

TODAY'S MUSIC EDUCATION RESOURCE

MUSIC ALIVE!

XG

They're a Japanese group singing in English, based in Korea, and using the K-Pop marketing system. It's a grand global music experiment now taking flight.

LISTENING GUIDE

"Tired of Being Alone"
by Al Green

It's Instrumental:
THE OBOE

SAYWHAT?

The meanings and origins of musical sayings

The Music of
THE PRODUCERS

MAKING THE MOVE TO MARCHING

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FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of *Music Alive* features XG, a female, seven-member Japanese singing group, created and managed by a subsidiary of a Japanese entertainment conglomerate. Nonetheless, XG operates within the K-pop industry framework (promoting in Korea). The further twist is that XG sings in English, and its music has been written and produced to reach and appeal to a global pop fanbase. The act has been charting in many territories (including the U.S.) and management's overall strategy appears to be working well.

This March issue also includes a story about the marching music activity. Aimed at readers who might consider joining a marching ensemble, our story details the experience and the process by which a student might become involved in marching. It seeks to manage expectations and foretell potential outcomes and should be interesting reading for anyone who decides to join a marching ensemble, or become a fan of the activity.

HEAR THE MUSIC

"Hypnotize" by XG

"Tired of Being Alone" by Al Green

"Kiss From a Rose" by Seal

"Last Dance" by Donna Summer

"Life In A Northern Town"

by The Dream Academy

"Honey Honey" by ABBA

"Married Life" by Michael Giacchino

"Hero" by Mariah Carey

"Do I Love You"

by Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett

"Spin Of Ice Crystals"

by Yu-Peng Chen

From *The Producers*:

"Opening Night"

"We Can Do It"

"I Wanna Be A Producer"

"In Old Bavaria"

"Der Guten Tag Hop-Clop"

"Keep It Gay"

"When You Got It, Flaunt It"

"Springtime For Hitler"

"Betrayed"

A Summary of the National Core Arts Standards

As you use this Teacher's Guide, refer to this summary
of the 11 NCCAS anchor standards

Cr1

Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work

Cr2

Organize and develop artistic ideas and work

Cr3

Refine and complete artistic ideas and work

Pr4

Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation

Pr5

Develop and refine artistic work for presentation

Pr6

Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work

Re7

Perceive and analyze artistic work

Re8

Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work

Re9

Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work

Cn10

Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal
experiences to make art

Cn11

Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical
context to deepen understanding

MAKING THE MOVE TO MARCHING

National Standards: Pr4, Re7-9

Joining a marching ensemble is one of the most rewarding decisions a young musician can make, but taking the leap can feel intimidating. The pressure of performances, physical demands, and uncertainty about the day-to-day experience is enough to keep potential marchers from signing up. Luckily, there is no shortage of advice from experienced elders of the activity, and In Tune is here to provide crucial wisdom and guidance. Share this article today and get your students marching!

Prepare

By a show of hands, how many students in class are involved in marching band, color guard, or any other marching-based activity? For those who are, what is their favorite part of marching? What is the biggest challenge? What inspired them to join?

After hearing from those already involved, ask if there are any others who are considering joining. What interests them about it? Do they have any questions or concerns about joining?

Key points in the article:

- There are more opportunities than ever to get involved in marching. Many marching bands do not require experience to join, and some even accept new members without instrumental experience. Wherever you may be, odds are there is a marching opportunity within reach.

- Before any musical or marching concepts, new marchers can set themselves up for success by preparing physically and mentally. Environmental conditions can be hard on the body, so it becomes important to focus on hydration, nutrition, and sleep. Likewise, becoming “comfortable with being uncomfortable” is an important mental and emotional skill to practice.

- Ultimately, everyone involved in this activity started as a beginner. No one is expected to come in knowing everything. What directors, drum majors, and section leaders will appreciate above all is commitment, effort, and team-oriented mentality.

Begin

Review Vocabulary words from the article below:

- **Discipline:** the ability to keep working at something that is difficult
- **Stamina:** the ability to sustain prolonged physical or mental effort
- **Fundamental:** a central or primary rule or principle on which something is based
- **Initiative:** the power or opportunity to act or take charge
- **Advocate:** to speak or write in favor of; support or urge by argument; recommend publicly

Discuss

After reading the article, conduct a classroom discussion about what students learned from the article. For those with marching experience: did the article align with their experience? What do they think of the advice offered? Is there anything else they would add for beginners?

