

Junk Band Lesson Plan

Teacher: Bethany Kirby		Year: 3-6	
Subject: Music Theme: Creating and performing as a junk band	Date: Time:	No. of children in class:	Notes:
<p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can play junk percussion instruments in a variety of different ways, and listen to and discuss the different sounds which they produce. • I can invent a short rhythm on a junk percussion instrument and repeat it with accuracy and control • I can play as part of a junk band ensemble, maintaining a steady rhythm on my junk percussion instrument and following directions from the conductor. 			
<p>Vocabulary: Junk band, percussion, ways of playing (beat, tap, scrape, shake, slide), pitch, volume, timbre, rhythm, layers, pulse/beat, conductor.</p>			
<p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many different ways can you think of to play the different pieces of junk percussion? • What rhythm can you invent to play on a particular junk percussion instrument, and how are you going to play out your rhythm (e.g. beating, tapping, scraping, a combination)? • How as a group can you make your performance as a junk band successful? 			
<p>Resources:</p> <p><u>Junk percussion instruments:</u> these can consist of all sorts of junk that you might find around your house or school or be able to source locally. See the Historyworks junk band webpage for ideas on how to get hold of junk items: http://www.creatingmycambridge.com/songs-creative/resources/how-to-make-a-junk-band/</p> <p>You can also make your own easy percussion instruments, e.g. visit this page to learn how to make a simple shaker: http://www.creatingmycambridge.com/songs-creative/resources/how-to-make-a-shaker/</p> <p>Ensure that all instruments and beaters are safe to use – wash them, sand down any sharp edges and cover splintered ends or other hazardous areas with tape.</p> <p><u>Before you begin the lesson:</u> split the junk instruments which you have collected into three sets, grouping together those with roughly similar properties. For example, you could have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1: instruments that can be beaten with sticks to create a bass sound (e.g. dustbins & lids, large plastic tubs etc. with plastic tubes or sticks for beaters); • Group 2: instruments that can be tapped with hands or sticks to create a higher-pitched sound (e.g. metal biscuit tins, tin foil plates/cartons, fizzy pop bottles, pieces of metal piping etc. with plastic, metal or wooden sticks for beaters); • Group 3: instruments that can be scraped or shaken (e.g. home-made shakers, corrugated plastic tubes etc. with plastic sticks as scrapers). 			

Learning Activities

Starter:

Explain that today we will be creating our own junk band out of pieces of junk percussion. Ask: What do you think we could use to create our junk band? Show children a clip of a junk percussion performance eg. From Stomp the Musical:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKa-pi577n0>

TEACHING:

Activity 1 (25-30 minutes)

- **Divide the children into three groups and assign them each to a group of instruments** (see 'Resources' above for examples of how to group together your junk band instruments). If space allows, spread the groups out so the sounds from one group don't distract another (eg. Hall, classroom, outside). Ensure there is at least one adult with each group if possible (alternatively you can split the group in two and use two groups of instruments, then swap, or do the activity as a whole class without rotating if only one room is available).
- **Encourage the children to be creative in thinking about how to make sounds from the junk percussion instruments in front of them.** Allow a few minutes for children to explore the instruments freely – this will be noisy!!
- **Ask individual children to demonstrate one way which they have identified of playing a piece of junk.** Other children in the group to copy each way of playing in turn. Different ways of playing may include:
 - beating with beaters or palms of hands;
 - tapping with sticks or fingertips;
 - scraping with sticks or fingertips;
 - shaking (for instruments which rattle, e.g. home-made shakers);
 - sliding (e.g. dustbins or tubs across a smooth floor).

Different parts of the instrument can be played, e.g. the middle, the rim and the lid of an upturned dustbin, or two sticks or beaters hit against each other, or the beater or instrument hit against the floor. Suggest any ways of playing which children have not thought of.

- **Encourage discussion of how the different instruments sound when played in different ways.** Introduce/remind them of musical words to describe and compare the sounds:
 - Pitch: is one sound higher-pitched or lower-pitched than another?
 - Volume: is one sound louder or quieter than another?
 - Timbre: do the sounds have different qualities or colours? Can you find words to describe these? (e.g. warm, harsh, tinny, resonant etc.)
- **Now ask the children to invent a simple 4-beat rhythm on their junk percussion instrument.** See Activity 4 below for examples. Encourage them to keep it simple! This will mean deciding on just one or two of the different ways of playing their instrument which they identified.
- **Ask individual children to play their rhythm to the group.** Other children in the group to copy each rhythm in turn. Make a note of any rhythms which are particularly effective – these may be useful later!

