

# The Jefferson Performing Arts Society

Presents



## A Study Companion

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## Table of Contents

<b>Teacher Notes</b> .....	3
<b>Louisiana Content Standards</b> .....	5
<b>Background</b> .....	6
<b>The Film and the Play</b> .....	8
<b>Compare and Contrast</b> .....	14
<b>Grade Level Expectations: English</b> .....	27
<b>Voice Acting in Animated Films</b> .....	29
<b>Grade Level Expectations: English</b> .....	41
<b>Scales and Arpeggios</b> .....	42



## Teacher Notes

Everybody wants to be a cat! Madame's jealous butler Edgar cat-naps Duchess and her Aristokittens and abandons them in the Parisian countryside. What's a cat to do? Luckily, Thomas O'Malley and his rag-tag bunch of Alley Cats come to their rescue! This feline adventure starring an all-kid cast is sure to get you tapping your feet to its hep, jazzy beat!

The JPAS presentation of **Disney's Aristocats** kids is directed by Matias Grau III with Music and Lyrics by Richard M. Sherman and Robert B. Sherman and Al Rinker and Floyd Huddleston. The music was adapted and arranged by Bryan Louiselle. Bryan Louiselle also provided additional music and lyrics. The Book was adapted by Michael Bernard, who provided additional lyrics.

Based on the 1970 Disney Film THE ARISTOCATS, DISNEY'S ARISTOCATS KIDS is presented through a special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).

**Disney's Aristocats** was originally planned to be a T.V. show. It also was the first Disney film to be completed after Walt Disney died. The **Background** section provides information on how the story was developed and how it was transformed from T.V. show to film.

Unlike some films which are adapted from plays, **Disney's Aristocats** went the other way. As with many other creative works that went through the process of adaptation, some things changed. **The Film and the Play** presents the plot and a list of characters for both works.

The **Compare and Contrast** sections first utilize information found in **The Film and the Play** section of this companion to guide students through lessons that explore similarities and differences between these two works. This section goes on to give students the opportunity to expand their knowledge of Disney films, including **the Aristocats**, as they compare and contrast Disney characters and animation styles. All of these lessons integrate **Disney's Aristocats** with English language arts activities.

The **Voice Acting in Animated Films: a History** and **Voice Acting in Animated Films** sections are geared to help students learn about the history of animation and what it takes to be a voice actor while they work on the English

language arts skills of sequencing. Using the article **Point of View** by Mark Evanier, students will learn English language arts concepts while they gain insight into the world of animation and the history of animation in film and television.

In **Disney's Aristocats** Duchess the cat emphasizes to her kittens the importance of practicing their scales and arpeggios. The **Scales and Arpeggios** section explores how scales and arpeggios can be used to improve vocal range and how numbers (pitch levels) can be used to teach the major scale.

*Everybody wants to be a cat,  
because a cat's the only cat  
who knows where it's at...*



# L o u i s i a n a

## Educational Content Standards and Benchmarks

Content Standards, Benchmarks and Grade Level Expectations will follow the lesson section of this companion. In the interest of brevity, **Content Standards, Benchmarks and Grade Level Expectations** generally are listed for grades K-4 only.

Most Content Standards and Benchmark coding for each subject is similar, and can be adapted for every grade level. As an example, English Language Arts Content Standard Three, “**Students communicate using standard English grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and handwriting**,” has corresponding Benchmarks across grade levels. The code is written **ELA** (English Language Arts,) **3** (Content Standard **3**,) and **E1** (grades **1-4**.) The same Benchmark applies to all grade levels. Coding can be converted as follows:

**ELA-3-E1** Writing legibly, allowing margins and correct spacing between letters in a word and words in a sentence **Grades 1-4**

**ELA-3-M1** Writing fluidly and legibly in cursive or printed form **Grades 5-8**

**ELA-3-H1** Writing fluidly and legibly in cursive or printed form **Grades 9-12**

All Louisiana Grade Level Expectations and Content Standards and Benchmarks were retrieved from:

<http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/saa/1222.html>

# BACKGROUND

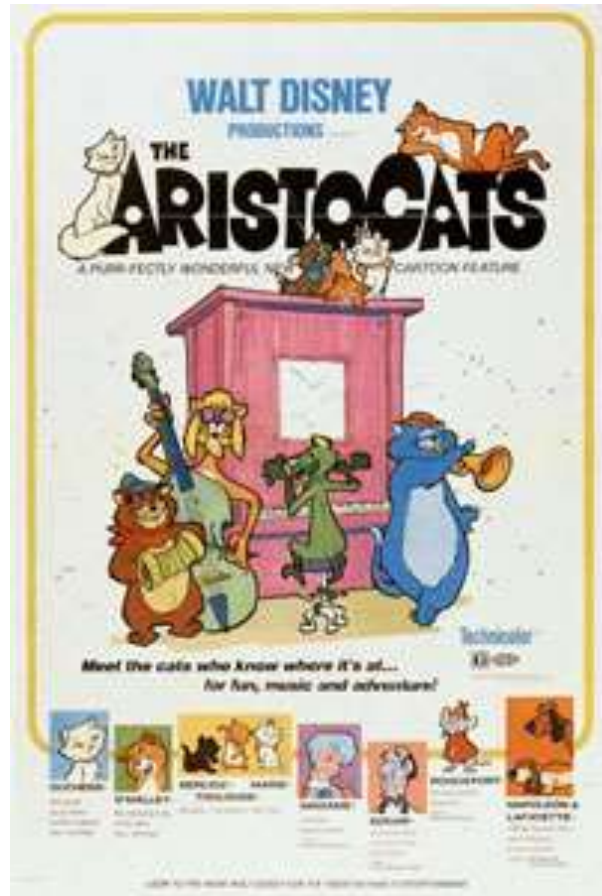


IMAGE RETRIEVED FROM:  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Aristoposter.jpg>

## STORY AND FILM BACKGROUND

In September, 1962 the Disney Studio purchased a story about some Parisian cats written by Tom McGowan and Tom Rowe. Walt saw a draft script in early 1963 and started production for a live-action T.V. program for Walt Disney's "Wonderful World of Color" that would be filmed on location in Paris, but this program was never completed. As production on the Jungle Book wrapped up, the animators were looking around for their next project. Story man Vance Gerry heard about the abandoned T.V. show and submitted an outline for an animated tale of the Parisian cats. Six other story team members helped develop the screenplay of the Aristocats.

Composer George Bruns drew on his background with jazz bands in the 1940s to create the score and featured the accordion-like musette for French flavor. As with the story, the film's music was a team endeavor. Floyd Huddleston and Al Rinker wrote "Ev'rybody Wants to Be a Cat." Teyy Gilkyson—who wrote "The Bare Necessities" for the Jungle Book—wrote "Thomas O'Malley Cat," which was also sung by Phil Harris. Disney Legends Richard and Robert Sherman contributed three songs. Since their father had written a few hits for the famous French singer Maurice Chevalier, the brothers were able to talk him out of retirement to sing the title song. The Aristocats premiered in December 1970 and was the first animated feature completed without Walt Disney, who died in 1966.

From **"The Aristocat KIDS—Student Book"**

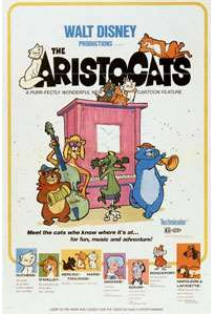
# The Film and the Play



IMAGE RETRIEVED FROM:

[http://www.starpulse.com/Movies/Aristocats\\_The/gallery/Aristocats-movie-06/](http://www.starpulse.com/Movies/Aristocats_The/gallery/Aristocats-movie-06/)





## PLOT SUMMARY: THE FILM

In Paris, France, wealthy and aging socialite Madame Adelaide Bonfamille lives with her cat Duchess, and Duchess' three kittens: Berlioz, Toulouse, and Marie. Also in her employ is a butler, named Edgar.

