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# QUARTETO NUEVO



STUDY GUIDE

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# BIOGRAPHY

Quarteto Nuevo merges western classical, eastern European folk, Latin and jazz with an organic feel that packs a wallop! Their diverse programs can be tailored to fit anywhere, from an intimate chamber music venue to a large outdoor festival. The ensemble's razor-sharp precision is enhanced by jazzy interludes, lightly rumbling percussion motifs and mesmerizing rhythms. They effectively meld the music of ancient worlds and faraway places with a contemporary groove that enchants audiences of all ages!

*"Utilizing the sounds and instruments of ancient worlds and faraway places with a contemporary groove, Quarteto Nuevo's music is complex in its structure and sophisticated time signatures but always melodic, accessible, and deeply communicative."*— LA WEEKLY





# INSTRUMENTS



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## Saxophone

The saxophone is from the woodwind family of instruments. It is made of brass and played with a single reed and was invented in 1846 by Adolphe Sax, a Belgian instrument maker.

## Guitar

The guitar is a fretted string instrument that usually has six strings. It is typically played by strumming or plucking the strings with either a guitar pick or the fingers/fingernails of one hand, while simultaneously fretting (pressing the strings against the frets) with the fingers of the other hand.

## Cello

The lowest pitched and largest member of the violin family. Cellos have 4 strings and can be played with a bow or sometimes with fingers (plucked or strummed).

## Cajon

An Afro-Peruvian percussion instrument whose name in English means "Big Box." The cajon is played with the hands while the player sits on top of the instrument and is common in Peruvian and Spanish Flamenco music.

## Pandiero

A Brazilian percussion instrument from the frame drum family. Distinct from, but similar to a tambourine, it is a national symbol of Brazilian Music.



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# GENRES

## World Music

Traditional folk and indigenous music from around the world.

## Chamber Music

A form of classical music that is composed for a small group of instruments that could fit in a palace chamber or a large room.

## Classical

Broad term for music rooted in European culture from 1650 to 1900.

## Jazz

Music with roots in blues and ragtime that originated in the Black communities of New Orleans in the early 20th century.

## Tango

A social dance that originated in the 1880s along the Río de la Plata, the natural border between Argentina and Uruguay.

## Rock

Broad term for music that developed from the genres of blues, rhythm and blues and country music in the late 1940s and evolved into a wide range of different styles in the mid-1960s and later.



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# STUDENT ACTIVITIES



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## **Spotify Playlist:**

### **Quarteto Nuevo Educational Playlist (search)**

- 1) Haitian Lady - Pancho Sanchez - World Music/Latin Jazz
- 2) Symphony No. 1 in C Minor - Johannes Brahms - Classical
- 3) String Quartet No. 3 in D Major - Ludwig van Beethoven - Chamber Music
- 4) Moment's Notice - John Coltrane - Jazz
- 5) Libertango - Astor Piazzolla - Tango
- 6) Billie Jean - Michael Jackson - Pop/Rock

## **Listening:**

Play short excerpts of selections from our Spotify Playlist and ask these questions:

What are the different instruments that you hear?

What are the differences in the rhythms that you hear?

What are other ways each selection is similar or different? (Loud vs. soft, lyrical vs. rhythmic, etc.)



## **Rhythms Of The World:**

Have students count the beats of track 6 from our Spotify Playlist: "1, 2, 3, 4"

Have half the students clap only on beats "2" and "4". This is called the "backbeat".

Which selections from our list have a backbeat? (1, 4, 5, 6)

Which don't? (2, 3)

## **Improvising:**

In Jazz and other styles of world music, it's common to improvise, but WHAT IS IMPROVISATION?

Discuss the fact that we all improvise every day when we walk, play, and talk with our friends.

Ask the students the different ways they improvise.

Improvising isn't just random notes:

Speak random gibberish to the class, such as: "Pink up yes cat"

Like when we speak, there are certain rules that help give music meaning.

When we talk we use grammar: the rules of language.

Musical improvisers use different rules and each set of rules regarding rhythm, notes, etc. produces a different sound and style of music.