For everyone else: Did the article answer any questions they had about marching? Do they have any questions that weren't answered? Do they feel more likely to join a marching ensemble than they were before reading the article?

Expand

To assess student understanding, assign the “All About the Article” worksheet located at www.musicalive.com/worksheets.

For an additional assignment, have students conduct their own research about what they should know before joining a marching ensemble. If possible, have students talk to someone they know who is in (or has past experience with) marching band, color guard, or drumline. This can be a classmate, friend, family member, or teacher. Students should note their level of experience with the activity and three pieces of advice for beginning marching. If this is not an option, students can search for reputable advice online and link their sources.

MUSIC OF MUSICAL THEATER: *THE PRODUCERS*

National Standards: Pr4, Re7-9, Cn11

With a record-breaking 12 Tony Awards to its name (including Best Musical), *The Producers* is a gut-busting satire of Broadway and all its behind-the-scenes follies. Adapted from the 1967 film by Mel Brooks, the show is full of outrageous humor, slapstick, and show-stopping numbers, including the infamous “Springtime for Hitler.” This beloved spoof celebrates all that we love about Broadway while gleefully poking fun at its vanity and absurdity. Share it with your class today!

Prepare

By a show of hands, ask if anyone in class has seen *The Producers* or heard any songs from the musical. For those who have, ask them to describe the musical and what stands out about it? What do they like (or dislike) about it? Play a clip of “I Wanna Be a Producer” linked in the Learn More section of this issue for the class.

Next, discuss the concept of satire with the class. What does the word mean, and can the class name any other famous examples? Explore the trope of the play-within-a-play as well. Can the class name any other musicals, plays, films, or literature that use this plot vehicle. After discussing, read the article as a class.

Key points in the article:

- Based on the 1967 film by Mel Brooks, *The Producers* centers around the partnership of washed-up Broadway producer Max Bialystock and timid accountant Leo Bloom. Together, the pair realize they could make more money by producing a flop than a hit show, inspiring them to produce a wildly offensive musical called *Springtime for Hitler*.

- Bialystock and Bloom’s plan backfires when audiences mistake *Springtime for Hitler* for a brilliant work of satire, making the show an instant hit. The pair are then forced to navigate the chaos of their fraud, which ultimately lands them in jail. While behind bars, they produce a new show and eventually find honest success after their release.

- Matching the plot’s chaos and absurdity, the musical numbers in *The Producers* are delightfully irreverent and unforgettable. Show-stoppers “I Wanna Be a Producer,” “Keep It Gay,” and the infamous “Springtime for Hitler” have joined the canon of Broadway classics.

Begin

Review Vocabulary words from the article below:

- **Unhinged:** wildly irrational and out of touch with reality
- **Flamboyant:** strikingly bold or showy; ostentation but often tasteless
- **Satire:** a humorous way of criticizing people or ideas
- **Rioutous:** hilariously funny
- **Infamous:** famous for something considered bad or shameful

Discuss

Select 2-3 songs from the list of Key Songs in the article and play them for the class (all are available for streaming via the Hear The Music playlist at www.musicalive.com). As a critical listening exercise, play each song twice and have students analyze them from the following angles, stopping after each listen to discuss:

1st listen- Character analysis and plot movement

- What do we learn about and the other characters through the lyrics of the song? How does the song move the plot forward? What feelings does the song evoke?

2nd listen- Musical analysis

- What instruments do students hear in the song? Is the tempo fast, slow, or moderate? Is the music loud, soft, or both? How does the music support the lyrics and feelings of the song?

Expand

After discussing, have students complete the “All About the Article” worksheet located at www.musicalive.com/worksheets.

For a class project, form students into groups and assign each group one of the Key Songs from *The Producers* that were not discussed previously in class. Have each group listen to their assigned song and analyze it together through the same framework (character analysis and plot development/musical analysis). At the end of the class period, have each group present their song and analysis. Allow other groups to ask questions or add their own thoughts after each presentation.