One day, Madame sends for her friend, George O'Corde. The task is to finalize and make up Madame's will. Unknown to the two of them, Edgar is listening in. Madame notes that she has no living relatives, and considers her cats to be just as much a part of her family as anything else. As Edgar listens, he's shocked that Madam is planning to give her entire fortune to them, with the estate to be turned over to Edgar once the cats expire.

Of course, Edgar is not at all happy about this, as the cats will easily outlive him! Edgar slips some sleeping pills in the cat's daily serving of cream, and once they have passed out, and night has fallen, he takes them out to the countryside, attempting to abandon them. However, his plans are ruined when a pair of dogs named Lafayette and Napoleon give chase. Edgar abandons the cats in a field before heading back to Paris.

The next day, the cats awaken to find themselves not in their home, but in the countryside, and soon meet a cat named Thomas O'Malley. After some talk, O'Malley offers to help get the family back to Madame Bonfamille.

Meanwhile, back in Paris, a house-mouse in Madam Bonfamille's residence named Roquefort confers with Madame's coach horse, Frou-Frou. Both are unsure what has become of their friends, when Edgar comes into Frou-Frou's stables very chipper. As Frou-Frou can't talk, Edgar shows her the headline from the morning's paper, telling of a mysterious catnapper taking off with Duchess and her children. Edgar seems to think he's gotten away with his little crime...until he realizes that he left his hat and umbrella out in the countryside, and quickly rushes out to retrieve them.

Meanwhile, Thomas, Duchess and the kids hitch a ride on a milk truck, before being found out by the driver. They next attempt to follow a train track, until a train causes them to dive off. However, little Marie gets swept up in a nearby river. Thomas jumps in to save her, and the family follows him downstream.

They then meet up with two female geese, Abigail and Amelia. The group then follow the two to their Uncle Waldo. Their journey takes them to a restaurant where Uncle Waldo has escaped from becoming the main course. However, being marinated in white wine has caused Uncle Waldo to be quite tipsy.

Meanwhile, Edgar returns to the countryside and manages to get back his hat and umbrella, but not before Napoleon and Lafayette attempt to nip at his heels again.

Back in Paris, the cats are almost home, but worn out from their trip. O'Malley then takes them to Scat Cat's abode in an abandoned building. Scat Cat and his gang of alley cats entertain the family, before heading off into the night.

After the kittens are put to bed, Duchess and O'Malley share a tender moment. While Duchess tells of her eagerness to return to Madame, O'Malley (who has never really known kindness from humans), just thinks Madame sees Duchess and her kittens as housepets. Duchess however, explains that Madame sees them as more than this: they are the equivalent of a family to her.

The next morning, O'Malley leads the family back to Madame's mansion. After saying his goodbyes, the cats head to the front door...only to be confronted by Edgar, who quickly throws them in a sack.

Rocquefort has seen the whole thing, and after going to Duchess and the kittens in the sack, is told to find O'Malley. Rocquefort runs off and catches up to O'Malley. Thomas heads back to the mansion, and tells Rocquefort to find Scat Cat and his gang.

Back in the mansion's stables, Edgar puts the cats into a trunk, telling them of his plans to send them to Timbuktu. He has already called for a truck to pick the trunk up, when O'Malley bursts in and attacks Edgar. Soon after, Scat Cat and his gang arrive to help, while Rocquefort manages to pick the lock and get the cats out. Scat Cat's gang, with doors, just as the pick-up service arrives, taking it away.

Some time afterward, Madame Bonfamille finds that Edgar has gone missing for some unknown reason, and calls on George to repurpose her will, removing him from any inheritance. Thomas is welcomed into the family, and Madam also has chosen to allow her mansion to be a safe haven for all the alley cats in Paris.

The film ends with Scat Cat and his gang throwing a wild party at Madame's abode.

RETRIEVED FROM: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0065421/synopsis>



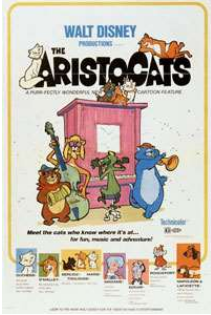
## PLOT SUMMARY: THE PLAY

The Alley Cats introduce Berlioz, Marie, Toulouse and their mother Duchess—the richest cats in all of Paris (Prologue/The Aristocats.) When the Aristocats' beloved owner Madame announces that she has left them all of her money, Edgar, the family butler, becomes very jealous. While the Aristocats practice signing (Scales and Arpeggios,) Edgar warms some milk. After they fall asleep, Edgar takes the Aristocats out into the country and leaves them in a ditch.

As the Aristocats wake up, lost and alone, Napoleon and his pack of Country Dogs chase Edgar away (Use Your Nose.) An Alley Cat named O'Malley discovers the Aristocats (Thomas O'Malley Cat,) who are surprised to find him friendly. Despite the protests of the other Alley Cats, O'Malley agrees to help the Aristocats find their way home to Madame. Napoleon and the Dogs find the Cats and chase them. When Marie falls into a river, O'Malley dives in to save her, only to be saved himself by a pair of geese, Abigail and Amelia (The Gabble Girls.) The whole gang waddles back to the city.

In Paris, O'Malley and the Alley Cats show the Aristocats the benefits of their freewheeling life (Ev'rybody Wants to Be a Cat.) Duchess invites O'Malley to come home with her, but he decides to stay in the alley. Surprised to find them home, Edgar traps the Aristocats and prepares to ship them to Timbuktu (The Cat Wash.) Roquefort the Mouse runs off to get help from O'Malley (Roquefort to the Rescue/Somebody is Looking for a Cat.) The Dogs and Geese join the Alley Cats to save the Aristocats and ship Edgar away (The Butler Did It!/Finale.) Madame celebrates the return of her precious Aristocats and agrees to take in all their friends as her treasured pets (Ev'rybody Wants to Be a Cat—Bows.)

From **"The Aristocat KIDS—Student Book"**



## List of Characters: THE FILM

Thomas O'Malley  
Duchess  
Roquefort  
Scat Cat  
Berlioz  
Shun Gon  
Marie  
Billy Bass  
Toulouse  
Peppo  
Hit Cat  
Frou-Frou  
Napoleon  
Lafayette  
Abigail  
Amelia  
Butler  
Madame  
Lawyer  
Uncle Waldo  
Milkman / Le Petit Cafe Cook

RETRIEVED FROM: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0065421/fullcredits#cast>



## List of Characters: THE PLAY

Duchess, an Aristocat  
Toulouse, one of Duchess' kittens and an Aristocat  
Marie, of Duchess' kittens and an Aristocat  
Berlioz, of Duchess' kittens and an Aristocat  
Abraham Delacey Giuseppe Casey Thomas O'Malley, an alley cat  
Scat Cat, an alley cat  
Wacky Cat, an alley cat  
Mad Cat, an alley cat  
Hep Cat, an alley cat  
Slick Cat, an alley cat  
Madame, the Aristocats' owner  
Edgar, the butler  
Roquefort, a house mouse  
Napoleon, a country dog  
Lafayette, a country dog  
Vichy, a country dog  
Ssoise, a country dog  
Abigail Gabble, a goose  
Amelia Gabble, a goose

From "The Aristocat KIDS—Student Book"

# Compare and Contrast



LESSONS BY Karel Sloane-Boekbinder

These exercises, designed by Karel Sloane-Boekbinder, are suitable for grades 3-6 and are geared to help students learn about **Disney's Aristocats** while they work on the English language arts skills of comparison and contrast.

Using information from **The Film and the Play** section of this Study Companion and the “**The Film and the Play**” graphic organizer students will expand their knowledge of **Disney's Aristocats** as they compare and contrast elements of the stage play and the film.

