

KOGER BEHIND THE SCENES: ORCHESTRA

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCE GUIDE

This video guide is presented by the Koger Center in partnership with The South Carolina Arts Commission. This guide will take students on an interactive journey through the various careers in the orchestra, predominantly focusing on “behind the scenes” or technical aspects of the orchestra. Students will participate in a number of instructor guided activities, discussions, writing exercises, and hands-on learning opportunities.

This guide is intended as a resource for educators. It is written in adherence to the South Carolina Educational Standards. This resource is recommended for middle school education*.

Anchor Standard 9: *I can relate music to other arts disciplines, content areas and career path choices.*

<https://ed.sc.gov/instruction/standards/visual-and-performing-arts/standards/theatre-design-and-media-arts-standards/>



*Modifications are available on certain activities/exercises for the younger student

**Please note that not all available careers are included in this video and guide. Each Koger Behind the Scenes video illustrates several different careers in the industry. If needed, please reference the Drama, Ballet, and Visual Art videos (as well as their corresponding guides) for additional information!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Overview: What is the Orchestra?

2. The Conductor

3. The Violinist

4. Concertmaster

5. Orchestra Librarian

6. Composer

7. Fundraising

8. House Manager

9. Orchestra in the Classroom: exercises and activities for the student



Pictured:
Scott Weiss
conducting
the USC
Symphony
Orchestra

THE CONDUCTOR

The **conductor** is the leader of the orchestra or, rather, the teacher! The conductor stands in front of the musicians and directs the performance. They are responsible for directing the **tempo** (speed), the **dynamics** (how loud or soft), and the emotion behind the piece. They use specific hand movements and a **baton** (pictured right) to achieve this effect.



Right- Scott Weiss conducting the University of South Carolina Orchestra

[Check out Scott Weiss conducting the USC Symphony Orchestra here!](#)



SPOTLIGHT: Scott Weiss

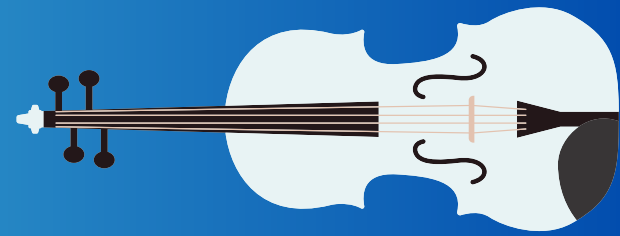
Weiss is the conductor of the orchestra at The University of South Carolina. His job is to prepare the orchestra for up to seven concerts a year. He is responsible for conducting and managing 90-100 musicians, wow! He is also the chief financial officer of the orchestra, which means he handles all of the money and the budget needed for a large ensemble like this. He is involved in every step of the process. Scott is also the chief executive officer of the orchestra. He conducts everyday rehearsals and classes, gives the pre-show announcements, and handles the necessary livestream information.



VIOLINIST



A **violinist** is exactly what it sounds like, a person who plays the violin! Traditionally, the violinists carry the main **melody** in the orchestra. The melody is the leading (and often most recognizable) part in a piece with **harmony** (multiple parts).



SPOTLIGHT:

A violinist for The University of South Carolina

“There is a misconception that artists, musicians in general, we just do it because we love it but no... I always try to do my best”

“I’m never nervous when I am going to conduct, I feel like a fish in a sea of water”



Classroom Connection -Create your own DIY practice violin! This will allow you to practice like a violinist and learn the proper technique. This exercise will use an empty macaroni box or milk carton, tape, a ruler, and a violin printable (link below)

Check out the full exercise [here](#)

Classroom Connection- Being a musician isn't just about playing the notes, it's about the emotion behind the music. Your instructor will play any music featuring a violin. While listening to the music, paint or draw what you feel. It can simply be lines and shapes, as long as you feel the music move you!

CONCERTMASTER



The **concertmaster** is the lead violinist of the orchestra. They are what is known as “**first chair**,” which means they sit closest to the conductor. The concertmaster is responsible for **tuning** the orchestra prior to a performance. This is a position that carries a large amount of responsibility and requires a skilled musician. The concertmaster is also responsible for setting behavioral expectations for the rest of the orchestra. They act as a liaison between the conductor and the rest of the orchestra.

