

EDUCATION
& COMMUNITY

London **Philharmonic** Orchestra

BrightSparks KS2 Concert: Teachers' Guide



BrightSparks Schools' Concert for KS2
Wednesday 23rd May 2012
10.15am and 12.15pm
Royal Festival Hall

Supported by

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INTRODUCTION

We are delighted that you are going to join us for our KS2 BrightSparks concerts at the Royal Festival Hall on 23 May.

This concert is centred around a new work by composer David Bruce called '**Prince Zal and the Simorgh**', commissioned by the London Philharmonic Orchestra and City University London. You will also hear work by Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky and Nielsen. There will be an audience participation song at the end of the concert, which we invite you to learn and join in with on the day.

This Resource Pack is an introduction to the composers and music you and your students will hear at the concert. Together with the Listening Resource and the Story Resource, it is designed to complement the Resource for Teachers section of our website.

Nielsen Oriental Festival March from Aladdin
Prokofiev Peter's theme from Peter and the Wolf
Tchaikovsky Excerpt from Swan Lake
Bruce Prince Zal and the Simorgh
Sherman I Wanna Be Like You

David Angus conductor
Andrew Barclay presenter
Sally Pomme Clayton storyteller
Arash Moradi Tanbour
Fariborz Kiani Tombak/Daf
Middle Eastern Ensemble City University London
Ashmole and Jessop Primary Schools Bridge Project Violinists

This material in this Resource Pack was written by Dr Laudan Nooshin from City University London. The Pack was produced by the London Philharmonic Orchestra Education and Community Department, 89 Albert Embankment, London, SE1 7TP. Tel: 020 7840 4200. Fax: 020 7840 4201. Box Office: 020 7840 4242. Website: www.lpo.org.uk

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LISTENING RESOURCE TRACK LISTING

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Track 2: Iranian Instruments

Track 3: Storytelling Excerpt

Track 4: The Simorgh and the Mountain of Gems

Track 5: Prince Zal's Themes

Track 6: Conclusion

Storytelling, Iran and the Shahnameh

Around the world in many different cultures, **music and storytelling** have gone hand in hand for thousands of years. Together, stories and music can transport us to other worlds, other times and places.

Activity 1: The Middle East

- **Iran** is a country in a part of the world known as the **Middle East**. The country used to be called 'Persia' by Europeans. Here is a map showing Iran and its surrounding countries.



Discuss what countries the students know to be in the Middle East.

This is where the first cities and agriculture started, and was home to a number of ancient civilisations including the Sumerians, the Babylonians and the Persians.

The Sumerians:

- The ancient Sumerians lived in the southern part of what is now Iraq, and were one of the first civilisations.
- The Sumerians were very inventive, and are likely to have been responsible for the development of the first writing. Well before 3000 BC Sumerians were recording their language using simple pictures.
- They were energetic farmers, traders and sailors. Their religion recognised many gods, whose feats and escapades were described in stories that were often preserved for generations.

Storytelling, Iran and the Shahnameh

- Rituals as well as parties were enlivened by skilful harpists, lyrists and singers, and Sumerian musical instruments have even been excavated by modern archaeologists. The lyre of Ur was found in a grave in the Royal Cemetery of Ur, and is currently in the British Museum:



- The Sumerians are also thought to have invented the wheel.

The Babylonians:

- The city of Babylon on the River Euphrates in southern Iraq first came to prominence as the royal city of King Hammurabi (about 1790-1750 BC).
- The Babylonian cities were the centres of great learning and creativity. The Babylonians invented astrology, and laid the foundations for our modern mathematical system.
- Babylon is famous for its Hanging Gardens, which are one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. They were said to be built by King Nebuchadnezzar II, who ruled the city for 43 years, as a gift for his sick wife. The gardens were built on a series of terraces raised one above the other by pillars, a bit like an Aztec pyramid.

The Persians:

- The first Persian Empire (550–330 BCE) stretched from the Indus Valley in the East to present-day Macedonia and Egypt in the West.
- The Persians are said to be the first people to follow a monotheistic religion, which means following just one god, instead of many.
- The Persian way of life and ruling structure became a model for Greek and Roman civilizations.

About the Shahnameh:

Iran has a very ancient tradition of storytelling, poetry and music, with musicians playing instruments to help tell the stories.

