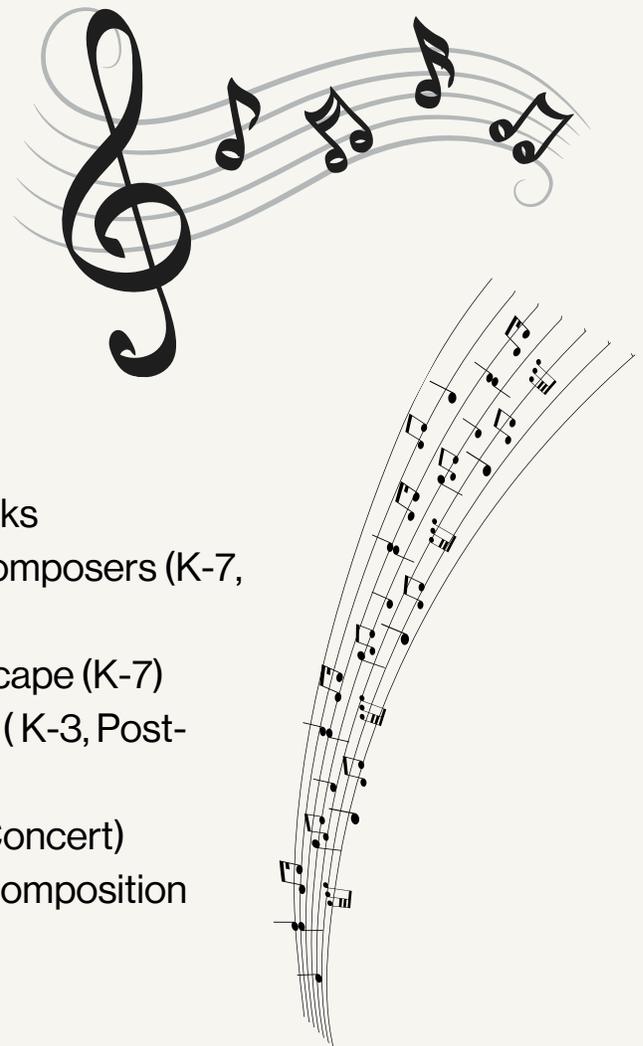


# The Composer is Here

## 2022 K-3 & 4-7 Study Guide

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## The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra

Founded in 1919, the Grammy and Juno-award winning Vancouver Symphony Orchestra is the third largest orchestra in Canada, the largest arts organization in Western Canada, and one of the few orchestras in the world to have its own music school.

Led by Music Director Otto Tausk since 2018, the VSO performs more than 150 concerts throughout Vancouver and the province of British Columbia each year, reaching over 270,000 people. The VSO has toured to the United States, China, Korea and across Canada. The orchestra presents passionate, high-quality performances of classical, popular and culturally diverse music, creating meaningful engagement with audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

## Otto Tausk Conductor & Musical Director

Dutch conductor Otto Tausk is the Music Director of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and Artistic Advisor of the VSO School of Music, now in his fourth season. He is also Chief Conductor of Phion Orkest van Gelderland & Overijssel, and until spring 2018, was Music Director of the Opera Theatre and Tonhalle Sinfonieorchester St. Gallen. He appears as a guest with such orchestras as Concertgebouworkest, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Lahti Symphony Orchestra, Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, Philharmonie Südwestfalen, Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Mariinsky Orchestra, the orchestras of Perth, Tasmania, Auckland, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and BBC National Orchestra of Wales, with whom he made his BBC Proms debut in August 2018. He is a hugely respected musical personality in his native Holland, working with all its major orchestras and composers.

Over the past year in Vancouver Tausk led an innovative reimagined season in response to the COVID-19 crisis, showcasing the orchestra with a curated series of digital performances. In the 2021/22 season, he continues guesting relationships with orchestras such as Norwegian Radio Orchestra and Orchestre National de Belgique. In Vancouver, his season will feature a concert performance of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*, Mahler's *Symphony No. 5*, works by five indigenous composers alongside many contemporary Canadian works including six new commissions.