The **Compare and Contrast Characters and Artwork in Disney Films** gives students the opportunity to expand their knowledge of Disney films, including **the Aristocats**, as they compare and contrast Disney characters and animation styles.

These lessons give classroom teachers a way to align the arts with an academic subject and can be completed as an introduction, before students view the JPAS production, or as a follow up after students have attended the field trip.



### The Film and the Play: Compare Contrast

Name \_\_\_\_\_

How Are They the Same?

Disney's <b>The Aristocats</b> Kids, the Stage Musical	Disney's <b>The Aristocats</b> , the Film

How Are They Different?

Disney's <b>The Aristocats</b> Kids, the Stage Musical	Disney's <b>The Aristocats</b> , the Film





## Compare And Contrast Characters and Artwork in Disney Films

Before this lesson, create three columns on a Promethean board or dry erase board where it can be seen by the entire class. Label one column ***The Jungle Book***, one column ***The Aristocats*** and one column ***The Lion King***.

Begin the lesson by explaining students will be comparing and contrasting characters and artwork in Disney films. Next, conduct a brief discussion about ***The Jungle Book***, ***The Aristocats*** and ***The Lion King***. Ask the class the following questions: 1) How many people have seen ***The Jungle Book***? 2) What are some things you remember about the film? 3) How many people have seen ***The Aristocats***? 4) What are some things you remember about the film? 5) How many people have seen ***The Lion King***? and 6) What are some things you remember about the film? After each question about the film, record students' answers in the column on the Promethean board or dry erase board where the answers can be seen by the entire class.

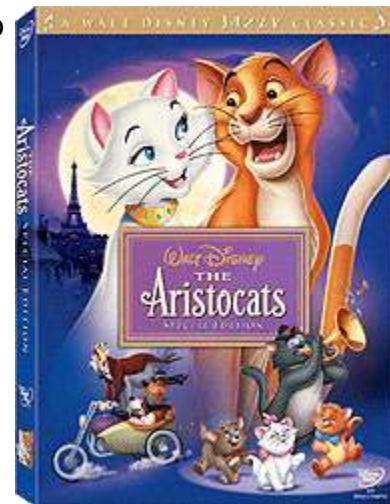
Next, have students read the excerpted article "**The Aristocats': Making Money the Old Old-Fashioned Way—Inheriting It,**" by Neema Parvini and the character breakdown sheet for **Chip** (from *Beauty and the Beast*) and **Toulouse** (from *The Aristocats*) and **Overviews: The Aristocats and The Lion King**. Next, using the class discussion and readings as a reference, ask students to complete the compare and contrast graphic organizers.

The first graphic organizer will give students an opportunity to compare and contrast **Tom O'Malley** from ***The Aristocats*** and **Baloo** from ***The Jungle Book***. Both characters were voiced by the same actor **Phil Harris** and both love music. **Tom O'Malley** however is an alley cat that lives in France and **Baloo** is a bear that lives in the jungle. The second graphic organizer will give students the opportunity to compare and contrast **Toulouse, from *The Aristocats*** and **Chip from *Beauty and the Beast***. Both characters are "friendly but feisty youngsters". Both characters also live in France and are adventurous, however, Toulouse is a kitten from a rich family and Chip (a little boy) is the son of a servant who has been turned into an enchanted tea cup. The third graphic organizer will give students the opportunity to compare and contrast the animation of ***The Aristocats*** and ***The Lion King*** are both stories about cats that must journey to find their way home. ***The Aristocats*** however, uses pale colors while ***The Lion King*** uses bright colors. Additionally, ***The Aristocats*** included 325,000 drawings and used 900 painted backgrounds while ***The Lion King*** included more than one million drawings and used 1,197 painted backgrounds.

**Excerpt:** " 'The Aristocats': Making Money the Old Old-Fashioned Way— Inheriting It," by Neema Parvini.

In hindsight, 1970 was a strange time for Disney. The great man himself had died in 1966 during the making of *The Jungle Book*. The films that followed (*Robin Hood* in 1973 and *The Rescuers* in 1977) have long been considered second-string releases and, fairly or not, are less well loved and fondly remembered than the likes of *Snow White*, *Pinocchio*, *Cinderella*, *Bambi* and so on. *The Aristocats* looks like the end of an era for Disney and the beginning of a slow decline that would last until the release of *The Little Mermaid* in 1989.

With *The Aristocats*, the studio for the first time had to make a film without Walt's personal drive and vision. Perhaps understandably, the studio rested on its laurels. The cast and crew reads like a Who's Who of Disney Legends. Five of Disney's ["nine old men"](#) were on board for the animating duties, and the film was directed by another, Wolfgang Reitherman, who directed every official canon feature from *One Hundred and One Dalmatians* (1961) to *The Rescuers* (1977). The cast features many instantly recognizable voice actors including, amongst many others, Phil Harris (better known as Baloo the Bear from *The Jungle Book*) as Tom O'Malley; Sterling Holloway (much more widely known as the voice of Winnie the Pooh or the Cheshire Cat from *Alice in Wonderland*) as Roquefort the mouse; and Bill Thompson (who played the White Rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland*, Mr. Smee in *Peter Pan* and Droopy the Dog) as Uncle Waldo. The cast also boasts some fairly major Hollywood stars in Eva Gabor (the sister of Zsa Zsa), who is refined if unspectacular as Duchess and almost identical to Miss Bianca in *The Rescuers* seven years later, and Charles Lane who is wonderful in his cameo-sized part as Georges Hautecourt, Madame Bonfamille's lawyer and old flame.



In such steady hands, the keynote of *The Aristocats* is familiarity. The plot is unusually slight: in Paris, a rich retired opera singer plans to leave her fortune first to her cat, Duchess, and her three kittens and then to her butler, Edgar, upon their death. For some reason, Edgar finds this unacceptable (if I were him, I know I wouldn't complain!) and catnaps the kitties, dumping them in the French countryside. The cats want to return to Paris to get back to their doting owner and, ultimately, to claim what is rightfully theirs. On the way home, they bump

into a swinging, streetwise alley cat called Tom O'Malley and a pair of English geese and their drunken uncle; there's also a spot of jazz thrown in for fun. And that's about it! Oh, and there's also a side plot involving Edgar, perhaps the oddest and least threatening of *all* Disney villains, in which he loses his hat and umbrella. The hat falls into the possession of two hound dogs with Deep South American accents. Edgar spends most of film trying to retrieve it from them while being followed and spied upon by Roquefort the mouse, a friend of Duchess's, who has donned a Sherlock Holmes-style deerstalker hat and figured Edgar's motives out. Plainly, the plot does not drive the film. Instead, *The Aristocats* relies on its characters and its familiar feel.



Perhaps for the first time (although cases might be made for *Lady and the Tramp* or *One Hundred and One Dalmatians*), this is Disney filmmaking by numbers. There are very few characters here that we haven't met before (or since) in some shape or form. Most obviously, Tom O'Malley is a carbon copy of Baloo from *The Jungle Book*, even down to his attitude and love of music. It is just a star vehicle for Phil Harris—Little John, the character he plays in *Robin Hood*, is exactly the same. One of the kittens, Toulouse, is a slightly tiresome reincarnation of the friendly but feisty youngster we've already met at least three times (Thumper in *Bambi*, Nibs in *Peter Pan*, and Patch in *One Hundred and One Dalmatians*) and would meet many times again (see, for example, Chip in *Beauty and the Beast*). Roquefort the Mouse is, basically, Winnie the Pooh in all but appearance and honey fixations. Even the bumbling Edgar has a precedent in the folding layers of skin of Sir Ector and Pelinore from *Sword in the Stone*. It's all as comfortable and snug as an old jumper.

