



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM

## PET PARADE

Our favorite animals set to music

### CLASS ACTIVITY: Legends and Myths Grade Level(s): 3-4

Subject Areas: Music, Reading Comprehension, Creative Writing, ELA

#### OBJECTIVE

This activity helps students to broaden their understanding of orchestration and music history through the exploration of serpents in myths and music.

#### SPACE AND EQUIPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The book *The Snake King of the Kalinago* by the Atkinson School can be purchased from Amazon. Students will also need access to the school or public library.

*Note: This activity will take place over 2 or more class periods.*

#### MUSIC TO EXPLORE

BERLIOZ *Symphonie Fantastique (V. Dream of the Witches' Sabbath)*  
MENDELSSOHN *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*

#### ACTIVITY

1. Read the book *The Snake King of the Kalinago* together as a class. Explain that many other cultures also have snake legends; they can be found in the origin stories of the Cherokee, Hindu, Greek, African, Celtic, Hebrew, and many other peoples.
2. Allow students time to explore the school library to find books about serpent legends from various cultures and to share what they find.
3. Tell students that there is a snake hiding in the orchestra! An instrument called the ophicleide, which resembled a snake, was invented in the early 1800s. It was originally made out of wood, then later brass. It had the sound of a low bass rumble. Watch a demonstration of the instrument here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lZzr4xXPeyw>
4. For an active listening element, listen to the suggested pieces above, which were originally written to use the ophicleide, but now use the contrabassoon instead. See if students can raise their hands to identify when the contrabassoon is playing.
5. Close with free writing time. Ask students to write their own serpent legend and imagine what instrument(s) they would use to write a musical piece that reflects their story. Encourage them to both draw from known instruments and get creative—use non-standard instruments, or invent their own new one!