Musical Explorers

My City, My Song

A Program of Carnegie Hall’s Weill Music Institute for Students in Grades K–2
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Student Guide
Welcome to Our Musical Trip!

Our subway conductor, Melody, will take us to neighborhoods all over New York City, where we’ll discover the music and cultures that we will be studying.

Subway Map © 2019 and MTA New York City subway logo ™ Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Used with permission.

Map current as of June 2019.

A current subway map is available at any subway station booth and at the MTA website, MTA.info.
Explore the Sounds of Our City

Music is everywhere! Let’s go on a sound exploration. All you need are your ears. You can use this explorer’s journal to record what you hear, including car horns and sirens, people singing, the chimes for the subway doors, and even silence.

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<tr>
<th>What did you hear?</th>
<th>When and where?</th>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Sirens" /></td>
<td>on my street going to school</td>
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Discover Music in Everyday Objects

Music is waiting to be found in everyday objects!

Experiment and see what kinds of sounds you can make with these objects.

What other objects can you find that make interesting musical sounds?
Musical Explorers Around the World Map

We can hear music from all around the world in New York City. Where do these types of music come from?

**Cumbia**
Colombia

**Armenian Folk**
Armenia

**Hip Hop**
New York City
Jamaica
Trinidad
West Africa

**Bluegrass**
Appalachia
British Isles

**Chinese Traditional**
China

**Iraqi Folk**
Iraq
Create a Postcard

Use the space below to draw or paste pictures of some of your favorite things about your neighborhood. Then write a message to one of our Musical Explorers artists describing your neighborhood.

Greetings from...

Dear ___________________,

_________________________________
_________________________________
_________________________________
_________________________________

Your friend,

________________________

(Artist’s name)
c/o Carnegie Hall
881 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10019
Carnegie Hall Musical Explorers Song

Every song tells a story, every tune tells a tale.
Every rhythm has a reason, don’t you want to know?
Don’t you want to know what makes the music go?
Come along and see, make your discovery.

I can sing it.

I can say it.

I can dance it.

I can play it.

(x2)

I can go explore the world of music at my door.
My city and my neighborhood, singing songs and feeling good.
I can know what makes the music grow.
I can know what makes the music go!
¡Hola amigos!

My name is Gregorio, and I’m from Colombia. Because it’s in South America, people sometimes think that it must be very hot there. But not all parts of my country are hot. For example Bogotá, where I’m from, is very high up in the mountains, so it gets pretty chilly. That’s probably why I like soup so much! I can’t wait to share cumbia—one of our most special kinds of music—with you.

As we say in Colombia when we’re getting really excited, ¡Wepa!

Gregorio
We asked Gregorio ...

What is one of your first musical memories?
When I was very little, a melody came into my head, and I didn’t want to forget it. So I grabbed a piece of paper and “wrote” the melody down, using syllables like “la” and “da.” To my disappointment when I looked at the paper later on, it didn’t help me remember my melody at all, since there were no actual notes or rhythms on it. Oh well! I was probably five or six, so I have to give myself a break.

What is your favorite Colombian food?
It depends on where I am in Colombia. If I’m in Bogotá, I like to have some ajiáco, a chicken soup made with three different types of potatoes, or chocolate con queso, which is hot chocolate with cheese melted in it. But if I’m on the Caribbean coast, I like to eat fried fish with patacones, or fried plantain slices, and drink fresh corozo juice—made from the fruit of the same tree as one of our percussion instruments!

Growing up in Colombia, did you have favorite games that you played?
There were two main games we played at school. One was called “piquis” or “canicas” (marbles), where the school playground would become a bazaar of kids competing and winning marbles from each other. The other was trompo, which is a spinning top. We would see who could make the trompo spin the longest. My friend became a trompo national champion!
Colombian Instruments

A traditional cumbia includes four percussion instruments, one wind instrument, and an accordion.
Imagine “El Pescador”

In the song “El Pescador,” the fisherman talks to the moon and to the beach. He is all alone, except for his fishing net. Close your eyes and imagine the fisherman and his life, and then draw what you imagine.
Meet Zulal!

GREETINGS FROM
LITTLE ARMENIA,
MANHATTAN!

Parev, Musical Explorers!

Our names are Teni, Yeraz, and Anaïs, and together we make up the vocal trio Zulal. We are all Armenian, but like many Armenians our families haven’t lived in Armenia for two generations: Our parents were born in Iraq, Kenya, Palestine, and Egypt, and we three were born here in the US. We connect to our Armenian heritage through the songs that we sing. We’re so excited that you’ll be learning the songs we love, and can’t wait to sing with you at Carnegie Hall!

Ts’dsootyoon,

Teni, Yeraz, and Anaïs

Musical Explorers
c/o Carnegie Hall
881 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10019

Greetings from Little Armenia, Manhattan!

