

Integrated Subject Areas:

- English Language Arts
- Music

Instructional Objectives:

- Students will listen to a narrated story.
- Students will listen to a piece of orchestral music.
- Students will understand the ways that music can help to tell a story.

“I can” statements:

- I can identify story elements.
- I can visualize story elements.
- I can describe sounds that I hear.
- I can identify the sound of the flute.

Chicago Reading Initiative Integration

- Comprehension
 - Word Knowledge
 - Fluency
- Writing



What is a Folk Tale?

DESCRIPTION

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In this unit, students will be introduced to *The Firebird*, a beautiful folk tale from Russia. *The Firebird* tells the story of a young prince who discovers a beautiful and magical bird. After a series of adventures, the bird repays the prince's wisdom and generosity by saving him from an evil sorcerer.

The elements of folk tales are discussed in this unit. Students will listen to a familiar folk tale and compare it to the story of *The Firebird*.

After hearing the first section of the story, students will listen to a musical setting of *The Firebird*, written by the Russian composer Igor Stravinsky and performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Students will explore the ways that music tells a story without using words. Students will visualize the story while listening to the music, with the help of question prompts.

Students will learn that the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is a team made of many individual musicians, each playing their part. Students will meet a musician from the orchestra, piccolo and flute player Jennifer Gunn. Students will learn and understand musical terms, and hear the sound of her instrument.



Materials

- The Firebird folk tale
- Printed version of another folk tale:
 - The Three Billy Goats Gruff
 - Beauty and the Beast
 - Hansel and Gretel
 - Cinderella
 - Abiyoyo
 - Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears(Please visit cso.org/OrchestraExplorers for links to these stories.)
- Orchestra Explorers CD
- CD player
- Orchestra Explorers poster

PROCEDURE

1. Introduce the elements common to folk tales
 - Magical objects
 - The use of trickery
 - Talking animals
 - Simple characters
 - Appearance of monsters or villains
2. Read a folk tale and help students identify the elements listed above.
3. Introduce the story of *The Firebird*, a folk tale from Russia, and read the first portion of the story (printed below). As you read, help students to identify the elements of a folk tale.

A Spanish language version of *The Firebird* is available at cso.org/OrchestraExplorers.

:10* “Once upon a time, a long time ago in a far away kingdom (not in this country) there was a prince named Ivan. Ivan was the son of the king, Tsar Vyslav, and had two brothers, the princes Dmitri and Vasilii. Ivan’s brothers were older than he, but they were lazy; Ivan was brave, hard working, and always did his best to honor his family.

:50 One night, Ivan was out hunting. It was an extremely dark night and though there was no moon in the sky, millions of stars shone brightly enough for him to find his way.

1:15 The forest at night was full of creatures: animals and insects that made every imaginable creepy and crawly noise. A soft wind made the trees shake and the leaves rustled against each other.

1:40 The prince went silently in search of his prey, and in the middle of the dark forest, as he cleared his way through a dense group of thorny bushes, he was amazed to come upon a bird that he had never seen before. The Firebird, as it was called, had feathers of brilliant, golden and fiery colors and eyes that were like crystals. The prince was just as amazed by the tree whose fruit the Firebird ate. The tree was silver, with golden apples for fruit.

Ivan stalked the Firebird, creeping silently and stealthily so he would not scare it away. His heart pounded in his chest. He was excited by the hunt and by the awesome, magical bird, but he was terrified of not knowing what might happen to him.

2:40 Finally, when he was in close range and sure the Firebird had not seen or heard him, Ivan waited for the bird to turn again to the golden apples on the silver tree...and then he lunged!”

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Say: “EYE-vun”

Say: “Zarr VIS-lav”

Say: “Dim-EAT-tree”

Say: “Va-SILLY”

Teachers Say

“I made the reading of the story more interactive by incorporating movement. For example, when students hear Prince Ivan’s footsteps, they had to make their hands “walk” in the air. When they heard the Firebird, they made flapping movements with their hands.”

*If reading the story with the music, timings indicate the approximate place where each section should be read.

4. Inform students that they will listen to a piece of music that was written to tell the story of *The Firebird*. Play track 5 from the *Orchestra Explorers* CD. While they listen, ask them to make a picture in their head of what they hear. As students listen to the music, read the story again.
5. When you are finished reading the story, ask the students if the music helped them visualize what was happening in the story.
 - What did they see?

Play track 5 again and tell the students that the lowest sounding instruments (beginning to :34) are the **basses** and **cellos**. Point out the basses and cellos on the *Orchestra Explorers* poster. Pause the CD after identifying the sound of the basses and cellos.

- Could they picture the dark night?
- Did it sound scary?

