

Discovery Concerts for Grades 4 – 5

The Composer is Dead!

Text by Lemony Snicket



Michael Buttermann, Conductor
Richard King, Narrator

Teacher Resource Guide





SHREVEPORT
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

POST OFFICE BOX 205
SHREVEPORT, LA 71162-0205
619 LOUISIANA AVENUE
SHREVEPORT, LA 71101

318 222-7496 VOICE
318 227-TUNE TICKET HOTLINE
318 222-7490 FAX
WWW.SHREVEPORTSYMPHONY.COM

Welcome to the Shreveport Symphony's Discovery Concert ***The Composer is Dead!*** We are so excited that you are planning to attend our concert.

The Composer is Dead is a composition with text by Daniel Handler, under the pseudonym Lemony Snicket, and music by Nathaniel Stookey.

"Composer" is a word, which here means "a person who sits in a room, muttering and humming and figuring out what notes the orchestra is going to play." This is called composing. But last night, the Composer was not muttering. He was not humming. He was not moving, or even breathing. This is called decomposing."

The composer is dead and everyone in the orchestra is a suspect! Our narrator will lead us through the orchestra, investigating each instrument and describing them along the way. We wanted to bring you this composition because it is a wonderful way for your students to learn about the different instruments in the orchestra - their personalities and their characteristics, along with famous composers and important musical styles.

The Symphony will open the concert with a piece by Kabalevsky from "The Comedians" and close the concert with "The Dance of the Tumblers" by Rimsky-Korsakov. We know that your students will enjoy these also.

We have put together this Resource Booklet to help you prepare for this concert. There are activities and lesson plans that directly relate to the concepts that will be explored at the concert. Please feel free to make copies of any part of this booklet to share with other teachers and your students. Let us know if there is anything else we can do to enhance your experience.

We look forward to seeing you at the concert!

The Author



Lemony Snicket
a.k.a. Daniel Handler

Daniel Handler was born in 1970 and raised in San Francisco, where he lives now. He attended Lowell High School and then graduated from Wesleyan University in 1992. He is best known for his series of children's books *A Series of Unfortunate Events*.

His mother was an opera singer and Daniel sang with the San Francisco Boys Chorus in the 1980's. His father was a CPA, who fled Germany as a child during the Holocaust. Daniel also enjoys playing the accordion. He has been quoted as saying he learned it "to drive his parents crazy".

Handler came up with the name "Lemony Snicket" while doing research for a book. He didn't want his name added to numerous mailing lists, so one day when someone called and asked his name, he blurted out: "Lemony Snicket".

As he began writing his children's books, and the character of the narrator emerged, he and his editor decided he needed a pseudonym. Well, he had one - Lemony Snicket.

In addition to his children's books, Handler has also published three more adult novels: *The Basic Eight*, *Watch Your Mouth* and *Adverbs*.

The Composer



Nathaniel Stookey

Nathaniel Stookey was born in 1970, and raised in San Francisco. He attended the San Francisco's French-American International School and one year at Lowell High School.

As a four-year-old, Nat fell in love with the sound of the violin when he heard one being played on the radio. He begged his mother to buy him one and to allow him to have lessons. Wisely, she consented to let him play the violin, but only if he had some piano lessons FIRST. So, little Nat began piano at four and then at five, the violin. He became good enough to play with the San Francisco Youth Orchestra. While he certainly loved the violin, he did not enjoy solo performances. As a result, he started dabbling in composition and found that he liked that far more than the idea of pursuing a career as an instrumental soloist. At the age of 17, he became the youngest composer ever commissioned for the San Francisco Symphony's "New and Unusual Music Series".

Upon graduation from the University of California at Berkeley in 1993, Stookey was awarded the first Hallé Orchestra Composition Fellowship located in England. In 2000, he returned to the United States and received a three-year New Residences Award with the North Carolina Symphony, The Ciompi Quartet and NPR affiliate WUNC-FM, while completing his doctorate at Duke University. While in North Carolina he met and married his wife. In 2003, he moved his family, which includes two children, back to San Francisco. His wife is a doctor and works as an epidemiologist at Stanford University.

In 2006, the San Francisco Symphony commissioned, premiered and recorded *The Composer is Dead*, a guide to the orchestra with narration by Lemony Snicket. It has since been performed by over 100 orchestras around the world.

The Conductor



Michael Butterman

Maestro Michael Butterman is in his sixth season as Music Director for the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra and the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra, and is in his 12th season as Principal Conductor for Education and Outreach for the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. He is also the Resident Conductor for the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Butterman began studying music at the age of seven. He took piano lessons beginning in the second grade, and added violin the next year. He enjoyed music so much that he became a violinist in the Northern Virginia Youth Symphony, and practiced piano for hours each day. He eventually entered and won several piano competitions when he was in high school.

Although he loved music, he decided to concentrate on studies in chemistry when he was in college. He remained involved in music by playing piano for his school's choruses. One year, he was asked to conduct the choruses, and discovered how much he enjoyed working with other musicians to prepare concert programs. He then decided to get some specialized training in conducting, and enrolled at Indiana University.

Mr. Butterman lived in Baton Rouge for five years while he was the Director of Orchestral Studies at Louisiana State University School of Music, and Principal Conductor of the LSU Opera Theater. He is married to Jennifer Carsillo Butterman, who is a gifted violinist herself, and plays in the Shreveport Symphony, too. They have one daughter, Olivia.

The Narrator



Richard King

Richard King is a familiar stage actor and director for the Shreveport community theatre scene. He wrote and performed the narration for the Peer Gynt Suite for the Shreveport Symphony in 2008, and directed scenes from “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” and “Romeo and Juliet” for the same concert.

Mr. King directed the sold out production of “Lend Me A Tenor” for the Shreveport Little Theatre recently, and he is currently in rehearsal for SLT’s “Over the Tavern” which opens March 1st.

When not directing or acting, Mr. King enjoys performing his duties as an accomplished custom picture framer at Campus Collectibles.

How to be a Good Audience Member

- ❖ An usher will seat you and your classmates. Please come into the Theatre quietly.
- ❖ Once seated, you will see musicians already on stage. Which musicians are already on stage? What are they doing? What sounds do you hear?
- ❖ You will know when it is time for the concert to begin when the first violinist, who is called the **concertmaster**, walks on stage.
- ❖ Applaud the concertmaster and the orchestra to let them know you are ready for the concert!
- ❖ The concertmaster will turn to the orchestra and ask them to **tune** their instruments. The oboe plays a note (A) for the woodwinds and brass to tune, then the strings. Notice all the sounds the musicians make in order to get all their instruments exactly to the right pitch. Why is this important?
- ❖ Once they are in tune, the conductor will walk on stage and bow. Applaud for the conductor.
- ❖ Applause is a way of thanking the conductor and the musicians for the performance when a piece is over. You will know it is time to applaud when the conductor turns around and faces the audience.
- ❖ Our concert this year has a narrator. When he is introduced, you will applaud for him, too.
- ❖ Watch and listen as the orchestra performs as to not miss anything. After the performance is over, applaud again! That's your chance to show how much you enjoyed the music. The musicians are always glad to hear warm applause and see smiling faces when they've finished playing.
- ❖ Out of courtesy to your neighbors and the orchestra, please do not talk during the performance. Remember, the orchestra can hear the audience just as much as the audience can hear the orchestra. Inappropriate noises during the performance can distract the musicians from playing their best.
- ❖ Please remain in your seat, unless there is an emergency, in which your teacher or chaperone should be notified. Please go to the restroom before the concert begins.
- ❖ Please do not bring gum, food, candy, cell phones, cameras, video recorders, or other electronic equipment in the theatre. You may not take pictures or record the concert.
- ❖ After the concert is over, please remain in your seat quietly until your school is dismissed.



How to LISTEN to Music

Do you think you need to learn HOW to listen to music?

