



St. Louis Symphony
Orchestra

stéphane denève : music director

SLSO At Home Learning

Surprise Symphony

Let's set the scene: "Just before you went to bed mom finished frosting a cake and placed it in the refrigerator. It looked delicious! Now it's midnight. Everyone in the house has gone to bed, but you can't sleep because you can't stop thinking about that cake. Let's sneak downstairs and get a piece, follow me."



Play the opening excerpt to [Andante from Symphony No. 94](#) by Franz Joseph Haydn (0:00-0:37). Do the following movements in time to the music while your child imitates you.

Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, look, look (pause and look around)

Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, tip-toe, look (pause and look around)
Tip-toe, tip-toe, look, SURPRISE!

Repeat the movement activity, this time allowing the child to lead. Then answer the following questions together:



- What did we discover after sneaking downstairs to get a piece of cake?
- How did the composer surprise us at the end?
- Which instruments do we hear on the tiptoe?
- Which instruments do we hear on the surprise?

Did you know? Haydn had a sense of humor. He wrote this symphony for a special after-dinner concert. Knowing that many of the people might be sleepy after eating a large meal he used calming string music to lure them into relaxation. Then after giving them just enough time to doze he suddenly hit them with a loud CRASH to surprise them.





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Listening again to the beginning of [Andante from Symphony No. 94](#) by Franz Joseph Haydn (0:00-0:37), sing along with the main theme on a syllable of your choice such as La or Loo.

A **melody** is a sequence of notes that is musically satisfying. It's the part of a song we usually hum or sing along with. A musical **theme** is a recognizable melody upon which part or all of a musical composition is based.



Once familiar with the main theme from Andante from Symphony No. 94, listen to the entire piece. Each time the theme returns, move around the room in a way that conveys how you hear the theme being played. For example:

- If the theme is forte or loud, you may choose big movements.
- If the theme is piano or soft, you may choose to make smaller, lighter movements.
- If the theme is marcato or accented and heavy, you may choose to make heavy, weighted movements.

You can do this activity multiple times but vary the movement instructions each time. For example, the first time have each person create their own movements. The second time you can mirror your child's movements, and the third time have your child mirror your movements.

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809): Austrian composer Franz Joseph Haydn was the son of a wagon maker. As an eight-year-old he joined a local choir and thus began his musical journey. He is affectionately known as "Papa" Haydn because he helped define the modern four-movement symphony form and established the string quartet. As an adult, he supported his family by serving as a royal court musician for a noble family named Esterházy. In this job, he wrote music specifically for the needs of the royal family. Haydn wrote more than 100 symphonies. While Haydn was composing in Europe, in the Americas Thomas Jefferson was born (1743), Benjamin Franklin flew his famous kite (1752), the American Revolution began (1775), and the Declaration of Independence was signed (1776). Also, during Haydn's lifetime, the steam engine was invented by James Watts (1769), and Eli Whitney made the first cotton gin (1793).

