



## **Cecilia String Quartet** ***Education & Engagement Learning Materials***

*The music outcomes provided are Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes and General Curriculum Outcomes (CAMAC Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Arts Education Curriculum). The activities often also address outcomes from other curricular areas such as social studies, language arts, technology education, and mathematics.*

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*Note: The focus of this first learning project expands on the ideas contained in the [CSO Outreach Materials](#) around the nature and evolution of the string quartet.*

### **Music Making Times Four**

#### **Summary**

Suggestions include exploring the string quartet and what is special about it; investigating the reality of playing or singing in a quartet; improvising in groups of four; choosing or composing a piece, rehearsing and performing it in groups of four; assessing learning through full group/quartet/individual reflection. An option is for one of the four quartets (chosen by the full group) to record their performance and submit it to Debut Atlantic.

#### **Music Learning Outcomes Addressed**

*Students will be expected to*

- Explore, challenge, develop, and express ideas, using the skills, language, techniques, and processes of music (GCO 1)
- Create and/or present collaboratively expressive musical products for a range of audiences and purposes (GCO 2)
- Demonstrate critical awareness of and value for the role of music in creating and reflecting culture (GCO 3)
- Apply critical thinking and problem-solving strategies to reflect on and respond to their own and others' expressive works (GCO 6)
- Analyse the relationship between artistic intent and the expressive work (GCO 8)

#### **Suggested Learning Activities**

*Note: The following activities are designed so that they can be adapted for a range of grade levels – elementary and secondary. They might also be shaped for use by university students and members of the general public.*

Explore what chamber music is, what is special about it

- why is it called chamber music?
- where is it played/sung?
- what is unique about chamber music? The string quartet?
- who are some famous chamber musicians today?

Explore [Cecilia String Quartet](#) and their [on-line materials](#) for further points of investigation about chamber music and the string quartet.

Talk together about how would you make music/have a musical conversation in groups of four without any conductor or recorded accompaniment.

- How do folk and rock groups do it?
- How would you make decisions about what voices/instruments to include?
- What would you need to decide together?

In groups of four, use body music, vocal sounds, and/or “found” sounds to improvise a musical conversation that expresses/reflects a chosen emotion (e.g., happiness, sadness, anger), a season of the year, a favourite animal, etc. Focus on listening to each other and being inspired by each other.

#### EITHER

In groups of four, choose a piece (song, instrumental piece of any style), plan your version of it, rehearse, make changes, and prepare for your performance. Work collaboratively to experiment and play with ideas before making final decisions. Consider such aspects of your creative work as

- How fast do we want it to be?
- What dynamics?
- How do we start and stop together?
- Are there special points that we want to emphasize?

#### OR

In groups of four, create a piece using vocal sounds, body music, other instruments such as Orff instruments, pitched and unpitched percussion, recorders, etc. to tell a known story in music (e.g., Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and Jill). Make decisions together and prepare for your performance.

Perform the quartets for the class. Following the presentation by each group, have a full group discussion that considers such questions as

- Did we start and end together?
- Were our dynamics noticeable?
- Were we singing/playing together (as one)?
- Identify three “bravos” about our quartet and one “I wish that you had.....”

To wrap up the project, have a full class discussion:

- What were the biggest challenges?
- What makes music making in quartets really special?

*Optional Extension: As a class, choose one of the quartets, record it, and submit to Debut Atlantic*

## Musical Roots

### Summary

Suggestions include: exploring the composer's statement for *Kitchen Ceilidh*; composing a "kitchen ceilidh" rendition of a known song; preparing a graphic score; writing a composers' statement; investigating the musical heritage of the community; and discovering your own musical roots.

### Music Learning Outcomes Addressed

*Students will be expected to*

- Explore, challenge, develop, and express ideas, using the skills, language, techniques, and processes of music (GCO 1)
- Create and/or present collaboratively expressive musical products for a range of audiences and purposes (GCO 2)
- Demonstrate critical awareness of and value for the role of music in creating and reflecting culture (GCO 3)
- Respect the contributions to the arts of individuals and cultural groups in local and global contexts, and value the arts as a record of human experience and expression (GCO 4)
- Apply critical thinking and problem-solving strategies to reflect on and respond to their own and others' expressive works (GCO 6)
- Analyse the relationship between artistic intent and the expressive work (GCO 8)

### Suggested Learning Activities

#### *Early Elementary*

Using instruments that would be found in the kitchen (wooden spoons, pots, pans, metal graters, cookie sheet and spoons, etc.) create a group "kitchen ceilidh" that is your rendition of a known song. This could be done in groups of four (to extend the quartet activities) or as a full class.

Together, prepare a graphic score noting rhythm patterns used, entrances and exits of instruments, dynamics, etc. Find a symbol for each of the instruments.

#### *Senior Elementary – Secondary*

Examine Canadian composer Abigail Richardson-Schulte's statement (program notes found at the bottom of this [web page](#)) about her composition, *Kitchen Ceilidh*. What key information is she giving the performers and listeners? Individually, in groups of four, or as a full group, prepare a composers' statement about the "kitchen ceilidh" (see suggestion above) or about another piece that you have composed/arranged, identifying the sources of your musical ideas.

Investigate your own musical roots and that of your community:

- Talk with parents and other family members about your own musical heritage. If possible, share examples with the class.
- Talk with older people in the community about the music of their parents about their musical roots.
- Investigate concerts and musical gatherings in the community to discover the various aspects of the community's musical heritage that are "alive and well"
- Invite community members/local musicians to the classroom to talk about/demonstrate their own musical roots
- Explore the musical heritage of newer members of the community and invite them to classroom.
- Talk together about what you have discovered about the musical roots of your community. What does all this tell you about the community you live in?

*Optional Extension: Organize a "Celebrating Our Musical Roots" concert in which students perform pieces from our Acadian and Celtic musical heritage, as well as music from other traditions. Invite members of the community, especially those who have non-European musical roots to participate in the concert.*