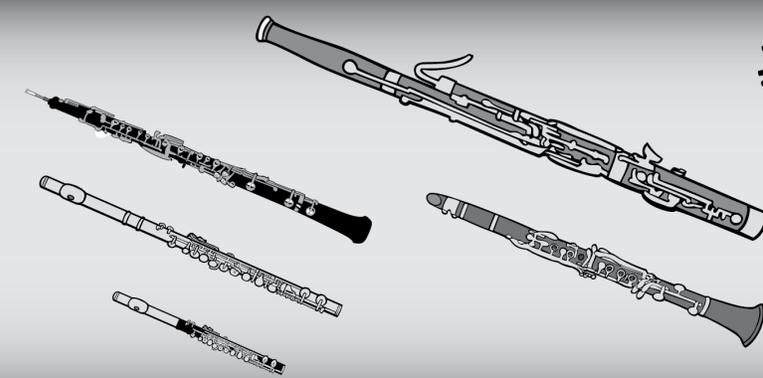


Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue

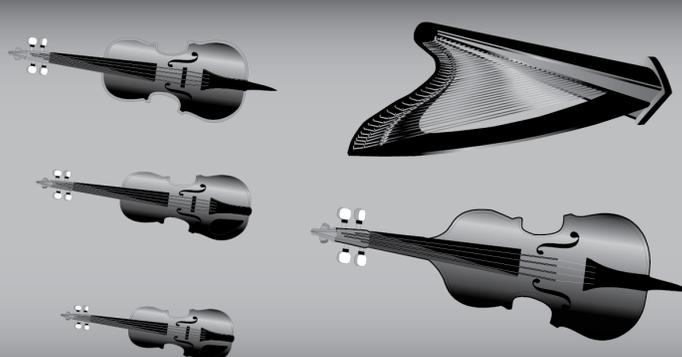
BY BENJAMIN BRITTEN



Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue by Britten (1943-1976)



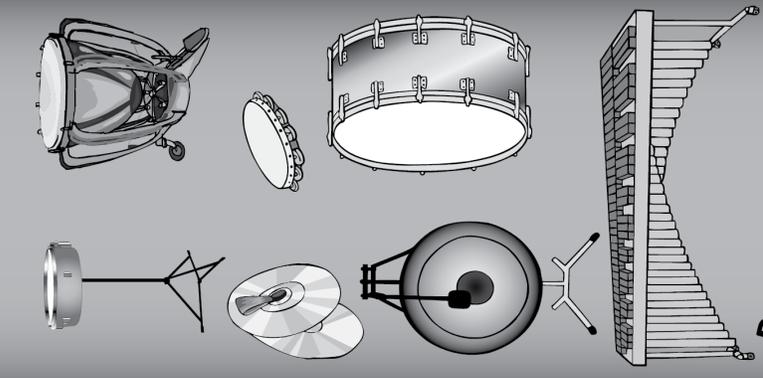
Woodwind Family



String Family



Brass Family



Percussion Family

FUGUE SUBJECT

PURCELL'S THEME

Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue

by Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

About the Composer

- Benjamin Britten was born in Suffolk, England in 1913 and was a 20th Century composer.
- His father was a dentist and his mother was a singer.
- At age 2 he begged his mother to teach him to play piano.
- While other boys his age were reading comic books before bed, Britten preferred reading the scores of symphonies and operas.
- By age 16 he had already composed a symphony and numerous other works.
- Britten was the first composer ever to be honored with a life peerage, and became Baron Britten, of Aldeburgh in the County of Suffolk in 1976.

About the Music

- Britten composed this selection in 1946 as a way to introduce children to the instrument families of the orchestra.
- He created a set of variations on a theme from **Abdelazar: Rondeau**, composed by the Baroque composer Henry Purcell. Each variation showcases a different instrument family.
- The *Fugue* is the final section of the work, and reviews the instrument families of the orchestra. A new variation on Purcell's theme is the fugue subject, introduced by the woodwinds and passed through the other instrument families until the end, when all join in a statement of the original Purcell theme.



