

Ludvig van **Beethoven**

BORN: December 1770, in Bonn, Germany

DIED: March 26, 1827, in Vienna, Austria

BIOGRAPHY (in Student Book)

Ludwig van Beethoven was born into a musical family during the winter of 1770. Both his father and grandfather were musicians at the Electorate of Cologne, based in his hometown of Bonn. Playing the piano created opportunities for him to perform for audiences and gain experience. Like many other composers, Beethoven traveled to Vienna, Austria, to find inspiration. He wanted to study under one of the most distinguished composers of the time, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, but never had the opportunity because of Mozart's declining health. As an adult, he began to lose his hearing. Although this loss was devastating, he continued to compose for nearly 25 more years until his death in 1827.

FUN FACTS ABOUT BEETHOVEN (in Student Book)

- Beethoven was very fond of nature and often took long walks in the countryside to find inspiration.
- More than 20,000 people lined the streets of Vienna for his funeral procession.
- He often dipped his head in cold water before composing!

BEETHOVEN'S LIFE

- Beethoven struggled with deafness, but not from birth. It wasn't until he was in his mid-20s that he started experiencing hearing loss.
- Some of his most important works were composed during the last 10 years of his life.
- Although the exact date of birth is uncertain, he was baptized on December 17, 1770.
- At age 12, his first piece of music was published. It was called *Nine Variations on a March*.

FEATURED WORK: Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, I. Allegro con brio

Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5*, also referred to as the "Fate Symphony," is known around the world and particularly remembered by the opening 4-note motif: short-short-short-long. Beethoven himself was noted as saying the opening motif is similar to "fate knocking at the door." Throughout history, those first four notes have been used time and time again. During World War II, the Allied Forces would even use it to signal a victorious moment. Today, the motif appears in everything from films to ringtones. The symphony was written at the same time as his *Sixth Symphony*, commonly referred to as his "Pastoral" symphony, and both debuted at the same concert. At the first performance, the symphonies were numbered differently, with the *Pastoral* being number five. After the performance, Beethoven renumbered the two works.

FUNDAMENTAL OF MUSIC: Introduction

Notice how the various elements of music—tempo, texture, dynamics, melody, rhythm, and form—come together to create a feeling of energy and motion.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY #1: Listening for a Motif

NORTH CAROLINA ESSENTIAL STANDARDS IN MUSIC:

- 4.MR.1 Understand the interacting elements to respond to music and music performances.
- 4.ML.3.3 Create rhythmic compositions which include the use of whole, dotted half, half and quarter notes; whole, half and quarter rests; and beamed eighth notes in duple and triple time and which are arranged using a variety of sound sources.
- 4.ML.2.4 Use standard symbols to notate rhythm, meter, and dynamics in simple patterns
- 4.CR.1 Understand global, interdisciplinary, and 21st century connections with music.

OBJECTIVE:

Students will listen to and evaluate the main melodic motif in Beethoven's Symphony No. 5. Students will then compose a similar motif with a partner or in a small group setting using either xylophone and/or Chrome Music Lab.

MATERIALS:

- North Carolina Symphony Education Concert video: Symphony No. 5 in C Minor
- Opening Motif Visual
- **Visual Listening Map**
- **Chrome Music Lab - Visual Listening Map**
- Orff Instruments
- Paper/pencil, audio recording device
- White board or screen

PROCESS:

1. Play the first few phrases from the Education Concert video and have students name the composer and title.
2. Ask the following questions:
 - a. Why do you think this piece is so recognizable?
 - b. How many notes do you hear in the first measure? Select a student to hum the musical idea.
 - c. Play 0:03–0:06. How many notes are in the second measure?
 - d. Were the two short phrases exactly the same, different, or similar?
3. Explain that a short musical idea or short phrase is a *motif* (sometimes spelled "motive"). Provide examples of a motif (eg "Jaws" is a 2-note motif)
 - a. Does Beethoven's motif have repeated pitches?
 - b. How many pitches are the same? Then what happens?
4. Play 0:00–0:06. Have students count how many times the motif 'ti-ti-ti ta' occurs.
5. Display the Opening Motif Visual and distribute copies.
6. Students will mark **Xs** for the first two times the motif is heard at the beginning, and continue marking an X each time the motif is heard.
7. Play :00-:20. Have students share their answers of how many times they heard the motif.
 - a. Think/pair/share or turn to talk with their neighbor.
 - b. Different answers provide a good reason to listen to the recording again to re-check answers.
8. Show students the **Visual Listening Map** and discuss how the motif is shown throughout, as texture changes from one family of instruments playing it to the entire orchestra.
9. Mallets and/or Chrome Lab experimentation
 - a. Have students work with a partner or in a small group and share one mallet instrument between them. Students will compose a motif similar to Beethoven's, with 3 repeated notes followed by a different note that is a certain number of xylophone bars away from the first one.

