



Lesson: Composing with Found Objects

OVERVIEW

Students will use found objects to compose an original piece of music.

LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

1. Discover the various sounds that can be produced from a found object.
2. Combine rhythmic sounds produced from the found object to create an original percussion piece.
3. Write rhythmic notation using traditional notation.

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- Found objects (provided by teacher or brought from home)
- [Rhythm Manuscript Paper](#) or access to a computer notation program.
- Handout of the reading [Composing with Found Objects](#)
- Audio recording of Bottle Trio - found in the Audio Examples folder within the Lessons for Creating Music folder of this curriculum.

PROCESS

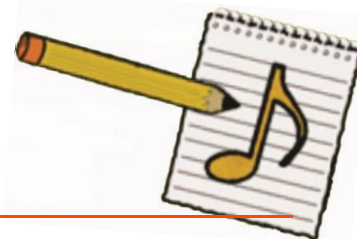
1. Read the [Composing with Found Objects](#) handout as a class.
2. Ask students to select a found object and experiment with the various sounds that can be produced.
3. Once students understand the sonic capabilities of their object, ask them to figure out how to best describe how the sounds are to be produced to performers.
4. Group students in pairs or trios.
5. Have students share their objects with their group and begin to improvise together.
6. Time to compose – working together, students create short trios or duets for their objects.
7. Using traditional musical notation, have students document the rhythms each player is to perform.
8. Rehearse and perform the pieces.

EXTENTIONS

Consider adding sounds from nature or recordings of things making their own normal sounds (e.g. a blender spinning, clothes tumbling in a dryer, etc.)

Once students are successful with one found object, ask them to write a solo that they can perform with several found objects.

Composing with Found Objects



You are going to compose an original rhythmic piece by experimenting with sounds that can be created using found objects.

The first step is to select an object and then to determine the variety of sounds that can be created it. Try various ways of producing sounds with your object: hitting it, blowing on it, rubbing or shaking it... What happens when you vocalize on/near/through your object?

How many different sounds can you create with your found object? Think about how you can notate those sounds.

Once you understand the sonic capabilities of your object, it's time for you to improvise and experiment with rhythmic patterns. What kinds of rhythms sound interesting?

Gather in groups of two or three. Share your found object with your group so that you all understand the sounds the object can create. Try to imagine how your found objects will sound when played together. Improvise some rhythms together. Then, using the [Rhythm Manuscript Paper](#) or a music notation program, work together to create a score and individual parts.

Consider using mostly rhythmic sounds. Be careful not to have the sounds get too cluttered. You may want to combine longer or slower moving sounds with faster, more active sounds.

Below is the sample score of a 4-measure rhythmic pattern using both empty bottle and bottle filled with water. Use this as an example of how to set up a musical score and the types of information that needs to be provided to the performers of the parts.

Bottle Trio

Play with wooden spoon.

Part 1

Part 2

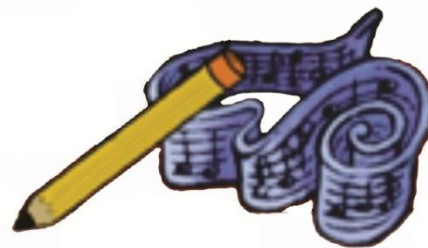
Part 3

Part 1: Use 3 bottles of the same size filled with different levels of water to create relative pitches from low to high.

Part 2: Use a small high pitch bottle. Should be the highest pitch.

Part 3: Use a larger bottle. Should be the lowest pitch.

Rhythm Manuscript Paper




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
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Remember to add a time signature and bar lines!


Part 1 


Part 2 


Part 3 

Part 1 

Part 2 

Part 3 

Part 1 

Part 2 

Part 3 