

# The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra - Listening Sheet

*Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Purcell Op.34*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Form \_\_\_\_\_

Benjamin Britten wrote a piece of music for orchestra called "The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra" in 1946 for an educational film called *Instruments of the Orchestra*. He based his piece on a very old *theme* that he borrowed from an earlier composer called **PURCELL**.



Henry **PURCELL** (1659-1695)



Benjamin **BRITTEN** (1913-1976)

We hear this *theme* at the beginning of the piece that is played by the full orchestra. Then, Britten gives us a brief tour of the four different sections of the orchestra that play a *variation* of the *theme*. Listen carefully and write down in what order you hear each of the four sections being introduced.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_



After the four sections have been introduced the full orchestra plays the *theme* again.

Now, Britten takes each section in turn and demonstrates the sound of each instrument as they play a *variation* of the *theme* that was heard at the beginning. First it's the **WOODWIND** section. Listen carefully and write down the order of the woodwind instruments you can hear playing.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

Next, Britten introduces us to the instruments of the **STRINGS** section. Listen carefully and write down the order of the string instruments you can hear playing.

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_

13. \_\_\_\_\_

It's now the turn of the **BRASS** section of the orchestra to introduce themselves. Listen carefully and write down the order of the brass instruments you can hear playing.

14. \_\_\_\_\_

15. \_\_\_\_\_

16. \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

The final section of the orchestra, the **PERCUSSION** section now demonstrates the sounds of their instruments. Listen carefully and write down all of the percussion instruments you can hear playing

17. \_\_\_\_\_

18. \_\_\_\_\_

19. \_\_\_\_\_

20. \_\_\_\_\_

21. \_\_\_\_\_

22. \_\_\_\_\_

23. \_\_\_\_\_



Once all the instruments of the orchestra have been introduced, Britten starts off a *fugue* where all the instruments enter one after each other overlapping. They enter in the same order as they were introduced earlier in the piece. The music becomes more exciting and the **TEXTURE** becomes thicker and thicker as more and more instruments join in. At the end of the piece the *theme* returns majestically played by the brass section before an exciting and triumphal ending.

Total \_\_\_\_\_ out of 25