

# The Dunning-Kruger Effect

Saarthak Shankavaram

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# Instrumentation

Bell (backstage)

Piano (backstage)

Violin 1s

Violin 2s

Violas

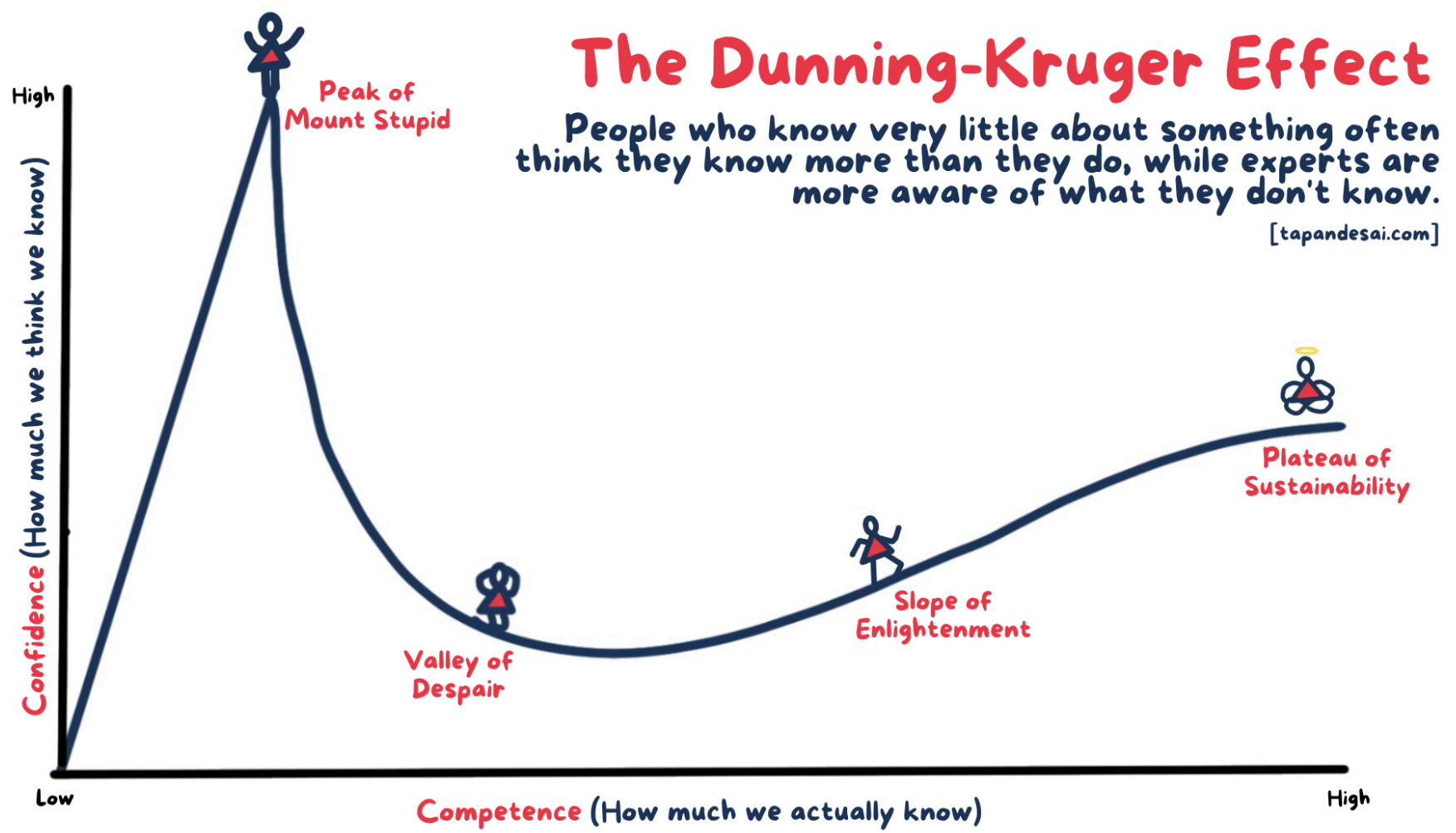
Cellos

Basses

# Programme Note

*The Dunning-Kruger Effect* was commissioned by AJ Gonzales for the Prospect High School Chamber Orchestra. The piece is structured around and based on the Dunning-Kruger effect, a phenomenon observed by David Dunning and Justin Kruger. The Dunning-Kruger effect proposes that individuals with lower competence tend to overestimate their abilities. This is popularly generalised to say that people with lower competence overestimate their abilities and people with higher competence underestimate their abilities. In *The Dunning-Kruger Effect*, the concertmaster is depicted as the victim of the Dunning-Kruger effect. In the beginning, “The Greater Unknown” depicts confusion and a lack of any knowledge. “The Peak of Mount Stupid” is framed as a conversation between the concertmaster, an ignorant individual with a lot of confidence, and other principals, the experienced and knowledgeable folk. The concertmaster is humiliated and slips into “The Valley of Despair”. They are plunged into a dark and anxious atmosphere as they cry out and bring back images of “The Greater Unknown”. However, the solo bass brings stability to the concertmaster, bringing the music to its final chapter, “The Plateau of Sustainability”. The bell serves as a wake-up call to the concertmaster while an off-stage piano soloist brings back motifs from “The Peak of Mount Stupid”, reminding the concertmaster of their confidence. The rest of the orchestra, including the conductor, leaves the stage, as the concertmaster is now left on stage on their own.

Duration: ~9’30”



-Tapan Desai, <https://tapandesai.com/dunning-kruger-effect-theranos/>

# Performance Notes:

Orchestra setup: Conductor's left-right: Violin 1s, Violas, Cellos, Violin 2s. Basses behind the Violas and Cellos.

Measure 87-88, 93-94: The figures in the boxes should be repeated individually until the conductor gives the cue to move on to the next measures. The duration of these figures should be approximate to the duration given.

The Plateau of Sustainability: This section will see the entire orchestra, except for the concertmaster, gradually leave. The order is as follows: Once the concertmaster begins playing the first note of the section, the conductor and two musicians will leave their seats/positions. The conductor will go off-stage. One musician will go to the piano backstage and the other will go to the bell. Throughout this time, the strings should continue their circular bowing. The bell will then ring for the first time and the piano cadenza will begin. Every time the bell rings, a group of musicians (who leaves is at the conductor's discretion) will stop their circular bowing and leave the stage. The bell will ring a total of 9 times by the time all musicians, except the concertmaster, should be off the stage. There should be a total of 7 groups, with the last group consisting of only the second chair first violinist. The order of musicians leaving the stage should be from the back of the sections to the front. Once musicians have left the stage (with their instruments), they will play the note as prescribed in measure 175 off-stage very softly.

# The Dunning-Kruger Effect

dedicated to the Prospect Chamber Orchestra and AJ Gonzales

Saarthak Shankavaram

## Adagio conversazionale

"The Greater Unknown"

*tremolo sul tasto*  
*gliss.*

( $\langle \rangle$ ) ad lib. up to *pp*

*tremolo sul tasto*  
*gliss.*

( $\langle \rangle$ ) ad lib. up to *pp*

*tremolo sul tasto*  
*gliss.*

( $\langle \rangle$ ) ad lib. up to *pp*

*tremolo sul tasto*

( $\langle \rangle$ ) ad lib. up to *pp*

*tremolo sul tasto*  
*gliss.*

( $\langle \rangle$ ) ad lib. up to *pp*

*tremolo sul tasto*  
*gliss.*

( $\langle \rangle$ ) ad lib. up to *pp*

*tremolo sul tasto*  
*gliss.*

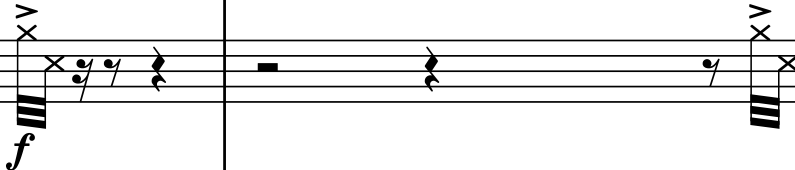
( $\langle \rangle$ ) ad lib. up to *pp*

*tremolo sul tasto*

*ppp*

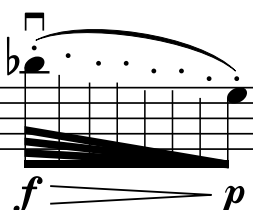
( $\langle \rangle$ ) ad lib. up to *pp*

solo  
behind bridge



pizz.

*f*



*f* ————— *p*

Violins 1

Violins 2

Violas

Violoncellos

Contrabasses

6 *b b b* *88* *b b b* *88* *b b b* *88*

Vlins. 1 (<>) ad lib. up to *p*

Vlins. 2 (<>) ad lib. up to *p*

Vlas. tutti div. sul pont. *sfz* *ppp*

Vcs. *f* *pp* *ff* *pizz.*

Cbs. *f* *p* *f*

9 arbitrarily placed accents—out of context

Vlins. 1 (<>) ad lib. up to *mp*

Vlins. 2 (<>) ad lib. up to *mp*

Vlas. sempre scratchy *sfz* annoyed solo *f* tutti non div. *sfz*

Vcs. gradually more snap *p* *ff* *sfz*

Cbs. *fff* slap *p* *ff* arco separate *p* *f* *f* *gliss.*

12 *b b b* *88* *b b b* *88* *b b b* *88*

Vlins. 1 (<>) ad lib. up to *mf*

Vlins. 2 (<>) ad lib. up to *mf*

Vlas. solo *sfz* tutti non div. *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Vcs. non div. *ff* *pizz.* non div. *p* *ff* *pp* *pizz.* *slap*

Cbs. *ff* *p* *f* *fff*



20

Vlns. 1

*ff* *fffz*

Vcs.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 20 and 21. The first violin part (Vlns. 1) features a triplet of eighth notes in measure 20, followed by a series of sixteenth-note patterns with dynamic markings of *ff* and *fffz*. The second violin part (Vlns. 2) has a melodic line with five-measure slurs. The cello part (Vcs.) is mostly silent, indicated by a bar line.

21

Vlns. 1

*pp* *ff* *fffz* *pp*

Vcs.

*n*  
2nd Chair solo

Detailed description: This system covers measures 21 and 22. The first violin part (Vlns. 1) continues with melodic lines and dynamic markings of *pp*, *ff*, *fffz*, and *pp*. The second violin part (Vlns. 2) has a melodic line with five-measure slurs. The cello part (Vcs.) has a solo marked with a fermata and the instruction *n* 2nd Chair solo. The system ends with a 3/4 time signature change.

**Allegro pomposa**  
"The Peak of Mount Stupid"

tutti  
div.

23

Vlns. 1

*ff* *div.* *sim.* *unis.*

Vlns. 2

*ff* *div.* *sim.*

Vlas.

*ff* *div.* *sim.*

Vcs.

*ff* *sim.*

Cbs.

*ff* *sim.*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 23 through 28. It features a tutti section with *div.* (divisi) and *sim.* (simili) markings. The first violin part (Vlns. 1) has a melodic line with dynamic markings of *ff* and *unis.* (unison). The second violin part (Vlns. 2) has a melodic line with dynamic markings of *ff* and *sim.* The viola part (Vlas.) has a melodic line with dynamic markings of *ff* and *sim.* The cello part (Vcs.) has a melodic line with dynamic markings of *ff* and *sim.* The double bass part (Cbs.) has a melodic line with dynamic markings of *ff* and *sim.*

**Poco Meno Mosso**

29

Vlns. 1

*p*

Vlns. 2

*p* pizz.

Vlas.

*p*

Vcs.

*p* *solo* *f*

Cbs.

*p* pizz.

Detailed description: This system covers measures 29 through 32. The tempo is *Poco Meno Mosso*. The first violin part (Vlns. 1) has a melodic line with dynamic marking of *p*. The second violin part (Vlns. 2) has a melodic line with dynamic marking of *p* and *pizz.* (pizzicato). The viola part (Vlas.) has a melodic line with dynamic marking of *p*. The cello part (Vcs.) has a melodic line with dynamic markings of *p*, *solo*, and *f*. The double bass part (Cbs.) has a melodic line with dynamic marking of *p* and *pizz.*

**A**  
Allegro pomposa

33

Vlns. 1

Vlns. 2

Vlas.

Vcs.

Cbs.

*f* arco

*f* arco

*f* tutti

*f* arco

*f*

**Poco Meno Mosso**

**B** Allegro pomposa

36

Vlns. 1

Vlns. 2

Vlas.

Vcs.

Cbs.

*f* confidently

solo

gli altri, div a3

*p* pizz.

*p* pizz.

*p* pizz.

*ff* slap

*p*

*ff*

*f*

*f* tutti

*f* arco

*f* arco

*f* arco

**Poco Meno Mosso**

42

Vlns. 1

Vlns. 2

Vlas.

Vcs.

Cbs.

*p* pizz.

*p* pizz.

*p*

*f* solo

*p* pizz.

*p*

*f*

*p*

*p*



*Precipitando*

66

Vlns. 1

Vlns. 2

Vlas.

Vcs.

Cbs.

72

Vlns. 1

Vlns. 2

Vlas.

Vcs.

Cbs.

notes unclear

8

**Grave**  
"The Valley of Despair"

----- ≈ 13 sec -----  
pressure—very little bow

79

scratch, indeterminate high note

ord.

Vlns. 1

*fff* *n* *fff* *n* *p* *n*

pressure—very little bow

Vlns. 2

scratch, indeterminate high note

ord.

*fff* *n* *fff* *n* *p* *n*

Vlas.

sempre senza vib.

*n* *fff* *n* *fff* *ppp* *fff*

Vcs.

*fff* pizz.

arco sempre senza vib.

*n* *fff* *n* *fff* *ppp* *fff*

Cbs.

*n* *fff* *n* *fff* *ppp* *fff*

----- ≈ 17 sec -----

90

Vlns. 1

*fff* *ppp* *fff* *n*

Vlns. 2

*fff* *ppp* drop bow *fff* *n*

Vlas.

*n* *f* drop bow *n* *fff*

Vcs.

*n* *f* drop bow *n* *fff*

Cbs.

*n* *f* drop bow *n* *fff*

99 **E** solo, cadenza, sul g

Vlins. 1 *f* struggling, insecure

Vlas. *sempre ppp*

Vcs. *sempre ppp*

Cbs. *sempre ppp*

106

Vlins. 1 *ff* *pp*

Vlins. 2 *ff* pizz.

Vlas. *sffz*

Vcs.

Cbs.

110

Vlins. 1 *fff* *pp*

Vlas.

Vcs.

Cbs.

111

Vlins. 1 *ff* *sffz*

Vlas.

Vcs.

Cbs.



130 (lll) -----

Vlins. 1

Vlins. 2

Vlas.

Vcs.

Cbs.

*pp*

*ppp*

**Very freely**  
 "The Plateau of Sustainability"  
 backstage

134

Cme.

*f dim. al fine*

Pno.

*p*  
backstage

solo

Vlins. 1

*ppp*

lll til leaving

Vlins. 2

*(ppp)*

lll til leaving

Vlas.

*(ppp)*

lll til leaving

Vcs.

*(ppp)*

lll til leaving

Cbs.

pizz.

*mf*

141

Cme.

(dim. al fine)

Pno.

*p*

Vlins. 1

Vlins. 2

Vlas.

Vcs.

148

Cme.

(dim. al fine)

(dim. al fine)

Pno.

*f*

*p*

Vlins. 1

Vlins. 2

Vlas.

Vcs.

156

Cme.

*p* *(dim. al fine)*

Pno.

Vlms. 1

Vlms. 2

Vlas.

Vcs.

161

Cme.

*mf* *(dim. al fine)* *(dim. al fine)*

Pno.

Vlms. 1

Vlms. 2

Vlas.

Vcs.

169

Cme.

(dim. al fine) *pp*

Pno.

*p* *pp*

Vlms. 1

off-stage

Vlms. 2

off-stage

Vlas.

off-stage

Vcs.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 169-174. The Cme. part (measures 169-174) has a melodic line with a dynamic of *pp* and a marking of *(dim. al fine)*. The Pno. part (measures 169-174) has a complex texture with chords and a bass line, marked with *p* and *pp*. The Vlms. 1 part (measures 169-174) has a melodic line with a 'off-stage' section. The Vlms. 2 part (measures 169-174) has a melodic line with a 'off-stage' section. The Vlas. part (measures 169-174) has a melodic line with a 'off-stage' section. The Vcs. part (measures 169-174) has a bass line with a 'off-stage' section.