



ASO
COMICS

WOLFGANG
AMADEUS
MOZART

JOHN
WILLIAMS

LUDWIG VAN
BEETHOVEN

DMITRI
SHOSTAKOVICH

AARON
COPLAND

SALUTE THE HEROES

*COMPOSERS TAKE INSPIRATION FROM THE
STRUGGLES OF HEROES AGAINST VILLAINS*

**SUPER
ISSUE**

INSPIRED BY COURAGE, THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMPOSERS HAVE WRITTEN MUSIC TO CHAMPION OUR HEROES AND DECRY OUR VILLAINS.

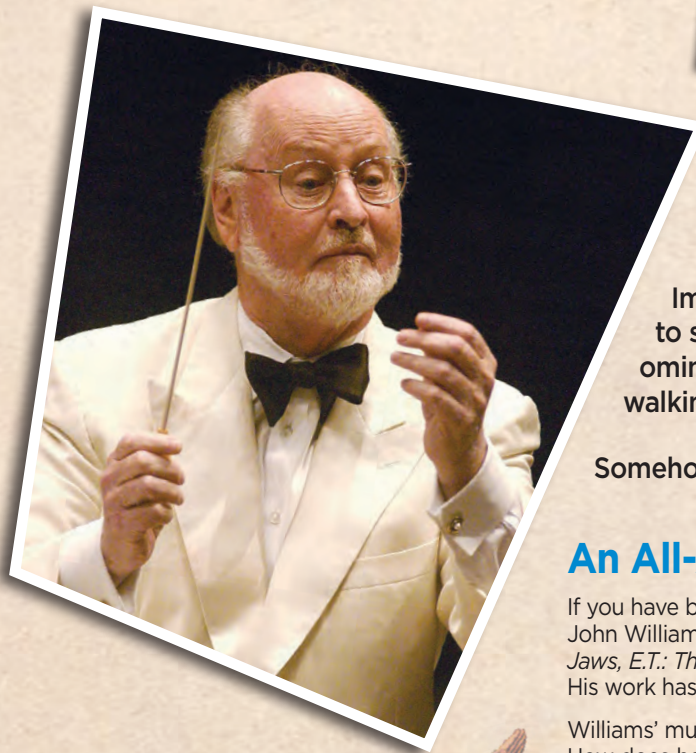
WHETHER THE INSPIRATION COMES FROM THE HEROISM OF ASTRONAUTS AND OLYMPIANS OR THE TREACHERY OF REAL-LIFE DICTATORS AND MOVIE VILLAINS, COMPOSERS HAVE CHAMPIONED COURAGE AND VALOR IN THEIR WORK. THEIR MUSIC KEEPS THE MEMORY OF HEROES ALIVE — AND INSPIRES FUTURE GENERATIONS!



**Atlanta
Symphony**
Orchestra

Joseph Young, Conductor

WE NEED A HERO



The world has many types of heroes. Our first encounter is often in a comic book or an action-packed movie. It takes music, however, to bring those action heroes to life!

Imagine Superman flying through the air without a musical theme to support him! And the bad guys require music too. Without his ominous theme music, Darth Vader would be a guy in a costume walking down the hall.

Somehow, music helps define our heroes and villains.

An All-American Composer

If you have been to the movies, you have heard the work of American composer John Williams. He wrote the film scores for the original *Star Wars* trilogy, *Superman*, *Jaws*, *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*, the *Indiana Jones* series, *Jurassic Park*, and many others. His work has won Academy Awards, Grammys, Golden Globes, and Emmys.

Williams' music captures a sense of courage, bravery, and victory-against-the-odds. How does he do that? Why do his melodies "sound" like a good guy or a bad guy?

The answer has to do with the composer's decisions. A composer makes specific choices regarding major keys and minor keys, instrumentation, musical dynamics, and orchestrations to create a "heroic" sound. Williams also puts thought into which instruments deliver the music — whether it is a "heroic" trumpet to issue a rallying-cry, stirring violins to tug at our heart-strings, or drums to march us into action.

