

The Orchestra's Secret Formula

For 1st-4th grades



Lesson 2 — *Melody & Harmony*

Objective

Students will learn the concepts of melody and harmony and how they come together to create pieces of music.
Students will demonstrate their understanding through singing and/or playing instruments.

Suggested Materials

- Audio recordings
 - ANTONÍN DVORÁK Symphony No. 9 “From the New World” Mvt. II Largo 
- Piano, recorders, or classroom instruments (optional)
- Behind the Music excerpt (provided)
- Melody & Harmony worksheet (provided)

New York State Arts Standards

MU:Pr4.2.1a-4a

MU:Pr4.2.1b-4b

MU:Cn10.1.1c-2c

New York State English Language Arts & Literacy Standards

Speaking & Listening, Standards 1, 2, 4 & 6

Language, Standards 1, 2 & 6

New York State Social Studies Standards

Standard 1: History of the United States and New York

Procedure

- 1) In language, we use letters, words, and phrases to provide the building blocks for communication. In music, composers create melodies by combining pitch and rhythm patterns. Every melody has a contour- the line or shape that is formed by the series of pitches as they go up and down.
- 2) Project the excerpt of “New World” Symphony (see provided Melody & Harmony worksheet) on a screen or provide to students. Play the melody on piano, or sing the melody using a neutral syllable, solfège, or note names with students. As students sing, have them trace the shape of the melody with their hand in the air, or draw the shape on paper.

Optional: Students may play the melody on recorders or other instruments.

- 3) Have students sing through the melody again, while exploring different movements to follow the melodic contour.
- 4) Play the recording of “New World” Symphony for students and have them listen for the melody they've learned. Have students move to the melodic contour as they listen. What instrument is playing the melody? Can students identify the family the instrument belongs to? Why do you think the composer chose to use this instrument?
- 5) Harmony, in music, is the sound of two or more notes heard simultaneously. Composers craft musical conversations by layering melodies together, which yields harmony. Harmony adds texture to the music and builds excitement.

Lesson 2 — *Melody & Harmony* (continued)

- 6) Divide students into two groups and assign each group a pitch from the major scale. Have the groups practice singing their pitches with a simple rhythmic pattern using solfège, note names, or scale degrees. (See provided Melody & Harmony worksheet for examples.)
- 7) Next, lead the groups in singing their assigned pitches simultaneously. Explain that the pitches that they're singing together form a chord. A chord is a combination of two or more unique notes.
- 8) Have the groups trade pitches so they each get a turn singing the different notes. Play around with different intervals in the major scale. How do students feel singing in harmony? How is it different than singing in unison?
- 9) Play the opening of the Largo movement from "New World" Symphony for students. Does it sound like the instruments are playing in unison (the same note together) or in harmony (different notes simultaneously)? What instrument family is playing?
- 10) Have students listen to the entire movement and identify when they hear the same chords being played again.

Extended Learning

Students can be divided into three groups to sing the main melody of the Largo movement from "New World" Symphony along with the bass line to create harmony. (See provided Melody & Harmony worksheet for music.)

BEHIND THE MUSIC

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

Symphony No. 9 "From the New World"

Antonín Dvořák was a Czech composer who is most well-known for his signature piece, Symphony No. 9 "From the New World." The piece is nicknamed "New World" because it reflects the composer's experience with his American setting during his time spent in the United States during the 1890s. Dvořák was influenced by the Native American music and African American spirituals he heard while in America, as well as the spacious, beautiful landscapes he encountered. The spirit of these influences can be heard throughout his symphony, particularly in the deep, somber spiritual-like English horn melody in the second movement.



Lesson 2 — Melody & Harmony *(continued)*

Extended Learning

Melody & Harmony

from Antonín Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 "From the New World", Mvt. II Largo

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a melody of four measures: a dotted quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, a quarter note B4, a dotted quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a dotted quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a whole note F4. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a harmonic accompaniment of four measures: a whole note chord (G2, B1), a whole note chord (G2, B1), a whole note chord (G2, B1) with a slur over it, and a whole note chord (G2, B1).

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a melody of four measures: a dotted quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, a quarter note B4, a dotted quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a dotted quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a whole note F4. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a harmonic accompaniment of four measures: a whole note chord (G2, B1), a whole note chord (G2, B1) with a sharp sign (#) above it, a whole note chord (G2, B1) with a flat sign (b) above it, and a whole note chord (G2, B1).