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# CONCEPTS AND TERMS



**Accompaniment:** A musical part that supports a solo instrument, voice, or group.

**Arrangement:** A version of a piece for specific instruments.

**Articulation:** The way notes are performed - slurred/connected, staccato/short, legato/long, accented.

**Beat:** The basic pulse of music.

**Backbeat:** The strong emphasis on beats 2 and 4 found in popular styles of music.

**Comping:** The accompaniment that the rhythm section provides to support a lead melody or an improvised solo.

**Composition:** An original piece of music.

**Dynamics:** Variations in volume.

**Genre:** The type or style of musical work (classical, jazz, world, rock).

**Harmony:** The sound of two or more notes heard simultaneously.

**Improvisation:** The creative activity of spontaneous musical composition.

**Interval:** The distance in pitch between two tones.

**Melody:** An organized sequence of single notes.

**Meter:** The grouping of beats by which a piece of music is measured.

**Notation:** Special symbols that create a visual representation of music.



**Ornaments:** Added musical embellishments that serve to decorate a musical line.

**Ostinato:** A repeating rhythmic and/or melodic figure.

**Percussion:** Musical instruments that produce sound by striking with the hand or stick.

**Phrase:** A musical idea comparable to a sentence or a clause in language.

**Pitch:** "High" and "low" sounds defined by their frequency.

**Rhythm:** The placement of sounds in time. A combination of long and short sounds and silences.

**Scale:** A set of musical notes ordered by pitch.

**Strings:** Musical instruments that produce sound from vibrating strings.

**Syncopation:** The placement or rhythmic accents on weak beats or weak portions of beats.

**Tempo:** The speed at which a piece of music is played, measured in beats per minute (BPM).

**Timbre:** The tone color or quality of sound.

**Woodwinds:** Musical instruments that produce sound when air is blown into or across the mouthpiece.

# TEACHING STANDARDS

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Educational outreach performances by Quarteto Nuevo cover the following teaching standards outlined in the Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools (grades K-12). Programs are customized to appropriate grade levels.

## **1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION**

Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to Music. Students read, notate, listen to, analyze, and describe music and other aural information, using the terminology of music.

1.2 Identify simple musical forms (e.g., phrase, AB, echo).

1.3 Identify common instruments visually and aurally in a variety of music.

1.5 Analyze and compare the use of musical elements representing various genres, styles, and cultures, with an emphasis on chords and harmonic progressions.

1.6 Analyze the use of form in a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres, styles, and cultures.

## **2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

Creating, Performing, and Participating in Music. Students apply vocal and instrumental musical skills in performing a varied repertoire of music. They compose and arrange music and improvise melodies, variations, and accompaniments, using digital/electronic technology when appropriate.

2.3 Compose and improvise simple rhythmic and melodic patterns on classroom instruments.

2.10 Improvise original melodies over given chord progressions.



### 3.0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of Music. Students analyze the role of music in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting cultural diversity as it relates to music, musicians, and composers.

3.1 Compare and contrast the functions music serves and the place of musicians in society in various cultures.

3.2 Identify uses of music elements in non-traditional art music (e.g., atonal, twelve-tone, serial)

3.3 Explain how music has reflected social functions and changing ideas and values.

3.4 Compare and contrast the distinguishing characteristics of musical genres and styles from a variety of cultures.

3.5 Compare and contrast instruments from a variety of cultures and historical periods.

3.6 Compare and contrast musical styles within various popular genres in North America and South America.

3.7 Analyze the stylistic features of a given musical work that define its aesthetic traditions and its historical or cultural context.

3.8 Compare and contrast musical genres or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions.

### 4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

Responding to, Analyzing, and Making Judgements About Works of Music. Students critically assess and derive meaning from works of music and the performance of musicians in a cultural context according to the elements of music, aesthetic qualities, and human responses.

4.1 Compare and contrast how a composer's intentions result in a work of music and how that music is used.

4.3 Compare and contrast the musical means used to create images or evoke feelings and emotions in works of music from various cultures.

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# BOOKING

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