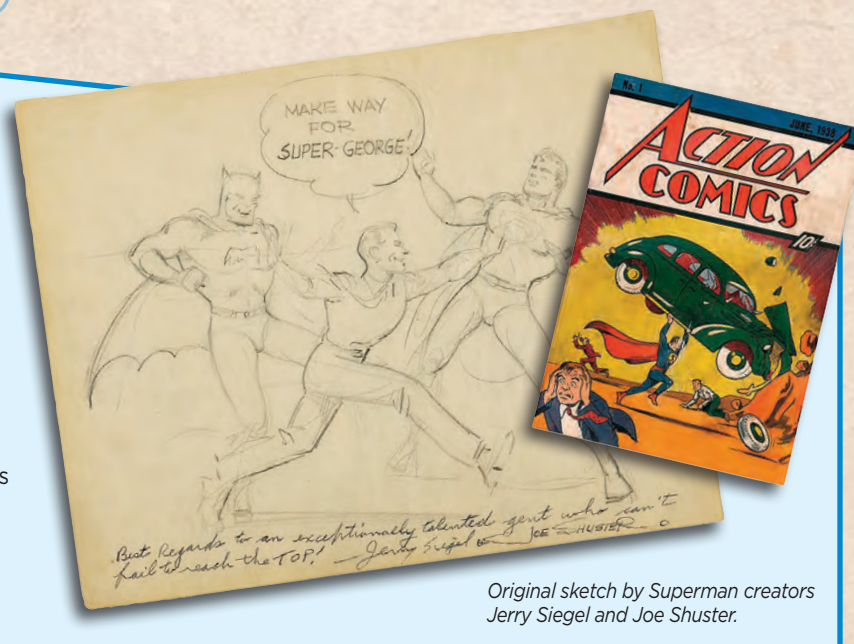
Look up in the sky!

Today Superman is an American icon — but in the 1930's, he began as a sketch pad shared by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, two high school students in Ohio. The story sold as a comic book and the rest is history!

In the movie version, composer John Williams captures the precise moment when Superman flies across the sky, leaping tall buildings and soaring through clouds.

How can music sound like a hero in flight? One of the devices Williams uses is pitch, the relationship between notes that are high, and low.

To travel between notes, a composer can take simple steps up or down — or greater leaps from a low note to a high note, or high to low. Here, Williams uses musical leaps to "leap" tall buildings.



Original sketch by Superman creators Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster.

Bring in the Bad Guy

Darth Vader is the ultimate villain of the *Star Wars* series. A former Jedi Knight who switched to the dark side, Vader is torn between good and evil — but still capable of terrible deeds.

Williams' musical theme for Darth Vader is "The Imperial March," introduced in the second film, *The Empire Strikes Back*. The march opens with a drum beat that suggests impending doom.

Notice that the opening musical note repeats several times, not announcing a major key or a minor key but keeping the listener in suspense. Notice too that the instruments are pitched at the very bottom of their range, delivering a dark, dissonant mood. When the melody finally begins in Williams' march, it delivers a militaristic tone — purposeful, deliberate, and over-confident, just like Darth Vader.

Melodic line descends from high to low—reaching down to the "dark" side of the orchestra.

Summon the Heroes

It doesn't take a cape to be a hero. Heroes can be real people too — and we recognize them based on their service, sacrifice, or accomplishment. When that happens, we call upon composers to honor those individuals with music.

The Olympics provide an excellent example. Williams composed "Summon the Heroes" for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia. Loud and clear, without words, the music alone announces that great, powerful, heroic athletes have arrived on the field.



Atlanta 1996

A Musical Motif

A motif (mo-TEEF) is a single repeated pattern. In music, that usually means a short musical idea, perhaps a few notes with some rhythm and a small tune.

A motif is more powerful than it sounds. A short musical phrase or melody can identify, trigger a mood or mark a character. Any time Superman flies or Luke Skywalker uses "the force," a musical motif appears to mark the moment. Consciously or unconsciously, our brain attaches an image, or a mood to the motif.



KA-POW!

MAKING HEROES

Heroes are hard to find. Sometimes composers pay tribute to a legendary hero from long ago — hoping that today’s leaders will follow the example.

Composers might also celebrate heroism as a lofty virtue in order to call attention to the lack of heroes in their day.



Mozart’s “Overture to La Clemenza di Tito”

Austrian composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 -1791) was a famous child prodigy by the age of 5. He grew up to be one of the greatest and most popular composers of the Classical era.

