

2025-2026

Discovery

Series RESOURCE GUIDE



DAYTON LIVE

Your Home for Arts,
Culture & Entertainment

Friday, Oct. 10, 2025
11:30 a.m. ONLY
Schuster Center

Welcome to the 2025-2026 Discovery Series at Dayton Live. We are very excited to be your education partner in providing professional arts experiences to you and your students!

BLACK VIOLIN is back with their live blend of classical, hip-hop, rock, R&B, and bluegrass music. They are accompanied by their incredible band, featuring ace turntable whiz DJ SPS and a drummer. In the past year they have performed for more than 100,000 students. Since starting **BLACK VIOLIN** a little over a decade ago, Wil Baptiste and Kevin “Kev Marcus” Sylvester have performed an average of 200 shows a year in 49 states and 36 countries as far away as Dubai, Prague and South Africa. Their groundbreaking collaborations have led them to play their music for U.S. troops in Iraq, the official President’s Inaugural Ball, and the Kids Inaugural in Washington, D.C. **Please note, this concert is loud!**

The information and activities in this guide have been carefully crafted to help you and your students explore the many ways a live theatre experience can create endless learning opportunities. Grade level icons will help you determine which activities are good for your students, too. Don’t forget to take advantage of the local resources listed to extend the play-going experience and make even more curricular connections for you and your students. Thank you again, and welcome!



The Education & Engagement Team

Curriculum Connection

Grades
4-12

You will find these icons listed in the resource guide next to the activities that indicate curricular connections. Teachers and parents are encouraged to adapt all of the activities included in an appropriate way for your students’ age and abilities. **BLACK VIOLIN** fulfills the following Ohio State Standards and Benchmarks for fourth through twelfth grades:



Learning Standards Related to **BLACK VIOLIN**

Fine Arts:

Music: 4.1RE, 4.2RE, 4.3RE, 4.5RE, 4.7RE, 5.1RE, 5.3RE, 5.5RE, 6.1RE, 6.3RE, 6.5RE, 7.1RE; 4.1CO, 4.2CO, 5.1CO, 5.2CO, 6.1CO, 6.2CO, 7.1CO, 7.2CO

SEL: C1.2b, C3.2.b, C3.2c, E4.1.b, E4.3.b, E4.1.c

Social Studies: 5.GS.9, 5.GS.10; 9.CS.17, 9.CS.18

ELA: RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.5.2, RL.6.2

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Your Trip to the Theatre!

SEL

FINE
ART

Get excited for your trip to the Victoria Theatre by checking out this video!

- 1 Pickle Jean, our Audience Etiquette Monitor, helped us learn about BRAVO. Do you remember what each letter stands for?
- 2 Based on this video, what are some ways you can be the best audience member you can be?
- 3 How can you as an audience member help the performers onstage do the best job they can for you?
- 4 Is this your first visit to a theatre? If so, what are you most looking forward to?



Pre-Show Conversation Starters

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MUSIC



BLACK VIOLIN is a show that will span several genres of music. Kev Marcus and Wil B draw upon influences from classical, hip-hop, rock, R&B, and bluegrass music. Have students reflect on these questions before coming to see the show:

- 1 What is your relationship with music? Do you play an instrument? Sing in a chorus?
- 2 What are your favorite genres or types of music?
- 3 What are the different ways music is used in the world?
- 4 What are the ways music expresses emotions?
- 5 What are the ways music is used to tell a story?

Artist Spotlight: Kev Marcus & Wil B

Kev Marcus is the stage name of Kevin Sylvester. His mother was the person who signed him up for violin lessons hoping to give him something constructive to do. He hopes that his performing inspires his audience to think about how they would do things differently in their lives and to be unique to themselves and their goals.

Wil B is the stage name of performer Wilner Baptiste. When he first started out in music, he wanted to study the saxophone. However, a scheduling error put him in classes for the viola and he decided to stick it out. When he performs, he wants the people who are seeing his show to leave as better people than when they arrived.



Kevin Marcus & Wil B

Ohio Spotlight

Did you know that Ohio is the heart of where funk music started, specifically Dayton?

