

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678-1741)

The Four Seasons

BIOGRAPHY:

Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi was nicknamed "the red priest," because of his red hair and his occupation as a priest. He learned to play the violin from his father and continued to study music while working in the church. Vivaldi went on to write many compositions, including concertos, operas, and music for the church. Much of his music is intense and



dramatic. His music often includes rapid [scale](#) passages, and extreme highs and lows which added to the development of violin style and technique in music at the time. Vivaldi's music is full of energy and brings to life the elegance of eighteenth-century Venice, Italy.

The Four Seasons consists of four concertos that each describe a season. A concerto is a work for soloist with orchestra or accompaniment. Sometimes the music describes the season literally, for example you can almost feel your teeth chattering in "Winter" or rolling thunder in "Summer". Other times Vivaldi creates a mood, like warmth by a fire, or an emotion, such as the liveliness of a harvest celebration. A series of sonnets or poems are paired with each concerto. It is believed that these sonnets were written by Vivaldi.



[LISTEN](#) to Classics For Kids about Vivaldi

and don't forget to take the quiz after!

Click to play!

SEASONS SAMPLING

With the help of an adult, listen to which seasons are depicted in these excerpts from Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* and try to guess which season is depicted.

Step 1: Listening Game

Close your eyes or look away from the screen as an adult plays each of the four recordings below. There is one recording per season below. While listening, pick which season you think that excerpt represents.

Excerpt 1:  RECORDING

Season Guess: _____

Excerpt 2:  RECORDING

Season Guess: _____

Excerpt 3:  RECORDING

Season Guess: _____





Excerpt 4:  RECORDING

Season Guess: _____

Answers below

Step 2: Season Scene Creation

Using the template below, imagine a “scene” that can represent each season with the music. This scene can include a set or artistic backdrop, costumes, theatrics or dancing. You can even bring your scene to life at home!

<p>SPRING</p> <p>Setting/Backdrop:</p> <p>Character(s):</p> <p>Action:</p> 	<p>SUMMER</p> <p>Setting/Backdrop:</p> <p>Character(s):</p> <p>Action:</p> 
<p>AUTUMN</p> <p>Setting/Backdrop:</p> <p>Character(s):</p> <p>Action:</p> 	<p>WINTER</p> <p>Setting/Backdrop:</p> <p>Character(s):</p> <p>Action:</p> 

Excerpt #1: "Spring" III. Danza pastorale. Allegro. #2: "Winter" III. Allegro. #3: "Autumn" III. Allegro. #4: "Summer" III. Presto

Poetry & Music: Seasons Sonnets

The Four Seasons by Antonio Vivaldi is made up of 4 [concertos](#), one for each season: Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter. They each had a sonnet, a style of poem, paired with the music, that describes a seasonal scene. **Listen** to each recording and **read** the corresponding sonnet. **Underline** the description or line in the sonnet that you hear most in the music.

SPRING



I. Allegro

Spring has arrived, with its fun festive airs
 The birds sing out a sweet song!
 The spring waters, also the whispering breezes,
 Make a sweet murmur as they flow along.
 A dark cover then falls over the sky,
 Thunder, lightning, as if calling the chosen
 Then that quiets down, the birds return
 And go back to singing their songs.

What is a [sonnet](#)?
 Read more [here](#)!

SUMMER



II. Adagio

The fear of the furious thunder and lightning
 Saps the strength from the shepherd's tired limbs
 With swarms of flies and of gnats all around him.

Were there any parts of
 the music where you
 pictured something
 other than what the
 sonnet described?

AUTUMN



II. Adagio molto

Let all of us leave the songs and dances
 In the cool and crisp and pleasing air
 The season invites us all
 To peaceful sleep and fine enjoyment.

WINTER



III. Allegro

Walking across the hard frozen ice,
 Carefully stepping, we try not to fall
 One quick turn and you fall to the ground
 Getting back up, running again,
 So the ice does not break apart under our feet
 All the winds raging, Scirocco and Boreas,
 All this is Winter, with joys of its own.