

INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT

Vivaldi and The Four Seasons

Created by
Robert de Frece

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TEACHER MATERIALS

THE FOUR SEASONS

An Introduction

ANTICIPATORY SET/MOTIVATION:

Each of the four seasons has its own charm. In the fall, we see beautiful colours of the leaves. In the winter, the bright whiteness of the snow is a beautiful contrast to the clear blue of the sky on a sunny winter day on the prairies. But it is the spring that has always been exciting for people all around the world. It is a time when the world seems to reawaken with new hope. Have the students:

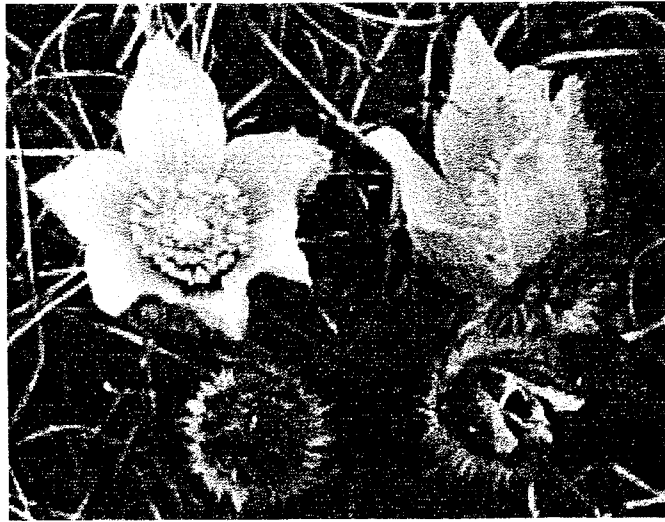
- Talk about the signs that spring is coming (buds on trees, melting ice, melting snow, grass turning green, the appearance of insects, rain etc.)

DEVELOP:

Listen to a legend of spring from the Blackfoot First Nation. Have the students:

- Listen as you read “The Legend of the Prairie Crocus.”
- Discuss the signs of spring mentioned in the legend.

The Legend of the Prairie Crocus



There are many stories of the spring but few are as beautiful as the Blackfoot First Nation legend of how the prairie crocus got its beautiful colours and its fur coat.

Wapee was a Blackfoot boy who lived with his parents. Each year, he grew taller and stronger and one day his father said to him “You are no longer a child. It is time for you to go to the hills and dream so you can become a man.” So Wapee set out for the hills. He was excited at this new adventure of becoming a man. The snow of winter was melting and he could feel the warmth of the sun on his back. But as the first night fell, it became cold and Wapee felt frightened and lonely. He saw the stars above him and the mountains in the west.

Wapee hoped for a dream that would tell him of the man he would become, but no dream came. He shivered through the night until the light of day began to dawn. The next three nights, Wapee crouched in the cold, wrapping his fur robe tightly around him but no dream came. He knew that he would shame his father if he returned to his people as a coward whom the Great Spirit had not found worthy enough to be given a dream.

On the fourth day, even though he felt very tired and discouraged, Wapee found a friend. Beside him, on top of the hill was a beautiful flower, as white as the snow. Wapee smiled as the flower opened to greet the sun and swayed in the breeze. When the sun set, Wapee no longer felt alone because he had the little flower beside him. As the night grew colder, Wapee said, “Little friend, it is so cold for a beautiful, delicate flower like you. Let me shelter you with my warm fur robe. I will be careful not to crush you with my big body.” As Wapee slept, he carefully protected the little flower.

Just as the sun was about to rise, the flower spoke to Wapee. “Yesterday, you were sad because you had been afraid. Always remember that he who never knows fear

is a fool. It is the wise man who learns to overcome his fears.” Wapee quickly sat up and put his ear next to the flower so he could hear it more clearly, but it just swayed in the morning breeze.

Wapee thought all day about what the flower had told him. That night, once again, he sheltered the flower with his fur robe. And once again, just as the dawn was breaking the flower spoke. “Wapee, you have a kind heart and it will lead you to great things.”

