



St. Louis Symphony Orchestra

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## SLSO At-Home Learning Night on Bald Mountain



Composer Modest Mussorgsky called his musical composition *Night on Bald Mountain* a “tone-picture.” The piece is a musical depiction of a short story by author Nikolai Gogol in which St. John witnesses a gathering of witches on the Bald Mountain near Kiev (take a virtual walk through the streets of Kiev with street view on [Google Maps](#)). What do you think the term “tone-picture” might have meant to Mussorgsky?

Activity #1: Using [KANDINSKY](#) from Google’s Chrome Music Lab, paint your own “tone-picture”. This simple online program takes anything you paint virtually and turns it into sound.

Activity #2: Create your own silent play. For this activity, *Night on Bald Mountain* has been divided into four sections. Each section is a different scene, like in a play. The four sections are:

Spirits and Creatures of the Night Awaken and Assemble	Beginning – 3:28	<a href="https://youtu.be/HMVxu7z06A8">youtu.be/HMVxu7z06A8</a>
Spirits and Creatures of the Night Celebrate	3:28 – 5:50	<a href="https://youtu.be/HMVxu7z06A8?t=208">youtu.be/HMVxu7z06A8?t=208</a>
Sunrise: Spirits and Creatures Scatter	5:50 – 7:35	<a href="https://youtu.be/HMVxu7z06A8?t=350">youtu.be/HMVxu7z06A8?t=350</a>
Morning over a Sleepy Town: The Sun Rises Over Bald Mountain	7:35 – end	<a href="https://youtu.be/HMVxu7z06A8?t=454">youtu.be/HMVxu7z06A8?t=454</a>

Listen to each section. Imagine all the possible pictures or scenes Mussorgsky could have been trying to paint with his music. Pick one for each section (four in total) and then act them out along with the music. Find or make props or costumes to use as you act out the different scenes.

Activity #3: What three words would you use to describe Bald Mountain? Draw or paint a picture of the mountain, illustrating those three words.

