



the trillium brass quintet

A Study Guide to:
Dance Music

Pre-Performance Activities
Post-Performance Activities
Related Resources

For extra copies of this study guide, please go to www.trilliumbrass.com.
Please send any comments or questions to information@trilliumbrass.com.

The Trillium Brass Quintet is presented with help from Prologue to the Performing Arts.

Prologue to the Performing Arts
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Dance Music

The Trillium Brass Quintet presents a fun and interactive view of dance music through the experience of the classic brass quintet: two trumpets, horn, trombone, and tuba. Dance Music explores the progression and development of dance music through the ages. Using delightful musical examples - some eclectic, some familiar - the Quintet explores dance music's function within different cultures, class structures and social setting while focusing on rhythm, meter and tempo.

Known for their ability to transform the classic brass quintet into a fun, exciting, and dynamic musical celebration, The Trillium Brass Quintet captivates audiences with Dance Music and encourages students to discover more about music and the family of brass instruments.

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For classroom activities go to page 5 of this study guide.

Program

Tchaikovsky: *Mere Gigogne* from The Nutcracker

Grieg: *Sarabande*

Andrews Sisters: *Boogie-Woogie Bugle Boy*

traditional: *Liverpool Hornpipe*

Kurt Weill: *Youkali*

traditional: *Wigel-Wogel Polka*

Dance Music Game Show

Orff: *Tanz* from Carmina Burana

Prokofiev: *Dance* from Romeo and Juliet

Traditional: *Zorba the Greek*

Traditional: *Garde-A-Vous* Hose March

Tito Puente: *Oye Como Va*

Traditional: *Bird Dance*

Pollack: *That's A Plenty*

The Trillium Brass Quintet - Biography

Heralded by trumpet virtuoso Jens Lindeman as "one of the most exciting ensembles to come along in many years," the Trillium Brass Quintet - Brendan Cassin (trumpet), Scott Harrison (trumpet), Christine Passmore (horn), Cathy Stone (trombone), and Courtney Lambert (tuba) - combines the energy and exuberance of brass with the nuance and intensity of classical chamber music.

Embracing the wide diversity of music available to the modern brass quintet, TBQ creates a unique and engaging concert experience. The quintet is well-known for its stylish transcriptions and interpretations of music from a variety of genres and eras, and constructs unique programs drawing on a wide range of musical inspirations. With a dynamic stage presentation and informative and witty commentary between selections, TBQ quickly establishes an easy rapport with its audiences.

Formed in 1996, TBQ has performed throughout southern Ontario including recital appearances at the Lindsay Arts Foundation Series, Stratford Summer Music, Kincardine Summer Music Festival, Toronto International Chamber Music Festival, the inaugural Brass in the Grass Festival, the Kitchener-Waterloo Music Society, and the University of Toronto's New Music Week. TBQ was featured in the 2007 season of the Sault Ste. Marie Symphony and was also the first ensemble to play our national anthem inside the Ontario Legislature! The ensemble has performed with in concert with the Exultate Chamber Singers, Mendelssohn Choir, Pax Christi Chorale, and Cantores Celestes Women's Chamber Choir, and has premiered new works by Chan Ka Nin, Andrew Ager, Alexander Rapoport, and Scott Good, among others.

In addition to maintaining a busy schedule of concerts and hired engagements, TBQ is committed to music education. Under the auspices of Prologue to the Performing Arts, they have taken their popular educational concert "A Brass Odyssey" to over 80 schools in the Toronto area. The TBQ presentation appeals to music lovers of all ages.

For individual member bios and more information, go to:

www.trilliumbrass.com

For classroom activities go to page 5 of this study guide.

Activities and Assignments

The following materials are meant to accompany a Trillium Brass Quintet presentation. Teachers may wish to explore the concepts and activities in advance of the performance, or as a follow-up to the show. Please note that these are only suggestions and are meant to be aimed at an intermediate level. Modifications of the activities to suit the needs of your students are welcome; some are included. The Trillium Brass Quintet will cater the presentation to the level of your students.

Activities are aimed at an intermediate level and constitute a starting point for study in many areas. Most activities are music oriented, but if you feel uncomfortable using the terminology, the activities can be just as effective in laymen's terms. Please feel free to alter in any way to accommodate students at all other levels and in any subject area. If you have any questions about anything you see here please email christine@trilliumbrass.com.

Activities Contents:

Music Activities - geared toward music teachers and students

General Activities - appropriate for all classrooms and teachers

Write

Listen/Discuss

Create

Hoses - how to make your own hosaphone band

*Note: There is some overlap between categories as several suggested activities work for both music students and non-music students.

Music Activities

Define and Understand the Elements of Music (for answers and clarification, refer to the page at the end of this guide titled “Elements of Music”.)

