

1723

Antonio Vivaldi
(1678 -1742)

COMPOSER: ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678 - 1742)
(an.TONE.ee.oh vee.VAL.dee)

COMPOSITION: Autumn from *The Four Seasons* (Concerto for Violin in F, Opus 8, No. 3) Last movement: “Allegro”

FEATURES:

1. **Strings** - String Orchestra (violins, violas, ’cellos, basses) with harpsichord and solo violin.
2. **“Solo” and “Tutti”** – The orchestra and solo violin play together in the **Tutti** sections. The solo violin takes the lead in the **Solo** sections.
3. **Program Music** – Vivaldi illustrates the text of a sonnet he wrote with his music. This movement describes a foxhunt!
4. **Rondo form** – ABACAD, etc.

BACKGROUND:

The Composer: Antonio Vivaldi lived in Venice, Italy 250 years ago. He was a priest and *maestro di concerti* or music master at a girl’s school in Venice for most of his life. His red hair earned him the nickname “The Red Priest.” He was a prolific composer, writing over 350 concertos alone.

The Composition: *The Four Seasons* are the most famous of Vivaldi’s 350 concertos. He developed the concerto, a piece of music written for a solo instrument and orchestra, to show off the virtuoso possibilities of the violin whose design had recently been perfected in Italy. His concertos were models for many other composers.

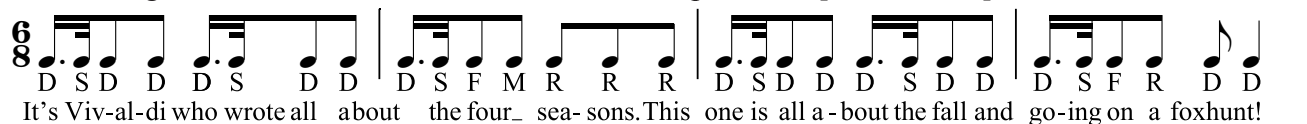
The idea of using music to illustrate text is uncommon in the music of the Baroque era (baroque, approximately 1650-1750). But this idea was used extensively in 19th century music, when such music came to be called Program Music. In the *Four Seasons* Vivaldi wrote text above passages of music. In this movement he wrote:

“The hunters emerge at dawn, ready for the chase, with horns and dogs and cries. Their quarry flees as they give chase. Terrified and wounded, the prey runs on, But, harried, dies.

QUESTIONS: Can you hear the solo violin?
Can you hear the sunrise? The horns? the dogs barking? the guns firing?
What instruments do you hear? [*violins, violas, ’cellos, basses, harpsichord*]

SOME POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

1. Listen for the hunting horns, the dogs barking, the chase, and the dying fox. Make a picture to show the hunt.
2. Make up a dance showing the fox hunt. Perform silently during the music.
3. Make cards saying *Solo* and *Tutti* to hold up when those sections are heard.
4. Make *f* and *p* cards (*piano* and *forte*, loud and soft). Have kids hold up when appropriate.
5. Sing the **“Rondo Theme”** below. Count the repetitions. [There are 7.]



6 8
D S D D D S D D | D S F M R R R | D S D D D S D D | D S F R D D |
It's Viv-al-di who wrote all about the four seasons. This one is all about the fall and going on a foxhunt!

6. In the Baroque era artists often hand colored etchings or pictures in books, as color reproduction was very expensive. Hand-color this drawing of Vivaldi. Remember he was called the “Red Priest”.