Unusual Musical Instruments 13 Players (MES0601)

A selection of interesting instruments from around the world which when played together can be quite entertaining! Enjoy exploring the different sounds.

Contents:

1. Boing Stick x 1
2. Maraca x 1
3. Egg Shaker x 2
4. Thunderer x 1
5. Painted Man Knocker x 1
6. Bamboo Guiro x 1
7. Bamboo Rainstick x 1
8. Shekere x 1
9. Bamboo Y Shaker x 1
10. Mini Croaking Frog Guiro x 1
11. Hand Drum x 1
12. Castanet Rattle x 1

Please note contents and designs may vary.

1. Boing Stick

From Bali, Indonesia. Also known as – bungkaka, bamboo buzzer

This Fair-Trade, handmade boing stick is made from a single length of decorated bamboo, and it produces a fantastic "boing" sound when tapped against a hand or surface. The instrument generates a sound from the slit between the two tongues when the instrument is struck. The sound can be altered by covering and uncovering the hole found on the bottom half of the instrument. As well as being an entertaining instrument, some people also believe it can be used to drive out evil spirits!

2. Maraca

From Indonesia.

This handcrafted Fair-Trade shaker, has been made with a polished coconut shell full of beads and mounted onto a turned wooden handle. Indonesia is the biggest exporter of coconuts in the world, so shells of coconuts are readily available. The maraca is a good example of how Indonesians make something worthwhile out of something that would otherwise be a waste product. Coconut shell is used because of its durability and strength.

3. Egg Shaker

Originating from Africa and popular in Latin American music, particularly samba.

A small hand-held egg-shaped percussion instrument filled with beads or seeds. Ideal for little hands and great for exploring rhythms and sounds.

4. Thunderer

From Bali, Indonesia. Also known as – thunder shaker, thunder tube, thunder drum

This handcrafted, Fair-Trade thunderer is decorated with a beautiful and colourful dot painting. The thunderer is played by holding the tube section and allowing the metal spring to dangle freely, the instrument is then gently shaken from side to side. This creates a fantastically realistic thunder sound. The more vigorously the instrument is shaken, the more of a booming thunderclap the player can produce. *NB- DO NOT pull the spring!*

5. Man Knocker

From Indonesia.

Made from natural materials and decorated with a detailed dot painting technique. This instrument makes a clear knocking sound as the head knocks between the arms on either side.

6. Bamboo Guiro

Often used in Cuban, Puerto Rican and other forms of Latin American music.

A lightweight, eco-friendly percussion instrument. Made from hollowed and ridged bamboo and played with a pua (stick scraper). It is played by rubbing/scraping the stick along the notches. Long and short strokes can be made to create different effects.

7. Bamboo Rainstick

From Chile, South America. Also known as a rainmaker, storm stick or waterfall shaker.

Made from a long tube of bamboo, filled with small pebbles or seeds. This instrument creates the sound of falling rain and is ideal for a sound effect instrument. It is believed that rainsticks were used by indigenous farming tribes in arid climates in the hope to bring rainfall for the crops.

8. Shekere

From Ghana.

This uniquely sounding Fair-Trade shekere is handmade and is made from a hollowed-out gourd with dozens of Job's tear beads. Every shekere is unique as the size of the gourd varies from season to season.

9. Bamboo Y Shaker

From Indonesia.

Made from bamboo with coconut discs suspended along a wire bar.

10. Mini Croaking Frog Guiro

From Thailand.

A Fair-Trade frog guiro handmade in Northern Thailand from acacia wood. Run the stick along the ridges on its back from rear to front to make deep croaking sounds or hit it on the head to make a 'pock' sound.

Explore further – (Share the Frog Guiro Origin and Process notes included with this guidance)

11. Hand Drum

From Bali, Indonesia. *Also known as - pellet drum, monkey drum*

This Fair-Trade hand drum is played by vertically placing the handle between the outstretched hands so that the head is above the thumbs. By rubbing the hands together, the drum rotates causing the attached beads to quickly strike each face. Hand drums are often used by street traders throughout Asia to attract the attention of potential customers!

12. Castanet Rattle

From Indonesia.

Polished coconut wood with hand-painted dot painting technique. The castanet rattle makes a loud crisp clapping/slapping noise.

Fair Trade

Fair Trade is a worldwide movement that aims to help producers in less economically developed countries, whether they be handicraft producers or farmers. The term Fair Trade means that producers receive a fair price for the goods they produce.