Mozart’s life was marked by poor health and money woes. Even so, he composed over 600 works in a dazzling variety of genres, including a great many masterpieces. After his early death at the age of 35, his fame as a composer skyrocketed.



The Question of Roman Emperor Titus

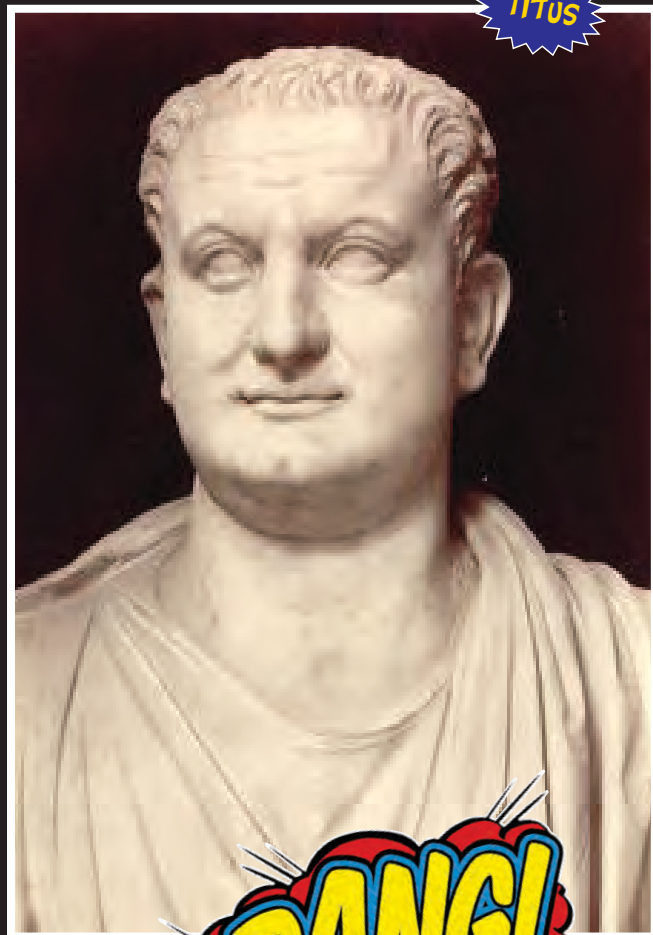
In 1791, the last year of his life, Mozart was commissioned to write an opera for the coronation of Emperor Leopold II of Bohemia. The opera, entitled “*La Clemenza di Tito*” – or “*The Clemency of Tito*,” was to be based on the life of Roman Emperor Titus (39-81) from ancient Rome.

A historical footnote to the life of the Roman Emperor suggests that Titus once confronted his best friend and his fiancée with an assassination plot. In an act of benevolent statesmanship, Titus pardoned them.

Whether it is true or not, that footnote forms the basis of “*La Clemenza di Tito*.” It is believed that Mozart’s task was to praise Titus’s benevolence from centuries past — in order to encourage the new Emperor Leopold to show the same quality.

So — was Roman Emperor Titus actually a hero? Or was he merely a puppet in this tribute at Leopold’s coronation?

