

ExxonMobil

DISCOVERY SERIES



Orígenes: Voice and Percussion through the Ages with Ars Lyrica Houston



ARS
LYRICA
HOUSTON

THE
HOBBY
CENTER
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

2026-2027 Season 5th Grade Curriculum Guide

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About the Performance

Orígenes | Oh-REE-he-nes

Ars Lyrica presents *Orígenes: voice and percussion through the ages*, a bilingual program curated by Mexican-born mezzo-soprano Cecilia Duarte and Spanish-born percussionist Jesús Pacheco. The program explores the development of voice and percussion instruments with a focus on Spanish and Latin American cultures. On stage, you will see a dynamic ensemble of eight performers, including four singers and four percussionists playing drums, enhanced by flashing lights and moments of darkness that highlight solo vocals, all while showcasing music that spans from the earliest forms of communication to contemporary compositions. Featured instruments include gongs, bells, vibraphones, and drums, which bring rich textures to the performance.

Students will learn how these instruments were historically used for communication, guiding people through everyday human experiences, from joyful celebrations to moments of deep sorrow and drama. From the earliest forms of musical expression to contemporary soundscapes, *Orígenes* takes the audience on a journey through time, highlighting the vibrant colors and diverse sounds of Spanish and Latin American musical heritage.



Ars Lyrica Houston

Ars Lyrica Houston specializes in music from the Baroque era, the “golden age” of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as performed on period instruments with careful attention to historical style and context. Each season, this Grammy-nominated ensemble provides audiences with world-class performances of a wide range of dramatic, sacred, and chamber works. In addition to six mainstage concerts, Ars Lyrica reaches thousands of Houstonians annually with engaging, educational programs that demystify and share the beauty of classical music. Programs are presented in partnership with local schools and organizations, including the Rothko Chapel, Houston Airport System, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, and more.



About the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts

The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts opened to the public in 2002 in downtown Houston, at the edge of the city's renowned Theater District. The district is home to several major performing arts organizations, including Houston Grand Opera, Houston Ballet, Houston Symphony, Performing Arts Houston, Theatre Under The Stars, DaCamera, and Alley Theatre. Located beside Tranquility Park and one block from Houston City Hall, the Hobby Center was named in honor of former Texas lieutenant governor and Houston businessman William P. Hobby Jr. after his family foundation made a significant contribution to the project. The Hobby Center was built on the site formerly occupied by the Houston Music Hall and Sam Houston Coliseum, both of which were demolished in 1998. Today, the Hobby Center includes three performance spaces designed specifically for theater, music, and live performance experiences:

- **Sarofim Hall** is a 2,650-seat proscenium theater designed to accommodate large-scale touring Broadway productions and major live performances. Resident companies include Theatre Under The Stars and Broadway Across America. The hall's design combines grandeur with theatrical elegance. Golden latticework frames the space, while multi-storied gold-leaf columns stand in contrast to deep midnight-blue walls. Overhead, the Joe and Lee Jamail Celestial Dome Ceiling features twinkling fiber-optic stars arranged to mirror the Texas night sky.
- **Zilkha Hall** is an intimate 500-seat "jewel-box" theater, a term used to describe smaller performance spaces designed with rich detail, warmth, and close audience connection. Home to many of Houston's local arts organizations, the hall features excellent acoustics, deep-rose tones, and walnut wood accents across two seating levels.
- **The Founders Club** is an intimate live music venue with cabaret-style seating. Guests may purchase tables of four or be seated with others, creating a social and relaxed atmosphere. The series features both local performers and nationally recognized artists in a format not commonly found in Houston. Concerts span a variety of genres, including Broadway songbook, jazz, and world music.

ExxonMobil DISCOVERY SERIES

The ExxonMobil Discovery Series is the Hobby Center's flagship education program, welcoming 5th grade students from across Houston to experience live performances by local and touring artists. Aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the series brings dance, music, and theater to life in ways that connect directly to what students are learning in the classroom. Every performance is free—including transportation—and includes curriculum materials and artist Q&As that deepen the experience.

