



Edvard Grieg

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.

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.

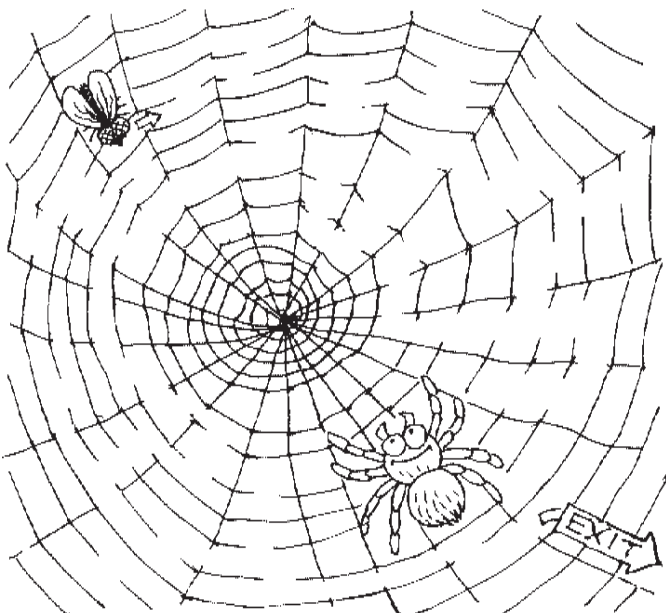
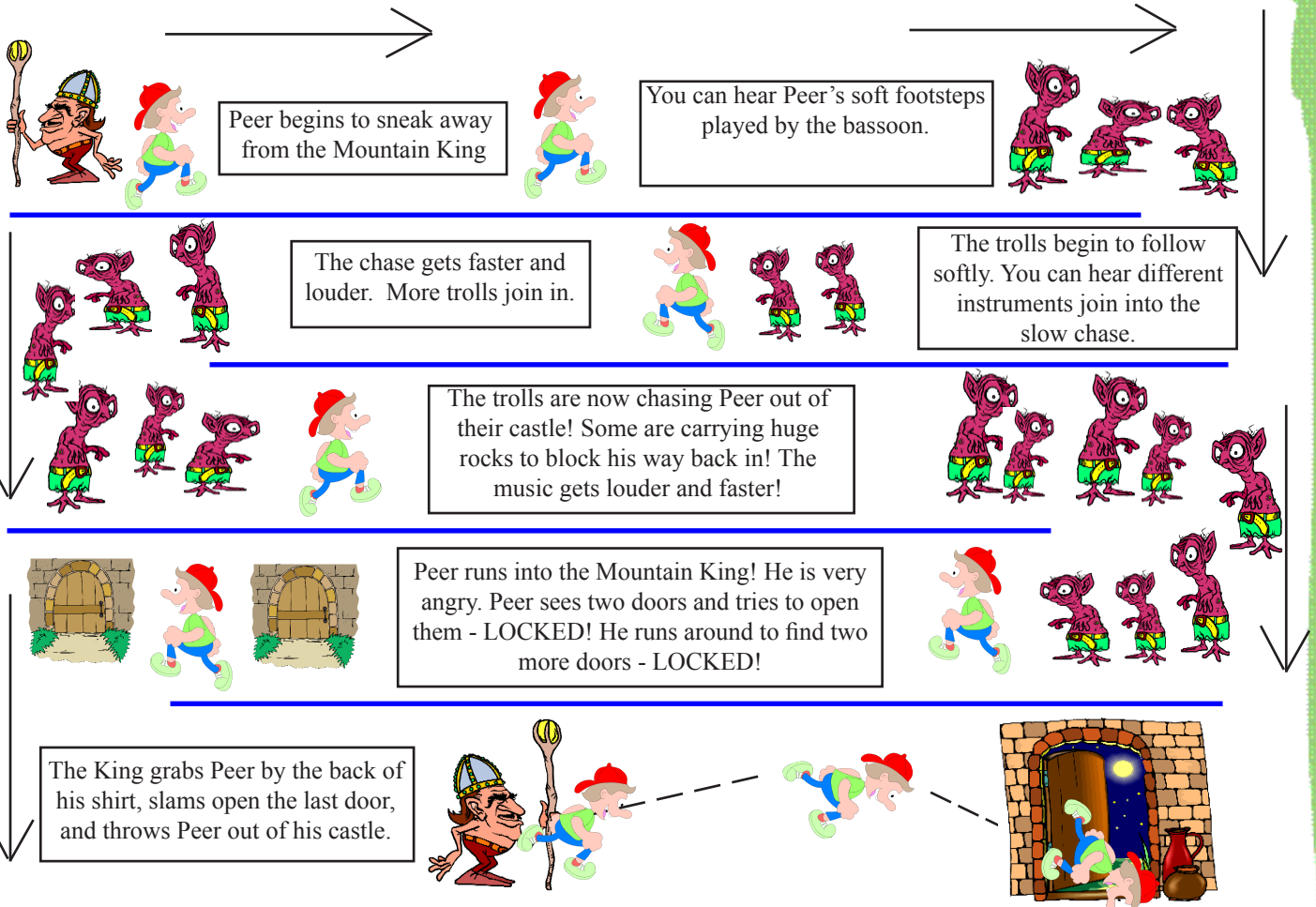
Triangle Flute Violin Glockenspiel Cymbals Trumpet Viola
Bass Drum Tuba Piano Trombone Chimes Clarinet Oboe



In the Hall of the Mountain King

"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.

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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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