

Classics for Kids



In the Hall of the Mountain King

from *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1*

Edvard Grieg
Born: June 15, 1843
Died: September 4, 1907

Edvard Grieg was born in Bergen, Norway. His first teacher was his mother. She was a wonderful pianist. Because Edvard was also a very good musician, at the age of 15 he was sent to study at the Leipzig Conservatory in Germany. After that, he traveled to Denmark. There, Grieg met another Norwegian composer who taught him about Norwegian folk music.

Grieg began performing as a pianist all over Europe, but every summer he went home to his cottage in Norway to compose. Grieg soon became the leader of a group of artists who wanted Norwegian music, art and theater to become more popular. Many of his songs are written to sound like folk songs

from his home country. He also wrote a lot of music for the piano.

Grieg is best known for the incidental music he wrote for Henrik Ibsen's play, *Peer Gynt*. Incidental music provides background or atmosphere for the action in a play. *Peer Gynt* is a tale about one man's epic journey to the four corners of the globe. Grieg's "In the Hall of the Mountain King" describes Peer Gynt's adventure in the underground Kingdom of the Trolls. Can you hear the trolls creeping up on Peer? They are coming faster and faster! Whew...luckily, Peer Gynt gets away from the trolls by the skin of his teeth.



Edvard Grieg

How did he DO that?

Edvard Grieg knew how to tell a story through music. Think about how he wrote his music. Close your eyes and listen to "In the Hall of the Mountain King." How did he make it sound as if the trolls were chasing Peer? What did he do to the speed of the music? Think about the instruments he chose to create his scene. What were they? If you were the composer, would you do this differently?

You Choose

Pretend you are Edvard Grieg and want to tell a story with music. What instrument would you match with the characters below? You can use an instrument from this list or think of one of your own.

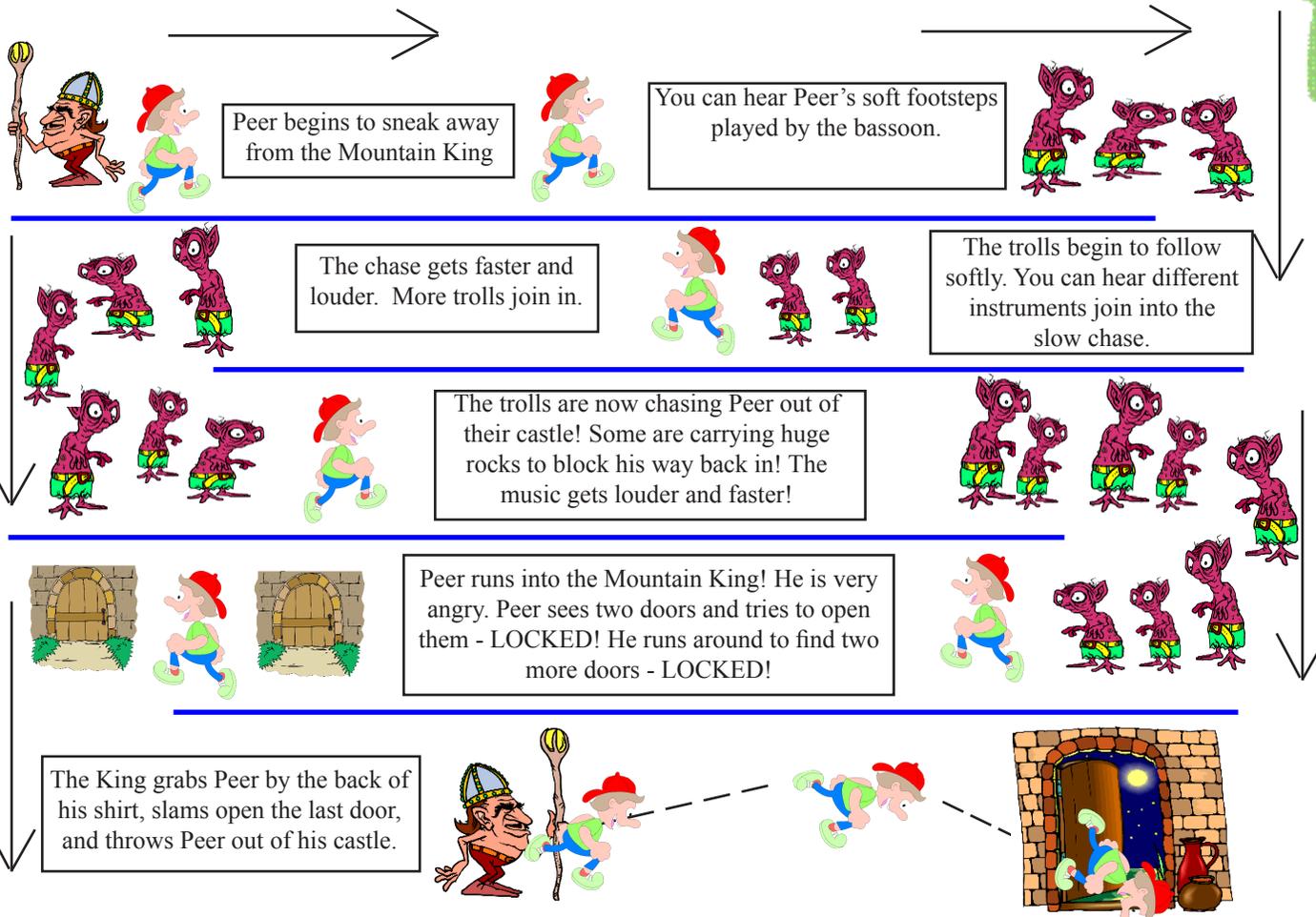
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|-----------|-------|--------|--------------|---------|----------|-------|
| Triangle | Flute | Violin | Glockenspiel | Cymbals | Trumpet | Viola |
| Bass Drum | Tuba | Piano | Trombone | Chimes | Clarinet | Oboe |