Music is like an onion or lasagna. It has layers. If you look at just the outside, you will miss all the good stuff on the inside.

There are two ways to listen to music – **Active** and **Passive**.

Passive listening happens all the time. Your ears are constantly working without you telling them to. Be still for 30 seconds and listen right now.

What do you hear? All these things were happening, but you only noticed them once you paid attention to them. When we listen without noticing, that is called passive listening.

Active listening is what happens when we are paying attention to what we are going to hear next. What if someone said, “I have a big surprise for you, and it is...”, or if your mother said, “I have been cooking all day, and for dinner we are having a big dish of...” Wouldn’t you be curious as to what was going to be said next? When you pay close attention to everything you hear and try to predict what you will hear next, that is active listening.

Active Listening Exercise

Be still for 30 seconds and listen to all the sounds around you. Make a list of those sounds.

Write a story using all the sounds that you heard.

When you come hear The Shreveport Symphony, you will hear many different sounds made by many different instruments. See if you can remember how many sounds you hear.

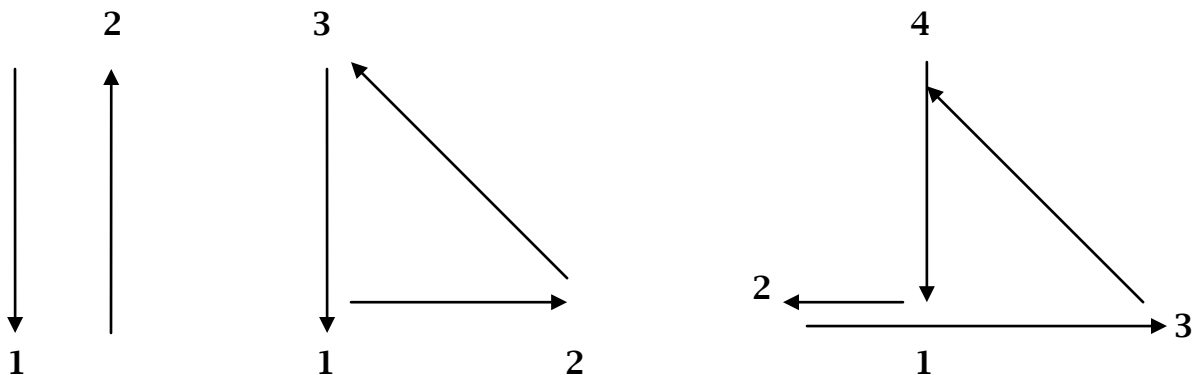
How to Conduct an Orchestra

Have you ever put on some music and pretended that you were conducting?
Wouldn't it be fun to be a conductor?

A conductor leads the orchestra. Conductors need to know how the composer wanted the music to sound. The conductor must be trained in music, know how to work with other musicians, know how to work with other groups of people, and must be able to get them to do what he wants them to do by a series of gestures.

To show the musicians what he wants, a conductor "draws" special shapes in the air with his baton. That is the stick used by the conductor to give musical directions. The shape corresponds to the number of beats that the piece has.

Try drawing these shapes in the air:



But a conductor does more than just beat the time. What else might a conductor need to show the musicians with his or her gestures?

How fast or slow the music is

How loud or soft the music is or if the music should get louder or softer

When to start and stop playing

Conductors also use their faces to show if the music should be happy, sad, scary, or even angry.

Conduct an Orchestra in Your Classroom

Prepare:

Gather enough “instruments” for each student. These can be simple, such as kazoos, sticks, clappers, or anything that will make a sound. You will need something to use as a “baton” - a pencil, pointer, or a short stick.

Procedure:

1. Gather students together and have them select an “instrument”
2. Have the students sit in a semi-circle
3. Select a student to be the conductor. Let him/her arrange the various “instruments” together in sections
4. As the conductor is conducting:
 - a. have different parts of the group play at certain times
 - b. have the group play loud/soft, fast/slow
 - c. have different groups play together louder/softer than others
 - d. have different sections start/stop at different times
5. Let different students take turns playing different “instruments” and being the conductor

Questions:

1. What signals did the conductor use to communicate with the musicians?
2. What did it feel like to be a musician?
3. What did it feel like to be the conductor?
4. Was it easy or hard to understand what the conductor wanted?
5. Was it easy or hard to communicate with the musicians?
6. When you were the conductor, did the musicians do what you wanted them to do?
7. Which did you like better - being a musician or being the conductor?

What is an Orchestra?

An orchestra is a large group of musicians made up of different instruments that play music under the direction of a conductor.

Instrument Families

There are four main instrument families in the orchestra. Each instrument belongs to either:

Strings
Woodwinds
Brass
Percussion

How do Instruments Make Sound?

Instruments make sounds through vibration. When something vibrates, it makes a sound, and sends vibrations out in every direction. Because air is vibrating, you can't see it, but you can hear it! The rate of vibration is what causes instruments to have different pitches.

Vibration Experiment

Have two students hold a long string very tightly. Have a third student "pluck" the string. If the string is held tight enough, you should see it vibrate. Try different lengths of string.

How does this affect the vibration of the string?

How does this relate to instruments in the orchestra?

The String Family

The String family makes up the largest section in the orchestra. It includes the *violin*, the *viola*, the *cello*, and the *double bass*. They all look alike, except for their size. They are all made of many pieces of wood that are glued together - never nailed! Their bodies are hollow, making them a vibrating box for sound.



The Violin is the smallest member of the String family. The orchestra has more violins than any other single instrument. The violin section is divided into first and second violins, with the first violins playing the highest notes, and second violins playing the second highest notes. It is one of the most popular solo instruments and is played with a bow and held under the chin. The left hand fingers the notes while the right hand plucks or bows the strings.



The cello is one of the bigger instruments in the string family. It plays notes that are lower than the viola, but not as low as the double bass. Unlike the violin and the viola, it is too large to hold under your chin, so it is played sitting down, resting on its "end pin". It is also played with a bow, or can be plucked.



The Viola is slightly larger than the violin and plays notes that are lower in pitch. The violas play the middle part in the orchestra and are hard to hear when the whole orchestra is playing, but would be missed if they were not there. The viola is slightly heavier than the violin, but is played just like it.



The double bass is the largest member of the string family. It also plays the lowest notes of any member of the string family. Because of its size, it is usually played standing up, resting on its "end pin". It can be plucked or played with a bow.

Do you know what material the Bow is made of?

The String Family

The piano and the harp are also members of the String Family, although they look very different from the violin, viola, cello, and double bass.



The piano is also considered a member of the percussion family because the sound is made by pressing down on a key, which causes a felt hammer to hit then bounce off metal strings. This vibration produces the sound that we hear. The piano comes in many different shapes and sizes and has 88 keys, both black and white.



The harp sounds when the player plucks the strings. The strings vibrate, and are amplified through the soundboard below the strings. The harp also comes in many shapes and sizes. The one you see in an orchestra is called a pedal harp. It has 47 strings, and is made up of over 1,400 parts! There are pedals at the base of the harp and when they are pressed, it changes the pitch of the strings.

The Woodwind Family

There are 4 instruments in the Woodwind family and they all look very different from each other.

The **Flute** was originally made of wood, but now is made of metal. A flute player holds the flute horizontally while blowing in the opening just like you blow across the top of a soda pop bottle to make a tone. The flute produces a sound that is light, clear and penetrating on its highest notes.

A shorter version of the flute is called the piccolo. It plays the highest notes of all the woodwinds.



The **Oboe** is smaller than the clarinet and uses two reeds tied together that vibrate to make a sound. The oboe is made of hard wood and metal keys. The oboe has a very important job in the orchestra. It is responsible for tuning the whole orchestra before each concert.



