SCHOOLTIME
PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

MYTHS AND LEGENDS



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The activity addresses PA Academic Standards MU:Pr4.3.5a, MU:Re7.2.6a, MU:Re8.1.5a, 9.1.5.A, 9.1.5.C, 9.1.5., 9.2.5.D, 9.3.5.A, 9.3.5.D

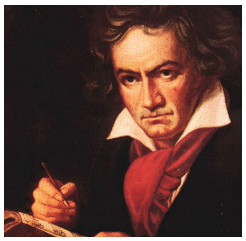
Listening Guide

Why have myths endured? Across time, people around the globe have used storytelling to make sense of the world around them. Music helps us to further understand these timeless tales, both through compositions that convey a specific story and pieces that invite us to reflect on their origin and meaning.

Use this listening guide with your students to explore each piece of music featured in Schooltime: Myths and Legends. All music can be found in the concert playlist, available in the Schooltime Classroom Resources at www.pittsburghsymphony.org/schooltime. You can also click on the highlighted titles in this document to link directly to each piece.



The Fall of Icarus, 17th century, Musée Antoine Vivenel



LUDWIG VON BEETHOVEN

Overture to The Creatures of Prometheus

- Listen to the first 17 seconds only. How does the music begin? Make a prediction of what you think will happen next. Will the music be slow and stately, fast and energetic, or something else?
- Start at the beginning of the piece and listen to the whole thing. How does the music compare to your prediction?
- What instrument(s) play the melody after the opening section?
- How does the tempo change? What instrument(s) play the new tempo first?
- There are many dynamic changes in this piece. Close your eyes as you listen to the music. Show the dynamic changes with your hands: move your hands away from each other for louder dynamics and closer together for softer dynamics.



JEONG-YANG PARK

"The Mood of the Temple Suri" from *Four Scenic Views of Suri Mountain*

- The movement begins at 8:08. What instrument do you hear first? Name the instrument and its instrument family.
- Which two woodwind instruments play the melody as a duet? How many times do they play together throughout the piece?
- Name the percussion instruments in this piece. Are they familiar to you? Are any new?
- Close your eyes as you listen to the music. What colors do you imagine?
- How does the music make you feel? What about the music makes you feel this way?

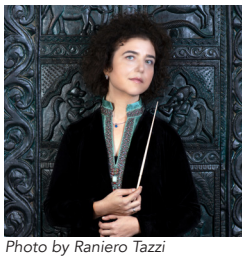


Photo by Raniero Tazzi

LERA AUERBACH

Icarus: Symphonic Poem

- Icarus is composed in two sections: a first, shorter section (0:00-2:59) and a second longer section (3:00-11:58). For this listening activity, we will focus on the first section.
- The string instruments use a technique called **col legno**, where they strike the strings with the wood of their bow to create a percussive sound. Listen for this technique throughout the first section. What feeling does this unique sound express? Why do you think the composer chose to use col legno in telling this story?
- The composer uses both sound (notes) and silence (rests) to create the music of Icarus. Raise your hand when you hear silence. How does the music change afterward?
- What instrument has a solo throughout this first section?
- What instrument ends the first section? Based on what you know about the story of Icarus, what do you imagine the composer might be trying to convey in this moment?



GIOACHINO ROSSINI

Thunderstorm from *The Barber of Seville*

- How does the music start? What part of a thunderstorm do you hear?
- How does the music change to portray wind? What instrument(s) do you hear? What do you notice about the tempo and dynamics?
- What instrument does the composer use to depict thunder?
- Compare the beginning, middle, and end of the piece to the beginning, middle, and end of an actual thunderstorm. How are they the same or different? Explain.
- Create a seated movement to represent each aspect of a thunderstorm (i.e., rain, wind, thunder, lightning). Perform your seated movements in time with the music as you listen.

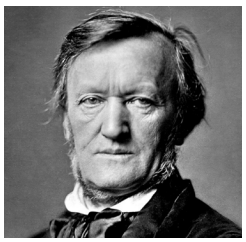


Photo by Anne Bied

CAMILLE PÉPIN

Les Eaux célestes (Celestial Waters)

- The first section of this piece is called "Weaving the Clouds" (0:00-3:10). What do you hear in the music that sounds like weaving?
- Listen to the texture of the music in the first section. Does it sound smooth, bumpy, rough? Make a list of as many words as possible that describe the music's texture.
- The second section of this piece is called "The Separation" (3:11-5:10). How does the feeling of the music change in this section? What new instruments do you hear?
- Listen to the direction of the music. Does it sound like it is moving up or moving down? What musical choices make it sound that way?
- Close your eyes as you listen. What colors do you see? What else do you imagine?



RICHARD WAGNER

Ride of the Valkyries

- Listen to the beginning of the piece (0:00-0:25). Based on this introduction, what do you think is going to happen next?
- Which instrument family has the main theme?
- An ostinato is a repeating rhythmic pattern. Listen for the ostinato that happens underneath the main theme. What instruments play the ostinato?
- Beginning at 2:30 there are a series of dramatic, descending, sweeping runs of notes. What do you imagine might be happening in the story at this point in the music?
- Raise your hand each time you hear the main theme. How many times does it appear? Is it the same each time or does it change? Describe what you notice.



JEAN SIBELIUS

II. The Swan of Tuonela from *Four Legends of Kalevala*

- What instrument plays the main solo? Name its instrument family.
- What other instrument has a solo line? Name its instrument family.
- What mood do you think the composer is trying to communicate? How do the strings help to create this mood? How does the composer use dynamics to communicate emotion?
- Listen for articulation. Raise your hand when the strings switch from playing arco (with their bow) to pizzicato (plucking the string with their finger).
- Consider the story of Lemminkäinen and the Swan of Tuonela. What do you think the absence of the main solo instrument at the end of the piece suggests?

IV. Lemminkäinen's Return from *Four Legends of Kalevala*

- Listen to this movement from Rehearsal 9 (3:32) to the end.
- Raise your hand each time you hear the brass section play in a large group. What dynamic level are they playing at?
- What happens to the tempo a few measures before Rehearsal 16 (5:45)? How does it change the feel of the piece?
- Count the cymbal crashes from Rehearsal 18 (6:05) to the end. How many are there?
- Compare the tempo, dynamics, and expression of this movement, the fourth movement, to the previous piece, the second movement of Four Legends of Kalevala. What do you think the composer was trying to communicate in each movement?