

Musical Conversations

THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA

LEARNING THROUGH MUSIC

MATERIALS & SETUP

- **Book:** *Ring! Yo?* by Chris Raschka
- **Music:** “III. Presto” from *Sinfonia Concertante* by Amadeus Mozart

CONNECTIONS TO OH STANDARDS

FINE ARTS

- **1CE** Identify echo and call/response.
- **1PR** Demonstrate echo and call/response.
- **2RE** Describe how music communicates feelings, moods, images and meaning.

LANGUAGE ARTS

- **RL.1.4** Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- **9.** Collaboration requires group members to respect the rights and opinions of others.

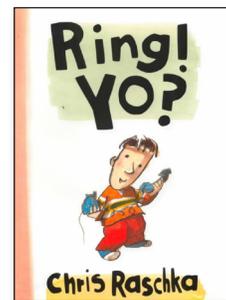
Learning Objective: Students will recognize inflection and intonation in conversation through identifying musical elements.

ACTIVITY (20-25 minutes)

1. Explain to students that we use musical elements to communicate with each other. Review these musical elements:

MUSICAL ELEMENT	SENTENCE TYPE/EMOTION	CONVERSATION
Pitch: Low to High	Question	Hello?
Dynamic: Loud	Exclamation	Hi!
Dynamic: Soft	Whisper	(I have a secret.)
Tempo: Fast	Excited	Igotanewtoy!
Tempo: Slow	Sleepy	I. Am. So. Tired.

2. Introduce *Ring! Yo?* by explaining to students that they only get to hear one side of a telephone conversation between two friends. Then read the book.
3. Explain that listening for the above musical elements during a conversation can help us understand what someone is communicating.
4. Go through the book again, this time pausing on each page to decide as a class what is said on the other line. Decide as a class if it should be said loudly/softly, fast/slow, or high/low (or combinations). Once you collectively decide, perform the word pair using call and response. e.g. *Teacher: Ring! ... Students: Hello?*
5. Explain that many musical compositions often sound like conversations. Show pictures of the violin and the viola. Point out how the viola is slightly larger than the violin and that it makes lower sounds.
6. Introduce “Presto” to the class by saying that the solo violin and solo viola will converse with each other. Ask the students to listen to how the violin plays the phrase first and then how the viola repeats it.
7. Listen to the piece and watch the instruments conversing (starting at 27:39 to about 30:00).
8. Discuss the piece: How did the violin and viola converse in call and response? What might they have been saying to each other?



(over)

REFLECTION

1. Did the student listen and respond to aural cues (pitch, dynamics, tempo)?
2. Could the student identify how the violin and viola also had a conversation?
3. Could the student understand the relationship of music to conversation in everyday life?

EXTENSION

1. Review the musical elements: dynamics, pitch, and tempo.
2. Divide the class into pairs.
3. Ask each pair of students to create a 15-30 second telephone conversation. Remind the students to communicate effectively using loud/soft, fast/slow, and high/low words.
4. Distribute the rhythm instruments. Each pair of students should have two instruments. Students may also use body percussion, vocal sounds, and sounds from around the room.
5. Ask the students to make as many of the following sounds as they can make on their instruments: loud/soft, fast/slow, high/low. Give the students 15 seconds to experiment with their instruments.
6. Ask the student pairs to translate their telephone conversation into a musical conversation. One student starts with a sound, then the other responds. Ask the students to listen carefully to whether the response should be loud/soft, fast/slow, or high/low (or a combination)?
7. Continue the conversation to compose a short piece of music, 15-30 seconds.
8. Have each pair of students perform for the class.
9. Discuss the performances. How were these musical conversations like the telephone conversation between the friends in *Ring! Yo?*

