



MELODY CONTEST

Calling all young composers! Be a featured part of this season's Young People's Concerts by entering the **Express Yourself Melody Contest** (recommended for students in grades 6-12). Winning melodies will be featured in a brand-new composition to be performed by the CSO during the Express Yourself concerts on January 24 & February 13, 2018.

HOW TO ENTER:

1. Read the poem "The Bell Ringer's Song" by Mark Flanigan (Page 2). Let the poem, especially the last 4 lines and repeated phrase "let it ring", inspire your melody.
OPTION 1: Use the poem to inspire a melody that stands on its own, without words.
OPTION 2: Set some of the text to music! Choose a few of your favorite phrases or lines. Then, create a melody that can be used to sing the text.
2. Compose your melody! See our tips on Page 4, or use the lesson plan found in the Express Yourself curriculum guide to lead your students through a composition process. The CSO will accept submissions from individuals, groups, or a school class.
3. Notate your melody and submit to the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra by **Wednesday, October 11, 2017**.
 - Mail To: Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
Young People's Concerts
1241 Elm Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202
 - Or, Scan & Email To: education@cincinnati-symphony.org
4. **Plan your trip to the concert!** Winning selections will be announced in mid-November. The Melody Contest winner will receive free admission and reimbursement for bus costs for up to 60 students.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: EXTENDED TO WED, OCT 11, 2017



MELODY CONTEST



The Bell Ringer's Song

by Mark Flanigan

let it ring
the bell's yoke made from American elm
mixed with tears from the trail and let it ring
blood-sweat from the blackbird's migration
swept windward from the ivory coast
fastened
by history and an inequitable liberty
let it ring lest we forget our bell does
sit in the shadow of a shared house
let it ring if flight brings with it responsibility
if blessing we wish to refrain from becoming curse
all the more reason to take wing and let it ring
through the dancer's lithe shoulders move under heavy cloak
though our lips are cracked as imperfectly as our bell no matter
the late start in an uneven race nor the obstructed view from the back
of the bus still we must let it ring unto all the inhabitants the world over
no matter who may or may not be listening no matter how well fastened the
clapper be chained no matter how tired the hand that pulls the string let it ring
no matter how high the wall or cramped the hold no matter the distance from shore
to sea throw off the yoke of history shrug off the cloak of inequality and let it ring
until all the chains of injustice break free each of us born with a song and thus we must sing
let it ring let it ring let it ring

Mark Flanigan (Cincinnati, OH) is a poet, performer, columnist, fiction writer and a screenwriter. After an 11 year run, his "Exiled" column is now archived at semantik.com and citybeat.com, while a compilation, *Exiled on Main Street: Dispatches, Diatribes, Stories and More from the Urban Core* is forthcoming. Previously, his volume of poetry, *Journeyman's Lament*, appeared in the Aurore Press publication, *Versus*, and his free e-book, *Minute Poems*, is available online from Three Fools Press. In January 2014, Flanigan co-founded an open/feature reading, *Word of Mouth Cincinnati* which takes place on the last Tuesday of each month at MOTR Pub, and in November 2015 his poem "The Bell Ringer's Song" won the grand prize in the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's One City, One Symphony Poetry Contest. In April 2016, Mark Flanigan was named one of



MELODY CONTEST



The Bell Ringer's Song Worksheet

What is the **theme** this poem? Can you summarize the poem in a single sentence?

How would you describe the **tone** of the poem? List 3-5 different descriptive words.

Can you identify any of the **allusions** to historical events in the poem? What are they?

Why do you think the poet repeats the phrase "let it ring" throughout the poem?

What do you think of when you read "The Bell Ringer's Song"? How does this poem make you feel?



MELODY CONTEST



SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MONDAY, OCT 2, 2017

I'M READY TO COMPOSE....WHERE DO I START?

Look back at “The Bell Ringer’s Song” and the accompanying worksheet. How can the different musical qualities in bold below help convey your thoughts and feelings about the poem?

- How would you sing the words “let it ring”?
Use this phrase and the theme of the poem to inspire your melody, or set your favorite phrase or lines from the poem to music.
- What will the **tempo** be? Do you want a faster tempo (allegro), or a slower tempo (andante)?
- What **time signature** will you use? 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, or something else?
- What **key signature** will your melody be in? Will it be **major** or **minor**?
- What is the **style** or mood of your melody? Could it be smooth (legato), or separated (staccato)? Will it be soft (piano) or loud (forte), or both?
- What **rhythmic qualities** do you want to use? Longer notes, like whole-notes and half-notes, or shorter notes, like quarter-notes or eighth-notes?
- Choose your first note and decide where your melody goes from there. Will you use large or small steps (**intervals**) between notes? Or both?

You can take your melody anywhere from here. Just let your creativity lead you.

FEELING STUCK?

WE RECOMMEND STARTING IN 4/4 TIME (4 BEATS TO A MEASURE)
AND THE KEY OF C MAJOR (NO SHARPS, NO FLATS).



MELODY CONTEST



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Class / Student Name: _____

School: _____

Title: _____

		

		

		

		



MELODY CONTEST



MELODY CONTEST Glossary

The definitions below are meant to help you understand elements of the poem and components of your composition. Many terms can be used to describe both poetry and music!

allusion	a reference in a text to a literary or historical person, place, or event
compose	to create a musical work; arranging ideas a details in a clear and coherent way to create an effective message
interval	the distance in pitch between two notes
key signature	the flats and sharps at the beginning of each staff line indicating the key of the music the piece is to be played; determines the tonality for a piece of music (can be major or minor)
major	related to the key signature; major keys generally have a positive character; the series of whole steps (W) or half steps (H) in the major scale is W-W-H-W-W-W-H
measure	a unit or group of beats in music; measures are divided by a vertical line on the musical staff
melody	an organized series of pitches or notes that make up a particular musical phrase, tune or idea
meter	a unit of rhythm; number of beats in a measure and the note value that receives the beat
minor	related to the key signature; minor keys tend to have a dark, melancholic character; the series of whole steps (W) or half steps (H) in the natural minor scale is W-H-W-W-W-H-W
rhythm	the pattern of musical movement through time; a recognizable, varying pattern in the duration of notes or beat of the accents in speech or sound
scale	a series of notes played one after the other in an ascending or descending line
style	characteristics of the music that reflect the mood, tone, or time period
tempo	the overall speed of a piece of music
time signature	the two numbers that appear one above the other at the beginning of a piece or section of music that tell you how many beats are in a measure and the note value that gets the beat.
theme	an abstract concept broad enough to cover the entire scope of a literary work
tone	the author's attitude reflected in the style of the written word; the mood