



## *Odysseus and the Sirens by Dana Wilson*

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### STUDENT MATERIALS

Featured readings and worksheets designed to be printed and shared with students can be found throughout this curriculum. They are easily identifiable - each page has a border and contains an image of Rondo, the *BandQuest*® mascot!



# Teacher's Guide

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## INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

*BandQuest*® was conceived and launched by the American Composers Forum to create new music for middle level bands. In addition to recent commissions by some of today's leading composers, *BandQuest* also provides a rich curriculum with multiple resources for ensembles and music classrooms. The main goals of the *BandQuest* curricula are to provide music educators with:



- Tools to create ensemble lessons that teach students how to perform the piece
- Resources to support interdisciplinary connections to other learning areas

We believe that when band students make connections between the music they play and other disciplines, and approach the piece through multiple entry points, they develop multi-layered critical thinking skills.

The materials were developed using a curriculum framework called the Facets Model (Barrett, McCoy, & Veblen, 1997). The Facets Model is a comprehensive approach for studying musical works in depth, one that helps students relate music to other disciplines in meaningful ways. The model has been used to create curricula in many settings, but especially in designing the content of the *BandQuest* curricula.

Eight essential questions make up the basic facets model. The questions are grouped into categories which encourage teachers and students to address fundamental ideas about the origins of the work, its elements and form, and the range of expressive meanings it conveys. For in-depth information on the facets model, go the *BandQuest* web site at <http://composersforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/FacetsModel.pdf>.

The materials for each *BandQuest*® curriculum can be downloaded. The curriculum includes:

- A Teacher's Guide
- Composer Biography and Program Notes
- Lesson plans for Rehearsing the Music
- Lesson Plans for Guided Listening and Responding
- Lesson Plans for Creating Music
- Lesson Plans with an Interdisciplinary Focus
- Readings for Students
- Assessment Strategies
- Links to other web based resources

### ODYSSEUS AND THE SIRENS

*Odysseus and the Sirens* by Dana Wilson was commissioned by the American Composers Forum BandQuest® Series. It was premiered May 8, 2008 by the Boynton Middle School Concert Band in Ithaca, New York, under the direction of Michael Allen.



## Lesson: Recognize, Define & Locate the Musical Elements in *Odysseus and the Sirens*

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### OVERVIEW

The purpose of this lesson is for students to be able to visually and aurally identify the critical musical elements that are contained within the piece. Each element is defined and a guide identifies an example measure where each element is located in instrumental parts. In addition, the conceptual analysis of the score provides the director with information about the critical attributes of the piece that will assist in interpreting and teaching the music.

### LEARNING GOAL

Students will:

1. define, visually/aurally identify, and locate musical elements contained in *Odysseus and the Sirens*.
2. visually and aurally identify and locate those same elements in other pieces of music they are rehearsing and in audio examples of recordings of other music.

### RESOURCES & MATERIALS

1. A table with a list of the musical elements, a definition for each, and the measures where examples of each element are located in each instrumental part to be used by the teacher to plan instruction.
2. The individual parts and/or a recording of other repertoire the students are rehearsing.
3. Print and audio examples.

### POSSIBLE STRATEGIES FOR INTRODUCING AND ASSESSING THE ELEMENTS:

The following activities can be used to present the musical elements contained in *Odysseus and the Sirens*:

- Students identify the measure that contains a particular element in their parts after you have defined and described it.
- Pick a measure and ask the students to identify all the elements and characteristics discussed in class that are contained in that one measure. (Different parts may require different responses.)
- Pick two contrasting measures where only one contains a particular element. Ask the students to identify which measure contains the element.

- Students identify selected elements in measures from other pieces they are rehearsing.
- Play an example of recorded music as an example illustrating several musical elements and characteristics. Ask students to describe what they hear.
- Students play a measure(s) that provides an example of a particular element. Have members of other sections identify what element or characteristic is being illustrated. If necessary, provide a list of choices from which to choose an answer.
- Pick a section of the piece and play the recording of that section. Students identify the musical function (melody, accompaniment, etc.) being fulfilled by specific instruments that either you are they choose (e.g. “What is the function of the clarinets starting in measure 29?” or “What do you notice about the functions of a particular instrument in measure 44?”).
- Students mark with a pencil the function their instruments fulfill in their parts. They may also note the names of the other instruments that share that function.

# ODYSSEUS AND THE SIRENS MUSICAL ELEMENTS ANALYSIS

An analysis of the musical elements contained in *Odysseus and the Sirens* is provided on the following pages, along with a definition and an indication of measures that contain each element. If measure numbers are not cited for an instrument, then the element does not occur in that instrument's part.

## Tonality

Pitch set:

The main pitch set on which composer dana Wilson based much of *Odysseus and the Sirens* is the G Aeolian Mode (Natural Minor).

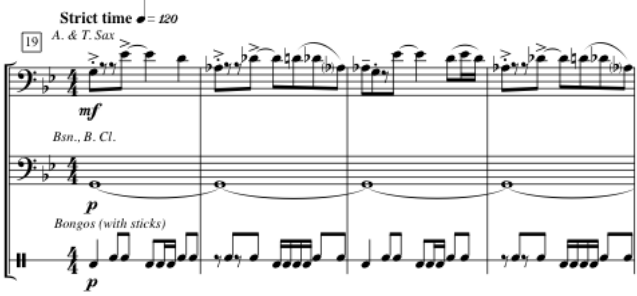
Concert Ab and Db are also introduced as a part of the pitch set.