- b. Then, the pair should do a self-assessment, make revisions, and decide upon a sequence of four occurrences of their motif that they will share with the class and write it down on paper any way that they want to.
- c. Video record the pieces on mallet instruments and play back the video for the class.
- d. Have students work collaboratively in small groups or individually in **Chrome Music Lab**. Choose an instrument (marimba, piano, electronic) and begin writing a motif similar to Beethoven's. Use the rhythm ti,ti,ti, ta___ (short, short, short, long___).
- e. Have students present their work to see which ones sound the most similar to the original motif and which ones sound different. How are these the same or different from the original? Intervals? Instruments? Rhythms?
- f. Ask them to explain their process for composing and evaluate their own composition and performance

10. Discussion Questions

- a. What was the name of this famous piece, and who wrote it?
- b. How many notes were in Beethoven's motif for this piece?
- c. How was your composition a little bit like Beethoven's?

11. Classroom Activity Extension

- a. Play the entire recording and have students count how many times the motif is heard
- b. Play the **second movement** of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7. Listen for the rhythmic motif, "ta, ti-ti, ta, ta" used throughout the work.
- c. Share **Visual Listening Map** of Beethoven Symphony No. 7.

Opening Motif Visual

Mark **X** each time you hear the motif: 



X	X			
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____





CLASSROOM ACTIVITY #2: Playing Along with the Music

NORTH CAROLINA ESSENTIAL STANDARDS IN MUSIC:

- 4.ML.1.1 Apply expressive qualities when singing or playing a variety repertoire of music representing genres and styles from diverse cultures.
- 4.ML.2.1 Interpret rhythm patterns, including whole, half, dotted half, quarter, and eighth notes and rests in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 meter signatures.
- 4.ML.2.2 Interpret through voice and/or instruments simple pitch notation in the treble clef in major keys.
- 4.ML.2.3 Interpret standard symbols and traditional terms for dynamics, tempo, and articulation while performing music.
- 4.MR.1.1 Illustrate perceptual skills by moving to, answering questions about, and describing aural examples of music of various styles and cultures.
- 4.MR.1.3 Design a set of criteria for evaluating music performances and compositions.

OBJECTIVE:

Students will interpret the sound and symbol systems of musical notation by following a simplified score. Students will then play percussion instruments, looking and listening for expressive qualities in the music. Class will decide on criteria for self-assessment.

MATERIALS:

- North Carolina Symphony Education Concert video: Symphony No. 5 in C Minor
- Simplified Score for Non-Pitched Percussion
- Assorted classroom instruments: Agogo, cowbell, triangles, finger cymbals
- Audio recording device
- White board or screen

PROCESS:

1. Explain what a musical score is and how a conductor uses it to conduct.
2. Play :00-:23 and have students follow along with the simplified score.
 - a. Explain how the three staves are connected and therefore happen simultaneously. As students listen, they will read vertically and horizontally, paying close attention to dynamics. Review piano, forte, fortissimo, and crescendo.
 - b. Have students share the dynamic markings indicated
3. Explain what a fermata is, and have students play the bottom line while patting or patsching their thighs. Longer note values may be shown by sliding hands toward the knee.
4. Practice the middle line while using a two-finger clap, sliding across the hand for longer notes. Put the bottom line and middle lines together with half of the class patting and half clapping.
5. Practice the top line while snapping, extending the snap upward for held notes.
6. Put all three lines together by dividing the class into three groups.
7. Transfer the three parts to the percussion instruments listed in the score. Students may offer suggestions for the first two non-pitched percussion parts. Emphasize following the conductor (or teacher) and noticing how the conductor showed the expression of the music and interpreted it. Tell students to be sure to play their instrument at the correct volume.
8. Continue rotating students to play a different instrument/part. Explain how large and small gestures were used to indicate how loud or soft to play.
9. Invite class to decide upon criteria to evaluate their performance. Write these on the board. Examples include: proper playing technique; played with proper expression; followed the conductor.
10. Record the class and play it back, allowing the class to make refinements and evaluate their performance.

11. Discussion Questions

- What is a musical score?
- What is a fermata?
- What does a conductor do?
- What is the difference between a composer and a conductor?
- Can someone be both a composer and a conductor? *Yes! Beethoven, Stravinsky, Copland*

Simplified Score for Non-Pitched Percussion

triangle?

finger cymbals?

agogo & cowbell
(high & low bells)

ff

ff

ff

6

p

p

p

a & c

14

18

cresc.

f

f

f

cresc.