For the 2026-27 school year, the Hobby Center is thrilled to be partnering with 22+ school districts to serve nearly 50,000 5th graders.

Special thanks to lead underwriter ExxonMobil and generous supporters: Cullen Trust for the Performing Arts, Elkins Foundation, George and Mary Josephine Hamman Foundation, Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, The John M. O'Quinn Foundation, Texas Commission on the Arts, H-E-B, Vivian L. Smith Foundation, and Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion

Theater Etiquette

Before you come to the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Please take some time to talk with your students about what to expect. Going to a live performance is a group experience unlike any other, and many students are more familiar with going to the movies or sporting events. Please help them prepare for what they'll see and how they should act. Other things to Keep in Mind: Make sure your students use the restroom before they leave school or at the theater before the show. If you get up during the performance, you may miss the best part! The performance runs approximately one hour long with no intermission. In entering or exiting the theater, safety is the primary concern. Please follow instructions from the house managers and ushers in taking your seats.

Going to a performance is different than going to a movie:

- This production is performed live. The performers can see, hear and react to the audience!
- Audience members can show the performers when they appreciate their performance! If something is funny, you can laugh! If the performers are doing a great job, then you can clap!
- Sometimes, the performers will ask you to participate by singing or clapping; please do not talk unless the performers ask you to!
- At the end of the show, the performers will bow. This is called a curtain call. If you really loved the show, you can give them a standing ovation to show that you appreciate their hard work!
- School clothes are appropriate, but some people like to dress up to go to the theater. Just make sure you are comfortable.

Going to a performance is the same as going to a movie:

- The lights dim before the performance begins and the theater stays dark during the show.
- Audience members are expected to stay quiet in their seats during the performance.
- Audience members may NOT take any pictures or video during the performance. (This is distracting to the performers and other audience members and this show contains copyrighted artistic material.)
- All cell phones and other electronic devices should be powered OFF or put on SILENT as soon as you enter the theater.

VISIT RESTROOM BEFORE - NOT DURING.

ARRIVE EARLY.

QUIET & SEATED DURING SHOW.

NO PHOTOS OR VIDEOS DURING SHOW.

PHONES OFF/SILENCED.

RESPECT THE SPACE & OTHERS.

LISTEN & ENGAGE.

APPLAUD APPROPRIATELY.

Vocabulary

- **Atonal** - Music that does not have a clear key or 'home' note. This music usually sounds dissonant and harsh.
- **Cancionero (kahn-see-oh-NEH-roh)** - A Spanish or Portuguese collection of songs and poems usually by several authors.
- **Composer** - A person who writes and creates music. Just like an author writes stories, a composer comes up with musical ideas and organizes them into songs or pieces of music for people to play or sing.
- **Curupira (koo-roo-PEE-rah)** - A creature of Brazilian folklore and mythology. It is an entity that protects the forests and animals from hunters.
- **Drone** - Where a note is continuously sounded throughout most or all of a piece.
- **Fugue** - A piece of music where multiple melodies are interwoven based on a single main idea.
- **Harmony** - The sound of two or more pitches that complement one another.
- **Monody** - A song with one melodic line.
- **Náhuatl (NAH-wahtl)** - A language or group of languages of the Uto-Aztecan language family.
- **Octet** - An ensemble of any instrument made up of eight people.
- **Pitch** - How high or how low a note sounds.
- **Polyphony** - Two or more melodies playing at the same time.
- **Quartet** - An ensemble of any instrument made up of four people.
- **Sacred music** - Music used in church.
- **Secular music** - Music intended for a non-religious audience - ex. Pop music by Taylor Swift.
- **Tonal** - Music that does not have a clear key or 'home' note. This music usually sounds dissonant and harsh.
- **Tuning an instrument** - The process of adjusting the pitch of one or many tones to make it sound more pleasing.
- **Uirapuru (wee-rah-poo-ROO)** - A Brazilian songbird that is supposed to bring good luck in love. It is a common symbol in Brazilian folklore.
- **Vibrato** - A slight variation in pitch when singing or playing some musical instruments.



