

The Wobbly Wombat Dance

Teacher Resources

Activities in this pack:



Information



Activity 3 **Learn**



Activity 6 Move



Activity 1 **Listen**



Activity 4 Listen



Activity 7 Learn



Activity 2 **Learn**



Activity 5 **Perform**

Introduction

The Wobbly Wombat Dance (2024)

This piece was composed especially for the TSO by Hobart composer and musician Dean Stevenson.

It was originally written for string quartet but the composer especially arranged it for one of each instrument in the Mini TSO ensemble: flute, clarinet, oboe, bassoon, French horn, trumpet, trombone, tuba, 2 violins, viola, cello, double bass and a percussionist that plays MANY instruments.

The music is a comical imagining of slow and bumbling wombats turning into mad dancers with loads of energy at night! However, the next day they are weary and return to the animals that we know so well just wobbling along eating grass as they go.

The music is programmatic in that it is intentionally trying to convey a story in sound.





Listen to an excerpt of the end of the piece:

Wobbly Wombat Dance excerpt

Ask the class to consider:

- What is the speed of the music?
- What is the mood of the music?
- Describe something that you heard in the music.
- If this was music for a cartoon, what might be happening?
- Listen again to the excerpt. This is a piece of music describing an Australian animal. What animal might it be?
- What clues did you hear in the music to make you think this?
- After hearing some of the student answers tell them this piece is called the wobbly wombat dance.





Investigate the Wombat

What facts do you know about wombats?

- Make a list on the board.
- Watch this short video about George the wombat: [CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)
- What activities does the wombat do?
- What different ways does George move around?
- How would you describe the personality of George?
- Write some words (adjectives) that describe wombats.





Read and Summarise

The Wobbly Wombat Dance is a piece of 'program music', or music that describes an object or living thing using sound.

Read the story the music is describing from the composer's program notes:

This piece is inspired by the wacky idea that at night, in secret, Wombats are crazy dancers. This could explain why they're mostly so slow and wobbly in the daytime.

The piece begins as a Wombat wobbles along, eating grass. As night comes, the Wombats gather as the music ascends into a crazy dance. The music collapses when they have had enough. Exhausted, the Wombats wobble home, eating along the way before flopping into bed for a nap.

What are the key events in the story?

Answer: Wombat slowly wobbling along and eating grass; wombats gather; crazy wombat dance; wombats collapse; tired wombats wobble home, flop into bed.

What do you think the tone of the story is? Serious, sad, mysterious or.....?





Listen

Listen to the whole piece and see if you can identify where each section starts.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THE WOBBLY WOMBAT DANCE](#)

Answer points in the recording

- Wombats slowly wobbling along eating from the start
- wombats gather 0.50”
- crazy wombat dance 1.29”
- dance gets crazy 1.46”
- wombats collapse 2.16
- tired wombats wobble home 2.30
- flop into bed 3.25

Listen one more time and point out the sections in the music.

Discuss how the composer makes the music sound comical or silly:

- Choice of instruments such as the bassoon at the opening
- The slow steady speed of the music
- Lots of percussion sounds





Sing the Wombat round

Learn this 4 part round about a wombat. Students can accompany themselves with a repeating F and C note drone.

[Listen to the melody here](#)

Wom-bats will slow - ly walk and eat.

Back-side goes wob - ble not his feet,

When he thinks no one can see him he will run and prance

Wob-ble wom-bat, wob-ble wom-bat do your spec-ial dance.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are: Staff 1: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. Staff 2: G4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. Staff 3: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. Staff 4: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4.



Move like a Wobbly Wombat

In pairs have the children make up a move for the following stages of the piece:

1. Wombats wobbling along walking slowly and eating
2. Wombats gathering together (Choose one action and have groups slowly join in)
3. Wombats dancing energetically
4. Wombats slowing down with exhaustion
5. Wombats going to bed.

Listen to the piece again and perform the movements with the music.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO WOBBLY WOMBAT DANCE](#)





Learn about Percussion Instruments

Draw all the percussion instruments heard in this piece.
If you do not know the instrument – look it up and how it is played.

Whistle, glockenspiel, bass drum, snare drum, tambourine, Gong, triangle, vibraslap and siren.