Vocabulary

fugue a composition technique where a short melody (subject) is introduced by one instrument and imitated by other instruments at different pitches

theme a main melody in a composition

More

A **life peer** is an appointed member of the House of Lords in the United Kingdom. It is a title that is not inherited but given in honor of great achievement. Such an honor has to be proposed by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.



Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue

de Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Acerca del Compositor

- Benjamin Britten nació en Suffolk, Inglaterra en 1913 y fue un compositor del siglo XX.
- Su padre era dentista y su madre una cantante.
- A la edad de 2 años le rogó a su madre que le enseñara a tocar el piano.
- Mientras los otros niños de su edad leían libros de historieta antes de dormirse, Britten prefería leer las partituras de sinfonía y ópera.
- A la edad de 16 años ya había compuesto una sinfonía y numerosas obras.
- Britten fue el primer compositor en ser honrado con un título nobiliario de Lore Temporal y se convirtió en el Barón Britten de Aldeburgh en el condado de Suffolk en 1976.



La Pieza Musical

- Britten compuso esta selección en 1946 como una manera de presentarle a los niños las familias de instrumentos de una orquesta.
- El creó un grupo de variaciones de un tema de **Abdelazer**: Rondeau, compuesta por el compositor barroco Henry Purcell. Cada variación muestra una diferente familia de instrumentos.
- La *Fuga* es la sección final de una pieza musical y cubre todas las familias de instrumentos. Una nueva variación del tema de Purcell es el tema de la fuga, introducido por los instrumentos de viento y pasada a las otras familias de instrumentos hasta el final, en donde todos se juntan como declaración del tema original de Purcell.

Vocabulario

fuga es una técnica de composición en donde una corta melodía corta (tema) es introducida por un instrumento e imitada por otros instrumentos en diferentes tonos

tema es la melodía principal de una composición

Más

Un **Lore Temporal** es un miembro designado de la cámara de los Lores en el Reino Unido. Es un título que no es heredado, pero es otorgado en honor a un gran logro. Dicho honor tiene que ser propuesto por el primer ministro del Reino Unido.



LESSON

Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue by Benjamin Britten (1913 - 1976)



LESSON BY BRAN VANDEWALLE

TIME: 3:03

CONCEPTS/VOCABULARY

brass family, fugue, percussion family, string family, theme, woodwind family

OBJECTIVES

1. Identify the instrument families of the orchestra.
2. Define fugue.



NOTE

1. *Kinesthetic Title Video* is available on the Digital Teacher's Guide.
2. *Movement Activity Video* is available on the Digital Teacher's Guide.
3. *Early Childhood Materials* are available on the Digital Teacher's Guide.

MATERIALS



CD 1:13(full selection)
CD 1:25-26 (theme bank)



MightyLessonKit© or Listening Map PDF



Student Reproducible Pages:
Background Page in English/Spanish
"Checking for Understanding"
"Conduct Your Own Orchestra"
Activity Page



Reader's Theater Script

SUPPLEMENTAL



Links to Live Performances



Composer Portrait



Wall Poster



SETTING THE STAGE

Introduce the concept of a *fugue*.

- ◆ Have students sing Row, Row, Row Your Boat.
- ◆ Have students sing the song again as a round (2-3) groups.
- ◆ Explain that a *fugue* is similar to a round or canon in that one group starts the piece, then other groups enter with the same melody at different times. In a *fugue* the new voices enter on higher or lower pitches than the first voice.

Tell the students that today they will be hearing a selection that will feature each family of the orchestra as they play a *fugue*.

LESSON

Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue by Benjamin Britten



TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- 1) Have students:
 - ◆ Read or listen to background information on Britten (1913-1976) and this selection. Perform the Kinesthetic Title moves with the video.
 - ◆ Define Concepts/Vocabulary for this lesson.
- 2) Review the listening map.
 - ◆ Identify the four instrument families in this selection, each represented by a different color.
 - ◆ Identify the instruments within each family.
 - ◆ Point out the fugue subject notation and Purcell's theme.
- 3) Sing the Theme with words. This can be found in the Notated Themes section of the lesson.
- 4) Listen to the selection and follow the map.
- 5) Visit <https://tinyurl.com/BerlinFugue> to hear the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra perform this selection.



