



## Elaine Rinaldi, Founder & Artistic Director

Greetings!

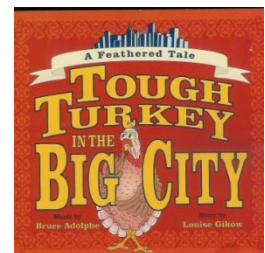
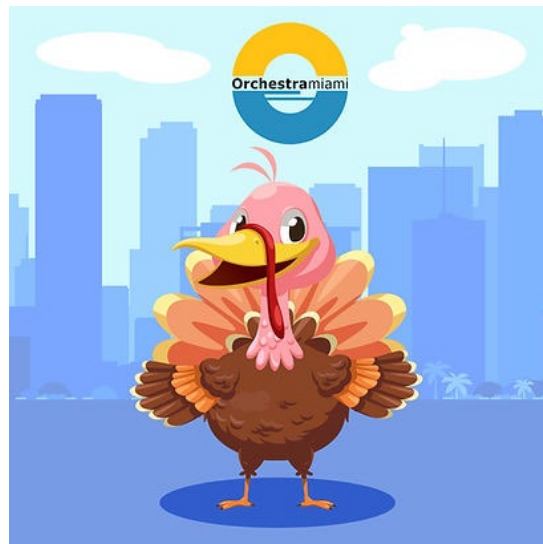
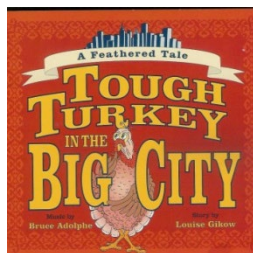
Thank you for joining us this afternoon at Pinecrest Gardens. You are about to enjoy a performance of "Tough Turkey in the Big City: A Feathered Tale" with music by Bruce Adolph and story by Louise Gikow. Today's performance features soloists from Orchestra Miami and is narrated by Joanna Kaye.

Tough Turkey in the Big City follows the comic blunders of Tom Turkey, who leaves the farm to try his luck in the big city. The music of the farm is a swinging barnyard counterpoint, while the music of the city recalls the smoky jazz of film noir. There's also some fun march music at the parade, and hot Latin rhythms at the Turkey Club.

Use this study guide to engage your child in thoughtful discussions about "Tough Turkey in the Big City." It not only enhances their understanding of the story and music but also encourages them to think critically and creatively.

Thanks again for your support, and we hope to see you at our next Family Fun concert on Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 3 PM for [Mad for Mariachi](#).

Warmly,  
Elaine Rinaldi, Founder & Artistic Director  
Orchestra Miami



### *Synopsis*

What happens when a turkey from the sticks meets a Park Avenue pigeon? With the feel of an old-time radio show, Tough Turkey in the Big City follows the comic blunders of Tom Turkey, who leaves the farm to try his luck in the big city. There's a close call with a menacing chef, a tussle at the Turkey Club, a brief romance with a pigeon, and a happy mix-up at the Thanksgiving Day parade.

Tom is portrayed by the bass trombone and his barnyard friends by the violin and clarinet. The music of the farm is a swinging barnyard counterpoint, while the music of the city recalls the smoky jazz of film noir. There's also some fun march music at the parade, and hot Latin rhythms at the Turkey Club.



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## *Curriculum Guide*

### **TOUGH TURKEY IN THE BIG CITY**

The story is told both with words (narration) and music. Each of the characters is portrayed by a theme and is associated with an instrument. Here is a complete list of all the characters and the instruments that play their themes:

Main Character:

Tom Turkey – Bass Trombone

Other Characters:

*On the Farm*

Farmer and Ms. Brown – Violin (in a country fiddle style) Dudley Duck

– Trumpet (with a wa-wa mute)

Rudy Rooster – Violin Gilda

Gosling – Clarinet

*In the Big City*

Midge Pigeon – Violin

Hawk – Trumpet (straight mute)

## *Musical Elements*

A musical concept that is used extensively in the story is **counterpoint**.