## MOTIVE/TEXTURE/ORCHESTRATION

Main motives (all excerpts in concert pitch):

|                                                                                                                                 |                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Flute 1</p> <p>Freely ♩ = 60<br/>Solo</p> <p><i>p</i></p>                                                                    | <p>MM. 1 – 4: Introduction: Solo flute plays with a rubato tempo.</p>         |
| <p>5</p> <p>Freely ♩ = 60<br/>Solo</p> <p>Clar. 1 <i>mp</i><br/>One player</p> <p>Bsn. <i>pp</i></p> <p><i>mf</i> <i>mp</i></p> | <p>MM. 5 – 10: Rubato Cl. 1 solo with pedal point sustained pitch in Bsn.</p> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Play over and over as fast as comfortable until next downbeat.<br/>Do not try to coordinate with other players.</p>                                                 | <p>MM. 10: Cl. 1 &amp; 2 play the pitches randomly as fast as comfortable, but not coordinating with other players to create a murmuring effect representing the wind-song of the Sirens.</p>                                   |
|  <p>Fl. 1 - Solo</p> <p>Fl. 1</p> <p>Fl. 2</p> <p>Cl. 1</p> <p>Cl. 2</p> <p>Bongsos (sticks)</p> <p>Bell Tree (or metal Wind Chimes)</p> <p>19 Strict time ♩ = 120</p> | <p>M. 13: Solo Fl. 1 enters on beat 2 after accented bongo drag on beat 1. At m. 16, Fl. 1 &amp; 2 join Cl. 1, 2 in ad lib murmuring effect on the provided pitches. Solo Fl. 1 leads transition into next section (m. 19).</p> |
|  <p>19 Strict time ♩ = 120</p> <p>A. &amp; T. Sax</p> <p>Bsn., B. Cl.</p> <p>Bongsos (with sticks)</p>                                                               | <p>M. 19: Change to fast tempo. Introduction of a syncopated melody in the A. &amp; T. Sax is accompanied by a pedal point G in the Bsn. &amp; B. Cl. and an active rhythm in the Bongos.</p>                                   |
|  <p>23 Fl. 1, 2, Ob.</p> <p>Fl. 1, 2</p> <p>Cl. 1, 2</p> <p>A. &amp; T. Sax</p> <p>Bsn., B. Cl.</p> <p>Bongsos (with sticks)</p> <p>Bell Tree</p>                    | <p>M. 23: Second occurrence of Sax melody along with a counter-melody in the Fl. 1, 2, and Ob. Followed by murmuring affect again in Cl. &amp; Fl.</p>                                                                          |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>M. 29: Melody from m. 19 and 23 now occurs in T. Sax and Tbn. 1, 2. Counter-melody in Fl. 1, 2, and Ob. now occurs in Tp. 1, 2. The pedal point that was in the Bsn. And B. Cl. is joined by the B. Sax and starts to move in pitch to create a bass line. Shaker is added to help advance the pulse.</p>                                                                                            |
|  | <p>M. 32: A fragment of the melody is repeated with the second half of each measure increasing in intensity by rising stepwise in pitch. A countermelody in the Fl. 1, 2, Ob., A. &amp; T. Sax, bass line in low WW, and active bongos and shaker rhythms leading into a change of meter. This is followed by a return to the murmuring ad lib Fl. And Cl. part that was first introduced at m. 10.</p> |
|  | <p>M. 37: Introduction of 2<sup>nd</sup> theme in Upper WW, harmonized in parallel 3rds (and 6ths), with a syncopated bass line in Low WW, Tbn. 1, 2, and Bar. that is rhythmically similar to theme 1. Cowbell maintains steady pulse with Timp. highlighting some notes in bass line. Tam-Tam adds dramatic color.</p>                                                                                |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>M. 43: Transition into next section. Terraced pentachord runs in parallel 3rds start in Fl. &amp; Cl., later is joined by A. &amp; T. Sax, and then finally by a descending scale in the Lower WW. At m. 45, murmuring effect returns and then ascending sequence patterns in A. &amp; T. Sax build towards the next section.</p> |
|  | <p>M. 49: Third occurrence of theme based on melody first introduced at m. 19, propelled by driving S.D. &amp; Timp. rhythms that lead to the Odysseus Scream (see Aleatoric and Instrumental Techniques).</p>                                                                                                                       |

|                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Fl. 1 (Sva if possible), 2, Ob.<br/>Cl. 1, 2, A. &amp; T. Sax<br/>F. Hn.</p> | <p>M. 56: Final reference to theme introduced at m. 19 in Tp. 1, 2 and Tbn. 1,2. Countermelody in Upper WW, A. &amp; T. Sax, and F. Hn. Active percussion rhythms propel pulse. Cresc. and ascending chromatic pitches build into the final section. Tp. 1, 2 and Tbn. build in volume and speed of notes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <p>Fl. 1, Cl. 1, A. Sax</p>                                                     | <p>M. 61: Pulsating effect in Fl. &amp; Cl. by contrary alternating between two pitches (Fl. 1 &amp; Cl. 1 play F# while Fl. 2 &amp; Cl. 2 play E and vice versa), while Ob. alternates between the same pitches in an eighth note rhythm at the same time. Intense Tp. and Tbn., pulse a F. Hn. rip. Terraced descending scale runs, later harmonized in parallel 3rds, then 6ths in the Upper WW and A. &amp; T. Sax, and a short, dramatic Low Br. figure lead to two accented 8<sup>th</sup> notes, a sustained fp concert G that crescendos to a final accented note of the piece.</p> |

