Surprise Symphony

SLSO Learning Lab

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

For Music Educators

For grades 1–3

Objectives

Students will:

- Explore the opening theme of Haydn's Surprise Symphony through creative movement
- Aurally identify the main theme in Haydn's Surprise Symphony
- Use student-created movement to show musical differences in the repetition of the main theme from Haydn's Surprise Symphony

Standards

Missouri Music Learning Standards

- MU: Re7B.1-3a
- MU: Re8A.1-3a

Illinois Music Learning Standards

- MU: Re7.1.1-3b
- MU: Re8.1.1-3a

Materials

- Recording of Andante from Symphony No. 94 by Franz Joseph Haydn

Vocabulary

- Melody
- Theme

Extensions

- Melody Detector can also be played as a mirroring activity. Allow students the opportunity to take turns leading while the other students mirror their movements.

Assessment (3-point rubric)
Student successfully:

- Identifies the main theme (1 point)
- Represents the main theme with student-created movement (1 point)
- Demonstrates knowledge of contrasting styles through student-created movements (1 point)



Just before bed you watched Grandma place a cake in the refrigerator. It looked delicious! Now it's midnight and everyone in the house has gone to bed. Let's sneak downstairs and get a piece.

How might we sneak downstairs to get a piece of cake? Let's try it! Play the opening excerpt to Andante from Symphony No. 94 by Franz Joseph Haydn (0:00-0:37). Do the following movements in time to the music.

Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, look, look (pause and look around)

Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, look, SURPRISE!

Did the end of that excerpt surprise you? What did you imagine happening at that point? What kind of movements do you think go with the word "surprise"? Replay the opening of Andante from Symphony No. 94, and this time add in your favorite "surprise" movement.

Answer the following questions:
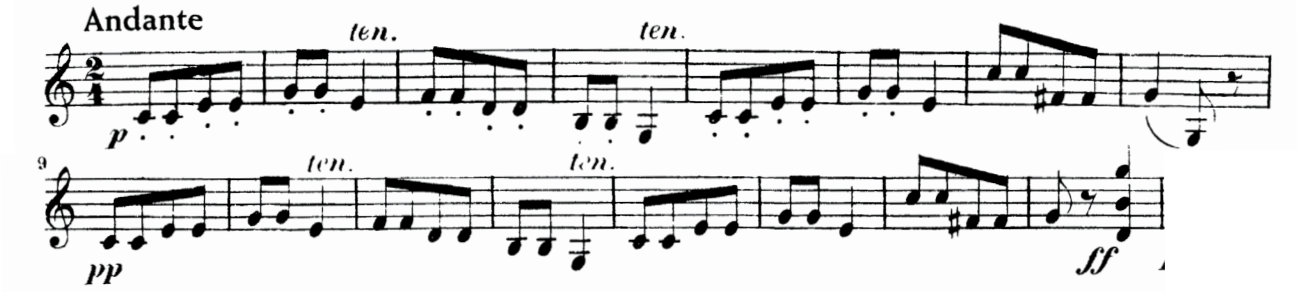
- How did the composer surprise us at the end?
- Which instruments did you hear while you tiptoed?
- Which instruments did you hear on the surprise?
- What did you discover after sneaking downstairs to get a piece of cake?
- What do you think caused the "Surprise"?



Haydn had a sense of humor. He wrote Surprise Symphony for a special after-dinner concert. Knowing that many people in the audience would be sleepy after eating a large meal, he used calming string music to help them relax. After giving them just enough time to doze off, he surprised them with a loud CRASH.

Melody Detector

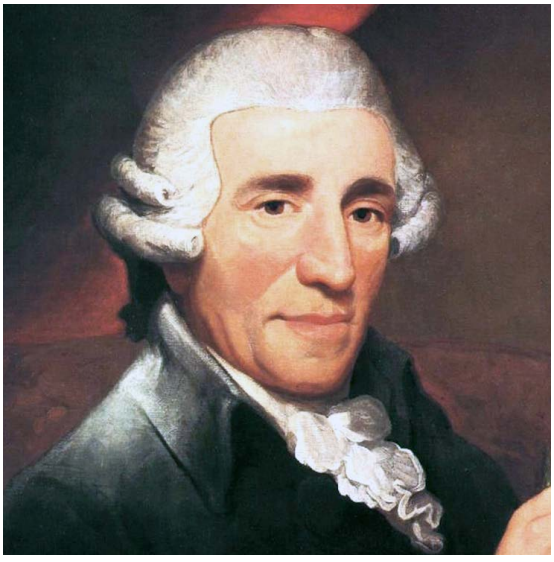
Listen again to the beginning of Andante from Symphony No. 94 (0:00-0:37) and sing along on a syllable of your choice such as La or Loo. This is what it looks like written out.



The part you just sang is called the melody. A melody is a sequence or group of notes that is musically satisfying. It's often the part of a song that we hum or sing. In music, the word "theme" is used to describe a recognizable melody on which part or all of a longer piece of music is based.

Now listen to the entire piece. Notice that after the melody or theme is played at the beginning, it keeps coming back. Each time you hear the theme, move around the room to show that you hear the theme. Each time the theme ends, freeze. Move in a way that matches the music. For example:

- If the theme is *forte* or loud, choose big movements.
- If the theme is *piano* or soft, choose smaller, lighter movements.
- If the theme is *marcato* or accented, choose movements that feel heavy.



Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) grew up in Austria. When he was eight years old, he joined a local choir. This was the beginning of his life as a musician. He is affectionately known as "Papa" Haydn because he helped define what a symphony is and established the string quartet. As an adult, he supported his family by working as a royal court musician for a noble family named Esterházy. In this job, he wrote music specifically for the needs of the royal family. Haydn wrote more than 100 symphonies. While Haydn was composing in Europe, the United States of America was taking shape: Thomas Jefferson was born in 1743, Benjamin Franklin flew his famous kite in 1752, the American Revolution began in 1775, and the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. Also during Haydn's lifetime, James Watts invented the steam engine in 1769, and Eli Whitney made the first cotton gin in 1793.