**Counterpoint** means *two or more lines of music (melodies) played at the same time*.

In *Tough Turkey in the Big City*, the barnyard animal's themes all fit together in counterpoint.

After we meet each of the characters on the farm, their themes are combined in counterpoint, as follows:

When the narrator says, "they were the best of friends", we hear Gilda Gosling (clarinet), Dudley Duck (trumpet), and Rudy Rooster (violin) in a trio (three instruments playing together.)

When the narrator says, "But Tom was different. He dreamed about what lay beyond the garden gates. He didn't want to stay on the farm forever", we hear Gilda Gosling (clarinet), Dudley Duck (trumpet), Rudy Rooster (violin), and Tom Turkey (bass trombone) in a quartet (four instruments playing together.)

When the narrator says, "But Farmer and Ms. Brown liked Tom, and they would never have eaten him", the theme of Farmer and Ms. Brown (violin in a country fiddle style) combines *contrapuntally* (in counterpoint) with Tom Turkey's theme (bass trombone.)

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Tom then decides to pay a visit to each of the barnyard birds individually to see if they want to come with him to the big city and “see what’s what and who’s who.” As he goes to see each of his feathered friends, his theme (bass trombone) is combined *contrapuntally* with that bird’s theme. The order is as follows:

1. Dudley Duck (trumpet)
2. Rudy Rooster (violin)
3. Gilda Gosling (clarinet)

Finally, Tom decides to go to the big city by himself. The narrator says, “Tom Turkey set out for the big city on a Monday morning. Dudley, Rudy, and Gilda walked with him to the gate.” At that point, all four themes combine in a longer contrapuntal episode.

In the big city, there is another example of counterpoint. When Tom first sees Midge Pigeon he “follows her into the public library.” The music depicts this action by giving Midge’s theme to both the violin and bass trombone, with the bass trombone following the violin in “imitative counterpoint”. (Two or more lines sharing the same melody, one following the other in imitation.)

### *Counterpoint in Everyday Life*

In counterpoint, the themes fit together, but they also retain their individuality. Counterpoint happens not only in music, but also in many things we experience every day. For example, we can find counterpoint in food, conversation, and clothing.

Let’s look at counterpoint in a peanut butter and jelly sandwich: you taste the bread, the peanut butter, and the jelly, but you also have a combined taste that is the best of all.

All sandwiches are contrapuntal! When you add mustard to a turkey sandwich, you are adding another independent flavor that is meant to combine with the taste of turkey, bread, and whatever else is in the sandwich.

When members of a family talk at the same time during dinner, you can hear the individual people if you try, but there is also the total contrapuntal effect.

Counterpoint in clothing is very common. We often find colors combined to make contrapuntal patterns, such as green and blue stripes, red polka dots on a yellow background, or a rich colorful counterpoint, like plaid.

Exercises:

1. Make a list of foods that are contrapuntal (where the tastes are combined yet retain their individuality in layers.)
2. Create a contrapuntal talking piece: two or more people talk at the same time, each telling a part of the same story *or* telling the same story in different ways.
3. Design clothing that has a contrapuntal pattern.

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### *Rhythm in the Big City*

Throughout the barnyard scene (track one), there is *no* percussion. When Tom finally gets to the big city, there is a sudden outburst of drums and cymbals. The introduction of percussion in the big city gives the feeling of energy and noise that, among other things, distinguishes the big city from the farm. Their rhythms of the city are more complex!

Another way in which rhythm helps tell the story can be heard in the Thanksgiving Day Parade music. Tom's theme has been played many times up to this point, and always in a simple rhythm in four/four time.

But when Tom joins in the parade, he is very excited because he is beginning to realize that maybe *he* is "what's what and who's who". His theme is transformed by a jazzier, quirkier rhythm in 7/8 time. When Tom returns to the farm, he can have his tune *both* ways.

