Become River: Creating Soundscapes

Learn more about John Luther Adam's piece, "*Become River*" on The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra's Concert Library.
https://content.thespco.org/music/compositions/become-river-john-luther-adams/

Check out the composer notes on the SPCO Concert Library page for the piece and find out Adam's motivation for composing the piece.

Research the word **delta** and make a guess for what the piece will sound like as the composer intended it to be a partner work to his later piece *Become Ocean*. What do you think will change in the **texture** of the piece as it moves through **river** and **delta** to **ocean**?

LABEL the diagram below to make connections to the music:

LABEL THE FOLLOWING:

Tributaries/Streams

River

Delta

Ocean
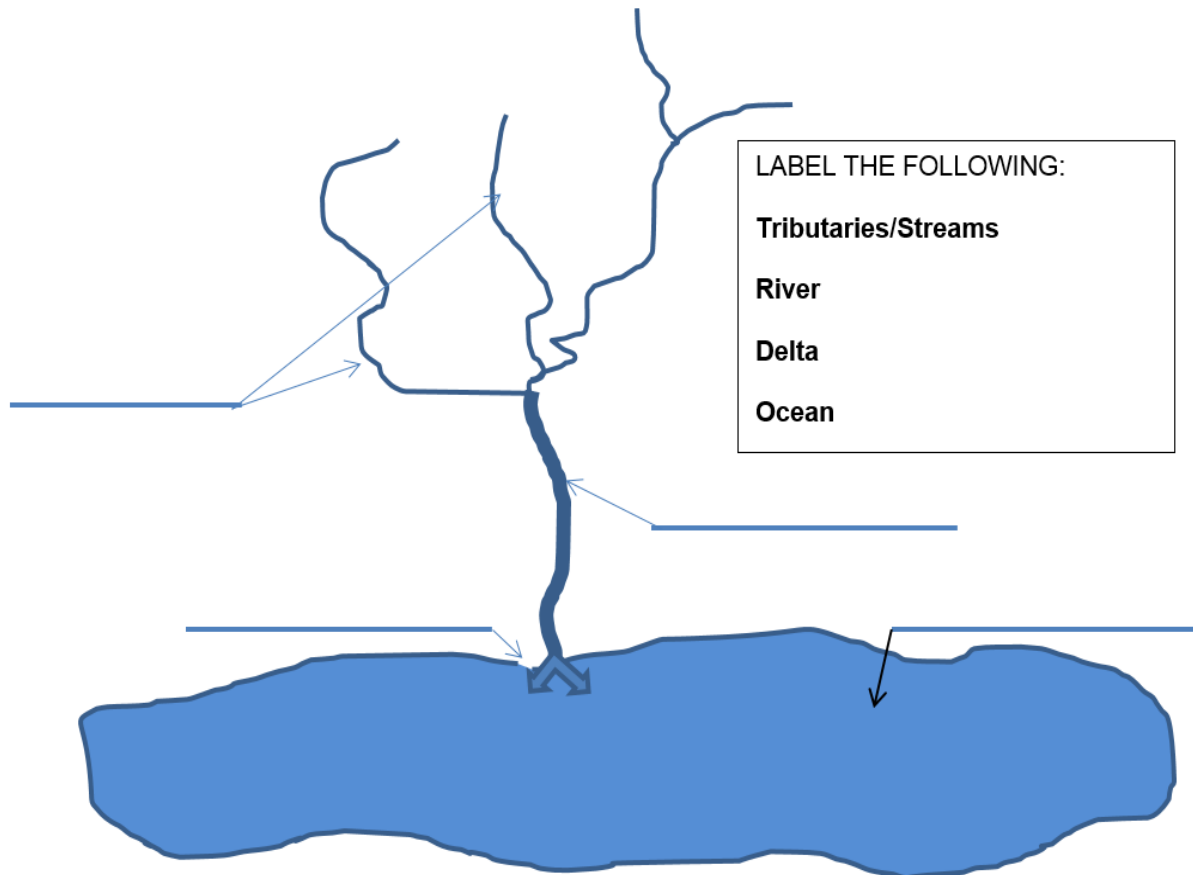
Share your answer with a partner and get set up to hear "Become River".

LISTEN ACTIVELY to *Become River* on The SPCO Concert Library and use the below listening guide to **engage** further:

Listen from the beginning to 1:55

What instruments do you hear? _____

Circle the best choice for what you hear in this section:

      THICK texture   or   THIN texture

Listen to 5:30 to 7:00

Listen for the variety of parts playing different pitches. These combine to form harmony and layer onto one another. How many parts do you hear playing during this section? Count the different instruments playing and record the number: _____ parts

Listen to 8:00 to 9:15

Notice that the high bell-like sounds have dropped out. How does this change what you hear? How does it change the mood of the piece?

Listen to 15:15 to the end

Describe what you hear in this section of "Become River". Do you like the sound? Does it change the picture in your mind?

What changes about the shape of the pitches you hear throughout the piece? Circle your answer: Stay the same   Pitches get higher   Pitches get lower

Composers often use imagery to write music. Knowing that this piece is about a river, what would you imagine "Become Ocean" would sound like?

John Luther Adams wrote "Beyond River" and "Beyond Ocean" as a tribute to his love for nature. What do you love to do? Brainstorm instruments you'd use in your own tribute piece of music. How would your piece sound?

THE SAINT PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA