

# Kite and Leaf...

The good news  
email from TCS!

## Musicals, Choral Concerts, Choreography, Improvised Instruments, and More! Here's Music at TCS

**O**ur all-school music teacher, Ms. Jennifer Trueman, brings creativity, fun, and skill building to each class, bringing out the best in each child and instilling a love of music.

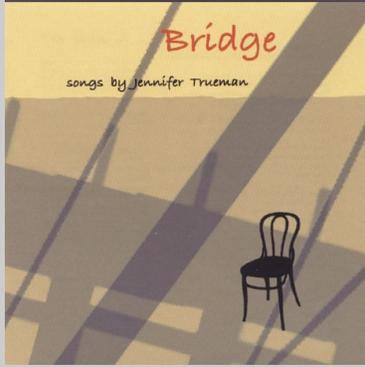


*Ms. Trueman has taught music  
at TCS since 2008*

"My main objective is to have students leave the school with love of music, an open mind to all kinds of music, an understanding of the work and practice that produces music, a basic knowledge of music theory and terms, and that they find a way to enjoy music throughout their lives, whether as a maker of music, or in an audience," explains Ms. Trueman.

She earned a B.A. in Music from Carleton College, and her M.A. in Music Composition and Theory from the University of Minnesota. She is also a music director and composer for The Actor's Garden, and previously was a conductor and accompanist for the Metropolitan Boys Choir. She is also a piano instructor, accompanist, performer, and choir conductor.

**Jennifer Trueman** is also a wonderful composer and performer and has a few albums which we



know many of you will enjoy. Check them out on Spotify by clicking the icons to the left.

Ms. Trueman meets with Lake and Pond classes once a week, and with Ocean classes twice a week. Music class is in room 107, where we have a recently donated piano, hand percussion instruments, bucket drums, sheet music, and Ms. Trueman's guitar.

Here are examples of music activities in each grade level that our students enjoy:

## Pond (Grades K - 2)



*Pond students enjoying chorus with maracas in the woods*

"**W**ith the youngest Pond children, I incorporate singing with movement. I try to present a variety of styles and genres, but my main goal is to have the kids enjoy the singing, listening, dancing, drumming. The children have chances to listen to many styles of music, and learn the language to discuss it," says Ms. Trueman.

"We play games involving musical theory, so there is a little introduction to musical notation, rhythm, and vocabulary. We often write a group song, starting with lyrics, - one of our favorites is still **I Do Not Like to Clean my Room.**"

*Below: Kids create their own impromptu band and musical instruments on the Bluff*



## Lake (Grades 3 - 5)

"With the Lake students, we continue the same activities as Pond, but start to develop more theory and vocabulary skills. I usually try to include a song in a language other than English - over the years we have performed in French, Swahili, American Sign Language, Arabic, Irish Gaelic, and others. We talk more about performance technique, developing good practice habits, etc."



*"Sometimes we develop choreography in order to learn about rhythm, meter and phrasing. Plus dancing is fun!"*

"Bucket drumming is a great way to explore rhythm too - we use them to make a drum circle, play call and response, and accompany songs while we sing."



## Ocean (Grades 6 - 8)

"For Ocean students we have had electives such as: writing jingles for local Oak Park businesses, music and visual arts, songwriting, drum circle, song analysis, music through the ages, and of course, our one-act musicals - **Thwacked!** and **Pirates!**" says Ms. Trueman.

"This year I'm hoping to explore music from around the world, beyond our familiar scope of Western culture."



*Students rehearse for their pirate musical in music class*

## Progressive Education & Music

When asked how a progressive learning environment makes teaching music special, Ms. Trueman says: "I appreciate most the flexibility to adapt the activities to the individual class. Some classes love to perform, others would prefer to listen and discuss. I can change directions accordingly. I think the group songwriting is pretty unusual, too."

Music class can also complement a project topic if the class is studying another country or culture, or would like to explore songs of an era or songs reflecting a social justice cause.



"As Covid risk is reduced, we hope to return to more group singing, including our tradition of singing in group gathering each morning and holding choral performances," says Ms. Christina Martin, director of curriculum and instruction.

The Children's School is committed to arts and music in its curriculum and in its work to create joyful classrooms. We also know that cultivating a love for music is part of creating lifelong learners.



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