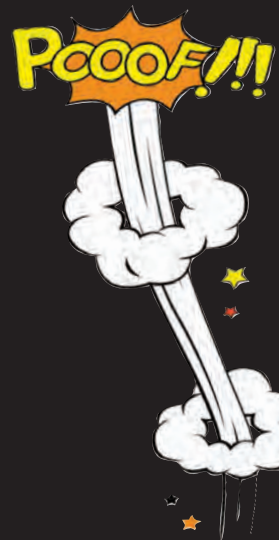
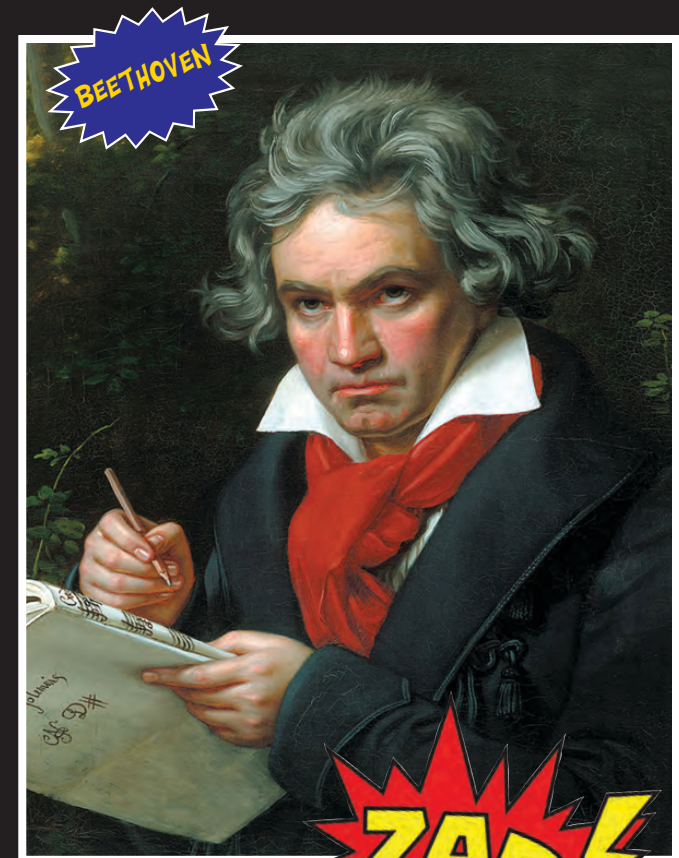
Whether Titus was a hero or not, Mozart’s music lives on as a testament to the belief that compassionate leadership is an heroic attribute.



Roll Over, Beethoven

German composer Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was playing the piano when he was still so small he had to stand on the bench to reach the keys! His father pushed Beethoven—and Beethoven pushed himself. At 11, he quit school altogether to pursue a full-time musical career. If you recognize Beethoven’s name, you already know that the gamble paid off.

Sadly, at the height of his career, Beethoven was also struggling with a hearing loss that left him almost totally deaf during the last decade of his life. Despite this condition, Beethoven continued to compose, figuring out the music in his head, like a mathematical equation.



Beethoven vs. Bonaparte

Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) certainly looks like a hero.

Sent to military school at the age of 10, he rose to become a Brigadier General in the French Army when he was only 28.

Two years later, Napoleon assisted in overthrowing the French government and asserted major reforms for the people, including public education and freedom of religion.

Beethoven saw Napoleon as a great hero, a true “man of the people,” and composed his Third Symphony as a singular tribute to Napoleon. On the title page, he wrote “Bonaparte.”

Then Beethoven learned that Napoleon had declared himself the first Emperor of France. Outraged, Beethoven was convinced that Napoleon wasn’t a “man of the people” at all — but a power-hungry dictator. He scratched the word “Bonaparte” off the manuscript so hard that he tore a hole in the paper.

But Beethoven was not about to sacrifice his symphony. The work had been too carefully crafted. Beethoven’s symphony would be heard — but instead of “Bonaparte,” he titled it “Eroica”— or “heroic.”

Romanticism, Defined

In art, Romanticism doesn’t mean hearts and flowers. It refers to an 18th century movement when artists rebelled against the strict rules of classical art — and threw themselves into new approaches to embrace wild imagination, big ideas and passionate emotions.

Beethoven is a prime example of a Romantic composer because his work engages with imagination, ideas, and emotions on a grand scale.

Fallen Hero

It is not uncommon for heroes to suffer a fall from grace, as Beethoven experienced with Napoleon. Can you think of a hero who failed to live up to expectations?



A COMPOSER CAN BE A HERO

COMPOSERS CAN BE HEROES TOO. IN TIME OF STRUGGLE OR OPPRESSION, COMPOSERS RALLY PEOPLE WITH MORAL SUPPORT AND INSPIRATION, DESPITE THE PERSONAL RISKS.

A Man of His Word

Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) was a boy when war broke out in his country. He saw Russia go from a nation led by an emperor to a chaotic government led by a dictator who controlled the people by keeping his army in the streets.

Josef Stalin, the dictator, ruled by terror and fear. People who challenged his government disappeared in the middle of the night, exiled, imprisoned, or executed. Millions of citizens died.

Shostakovich had been extremely popular and was at the peak of his career as a composer when Stalin rose to power. Suddenly Shostakovich's life, family, and career were in terrible danger.

Life Under Stalin

To keep control of the people, Stalin censored all forms of expression, including orchestral music. He ordered composers to use "down to earth" folk melodies with simple harmonies and banned anything "modern" or experimental.

