

# NLO Shorts: An Introduction to the Orchestra



## The Conductor

Watch the NLO Shorts videos introducing the instruments of the orchestra. You can find them on the New London Orchestra YouTube channel, or on their website at [bit.ly/NLOShorts](https://bit.ly/NLOShorts). As you are watching the videos, answer the questions below. If you're unsure about spellings, turning on subtitles might help!

1. What does the conductor's upbeat show? [1]
2. Before conductors, who usually directed performances, and from where? [3]
3. Other than showing time & speed, what else does a conductor show? [2]
4. Listen carefully to the extract from Marin Alsop's performance of *Short Ride in a Fast Machine* by John Adams (3:00). What might be a suitable tempo indication for this music? [1]
5. Why do conductors use a baton? [1]

Extension: listen to the following three performances of the same extract from Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht*. Write a short essay comparing the similarities and differences in the three conductors' approaches to the same piece. (You might like to think aurally about speed, dynamic, phrasing, which instruments are more prominent in the texture, and visually about how they convey the character of the music with their hands, face, and general body language.)

Semyon Bychkov: <https://youtu.be/67Uwwler04U> (0:00–1:37);

Alpesh Chauhan: [https://youtu.be/FTDf\\_rO08SM](https://youtu.be/FTDf_rO08SM) (1:01:55–1:03:37);

Barbara Hannigan: <https://youtu.be/ivZqvbGKGAA> (20:24–21:49).

You may find following a score helpful, which can be found at [http://petruccimusiclibrary.ca/files/imglnks/caimg/a/a6/IMSLP29738-PMLP09699-Schoenberg\\_-\\_Verklärte\\_Nacht\\_orch.pdf](http://petruccimusiclibrary.ca/files/imglnks/caimg/a/a6/IMSLP29738-PMLP09699-Schoenberg_-_Verklärte_Nacht_orch.pdf); the extract starts at bar 320 on page 28.