ASSESSMENT

Observe students to assess understanding as they:
Get into 2 groups. While listening to the selection one group will pantomime playing the instrument that is heard while the second group will use sign language (shown below) to identify the instrument family. On a second listening the groups switch roles.



STRINGS



WOODWINDS



BRASS



PERCUSSION

Have students turn to their shoulder partner and define a *fugue*.

LESSON

Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra:

Fugue

by Benjamin Britten



OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

Have students:



Complete the “Checking for Understanding” worksheet.

ANSWERS: 1. a 2. c 3. a 4. b 5. b



Complete the “Conduct Your Own Orchestra” Activity Page.



Visit <https://tinyurl.com/BrittenAnimation> to see an animated adaptation of this selection created by LA Shorts.

Visit <https://listeningadventures.carnegiehall.org/> to play an online game from Carnegie Hall Listening Activities based on this selection.

Visit the Mighty Music YouTube Channel for more video resources at

<http://tinyurl.com/musicmemoryvideo>

Be sure to have students listen to other recordings of this selection from YouTube or other music streaming services that vary in tempo and style.



Use the Reader's Theater Script.



VOCABULARY/DEFINITIONS

brass family (brass) instruments, usually made of metal, that are played by buzzing lips into a mouthpiece; modern brass instruments have valves and slides for changing the pitch

fugue a composition technique where a short melody (subject) is introduced by one voice and imitated by other voices at different pitches

percussion family (percussion) musical instruments that are struck, shaken or scraped; may be “pitched” (xylophone, bells, timpani, etc.) or “unpitched” (snare drum, maraca, slapstick, etc.)

string family (strings) instruments that have strings and are bowed, plucked or strummed; the pitch is changed mostly with the fingers changing the length of the vibrating strings

theme a main melody in a composition

woodwind family (woodwinds) instruments which were originally made of wood; played by blowing through a mouthpiece or across a hole; modern woodwinds have many keys (buttons or pads) for changing the pitch

LESSON

Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra:

Fugue

by Benjamin Britten



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Interdisciplinary Studies

A Theme and Variations is experienced in many disciplines, and in many aspects of life. In music, the theme can be varied by tone color, style, mode, tempo, dynamics, etc. Visually, an image can be varied in many ways. Think of Andy Warhol's images of soup cans or portraits. Monet created variations of a haystack at different times of day. Synonyms are variations of words. In literature, Langston Hughes wrote a poem, *Dream Variations*, where the second stanza is a variation of the first. Serial writers use a formula for writing texts and screenplays, where each is a variation of the successful formula for a short story, book, cartoon, comedy series or movie. Students are asked to write according to a formula for the three-paragraph essay, thereby creating variations on the essay theme. Discuss other places where students experience a theme and variations, including styles of clothing, holiday tree decorations, and so on.

Mathematics

Benjamin Britten used a very interesting layering of meter in this piece. During the fugue, the meter signature for the strings and woodwinds is $3/4$, and the meter signature for the brass is $6/8$. These are equivalent, which means that there are the same number of beats in each measure. However, $3/4$ and $6/8$ feel very different. $3/4$ has accents on the first, third and fifth eighth notes. $6/8$ has primary accents on the first and fourth eighth notes. The layering of one over the other gives a great feeling of movement. Listen carefully to this imaginative layering of meters – a practical application of mathematics.



NOTATED THEME

Lis-ten to this piece Brit-ten wrote it for the young chil-dren to learn a-bout

in-stru-ments heard in the or-ches-tra like wood-winds and strings and brass it's a Fugue!