The film also looks great. As you'd expect, Disney have done a fine digital transfer job on this DVD special edition and the artwork really stands out. It has that chalky quality that Disney seemed to favour under Reitherman's direction. Just as in *Sword and the Stone*, the animated sequences of *Mary Poppins*, *The Jungle Book*, and *Robin Hood*, the artists favour a pale, pastel colour palette and you can see lots of faint pencil lines; at times it borders on impressionism, which is perhaps fitting, considering *The Aristocats*' French setting. It's a great look, distinctive from the clean lines of the 1940s (see *Snow White* and *Pinocchio*), the chubby cheeks of the 1950s (particularly *Cinderella* and *Sleeping Beauty*, which, the leads aside, seem to be inhabited entirely by plump characters) and the vibrant colours of the 1990s (see *Aladdin* and *Lion King*). *The Aristocats* probably epitomises the 'impressionistic look' better than any other Disney film, particularly in the opening sequence where the pencil marks and chalkiness really bring out the age in Madame Bonfamille and Georges Hautecourt. In terms of animation alone, I'd rank *The Aristocats* way up there in the Disney canon, probably in the top ten.

RETRIEVED FROM: <http://www.toonzone.net/news/articles/21521/the-aristocats-making-money-the-old-old-fashioned-wayinheriting-it>



Chip

**Chip** is the son of [Mrs. Potts](#) who was featured in [Disney's](#) 1991 hit film [Beauty and the Beast](#) and its midquels. In his human form, Chip is a young boy. Like the other inhabitants of the castle Chip was cursed. While his mother was turned into a teapot, Chip was turned into a teacup. In the end of the film once [Belle](#) and [Beast](#) fell in love, Chip was magically reverted back to his human form. Chip is voiced by Bradley Pierce in the first film, Haley Joel Osment in the [its second midquel](#) and Gregory Grudt in [its third](#).

Chip is shown to be adventurous and constantly curious about the world around him. Chip is a cheerful and active young boy and (like his mother and friends) is shown to have a great fear of [Beast](#)'s temper. He is also shown to be very heroic shown in the first film, where he saved [Belle](#) and her father [Maurice](#) in order for them to rescue Beast from [Gaston](#) and the angry mob.



Toulouse

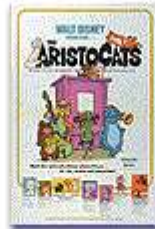
**Toulouse** is a character in *The Aristocats*. He is an orange colored kitten who is the oldest child of [Duchess](#) and the older brother of [Marie](#) and [Berlioz](#). He was voiced by Gary Dubin.

Toulouse wishes to meet tough alley cats, and often tries to appear tough. He is known for puffing up and attempting to hiss when trying to show how tough he is. Toulouse is fairly laid-back and easy-going otherwise. He aspires to be a painter and practices his painting daily.

RETRIEVED FROM: <http://disney.wikia.com/wiki/Chip> AND <http://disney.wikia.com/wiki/Toulouse>

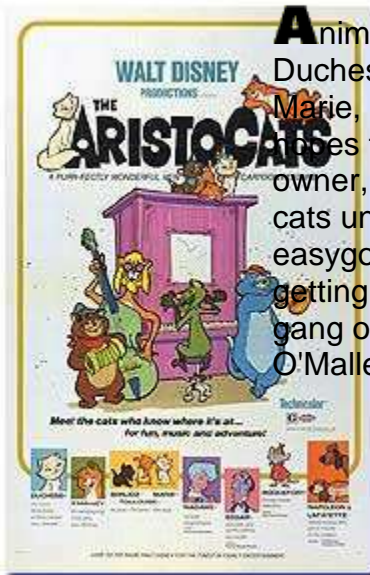
## Overviews: The Aristocats and The Lion King

**RELEASE DATE**  
December 24, 1970



**CHARACTERS**  
Thomas O'Malley, Duchess, Roquefort, **Edgar**

### The Aristocats



**A**nimated feature in which a pedigreed mother cat, Duchess, and her three kittens, Toulouse, Berlioz, and Marie, are catnapped by a greedy butler named Edgar who tries to get the inheritance left to the family of cats by their owner, Madame Bonfamille. Things look hopeless for the cats until they are befriended by Thomas O'Malley, an easygoing alley cat. After the cats have many misadventures getting back to Paris, the villainous butler is foiled when a gang of alley cats and a mouse named Roquefort join O'Malley to rescue Duchess and her kittens.





For the background musical score, George Bruns featured the accordion-like musette for French flavor, and drawing on his considerable background with jazz bands in the 1940s, provided a great deal of jazz music. The film was four years in the making, budgeted at over \$4 million, and included more than 325,000 drawings made by 35 animators, with 20 main sequences having 1,125 separate scenes using 900 painted backgrounds. The project employed some 250 people. The film was a box-office success, earning reissues in 1980 and 1987. Released on video in 1996.



Directed by Wolfgang Reitherman. Starring: the voices of Phil Harris (Thomas O'Malley), Eva Gabor (Duchess), Sterling Holloway (Roquefort), Scatman Crothers (Scat Cat), Paul Winchell (Chinese Cat), Thurl Ravenscroft (Russian Cat), Hermione Baddeley (Madame Adelaide), Roddy Maude-Roxby (Edgar), Bill Thompson (Uncle Waldo), and Maurice Chevalier, who sang the title tune. 78 min. This was the first feature-length animated cartoon completed without Walt Disney. The song "Ev'rybody Wants to Be a Cat," was written by Floyd Huddleston and Al Rinker. "Thomas O'Malley" was written by Terry Gilkyson, and Richard and Robert Sherman composed "The Aristocats," "She Never Felt Alone," and "Scales and Arpeggios."

RETRIVED from: <http://disney.go.com/vault/archives/movies/aristocats/aristocats.html>

# The Lion King

The production of *The Lion King*, originally titled *King of the Jungle*, took place at [Walt Disney Feature Animation](#) in [Glendale, California](#), and [Disney-MGM Studios](#) in [Orlando, Florida](#). The original treatment, inspired by [Hamlet](#), was written by [Thomas M. Disch](#) (author of [The Brave Little Toaster](#)), as “King of the Kalahari” in late 1988. Since his treatment was written as work-for-hire, Disch received no credit or royalties.<sup>[9]</sup> Thirteen supervising animators, both in California and [Florida](#), were responsible for establishing the personalities and setting the tone for the film's main characters. Nearly 20 minutes of the film were animated at the Disney-MGM Studios.<sup>[10]</sup> Ultimately, more than 600 artists, animators and technicians contributed to the *The Lion King* over its lengthy production schedule. More than one million drawings were created for the film, including 1,197 hand-painted backgrounds and 119,058 individually colored frames of film.<sup>[10]</sup> ...

The character animators studied real-life animals for reference, as was done for the 1942 Disney film [Bambi](#).<sup>[11]</sup> [Jim Fowler](#), renowned wildlife expert, visited the studio on several occasions with an assortment of lions and other jungle inhabitants to discuss behavior and help the animators give their drawings an authentic feel.<sup>[10]</sup> To prepare the filmmakers, some of the lead production crew made a trip to Africa to better understand the environment for the film. The trip gave production designer [Chris Sanders](#) a new appreciation for the natural environments and inspired him to find ways to incorporate these elements into the design of the film.<sup>[10]</sup>

The use of computers helped the filmmakers present their vision in new ways. The most notable use of [computer animation](#) is in the "wildebeest stampede" sequence. Several distinct wildebeest characters were created in a 3D computer program, multiplied into hundreds, [cel shaded](#) to look like drawn animation, and given randomized paths down a mountainside to simulate the real, unpredictable movement of a herd.<sup>[12]</sup> Five specially trained animators and technicians spent more than two years creating the 2½ minute stampede sequence.<sup>[10]</sup>

RETRIEVED FROM: [http://disney.wikia.com/wiki/The\\_Lion\\_King](http://disney.wikia.com/wiki/The_Lion_King)



**The Aristocats: Compare Contrast**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

How Are They the Same?