For a senior elementary or high school class, try the following:

1. Use a (standard) dictionary and work alone or with a partner.

For each of the following words:

- a) write the number of definitions shown in brackets beside the word (not necessarily the first ones, choose the ones that make the most sense in terms of music)
- b) create a definition that makes sense to you, using your own words (can combine several given definitions)
- a) draw a picture or create an analogy to help you remember what the word means

Melody (3)

Rhythm (3)

Timbre (1)

Dynamics (2)

Harmony (3)

Texture (2)

Form (3)

Articulate (2)

Example: Melody.

- a) 1) Pleasing sounds or an agreeable succession of such sounds. 2) An organized succession of tones. 3) The leading part in a homophonic composition.
- b) Melody is the main part of a song consisting of an organized line of notes that go together.
- c) Melody = main tune. (the part you would sing along with)

Discuss. (Choose a song and apply the definitions to describe the music.)

Write a review of the Trillium Brass Quintet show “Dance Music” for the local paper. Describe the event, what you learned from the show about brass instruments, the elements of music and music in general. How do composers use melodies? How do they turn them into interesting music? Be sure to include any portions that you particularly liked, and any suggestions you have for making the show better. Should other students go to the show? (**Please send** us your best reviews: christine@trilliumbrass.com)

Listen to dances from several different cultures (either different countries or from different parts of Canada). **Consider** what the songs tell us about the region it comes from, the people who live there, the history of the place, and the approach to music in that region. Folk songs can be particularly telling in terms of how people live, think, what they value and how they approach life. How was this dance used in the culture?

Mystery Music. This assignment involves listening to a “mystery” piece of music and describing it in as many ways possible. Do NOT tell the students the title of the piece, or anything about it. Suggested pieces: Aaron Copland, Rodeo; Hector Berlioz, Symphony Fantastique, March to the Scaffold; Frederic Chopin, Prelude in D Flat, Op. 28 No. 15, Raindrop; Schumann, The Erlking. Dance possibilities: Kachaturian, Sabre Dance; Tchaikovsky, Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy; J. Strauss, Blue Danube Waltz; J. Strauss Thunder and Lightning Polka. Use any piece that is not too long - start with ones that have suggestive titles. Note - you can find lots of pieces and even parts of pieces on iTunes or Amazon.com.)

Listen to the piece several times (it will be played 3 times in a row to start). **Write a journal** describing the piece. Be sure to include discussion of all eight elements of music. (Melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, texture, form, dynamics and articulation.) Write clearly and neatly and in full sentences. Include a diagram if it helps.

Conclude your journal by answering the following questions:

What does the music make you think of?

What would be a good title for the piece and why?

What costumes would the dances wear to dance this dance?

What occasion was this music written for?

(To refresh your memory the piece will be played again midway through the class.)

Draw and label your favourite instrument from the Quintet - use an encyclopedia or the internet for the correct terms. Write a report to tell what roles the instrument played in the quintet. Was it the soloist? Did it play accompaniment? Leader? Follower? Can you describe how the quintet works in terms of which instrument is most or least important? You can look up the history of the instrument in an encyclopedia or on the internet.

Research a composer who is known for writing for brass instruments. Choose several from throughout history and compare the instruments they had to work with and the music they wrote. Some examples are Gabrieli, J.S. Bach, J. Haydn, W.A. Mozart, R. Wagner, R. Strauss, C. Ives and I. Stravinsky.

Research a composer who is known for writing dance music. Choose several from throughout history and compare the different types of dances they wrote and the occasions that they wrote for. Some examples include P. Tchaikovsky, J. Strauss, I. Stravinsky, J.S. Bach and Telemann.

Choose two pieces from the TBQ performance “Dance Music” and use the elements of music to **describe the differences and similarities** between the two.

Elements Listening Assignment (Great for classroom presentations. Use individually, in groups or as a class. A good way to start is using the terms verse, chorus, instrumental solo, intro and ending. Try starting with some very obvious songs by the Dave Clark 5, Beach Boys, or Elvis.)