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Name: _____

Class: _____



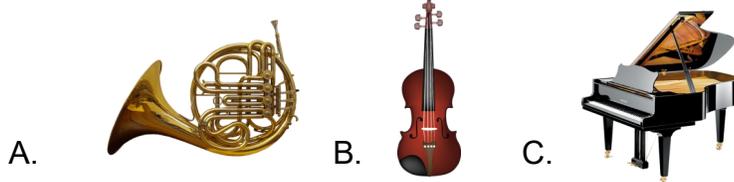
Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra:
Fugue
by _____

As you look at the map, answer the following questions.

_____ 1) How many instrument families are represented in this selection?

- a. 4
- b. 5
- c. 6

_____ 2) Look at the following pictures of instruments.



Which instrument is not featured in this selection?

- a. A
- b. B
- c. C

_____ 3) Which group of terms would be best to use for more information about this selection?

- a. Britten, fugue, children
- b. children, instruments, orchestra
- c. English, orchestra, fugue

_____ 4) Which of the following instruments is in the brass family?

- a. violin
- b. trombone
- c. bassoon

_____ 5) This selection is performed by _____.

- a. a band
- b. an orchestra
- c. a choir

Write complete sentences to answer the following questions:

Write one fact about this selection or its composer.

Does the music sound like anything you have heard before?



Name _____ Class _____

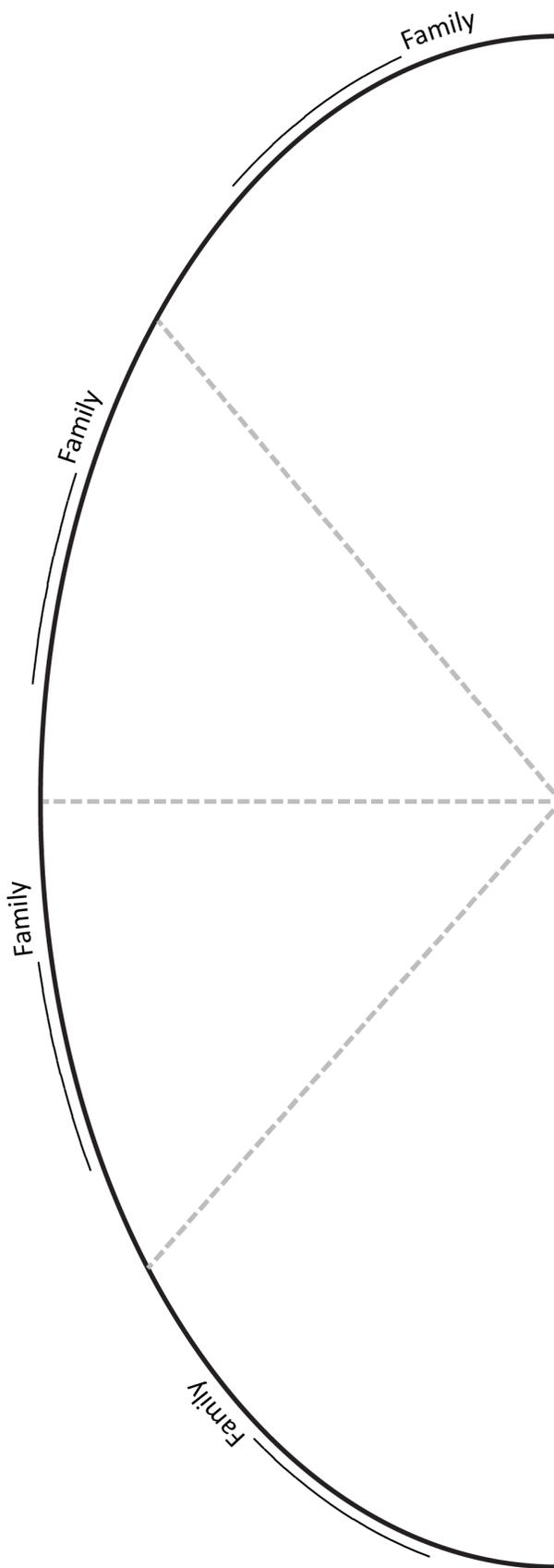


Conduct Your Own Orchestra

Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue
by _____ (1913-1976)



Cut out the instrument families from the next page and glue them into the template below. Be sure to glue them down in the order that they perform during this selection. Use the word bank at the bottom of the page to fill in the blanks. Then cut out the conductor from the next page and set it on the conductor podium below. Do not glue the conductor down. It needs to be able to move freely. While listening to Britten's **Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue** rotate the conductor so that the baton is pointing at the instrument family that is performing.