The next night, as he sheltered the flower, it spoke yet again. “Wapee, your wisdom and your gentle heart will make you a great leader. But always remember when you feel weighed down by troubles and worries, you can find peace and warmth on a nearby hilltop.” Then, Wapee fell into a deep sleep and he saw many visions of the future. He was to become the chief of his tribe and under his leadership, his people would be happy and content, wanting for nothing.

When Wapee arose from his sleep, he knew that it was time to return to his people. But then, he thought of the little flower. “Little friend,” he said, “for three nights you have comforted me in my loneliness and you brought me the visions I was seeking. Tell me three of your wishes and I will ask the Great Spirit to grant them to you.”

The flower swayed as it said, “Pray to the Great Spirit that I may have the purple blue of the mountains in my petals and a golden sun to hold close to my heart to gladden me on days when the sun is hidden. Last, ask the Great Spirit to give me a coat like your fur robe to keep me warm as I face the cold winds blowing from the melting snow.”

The Great Spirit was very pleased that Wapee’s first thought had been for the little flower and his prayers were answered. To this day, thousands of the descendants of Wapee’s little friend can be seen every spring across the Prairies. They have the purple blue of the distant mountains in their petals, a bright sun in their hearts, and warm, furry robe to help them face the cold winds of early spring.

APPLY:

Learn about Antonio Vivaldi and the composition of *The Four Seasons*. Have the students:

- Listen as you read to them about Vivaldi's life, the time he lived in and his music (pages 4 to 9 in the *Teacher Resource Kit*).
- Draw the students attention to the fact that the term, *baroque*, was originally used to describe architecture on a grand scale with lots of fancy, detailed decorations.
- Look at Baroque architecture in books and on the internet . Some recommended websites for pictures of Baroque architecture:

<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/orion/eng/hst/baroque.html>

<http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2000/baroque/splash.htm>

<http://www.greatbuildings.com/types/styles/baroque.html>

<http://arthist.cla.umn.edu/aict/html/renbrq/brqarch.html>

<http://russia-in-us.com/St.Peterburg/>

- Listen to the first movement of “Spring” and discuss how Baroque music is like Baroque buildings (on a grand scale; fancy and decorated)
- Read the poetry that inspired Vivaldi to write this movement from the board [First 2 stanzas of *Spring (Concerto No. 1)*, bottom of p. 10 in the *Teacher Resource Kit*]. Discuss this poem in relation to “The Legend of the Prairie Crocus.” Does spring sound warmer in Italy than in Alberta? (*There is no mention of snow in this poem but melting snow is part of an Alberta spring*)

Learn the rhythm of the first section of *Spring*

- Distribute the first 3 pages of the “Spring Into Rhythm” handout (including the rhythm of the first refrain section). *NOTE: The technical term for each of the sections for which speech has been written is **ripieno**. This is the section played by the entire orchestra in the **concerto grosso** style that was popular during the Baroque period. The other sections, played by a group of soloist, s are called the **concertino** sections.*
- Have the students follow the handout as they listen to the first section of the recording, joining in with the echoed voice.

NOTE: The male voice presents each phrase. The children should join in with the female voice on the echo. Repeat these exercises until the children can perform them fluently. Before echoing the rhythm syllables, it will help children to say the syllables very slowly as they go through the written score, identifying the rhythm syllables for the notation.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY DURING THE MUSICIAN'S CLASSROOM VISIT

1. Ask the children to recite the speech they learned for the first refrain (*ripieno* section) of the first movement of the *Spring* concerto. (They may need the speech CD to accompany this)
2. Ask the children to listen and follow the music and words as you play the music for the section on your instrument.
3. Have the children say the speech as you play the refrain on your instrument.
4. Ask the teacher to distribute copies of the melody with text. Invite the children to sing along as you play.

Spring

Antonio Vivaldi
Words by Robert de Frece

It's spring-time, let us re-joyce, It is spring-time, let us re-joyce, We re-
3
joyce in the sun, it makes us glad, It's spring-time, let us re-joyce It is
5
spring-time let us re-joyce, We re - joyce in the gold-en sun. O come let us all be mer-ry, O
8
come let us all be mer-ry with danc-ing and sing-ing a glad song. O come let us all be
11
mer - ry, for spring is up-on us, Danc-ing and sing-ing, for spring is up-on us.