In the Hall of the Mountain King

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“In the Hall of the Mountain King” appears at the point in the story where Peer Gynt has insulted the trolls and their king (maybe he said their feet smelled funny). Follow along as Peer tries to sneak away from the king and his trolls.



Peer begins to sneak away from the Mountain King

You can hear Peer's soft footsteps played by the bassoon.

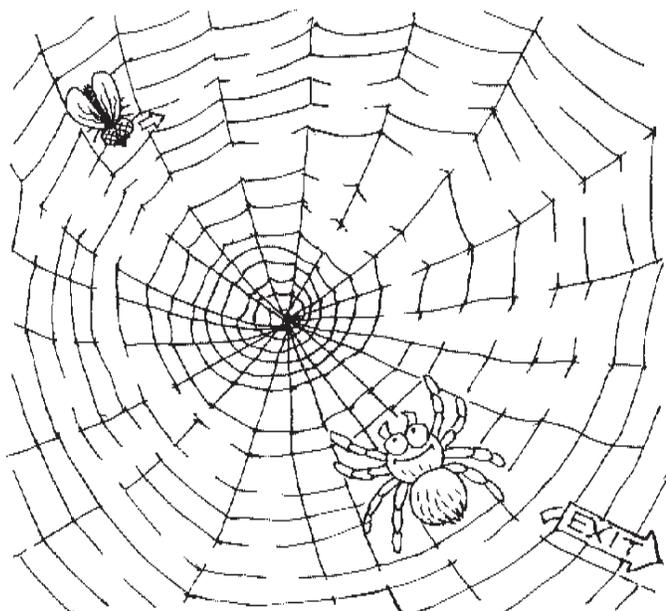
The trolls begin to follow softly. You can hear different instruments join into the slow chase.

The chase gets faster and louder. More trolls join in.

The trolls are now chasing Peer out of their castle! Some are carrying huge rocks to block his way back in! The music gets louder and faster!

Peer runs into the Mountain King! He is very angry. Peer sees two doors and tries to open them - LOCKED! He runs around to find two more doors - LOCKED!

The King grabs Peer by the back of his shirt, slams open the last door, and throws Peer out of his castle.



Why not create your own original piece of art while listening to “*In the Hall of the Mountain King.*”

Draw a picture, or write your own story, if you wish, on blank 8 1/2” x 11” paper. Send us your art and we may post it on our *Classics for Kids* website for you to share with others.

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