. When you get to the “wobble” part, ask them to join you. Repeat the first part of the song again- this time they can join you in the singing. After the second wobble, explain, “This time the song starts the same, but ends differently.” Slow down and get considerably quieter on “Feel your body quiet down...” so that you are at a slow whisper by the end of the song.



MUSIC & GEOGRAPHY: Around the World

Age Range: Elementary, Middle School, Grades 2-8

Learning Objective: Students will demonstrate an understanding that artistic works are influenced by personal and cultural contexts.

INTRODUCE music around the world with a game

1. Ask students to name a song, and then ask where it's from. Encourage them to research if they don't know.
2. Repeat several times. If examples seem to all be from a very specific time or place, encourage them to think of a song from someplace else.
3. After a few rounds, students will begin to draw the connection that music is a cultural expression, and that music comes from everywhere.

EXPLORE music around the world

1. Show students a blank map of the world [like this one](#). Explain that you will visit various locations. During each "visit" you will learn about a particular style of music that originated in that area. "Visits" might be spread out over several class periods.
2. Select locations/musical styles from the options below, or others of your own choosing:
 - *Traditional Ojibwe singing*-Minnesota/the Dakotas/Canada
 - *Ragtime*-St. Louis, MO
 - *Mariachi*-Mexico
 - *Alpine yodeling*-Switzerland/Austria
 - *Raga*-India
 - *Tuvan throat singing*-Mongolia
 - *Kwv Thxiaj*-Southeast Asia
 - *Taiko*-Japan
3. Once you select your places, mark the locations on a map.
4. Choose a country to "visit." Start by listening to music in that style.
5. Using the [included printable worksheet](#), fill out a fact grid, so that students learn core characteristics of each style. You may present the material to students or have them do research on their own.
6. Visit as many places as your time frame allows! Use [our completed grids](#) as a starting point for each culture.
7. If you wish, continue "visiting" countries/regions throughout the year. Customize the lesson by visiting a region that you or one of your students has lived in.

Around the World

SAMPLE GRIDS (page 1)

Completed Grid: Ojibwe Singing

Genre/Style	TRADITIONAL OJIBWE-ANISHINAABE MUSIC
Location	Parts of Minnesota and Canada, surrounding Lake Superior
Description of Music	Songs from the Ojibwe-Anishinaabe: This music is often vocal and uses instruments such as rattles, shakers and drums.
Fact #1	The number four is an important element in Ojibwe-Anishinaabe music and culture. It represents balance.
Fact #2	Music is used from many things in Ojibwe-Anishinaabe culture: teaching, celebration and traditional ceremonies.
Fact #3	You should ask permission to perform a song someone else has written.
Musical Example	Video: Teaching Appreciation and Understanding for Native American Music and Culture

Completed Grid: Ragtime

Genre/Style	RAGTIME
Location	St. Louis, Missouri, USA
Description of Music	Music characterized by a syncopated melodic line and regularly accented accompaniment.
Fact #1	Was most popular during the early years of the 20 th century.
Fact #2	Scott Joplin was a famous ragtime composer.
Fact #3	Gets its name from its "ragged," or syncopated rhythms.
Musical Example	Video: Scott Joplin's Maple Leaf Rag

Around the World

SAMPLE GRIDS (page 2)

Completed Grid: Mariachi

Genre/Style	MARIACHI
Location	Mexico
Description of Music	Folk music from Mexico. There are variations in the music depending on the precise region of the origin within Mexico.
Fact #1	Instrumentation usually includes violin and guitar and sometimes trumpet.
Fact #2	Some Mariachi music uses <i>false</i> vocals.
Fact #3	Mariachi music is often used in celebrations or special events, like weddings, holidays or funerals.
Musical Example	Video: Mariachi Sol De Mexico

