

# Tacoma String Symphony Assignments

As we plan and prepare for a **Reunion Finale Concert** that will include each orchestra, Dr. Paul-Elliott Cobbs will be sending weekly messages & assignments until we get back together again.

**[CLICK HERE](#)** for this week's message.

4/26/2020

We are almost there!

Hello everyone,

It has been so much fun for me to hear and see all of you in the Google Classroom, during our Skype mini-lessons, and in our Zoom meetups!

Our final assignment: Please submit your virtual orchestra video in the Google Classroom by Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>.

A few things to keep in mind to keep your spirits up and motivation high while making your videos:

1. It's just like orchestra once we put it all together...everyone will make a few mistakes here and there, but the other members in your section will "cover" for you as you will for them :) Go for as much accuracy as possible, but I don't expect perfection.
2. For playing with the track...focus on the click of the metronome beat. This will keep us together. If it feels off, just jump back on when you can.
3. This is a HUGE task for us to take on. Many professional orchestras have avoided doing a virtual orchestra because it is such a challenge. My goal for everyone is to keep playing, have fun in the process, and know that once everything is put together it's going to be pretty cool!
4. One student messaged me last night to let me know that he had a "bloopers roll" of over a 100 takes! Keeping a good sense of humor will help. Try to get a video of one run-through (no matter what happens) and then from there you can stop the first moment you aren't happy with something.
5. Feel free to reach out at any point! Email me and we can "chat" through email or if needed, we can sneak in one last Skype mini-lesson.

I'm so proud of each and every one of you! I can't express to you how much I have enjoyed getting to know you all better in our musical virtual world.

All the very best,  
Dr. Jensen

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4/19/2020

Hello everyone,

Here is the assignment for this next week as we prep to make our virtual orchestra videos!

1. Please make sure that you have received the virtual orchestra backing track and are able to play it in on your device. The backing track was emailed to your parents and was also posted in the Google Classroom.
2. Practice with the backing track lots and lots! When you record your video in about a week, you will be listening to the backing track on a pair of headphones. Typically, I wear the headphones with just one earpiece on...this way I can hear myself and the backing track at the same time.
3. Make sure that you know how to submit a video in the Google classroom. This is the safest and most private way for us to share videos without losing quality of the video.
4. Join Chris, our recording/video tech, and Dr. Jensen for a Zoom meeting this Thursday at 6:30 p.m. Parents and students are both invited! Chris will be answering any questions that we may have about how to make our videos at home. Zoom meeting invites were emailed to your parents and are also posted in our Google Classroom.
5. Finally, feel free to ask me any questions that you may have. If you need a little extra help in prepping for the virtual orchestra, please let me know! I want everyone to have a positive experience as we make this virtual orchestra project come to life.

I so appreciate each and every one of you and am incredibly excited to be part of this virtual orchestra with you!

All the best,  
Dr. Jensen

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4/12/2020

Dear TSS families,

Students, please review all of this with your parent/guardian. We will need their help.

This week's assignment will be to start your preparation for our virtual orchestra video! I have a sound tech who will be working with us on this project, so stay tuned for lots more info :)

Our virtual orchestra piece will be Handelian.

Assignment for this week:

1. Confirm with me that you would like to be part of this project by answering this question in our Google Classroom. If you are not in the classroom, please email me your name followed by a quick "yes" or "no".
2. Practice the Handelian like crazy!
3. Play along with the backing track lots and lots once it is sent out. I will post this in our Google Classroom and email you an mp3 recording as well. This will be sent out soon!
4. Test out recording yourself on a cellphone while the backing track plays on your headphones on another device. It's very important for you to be able to hear the backing track, but for the video to only hear you! Ask your parent/guardian for help on this one.

Here is an example of a virtual orchestra video done by a high school chamber orchestra:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ExbR5KInDY&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3lDsYCLQVPkIFU26-c6kJ-fPgDvYQ-N9heFt-JLHo39izwEIQ5Xx41X4g>

I'm so incredibly excited to take part in this project with you!!!

