

Music Mind Bender

Lateral-thinking puzzles, brainteasers, logic puzzles, story problems, and many more music-themed head scratchers

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Getting your students excited about class can be a difficult task. How do you motivate them to buckle down and focus on the daily activities of the music classroom? Begin the class or rehearsal with a brain-stretching logic puzzle or a wheel-turning brainteaser from *Music Mind Benders*!

The puzzles included in this reproducible resource can be used with the entire class or as a quick team-building exercise—whatever best suits your teaching needs. Divided into sections by level of difficulty, this book contains a wide variety of lateral thinking puzzles, brainteasers, logic puzzles, story problems, and many more music-themed head scratchers. The puzzles in these sections require very little time and zero setup. The last section of this resource contains single-page reproducible puzzles that are designed for each student to complete individually.

Try solving a brainteaser together at the very beginning of the period by allowing your students to throw out ideas and work through the puzzles as a whole class. Alternatively, provide them with a copy of a logic puzzle to solve in a small group or on their own. Encourage students to ask questions while working through the problems to engage them in the activity. Creativity is important when solving many of these puzzles—the answers might not always be as obvious as the students think!

—Bonnie J. Krueger

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Easy



1. Two of the three saxophone players had been playing the wrong notes on purpose during a band rehearsal. Unsure of the culprits, the band director pulled all three students into his office at the end of the rehearsal. After having a short discussion with the students, the director learned the following:

The three students' names were Bridget, Lenny, and Pete.

- Pete said that one of the other two was not playing the wrong notes.
- Bridget said that one of the other two was not playing the wrong notes.
- Lenny refused to say anything.

Which two saxophonists were playing the wrong notes?

???

2. Amy really loves to sing, and she is performing a recital in front of her classmates and family. If all of the songs she sings in her recital are arias except for two and all of the songs she sings are hymns except for two, how many songs does Amy sing?

???

3. There has been a terrible plane crash right on the border between Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. The plane, which was carrying a school choir, had actually landed in the Ohio River, which is mostly in Kentucky, but the river's flow pushed the plane over to the exact spot where the Ohio and Indiana borders meet. In addition, the choir members on the plane are all from Illinois.

Where should the survivors be buried?

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4. Your mother had four children. She named the first child Soprano, the second one Alto, and the third child Tenor. What is the name of her fourth child?

- 5.** Aaron was new in school. He wanted very badly to make friends, so when he saw a boy and girl together in the music room, he went over to introduce himself. As he approached them, Aaron noticed that the boy was playing a recorder and intentionally making terrible sounds in the girl's ear. Aaron immediately asked the girl, "Is your brother going to play the recorder in my ear too?" The girl answered that he wouldn't, but as she said this the boy turned and blasted Danny with a terrible recorder sound. Even though Aaron could now barely hear, the girl never lied. How is this possible?

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- 6.** Andy was competing in a guitar-playing contest against several other students from schools around the state. On his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and played a short, fast rock-and-roll piece. The judges gave him a score that put him in third place. On his next turn, Andy played a smooth jazz piece that wowed the judges. His new score allowed him to overtake the guitarist in second place. In what place was Andy now in?

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- 7.** A young girl was dancing in a ballet when she tripped, hit her head on the nearby wall, and was knocked unconscious. She was rushed to the hospital, and woke up several days later able to speak perfect French. How did this happen?

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- 8.** Several band members volunteered to practice for the weekend's pep rally in the band room after school. Olivia walked into the room with her trumpet, joining the three people already there. After the first song, two band members left the room, and four more came in. After the second song was finished, three people left the band room and one more person came in. Suddenly, the door to the band room was locked from the outside by the janitor, and no one was able to get out! Miraculously, Olivia was home in time for dinner.

How is this possible?

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- 9.** Elizabeth watched the man in front of her intently. The man was holding a long stick and was waving it around. Elizabeth herself was holding two sticks, both of which were bigger than the one being waved at her by the man. Yet Elizabeth followed the man's every direction, not daring to disobey him. Who was this man?

Easy Mind Benders

- 10.** I occur once in an orchestra, twice in a jazz band, and never in a woodwind quintet. What am I?

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- 11.** Julia, John, James, and Jackie were all sitting in the hallway when a wonderful sound filled the air. It was coming from the orchestra room—it must be the recording for their new performance piece!

Julia said, “I bet it’s a Classical piece.”

John said, “No way, it has to be from the Romantic period.”

James said, “I think it’s either Classical or Baroque.”

Jackie said, “It’s definitely Baroque.”

Only one of the kids was correct about the music coming from the orchestra room. What would they play for their new performance piece?

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- 12.** Three tuba players were walking down the street carrying their tubas under the same tiny umbrella, but none of them got wet. How is this possible?

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- 13.** A fiddle-playing cowgirl was to travel to Dallas, Texas to participate in a fiddling contest. She left her hometown on Friday, traveled for two days and arrived in Dallas on Friday. How is this possible?

???

- 14.** Thomas is trying to put all of his song collections in his backpack. He wants to put the books in his bag in order by their weight. He knows:

- His show tunes songbook weighs less than his hymn collection.
- His holiday song collection weighs more than his show tunes songbook.
- His gospel songbook weighs more than his holiday song collection but less than his hymn collection.
- His hymn collection weighs more than his holiday song collection.

In what order should Thomas put his books in his bag if he wants to put the heaviest book in first?

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