## Aleatoric and Special Instrumental Techniques

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Play over and over as fast as comfortable until next downbeat.<br/>Do not try to coordinate with other players.</p> <p>Cl. 1</p>  <p>pp</p> <p>Cl. 2</p> <p>pp</p> | <p>MM. 10-17: Cl. 1 &amp; 2 play the pitches randomly as fast as comfortable, but not coordinating with other players to create a murmuring effect representing the wind-song of the Sirens. At m. 16 the Fl. 1 &amp; 2 do the same.</p> |
| <p>"Odysseus' scream!"<br/>(highest note possible as loud as possible; trill if you wish)</p>  <p>ff</p>                                                              | <p>M. 52: Upper WW, A. &amp; T. Sax play random selected highest pitch possible as loud as possible (trilling if the player chooses) to represent the scream of Odysseus.</p>                                                            |
|  <p>ff</p>                                                                                                                                                            | <p>M. 61: F. Hn. Rip – Aggressively slur from the starting to the destination pitch with all the partials quickly sounding in between.</p>                                                                                               |
| <p>(gliss. "white" notes)</p>  <p>f</p>                                                                                                                               | <p>M. 62; Bells Glissando – Strike the indicated pitch and then drag the mallet across all the natural keys to the final pitch.</p>                                                                                                      |

## TEMPO

| Changes in Tempo                                                                   |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <p>M. 1: Freely ♩ = 60</p> <p>M. 10: ♩ = 120</p> <p>M. 19: Strict time ♩ = 112</p> |  |

## FORM

|                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>For an overview of the form, please refer to the <a href="#">Listening Map</a>.</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## EXPRESSIVE MARKINGS

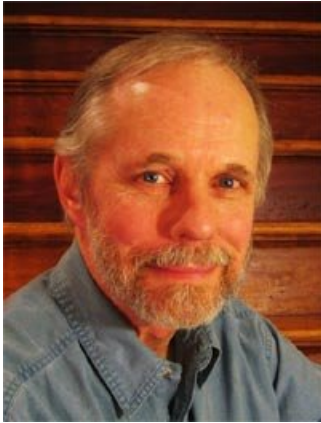
Articulation Markings:

Accent, Staccato Accent, Staccato, Tenuto, Tenuto Accent, and Slur



|                 |  |                                                                        |
|-----------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Accent          |  | Place extra emphasis or stress on a note.                              |
| Staccato Accent |  | Place extra emphasis or stress on a note and more separated in length. |
| Staccato        |  | Separated in length between the note and the following note.           |
| Tenuto          |  | Sustain a note its full value.                                         |
| Tenuto Accent   |  | Place extra emphasis or stress on the note and sustain it full value.  |
| Slur            |  | Smoothly connect notes without re-tonguing.                            |

## MEET COMPOSER DANA WILSON



The works of Dana Wilson have been commissioned and performed by such diverse ensembles as the Chicago Chamber Musicians, Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings, Buffalo Philharmonic, Memphis Symphony, Washington military bands, Netherlands Wind Ensemble, Syracuse Symphony, and Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra. Solo works have been written for such renowned artists as hornist Gail Williams, clarinetist Larry Combs, trumpeters James Thompson and Rex Richardson, and oboist David Weiss.

He has received grants from, among others, the National Endowment for the Arts, New York Foundation for the Arts, New England Foundation for the Arts, New York State Council for the Arts, Arts Midwest, and Meet the Composer. His compositions have been performed throughout the United States, Europe, and East Asia. They have received several awards, including the International Trumpet Guild First Prize, the Sudler International Composition Prize, and the Ostwald Composition Prize; are published by Boosey and Hawkes, Ludwig Music Publishers, and Dorn Publications; and can be heard on Klavier, Albany, Summit, Centaur, Innova, Meister Music, Elf, Open Loop, Mark, Redwood, Musical Heritage Society, and Kosei Recordings.

Dana Wilson holds a doctorate from the Eastman School of Music, and is currently Charles A. Dana Professor of Music in the School of Music at Ithaca College. He is co-author of *Contemporary Choral Arranging*, published by Prentice Hall/Simon and Schuster, and has written articles on diverse musical subjects. He has been a Yaddo Fellow (at Yaddo, the artists' retreat in Saratoga Springs, New York), a Wye Fellow at the Aspen Institute, a Charles A. Dana Fellow, and a Fellow at the Society for Humanities, Cornell University.

