

Carnival of the Animals

- 1. Introduction to Saint-Saëns
- 2. Bird songs
- 3. Fossils
- 4. Animal safari
- 5. How many ways?
- 6. Move like animals

Charles-Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921), was a French composer, organist, conductor, and pianist of the Romantic era.

He is known especially for his music piece for children, The Carnival of the Animals.



He was raised by his mother, Clémence, with the assistance of her aunt, Charlotte Masson, who moved in.



Clémence Saint-Saens



Masson introduced Saint-Saëns to the piano, and began giving him lessons on the instrument.

At about this time, age two, Saint-Saëns was found to possess perfect pitch.

Saint-Saëns was a very intelligent man. From an early age, he studied geology (all about the Earth), archaeology (human history), botany (plants), lepidoptery (butterflies and moths), and was an expert in mathematics.



In 1886 Saint-Saëns produced two of his most renowned compositions: The Carnival of the Animals and Symphony No. 3.





Symphony No.3 'Organ' The Carnival of the Animals Danse macabre - Bacchanale (Samson & Delilah)

Christopher Robinson City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra - Louis Frémaux



- The Carnival of the Animals (Le carnaval des animaux) is a musical suite of fourteen movements by the French Romantic composer Camille Saint-Saëns.
- Written for private performance by an ad hoc ensemble of two pianos and other instruments, the work lasts around 25 minutes.

There are fourteen movements, each representing a different animal or animals:

- 1. Introduction and Royal March of the Lion
- 2. Hens and Cocks
- 3. Wild Asses Swift Animals
- 4. Tortoises
- 5. The Elephant
- 6. Kangaroos
- 7. Aquarium
- 8. Personages with Long Ears

There are fourteen movements, each representing a different animal or animals:

- 9. The Cuckoo in the Depths of the Woods
- 10. Aviary
- 11. Pianists
- 12. Fossils
- 13. The Swan
- 14. Finale

In 1999, Walt Disney Animation Studios incorporated the "Finale" into Fantasia 2000.





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Class Discussion

What are the physical characteristics of birds? feathers - beak wing tail claws

Class Discussion

Where do birds live?





Nest

Aviary

Class Discussion

What do birds do?



Lay eggs





Build nests

Fly

Whole Class

- Saint-Saëns used different instruments to create the sounds of different birds.
- J Listen to the different movements showing pictures of instruments that represent the different birds.
- S Children to name and match the instruments used to describe the birds.

Hens and Cocks

This movement is centred around a pecking theme played in the pianos and strings, which is quite reminiscent of chickens pecking at grain. The clarinet plays small solos above the rest of the players at intervals.









flute

bassoon violin

clarinet

piano

The Cuckoo in the Depths of the Woods

The pianos play large, soft chords while the clarinet plays a single two-note ostinato, over and over; a C and an A flat, mimicking the call of a cuckoo bird.





The high strings take on a background role, providing a buzz in the background that is reminiscent of the background noise of a jungle. The cellos and basses play a pick up cadence to lead into most of the measures. The flute takes the part of the bird, with a trilling tune that spans much of its range. The pianos provide occasional ping and trills of other birds in the background. The movement ends very quietly after a long ascending scale from the flute.











flute

bassoon violin

clarinet

piano

The Swan

This is by far the most famous movement of the suite, often performed solo and is used to showcase the interpretive skills of the cellist. The lushly romantic cello solo (which evokes the swan elegantly gliding over the water) is played over rippling sixteenths in one piano and rolled chords in the other (representing the swan's feet, hidden from view beneath the water, propelling it along).



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<u>Plenary</u>

Using body or instrumental percussion, can you make a bird sound?

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Class Discussion

In many places, bones from animals and the remains of plants that lived long ago can be found in the earth. These are called fossils.



Class Discussion

The people who study fossils are called archaeologists. An archaeologist puts fossil pieces together to discover what kind of animal or plant they were. They look at everything found at the fossil site and are able to describe what life may have been like a long time ago.



Watch Fossils



Whole Class

What instrument could you hear in the movement 'Fossils'? How does it sound like it is played (plucked, bowed, blown, struck)?

Look at and explore the percussion and see if you can find anything that sounds like the instrument used.

Whole Class

Fossils is performed with string instruments, two pianos, a clarinet and a xylophone.





Whole Class

Here, Saint-Saëns mimics his own composition, the Danse Macabre, which makes heavy use of the xylophone to evoke the image of skeletons playing card games, the bones clacking together to the beat.

The musical themes from Danse Macabre are also quoted; the xylophone and the violin play much of the melody, alternating with the piano and clarinet.

Plenary

Can you use body percussion to tap out the first part of 'Fossils'?



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Carnival of the Animals

Resources needed:

- Non-fiction books about animals
- Toy animals
 - Elephant
 - Lion
 - Kangaroo
 - Fish
 - Donkey
 - Tortoise
- Carnival of the Animals CD

Group Activity

In your group, choose an animal from the following:



Group Activity

- J In your group, look at a book and toy of your chosen animal.
- J Research your animal:
 - What it looks like
 - Where it lives
 - What it eats
 - What sound it makes

Individual Activity

- ♪ Draw a picture of your animal.
- ♪ Write some words to describe it if you can.



Whole Class

Listen to Carnival of the Animals, telling children when the music for their animal is being played.


I can discuss whether Saint-Saëns can represent an animal with music

<u>Plenary</u>

- J In groups, discuss whether Saint-Saëns' movement portrayed the characteristics of your animal.
- Share your drawings, words and thoughts with the class.

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Carnival of the Animals

Resources needed:

- Carnival of the Animals CD
- Pictures of instruments
- Percussion instruments



Watch Wild Asses

The animals depicted here are quite obviously running, an image induced by the constant, feverishly fast up-and-down motion of both pianos playing scales in octaves.







Watch The Elephant



This section is marked Allegro Pomposo, the perfect caricature for an elephant. This means moving in a lively and majestic way.

Children to find the right instrument picture.





Watch Aquarium



This is one of the more musically rich movements. The melody is played by the flute, backed by the strings, on top of the tumultuous,

glissando-like runs from the piano. There is an occasional glissando from the glass armonica (often played on celesta or glockenspiel) which is evocative of a peaceful, dimly-lit aquarium.

Children to find the right instrument picture. 47





<u>Plenary</u>

- ♪ In a group, choose an instrument and decide what animal it could illustrate.
- J Play the instrument to the class, explaining why it represents a particular animal.

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Carnival of the Animals

Resources needed:

- Carnival of the Animals CD
- Pictures of animals

Whole Class

- This is a tortoise.
- J How big is it?
- J How does it move?



- J Does it move fast or slow?
- ♪ What kind of sound does it make?

Watch Tortoises



Act &/or move like a tortoise: Big or little Flat or round Fast or slow

Whole Class

- This is a cuckoo.
- J How big is it?
- J How does it move?
- J Does it move fast or slow?
- ♪ What kind of sound does it make?



The Cuckoo in the Depths of the Woods



Act &/or move like a cuckoo: Big or little Flat or round Fast or slow High or low

Whole Class

- This is a kangaroo.
- J How big is it?
- J How does it move?



- J Does it move fast or slow?
- ♪ What kind of sound does it make?

Watch Kangaroos

Act &/or move like a kangaroo: Big or little Flat or round Fast or slow High or low



<u>Plenary</u>

- J Listen to the Finale of Carnival of the Animals.
- S Which instruments can you hear?
- S Which animals is Saint-Saëns representing?
- ♪ Watch the <u>Fantasia</u> video clip.