More soon!  
Dr. Jensen

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4/5/2020

Hello everyone,

Great work on your assignments so far! I've had so much fun seeing and hearing all of you in our Google Classroom. There are a few spots left this week for Skype lessons, so please feel free to sign-up for a mini lesson.

This week's assignment: **The Metronome!**

Please listen to *Cello Pudding* and start the link at 2:55:  
<https://www.jwpepper.com/Serendipity-Suite/2244762.item#/>  
(make sure to click the “listen” button that looks like a speaker)

Step 1

Listen to the recording.

Step 2

Play along with the recording.

Step 3

For 100 points, send me a short video of you playing a tricky rhythmic spot with the metronome set at quarter note = 100 to 120. If you are open to sharing, please let me know your favorite color. There will be bonus points for wearing it as well! My first favorite color is purple, then dark pink, and then bright blue.

Let me know if you need help finding a good metronome app!

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3/30/2020

This week’s assignment: Spark the Flame of Hope!

As we Stay Home/Stay Safe, we need to share our music more than ever. Your TYSA conductors would like to challenge you to Keep Playing/Keep Connecting!

For this challenge you can:

1. Play on your porch, in your opened garage, or in your backyard for a neighbor or people walking by.
2. Phone a grandparent, aunt, or uncle and play for them over the phone.
3. Skype/Zoom/Facetime with a relative or friend who you can't see and cheer them up with a video chat performance.
4. Make a short video greeting to send to one of your schoolteachers to let them know that you are thinking about them.
5. Any mixture of the ideas above! Please share your videos and stories with us on the TYSA Facebook page and post your stories, videos, and photos in our Google Classroom. **Just make sure to follow the WA state Stay Home/Stay Safe guidelines!**

Have fun and Spark the Flame of Hope!

p.s. Parents, siblings, family, and friends are welcome to join in as well and pass along the Flame of Hope.

I can't wait to see the amazing ideas that you all come up with!

Take care and be well,  
Dr. Jensen  
TSP/TSS Conductor

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3/23/2020

Hello everyone,

I just uploaded your second assignment onto our TSS Google Classroom!

Here is the assignment:

1. Hello everyone,

Please listen to these awesome students perform *Oasis for Basses* here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCly\\_jwqWSo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCly_jwqWSo)

Level 1

Listen to the recording and pay super close attention to their bow strokes!

Level 2

Try to play along with the recording.

Level 3

For 100 points, send me a short video of you playing the hardest part of this piece. There will be bonus points for introducing me to your pet...if you don't have a pet, you are welcome to introduce me to your "imaginary pet"!

Please let me know if you have any questions! The code for our Google Classroom was sent to you via email.

It was so much fun to see and hear many of you last week in our Skype mini-lessons! This week we will be focusing on *Oasis for Basses*. If you would like to sign up for a FREE lesson, follow the directions given in your email.

All the very best,  
Dr. Jensen  
TSP/TSS Conductor

If you are not receiving the weekly assignments through your email, please add [tss@tysamusic.org](mailto:tss@tysamusic.org) to your preferred list. You may also email us with your alternate email address at [tss@tysamusic.org](mailto:tss@tysamusic.org).

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3/16/2020

Dear TSS families,

I cannot even begin to express how much I miss all of you! Thank you for your patience in waiting to hear from me...I wanted to make sure that we had a plan before I reached out to you.

Here is the plan so far:

1. I've created a Google Classroom just for TSS! The classroom code was sent to you via email.

For all of my classes at both CWU and PLU, I've had to go to online learning. I have learned so much and can't wait to continue our TSS learning online!

2. In addition to Google Classroom, I'd like to offer you mini-lessons via Skype. This will give us a chance to say hello, for you to play a little something for me, and I can give you some feedback and help with your TSS music or any other music you wish to play. If you'd like to sign-up for a mini-lesson, please email me at the address sent to you via email. These mini-lessons are free to TSS members.

3. The board and TYSA staff are working hard on extending our season into May so we can still have a concert!!! This was the best news of hope that I have heard in weeks! Stay tune for more news to come.

4. Please feel free to email me and reach out at any point!

5. Practice, practice, practice :)

I look forward to seeing you all online very soon! Please stay well and take good care of each other.

All the very best,  
Dr. Jensen