



Careers Behind the Concert: The Life of a Piano Technician

Video Resource

Schooltime: The Orchestra at Work demonstrates that it takes more than musicians to bring a concert to life — there's a whole team behind the scenes!

One of those important team members is Peter Stumpf, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra's piano technician. Even though Peter works with instruments that appear on stage, he is not one of the performers you hear. In this [video from PBS](#), you'll get an inside look at what it takes to care for, repair, and tune pianos at the highest level both on and off the stage. Watch the video closely, then answer the questions below.



Part 1: Watch & Respond

Write your individual answers below.

1. How long does it take Peter to tune the piano before a PSO performance?
2. What tools and methods does Peter use for the initial tuning of a piano?
3. Name at least three things that can cause a piano to go out of tune:
4. In a few sentences, describe the mechanical changes Peter made to the piano used in the movie *It's a Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*.
5. List some of the different places Peter visits to tune pianos in the video:

Part 2: Reflect & Discuss

Discuss the following questions as a group.

1. Before watching the video, what did you think a piano technician's job involved? How has your perspective changed?
2. Were you surprised to learn that Peter does not have perfect pitch? Why or why not?
3. What surprised you most about the different places Peter travels to for his work?
4. What part of Peter's process did you find most interesting or unexpected?
5. If you had the chance to interview Peter, what is one question you would want to ask about his work?