IT'S INSTRUMENTAL: THE OBOE

National Standards: Re7-9, Cn11

The oboe's expressive, unmistakable voice has made it a staple of orchestras, jazz bands, film scores, and countless other genres and ensembles. Because it is not a traditionally popular choice for beginner woodwind players, the oboe is often in higher demand. The lineage of the oboe can be traced all the way back to 14th century Europe, and its popularity and ubiquity have consistently spread throughout the ages. Take your students through the rich history of this indispensable instrument today!

Prepare

To start, ask if anyone in class plays the oboe. If not, are they familiar with the sound of the instrument? Ask students if they can describe the sound of an oboe. How is it played? What styles of music use the oboe? Can they name any songs or music groups that feature the oboe? After this brief introductory discussion, read the article as a class.

Key points in the article:

- The oboe is a double-reed woodwind instrument with a distinctive, emotionally rich sound. The first known ancestor of the oboe is the shawm, a 14th century European instrument that was widely used by military bands due to its loud, piercing sound.

- The modern version of the oboe was developed around the early 18th century by French instrument makers like Jacques Hotteterre, who made the instrument more versatile and easier to play. The bright new voice of the instrument immediately earned it a place in orchestras around Europe.

- Traditionally associated with classical music, the oboe was indispensable for many important composers throughout the Baroque and Classical eras all the way through the 20th century. The instrument's versatility, however, has found it a home in many contemporary genres, ranging from jazz to pop to rock to cinematic compositions.

Begin

Review Vocabulary words from the article below:

- **Distinctive:** serving to set apart or mark as distinct or unusual
- **Diverse:** showing a great deal of variety; very different
- **Versatile:** able to adapt or be adapted to many different functions or activities
- **Penetrating:** (of a voice or sound) clearly heard through or above other sounds
- **Innovative:** using new methods or ideas

Discuss

After reading the article, listen to the following tracks from the Hear the Music playlist at www.musicalive.com:

- "Kiss From A Rose" by Seal
- "Spin of Ice Crystals" by Yu-Peng Chen

After listening to the examples, discuss the oboe performances heard in each song. What words would students use to describe the performance? What types of sounds and timbres does the oboe create in each piece? What emotions does it evoke?

The "Music Review Journal" found at www.musicalive.com/worksheets can also be used to assess students' understanding of each song.

Expand

To assess student understanding, assign the "All About the Article" worksheet located at www.musicalive.com/worksheets.

As a supplement to the lesson, have students select another song from the list at the end of the article. In a short report, students will analyze the role of the oboe in the song using the same framework presented in the Discuss section of the lesson. After this analysis, students will compare the role of the oboe in their selected song to the two songs presented in class. Is the oboe in their selected song used similarly to the other two, or is there a difference in the approach? Is it more prominent, or more subdued? Does it invoke the same emotional response across all three pieces, or does it vary?

LISTENING GUIDE: “TIRED OF BEING ALONE” BY AL GREEN

National Standards: Pr4, Re7-9

It is difficult to overstate the influence of Al Green’s voice on soul music. Able to express quiet intimacy and raw, unrestrained emotion (often all in the same line), Green made an unforgettable impact on the sound of the 1970s. His two iconic albums from that decade, *Let’s Stay Together* and *I’m Still In Love With You*, produced some of the eras most enduring hits, including “Tired of Being Alone.” A profound statement of universal emotion, “Tired of Being Alone” resonates as powerfully today as it did 55 years ago. Share it with your students today!

Prepare

By a show of hands, ask the class if they have heard “Tired of Being Alone” by Al Green. If they don’t recognize it by name, play a quick snippet of the song. Its ubiquity among fans of soul and R&B music, particularly of their parents’ or grandparents’ generations, means it is not an unlikely proposition for them to hear it floating from their car radios or kitchen bluetooth speakers.

Next, instruct the class to take out a notebook (or whichever device they use for notetaking) and play “Tired of Being Alone” in its entirety. Encourage students to listen carefully and take notes on what instruments they hear on the record, the tempo of the song, lyrical themes, and the overall atmosphere of the song. How would they describe the vibe of the song? What feelings does it evoke?

Key points in the article:

- Released in 1971, “Tired of Being Alone” became an instant soul classic thanks to Green’s iconic vocal delivery. The impact of the song, along with many others from his albums *Let’s Stay Together* and *I’m Still In Love With You*, made him a defining voice of the era and an influence for generations of musicians to come.