The Great Migration in the early to mid-twentieth century led to a new flow of musical styles to the northern U.S.¹ Black Americans moved to Dayton, a large mid-west metropolitan area of the times, for jobs at companies such as General Motors and the National Cash Register Co.² This Great Migration and the influence Dayton artists had on the genre have helped to create the sound of artists you may know – **Bruno Mars, Prince, Childish Gambino and Kendrick Lamar!**



FUNKY FACTS

- **Funk** – musically, it refers to a style of aggressive urban dance music driven by hard syncopated bass lines and drumbeats. It's accented by many other instruments all working in counterplay, finding a “groove.”
- **James Brown** established the beat and modern street funk in the 1960's.



- The development of the terms **funk** and **funky** evolved through the vernacular of jazz improvisation in the 1950's as a reference to a performance style that was a passionate reflection of the black experience.
- By The 1970's, funk became the musical standard for bands like the Ohio Players. See them **LIVE** at the historic Victoria Theatre this upcoming April!

Citations:

1. <https://artsmidwest.org/stories/how-ohio-funk-changed-the-world-of-music/>
2. <https://www.statenews.org/section/the-ohio-newsroom/2025-02-27/how-dayton-became-the-funk-capital-of-the-world>
3. <https://www.thefunkcenter.org/history/>

About the Show



WARNING This performance may not be suitable for students who are highly sensitive to loud noise.

BLACK VIOLIN is a live blend of classical, hip-hop, rock, R&B, and bluegrass music. They are accompanied by their incredible band, featuring ace turntable whiz **DJ SPS**, drummer **Nat Stokes**, keyboardist **Liston Gregory**. Since starting Black Violin in 2004, Wil Baptiste and Kevin “Kev Marcus” Sylvester have performed an average of 200 shows a year in 49 states and 36 countries as far away as Dubai, Prague and South Africa. They received a Grammy nomination for their album entitled “**Take the Stairs**” for Best Contemporary Instrumental Album. Their groundbreaking collaborations have led them to play their music for U.S. troops in Iraq, the official President’s Inaugural Ball, and the Kids Inaugural in Washington, D.C.



Why Music Education?

ELA

MUSIC



Are you lucky enough to be part of a school, community, or family that values music education? According to the **NAMM Foundation** and **PBS**, here are some of the benefits school-aged children receive when music is a part of their education!

- ▶ Students who study music foster a bigger vocabulary.
- ▶ Understanding musical language offers some of the same benefits as being bilingual.
- ▶ Reading and spelling test scores are higher for students who participate in music programs.
- ▶ Music facilitates learning other subjects and strengthens the skills that children will use in other areas.
- ▶ Making music involves more than one voice or part of the body, aiding in fine and gross motor skills.
- ▶ Studies have shown that children with music lessons or programming have a slightly higher IQ than those who do not.
- ▶ Studies have shown that the brain of a musician works harder! There’s a larger growth of neural activity in brains engaged in music training.

And many more! Learn more about all the benefits a musical education holds for a child by visiting: <https://www.nammfoundation.org> or <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/the-benefits-of-music-education>.



Meet the Strings!

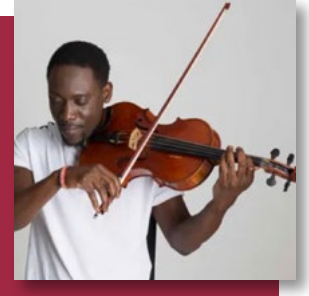
ELA

MUSIC



The **Violin** makes the highest sound in the orchestra. Typically the first violins play the melody of the piece while second violins play between the melody and harmony. Think of it like a lead singer in a band with backup vocals and harmonies! You play the violin by resting it between your chin and left shoulder while moving a bow across the strings or plucking the strings with your right hand.

The **Viola** is slightly larger than the violin and has thicker strings. It looks a lot like violin, but the thick strings of a viola make a warmer and deeper sound. They are the peanut butter to the jelly of the violin in an orchestra. An orchestra will have 10-14 violas and they play the rich harmonies. You play the viola the same way you play the violin.



The **Cello** is four feet tall with four thick strings. They make a deep, warm, and smooth sound. The cello also the instrument that sounds the most like the human voice! An orchestra will have 8-10 cellos. You play the cello sitting down while it rests on the ground, sitting between the legs of the player and resting on their shoulder. A cello can be played with a bow or by plucking the strings.

The **Double Bass**, sometimes just called a bass, is the biggest and lowest sounding string instrument at over six feet tall. The bass makes very deep notes and helps give the music a nice, strong beat and foundation. The orchestra will have 6-8 basses. Musicians will stand while playing the instrument and have it rest against their left shoulder, and it is played similarly to a cello.



