

Antonio Vivaldi-The Four Seasons

Grade Level: Second Grade Music

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Length of Unit: Five lessons, 30 minutes each

I. ABSTRACT

Through learning about *The Four Seasons* by Antonio Vivaldi, students will gain an understanding of form in music, the timbre of string instruments of the orchestra, and the use of instruments in orchestration. Students will also appreciate the significance of Vivaldi as a composer of the late Baroque era.

II. OVERVIEW

A. Concept Objectives

1. Develop and awareness of music in relation to history and culture. (National Music Standards (NMS)-Content Standard (CS)-9)
2. Appreciate the use of musical elements to express ideas. (NMS-CS-6)

B. Content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*

1. Elements of Music: Move responsively to music (page 54)
2. Elements of Music: Hum the melody while listening to music (page 54)
3. Elements of Music: Through participation, become familiar with basic elements of music (form) (page 54)
4. Listening and Understanding: Become familiar with instruments in the string family (page 54)
5. Listening and Understanding: Antonio Vivaldi, **The Four Seasons** (page 54)

C. Skill Objectives

1. Students will identify simple music forms when presented aurally. (National Music Standards (NMS)-Content Standard (CS)-6)
2. Students will use appropriate terminology in explaining music, music notation, music instruments and voices, and music performances. (NMS-CS-6)
3. Students will identify the sounds of a variety of instruments, including many orchestra and band instruments. (NMS-CS-6)
4. Students will respond through purposeful movement to selected prominent music characteristics or to specific music events while listening to music. (NMS-CS-6)
5. Students will identify and describe roles of musicians in various music settings and cultures. (NMS-CS-9)

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

A. For Teachers

1. Grout, Donald Jay. *A History of Western Music*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc, 1973. 0-393-09416-2
2. Appendix A
3. *The Kingfisher Young People's Book of Music*. New York: Kingfisher Publications, 1999. 0-7534-5250-2

- B. For Students
 1. Students should have experience recognizing same and different parts of music, such as verse and refrain.
 2. Students should have previous experience moving within their “personal space,” not bumping or disrupting others.

IV. RESOURCES

- A. Recording of *The Four Seasons*, by Antonio Vivaldi
- B. *The Kingfisher Young People’s Book of Music*. New York. Kingfisher Publications, 1999. 0-7534-5250-2

V. LESSONS

Lesson One: Tone Color in Music

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Appreciate the use of musical elements to express ideas.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Listening and Understanding: Become familiar with instruments in the string family.
 - b. Listening and Understanding: Antonio Vivaldi, *The Four Seasons*
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will identify the sounds of a variety of instruments, including many orchestra and band instruments.
 - b. Students will identify and describe roles of musicians in various music settings and cultures.
- B. *Materials*
 1. Recording of *The Four Seasons*, “*Spring*,” by Antonio Vivaldi
 2. Pictures of string instruments (violin, viola, cello, bass, harpsichord), or actual instruments if available
 3. Drawing paper
 4. Crayons, markers, or paints
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 1. Tone color: the unique sound of an instrument or voice, determined by its size, shape, and material
 2. Composer: a person who writes music
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 1. Discuss the title of the piece *The Four Seasons, Spring*.
 - a. Why would the composer title a piece of music, “Spring”?
 - b. What do you expect to hear? What kinds of things do you hear in the spring, especially that you might not hear as much at other times of the year? (rain, thunder, birds singing)
 - c. This piece was written a long time ago. Are there things we hear in the spring that wouldn’t have been heard then, because they weren’t invented yet? (sprinklers, lawn mowers, road building equipment)
 2. Listen to the music for things that you might hear in the spring.
 3. Listen again for the instruments that are creating these sounds.

