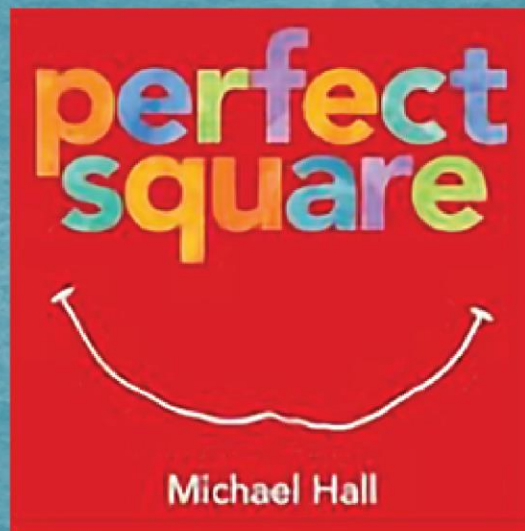


*Friends of the
Minnesota Orchestra*

**Kinder Konzerts in the Hall
Educator Curriculum
2024-25**



Composition by
Charles Lazarus
based on the book by
Michael Hall

Dear Teachers,

Welcome to Kinder Konzerts! If you are new to the program, we promise you and your students are in for quite a treat.

This Educator's Guide is designed to help you make the most of your students' experience: before, during, and after the concert. You will find lots of ideas for classroom activities to prepare students for their visit to Orchestra Hall and extend learning after the concert is over. Your help and cooperation will strengthen, deepen, and reinforce music and literacy learning for your students.

Here's a little more background to help frame the event:

What is Kinder Konzerts?

Kinder Konzerts is a unique, two-part experience designed especially for preschool-aged children. Each year, Kinder Konzerts features a composition with narration, based on a children's book. FRIENDS of the Minnesota Orchestra commissions these featured compositions especially for Kinder Konzerts.

Here's what happens at Kinder Konzerts:

- Children begin in the Sound Factory, a hands-on music lesson led by volunteer guides.
- Children attend a concert, sitting on the stage of Orchestra Hall. They hear musicians from the Minnesota Orchestra introduce their instruments and then listen to a concert created especially for children.

The goals of the Kinder Konzerts experience are:

- To introduce musical instruments and the idea of a symphony orchestra to young children.
- To help children understand that music can tell a story.
- To develop the concept of what it means to be an audience.
- To explore and experience sound and understand that each instrument has its own unique sound.
- To teach and reinforce one musical concept to children. This year's concept is long and short sounds in music, or *staccato* and *legato*.

The entire experience is enhanced by doing activities in this Guide. We are excited to share the magic of music and stories with you and your students!

Katie Condon

FRIENDS of the Minnesota Orchestra Education Consultant

CONTENTS

BEFORE YOU GO

TEACHING THE STORY.

TEACHING THE MUSIC

SONG INDEX

BEFORE YOU GO

The day of the concert is exciting for everyone! There is a lot you can do to prepare for the big day. Activities are outlined below. See also the *Trip to Orchestra Hall* PowerPoint on the [resource page](#) of the FRIENDS of the Minnesota Orchestra website.

1) Discuss going to a new building.

Orchestra Hall may be a new place for many or most of these children. Ask the following “think aloud” questions so children will anticipate and be able to adjust to the transitions of the day.

- Have you been to downtown Minneapolis? What did you see there?
- Have you ever been to a building made just for music?
- What was that building? How was it made to listen to music?

After asking these questions, break down the day for them so they know what to expect and so they have some concrete details to focus on when they arrive. For example:

- On the day of Kinder Konzerts, we will get on the bus.
- We’ll drive to downtown Minneapolis to Orchestra Hall, a special building made just for listening to music. Orchestra Hall is the home of the Minnesota Orchestra
- There is lots of glass on the outside of Orchestra Hall. When we first walk in, we will be in the lobby.
- We will meet a Guide who will teach us about music and help us throughout the day.