FOLLOW-UP LESSON NO. 1

Review rhythm syllables and read new rhythmic examples from *Spring*.

Have the children:

1. Review the syllables they learned to say the rhythms for the first section of *Spring*. (You may wish to have them echo the recording)
2. Look the music for each of refrains 2-3-4, 5 and 6, and say the rhythm syllables for each.
3. Follow the music for each of the refrains, and echo the text spoken on the recording.
4. Transfer the rhythm of each refrain's speech to clapping. *NOTE: This will be performed most successfully when the dominant hand does the moving and the other hand serves as the "instrument."*
5. Have the children choose non-pitched percussion (rhythm) instruments to play the rhythm of each refrain. The most appropriate instruments to play these rhythms will be: hand drums, claves, bongos, temple blocks, wood blocks.
6. Practice by first speaking the words as they play and then thinking the words as they play.

FOLLOW-UP LESSON NO. 2

Create movement to illustrate the sections between the refrains.

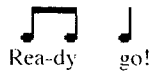
Have the students:

1. Divide into four groups
 - Group 1: Birds #1
 - Group 2: Flowing brooks and gentle breezes
 - Group 3: Birds #2
 - Group 4: Thunder and lightning
2. Create an 8-beat movement *ostinato* (repeated musical pattern) to show the part they have been assigned.

TEACHER NOTE: Explain to the students that *ostinato* is the Italian word for “obstinate” or “stubborn.” The *ostinato* is a musical idea that keeps repeating because it is so obstinate that it refuses to change! Once the *ostinato* has been developed, each group will repeat as follows:

BIRDS # 1:

- Perform the 8 beat *ostinato* 7 times, and then whisper



FLOWING STREAMS & GENTLE BREEZES

- Perform the 8 beat *ostinato* 5 times.

THUNDER and LIGHTNING:

- Perform the 8 beat *ostinato* 6 times.

BIRDS #2

- Perform the 8 beat *ostinato* 3 times, and then whisper:



TUTTI

Explain to the students that *tutti* is the Italian word for “all.” All groups will perform the 8-beat movement *ostinato* they have developed two times (simultaneously) and then whisper:



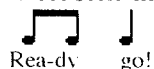
FOLLOW-UP LESSON NO. 3

Integrate the refrains with the movement sections.

Have the students:

1. Review saying and playing the refrain sections.
2. Review the performance of their movement ostinati /
3. Look at the map of the complete piece as you outline the following steps.
 - REFRAIN #1: Performed on NON-PITCHED PERCUSSION

- BIRDS # 1:
- Start on the word, “us” at the end of Refrain 1.
- Perform the 8 beat *ostinato* 7 times, and then whisper



- REFRAIN #2: Performed on NON-PITCHED PERCUSSION

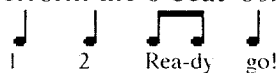
- FLOWING STREAMS & GENTLE BREEZES
- Start on the word, “us” at the end of Refrain 2
- Perform the 8 beat *ostinato* 5 times.

- REFRAIN #3: Performed on NON-PITCHED PERCUSSION

- THUNDER and LIGHTNING:
- Start on the word, “us” at the end of Refrain 3.
- Perform the 8 beat *ostinato* 6 times.

- REFRAIN #4: Performed on NON-PITCHED PERCUSSION

- BIRDS #2
- Start on the word, “us” at the end of Refrain 4.
- Perform the 8 beat *ostinato* 3 times, and then whisper:



- REFRAIN #5: Performed on NON-PITCHED PERCUSSION

- TUTTI

All groups perform their 8-beat ostinato 2 times and then whisper:



- REFRAIN #6: Performed on NON-PITCHED PERCUSSION

NOTE: At the end of REFRAIN # 6, all students should freeze in position as they hold their instruments.

FOLLOW-UP LESSON NO. 4

Perform the percussion movement sections with the recording.

Have the students:

1. Review the entire piece. TEACHER NOTE: It would be helpful to have visuals of each of the refrains on transparencies. Transparencies can be changed as each group performs its movement.
2. The following map should be written on the board.

1. Refrain #1

2. Birds #1

8 beats: 7 times + 
Rea-dy go!