2021/22 also marks the beginning of a multi-season project combining the symphonies of Schumann with a new commissioned work. With Phion Orkest van Gelderland & Overijssel, programming highlights include performances of Mahler's *Symphony No. 6*. In the opera pit, this season he conducts the world premiere of Michel van der Aa's new opera 'Upload', with appearances worldwide at the Dutch National Opera, Oper Köln, Bregenzer Festspiele and Park Avenue Armory in New York. In St. Gallen, Tausk conducted the world premiere of 'Annas Maske', by Swiss composer David Philip Hefti, the Swiss premiere of George Benjamin's 'Written on Skin', Korngold's 'Die Tote Stadt' and other titles including 'Don Giovanni', 'Die Entführung aus dem Serail', 'Eugene Onegin', 'West Side Story', 'Lohengrin' and 'Ariadne auf Naxos'.



Tausk has recorded with the Concertgebouworkest (Luc Brewaeys, and an animated version of Prokofiev's 'Peter and the Wolf'), Tonhalle Sinfonieorchester St. Gallen (Korngold and Diepenbrock), BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (Mendelssohn) and the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra (Gavin Bryars) amongst others. For the cpo label in 2011 Hans Pfitzner's enchanting *Orchesterlieder* garnered international praise, not least the *Classica France's* 'Choc du mois'. His Prokofiev disc with Rosanne Philippens also received BBC Music Magazine Concerto Disc of the Month (2018).

Born in Utrecht, Otto Tausk initially studied violin and then conducting with Jonas Aleksa. Between 2004 and 2006, Tausk was assistant conductor to Valery Gergiev with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, a period of study that had a profound impact on him. In 2011 Tausk was presented with the 'De Olifant' prize by the City of Haarlem. He received this prestigious award for his contribution to the Arts in the Netherlands, in particular his extensive work with Holland Symfonia serving as Music Director 2007 to 2012. In reflecting on their work together in The Netherlands, Valery Gergiev paid particular tribute to Tausk on this occasion.

**First Violin**

Nicholas Wright, Concertmaster  
Timothy Steeves, Associate  
Concertmaster  
David Lakirovich, Assistant  
Concertmaster  
Jennie Press, Second Assistant  
Concertmaster  
Jae-Won Bang  
Mary Sokol Brown  
Jenny Essers  
Monica Pegis (On Leave)  
Xue Feng Wei  
Rebecca Whitling  
Yi Zhou

**Second Violin**

Karen Gerbrecht, Acting  
Principal  
Jeanette Bernal-Singh, Acting  
Associate Principal  
Ashley Plaut, Acting Assistant  
Principal  
Cassandra Bequary  
Daniel Norton (On Leave)  
Ann Okagaito  
Carina Vincenti

**Viola**

Hung-Wei Huang, Principal  
Andrew Brown, Associate  
Principal  
Emilie Grimes, Assistant  
Principal  
Katrina Chitty  
Matthew Davies (On Leave)  
Angela Schneider  
Jacob van der Sloot

**Cello**

Henry Shapard, Principal  
Janet Steinberg, Associate  
Principal  
Zoltan Rozsnyai, Assistant  
Principal  
Olivia Blander  
Natasha Boyko  
Charles Inkman  
Luke Kim  
Cristian Márkos

**Bass**

Dylan Palmer, Principal  
Evan Hulbert, Associate  
Principal  
Noah Reitman, Assistant  
Principal  
Malcolm Armstrong  
David Brown  
J. Warren Long

**Flute**

Christie Reside, Principal  
Chris James, Assistant  
Principal  
Rosanne Wieringa

**Piccolo**

Chris James

**Oboe**

Marin Tinev, Principal  
Beth Orson, Assistant Principal  
Karin Walsh

**English Horn**

Beth Orson

**Clarinet**

Jeanette Jonquil, Principal  
Michelle Goddard, Acting  
Assistant Principal

**E-flat Clarinet**

Michelle Goddard

**Bass Clarinet**

Vacant

**Bassoon**

Julia Lockhart, Principal  
Sophie Dansereau, Assistant  
Principal  
Gwen Seaton