Some composers went along with Stalin's demands — but not Shostakovich. Despite direct threats from Stalin's officials, Shostakovich was determined to speak against life under Stalin. But how?

Shostakovich let the music speak — without words. To our ears, his Fifth Symphony sounds harsh and chaotic, but to Russians, daily life under Stalin's persecution was harsh and chaotic. They heard the violin solo as a child's voice crying out beneath a soldier's boot and the flute solo as a defiant fist. Distant drums suggested low-flying bombers, signaling the need for someone to bring down Stalin and his regime.

The premiere of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony received a famous standing ovation that lasted over 30 minutes. History suggests that Stalin's government heard the wild applause and "officially" decided that Shostakovich had written acceptable music "of the people." The work became a popular success before it could be halted.

Abrasive as it was, the music spoke the truth — and offered hope.

SHOSTAKOVICH



STALIN



The Dance of Death: The 2nd Movement

The second movement of Shostakovich's symphony opens with a merry waltz but listen and you'll hear that something isn't quite right. The melody is folksy but slightly off, as though Shostakovich was commenting with resentment about the "down to earth" melodies required by Stalin's government. Shostakovich is saying, "you can order the people to dance but you can't make us enjoy it."

Music with a mission

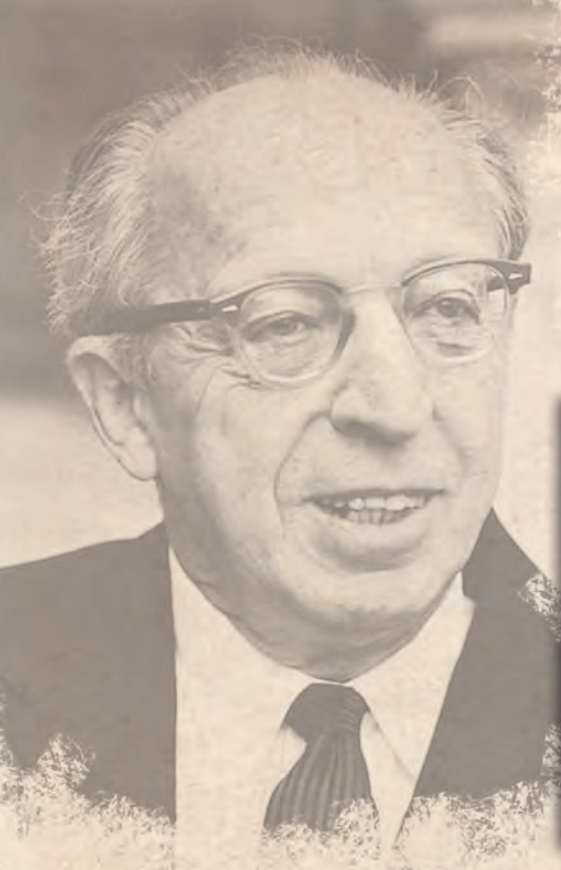
Shostakovich isn't the only composer to write music with a political agenda. Can you think of other examples of music that pack a charged message inside a song that might be dismissed by people who don't get the message?

You might consider songs from the Underground Railroad, protest songs from the Civil Right Movements, the emergence of hip-hop, or even new releases by contemporary artists. Create a playlist to share with your classroom.

PLAYLIST



THE VOICE OF A NATION



AERICAN COMPOSER AARON COPLAND (1900-1990) HAD BIG GOALS. HE WANTED TO WRITE ORCHESTRAL MUSIC WITH POPULAR APPEAL – AND TO CREATE A NEW SOUND FOR “AMERICAN” MUSIC. TO DO THAT, HE CREATED A SIGNATURE STYLE THAT FAVORS SWEEPING OPEN HARMONIES.

COPLAND’S WORK SUGGESTS A DEEPER AND MORE SPIRITUAL SENSE OF PATRIOTISM THAN A LIVELY MARCH WITH A BRASS BAND AND FIREWORKS. LISTENING TO HIS WORK, ONE GETS A VISION OF THE MAJESTIC EXPANSE OF AMERICA AND A SENSE OF THE PIONEER SPIRIT THAT FORGED NEW FRONTIERS.