4. Discuss how all the sounds are created by string instruments of the orchestra. Show pictures of the instruments, or the instrument itself. Demonstrate the sound on the instrument if you can. If you have a student who plays a violin, viola, cello, or bass, this is a great time to allow him or her to demonstrate for the class.
 5. Discuss the concept of tone color. What other instruments could have been used?
 6. Students listen to the piece again, and color, draw, or paint while listening. Prompt them to create what they think of when they hear the music. Some students may not think of spring sounds when they listen. This is not a lesson about what they “should” draw, but rather a way to have them listen several times and become familiar with the piece, as well as an outlet for students who enjoy creating a visual piece.
 7. Listen to the piece several times as they draw and color.
 8. Invite students to tell the class about their drawing. This helps develop language skills.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teacher will determine, by questioning, if students understand what tone color is.
 2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the use of tone color in describing what they colored and why.

Lesson Two: Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Develop an awareness of music in relation to history and culture.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Elements of Music: Move responsively to music
 - b. Elements of Music: Hum the melody while listening to music
 - c. Elements of Music: Through participation, become familiar with basic elements of music (form)
 - d. Listening and Understanding: Antonio Vivaldi, *The Four Seasons*
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will respond through purposeful movement to selected prominent music characteristics or to specific music events while listening to music.
 - b. Students will identify and describe roles of musicians in various music settings and cultures.
- B. *Materials*
1. Appendix A
 2. A timeline of musicians and composers; this can be an ongoing piece that you create, or one that has been purchased
 3. Recording of *The Four Seasons* “Spring,” Antonio Vivaldi
 4. World map

- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Venice, Italy-important city in the development of music during this time period; unique characteristic of canal system for travel by boat; the streets of Venice are very narrow, only suitable for travel on foot; located in northern Italy on the Adriatic Sea
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Listen to “Spring” from Vivaldi’s *The Four Seasons*.
 2. Ask students to identify the title and composer. If you have an ongoing list of pieces they are to identify, add it to that list, and give a short listening quiz to determine if they recognize the piece.
 3. Place Vivaldi on your timeline between 1678 and 1741. Read the biographical information from Appendix A.
 4. Locate Venice, Italy on a world map.
 5. Listen again to “Spring” for the part that recurs several times. This will later be labeled the “A” section.
 6. Hum the melody on this recurring theme.
 7. Listen again, humming and miming playing a violin, cello, or bass.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teacher will question students at the end of the lesson about facts discussed in the lesson to determine if students comprehend the information.
 2. The teacher will observe if students are successfully identifying the recurring melody.

Lesson Three: Rondo Form

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Appreciate the use of musical elements to express ideas.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Elements of music: Move responsively to music.
 - b. Elements of Music: Through participation, become familiar with basic elements of music (form).
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will recognize simple music forms when presented aurally.
 - b. Students will use appropriate terminology in explaining music, music notation, music instruments and voices, and music performances.
 - c. Students will respond through purposeful movement to selected prominent music characteristics or to specific music events while listening to music.
- B. *Materials*
1. Recording of *The Four Seasons*, “Spring,” Antonio Vivaldi
 2. Scarves or streamers, one for each participant

- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Rondo Form: consists of an introduction, A-B-A-C-A-D-A, etc.; always starting and ending with the “A” music
 2. Personal space: used to describe the area around an individual in which he can move comfortable without disturbing others
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Listen to the recording of *The Four Seasons “Spring,”* Antonio Vivaldi. Students will listen for the “A” section, and pantomime playing the violin during this section each time it recurs.
 2. Ask students to find a “personal space.” This is a space where you can move without touching anyone, or anything (such as furniture, the piano, etc.) Each student will get a scarf or streamer. Direct students to move to the music using the scarf or streamer. They should move “the way the music tells them to,” or at the same tempo. Move only on the “A” section.
 3. Play the game again, with variations. During the sections of music which are different than “A,” you can allow them to change scarves for another color. This calls for cooperation, and concentration. They should not speak, using gesturing and non-verbal communication. This is important, so that the music can still be heard.
 4. Have students sit down in their personal spaces. Outline rondo form on the board. Show them that each section is labeled with a letter. The music that recurs is called “A.” The section that follows it is called “B,” etc. The introduction is separate, and is not given a letter name.
 5. When the form is written out, explain that form is used in music to frame music in time. Because music occurs through time, form is a way of organizing the whole piece. In a painting, there is form, and even the picture frame is used to direct our visual attention on the painting. In rondo form, the “A” section recurs to “frame” the piece.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. The teacher will evaluate students’ understanding of the piece, by observation of the activity.