Curupira (koo-roo-PEE-rah)



Uirapuru (wee-rah-poo-ROO)

PRE-SHOW

DISCUSSION

Discuss

- What do you think was the very first instrument that ever existed?
- If you could choose any instrument to play, what would it be and why?
- Do you think music can express feelings that words can't? Can you think of a time when music spoke to you without words?

Explore Composers & Compositions



Juan del Encina (c. 1468–1530) Salamanca, Spain - A composer from Spain during the Renaissance, known for happy songs called Villancicos about secular and religious themes.



Gaspar Fernandes (c. 1566–1629) Mexico City, Mexico - A Spanish composer mixing European music with Indigenous influences.



Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) Eisenach, Germany - A Baroque composer known for creating complex, layered music like fugues, using patterns and structure to build intricate soundscapes.



Codex Truxillo (c. 1700) Trujillo, Peru - An old music book from Peru that shows how Indigenous, Spanish, and African cultures created new music together.



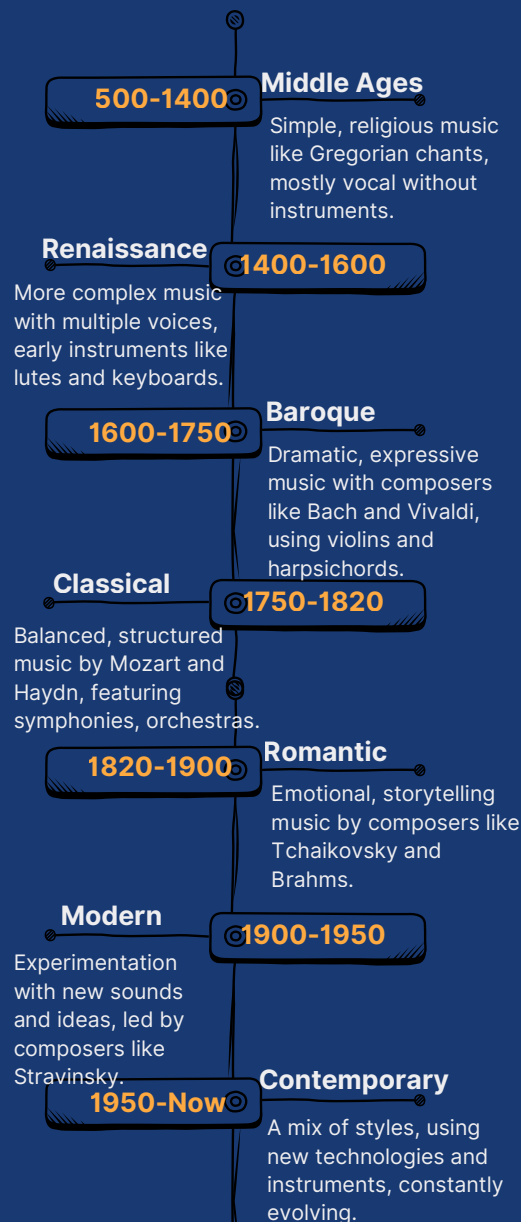
Ney Rosauro (b. 1950) Brasilia, Brazil - A Brazilian composer who writes music for drums and percussion, using ideas from Brazilian culture.



David Hanlon (b. 1971) Austin, Texas - An American composer from Texas who mixes folk and popular music to create fun songs that people enjoy.

Classical Music Timeline

Early Music is made up of the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque periods. This performance has music from all of those periods AND contemporary music, which is music composed AFTER 1950.



SCAN

[Watch a Brief Introduction to Musical Periods](#)

PRE-SHOW

ACTIVITY

World Map Activity

- Find the homes of each composer on a map



Composer Name Bank

- Juan del Encina
- Codex Truxillo
- Gaspar Fernandes
- David Hanlon
- Johann Sebastian Bach
- Ney Rosaura

PRE-SHOW

PRINTABLE ACTIVITY

Worksheet - Instrument Matching Game

Name: _____

Date: _____

PART 1: Instructions

Listen to the sounds as the teacher plays them. (teacher will click or scan)

Look at the pictures of the instruments

Draw a line from the instrument photo to the sound you think it makes!