The most important epic poem in Iran is called the **Shahnameh** (pronounced Shaah-naah-meh with long 'a's), which means 'The Book of Kings'. It was written by a poet called Abolqasem Ferdowsi who lived about a thousand years ago.

The Shahnameh is considered to be one of the greatest **epics** of world literature. It took over 30 years to write, and the poem has about 60,000 verses.

Discuss what 'epic' means: Can you think of any other stories or collections of stories that might be described as epic? Look at the link below – this information was written for the British Library by Sally Pomme Clayton, who will be telling the story of Prince Zal at the BrightSparks concert in May.

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/cult/inside/corner/shahbground/questions.html>

Meet the Poet

Abolqasem Ferdowsi (940-1020 CE)



- Ferdowsi is regarded as one of Iran's most important national poets.
- He was born in Tus, a town in North Eastern Iran in the province of Khorasan.
- Ferdowsi lived at a time when Iran had been ruled by Arab invaders who had tried to suppress the Persian language by burning books and stopping people from speaking Persian. The Shahnameh was considered important in preserving the Persian language and the fact that it does not use a single word of Arabic.
- The link below details Ferdowsi's life and times. His life is an interesting and enjoyable story to tell your class.

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/cult/inside/corner/ferdowsilife/lifeferdowsi.html>

Storytelling, Iran and the Shahnameh

The stories of the Shahnameh are partly myth and partly based on **oral** and other written histories which Ferdowsi put into verse.

Discuss what oral, and the 'oral tradition' mean.

The Shahnameh starts with the creation of the world and ends with the Arabic conquest of Iran in the 7th century CE. It tells the stories of kings, heroes and demons; it deals with themes such as good and evil, love, loyalty, treachery and power. This link outlines the synopsis of the Shahnameh.

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/cult/inside/corner/shah/synopsis.html>

The stories of the Shahnameh are widely known in Iran and learnt in school. Many people know hundreds of lines by heart. Ferdowsi is like the Shakespeare of Iran.

For hundreds of years, these stories were recited in traditional tea houses by storytellers called 'naqqal'. They are also chanted in traditional gymnasiums (known as Zurkhaneh, which means 'House of Strength') by the morshed, who also plays a giant drum. Watch some traditional exercises accompanied by a morshed playing the drum and chanting verses from the Shahnameh:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5e5eugm9ZU>



The Zurkhaneh Ceremony

Activity 2: The Characters in Shahnameh

- ***The Simorgh***

One of the most colourful characters in the Shahnameh is the beautiful mythic Simorgh bird (pronounced See-mor-gh, with the 'gh' like the 'ch' in 'Bach') who appears in the story of Prince Zal. She lives on the Mountain of Gems, and is described as being the size of thirty birds, living for a thousand years, with red and gold feathers. Instead of being frightening or intimidating she is known to be wise, forgiving and benevolent.

Play the Listening Resource: Track 4, to hear the Simorgh's music.



- ***Prince Zal***

Zal (Zaal) is the son of King Sam, who is born with 'hair as white as snow'. He is shown to us in the story as a baby, as a wild teenager, and as a young Prince. He is described as wise and forgiving, and respectful and loving towards the Simorgh.

Play the Listening Resource: Track 5 to hear Prince Zal's music.

- ***The King***

King Sam (Saam) rules with his wife the Queen, and longs for a child. He is quick to judge people on their looks, and over the story learns to amend his judgements and become a better, more forgiving person.

Storytelling, Iran and the Shahnameh

Over the centuries, many beautiful drawings of the Shahnameh stories have been made. The picture below shows Zal being reunited with his father, Sam, and comes from a manuscript dating from about 1444. Notice how detailed the plants, trees, clouds and so on are. The writing at the top of the page is in a special kind of calligraphy which is itself considered to be a work of art.



Activity 3: Writing and Illustrating the Story

Discuss the characters from the story of Prince Zal and the Simorgh. Based on the above descriptions and pictures, what might they really look like, and how might they behave in the story?

Ask the class to write a character description and a storyline for that character, in reference to the title '*Prince Zal and the Simorgh*'. Then select a few to read theirs out to the class. This will reinforce the idea and practice of storytelling.

Students should illustrate their stories, taking the music from the Listening Resource and Sally's descriptions as inspiration. These pictures are integral to the stories and poems of the Shahnameh.

Read this section from our concert narrator, Sally Pomme Clayton, about the Shahnameh and story telling. This may help inform the students' writing.

