

# American Orchestra Performs in North Korea

VOA at: <http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/2008-02-29-voa1.cfm>



- What is a Philharmonic Orchestra?
- Have you ever taken part in a performance? What kind (drama, dance)?
- Where is North Korea? Who is the leader there?
- What is diplomacy? How is the orchestra trying to help with diplomacy?
- What do you know about nuclear energy/weapons?

## Section A: Vocabulary

Match the words to their meanings. Write the letter of the correct answer in the space below.

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. _____ Perform   | (a) type; form; kind                         |
| 2. _____ Direct    | (b) energy production through fission/fusion |
| 3. _____ Symphony  | (c) help; support                            |
| 4. _____ Communist | (d) authorized; allowed                      |
| 5. _____ Anthem    | (e) unfriendly                               |
| 6. _____ Version   | (f) do; carry out                            |
| 7. _____ Official  | (g) Collectivist; socialist                  |
| 8. _____ Hostile   | (h) national song                            |
| 9. _____ Nuclear   | (i) guide; lead                              |
| 10. _____ Aid      | (j) piece of music                           |

## Section B: Phrasal Verbs

One of the following phrasal verbs means to **improve**. Can you guess which one?

- (a) get better    (b) get over    (c) get out of    (d) get on

Now try to put the above phrasal verbs into the sentences below. You will need to think about what the phrasal verb means, and how it fits within the sentence. Good luck...

1. The bus stopped so that I could \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I don't want to go to the party. I need to think of a way to \_\_\_\_\_ it.
3. John \_\_\_\_\_ here and clean that mess.
4. My test scores have been really low. I hope that they will \_\_\_\_\_ soon.

## Section C: Transcript

Read along as you listen to the VOA report.

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- 1 The New York Philharmonic orchestra **performed** in North Korea's capital, Pyongyang, Music director Lorin Maazel directs the New York Philharmonic's performance in Pyongyang, North Korea. Music director Lorin Maazel **directs** the New York Philharmonic's performance in Pyongyang, North Korea this week. It was the first performance by an American **symphony** orchestra in the **communist** state. More than one hundred performers made the trip to Pyongyang, led by the Philharmonic's musical director, Lorin Maazel. The **historic** event was broadcast live on television and radio in North Korea. It can also be seen on the Internet.
  - 2 More than one thousand North Koreans attended the concert Tuesday night. North Korean leader Kim Jong Il did not attend. However, other top North Korean officials did.
  - 3 The New York City orchestra performed the North Korean national song and America's national **anthem**, "The Star-Spangled Banner." The musicians played famous music, including Antonin Dvorak's "New World Symphony" and George Gershwin's "An American in Paris." The performance ended with a **version** of "Arirang," a Korean folk song that is considered an **unofficial** national anthem in both North and South Korea.
- (MUSIC)
- 4 North Korea's government usually bans music that is not **approved** by officials. As a result, jazz, rock and most Western classical music are not **permitted**.
  - 5 The North Korean government has always described the United States as a **hostile** aggressor. But the American orchestra's visit was widely described as a form of musical diplomacy. Some Americans hoped the friendly cultural exchange will help improve relations between the United States and North Korea.

- 6 South Korea's Foreign Ministry praised the event as a chance to **improve** understanding and trust between North Korea and the United States. South Korean **experts** say much has changed in North Korea since leaders from the North and South met in two thousand. They say expanded contacts have increased the flow of information about the rest of the world into North Korea.
- 7 Many experts say the country is not as **disconnected** as it once was. They say events like the Philharmonic performance make important gains in opening North Korea even further.
- 8 However, the White House spokeswoman said the performance neither hurt nor helped American diplomatic efforts. She said relations between the two countries will only improve when North Korea provides information about its **nuclear** programs. It was supposed to provide such information about two months ago to the United States, South Korea, Japan, China and Russia. Those countries have promised **aid** and improved diplomatic relations if North Korea ends all of its nuclear programs.

And that's IN THE NEWS in VOA Special English, written by Brianna Blake. I'm Steve Ember.

(MUSIC: "An American in Paris")

### Section D: Discussion

Discuss the following questions with a partner.

#### Student A (ask Student B)

- Do you like classical music?
- What did the orchestra play? Why?
- How can this orchestra help improve relations between America and North Korea?

#### Student B (ask Student A)

- What kinds of music do you like?
- What kinds of music are banned in North Korea? Why?
- What needs to happen before relations improve?