- Our Guide will take us to another room for a music lesson. In the music lesson, we will learn about a violin, a cello, and a snare drum and even get to try playing those instruments! That music lesson is called the *Sound Factory*.
- We will use some special doors to walk into the big *auditorium* and sit on the stage. Along the way, our Guide might tell us some interesting facts about the building and how it helps us hear music. Musicians will come out and play their instruments one by one. They will also play music all together. Finally, they will all play the musical story of *Perfect Square*.

2) Talk about the orchestra.

An orchestra is a group of musicians making music together. Many symphony orchestras consist of four main families: strings, brass, woodwinds, and percussion. Here are some activities to help children understand and remember the orchestra and its instruments.

- Make a bulletin board! See the Trip to Orchestra Hall PowerPoint on the FRIENDS of the Minnesota Orchestra [resource page](#) for good instrument pictures.
- Invite musicians to your classroom for a special music sharing.
- Have an instrument show-and-tell day. Many of your children will have instruments at home. Ask them to bring an instrument if possible, or maybe just a picture. Encourage them to share all instruments, even if they are not traditional orchestral instruments.
- Create a classroom orchestra! Use auxiliary percussion (maracas, tambourines, rhythm sticks, etc.) to accompany favorite classroom songs. Making your own instruments from found objects is also a great way to explore sound.
- Create a playlist of orchestral music. Use it during naptime, free play, dance time, work time. Set aside some time for a “Music of the Week” sharing time. This helps children cultivate audience skills.
- Instrumentation for Perfect Square is:
 - flute
 - clarinet
 - trumpet
 - violin
 - cello double
 - bass piano
 - drum set
 - piano

3) Practice being an audience!

The Kinder Konzerts experience is a great way to learn and practice audience etiquette.

- Explain that at Orchestra Hall, audience members have a job: to notice and listen to sounds! Audience members often keep their bodies and voices quiet so that they can hear the sounds musicians make.
- Audiences show appreciation by clapping at the end of a performance. Sometimes the audience might say “*Bravo*” if they really love what they hear.
- Use show-and-tell or sharing time to practice being an audience. Encourage the sharer to take a bow after sharing and ask the listeners to clap. Take turns singing classroom songs one by one in small groups. Everyone gets a chance to be both a performer and an audience member.
- Invite performers into your classroom. Parents, siblings, grandparents, or community members who play an instrument might be happy to share music with your class.
- Use terminology to reinforce these concepts. Audience, bow, Bravo, clapping, appreciation- these are all good terms to use whenever appropriate.

Learn and sing an audience song:

We Are the Audience

K. Condon

Voice

We are the aud - i - ence, it's our job to li - i - sten, Let all your

6

Vo. wi - ggles out be - fore the mu - sic be - e - gins. (WIGGLE!!!) We are the

11

Vo. aud - i - ence, it's our job to li - i - sten. Feel your bo - dy qui - et down,

16

Vo. so sounds can co - ome in.

TEACHING THE STORY: *PERFECT SQUARE*

Story comprehension is an integral part of Kinder Konzerts. Each year, the feature piece is based on a children's book. A narrator reads the text of the story while the music is played. FRIENDS of the Minnesota Orchestra commissions these feature pieces especially for Kinder Konzerts.

This year, Charles Lazarus composed music to go along with Michael Hall's book, *Perfect Square*. The story is abstract but simple. A happy square gets poked, prodded, torn into scraps, and shattered. In response, the square decides to turn itself into many different things. It's a story of transformation and change. The better children understand the story and its concepts and themes, the more they will be able to understand how music helps to tell that story.

The following activities will help guide and reinforce story comprehension.

1. READ THE BOOK!

2. RE-READ THE BOOK AND ASK QUESTIONS

Though the story is simple, there are some profound themes. Asking questions will help children reflect on the message. It's a story that can help children identify emotions and cultivate healthy responses to change and uncertainty.

Here are some questions that will help develop children deeper understanding:

- How did the square feel in the beginning?
- What happened on Monday?
- Do you think that made the square feel excited? Or scared? Can you feel a little excited and scared at the same time?
- What did the square do when it got poked full of holes?
- Can you think of a time when something unexpected happened to you? What did you do when that happened?
- By the end of the story, how did the square feel?

