



STUDY GUIDE for
West Coast Chamber Music's
Peter & the Wolf
Performances in schools

A blend of classical music, storytelling, mime, dance, theatre & puppetry

featuring: **Angela Brown**, *dancer, mime artist, actress*

Holly Duff, *storyteller, pianist*

Alan Crane, *classical pianist*

Ross Curran, *wind multi-instrumentalist*

Overview of West Coast Chamber Music

West Coast Chamber Music was founded in 1993 by pianists/ directors Holly Duff and Alan Crane and is currently in its 22nd. season. It's a Sunday afternoon concert series in Vancouver presenting four chamber music concerts per season. Throughout the years, various original children's concerts for families have augmented the series. With a goal of increasing the accessibility of classical music, stories and poetry, dance and mime have combined with classical music in shows that have delighted and educated young audiences. Some of these shows have toured the schools in Metro Vancouver.

In 2006, Holly Duff (*pianist/ storyteller*) and Alan Crane (*pianist*) first united forces with inter-disciplinary artist, Angela Brown, an extraordinary talent. In subsequent years, they collaborated on two shows: *Jean Pierre and the Old Witch*, & *Goldenhair*, two French Canadian fairytales which they toured in the schools. ***Peter & the Wolf*** is their third collaboration. Joining their group for this show is multi wind instrumentalist, classical and jazz musician, Ross Curran.

West Coast Chamber Music
472 East 44th Ave.
Vancouver, B.C. V5W 1W3

Visit:

www.westcoastchambermusic.com

www.angelabrown.ca

www.rosscurran.com

The Show: Peter & the Wolf

Duration: 45 Minutes

Requirements: Piano plus piano bench or 2 chairs,
(can provide keyboard if piano not available)

-sturdy table, extra chair,

- one standing mic with sound system

Space required: Approx. 16' X 20' (gym floor is fine)

Set Up Time: 45-60 min.

Tear Down Time: 30 min.

Description of Peter & the Wolf School Performance:

Peter & the Wolf with music and narration by Sergei Prokofiev is a world famous piece. *West Coast Chamber Music's* adaptation is performed on the piano by Alan Crane, with wind parts by Ross Curran depicting the various characters in the story.

In our version:

Bird	-flute
Duck	-Soprano Sax
Cat	-Clarinet
Grandfather	-Bass Clarinet
Wolf	-Alto Sax
Hunters	-Snare Drum

The original narration of this simple story is beautifully spoken by Holly Duff over the music and in silences between musical segments. She also plays the Snare Drum and the Cymbal to punctuate the action. Angela Brown acts out the story with mime, pantomime, puppetry and dance and uses her own artfully made masks, body puppets and a rod puppet to depict the various characters. The music is appealing and evocative and perfectly describes the characters and actions of the story. The theatrical component to the presentation makes the story come alive, and is visually vivid and light hearted in mood, often humorous. The Wolf is rarely perceived as "scary" to younger children, rather more dramatic and impressive, and sometimes is perceived by children in a humorous way.

One class is pre-selected to join in the parade at the end of the piece!

Please see the following additional material included separately:

*The Wind Family –a glossary of the wind instruments

*A simple Matching Game and Answer Key –Primary Grades

*A more challenging Word Search and Solution –Intermediate Grades

The Music and composer:

The Composer: Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) was a Russian composer born in a small village in the Ukraine. He was an amazing child prodigy beginning to play piano and compose at the age of five and writing his first opera at the age of 9! He is famous for his piano sonatas and concertos, his symphonies and his ballet music, most notably Romeo and Juliet.

Prokofiev's Musical Style:

Prokofiev's musical style experiments with many innovative harmonies of the 20th century, yet is rooted in tonality and is thoroughly accessible. There are frequently easily recognizable sharp contrasts in his music in rhythm, texture, melody or harmony, often drawn within a few short measures. His music never fails to communicate great energy and vitality, passion, playfulness or great beauty.

Peter & the Wolf



1947 colouring cover

Piece's History: In 1936, Prokofiev was commissioned to write an educational musicals symphony for children by the Central Children's Theatre in Moscow. He wrote both the music and the narration drawing on ideas from his own childhood and meant the piece as an introduction to the orchestra. He wrote it in just 2 weeks and it debuted as part of May Day celebrations in 1936. It has gone on to become one of the most popular pieces for children of all time.