SPOTLIGHT:

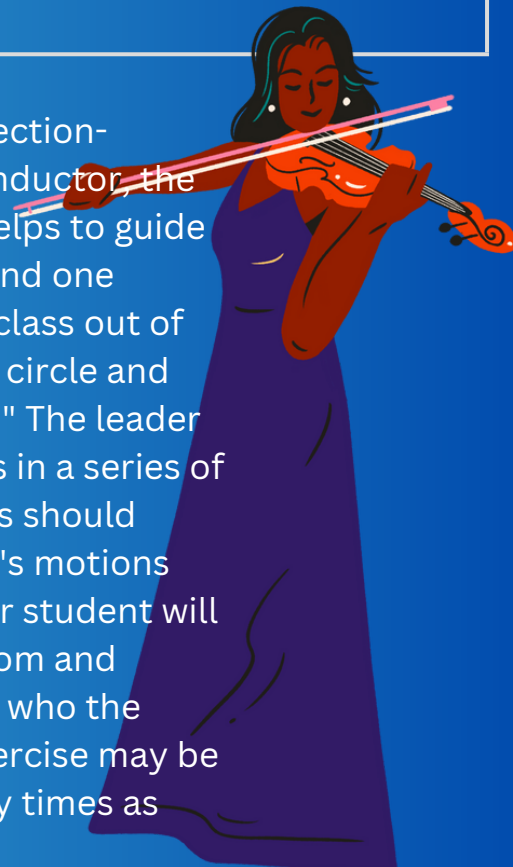
The Concertmaster for the USC Orchestra

"You have to work with the other string players and make sure they are playing accurately and correctly! You have a leadership role within the orchestra"

When the concertmaster tunes the orchestra, it acts as a signal for not only the musicians, but the audience as well! The performance is about to start!



Classroom Connection- Similar to the conductor, the concertmaster helps to guide the orchestra. Send one member of your class out of the room. Sit in a circle and choose a "leader." The leader will lead the class in a series of motions. The class should mirror the leader's motions exactly. The other student will now enter the room and attempt to guess who the leader is! This exercise may be repeated as many times as desired.



ORCHESTRA LIBRARIAN

The **orchestra librarian** is responsible for preparing all of the music for the musicians, cataloging the music, and for returning the music to the publisher once the orchestra is done using it! This is a job that carries lots of responsibility and requires strong organizational skills as well as an attention to detail. If you are a responsible person, this may be the job for you!

Check out the University of South Carolina music library [here!](#)

GUIDED DISCUSSION: What do you think are important traits to have as an orchestra librarian? ADAPTED: Do you think an orchestra librarian should be clean or messy? Why or why not? Do you think they are *organized* or *disorganized*?

All images are of the University of South Carolina's music library and private collection!

SPOTLIGHT: The Orchestra Librarian

Traits of a good
orchestra librarian:

1. punctual
2. responsible
3. organized
4. efficient
5. detail oriented



COMPOSER



The **composer** is the person who composes (writes) the music! Many composers begin as musicians so they have an understanding of what they are creating. An in depth understanding of **music theory** is useful in this field. When writing for a symphony or orchestra, composers need to understand the way the instruments will interact with one another, as well as each individual instrument's capabilities and limitations (ex; how high is a violin able to play?)

SPOTLIGHT:

Augusta Read Thomas

Augusta has been composing for about 53 years!

"You need different things at different times in your life to be a composer, it gets easier with practice!"

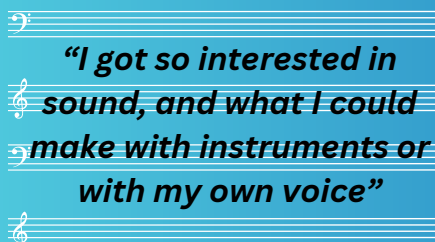
While composing, Augustus says that she frequently asks the question, "**What does the music want to do** "

Thomas describes her job as, "looking at the context of the story... telling a story through music"

"As you develop your skills as a composer you start to realize what you wanna hear and how you wanna hear it"



Pictured Above: Promotional material for Augusta Read Thomas' residency at The University of South Carolina School of Music



Classroom Connection: Get up! You and your classmates will be making a "sound machine." One at a time, you will enter the space and repeat a single sound over and over again. By the end, everyone should be up and making noise together. Congratulations, you all just composed your first piece!



