Come along as we go on a journey into the world of jazz!
This performance guide is designed to help you enjoy the performance of the John Brown Jazz Orchestra.

What is a Jazz Orchestra?
A jazz orchestra, also called a “big band,” typically consists of 5 saxophones, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones, and a rhythm section (made up of piano, bass, guitar and drums). Sometimes the Jazz Orchestra will add vibraphone (which is a part of the xylophone family), clarinet, violin and singers to the group. The Jazz Orchestra performs music that allows players to improvise and play in featured sections that make a big and powerful sound. Many times the band plays exciting background sections while one musician takes a solo. Listen for that while we play!

Who is The John Brown Jazz Orchestra?
This jazz orchestra is led by bassist John Brown who graduated from UNC-Greensboro and UNC-Chapel Hill, has performed all over the world, teaches at Duke University and UNC-Chapel Hill, and sometime performs with the North Carolina Symphony. His Jazz Orchestra performs music written by Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie, Tito Puente and North Carolina natives Thelonious Monk and John Coltrane. Listen with an open mind, as you will hear high-energy Latin jazz, upbeat swing tunes, new arrangements of familiar contemporary and children’s tunes. These musicians love to perform, and this performance will showcase the versatility and power of a large jazz ensemble. Snap, clap, and tap while the music carries you away for a jumpin’ good time!

Jazz Greats from the Tarheel state

John Coltrane grew up in High Point, NC
Thelonius Monk was born in Rocky Mount, NC
How does the music come together?

**The Elements of Music**

**Melody**
The melody is the main theme of the piece of music. It is the part that you might sing along with while you hear it. As an example, sing your favorite song...you just sang a melody!

**Harmony**
The harmony is made up of chords, and it is the part that supports the melody and makes the music sound full. Chords are usually made up of three notes or more and the musicians play them all at once for a warm, full sound that makes the melody stand out. Listen for the chords you hear the guitar and the piano play.

**Rhythm**
The rhythm is the beat! The best way to hear the beat is to listen to the drums! The drums keep the beat with the help of the rhythm section. Sometimes the songs are fast, sometimes they are slow (this is called the tempo), and sometimes they play rhythms from different countries and cultures. They work together to keep the paces of the music going so the other musicians can play melodies and harmonies. See if you can snap your fingers or pat your feet to keep the beat along with us!

**Backgrounds and shout choruses**
There are two different times when you might hear the entire horn section playing all together. Sometimes parts are written for the band to play and accompany one of the musicians who is playing a solo. These parts are called “Backgrounds.” In the same way that harmony supports the melody and makes it sound full and warm, the backgrounds make the soloist sound stand out. Watch and listen for how the different sections of backgrounds unfold.

A “Shout Chorus” is where the entire horn section is featured playing some really spirited music together and is meant to show the full power of the sound of the Jazz Orchestra. Be sure to listen for these sections!

**Vocabulary words:**
- Backgrounds
- Call & response
- Harmony
- Improvisation
- Melody
- Rhythm
- Rhythm Section
- Shout Chorus
- Tempo
- Trading

Listening Challenge

How does the piece start? Who is taking the lead? How many different musicians are taking the solos? Discuss or explain what else you heard and saw.

Rhythm Challenge

Can you give a countoff? Practice counting off a tune at different temps.

The Instruments

**Saxophones**
There are many types of saxophones and in the Jazz Orchestra, you will find three of them. They are the alto saxophone, the tenor saxophone, and the baritone saxophone. One kind plays the high notes, one kind plays middle range notes and one kind plays the low notes.

Can you figure out which saxophone plays which range of notes? You will see them sitting in a row right in the front of the Orchestra.

**Trombones**
On the second row, right behind the saxophone section, you will find the trombone section. Jazz Orchestras usually have 3, 4 or 5 trombones depending on the arrange-
ments of the pieces of music. See how many will perform with this Jazz Orchestra...and be sure to watch how much the trombone players move their arms using a slide to get different notes on the instrument!

**Trumpets**
Behind the trombone section, you will see the trumpets standing on the third row. They sit high above the whole band so they can point their instruments right at the audience so you can really hear their sound! As with trombones, a Jazz Orchestra might have 3, 4 or 5 trumpets. Find out how many we'll have on performance day! Watch and listen for how they stand tall and play those high notes!

**Rhythm Section**
The Rhythm Section includes one of each of the following instruments: Electric Guitar, Piano, Bass and Drums. They sit together on the left side of the stage right beside the horns.

Listen for how the Rhythm Section keeps the beat and drives the band. Remember to snap your fingers or pat your feet to keep the beat right along with us!

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When may I talk?

When do I clap?

Like in most performances, performers expect the audience members to end conversations and not talk during performances so everyone has a chance to enjoy the music! In jazz performances, audience members may participate a little bit more than at other types of concerts, and you are invited to applaud anytime! Feel free to clap or cheer after an instrumentalist takes a solo, and certainly after the piece is over. At the performance feel free to clap along, tap along and take the musical journey with us as we take a tour of jazz!

**ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS...**

Who is playing the melody? Who is playing the harmony? Who is keeping the rhythm? What are the roles of the instruments? What are the pitches of each? Which one makes a high pitched sound? Which ones make low pitch sounds? How high/low can you sing or make your voice go? Watch for the buttons the saxophones push with both hands; watch for the three buttons the trumpet player push to get their notes; watch for how the trombone players use the slides to get their notes.
Listen to a variety of jazz orchestra tunes and take note of the instruments you hear, the tempo, the rhythm, and talk about how you feel when you hear different selections. Do they all make you feel the same way? If not, discuss what differences you hear in the pieces and discuss how they make you feel differently.

**Activities**

**BEFORE the performance...**

Listen to a variety of jazz orchestra tunes and take note of the instruments you hear, the tempo, the rhythm, and talk about how you feel when you hear different selections. Do they all make you feel the same way? If not, discuss what differences you hear in the pieces and discuss how they make you feel differently.

**AFTER the performance...**

Write about 2 or 3 of the following:
Which instrument is your favorite? Which song did you like the best?
Why? Did you recognize any of the songs? Did you hear any improvisation?
How many different people and how many different instruments? What did you think and feel during the performance? How does big band sound compare to other groups and other types of music you've heard?

**Take Note**

Do the soloists take turns? Do the soloists go back and forth? What did you notice about the way the musicians play the instruments? What did you learn? What did you hear?

**Critical Thinking**

After the performance complete the K-W-L chart. You may want to compare/contrast two or three musicians. Reflect, in writing, your own thoughts, feelings, and emotions while listening to jazz music. Could you identify the modern tunes played during the performance? How does the big band arrangement compare to the contemporary version of the tune?

What did you like/dislike about the big band arrangement?
Why? Do you want to play an instrument someday? Which one would you pick? Why?

**Listening Challenge**

Listen for pieces that add layers. What instruments start? Then what comes next?

**Did you know?**

You are part of the performance.

Audiences are an essential component of a live performance.

You’re in the show! Because you are in the same room with the presenters, they can hear and see you so it is very important that you control your body and your voice. Watch the entire performance and listen closely and attentively. Sit still and keep your body to yourself. We want to make sure all audience members can watch and listen too! Respond appropriately: laugh when something is funny, participate if the performers ask you to and applaud at the end.

Thanks for making this a great performance!