**Contrabassoon**

Sophie Dansereau

**French Horn**

Oliver de Clercq, Acting  
Principal  
Andrew Mee, Acting Associate  
Principal

**Trumpet**

Larry Knopp, Principal  
Marcus Goddard, Associate Principal  
Vincent Vohradsky

**Trombone**

Brian Wendel, Principal  
Andrew Poirier

**Bass Trombone**

Ilan Morgenstern

**Tuba**

Peder MacLellan, Principal

**Timpani**

Aaron Macdonald, Principal

**Percussion**

Vern Griffiths, Principal  
Michael Jarrett  
Tony Phillips

**Harp**

Alyssa Katahara

**Piano**

Vacant

**Otto Tausk,  
Music Director**

# *Members of the Orchestra*

# About Vern Griffiths

## Conductor & Host



Vern Griffiths is a dynamic and versatile performer who joined the Vancouver Symphony as Principal Percussionist in 1997. He has also played with Standing Wave, the Music On Main All-Star Band, Turning Point Ensemble, CBC Radio Orchestra, and can be heard on soundtracks for Disney, ABC, IMAX, NFB, EA Sports, and Dreamworks. 2019 saw him perform the world premiere of *Perxploitation*, a full-length percussion concerto written for him by Nicole Lizée. He made his VSO conducting debut in 2013 in Stravinsky's *Histoire du Soldat*, and his VSO composing debut in 2019, in his piece *Kitchen Concerto*. He also composed *Jack of Hearts* in 2020 to be part of the VSO kids show with Circus West.

For over a decade, Vern has played dozens of performances of his kids concert *Wall to Wall Percussion* with the Vancouver, Victoria, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Toronto Symphonies. His new show, *The Composer Is Here*, debuts in March 2022, and explores in a fun and engaging way the art of composing — featuring several living, local composers!

Born and raised in North Vancouver, Vern has degrees in both Commerce and Music from the University of British Columbia, studying percussion with John Rudolph. Vern then earned his Master of Music degree in *Orchestral Performance* from the Manhattan School of Music, as a student of Chris Lamb of the New York Philharmonic and Duncan Patton of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.

A committed educator, Vern has been teaching percussion at UBC since 1997, as well as teaching at the VSO School of Music and the VSO Institute each summer.

Vern is proud that the Principal Percussion chair is endowed by his friend and generous patron of the arts, Martha Lou Henley.

# About the Concert

## Overview

The Composer Is Here is an elementary school concert with the VSO that teaches kids about composers and how they do what they do. In a fun and engaging presentation, we'll explore mostly living Canadian composers (plus some Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and John Williams), and see how anyone can be a composer — just like anyone can draw a picture. We'll welcome several local composers to talk about their music before we play their pieces, plus we'll even have the audience write a melody that we'll sing with the full orchestra!

This concert introduces students to the modern-day music and identities of 6 living composers. This study guide will guide you in more deeply discovering the lively world of music composition. There are a lot of different pieces in this concert, including a couple classics by not-so-living composers. If you're watching online, consider taking a moment after some of the pieces to discuss with the class - what did they notice about the music? What makes it stand out from other music they have heard?

## Antarctica: Life Emerging

This composition was created as part of a large collaboration including world-renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma, to raise awareness about the effects of climate change. For more on this fascinating project: <https://only.one/pages/lifeemerging>

We invite you to share the full 15-minute video with your students:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsDhvk9f5FY&t=787s>

## Program

<b>Estacio - Frenergy</b>	1:30
<b>Rita Ueda - forty years of snowfall will not heal an ancient forest</b>	5:00
<b>Magic Flute 'Constructed'</b>	5:00
<b>Mozart - Magic Flute Overture</b>	3:30
<b>Ta-Daaaa!</b>	3:30
<b>Williams - Imperial March</b>	1:20
<b>Marcus Goddard - Excerpt from Antarctica: Life Emerging Music Is Everywhere</b>	1:00
<b>Gabriella Yorke - Toontown Rewritten Medley</b>	3:00
<b>Chocolate Ice Cream</b>	3:00
<b>Dvorak - Slavonic Dance Op. 72 No. 2</b>	1:00
<b>The Audience - TBC (To Be Composed)</b>	1:30
<b>Tchaikovsky - Swan Lake Suite mvmt 1. Scène</b>	3:00
<b>Cam Wilson - The Gopher</b>	1:00