Each instrument included in this pack can be a way to teach and learn about the principles of Fair Trade. Teaching the principles of Fair Trade provides learning opportunities in many areas of learning, including PSED/PSHE, Understanding the World and Geography. The instruments have been sourced by Siesta, who have been a member of BAFTS (the British Association for Fair Trade Shops and Suppliers) for over 25 years and are also a BAFTS recognised Fair Trade importer.

Most of the suppliers of the instruments in this pack are small family businesses employing only a few people; Siesta tries to keep them in continuous work, enabling their businesses to grow. Nearly everything in this pack is handmade with materials being sustainably sourced, and traditional skills being kept alive.

Explore further – What are the 10 Principles of Fair Trade? How does Fair Trade help producers? Research the many organisations around the world, including Fairtrade Foundation, the British Association for Fair Trade Shops and Suppliers (BAFTS) and World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO).

The instruments in the unusual Musical Pack can be used in a variety of ways with children of different ages. They are perfect for creating discussions and making music.

- Create cross-curricular links and cover elements of the Music, Geography, Art and Design curriculum.
- Explore a range of different percussion instruments and find out where in the world they come from.
- Introduce the resources during whole class teaching and provide time for hands-on exploration in small groups.
- Group and sort the instruments according to the materials they are made from and how they are played e.g. shaken, plucked, tapped, scraped.
- Add the instruments to tabletop areas and promote independent investigation.

Ideas and suggestions

Here are some examples of ways you could use them.

1. Mystery Instrument

Introduce the instruments without naming or identifying them.

Give the pupils time to work together to guess what the instruments are called and how they can be played.

Encourage the pupils to identify what materials the instruments are made of.

2. Hands-On Instrument Exploration

Identify and name each of the instruments.

Explain the material the instruments are made from and give time for small groups to handle each instrument.

Watch videos to see how they are played and experiment to create different sounds.

3. Instrument Investigation

Encourage the pupils to look at elements of the instrument that can be adapted.

Talk about pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre and texture.

Encourage the pupils to discuss their preferences.

4. Music Challenge

Explore the instruments and identify those which make a specific sound.

Use the instruments to play and record 'special effects' noises.

Encourage the pupils to play the special sound effects alongside a story/picture book and perform to an audience.

5. Geography

Use a world map to name and locate Indonesia, where most of these instruments are made.

Research Indonesia. Think about the flag, culture, food, history and landmarks.

Create a fact file using the information gathered.

6. Art and Design

Encourage the pupils to design and make their own percussion instrument.

Are there readily available materials they could use?

Produce a 'how to play' document for other pupils to use.

Ask the pupils for ideas to rename the existing instruments – think creatively!

Explore Further Frog Guiro (Origin and Process Notes)

A Fair-Trade frog guiro handmade in Northern Thailand from acacia wood. Run the stick along the ridges on its back from rear to front to make deep croaking sounds or hit it on the head to make a 'pock' sound.

These frog guiros are produced in the mountainous countryside outside the city of Chiang Mai in Northen Thailand. As woodcarving is no longer a big enough source of income to do exclusively, many of the woodcarvers also farm Longan fruit, a small, sweet and juicy lychee-like fruit. With many producers working from their homes, traditional carving tools can be spotted amongst their everyday items.

These frog guiros are made from acacia wood, used because of its sustainability as a fast-growing tree. One particular business has grown from strength to strength over the years and the owner has now built a large factory right next to his house and is now able to employ a large staff of carvers and painters – a perfect example of the Fair-Trade way of working.

Firstly, the rough shape of each frog is carved out by hand before being carefully sanded down. The sawdust waste is then transported to be used as a base for growing mushrooms at a nearby farm! Next a drill is used to shape the central hole in the frog. Each frog is drilled and then given a quick tap on the head to see if it makes the desired *'thock'* sound. If it is not quite right, it gets another go under the drill. If it passes the test, then they are given a final sand down inside and are taken to the large drying kiln.

The kiln is almost entirely fired by leftover chunks of wood from the manufacturing of the frogs and has been installed with a top of the range alarm system in case the fire gets too hot. Once the frogs have all been fully dried, they are ready to be stained and painted. The painters use a mixture of techniques depending on the desired finish. Some use a paint gun to spray them whilst others require more detailed hand painting with brushes. After painting the frogs are given a final quality control check and are then packaged up for sending out.

Can you spot the giant frog in this photo?