Peter & the Wolf Synopsis:

The story takes place in the meadow beyond the gate of Peter's house. Peter's friends, the Duck and the Bird, play by the pond. A nearby Cat sneaks up on the Bird and Peter helps him to get away. Then Grandfather comes and scolds Peter and takes him back home behind the gate, and warns him to beware of wolves. Soon a wolf indeed comes out of the forest, and catches the Duck and swallows her whole. He then prowls around the tree where the Bird and Cat are perched. Watching from his yard, Peter plans to catch the Wolf. He climbs over his garden wall, lowers a rope and with the help of the Bird, catches him by the tail. Some Hunters arrive who are stalking the Wolf, but Peter convinces them instead, to help him take the Wolf to the zoo. The story ends in a grand parade to the zoo. In *West Coast Chamber Music's* version of the story, Peter triumphantly pulls the still alive Duck from the Wolf's throat in the last bars of the music, and all is well!

The Story's Themes:

This simple story presents various universal themes such as the value of friendship, taking risks to achieve success, problem solving and standing up for what you believe. These themes provide a marvelous framework for teachers to discuss with students the meaning and value of the story itself.

MUSICAL POINTS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION/WRITING

(The following ideas can be adapted for any grade level.)

Listen for these ever changing moods and contrasting sounds in the music *Peter & the Wolf* and how each character is musically portrayed.

Describe the qualities of the music:

(It is often useful to offer students choices in terms of opposites when deciding their descriptions or discussion points.)

Examples:

Are the sounds short or long?

Is the music fast or slow?

Loud or soft?

Heavy or light?

Sweet or forceful?

Playful or determined?

Mournful or jubilant?

Etc.

Which instruments are featured? (in the case of *Peter & the Wolf*)

Children could then be invited to describe the qualities of each character based on the music coupled with the dance (if applicable)

For example:

Is the cat sneaky or docile? Or is Peter foolish or brave? Etc.

How does the music help portray the qualities of the characters?

How does the dance and mime help portray these same qualities?

CREATIVE MOVEMENT: (storytelling & story making)

Definitions:

Mime: Acting out a story through body motions, without the use of speech.

Pantomime: Wordless storytelling by means of bodily movements, gestures and facial expression. The emotion of the story is often conveyed this way.

When students develop their storytelling techniques, they can become more open and willing to communicate; their stories become more magical and compelling.

Goals:

- Improve language and communication skills, confidence
- Sharpen physical skills, develop body awareness, relax and centre the body, use of the whole person as an expressive vehicle
- Become more spontaneous, playful, creative, imaginative, leading to development of writing skills, love of reading, new ways of learning
- Enhance appreciation of dramatic expression

- Develop a sense of working as individuals as well as together in a group, explore ways to communicate with each other to overcome cultural or other barriers by developing social skills and creating community.

Creative Movement Activities:

(The following ideas and exercises can be adapted for any grade level.)

Students may begin to move creatively by using the cast of characters from *Peter & the Wolf* as a starting point. Further to this, they may explore and observe the world around them, people, animals and the elements: air, earth, fire and water. All of these things can be their cast of characters, inspiration and fuel for storytelling with movement.

Students can develop story telling presentations of their own or as a group piece.

Teachers could establish an easy framework for the following movement ideas and images by providing start/stop musical cues for students, such as a drum beat at differing speeds or music from a CD. In stopping, students could freeze in the shape of the character, animal or image they wish to portray. Alternatively, students could move in silence, and a single sound such as a cymbal could signal students to shift to another movement, or provide a signal for another student to take his/her turn.

Animal Images

Choose animals: reflect on the way the animal moves, perhaps write down as a class or discuss adjectives to describe qualities of the animal, for example:

- duck (slow and wobbly)
- bird (fast and light)
- squirrel (skittish, quick spurts of movement)

Try to imitate the animal's movement.

The class could even use an animated animal character such as Snoopy from Peanuts, a happy-go-lucky character, who might hop or skip, swing arms and smile widely.

Nature Images

Choose movement images from nature: When we imagine what it would be like to be air, or fire, or water for example, we automatically move differently from how we normally move. We can use as inspiration, images from nature as a way to broaden our vocabulary of how to move differently from how we are accustomed. As a group, try to move as:

- a flowing stream
- a wind storm
- a simmering fire
- a swirling whirlpool
- a gentle breeze
- a mighty tornado
- be still as a rock

People Images

Choose People Characters: If you wanted to portray a **Peter** you could walk jauntily.

Grandfather might be hunched over, and walk with a cane. A **Hunter** might be looking for his prey.

In contrast, try portraying Santa Claus, you might take large steps in big, black boots with wide open arm gestures and “Ho, Ho, Hos.” Try to move the way these or other characters (astronaut, scuba diver, fairy, firefighter...) might move when he/she walks or dances. You might explore ways to talk or make sounds like the character as you move along.

Create your own Movement Stories

Now that you have explored different ways that you can create a character by the way you move and speak, imagine the character you’ve created as a character in your own storybook.