3. Refrain #2

4. Flowing streams/Gentle breezes

8 beats: 5 times


5. Refrain #3

6. Thunder & Lightning

8 beats: 6 times

7. Refrain #4

8. Birds #2

8 beats: 3 times + 
1 2 Rea-dy go!

9. Refrain #5

10. Tutti

8 beats: 2 times + 
1 2 3 4 Rea-dy go!

11. Refrain # 6 + FREEZE

3. Have the children listen to the first movement of *Spring* (first movement of The Four Seasons, first band on the CD) as they follow the map and the transparencies and think their way through the piece.
4. Perform the entire piece with the recording. TEACHER NOTE: Be sure the volume is high enough that the children can hear the music as they play and move. Repeat the experience several times so that the children feel that they have performed well and so that they have the opportunity to really listen to the piece and get to know it.

SPRING INTO RHYTHM • CD TRACK INDEX

Each echoed section is on a separate track to make it easy to repeat as many times as the children need to become comfortable with the syllables and speech rhythms.

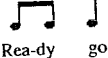
1. Instructions for page 1 of *Spring Into Rhythm*
2. Rhythm #1 syllable echoes (p. 1 of Spring Into Rhythm) handout
3. Rhythm #2 syllable echoes
4. Rhythm #2 syllable echoes
5. Syllables for Rhythms 1, 2 and 3 continuous
6. Instructions (p. 2 of handout) re: syllables for eighth note, two sixteenth notes and eighth rest.
7. Echo of syllables for phrase 1 (p. 2 of handout)
8. Echo of syllables for phrase 2
9. Echo of syllables for phrase 3
10. Echo for syllables of phrase 4
11. Echo of syllables for phrase 5
12. All five rhythm patterns complete
13. Instructions re: echoing word phrases
14. *La Primavera (Spring) Refrain (ripieno) 1*: echoing of phrases as marked
15. Instructions re: echoing 3 “big” phrases
16. First big phrase echoed
17. Second big phrase echoed
18. Third big phrase echoed
19. *La Primavera (Spring) Refrain 1* speech: complete
20. Instructions re speech sections 2,3,4,5 and 6
21. *La Primavera (Spring) Refrain 2-3-4* speech echo
22. Instructions re: Refrain 5
23. Refrain 5 echoes
24. Refrain 5 speech: complete
25. Instructions re refrain 6
26. Refrain 6 echoes
27. Refrain 6 speech: complete

SPRING

Refrain #1

... spring is upon us.



Birds #1 8 beats: 7 times +  Rea-dy go!

Refrain #2

... spring is upon us.



Flowing Streams/Gentle Breezes
8 beats: 5 times

Refrain #3

... spring is upon us.

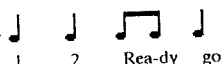


Thunder & Lightning
8 beats: 6 times

Refrain #4

... spring is upon us.




Birds # 2
8 beats: 3 times +  Rea-dy go!

Refrain #5

... spring's really here.

TUTTI!





8 beats: 2 times +  Rea-dy go!

Refrain #6


STUDENT MATERIALS

Spring into Rhythm!

Let's learn the rhythm of the first section of Vivaldi's musical description of spring. To do this, you will need the following rhythmic "building blocks." First, let's look at the note values you're going to need to use. Each of these rhythms found in the first section of "Spring" is one beat long.



When see:	it is called:	Say these rhythm syllables:
	quarter note	<i>ta</i>
	quarter rest	think "rest" but don't say anything!
	eighth notes	<i>ti ti</i>
	an eighth and two sixteenths	<i>ti tikka</i>



There are also some rhythms that last 2 beats




When see eighth-quarter-eighth	say:
	<i>syn-co-pa</i>

This rhythm gets this name because it is *syncopated* which means that some long notes start between beats, giving the music an interesting feeling.

