

# Beethoven & the Big Note Band



## Study Guide For Grades K-5<sup>th</sup>

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### **Artist/Ensemble Information**

Artist/Ensemble Name: Sean Driscoll "Beethoven"

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For: K- 5th grades

### **About The Program**

"Beethoven & The Big Note Band"

"The Big Note Band" has fallen apart! They've lost their beat, can't remember the melody, and don't know the harmony! So their conductor, Beethoven uses comedy, magic and music to help them re-discover the essential elements of music pitch, melody, harmony, rhythm texture meter etc...). The band comes alive on a giant video screen with animated characters that interact with the audience. In the end, the band just can't get it together. They are fired and the audience becomes Beethoven's new band in a giant jam session.

### **Technical Requirements**

2 grounded outlets, 1 chair, one table 6'X2', performance space 25'X 25' with a clean floor

### **Set Description**

The set includes a giant interactive video screen with animated characters that interact with the audience. There are over dozens of percussion instruments and drums on stage that are handed out to the audience during the show. Sean also brings various guitars and banjos.

### **Artist Bio**

Mr. Driscoll performs hundreds of shows throughout the United States each year in theater, television, school, concert and festival settings. He has performed educational programs since the age of 15 for over thirty years. His performances combine technology, video, music, animation, magic and theater into unusual theatrical experiences.

In addition, Sean conducts numerous Artists in Residency programs in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. During these residencies he

develops Audio CDs and CD Roms with students. Sean takes students through the process of creating scripts, developing acting skills, recording voice-overs and sound effects. He brings a complete recording studio to the school so children may experience the recording process first hand.

He has also released several Audio CDs including, "Critter Tales" (Storytelling.) and "Kindred Spirits" (Classical Guitar). His stories have been heard throughout the world on the World Space Radio Network and the Internet.

### **Background On Art Form**

Mr. Driscoll is a pioneer in children's educational performances and is one of the first performers in the world to combine animation, video, music and live theater into an educational show. He began his studies in classical music at the age of six. Throughout high school and college, he studied composition and mastered the art of theatrical and musical performance. After college, Mr. Driscoll began teaching at Armstrong Atlantic University. It was during his time as a college professor that he started teaching himself video editing and animation techniques. He now owns Storymaker Studios in Savannah, GA where he and his team of artists produce animated characters for live performances and Audio CDs of music and storytelling.

### **Program Objectives**

1. Students learn to identify the basic elements of music (pitch, melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, meter etc...).
2. Students listen and observe how these elements are present in music from around the world and in different styles.
3. Students identify various string and percussion instruments and help produce accompaniment to musical selections from around the world.
4. Students expand their knowledge of musical terms and see how these terms apply to musical styles from around the world.

### **Prepare (Pre-performance)**

#### **(Teachers please read this to your students.)**

Today the crazy band leader Beethoven is coming to perform for us. He is going to share some music from around the world and to teach us some basic concepts. He has an animated band and I understand that they need some help, so be prepared to help him play musical instruments and sing during the show.

### **Warm up questions to set the stage for engaging students.**

1. What is music?
2. What is your favorite kind of music?
3. How is Country music different than Rap music? How are they the same?
4. Name one thing you will find in all music from around the world?
5. What instrument would you play if you were in a band?

**(Teachers please have students complete the assessment questions after the show. You will find them along with the answers at the conclusion of this study guide.)**

### **Curriculum Connections and pre or post performance activity suggestions.**

*Arts:* Have students examine works of art from Africa, Ireland, Japan, United States (Jazz) etc. See if they can identify rhythmic patterns and repeating patterns in the art.

*Math:* Create math game show using meter and music. Example questions: In 4/4 time how many beats are there in ten measures? Answer 40

*History & Social Science:* Organize an international festival and have children learn musical selections from around the world. Then have them perform them at the festival.

*Music:* Listen to examples of music from Africa, Ireland, Japan, and other countries of the world and identify key conceptual terms as explained during the show and listed in the above vocabulary.. Learn to perform a song with a rhythmic ostinato.

