

Musical Stories



Lesson – *Listening Scavenger Hunt in Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks*

Companion Video – *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks*

Suggested Grade Level

Grades 1-4

Grades 5-8

Objective

BPO double bassist, Brett Shurtliffe, wrote a narrative to the music in Richard Strauss’ *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks*, which tells the tale of a mischievous boy who enjoyed playing pranks on the townsfolk in his village. Students will listen to excerpts from *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks* and identify where the main theme appears and what instrument(s) are used to convey the theme. Students will describe the musical sounds they hear and be able to relate the sounds to scenes in the story.

Suggested Materials

- BPO video of excerpts from *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks*
- *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks* text (provided)
- Scavenger hunt list of Musical Sounds & Listening Guide (provided)

New York State Arts Standards

MU:Re7.1.1a-4a VA:Cr1.2.1a-4a

MU:Re8.1.1a-4a VA:Cr2.1.1a-4a

VA:Cr2.3.1a-4a

New York State English Language Arts & Literacy Standards

Speaking & Listening, Standard 2 & 4

Language, Standard 3

Procedure

- 1) Music can illustrate a story and evoke emotions that describe people, places, or things. *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks* tells the story of Till and the many pranks he likes to play on the townsfolk. In music, a **theme** consists of a recognizable melody or characteristic rhythmic pattern. Till’s laughter is represented throughout the excerpt by various instruments.
- 2) Play the excerpt of Till’s laugh theme, which first appears in the clarinet (Time stamp: 1:30), for students to become familiar with.



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- 3) Students will use the accompanying list of musical sounds to follow Till's theme throughout the excerpts. The accompanying Listening Guide highlights twelve musical scenes in which Till's laughter theme can be heard.
 - a) **For Grades 1-4:** Play through the recording and have students match the appropriate musical sound(s) to each scene in the Listening Guide as they follow along. Each time stamp marks when a musical sound(s) can be heard.
 - b) **For Grades 5-8:** Have students listen through the recorded excerpts and use the accompanying list of musical sounds to identify the scene in which each musical sound occurs. See how many sounds students can find upon their first listening and have them list the scenes in which these sounds can be heard. For their second listening, students may reference the Listening Guide to double check their findings.

Extended Learning

As they listen to the recorded excerpts, have students select a scene and draw a picture of what they imagine the scene would look like. How did the music shape their drawing? What images came to mind when they heard the music?



Listening Guide

- Scene 1: Introduction
- Scene 2: First appearance of Till’s laughter theme (Time stamp: 1:30)
- Scene 3: Till at the market (Time stamps: 1:54; 2:00; 2:02; 2:10)
- Scene 4: Till at church (Time stamp: 2:46)
- Scene 5: Till as the King (Time stamp: 3:55)
- Scene 6: Till dumps water on people (Time stamp: 4:15)
- Scene 7: Till as a teacher (Time stamps: 4:50; 5:05; 5:10)
- Scene 8: Till whistles a tune (Time stamp: 5:30)
- Scene 9: Till is chased by the townsfolk (Time stamp: 6:12)
- Scene 10: Till’s trial (Time stamps: 6:49; 6:57)
- Scene 11: Till in jail (Time stamp: 7:28)
- Scene 12: Till escapes (Time stamp: 8:21)

Musical Sounds

- A. Till’s laugh in Clarinet
- B. Instruments sound like carts turning over
- C. Till’s laugh in Bassoon
- D. Till’s laugh in French horn
- E. Till’s laugh in Violin
- F. Till’s laugh in Double Bass
- G. Violin sounds like falling water
- H. Double bass sounds like a drum
- I. Clarinet sounds like crying



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Narrative Text

Scene 1: Time stamp- 0:32 Once upon a time, there was a mischievous little lad named Till Eulenspiegel. He loved to play pranks on the townsfolk in his village. While most of his pranks were silly and harmless, some were nasty and mean. Soon, Till found himself getting into trouble.

Scene 2: Time stamp- 0:46 Our young lad, Till Eulenspiegel loved to play pranks and tricks all day. With mischief, mayhem and a loud clear laugh, through life he joked his way.

Time stamp- 1:30 [Till's laughter theme heard in the clarinet]

Scene 3: Time stamp- 1:35 When Till went to the market, he overturned the peddlers' carts. He spilled the beans, he bruised the fruit, and ate up all the baker's tarts.

Time stamp- 2:00 [Till's laughter theme heard in the bassoon]

Time stamp- 2:02 [Till's laughter theme heard in the French horn]

Time stamp- 2:10 [Till's laughter theme heard in the violin and all other instruments]

Scene 4: Time stamp- 2:30 A saintly priest, young Till becomes, to trick the pious people. His sermon full of puns and jokes gets him chased from the Cathedral.

Time stamp- 2:46 [Till's laughter theme heard in the bassoon and double bass, followed by the clarinet]

Scene 5: Time stamp- 3:08 In royal robes we find naughty Till, giving out orders as the King. But the crowd soon realizes it isn't him and rotten vegetables they start to fling.

Time stamp- 3:55 [Till's laughter theme heard in the clarinet]

Scene 6: Time stamp- 4:05 From the top of the bridge Till turns on the hose and douses the heads of the people below.

Time stamp- 4:15 [Till's laughter theme heard in the violin]

Scene 7: Time stamp- 4:37 Till the schoolteacher tells all kinds of lies, like, "We look with our noses and smell with our eyes!"

Scene 8: Time stamp- 5:19 Till whistles a tune as he strolls down the trail, but the people he's tricked want to put poor Till in jail.

Time stamp- 5:30 [Till's whistle heard in the violin and clarinet]

Scene 9: Time stamp- 6:00 Till runs for his life as he is chased by the townsfolk. Will they capture him? Imprison him? Will he pay for his jokes?

Time stamp- 6:12 [Till's original theme from the beginning heard in the French horn]

Time stamp- 6:20 [The bassoon sounds like hooves and footsteps of angry people]



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Scene 10: Time stamp- 6:34 The drum beats loudly as Till is taken to court. He wails and he cries, "It was all done in sport!"

Time stamp- 6:49 [The double bass sounds like a snare drum beat]

Time stamp- 6:57 [Till's cry heard in the clarinet]

Scene 11: Time stamp- 7:13 Till sits in prison, sorry for what he's done. He just wanted to spread cheer and not hurt anyone.

Scene 12: Time stamp- 8:00 With one hidden pin, Till picks open the lock. He creeps out of the hallway past the guards he once mocked and out into the open. He hoots and gives thanks and vows nevermore to trick or play pranks.

Time stamp- 8:21 [Till's laughter theme heard in the clarinet and violin as he runs away]