Continue with track 5 and point out the short, separated notes played by the **bassoon** and horn (1:00–1:04). Point out the bassoon and horn on the *Orchestra Explorers* poster. Pause the CD after identifying the sound of Prince Ivan’s footsteps.

- Could they hear Prince Ivan’s footsteps?

Continue with track 5, drawing the students’ attention to the sound of the Firebird (at approximately 1:50). Tell them that the sound they hear is the **flute**. Point out the flute on the *Orchestra Explorers* poster.

- Could they hear the Firebird?
- What did it sound like?
- Was the sound of the Firebird different from the low, scary sounds at the beginning?

It may be helpful to repeat track 5, giving the students another chance to identify the sounds of the dark night, Prince Ivan’s footsteps, and the Firebird as well as identifying those instruments on the *Orchestra Explorers* poster.

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6. Play track 6, which is an excerpt of the flute alone. Ask students the following introductory questions about the flute.
 - How many have seen a flute before?
 - Do they know what family of the orchestra the flute is in?
Woodwinds; point out the flute and the rest of the woodwind instruments on the Orchestra Explorers poster.
 - Do the notes that the flute plays usually sound high or low?
High
 - What does it mean that the instrument has a high sound?
It’s not a low sound; it’s like if you talk in a little voice like a mouse.



Say: “BASE-es,” “CHEL-lows”



Say: “Buh-SOON”



Teachers Say

“Listening on this level is a skill that hasn’t been well-developed yet in the classroom. It takes a few times for students to get the hang of it.”

2

ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS

Extensions:

- Have students write their own folk tales. Offer some ideas for a main character. Give them some ideas for a talking animal. Have them decide on magical features for the story. Where will the story take place? Who will be the villain? Continue asking questions until students have identified all of the necessary elements. This may need to take place over several days. If students are not able to write their own stories, write a story as a class.
- Have students draw or paint the scenes in this portion of the story.

Supplemental Resources
available at
cso.org/OrchestraExplorers



Play track 6 again, giving the students another chance to hear the sound of the flute and offer any other comments.

7. Introduce students to Jennifer Gunn, who plays flute in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Point out Jennifer on the *Orchestra Explorers* poster, along with the picture of the flute. Play track 7. Jennifer will introduce herself and talk about what it is like to play *The Firebird*.
8. Play track 8. Jennifer will perform examples that show how different composers use the flute to imitate the sounds of birds.
9. Play track 9. Distribute student worksheets or lead students in a conversation that assesses their understanding of the information presented in this unit.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Learning Benchmark I.C.1b: Identify important themes and topics.

Learning Benchmark I.C.1e: Identify how authors and illustrators express their ideas in text and graphics (e.g., dialogue, conflict, shape, color, characters).

Learning Benchmark 2.A.1a: Identify the literary elements of theme, setting, plot and character within literary works.

Learning Benchmark 2.B.1a: Respond to literary materials by connecting them to their own experience and communicate those responses to others.

Learning Benchmark 4.A.1d: Use visually oriented and auditorily based media.

FINE ARTS

Learning Benchmark 25.A.1c: Music: Identify differences in elements and expressive qualities (e.g., between fast and slow tempo; loud and soft dynamics; high and low pitch/direction; long and short duration; same and different form, tone color or timbre, and beat).

Learning Benchmark 26.A.1c: Music: Identify a variety of sounds and sound sources (e.g., instruments, voices and environmental sounds).

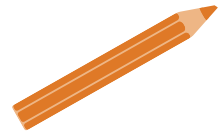
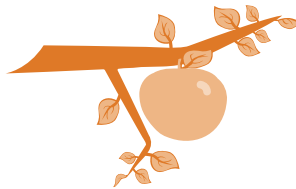
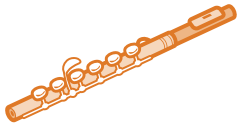
Learning Benchmark 27.A.1a: Identify the distinctive roles of artists and audiences.

Learning Benchmark 27.B.1: Know how images, sounds and movement convey stories about people, places and times.

Name _____


What is a Folk Tale?

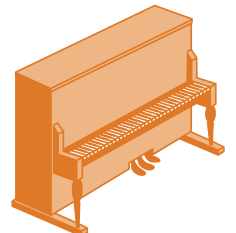
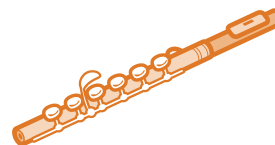
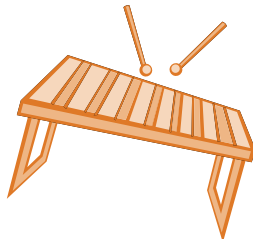
What belongs?  Draw a line from the Firebird to the pictures that belong with it.



