

Meet the Orchestra

May 2 & May 6-9, 2025

Instrument Family Listening Suggestions

Explore the instrument families of the orchestra with these listening suggestions from American composers. Click the link to access a YouTube playlist for each family or go to the Classroom Resources section at www.pittsburghsymphony.org/schooltime.



The String Family

Samuel Barber, Adagio for Strings
Aaron Copland, "Saturday Night Waltz" from Rodeo
Jessie Montgomery, Starburst for String Orchestra
Caroline Shaw, "The Ellipse" from Plan & Elevation

Playlist link: [Strings](#)



The Woodwind Family

Leroy Anderson, The Penny Whistle Song
Amy Beach, Pastorale
Valerie Coleman, Umoja
George Gershwin, Promenade - Walking the Dog
R. Carlos Nakai, Far from the Water

Playlist link: [Woodwinds](#)



The Brass Family

Leonard Bernstein, "MTV, for Jerry" from Dance Suite
Elliott Carter, A Fantasy about Purcell's "Fantasia Upon One Note" Duke
Ellington, "Giggling Rapids" from The River Suite
Billy May, Flight of the Green Hornet
John Williams, Summon the Heroes

Playlist link: [Brass](#)



The Percussion Family

Danny Elfman, Percussion Quartet: Movement 1
Stacy Garrop, "Summoned" from Thunderwalker
William Russell, Three Cuban Pieces
Joseph Schwantner, Percussion Concerto: I. Con Forza

Playlist link: [Percussion](#)