Lesson Four: Puzzle activity for *The Four Seasons*

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Appreciate the use of musical elements to express ideas.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Elements of Music: Through participation, become familiar with basic elements of music (form).
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will identify music forms when presented aurally.
 - b. Students will use appropriate terminology in explaining music, music notation, music instruments and voices, and music performances.
- B. *Materials*
1. Puzzle, Appendix B, one for each student

2. Recording of *The Four Seasons* “Spring,” Antonio Vivaldi
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 1. Rondo Form: introduction-A-B-A-C-A-D-A-E-A
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 1. Listen to, and identify *The Four Seasons* “Spring,” by Antonio Vivaldi.
 2. Arrange the pieces of the flower puzzle from Appendix B. You may choose to have the students color and assemble the puzzles themselves. These should be printed on card stock if possible. Students should be able to arrange the petals of the flower to represent the corresponding sections of music.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
 1. The teacher will observe individuals as they arrange the puzzle sections to determine if they are discriminating between the various sections in the music.

Lesson Five: Playing Rondo Form

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Appreciate the use of musical elements to express ideas
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Elements of Music: Through participation, become familiar with basic elements of music (form)
 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. Students will identify simple music forms when presented aurally.
 - b. Students will use appropriate terminology in explaining music, music notation, music instruments and voices, and music performances.
- B. *Materials*
 1. Piano
 2. Orff Xylophones, glockenspiels, metallophones, arranged in pentatonic, one for each student (if these instruments are not available, use what you have, adapting the lesson for what you have available)
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 1. Pentatonic: five tone scale, leaving out the 4th and 7th steps of the major scale; example: C-D-E-G-A
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 1. Create a piece in rondo form. Teacher plays an “A” section, alternating with the “B,” “C,” etc. sections played on xylophones by students. Set up the format and assign the order before you start so that you do not have to interrupt the flow of the piece. Practice several times, giving students an opportunity to find melodic patterns they like. Some tips to make this go smoothly:
 - a. Remember to keep the “A” section the same each time.
 - b. Remember to start and end with “A.”
 - c. Tell students to try to start and end on C if you are in C pentatonic.

- d. The fifth step of the scale (G in C pentatonic) is a good place to pause, like a comma in a sentence.
 - e. Keep the steady beat. If students are inexperienced or having trouble keeping the beat, play C-G on the piano as they play to maintain the same beat.
 - f. Remind students that the best melodies are not necessarily the most complicated. Repeated tones and step-wise melodic motion are easy to listen to.
 - g. Enjoy the progress students are making in improvisation. They can usually progress very quickly at first with these guidelines.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
- 1. Assess students' skills in this lesson by observation. Students should be increasing their ability to:
 - a. Play at the correct time within the form.
 - b. Play evenly with the established beat and meter.
 - c. Play melodies within the correct key.
 - d. Use the tonic and dominant notes of scale to establish tonality.

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- A. Attend a local performance by a symphony orchestra performing *The Four Seasons*. There are many possibilities for this, from a local high school, to a professional symphony orchestra. Every effort should be made for students to experience live musical performances.

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- A. Appendix A: Background Information on Antonio Vivaldi
- B. Appendix B: Flower Puzzle

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. Grout, Donald Jay. *A History of Western Music*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc, 1973. 0-393-09416-2
- B. *The Kingfisher Young People's Book of Music*. New York: Kingfisher Publications, 1999. 0-7534-5250-2
- C. *The World Book Encyclopedia*. Chicago: World Book, Inc. 1993. 0-7166-0093-5