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/cult/inside/corner/sea/ofstories.html>

You can find the text of the story, written by Sally, on the Story Resource.

Activity 4: Instruments

There are many different musical instruments in Iran. In '*Prince Zal and the Simorgh*', you'll hear some stringed and percussion instruments.

The Tanbour:

This is a long-necked lute with 3 strings which are plucked and strummed by the performer. The tanbour originally comes from the Kurdish region of western Iran. The tanbour is one of the oldest string instruments in the world dating back to some 5000 years ago. It is often used in religious rituals in Kurdistan where many regard it as a sacred instrument.



Discuss what 'sacred' might mean in regards to an instrument. What might the instrument be used for to make it sacred? How should you treat such an instrument?

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The Tombak:

This is a wooden drum with a skin head, shaped like a goblet and which is held over the player's knees. Very complex rhythms are played with the bare fingers.



The Daff:

This is a large, round frame drum with a skin (or nowadays more usually synthetic) head and lots of metal rings on the inside of the instrument so that it makes a loud sound when you shake it. It is also played with the fingers. Like the tanbour, the daff comes from the Kurdish region of western Iran.



All instrumental pictures courtesy of Fariborz Kiani

Play the Listening Resource: Track 2 to hear Arash Moradi and Fariborz Kiani play each instrument.

Discuss the descriptions of these instruments with the sounds you hear on the Listening Resource, and the materials that might be used to make them.

These instruments will be on stage next to the London Philharmonic Orchestra. What instruments are in an orchestra?

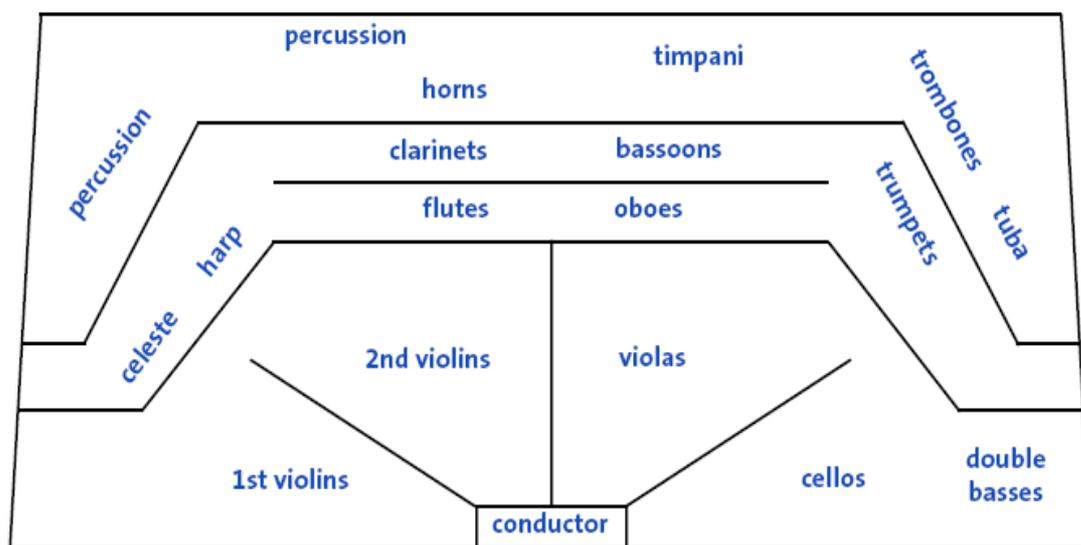
Instruments of the Orchestra:

There are 75 musicians in the London Philharmonic Orchestra and they play many different kinds of instruments.

These instruments are split into four families or sections called **strings**, **woodwind**, **brass** and **percussion**.

The sections of the orchestra combine in different ways to produce different sounds.

The Conductor stands in front of the orchestra, he/she holds a stick called a baton, and they direct the overall shape of the sound by controlling speed, balance and dynamics

