

Grade(s): K-8

Lesson length: 30-40 minutes

Instructional objectives:

Students will:

- Identify character traits represented in musical examples
- Evaluate a composer's portrayal of animals in music

Materials:

- **Paper**
- **Writing utensil**
- **Musical Recording** of featured repertoire
- **Sound System** for musical excerpts (e.g. laptop and speakers, iPhone® dock or Spotify®, etc)

Featured Repertoire*:

- **Camille Saint-Saëns** [The Carnival of the Animals](#)

*Click on the link above to listen to these examples on Spotify. A free account is required to listen.

¹ *Classics for Kids*. Web. May 2016
<http://www.classicsforkids.com/composers/bio.asp?id=61>

**This biography is provided for your information. It is not necessary background information for this lesson.

NEGAUNEE
MUSIC
INSTITUTE
at the
CHICAGO
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

The Carnival of the Animals

DESCRIPTION

This lesson will explore *The Carnival of the Animals* by Camille Saint-Saëns and how Saint-Saëns uses music to portray characteristics of animals in each movement.

Assessment Strategies

In this lessons, students should be able to successfully do the following: identify character traits of animals and evaluate Saint-Saëns ability to portray those traits in his music. Learn more about assessment strategies on page 4.

Learning Standards

This lesson uses Common Core and National Core Arts Anchor Standards. You can find more information about the standards featured in this lesson on page 4.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER*

Like Mozart, Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921) was a child prodigy, composing his first piece by the age of 3! When he was 10 he performed in public for the first time, and because of his excellent memory, he offered to play any of Beethoven's 32 sonatas from memory.

In addition to performing, Saint-Saëns also composed music, and was a conductor and a teacher. He is best known for his concertos, an organ symphony and *The Carnival of the Animals*.¹

Featured Repertoire*:

The Carnival of the Animals

- [Introduction and Royal March of the Lion](#)
- [Hens and Roosters](#)
- [Wild Asses](#) (Horses)
- [Tortoises](#)
- [The Elephant](#)
- [Kangaroos](#)
- [Aquarium](#)
- [People with Long Ears](#) (Donkeys)
- [The Cuckoo in the Depths of the Woods](#)
- [Aviary](#)
- [Pianists](#)
- [Fossils](#) (bones/dinosaurs)
- [The Swan](#)

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PROCEDURE

TEACHING STEPS

1. **Tell** students that they will be listening to a piece called *The Carnival of the Animals* by Camille Saint-Saëns. **Explain** that each movement of the piece represents a different animal.
2. **Project or recreate** the table on page 3. As a class, complete the following columns with the appropriate animal characteristics.
 - *Size* (SM/M/L/X-L)
 - *Habitat*
 - *Speed*
 - *Diet* (herbivore or carnivore)
 - *Demeanor or Personality* (proud, shy, hyper-active, lazy, regal)
 - *Physical Characteristics* (what does it feel to touch one of these animals?)
3. **Listen** to each movement, telling students what animal the music represents.
4. After listening to each movement, fill out the remaining column—C.S.S. stands for Camille Saint-Saëns—using the following questions as a guide:
 - What characteristics from the previous columns are found in the composer’s music?
 - How does he do this? Do we get a strong sense of the animals’ habitat in the movements Aquarium or The Cuckoo? How?
 - Do we get a sense of size when we hear the elephants? (Perhaps because the double bass, the largest of the string family, plays the melody).
 - Do we get a sense of the animal’s speed in the “Wild Asses (Horses)”?

PROCEDURE

Note: For younger students who cannot yet read, use pictures instead of words to create the same chart.

Animal	Size	Speed	Habitat	Diet	Personality	Physical Characteristics	C.S.S.*
Lion							
Hens and Roosters							
Horses							
Tortoise							
Elephant							
Kangaroos							
Fish and Aquarium							
Donkeys							
Cuckoo							
Aviary							
Pianists							
Fossils/bones/ Dinosaurs							
Swan							

*Camille Saint-Saëns

LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core Anchor Standards

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2](#)

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

National Core Arts Anchor Standards

Anchor Standard 7 Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Anchor Standard 9 Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

ASSESSMENT

- Observe students ability to evaluate Saint-Saëns' music and the way he conveys animal character traits.

NOTES