Slide
Whistle



Tambourine



Marimba



Medieval Drum



Thunder
Sheet



Bongos



Timpani Drums



Sound 1

Sound 2



Sound 3

Sound 4



Sound 5

Sound 6



Sound 7

PART 2: Reflection

Which sound surprised you the most? Which instrument do you think is the most fun to play?

FIFTH GRADE

TEKS

Alignment

ELAR & READING- \$110.7

TEKS: *Comprehension, Response, Author's Purpose*

Student Learning Connection:
Students interpret narrative and theme through music, voice, lyrics, and staging while discussing how performers communicate meaning.

Science - \$112.7

TEKS: *Force, Motion, and Energy*

Student Learning Connection:
Students investigate how sound is created through vibration and observe how instruments produce different pitch, volume, and tone.

Mathematics - \$111.7

TEKS: *Algebraic Reasoning; Data Analysis*

Student Learning Connection:
Students identify rhythmic patterns, repeated musical structures, tempo, sequencing, and mathematical relationships in music.

Social Studies - \$113.16

TEKS: *History; Culture*

Student Learning Connection:
Students examine how music reflects culture, history, and traditions across Spain, Mexico, Peru, Brazil, and the United States.

LOTE - \$114.4

TEKS: *Languages other than English*

Student Learning Connection:
Students recognize connections between language, music, and culture through Spanish-language songs and vocabulary.

Health - \$115.17

TEKS: *Health Education and SEL*

Student Learning Connection:
Students recognize emotions expressed through music, develop empathy, and reflect on how artistic expression communicates human experiences.

Music - \$117.118

TEKS: *Fine Arts and Music*

Student Learning Connection:
Students analyze rhythm, melody, instrumentation, historical context, and respond thoughtfully to live musical performance.

FIFTH GRADE

STAAR Alignment



RLA

STAAR Reporting Category:

Comprehension; Author's Purpose & Craft

Student Learning Connection

Analyze how performers communicate story, mood, and meaning through music and performance.

Mathematics

STAAR Reporting Category:

Algebraic Reasoning; Data Analysis

Student Learning Connection

Recognize patterns, sequencing, and mathematical relationships found in rhythm and musical structure.

Science

STAAR Reporting Category:

Force, Motion & Energy

Student Learning Connection

Investigate sound energy, vibration, and how instruments create and transmit sound.

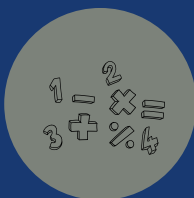
FIFTH GRADE Curriculum Connections



English Language Arts

In The Classroom

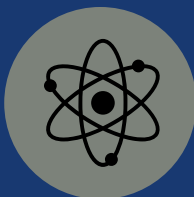
Use the performance to compare how stories are communicated through music, movement, and spoken language. Have students analyze mood, theme, point of view, or symbolism, then write a response explaining how the performers communicated meaning without relying on traditional dialogue.



Mathematics

In The Classroom

Connect rhythm to mathematical thinking by exploring patterns, fractions, sequencing, tempo, and repetition. Students can create rhythmic compositions, identify repeating patterns, or compare note values using fraction concepts.



Science

In The Classroom

Extend the performance into investigations of sound energy. Students can experiment with vibrations, pitch, volume, resonance, and the properties of different materials to explain how percussion instruments produce sound.



Social Studies

In The Classroom

Use the featured composers and musical traditions to explore how geography, history, and culture influence artistic expression. Compare musical traditions from Spain, Mexico, Peru, Brazil, and the United States and discuss how cultures exchange ideas over time.



Health / SEL

In The Classroom

Invite students to reflect on how music communicates emotion, builds community, and preserves cultural identity. Discussion and journaling activities help students connect emotional expression with empathy, self-awareness, and respectful listening.

Discussion



Performance Reflection

- What moment from *Orígenes* stayed with you the most? Why?
- How did the performers use voice, percussion, lighting, or movement to tell a story?
- Did anything surprise you about the performance?