<b>Tom O'Malley from <i>The Aristocats</i></b>	<b>Baloo from <i>The Jungle Book</i></b>

How Are They Different?

<b>Tom O'Malley from <i>The Aristocats</i></b>	<b>Baloo from <i>The Jungle Book</i></b>





**The Aristocats: Compare Contrast**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

How Are They the Same?

<b>Toulouse, from <i>The Aristocats</i></b>	<b>Chip from <i>Beauty and the Beast</i></b>

How Are They Different?

<b>Toulouse, from <i>The Aristocats</i></b>	<b>Chip from <i>Beauty and the Beast</i></b>



**The Aristocats: Compare Contrast**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

How is the Animation the Same?

<b>Disney's <i>The Aristocats</i></b>	<b>Disney's <i>The Lion King</i></b>

How is the Animation Different?

<b>Disney's <i>The Aristocats</i></b>	<b>Disney's <i>The Lion King</i></b>

**English Language Arts (ELA)  
Grade-Level Expectations: Third Grade**

**Reading and Responding**

**Standard 1:**

10. Demonstrate understanding by summarizing stories and information, including the main events or ideas and selected details from the text in oral and written responses (ELA-1-E5)
11. Connect ideas, events, and information identified in grade-appropriate texts to prior knowledge and life experiences in oral and written responses (ELA-1-E6)

**Writing**

**Standard 2:**

23. Incorporate grade-appropriate vocabulary and information when writing for an intended audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-E2)

**English Language Arts (ELA)  
Grade-Level Expectations: Sixth Grade**

**Standard 1:**

3. Develop specific vocabulary (e.g., scientific, **content-specific**, current events) for various purposes (ELA-1-M1)

**Standard 7:**

10. Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including:
  - sequencing events and steps in a process
  - **summarizing and paraphrasing** information
  - **identifying stated or implied main ideas and supporting details**
  - **comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas**
  - making simple inferences and drawing conclusions
  - predicting the outcome of a story or situation
  - identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1)

**Standard 5:**

42. Locate and integrate information from grade-appropriate resources, including:
  - multiple printed texts (e.g., encyclopedias, atlases, library catalogs, specialized dictionaries, almanacs, technical encyclopedias)
  - electronic sources (e.g., Web sites, databases)
  - other media sources (e.g., audio and video tapes, **films**, documentaries, television, radio) (ELA-5-M2)

45. Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including:

- visual representations of data/information
- **graphic organizers** (e.g., outlines, timelines, **charts**, webs)
- bibliographies (ELA-5-M3)

# Voice Acting in Animated Films



LESSONS BY Karel Sloane-Boekbinder

These exercises, designed by Karel Sloane-Boekbinder, are suitable for grades 3-6.

Unlike some plays that were later adapted for film, **Disney's Aristocats** was an animated film first that was then adapted into a play. **Voice Acting in Animated Films: a History** and **Voice Acting in Animated Films** are geared to help students learn about the history of animation and what it takes to be a voice actor while they work on the English language arts skills of sequencing.

First, have students read **Point of View** by Mark Evanier. This article provides insight into the world of animation and the history of animation in film and television. It also gives pointers on how to go about becoming a professional voice actor.

Using information from the article **Point of View** by Mark Evanier and the "**Voice Acting in Animated Films: a History**" graphic organizer students will expand their knowledge of both **Disney** and animation as they explore the English language arts concept of sequencing.

Additionally, the "**Voice Acting in Animated Films**" graphic organizer gives students the opportunity to expand their knowledge of voice acting as they learn about the sequence of creating animation.

These lessons give classroom teachers a way to align the arts with an academic subject and can be completed as an introduction, before students view the JPAS production, or as a follow up after students have attended the field trip.

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# POV

POINT OF VIEW  
by MARK EVANIER

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ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED 9/27/96



*A Flintstones recording session. Left-to-right: Alan Reed, Jean Vander Pyl, Bea Benaderet and Mel Blanc.*

In the last four days, I've received three letters and two phone calls from people who want to get into the field of doing cartoon voices. One of the calls almost stunned me with its nonchalant assumption that this is an easy-entrance business. This lady seemed to think it was like signing up to earn frequent-flyer mileage. I imagine her deciding she wants to be in the movies, then calling up Martin Scorsese and saying, "Hi. I'm a clerk-typist here in Dayton, Ohio. Is it okay if I star opposite Robert DeNiro in your next movie?"

It would be wrong to tell these aspiring voice artists that what they want is impossible. In show business, nothing is impossible, except an honest accounting of profits. Not all that long ago, Conan O'Brien was a writer and bit-part performer. If he'd told me he wanted to take over for David Letterman on NBC, I'd have gone, "Uh-huh, well, I wouldn't bet on that ever happening."

Still, when folks ask me about something like getting into cartoon-voicing, I feel I'd be doing them a disservice not to clue them in that it might not be all that easy to attain. Is it possible? Of course. But then so is winning the lottery.

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The first cartoon voice artist was probably Walt Disney. He made the first sound cartoons and he cast himself, altogether appropriately, as Mickey Mouse. Many of the early makers of animated talkies looked no further than their own staffs, conscripting artists and secretaries to stand, often trembling, before the microphones.

Which is not to say they were all bad. Walt was fine as Mickey — a task he kept for himself until he became too busy with studio matters. Jack Mercer, the long-time voice of Popeye and other characters, was discovered in the Fleischer Studios art department. And one of the all-time great voice artists, Bill Scott (voice of Bullwinkle, Dudley Do-Right and umpteen others) was first and foremost a writer and producer.

The first actor to make a living primarily doing cartoon voices was probably Clarence "Ducky" Nash, voice of Donald Duck. Disney heard him on a radio show in 1934 and quickly signed him to what turned out to be a lifetime gig. When "Ducky" wasn't speaking for The Duck, he was the studio's goodwill ambassador, making personal appearances with a ventriloquist figure of Donald.

Then in 1936, Warner Brothers gave a shot to a beginning radio actor named Mel Blanc. Smart move.

Blanc billed himself as the Man of a Thousand Voices — good p.r. but probably not an accurate count and certainly a misassessment of his talent. It wasn't quantity that made Mel great, it was quality. His "voice characterizations," as the credits called them, were rounded, fully-developed personalities — with comic timing and delivery as skilled as the best radio comics of the day. The cartoon acting field had found its Olivier.

Soon, a few other masters happened along, including Daws Butler, Stan Freberg, Paul Frees and, in a class by herself, the incredible June Foray. Butler — the man Blanc himself called "my only rival" — would later voice Yogi Bear, Huckleberry Hound and most of the early Hanna-Barbera characters.

Between 1950 and 1970 (all dates approximate), a relatively small talent pool supplied most of the cartoon voices in Hollywood. Butler, Blanc, Foray, Frees, Hans Conreid, Don Messick, Allan Melvin, Howie Morris, Janet Waldo, Joanie Gerber, Hal Smith, Dick Beals, Walker Edmiston, Julie Bennett, Lennie Weinrib, Shep Menken, John Stephenson and a few others probably handled about 75% of the work. In 1969, a young impressionist named Frank Welker began doing voices and quickly became ubiquitous. If anyone were to ever tally who since then has logged the most hours making silly sounds before microphones, Frank would be the easy victor.

Since about '70, there seems to have been a rush of new voice performers. Some hail from the comedy circuit and from various improv troupes. Others come out of disc-jockeying or on-camera acting. Most grew up on cartoons, dreaming of someday being Mel Blanc or Daws Butler.



Between 1970 and 1990, the field became flooded with new performers and, since then, it's only gotten more crowded. As a result of Disney features, *The Simpsons* and a general depression in Screen Actors Guild employment, it is no longer unfashionable for on-camera actors to do cartoon voice work. Many animated shows have rushed to cast actors who are best known for their work on live-action TV series on the questionable (I think) premise that employing these folks elevates the cartoon to some higher level.