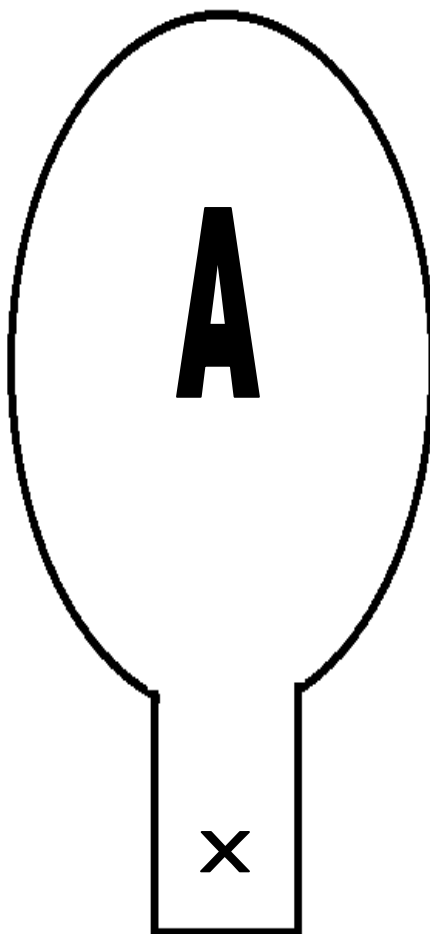
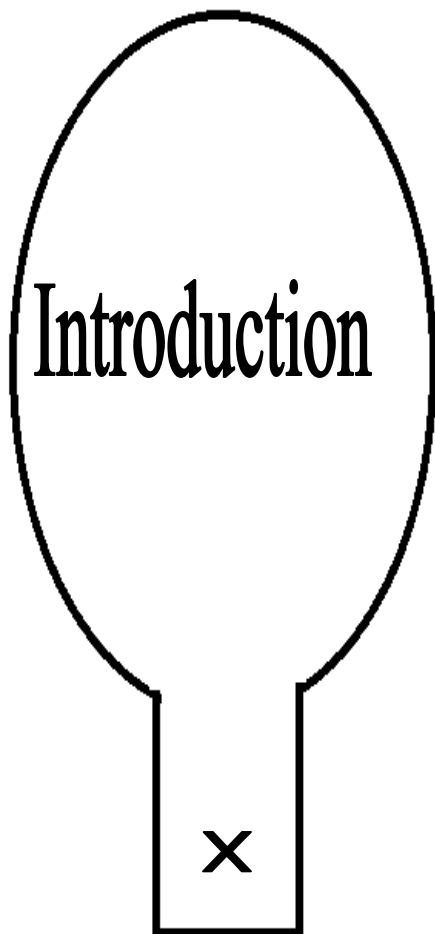
BACKGROUND INFORMATION ANTONIO VIVALDI

