Presents
Symphony Day: A Musical Space Adventure!

Learning Guide

Northern Star Fanfare
Morning Mood from Peer Gynt Suite No. 1
Starburst
Jupiter from The Planets

Plus, a surprise ending!

October 26 & 27, 2023
The Fox Theater
1001 W Sprague, Spokane, WA
Dear Teachers,

Thank you for bringing your students to Symphony Day! In addition to providing some background on the Spokane Symphony and Fox Theater, we’ve written up some questions for you to use as prompts with your students as they prepare for the concert. Those questions can be found on pages 13-15.

We will have the musicians in color coded t-shirts according to their section. Strings will be in purple, percussion in yellow, woodwinds in blue, and brass in green. The sections will take turns introducing themselves before a new piece, and will give examples of their sound so that students can listen for them in the ensemble. You’ll notice that some of the questions provided in the learning prompts are hints to which section will be introduced before a certain piece. We encourage you to adjust the questions as you see fit for your students.

If you have any questions please call me at (509) 528-5211 or send me an email at alexandraranow@spokanesymphony.org.

We hope you enjoy the concert!

Alexandra Rannow
Education and Community Engagement Manager, Spokane Symphony

The Education programs of the Spokane Symphony are generously supported by:

The Washington State Arts Commission, Hagan Foundation, Innovia, Harry Fix, and Future Song Foundation
Meet the Orchestra

The Spokane Symphony is your local symphony orchestra. Although it is in Spokane, the musicians who play in our orchestra have lived, played, and studied all over the world. The symphony is normally broken up into four different groups of instruments: the strings, the woodwinds, the brass, and the percussion. In the next section we’ll split it up and introduce the instruments from each of the four groups of instruments in our orchestra.

*Spokane Symphony with Music Director, James Lowe performing onstage at The Martin Woldson Theater at The Fox*
Instrument Families

featuring current or former musicians of the Spokane Symphony!

The Strings

Violins

Violas

Cellos

Basses
The Woodwinds

Flutes

Clarinets

Oboes

Bassoons
The Brass

Trumpets

French Horns

Trombones

Tuba
The Percussion

Timpani

Auxiliary (all other percussion instruments)
American conductor Shira Samuels-Shragg was recently selected for The Dallas Opera’s Hart Institute, and as a 2024 mentee of the Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship. This fall, Shira will assume her new position as assistant conductor for the Spokane Symphony Orchestra, while maintaining her current assistant conductor post with the Plano Symphony Orchestra. Recently, Shira guest conducted interdisciplinary concerts with the Spokane, Corpus Christi, and South Bend symphony orchestras. She is passionate about sharing the wonders of music with young audiences and has led education concerts with the Spokane and Plano symphonies for over 23,000 students, served as cover conductor for Young People’s Concerts with the New York Philharmonic, and co-founded Plano Symphony’s Summer Youth Orchestra Camp. In May 2022, Shira graduated with her Master of Music in orchestral conducting from The Juilliard School, where she studied with David Robertson. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music with a minor in German Studies from Swarthmore College.
What Does a Conductor Do, Anyway?

When we watch an orchestral concert, we are looking not only at the musicians, but also the conductor, and we wonder, what exactly do they do?

- First, a conductor chooses music for the concert, usually in collaboration with a person on staff of the orchestra.
- Second, a conductor studies the music so that they know each and every part that the individual musicians play and how they work together. Studying music is a solitary activity and does not take place with musicians or even onstage, most conductors prefer a quiet room in which to study their music scores.
- Third, a conductor rehearses with musicians, a practice where everyone plays the music just as the conductor imagined in it in their head. The conductor will sometimes talk to the musicians to convey their ideas but more often they communicate their ideas through gestures, eye contact, and other body language. The conductor works on articulation (how sounds are played), tuning, phrasing, and overall energy and communication within the orchestra.
- Finally, the conductor performs the music with the orchestra in front of an audience. This is when all the hard work pays off! At this time, no words are used to communicate to the musicians—only gestures, eye contact, and body language.

Learn to Conduct

When working with the musicians, you'll see the conductor using their hands or a baton to communicate with musicians. The conductor uses each of their hands differently. With the right hand they keep the beat with a specific pattern (see below), with the left hand, they communicate the expressive qualities of the music.
Tips for Listening

- An usher will lead you from the lobby into the hall. You will be asked to walk in a single-file line to your seating area. The Fox Theater is a big place and we don’t want you to get separated.

- After you are shown your seats, teachers and students are asked to remain seated.

- At this time, you’ll notice the musicians warming up onstage. Just as an athlete warms up before a big game, the musicians have to also. Watch them to see if they do anything you don’t expect.

- When the lights go down you’ll know the concert is about to start. When the concertmaster walks on stage, clap enthusiastically! He will help the orchestra tune.

- After the concertmaster sits down, the conductor will walk on stage. Again, clap loudly for the conductor and the musicians. Then get ready to listen.

