

## **Finlandia by Jean Sibelius**

*Written by Lucy Drever*

For:

- EYFS and Key Stage 1 in England and Wales
- Early years and P1-P4 in Scotland
- EYFS and Key Stage 1 in Northern Ireland

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# Introduction

This BBC Ten Pieces resource is for KS1 teachers and support staff; it is a collection of ideas for you to adapt, explore and have fun with. Not only will it tick many of the learning requirements and goals, but the resource will give you and your children a fun insight into the world of classical music.

Give yourself the permission to be creative, to be musical (regardless of what you've been told, you are musical, it's not just about singing in tune!) and to have fun; whatever response you get from the children is brilliant. And the more confident the children see you in your exploration of this BBC Ten Piece, chances are they'll be more confident too!

The plan will look vastly different depending on the group of children you are working with, as well as the learning environment. The plans are suitable for free flow, small groups or whole classes. If you are working with a whole class, I'd suggest being in a circle. The plans will also work well if you're working with non-verbal children; music is a really safe place for all children to be creative in.

**Whilst writing this resource I decided to stay away from weekly lessons that are built upon, as many KS1 settings I work in don't work in this way. I've therefore written six sessions, that can be done in any order, and should be repeated again and again...and again.**

The last session is a documenting one- collect all the musical things you've explored, revisit activities, and listen to the piece again. This can be done alongside the other sessions, or at the end of your learning.

Have fun exploring these amazing pieces, and remember, when creating, there are no wrong answers!

**Lucy Drever**

# Learning Outcomes

Learners will:

- Listen to a new piece of music
- Explore loud and quiet sounds
- Made sounds on their body
- Make a graphic score, and new pieces of music
- Sing in different languages
- Hear music from another country
- Move to a pulse
- Move to music
- Play classroom instruments

Exploring this piece of music will help children with their;

- Listening
- Communication and language
- Personal, social and emotional development
- How and why questions
- Creating own stories and developing own narratives
- Singing
- Developing their fine motor skills

## About Finlandia

- Finlandia was written by Jean Sibelius in 1899
- He wrote it in protest towards the increasing censorship by the Russian Empire
- It is an ode to the trees, lakes, mountains and people that make up Finland
- In Finland the 8th December is known as the 'Day of Finnish Music.' This was the same day that Sibelius celebrated his birthday

# Adventure 1- Quiet and Loud

**Goal- The group will explore quiet and loud sounds!**

## Warm-up

**Sing a song** that you sing with your class; this could be a nursery rhyme, a school song, or something you've previously sung with your students.

**Does this song have actions?** If not, make some up and if it does, sing the song again with even bigger actions!

Now can you try singing the song as quietly as possible, with the smallest actions?

## Activity 1

Explain to the children that you are all going to **watch and listen to Finlandia**. It was written by the composer Sibelius. Explain that a composer is someone who writes music, and often the music reflects a story. Sibelius was from Finland and loved this country so much that he wrote a piece of music inspired by the trees, the lakes, the mountains and the people.

If you have a globe in your setting, or a big map, **find Finland!**

If you have older KS1 children, you might want to watch the whole piece. Stop the piece occasionally and ask questions such as;

*"I wonder how this music makes you feel?"*

*"Do you think it's daytime or nighttime?"*

*"Is the weather cold or hot?"*

If you are working with younger children, start off by watching a smaller section. **I'd recommend from the start to 1.30**. Again, stop the music occasionally and ask questions such as;

*"Does the music feel angry or happy?"*

*"What animal does this music make you think of?"*

Whatever answers you get from the children are great! We all hear music differently which is one of the best things about it!

## Activity 2

**Listen from the start to 42 seconds**. Encourage the children to think if the music is loud or quiet (reflect the volume in your voice when asking the question i.e 'loud' should be said loudly and 'quiet'

should be said quietly). This section is both loud and quiet. Explain to the students that music is made up of quiet and loud sounds, and this can change how it makes us feel!

**Ask the children to think about sounds they can make using their bodies.** Once they have told you their sound, ask them if it's loud or quiet. Give the child as much time as possible to show you their sound.

Possible sounds include;

- *Clapping your hands (loud)*
- *Making star shapes with your fingers (quiet)*
- *Stamping your feet (loud)*
- *Nodding your head (quiet)*

**Once a child has a suggestion, encourage the whole class to make the sound.**

After you've done this three or four times, be more specific in asking the children for a quiet sound, or a loud sound. When asking your class, reflect what volume you want your question to be in your question and body language (e.g sitting up straight for loud, and being more hunched for quiet).

