

Arabian Dance

Teacher Resources

Activities in this pack:



Information



Activity 3 Listen



Activity 1 **Listen**



Activity 4 Learn



Activity 2 Perform

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Introduction

Title of Work: Arabian Dance from Peer Gynt

Composer: Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Focus Concepts and genre

- Program music
- Instrumental timbre (colours) of percussion instruments
- Recognising changes in structure through changes in melody and accompaniment

Introduction to the piece

Edvard Grieg is widely considered one of the leading Nineteenth Century composers, and his music is often played by the TSO. His use of Norwegian folk music in his own compositions brought the music of Norway to fame, as well as helping to develop a national identity. This lively dance for whirling woodwinds and sharp percussion knit together the themes of this movement. A number of sections frame the different themes of the dance, from the opening flute theme to the central syncopated melody. The dance has different sections to highlight different personas within the play itself. Each section has a different accompaniment ostinato which features percussion instruments. The violins take over the melody and the urgency in the music becomes more apparent. After a bold reprise of the opening theme, the dance comes to a mysterious end led by the triangle.

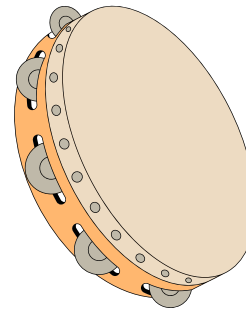
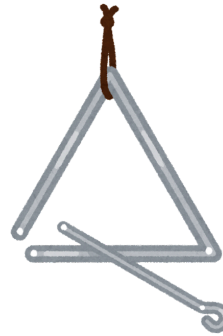
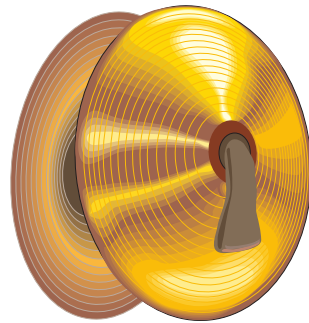
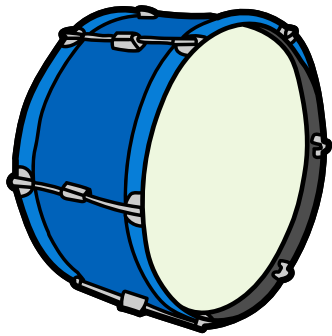




Untuned percussion instruments

Watch this performance:

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH ARABIAN DANCE](#)



1. What are the names of these percussion instruments?
(Bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, snare drum).

2. What order do the instruments enter in the piece?
(bass, triangle, cymbals, snare drum, tambourine)

3. There are 4 main sections in this piece. Which percussion instruments are accompanying in each section?

4. Can any of these percussion instruments play a tune?

(NO) This group of percussion instruments are called 'untuned' because they cannot play a tune. Ask the students to name other untuned percussion instruments.



Body percussion to Arabian Dance

Part A:

Each section of the music has a specific percussion accompaniment.

Learn each of the body percussion patterns below and then perform them with the music.

Body Percussion

Slap knees-click fingers-knees-click. On the beat.

Silent count 1,2,3,4,1 loud clap: cha-cha-cha

Softly use fairy claps to play the triangle beats

On chest keep the tambourine pattern one-and-two



What is happening in the music

Opening with the flute melody - SOFT

Other wind instruments join in loudly
Snare drum features with a drum roll, then a
cha-cha-cha rhythm ostinato pattern

Violins have the tune

Tambourine pattern





Part B:

There are a few different percussion patterns that happen at different times in the music. Learn to play these, then add them to the music as you listen. Mix and match the patterns to suit what you hear.

Body Percussion

Slap knees-click fingers-knees-click. On the beat.



Drum roll for 4 counts then clap:



Softly click to play the triangle beats:



On chest keep the tambourine pattern one-and-two



What is happening in the music

Opening with the flute melody - SOFT

Other wind instruments join in loudly
Snare drum features with a drum roll, then a cha-cha-cha rhythm ostinato pattern

Return of the opening

Violins have the tune answered by the lower strings

Return of the opening flute tune played by more instruments





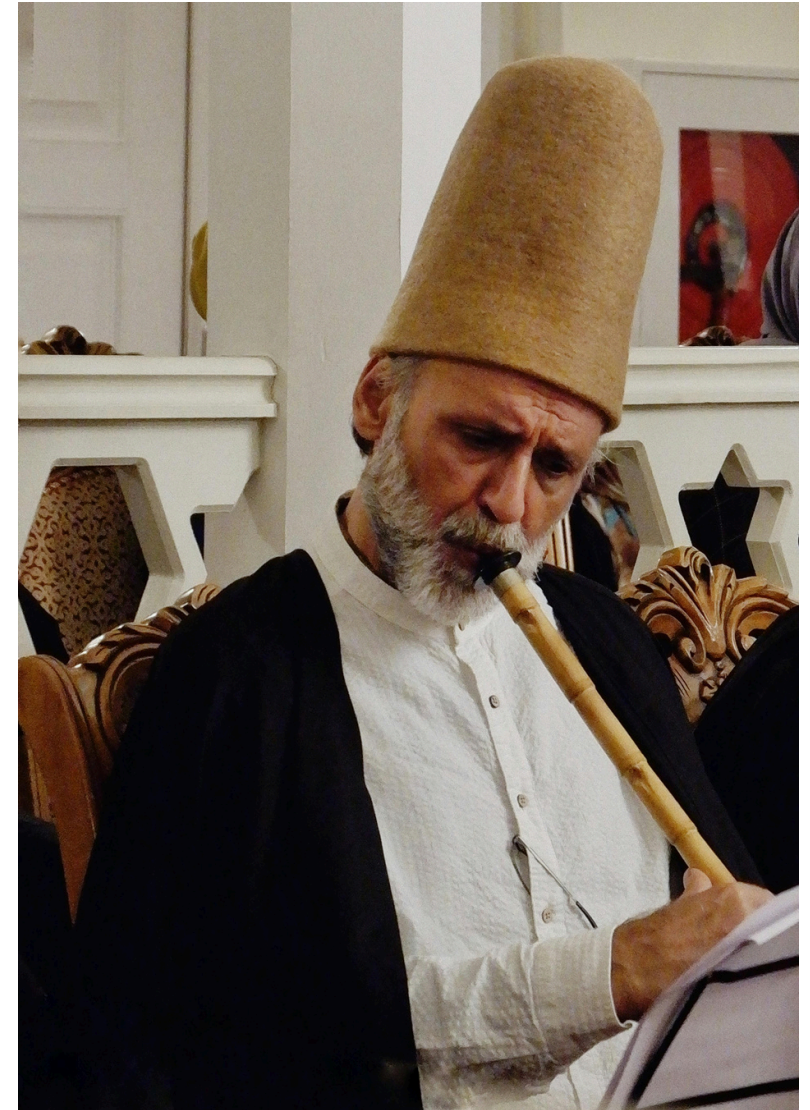
The Arabic Flute - Ney

Listen to [Arabic Flute Music–Ney](#) (Click here to listen).

This piece by Grieg is trying to capture the sounds of an Arabic flute called a *Ney* by featuring 2 flutes from the opening of the piece. Is it played the same way a western flute player plays their instrument?

Compare the sounds of a real *Ney* flute with the tunes in the *Arabian Dance* by Grieg.

Now watch the [National Arab Orchestra–Ney_plus_percussion](#) (Click here to watch) and identify what percussion instruments are used. Are they all untuned percussion instruments?





Cross-Curricular ideas

- What part of the world is called Arabia? Investigate the Arabic Countries.
- Which countries are part of Arabia? Mark them on a map of the world.
- What is the climate like?
- What language do they speak?
- What is the food like?
- What is the history of Arabia?
- Plan an Arabian food feast or make some Arabic food (like tabouli, hummus, falafel, cous cous salads).
- Arabian arts generally feature floral designs, geometric patterns and calligraphy. Use geometric instruments (compass, protractor, ruler) to create a design and colour it with colours of nature such as blue, green, sandy yellow, brown. Use the examples below for inspiration.

