An orchestra is a large group of musicians that play instruments together. The orchestra is divided into four groups: strings, brass, woodwind and percussion.
Brass

Most of the instruments in the brass family. Sounds are created by the musician pressing their lips up against the mouthpiece and blowing, creating a vibration.

Percussion

There are many percussion instruments. These can be shaken, tapped or knocked to make many different sounds. These instruments are great for making rhythms.
The string family is usually the largest in the orchestra. These instruments look alike but they each have their own pitch. To play these instruments, you need a bow, which is dragged across the strings to make sound.

The woodwind family is also quite strong in the orchestra. These instruments are long tubes, usually made of wood (or metal for the flutes) and the sound is made by blowing into the mouthpiece.
Conductor

The conductor is the boss. They stand at the front of the orchestra, making sure they musicians play together. Some conductors hold a stick called a baton which they use to guide the orchestra.

trumpet

A trumpet has three piston valves. When you blow into the mouthpiece, you press these valves down to make different sounds.
A trombone has a long slide that is pushed out or pulled in to play different notes. When the tube is pushed out long, a lower sound is made so when the tube is pulled in smaller, a higher sound is made.

The sound on these horns is made by the musician blowing into the mouthpiece and pressing on the three rotary valves. The musician also places their hand in the bell to help control the sound.
Tubas are really big instruments so the musician hugs them when they play them. The tuba has a very low but gentle sound. It takes a lot of air to make the sounds.

The cornet is very similar to the trumpet. The arrangement of the tubing on the cornet is different to that of a trumpet. It has more curves and loops making it shorter than the trumpet. It is played in the same way as the trumpet.
Clarinet

Clarinet made a smooth sound. They have a single reed which is attached to the mouthpiece. The sound is made by blowing on the mouthpiece and reed.

Oboe

At the start, the oboe plays the note ‘A’ and the rest of the orchestra has to make sure that their ‘A’ sounds exactly the same as the oboe. The oboe has a double reed made up of two thin pieces of cane that vibrate against each other when blown.
The flute was originally made from wood, but is now made from gold or silver. It is played by blowing across the hole in the mouthpiece. A flute is held sideways.

The bassoon has a double reed that sits on the end of a crook. It makes rather low sounds, though it can make a few high sounds as well.
The contra bassoon is bigger than the bassoon and makes an even lower sound. It also has a double reed and is sometimes known as a double bassoon.

The bass clarinet is larger than a clarinet and makes a very low sound. It is a single reed instrument made of wood.
A piccolo is exactly the same as a flute except that it has a much higher sound. It is usually smaller in size than the flute and is usually made of silver or wood.

The cor anglais is like an oboe only bigger. It makes a sad sound. Another name for the cor anglais is the English horn. It has a bent metal crook to which the double reed is attached.
The saxophone is a woodwind instrument that is made of brass. It also has a reed that is attached to a mouthpiece.

The tenor saxophone is a medium-sized instrument. It is one of the two most common types of saxophones, the other being the alto. It is easy to distinguish by the bend in its neck near the mouthpiece. Many jazz musicians have been tenor saxophonists.
The baritone saxophone is one of the largest members of the saxophone family. It is commonly used in classical music, military bands, marching bands and jazz.

The bass flute is a woodwind instrument that has a tube around 146cm long. It has a ‘J’ shaped head joint which brings the hole within reach of the player. They can be easily drowned out by other instruments, so are usually only used in flute choirs.
The recorder is a woodwind instrument that has seven holes. Sound is produced by the musician blowing air into the mouthpiece and opening or closing off the holes. These days it is thought of as a child's instrument.

Bagpipes used enclosed reeds feed from a constant reservoir of air to produce sounds. The most popular are the Scottish Great Highland bagpipes, though they have been played for centuries throughout Europe, Turkey, the Caucasus and in Northern Africa.
The violin is known for ‘singing.’ It can make people feel sad or happy.

In the orchestra, the front violinist is the ‘leader’ of the group of violins. The sound comes out of the ‘f’-holes in the violin.

A double bass is an enormous instrument. They are about 180 cm tall and are very wide also. They have a very low sound.
The cello is like a big violin. It rests on the floor, so the musician needs to sit down to play them. A cello has a low sound and is still played with a bow like a violin.

Viola's look exactly like violins, except they are bigger. They are played the same way as violins. They have a lower sound than the violins.
The harp is a large string instrument which the strings are plucked to make the sounds. They were very popular during the Middles Ages and the Renaissance.

Pipe organs are commonly used in churches or cathedrals. They produce sound by driving pressurized air, or wind, through pipes that are selected via a keyboard. They have more or more keyboards that are played with the hands and a pedalboard which is played with the feet.
A music stand is used to hold sheet music in a position, allowing the musician to read it while performing. They can be made from wood, plastic or metal. Some are able to be folded down for easy transportation. Small stands, called a lyre, can be attached to the instrument itself. Conductors use large music stands to hold their scores.

A vibraphone can also be known as the vibraharp or the vibes. It is similar in appearance to the xylophone and glockenspiel. They are often used within jazz music or in a wind ensemble.
The piano (abbreviation of pianoforte) is played using a keyboard. It is widely used due to its versatility. Pianos are not portable and are often quite expensive. An acoustic piano usually has a wooden case, surrounding the soundboard and metal strings and a row of 36 black and 52 white keys.

The timpani or kettledrums, are part of the percussion family. They are a type of drum with a skin stretched over a large bowl that is traditionally made of copper. They are played by striking the skin or head with a timpani stick or timpani mallet.
The snare or side drum is a very popular percussion instrument. They can be used in orchestras, concert bands, marching bands, parades and more. They originated from the Tabor drum and have evolved into many different versions including the kit snare, marching snare and the piccolo snare.

A gong is a flat, circular metal disc which is hit with a mallet. It is a percussion instrument that originated in China. There are three broad types of gongs: suspended gongs – flat, circular discs; bossed gongs – raised centre boss and are often played horizontally; bowl gongs – bowl-shaped gongs that rest of cushions.
The marimba is a percussion instrument that consists of a set of wooden bars which are struck with mallets to make sounds. They can be used in solo performances, woodwind and brass ensembles, marimba concertos, jazz ensembles and orchestral compositions.

Chimes, also known as tubular bells, are part of the percussion family. Each bell is a metal tube which range in length.
Maracas are a percussion instrument that originated in Latin America. The musician holds them by their handles and shake them. They are usually played in pairs. Traditionally they were made from dried gourd or coconut shells filled with seeds or dried beans. Modern maracas can also be made from leather, wood or plastic.

A xylophone is a percussion instrument that consists of wooden bars which are struck by mallets to produce sound.
Bongos are an Afro-Cuban percussion instrument. They consist of a pair of small open bottomed drums of different sizes. They are instruments that create sound by a vibration of a stretched skin or membrane.

A tambourine is a percussion instrument that consists of a frame with pairs of small metal jingles, called ‘zils’. The frame is usually made from wood or plastic. Commonly tambourines are circular and may or may not have a skin or head.
A triangle is a percussion instrument that is usually made from steel. It is a bar of metal that has been bent into a triangular shape. This instrument is usually held by a loop of thread or wire at the top curve.

A bass drum is a large percussion instrument that can vary in size. They are the largest drum of the orchestra. They can also be used on drum kits and are struck with a beater that is attached or in marching bands.
Cymbals are thin, round plates that are usually hit together to produce sound. They are a percussion instrument that are used in many ensembles such as orchestras, percussion ensembles, jazz bands, heavy metal bands and marching groups.