Clair de Lune

SLSO Learning Lab

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

For Music Educators

For grades 2–3

Objectives

Students will:

- Make detailed observations about a setting/environment using developmentally appropriate descriptive language
- Represent select setting/environment through a student-created musical soundscape
- Compose using AB (binary) or ABA (ternary) form
- Describe their soundscape using select elements of music

Standards

Missouri Music Learning Standards

- MU: Cr1A.2-3a
- MU: Cr2A.2-3a
- MU: Cr3B.2-3a

Illinois Music Learning Standards

- MU: Cr1.1.2-3
- MU: Cr2.1.2-3a
- MU: Cr3.1.2-3b

Materials

- Percussion instruments or similar found objects
- *Clair de Lune* Soundscape Google Slides
- Recording of *Clair de Lune* by Claude Debussy

Vocabulary

- Setting
- Soundscape
- Form (ABA and AB)

Requirements to satisfy learning objectives

- Step by step procedures are available in the *Clair de Lune* Soundscape Google Slides to guide students through outlined learning objectives. Slides may be copied and edited to meet the needs of your students
- Encourage students to reflect, using developmentally appropriate vocabulary and elements of music, on their compositional process and their final composition

Extensions

- Provide an opportunity for student-created movement to accompany soundscapes
- Encourage students to respond to their peers' creations

Assessment

Soundscapes (4-point rubric)
Student successfully:

- Describes their selected setting using descriptive language
- Creates a musical soundscape that mimics their selected environment
- Incorporates a required musical form, either AB or ABA, in their soundscape performance
- Uses developmentally appropriate vocabulary and elements of music to describe their soundscape



Every great story has a setting where the action happens. What is one story you really enjoy? Where does the story take place?

Sometimes when stories are told in movies or television shows, music is used to bring the setting of the story to life. But music can also represent a setting all on its own, leaving our imaginations to create the pictures. Many composers, such as Claude Debussy, have turned to their environment, or setting, to find inspiration for their music.

Listen to Claude Debussy's *Clair de Lune*. *Clair de Lune* is French for "light of the moon" or moonlight. Could this piece be a musical representation of your neighborhood after dark? To answer this question, you may need to stay up a little later than usual to experience your neighborhood in the light of the moon. Or maybe a backyard campout is in order? Either way, start by answering the following questions about your neighborhood after dark:

- What do you see?
- What do you hear?
- How do you feel?
- If you made a movie and the setting was your neighborhood at night, would *Clair de Lune* be a good piece to use for the movie? Why or why not?

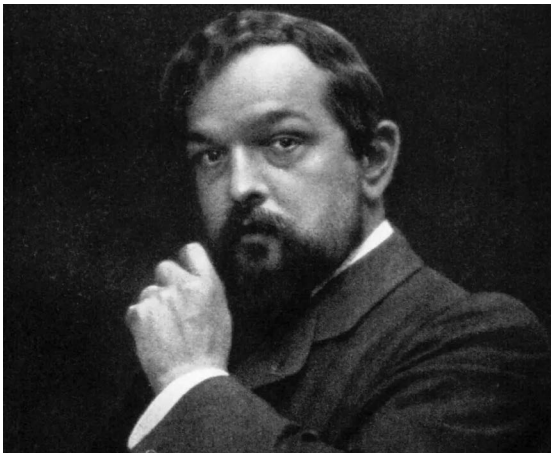
Soundscapes

The word soundscape refers to all the sounds in an environment or setting. List all the different sounds you hear in your neighborhood after dark. Be descriptive about the sounds. Are they:

- Loud or soft?
- Short or long?
- High or low?
- What other adjectives could describe each sound?

After you finish your list, recreate the soundscape of your neighborhood at night. Use percussion instruments or objects you find around your house to mimic each sound you heard. You can also use different voices, sound effects, and/or programs such as GarageBand (if available) to create the sounds on your list. Decide the order of the different sounds and how long to play each sound. Be creative!

You don't have to stop with your neighborhood. You can create soundscapes for different places or to accompany your favorite books.



Claude Debussy (1862-1918) began piano lessons at a very young age, and by the time he was ten he was admitted to the Paris Conservatoire, the best music school in Paris. In college, Debussy started composing, or writing, music. At age 22, his composition *L'Enfant Prodigue* (The Child Prodigy) won him the Prix de Rome, a major composition prize that allowed him to live and work for two years in Italy. Debussy constantly experimented with music. Like many other composers of his style, Debussy created colorful sounds by using orchestral instruments in new ways. He also titled his pieces so that the listeners would be able to picture the music in their minds.