REDISCOVERED COMPOSERS

UKRI — Arts and Humanities Research Council

BBC RADIO 3

BBC Philharmonic

KEY STAGE 3 LESSON PLAN
By Rachel Shapey

Sinfonie Concertante Op. 13, No.1 in E flat major
by
JOSEPH BOLOGNE CHEVALIER DE SAINT GEORGES

Background information

Joseph Bologne Chevalier de Saint Georges (1745 - 1799) was born in Guadeloupe, the son of a wealthy plantation owner and a slave. Bologne was the first known 'classical' composer of African ancestry. At the age of seven his father took him to France where he was educated. Bologne became a virtuoso violinist and later wrote numerous compositions. He demonstrated great skill as a conductor, directing one of the leading orchestras in Paris, where he performed his own concertos and impressed the audiences with his improvisation skills. Not only was Joseph Bologne an accomplished musician but he was also admired for his sportsmanship - he was a keen horse rider and champion fencer.

Learning outcomes

Learners will:

- **LISTEN** to *Sinfonie Concertante Op.13, No.1 in E flat major* and discuss the musical style, atmosphere, and key musical features.
- Use level-appropriate technical vocabulary to describe different aspects of the music.
- **PERFORM** the opening theme from Bologne's *Sinfonie Concertante Op. 13, No.1 in E flat major*, on keyboards (the arrangement is available in both E flat major and F major for this task) in pairs or as a class ensemble.
- Learn / refresh staff notation reading skills through following and playing the different parts.
- **COMPOSE** a musical conversation.
- Explore practically the key terms: tonic, dominant, phrase and chords.
- Collaboratively create a whole-class rondo

Key words

Tonic
Dominant
Antecedent
Consequent
Phrase
Alberti bass
Solo
Accompaniment
Melody
Rondo

LISTENING ACTIVITY

🔊 Play the music on the BBC Philharmonic website and ask pupils the following questions:

Choose two adjectives from the word bank to describe the atmosphere created by this music. Encourage pupils to also add their own adjectives.

Word Bank		
Elegant	Angry	Confused
Boisterous	Poised	Dark
Calm	Mournful	Creepy

Choose one of the following scenarios where you think this music would be suitable to play:
A.   A night club
B.   An afternoon tea garden party
C.   An art gallery
D.   A 6 year old's skate-boarding party

Give a musical reason for your answer.

General questions:

1) Which orchestral family of instruments is playing?

Percussion   Woodwind   Strings   Brass

2) Identify the solo instrument playing the main theme at 02:05

3) The tempo of the music is marked 'Allegro'. Choose the correct definition below:

Very slow	Steady walking pace	Fast

4) What happens to the dynamics at 00:26 – 00:36?

Reading staff notation task:

Play the opening of the music and whilst it is playing, show pupils the melody in staff notation on a handout or displayed on the whiteboard. Explain that Joseph Bologne would have used staff notation to write down his music for musicians to perform.

Play the music again and ask pupils the following questions (they can highlight the score handout or annotate the board image):

- Highlight two bars with exactly the same rhythm.
- In bar 3, is the pitch of the first four quavers going up or down?
- Circle the time signature.
- How many beats are in each bar?
- Circle a bar containing a semibreve.
- What does a dot after a note (bars 2 and 5) mean?

PERFORMING ACTIVITY

Using the differentiated arrangements of Bologne's *Symphonie Concertante Op.1 No.1* **(found at the bottom of this document)**, pupils can learn to play the parts on the keyboard for a class performance.

Parts have been written to work together in a whole class context. All parts can be played on the keyboard and on appropriate concert C instruments.

For the simplest arrangement, use violin 1, violin 2 and cello 1 parts. To add more difficulty, include the piano part and cello 2.

- Start with the violin 2 part. To reinforce staff notation reading skills, play the line on the piano at the front of the class and play a game of 'which note have I stopped on?'
- Continue the activity with the main melody (violin 1) and then the bass line (cello 1).
- Ask pupils to learn each part in turn on keyboards using an appropriate instrument sound setting.
- Some pupils might learn the piano and Alberti bass parts. The Alberti bass was a regular feature of keyboard music from the classical era (note: this has been added into the arrangement as it is intended for keyboard use, and was not part of Bologne's original composition)
- It might be helpful to use an amplified metronome to keep everyone in time.
- In pairs pupils can put different parts together. Then try a whole class performance!

COMPOSING: MUSICAL CONVERSATIONS

Short composing tasks
Using the example below as a starting point, pupils compose musical phrases in a classical style. This can either be done in pairs: pupil 1 composes the question phrase; pupil 2 creates the answering phrase, or individually.

