



Teachers' Pack

National Open Youth Orchestra concert, with guest musicians from BBC National Orchestra of Wales (BBC NOW).

Barbican Hall, 30th June 2026, 2-3pm.

We hope you enjoy exploring the pre-concert resource slides with your classes ahead of the concert on Tuesday 30th June!

Our resource slides include various YouTube video links. Should your school's network restrict access to YouTube, please contact us and we can provide these via a WeTransfer link. Additionally, do reach out if you require the resources in an alternative format, such as a plain text version.

This document contains some additional information, context and extender activities that you may find useful depending on the age and needs of your group.

Slide 3: What is an orchestra? – Additional information

- This is the first year the musicians in the National Open Youth Orchestra (NOYO) have performed with a professional orchestra (BBC National Orchestra of Wales) and worked with a professional conductor (Alice Farnham).
- You can see our music leaders around the room as you watch the rehearsals. These people lead the five Regional NOYO Ensembles across the UK, in London, Bristol, Bournemouth, Cardiff and Birmingham. Every year, musicians from all Regional NOYO Ensembles can apply to be part of the National Open Youth Orchestra.
- The most important thing for a NOYO musician to be part of the orchestra is to love music and want to be part of the orchestra's community.
- There are auditions to join, but the orchestra is open to young musicians who haven't taken graded exams. We welcome musicians who don't learn music the traditional way of reading sheet music. Some NOYO musicians learn by ear!
- Some of the adjustments we make so the ensemble experience is accessible to everyone:

- ★ Asking musicians what music they would like to play in the orchestra!
- ★ Making sure the place we rehearse is accessible for everyone
- ★ Sending the rehearsal plan two weeks early for musicians to practise the right pieces
- ★ Having breaks where we chat and play games
- ★ Supporting musicians to change their parts in the music if they would like to play harder or easier music!

Slide 5: Other orchestra roles – Additional activity

Conducting!

- Watch the conductor video with Alice Farnham. Ask your class if they would like to try conducting each other.
 - Practise breathing in slowly while raising hands then dropping hands while breathing out quickly.
 - Ask the class to sing a note, use an instrument or clap for the next bit.
 - Find something to use as a baton (the conductors stick!) and try one pupil as the leader of the whole class and see if everyone can follow the leader to make sounds at the same time! You could also try this activity in pairs.
- Encourage your class to see if they can make their sounds exactly at the same time. Explore if there's a better way for the conductors to get everyone playing together!

Slides 7 – 12: Sections of the orchestra – Quick quizzes!

Quick String Quiz

- Which string player told you about how many calories you use in an hour's violin playing? (Josh)
- How many strings did Holli say her harp has? (47)
- Which farm animals' intestines used to be used to make violin strings? (sheep)
- Which string instrument does Conor play? (Cello)

Quick Woodwind Quiz

- Which woodwind instrument does Raena play? (saxophone)
- How many thumb keys does the bassoon have? (13)
- What does Lilian show you in their video? (a reed)

Quick Brass Quiz

- Does the Euphonium have a high or low sound? (low)
- How many feet of tubing does the Euphonium have? (24ft)
- Why does Maeve think the brass are the best section in the orchestra? (because they are shiny instruments!)

Quick Percussion/Keys Quiz

- Which drum does Charlie show in the video? (snare drum)
- When does percussion date back to? (5,500 BC)
- Yes or no, can you see the strings in a piano? (no)

Quick Electronic Quiz

- What is the instrument that Evie plays called? (Clarion)
- Can you name another instrument in the electronic section? (Electric Bass)

Slide 15: Composers

- Oliver Cross mentions the Social Model of Disability
 - This [video by Scope](#) is helpful explaining the Social Model.
 - [We Are Unlimited](#) has some useful resources on the Social Model and an animated video to watch.

Slide 17: *The Seasons*

Send your students' artwork inspired by listening to *The Seasons* to demi@openupmusic.org by Wednesday 10th June 2026 at 5pm. We will feature as many of them as we can on the screens in the concert hall while the orchestra performs the full pieces. When you send your pictures, please make the file name your school name and the season the image represents e.g. 'Manor School - Spring'.

Slide 21: This is our orchestra!

We'd love to hear what your orchestra sounds like! Send your videos and photos of your orchestra to demi@openupmusic.org by Wednesday 10th June 2026 at 5pm. We may feature them on our social media channels including:

[Instagram](#)

[Tik Tok](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Facebook](#)

Please ensure you have the appropriate permissions to share, and for us to use them in this way. Your submissions will be treated according to our [Privacy Policy](#).

Thank you

NOYO musicians told us that young people like them were a priority audience, so thank you for playing your part in making this happen. They would like all young people (and adults too!) to know that it's possible to play an instrument and be part of an orchestra whatever your access needs. Through our theme, #ThisIsOurOrchestra, we hope you and your students will join us as champions for musical inclusion too!

This concert celebrates a major milestone for the orchestra - the 10th anniversary of our partnership with the brilliant arts organisations that started and developed the National Open Youth Orchestra with us, including our London partners the Barbican and Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

We would like to thank them and our funders, who have made this concert possible.

The National Open Youth Orchestra and Regional NOYO Ensembles are delivered in partnership with:



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The National Open Youth Orchestra is a programme of charity Open Up Music, whose mission is to open music to young disabled musicians.