

PIZZICATO LISTENING PARTY

LESSON/ACTIVITY PLAN

Here's a short, simple listening activity geared for younger students to help reinforce recognition of basic string techniques and tone color/timbre.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will correctly identify *pizzicato* and *arco* sounds by listening.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Explain that string instruments can perform a special technique, *pizzicato*, which means that they pluck their strings instead of using the bow.
2. Introduce or review the term *arco*, which is when players pull the bow across the strings of the instrument. Listen to a few examples of *pizzicato* and *arco* (good examples listed below.)
3. Watch a few examples so that students understand what *pizzicato* looks and sounds like. Here's "[Allegretto Pizzicato](#)" from Béla Bartók's *String Quartet No. 4, Sz. 91*.

Watch a contrasting *arco* example, the [String Quartet No. 12, Op. 96 "American"](#) by Antonín Dvořák.

4. Create index cards:



Play random examples from the list below and ask students to flash the appropriate card based on what they hear. Here are a few examples to get you started.

Pizzicato

- a. Johann and Josef Strauss: [Pizzicato Polka](#)
- b. Giacomo Puccini: *Madame Butterfly* "[Humming Chorus](#)"
-Make sure to listen to a version with orchestral accompaniment, like this one:
- c. Antonio Vivaldi: *The Four Season* "Winter" II. [Largo](#)
-This one is sort of a trick question because the melody is bowed (*arco*), but the accompaniment is *pizzicato*.

d. Leroy Anderson: The very fun [*Plink, Plank, Plunk*](#).

Arco

a. J.S. Bach: [*Partita No. 3, "Gavotte en rondeau"*](#)

b. Antonio Vivaldi: *The Four Seasons* "Summer" III. [*Presto*](#)

STANDARDS:

These activities incorporate aspects of the following Minnesota Standards for the Arts:

1. K-3. Artistic Foundations 1. Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of the arts area. Music. 0.1.1.3.1. Identify the elements of music including melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, tone color, texture, form, and their related concepts.
2. K-3. 4 Artistic Process: Respond or Critique. 1. Respond to or critique a variety of creations or performances using the artistic foundations. Music. 0.4.1.3.1. Compare and contrast the characteristics of a variety of musical works or performances.



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Music for learning.