### **Vocabulary**

Rhythm – the movement of music through time

Beat – the underlying pulse of music

Tempo – the speed of music

Pitch – the highness or lowness of a single sound or note. Also refers to a note sound itself

Melody – the tune; a combination of pitches in a rhythmic sequence

Harmony – two or more pitches sounded together

Consonance – absence of harsh sounds or tension in music

Dissonance – the presence of harsh sounds or tension in music

Arpeggio – chord tones played separately

Antiphonal – call and response, using responses recited or sung in alternation

Texture – the various uses of melody and harmony in a piece of music

Homophony – when chords support a melody

Monophony – one melody or single line of music

### **Support materials**

“101 Music Games for Children: Fun and Learning With Rhythm and Song”  
(Smartfun Books)

“Teach Your Kids About Music”

*An Activity Handbook for Parents and Teachers using Children's Literature*

Ruby Chroninger

Paperback

ISBN: 0-8027-7410-5

“M Is For Music”

By Kathleen Krull

Illustrated By Stacey Innest

ISBN 0-15-201438-1

“M Is For Melody”

By Kathy Jo Wargin

Illustrated By Katherine Larson

ISBN 1-58536-215-8

“Rhinoceros Tap”

By Sandra Boynton

ISBN 0-7611-3323-2

Workman Press

“When Marion Sang”

By Pam Murizo Ryan

Scholastic Press

ISBN 0439-2697-9

“Duke Ellington”  
Andre Davis Pickney  
ISBN 0-7868-0278

“Beethoven’s Wig”  
Sing along symphonies  
Rounder Kids  
ISBN 1-5-7940-100-7  
(Audio CD)

“Jazz Cats”  
By Donald Davis, Chuck Galey  
Pelican Press

“Jazz Fly”  
Mathew Gollub, Karen Hanke  
Tortuga Press

### **Websites**

<http://www.kidsongs.com/>

<http://www.cmnonline.org/>

<http://www.earlychildhoodlinks.com/parents/childrensmusic.htm>

<http://www.playmusic.org/>

<http://www.sfskids.org/templates/splash.asp>

<http://www.si.umich.edu/chico/instrument/>

<http://freekidsmusic.com/home.html>

<http://www.childrensmusic.org/>

<http://www.sci.mus.mn.us/sound/nocss/top.html>

## Beethoven's Assessment Questions

Directions. Answer the following multiple choice and discussion questions to see what you have learned from Beethoven's performance.

Last Name:

First Name:

School:

Teacher's Name:

1. What is rhythm?

- The Steady beat or pulse that measures the movement of music through time
- When singers clap their hands and dance
- Rappers when they are rapping
- All of the above

2. What is melody in music?

- A girl's name that was a famous singer
- The volume, or loudness and softness of music
- A series of single pitches in rhythm that musicians might sing or play as the leading part in a musical selection
- When two or more notes or pitches are played at the same time

3. What is a pitch in music?

- A single note or sound that can be played by a musical instrument or sung. It also refers to whether the note is high or low
- A sharp metal fork on the end of a pole used to pick up hay.
- When musicians throw their instruments across the stage
- The loudness and softness of music

4. Why did Beethoven fire his band?

- They did not know the rhythm of the song
- They did not know the melody of the song
- They did not know how to use harmony in the song
- All of the above

5. What element of music did the Irish musician teach us about?

- Melody
- Harmony
- Pitch
- Rhythm

6. Why did Beethoven go to Africa before coming to perform the show?

7. Do you ever hear antiphonal call and response at baseball or football games?

8. What was the name of the drum from Ireland that Beethoven played?

9. The banjo is a cross between which two instruments?

10. Harmony is when two or more pitches sound together. How many pitches played together does it take to make a chord?

11. What is an arpeggio?



## Beethoven's Assessment Answers

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School:

Teacher's Name:

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Rappers when they are rapping

All of the above

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A girl's name that was a famous singer

The volume, or loudness and softness of music

A series of single pitches in rhythm that musicians might sing or play as the leading part in a musical selection

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A single note or sound that can be played by a musical instrument or sung. It also refers to whether the note is high or low

A sharp metal fork on the end of a pole used to pick up hay.

When musicians throw their instruments across the stage

The loudness and softness of music

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They did not know how to use harmony in the song

All of the above

5. What element of music did the Irish musician teach us about?

Melody

Harmony

Pitch

Rhythm

6. Why did Beethoven go to Africa before coming to perform the show? [To find the world's greatest drummer to keep the beat](#)

7. Do you ever hear antiphonal call and response at baseball or football games?  
Yes, when singing baseball songs at a stadium.

8. What was the name of the drum from Ireland that Beethoven played?  
Bodhran

9. The banjo is a cross between which two instruments? A Guitar and Drum

10. Harmony is when two or more pitches sound together. How many pitches played together does it take to make a chord? Three notes or pitches

11. What is an arpeggio? When the notes of a chord are all played one after the other very quickly