For a more detailed biography:

Ferrari, Lois. "Two Symphonic Wind Ensemble Compositions of Dana Wilson." Doctoral Thesis, Eastman School of Music, 2009. See pp. 3-7. <file:///C:/Users/jcort/AppData/Local/Temp/Ferrari%20DMA%20text-1.pdf>

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## Mini-Lesson: Meet Composer Dana Wilson

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### OVERVIEW

“Who created the work?” is the first essential question in the Facets Model. When student rehearse a new piece, learning about the composer helps them better understand the music. In this lesson, students will read a short biography, then discuss what they learned and found interesting about Wilson’s life, accomplishments, and inspirations for creating music. Working as individuals or in small groups, students will then develop a *Composer Kaleidoscope* for Dana Wilson.

### LEARNING GOAL

Students will read a short biography about Dana Wilson, then choose and organize key information and ideas about him into a *Composer Kaleidoscope* to support their understanding and performance of *Odysseus and the Sirens*.

### MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- Paper copies or electronic posting of the article “Meet Composer Dana Wilson”
- Copies of the *Composer Kaleidoscope* graphic organizer for students to complete
- Optional Reading: Teacher biography, [“Meet Composer Dana Wilson”](#)

### PROCESS

Decide if you will use the *Composer Kaleidoscope* as a group project or an individual assignment, and whether it will be an in class or homework project.

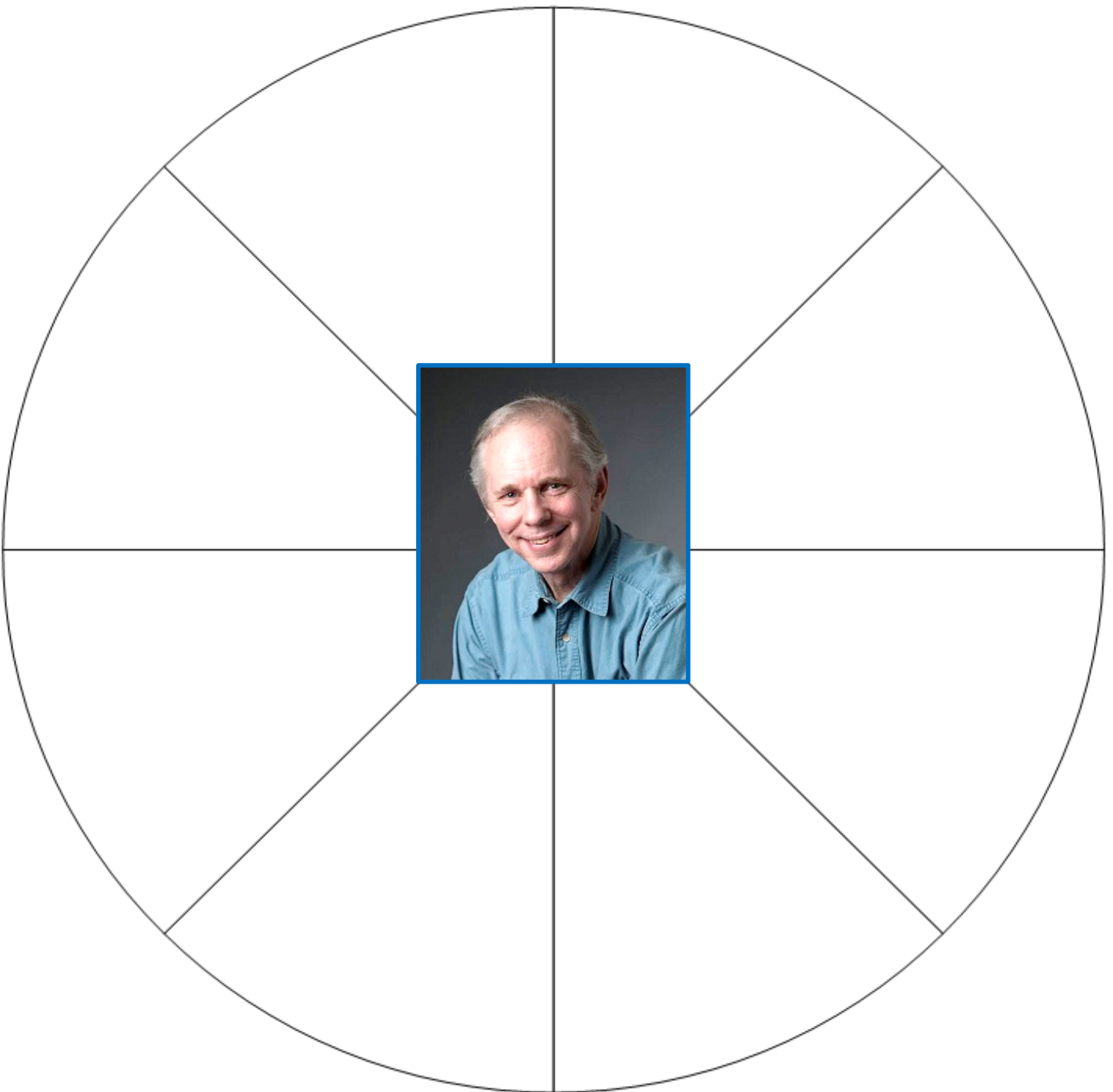
1. Assign the reading “Meet Composer Dana Wilson” before rehearsing, or early in learning *Odysseus and the Sirens*.
  - Tell students notice composer facts, information, and stories they find interesting as they read the article. They will use this information as well as their insights about the composer to complete a written assignment, the *Composer Kaleidoscope*.
  - Students can learn more about the composer by connecting to the web links included at the end of the article.
2. Distribute the graphic organizer after deciding if students will work alone, with a partner, or in small groups.
3. After completing the assignment, ask students to read some of their entries out loud in class. Post complete Kaleidoscopes on the walls of the band room and at the concert when you perform *Odysseys and the Sirens*.

