

JOURNEY IN... YEAR ONE

ENDINGS

MUSIC



This lesson's Big Ideas:

- Change—a mix of beginnings and endings—is an inevitable part of existing in this universe.
- Change brings big feelings: sometimes it feels good, sometimes it's painful.
- Change is necessary for growth.

Lesson Materials

- CD of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*
- Various musical instruments for exploration
- Lyric sheets for *Turn, Turn, Turn* by the Byrds. (attached)
- CD of *Turn, Turn, Turn* or guitar and chords, if the teacher chooses to play and sing

TEACHER REFLECTION AND PREPARATION

🕒 Ahead of time

“After silence that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music.”

- Aldous Huxley

“Listen to any musical phrase or rhythm, and grasp it as a whole, and you thereupon have present in you the image, so to speak, of the divine knowledge of the temporal order.”

- Josiah Royce

To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born and a time to die;

A time to plant and a time to reap;

A time to kill and a time to heal;

A time to destroy and a time to rebuild;

A time to cry and a time to laugh;

A time to mourn and a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones and

a time to gather stones together;

A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to get and a time to lose;

A time to keep and a time to cast away;

A time to rend and a time to sew;

A time to be quiet and a time to speak;

A time to love and a time to hate;

A time of war and a time of peace.

- Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LESSON

- If this is the students' first workshop in the Endings rotation, they may need more prompting in the discussion sections. If they've been in other workshops on past Sundays, try to make connections with what they've done and discussed in past workshops.
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YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCES: FEEDBACK AND NOTES

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GATHERING AND FOCUSING

🕒 10 minutes

Invite each child to share how quickly or slowly their life is changing right now. We'll use a metronome and musical terms for tempo to talk about this. *Tempo* is the Italian word for time. Different songs can take different time to play them. Songs can be fast or slow or medium. Here are some terms we'll use:

- *largo*—very slow
- *adagio*—gently slow
- *andante*—slow, like walking pace
- *moderato*—moderately, in between slow and fast
- *allegro*—quickly
- *presto*—very fast
- *prestissimo*—so fast it's crazy

Think about how your life feels right now. Think about home and school and vacations and weekends and sports and lessons. Are things always the same, even boring? Are things changing but in a gentle way? Is stuff happening quickly? Is your life moving so fast you can hardly keep up?

Let's listen to the metronome at each tempo. I'll ask you to raise your hand at the tempo that fits how you're feeling lately and maybe share a word or two about how things are going.

Wondering Together

- Is your life always this tempo? Can you remember a time when life felt *prestissimo*? *Largo*?
- What would music be like if it were always the same tempo?
- What would life be like if it was always the same tempo?
- Can one song have more than one tempo?
- Can one life change tempos, too?

PRIMARY ACTIVITY ONE MOVEMENTS AND SEASONS: LISTENING TO VIVALDI

🕒 10 minutes

We'll explore the changes that composers make in a work of music. Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* is a great work to start with because the contrast between movements is stark and the mood and themes of the changing seasons are accessible to young listeners.

You can decide whether to play the seasons in order or mix them up. You might ask groups to guess which season the music represents.

Listen to a short section of each movement of Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter.

Wondering Together

- Ask the children to describe what's changing in their imagination: is it the weather? the mood? something about people or animals and their activities?
- What are some things that Vivaldi changed about the music itself? The kids might list tempo, major or minor keys, instruments, melody, rhythm.
- What season(s) are favorites in your group? Why? If it had to stay one season forever, which would they pick? If that season never changed, what would they miss out on?
- The changes in the music create changes in the way we feel, too. What are some feelings that have come with big changes in our lives?
- How might music help us handle or express the big emotions that come with change?

PRIMARY ACTIVITY TWO INSTRUMENTS AS REINCARNATIONS

🕒 15 minutes

Ask the group their ideas about this statement, "Anything new must come from something old" or this one, "There can be no beginning without an ending." Do they agree? Why or why not?

We'll explore endings, beginnings, old and new with a quick discussion of instruments and their origins:

- Have each child select an instrument. Give them time to examine it quietly.
- Take turns around the circle having children imagine what each part of the instrument *used to be*. Where did it come from? What was its other life? How did it change into an instrument?
- Example: "This drum used to be lots of different things. Someone changed a tree into the body of the drum by hollowing it out and painting it. I think the head of the drum is made of goatskin. So, this part here was part of a living goat."

I wonder if someone killed the goat just to make this drum, or if the goat died for another reason? The metal for the screws used to be in the earth, deep in the rock. Someone must have melted the metal and made these parts. The rope used to be some kind of plant, maybe a tree?"

- If you choose, you the teacher can offer a response to each child, such as, "All those things changed into music."

PRIMARY ACTIVITY THREE

TURN, TURN, TURN—THE BYRDS SING ECCLESIASTES 3:1-8

🕒 15 minutes

We'll contemplate the changes in the verse from the Bible as it was set to music.

- Show the children a copy of the Bible and explain that it's divided into books. The words for our song come from a book called Ecclesiastes, a part of the Bible important to both Christians and Jews.
- Give each child a copy of the words. Read them aloud yourself, or invite a volunteer or read "popcorn" style, having each reader read a bit and then select the next volunteer.
- Ask if any of the times named in these verses have come into their lives. You might do this by show of hands or ask each child to select one of the events and tell a little about it.
- Listen to the CD. You can encourage them to sing along. They might have heard this song before and they'll likely hear it again.
- After listening, ask each child to name a "time" that was left out. What are some times that have happened in their lives that could become verses in this song? Maybe "a time to fail math" or "a time to change schools" or "a time to start dance lessons". If you have time, you might try singing an additional "kid verse".

CLOSING AND LEAVE-TAKING

🕒 2 minutes

Gather in a circle, take each other's hands and speak these words:

Just as the seed holds the beauty that the flower later shares,
and just as the acorn holds the strength that the tree later provides,
we, too, hold in our hearts the growth of our many gifts.

May we offer our gifts to each other and everyone.

Let's change the world with our kindness,
let's bless each other with compassion,
and let's grow, with all things, in love.

Amen.

- Bill Neely

Turn, Turn, Turn

To every thing, turn, turn, turn
There is a season, turn, turn, turn
And a time to every purpose under heaven

A time to be born, a time to die
A time to plant, a time to reap
A time to kill, a time to heal
A time to laugh, a time to weep

To everything, turn, turn, turn
There is a season, turn, turn, turn
And a time to every purpose under heaven

A time to build up, a time to break down
A time to dance, a time to mourn
A time to cast away stones
A time to gather stones together

To everything, turn, turn, turn
There is a season, turn, turn, turn
And a time to every purpose under heaven

A time of love, a time of hate
A time of war, a time of peace
A time you may embrace
A time to refrain from embracing

To everything, turn, turn, turn
There is a season, turn, turn, turn
And a time to every purpose under heaven

A time to gain, a time to lose
A time to rend, a time to sew
A time to love, a time to hate
A time for peace, I swear it's not too late