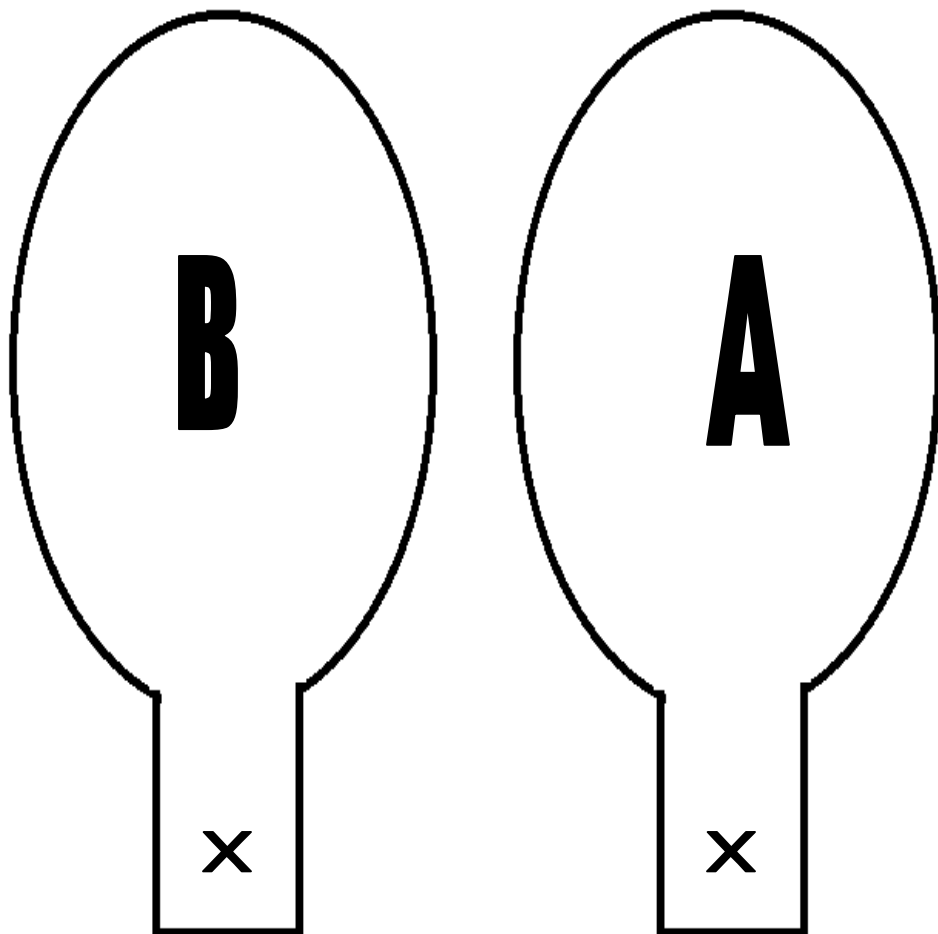
Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) lived in Venice, Italy. Vivaldi was a Catholic Priest and composer. He was known as “The Red-Haired Priest”. He only worked as a Priest for one year, when health problems caused him to devote his time to music teaching and composition. He wrote many operas and concertos. He worked as a music teacher and composer at an orphanage for girls (The Pieta). It was very common at that time for music to be an important focus of education at orphanages, and they produced many fine musicians.

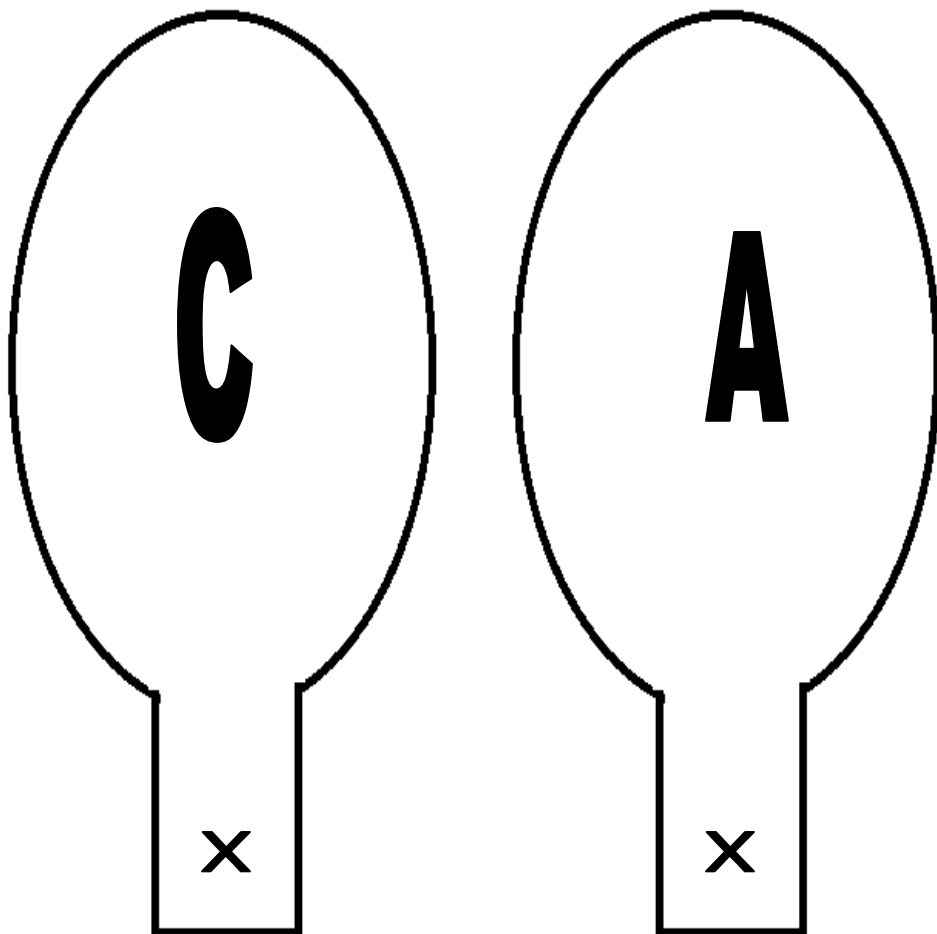
Vivaldi spent a lot of time traveling, conducting his operas, and other music. Vivaldi was an important composer in the transitional period between the late baroque and classical periods. He successfully used the forms of the baroque period, such as the concerto used in *The Four Seasons*.

