A conductor keeps an orchestra, band, or choir together. The conductor must make sure that each member of the ensemble is playing at the same time with each other and that no one overshadows any of the other musicians. With one hand, the conductor uses a baton to indicate the number of beats and the tempo. With the other hand, the conductor gives the musicians musical cues and tells them how the music should be played (loud, soft, slow, fast, accented, smooth, choppy).

Ethel Smyth often conducted her own compositions which allowed her to get the exact sound she wanted when people were playing or singing her pieces. Today we are all going to become conductors!

To start, count out loud to each signature, stressing the first note of each measure to get the feel of counting in 2, 3, and 4. For example, when counting aloud to your 3/4 time signature, you might notice that 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3 sounds like a waltz. That's because waltzes are written in 3/4 time! Before conducting in the air, count aloud and use your finger to trace each conducting pattern on the sheet. Now it is time to conduct!