The **Clarinet** is the only single reed instrument in the symphony orchestra. It is also made of hard wood with metal keys. The tone of the clarinet is dark and hollow sounding. The clarinet comes in different sizes, but the most popular is the Bb clarinet, which is just over two feet long.

The **Bassoon** is the largest and lowest sounding member of the Woodwind family, except for the contrabassoon. The bassoon is held to the side of the player because it's way too big to hold in the middle like the other woodwind instruments. Because the bassoon is somewhat heavy, it is supported by a seat strap, which is hooked to the end of the bassoon and then placed over the player's chair. To make a sound, the bassoonist blows air through a double reed, causing it to vibrate. The bassoon has over 8 feet of tubing bent in a "U" shape to make it easier to play.



The Brass Family

The Brass family has four different instruments in it, all made from shiny brass.

TRUMPET



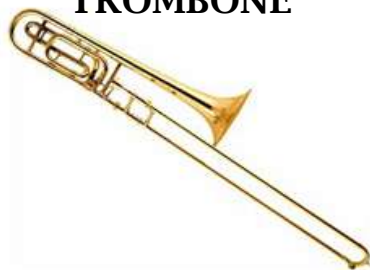
The Trumpet is the smallest of the Brass family, but you can always hear them! To make a sound on the trumpet the player buzzes his/her lips into a cup-shaped mouth-piece. Trumpet-like instruments have been around for centuries. It wasn't until 1813 that valves (those button thingies) were invented. These allow the player to switch the length of tubing the air is going through so new notes can be played.

FRENCH HORN



The French Horn, or just Horn, has a velvety sound. The first horns were small with just one loop and no valves and were used to give directions to hunters. A French horn player keeps his/her right hand inside the bell all the time. This helps with tone quality and giving it a haunting and distant sound. If you were to unwind the French horn, the brass tubing could be up to twelve feet long!

TROMBONE



The Trombone plays notes lower than the French horn, but not as low as the tuba. While most brass instruments use valves to play different pitches, the trombone uses a slide. The tone of the trombone is rich and brilliant. Trombones have been around since Columbus discovered America! If you were to unwind a trombone, it would measure about 9 feet long!

TUBA



The tuba is the largest and lowest sounding member of the brass family. It is the youngest of the brass family, invented in the middle of the nineteenth century. The tuba player holds the instrument in his lap with the bell pointing up. If you were to stretch the metal tubing out, it would be 18 feet long!

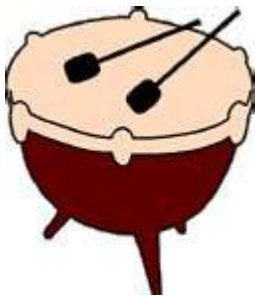
The Percussion Family

The Percussion section of an orchestra has many different instruments. They come in many different shapes and sizes. Percussion instruments are played by being struck, shaken, scraped, or banged together. Percussion instruments add much color, variety and excitement to an orchestra.

There are two different types of Percussion instruments - tuned and untuned.
Tuned play specific pitches.

Untuned produce a sound with an indefinite pitch.

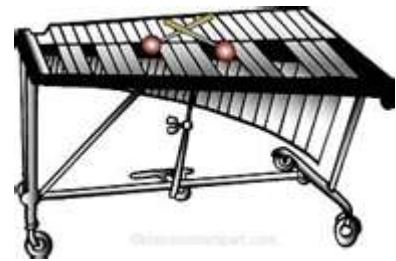
TUNED:



Timpani
(Kettle Drum)

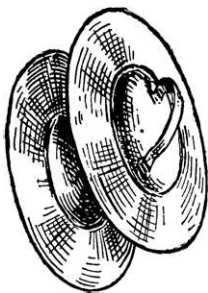


Chimes



Xylophone

UNTUNED:



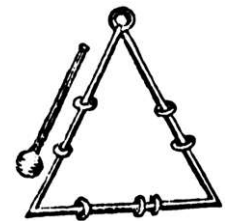
Cymbals



Snare Drum



Bass Drum



Triangle

What other percussion instruments can you think of?