Some of these TV stars are as good as the full-time voice actors, many are not, and at least one producer has openly admitted that he doesn't care. For reasons of promotion and prestige, he'd rather have a "name actor" delivering a mediocre performance than a good job by a professional voice artist whose name most folks wouldn't recognize. (Most of them are working for S.A.G, scale, so the celebrities don't cost any more.)

The end result of all this, of course, is that the field keeps getting more and more overrun with talent. Like all forms of professional acting that have ever existed on this planet, the number of folks who want to perform will always greatly exceed the number of roles that could possibly exist.

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Cartoon voices are almost always done before the pictures. The animation is done to the voice track. (One exception was at the Fleischer Studios where they usually animated first and voiced after. This order of business is what led to Jack Mercer doing all those wonderful under-his-breath mutterings as Popeye.)

For theatrical cartoons (Such as movies,) it has usually been the practice to record the dialogue a line at a time. The actor does multiple takes of each speech, doing it over and over until the director is satisfied. Often, when two or more actors are involved, they're recorded at separate times...or, when one actor does multiple roles, they record one character at a time. Mel Blanc would sometimes perform Tweety one day and Sylvester, the next.

Television cartoons are almost always recorded like a radio play, with the entire cast gathered together in one room, everyone doing his or her lines in sequence. The few instances wherein the actors aren't all together, it's usually because someone wasn't available, not because the producers wanted it that way. Usually, the actors all record together and when they can, the procedure goes something like this...

1. The first thing that happens, of course, is the casting. On a new series, they usually have auditions for the recurring roles. Actor after actor is brought in and recorded reading a few lines of copy, then the producers (or network folks or whoever) whittle down the pile and make their selections.

Each episode also has non-recurring roles — one-time characters who are usually cast by the voice director without an audition. Whenever possible, to save money, they'll try to have the regular actors double. The Screen Actors Guild contract says that, for the basic

session fee, an actor can do two roles, plus he or she can do a third for a small increase. If an actor does four roles, the "count" starts over and they get paid the basic session fee again.

Not all actors can double. Some are hired for their one wonderful voice and can't really do a few lines as Man #1 or the Policeman in Scene 22. But to the extent possible, the voice director will have the show's regulars cover other roles, then hire as many other actors as necessary to fill out the cast.

After the actors are booked, everyone gathers at the specified time at a recording studio and the real work begins.

2. Voice actors work from scripts that contain all of the dialogue but little, if any, description of the visuals. Each line is numbered. Sometimes, they may be shown a storyboard or other artwork, especially if the episode contains a new character whose voice must be invented.

The director assigns roles and explains the action. He tells the actors what their characters are doing when they go, "Yow" or whatever. He takes them through the script and may have them read it aloud once or twice. (On certain shows with certain actors, there is a value to not doing this. You let them read it the first time with tape rolling, just in case magic happens. Actors have been known to do things on a first read that they cannot replicate once they know what they're doing.)

Actors will usually mark their scripts as the director explains things. They all have their own mysterious codes and symbols. Don Messick, who is unparalleled at switching voices and playing nine people talking to each other, carries an array of colored markers. He'll highlight one character's lines in yellow, another's in green and so on.

3. The actors are placed at individual microphones in a studio. Each has a few pages of script spread out on a music stand before them. It's not a good idea to have the actors turning pages during a recording. Good takes have been ruined by the sound of paper rustling.

4. The director, who sits outside the booth at a console by the engineer, will designate a sequence to be recorded. He'll say, for instance, "Let's do lines 1 through 20 this take." The engineer will roll tape and then slate, meaning that he'll record some information to identify the sequence. He might say, "This is [Name of episode], take one, lines 1 through 20." This will help him locate the proper takes when it comes time to edit.

5. The actors will perform their lines in sequence. If someone makes a mistake, the director will stop them and either start over or try to find a natural place in the dialogue to restart.

6. Once the take is done, the director may give them comments and do it again several times. Then he may do pick-ups of individual lines. Once he's satisfied he has at least

one good take of every line, he will designate which ones to use. He might tell an assistant, "Let's use 1 through 10 from the second take and 11 through 20 from take three, except that I want to edit in the pick-up of line 15 from take four." Later, the editor — sometimes working with the director, sometimes off the notes — will assemble all this accordingly.

(Some directors will also do what is called a "protection take," meaning that they get what they need, then they record another copy in case there proves to be a technical defect with the first version. As the technology improves, this is becoming increasingly unnecessary and many shows are dispensing with it. On *Garfield and Friends*, we never bothered — and, in 121 half-hour shows, only once did we have to go back and redo lines later because we didn't have a protection take.)

And that's pretty much it. The "gang" method is generally preferred to the system where the actors are recorded separately. Actors like working with other actors. They draw energy and inspiration from one another and the result is usually a more natural flow. Also, this way, the actors have a bit more control over the timing of the dialogue and the pauses between speeches (although even then, the editors may later shorten or lengthen these pauses to suit the animation).

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Which brings us back to that original query of how one goes about getting into the field of cartoon voices. The first thing that should be explained is that the competition is fierce and that you must be very, very good. Just being able to do one silly voice around the dinner table is not enough.

Another must: You must be where the work is. About 5% is in New York, maybe 20% is in Toronto or Vancouver, and the rest is in Los Angeles. (I'm talking here just about cartoon jobs. In actuality, no one functions as a full-time cartoon voice actor. They all do other things like commercial voiceovers, announcing, dubbing of movies, narration, etc. But the point is that you have to be where the work is. It won't come to you.)

Those who think they don't need acting lessons are almost always wrong. Even many working voice actors find it helpful to take classes.

There are teachers who specialize in voiceovers. They're usually located in the same cities as the work but any kind of acting coach is better than none. I'd especially look into classes on improvisational comedy and on cold readings. (A cold reading is when you're handed a script and have to perform with zero time to think through the role and rehearse.) If you can find a good tutor of dialects, sign up immediately.

Then you must have a demo of your work — an audio cassette of 2-3 minutes, demonstrating versatility and professionalism. In most cases, you edit up a little montage of scenes and speeches. Excerpts from actual jobs, if any, are more impressive than

homemade stuff but, in either case, it ought to be professionally recorded and edited — in a studio, not on your friend's deck from Radio Shack.

In each city where the work is, there are agents who specialize in voiceover performers. The local actors' union/guild should be able to give you a list of them. You would submit a copy of your demo tape to each and then cross every part of your body that can be crossed, hoping that yours would arouse some interest. The odds are steep: Last year, one of the top voice agents received in excess of 2,000 submissions from novices and accepted a grand total of two as new clients.

If the agent takes you on, he or she will send you to a few auditions to see how you fare. If you audition and the director thinks you're better for the role than Charlie Adler, Frank Welker, Rob Paulsen, Joe Alaskey, Greg Burson, Gregg Berger, Don Messick, Hal Rayle, Jeff Bennett, Maurice La Marche, Corey Burton, Howie Morris, Jeff Bergman, Greg Berg, Neil Ross, Billy West, Brian Cummings, Jim Cummings, Bob Bergen, Bill Farmer, Hamilton Camp, Michael Bell, Nick Jameson, Dan Castellaneta and about ninety other guys, you'll get the job.

Good luck. You'll need it.

RETRIEVED FROM: <http://www.povonline.com/cols/COL101.htm>



## Voice Acting in Animated Films: a History

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read **Point of View** by Mark Evanier. Fill in the blanks with the correct answer.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ was the first actor to do a voice for a cartoon.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ was the voice of Mickey Mouse.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ was the voice of Yogi Bear.
4. Fleischer Studios created the cartoon \_\_\_\_\_.
5. In an animation the \_\_\_\_\_ are added after the voices are recorded.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ was the voice of Popeye.
7. In film animation, often \_\_\_\_\_ voice is recorded at a time.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ was the voice of both \_\_\_\_\_ and Sylvester the Cat in the same cartoon.
9. In animation for television, \_\_\_\_\_ records the voices \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Most work for voice actors is found in \_\_\_\_\_.



