The Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra
Benjamin Britten

In 1945, the famous composer (1)____________________ was
asked by the British Ministry of Education to write a piece of music that would teach children
about the instruments in the symphony (2)________________. The music was to go with a
movie called Instruments of the Orchestra. With or without the movie, Britten’s music has
become a classic. Not only is it a favorite way to learn about (3)____________________ but
it is also a great piece of music to listen to.

One of England’s most famous composers, Benjamin Britten, was born on November 22,
1913. Britten first fell in love with music listening to his (4)____________________, who was a singer. By the age of (5)____________________, he was already
composing. Throughout his childhood he loved to write music (often writing before breakfast!).
He also loved (6)____________________ and playing cricket.

When he was only 11 years old, a famous composer named Frank Bridge started
working with Britten. Bridge taught the young composer many of the composing skills he
would use later in life. Britten wrote some of the most well-known pieces of the (7)_______
century. They include (8)______________________________________________,
Ceremony of Carols, War Requiem, and the operas Peter Grimes and Billy Budd.

Unlike some famous composers, Britten was lucky enough to be highly respected during
his lifetime. He won many awards, including a medal from the United States Library of
Congress. Benjamin Britten died on December 4, 1976, just days after his 63rd birthday.
Color the STRING family PINK
Color the WOODWIND family GREEN

Color the BRASS family YELLOW
Color the Percussion family BLUE
The Woodwind Family

In his Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra, Benjamin Britten introduces five members of the woodwind family – the (1) ______________, the (2) ______________, the (3) ______________, the (4) ______________, and the (5) ______________. These instruments are called woodwinds because at one time they were made from (6) ___________ tubes. Today, the flute and piccolo are usually made of (7) ______________. To help remember half of the family name, think of how the woodwinds are played. You (8) _________ your breath, or “wind,” into a (9) ______________. This causes the tube to (10) ___________ and sound to come out.
The String Family

Instruments in the string family all have (you guessed it) strings! Family members include the (1) ______________, the (2) ________________, the (3) ________________ and the (4) _________________. These instruments all have one big feature in common: each is made of a hollow (5) ______________ box with (6) ____ strings stretched across it.

When you pluck these strings with your fingers or move a bow across them the strings move and (7) _______________________________, making sounds.

One string family member looks very different. It is the (8) ______________ with 47 (yes, 47!) strings. You play them by plucking them.
**The Brass Family**

Britten’s work features four members of the brass family: the (1) _______________,
the (2) _______________, the (3) _______________, and the (4) _______________.

All of these instruments are made from long, coiled brass (5)_____________________. At one
end is a wide, (6) __________________ -shaped opening. At the other end is a (8) ________
shaped like a little (9) ________________.

Playing a brass instrument is a little harder than you might think. You don’t just blow,
you (10) ______________________________ by putting your lips together and blowing
through them. This sends vibrations through the mouthpiece and into the brass tube. The
vibrations come out as sound.
The Percussion Family

The percussion family is the most varied family in the orchestra. The instruments look very different – from tiny castanets to the huge timpani. There are so many percussion instruments; people group them in different ways.

Sometimes they are grouped by how they are played. You...(1) ________________ them, (2) ___________________ them, or (3) ____________________________ them.

Sometimes they are grouped by the way they sound. Some can make definite pitches - (4) ________________ and some cannot - (5) ____________________________.

One other way to group them is the materials from which they are made: (6) ________________, (7) ________________, or (8) ________________ (a fancy word for skin).