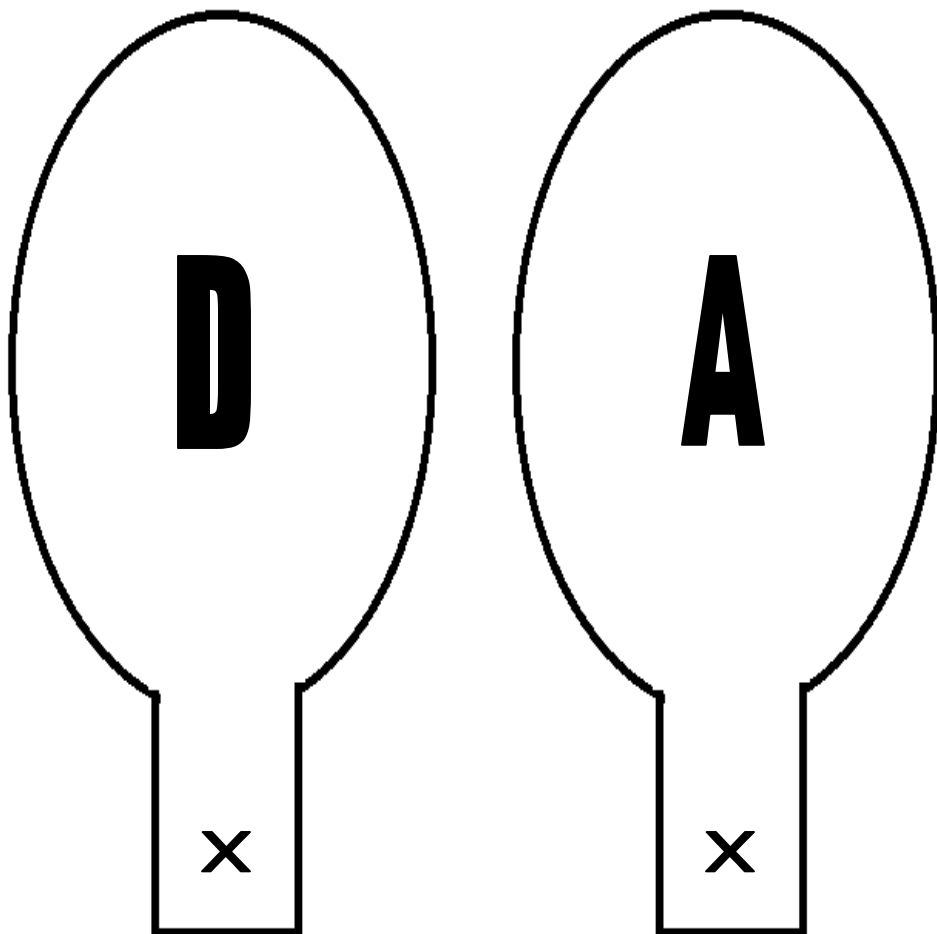
Venice, Italy is one the world’s most famous cities. It lies at the north end of the Adriatic Sea, 2 ½ miles off the coast of Italy. Canals take the place of streets Venice. People travel by boat on the more than 150 canals. Venice was a cultural center during the time of Vivaldi. Many artists and musicians were drawn there to work, and to have their work recognized.

