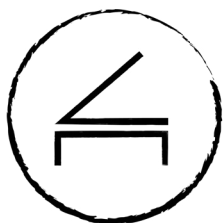


# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



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# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM

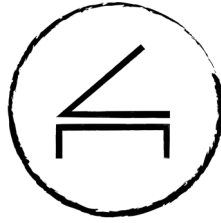
Thank you for sharing some of your class time with Cliburn in the Classroom! How does a pianist become an international hero? How can a musician leave a legacy for an entire country? How does music heal relationships? We answer these questions by telling the story of our namesake Van Cliburn in our “What Makes a Hero?” program.

This curriculum guide contains everything you need ahead of our visit. Our most frequently asked questions about the piano move are included here, so your front office staff knows what to expect. A printable visual schedule is included for friends with autism, anxiety, or ADHD. Want to know more about the composers who wrote the music you’ll hear? Check out the composer bios and Spotify Playlists! Five lesson plans are inside, with handouts and TEKS objectives provided; feel free to pick and choose your favorites. Of course, kids can still enjoy Cliburn in the Classroom even if the guides aren’t used, but familiarity makes the experience more memorable. We hope you will find this guide both useful and engaging!

The lesson plans give students the opportunity to practice goal setting and active listening; to consider the legacy they would like to leave behind; to produce their own movie soundtrack; and to play along with Tchaikovsky’s famous piano concerto. Volunteers may even have the opportunity to make their Cliburn debut!

As always, we look forward to sharing music and fun with your students

Nicole Paglialonga  
Education and Community Programs Manager  
[npaglialonga@cliburn.org](mailto:npaglialonga@cliburn.org)



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM

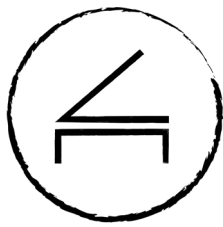
## PIANO MOVE - WHAT TO EXPECT

Metroplex Piano Moving moves our piano between schools. These wonderful and professional movers serve many other clients as well, including in between Cliburn programs, so they cannot provide an exact delivery/pick-up time for each school. However, it is a very fast process – set up takes **less than 5 minutes** – and it will not be in the way of your school's lunch or dismissal schedule.

1. We would like to be on a stage whenever possible and can do so only if there is a ramp to deliver the piano. But a stage is not required. We can set up wherever is convenient that can fit all of your **second, third, and fourth graders** comfortably, with a little bit of room to move. This can be a cafeteria, gym, or library. Just be sure to let your office staff know where to direct our piano.
2. If you have a morning program, most often the piano will arrive on the morning of the performance, approximately 45 minutes before our scheduled start time, or in the afternoon of the day prior. If you have an afternoon program, usually it will arrive after our morning program has concluded, between approximately **10:30–12:30**, depending on location. Metroplex Piano Moving will be in touch with your school's office staff directly **only** if there are any issues with delivery, or if it will need to be delivered/picked up outside of these times.
3. You do not need to remove middle bars from doors or rearrange the room for the piano to get in. Schools do not need any additional staff on site to help with the piano delivery or pick-up after the performance; the movers will simply sign in as all other visitors do and get the piano set up quickly.
4. Cliburn staff will arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of the program. We can move the piano around the room, but we do not have the equipment needed to move the piano to another room. Once the piano is delivered, the program must take place in the room in which it is set up.
5. The piano has wheels, and if needed, can be moved **by Cliburn staff** to a safe corner of the room after the program ends.

The piano has wheels, and if needed, can be moved by Cliburn staff to a safe corner of the room after the program ends.

If there are any issues, please contact **Nicole Paglialonga** directly at [npaglialonga@cliburn.org](mailto:npaglialonga@cliburn.org).



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM presents



## SYNOPSIS

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's a pianist?! A musical conversation about heroes, from caped comic book characters to heroes we meet in everyday life; told through the lens of how Van Cliburn used the superpower of music to connect people around the world.

## MUSIC

BEETHOVEN-LISZT	Symphony No. 3 "Eroica," S. 464/3
CHOPIN	Piano Concerto No. 1 in E Minor: II. <i>Romance</i>
BENZECRY	<i>Toccata Newen</i>
CHOPIN	Etude op. 10, no. 12 "Revolutionary"
TCHAIKOVSKY	Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor, op. 23: I. <i>Allegro non troppo</i>
HOUGH	<i>Fanfare Toccata</i>

Click [here](#) to go to the Cliburn's Spotify playlist and listen to all of the pieces on this program!