3. LEARN THE SEQUENCE

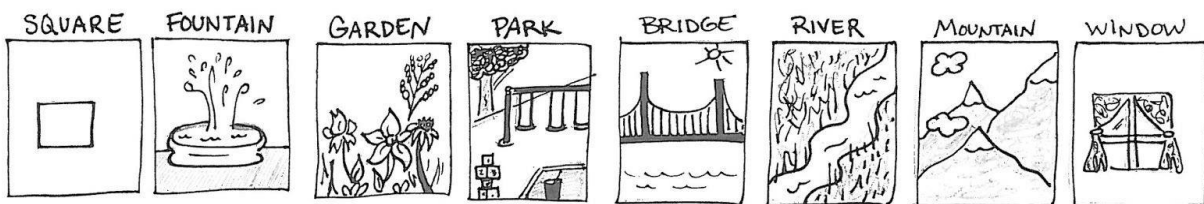
Putting events in order helps children understand narrative arc and reinforces overall story comprehension. Sequencing is a fundamental skill for students who are about to start learning to read. "Perfect Square" lends itself well to many sequencing activities, since the square transforms itself into a series of concrete objects. Start by learning the sequence of things the square becomes.

- Perfect square
- Fountain
- Garden
- Park
- Bridge
- River
- Mountain
- Window

List the objects on the board with a picture for each image. Choose clip art or photographs or draw each item by hand. For the following activity, you might choose to use art that is separate from the art in the book. It will help children associate the themes of the book with the outside world. There are eight separate objects. After students are familiar with the images, you can make the connection to the images from the book. Below are two sequences - one using free clipart and one using images directly from the book.



- Post the images and say them in order to a beat. Vary the tempo (speed). Repeat, repeat, repeat. Choose two alternating pitches and sing in order.
- Use a familiar tune and substitute the names of the images for the lyrics. The tune of *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* works well.
- After students demonstrate solid knowledge of the order, mix up the sequence. Using the song, ask students to put the image cards back in story order.
- Using the image cards as a prompt, ask students to make the shape of each object with the body (or hands.) Though it might seem strange or difficult for an adult to pretend to be a park or garden with their body, children will have no trouble.
- Again, using the cards as a prompt, ask students to make a sound for each item as show them the image cards.
- Ask students to draw objects in order on their own.



4. DO AN ART PROJECT

The book Perfect Square has many wonderful applications with visual arts activities.

- a. Give each student a perfect square of colored paper and a larger sheet of 11 x 17 paper as a backdrop.
- b. Using paper hole punchers and scissors, ask them to cut their square into pieces and poke it full of holes.
- c. Repeat the paper play with each verb/object:
 - Tear into scraps to make a garden
 - Shred into strips to make a park
 - Shatter to make into a bridge (“shattering” may take some imagination and creativity)
 - Snip into ribbons to create a river
 - Crumple and rip and wrinkle to make a mountain
 - Use markers and crayons to make a window that sees all the things listed above.
- d. Personalize it! Or, be your own square. Tell students to bend, fold, tear, shred, snip, or WHATEVER to make anything they want.

5. DO SEVEN ART PROJECTS

The sequence of activities in the book follows the days of the week, starting with Monday. Follow the activities listed above in #4 or ask students to create their own things out of squares but break it up so that you do one activity for each day of the week. Allow for extra time on Friday to include the weekend activities.

- a. Monday
- b. Tuesday
- c. Wednesday
- d. Thursday
- e. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday

Mount each day’s creation so that each child has their own sequence of shapes created over the course of a week.