Again, get everybody to copy.

### **Activity 3**

**Pick a song to sing with your children.** If possible, make it different to the warm-up.

Sing the song.

Then ask the children, **"Shall we sing this song loudly or quietly?"** and sing it whatever way they suggest.

If they say loudly, after you've all sung it once, can you try singing it again *even* louder?

If they say quietly, can you sing it again *even* quieter?

Sing the song a few times, either loud or quiet and draw attention to the actions- use really big actions for loud, and really small actions for quiet.

You may then want to get your group moving around the space;

"How do we move if we are singing quietly?"

"How do we move if we sing loudly?"

## **Warm-down**

**Sing the song that you sang in the beginning as quietly as possible**, maybe this means you just do the actions! Then sing it as loudly as possible!

### ***Extension activity***

*What quiet and loud sounds can you find in your setting, both inside and outside? Record these sounds on your tablet and show the rest of the class!*

## Adventure 2- Let's Make a Graphic Score

***Goal- In this activity you will make a graphic score with your group. They will be able to create and identify a sound to match a specific shape. This is composition- you are going to be writing music with your class!***

A graphic score is a really accessible way to write music. You can come up with your own code with the children, and it's a lovely way to explore the relationship between sounds, drawing and reading. It's also a brilliant way of writing music without realising you're writing music!

**For the purpose of this plan, I've written about a storm as that's what I think of when I listen to the beginning bit of Finlandia, but maybe you might think of something else.** Or after you've done this exercise a couple of times, why not try creating a graphic scored based on your class topic?

This activity is one that should be repeated again and again! And why not keep it up in the setting and let your students explore it by themselves?

### Resources

- **Either pre-cut out some storm shapes, or you can make them as you go**

*If you're working with a large group, I'd suggest pre-cut ones, unless you have a lovely member of support staff to cut them out for you depending on the child's suggestion in the moment!*

*Once you have done this activity, you could get the children to draw their own shapes and photocopy them. If you are going to keep this up in the setting, I'd suggest laminating a large piece of paper (no smaller than A3) and the shapes!*

### Warm-up

Play a game of musical statues to Finlandia!

### Activity 1

**Listen to the beginning on Finlandia (0- 42 seconds).** Encourage the children to think about what weather the music is telling the story of.

For each type of weather the children suggest, encourage them to give you a sound. For example:

Thunder and lightning, *stamping feet*

Rain, *tapping knees*

Windy, *blowing*

With your class **pick three different sounds**. Practice these sounds a few times!

## Activity 2

With your pre-cut shapes, or making the shapes as you go, ask what sound goes with what shape.

For example it could be something like this;

**Thunder and lightning- *Stamping feet***



**Rain- *Tapping knees***





### **Windy- *Blowing***

Then, holding up one shape at a time, **get the group to make the sound that the shape makes.** So if you hold up the rain-drop, everyone should start tapping their knees.

**Pick one child to come up and be the leader,** depending on what shape they hold up, the rest of the group has to make the sound. Do this a few times!

### **Activity 3**

Then ask a child to help you to **arrange these three shapes on the board.** For example;

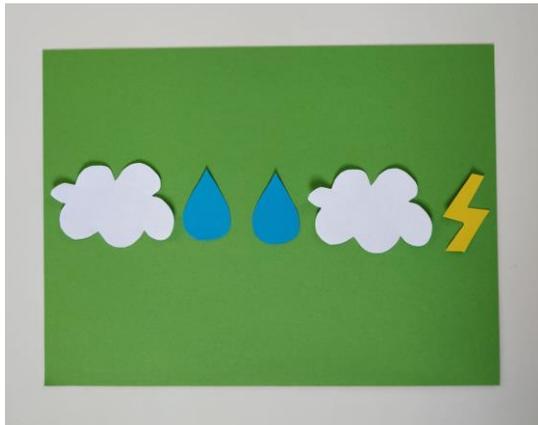


Using your hand, or something to point with, point to the shapes from left to right. Remember to give the children time to make the sound!

“I wonder how this would sound?”

Blowing	Tapping knees	Stamping feet
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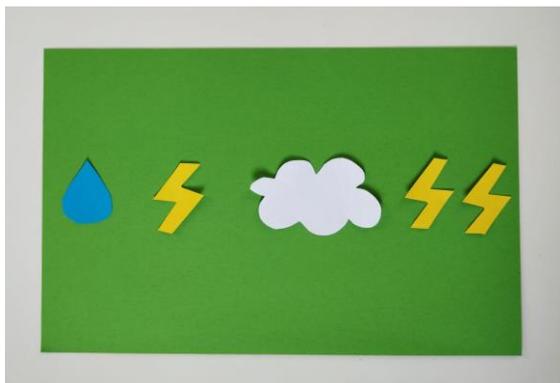
Encourage another child to change the order and you can also add in more of the same shapes!



