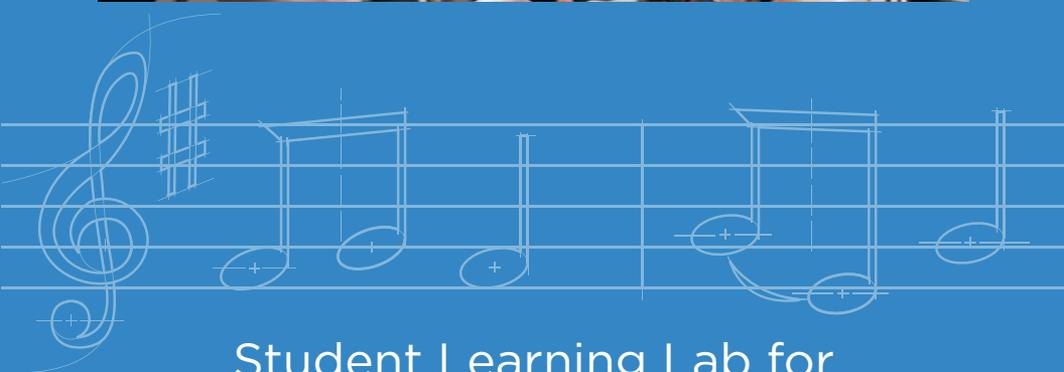


THE
CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA

WHAT IS AN ORCHESTRA?



Student Learning Lab for

The Woodwind Family

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PART 1: Let's Meet the Woodwind Family

An orchestra consists of musicians organized by instrument “family” groups. The four [instrument families](#) are: strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion. Today we are going to explore the woodwind family. Hold onto your hats – “thar she blows!”

The first woodwind instruments may have been made by blowing through an old animal bone! Flutes made of bone and decorated wood are found in the history of [many cultures](#). At first the holes were open and needed to be covered by fingers to change pitch. Later, inventors put metal keys on woodwind instruments that could cover more than one hole at a time, making it possible to play higher, lower, and faster.

There are three groups of woodwind instruments:

1. Those where you blow across an open hole (flute, piccolo)
2. Those with a single wood [reed](#) on the mouthpiece (clarinet, bass clarinet, saxophone)
3. Those that use two small wooden reeds tied together in a specific way (oboe, English horn, bassoon, and contrabassoon)



How woodwind instruments work

The air inside hollow woodwind instruments must vibrate to make musical sounds. For a flute and piccolo, you blow across (not into!) the hole in the mouthpiece, like blowing across the top of a Coke bottle (glass bottles make better sounds than plastic ones). For woodwinds with wooden reeds, the reeds begin to vibrate when you put them in your mouth, set your mouth just right, and blow! You can change pitch by tightening and loosening your lips and by pressing down different combinations of keys.

Each type of woodwind instrument produces a unique sound along a range of [pitches](#) from low to high. Like other musical families, the woodwind instruments that produce the highest sounds are the smallest in size, and those that produce the lowest sounds are the largest.

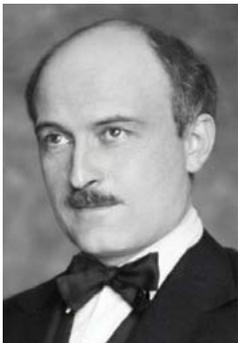






PART 2: Let's Listen to *Five Pieces for Oboe, Clarinet, and Bassoon* by Jacques Ibert

To see this video you'll need to get the password from your **Teacher/Parent**. If they don't have the password yet, please have them go to <http://bit.ly/DigitalEducationSeries> and fill out the short form.



Composer Fun Facts

Jacques Ibert was a French composer who lived from 1890 - 1962. (How old was he when he died?) He studied music from an early age at a music conservatory in Paris. He won a top music award even though his studies were interrupted when he was called to serve in the French army during World

War I when he was still a teenager.

Mr. Ibert (pronounced “e-bear” – the “t” is silent!) had a successful career composing operas, choral works, chamber music, songs, and music for ballets, plays, and films. He did not attach himself to any particular music genre or “philosophy” of composition popular at the time. Instead his music was considered [eclectic](#).

About the Music

Jacques Ibert wrote ***Five Pieces for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon*** in 1935. This piece of music is a type of “chamber music” which is different from, for example, “orchestral music.” Music for an orchestra is performed by an entire orchestra of up to 100 musicians! Symphony orchestras, like The Cleveland Orchestra, need a concert hall with a large stage to fit all of the musicians together at the same time. “Chamber” is another word for “room.” So chamber music is a type of music written for smaller groups of musicians who can all fit in one room!

This piece of music is also considered a “trio” – can you explain why?

Five Pieces for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon is made up of five sections or pieces, which explains the title! Each section has its own mood, feeling and characteristics. A composer uses musical elements in different ways to create different sounds and feelings for each piece. Some of these elements include the following (and there are many more!):

- Tempo - how fast or slow
- Dynamics - how loud or soft
- Length of notes - how long or short notes - these have Italian names: [legato](#) = longer notes or [staccato](#) = short notes
- [Key signature](#) - the scale or “key” in which a piece is written. A “minor key” may feel sad or sweet; a [major key](#) may feel bright and cheerful.
- Which instrument takes the lead or has the [melody](#) at certain times

Think about these elements as you listen to each of the five pieces.

PART 3: Music Learning Lab

Activity #1: Whistle Away!

You've learned that woodwind instruments work by blowing across an open hole (flute or piccolo) or using one or more wooden reeds in a mouthpiece to blow and create vibrations (clarinet, oboe, and bassoon).

The way that you change the shape of your lips and mouth also has an impact on the sound! This is called the “embouchure.” It's pronounced “amboo-shore” and is a French word, just like the name of the composer Jacques Ibert! One thing your “embouchure” can do is change the pitch, by altering the position of your lips.

Try it out! Pucker your lips and whistle, by taking a big breath and pushing the air out between your lips. Now change the position of your lips slightly to change the pitch up or down. Or if you're a pro – whistle a tune!



Activity #2: Listen Closely

Grab a piece of paper and pencil to make notes!

1. Number your paper down the left side, 1-5 for five different sections. Make sure you leave space between each number for your notes!
2. Queue up the video of ***Five Pieces for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon***
3. Play the video and listen to each of the five pieces, pausing in between to take notes on what you hear. Here are some things to think about and jot down in your notes.
 - How would you describe each piece?
 - Which instrument leads each piece or plays the melody first?
 - How would you move to this piece or section of the music?
 - Use your own words to describe what you hear, and then connect the feeling to the musical concepts above (such as, tempo, dynamics, key signature, etc.)

Activity #3: Make Your Own Woodwind Instrument!

Make a homemade pan flute with drinking straws!

What you need:

- 8 plastic drinking straws
- Ruler
- Pair of scissors
- Scotch tape

Ready, Set, Play this [how to video](#) for a step by step adventure in making a pan flute (and learn more musical concepts, too)!



Going Deeper . . .

Flutes Around the World

Flutes are played around the world for many different occasions, celebrations, ceremonies, or just to enjoy the sound they make. Explore the distinctive characteristics of these flutes:

Native American Flute



Introduction to the Bamboo Flute



Flutes in the Music of India



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