6. USE OTHER MATERIALS

Squares of paper are easy, obvious choices for art projects. Extend the idea of manipulating shapes by creating the sides with various objects. A few ideas:

- Four equal lengths of yarn, string, or ribbon
- Four pipe cleaners or straws
- Play-Doh or modeling clay
- Four pieces of dry pasta (lasagna noodles, spaghetti noodles, etc.)
- Cardboard box (The “square” shape idea may need to be modified to rectangle, unless you can find perfectly square boxes)
- Cut squares of felt or fabric

7. DRAW SQUARES (and circles and fountains and other stuff) IN YOUR HEAD

To understand that music can represent the action in the story, encourage children to imagine the pictures in their head without using concrete visuals or manipulatives. Re-read the story and ask children to “see” the pictures in their head. This encourages them to strengthen their imagination and inner vision; the ability to “see” in their head without using the external sense of sight to look at pictures and objects. This is an important skill in our increasingly visual culture.

8. EXTEND TO LESSONS ABOUT SHAPES, PATTERNS, OR COLORS

Color, shape, and pattern are all corollary themes in *Perfect Square*. Create your own “Perfect Triangle” or “Perfect Circle” story with children. Make a bulletin with shapes and colors. Re-read *Perfect Square* and take note of all the shapes, colors, and patterns you see.

9. DISCUSS VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF LINE VS. DOTS

When we think of pictures, we often think of using lines to draw those pictures. Can we use dots to make a picture of something? Look at the “fountain” page of *Perfect Square* for inspiration. The idea of contrasting smooth lines with “bumpy” dots will be a primary focus of the “TEACHING MUSIC” portion of this Educator’s Guide.

Together with students, examine a painting like *The Seine and la Grande Jatte-Springtime 1888*, by Georges Seurat (below.) Notice all the tiny dots that make up the picture.



TEACHING THE MUSIC

Each year at Kinder Konzerts, we focus on a musical concept. We select something that children can easily hear in the feature piece and in additional repertoire at the concert and in the classroom. This year's concept is *staccato* and *legato* in music, or smooth and "bumpy" sounds.

1. INTRODUCE THE IDEA

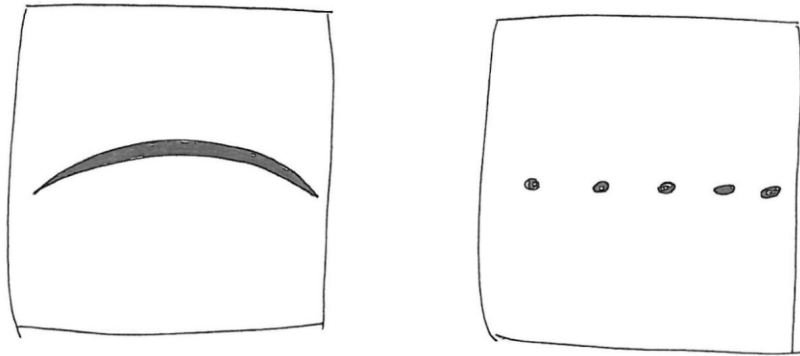
Explain that in music, some sounds are smooth and connected, while other sounds are detached and bumpy. Musicians call smooth sounds "*legato*" and bumpy sounds "*staccato*."

2. LEARN AND REINFORCE THE VOCABULARY

- a. *Legato* is SMOOTH. I remember the word by smoothly sliding my hand down my LEG all the way to my TOE. Do this motion several times while saying LEG-A-TO. Adding the motion is great kinesthetic reinforcement.
- b. Practice saying “*staccato*” while poking your fingers in your palm, on your knee, or all over your body. Repeat several times; vary the placement of the *staccato* “pokes” on your body or around the room.
- c. Sing *If Hear a Bumpy Sound, Say “Staccato”* to the tune of *If You’re Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands*, then switch to *If You Hear a Smooth Sound, Say “Legato.”* With each version, exaggerate the articulation so the *staccato* version is very short and clipped, while the *legato* version is very smooth and flowing.

3. USE VISUALS FOR CUES

Create a small card with a curved slur line. This symbol tells musicians to play *legato*, smooth sounds. Create a second card with a series of dots. Dots tell musicians when to play *staccato* sounds. Your cards will look like this:



Use the cards as visual prompts. Ask children to make a smooth, *legato* motion when you flash the slur/line card and tell them to hope or poke the air when you flash the *staccato* /dot card. Use the blank backside of a card for a “freeze” cue to help control motion. Use these cards as prompts with the songs and activities below.

