Olympic Fanfare and Theme

SLSO Learning Lab

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

For Music Educators

This lesson is adaptable for students in grades 1–3. Its intentional flexibility allows teachers to modify the content to best suit their students' needs.

Objectives

Students will:

- Understand that music can convey emotion.
- Demonstrate recognition of sections in a simple musical form by responding with a change in movement.

Standards

Missouri Music Learning Standards

- MU: Re7b
- MU: Re8a
- MU: Cn11a

Illinois Music Learning Standards

- MU: Re7.1b
- MU: Re8.1a
- MU: Cn11.1a

Materials

- Device on which to play music from the internet: John Williams' *Olympic Fanfare and Theme*

Assessment

Listening Map (2-point rubric)
Student successfully:

- Records at least one emotion for each section of music.
- Shows recognition of difference in musical expression in sections A and B by choosing contrasting emotion words in those sections.

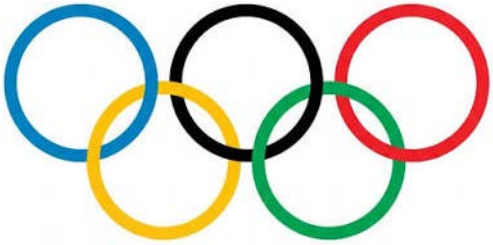
Creative Movement (4-point rubric)
Student successfully:

- Uses gross motor movements to act out a favorite sport.
- Performs the same movement in "real time" and in "slow motion."
- Performs movements at tempos that match the music.
- Responds to changes in formal sections of the piece of music by changing physical movement.

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The Olympics are an international sporting competition where thousands of athletes from around the world compete in a variety of sporting events. John Williams' Olympic Fanfare and Theme was originally written for the 1984 Olympic games.

The history of the Olympics goes back almost thirty centuries! The ancient Olympic games started in Greece near Mount Olympus in the 8th century BCE. One week of each year, athletic young men from all over Greece would compete in events like track and field, wrestling, and boxing.

The modern Olympic games were first held in Athens, Greece, in 1896. Today, the Olympics are a chance for teams from most countries of the world to compete in a huge variety of athletic events every two years, alternating summer and winter sports. In the summer, they compete in events like track and field, swimming and diving, volleyball and beach volleyball, soccer, gymnastics, rowing, surfing, tennis, and many more. At the winter Olympics you'll see speed skating and figure skating, downhill and cross-country skiing, and hockey. **Have you watched the Olympics? If so, what are some of your favorite Olympic sports?**

Winners of each Olympic event receive medals: gold medals for first place, silver for second, and bronze for third. At the ceremony where the athletes receive their medals, the national anthem of the first-place winner's country is played. **Do you know the national anthem of the United States or any other countries?**

There are a lot of similarities between Olympic athletes and professional musicians. Name three!

Listening Map

While you listen to John Williams' *Olympic Fanfare and Theme*, follow along on the listening map that you'll find at the end of this document. After listening, describe what you think the composer wanted you to feel in each section using these timings:

Section/Timing	How did the music make you feel?
A / 0:00-1:00	
B / 1:01-2:49	
C / 2:50-4:20	

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Creative Movement

Choose a favorite Olympic sport and act out an exciting highlight from that sport. Experiment with acting out the highlight in real time (sudden movements) and in slow motion (sustained movements.)

Listen to John Williams' *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* again and, following the form outlined on the listening map, complete the following:

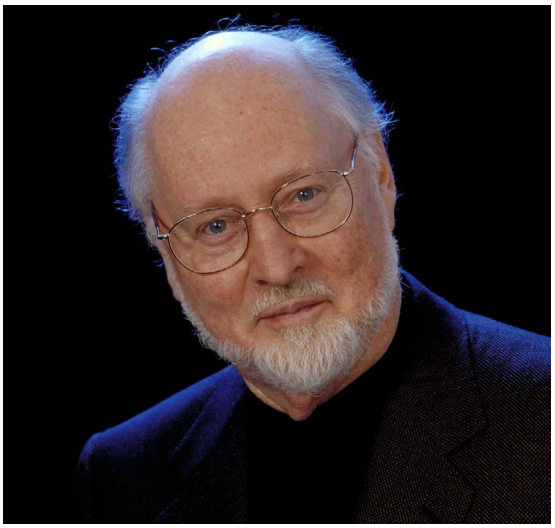
- March during the A Section
- Perform your slow-motion sports highlight during the sustained B Section
- Then during the C Section, have one person or group march to the music while the other person or group continues to act out their slow-motion sports highlight.

At the end, discuss your experience using the following prompts:

- **I value...**
- **I notice...**
- **I wonder...**

Answer the following questions:

- Does John Williams' music capture the excitement of the Olympics? If yes, how does it accomplish this?
- John Williams described his composition as "the spirit of cooperation, of heroic achievement, all the striving and preparation that go before the events and all the applause that comes after them." Do you think he achieved this in this musical composition? Why or why not?
- The theme song for the St. Louis Blues is "Oh When the Blues (Saints) Go Marching In." The *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* is the theme song for the Olympics. What is a theme song? What other theme songs do you know?



John Williams (born 1932) is an American composer and conductor most famous for his many film scores: music that accompanies movies. You've heard Williams' music if you've seen *Star Wars*, *E.T.*, *Jurassic Park*, *Home Alone*, *Indiana Jones*, the first three *Harry Potter* movies, or *Superman*. Williams was born in New York, but when he was a teenager his family moved to Los Angeles, where Hollywood is located and where many movies are made. Williams returned to New York to study music composition at the Juilliard School, a famous music school. After he finished his studies, he moved back to Los Angeles to work on music for movies. Williams once said, "As a youngster, I never dreamed there could be a career actually earning a living writing music." He went on to become one of the most successful composers of movie music.

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Listening Map