# Curriculum Connections

## K-3

### Exploring and creating

- Explore elements, processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, and techniques of the arts
- Create artistic works collaboratively and as an individual, using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation, and purposeful play
- Explore artistic expressions of themselves and community through creative processes

### Reasoning and reflecting

- Observe and share how artists (dancers, actors, musicians, and visual artists) use processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, and techniques
- Develop processes and technical skills in a variety of art forms to nurture motivation, development, and imagination
- Reflect on creative processes and make connections to other experiences

### Communicating and documenting

- Interpret how symbols are used through the arts
- Describe and respond to works of art
- Experience, document and share creative works in a variety of ways

## 4-7

### Exploring and creating

- Explore elements, processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, and techniques of the arts
- Choose artistic elements, processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, techniques and environments using combinations and selections for specific purposes in art-making
- Create artistic works collaboratively and as an individual using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation, and purposeful play

### Reasoning and reflecting

- Observe, listen, describe, inquire and predict how artists (dancers, actors, musicians, and visual artists) use processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, techniques, and environments to create and communicate
- Develop and refine ideas, processes, and technical skills in a variety of art forms to improve the quality of artistic creations
- Reflect on creative processes and make connections to other experiences
- Connect knowledge and skills from other areas of learning in planning, creating, interpreting, and analyzing works for art

### Communicating and documenting

- Interpret and communicate ideas using symbolism to express meaning through the arts
- Describe and respond to works of art and explore artists' intent
- Experience, document and present creative works in a variety of ways

# Instruments of the Orchestra

## String Family

The four major instruments in the string family, the **violin, the viola, the cello and the double bass**, are built the same way. The instruments are made of many pieces of wood which are glued together. The body of the instrument is hollow, thus becoming a resonating box for the sound. Four strings made of animal gut, nylon, or steel are wrapped around pegs at one end of the instrument and attached to a tailpiece at the other. They are stretched tightly across a bridge to produce their assigned pitches.

## Woodwind Family

The three branches of the woodwind family have different sources of sound. **Vibrations begin when air is blown across the top of an instrument, across a single reed, or across two reeds.** Reeds are small pieces of cane. A single reed is clamped to a mouthpiece at the top of the instrument and vibrates against the mouthpiece when air is blown between the reed and the mouthpiece. Two reeds together are commonly known as a double reed. The double reed fits into a tube at the top of the instrument and vibrates when air is forced between the two reeds.



## Brass Family

Brass family instruments produce their unique sound by the player buzzing his/her lips while blowing air through a cup- or funnel-shaped mouthpiece. To produce higher or lower pitches, the player adjusts the opening between his/her lips. The mouthpiece connects to a length of brass tubing ending in a bell. The shorter the tubing length, the smaller the instrument, and the higher the sound; the longer the tubing length, the larger the instrument, and the lower the sound. The brass family can trace its ancestry back to herald trumpets, hunting horns, and military bugles. The main instruments of the brass family include the **trumpet, horn, trombone, and tuba.**

## Percussion Family

Percussion instruments are the loud instruments in the back of the orchestra that produce sound when they are struck with another object, usually a drumstick or mallet. There are two types of percussion instruments: **definite-pitch instruments** make pitches just like the other instruments of the orchestra, while **indefinite-pitch instruments** make neutral rhythmic sounds.

# *Discover How An Orchestra Works*

Everyone learns their part before the first rehearsal, because a professional orchestra typically has only 1 – 4 rehearsals before a concert!

For woodwind, brass, and percussion players, each individual has a unique part. For example, in the flute section, each player has a different part. How does it all fit together?

Composers use the many parts and instruments to create rich harmonies, overlapping counter-melodies, and other musical layers that draw us in.

## Did you know?

### TEAM Orchestra?

Pass the ball! Do you notice musicians passing a melody to one another?