INSTRUMENT LESSON PLAN

Objective: The students will learn about the different families of instruments that comprise the orchestra and which instruments belong in each family.

Materials:

Paper
Pencils
Pictures of musical instruments
Construction paper
Colors/markers

Teaching:

- Have the students write down as many different types of instruments that they can think of and compile the results on the board.
- Pick out 2 or 3 instruments and write down specific features that they have in common.
- Place instruments into groups that are the same by matching the instruments with similar features.
- Show the students the four basic instruments groups (strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion). Talk about the specific features of each family.
- Show pictures of the various instruments in each family and talk about the different features.
- Show pictures of different instruments and let the students guess as to which family they belong.
- Let the students pick their favorite instrument and write a report on it to present to the rest of the class.
- Have the students create their own "Wanted" poster of an instrument and present it the rest of the class and see if they can guess which instrument it is.

Classroom Activities

Instrument “Hot Potato”

Materials:

Small ball, beanbag, etc.



Have the students stand in a circle with the teacher in the middle. Toss the “hot potato” to a student. As you toss, call out an instrument family. The student who catches the “hot potato” must immediately name an instrument that belongs to that family. If they can’t do so immediately, they must sit down. The last student standing wins!

What Instrument Am I?

Materials:

Paper with Instruments Names/Pictures on them

Small bowl

On several small pieces of paper, either print off individual instrument pictures or write down an instrument name. Fold the papers and place in the bowl. One at a time, have a student pick a piece of paper out of the bowl. Have the other students in the classroom ask questions about what instrument they picked, such as “What family do you belong to?” ... “Do you have a reed?” ... “Are you high pitched or low?” ... “Are you large or small?” ... Students continue to ask questions until they can correctly guess the instrument.



Comprehension Questions:

Use the following questions for discussion before and after the concert.

1. What does a composer do?
2. What does an inspector do?
3. What does a conductor do?
4. What is the difference between first violins and second violins?
5. Which instrument is larger, the cello or the bass?
6. Who is the concertmaster and what does he do?
7. Which instrument tunes up the orchestra? What note does that instrument play for tuning?
8. What three reed instruments are mentioned in the story?
9. Which brass instrument is often used to announce the arrival of kings and presidents?
10. What is an alibi?
11. Who killed the composer? Who keeps composers alive?

Vocabulary:

The following words will be used during the performance of *The Composer is Dead*. Expand your students' vocabularies by having them learn the definitions. They can look them up and use them in sentences. After the performance, have your students write a "review" of *The Composer is Dead* using some of these vocabulary words.

Accompaniment	Ecstatic	Nostalgic
Admire	Flamboyant	Official
Arrogant	Flattering	Patriotic
Baffled	Foreigner	Ridiculous
Boisterous	Imitation	Ruckus
Cadenza	Incomprehensible	Shenanigans
Contrary	Injustice	Suspect
Crucial	Interrogate	Suspicious
Decompose	Lurk	Unison
Distasteful	Melody	Various
Dramatic	Mourn	Waltz
Enormous	Murmur	Weary

WANTED

Can you identify these “wanted” instruments?

1. Very large, with strings and petals. Won't be able to hide easily.

2. Long and bright. Had him in custody, but he slide right out.

3. Small and very popular. Never seen without his bow.

4. Thinks she is quite important and the orchestra won't be in tune without her. _____
5. A “foreign” instrument that always needs a hand.

6. Not small, but not too big. Won't be able to hide under your chinny chin chin. _____
7. Hard wood, but with metal keys. Don't let one reed fool you - this fellow sounds dark and hollow. _____
8. Large, with a deep voice. Will have to be brought in standing up.

9. Very old and small, but can't hide for long because he is very loud!

10. Probably will be found lying horizontally, but when speaks is light and clear. _____
11. Extremely large and claims to belong to two different families. Escaped by using one of its 88 keys. _____
12. A young fellow, but when stretched out over 18 feet long. This one will want to sit in your lap. _____
13. A whole group that is very colorful and has a variety of family members.

