

SWAN LAKE

Grade Level: Third Grade Music
Presented by: Sue Brownson, Elbert County Charter School
Length of Unit: Four lessons

I. ABSTRACT

- A. This unit will focus on the ballet “Swan Lake” by Peter Tchaikovsky. In this unit, the students will learn that a ballet is a story told in dance. They will recognize melodies that occur during the ballet. The students will move responsively to music and identify the instruments used as a representation of characters and events.

II. OVERVIEW

- A. Concept Objectives
1. Learn that stories can be told verbally, musically, and through physical movement.
 2. Instill an appreciation for Ballet and Music as a pure expression of dreams and emotions.
- B. Content covered from Core Knowledge Sequence
1. “Swan Lake” by Peter Tchaikovsky as represented in Third grade music Scope and Sequence.
- C. Skill Objectives
1. The students will be able to identify the instruments that are used as a representation of various characters and events that occur during the ballet.
 2. The students will move appropriately to the music as it is played for them.
 3. The students will learn the story of Swan Lake.
 4. The students will learn the life history of Peter Tchaikovsky in relationship to being the composer of “Swan Lake”.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- A. **For the teacher**
1. *The New College Encyclopedia of Music* J. Westrup and F. Ll. Harrison
 2. *A History of Western Music* Grout
 3. *The Illustrated Book of Ballet Stories* Newman
- B. **For the Students**
1. The students have studied that a composer is one who writes music in previous grade levels. They will build upon this knowledge as we investigate the life of Tchaikovsky.
 2. The students have studied the orchestra family from Kindergarten on up. They will use this knowledge to assist in identification of instruments as heard in the ballet.

IV. RESOURCES

- A. *The New College Encyclopedia of Music* Westrup
B. *A History of Western Music* Grout
C. *Tchaikovsky, Famous Children Series* Rachlin
D. *The Illustrated Book of Ballet Stories* Newman

V. LESSONS

Lesson One: The Story of Swan lake

- A. Daily Objectives
1. Lesson Content

- a. The written story of Swan Lake
- 2. Concept Objectives
 - a. Learn that stories can be told verbally, musically, and through physical movement.
- 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will learn the story of Swan Lake.
- B. Materials
 - 1. *The Illustrated Book of Ballet Stories* Newman
- C. Background Notes
 - 1. Review the story prior to reading to the students.
- D. Key Vocabulary
 - 1. Ballet-Theatrical performance of a group and solo dances that combine steps and music, often to tell a story.
 - 2. Siegfried-Name of the prince in Swan Lake.
 - 3. Odette-Queen of the swans.
 - 4. Rothbart-The evil sorcerer.
 - 5. Cygnets-Little swans
 - 6. Odile-The daughter of Rothbart.
- E. Procedures/Activities
 - 1. The teacher will read the story of Swan Lake from *The Illustrated Book of Ballet Stories*. The vocabulary will be covered as the students listen to the teacher.
 - 2. The teacher will use the “music notes” found to the side of the story. These “notes” will facilitate the process of explaining the use of ballet to tell a story.
 - 3. The students will draw three pictures of the story’s beginning, middle, and end.
- F. Evaluation/Assessment
 - 1. The teacher will grade the students’ pictures in order to observe if they have grasped the story.
- G. Standardized Test/State Test Connections
 - 1. Standard 4: Students will listen to, analyze, evaluate, and describe music.

Lesson Two: Tchaikovsky

- A. Daily Objectives
 - 1. Lesson Content
 - a. *Tchaikovsky, Famous Young Composers Series*
 - 2. Concept Objectives
 - a. Learn that stories can be told verbally, musically, and through physical movement.
 - 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. Identify the definition of a composer
 - b. Identify Tchaikovsky as the composer of Swan Lake
- B. Materials
 - 1. *Tchaikovsky, Famous Young Composers Series*
 - 2. Tape Recorder
 - 3. Recording of Swan Lake
- C. Background notes
 - Review the story of Tchaikovsky prior to reading it to the children.
- D. Key Vocabulary
 - 1. Composer-One who writes music.

2. St. Petersburg-City in Russia in which Tchaikovsky moved and composed much of his music.
 3. Keyboard-A horizontal set of keys to produce sound on the organ, harpsichord, clavichord, and similar instruments.
 4. Symphony-A sonata or song for orchestra.
- E. Procedures/Activities
1. The teacher will read the story of Tchaikovsky as a child. Discuss that he was talented from a young age. The vocabulary will be covered as the book is read.
 2. The teacher will quietly play Swan Lake in the background as the story is read.
- F. Evaluation/Assessment
1. Upon completion of reading the story, the students will discuss the life of the young Tchaikovsky. The teacher will listen to appropriate answers in order to determine the students' level of understanding.