Emotional Connections

- Which piece made you feel the strongest emotion?
- How did the performers communicate emotion without using many words?
- Why do you think music can help people express feelings across cultures?



Culture & Community



- What did this performance teach you about Spanish and Latin American cultures?
- Why is it important to preserve music and traditions from different cultures?
- How does music connect people from different places and time periods?

Careers in the Arts

- Besides the singers and percussionists, what other careers do you think helped bring this performance to life?
- Which arts career would you be most interested in exploring and why?
- What skills do musicians, lighting designers, sound engineers, stage managers, or composers need to be successful?



POST-SHOW Activities

Listen & Compare

- **Hear the Music Again**

Scan the QR code to revisit one piece from *Orígenes*. As you listen, identify one instrument, one emotion, and one musical element (tempo, dynamics, rhythm, or pitch) that stood out. Share your observations with a partner.



SCAN HERE



Reflection Writing

- **Music Tells a Story**

Write one paragraph describing the story you think *Orígenes* told. Support your ideas with examples from the music, performers, lighting, or instruments you observed.

Language & Culture

- **Musical Vocabulary**

Choose three vocabulary words from this guide (such as vibrato, polyphony, or fugue). Explain each word in your own words and describe where you noticed it during the performance.



Create & Perform

- **Create a Soundscape**

Working in small groups, use body percussion, classroom instruments, or your voices to create a short soundscape that represents a place, celebration, weather event, or emotion. Perform it for the class and explain your creative choices.



Career Spotlight

- **Explore Performing Arts Careers**

Choose one career involved in *Orígenes*, such as performer, composer, percussionist, lighting designer, stage manager, sound engineer, producer, or arts educator. Research what that person does and identify one skill they need to be successful. Share your findings with the class.



INSTRUMENT INVESTIGATOR

Research a Musical Instrument from *Orígenes*

Choose one instrument you saw or heard during the performance.

Investigate its sound, history, and cultural importance.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 CHOOSE AN INSTRUMENT

Pick one instrument you saw or heard during the show.

INSTRUMENT NAME: _____

I remember... ☐ seeing it ☐ hearing it ☐ both

2 ORIGIN & CULTURE

Research where the instrument comes from and why it is important.



COUNTRY OR REGION



WHEN OR WHERE IS IT PLAYED?



CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

3 HOW IS IT PLAYED?



Describe how the musician produces sound.

☐ STRUCK

☐ PLUCKED

☐ BLOWN

☐ SHAKEN

The instrument can sound: ☐ HIGH ☐ LOW ☐ BOTH

What vibrates to create the sound?

Describe its sound using three words:

4 DRAW & LABEL IT

Draw the instrument. Label at least three important parts.



5 SHARE YOUR DISCOVERY

Use your research to prepare a short class presentation.

- ☐ I named the instrument.
- ☐ I explained where it comes from.
- ☐ I described how it makes sound.
- ☐ I shared why it matters to its culture.

THE MOST INTERESTING THING I LEARNED:

FIFTH GRADE RESOURCES

Books



"The Crossover" by Kwame Alexander

This dynamic novel-in-verse tells the story of twin brothers and their love for basketball and music. It delves into themes of family, identity, and self-expression, paralleling the journey of cultural exploration presented in *Orígenes*.



"Maria's Magical Music Adventure" by Emma Kent Wine

This enchanting bilingual book follows Maria on a magical journey of self-discovery. It echoes the themes of *Orígenes*, highlighting personal growth and cultural exploration through music.

Websites

National Endowment for the Arts



Offers resources on music and arts education, including lesson plans and funding opportunities.

Link: [NEA Arts Education](#)

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings



A collection of music from around the world, including traditional music of various cultures.

Link: [Folkways](#)

PBS LearningMedia



A resource with videos and interactive lessons about music and culture.

Link: [PBS LearningMedia](#)

Music Together



An interactive website that offers resources on music and movement, providing foundational music education.

Link: [Music Together](#)

CONNECT WITH US

thehobbycenter.org/education

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Let us know what you think.
Please take our survey!



[Post-Show
Student Survey](#)



[Post-Show
Teacher Survey](#)