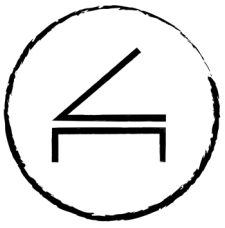
## RELATED VIDEOS

[Cliburn Kids Ep. 32](#)

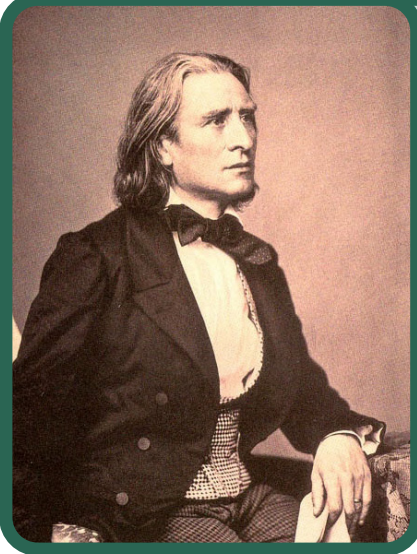
"My Country Tis of Thee"

[Cliburn Kids Ep. 33](#)

"My Country Tis of Thee, part 2"



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## FRANZ LISZT

BORN: October 22, 1811

ERA/STYLE: Romantic

DIED: July 31, 1886

HOMETOWN: Raiding, Austria

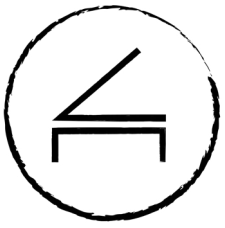
Franz Liszt, a towering figure in classical music, was born in then-Hungary (his birthplace is now part of Austria). Regarded as one of the greatest pianists of all time and an internationally celebrated composer, Liszt's impact on classical music is limitless.

Liszt's musical genius was clear from an early age, and he took his first piano lessons from his father at only 5 years old. By the age of 9, he began performing in public concerts, and two years later, his family moved to Vienna. There he studied piano with famous teachers and soaked in the vibrant musical culture of the city.

By the time he reached his teens, Liszt had already established himself as a virtuoso pianist, captivating audiences across Europe with his extraordinary technical skill and charisma on stage. His performances, marked by their intensity, passion, and drama, earned him fame and admiration. He is considered the world's first music celebrity; this popularity caused frenzy at his concerts, which journalists called "Lisztomania!"

In addition to being an impressive performer, Liszt was a composer whose original works helped shape the course of classical music. He infused his music with emotion, poetry, and brilliance, defining the entire Romantic era. Liszt's contributions to piano repertoire are particularly remarkable; he expanded its capability, pushing technique to new levels of difficulty. He also developed new forms of composition, such as the symphonic poem, where the story of a poem is told through music rather than words.

Later in life, Liszt became more devoted to teaching, writing, and conducting, and championed works by his contemporaries so they could also become well-known. Over the course of his lifetime, Liszt wrote more than 700 pieces of music!



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

BORN: December 1770

ERA/STYLE: Classical–Romantic

DIED: March 26, 1827

HOMETOWN: Bonn, Germany

Ludwig van Beethoven, one of the most renowned composers in history, was born in Bonn, Germany, in 1770. His enduring legacy continues to captivate audiences worldwide.

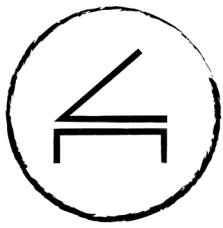
Beethoven was born into a family of musicians, with both his grandfather and father being accomplished musicians. His father, Johann van Beethoven, recognized Ludwig's exceptional talent and aspired for Ludwig to emulate the success of other famous child prodigies like Mozart. Remarkably, Beethoven gave his first public performance at the age of 7, although his father claimed he was 6 to exaggerate his talent. In his teenage years, Beethoven decided to create his own music, and moved to Vienna, Austria, the epicenter of classical music at the time.

His compositions quickly earned attention and acclaim. One of his most famous piano pieces is "[Für Elise](#)," though the identity of Elise and her relationship to Beethoven remain a mystery. Beethoven's nine symphonies are particularly celebrated, with the Ninth Symphony featuring the iconic "[Ode to Joy](#)." His melodies are so catchy, his pet parrot could whistle some of his tunes.

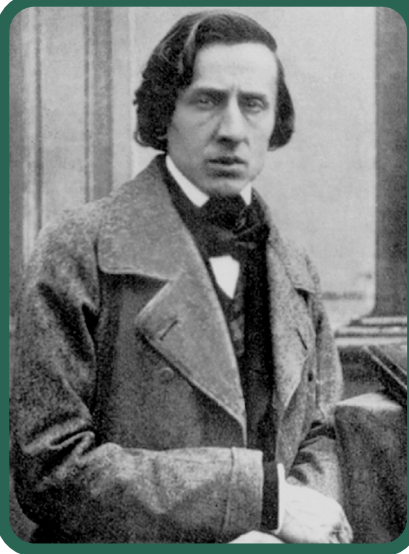
Beethoven had a deep love for nature and often took long walks in the countryside, where he found inspiration for his compositions. His intense, singular focus on music often led to a disheveled appearance, with his wild and messy hair becoming a signature trait. Beethoven was also known for his quick temper and passionate nature, often leading to frustration when things did not go as planned. His heavy-handed piano playing frequently broke strings, necessitating sturdier instruments.

Beethoven faced significant setbacks, notably the early onset of mysterious and incurable hearing loss in his late twenties. Despite this, he continued to compose some of his most profound works even after becoming almost completely deaf. To communicate, he carried notebooks to write down conversations, which have been published into a series of books to give readers insight into his genius mind.

