

# Pascal Archer, Teaching Artist

## Sample Lesson Plan

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This is a very successful lesson about teaching the concept of articulation to elementary school students.

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### MUSIC LITERACY

#### Articulation (note length)

#### Learning Objective(s):

- To become familiar with Italian musical terms, which express articulation, **legato/staccato/marcato**
- To review instruments in the string family: **violin, viola, cello**, and **bass** by sound.
- To identify different articulation within musical samples from Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*

#### Materials:

- CD player and CD of Vivaldi's "*The Four Seasons*" and Saint-Saens "*Carnival of the animals*"

#### Procedures/Activities:

The following procedures will be used with Saint-Saens "*Carnival of the animals*"

#### Procedure 1:

- So far we have talked about Tempo, Dynamics and Pitch which are used to describe the music that we hear. Today we will talk about Articulation, another word to describe music that we hear. To explain that very long word I will ask you to think about all the animals that you know from the rainforest. Can you describe how some of these animals move from place to place? Students come up with different examples and imitate the animal's way of moving with their arms and/or fingers on their desks.
- A French composer wrote a piece upon the way certain animals move. For example he wrote a piece of music for the Swan. How does a swan move on the water? If your hand is a swan and your desk the water, how would you move your hand on the desk? Can you describe how that feels? I take notes on chart paper.
- We listen to "*The Swan*" by Saint-Saens and I ask the students to listen carefully to the cello melody. I encourage the students to move their hands like a swan on their desks or wave their hand in the air as they listen to the music.

- Did the music match the words that we used to describe the swan? In music, when the music sounds like a swan gliding on the water composers use **Legato**.
- We listen to the *Kangaroo* and *Elephant* by Saint-Saens to learn **Staccato** and **Marcato**. I use the same steps as above.

Procedure 2:

- I distribute a separate sheet featuring pictures of the kangaroo, elephant and swan. As a quick review, the students will have to match the animal with the correct terminology.
- Then, we listen to samples from Vivaldi's "*Four Seasons*" and guess what articulation the composer used for each of them.
- Students should be identifying each string instrument heard in the music.

**Review/Reflection:**

- When you are listening to Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, what new words can you use to describe the music that you hear?
- Why would a composer use different articulation when writing a new piece of music?

