

## Suggested activities to accompany Strauss' *Thunder and Lightning Polka*

### *Movement*

**Objective:** Students will create a dance or movement sequence that corresponds to the "thunder" and "lightning" in the music.

- **How:** Play the *Thunder and Lightning Polka* and ask students to listen closely to the changes in dynamics (loud for thunder, quick and sharp for lightning). When the thunder strikes (louder sections), students can stomp, clap, or use big movements to represent the power of thunder. When the lightning flashes (faster, lighter sections), students can do quick, sharp movements like jumps or small steps.
- **Extension:** Have students break into small groups and choreograph a section of the dance to perform for the class.

### *Science and Music – Storms in Nature*

**Objective:** Teach students about thunderstorms and how music can represent natural phenomena.

- **How:** Before listening to *Thunder and Lightning Polka*, provide a simple science lesson about thunderstorms and how lightning and thunder occur. Then, listen to the piece, discussing how the music reflects the characteristics of a thunderstorm (the rumble of thunder, the flash of lightning). Afterward, students can draw or write about their favorite part of a thunderstorm and compare it to what they heard in the music.
- **Extension:** Students could use this information to create a "stormy day" writing project, such as a poem or a short story.

**Objective:** Students will develop their vocabulary by exploring words related to weather and storms.

- **How:** As a class, brainstorm words associated with thunderstorms (lightning, thunder, storm, clouds, rain, strike, etc.). Afterward, students can listen to the *Thunder and Lightning Polka* and write down any words or phrases that come to mind as they listen. They could then use these words in creative sentences or poems.
- **Extension:** Students could illustrate their favorite weather-related word or create a word search or crossword puzzle with these terms.

### **To listen to Strauss' Thunder and Lightning Polka**

The Michigan Pops Orchestra, Rotem Weinburg, conductor

<https://youtu.be/mj4a6f1s7pA?si=7eIMc4NkM82CS2xs>