Ludwig van Beethoven's life and work continue to inspire, illustrating that even in the face of great difficulties, one can achieve lasting greatness through dedication and perseverance.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

BORN: March 1, 1810

ERA/STYLE: Romantic

DIED: October 17, 1849

HOMETOWN: Zelazowa Wola, Poland

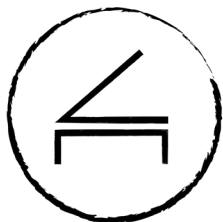
Frédéric Chopin is one of the most well-known composers and pianists of all time. He was born near Warsaw, Poland, and first learned piano from his mother before moving on to some of the best teachers in the area.

Chopin looked to his roots for inspiration for his first compositions, weaving Polish folk music into his classical piano works. However, wanting more experience, he moved to Vienna, a hub for classical music. There he became an instant celebrity. His sensitive and elegant performances charmed audiences and made him a rising star in the music world.

Chopin eventually settled in Paris during his 20s, where he would spend the rest of his life. Paris provided a lively culture that fed Chopin's creativity and allowed him to prosper. His concerts became legendary social events that brought noble people, artists, and intellectuals all together. Chopin even became a sought-after teacher.

Chopin's music is some of the most representative of the Romantic era style. His compositions for piano are celebrated for their emotional range, from the delicate melodies of his nocturnes to the fiery passion of his scherzos. He also transformed how composers wrote for the piano, pushing the boundaries of technique and expression with exquisite craftsmanship.

Chopin lived a short 39 years, but his impact on the world of music was deep. His influence reached far beyond the concert hall, into the works of other famous composers such as Liszt, Brahms, and Debussy.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## ESTEBAN BENZECRY

BORN: 1970

ERA/STYLE: Contemporary-Classical

HOMETOWN: Lisbon, Portugal

Esteban Benzecry is a talented composer who brings the bright rhythms of Latin America to life through his music. Born in Lisbon, Portugal, Benzecry grew up in Argentina surrounded by the rich sounds of his culture. He was captivated by the melodies of tango, the beats of folk music, and the sounds of traditional instruments.

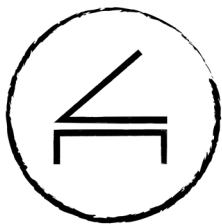
Benzecry showed a natural gift for music from the start. The first instruments he learned were the piano and the flute, and he quickly mastered both; he also began composing at a young age. At 27, he moved to Paris to study composing, and still lives there today.

But Benzecry's curiosity reached far beyond his own country. He traveled the world, soaking up inspiration from different musical traditions and cultures. He listened to the music of Europe, Asia, and Africa, always eager to learn and create a new global sound. Benzecry's compositions are diverse, blending classical music with the lively energy of his homeland.

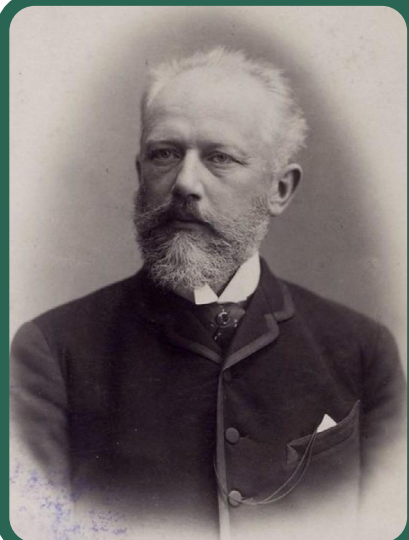
Today, Benzecry is celebrated as one of the leading composers of Latin American classical music. His pieces have been performed by orchestras, chamber groups, and soloists around the world, delighting audiences with their colorful, dance-like sounds. He has won several awards, notably being named Argentina's Composer of the Decade.

For Benzecry, the joy of music lies not only in writing music but also in sharing his passion with others. He continues to perform and teach, inspiring the next generation of musicians to embrace the beauty and diversity of their own cultures, and to write their identities into their music.





# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

BORN: May 7, 1840

ERA/STYLE: Romantic

DIED: November 6, 1893

HOMETOWN: Votkinsk, Russia

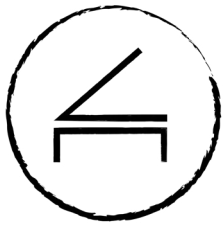
Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky made his first attempt at writing a song at the age of 4 and began piano lessons the following year. His family provided him with a solid education, eventually sending him to school to receive formal training in both law and music.

Tchaikovsky's love for music ultimately won over his law career, and he enrolled in school to study composition. Tchaikovsky's early works, including his [First Symphony](#) and opera *Eugene Onegin*, showcased a particular gift for writing melodies.

Throughout his career, Tchaikovsky drew inspiration from Russian folk music, literature, and his own experiences, including difficult feelings like homesickness and challenging situations from his life. He is particularly noted for his orchestral works, and his ability to show open-hearted human emotions in music.

Tchaikovsky's best-known pieces are for ballets, with [Swan Lake](#), [The Nutcracker](#), and [The Sleeping Beauty](#) remaining among the most loved and frequently performed in classical music. You have probably heard many of the themes from these ballets. They have an enchanting fairy-tale atmosphere and memorable melodies, which helped ballet become more popular in society.