"I wonder how this would sound?"

<i>Blowing</i>	<i>Tapping knees</i>	<i>Tapping knees</i>	<i>Stamping feet</i>
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Encourage another child to change the order.



"I wonder how this would sound?"

<i>Tapping knees</i>	<i>Stamping feet</i>	<i>Blowing</i>	<i>Stamping feet</i>	<i>Stamping feet</i>
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This time, **why not get one of your students to lead?** They can point from left to right. Or make up their own order...remember, they are creating their own musical storm!

**Not only are they composing (writing the music), they are also being a conductor (somebody who leads the music)!**

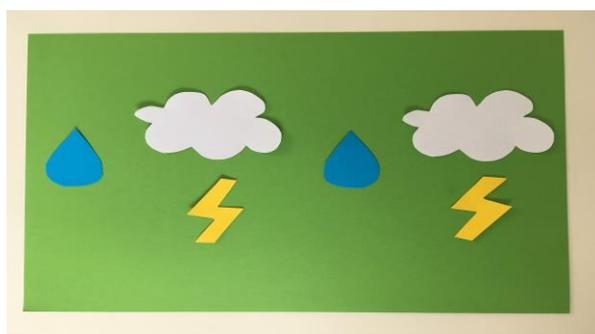
## Warm-down

Sing a song your class loves singing! How smoothly can you sing it? Can you sing it as spikey-ly as possible?

## ***Extension activities for Graphic Scores***

*There are so many things you can do with graphic scores. Here are some suggestions;*

- *Record each child's pattern on a tablet- each child is composing their own storm!*
  - *Read the graphic score from right to left*
  - *Give each child an opportunity to lead*
- *Create your own class Storm orchestra. Split the class into three groups and assign each group a different sound- they have to make their sound only when their shape is pointed to.*  
*You can even have two different sounds at the same time e.g*



- *In smaller groups, use instruments instead of sounds with your body, ie a tambourine for rain, a shaker for wind and a drum for thunder and lightning*
- *Make a graphic score about your class topic. For example, if you're learning about the seaside pick three sounds about that e.g the waves, a whale and an ice-cream van!*

## Adventure 3- Other countries

**Goal- You will talk about other countries; you will discuss different languages, and listen and sing music from the country you are in, or another country.**

### Warm-up

Sing your favourite song as a class.

What about singing it in a different way?

- *Quiet*
- *Loud*
- *Like a giant*
- *Like a robot*
- *Fast*
- *Slow*
- *Spikey*
- *Smooth*

Ask the children for their suggestions!

### Activity 1

**Start the session off by listening to a little bit of Finlandia** (4.30-to the end). Say that Sibelius wrote this piece of music for his country- he's from Finland. The people of Finland loved this piece so much that somebody wrote words to it, and everybody can sing it (it has become an unofficial National Anthem). They all spoke Finnish.

### Activity 2

Sing your hello song! If you don't have one, no worries, you can use this one.

Hello everyone,  
Hello everyone,  
Hello everyone,  
It's nice to have you here!

***You can download this on the Finlandia page on the Ten Pieces website (Hello Everyone)***

Encourage children **to think about other languages that people speak in other countries.**

Depending on your setting there are lots of ways you can pick what language you can sing hello in. Here are some suggestions;

- *Do any of the children you are working with speak another language?*
- *Do any of the children have parents/ carers who speak another language?*
- *I wonder how Sibelius would say Hello to his friends?*
- *Maybe you've been studying a specific country in class?*
- *Do you have any flags in your classroom? What languages do people speak in these countries?*
- *Do you have a globe or map in the classroom? Maybe a child could point to somewhere on this?*

**Then substitute Hello for Hello in another language!** For example;

#### **In Finnish;**

(pronounced Hey)

*Hei everyone,*

*Hei everyone,*

*Hei everyone,*

*It's nice to have you here!*

#### **In Spanish;**

Hola everyone,

Hola everyone,

Hola everyone,

It's nice to have you here!

### **Activity 3**

Learn a song!

Explain to the children that just like Finlandia was written for the people of Finland, other countries have songs that are special to them.

**Choose a song from any country, or a song in another language, to teach the children.** This could be a simple playground song, a rhyme, traditional folk song, or maybe even a national anthem. It doesn't need to be a whole song, a couple of lines is great!