Do the musicians look around to know what the rest of the team is doing?

**Is this starting to sound a bit like a sports team? What instrument sections would you match with the following team positions:**

The musicians in the \_\_\_\_\_ section are like midfielders, because they are playing all the time without a rest.

The musicians in the \_\_\_\_\_ section are like strikers or forwards, because they wait until their chance to create the most dramatic, loud moments.

# Listening: Canadian Composers (K-7, Pre-Concert)

## Preparation

Choose one of the pieces below, or find any piece by one of the Canadian composers featured in this concert.

- 
- John Estacio, King Arthur and Merlin: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUCUNxXg\\_h0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUCUNxXg_h0)
- Marcus Goddard, Converging Lines: <https://youtu.be/ZAbgLRGzysA?t=11>
- Rita Udea, One Thousand Paper Cranes for Japan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjoWOSWFAqQ>
- 

## Action

Play your chosen selection for your class, but don't reveal the title!

Discussion & Brainstorm: Ask the following guiding questions, and discuss as a class:

Which emotion(s) did this piece remind you of?

Was it exciting, sombre, or angry?

Did it remind you of any particular places or things?

Which instruments did you hear?

Did you like it? What were your favourite parts?



As you discuss, create a word cloud or brainstorm on the board. You may choose to listen to the piece multiple times.

Once you have generated your word cloud, ask students to sort the words: what different categories could there be? There are many different ways to sort the words. See if students can sort into 3 categories.

Last but not least, share the title and (if applicable) backstory of the work. Marvel at how similar or how different this might be from what the students perceived.

# Composing a Soundscape (K-7)

## Minds On:

Think about the way sounds overlap in different environments. What sounds are part of the playground environment? Home environment? We can use music and sound to create the feeling of being in a different environment.



## Action: Composing a Soundscape

1. As a class, brainstorm the sounds you might hear in a rainstorm. (eg. raindrops hitting the pavement, gusts of wind)
2. Prompt students to look around and experiment. Do you have any musical instruments in your classroom? What other things in your current environment can you use to make sound? (eg. snapping fingers, drumming on knees)
3. Decide which instruments and sounds each student will be using and which elements will be present in your rainstorm.
4. Create a rainy composition that has a beginning, middle, and an end: Consider beginning with softer sounds, (this may mean fewer players at first) then add in layers to gradually increase the volume and density of sounds. Optional: A teacher or student leader may create a graphic score for the class to follow. This is a visual representation that uses symbols to show your musical ideas. Like a score, just read it from left to right.
5. Now, you are ready to perform, fine-tune, and perform your collaborative rain-scape again!
6. Afterwards, reflect: Did the different layers come together in an expected way, or were there any surprises? Feel free to make adjustments and try another soundscape to imitate (eg. a traffic jam, an underwater scene).

# Make a Class Melody!

## ( K-3, Post-Concert)



Remember when Vern worked with the audience to write a melody? Try this as a class, and everyone has a chance to contribute! This class activity can serve as a springboard for individual compositions.

**Supplies:** A blank staff that all the students can see, and means to notate the pitches (either on the white-board, or projecting from a computer using notation software such as noteflight.com)

NB: For youngest students, you may wish to simply use graphic notation such as blocks or dashes moving upward or downward.

**Minds On:** Brainstorm a few melodies that everyone knows, and sing them as a class! What do students observe about the shape of the melody?

### Action:

1. Set your starting pitch, then students take turns determining whether the next pitch should be a step up, or a step down. Every now and then, check in with how your melody sounds (everyone can sing on “La”. (Other variations: repeating the same pitch, or making a leap.)
2. Students may also wish to determine which notes should be held for 2 or more beats.
3. Have any natural phrases emerged? Is there a section that could be repeated?
4. Allow students to polish their melody by adding other elements of music such as dynamics, accents, texture and tempo.
5. Consider adding lyrics, and then perform your song together as a class.
6. Reflection Question to Think Pair Share: Was there something more or different that you wanted to do with the melody?

This post-concert activity extends the exercise that Vern began in the concert, of imagining how Mozart wrote the Magic Flute Overture.

