

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Beauty and the Beast Music Activities

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The Music

The score for *Beauty and the Beast* is a compilation of excerpts of works by Pyotr I. Tchaikovsky, which were arranged by Earl Bernard Murray when the ballet was created in the 1950s. The works include Symphonies Nos. 1, 2, and 3; Orchestral Suites Nos. 1, 2, and 3; and *The Storm*, Opus 76.

While the music for the *Beauty and the Beast* was not composed as a ballet, the music works seamlessly together and has the effect of a ballet score. In his lifetime Tchaikovsky composed just three scores for ballets, all of which are masterworks of the genre: *Swan Lake* (1877), *The Sleeping Beauty* (1890) and *The Nutcracker* (1892). Learn more about Tchaikovsky online at [Encyclopedia Britannica](#).

Musical Highlights and Activities

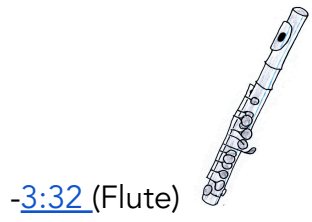
Beauty and the Beast is structurally framed with Tchaikovsky's [Orchestral Suite No.3 in G](#). The ballet not only begins and ends with sections of Orchestral Suite No. 3, but pieces are used throughout the middle of the ballet to create a musical throughline.

I. Overture

The ballet opens with [Movement I: Élegie](#), known for the sweetness of the melodic line. It starts out gently and becomes increasingly passionate as the forest of the ballet begins to come alive.

An overture is a musical introduction to a ballet that sets the mood and introduces themes that will be shown in the performance.

What instruments are featured at the following points?



Think about how the music introduces the story you are about to watch. If you had to assign each of the following characters to one of these instruments, who would you choose for each and why? Write words next to the instruments that describe the quality of sound in each of the instruments. How do these qualities relate to the character?

- Beauty
- Beast
- Bluebirds
- Beauty's father

II. The Forest

This music is from [Symphony I, Movement III \(Scherzo\)](#) and is played while Beauty and her father explore the Enchanted Forest and see The Beast for the first time. Contrast this style of music with what you just heard in the Overture. Describe the differences. Is this music *staccato* or *legato*? Where do you hear *pizzicato*? Demonstrate how you would move your body to these styles of music and describe why you chose that movement.

Vocabulary:

- *Staccato* - Musical notes that are sharply detached or separated from others
- *Legato* - A smooth and flowing style of music where there is no break between notes
- *Pizzicato* - a term for string instruments where the strings are plucked with the fingers instead of using the bow

III. The Transformation



The first minute of ["The Storm"](#) by Tchaikovsky is used during The Beast's transformation into The Prince. A new instrument is featured in this section - the timpani. Listen for it [here](#). Draw a picture of an image this music brings to mind or write about how it makes you feel. Why is it a good instrument to use in this scene?

IV. Beauty's Variation

[Gavotte from Suite for Orchestra No. 1](#) plays while Beauty dances alone in the garden after the Beast banishes her father. We again hear the instrument that choreographer Lew Christiansen often uses to represent Beauty (violin). While the solo happens, what musical technique are the lower string instruments using? (*pizzicato*). Describe the kind of movement you imagine Beauty performing to this music and why.

V. Wedding

[Symphony No. 2](#) plays during Beauty and Beast's wedding scene. *Tempo* is the word used to describe how fast or slow music is. Here are some common musical terms for tempo with definitions. The words are in Italian. Which do you think fits this piece of music best once the introduction is over? ([around 0:48](#))

- *Lento* - Slowly
- *Andante* - At a walking pace, moderately slow
- *Moderato* - Moderately
- *Allegro* - Fast, quickly, and bright

Musicians often use a metronome to set the tempo of their piece and practice it at the right speed. Can you use this [online metronome](#) to find the BPM (beats per minute) of this song? Clap the beat you hear and toggle the arrows on either side to make it slower or faster until it matches the tempo.

Try to find the BPM of your favorite song with the metronome!