- “Tired of Being Alone” features the signature production sounds of Willie Mitchell and the Hi Records rhythm section, creating an arrangement that is simultaneously rich and minimal. The restrained-yet-soulful instrumental backing provides the perfect platform for Green’s dynamic vocals, allowing them to take center stage.

- Beyond the masterful performances, a key part of the song’s appeal is the universality of the emotion it expresses. The sincerity and softness of Green’s delivery make simple lines like “*I’m so tired of being alone / I’m so tired of on-my-own*” hit with unbelievable emotional impact.

Begin

Review Vocabulary words from the article below:

- **Dynamic:** the volume or intensity of a musical sound
- **Standard:** a musical composition of established popularity, considered part of the “standard repertoire” of one or several genres
- **Signature:** a distinctive, characteristic, or identifying feature that makes a person, group, or thing easily recognized
- **Restrained:** marked by restraint; not excessive or extravagant
- **Sincere:** expressing genuine feelings; not dishonest or hypocritical

Discuss

After reading the article, ask students if they missed anything mentioned in the article on their initial listen to “Tired of Being Alone.” Then, play the record for the class again as they read along with the listening guide. Tell the class to listen for the elements described in each timestamp in the guide.

At relevant points, pause the recording and talk to students about what just occurred in the song. Ask questions like “How does the band build momentum in the song without overplaying or interfering with the vocals?” or “How do the horn stabs punctuate the vocals?” or “What effect does it have when the background singers enter the arrangement?”

After listening to the full song, ask students to identify their favorite part of the song. What instruments are most important in different sections of the song? How does the energy of the song build? How does the last verse feel different than the first?

Expand

To assess student understanding, assign the “All About the Article” worksheet located at www.musicalive.com/worksheets.

As an additional assignment, have students research other soul or R&B artists from the era of Al Green’s peak output (1970s, roughly) and select one. Marvin Gaye, Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, and Gladys Knight are all excellent options. Have students select a song that their chosen artist released in that time period and create their own listening guide for it. Students should provide timestamps for each section of the song (intro, verse, chorus, bridge, solo, etc), and key moments in the song, including notable instruments entering the mix, key changes or tempo changes, dynamic shifts, and important lyrics.

COVER STORY: XG

National Standards: Pr4, Re7-9, Cn11

The explosion of K-Pop and J-Pop onto the world stage has inspired a new wave of idols looking to capitalize on the genre's global popularity. XG is perhaps the group that best embodies this new ethos – borderless, stylistically fluid, fashion-forward, and sung primarily in English. While critics might question the authenticity of this approach, one thing is undeniable: XG are tailor-made to thrive in today's digitally driven pop music landscape. Share their story with your class today!

Prepare

By a show of hands, ask if anyone in class is a fan of K-Pop or J-Pop music. The streaming and airplay dominance of the genres is bolstered by the ever-growing popularity of anime, an increasingly influential avenue of music discovery. Which K-Pop or J-Pop acts do students enjoy? How would they describe the sound of the genres?

Next, ask if anyone in class is familiar with XG. Play a clip of “Tippy Toes” or another XG song and ask students to describe the sound. Does it sound like other K-Pop/J-Pop acts? How is it similar, and how is it different?

After discussing, read the article as a class.

Key points in the article:

- XG began in 2017 when producer Simon Jakops launched the X-Galaxy training program as a subsidiary of Japanese entertainment company Avex. With the goal of developing a globally competitive girl group, the program selected seven Japanese performers to undergo years of intense vocal, dance, and language training. The group was relocated to South Korea to utilize the impressive infrastructure of the K-Pop world.

- From the start, XG was designed to sidestep many traditional aspects of idol culture, including its traditionally domestic focus. XG's sights were set on the world stage, and they developed their musical style, visual image, and digital strategy for maximum global engagement. Primarily singing in English and incorporating Western pop/hip-hop influences, the group immediately stood out from their peers.

