

# Lesson Plan B: Instrumental and orchestral development

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This Lesson Plan could be used in conjunction with Student Assignment B, either as an introduction or as a consolidation.

## Learning outcomes

Students will:

- Acquire a historical perspective on the instruments explored
- Think critically about the importance of certain events
- Discover or develop skills involved in public performance through practice and observation.

## Prerequisites

- Sibelius Instruments navigation skills
- Ability to access information related to specific questions and tasks
- As an introductory lesson: Student Assignment A or C completed
- As a revision lesson: Student Assignment B completed.

## Materials needed

Sibelius Instruments on classroom computers.

## The lesson: 'Big Bangs'

Introduce the class to the concept of significant steps – 'Big Bangs' – in human history. Briefly explore a couple of different topics with the class, e.g. transport – wheel, car engine, aeroplane; communications – telegraph, telephone, Internet; writing – alphabet, printing press, typewriter, word processor. Apply the concept to a musical instrument: take for example, the trumpet and piano and have the class come up with one 'Big Bang' advance in the history of each.

Break the class into groups and have each appoint a secretary and reporter. Allocate sections of the musical timeline (Early Classical, Mid-Classical, etc.) to each group. With the help of Sibelius Instruments, the groups have to come up with five 'Big Bangs' – that is, the five most significant instrumental or orchestral developments which occurred in their allocated period. The secretary notes these down.

The class reconvenes and reporters present the findings of each group. The choices are evaluated by the class with the teacher. As each group reports, a timeline of all the Big Bangs is built up on the board or overhead projector, which students can copy into their workbooks. Any significant omissions can be raised by the teacher and other students for discussion and possible inclusion.

Advanced classes can then debate whether every change in instruments or orchestras is necessarily positive. Is the modern orchestra always to be preferred to the early Classical orchestra? Is the modern resurgence of early instruments in orchestras and ensembles due merely to nostalgia? Or do authentic period instruments express musical ideas which later, more sophisticated instruments are unable to convey?