

Glossary

Imagery – visually descriptive or figurative language, especially in a literary work.

Imitation – the action of using someone or something as a model.

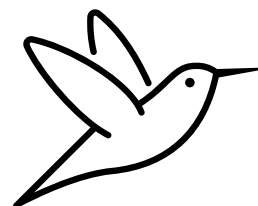
Program music – music that is intended to evoke images or convey the impression of events.

Trill – a quavering or vibratory sound, especially a rapid alternation of sung or played notes.

Listen

Imitation and Imagery

In *The Hummingbird*, the composer imitates the sounds of a hummingbird using techniques such as trills and short notes and rhythms. She also conveys imagery of hummingbirds flitting around by writing music that is light and playful. How does this compare to [Goldfinch](#), another LISTEN piece that imitates bird sounds?



Dig Deeper

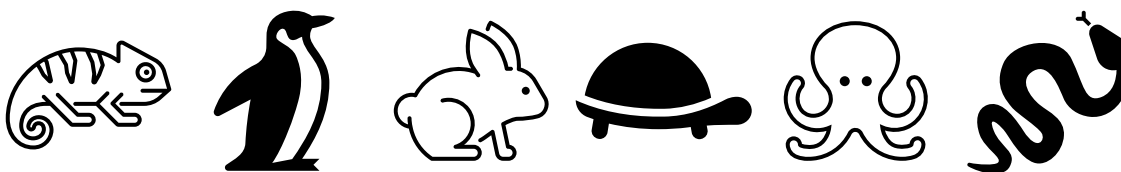
Tell a Story

Oftentimes, music that is inspired by the natural world tells a story. What story does *The Hummingbird* tell? Can you write your own story to accompany the music?

Create and Make

Write your own animal-inspired music

The Hummingbird is a piece of program music that is influenced by and imitates the character of a hummingbird. Try writing your own piece of music that is inspired by an animal!



Listen

Imitation and Imagery

First, listen to *The Hummingbird* with these questions in mind:

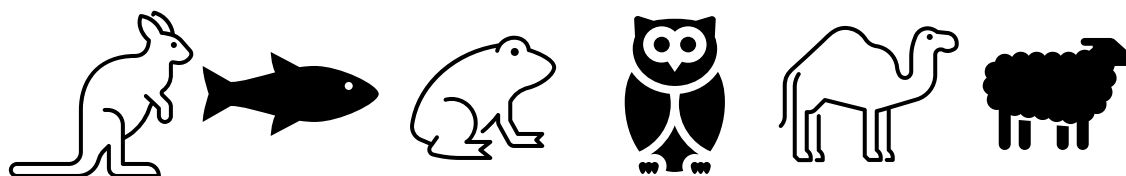
- Do you think the flute is a good instrument to imitate and represent birds? Why or why not?
- If you close your eyes and listen to the music, can you visualize a hummingbird? What color is it? Is it in a garden? What color are the flowers? Can you imagine the smell of the flowers?
- Can you connect specific sections of the piece with movements of a hummingbird?

Now, listen to Juri Seo's piece, *Goldfinch*, which is also inspired by a bird. Seo's piece is written for a countertenor and also includes fixed and live electronics. Seo uses lyrics that mimic the call of birdsongs. Compare the ways in which they achieve musical imitation and imagery. What are the similarities? What are the differences?

Dig Deeper

Tell a Story

Another way that imitation and imagery can be conveyed is through written or spoken language. When you listen to *The Hummingbird*, do you imagine a story playing out? If so, how would you tell that story? Try writing it down and get creative! As an author or storyteller, you can embellish the story any way that you'd like. Once you've come up with a story, tell it to someone and see if they imagined a similar story while listening to the music.



Create and Make

Write your own animal-inspired music

To write your own animal-inspired piece of music, first you need to pick an animal! Maybe you want to use your favorite one. Then you must choose an instrument that you think best represents that animal. If you chose a **big** instrument, maybe you want to pick a **big** instrument. Next, you must decide what part or characteristic of the animal you want to imitate and represent. You could try and emulate the way they move or the sounds they make. Write down some adjectives describing those things you want to imitate and represent. Then, consider the ways in which you can musically express them. What speed should the music be? How loud should be the music be? Do you need to include any special techniques? Try writing your music in a notation software like [MuseScore](#) or [Finale Notepad](#).