Activities 2 & 3 (50-60 mins)

- **Each group of children rotates to a new set of junk percussion instruments. Repeat Activity 1 for each group with the different instruments.**
- Each group of children then rotates to the final group of instruments and repeats the activity a final time.

N.B. If time, space or adult assistance is short, you can explore all the different types of junk percussion together in one group; children may not get a chance to try every type of instrument in this case.

Activity 4 (up to 1 hour)

- Now the children have had a chance to explore the different junk percussion instruments, to experiment with ways of playing and discuss the sounds created, and to invent their own rhythms, **it is time to form your junk band!**
- Assign each of the 3 groups of children to one of the sets of instruments each.
- **Organise the children and instruments into a horseshoe shape**, with one group on each side and one in the middle.
- **Teach each group a 4-beat rhythm to play on their instruments.** This could be a rhythm which one of the children invented earlier (see Activity 1), or you can decide in advance on your own rhythms to use. Any three 4-beat rhythms are likely to fit together just fine!

EXAMPLE 1

Beating instruments, e.g. dustbins

1 hit [rest] 3 tap 4 tap

Tapping instruments, e.g. biscuit tins

plink plink plink plink plink

Scraping and shaking instruments, e.g. corrugated tubes

1 shake 2 shake 3 shake 4 [rest]

EXAMPLE 2

Beating instruments, e.g. dustbins

1 hit 2 tap tap 3 hit 4 tap tap

Tapping instruments, e.g. biscuit tins

plink plink plink plink plink plink

Scraping and shaking instruments, e.g. corrugated tubes

1 tap 2 tap 3 scrape scrape 4 scrape

In each of the examples above, the second rhythm is syncopated. This adds interest to the layered rhythms, and is a good challenge for more musically able

children. However, it can be replaced with a simpler rhythm if required.

- Once each group of players is confident with their rhythm, **try layering the rhythms together one at a time**. Start with the beating instruments, which will provide a pulse for the other rhythms to fit over.
- **Now explain that you are the 'conductor' of the band and that they need to watch you for directions**. Introduce and practise different directions in turn and demonstrate the hand symbol you will use for each one, e.g.:
 - Stop playing for 4 beats, then start again (clenched fist; count down with fingers on one hand to indicate when the 'stop' will happen);
 - Play just on the first beat of the bar (hold first finger of one hand up; count down with fingers on other hand to indicate when this will happen, and then to indicate how many more times to repeat it before reverting back to the usual rhythms);
 - One group to stop playing while others continue (move to one group and snap your hands shut);
 - One group to start playing again (point or wave at the group);
 - End of the piece (two clenched fists; count down with fingers to indicate when it will happen)
- Practise playing a piece as a junk band, using directions as above to add variation.
- Perform the piece to family / another class / in assembly!

TA ROLE: lead one of the three groups for Activities 1-3. During whole group activities, assist less able children. Help to keep the beat during whole group playing/performance, e.g. by playing a loud instrument (rubber drum or dustbin) on the first beat of each bar.

<p>Differentiation: Children will work in 3 groups for most of the session. More able children can be encouraged to invent/play more complicated rhythms, and to assist less confident children.</p>	<p>Support: Play very simple 4-beat rhythms with assistance if struggling.</p>	<p>Core: Start with just one or two different ways of playing each instrument, and with very simple 4-beat rhythms.</p>	<p>Extension: Introduce more complicated rhythms and/or ways of playing as children grow in confidence. More able/confident children can take the turn of 'conductor' of the band.</p>
<p>Success Criteria: I can keep a steady pulse whilst playing my 4 beat rhythm. I can display control and accuracy when repeating my 4 beat rhythm. I can watch the conductor and follow their directions. I can listen to the other sections of the band and adjust my volume as needed.</p>		<p>Assessment Opportunities: - Individual sharing of ideas for ways to play the junk percussion instruments. - Individual sharing of 4-beat rhythms on the junk instruments. - Group performance as junk band. - Recording of performance on audio recorder/video recorder/tablet</p>	