- While the music is playing, listen and watch carefully. Think about things you learned from your teacher and that you might already know.

- Sometimes the conductor might ask the audience a question or ask you to clap along. This is your turn to add to the concert experience.

- After the orchestra plays the last piece and the clapping ends, please stay seated until the head usher points your way out. As you leave, make sure you have your personal belongings with you. As you exit the hall, please stay together in a single-file line.
Where Does Everyone Sit in the Orchestra?

- Violins
- Violas
- Cellos
- French Horns
- Timpani
- Trombones
- Clarinets
- Bassoons
- Flutes
- Oboes
- Trumpets
- Tuba
- Basses
- Conductor
Quick Facts about Symphony Hall in the Martin Woldson Theater at The Fox

When was the Fox Theater built?
• The theater was first opened in 1931 as the Fox (movie) Theater.
• The construction cost was $1 million in 1931, which would be about $16 million now.

What style of architecture is used?
• The interior is designed in an Art Deco theme.

When was the theatre remodeled?
• In November 2007 the Fox was reopened after a full renovation.
• With help from the Save America’s Treasures grant, the original Art Deco murals were restored from damage that happened during previous renovations.

How many seats are in Martin Woldson Theater at The Fox?
• There are about 1600 seats in the theater.

When did the Spokane Symphony start?
• The Spokane Symphony started as the Spokane Philharmonic in 1945.
• In 1962 the name was changed to the Spokane Symphony.
Listening Questions!

We are so excited for you to come to Symphony Day! To help prepare for the experience, here is some information and things to listen for.
At the concert, the conductor, Shira Samuels-Shragg, will introduce all the instrument families! See if you can start to hear and see the differences between them.

The National Anthem
John Stafford Smith
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0GFrqCcwes (Orchestral footage – young musicians.)

- Have you heard this song before? Where did you hear it?
- This song is meant to represent the American people. Who does it make you think of?

Northern Star Fanfare (listed as Fanfare for Humanity)
Libby Larsen
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znxn-edvezo&list=PLoORjnJLuvXNuHGdQ3-jh2C7p_OnKimow&index=2

- This piece is played by brass instruments: trumpet, French horn, trombone, tuba, and euphonium. They are all played by buzzing on mouthpieces, but play in different ranges - which mean some play low, and some play high. Listen for the highest notes and the lowest notes and see if you can tell which brass instrument is playing them.

- This piece represents the Northern Star, which was used to guide explorers long ago. Ask your parents or guardian to help you find the Northern Star in the night sky so you can see the same star those explorers saw.

(continued)
“Morning Mood” from *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1*
Edvard Grieg
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMs0rNtBZJk&list=PLoORjnJLuvXNuHGdQ3-jh2C7p_OnKimow&index=3  (Orchestral footage.)

- The conductor will introduce you to the woodwinds during this piece: piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet, and bassoon. They will start the piece, then other instruments come in. While the music starts out *piano* (quiet!) it slowly grows and becomes *forte* (loud!). Listen to the whole piece and notice what *dynamic* (piano or forte) the piece ends on.

- This music was written for a play almost 150 years ago but is still used in movies and on social media today. Why do you think it has been popular for so long?

**Starburst**
Jessie Montgomery
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcxDk92QIcY&list=PLoORjnJLuvXNuHGdQ3-jh2C7p_OnKimow&index=4  (Orchestral footage)

- This piece features the string family: violin, viola, cello, and double bass. String instruments can make so many different sounds! As you listen, pay attention to when they play long, connected notes (legato) and when play short, disconnected notes (staccato).

- The composer, Jessie Montgomery, said she wanted this piece to be very colorful! What "colors" can you imagine during this piece?

(continued)
Overture to “Il Mondo della Luna”
Franz Joseph Haydn
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=emmUTU8k654&list=PLoORjnJLuvXNuHgdQ3-jh2C7p_OnKimow&index=6 (not orchestral footage; photo of the moon)

- This piece is from an opera called “Il Mondo della Luna,” which is Italian for “The World on the Moon.” The story is very silly, and our conductor will tell you all about it during the concert. While you listen in class, see if you can make up your own story about “The World on the Moon.” Is your story silly? Serious? An adventure?

- Teachers: Since this piece won’t be used to introduce a particular instrument family, please utilize as you see fit!

Jupiter from The Planets
Gustav Holst
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUM_zT3YKHz&list=PLoORjnJLuvXNuHgdQ3-jh2C7p_OnKimow&index=5 (orchestral footage)

- This piece is a great example of how all the instrument families work together, and is especially exciting for the percussion family! Not only does the percussion family create many beautiful and impressive sound effects, they help the orchestra keep a strong, steady beat. Why is it important for an orchestra to play all together at the same steady beat?

- Teachers: If you’re able to show your class the video, see how many percussion instruments they can point out as they watch. They won’t need to know the names.