1. Choose a song that you like and that you have a recording of. (Any style will work, and popular music is a great place to start. Words help!) Listen to it several times (at least!) (You can have each student choose their own, or have them work in small groups.)
2. Draw a diagram that shows the form and important changes in the other elements in relation to the form. (Be imaginative - there are no rules, it just has to represent the song and changes within the song.)
3. Write a 1-2 page description of the song based on the eight elements of music using the following outline. Begin with a brief introduction to the song and the performers. (Title, song history, group history etc.)
4. Make sure you discuss every element of music in detail in relation to the song. Use the following questions to help:
 - ~ Melody: conjunct? disjunct? both? repetitive? catchy? - why? lyrical? speechlike?
 - ~ Harmony: consonant or dissonant? Lots of chord changes or few?
 - ~ Rhythm: fast, slow - describe the tempo using a musical term, what is the time signature? Are the rhythms simple (could you write it out) or complex? Repeated?
 - ~ Timbre: what instruments are playing? Is there a singer? Describe the effect of the combination on the overall timbre of the group. High or low, electric or acoustic, pitched or unpitched.
 - ~ Texture: monophonic, homophonic, polyphonic - or some of all? Include in your diagram.
 - ~ Form: draw a diagram of the form of the piece. Give indications of where each new section starts and reasons (new words, different instruments, key change, new tune etc)
 - ~ Dynamics and Articulation: Describe them overall, if they change throughout the piece, and show any trends in the diagram.
5. Describe the genre of music that your song belongs to and how the elements you discussed are either typical or unusual for this genre. How do you know by listening to the song that is it classical/country/rock etc?
6. Hand in your report, diagram and a recording of the song.

Listening Guide

Below are some general points to discuss when describing a piece of music.

Things to Listen for:

tempo: (fast, slow, moderate)

meter: (three, four, two...)

Is it in a **major** or **minor** key?

Instrumentation: what instruments are playing? Singing?

Is it **polyphonic** or **homophonic**?

Do you hear any **melodies** that return later in the piece or **repeat**? Do you hear small pieces of the melody?

Type of piece: Is it a dance, aria, recitative etc.? Part of a larger work? Chamber Music or full Symphony?

Are there any **solo** instruments or voices?

What **language** is the singing in?

Notice any word painting and **representation** of the text? (ex. words about thunder with rumbling in the background?)

Contrast within the movement is created by:

What is the **mood** of the piece?

Be aware of all **8** elements of music...

Give the piece a **descriptive title** to help you remember it.

Elements of Music - Definitions

Melody is the tune. It is a line of pitches and rhythms, based on scales. It is either conjunct (step-wise) or disjunct (leaps) or a combination of both. Variety in the melody creates interest, repetition creates unity. Melodies create tension and release.

Harmony describes the other notes that go with the melody. It is the progression of chords created by the relationships between the notes. It supports the melody and helps create tension and release through consonance (notes that sound good together) and dissonance (notes that clash). Chords and harmony follow set patterns in Western Music, which allows us to recognize tension and release.

Rhythm is the beat. It is the way music is arranged in time. It uses meter (the time signature - the number of beats in a measure of music - often 2, 3 or 4), tempo (the speed of the music) and note and rest durations. Tempo is measured by using a metronome. A metronome marking may look like MM=120, which means 120 beats per minute. It may also be indicated by a common term such as *lento* (very slow), *adagio* (slow or leisurely), *andante* (at a walking pace), *Moderato* (at a moderate pace), *allegro* (fast, quick, lively), *presto* (very fast). Rhythm can be simple (easy to hear patterns) or complex.

Timbre (tam-ber) describes the tone quality of a sound, which depends on the physics of the instrument. We will be demonstrating the brass tone quality and talking about the physics behind the sound. Air vibrations make sound, and amplifiers (the instruments) make it louder so we can hear it. Families of instruments have similar ways of producing sound which makes them also have similar timbres. Range (high or low notes) effects timbre, and the longer an instrument the lower the sound. Some timbres have pitch, some don't. An ensemble has its own timbre based on the combination of timbres found in the group, and you can hear the difference between an orchestra, band, brass band and choir for this reason.

Texture is the combination of musical lines. There are two main types of texture:

homophonic melody plus accompaniment, or all moving at the same time

polyphonic several lines moving at different times, all important

Form is how we structure and organize music and the elements that make up music. Through contrast and repetition we can hear sections that go together, and form makes a piece of music make sense. The smallest part of form is a phrase, a musical sentence fragment. We will discuss how composers put music together.

Dynamics describe the degree of loud or soft, and provide drama, contrast and variety. (Technical terms are: pp, p, mp, mf, f, ff etc. *crescendo*, *diminuendo*, *sforzando*, *forte-piano*.)

Articulation is how you produce the notes. They can be smooth, choppy, short, long, punchy or gentle. Articulations make notes attached or detached, accented or all the same. Some examples of articulations are accent, tenuto, staccato, slur.

General Activities

Write

Mystery Music. This assignment involves listening to a “mystery” piece of music and describing it in as many ways possible. Do NOT tell the students the title of the piece, or anything about it. Suggested pieces: Aaron Copland, Rodeo; Hector Berlioz, Symphony Fantastique, March to the Scaffold; Frederic Chopin, Prelude in D Flat, Op. 28 No. 15, Raindrop; Schumann, The Erlking. Dance possibilities: Kachaturian, Sabre Dance; Tchaikovsky, Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy; J. Strauss, Blue Danube Waltz; J. Strauss Thunder and Lightning Polka. Use any piece that is not too long - start with ones that have suggestive titles. Note - you can find lots of pieces and even parts of pieces on iTunes or Amazon.com.)