Leaving from Jackson Heights, Queens

Teni

Yeraz

Anaïs
We asked Zulal ...

What is your favorite Armenian food?
There is so much delicious Armenian food! Teni loves vospov kufte, which are lentil patties. Yeraz loves mante, which are boat-shaped dumplings cooked in tomato-chicken broth and topped with yogurt and mint. Anaïs loves boreg—buttery pastry triangles filled with cheese.

Do you have a favorite Armenian holiday?
Our favorite holiday is definitely Hampartsoum, when a wonderful fortune-telling ritual called the vijag is performed. It is believed that on that day the seams of the universe loosen so the future can be told. There are many vijag songs that we love to sing!

Did you have a favorite Armenian story growing up?
We all love the story of the talking fish! It is the story of a poor fisherman who saves a fish by throwing it back into the water, and how the fish rewards the fisherman. Ask your teacher to tell you the whole story!
Explore the Oud

The oud is a pear-shaped string instrument with a rounded back and a short neck. While the oud looks like a big gourd, its body is actually made out of many wooden strips—in fact, its name in Arabic means “thin strips of wood”! Ten of the strings are paired together—pairs of strings play the same note—with one low string on its own.
Armenian Bird Letters

The Armenian language has its own alphabet with 39 letters. The Armenian people are so proud of their alphabet that sometimes they draw the letters in the shape of birds. This special writing is called trchnakeer. Here’s the word “song” in regular Armenian writing (left) and in trchnakeer (right).

You can try trchnakeer! Write the word “song” or your own words (in English), decorating your letters with birds.
Hey Musical Explorers,

We’re Soul Science Lab, also known as Chen Lo and Asanté. We are children of hip hop and have passion for the power of music. We’re here to let you know that it’s possible to live your life doing the things you love. We believe you can create your reality with your thoughts and words. We travel the world spreading love by sharing our music. We hope you enjoy the music. We created it just for you! Let’s have fun and uplift one another.

Peace and love,

Chen Lo & Asanté

Musical Explorers
c/o Carnegie Hall
881 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10019

Meet Soul Science Lab!

Greetings from the South Bronx!
We asked Soul Science Lab ...

When did you first start playing music?
Chen Lo: I wrote my first lyrics as an MC when I was 13. I joined my first band at 15 and began perfecting my performance and songwriting skills.
Asanté: I started playing saxophone when I was 15 years old and started producing musical beats when I was 17.

What is your favorite thing about performing hip hop?
Our favorite thing about performing hip hop is inspiring other people. It’s not just about yourself being on stage, but having fun with the audience too. We love getting the audiences to participate and dance, and to see the crowd’s reaction to our creative and sometimes tricky lyrics.

What’s your favorite food?
Chen Lo: I’ve always loved the Southern black comfort food my mother and grandmother would make: a spread of fish, collard greens, yams, black-eyed peas, and cornbread. Every time I have these foods, I feel connected to a rich cultural legacy.

What are some games you grew up playing?
Asanté: The dozens is a game of spoken words between two contestants, common in black communities of the US, where participants insult each other until one gives up. It sounds crazy, but we love it.
Five Elements of Hip Hop

- MCing
- DJing
- Graffiti
- B-boying / B-girling

Knowledge
Learn to Beatbox

You can create your own rhythm track using just your mouth to imitate different percussion instruments.

When you say “BOOTS,” it sounds like a bass drum.

When you say “CATS,” it sounds like a snare drum.

Ready to BEATBOX?

BOOTS and CATS
and BOOTS and CATS
and BOOTS and CATS
and BOOTS and CATS

What other sounds can you make with your mouth to add to your beatboxing rhythm?
Create Your Own Graffiti Artwork

Artists make graffiti to share messages that they feel are important for their communities to know. Create your own graffiti artwork with a message that is important to you and your class.
Welcome to Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall!

Meet Steven!

Hey there, Musical Explorers! My name is Steven, and I’ll be your host! I can’t wait to go on this journey with you as we discover how music and dance from around the world can bring us all closer together. Join me and get ready to sing, dance, and explore!

Meet the ushers!
This is Carnegie Hall.

You’ll enter here and go down the escalator.

Your ushers will meet you at the bottom of the escalator and guide you into beautiful Zankel Hall. Everyone will get a great seat!
What Did You See and Hear at Carnegie Hall?

Draw pictures of your trip to Carnegie Hall below.
Who Is Your Favorite Artist?

Write a letter to your favorite artist. Be sure to include your favorite part of the concert and your favorite song from the concert.

Dear ___________________,

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

Your friend,
Hello Musical Explorers!