Completed Grid: Yodeling

Genre/Style	ALPINE YODELING
Location	Switzerland, Austria
Description of Music	Form of singing developed in rural areas of the Alps.
Fact #1	Involves fast changes between high and low pitches.
Fact #2	Singer must switch register, which is a practiced skill.
Fact #3	Was originally developed as a form of communicating over long distances.
Musical Example	Video: Franzl Lang- Jodlersang und Zitherklang

Around the World

SAMPLE GRIDS (page 3)

Completed Grid: Raga

Genre/Style	RAGA
Location	India
Description of Music	A traditional melodic pattern that is a fundamental part of Indian classical music.
Fact #1	Uses a series of five to nine notes as a basis for composition, then improvisation.
Fact #2	Specific ragas can be associated with certain times of day or seasons.
Fact #3	There are regional differences between ragas and raga interpretation.
Musical Example	Video: Ravi Shankar- Tenth Decade

Completed Grid: Throat Singing

Genre/Style	TUVAN THROAT SINGING
Location	Mongolia, Siberia, Russia, Tuva
Description of Music	A style of singing in which the singer produces two pitches at the same time, creating harmony.
Fact #1	Attempts to mimic or imitate sounds of nature
Fact #2	The singer produces a fundamental pitch and then a particular <i>overtone</i> , part of the harmonic series.
Fact #3	There are different ways of categorizing the variations of Tuvan throat singing.
Musical Example	Video: Tuvan Throat Singing

Around the World

SAMPLE GRIDS (page 4)

Completed Grid: Kwv Thxiaj

Genre/Style	KWV THXIAJ (pronounced "k-ou ts-ee-ah")
Location	Southeast Asia, including Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, parts of China
Description of Music	Vocal folk music of the Hmong people.
Fact #1	Sung by both men and women of all ages.
Fact #2	This music is for voice only. The vocal quality is raw, powerful, and loud.
Fact #3	The language in these songs is referred to as "paj lug," or "flowery language." It is often used for courting.
Musical Example	Video: Kwv Txhiaj

Completed Grid: Taiko

Genre/Style	TAIKO
Location	Japan
Description of Music	Percussion-based music usually played in an ensemble using a variety of instruments.
Fact #1	Has ancient origins.
Fact #2	Has been used for many purposes, including communication, use in military activities, and use for theatrical accompaniment.
Fact #3	Styles vary by region.
Musical Example	Video: Kodo – "O-Daiko"

NAME: _____ CLASS: _____

Genre/Style	
Location	
Description of Music	
Fact #1	
Fact #2	
Fact #3	
Musical Example	

NAME: _____ CLASS: _____

Genre/Style	
Location	
Description of Music	
Fact #1	
Fact #2	
Fact #3	
Musical Example	



Create a Musical Story

Age Range: Elementary, Grades K-6

Learning Objective: Students will generate and develop original artistic ideas in response to written and verbal prompts.

INTRODUCE storytelling through discussion

1. Ask students to think of their favorite story, then turn to a friend and whisper their favorite book or story.
2. Say, "Now turn to a different friend and whisper your favorite song or kind of music."
3. Explain that adding music to a story makes it more exciting. Today we will create our own soundtrack for a story to make it exciting and memorable.

CREATE a story "soundtrack"

1. Select a favorite book to read aloud.
2. While reading, pause after key moments and ask students to brainstorm sound effects (body percussion or vocal sounds) that enhance the story.
3. Establish a "start" and "stop" signal to cue students. (i.e: Book: The boy ran away! Sound Effect: Drum on lap quickly for 5 seconds)
4. Gather some classroom instruments or [found objects](#).
5. Read the book again and allow students to explore and improvise sound effects using instruments.
6. Fine-tune the group's musical choices by adding "story cards" (see examples from *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* on the next page.) Use words or graphics depending on your students' literacy level.
7. Practice and refine your musical story!
8. Assign a conductor to start and stop cues. Take turns as the reader/narrator.

EXTEND storytelling through additional activities

1. Listen to storybooks that have been commissioned as musical pieces, such as: [Perfect Square](#), [One-Dog Canoe](#), or the classic [Peter and the Wolf](#).
2. Listen to an episode of [YourClassical Storytime](#). Notice how music helps tell the story.