“WHEN YOU REACH THE
END OF YOUR ROPE, TIE
A KNOT AND HANG ON.”

“A BALLOT IS STRONGER
THAN THE BULLET.”

“I DESTROY MY
ENEMIES WHEN I MAKE
THEM MY FRIENDS.”

“THE BEST WAY TO
PREDICT YOUR FUTURE
IS TO CREATE IT.”

“THOSE WHO DENY
FREEDOM TO OTHERS
DESERVE IT NOT FOR
THEMSELVES.”

“A HOUSE DIVIDED
AGAINST ITSELF
CANNOT STAND.”



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A House Divided

During World War II, Copland was asked to write a musical portrait of a great American that might inspire Americans to stay courageous during wartime.

Copland chose to write *Lincoln Portrait*, based on the life of President Abraham Lincoln.

As a hero, Lincoln rose from humble origins to the highest office in the land where he held the nation together through a difficult Civil War. He championed the end of slavery and asserted the equality we aspire to today.

To paint a musical portrait, Copland wove in to the music with actual statements that Lincoln made during his lifetime, alongside facts about his life—so that it sounds as though listeners are sitting with the man himself. Copland’s music is solemn and restrained – instead of a patriotic fanfare – so that Lincoln’s words can be illuminated.



Romanticism and Modernism

Modernism refers to an artistic movement that purposefully broke with the past to search for new forms of expression.

Copland is a prime example of Modernist composer because he intentionally sought a new sound for patriotic music.

At the same time, Copland is rooted in Romanticism because his music honors the idea of patriotism and openly tugs on emotions. In Copland’s *Lincoln Portrait*, one can hear the influence of both Romanticism and Modernism.

Harper’s Weekly
April 15, 1864



FROM OUR SPECIAL WAR CORRESPONDENT.
“All seems well with us.”—A. LINCOLN.

A Complicated Hero

History remembers Lincoln with praise but he was hardly a hero in his day. Editorials criticized his policies and cartoons mocked his gangly appearance. After his assassination, however, all criticism vanished. Lincoln has been memorialized among the greatest Presidents and his accomplishments are framed in the context of a challenging Civil War.

Judged by today’s standards, however, we might question Lincoln’s status as a hero. Did he really “free” African-Americans? How did his actions contribute to a new class of workers for the industrial revolution? How is this man a hero?

Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines

Heroes are not just reserved for history and comic books. Heroes live among us.

The men and women of our armed forces, along with military veterans, policemen, firemen, and emergency rescue workers, are citizens who demonstrate heroic qualities every day.

Every branch of the United States military has an anthem to provide strength and inspiration to our

servicemen. The U.S. Navy sings “Anchors Aweigh” and the U.S. Army uses “The Army Goes Rolling Along.” For the U.S. Marine Corps, the song is “The Marine Corps Hymn” (From the Halls of Montezuma). And the U.S. Air Force relies on “The U.S. Air Force Song” (The Wild Blue Yonder!). The U.S. Coast Guard has its own song too, a march called “Semper Paratus.”

#LearnThisPiece

If you play an instrument, take the challenge and learn those eight bars (below). Set up a small ensemble with your teacher, or else encourage your school’s full orchestra or band to participate. Record the results and post your performance on social media with the hashtags:

#ConcertsForYoungPeople
#YoungConductor
#AtISymphony

The
Atlanta Symphony
Orchestra Education
Department would like to
thank Zoey Donahue for
the “Learn This Piece”
Challenge.