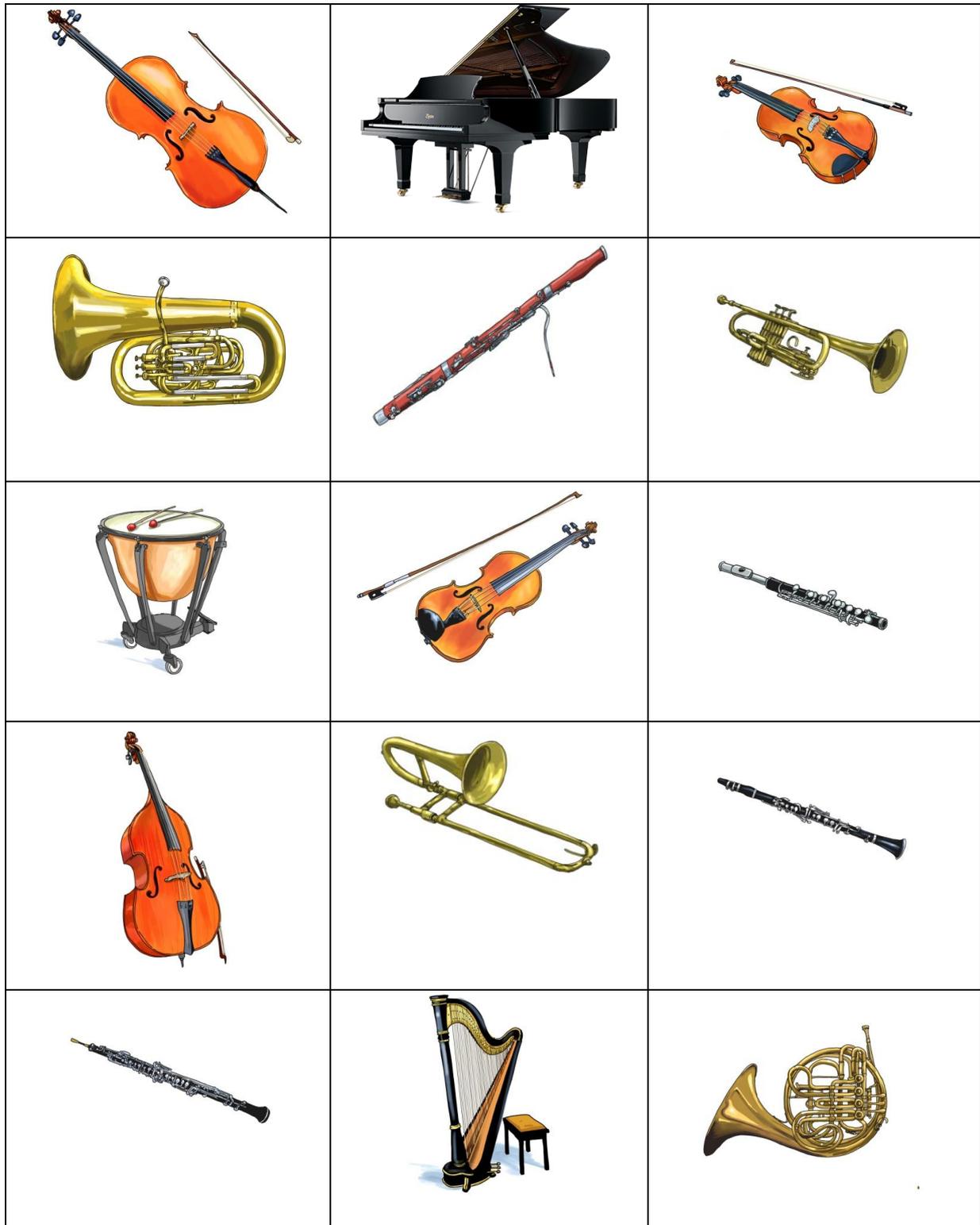


You can listen to different instruments of the orchestra on the internet, using many different kinds of musical resources.

This link, from the Philharmonia Orchestra, is a simple and effective tool to use in the classroom to hear the orchestral instruments:

http://www.philharmonia.co.uk/thesoundexchange/the_orchestra/instruments/

To familiarise your class with the different instruments, you could play listening games with pictures of instruments, using the grids below either as a bingo game, or by asking students to cut up the squares and match the picture with the name.



Violin	Trumpet	Piano
Oboe	Tuba	Flute
Double Bass	Clarinet	Viola
Trombone	French Horn	Bassoon
Harp	Cello	Timpani

Activity 5: Focus on Iranian Music

Modes

A mode is a type of scale, which is a series of musical notes in ascending or descending order. There are many different scales and modes in Iranian music, like major and minor scales in western music, but using different **intervals**. Each mode has its own name. Some of these modes are heard in '*Prince Zal and the Simorgh*'.

For instance, on the Listening Resource we can hear Arash playing the Tanbour improvising on a one of David's mode.