### *Characterization:*

In *Tough Turkey in the Big City*, the **bass trombone** represents Tom Turkey throughout the story. Some instruments play *several* characters or represents different kinds of musical settings.

The **clarinet** plays Gilda Gosling as a honking goose but it also plays smooth jazz when the story moves to the city, and marching band music during the Thanksgiving Day Parade.

The **trumpet** plays Dudley Duck with a wa-wa mute, giving a quacky sound, but it also plays the mean Hawk in the Turkey Club using a straight mute, and plays in the marching band, too.

The **violin** plays Rudy Rooster in a cockadoodle kind of way, but it also plays the sweet melody of Midge the Pigeon, and the country fiddle sound of Farmer and Ms. Brown.

The narrator also changes his voice to portray the different characters. Try imitating the voices on the recording.

For an actor, the voice is like a musical instrument. Voice quality is a very important part of acting.

An actor thinks of *voice quality* in musical terms, including:

Range – high, medium, low;

Articulation – strong or soft consonants; *staccato* (detached) or *legato* (smooth and connected) pronunciation

Dynamics – soft and loud

Timbre – husky, bright, raspy, hollow, thick, etc.

Tempo – fast talker? Slow talker?

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Pick characters from the list below, and use a voice that you think fits the character.

Cowboy/girl	Waiter or Waitress
Doctor	Ringmaster of a circus
Police officer	TV news announcer
Talking frog	Talking cat or dog
Politician	Robot
Monster	Fairy

### *The Story Itself*

Things to think about and discuss concerning the story of *Tough Turkey in the Big City*:

1. Sometimes you have to leave home, and go out in the world to find out “what’s what and who’s who”. Where would you like to go? Why? What would you like to discover?
2. YOU may be “what’s what and who’s who”, even though you did not think so. Do you think you have hidden (secret) talents? What are they?
3. Life is full of unexpected events, some disappointments and some happy surprises. What are the happy and sad things that happen to Tom Turkey? What surprises have happened in your life?
4. Becoming famous can happen to someone by accident, as it did to Tom Turkey. But being famous is not the end of the story for Tom Turkey. Do you think it would be fun to be famous? What are some of the reasons? What might not be fun about being famous? What are good reasons for becoming famous? What are bad reasons?
5. People do not always believe the truth, and sometimes they believe nonsense, too. Tom Turkey did not trust news and TV, “for the most part, anyway”. How can you tell what is true and not true? Tell a story about your life that is not completely true, and the other students will guess which parts are true and which are not.

Exercise: Make up a story in which a character travels away from home and then returns after an adventure. Consider the following:

What is home like?

Why does the character wish to go somewhere else?





What is that other place like?

Make up two situations that happen to the character in the new place. Why does the character go home?

What has changed for the character?

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*Musical Instruments:*

Instrument/ Character	Image
Violin Rudy Rooster Farmer Mrs. Brown Midge Pigeon	
Trumpet Dudley Duck Hawk	
Clarinet Gilda Gosling	
Bass Trombone Tom Turkey	

*Story Text*

I'd like to tell you a story. A story using music. I could tell it to you on the piano... but it's much more fun with a little band of instruments. Good!

Our story begins on a farm owned by Farmer and Mrs Brown. On this Farm lived Dudley Duck... Rudy Rooster... and Gilda Gosling. They were the best of friends. And then there was Tom Turkey. Dudley and Rudy and Gilda were happy on the farm. They didn't think about the rest of the world. But Tom was different. He dreamed about what lay beyond the garden gates. He didn't want to stay on the farm forever.

"I'd like to see a bit more of the world before I get too old," Tom told to Gilda Goosling.

"Not me," Gilda honked, ruffled her feathers. "I'm happy right here"

Now some people think that Tom left the farm because of Thanksgiving. After all, for turkey, life on the farm was always a little unsettling, especially around late November. But Farmer and Mrs Brown like Tom, and they would never have eaten him.

The thing that made Tom decide it was time to leave was a conversation he overheard between Farmer Brown and The Farmer in the dell.

"I'd love it here in the country," Farmer Brown said. "I got to tell you- the big city is for the birds."

"Hmm," Tom thought. For the birds?" That means me! If a big city is for the birds. I'm going to go there and... see what's what and who's who!"

"Dudley," Tom said, Farmer Brown says that the big city is for the birds. Well I'm a bird. You're a bird. I think we should go to the big city and see what's what and who's who!"

"What's what and who's who!" Dudley squeaked. "Are you quackers? It's dangerous in the big city! Don't you watch TV?"

"TV is make believe," Tom said stubbornly. "For the most part anyway."

Dudley thought for a while. Ducks are slow thinkers.

"Tom you're a good friend," said Dudley. "But I'm not going anywhere."

Next, Tom went to see Rudy Rooster.

"Rudy," said Tom. "Farmer Brown says the big city is for the birds. Well, I'm a bird. You're a bird. I think we should go to the big city and.. see what's what and who's who!"

Rudy screeched, "Are you a cockadoodle-doofus? It's dangerous in the big city! Don't you go to the movies?"

"Movies are make-believe," Tom said stubbornly. "For the most part, anyway."

Rudy thought a little. Roosters don't think too much about anything.

"Tom you're a good friend," said Rudy. "But, I'm staying right here."

Finally, Tom went to see Gilda Goosling.

"Gilda," said Tom. "Farmer Brown says the big city is for the birds. Well I'm a bird. You're a bird. I think we should go to the big city and see what's what and who's who!"

Gilda honked, "Don't be a goose! It's dangerous in the big city! Don't you read the newspapers?"

"Newspapers are make-believe," Tom said stubbornly. "For the most part, anyway."

Gilda didn't need to think at all. "Tom you're my best friend on the farm," said Gilda. "But, I'm staying right here."

"Okay!" said Tom. "I'll go by myself."

Tom Turkey set out for the big city early on a Monday morning. Dudley, Rudy, and Gilda walked with him to the gate.

"Stick to the main road," Dudley Duck told him. "And don't lose your way."

"Keep out of fights."

"Rudy Roster advised. "And, don't lose any feathers."

"Be careful," said Gilda Gosling. "And don't lose your heart!"

And then, Tom was on his way.

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He strutted along the road singing a song he had made up just for the occasion. “Gobble, gobble, oh gobble” he sang. He had never made up a song before so he kept it simple. He walked and walked. As he walked down the road, a car passed him. The car slowed down and stopped.

“Where are you headed my handsome friend?” a voice said from inside the car.

But Tom knew never to talk to strangers. Especially strangers that wore tall white hats and big white aprons. He stuck to the main road, and kept walking. The sun rose. The sun set. Tom walked some more. Finally, the shapes of the skyscrapers began to fill the sky.

“That must be the big city!” Tom thought and it was.

The big city wasn't anything like the farm. There were millions of cars and buses and trucks tooting their horns and rushing from here to there. There were millions of people spending their money and rushing from there to here. There were skyscrapers above and subways below. Tom thought it was grand. “For the most part, anyway.” Tom was hungry. He saw a sign that said, “We Serve Turkey.”

“Turkey! that's me, he said. So he went in. The man behind the counter wore a tall hat and a big white apron. he looked familiar...

“Yeah, we served turkey.” said the man. “Turkey sandwiches, Turkey burgers, Turkey hash, Roasted turkey with all the trimmings.”

“Never mind,” said Tom. “I'm a vegetarian.”

Tom left the restaurant in a hurry. He soon found himself wandering aimlessly in the streets of the big city. Tom first laid his eyes on her on Boyle street. She was one cute chick. Her name was Midge Pigeon. And Tom fell for her. Hard. He followed her into the public library. She was no birdbrain.”

“This won't be a fly-by night romance,” he told her.

“Oh, please,” she said. You're all birds of a feather. Now be a good egg and fly away home,”

But Tom wouldn't take no for an answer. Finally, she gave in.

“Meet me at the Turkey Club,” she said. “Tonight at eight.”

A club for Turkeys? This city really was for the birds, all right!

That night, Tom went to the Turkey Club. It was a downtown dive, full of jailbirds and eggheads. And there she was. She was even more beautiful than Tom remembered. Tom looked at Midge. Midge looked at Tom. This could be the start of something big.

“Marry me, Midge,” Tom said.

“ It'll never work,” Midge sighed. “I'm a Newbury St. pigeon. Your feathers are all full of hayseed.”

“Come on-- say yes,” Tom begged. “We can wing it.”

Suddenly, someone else was standing beside Midge.

“Is this cluck bothering you, sweetbeak?” He was a hawk. He had slick feathers, curved talons, and beady eyes.

Tom tried to tell Midge she was making a mistake. But before he could say a word, the hawk was on him like a robin on her eggs.

Tom got the stuffing kicked out of him. He lost a few feathers too

“That'll show you what's what and who's who!” The hawk sneered.

Tom left the Turkey Club. He was alone. There were too many men in tall white hats and big white aprons roaming around. Tom felt like.. a turkey.

“Maybe the big city is for the birds.” he thought. But, not this bird. I'm going home.

That night, Tom slept in the park. He woke up the next morning to the sound of a marching band. It was a parade! Tom loves parades. So he marched right along with it. Tom passed lots of bands playing they're clarinets, trumpets, and brass trombones. He passed giant balloons. He even passed a giant sleigh driven by a man in a white beard and red suit. Tom kept marching along. He passed... oh no! His goose was cooked! It was a giant turkey! Tom had heard about THIS parade. It was to celebrate... THANKSGIVING!

“Let me out of here!” yelled Tom, running as fast as he could.

He passed the giant turkey, and kept going. He passed the mayor in a big in his big limousine. He was at the head of the parade. People started pointing, then cheering. Tom slowed down. They liked him! They really liked him! Tom thought, “I guess this is what's what and who's who!”

That night, he stayed in the mayor's mansion. The next day, his picture was in all the papers.



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"Isn't that our turkey?" Farmer Brown asked his wife.

"Of course not," said Mrs. Brown. "Those papers are make-believe for the most part anyway."

Now, you might think that Tom lived happily in the city, for the rest of his life, and that that is the end of the story. But it's not. Tom still wanted to go home. The big city had treated him like a hero...but it had also broken his heart. Tom set for the farm on Monday morning, but this time he traveled in style. He rode in the mayor's limousine. He a bird seed and drink vanilla chai. When he came strutting into the barnyard, Dudley, Rudy, and Gilda were all there to greet him.

Dudley squeaked, "So, what was what and who was who?"

Rudy screeched, "We saw your picture in the paper!"

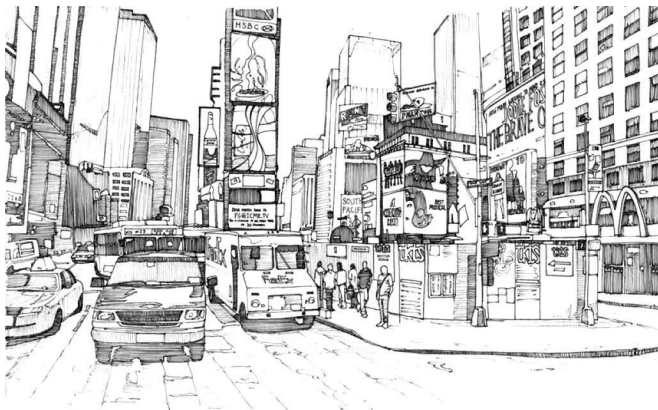
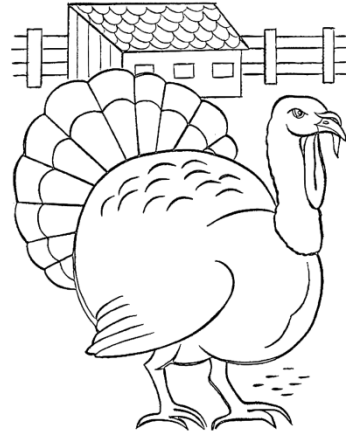
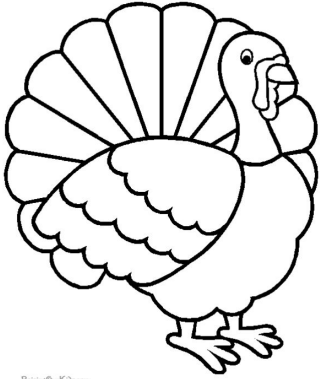
Gilda honked "Was the big city for the birds?"