Lesson Three: Instrument Identification

- A. Daily Objectives
1. Lesson content
 - a. Selections from Swan Lake
 2. Concept Objectives
 - a. Instill an appreciation for Ballet and Music as a pure expression of dreams and emotions.
 3. Skill Objectives
 - a. The students will be able to identify the instruments that are used as a representation of various characters and events that occur during the ballet.
- B. Materials
1. Individual instrument recordings
 2. Tape recorder
 3. Recording of Swan Lake
- C. Background Notes
- Review the “musical notes” found in *The Illustrated Book of Ballet Stories*. Remember to define each instrument as a woodwind, brass, etc.
- D. Key Vocabulary
1. Oboe-A woodwind instrument with a conical bore and a double reed.
 2. Bassoon-A woodwind, double reed instrument.
 3. Theme-A musical entity which is the chief idea in a composition.
 4. Trumpet-A treble brass instrument with a cylindrical tube widening into a bell and played with a cupshaped mouthpiece.
 5. Fanfare-A musical flourish, often used as a processional.
- E. Procedures/Activities
1. The teacher will begin the lesson by playing a recording of the solo oboe. The teacher will use the key vocabulary list in order to describe each instrument. The students will listen for the “sound” of the oboe. The teacher will introduce the vocabulary word “theme.”
 2. The teacher will play a recording of the solo bassoon. The students will listen for the “sound” of the bassoon.
 3. The teacher will play a recording of the solo trumpet. At this point, the teacher will introduce the vocabulary word “fanfare”. The student will listen for the “sound” of the trumpet.

4. The teacher will play the dance of the four cygnets. The students will be instructed to listen for the quick sounds of the oboe and bassoon. The students will discuss if this is happy or sad sound.
 5. The teacher will play the swan theme. The teacher and students will then discuss how the instruments are used to express sad emotions.
 6. The teacher will play the trumpet fanfare featured at Siegfried's birthday party. The students will discuss whether this is a happy or sad sound.
- F. Evaluation/Assessment
1. Reviewing the orchestra is a year long event. For example, we play games identifying the instruments by ear. The students' progress is monitored visually by the teacher.

Lesson Four: Move Responsively to Music

- A. Daily Objectives
1. Lesson Content
 - a. Recording of Swan Lake
 2. Concept Objectives
 - a. Instill an appreciation for Ballet and Music as a pure expression of dreams and emotions.
 - 1) The students will move appropriately to the music as it is played for them.
- B. Materials
1. Tape recorder
 2. Recording of Swan Lake
 3. Scarves
- C. Background Notes
- Review the recording of Swan Lake. Find selections that contrast in style and tempo.
- D. Key Vocabulary
1. Plie-A basic knee bend exercise that increases turnout and builds strength in the feet and legs.
 2. Port de Bras-Carriage of the arms.
- E. Procedures/Activities
1. The teacher will begin the class by explaining and demonstrating the two key vocabulary words. The students will be instructed that these are two steps that they may use as they physically interpret the music.
 2. Each student will be given a scarf. They will be instructed to move the scarves in a way that will best reflect the emotion the music is portraying.
 3. The teacher will play various selections from Swan Lake. Highlights to hit will be the dance of the four cygnets and the Swan theme.
- F. Evaluation/Assessment
1. The teacher will observe the students as they create their body movements. The teacher will look for appropriate body language in order to convey the emotion of the piece.
 2. The teacher will use the rubrics (Appendix C) in order to evaluate the students' learning process.

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- A. Suggested activities:
1. Have the students attend a production of Swan Lake

2. Contact the education department of the state ballet company. Often times, they will have outreach programs for the fine arts.
3. Test the students (Appendix B) in order to observe if they have understood the concept of the ballet, music, and story.

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

See Appendices

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. Grout *A History of Western Music* revised edition. New York Norton Pub., 1973. ISBN 0-393-09416-2
- B. Westrup *The New College Encyclopedia of Music* New York Norton Pub., 1960. ISBN 393 00273
- C. *Core Knowledge Sequence* Charlottesville, VA Core Knowledge Foundation, 1998.
- D. Rachlin *Tchaikovsky, Famous Young Composers Series* New York Barron's Books, 1993. ISBN 0-8120-1545-2
- E. Newman *The Illustrated Book of Ballet Stories* New York DK Publishing, 1997. ISBN 0-78970225-5.

APPENDIX A
DRAW SWAN LAKE

BEGINNING

MIDDLE

END

APPENDIX B
SWAN LAKE TEST

H. MATCH THE FOLLOWING TERMS

BALLERINA

MAN WHO WROTE SWAN
LAKE

BALLET

SET OF KEYS ON A PIANO

TCHAIKOVSKY

GIRL WHO DANCES
BALLET

OBOE

TYPE OF ENTERTAIN-
MENT THAT USES DANCE
AND MUSIC

COMPOSER

WOODWIND
INSTRUMENT

KEYBOARD

SOMEONE WHO WRITES
MUSIC

II. IN YOUR OWN WORDS, TELL THE STORY OF SWAN LAKE.

APPENDIX C
RUBRICS FOR SWAN LAKE

4=excellent 3=good 2=fair 1=poor

Knows the term ballet	4	3	2	1
Knows that Tchaikovsky composed Swan Lake	4	3	2	1
Knows that instruments in the ballet are used to Express characters and events	4	3	2	1
Knows the story of Swan Lake	4	3	2	1
Moves appropriately to “happy” and “sad” sounds	4	3	2	1