

# Study Guide for Teachers



## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Experience the power of the silver screen! Students travel from the silent film era to today's movie blockbusters in this interactive program. Using sound effects, live performance, and collaborative storytelling, Cello Fury helps students discover how and why movie music tells a story and creates an emotional response. The performance features a variety of original instrumental music, classic movie themes, ragtime music, and improvised sounds.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Cello Fury is a rock/classical crossover band based in Pittsburgh, PA, featuring three classically trained cellists and a rock drummer. Cello Fury has been presenting educational outreach programs in western Pennsylvania, upstate New York, Maryland, Virginia and Washington, DC, for many years to great acclaim. After joining the roster of Gateway to the Arts, a Young Audiences Arts for Learning affiliate, Cello Fury performed over 100 school assemblies in western Pennsylvania. Cello Fury is now also on the roster of Young Audiences of Rochester in upstate New York and Young Audiences New Jersey & Eastern PA. Every year Cello Fury performs for tens of thousands of children through their outreach concerts.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about film and movie music from the early 1900's to today. From live music played for silent films to modern film scores, students will experience a variety of music throughout time periods; explore how technology has impacted music and films; learn about the string and percussion instrument families; create sound effects using found objects; compare and contrast differing musical styles; and participate by listening, responding to questions, and discovering the variety of sounds produced by string instruments.

## RESOURCES

Sound for Film:  
[www.filmsound.org/](http://www.filmsound.org/)

Jack Foley:  
[www.filmsound.org/foley/jackfoley.htm](http://www.filmsound.org/foley/jackfoley.htm)

Music and Feelings:  
[www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-does-music-make-us-fe](http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-does-music-make-us-fe)

## BEFORE THE PROGRAM

### **Classroom Discussion Questions:**

1. What sort of sounds do you hear in the background of your day-to-day lives? Could you create those sounds using everyday items in the classroom?
2. How has the job of a musician changed over time? Has technology changed the role of the musician?
3. Have you watched a movie and heard how the music interacts with the story? Do you think you would enjoy a movie more or less without any music?

## AFTER THE PROGRAM

### **Classroom Discussion Questions:**

1. Think about a movie you watched recently. How did the music and sound help to tell the story? How did the music affect your experience of the movie?
2. Listen to music that doesn't have words. Describe the emotions you feel after listening to it. What aspects of the music make you feel a certain way, and why? Does the choice of instruments, the speed (tempo), or the pitch help to make you feel that way?
3. When the music stops and there is silence, does it make you feel a certain way? Do you think composers use silence in addition to music to help tell the story?

## GLOSSARY

**Composer:** a person who writes music.

**Foley:** motion picture sound effects produced manually; named after Jack Foley, sound effect pioneer at Universal Pictures in the 1930s.

**Leitmotif:** a theme associated throughout a musical drama with a particular person, situation, or idea.

**Melody:** the principal part of a harmonic composition; a rhythmical succession of single tones producing a distinct musical phrase or idea.

**Mood:** a state or quality of feeling; a distinctive emotional quality or character.

**Narrator:** a person who tells the story of an event or experience.

**Ragtime:** a style of American music popular from about 1890 to 1915; rhythm in which the accompaniment is strict two-four time and the melody is syncopated.

**Silent film:** a film with no synchronized recorded sound or dialogue (generally from 1895 to 1936); typically accompanied by live music.

## ARTIST INFORMATION

A cello rock powerhouse featuring three cellists and a drummer, Cello Fury's original music combines the symphonic sounds of the cello with driving rock beats. Cello Fury's cinematic, progressive rock sound appeals to a diverse audience throughout the United States and abroad, with over 100 performances yearly in venues ranging from concert halls to rock clubs. Cellists Simon Cummings, Nicole Myers, and Cecilia Caughman along with drummer David Throckmorton unleash vitality and rhythmic drive in their music and dare to venture past classical expectations. Cello Fury has performed on radio and television, in rock clubs and concert halls, and at music festivals such as SXSW for audiences as large as 67,000 and has toured throughout 27 states and abroad. As an independent band, Cello Fury has released three albums of original music, "Cello Fury," "Symphony of Shadows," and "X." Connecting with artists across genres, Cello Fury has collaborated with dance companies, theater organizations, opera, and orchestras, as well as with rock bands and singer-songwriters.