## Voice Acting in Animated Films: a History

### ANSWER KEY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

11. Walt Disney was the first actor to do a voice for a cartoon.
12. Walt Disney was the voice of Mickey Mouse.
13. Daws Butler was the voice of Yogi Bear.
14. Fleischer Studios created the cartoon Popeye.
15. In an animation the pictures are added after the voices are recorded.
16. Jack Mercer was the voice of Popeye.
17. In film animation, often one character's voice is recorded at a time.
18. Mel Blanc was the voice of both Tweety Bird and Sylvester the Cat in the same cartoon.
19. In animation for television, the whole cast records the voices all together.
20. Most work for voice actors is found in Los Angeles.



## Voice Acting in Animated Films

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read **Point of View** by Mark Evanier. Place these sentences in the right order:

The director tells the actors to do another take. Each actor has a few pages of script and an individual microphone. Casting the film or cartoon T.V. show. The director gives the actors feedback about their performances. Voice actors read the script aloud once or twice. The editor assembles all the takes into a finished product. The actors perform their lines in sequence. The director tells their assistant which takes to use for the finished product. The director is satisfied with how the actors have read all the lines. The director calls out "Let's do lines 1 through 20 this take."

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.



## Voice Acting in Animated Films

ANSWER KEY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Casting the film or cartoon T.V. show.
2. Voice actors read the script aloud once or twice.
3. Each actor has a few pages of script and an individual microphone.
4. The director calls out "Let's do lines 1 through 20 this take."
5. The actors perform their lines in sequence.
6. The director gives the actors feedback about their performances.
7. The director tells the actors to do another take.
8. The director is satisfied with how the actors have read all the lines.
9. The director tells their assistant which takes to use for the finished product.
10. The editor assembles all the takes into a finished product.



**English Language Arts (ELA)  
Grade-Level Expectations: Third Grade**

**Reading and Responding**

**Standard 7:**

17. Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including:
- sequencing events
21. Apply basic reasoning skills, including:
- connecting what is learned to real-life situations (ELA-7-E4)

**Writing**

**Standard 2:**

23. Incorporate grade-appropriate vocabulary and information when writing for an intended audience and/or purpose (ELA-2-E2)

**English Language Arts (ELA)  
Grade-Level Expectations: Sixth Grade**

**Standard 1:**

4. Develop specific vocabulary (e.g., scientific, **content-specific**, current events) for various purposes (ELA-1-M1)

**Standard 7:**

11. Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including:
- sequencing events and steps in a process
  - summarizing and paraphrasing information
  - identifying stated or implied main ideas and supporting details
  - comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas
  - making simple inferences and drawing conclusions
  - predicting the outcome of a story or situation
  - identifying literary devices (ELA-7-M1)

**Standard 5:**

45. Generate grade-appropriate research reports that include information presented in a variety of forms, including:
- visual representations of data/information
  - **graphic organizers** (e.g., outlines, timelines, **charts**, webs)
  - bibliographies (ELA-5-M3)

# Scales and Arpeggios





**Here is a list of scales and arpeggios:**

- **Minor Pentatonic**
- **Blues Minor**
- **Minor**
- **Melodic Minor**
- **Harmonic Minor**
- **Hungarian Minor**
- **Algerian**
- **Byzantine**
- **Hirajoshi**
- **Iwato**
- **Japanese**
- **Kumoi**
- **Oriental**
- **Persian**
- **Augmented**
- **Diminished (Whole-Half)**
- **Diminished (Half-Whole)**
- **Enigmatic Scale**
- **Whole Tone**
- **Major Arpeggio**
- **Major 7M Arpeggio**
- **Major 7m Arpeggio**
- **Minor Arpeggio**
- **Minor 7M Arpeggio**
- **Minor 7m Arpeggio**
- **Augmented Arpeggio**
- **Diminished Arpeggio**

## Major and Minor Arpeggios

**Arpeggios are made from notes of a musical chord.** The only difference between the musical chords and arpeggios occurs by the way that the two are played. Instrumentalists play the chords using a strum, while playing the arpeggios is done one after the other. Minor arpeggios are played by picking and avoiding interval notes in a scale. For example in a minor chord that has A, E, A, C, E, the instrumentalist minor arpeggios will consists of the notes A, C and E. He or she skips the middle E and A notes because they play in the two octaves.

**Arpeggios are an important part of music training especially where pitching exercises are required.** Depending on whether the instrumentalist wants to form a minor or major arpeggio, he or she picks chords from either the minor scales or the major scales respectively. Minor keys consists the minor third interval and the perfect fifth interval while major keys consist the major third interval and the perfect fifth interval. These notes usually make up the arpeggiatic scales.

The Major arpeggios can be in any key. This includes C major (C, E, G, C), E major (E, G?, B, E), F major (F, A, C, F), D major (D, F?, A, D) and G major (G, B, D, G). Minor arpeggios on the other hand can be formed in the following notes: A minor arpeggios (A, C, E, A), B minor arpeggios (B, D, F?, and B). In addition, the minor arpeggios include: C minor arpeggios (C, Eb, G, C), D minor arpeggios (D,F,A,D) E minor arpeggios(E,G, B,E), F minor arpeggios(F, Ab, C, F) and G minor arpeggios (G, Bb, D,G)

**Arpeggios are helpful in song writing as a singer can use them to create a melody with a characteristic strong chord tone.** Arpeggios are major components of the jazz genre or music and have significant contributions in the rhythms and blues genres. When playing the arpeggios, the instrumentalists usually play the lowest sounding note first and ends with the highest then back down. When reading an arpeggio, the numbers used on the book usually denote the position of the musical note on the major or minor scales. The number (1) therefore denotes the first note on the scale while (5) means fifth., the small (b) denotes a flat and translates to a fret or half step when playing, a sharp(?) on the other hand means that the note is half a step sharper.

When playing the guitar, both the major and minor arpeggios can spice up the guitar playing and gives the music an interesting mix to it. Seasoned guitarists play the arpeggios in a sweep pick technique that is fast and a bit complicated for the beginner guitarists. Systematic progression through frequent exercise of playing the arpeggios is the only way that the instrumentalist can get accustomed to playing the arpeggiatic scales.

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RETRIEVED FROM: <http://singingleasonsreviews.com/Major-And-Minor-Arpeggios>

## Increase Your Singing Range: Scales and Arpeggios

Many articles on how to increase singing range focus on adding high notes, leaving altos and basses feeling left out. For you people with lower voices, this one is for you! We will explore various ways to add low notes by using your chest voice.

Everyone uses the chest voice for normal everyday speaking. Actually, your speaking voice can teach you a lot about your singing voice. How you use your speaking voice can either help or hinder your singing voice.

We will begin by exploring your speaking voice. Try making various non-speech sounds like laughing, crying, yawning or sighing. If you have a piano or pitch pipe nearby, find the nearest pitch to the sounds you are making. Now speak a few monosyllables: uh-huh, mm-hmm, aha! Again, find the matching pitch on a piano or the pitch pipe.

Then, speak a few simple sentences, like “my name is \_\_\_\_\_” or “ I love to sing”. Again, find the matching pitch. Ideally, the pitch should be the same for speaking as it is for monosyllables or non-speech sounds, but many people try to speak at a much lower pitch than it is actually natural for their own voice. This is not a very healthy thing to do.

Continue exploring your voice by speaking those monosyllables at various pitches on the piano. Find the lowest pitch you can speak without sounding gravelly. This gravelly sound is called “vocal fry” and is not so healthy to sustain. Your ideal speaking pitch should be about four to five notes above your vocal fry level.