Tchaikovsky's music is still among the most popular; audiences can relate to its beauty, passion, and emotion. He toured extensively throughout Europe during his life, and his more than 150 works are still performed regularly today.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## SIR STEPHEN HOUGH

BORN: November 22, 1961

ERA/STYLE: Contemporary-Classical

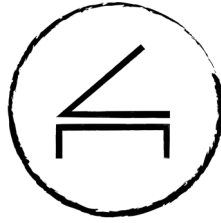
HOMETOWN: Heswall, England

Knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for his services to music, Stephen Hough occupies a special place in the world of classical music. Born in England, Hough demonstrated huge musical talent from an early age. He began piano lessons at 5 and quickly became known as a genius, winning many competitions and gaining recognition for his technical brilliance and musical imagination. Hough's education took him to the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England, and later to The Juilliard School in New York City.

Hough has recorded an impressive 60 albums of piano music. He performs a wide range of styles and periods, but is known especially for his performances of the Romantic repertoire, including the music of Chopin, Liszt, and Rachmaninov. You'll hear the music of many of these titans featured on our "What Makes a Hero?" program.

In addition to his achievements as a pianist, Hough is also a dedicated composer. His compositions have been performed by the best orchestras and various groups around the world, earning him recognition as a composer of talent and originality. In fact, Hough wrote a piece for the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in 2022 that all competitors were required to play. It's called "[Fanfare Toccata](#)," which you'll also hear during our visit.

Hough is truly a Renaissance man. Outside of music, he is an accomplished writer, thinker, and artist. He won the 6th International Poetry Competition, regularly writes articles for respected publications like *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*, and has published four books. He had a solo exhibition of his own paintings in 2012. Currently, he lives in both the United Kingdom and New York City, teaching and composing when he's not performing for audiences all over the world.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM

## SOCIAL STORY



My friends and I will see Cliburn in the Classroom today! We will go to the cafeteria, gym, or auditorium in my school, so we will be in a place I already know. My teacher will stay with me.

When I walk into the room, I will see a baby grand piano. There will be someone sitting on the bench, and they may be playing when I arrive!

Before the show starts and after I've sat down, I can chat with my classmates. If I need to go to the bathroom before, during, or after the show, I will let my teacher know.



I'll know the show has started when a person introduces themselves, the pianist, and the name of the show. They are called the host.

The show is 35 minutes long. I can follow along with the visual schedule, so I know where we are in the program, how much time is left, and what happens next.

At different times during the show, I will hear piano music, laughter, and clapping. Sometimes, kids might dance, play a game, or talk with the host. I can raise my hand if I'd like to dance, play, or answer a question, too! Or I can enjoy the music from my seat. I can decide what makes me comfortable. I am safe.



If the volume gets too loud for me, I can cover my ears with my hands or ask my teacher for headphones.

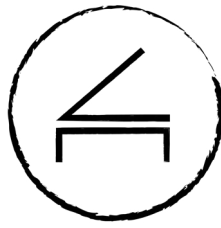
I know that playing the piano takes a lot of practice. I also know it can be scary to talk in front of a lot of people. The host and pianist are very brave! I want to be a good audience member, so I will listen when they are playing or talking, and I will watch the screen.



Clapping is the way an audience says "thank you" to musicians. When the music is finished, I can clap to let them know I enjoyed it!

I will know the program is over when the host and the screen say "thank you!" This means it is time to walk back to class with my teacher.

Knowing what to expect made it easy and fun! I hope The Cliburn comes back to my school again next year!



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM

## WHAT MAKES A HERO? VISUAL SCHEDULE

Check the boxes next to the picture when the task is complete.

1.  Hello!

9.  Olympic medal

2.  Superhero

10.  Piano


3.  Piano

11.  Gold trophy


4.  Teacher

12.  Piano

5.  Piano

13.  Friends

6.  Olympic medal

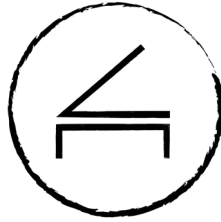
14.  Piano

7.  Let's race!

15.  Thank you!

8.  Piano

16.  Go back to class



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## MY HERO

Grade Level(s): 2–5 | Subject Areas: Music, Social Studies

### OBJECTIVE

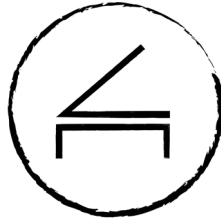
This activity encourages critical thinking and self-reflection to identify personal heroes. By creating an original movie trailer with a tailored soundtrack, students relate music to feeling and relationships.

### SUPPLIES

Students will need a pencil and paper for a brief writing exercise, and a school-issued Chromebook or tablet to record a one-minute movie trailer and soundtrack. Optionally, older grades may also utilize basic composition software such as Make Music Cloud or Garage Band. This activity is a project that may take the course of two to three class periods.