The **Harp** is six feet tall and kind-of shaped like the number 7. It contains 47 strings of different lengths which are plucked by your fingers to play different notes. The harp sounds soft and dreamy, adding a magical sound in an orchestra. The harp also has seven foot pedals that will change the pitch of the strings.

There are many genres of music, and even genres that mix together!

Classical

music is music that was written in the European tradition during 1750 to 1830.

One of the ways classical music is different than other genres such as pop or folk music is the way the music is written. The piece of music is written down in musical notation, meaning that each instrumental or vocal part of the music is written down on sheet music to create a score. Instruments commonly used in the genre included the string family, clarinet, flute, oboe, clavichord, and piano. The well-known composers of the Classical era are **Beethoven, Mozart, Vivaldi and Bach**.

Hip-Hop

music originated in New York City in the late 1970s and was heavily influenced by African and Latino Americans. The style of music

has musicians create rhythmic music and add rapping, which is vocals that contain rhythmic and rhyming speech. Hip Hop has four elements that come together to form its culture: turntabling, rapping, graffiti, and dancing called “B-Boying”. The first Hip-Hop DJ was Kool Herc (Clive Campbell). Some popular Hip-Hop artists of today are **J. Cole, Ludacris, Lauryn Hill, Lupe Fiasco and Missy Elliott**.

R&B

stands for **rhythm and blues**. It originated in the 1940s in African American communities.

It is a genre of music that combines influence from pop, soul, funk, hip-hop, and electronic music. The music is largely backed by the beat of drums, symbols, and snares. The vocals also go through an electronic processing called pitch correction. Some famous R&B musical artists are **Whitney Houston, Michael Jackson, Usher, SZA, John Legend and Beyoncé**.

Bluegrass

is a genre of music that originated in the Appalachian region of the United States.

Bluegrass is influenced by traditional English, Irish, and Scottish ballads, and dance tunes. It can also draw from traditional African-America blues and jazz. Bluegrass music features stringed instruments and emphasizes the offbeat. It is a high energy form of music where one or more

instruments will take turns playing the melody and then changing or improvising around it while everyone else accompanies that instrument and musician. Famous Bluegrass musicians include **Bill Monroe, Allison Krauss, the Foggy Mountain Boys, Nickel Creek and Dolly Parton**.

Rock

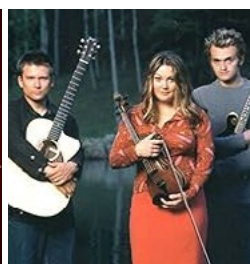
is a genre of music that has its origins in rock and roll and pop music during the late 1960s. The instruments you will mostly find in a rock piece are the electric guitar, electric bass, drums, and vocals. Rock songs will use a verse-chorus format where it will give a new verse of lyrics and then have the chorus repeat itself throughout the song. Some subgenres of rock include punk, glam rock, soft rock, heavy metal, alternative, and pop rock. Some popular rock musicians and groups include **Jimi Hendrix, David Bowie, Led Zeppelin, Patti Smith, the Ramones and Queen**.

Pop

music, or popular music, is a genre that is geared to appeal to a wide audience. Some think it has its own sound, but it's actually a blend of various genres with the sound changing based on what's popular at the time. It's often hard to establish a genre with pop music when so many influences shine through! In its most modern form, pop began to emerge in the 1950's, heavily influence by catchy melodies and rock music. You will hear just about every type of instrument or electronic sound, depending on the pop artist; these artists often span other genres too! Some original and modern pop artists you may know are: **The Beach Boys, Prince, The Beatles, ABBA, Taylor Swift, Billie Eilish, Ed Sheeran, and Harry Styles**.

Discussion Questions

1. There are many genres and sub-genres of music which is your favorite? Is it on the list?
2. What makes a song or genre your “jam”? Is it the beat? The lyrics?
3. Can you think of a time when a song helped you feel better or excited? What genre was it?
4. Can a song belong to more than one genre? Why or why not?