- Critics of the group often see their universal accessibility and global ambition as a lack of authenticity, a corporation's lab-tested formula for pop marketability. Fans argue that the origins of the group and their marketing strategy shouldn't matter if the music moves them. Regardless of the debate over their artistic merit, XG are expanding their empire and appear poised to lead the charge for the next genera

Begin

Review Vocabulary words from the article below:

- **Aesthetics:** a particular theory or conception of beauty or art; a particular taste for or approach to what is pleasing to the senses and especially sight
- **Domestic:** existing or occurring inside a particular country; not foreign or international
- **Palette:** the range or variety of tonal or instrumental color in a musical piece
- **Maximalism:** an aesthetic characterized by excess and abundance, serving as a reaction against minimalism
- **Coherence:** a clear relationship between parts, especially in a work of literature or art

Discuss

Play “Hypnotize” for the class and encourage active listening (or even note-taking!). After listening to the full song, ask the class to identify fundamental elements of the song and use their responses as a gateway to deeper exploration. For instance, ask about instruments they hear, the tempo, and the style/genre of the record. Does the sound of the record remind them of any other artists?

Next, explore the lyrical themes of the song. How would the class describe the lyrical approach overall? Do any lines stand out? Do groups with multiple singers/songwriters need to approach lyrical subjects differently than solo artists? How so?

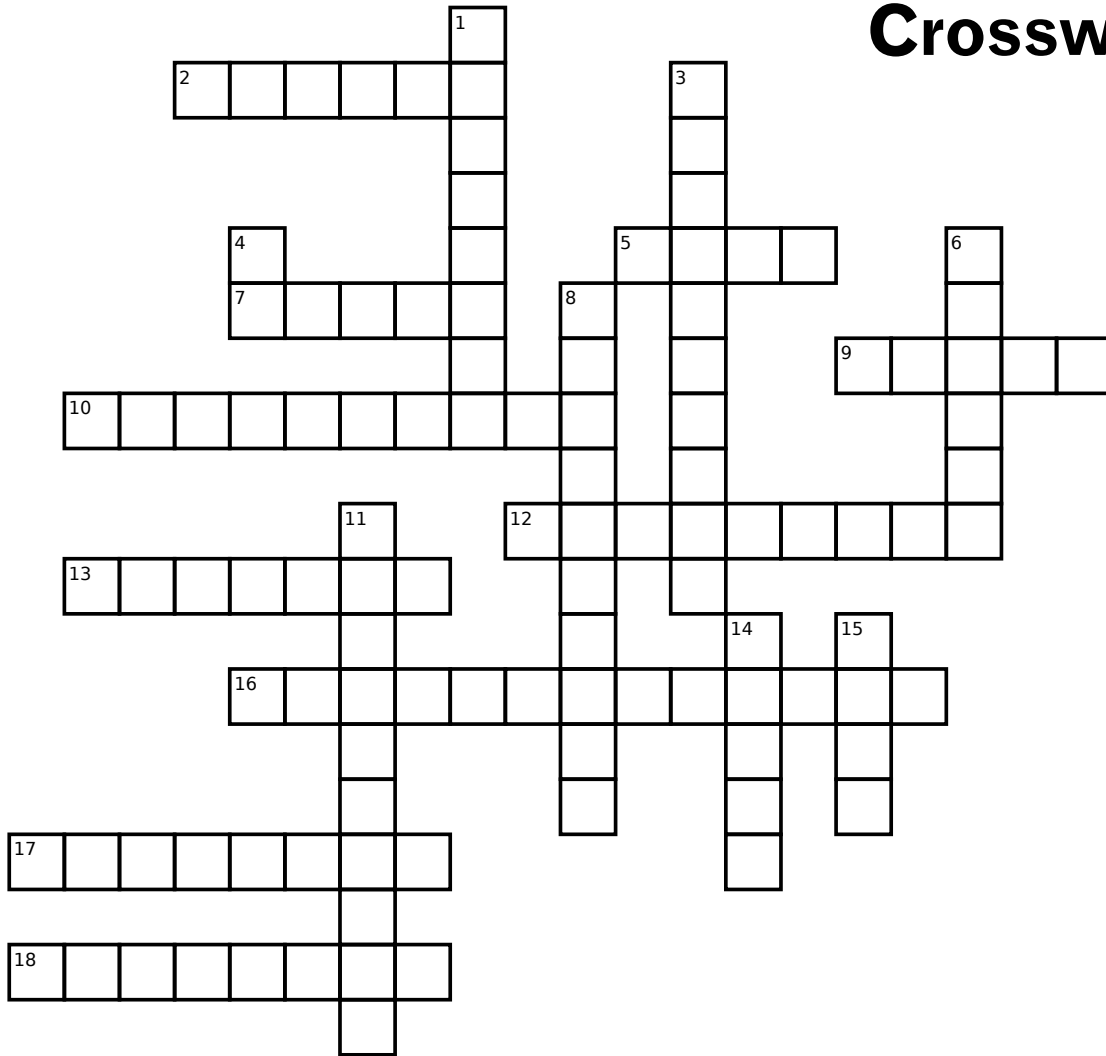
Next, encourage more abstract analysis. How do the sounds of the instruments fit together? What atmosphere or mood does the music create? How does this complement the vocals? What feelings do they get from the song? If students close their eyes and listen, what scenery do they picture?