### ACTIVITY

1. Begin with 5–10 minutes for a class discussion of the question, “Who are your personal heroes and why?”
2. Ask students to select one of their heroes. What kind of movie would they star in—an action movie, a family movie, a comedy? What would the plot/storyline be for this movie?
3. Free write! Have students create a storyboard of their movie. Students can draw scenes by hand or use an online template.
4. If you were to create a soundtrack for this movie, what kind of music would you use? What kind of instruments would it include? Would it be classical, jazz, rock, etc.?
5. Prompt students to create a trailer for their movie, including music. Working together in groups, students act as the characters for one another’s films. Younger grades can put together a Spotify playlist for their soundtrack. Older grades may choose to use basic composition software such as Make Music Cloud (free and web-based) to write and play an original score.
6. Have students upload their finished trailers to Google Classroom and host a release party for the entire class to watch! Remind students of good audience etiquette and encourage them to listen and applaud.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## HEROIC SYMPHONY

Grade Level(s): 2–5 | Subject Areas: Music, SEL



### OBJECTIVE

Students will understand how music crafts a personal narrative, comments on societal events, and expresses human emotion through actively listening to Beethoven’s Symphony No. 3 “Eroica.” This will also familiarize them with the piece, which will be featured on our “What Makes a Hero” program.

### MUSIC TO EXPLORE

BEETHOVEN

[Overture to “The Creatures of Prometheus”](#)

[Symphony No. 3 “Eroica”](#)

### WARM-UP

This is a short warm-up activity for those wishing to give students an introduction or opportunity to practice active listening before the main lesson. Write the following prompts on the board: instruments, tempo, form, mood(s), surprises, story. These are details that students should try to identify in Beethoven’s “Prometheus” Overture. Listen to this short piece together, then discuss the items on the board. Remind everyone that active listening is the opposite of background music. The music is the main event!

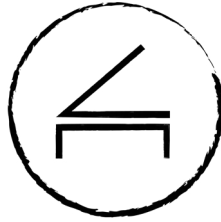
### ACTIVITY

Listen to the movements of the symphony individually, either in their entirety or selected excerpts, allowing time for class discussion and reflection between each. Some background and suggested questions are included below, which can be used in advance of or after listening. At the end of the piece, encourage students to connect the story of the music with their own lives: when have they done something heroic, and what challenges did they face to accomplish it?

#### 1. Introduction

Beethoven’s Third Symphony is known as “Heroic.” It was dedicated to one of his personal military heroes, Napoleon Bonaparte, and was originally called “The Bonaparte Symphony.” Think about some movies or shows you have seen that have superheroes in them. Is there a lot of action? Does the hero put themselves in danger to save the day? Now think about the music in those movies. Is it fast or slow? Loud or soft? What instruments do you hear a lot of? Do you think this piece will sound similar or different?

Beethoven wrote this symphony long before any of those movies. It was a groundbreaking piece, in that it totally changed the way people thought about symphonies, and how much action, drama, and emotion could be contained in a single piece. Because he wrote so much into it, it’s longer and bigger than any symphonies that came before it! Movements in a piece are like chapters in a book—we have to listen to the whole thing to understand the story. Let’s start with the first chapter.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## HEROIC SYMPHONY

Grade Level(s): 2–5 | Subject Areas: Music, SEL



### ACTIVITY

#### I. [Allegro con brio](#)

How did the first movement start? How did it end? Based on what you heard, do you think the next part of Beethoven's heroic tale will be happy, sad, frightening, or something else?

#### II. [Marcia Funebre](#)

The second movement is titled "Funeral March." It is about grief and loss. How do you think it will sound?

Remember Napoleon, the military hero that Beethoven dedicated this symphony to? Unfortunately, the power was too much, and he crowned himself Emperor. This was so offensive to Beethoven that he retitled the piece from "The Bonaparte Symphony" to "Heroic," and erased the dedication. He erased it so hard that there are holes in the title page! He was frustrated at the loss of a hero, someone so many people had put their hope into, only to be let down.

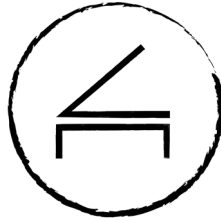
There was also a lot going on in Beethoven's personal life. A few years before writing this symphony, he discovered that he was going deaf. You can imagine how terrifying that would be for a musician, or for anyone. It would be hard to connect with friends and family if talking to them became difficult. He moved out to the countryside, hoping the quiet would bring him some relief and healing. Maybe when he wrote the Funeral March, he was mourning the end of his career and ability to have conversations.

#### III. [Scherzo](#)

It seems like things couldn't get any worse, but think again about your favorite hero movies. Do they usually have a happy ending?

Fortunately for us, Beethoven found a way to push past his fears and physical limitations and continue to create beautiful music for many years to come. He drew inspiration from the sounds of the countryside, which helped improve his health and mood. What kinds of things will we/did you hear? Carefree dancing, horn calls ...even the form of this movement itself, a scherzo, is a musical joke. It's supposed to be lighthearted, joyful, almost funny sometimes.