Teachers, prepare your students for this activity by visiting: <https://www.dallassymphony.org/community-education/dso-kids/listen-watch/instruments/> and have them listen to a sound clip of each instrument playing solo. Then instruct them to pick a Musical Genre from the list below and listen to the sample that is provided in the link. They can then complete an analysis of that song by answering the following questions. *(They can also pick one of their own favorite songs to analyze.)*

Samples of Each Musical Genre

Classical https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oy2zDJPlgw&list=PLIQVJBI1Wj9AXSlthzQHhQyQkEUsV_Xuu&pp=gAQB

Hip Hop <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MufzuaKfZg&list=PLIQVJBI1Wj9DHOntfNBQVvujnT5yYa-A8&pp=gAQB>

Rock https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ognf_oRQWM&list=PLIQVJBI1Wj9BoqU07kRvjjRzneKxOGVQ_&pp=gAQB

R&B <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsJltdkybk&list=PLIQVJBI1Wj9Cyb5K0IEQtHpu96FDvgtvP&pp=gAQB>

Bluegrass <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VG2kL4ojylk&list=PLIQVJBI1Wj9A6avU4YmQyrIVMm3XEXqFH&pp=gAQB>

Pop <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wy8GMvU6x4Y&list=PLIQVJBI1Wj9AXmDYCbA0gtXftVxNBjStk&pp=gAQB>

1. What instruments can you hear playing for this piece? _____

2. Describe the tempo and beat of the piece? Does it make you want to dance or sit still? _____

3. What genre of music would you place this piece in? Does it have more than one or was it clearly influenced by another? _____

4. Are there different sections of this piece? Do certain parts repeat? Describe the different sections or repeating parts. _____

5. List some adjectives that describe this piece of music. _____

6. What emotions do you have when you listen to this piece of music? _____

7. What is your opinion of this piece of music? _____

Lyric and Character Study

ELA

MUSIC

Read the lyrics and listen to “*Impossible Is Possible*” by Black Violin.

Now, think of the person singing this song as someone who is a character in a book or a show. Fill out the chart below using the lyrics and tone from the musical piece.

Copy 3 lines from the lyrics that seem important to you.

What are some actions within the lyrics?

What would this character do in a story?

What emotions do you experience when you read the lyrics?

Based on the lyrics, name 2 important values that the character would have.

Based on the lyrics and tone of “*Impossible Is Possible*”, make three inferences about the character this song would be written for. **Inferences** means to make conclusions by using the evidence available and using your reasoning or logic.

1.

2.

3.

There's a moment when you realize
All the things they said were lies
It's time to open up your eyes
Cause we were made to fly
We can do anything

We'll shine like the sun, the moon, the stars
We can go anywhere
They'll see us no matter where we are

Cause we got the fire
We got the fire

Show the world the impossible is possible
Show the world the impossible is possible

There's a moment when you understand
You don't gotta follow all their plans
It's time to open up your hands
Don't leave it up to chance
We can do anything

We'll shine like the sun, the moon, the stars
We can go anywhere
They'll see us no matter where we are

Cause we got the fire
We got the fire

Show the world the impossible is possible
Show the world the impossible is possible
Show the world the impossible is possible
Show the world the impossible is possible

We could do anything
We'll shine like the sun, the moon, the stars
We can go anywhere
They'll see us no matter where we are