### ASSESSMENT SUGGESTION

Assess the level of detail included in the composer profile. An additional strategy is to complete this activity near the end of working on *Odysseus and the Sirens* to assess students’ background knowledge about the composer and how they perceive his creation of the piece.

## A Composer Kaleidoscope

Create a Composer Kaleidoscope from what you've learned about Dana Wilson, composer of *Odysseus and the Sirens*. Write one fact or insight you now have in each section of the circle.



Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_





## Meet Composer Dana Wilson

Dana Wilson (b. 1946) grew up in Wilton, CT, a town near New

York City. His formal musical life began with piano lessons at age of five. Because his family did not have an instrument, he went next door to practice on his neighbor's piano. She eventually became his teacher.

As a young player, Wilson loved to improvise. "I always preferred making up music to reading it. If I messed up while playing Mozart, I just made up stuff that seemed to fit until I got back to the written notes." The ability to "just make up stuff" was an early indicator of his future as a composer. Wilson also sang in both his church and middle school choirs.

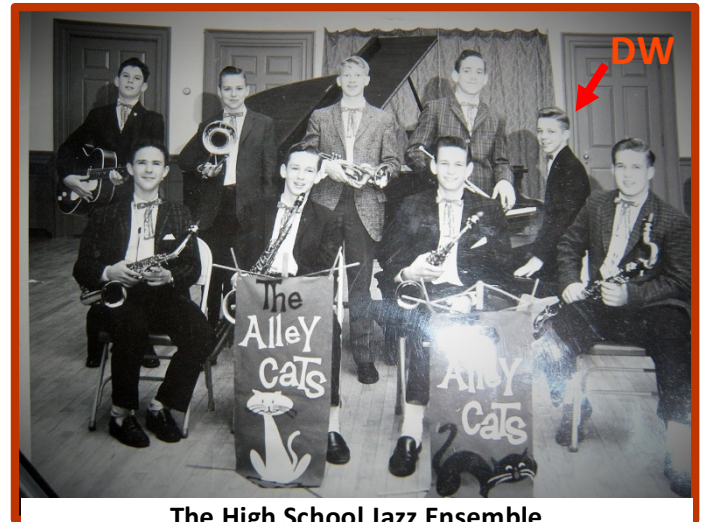
### How Did He Become a Composer?

Jazz was his main musical interest in middle school. He joined a local jazz group that performed in his home town. He continued with the group for several years. In high school, he played keyboard in the school's jazz ensemble. He also joined both a jazz and a rock band outside of school. Music was now a bigger part of his life, which led to a BIG "aha!" moment. He realized that when he played jazz and rock, he was improvising all the time. Wilson now calls improvising "composing in the moment." He was a composer! And he wrote pieces for these groups to perform.

Wilson went on to Bowdoin College in the state of Maine, where he majored in psychology and

minored in music. He continued playing and performing in a rock band and in choirs. And he conducted and wrote pieces for a small vocal group. Classes in music in theory and composition began to round out his knowledge about the foundations of music.

Dana Wilson intended to go to law school, and keep music as an important part-time interest. But the United States' role in the Vietnam war interrupted this plan when he was drafted into the army.



**The High School Jazz Ensemble**  
Used by the permission of the composer

After basic training, Wilson was assigned to play in the European Headquarters Band stationed in Heidelberg, Germany. There he met and played alongside many talented young musicians, recent graduates from Juilliard, Eastman and other fine music schools. These musical friendships influenced him to change his plans and go into music instead of law. When he left the army, Wilson went on to earn a PhD. in music from Eastman School of Music in New York state.



## The Best Thing about Being a Composer

According to Wilson, every morning you wake up "...and think about beautiful sounds and how they might best represent your current view of life in all its joys and difficulties." And you make friends with dedicated, interesting performers all over the world!

## Inspiration & How to Get Ideas Flowing?

Wilson says that all composers have good days when ideas and energy flow, and impossible days when nothing works. But he disciplines himself to spend time composing every day because one never knows which kind of day it will be.

*"The Odyssey is one of the few books I vividly recall reading as a very young person, and I hope students playing the piece will explore this terrific story."*

*Odysseus and the Sirens*  
program notes

By being consistent, new pieces keep "percolating" in his brain. This usually leads to new ideas that strike him at odd times – for example, while taking a shower!

Request for new pieces also helps ideas to flow. Working on a commission is like

working on a big school project. There are due dates, guidelines about the length and what instruments will play the piece, and requirements about the level of technical difficulty. This structure doesn't hinder creativity; it helps. Wilson says that "It is not the freedom but the constraints that get the juices flowing."