- Give your character a name and choose an action that he/she might perform. Perhaps it’s something fun or funny, or perhaps it’s scary or threatening.
- Tell a story about your character by using your body movements only and/or your voice. Stories can range from very short and simple, to a story fragment, to its full presentation.
- Create some drawings to help illustrate the story. It could even be part of the “set.”
- Present the story to the class –classmates could guess what the story is conveying, or who the animal or character is

The Role of the Storyteller

As storyteller, you can play all the various characters of a story as well as the role of the narrator. To change roles, you would need quickly to assume a different stance, movement and voice. This is a challenging process, but a lot of fun. You might experience that by playing all the different roles of a story you can delve much deeper into the story.

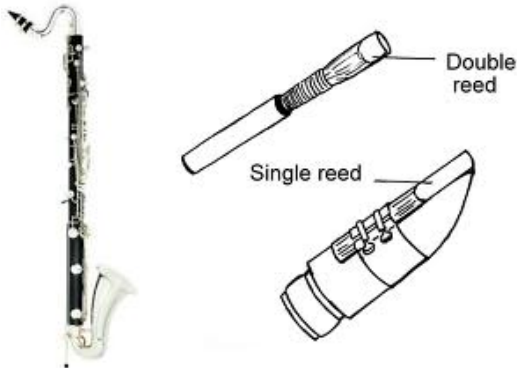
The Wind Instrument Family



Saxophones

Clarinet

In this version of the story of *Peter & the Wolf* there are two saxophones and two clarinets. These are both instruments that use single reeds to vibrate and make the sound. The saxophone family has four common saxophones. In order of size they are the soprano, the alto, the tenor and the baritone. We are using the smaller two saxophones, the soprano and the alto. An example of the tenor saxophone sound is the soundtrack to *The Pink Panther* by Henry Mancini. The clarinets used are the regular clarinet and the bass clarinet. The bass clarinet is twice as big as the regular clarinet and sounds an octave lower. An example of the regular clarinet is the Adagio (middle) movement of Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto* (K622). The bass clarinet can be heard in the *Dance of The Sugar Plum Fairy* from *The Nutcracker* by Tchaikovsky.



Bass Clarinet Reeds

Besides members of the clarinet and saxophone family we also use the flute in our production. The flute is also a woodwind instrument but does not use a reed. The flute player (called a flutist or a flautist) shapes his lips in a special way to produce the sound. By shaping the lips differently and varying the air speed you can get higher and lower notes can get higher and lower notes.



Flute

(Greg Pattillo can be seen beatboxing themes from Peter & the Wolf on youtube)

In the original version of Peter & the Wolf there is an oboe and a bassoon. These are double reed instruments. This means that instead of a single reed vibrating at the bottom of a mouthpiece there are two reeds that vibrate against each other.



Oboe



Bassoon

All these woodwind instruments use a fingering process that involves the left thumb and three fingers of each hand for the basic notes. This is similar to the recorder which is a simpler woodwind instrument. Some fingerings for these more complex instruments use the same fingerings as recorder for some of their notes. The other woodwinds have many extra keys to make it easy to play all the notes and tricky combinations of notes.



Recorder

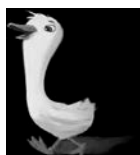


Peter and the Wolf Matching Game

After listening to and watching West Coast Chamber Music's production of Peter & the Wolf, can you match the character's image in the left hand column with the musical instrument that portrayed it in the right hand column?



Peter



Grandfather



Soprano Saxophone

Clarinet

Alto Saxophone

Flute

Piano

Snare Drum

Bass Clarinet

Answer Key

Peter and the Wolf Matching Game

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Peter



Grandfather



Soprano Saxophone



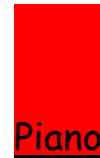
Clarinet



Alto Saxophone



Flute



Piano

Snare Drum



Bass Clarinet

Peter and the Wolf Word Search –
intermediate grades
(includes shared letters)

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

Find each word in the Word Search above by following the 3 digit coordinates:

(Count Over, Count Down, Direction NSEW)

1,1,SE _____
10,1,SW _____
15,15,NW _____
5,7,E _____
15,4,SW _____
10,4,W _____
10,3,SW _____
2,5,NE _____
7,8,E _____
2,1,S _____
2,10,NE _____
4,10,E _____

Peter and the Wolf

Word Search Solution:

-intermediate

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

Coordinates -Over, Down, Direction:

| | |
|----------|---------------|
| 1,1,SE | Bass Clarinet |
| 10,1,SW | Evocative |
| 15,15,NW | Flute |
| 5,7,E | Grandfather |
| 15,4 SW | Pantomime |
| 10,4,W | Percussion |
| 10,3,SW | Peter |
| 2,5,NE | Piano |
| 7,8 E | Prokofiev |
| 2,1,S | Saxophone |
| 2,10,NE | Single reed |
| 4,10,E | Woodwind |