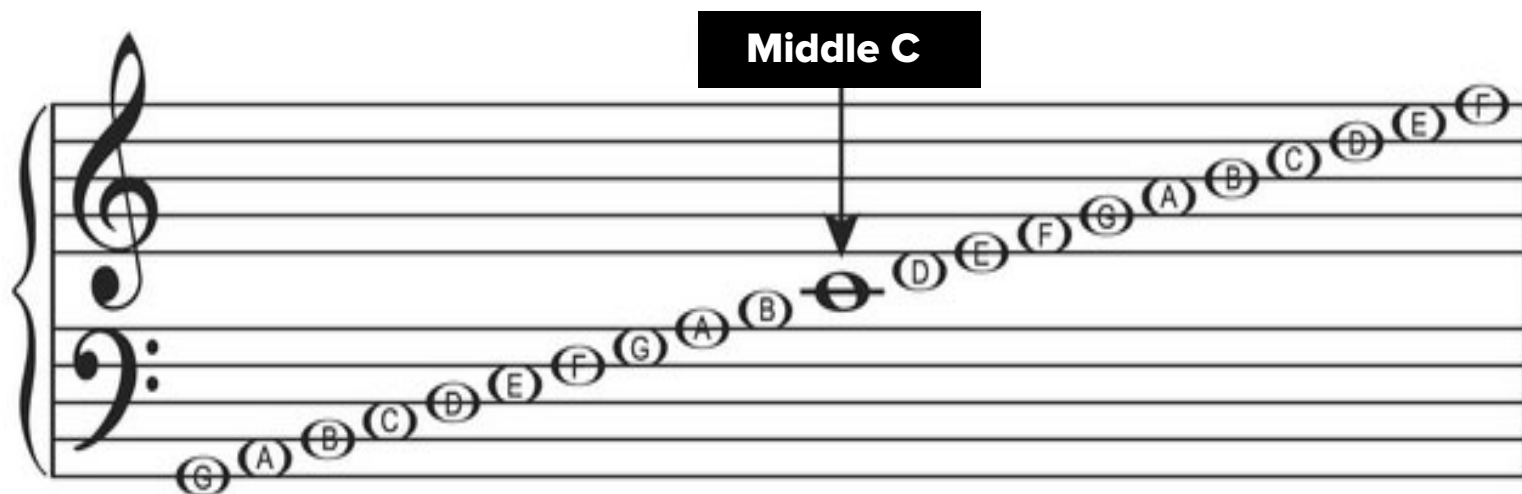
Cause we got the fire
We got the fire

Musical Staff Spelling

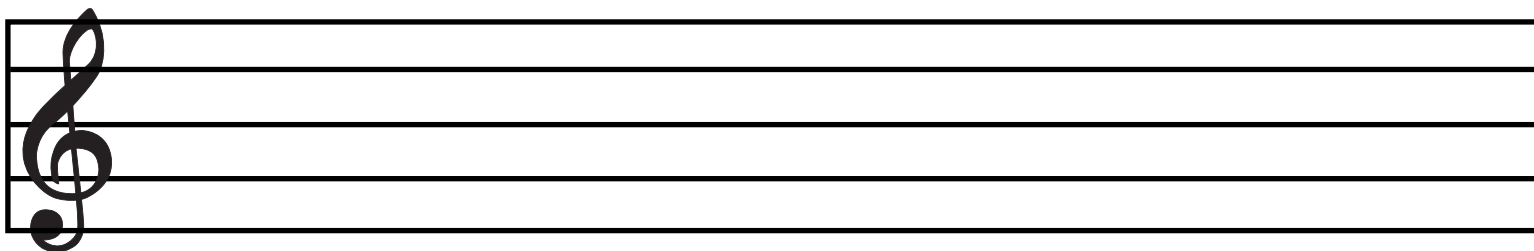
ELA

MUSIC

Each note on a musical staff has a letter that is associated with it, giving the note its name. Musicians use these notes to build their musical pieces. Check out the musical staff below:



Using the blank staves below, see how many words you can spell and then see if you can build whole musical sentences. If you are in a music class where you are learning to play an instrument, extend this activity by playing the words you spelled.



Name _____

An **ACROSTIC** is a type of poem that describes something (*a person, place, or thing*), by using each of the letters in the word as the beginning of a line. For example, an acrostic poem for the word **MUSIC** would look like:

Melodies in the air

Ukuleles and drums

Soft and loud sounds

Ideas in every note

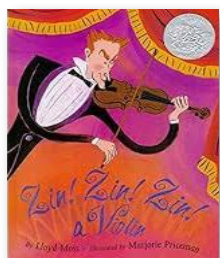
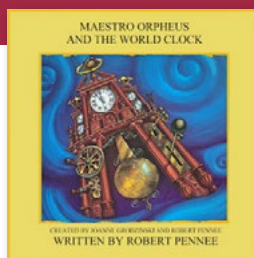
Clapping to the beat

Now, write your own acrostic poem for a word related to music!
Examples: *violin, drum, melody, piano rhythm.*

Resources for Students and Educators

Books for Students

- **Maestro Orpheus and the World Clock**, audiobook by Joanne Grodzinski and Robert Pennee. This book contains and 80 page Teacher Guide.
- **The Story of the Orchestra: Listen While You Learn About the Instruments, the Music and the Composers Who Wrote the Music!**, written by Robert Levine, Illustrated by Meredith Hamilton. Black Dog & Leventhal 2000.
- **Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin**, written by Lloyd Moss, illustrated by Marjorie Priceman. Aladdin 2020.
- **Ada's Violin: The Story of the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay**, written by Susan Hood, illustrated by Sally Wen Comport. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers 2016.



