

# Study Guide For Teachers

## The Phoenix Woodwind Quintet

In  
*Peter and the Wolf*  
presented by

Young Audiences  
(866) 500-9265  
[www.yanj.org](http://www.yanj.org)  
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### ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Phoenix Woodwind Quintet presents a colorful program through which children discover the instruments of the woodwind quintet. They also learn how music creates moods and contributes to various emotional reactions.

After a lively and informative introduction, the Quintet's performance of Prokofiev's beloved "Peter and the Wolf" tells the story of the plucky young fellow and his animal friends through superb musicianship and mime. A dynamic actor/storyteller recreates the tale and calls for plenty of student participation!

### LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Be introduced to the woodwind quintet, including the similarities and differences among the instruments and the instruments' distinctive tone colors.
- Learn to recognize the instrumental sounds and become aware of the differences between melody and accompaniment.
- Be acquainted with the twentieth-century classic, *Peter and the Wolf*.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Both the music and narration of Peter and the Wolf were written by Sergei (pronounced, Sair-gay) Prokofiev (1891 -1953). Its educational purpose is to teach the sounds of the instruments through identification with the characters of the story.

The narrator introduces the characters and the instruments which represent them before the story begins. Thereafter, whenever a character is mentioned, its music is played both to reinforce the listener's memory of the instrument and to tell the story:

**Flute: Sasha, the bird (chirping; high and fast)**

**Oboe: Sonia, the duck (nasal; lower and slower)**

**Clarinet: Ivan, the cat (smooth, on velvet paws; played in instrument's low register)**

**Bassoon: Grandfather (stern-sounding; also played in instrument's low register)**

**Clarinet, bassoon and horn ensemble: the wolf (deep, dark, and sinister!)**

Note that Prokofiev's original instrumentation calls for Peter to be represented by the strings. However, he is well-represented in this performance by the woodwind ensemble. Likewise, Prokofiev's wolf is played by an ensemble of horns — while the Woodwind Quintet portrays him by using the three lower instruments: the clarinet, bassoon and horn.

## BEFORE THE PROGRAM

1. Play a narrated recording of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* for your students. Use this as a teaching tool and stop the recording frequently to ask students to name which instruments represent which characters. Have them discuss why Prokofiev chose each instrument to represent their respective characters. As the story progresses and the music changes, have students discuss how the music changes and what it reflects in the story.

2. Get the music teacher involved! Have students learn to play the recorder. Along with the music teacher's instruction, this will give them a basic understanding of how woodwind instruments function.

3. Have students read the story of Peter and the Wolf. Get the art teacher involved! Have each student create an image of at least one of the characters. They can draw, paint, sculpt or even make a puppet that could be used for their own performance of the story!

## RESOURCES - LISTENING

**Clarinet:** *On the Trail* from Grand Canyon Suite, by Ferde Grofe or *The Cuckoo* from *Carnival of the Animals*, by Saint-Saens.

**Flute:** *Irlandaise* from *Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano*, by Claude Boiling.

**Oboe & Bassoon:** *Hornpipe* from *Water Music*, by G.F. Handel.

**Woodwind Quintet:** *Trois Pieces Breves*, by Jacques Ibert

## RESOURCES - READING

Ginsburg, Mirra. *Three Rolls and a Doughnut: Fables from Russia*. Dial, 1970.

Stoltzenberg, Mark. *Exploring Mime*. New York: Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., 1979.

Wyndham.Lee. *Russian Tales of Fabulous Beasts and Marvels*. Parents Magazine Press, 1969.

Voigt, Ema (illustrator). *Peter & the Wolf*. Boston: David R. Godine, 1979.

## AFTER THE PROGRAM

1. Give students the opportunity to discuss the performance. If they listened to an orchestral version of *Peter and the Wolf* prior to the performance, did they notice the instrumental differences when it was performed by the woodwind quintet? What were the differences between listening to a recorded performance and seeing it live? How did the narrator/mime enhance the performance?

2. The end of the story is left open-ended. Have students discuss what will happen next. Will the duck escape from the wolf's stomach? Will the entire group make it to the zoo? If the students created puppets, have the students write their own ending and perform it for classmates.

## ARTIST INFORMATION

The Phoenix Quintet has been in existence for nearly twenty years and has entertained audiences of all ages. Currently, however, their focus is entirely on music education. Their program *Peter and the Wolf* has brought fun and information to school children throughout the tri-state area.

Each member of the Quintet is a busy freelance musician in the New York area. The mime/narrator is also a performer with the Bond Street Theatre.

## VOCABULARY WORDS

**WOODWIND INSTRUMENTS** – musical instruments that are (or originally were) made of wood. They are played by blowing air into the instrument and either have no reed (flute), one reed (clarinet), or two reeds (oboe, bassoon)

**BRASS INSTRUMENTS** – musical instruments that are made of brass. They are not played by blowing air into the instruments. The players learn to buzz air on the mouthpiece so that the air inside the instruments vibrates. Lips are held tightly together, and air is forced between them to make vibrations.

**PROGRAM MUSIC** - music that tells a story or paints a picture, such as *Peter and the Wolf*. Other examples: *Carnival of the Animals*, by Saint-Saens. *Peer Gynt*, by Edvard Grieg. *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, by Paul Dukas.

**PANTOMIME** - A way of telling a story or illustrating an event through movement, without using language or sound.

**THEME (MUSIC):** The repeating melody that identifies a character or a performer. A theme can also identify a whole show, as the theme to your favorite television program does.

**MOOD:** The feeling created by a work of art, such as a piece of music.