Follow the following three rhythms and echo the syllables that you hear on the recording:

1 $\frac{4}{4}$  |  |

2 $\frac{4}{4}$  |  |

3 $\frac{4}{4}$  |  |  |

When you see just one eighth note



say:

ti

When you see two sixteenth notes



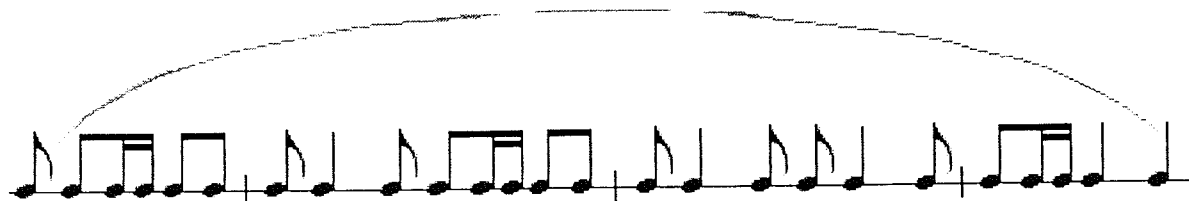
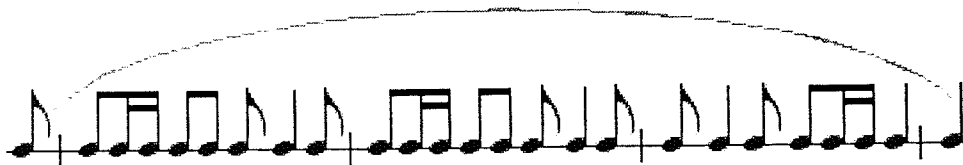
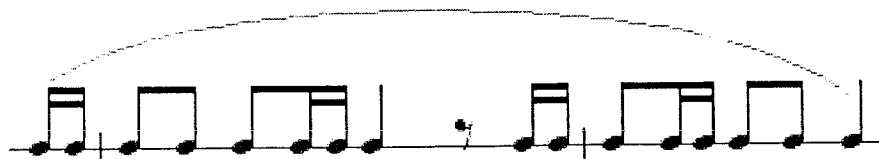
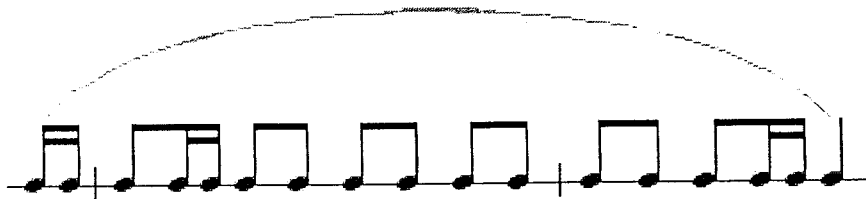
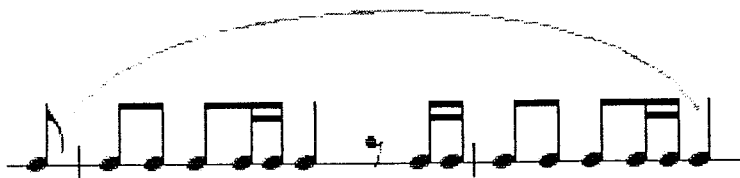
say:

tikka

The rest or moment of silence that is as long as an eighth note looks like this:



Now, follow each of these rhythmic phrases and echo the syllables that you hear on the recording. Each phrase is marked with a phrase mark that looks like a spring rainbow.

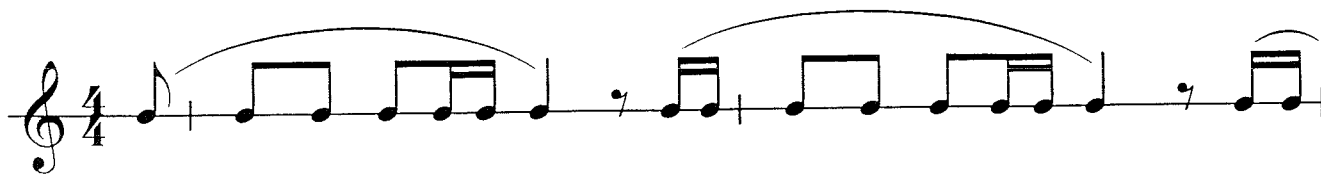


Now, let's add words that describe spring using the rhythms that you have read.
Echo each phrase you hear spoken on the recording.