The composer David Bruce has used many modes in '*Prince Zal and the Simorgh*', but this is an Iranian mode he uses often in the piece:



If your school glockenspiels don't have a Bb, then you can use this version – it's the same mode, but by starting on an E the notes are all white notes and may be easier to play:



Play this to your class, showing them exactly where the notes are. Then, using keyboards or glockenspiels, get the class to play this mode up and down themselves, to familiarise themselves with where the notes are on their instrument, and what it sounds like. They will need to be able to play this for the next activity.

Discussion: What do you think improvisation is? What might it mean in music?

Improvisation is when you make something up as you go along. In music, this means making up music as you are performing – on the spot. Usually you have a musical basis to start from, like a scale or a set of chords. In many musical styles, musicians improvise over the top of well known modes.

Improvisation is an important part of Iranian music. It takes musicians many years to memorise the many modes and hundreds of melodic patterns which form the basis for creative performance. Musicians then improvise on the modes and patterns that they have learnt.

Improvisation Activity:

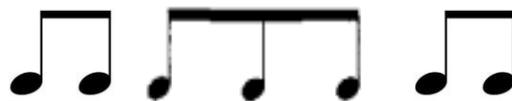
What happens if the order of the notes in the mode is mixed up? Can some students 'improvise' a tune, using only the notes of this mode? Can they perform this to the class? Remember – lots of tunes finish on the note they started on, which is usually the first note of the scale or mode.

Extension: Try adding some rhythms to the tune. A simple way to do this is for students to think about the rhythm of their own name, or school, for example: Lon-don Phil-har-mon-ic could be long-long-short-short-short-short, or two crotchets and four quavers. This is an easy way to remember rhythms without having to write them down.

Rhythms

Iranian music also uses many different rhythms. Sometimes, these rhythmic patterns are built out of smaller units, just like lego bricks, often from 2- and 3-beat units. These kinds of rhythms are called **additive** rhythms.

- 7-time can be made from 3 + 2 + 2, or 2 + 3 + 2.



- 11-time can be made from 3 + 3 + 3 + 2



- 13-time can be made from 3 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2

**Composing Rhythms**

Ask the children to clap some of these patterns slowly; then speed up. They can work in small groups and answer each other in call and response.

Extension: What other patterns might some students be able to make from combinations of 3 and 2? Or mix up the patterns for 7, 11 or 13 time.

Activity 6: Telling a Story through Music

Talk to the children about how music can bring a story alive. How can it paint a character or place? Examples might include music in film/theatre – you could discuss some famous themes from film music, such as the Jaws theme, the James Bond theme or the Harry Potter music.

Discuss how these pieces of music make them feel, what they imagine, how they add to and reflect the story.

We can tell stories through music using themes for different characters or ideas.

Play the Listening Resource: Track 5, to hear how composer David has treated Prince Zal in the music, and particularly through the different stages of his life.

Discuss the musical elements involved in this track. Talk about how closely the music reflects the story, and how the students themselves might apply that to their own music. You can also listen to the Naxos online playlist to hear examples of the other pieces of music that will be performed at the concert, and talk about the stories that might be behind them.

In groups, ask the students to put together a short section of one of their stories with the notes from the mode they have learnt. One student at a time should narrate the story, possibly taking it turns through the group, with others on keyboards, glockenspiels, and if possible percussion instruments. Ask them to think about the mood of their stories, and how their music will accompany this. Students should think about the following elements to help their music reflect the story:

- **Structure** – what order things come in, story with melody, or melody first then story?
- **Dynamics** – volume, how loud or how quiet they want their music to be at certain points.
- **Tempo** – speed, how fast or how slow they want to play at certain times.
- **Pitch** – how high or how low. Students can decide whether to play their music high up on the keyboard, or lower down.
- **Timbre** – what instruments are you going to use, and where in the story will you use them? Think about your character, what sounds should depict them?

Play the Listening Resource: Track 3, to hear how the story and the music go together. Use this as an example of how the students can put their performance together.

Play the Listening Resource: Track 4, to hear how David treats a place (Mountain of Gems) and character (Simorgh).

Storytelling, Iran and the Shahnameh

Get your class to really think about the way David's Prince Zal music **grows** and **transforms** through the piece. Students should think about their own piece growing with the story.

Extension: Can some students add some of the rhythms they tried out earlier? This might be playing their melodies in a specific rhythm, or adding the rhythm by playing some percussion instruments as a separate section to the melody.