## Imagine It! (4-7 Post-Concert)



### Minds On:

Prompt students to share their recollections: Remember when Vern pretended to be Mozart, and slowly came up with the ideas for the Magic Flute Overture? What was the imagined composition process?

### Goal:

Pairs or small groups will make a presentation for the class in which they dramatize (act out) the thought process of composing a favourite piece of music - just like Vern did in this concert!

### Action:

Working in pairs, students pick a piece of music - it can be a song - that they think is great, and try to imagine it being composed! Don't worry about the whole song. This can just focus on the awesome first moments.

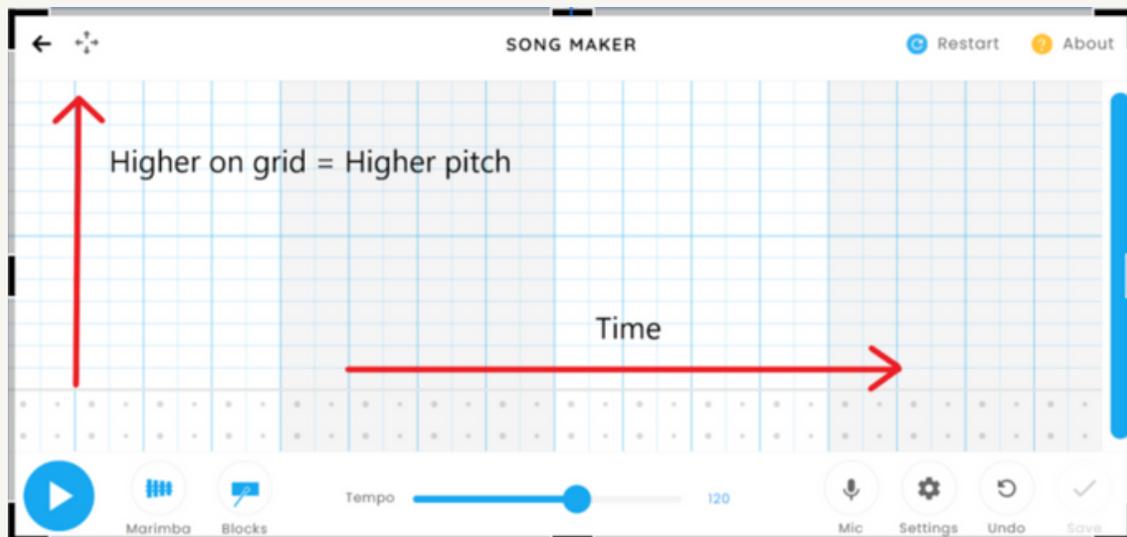
### Steps for the Students to follow:

1. Listen to the song, or, sing it. List the different elements that you notice, especially the ones you really like.
2. Imagine how the composer came up with these elements: What came first? What came next? What decisions had to be made? What decisions are connected to other decisions? (For example, sometimes the words of a song determine the rhythm).
3. Try to come up with at least 5 steps in your imagined composition process.
4. Decide how you want to present these steps to the class.
5. Practice your presentation.

# Compound Rhythm Composition with Chrome Music Lab (4-7)

## Preparation:

Students will need to have access to the sound maker in the Chrome music lab (<https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com/Song-Maker/>). This website works on either your phone, tablet or a computer. The grids function as follows:



**Prompt students to follow these suggested steps to create a compound rhythm pattern. Depending on the level of your students, you may wish to add more or less.**

1. Begin by creating a basic, simple rhythmic pattern using the row at the bottom. Consider whether this pattern is 3 beats? 4 beats? More? Listen to it a few times to feel the groove.
2. Add a simple rhythmic pattern on top at a single pitch. This can be as little as one or two notes. Consider how long the individual pattern is: Does it repeat after 3 beats? 4? More?
3. Add a third simple rhythm on top, on a different pitch. Listen to how all the rhythms interact with one another to create what is called a “compound rhythm.”
4. Make adjustments to your patterns, and add as many more layers as you like!
5. Experiment with the instrument choices on the bottom. Then, save your composition, come up with a title, and share it with your classmates!



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