Dana Wilson on the left in a conversation with members of the Boynton M.S. Concert Band

## Advice for Kids Who Want to Compose

"Compose, compose, compose," all the time. Find ways to hear live performances of your music. Be open to what performers say that might help you to improve. Listen to all kinds of music. "If something really excites you, determine what the secret ingredient is."

## What Is He Doing Now?

Dr. Wilson is currently a Professor of Music in the School of Music at Ithaca College in New York State. His music has been commissioned and performed by many orchestras, bands, and other ensembles in the United States and around the world.

## If Not Composing, What Would He Do?

Wilson speculates that he would have become a lawyer, and then a public defender representing people who cannot pay for their own lawyers. Or he would have a job where he would be helping others in society. "Life is interesting and meaningful if you can do meaningful work."

Learn more & listen to Wilson's music at:

- Dana Wilson's website: [www.danawilson.org](http://www.danawilson.org)
- American Composers Forum BandQuest website where you can hear the piece, follow the full score: <https://composersforum.org/bq-compositions/odysseus-and-the-sirens/>
- Listen to "Footsteps" at [http://www.danawilson.org/files/audio/Footsteps\\_1.mp3](http://www.danawilson.org/files/audio/Footsteps_1.mp3)

# Program Notes by Composer Dana Wilson

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*Premiered May 8, 2008 by the Boynton Middle School Concert Band in Ithaca, New York, under the direction of Michael Allen.*

The *Odyssey* was created by Homer about 2700 years ago. It tells of the adventures of the Greek hero Odysseus (*Ulysses* in Roman mythology) during his harrowing return to Ithaca after being away for twenty years, ten of which he had spent fighting the Trojan Wars. In one part of the journey, Odysseus is aware that he is about to encounter the sirens, famous for luring sailors to their death with their beguiling wind-like song. Intensely curious to hear them, he has all his sailors plug their ears with wax and tie him to the mast, with instructions not to untie him, no matter what he says. As they approach, the sirens begin singing and Odysseus screams to be untied, but the sailors can't hear him and they are all saved.

According to some versions of the myth, the sirens are fated to die if sailors were to hear their song and escape. So after Odysseus' ship passes by, the sirens fling themselves into the sea and are drowned.

This piece suggests this dramatic encounter. If you listen carefully, you can hear the wind-song becoming ever more insistent, the rocking of the ship, Odysseus' screams, and finally the sirens plunging to their death.



**The Boynton Middle School Band**

It might also be mentioned that sirens are still found in our stories today. Perhaps most recently, the Marvel Comics superhero "Siryn" (associated with the X-Men) is an Irish mutant that possesses a "sonic scream." And the term "siren song" still refers to an appeal that is hard to resist but, if heeded, will lead to disaster.

Finally, as part of the American Composers Forum's BandQuest® commission that supported the creation of this piece, the composer worked with the Boynton Middle School Concert Band, which also happens to live in Ithaca (though this one is in New York).

# Odysseus and the Sirens Listening MAP for TEACHERS

Dana Wilson weaves the dramatic encounter between the hero and the sirens into the music. The **wind-song** becomes more insistent throughout, the **rolling and rocking** of Odysseus' **ship**, his **screams**, and the sirens fatal **plunge to death** at the end are clearly illustrated through the music.