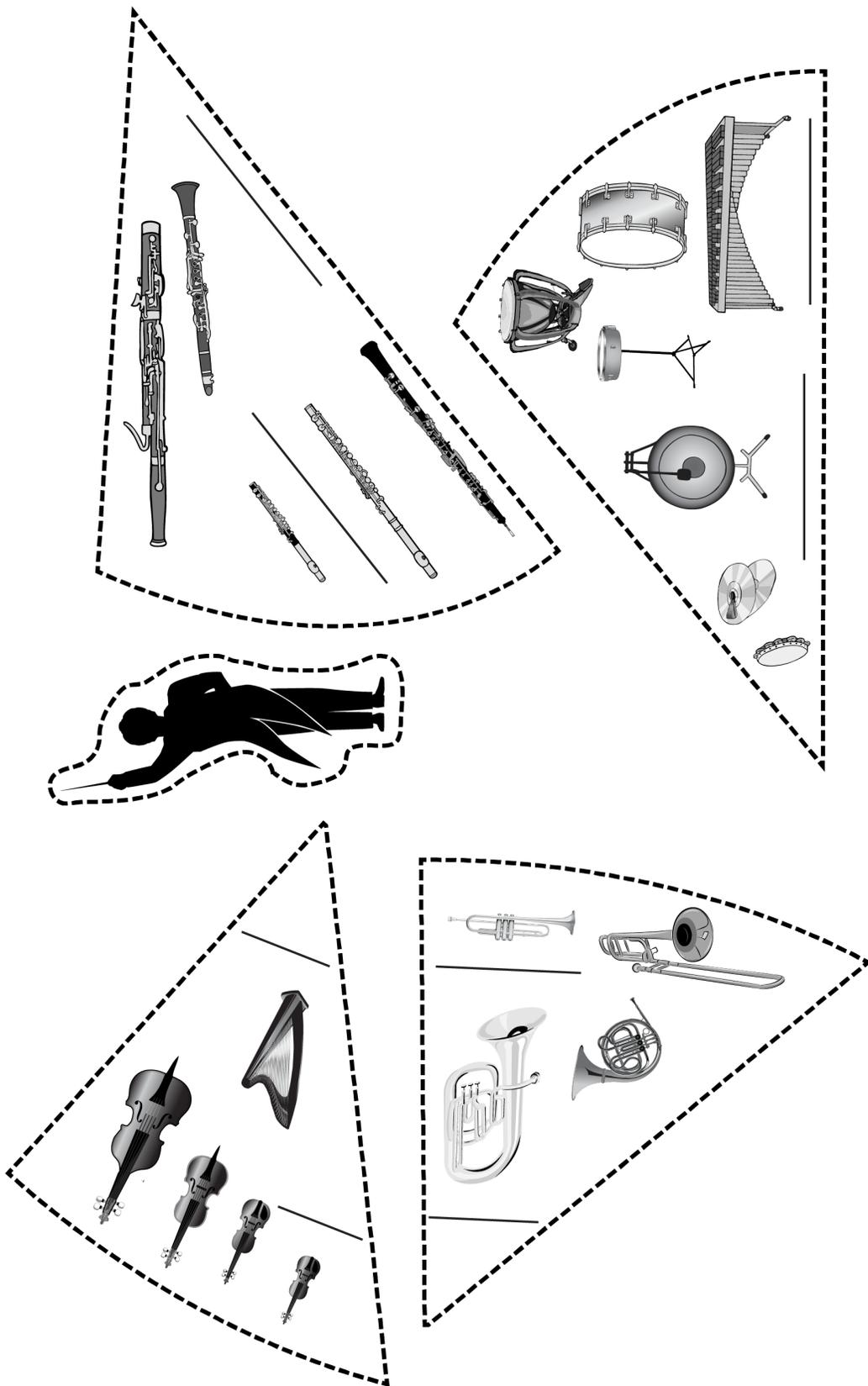
WORD BANK

Brass	clarinet	gong	harp
Percussion	piccolo	String	trumpet
tuba	violin	Woodwind	xylophone