4. SING SONGS!

Singing songs, especially ones that suggest imagery or movement, will greatly help reinforce the idea of *legato* and *staccato*. The songs are listed below. The lyrics, notation, and suggested activities for each song are included at the end of this guide.

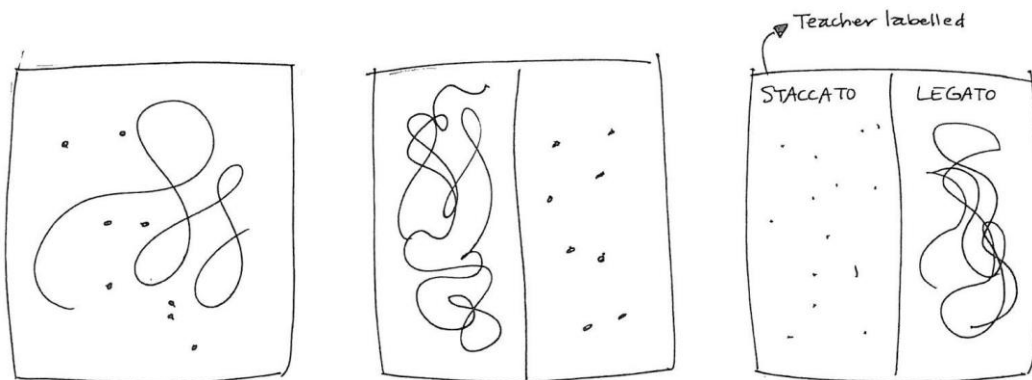
- a. "Floating Down the River"
- b. "Bumpy, Bumpy/Smooth and Rolling"
- c. "All the Fish are Swimming in the Water"
- d. "Hop Along/See the Snake"

5. ADD INSTRUMENTS

- a. Repeat any of the songs listed above using rhythm sticks or other classroom instruments. Rhythm sticks are especially good to use for *staccato* and *legato* because they can make both *staccato* and *legato* sounds. Tap together or on the floor or like a hammer to make *staccato* sounds. To make legato sounds, try rolling the sticks in your palm, on the floor, down your leg, or scraping them slowly against one another.
- b. Glockenspiels, classroom bell sets, or Orff-style mallet instruments are also good instruments to use. Tapping on each individual bar of the instrument creates a short, distinct sound that evokes *staccato*. Sliding a mallet up and down creates a smooth, fluid sound for *legato*.

6. ADD MOVEMENT

- a. Use props such as ribbon wands, scarves, or streamers as you sing your *staccato* and *legato* songs.
- b. During transitions like lining up or putting away, ask students to move *legato* (think of ice skating or roller skating for this) or tell them to hop *staccato*-style into line. Use a song to help frame and structure these activities.
- c. Use finger paint, paint dots, or plain old crayons and markers while listening to or singing *staccato* and *legato* music. Use large paper, and have the students make smooth lines while the *legato* music plays. Shift to dots when the *staccato* music comes. You may choose to divide the paper down the middle into *staccato* and *legato* sections. A sample of a finished product might look like this:



- e. If you have a classroom parachute, use it with any *staccato/legato* songs.

SONG INDEX

FLOATING DOWN THE RIVER

traditional

The musical score is written for voice in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 3/4 time signature. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff (measures 1-7) has lyrics: "We're float - ing down the ri - ver, we're float - ing down be - low." The second staff (measures 8-15) has lyrics: "We're float - ing down the ri - ver to the O - HI - O!" The third staff (measures 16-18) starts with a "faster!" marking and has lyrics: "Two in the ri - ver and you can't jump, Jo - sie,". The fourth staff (measures 19-21) has lyrics: "two in the ri - ver and you can't jump, Jo - sie, Two in the ri - ver and you". The fifth staff (measures 22-24) has lyrics: "can't jump, Jo - sie, Oh, miss Su - sie, Brown - ie - o!".