|                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>The Story Begins</b><br>mm. 1-4*<br>mm. 5-9                                                            | <b>Song of the Siren</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A solo flute sets the stage, gently playing an enticing, <b>ornamented</b> 4 measure phrase. <b>Grace notes, slurs, &amp; accidentals</b> weave through the siren's song.</li> <li>• A second voice, a solo Bb clarinet, responds. The 5-measure ornamented phrase has more melodic movement &amp; a swelling crescendo.</li> <li>• A single soft bassoon holds a sustained note (<b>pedal point</b>) beneath the clarinet.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>The Wind Rises</b><br>mm. 10-19<br><br>mm. 16<br>m. 18                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarinets make gentle undulating sounds, created by playing two, three, or four pitches, randomly shifting back &amp; forth.</li> <li>• Solo flute &amp; bongo comment at m. 13.</li> <li>• Flutes join the chorus of quickly shifting pitches as the wind rises.</li> <li>• The solo flute plays the final measure of the siren's song, a transition to the next section.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Sailing into Danger</b><br>mm. 19<br><br>m. 23-25<br>m. 26<br>m. 29-31<br><br>m. 32-34<br><br>m. 35-36 | <p><b>Suddenly the mood shifts</b> with a faster tempo, strict even rhythm for the rowers, &amp; louder dynamics. The texture is thicker as more instruments play to create an image of Odysseus' swiftly moving ship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alto &amp; tenor saxophones begin the <b>syncopated</b> main melody over a pedal point in the low bassoon and bass clarinet, &amp; bongos play an active 2 measure <b>ostinato</b> pattern.</li> <li>• Saxophones again play the melody. Flutes &amp; oboes play a <b>countermelody</b> over the rolling ship.</li> <li>• 3 measures of murmuring wind interrupt the forward movement; first in soft clarinets, then flutes.</li> <li>• The even tempo of the rowers returns in the tenor saxophones &amp; trombones. Trumpets take the countermelody played before by flutes &amp; oboes. More instruments join the sustained pedal point.</li> <li>• Tension builds when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- trombones play a fragment of the main melody at higher &amp; higher pitches</li> <li>- flutes, oboe, alto &amp; tenor saxophones play a countermelody</li> <li>- maracas play even eight notes &amp; the bongo drum a syncopated rhythm</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The murmuring of the clarinets, saxophones &amp; flutes again interrupts the momentum.</li> </ul> |
| <b>A New Theme</b><br>m.37<br><br>m. 43<br><br>m. 45                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A second theme is introduced by upper woodwinds while lower instruments play a syncopated accompaniment that echoes the main theme.</li> <li>• Cowbell penetrates with a strict steady beat while timpani highlights some of the bass notes &amp; tam-tam adds color &amp; drama.</li> <li>• A transition is provided with a flurry of parallel <b>pentachords</b> in upper winds, joined by lower winds. Ending in a descending scale, the passage leads to...<br/>...rising winds &amp; more frantic music. An ascending murmuring pattern completes the transition.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Sailing into Danger</b><br>m.49<br><br>m. 52<br><br>m.55<br>m.56                                       | <p><b>On the Move Again</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The theme for the sailing ship returns, played by brass &amp; low winds. The snare drum &amp; timpani provide the driving rhythm as the ship cuts through the sea. Music is even more insistent.</li> <li>• Then upper wood winds plus alto &amp; tenor saxophones play the highest pitch they can, <u>as loud as they can!</u> Odysseus screams as he fights against the ropes that bind him &amp; keep him from jumping into the sea to follow the siren's song.</li> <li>• The sailing theme continues.</li> <li>• Again Odysseus screams into the wind!</li> <li>• <b>Finally, the ship sails beyond the island.</b> Trumpets &amp; trombones play with a counter melody in upper woodwinds, saxophones, &amp; French horn. Active percussion drive the music forward. Music build to the final section of the piece.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Siren's plunge to their death</b><br>m. 61 to end                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flutes &amp; clarinets play pulsating 16<sup>th</sup> notes on two alternating pitches, F# &amp; Eb while trumpets &amp; trombones push through &amp; French horn rips upwards.</li> <li>• A 2 measure descending scale – <b>ff</b> – moves quickly to the final measures.</li> <li>• Two accented eighth notes, a sustained <b>fp</b> "G" that crescendos to a <b>ff</b> eighth note G, play the final note in the piece. The sirens leap to their death because the sailors have carried Odysseus to safety.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

\*One of the crew members sailing on ships of ancient Greece was an aulos (an ancient flute) player, He would play as the ship sailed, providing the music that kept the rowers working together in rhythm as they pulled the oars to propel the ships. (The rhythmic undercurrent in Wilson’s music is provided by percussion.)

Why the aulos and not the drum? One source cites the ability of the aulos to “cut through” or penetrate the wind and other noises on board the ship. Another reason might be the portability of a wind instrument in the close quarters onboard the ancient ship.

Hall, Edith. *Introducing the Ancient Greeks: From Bronze Age Seafarers to Navigators of the Western Mind*. W.W. Norton & Company.