Check out Augusta Read Thomas' composition "Prisms of Light" [here](#)



FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is a key aspect of any nonprofit work, especially in the arts. Fundraisers may be responsible for organizing campaigns or events to raise money or to create awareness about a certain organization or cause. Fundraising is about raising funds, plain and simple! Fundraising may also include: finding and organizing volunteers, communicating directly with donors (as well as communicating with potential donors), creating promotional/informative materials about an organization or a cause, and keeping track of existing fundraising efforts.

SPOTLIGHT: Audra Vaz
The Koger Center/ The School of Music

Audra works in fundraising both here at Koger as well as at the University of South Carolina School of Music. She has worked in nonprofits for nearly thirty years!

Audra has a Masters in Nonprofit Management, and a PhD in Educational Leadership!

Efficient communication skills are needed for this position!

"You're going to donate to someone you trust"



Pictured: Audra Vaz



"Fundraising is all about building relationships!"



Classroom Connection: Park bench. Improvise (make up) a scene in which you are trying to convince someone to move off the park bench. You may use whatever tactics you would like, but do not touch them or invade their bubble!

Alternate Activity : You are making a sales pitch on Shark Tank. Research a cause you believe in. Write down why you believe in this cause, how much money you will need, and why! Then, you will make your sales pitch in front of the entire class.

HOUSE MANAGER

The **house manager** ensures that the theatre is kept clean before a performance, and that everything goes smoothly during a performance. This means making sure the audience is safe and respectful at all times. The house manager also directs all house staff (**ushers**, security, nurses, etc.) before, during, and after a performance. The house manager is in charge of everything that happens on our side of the curtain!

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SPOTLIGHT: Jeannie Weingarth

Jeannie holds a doctorate in Philosophy from USC as well as a Master of Arts in Teaching and a Political Science degree from Florida State University.

Jeannie is responsible for "everything from the street to the stage"

"There's a chance to have all kinds of different people be introduced to a new way of life or even understanding themselves better."

"if you don't notice us, we've done our job!"

"You have to have a love of the arts!"

Classroom Connection: Jeannie says that being a house manager requires flexibility because sometimes things just don't go according to plan. Practice that in your classroom today. Your instructor will act as house manager, and set up various stations around the classroom. Continue through class as normal, but your instructor (or your appointed "house manager") will clap their hands and you will immediately change stations and begin the next assigned task. Be flexible, smart, and work together! You have to complete everything before time is up! Your house manager will work with you to make sure everything runs smoothly and efficiently!

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE STUDENT (A SUMMARY)

Classroom Connection- Create your own DIY practice violin! This will allow you to practice like a violinist and learn the proper technique. This exercise will use an empty macaroni box or milk carton, tape, a ruler, and a violin printable (link in Violin section)

Classroom Connection- Being a musician isn't just about playing the notes, it's about the emotion behind the music. Your instructor will play any music featuring a violin. While listening to the music, paint or draw what you feel. It can simply be lines and shapes, as long as you feel the music move you!

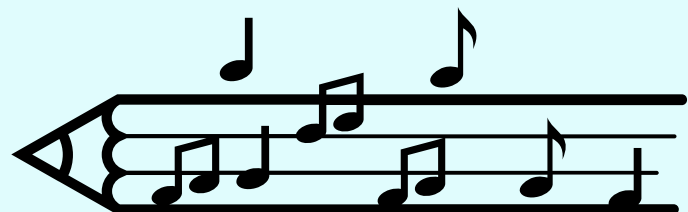
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Classroom Connection: Get up! You and your classmates will be making a “sound machine.” One at a time, you will enter the space and repeat a single sound over and over again. By the end, everyone should be up and making noise together. Congratulations, you all just composed your first piece!

Classroom Connection: Park bench. Improvise (make up) a scene in which you are trying to convince someone to do something. Do not touch them or invade their bubble!

Classroom Connection: You are making a sales pitch on Shark Tank. Research a cause you believe in. Write down why you believe in this cause, how much money you will need, and why! Then, you will make your sales pitch in front of the entire class.

Classroom Connection: Jeannie says that being a house manager requires flexibility because sometimes things just don't go to plan! Practice that in your classroom today. Continue through class as normal, but your instructor (or your appointed "house manager") will randomly yell "switch!" and you will immediately begin another task at random! Don't think about it too hard, be flexible!



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**KOGER CENTER
FOR THE ARTS**

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA