

ACTIVITY PAGES

Find Music Everywhere (Art & Construction)

Make a musical instrument out of objects you see everyday!

This is really an exercise in observation, imagination, and resourcefulness.

First have your students look carefully around them at home, in the classroom, wherever they go. Have them listen carefully to the sounds that they hear from everyday objects, such as the clinking of silverware at dinnertime, the sound of their shoes on the pavement, the wind blowing through the trees. Ask them to come back with a list of three or more sounds that they noticed, and what musical qualities they noticed in those sounds.



Have each child bring in two objects that are NOT specifically musical instruments, and have them explore the sounds that they can make with the objects. Help them open their ears to the rhythmic and melodic qualities of the objects and find ways to “play” the object instruments that they would have never thought to before.

Next, ask them to think of a familiar song and try to play it with their found objects. Give them some time to practice, and then have each show the class.

Students can then pick a partner or small group, and blend the sounds of their instruments together. Try to pair them so that the sounds the objects make are diverse, some rhythmic and some melodic, like a band.

Have the students individually decorate their objects, practice their own unique object instrument, and then perform familiar songs together in their pairs or small groups. For the older grades, ask them to create their own compositions or songs! Have a recital and invite your friends or family members. The power to make musical instruments belongs to everyone!

This exercise shows how resourceful human beings can be, such as the South Africans who created Gumbo dance, or early African Americans who used their bodies to play hambone and others who utilized items such as washboards and spoons to make music! Each culture uses what materials and objects are plentiful in order to create musical expression. Imagine what new instruments created today, may be commonplace 100 years from now!

Online: www.worldartswest.org/plm/guide/activitypages/artconstruct/findmusic.shtm