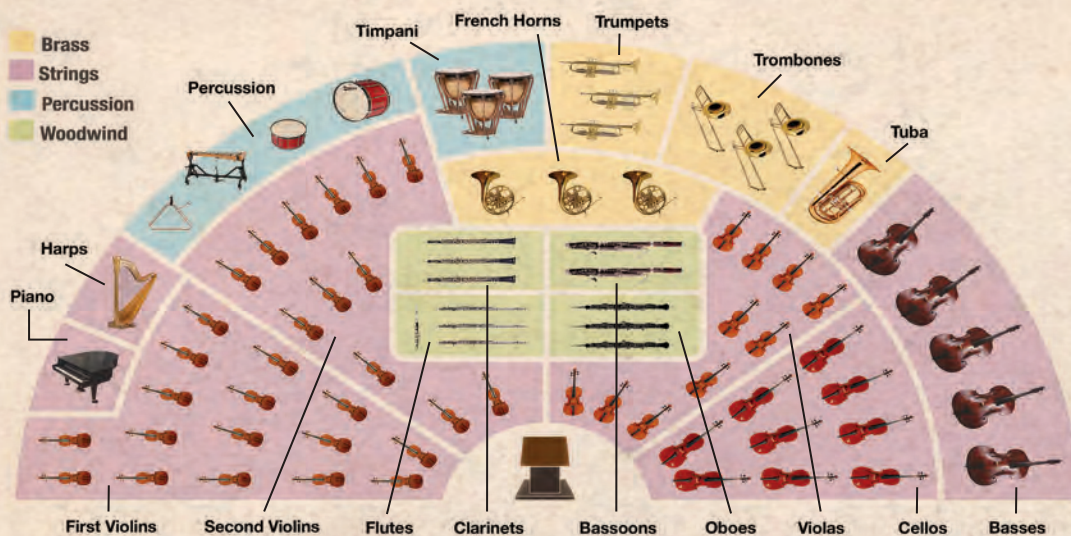
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Armed Forces Salute - 30

Source Credit: “Anchors Aweigh” from our arrangement by Bob Lowden called Armed Forces Salute.

Meet the orchestra - and how it creates sound!

An orchestra is comprised of four sections, representing four different types of instruments.



Here comes the brass!

The brass section contains horns, trumpets, trombones, and a tuba. Brass instruments deliver the loud, exciting parts of the music. They are also used to create epic swells and sudden bursts of sound.

The sound comes from the musicians' lips. The player places his or her lips tightly against the mouthpiece and blows a blast of air, sending a vibration down the tube of the instrument. Musicians can vary pitch, tone, and loudness by controlling the vibration of their lips. (It takes practice!)

The valves are the buttons on brass instruments. Valves or slides on brass instruments allow the player to change the length of the tube and create different sounds and notes. The tube is called the bore and the part that flares out wide at the end is called the bell. The shape and size of the bore and the bell can change the tone of the instrument. For example, the shorter length and smaller bell on a trumpet creates a crisp, blaring tone. A French horn, with its longer bore and larger bell, has a warm, mellow tone.

Bring in the strings!

The string section includes violins, violas, cellos, and double basses. The sound of these instruments ranges from soft and sweet — to harsh and severe — to soaring and majestic.

The sound of stringed instruments is caused by the vibrations of the strings. A player rubs a bow against the strings, strums, or plucks them with his or her fingers. The player controls the pitch of the sound by making the strings longer or shorter — and tighter or looser. (Shorter and tighter strings create higher pitches. Longer and looser strings create lower pitches.)

We got the beat!

The percussion section holds the drums, chimes, gongs, cymbals, and whistles. These instruments provide pounding rhythms, booming drum rolls, and driving energy.

The sound is produced by one object hitting another, which is what the word "percussion" means. Percussion instruments are either "tuned" or "untuned." Tuned instruments, such as the xylophones, chimes, or the timpani, play specific pitches or notes. Untuned instruments, such as most drums, cymbals, the gong, and the triangle, produce sounds with an indefinite pitch.

Drums come in many shapes and sizes but in each, a membrane is stretched across a frame or hollow container. When the membrane is struck with a stick or mallet, it sends vibrations echoing within the container. Every country in the world has its own version of the drum.

And now for the woodwinds!

The woodwind section is home to flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons. Woodwinds can carry the melody over the quietest and the loudest parts of a musical work. Some think they come closest to the quality of the human singing voice.

The sound comes from blowing air into or across the mouthpiece. In the flute family of instruments, air is blown across an edge, like blowing across the mouth of a bottle. The air is split by the edge, resulting in vibrations. In reed instruments, the air travels across of thin piece of wood, called a reed. Clarinets and saxophones have one reed. Oboes and bassoons have two reeds that vibrate against each other.

The manner of creating the sound may vary between the flute and the reed instruments but the manner of controlling the tone remains the same. Woodwind players cover holes on the long tubes of woodwind instruments. Sometimes the holes are covered by fingers. On longer instruments, the musician presses a metal key that raises a soft pad that had been covering a hole.



**Atlanta
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— WITH DEEPEST GRATITUDE —



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