



The Interdisciplinary Context

OVERVIEW

Exploring the context of a piece of music to go beyond its musical elements makes the piece more relevant to students. Understanding the interdisciplinary facets can capture students' imaginations, give birth to new perspectives about the music, and lead to performances that express the composer's intentions and more musical possibilities. The [Facets Model](#), the essential framework for BandQuest™ curricula, encourages learning the context of music and its non-musical connections in addition to the technical skills needed to play the work. Here are two of the essential questions related to the context of the music from the Facets Model:

- “What is its subject?”
- “What is being expressed?”

The subject of *Eye of the Hawk* is the raptor, the “bold, instinctive, elegant...creature who owns the sky.” Composer Susan Botti expresses her love for hawks and their fierce nature, as well as the beauty and majesty of the Hudson River Valley, the hawk's home. She is also drawn to the young adolescents for whom this piece was composed and sees the hawk as a metaphor for the emerging independence of teenagers.

Mini-lesson plans include resources and learning activities that help to answer the questions and engage students in deeper understanding about the music's context. Directors are urged to include some lesson activities in class while learning the piece; others can be extensions, homework assignments, or individual projects.

Intersperse mini-lessons within your plans to teach the piece and tackle its musical challenges. They help students understand the music in a holistic way. Integrating the contextual facets of the work will support them in responding to, understanding, and interpreting *Eye of the Hawk*.

THE LESSON PLANS

#1 Getting Acquainted with the Hudson River Valley is an interdisciplinary introduction students to the river, its geography and history, and the setting or place where hawks live.

#2 A hawk is the subject of Botti's music. This lesson provides background on hawk and the kestrel, another raptor. There is another story that connects to the composer, one about a rescued kestrel.