14. Missing, but may be hard to find because they aren't heard when others are “speaking”. _____
15. Large. Be careful. This one may strap you down in your chair.

WANTED

Answer Sheet:

1. Harp
2. Trombone
3. Violin
4. Oboe
5. French Horn
6. Cello
7. Clarinet
8. Double Bass
9. Trumpet
10. Flute
11. Piano
12. Tuba
13. Percussion Family
14. Viola
15. Bassoon

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Composer is Dead! Wordsearch

BASS	BASSOON	BRASS	CELLO	CLARINET
COMPOSER	CONDUCTOR	FLUTE	FRENCH HORN	HARP
INSPECTOR	LEMONY SNICKET	OBOE	PERCUSSION	PIANO
STRINGS	TROMBONE	TRUMPET	TUBA	VIOLA
VIOLIN	WOODWINDS			

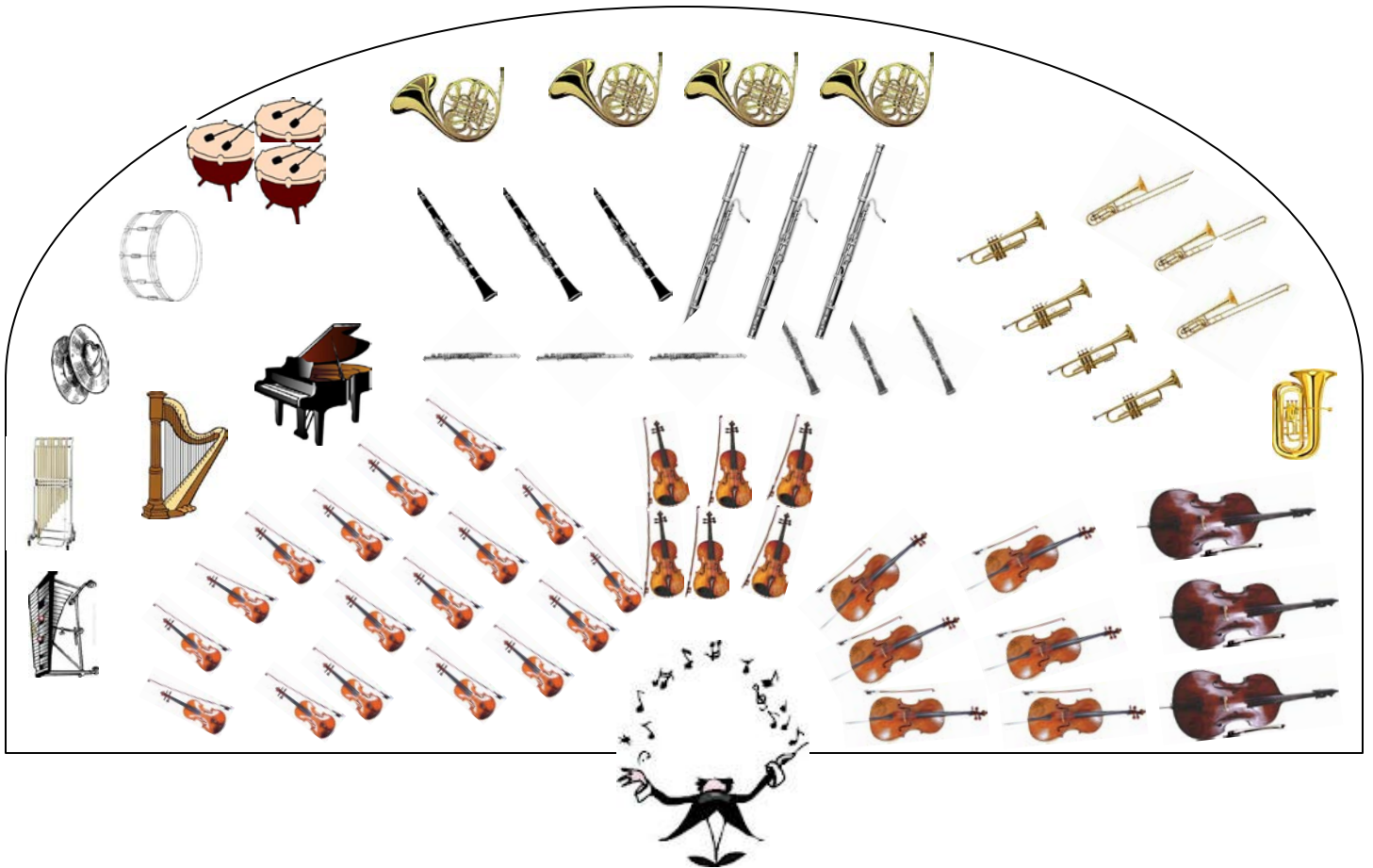
T O Q M V J Z G M E T U L F V I O L I N
U M C T O W U R B B X N C L A R I N E T
C V N D E H C A E A S P H A R P N F S P
S I V P T U B C M S N O O S S A B N Y E
G O F D U S T B J S V U V J C B G P J R
U L S P B M U K J K O H Q K O Z W R B C
G A Z R A T H M O V P Y P O L T A E W U
E K P H I D O G S L A V I L L J Q S R S
T E K C I N S Y N O M E L F E H E O O S
T P G N M C O N D U C T O R C F Q P T I
R I X U Y F P R B U T J V T V S E M C O
O A G R Z D Z T Z E B G B W L K Q O E N
M N S F U W Q H Z J Y D Q Z L H T C P J
B O S W O O D W I N D S I G N I Y W S K
O V A O C I B T E P M U R T Q G H V N F
N N R W A P Z J F R E N C H H O R N I X
E Z B S F W T X T J O B O E R Q S P S D
S T R I N G S U Q B D X T P R M O P U K
L L J Q K C W M T Z R B D N L T G A X W
V M E V W P P I L Q N Z B A N Q C K J V

