

Kids Love Classics

Hall of the Mountain King by Grieg



Activity Notes

by
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Hey Teachers!

Detailed links to specific areas of the New Zealand Arts Curriculum are given for each activity. The activities, mentioned below, range from Early Childhood to Secondary level.

The CD has a unique system of cueing: each musical track being *separately* cued from its spoken introduction so you can play the *music only* in class - great for older students! Should you want to include the introduction, simply cue it and allow it to run on into the music.

If you or your students have further ideas that work well for this piece, email them to us and we'll include them in the *ideas for teachers* section. Also let us know what music you'd like in further CDs in this series.

The second album in this series, *More Kids Love Classics*, is also now available from UCA.

Hey Kids!

Kids Love Classics is for young people. This album has an exciting variety of pieces that are easy to listen to, so it won't be boring! Danielle opens an exciting door into each track with an imaginary scene. She also tells you the title and composer and a little about the music. Now see the following pages for fun activities under these headings ...



We'd like to thank ...

- Naxos for the use of *Hall of the Mountain King* from *The Best of Grieg*, (Naxos 8551108).
- Heather Leslie for trialing *Kids Love Classics* and kindly adding her ideas and comments.

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Hall of the Mountain King

Kids Love Classics ~ Track 1

Dur: 2' 18"



The Time Machine

Let's set our time-clock to visit Norway's most famous composer, Edvard Grieg. It's 1849 and six-year-old Edvard is being given piano lessons by his Scottish mother. By age twelve he's composing music and at fifteen he leaves home to study at Leipzig where he does well despite a serious illness.

In 1863 he moves to Copenhagen where he discovers his passion: Norwegian folk music. Then, of course, he falls in love! He marries Nina, his cousin, who is a talented singer. They enjoy performing together, and have a busy musical life teaching and travelling.

Edvard starts a music society at Christiania, and between 1874-76 he writes the famous Peer Gynt suite. Then he and his wife realise another dream: living in the Norwegian Fjords. They also travel to London, Paris and Vienna several times, and Edvard receives an honorary Music degree from Cambridge University. Our time machine visit concludes in 1907 when Edvard dies, leaving a treasure house of wonderful music for all time.

Curriculum Strand ~ UC ~ Understanding Music in Context,

"Students develop knowledge and understanding of music in past and present contexts".



The Music

This piece is from one of the *Peer Gynt Suites*, inspired by folk stories about a young man, Solveig, from Scandinavia. These stories are famous in Norway, and Grieg, no doubt, heard them when he was growing up. The Peer Gynt music takes us on many adventures with Solveig, and in this piece, he journeys underground into scary realms where trolls exist - the *Mountain King* being king of the trolls. Maybe *The Mountain King* is a relation of the Balrog and his frightening underground kin in the film, *Lord of the Rings ~ The Fellowship of the Ring!*

Curriculum Strand ~ UC ~ Understanding Music in Context

"They associate music with particular events, times, places and feelings".



Listening

Hear how the music moves from quiet to loud and how it speeds up. Listen to the beat and the pulse at the start of the music. Imagine what your hands would do if you were playing drums to this beat. What instruments did Grieg use to suggest trolls?

Setting the Scene: "You're walking into a dark cave in a mountain. Listen to the tempo increase as you go deeper into the underground world. What's going to happen?"

After listening: Talk about what you heard and felt, and what you saw in your imagination - e.g. did you hear anything in the music that gave you a mysterious feeling? What did you see in your mind's eye as you listened?

Curriculum Strand ~ CI ~ Communicating & Interpreting in Music: Levels 1 & 2,
"Students will ... respond to live or recorded music."



Moving

The sections don't have set cues so listen to the music to decide how you want to plan the dance. Dance with this music on your own, or with a group. Imagine the music moving through three sections:

- 1) *entering* the underworld,
- 2) *in* the underworld, and,
- 3) *escaping* the underworld.

Ideas ~

- A) Dancers explore alone or together, or
- B) Form two groups - the 'explorers' and the 'trolls'. One troll could be the mountain king.

~ *Entering the Underworld...* How does your body move ~ stooping, creeping?

~ *In the Underworld...* Are the Explorers huddled together? Are the trolls stirring? In various postures? Bold, slow "troll" movements? Clenched fists? Fierce expressions? Assertive arm movements? Are the Mountain King's movements strong, wide, short or tall?

~ *Escaping...* How are you moving - running? - stooping through tunnels here and there? Do you end with jubilant gestures or with the trolls 'freezing', or retreating?

Note: For dance purposes the music could be extended to approx. 3min with the 'trolls' gently beating live drums for about 30 seconds *before* you press play.

Curriculum Strand ~ DI ~ Developing Ideas in Dance

"They use dance ideas derived from such sources as imagination, feelings, experiences or given stimuli. They manipulate the elements of dance to develop dance works, individually & in groups."



Creating

Make your own music about the *under-world* as it is thought of in your own culture. Use drums, horns, cymbals, rainmakers and voice. Here are some New Zealand ideas of the underworld to get you started:

- a) Deep down, a Taniwha, or monster, rumbles around, stirring the earth. (Drums).
- b) Boiling hot liquids rise towards the earth's surface. (Drums continue, horns climbing in pitch).
- c) A geyser erupts. (Cymbal crashes as drums stop, rainmakers and voices hissing).

Curriculum Strand ~DI ~ Developing Ideas in Music,

"They develop an awareness of different sounds and the potential of sound for resourcing and generating ideas and for communicating feelings."



Playing

Play drums and 'horns', (real or tubes, rolls, etc), exploring the timbre of the music. Make sure the recorded music is played loud enough to 'lose yourself' in as you play your instruments. (Teachers: remember children will hear their own instruments as louder than the adult will).

If you're in a group, perhaps you could split – with drums representing explorers, horns representing the trolls and as a very loud horn representing the Mountain King. Horns could be made from plastic pipes, industrial cotton-reel spools, decorated cardboard rolls etc. Follow the tempo as it speeds up. The group decides when the various instruments play.

Curriculum Strand ~CI ~ Communicating Ideas in Music,

"Students develop fluency, musicianship, and technical control as they rehearse and present individual and group performances"



Other Activities

Drawing or Painting

Imagine what it looks like in the underworld as you listen to the music. Afterwards, draw a picture, painting or collage etc about it. Tell others about how the music inspired your picture.

Curriculum Strand ~DI ~ Developing Ideas in the visual Arts,

"They source ideas from a variety of motivations and extend and organise them in ways that communicate their intentions"

Drama

Pre-school children may find that covering their heads with dark chiffon scarves may help:

- a) find a character to act out,
- b) enter the mood of the music with less inhibition, and,
- c) stimulate their imaginations.

This might, in turn, enhance their movement. The Mountain King may like to wear a mask ...

Curriculum Strand ~DI ~ Developing Ideas in Drama,

"Students develop ideas for and participate in classroom process drama".



Ideas from Teachers

- "Making masks to bring the characters alive is a good activity! After moving to the music and acting with them, the masks can be added to an underworld mural depicting the scenes described in the music".
Heather Leslie, Levin

Your ideas will be added here – to contribute please email radha.sahar@clear.net.nz