

ACTIVITY 1: *Exploring clarinet playing through imagery and sound creation*

1. OUTLINE

Framework: This activity encourages students' imagination and self-awareness by interconnecting clarinet music and imagery. It specifically fosters students' understanding of "sound properties"¹ through experimentation with tone colors (excluding timbre) and note-fingering on the instrument. Lastly, it integrates references to the repertoire piece "Het Orkest" to align with the school curriculum's objectives.

This activity will be structured in three parts.

Part 1: Learn/review sound properties based on the clarinet orchestral repertoire

Part 2: Connecting imagery to clarinet playing

Part 3: Creating and performing tone colors (in pairs)

Student level: This activity is intended for beginner clarinet students aged nine or older.

Groupe type: This activity is suitable for groups from two to six students.

Material:

1) Instruments (clarinet)

2) Selected paintings:



"The Dance Class" by
Edgar Degas (1874)



"Starry Night" by Vincent van
Gogh (1889)



"Composition VIII" by Wassily
Kandinsky (1923)

¹ In their article Development of a Technique for Identifying Elementary School Children's Musical Concepts, Andrews and Deihl (1970) argue that "a tone has properties of pitch, duration, loudness, and timbre" (p.216).

- 3) Paper sheets and colored markers or crayons to identify and write the properties of the created sound.

Length: 45 minutes of curriculum-integrated activity (30 minutes of creative activity and 15 minutes of “Het Orkest” activity integration)

Objectives:

In the first part of the activity, students will:

- 1) Learn sound properties, namely high and low, short and long, and soft and loud, based on the conductor’s corresponding gestures and the repertoire piece “Het Orkest”.
- 2) Connect the three paintings to the above sound properties by discussing them in a group setting.

In the second part of the activity, students in pairs will:

- 1) Choose an element from the paintings and create a corresponding sound, a learned pitch, or a tonal sequence.
- 2) Perform their sonic creations for the class and classify them as high or low, short or long, and loud or soft through a guessing game.

2. METHODOLOGY AND PRACTICAL ACTIONS

2.1 Part 1: *Learn/review sound properties based on the clarinet orchestral repertoire*

2.1.1. Practical Steps (3-5 min):

Teachers will first show the students the image of Mickey's Grand Opera (1936) and introduce the repertoire piece “Het Orkest”, focusing on different sections and instruments (e.g. Clarinet Theme, Harp melody, Violin voicing, and Cello accompaniment). When reviewing the clarinet part with the students, the teacher will highlight the clarinet's sonic characteristics, such as whether the notes are high or low (A or G), soft or loud in volume, and short or long in duration. (See Figure 1)



Figure 1. Image from the short film Mikey's Grand Opera 1936

This will be enhanced by showing specific gestures chosen by the project's conductor for the curriculum *Orkest in De Klas*. (See Figure 2)

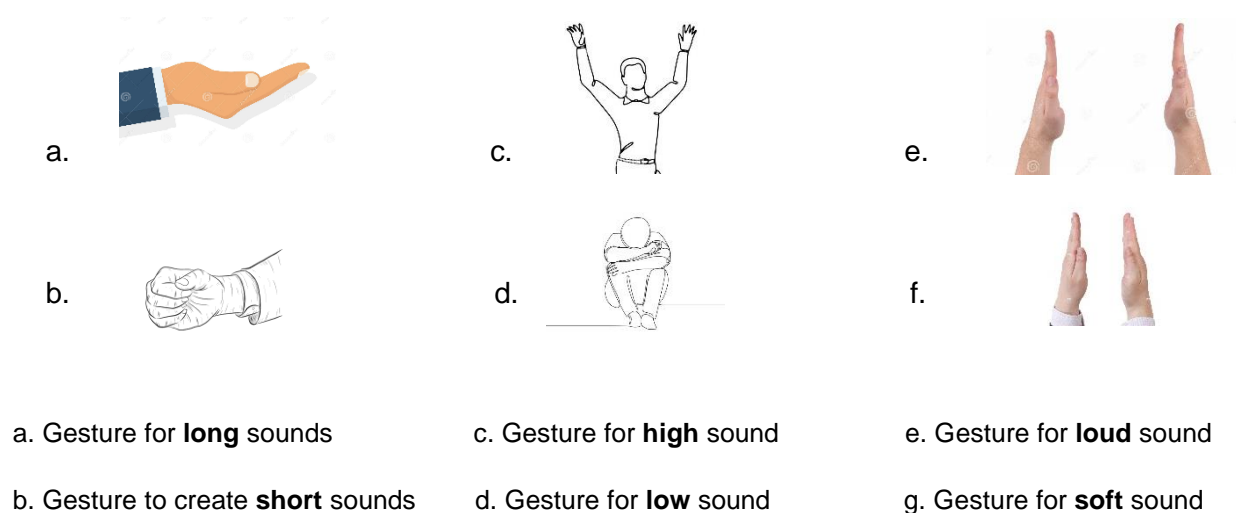


Figure 2. Orkest in de Klas Conductor's Gestures for sound properties

2.2 Part 2: *Connecting imagery to clarinet playing*

2.2.1. Students Preparation (7-10 min):

Subsequently, teacher(s) will show the three paintings to the class, and for each painting ask introspective questions such as: "What can you see in this painting?". The latter will stimulate students' discussion and interpretation of the overall painting. (see figure 3)



1. Which shapes and colors can we find in this painting?
2. What kind of feeling does this painting suggest to you? Is it calm, chaotic, or something else?



