

The Runaway Strings

The *Teddy Bear Series* video, *The Runaway Strings* by Victoria Griswold, is an adventure-filled tale of a quartet of string instruments who run away to see the world by making themselves into different forms of transportation. Young children are invited to move along to music, listen to a story, and watch five musicians from the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra perform. *The Runaway Strings* video introduces the violin, viola, cello, and horn. The story highlights the concept of music's power to transport all of us through imagination. The works of Grieg, Mozart, Wagner, and Strauss are performed in addition to the traditional Bicycle Built for Two.

Instrument Introductions

The instruments you'll meet first are all members of the string family.

Violin (*vai-uh-lin*), **Viola** (*vee-oh-luh*), and **Cello** (*cheh-low*) are all part of the string family. They are all made of wood, have 4 strings, and use a bow (*rhymes with go*) to draw out the sound.



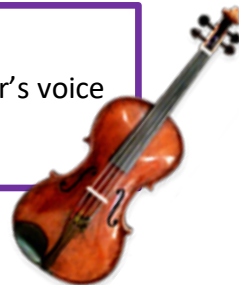
Violin

The violin is the smallest and sounds like a little sister's voice. It is played by holding it under the chin.



Viola

The viola is bigger with a sound like a mother's voice and it is also held under the chin.



Cello

The cello is much bigger. It sounds like a big brother's voice, and is played sitting down and holding the instrument between the knees.





A **string quartet** has two violins, one viola, and one cello. Many works have been written for string quartet since the 1750's when Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809, pronounced *High-den*) made it popular. It is still used today by composers. Augusta Read Thomas (1964-) wrote *Helix Spirals* for string quartet in 2015. The opening uses a technique called “pizzicato” where the strings are plucked with one finger creating a sound similar to a guitar.

[Watch a performance of Helix Spirals here](#)

Help Us Tell the Story!

We like to move to the music! Help us tell the story of *The Runaway Strings* by learning the movements used throughout the video.

Rocket Launch | Bring hands together in prayer formation to make a rocket. With feet in a wide stance, slowly bend knees. Launch rocket by straightening up and shooting hands up over your head.

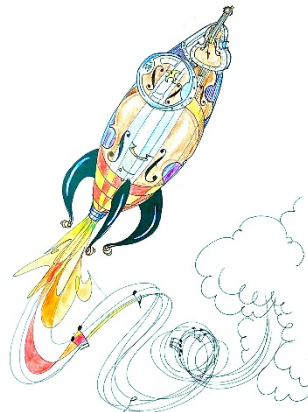
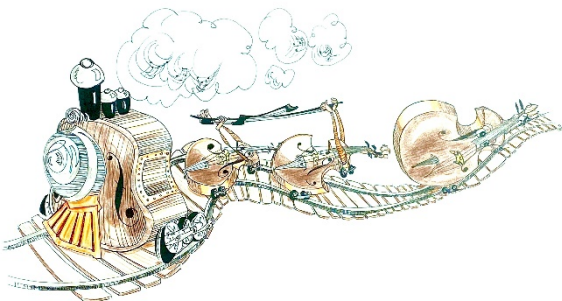
Ocean | Paddle arms and hands in a swimming motion. Raise hands to the sky for waves.

Bicycle | Make fists and rotate them around each other in front of your body to make a bicycle wheel.

Sled | With arms straight and hands reaching to the sky, lean slightly backwards, sideways, forward, and mix it up to make a wild sleigh ride.

Train | With arms at your side, bend your elbows and make a fist. Rotate fists at your sides to make train wheels.

Balloon | Long inhales and long exhales



What Was Your Favorite?

Discussion Topics for the Classroom

1. Which instrument did you like best? Violin, Viola, Cello, or Horn? Why?
2. What was your favorite music from the video? Rocket, Ocean, Bicycle, Sled, Train, Home, Horn Call, or Finale?
3. If you could go anywhere right now, where would you go? Sky, ocean, forest, mountain, or desert? In a rocket, boat, bicycle, sled, train, or hot air balloon? Did the music make you think of these things or something else?
4. Do you go places or see things in your mind when you listen to music?



A surprise instrument, the **horn** arrived near the end of our story. The horn is part of the brass family of instruments. Brass instruments are made of metal and are played by blowing air into them.

Did You Know? There is a problem with “French” horn. They’re actually German! All professionals and all countries except U.S., Britain, and Canada simply use “horn”. There is no clear theory on how it came to be, but many believe the name started because of French hunting horns that were brought to Germany a long time ago.



Meet the Musicians



Victoria Kintner
Griswold, violin



Peter Vickery, violin



Amy Kniffen, viola



Julie Beckel, horn



Nick Donatelle, cello

The musicians featured in *The Runaway Strings* are all members of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. These musicians are available for live Zoom Q&A sessions for an additional fee. They would love to meet your class and answer questions about their instrument and how they came to be professional musicians.

To schedule your Zoom Q&A or for additional questions, please email concertadventuresindy@gmail.com.

Activity Sheet #1

Step 1) Circle your favorite instrument from *The Runaway Strings*.

Step 2) Write a 1 on the line next to your favorite instrument, a 2 next to your next favorite, and so on until each instrument has a number.



Violin



Horn



Viola



Cello

Activity Sheet #2

Can you name each of these instruments from *The Runaway Strings*. Write their names in the boxes.



Activity Sheet #3

Color this illustration from *The Runaway Strings*.



Activity Sheet #4

Cut out the instruments from *The Runaway Strings* and create your own artwork for the story by putting them in a scene!



Complete Musical Works from the Video:

Intro

“Introduction and Lion’s Royal March” by Saint-Saens

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9P1LOBepcY>

Rocket

“Also Sprach Zarathustra” by Strauss (Also known as 2001: A Space Odyssey)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Szdziv4tI9o>

Ocean

“The Flying Dutchman Overture” by Wagner

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cum3HoVhMIs>

Bicycle

“Daisy Bell”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w98l2EFR6dE>

Sled

“Die Musikalische Schlittenfahrt” by L. Mozart

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3j4-Ny DDS4>

Train

“The Holberg Suite” by Grieg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sqtnsY69RQc>

Balloon

“1812 Overture” by Tchaikovsky

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIbCakDfXfE>

Horn Call

“Siegfried Horn Call” by Wagner

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUGxh53KUac>

Home

“On the Banks of the Wabash, Far Away” by Dresser

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-FwwNDCUKE>

Finale

“Concerto for Horn in Eb” by W.A. Mozart

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jT67unfTJcU>