Name _____ Class _____

Conduct Your Own Orchestra - Pieces



MOVEMENT DIRECTIONS

Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue by Benjamin Britten



Concepts Reinforced: steady beat, instruments heard

Note: The movement corresponds to the form on the listening map. See map and lesson for details.

Opening Formation: scatter

Materials needed: none

During the Woodwind Section: Students stand and step the beat in place while pantomiming performing on the woodwind instruments as heard.

During the String Section: Students sit and pat the beat alternating hands.

During the Brass Section: Students stand and march with a steady beat around the room while pantomiming performing on the brass instruments as heard.

During the Percussion Section: Students sit and wave arms with the steady beat in a windshield wiper style.

During the Purcell's Theme Section: Students stand and sway L-R with the strong beat.

Ending: Students stand in a star position with feet apart and arms raised in the air. Students perform a burst motion with their arms on the loud accented notes.

READER'S THEATER SCRIPT

Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue by Benjamin Britten



Characters: The Chef, The Apprentice Cook, The Waiter

Setting: A Restaurant Kitchen

APPRENTICE: Chef, I notice that you always play music here in the kitchen. You must love classical music. Does the music help you work?

WAITER: The music must do some good. People love to eat here! Can you hand me that other salad? My hands are full.

APPRENTICE: Here you go. Wow, all three of those salads are different!

CHEF: Each salad is a variation of a basic. It's like the music we were listening to.

WAITER: Chef loves to make salad variations. You should see what he can do with just a few basic greens, and a little of this, a little of that... Well, I'd better serve these salads.

APPRENTICE: OK, I give up. How is that music we heard like a salad?

CHEF: Both are variations. The salads start with a basic recipe or idea. But I vary it adding new things, leaving others out, and changing the way it's put together. That music is a variation on a musical idea.

APPRENTICE: You mean a composer changed or added things, and messed around with the way it's put together? I get the idea. I can see all these ingredients laid out here, and how you combine them in different ways. But how does a composer make a "variation"?

CHEF: A composer has a set of ingredients, too. There is the main idea or theme, then you can add, change, and shape it in new ways, sort of like making a "musical salad."

APPRENTICE: But you have a lot of different ingredients to work with.

CHEF: So does a composer: There is harmony, rhythm, melodic design, and in the piece we heard, a whole musical kitchen full of instrumental sounds. Sometimes there is so much variation of the theme that it's hard to find the original melody.

APPRENTICE: Can you play that music again? I want to listen for the basic theme, and notice all the other musical ingredients.

WAITER: I brought this salad back. The customer asks if you can add mushrooms.

CHEF: Of course! I guess the customer wants...

CHEF, APPRENTICE: (*together*) a variation!



Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue by Britten



In this piece you hear the
instruments of the orchestra.
Write the word orchestra.



orchestra

The orchestra is led by a conductor.
Color the conductor as you listen.
Write the word conductor.

conductor



EARLY CHILDHOOD PAGES

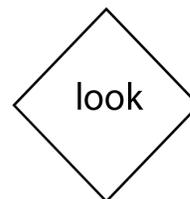
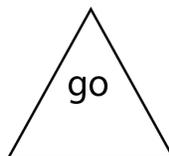
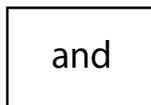
Name _____



Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra: Fugue by Britten



Read the sight words. Draw the correct shape around each sight word in the sentence. Listen to the music as you draw a picture to go with each sentence.



Let's go hear the orchestra.

Look at the conductor.

Come see the flute.

I like listening and
dancing to music.