My name is Michael, and I am a singer and guitarist who moved to Brooklyn from down south in Atlanta, Georgia. I grew up playing a style of American music called bluegrass with my parents. Some of the songs my parents taught me have been played for hundreds of years! I can't wait for you to hear my band. You might recognize some of our instruments, like the bass, guitar, and violin (or fiddle as we like to call it), but others, like the banjo and mandolin, might be new to you.

See you at the concert!

Michael

Musical Explorers
c/o Carnegie Hall
881 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10019

Leaving from the South Bronx
We asked Michael ...

What is your favorite memory of listening to bluegrass as a child?
I used to love it when my parents would have music parties and invite all of their musician friends over to jam. There’s something special about sitting around in your own house making music with your friends and family. You don’t need to always listen to recordings or go to a concert hall to enjoy music—you can also make your own music any time, and share it with friends!

Who are your favorite bluegrass musicians and why?
My favorite bluegrass musician is Bill Monroe, who people call the Father of Bluegrass. A long time ago he made up a new style that no one had ever heard before, and then a lot of people wanted to play it, and to this day, still do. I also love Ralph Stanley. He has such a cool voice that sounds about 200 years old.
Make Your Own Bluegrass Band

Here are all the instruments you need to make your very own bluegrass band. Draw a picture of your band with instruments. Don’t forget to give your band a name!

My bluegrass band’s name is ____________________________.
Emotional Opposites

We can feel many emotions when we sing and show these emotions on our faces. On each line, draw an emotion and its opposite. Be sure to write what each emotion is!
Meet Qian Yi!

Ni hao, Musical Explorers,

I was born in Shanghai, China, and first began singing in the choir when I was eight years old. When I turned 10, I was picked to go to the Shanghai Opera School. I studied Chinese opera for many years in my home country. Now I love to sing all different kinds of Chinese traditional music, including folk songs. I can't wait to share these songs with you!

Your friend,

Qian Yi

P.S. On Bayard Street in Chinatown, there's a garden where Chinese opera can be heard almost every day, and especially on the weekends!

Musical Explorers
c/o Carnegie Hall
881 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10019

Greetings from Chinatown, Manhattan!

Leaving from Park Slope, Brooklyn
We asked Qian Yi ...

What was your first memory of hearing traditional Chinese music as a child?
I remember hearing my grandmother singing opera songs at home!

Do you have a favorite Chinese traditional song?
Yes, “Mo Li Hua”!

Did you have a favorite Chinese fairy tale as a child?
I loved the story called “The River Snail Lady.” This story is about a poor fisherman who caught a river snail one day and put her in a fish tank in his house. Every day after that when he would come home, there would be warm food waiting for him on the dinner table. One day, he discovered that the snail transformed into a beautiful woman each day while he was away to prepare the food. He and the woman fell in love and lived happily ever after.
Explore the Pipa

The pipa is one of the most popular traditional Chinese instruments. It has been played in China for almost 2,000 years. It has a pear-shaped wooden body and four steel strings. Pipa players attach fake fingernails to their fingertips to play it. The pipa can also sound like a drum by striking the instrument’s body or like a cymbal by twisting the strings.
Chinese New Year

During the Chinese New Year, it is a tradition to wish someone good things in the new year by giving them red envelopes with gold writing containing money. What do you want to wish someone for the new year? Pick one of the symbols below, and then copy it on the cover of the envelope. Then color your envelope red with your own original gold designs!

福 幸福 幸运

Good Fortune  Happiness  Luck
Meet Layth!

Marhaba!

My name is Layth, and I’m a violinist and a singer. I was born in Iraq and raised in Jordan, both countries in the Middle East where people speak Arabic. My name means “Lion” in Arabic, and I have red hair! I’m very excited to teach you about my culture and some of the songs I grew up with.

Salam (peace),

Layth
We asked Layth ...

What are some of your earliest musical memories?
My mom is a violinist, and my dad is a pianist. When I was growing up, they always hosted concerts at our house. I loved it when their musician friends would come over and play music through the night! I started playing violin when I was four. I had a strict practice schedule, and by the time I was 10, I played a solo with an orchestra for the Jordanian royal family.

What is your favorite holiday?
When I was little, the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr was my absolute favorite! It comes at the end of Ramadan, a month where we fast every day from sunrise to sundown. We would get new clothes and for two or three days, we would celebrate and feast with our friends and family.

What else do you want people to know about you?
People always think I’m Irish or Scottish because I have red hair, and they think that Arab people have dark hair. But many people don’t know that the first people with red hair came from the Middle East! It always reminds me that you can’t judge someone by the way they look.
Iraqi Folk Instruments

A traditional Iraqi ensemble includes three string instruments, one wind instrument, and one percussion instrument.

**OUD**
A pear-shaped instrument with 11 strings. Its name means “thin strips of wood,” which is what its body is made of.

