

Carnival of the Animals

Composed by Saint-Saëns

Carnival of the Animals was composed in February 1886 by a French composer called Camille Saint-Saëns. The piece is written for a symphony orchestra and has fourteen different movements that cleverly use sounds created by instruments to mimic the sounds of different animals. A performance of the whole piece lasts about twenty-five minutes!

Listen to the following movements of Carnival of the Animals and answer the questions as you listen.

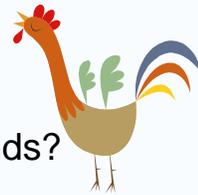
Movement One: Introduction and Royal March of the Lion



1. Which instrument begins the piece? _____
2. Are the very first notes high or low pitched? _____
3. Which section of the orchestra plays throughout the introduction? _____
4. Listen to the string section as it first plays the *March* theme. Is this melody high or low pitched? _____
5. What dynamic (volume) is the very last note of the Royal March of the Lion?

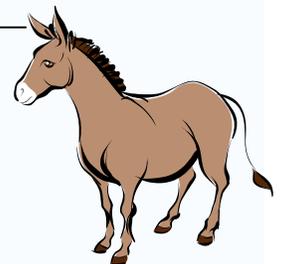
Movement Two: Hens and Cocks

1. In this movement Saint-Saëns composes music that sounds like chickens pecking at grain. How does he achieve this?
 - a) By using long, sustained, low-pitched brass notes?
 - b) By using short, high pitched, repetitive string and piano sounds?
 - c) By using muted pizzicato strings?
2. Listen **very** carefully. There is ONE woodwind instrument that plays in this movement. Which one is it?



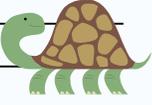
Movement Three: Wild Asses

1. Which instrument plays throughout this movement? _____
2. Do you think that the wild asses are:
 - a) strolling?
 - b) stealthily hunting their prey?
 - c) running?
 - d) going for a civilised morning jog around the block?



3. Explain your answer to question number 2

Movement Four: Tortoises (Track 5)

1. Describe the dynamics (volume) at the opening of the piece _____ 
2. How quickly are the string section playing the famous 'Can-Can' theme _____
3. Why does this movement effectively portray a tortoise? _____

Movement Six: Kangaroos (Track 7)

1. How does the piano create a hopping sound?
 - a) By pressing and holding down the piano keys firmly?
 - b) By using a pattern of short ascending and descending notes?
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Movement Seven: Aquarium

1. What is the overall pitch (high or low) of this movement? _____
2. Listen **very** carefully. There is ONE woodwind instrument that plays the theme in this movement. Which one is it? _____
3. Which instruments are NOT playing in this piece? _____
4. Close your eyes and imagine a dimly-lit, peaceful aquarium as you listen to this piece. How is this music effective?

Movement Thirteen: The Swan

1. This is the most famous movement of the whole suite. Which stringed instrument performs the elegant melody of the Swan? _____
2. Which instrument provides the accompaniment?

Which of the pieces that you have listened to is your favourite and why?