The Firebird



Meet Jennifer Gunn.  Circle the instrument that Jennifer plays.



Name _____

What is a Folk Tale?

A folk tale is a story that was written a long time ago.
Folk tales usually include

- MAGICAL OBJECTS
- TALKING ANIMALS
- MONSTERS
- TRICKS



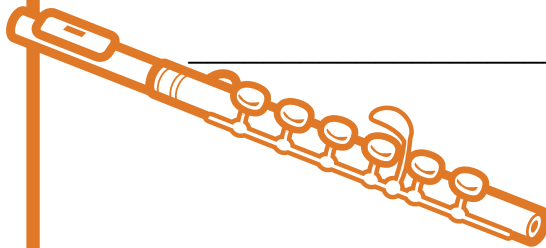
The story of *The Firebird* is from what country?



The Firebird



The flute belongs to which instrument family?



Write three words that describe the sound of the flute:



Jennifer Gunn plays flute in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Integrated Subject Areas:

- English Language Arts
- Music

Instructional Objectives:

- Students will listen to a narrated story.
- Students will learn and understand a set of vocabulary words from the story.
- Students will explore the vocabulary words through a drawing activity.
- Students will listen to a piece of orchestral music.
- Students will describe their drawing, including connections to the music they have heard.

“I can” statements:

- I can use prior knowledge to learn new words.
- I can visualize story elements.
 - I can create a drawing in response to story and music.
 - I can share my ideas with my classmates.
 - I can identify the sound of the violin.

Chicago Reading Initiative Integration

- Comprehension
- Word Knowledge
- Fluency
- Writing

Round Dance of the Princesses



DESCRIPTION

In this unit, students will make predictions about the meaning of several vocabulary words used in Part 3 of the story of *The Firebird*. After hearing this section of the story, students will determine whether their predictions were correct.

Students will draw an image from the story, discuss their drawings with their classmates and explain the choices they made.

Students will meet Nathan Cole, a violinist in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, who will demonstrate sections from the *Round Dance of the Princesses* and describe how he plays this music expressively.

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PROCEDURE

1. Introduce the following vocabulary words. Ask the students if they have heard these words before and whether they have any idea what they might mean.

Enchanted: A place or thing that is enchanted has been put under a magic spell or seems magical.

Castle: A large building, often surrounded by a wall and a moat, where a king or queen lives. In the Middle Ages, noble families stayed in castles and soldiers defended them from attack.

Maiden: A young, unmarried woman.

Sorcerer: Someone who performs magic by controlling evil spirits; a wizard.

2. Read the story of the *Round Dance of the Princesses*, with the accompanying music playing softly in the background (track 14 on the *Orchestra Explorers* CD). Tell the students to listen carefully for each of the new vocabulary words.

:15* “Later the same night, Ivan came upon a group of twelve maidens and the beautiful Princess **Vasilisa** playing games and dancing in an orchard next to a dark, enchanted castle. Each of them wore a long white gown with delicate silver embroidery. The princess had precious jewels wrapped around her wrists and neck and throughout her hair.

:45 Ivan was overcome by the princess’s beauty and immediately fell in love with her.

3:56 Finally noticing the appearance of the stranger, the maidens were frightened and ran to hide behind nearby trees. But Ivan reassured them that he meant no harm. He was a Prince, the son of Tsar Vyslav, and he was in love with the princess. Because of his kind and noble words, the princess and her maidens welcomed Ivan to dance with them.

4:16 A group of six maidens surrounded him in a circle. The other six maidens surrounded the princess. Their dance was full of soft, gentle movements. They jumped lightly and twirled and spun. Every step, every turn, and every gesture was exactly together so that in one moment, their movements seemed to resemble a sun with spinning, shining rays; in another moment, they seemed to be the soft petals of a flower.

Materials

- *The Firebird* folk tale
- Paper
- Crayons, colored pencils, markers, or other drawing materials
- *Orchestra Explorers* CD
- CD player
- *Orchestra Explorers* poster



4

Say: “Vas-ill-LISA”

Teachers Say

“As I read the folktale aloud, I placed the pictures of the characters on the board so the students could follow along better.”

*If reading the story with the music, timings indicate the approximate place where each section should be read.

Say: “Cash-CHAY”

3:59 After their dance ended, the princess in the silver-embroidered gown warned Ivan that they were being held captive by the evil sorcerer, **Kastchei**, whose enchanted castle was nearby. Ivan’s heart broke when he heard this news! He asked the princess if there was some way he could free them from the sorcerer.

4:18 The princess cried. No, Kastchei was wicked! If Ivan was captured, he would be turned into stone, so the princess told him to run away. But Ivan was brave, and because of his love for the princess, he was determined to free them from the evil sorcerer. The princess hugged Ivan before she and the maidens left the orchard.”