Here are some suggestions of how to pick a song;

- *Choose a song from the country, or town, you are living in*
- *Choose a song from the country you were born in*
- *Ask another member of staff, or parent, if they have any songs from other countries*
- *Search online*

Here are some examples:

**Mari's Wedding from Scotland**, recording [here](#).

*Step we gaily, on we go,  
Heel for heel and toe for toe,  
Arm in arm and on we go,  
All for Mairi's wedding*

**Or Frère Jacques, in French**

*Frère Jacques, Frère Jacques,  
Dormez-vous? Dormez-vous?  
Sonnez les matines, sonnez les matines  
Ding ding dong, ding ding dong.*

## **Warm-down /movement activity**

Use Finlandia to play Musical Statues.

## Adventure 4 - Let's move!

**Goal- We're going to think about tempo, the fast and slow of the music!**

### Resources

- A drum. If you don't have this, you can tap on something else e.g a table, or your lap.

### Warm-up

**Sing a song your class love singing together.**

*How slowly can you sing it?*

*How fast can you sing it? Can you sing it even faster?*

*Now can you move whilst you sing it?*

### Activity 1

**Take the drum and tap a steady beat on it.** It can be any beat.

Take a pause and explain to the children that **for every tap they hear on the drum, they need to take a step.** Start with a very steady beat, and once you feel that the children are getting the idea of this game, change the speed; make it faster or slower.

**Now pass the drum over to one of them to lead.** Encourage them to go fast and slow.

### Activity 2

Here are some small sections from Finlandia.

- **1:** 0-0.14
- **2:** 1.31- 1.46
- **3:** 3.26-3.46
- **4:** 4.31- 5.04
- **5:** 5.40- 6.03

Encourage the group to listen to one section.

Then, **ask your children to move their hands with the music as they listen to the same section for a second time.**

On the third listen **get the children to move around the space**, still focusing on the music.

Pick out a couple of children who are moving interestingly to the music- encourage them to show the class.

Repeat with two or three other sections.

### **Activity 3**

**Pick a story that you have been reading in class and ask the children how they think the characters in that would move.** Get them to show you! Do they move quickly or slowly? For older children, ask them why they think that!

### **Warm-down**

Sing another song your children love singing, and play about with the tempo (the speed)!

## Adventure 5 - What are your favourite things?

**Goal- Learn more about the children's favourite things. Play some classroom instruments- they can play something that was inspired by their favourite thing!**

### Resources

- Some instruments- whatever you have! Shakers, tambourines, drums, chimes, bells, saucepans and spoons etc.

### Warm-up

**Sing a song!**

How smooooooth can you sing it?

How spik-ey can you sing it?

### Activity 1

Explain that Sibelius wrote Finlandia because he loved his country so much. He loved the trees, the lakes, the mountains and the people.

Encourage your class to **think of their favourite things about their hometown**- it could be anything! It may be something to do with school, the park, their house or maybe the ice-cream van at the beach!

### Activity 2

Encourage the children to **draw their favourite thing about their hometown. Or colour in a picture of their favourite thing**, write a sentence about it, or make it with Play-Doh. Or have a conversation about it!

### Activity 3

This activity works well working individually with a child or in smaller groups. It can also work with a whole class- pick three or four children to have a go and then during free play, leave the instruments out and encourage the children to play their picture!

**Put a selection of instruments on the table or carpet.** Encourage the child to use the instruments to play something inspired by their favourite thing. Have their picture, or thing that they made in Activity 2 close by for inspiration. Let them improvise and see what they do! Don't feel like you have to ask questions, but if you think they need some help, here are some things you could ask;

*Does your favourite thing make a loud sound?*

*Does your favourite thing make a quiet sound?*

*Maybe it sounds spikey? Or smooth?*

*Maybe it has lots of different sounds?*

## **Warm-down**

Sing a song that you love to sing together!

## Adventure 6- Make a Finland map!

**Document everything that you have explored with your class.** This can be individually on A4 size maps of Finland, or as a whole class with a giant map outline of Finland.

Print out, or roughly draw, a large outline of Finland. Fill it with things you have learned!

- What are some quiet sounds?
- What are some loud sounds?
- Print and cut out a picture of Sibelius.
- Stick up some of your graphic score shapes!
- What sounds did you make in your graphic score?
- Stick on some pictures of your students' favourite things.
- What characters from our book move slowly?
- What characters from our book move fast?
- Why not draw a drum?
- Let's draw the flags for the countries we sang hello in!