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2. Draw a diagram that shows the form and important changes in the other elements in relation to the form. (Does the song break down into chunks? Are some of the chunks repeated? Be imaginative - there are no rules, it just has to represent the song and changes within the song.)
3. Write a 1-2 page description of the song. Begin with a brief introduction to the song and the performers. (Title, song history, group history etc.) Be as specific as you can and remember to talk about how it sounds.

Listen/Discuss

Familiar Tunes? Our show will include some familiar songs that your students may or may not know. Refer to the repertoire list at the beginning of this study guide to familiarize your students with the music that will be performed - this will enhance their understanding of the show.

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Research one of the dance styles we played in the show. Learn about the steps, who would have danced, when it was important and why. Does anyone still do this dance today?

Create

Make your own brass instrument. What sort of materials might you use? (not hoses - see the Hosaphone link for instructions on making your own hose band.)

Draw and label your favourite instrument from the Quintet - use an encyclopedia or the internet for the correct terms. Write a report to tell what roles the instrument played in the quintet. Was it the soloist? Did it play accompaniment? Leader? Follower? Can you describe how the quintet works in terms of which instrument is most or least important? You can look up the history of the instrument in an encyclopedia or on the internet.

Visual Art activities may include **diagramming** a piece of music, or creating images to reflect a piece of music, or using brass instrument shapes in drawing projects. Use art to show how the music sounds, what it makes you feel, or think of.

Choose a piece from the TBQ performance “Dance Music” (or choose another brass quintet or instrumental piece) and **write a story or poem or play** to go along with the music. Then choreograph a dance to go with the music.

Write a **story** (or choose one of your favourites) and **create music and sound effects** to go along with the action. Perform the story as a reading with music. Sounds do not have to be classical and can include percussion sounds, kazoos, etc.

Choreograph your own dance (to any music) and make up a dance map (pictures of where your feet and hands go) and instructions so that you can pass your dance along to the class.

Making your own Hosaphone

The HOSE:

Start with about 130cm of garden hose. (Make sure you ask first, or go shopping at Home Depot or Canadian Tire.) To make other instruments that play well together, you will need to make them the same length, two times as long, or four times as long. If the hoses are different diameters or materials, you may need to adjust slightly, so start out a bit too long. Remember, you can always cut more off, but you can't add back on!

The MOUTHPIECE:

If you own a brass mouthpiece, great. You are ready to go. Brass mouthpieces can be purchased from your local music store (for example Long and McQuade, Cosmo or St. John's Music in Toronto.)

If you don't have a brass mouthpiece, there are other things you can use.

~the top of a plastic pop or water bottle cut off about 5 cm from the top of the bottle.

This should fit over the hose and you can use plasticine or tape to fill any gaps.

~a film container with the bottom cut out to fit the hose.

~a very small funnel that fits into the hose.

The BELL:

A funnel works best for the bell of your hosaphone, and can be purchased for a small amount at a hardware store or dollar store. They often come in sets, so take a friend! Or, if you want, you can also use another water bottle or 2L pop bottle. Cut the bottle about half-way down and tape the end of your hose until they fit together.

MUTES:

If you want to experiment with a mute the way you heard in the show you can tape a piece of paper over the bell of your hosaphone. Don't tape it all the way around or no sound will be able to come out! You will be able to hear the sound get softer and the paper buzz.

Related Resources

Internet and Books

Check out the TBQ Education Page (www.trilliumbrass.com). This study guide, some recordings of the music from “Dance Music”, some of our favourite music for brass instruments and quintet, and answers to some Frequently Asked Questions.

One of the best resources for more information about brass instruments is the New York Philharmonic’s Kid’s Page (www.nyphilkids.org). Go into the instrument storage room and click on the instrument shape that you want to know about! This website also contains composer information, performer information, an instrument building/design area and games. There are excellent instructions for building a hosaphone! This site would be a great place to spend a classroom period.

Many school libraries contain books with basic descriptions of the history, physics and use of brass instruments. If your library is lucky enough to have a set of Grove’s Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians, please use it! If not, even the regular encyclopedia contains useful if brief information about instruments, composers and classical music.

Recordings

There are many great recordings by brass ensembles. Rather than listing them all, here is a selected list of groups that we recommend listening to along with Trillium.

- The Canadian Brass
- Summit Brass
- Empire Brass
- Philip Jones Brass Ensemble
- Center City Brass Quintet
- True North Brass

TBQ on CD:

Our first CD, *Revecy*, is available by emailing information@trilliumbrass.com

Please contact us before your show if you would like us to bring CDs to your school.