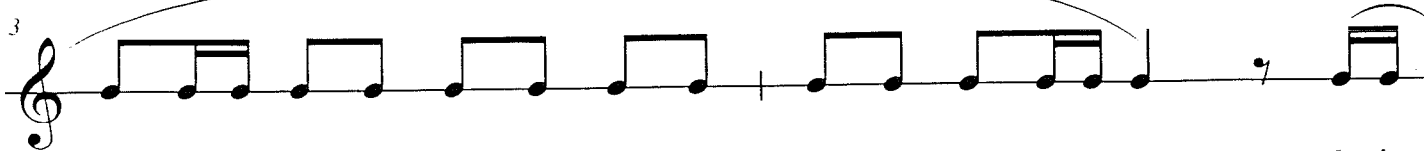
La Primavera (Spring)

REFRAIN 1

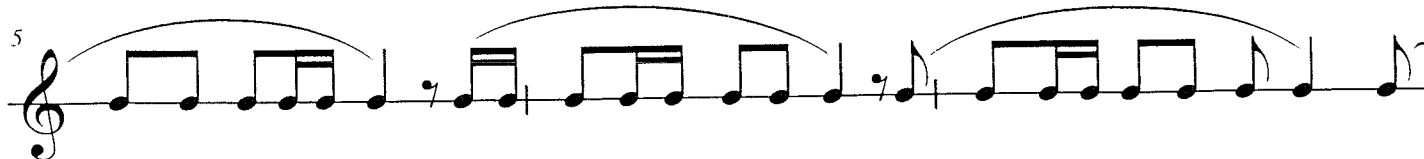
Antonio Vivaldi
Text by Robert de Frece



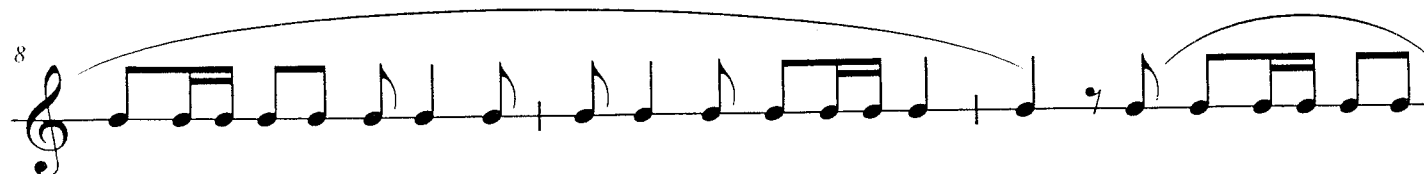
It's spring-time, let us re-joyce, It is spring-time, let us re-joyce, We re-



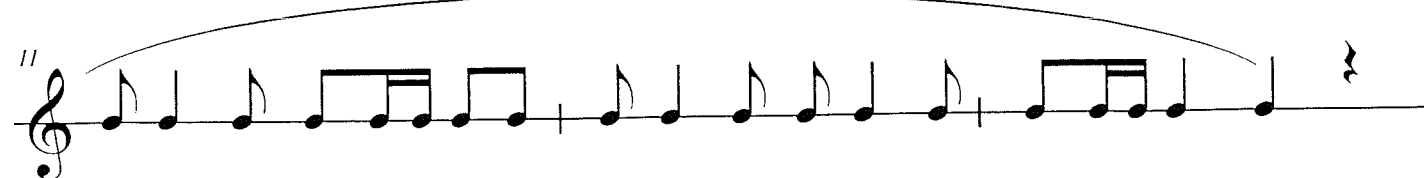
joyce in the sun, it makes us glad, It's spring-time, let us rejoyce, It is



springtime, let us re-joyce, We re-joyce in the golden sun. O come let us all be mer-ry, O



come let us all be mer-ry with danc-ing and sing-ing a glad song. O come let us all be



mer-ry, - for spring is up-on us, Danc-ing and sing-ing, for spring is up-on us.

Spring

Antonio Vivaldi
Words by Robert de Frece

It's spring-time, let us re-joyce, It is spring-time, let us re-joyce, We re-
3 joyce in the sun, it makes us glad, It's spring-time, let us re-joyce It is
5 spring-time let us re-joyce, We re - joyce in the gold-en sun. O come let us all be mer-ry, O
8 come let us all be mer-ry with danc-ing and sing-ing a glad song. O come let us all be
11 mer - ry, for spring is up-on us, Danc-ing and sing-ing, for spring is up-on us.