By this movement, Beethoven is no longer afraid. He wants to think about the future—the future of music, and his place in it.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## HEROIC SYMPHONY

Grade Level(s): 2–5 | Subject Areas: Music, SEL



### ACTIVITY

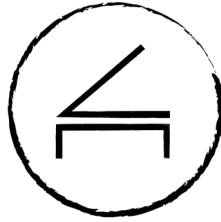
#### IV. Finale

We have reached the final chapter, our heroic character's climax. Did Beethoven's story have a happy ending? How does this movement sound different from the others?

Think about a time in your own life when you were heroic. Were you brave? What sorts of challenges did you have to face, or problems did you have to solve? What kind of heroic story would you like to be told about you?







# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## TCHAIKOVSKY PLAYALONG

Grade Level(s): 3–5 | Subject Area: Music



### OBJECTIVE

Students will learn and rehearse the opening chords and melody of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1, to be performed alongside the pianist during our Cliburn in the Classroom "What Makes a Hero" program.

### SUPPLIES

Students will need Orff ensemble instruments and either a recorder or Suzuki string instrument for the melody line. Teacher will need to transpose the melody if using a non-treble instrument.

### MUSIC TO EXPLORE

TCHAIKOVSKY [Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor \(I. Andante non troppo\)](#)

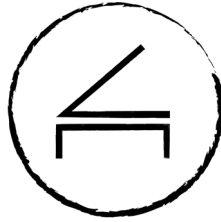
### ACTIVITY

Begin class by listening to Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1, link in title above. For this activity, only the first minute and 45 seconds is needed. Have students sing the main melody and identify what instrument families play the melody/ where it switches between voices. Have them also identify what the other (chordal/rhythmic) parts are doing.

Then use the provided score for Tchaikovsky Concerto No. 1 for Orff Ensemble, which has been transposed and transcribed from the original, to assign parts and rehearse together as an Orff or boom whacker ensemble. The melody line can be played by either a string instrument or recorder. Volunteers will be able to play along with the pianist during our visit!

### BONUS

If your students would like to practice along with a recording for their Cliburn debut, simply scan and upload the provided score into SmartMusic or PlayScore and press play.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## TCHAIKOVSKY PLAYALONG

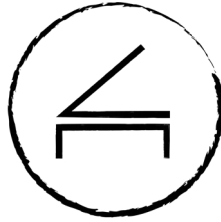
Grade Level(s): 3–5 | Subject Area: Music



Musical notation for the first system, measures 1-4. The score consists of four staves. The top staff is the melody in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 3/4 time. The bottom three staves provide harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

Musical notation for the second system, measures 5-8. The notation continues with the same four-staff structure as the first system.

Musical notation for the third system, measures 9-12. The notation continues with the same four-staff structure as the previous systems.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



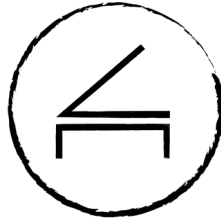
## TCHAIKOVSKY PLAYALONG

Grade Level(s): 3–5 | Subject Area: Music



13

17



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## LEAVING A LEGACY

Grade Level(s): 3–5 | Subject Areas: Music, History, SEL

### OBJECTIVE

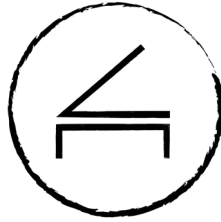
Through the story of Van Cliburn, students will understand what it means to leave a legacy. By identifying impactful events from their own lives, students will consider the impact they might have on future generations of music students.

### SUPPLIES

Students will need the included handout on Van Cliburn, timeline worksheet, and a pencil. Students will also need internet access to research dates and music to fill in their timelines.

### ACTIVITY

1. Begin class with time for independent reading of the handout on Van Cliburn. When everyone has finished reading, lead a class discussion on leaving a legacy. Some suggested questions are below.
  - a. What does it mean to leave a legacy? What are some of the ways people create a legacy?
  - b. How would you summarize Van Cliburn's legacy? What is the meaning behind his story?
  - c. Who is a musician's community? What impact can a musician have on their community?
  - d. Does music help you remember an important event or person?
2. Have students fill in the included legacy timelines with the most memorable and meaningful moments of their lives so far. Encourage them to think well beyond the current school year. Some examples could be a family trip, performing in a school concert, a big win at a sporting event, or a favorite memory with friends. Add pictures to the boxes in the timeline; these can be hand-drawn or printed. On the music line, have students write in music they associate with that memory. It can be a song that was played at the event, a piece they performed themselves, or simply their favorite song from that time.
3. Have students write a legacy letter as their future, older selves. What sorts of memories will they want to revisit? What experiences will they have? What advice would they leave for their own children, students, or future generations? What do they want the story of their lives to be?
4. Allow volunteers to read their letter out loud!



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## LEAVING A LEGACY

Grade Level(s): 3–5 | Subject Areas: Music, History, SEL

### LEGACY TIMELINE

1.

Empty box for step 1.

2.

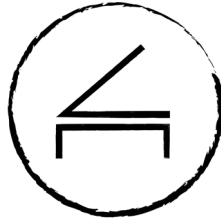
Empty box for step 2.

3.

Empty box for step 3.

4.

Empty box for step 4.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## LEAVING A LEGACY

Grade Level(s): 3–5 | Subject Areas: Music, History, SEL



### VAN CLIBURN

Van Cliburn was a celebrated American pianist who helped shape international relationships, build community, and inspire future generations through his music.

