

Instruments of the Symphony Orchestra



Name:

Date:

?

Listen closely

Listen to the audio file and try to find out where we are and what is happening.



Audio Content

To listen to audio content just scan the QR code and listen to it on the digital worksheet.

<https://to-teach.ai/worksheet/k5YEHQAWx48ITrnpOVZj>

Notes

Use this space to take notes.

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The symphony orchestra

In the audio file, you could hear a symphony orchestra tuning - that is, before the performance. In the following video, learn what a symphony orchestra is and which instruments play in it.



Youtube: The Classical Symphony Orchestra, explained in under 5 minutes.

To watch the youtube video just scan the QR code.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rSxDZ-LXTfg>

Fill the blanks with the correct words.

The _____ orchestra is a remarkable sonic invention, predating electricity and amplifiers. Each instrument within the orchestra has a rich _____, with trumpets dating back to ancient times and flutes existing thousands of years before the 18th-century invention of the clarinet. The guiding principle for the orchestra is "the more, the merrier," particularly evident in the large _____ of string instruments. The strings, which include violins, violas, cellos, and double basses, are considered the engine room and driving force of the orchestra. The woodwind section comprises flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons, offering elegance and beauty. The brass section, made up of trumpets, horns, trombones, and tubas, provides the _____ with power and strength. Percussion instruments, especially tympani drums, add essential rhythmic support. Together, these four sections blend to create the unique and compelling sound of _____ music.

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The interview

Read an interview with a musician who plays an instrument that is found in symphony orchestras. Then answer the questions.

Emily Carter: Hello, Mr. Ma! Thank you so much for joining us today. Could you start by telling us how you first got into playing the cello?

Yo-Yo Ma: Hi Emily! It's a pleasure to be here. I started playing the cello when I was just four years old. My parents were both musicians – my mother was a singer and my father was a violinist and a music professor. When I was three, I told my father I wanted to play a big instrument, so he got me a tiny cello. I loved it right away, even though it was almost as big as I was!

Emily Carter: That's such a fun story! What do you think is special about playing the cello?

Yo-Yo Ma: The cello is a wonderful instrument because it has a range that is very similar to the human voice. It can produce deep, rich sounds as well as high, singing tones. Playing it feels very natural, like singing with your hands. I also love how versatile it is – I've played classical pieces, folk music, and even collaborated with artists from different genres like Sting and James Taylor.

Emily Carter: Wow, that sounds amazing! How did you feel when you first decided to join a symphony orchestra?

Yo-Yo Ma: Joining a symphony orchestra was an incredible experience. I've played with many orchestras around the world, and each one is like a big family. The feeling of being part of a group of talented musicians all working together to create something beautiful is indescribable. It's a mix of excitement and responsibility because you want to contribute your best to the collective sound.

Emily Carter: You've had such an impressive career, Mr. Ma. Could you share one of your most memorable experiences?

Yo-Yo Ma: One of my most memorable experiences was playing at the inauguration of President Barack Obama in 2009. It was a freezing day, and we had to pre-record the piece to avoid any issues with the cold weather affecting our instruments. Despite the cold, it was an honor to be part of such a historic event.

Emily Carter: That sounds incredible! Do you have any advice for young students who want to learn the cello?

Yo-Yo Ma: My advice would be to practice regularly and to listen to a lot of different kinds of music. Find joy in playing and keep exploring new pieces and styles. Remember that music is a way to express yourself and connect with others. And most importantly, have fun and enjoy the journey!

Emily Carter: Thank you so much for sharing your story with us, Mr. Ma. It was a pleasure talking to you!

Yo-Yo Ma: Thank you, Emily! It was great to chat with you and share my love for the cello.

For each sentence, choose if it's true or false.

Yo-Yo Ma started playing the cello when he was four years old.

☐ True ☐ False

Yo-Yo Ma's father was a pianist.

☐ True ☐ False

Yo-Yo Ma played at the inauguration of President Barack Obama in 2009.

☐ True ☐ False

Yo-Yo Ma prefers playing only classical music on the cello.

☐ True ☐ False

Yo-Yo Ma described the cello as having a range similar to the human voice.

☐ True ☐ False

Which questions would you like to ask the musician?

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Test your knowledge

Which of the instruments typically play in a symphony orchestra, and which don't?

Plays in a symphony orchestra

Doesn't play in a symphony orchestra

Violin · Electric Guitar · Trombone · Clarinet · Bagpipes · Mandolin · Trumpet · Cello · Harmonica · Oboe · French Horn · Accordion · Flute · Synthesizer · Banjo · Djembe