La Primavera (Spring)

Antonio Vivaldi
Text by Robert de Frece

REFRAIN 2, 3 & 4

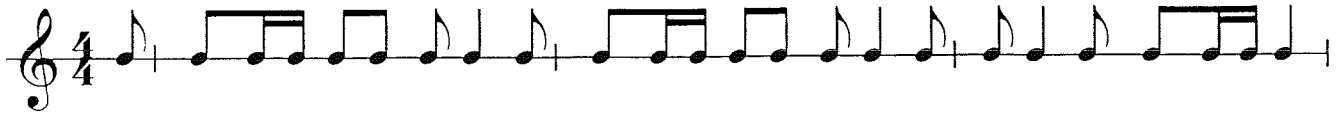
O come let us all be mer - ry, O come let us all be mer - ry, be

mer - ry, - for spring is up - on us.

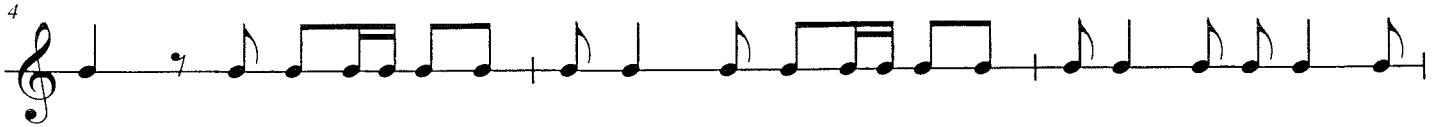
La Primavera (Spring)

Antonio Vivaldi
Text by Robert de Frece

REFRAIN 6



O come let us all be mer-ry, O come let us all be mer-ry, be mer-ry, -for spring is up-on



us. O come let us all be mer - ry, O come let us all be mer-ry, be mer-ry, for



spring is up-on us.

TEACHING MUSICIAN MATERIALS

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY DURING THE MUSICIAN'S CLASSROOM VISIT

1. Ask the children to recite the speech they learned for the first refrain (ripieno section) of the first movement of the Spring concerto. (They may need the speech CD to accompany this)
2. Ask the children to listen and follow the music and words as you play the music for the section .
3. Have the children say the speech as you play the refrain on your instrument.
4. Ask the teacher to distribute copies of the melody with text. Invite the children to sing along as you play.

La Primavera (Spring)

Antonio Vivaldi

C-INSTRUMENTS

Musical notation for C-Instruments, measures 1-13. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes with frequent rests.

Bb-INSTRUMENTS

Musical notation for Bb-Instruments, measures 14-23. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes with frequent rests.

BASS CLEF INSTRUMENTS

Musical notation for Bass Clef Instruments, measures 24-39. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes with frequent rests.

HORN IN F

42

47

52

Musical notation for Horn in F, measures 42-55. The key signature is F major (one sharp). The notation consists of three staves of music in treble clef. The first staff (measures 42-46) features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff (measures 47-51) continues the melodic line with similar rhythmic patterns. The third staff (measures 52-55) concludes the passage with a final cadence, marked with a double bar line and repeat sign.

VIOLA

56

61

66

Musical notation for Viola, measures 56-70. The key signature is F major (one sharp). The notation consists of three staves of music in bass clef. The first staff (measures 56-60) features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff (measures 61-65) continues the melodic line with similar rhythmic patterns. The third staff (measures 66-70) concludes the passage with a final cadence, marked with a double bar line and repeat sign.

Spring

Antonio Vivaldi
Words by Robert de Frece

It's spring-time, let us re-joyce, It is spring-time, let us re-joyce, We re-
3
joyce in the sun, it makes us glad, It's spring-time, let us re-joyce It is
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spring-time let us re-joyce, We re- joyce in the gold-en sun. O come let us all be mer-ry, O
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come let us all be mer-ry with danc-ing and sing-ing a glad song. O come let us all be
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mer-ry, for spring is up-on us, Danc-ing and sing-ing, for spring is up-on us.