Van's mother was a pianist and music teacher. As a baby, he listened to her lessons and heard the pieces she taught every day. At only 3 years old, he decided to sit at the piano and play the music he'd heard all his life—and to her surprise, he had it memorized, without ever having a lesson himself! Recognizing this unusual talent, his mother immediately began to teach him. Van won his first competition nine years later; the prize was to make his solo debut with the Houston Symphony.

At 17, Van left home for New York City, where he studied at The Juilliard School with the most important piano teacher of the time, Rosina Lhevinne. She was a native of Russia, and under her care, he built a growing reputation as an artist. She taught him many inspiring lessons about the piano, but also about caring for your neighbor and community and having a generous spirit. This is important because, at the time, the relationship between the United States and Russia was very tense.

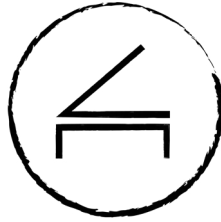
Our countries were locked in a kind of war called the “Cold War.” It was not fought with soldiers and tanks, but with culture and politics. It was all about being the first and best at everything. In 1957, Russia launched the first satellite, Sputnik, into space. This challenged the idea of the United States as the world leader in science and lowered American morale. Russia then founded an international music competition—the Tchaikovsky Piano Competition—to prove it was also the best in culture. Ms. Lhevinne encouraged Van to enter the competition. Though it seemed an impossible task, he traveled to Russia and took with him all of the lessons he had learned from his teacher. He won not only the competition, but the hearts of the Russian people. Van proved that music could promote understanding, ease tensions, and even form unlikely friendships.

Van Cliburn returned to the United States a celebrated and beloved hero. New York City threw him a ticker tape parade—the only one in history to be given to a musician! His recording of the piece that led him to victory was the first classical recording to go platinum and was the best-selling album for more than 10 years. His victory made him a source of pride for every American and cemented his enduring legacy for many generations to come.



*“If you hold onto the beauty and inspiration and the clarity that is music, you will have an anchor, you will not be too far swayed by what the world is.”*

**Van Cliburn**  
(1934–2013)



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



## GO FOR GOLD!

Grade Level(s): 2–5 | Subject Areas: Music, SEL

### OBJECTIVE

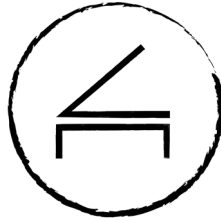
Using youth music competitions as an endpoint, students learn and practice SMART goal setting.

### SUPPLIES

Students will need a school-issued Chromebook or tablet to search for information about music competitions in their area. They will also need a word processor or pencil and paper to outline tangible steps to achieve their goal. If creating a physical vision board, students will need craft supplies such as poster board, glue, scissors, and magazines or printer for pictures.

### ACTIVITY

1. Begin by having students independently research music competitions open to students under 18. These can be for any instrument of interest to them, whether they are currently learning that instrument or are interested in learning it in the future. Some examples are below.
  - [Cliburn International Junior Piano Competition](#)
  - [DSO Lynn Harrell Concerto Competition](#)
  - [Wildflower! Budding Talent Vocal Competition](#)
  - [Juanita Miller Concerto Competition](#)
  - [Fort Worth MTNA Solo Competition](#)
  - [Vernell Gregg Young Artists Competition](#)
  - [Denton Bach Society Competition for Young Musicians](#)
  - [Collin County Young Artist Competition](#)
2. Have students compile a list of requirements, including ages and dates, as well as repertoire. While moving through the steps below, listen to the some of the repertoire they've discovered!
3. As a class, discuss what steps it would take to enter a music competition. Include things like taking lessons, daily practice, going to concerts, and joining a school and/or youth ensemble.



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM



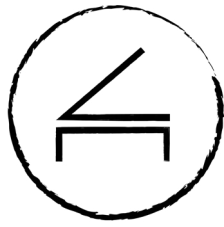
## GO FOR GOLD!

Grade Level(s): 2–5 | Subject Areas: Music, SEL



4. Have students take the ideas discussed above and set their own musical goal. This should be specific to the student and their interests and experience, whether they play an instrument currently or not. Examples can include learning a new instrument, performing in the school talent show, auditioning for youth choir, etc. Encourage them to practice SMART goal setting for this exercise:
  - a. Specific – know exactly what you want to work toward, whether it be a performance, a piece, or a competition.
  - b. Measurable – how will you know when you have achieved your goal? What do I want to achieve (I win a gold medal, I hear the audience applause, I play along with my favorite recording, etc.)
  - c. Attainable – How can I break down this task into achievable steps given the time and resources that I have? What daily things must I do to reach my goal?
  - d. Relevant/Realistic – Is this goal realistic? Can I accomplish this goal on my own, or do I need help from parents/teachers, etc.?
  - e. Timely – Set a deadline to achieve the goal, with smaller benchmarks for each step of the way. This can be within the same school year for smaller goals, or several years from now for bigger dreams!
5. Create a vision board to remind students to take daily steps toward reaching their goals. These can be online using free tools like Canva, or physical boards created in class for display in and around the music room.