1. What do you think they are doing in this painting? How would you describe the atmosphere? Is it graceful, energetic, or tense?
2. Which objects can you see in the painting?



1. What can you see in the painting? (e.g. elements such as houses, stars, sun)
2. How does the night sky make you feel? Do you think it feels chaotic, or maybe calm and peaceful?
3. What colors and shapes do you see in the night sky, what do they represent for you?

Figure 3. Selected paintings and guided self-reflective discussion.

2.3 Part 3: Creating and performing tone colors

2.2.2. Practical steps (10 min):

After discussing the paintings students in pairs will now choose an element of the painting, draw it on paper, create one or more sounds to represent it, and write whether it is loud or soft, short or long, high or low sound. (See Figure 4)

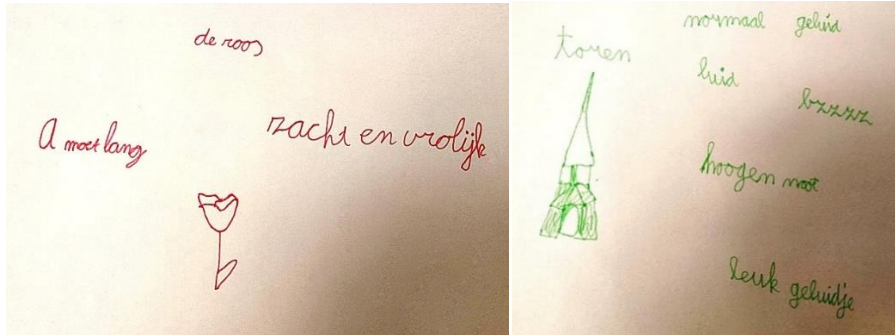


Figure 4. Combination of imagery and sound properties from the first case study

During this stage, students will have a specific time to explore and create sounds based on their selected painting. The teacher will act as a facilitator, asking questions like: **“If this element of the painting could be played on our clarinet, what would it sound like?”**

A PowerPoint slide with practical examples will be projected in the classroom to support the activity. Students will use colored markers or crayons and a blank sheet of paper to express their ideas. (See Figure 5)



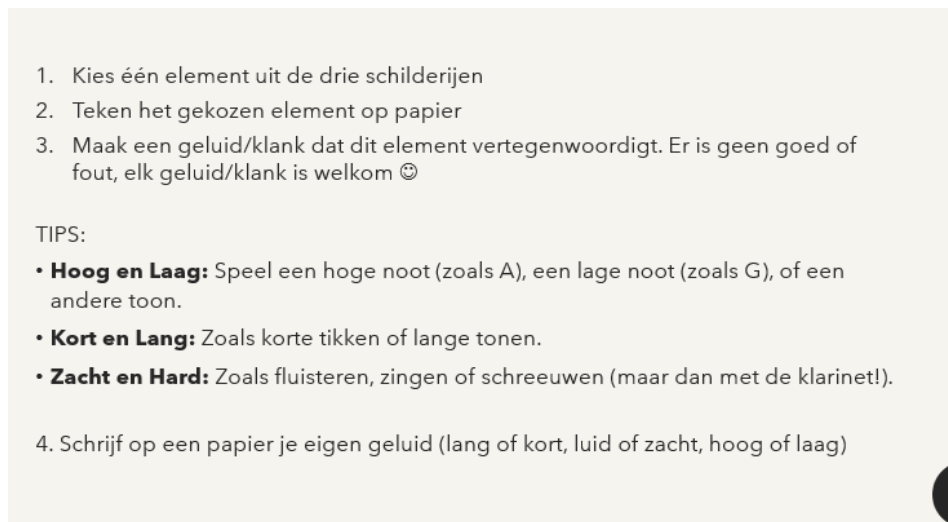


Figure 5. PowerPoint slide with practical examples for sound creation

Each pair of students will then perform their sound(s) for their peers. At this stage, the other students will listen to the sounds and try to guess which painting or element of the painting inspired their classmate's performance.

For research purposes: Associating activity with the orchestral repertoire

Given the performing results emerging from image exploration, the students will relate these outcomes when rehearsing with the class and the orchestra the repertoire piece "Het Orkest". Throughout this activity, students have implicitly focused and enhanced their skills through the following categories:

- Exploration of the musical score: Through the graphic visualization of all its elements (such as rests, notes, and sections of the musical text).
- Embodiment of clarinet technique: Through self-experimentation with the different fingerings, and keys, holes of the instrument.
- Ownership of the musical repertoire piece "Het Orkest": This will be achieved by exploring the evolution of the performance, which develops from the storytelling of the text, the alternation between singing and playing, the varying dynamics and pitch in the part, and, finally, playing together.

DISCLAIMER

The entire class is to be conducted in Dutch, primarily by the supervising teacher. If required by them, the intern-researcher will support the activity by playing and demonstrating with the instrument too. Translation from/to English will be provided by the supervisor at all convenience.