Moving on, speak sentences or read a paragraph out loud. Experiment with higher speaking pitches to see how high you can go. Along the way, note where your voice is at its most comfortable and feel where you start to hear and feel strained.

When using your “chest voice”, you will feel vibration (this is “resonance”) in your chest when producing tones in that range of pitch. Place your hand lightly on your upper chest with your thumb and fingers resting on your collarbones. Do a yawn-slide (take a breath, exhale on “hee” or “hoo” starting from the top of range, sliding slowly down to your bottom range). Your hand should feel vibrations as you slide down into your chest area.

It may feel like the resonance is happening in your chest when in reality it's actually happening in your throat and mouth. The vibration that you felt is the result of air moving your lungs and across your vocal folds.

A fifth slide is a simple exercise for your singing range, and it is low-range, which should be easy. Starting in the comfortable middle part of your range, use the buzz (puckered lips vibrating as air is expelled) or a syllable such as "vaw" to sing the starting pitch and slide down five steps. In the key of C major it would be the notes G-C, so-do (of the Do Re Mi). The slide should be smooth, not bumpy or creaky. Start each repetition a half-step below the previous one.

If you feel bumpy or creaky sensations as you descend the scale, you're probably holding some tension. Note that this isn't the end or the top/bottom of your singing range, it's just a 'hump' or 'hole' that your voice have to cross. Pause and do some face and neck relaxation exercises. Gently massage your face and throat, stretch your neck from side to side, up and down, and then try again. As you descend the scale, close your mouth slightly from its starting position.

Next, sing an octave scale up and back down, again using the buzz or "vaw". As you go up the scale, allow your jaw to drop and your mouth to open a bit wider, and then reverse that as you come back down. Try to imagine that your tone is on a path leading away from yourself, with low notes nearest and high notes farthest away. Perhaps even move one hand away from your body as you ascend the scale and back to your side as you descend.

The arpeggio is another helpful exercise. Sing do-mi-so-do-so-mi-do on a vowel sound, such as "oo", "ee", or "ah". Start each new arpeggio a half-step lower than the last. As with any singing technique, adding to your lower range will take time and effort. If you are patient and persistent, you will see positive results and an increase in your singing range.

## **Vocal Training Exercises**

The following exercises are very helpful for you sopranos and tenors, but altos and basses who need to work on their high range can find these useful too.

**Up and down arpeggios.** This is an easy broken chord going up and down: do-mi-so-do-so-mi-do. Move upward by half-steps with each subsequent repeat, using the lip bubbles or a vowel sound or syllable of your choice.

**Upward arpeggio and downward octave with turn.** This is a little bit more complicated version of the previous exercise. Vocalize the arpeggio upwards (do-mi-so-do), then do a turn (ti-do-re), then the 8-tone descending octave scale from do to do. Use those vowel sounds; do some on “ee”, some on “oo”, and some on “ah”. Begin each different arpeggios a half-step higher then the last one, as displayed in the pattern below.



**Upward arpeggio with repeated high note.** One other version of the arpeggio is very helpful with keeping a light tone on those high notes. With the syllable “ha”, vocalize the upward arpeggio (do-mi-so-do) and then repeat the high do, staccato, five or six times. Look at the pattern down here.



## Vocal Training Exercises for Flexibility

**Ascending triplet scale.** This particular exercise is quite complex to explain but its easy if you read the following notes below. Using the solfege syllables (do, re, mi, etc.), vocalize an eighth-note triplet upward beginning on each syllable. Once you reach the top of the scale, go backwards and vocalize each triplet downwards. Sing the exercise as fast as you can.



do re mi fa so la ti do ti la so fa mi re do

**Ascending and descending thirds.** This is another one that is easier to sing than to explain. Beginning on the base note, go up a third, down a whole step, up another third, etc. until you reach the fifth tone, then reverse back and go back

down a third, up a half step, down a third, up a whole step, etc. Again, try to sing it as fast as you can.



**Rapid repeated up and down five note scale.** This one is straightforward—just go up and down a five tone scale (do-re-mi-fa-so-fa-mi-re-do) and repeat.

RETRIEVED FROM: <http://www.singingshow.com/vocal-training-exercises/>



## MUSIC: MIDDLE SCHOOL LESSON PLAN

### MIDDLE SCHOOL LESSON PLAN

**Submitted by Cynthia L Campbell, Cumberland County Schools**

**Lesson Title:**

Using numbers (pitch levels) to teach the major scale..

**Grade Level or Course:**

6-8 Choral Music

**Time Allotment:**

1 45-minute class period for two weeks. It is important to note that students will need to utilize the skills learned in this lesson on a daily basis in order to become competent sight-readers.

**Targeted Goals and Objectives from the 2000 North Carolina Arts Education Standard Course**

**of Study and Grade Level Competencies, K - 12:**

(From 6th grade SCS, can be adapted for 7th or 8th grades)

- 1.01 Sing with pitch and rhythmic accuracy and proper breath control, in an appropriate range.
- 5.03: Sightread simple melodic notation in the treble clef.

**Lesson Objective(s):**

The learner will be able to recognize the sound of and sing the major scale by singing it with numbers/pitch levels. The teaching of the major scale gives students a process by which to learn simple sight-reading passages for the purpose of sight-reading for adjudication at local and state choral festivals.

**Materials/Equipment Needed:**

Chalk board, staff liner, piano, teacher-made sight-exercises or exercises from a text.

**Lesson Procedure:**

Begin by giving examples of the major scale that students most likely have been exposed to such as "Do Re Mi" from "The Sound of Music" and the "Scales and Arpeggio" song from Disney's "Aristocats". Another example would be to play "Joy to the World" making all note values equal and asking students to name the famous Christmas song. They won't be able to do it unless the familiar rhythm is added back in. Then the teacher can point out that it is the major scale.

Write a C major scale in notation on the board. Then assign each pitch a number with low C being one and moving up by step. The top pitch is called "1" also however the teacher must point out that it is high "1" as opposed to low "1". Play the major scale on the piano and have students sing it back using the rhythm of quarter, 6 eighths, quarter, 6 eighths, whole in common time. At this point the teacher can change the key and have the students sing it back. Explain that the major scale sounds the same in any key because it follows a certain pattern of

whole and half steps. This can lead to a discussion of the piano keyboard and using the keyboard to identify this difference between whole and half steps. Once it is assessed that everyone understands the difference between whole and half steps, students can be given the assignment to create major scales beginning on various notes. This is most often done orally by the class with me at the board and the students telling me which notes to write next. It is important that students learn the sound of the major scale in their head. It should be played and sung every day as well as sung a cappella. Once the sound of the scale is in their heads the teacher can begin to mix up the scale tones using finger exercises. (Teacher holds up the number of fingers to indicate the pitch number desired.) It also works well to use the floor tiles to help students understand the relationships between steps and skips in the major scale. The finger and tile exercises should begin with movement up and down by step and slowly progressing to skips between the notes of the tonic triad. When students are comfortable with the vocal exercises, the teacher can begin to write simple sight-reading exercises on the board. The written exercises should begin with up and down stepwise movement within the scale and slowly progressing to skips within the tonic triad. Once the melodic aspect of sight-reading is taught, the teacher can add the rhythmic element.

**Assessment:**

I most often assess student progress with oral exercises involving the whole class using finger exercises. Once the class is comfortable, the teacher can more thoroughly assess individual student achievement by dividing the class into small groups. Once the written aspect of sight-reading has been introduced the teacher can use written evaluations in which simple sight-reading exercises are written with the students being given the number of the starting pitch. The students would then be assigned to write in the rest of the pitch numbers. The students could then sing the written exercises in large and small groups.

**Special Considerations:**

It is important to note that it is difficult to place a time limit on this lesson. The concepts should be introduced in a systematic way with one skill building upon the next. The skills should be practiced and assessed on a daily basis.

RETRIEVED FROM:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/artsed/resources/handbook/music/20usingnumbers>



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