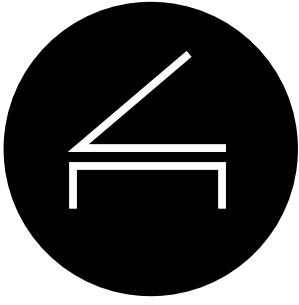




# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM

## WHAT MAKES A HERO? CURRICULUM GUIDE

	<b>Lesson 1: My Hero</b>	<b>Lesson 2: Heroic Symphony</b>	<b>Lesson 3: Tchaikovsky Playalong</b>	<b>Lesson 4: Leaving a Legacy</b>	<b>Lesson 5: Go For Gold!</b>
<b>TEKS Objective</b>					
<b>Elicit/Warm-Up TEKS 2.A, 3.A 4.A, 5.A</b>	Activity begins with a free writing prompt - "Who are your personal heroes and why?"	Background narrative is provided for active listening to Beethoven's Symphony No. 3.	Begin by listening to Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1	Activity opens with independent reading of a provided handout on Van Cliburn.	Open with an exercise in SMART goal setting.
<b>Foundations: Music Literacy TEKS 1.A, 1.B, 1.C; 2. A, 2.B, 2.C</b>	Students use foundations of music literacy to compose an original score for a movie trailer.	Students identify the instruments featured in each movement of the symphony and their impact on the overall narrative and mood.	Students must differentiate between melody and rhythm/chords and echo-sing the melody line to memorize contour.		Students refine their personal music performance through consistent practice and goal setting.
<b>Movement based TEKS 3.A, 3.B, 3.C, 3.D, 3.E, 3.F</b>	Students work together in small groups to act out the plot and characters to their own original heroic movie trailer.		Students perform together in a small ensemble using Orff instruments or boomwhackers. Melody line can be performed on Suzuki string instruments or recorders.		Students move and dance to their original recording during an in-class Album Release Party.
<b>Creative Expression TEKS 3.A, 3.D, 3.E, 3.F, 4.A, 4.B, 4.C</b>	Students compose and record a soundtrack for their original movie trailer using classroom instruments.		Students perform simple accompaniments and rhythmic phrases on boomwhackers or Orff instruments, while creating melodic phrases on string instruments or recorders.	Students relate music to personal experience, reflect on memories from music class, and connect to legacy and community building by reading aloud letters of advice they write to future music students.	Students select competitions specific to their personal goals and select preferred repertoire.
<b>Historical and Cultural Relevance, Critical Evaluation and Response TEKS 5.A, 5.B, 6.A, 6.B, 6.E, 6.F</b>	Students must show proper audience etiquette as they watch each others' trailers.	Students will gain a better understanding of how music crafts a personal narrative, comments on societal events, and expresses human emotion.	Students recognize known rhythmic and melodic elements in aural examples and identify specific musical events, ie. when the theme switches between voices of the orchestra/soloist.	Through the story of Van Cliburn, students will better understand how classical music is representative of America and Texas. They will also justify personal preferences for specific music works as they relate to memorable moments.	Students will gain the tools to justify personal preferences for specific music works and will use those preferences to outline a path for continued participation in music beyond the elementary classroom.



# ABOUT THE CLIBURN



## CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM

Cliburn in the Classroom is an interactive concert experience designed specifically for elementary audiences. We bring our own Steinway baby grand piano into every school, along with a virtuoso pianist to perform impressive music. A teaching-artist leads students through activities and bridges connections between the music and theme of the program.

With Cliburn in the Classroom, instructional time is enhanced, not lost. Our interdisciplinary themes explore the intersection of music and multiple subjects, including math, reading, language arts, social studies, history, and art. When combined with our curriculum guides, they address state and national standards for STEAM education for students in the second through fourth grades.

We take a student-centered approach to music education. All Cliburn in the Classroom programs are crafted through a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) lens. Our experiences provide multiple, flexible means of engagement to celebrate the variability in all students, and to allow kids the opportunity to participate in ways that are most meaningful and comfortable for them. We cater to multiple learning styles, utilize movement and peer-building activities, and address social-emotional learning competencies. Our performance length and structure are both attention and sensory friendly. We are also able to offer bilingual (Spanish/English) presentations, so that every child can fully participate. Cliburn in the Classroom is provided without cost to schools and districts in North Texas, to remove financial barriers to access.

The Cliburn was awarded *D CEO's* Nonprofit and Corporate Citizenship Award for Innovation in Education in 2024.

## OUR MISSION

It is the mission of the Cliburn to advance classical piano music throughout the world. Its international competitions, education programs, and concert series embody an enduring commitment to artistic excellence and the discovery of young artists.

## GOVERNANCE

The Cliburn is a not-for-profit organization governed by a board of directors, elected for a four-year term. It is sustained by the generous support from individuals, foundations, corporations, the tireless efforts of volunteers, and embraced by the community of Fort Worth. The Van Cliburn International Piano Competition is a proud member of the [World Federation of International Music Competitions](#).

Special thanks to Amegy Bank for their generous sponsorship of Cliburn in the Classroom.