Students should perform to the class, in the musical story-telling tradition of ancient Iran. As all the class will be working from the same mode, you could do a whole class performance, with each group passing on their part of the story to another, with true musical and narrative development.

Activity 7: The Concert

We look forward to seeing you at the Royal Festival Hall on Wednesday 23rd May. Come with your ears and eyes prepared to hear a wonderful story, some fantastic music, and see the London Philharmonic Orchestra perform!

Also come ready with your voices for some singing! There will be an audience participation section at the end of the concert – 2000 young people singing together in the Royal Festival Hall is an opportunity not to be missed! We will be singing ‘I Wanna Be Like You’ from Disney’s The Jungle Book, from the Sing Up website. Words will be up on the screen, so you don’t need to worry about words.

The performance track, lyrics and teaching guides are available from the Sing Up website at <http://www.singup.org/songbank/song-bank/song-detail/view/207-i-wanna-be-like-you/>.

Please do look at this before coming to the concert and practise with your class. It will be really great if all the schools come prepared and ready to sing a song they know well.

Discussion: Why are we singing ‘I Wanna Be Like You’? Why might that be relevant to the story of ‘Prince Zal and the Simorgh’?

Performances will start at 10:15 and 12:15 in the Royal Festival Hall. If you wish to cancel your tickets you must do so by 23rd April, or you may be charged £3.50 per ticket for failing to attend. Our concerts are hugely popular and we always have a waiting list of schools who wish to attend should any tickets be returned.

At 12pm there will be a short performance on the Clore Ballroom Floor by students from Cherry Garden School, with LPO members, and led by workshop leader Tina Pinder. This is the culmination of a year-long project with the school under our **Adopt-a-Class** Project, which works with children with Special Education Needs from special schools in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham and Greenwich. This is a free event, so please do come and see what they’ve been doing over the year!

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA HISTORY

Seventy-eight years after Sir Thomas Beecham founded the London Philharmonic Orchestra, it is recognised today as one of the finest orchestras on the international stage. Following Beecham's influential founding tenure the Orchestra's Principal Conductorship has been passed from one illustrious musician to another, amongst them Sir Adrian Boult, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt and Kurt Masur. This impressive tradition continued in September 2007 when Vladimir Jurowski became the Orchestra's Principal Conductor, and in a further exciting move, the Orchestra appointed Yannick Nézet-Séguin, its new Principal Guest Conductor from September 2008. Julian Anderson became the Orchestra's Composer in Residence in September 2010. The London Philharmonic Orchestra has been performing at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall since it opened in 1951, becoming Resident Orchestra in 1992. It plays there around 40 times each season with many of the world's most sought after conductors and soloists. The Orchestra also has flourishing residencies in Brighton and Eastbourne, and performs regularly around the UK. It is unique in combining these concert activities with esteemed opera performances each summer at Glyndebourne Festival Opera where it has been the Resident Symphony Orchestra since 1964. The London Philharmonic Orchestra performs to enthusiastic audiences all round the world. In 1956 it became the first British orchestra to appear in Soviet Russia and in 1973 made the first ever visit to China by a Western orchestra. Touring continues to form a significant part of the Orchestra's schedule and is supported by Aviva, the International Touring Partner of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Tours in 2010/11 include visits to Finland, Germany, South Korea, France, Belgium and Luxembourg. Having long been embraced by the recording, broadcasting and film industries, the London Philharmonic Orchestra broadcasts regularly on domestic and international television and radio. It also works with the Hollywood and UK film industries, recording soundtracks for blockbuster motion pictures including the Oscar-winning score for The Lord of the Rings trilogy. The London Philharmonic Orchestra made its first recordings on 10 October 1932, just three days after its first public performance. It has recorded and broadcast regularly ever since, and in 2005 established its own record label. Its own-label releases are widely available at record shops and can be downloaded from its website. Visit www.lpo.org.uk/shop for the latest releases. The Orchestra reaches thousands of Londoners through its rich programme of community and school-based activity in Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark, which includes the offshoot ensembles Renga and The Band, its Foyle Future Firsts apprenticeship scheme for outstanding young instrumentalists, and regular family and schools concerts. There are many ways to experience and stay in touch with the Orchestra's activities: visit www.lpo.org.uk, subscribe to our podcast series, download our iPhone application and join us on Facebook and Twitter.