**QANUN**
An Arabic harp that is more than 1,000 years old!

**VIOLIN**
A four-stringed instrument played with a bow. It’s the same instrument you find in an orchestra, but it’s played and tuned differently.

**RIQQ**
A small hand drum with cymbals around it. It’s a lot like a tambourine.

**NEY**
An ancient flute made out of cane. It is one of the oldest instruments still in use, and the only wind instrument used in traditional Arabic music.
Explore the Arabic Language

Arabic has its own alphabet with 28 letters in it. It is written from right to left. The words on this page come from the songs you are learning. Trace the letters, and then draw a picture to illustrate each word.

Hubb (Love)  
Beit (House)  
Nahar (River)
Discover Mesopotamia

In ancient times, Iraq was part of a large region called Mesopotamia, which is often called the “cradle of civilization” because of the many things invented there. Here are just a few:

- **THE WHEEL**
- **MEASURING TIME** (using hours, minutes, and seconds)
- **CUNEIFORM** (the first form of writing)
- **FARMING** (growing food to eat)
- **SAIL BOATS**
It’s Concert Time!

Circle things you WILL do at Carnegie Hall. Put an “X” through things you WON’T do at Carnegie Hall.

- Sleep
- Dance
- Run
- Talk during the music
- Have fun!
- Get bored
- Move
- Follow directions
- Cheer!
- Listen to the performers
- Sing!
- Eat popcorn
- Watch how the musicians play and sing
- Clap
- Use all four kinds of voices: whispering, talking, calling, and singing
What Did You See and Hear at Carnegie Hall?

Draw pictures of your trip to Carnegie Hall below.
Who Is Your Favorite Artist?

Write a letter to your favorite artist. Be sure to include your favorite part of the concert and your favorite song from the concert.

Dear ___________________,

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

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_________________________________________________________________________________________

Your friend,

_________________________________________________________________________________________
Acknowledgments

Photos
SG3: Children playing tube trumpets by Stephanie Berger; bucket drummer by Nan Palermo; boy playing straw oboe by Stephanie Berger; kitchen supplies by Hillarie O'Toole. SG4–5: Gregorio Uribe, publicity photo by OneRPM Studios; Zulal, publicity photo by Kathi Littwin; Soul Science Lab, publicity photo by Kamau Ware; Michael Daves, publicity photo by Wendy George; Qian Yi, publicity photo by David Geffin; Layth Sidiq, publicity photo by Rohith Jayaraman. SG8: Gregorio Uribe, childhood photo courtesy of the artist. SG9: Ajiáco by F Delventhal; Trompo by Patricia Alim Riquelme Wolpat; Patacones by David Berkowitz. SG10: Instruments by Hannah Santisi. SG12: Teni, childhood photo courtesy of the artist; Yeraz, childhood photo courtesy of the artist; Anaís, childhood photo courtesy of the artist. SG13: Vosprov kufte by Vasily Kassianides; Armenian flags by young shanahan; Boreg by Alanyadk; Mount Ararat by Bo Stern. SG16: Graffiti by Sprayhunter; Chen Lo, childhood photo courtesy of the artist; Asanté, childhood photo courtesy of the artist. SG17: Turntable by Andrew Evans; Breakdancing by Alper Çuğun. SG18: B-boy dance by Wen-Cheng Liu; MCing by Casa Fora do Eixo Minas; Graffiti by Mik photography; DJing by Thomas Hawk. SG20: Mural by Jeffrey Zeldman. SG21: L. Steven Taylor, publicity photo by Dirty Sugar; Ushers by Rigdzin Pema Collins. SG22: Carnegie Hall by Jeff Goldberg/Esto; Escalator by Google Maps; Zankel Hall by Jeff Goldberg/Esto. SG25: Michael Daves, childhood photo courtesy of the artist; Bluegrass by oldcrowgirl. SG26: Bill Monroe by bunky's pickle; Bluegrass instruments by lothlaurien. SG27: Banjo by Wayne Rogers; Upright bass by Paree; Guitar by Route55; Mandolin by Kseniya Bogdanova. SG29: Paper lanterns by bobistraveling; Qian Yi, childhood photo courtesy of the artist. SG30: Qian Yi performance photo courtesy of the artist; Paper dragon by 蔡滄龍; Chinese opera by bryantwalker72. SG32: Red envelope by Kyle Tsui. SG33: Layth Sidiq, childhood photo courtesy of the artist; Verrazano Bridge by Ajay Suresh. SG34: Eid Mubarak by Frankris; Tigris River by rasoulali. SG35: Oud by Yaser Alamoudi; Qanun by Ozan Yarman; Violin by Somsit; Riqq by Ariadne Barrosa; Ney by Cem Ekiztas.

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