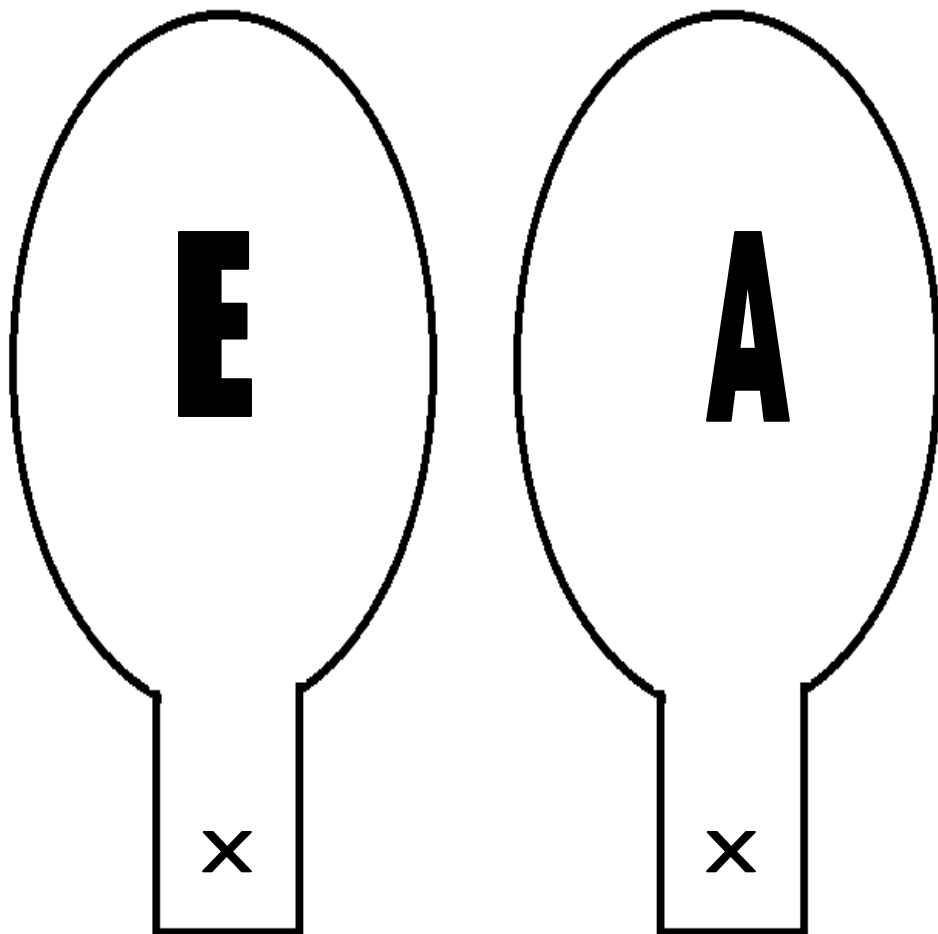
The Basilica of Saint Mark is located in Venice, in St. Mark’s Square. It is an outstanding example of Byzantine Architecture. Three sides of the square are comprised of buildings in the Renaissance style of architecture.



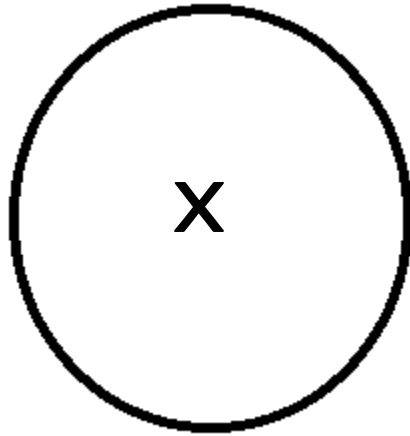








Appendix B, page 6-Antonio Vivaldi-The Four Seasons



Puzzle Assembly Directions.

- 1) Copy flowers on to card stock, one for each student.
- 2) Cut out all petals and center circles. Color and laminate pieces (if desired).
- 3) Insert a brad through each piece at the "X".
- 4) The flower petals can be arranged in any order around the center circle.