



FEATURE

Listening Guide: Duke Ellington Orchestra's "Take the 'A' Train"

Meets National Core Arts Standards 1, 3, and 7

OBJECTIVES

- Conceptualize artistic ideas and work (Cr1)
- Refine and complete artistic ideas and work (Cr3)
- Perceive and analyze artistic work (Re7)

MATERIALS

- *Music Alive!* magazines (April 2017)
- *Music Alive!* Classroom Worksheets #5: Music Review Journal and #12: Staff Paper (download at musicalive.com)
- Notation software (optional)
- Classroom keyboards or other instruments

START

1. Ask your students to read "Listening Guide" on pages 18–19.

DEVELOP

- ▶ 1. Play "Take the 'A' Train" (Hear the Music playlist track 8 on musicalive.com) two or more times while the students follow along with the timeline and complete the Music Review Journal.

2. Ask the following supplemental questions:

- **What time signature is the piece in?** (4/4.)
- **Is it in a major or minor key?** (Major—C major.)
- **Can anyone identify the scale that the piano plays in the intro?** (The whole tone scale—C D E F# G# A#. As the name indicates, it contains only whole steps. Play the whole tone scale on the piano.)
- **When the bass kicks in at around 0:05, what is it doing?** (It's "walking," or playing steady quarter notes in a way that outlines the chord progression, an essential technique in jazz.)
- **In the chorus, how would you describe the rhythm of the trumpet responses?** (Syncopated.)

- **At around 0:29, are the trumpets playing in unison or in harmony?** (In harmony.)
- **What note value is most commonly used in the trumpet solo?** (Eighth note.)
- **Are the saxophones behind the trumpet playing in harmony or unison?** (In harmony.)
- **How long is the first solo?** (32 bars.)
- **Does anyone know the significance of 32 bars in jazz?** (It's the length of a typical jazz head, or melody, on which players improvise.)
- **What happens to the music at around 1:45?** (It modulates up, to the key of E \flat major.)
- **Are the trombone accents at 2:08 in unison?** (No, they're harmonized.)

CLOSE

1. Write out the whole tone scale (shown here) on the whiteboard and hand out copies of the staff paper worksheet, or have the students use notation software. Using this pitch collection for reference, ask the students to compose whole tone melodies—and whole tone harmonies as well. Then have the students try reading their classmates' compositions on classroom keyboards or other instruments.



ASSESS

- Did the students read the Listening Guide?
- Did they listen to the song using the timeline and complete the Music Review Journal worksheets?
- Did they answer the additional questions?
- Did they write and play their whole tone compositions?

April 2017 QUIZ ANSWERS

This month's quizzes are available at musicalive.com/the-quiz-zone-april-2017. Here are the quiz answers:

HOW WE LISTEN

1. 1.2 billion
2. Vinyl records
3. \$416 million
4. 1982
5. Up to 80 min.
6. Sample rate; bit rate
7. 44,100
8. True
9. MP3
10. WAV and FLAC

THE LATIN JAZZ CONNECTION

1. Rumba
2. Xavier Cugat
3. Machito and Mario Bauzá
4. Dizzy Gillespie
5. cubop
6. "A Night in Tunisia" and "Manteca"
7. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
8. False
9. João Gilberto and Antonio Carlos Jobim
10. "The Girl from Ipanema"

LITTLE BIG TOWN

1. Karen Fairchild, Jimi Westbrook, Phillip Sweet, Kimberly Schlapman
2. False
3. 1998
4. "Boondocks"
5. *The Road to Here*
6. "Pontoon"
7. Seven
8. False
9. Its four-part harmonies
10. Pharrell Williams