## Odysseus and the Sirens Glossary

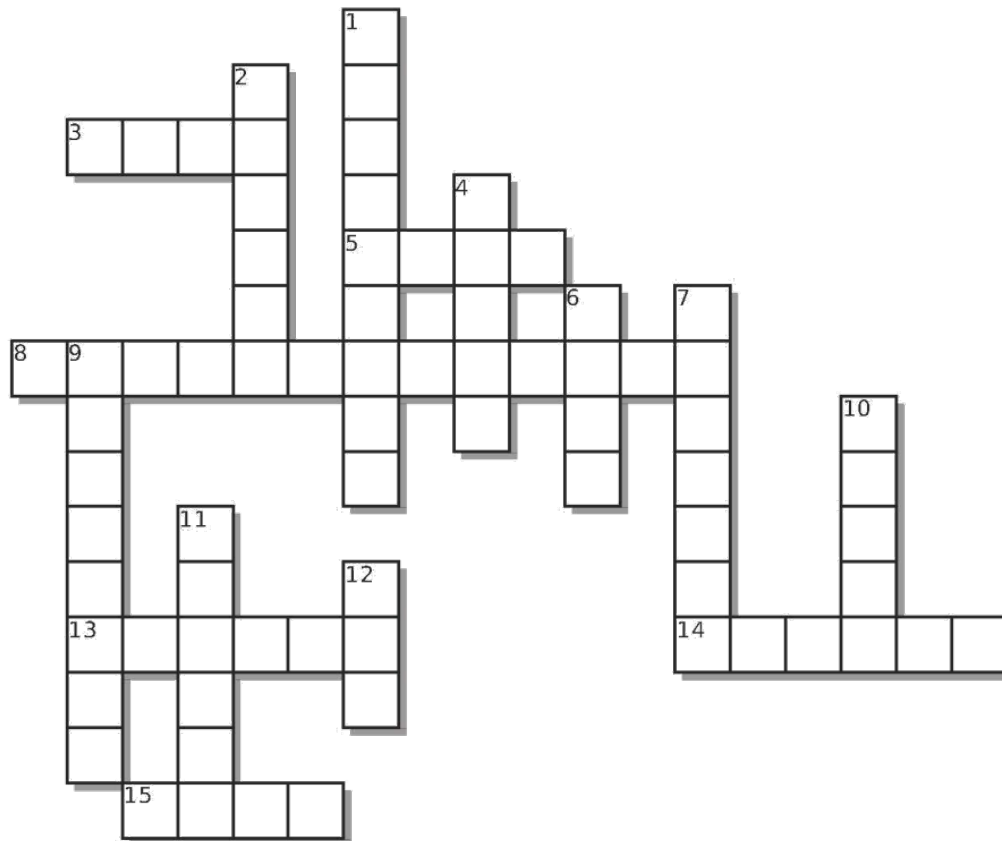
|                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Accent<br> | Place extra emphasis or stress on a note.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Aleatoric                                                                                   | Some element of what is performed is left to chance and/or the decision of what sounds to play are determined by the performer, often with some sort of directions or original type of notation that doesn’t necessarily specify specific pitches or rhythms.                                                                            |
| Articulations                                                                               | Expression markings that indicate how heavily a note is attacked and how long a note is sustained.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Bard                                                                                        | One who composes and recites epics or heroic poems, often while playing an accompaniment on a harp or lyre.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Chromatic note                                                                              | A pitch that is not a part of the scale based on the key signature and is written with an accidental attached to it.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Counter melody                                                                              | A second melody played or sung simultaneously with the main melody.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Cyclops                                                                                     | A member of a family of giants who have a single eye in the middle of the forehead.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Epic                                                                                        | A long poem, usually from ancient times, that tells of the deeds and adventures of a hero or legendary figures who are part of the history of a culture or country.                                                                                                                                                                      |
| G Aeolian mode                                                                              | The <b>Aeolian mode</b> is a musical mode or scale that follows the arrangement of notes from A to A1. It is also called the natural minor scale. The G Aeolian mode runs from G to G1 and arranges the pattern of half and whole steps to follow those of the Aeolian mode or the modern G natural minor scale. It is the scale used in |

|                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                          | Odysseus and the Sirens. Composer Dana Wilson comments that it is named for the ancient Greek god, Aeolus who created a favorable west wind for Odysseus.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Glissando                                                                                | Quickly moving from one note to the next and including all possible chromatic notes in between.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Graphic notation                                                                         | Geometric shapes or designs suggest how sounds are to be performed without specific pitches or rhythms indicated.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Hero's Journey                                                                           | <p>"The Hero's Journey is a pattern of narrative identified by the American scholar Joseph Campbell that appears in drama, storytelling, myth, religious ritual, and psychological development. It describes the typical adventure of the archetype known as The Hero, the person who goes out and achieves great deeds on behalf of the group, tribe, or civilization."</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.thewritersjourney.com/hero%27s_journey.htm">http://www.thewritersjourney.com/hero%27s_journey.htm</a>)</p> |
| Listening map                                                                            | A visual organizer that helps listeners follow the flow of the music, locate some of its key landmarks, and understand the overall work.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Metronomic marking                                                                       | An indication of the speed of the beat represented as the number of beats per minute.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Monomyth                                                                                 | Another term for the Hero's Journey                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Motive                                                                                   | The subject or melody of a piece of music.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Ostinato                                                                                 | A rhythm or a short melody that is repeated over and over.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Pentachord                                                                               | Five consecutive notes of a scale                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Pedal point                                                                              | A sustained note, often in the bass, over which the harmony above changes and sometimes causes a dissonance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Program music                                                                            | Music created to convey an underlying story, poem, scene, image or event.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Siren Song                                                                               | Not an actual song but something very appealing that tempts one to do something or go somewhere that will lead to a bad end result.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Slur  | Smoothly connect notes without re-tonguing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

|                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Speculate                                                                                            | Make some good guesses about something after thinking about it; to form a theory about something when little is known about it. |
| Staccato<br>        | Separated in length between the note and the following note.                                                                    |
| Staccato Accent<br> | Place extra emphasis or stress on a note and more separated in length.                                                          |
| Syncopated/Syncopation                                                                               | Placing rhythmic emphasis on a weak beat or weaker part of a beat.                                                              |
| Tenuto<br>          | Sustain a note its full value.                                                                                                  |
| Tenuto Accent<br>   | Place extra emphasis or stress on the note and sustain it full value.                                                           |
| Texture                                                                                              | The density of music determined by the number and range of sounds that are combined.                                            |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Odysseus & the Sirens



## ACROSS

- 3 long heroic poem
- 5 defeated city
- 8 second simultaneous tune
- 13 goddess & helper
- 14 fatal mythical singers
- 15 musician storyteller

## DOWN

- 1 chance music
- 2 note with extra stress
- 4 Odyssey author
- 6 O's destination
- 7 one eyed giant
- 9 repeats continuously
- 10 siren voice
- 11 O's island home
- 12 used to avoid Siren spell



# Odysseus & the Sirens