22

ff

ff

ff

a & c

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY #3: Listening for Major and Minor Keys

NORTH CAROLINA ESSENTIAL STANDARDS IN MUSIC:

- 4.ML.1 Apply the elements of music and musical techniques in order to sing and play music with accuracy and expression.
- 4.ML.1.3 Use voice and/or instruments to execute melodic movement through pentatonic melodies on the treble staff.
- 4.ML.2 Interpret the sound and symbol systems of music.
- 4.ML.2.1 Interpret rhythm patterns, including whole, half, dotted half, quarter, and eighth notes and rests in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 meter signatures.
- 4.ML.2.2 Interpret through voice and/or instruments simple pitch notation in the treble clef in major keys.
- 4.MR.1 Understand the interacting elements to respond to music and music performances.
- 4.MR.1.1 Illustrate perceptual skills by moving to, answering questions about, and describing aural examples of music of various styles and cultures.
- 4.CR.1 Understand global, interdisciplinary, and 21st-century connections with music.

OBJECTIVE:

Students will listen and recognize the difference between major and minor scales/keys and share their ideas about the popularity of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5. Students will learn to play the opening motif on pitched percussion and utilize ear training.

MATERIALS:

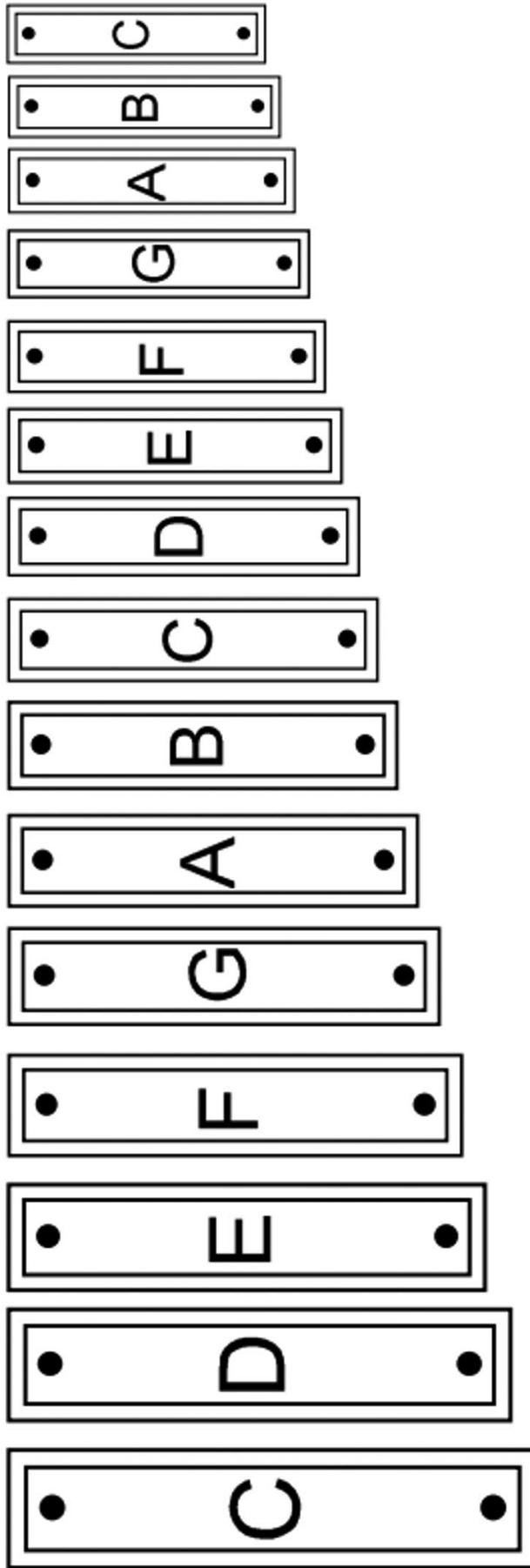
- North Carolina Symphony Education Concert video: Symphony No. 5 in C Minor
- Xylophones (Orff Instruments) or keyboards
- Simplified Score for Pitched Percussion
- Paper practice xylophone
- Audio recording device
- White board or screen

PROCESS:

1. Play :00-:09 and have students identify major versus minor key signatures using the following hand motions:
 - a. If major, form a large "M" with fingers of both hands.
 - b. If minor, use sign language to form a small "m" by wrapping three fingers over the thumb.
2. Ask the following questions:
 - a. Does the beginning sound dark and urgent, as if to say "watch out?" *Yes, most sources agree the motif meant "Fate knocks at the door."*
 - b. Why do you think this piece is so famous and popular? *Have students share their answers, letting them know that there are no right or wrong answers, just opinions that may differ and create interesting perspectives.*
3. Tell the class that they are going to learn how to play the beginning of this piece on the pitched percussion (Orff mallet) instruments.
4. Explain that the original piece is in a key or tonality that won't work on pitched percussion because some notes are missing. Instead, play it in the next higher key, using the "home tone" of D.
5. Review proper mallet technique. Distribute "Paper Practice Xylophone, basic," and replace the Bs with B-flats. Students may do this at the barred instruments, picking up the bars carefully with one hand on each end.
6. Give students the beginning note of A and see if they can figure out how to play the opening by ear. Ask the following questions:
 - a. How many times will you play A? *3*
 - b. Is the next note higher or lower? *Lower*
 - c. Can you figure out what the next note is? *F*
 - d. After that note is held out, is the next note higher or lower? *One step higher, G*
 - e. Will it then skip down the same way as the first time? *Yes, down to E*

7. Display the "Simplified Score for Pitched Percussion" and discuss as a whole. Explain what a key signature is and that a D-minor scale uses a flat or black key on the piano.
8. Play :00-:22 and have students follow along with score while listening.
9. Teach the parts, having students identify note names, finding them on their paper xylophones and playing the parts slowly. Students should alternate hands whenever possible.
10. Transfer the learning to pitched percussion instruments and have students take turns playing.
11. Record the students' performance with or without the recording and then play it back, asking the class to identify criteria for evaluation, including: rhythmic accuracy or fluency, expression, or the ability to follow the conductor.
12. Discussion Questions
 - a. What is the tonality of music and how is it shown in printed music? *Tonality is the scale the music is based on or the key the music is in, shown in printed music by a key signature*
 - b. What are two common scales or tonalities used in music? *Major and minor*
 - c. Which of these did we concentrate on today? *Minor*
 - d. Why couldn't we play our Orff instruments with the recording today? *We were playing in a different key than the recording*

Paper Practice Xylophone, Basic



Simplified Score for Pitched Percussion

6

AG/SG *ff* *p* *AG only*

SM *ff* *p*

AM *ff* *p*

BM/CBB *ff* *p* *BM only*

14

AG/SG

SM

AM

BM/CBB

18

AG/SG *p cresc.* *f* *ff* *add SG* *ff* *add CBB*

SM *p cresc.* *f* *ff*

AM *p cresc.* *f* *ff*

BM/CBB *p cresc.* *f* *ff*

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EXTENSION ACTIVITY: Beethoven's Life and Legacy – Motif and Meaning

NORTH CAROLINA ESSENTIAL STANDARDS IN MUSIC:

- 4.MR.1 Understand the interacting elements to respond to music and music performances.
- 4.MR.1.1 Illustrate perceptual skills by moving to, answering questions about, and describing aural examples of music of various styles and cultures.
- 4.MR.1.2 Explain personal preferences for specific musical works and styles, using appropriate music terminology.
- 4.MR.1.3 Design a set of criteria for evaluating music performances and compositions.

OBJECTIVE:

Students will listen to the original version and write a journal entry about the 4-note motif heard at the beginning of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony based on biographic research. They will listen to at least three other versions of Symphony No. 5 and design a set of criteria for evaluating music performances and compositions by explaining their personal preferences.

MATERIALS:

- North Carolina Symphony Education Concert video: Symphony No. 5 in C Minor

PROCESS:

1. Have students watch the North Carolina Symphony Education Concert video of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 and ask the following questions:
 - a. What does the motif heard in the very beginning of the piece mean to you?
 - b. What do you think the piece is about?
 - c. What do we know about Beethoven's life during this middle period?
 - d. Did he leave notes about his intent? Research Ludwig Van Beethoven in your media center or with your teacher's help.
 - e. What are some alternative versions of the familiar motif (short melody that is repeated, unifying the piece) used in Beethoven's 5th symphony?
2. Listen to various interpretations and alterations of the familiar motif from Beethoven's Symphony No. 5. What do these versions have in common? How are they different?
 - a. **Disco**
 - b. **Rock**
 - c. **Jazz**
 - d. **Cuban Style Piano**
3. Design a set of criteria for evaluating music performances in order to determine the most enjoyable version.
 - a. Was this version aligned with the composer's original intent?
 - b. Was it contrasting? What made it similar or contrasting?
 - c. Did you like how the arrangement was performed? Explain your personal preferences for why you selected the version you did as your preferred arrangement.
 - d. What was it about the performance that made it enjoyable?

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