Orchestra Seating Chart

It is very important for the conductor to know where all the instruments sit. Below is a seating chart of where you might see members of the Shreveport Symphony sit.

Can you label the different instruments?

What family do they belong in?





SHREVEPORT
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Now that you have been to an SSO concert, write us a letter and tell us about your experience. You can write your own letter or use this sheet as a guide. Send your letter to:

Shreveport Symphony Orchestra
Attn: Education
P. O. Box 205
Shreveport, LA 71162-0205

Date _____

Dear Shreveport Symphony Orchestra,

I just came to see *The Composer is Dead*. One thing I liked about the concert was ____

My favorite part of the concert was _____

Something new that I learned was _____

If I could play an instrument in the orchestra, I would play the _____,

because _____

Sincerely,

Name _____

School _____

Discovery Youth Concert – February 9-10, 2012
The Composer is Dead
Evaluation Form

School Name: _____

Concert Date and Time: _____

Name & Position of Evaluator: _____

Number of Students Attending: _____ 4th grade _____ 5th grade

____ # of Males ____ # of Females ____ # African/American ____ # White ____ # Other

(Please fill in the above information for grant writing purposes. Thank you)

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
1. What was your overall reaction to the concert?	5	4	3	2	1
2. How did the conductor interact with the students?	5	4	3	2	1
3. How was the student's response to the program?	5	4	3	2	1
4. Was the educational aim of the program clear?			YES	NO	
5. Do you feel it was achieved?			YES	NO	
6. Were the teacher materials effective in preparing for the concert?			YES	NO	
7. Did you find the lesson plans helpful?			YES	NO	
8. Did you use the lesson plans?			YES	NO	
9. Briefly describe any follow-up activities you plan on doing, or did in response to this concert.					

10. Other comments:

Thank you very much for your feedback!
Please return this evaluation form to:
 Cathey Sholar, Education Coordinator
 Shreveport Symphony Orchestra
 P. O. Box 205
 Shreveport, LA 71162-0205