"Yep," said Tom. "It sure was. But a turkey's place is on a farm. I like the peace and quiet. I'm here to stay."

As the years went by, Tom often thought of the city. He wondered what had happened to Midge. He even dreamed of going back someday. But he never did. When Tom was a tough, stringy old bird, he liked to sit around the barnyard and tell all the chicks the stories of his adventures in the big city.

Of course they didn't believe him. But everything in the story happened just the way I told you. For the most part, anyway.

*Activity Pages:*



*Key Story Elements Review:*

## 1. Characters:

Tommy the Turkey  
Gilda Gosling  
Dudley Duck  
Rudy Rooster  
Midge the Pigeon  
Farmer and Ms. Brown

## 2. Setting:

The countryside farm  
The bustling city  
Thanksgiving Day Parade

## 3. Plot:

Tommy's adventurous journey from the farm to the city.  
Encounters with various characters.  
Lessons learned about courage and friendship.

## 4. Musical Elements:

The use of different instruments to represent characters.  
The changing musical styles (e.g., jazz, marching band, country fiddle).  
The importance of voice quality for the narrator and actors.  
The use of counterpoint.

*Study Guide Questions:*

## 1. Character Analysis:

How does the bass trombone represent Tom Turkey, and why is this important to the story?

Describe how the clarinet is used to portray Gilda Gosling. How does the music change when the story moves to the city?

Explain how the trumpet plays both Dudley Duck and the mean Hawk. How does the choice of mute affect the sound?

Discuss the versatility of the violin in representing Rudy Rooster, Midge the Pigeon, and the farm setting. How does the music convey their characters?

## 2. Setting and Mood:

How does the music help create different moods for the farm, city, and Thanksgiving Day Parade scenes?

How does the narrator's voice contribute to the overall atmosphere of the story?

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3. Voice as an Instrument:

Why is voice quality important for actors in portraying characters?

Give examples of how voice quality can be described using musical terms like range, articulation, dynamics, timbre, and tempo.

4. Character Growth:

How does Tommy the Turkey change and grow throughout his journey in the big city?

What lessons about courage and friendship does Tommy learn from his encounters with other characters?

5. Musical Elements and Emotions:

Discuss how different musical elements (e.g., tempo, dynamics, timbre) can convey emotions in the story. Give examples from the musical.

6. Real-Life Connections:

Have you ever tried to be brave like Tommy in a new situation? What did you learn from that experience?

Can you think of other stories or movies where music plays a significant role in conveying emotions or character traits?

7. Creativity and Exploration:

Encourage your child to create their own character and imagine the musical instruments that would represent them. What kind of music would those instruments play?

*Resource Contributions:*

Learning Maestros:

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56227cebe4b01226f10e825a/t/5855d8c6b8a79ba19e9f1ee6/1482021065098/TOUGH+TURKEY+GUIDE+for+TEACHERS\\_2016.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56227cebe4b01226f10e825a/t/5855d8c6b8a79ba19e9f1ee6/1482021065098/TOUGH+TURKEY+GUIDE+for+TEACHERS_2016.pdf)