Sample Story Cards & Book List

CREATE A MUSICAL STORY

Example One: Text Only

STORY	SOUNDTRACK	STORY	SOUNDTRACK
Once upon a time, Goldilocks went on a walk through the woods.	<u>RHYTHM STICKS</u> : Steady walking beat, 10 counts	She found a house, and the door was open. So she opened the door and went in!	<u>VOICE</u> or <u>RATCHET</u> : Slow, quiet creaking sound

Example Two: Graphic Representation

STORY	SOUNDTRACK	STORY	SOUNDTRACK
	10 times <i>mf</i> 		5 seconds <i>pp</i> 

K-2 Recommended Books

- ✓ *Miss Spider's New Car* by David Kirk
- ✓ *Moo* by David LaRochele
- ✓ *Snail Trail* by Ruth Brown
- ✓ *Mortimer* by Robert Munsch
- ✓ *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury
- ✓ *Shark in the Park* by Nick Sharrat
- ✓ *Max Found Two Sticks* by Brian Pinkey
- ✓ *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* by Eric Carle
- ✓ *Tin Forest* by Helen Ward
- ✓ *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats

3-6 Recommended Books

- ✓ *Skeleton Cat* by Kristyn Crow
- ✓ *The Z was Zapped* by Chris Van Allsburg
- ✓ *Tuesday* by David Wiesner
- ✓ *Be You!* by Peter H. Reynolds
- ✓ *Bee-Bim Bop* by Linda Sue Park
- ✓ *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt De La Pena
- ✓ *Samad in the Forest* by Mohammed Umar
- ✓ *A Different Pond* by Bao Phi

Tips for Selecting Books

Books with a lot of animal sounds work well for vocalization and vocal development. Action-oriented books work well if you have a lot of classroom percussion instruments available.



Age Range:	Elementary, Grades K-6
Learning Objective:	Students will learn to identify the guitar by sight and sound.
Total Video Time:	12:07

INTRODUCE the guitar

Look at a [picture of a guitar](#) and ask: "Does anyone have a guess what instrument this is? That's right, it is a guitar. Have you seen or heard a guitar before? There are many different kinds of guitars. The guitar in this picture is called a classical acoustic guitar. What are some things you notice when you look at it?"

LEARN how the guitar makes sound

1. Ask students if they've ever stretched out a rubber band and plucked it. Explain that a guitar makes sound in the same way. There are six strings stretched over a hollow *body*, usually made of wood.
2. If you'd like to incorporate hands-on learning, stretch six rubber bands over an open shoebox to demonstrate the concept. Allow students to experiment and explore. Notice that thicker rubber bands make different sounds than thinner ones.
3. On a guitar, each string is a different thickness, so they each make a different sound. Demonstrate on a guitar if possible. Notice that the strings are held in place by *pegs*. If you turn a peg to tighten a string, it makes the sound a bit higher. If you turn the peg to make the string looser, the sound gets lower.
4. If you press your finger on a string and pluck that string, just one part of the string vibrates and that changes the pitch, or the note. Guitarists learn exactly where to put their fingers to play certain pitches/notes.

WATCH and LISTEN to the guitar

1. Guitarist Joel Spoelstra demonstrates his instrument in [this short video](#) (approx. 2 minutes).
2. In [this video](#) (approx. 3 minutes) the musician Prince plays an electric guitar. An electric guitar is hooked up to an amplifier, which connects the guitar to an electrical current, which changes the sound.
3. In [this video](#) (approx. 8 minutes) notice how guitarist Milena Petkovic plays the guitar in different ways to make different sounds. Sometimes she plucks on string, sometimes she strums all strings at once.

REVIEW what you learned about the guitar

1. Can you name some different parts of the guitar?
2. How does a guitarist make a sound on a guitar?
3. What can a guitarist do to play different pitches/notes?
4. Can you think of some instruments that are related to a guitar?