Expand

For an additional assignment, have students select another K-Pop or J-Pop song by a different artist. In a short report, students will analyze the song using the questions from the “Discuss” section. Next, they will compare their selected song to “Hypnotize.” The songs are in the same broad genre, but how do they compare? Do they have similar lyrical themes? How do the production, instrumental arrangement, and overall sound compare? Are both songs primarily in English? Which of the two songs has a more traditional approach to the genre? Do they both incorporate Western pop influences? Which song does the student enjoy more?

After discussing, have students complete the “All About the Article” worksheet located at www.musicalive.com/worksheets.

Crossword



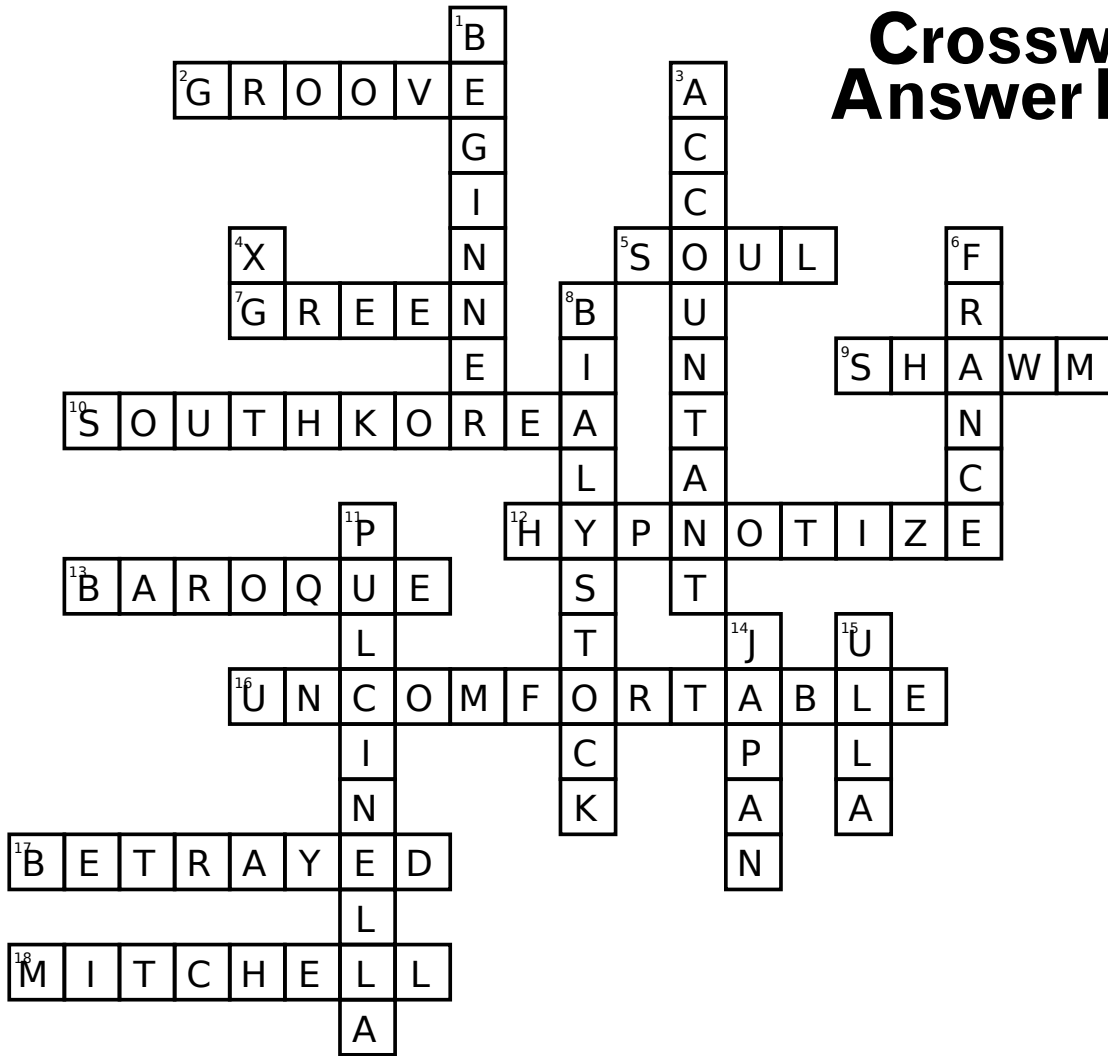
Down:

1. Everyone starts marching as a _____
3. Leo Bloom's job before he became a Broadway producer
4. The seven-member "girl group" creating globally-minded pop music
6. The country where the modern oboe was developed in the early 18th century
8. Max _____, the washed-up Broadway producer who teams up with Leo Bloom to make a flop
11. The Stravinsky composition featuring striking oboe passages that blend seamlessly with other instruments
14. Home country of the members of XG
15. Max and Leo's eccentric Swedish secretary in *The Producers*

Across:

2. "Tired of being alone captures loneliness not with drama, but with grace and _____"
5. "Tired of Being Alone" remains a masterclass in _____ music
7. Al _____, singer of "Tired of Being Alone"
9. The first known ancestor of the oboe
10. The country where the members of XG live and work
12. XG's latest single (and our Song of the Month)
13. The period when the oboe became a staple of European orchestras
16. To establish realistic expectations about marching, get comfortable being _____
17. _____ the solo sung by Max Bialystock in jail, recapping the plot while hilariously wallowing in self-pity
18. Willie _____, producer of "Tired of Being Alone"

Crossword Answer Key



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Word Find

Z N Z Z F R A N C E H J M P O
A S E W D R U M M A J O R S B
L H I R E C O R D S H P K O O
G A A C O M F J K D T Z R U E
R W I L L I E M I T C H E L L
E M P U L C I N E L L A G T B
E M W V T V I A T Y Y U K H A
N V T H E P R O D U C E R S R
X S O U T H K O R E A S K C O
G M A X B I A L Y S T O C K Q
R L J A C C O U N T A N T J U
S E C T I O N L E A D E R A E
R Q C X M A R C H I N G E P I
L B K O E T C L Y Z K Q Y A D
Z Y B P H Y P N O T I Z E N U

Willie Mitchell

South Korea

Pulcinella

Drum Major

Hypnotize

Shawm

Max Bialystock

Accountant

Hi Records

Marching

Al Green

Oboe

The Producers

Section Leader

Baroque

France

Japan

Soul

XG

Word Find Answer Key



- | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|------|
| Willie Mitchell | Max Bialystock | The Producers | Soul |
| South Korea | Accountant | Section Leader | XG |
| Pulcinella | Hi Records | Baroque | |
| Drum Major | Marching | France | |
| Hypnotize | Al Green | Japan | |
| Shawm | Oboe | | |

LINKS

Learn More

Cover Artist

See XG answer fun questions about each other (while being swarmed by puppies!):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjjJAK0Fimk>

Song of the Month

Watch XG perform “Hypnotize” live in the Genius studio:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_nBYUmH4z5Q&list=RD_nBYUmH4z5Q&start_radio=1

The Producers

See Matthew Broderick perform “I Wanna Be A Producer” from the 2005 film adaptation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BzTFOGrxC8&list=RDBzTFOGrxC8&start_radio=1

It’s Instrumental

Hear the oboe solo from Tchaikovsky’s Swan Lake performed by Erin Brophey: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIZvDAOPIow&t=30s>

Listening Guide

Watch Al Green perform “Tired of Being Alone” on SoulSchool in 1972:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICKToz7BLLA&list=RDICKToz7BLLA&start_radio=1

Making The Move To Marching

Take a peek into the art of learning drill:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=475d7eg7eG4>