3. Review the four vocabulary words again. Ask the students if hearing the words in the story helped them understand what they mean.

4. Tell the students that they are going to draw a picture of one image from this part of the story. Students should choose a strong image that stands out when they close their eyes and think about the story or hear the music.

Ask students to share what image they have selected. Encourage them to be descriptive.

5. Distribute drawing materials and play *Round Dance of the Princesses* (track 14) while students draw the image they have selected. If students get stuck in the drawing process, encourage them by asking questions, including:

- What does the music tell you to draw?
- What is in the background of your picture?
- What other things are going on in your picture?

Have students add titles to their drawings. Encourage them to use descriptive words and, when possible, the new vocabulary words.

6. When everyone is finished, invite students to share their drawings. Lead a discussion about their pictures, including the following questions:

- What is happening in your picture?
- How did the music influence your picture?
- What other sounds or noises would you add to the music to make it match your picture?

7. Display the students’ work.

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Extensions:

- Have students write their own story about what is happening in their picture. Tell them it doesn’t have to match *The Firebird* story.
- Find a book or illustration that shows how castles were built and shows the various parts of their architecture and structure. (See suggestions below.) Show and discuss the various features and illustrations. Allow students to look at the books individually during free reading periods.

Supplemental Resources:

[Castle](#) (DK Publishing)
[Castles](#) (Usborne Beginners)
[Usborne Book of Castles](#)
(Usborne Books)

8. Introduce students to Nathan Cole, who plays violin in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Point out Nathan and the other string instruments on the *Orchestra Explorers* poster. Play track 15. Nathan will introduce himself and demonstrate sections from the *Round Dance of the Princesses*.
9. Distribute student worksheets or lead students in a conversation that assesses their understanding of the information presented in this unit.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Learning Benchmark 1.A.1b: Comprehend unfamiliar words using context clues and prior knowledge; verify meanings with resource materials.

Learning Benchmark 2.B.1a: Respond to literary materials by connecting them to their own experience and communicate those responses to others.

Learning Benchmark 4.A.1b: Ask questions and respond to questions from the teacher and from group members to improve comprehension.

Learning Benchmark 4.A.1d: Use visually oriented and auditorily based media.

Learning Benchmark 4.B.1a: Present brief oral reports, using language and vocabulary appropriate to the message and audience (e.g., show and tell).

FINE ARTS

Learning Benchmark 25.A.1c: Music: Identify differences in elements and expressive qualities (e.g., between fast and slow tempo; loud and soft dynamics; high and low pitch/direction; long and short duration; same and different form, tone color or timbre, and beat).

Learning Benchmark 25.A.1d: Visual Arts: Identify the elements of line, shape, space, color and texture; the principles of repetition and pattern; and the expressive qualities of mood, emotion and pictorial representation.

Learning Benchmark 26.B.1d: Visual Arts: Demonstrate knowledge and skills to create visual works of art using manipulation, eye-hand coordination, building and imagination.

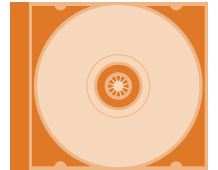
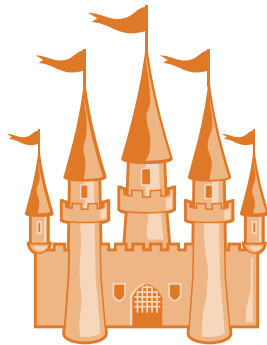
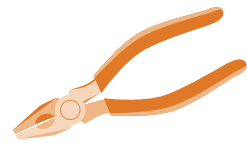
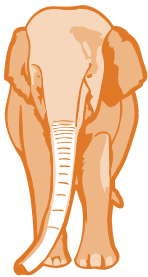
ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS

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Name _____

Round Dance of the Princesses

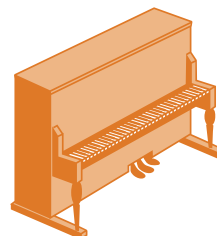
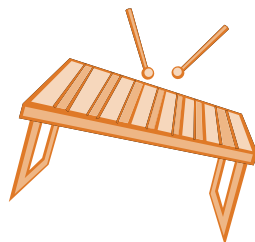
 Circle the pictures that do NOT belong in the story of *The Firebird*.



Meet Nathan Cole.



Circle the instrument that Nathan plays.



Name _____

Round Dance of the Princesses



Define these words from the story of *The Firebird*:

Enchanted _____

Castle _____

Maiden _____

Sorcerer _____



The violin belongs to which instrument family?



Write three words that describe the sound of the violin:

Nathan Cole plays violin in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Write one question you would like to ask Nathan: _____