Classical melodies use balanced, even phrases. It can be helpful to describe a phrase as a 'musical sentence'. In the case of Sinfonie Concertante in E flat major, the phrases in the opening section are 4 bars long.

Revisiting work on time signatures might be helpful here.

- Give pupils a C major scale and ask them to play it on keyboards or other melodic instruments.
- After demonstrating some examples of simple melodic phrases, ask pupils to compose their own 2-bar 'question' (or antecedent) phrases using only notes from the C major scale.
- To aid the process of adding chords, it is helpful if the melody starts on one of the notes from the tonic triad (C E G).
- To encourage simplicity you might wish to limit the number of notes or provide rhythmic frameworks as a starting point.
- Discuss tonic and dominant and how these notes help to make the key clear.
- You can ask pupils to choose a pitch direction for the question phrase; the 'answer' phrase can go in the opposite direction.

Question phrase example:

Now ask pupils to create an 'answer' (or consequent) phrase. This will go in the opposite direction to the question and will end on the tonic.

This could be done in pairs with one pupil writing the answer phrase for another.

 Answer phrase example:

Class Rondo
A rondo is an instrumental form introduced in the classical period and consists of an opening section (A) which alternates with contrasting sections.
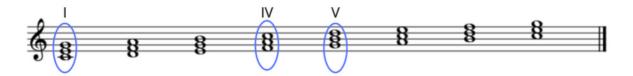
Create an extended class rondo with pupils playing keyboards on orchestral sound settings. Everyone learns one phrase that keeps returning (the given example could be used), with pupil pairs providing the alternating sections. Some pupils could compose phrases in the relative minor (A minor) or dominant (G major) to add variety to the class piece. Invite pupils who learn an instrument to join in using their instruments.

Chords
Explore harmony: use of tonic (I) and dominant (V) chords.

Introduce / recap chords and triads
Display a C major scale with triads and highlight chords I, IV and V (the strongest chords to use). Link to any work done on chords in popular contemporary music.

Using the example below, demonstrate how these chords can accompany a melody. Encourage pupils to use the melody notes on the strong beats of the bar to harmonise. Deliberately play some wrong chords to help pupils to hear the correct harmonisation.
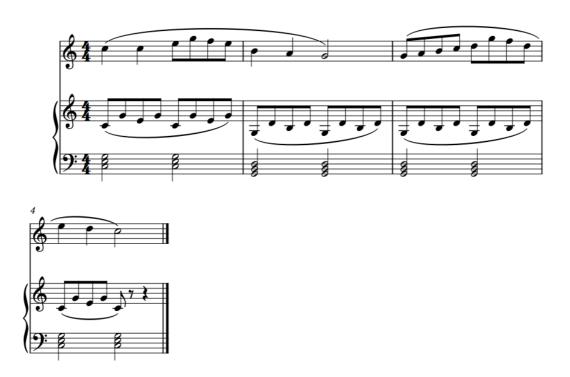

Pupils add chords I, IV & V to their melodic phrases.

If appropriate, discuss chord inversions and demonstrate how the triad notes can be rearranged to offer a different bass line and varied chord choices.

Extension

Consider the prominent use of broken chord accompaniment in 18th century keyboard music, (the Alberti bass).

Demonstrate how the 'block' chords can be broken up into a moving quaver accompaniment using the pattern: lowest – highest – middle – highest.

Taking it further

Explore the classical string orchestra that Joseph Bologne was composing for and encourage pupils to research a string instrument of their choice. Invite VMTs (Visiting Music Teachers) to demonstrate how their instruments work and arrange for the class to either see a live or video orchestral performance.

Melody

Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in E flat

Allegro

Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in F

Allegretto ♩ = 112

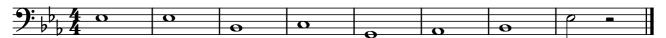## Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in E flat

Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in F

Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in E flat

Allegro

Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in F

Allegretto ♩ = 112

Alberti Bass

Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in E flat

Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in F

Piano

Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in E flat

Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in F
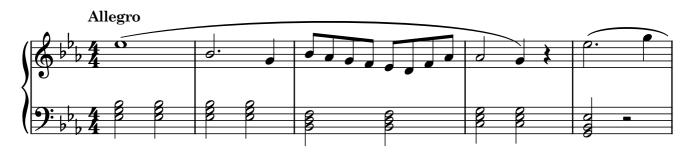
Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in E flat
SCORE

Arranged by Rachel Shapey

Bologne Concertante Classroom Arrangement in F
Score

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