Publications for Educators

- **Chevalier**: A 2022 American film based on the life of French-Caribbean musician Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges.
- **Music Matters: A Philosophy of Music Education**, written by David J. Elliott and Marissa Silverman. Oxford University Press 2014.
- **This Is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession**, written by Daniel J. Levitin. Dutton 2006.
- **Music in Childhood Enhanced: From Preschool through the Elementary Grades**, written by Patricia Shehan Campbell and Carol Scott-Kassner. Cengage Learning 2018.



Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges.

Local Resources

Resources for Students and Educators

- <https://blackviolin.net/> – This is the official website for **Black Violin**. You can visit it to learn about their upcoming shows. They also have videos of their performances and links to purchase their albums. Their news section gives their fans updates in a blog style.
- https://thinktv.pbslearningmedia.org/subjects/the-arts/?rank_by=recency – **PBS: Resources and Activities For Art Lesson Plans | PBS Learning Media** - Dive into lesson plans, videos, interactive activities, and more! You can also filter by grade level and resource type. Check out the LearningMedia site for more!
- <https://www.brainpop.com/discover> – Brainpop has its own section on Arts and Music. They have educational videos on the different types of instruments and articles you can print for your students.



The Dayton Scene Radio Show is perfect for funk lovers! "The Dayton Funk Dynasty Group," preserves not only the history of **FUNK** music but Dayton's special place in the history of the genre. The heartbeat of the radio show is to ensure that future generations are exposed to the wonderful music artform with an emphasis on the history of the contributions of the **FUNK** music in Dayton, Ohio.

Brought To You By

DAYTON LIVE

138 North Main Street Dayton, OH 45402

DAYTON LIVE DISCOVERY

The Education and Engagement programs of Dayton Live are made possible through the support and commitment of the following sponsors and donors whose generosity have opened the door of live theatre to the students of the Miami Valley:

PROGRAM SPONSORS

Montgomery County Arts & Cultural District

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Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority

DAYTON LIVE CREATIVE ACADEMY

Interested in learning more about theatre?!

The Dayton Live Creative Academy offers a variety of professionally curated performing arts experiences for all ages. From classes for beginners, and summer camps for the adventurous, to Broadway after-school intensives for the curious, there are year-round activities for everyone in the family. Join us for fun, for adventure, and to develop your own creativity. This is performing arts education for **EVERYONE!**

EDUCATION AND BROADWAY PROGRAMS

Broadway Camps and Intensives

Broadway Master Classes

Background on Broadway

Bagels & Broadway

<https://www.daytonlive.org/education>

Dayton Live is an ACE Qualified Education Service Provider! Find out more about ACE funds: <https://education.ohio.gov/ohioace>

DAYTON LIVE



Teacher's Rave Reviews for Black Violin

"Black Violin was highly motivational and inspirational. Students didn't want it to end!"

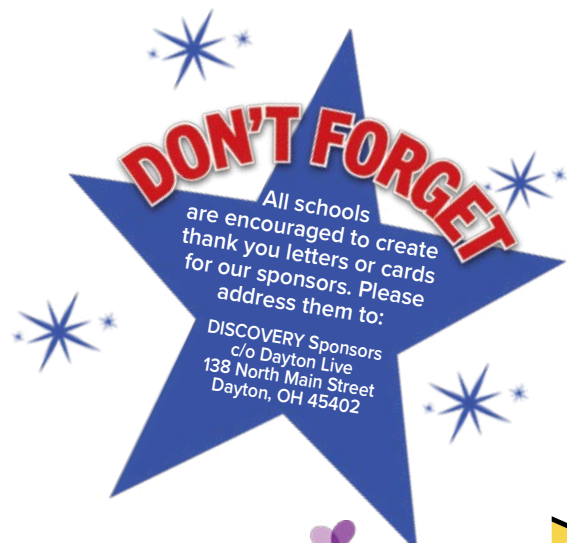
This was a great performance and the fusion of hip-hop, classical and jazz was great for both my band and general music students. It fits perfectly into my hip-hop unit with general music and provided great character/cultural education for my band students. Thankyou! "

• • • • •

"I appreciated the steps they took to adapt it to kids, especially the DJ's smooth censorship for "Uptown Funk"! "

• • • • •

"I thought that the musician's comments about breaking stereotypes were so valuable. My students, who are mostly students of color, were surprised and impressed to see African American men playing classical instruments."



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