Voice

We're float - ing down the ri - ver, we're float - ing down be - low.

8

Vo.

We're float - ing down the ri - ver to the O - HI - O!

16

Vo.

faster!

Two in the ri - ver and you can't jump, Jo - sie,

19

Vo.

two in the ri - ver and you can't jump, Jo - sie, Two in the ri - ver and you

22

Vo.

can't jump, Jo - sie, Oh, miss Su - sie, Brown - ie - o!

Suggested activity:

Use ribbons, streamers, or scarves to dance along and illustrate the smooth and bumpy (*staccato* and *legato*) parts.

BUMPY, BUMPY, SMOOTH AND ROLLING

traditional

The musical score is written for a single voice part in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of five staves of music. The first staff (measures 1-3) features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes and eighth notes with lyrics: 'Bump - y, bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y'. The second staff (measures 4-6) continues the rhythmic pattern with lyrics: 'Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y'. The third staff (measures 7-9) introduces a melodic line with lyrics: 'Ride a lit - tle po - ny! Smooth and roll - ing, like a ri - ver,'. The fourth staff (measures 10-12) continues the melodic line with lyrics: 'smooth and roll - ing, like a ri - ver, smooth and roll - ing,'. The fifth staff (measures 13-15) concludes the piece with lyrics: 'like a ri - ver, Ri - ding on the ri - ver!'.

Voice

Bump - y, bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y,

4

Vo.

Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y, Bump - y,

7

Vo.

Ride a lit - tle po - ny! Smooth and roll - ing, like a ri - ver,

11

Vo.

smooth and roll - ing, like a ri - ver, smooth and roll - ing,

14

Vo.

like a ri - ver, Ri - ding on the ri - ver!

Suggested Activity:

Ask children to use a stuffed animal or doll to give a “horsey” ride on the bumpy part, then roll or rock the toy on the second half of the song.

ALL THE FISH ARE SWIMMING IN THE WATER

traditional

The musical score is written for voice in 4/4 time. It consists of three staves. The first staff is labeled 'Voice' and contains the first two lines of the song. The second staff is labeled 'Vo.' and contains the next two lines. The third staff is labeled 'Vo.' and contains the final line, which includes a staccato section for 'bubb - le, bubb - le, bubb - le, bubb - le' and a final 'SPLASH!'.

Voice

All the fish are swim-ming in the wa - ter, swim-ming in the wa - ter,

Vo.

swim-ming in the wa - ter. All the fish are swim-ming in the wa - ter,

Vo.

bubb - le, bubb - le, bubb - le, bubb - le SPLASH!

Suggested activity:

Fill a small tub with water and small plastic fish. During "All the Fish are Swimming in the Water," ask children to make the fish swim smoothly through the water. When we reach "bubble, bubble, bubble, bubble-splash," we will feel the bumpy *staccato* splashes.

HOP ALONG/SEE THE SNAKE

traditional

The musical score is written for voice in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are: "Hop a - long, lit - tle bunn - y, hop a - long, hop a - long, lit - tle bunn - y, hop a - long, lit - tle bunn - y, hop a - long! See the snake slide in the grass, he slides slow and he slides fast!" The melody is simple and repetitive, with a consistent rhythm of quarter notes and eighth notes. There are some slurs and accents in the notation.

Voice

Hop a - long, lit - tle bunn - y, hop a - long, hop a -

Vo. ³

long, lit - tle bunn - y, hop a - long, hop a - long lit - tle bunn - y. hop a -

Vo. ⁶

long lit - tle bunn - y, hop a - long lit - tle bunn - y, hop a - long!

Vo. ⁹

See the snake slide in the grass, he slides slow and he slides fast!

Suggested activity:

Create a frog using a cutout picture taped on a craft stick or straw (template below). Use a green ribbon or streamer for a snake. Use the props to act out each section of the song. Or ask children to be the frogs and snakes. They will love slithering on the floor!