

# Rhyming Land

## Opportunities for the children to explore music and sound:

### Activity 1: Name and Order

Learning the names of four common percussion instruments and ordering them to match a song

### Activity 2: Play by Colour

Exploring percussion and learning to follow start and stop signals

### Activity 3: Move to the Pulse

Clapping and moving fingers to match a steady pulse

## Resources

For this topic, you will need:

- enough percussion instruments, such as triangles, bells, shakers or tambourines, for all of the children to have a turn;
- one copy of traffic light cards (**red**, **orange**, **green**);
- a copy of *Each, Peach, Pear, Plum* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg; and
- an audio clip of the children's song Tommy Thumb (optional).

### Resource 1: Rhyming Land Chant

### Resource 2: Instruments Picture Cards

### Resource 3: Pulse Visual

## Activity 1: Name and Order

Introduce **Resource 1: Rhyming Land Chant** to the children. Sing one line at a time. Ask the children to sing the line back to you.

Ask the children if they can recall the names of any instruments mentioned in the song: bells, triangles, shakers or tambourines. Give them a box of percussion instruments that includes these four instruments. Ask the children to search the box to try to find the four instruments from the song.

To help the children to remember the names of the instruments, ask them to clap the number of syllables for each. Ask:

- Which instrument name has the least number of claps?
- Which two instrument names have the same number of claps?

Place the four instruments in front of you. Explain to the children that you would like them to sequence the instruments in different ways.

First, ask them to sequence the instruments from left to right according to the number of syllables each one has in its name: bells (1), shaker (2) triangle (3) and tambourine (3).

Then, ask them to sequence the instruments according to their order in the **Rhyming Land Chant**. Help them to do this by slowly singing the song again. Pause after the name of each instrument to give the children time to place it in the correct order. Sing the song another couple of times, pointing to the instruments as you sing their names.



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## Activity 2: Play By Colour

Tell the children that they are going to play some of these instruments. First, they must learn to follow some special signals. Show them the **red**, **orange** and **green** cards. Explain that these have the same meanings as traffic light colours.

- **Red** is for **STOP** – this means they should set the instrument down and not touch them;
- **Orange** is for **GET READY** – this means they should gently lift their instruments up, but not play them yet; and
- **Green** is for **GO** – this means they should play their instruments enthusiastically!

Explain what a conductor is. Remind them of the importance of watching you, their conductor. Tell them that when they are playing they must watch for when the cards change.

Practice this a few times with imaginary instruments. To do this, ask the children to choose their favourite out of the four instruments (bells, triangles, shakers and tambourines). Encourage them to pretend to play their instruments as you show the colour cards in different sequences. This will help the children to learn the importance of following the conductor's lead.

This also gives the children an opportunity to learn to play the instruments correctly. For example, as they practise with their pretend triangle make sure they are holding it correctly. The triangle is a particularly important instrument to teach, as many children do not realise they must hold it by the string. Model this and make sure they listen to the difference between the sounds made when you hold the triangle by the string and the when you hold the triangle itself. This is an important learning experience.

Once the children are ready and have had enough practice responding to the signals, swap their pretend instruments for real ones. Start by asking the class to form one group for each instrument, then give each group an instrument.

Using **Resource 2: Instruments Picture Cards** and the traffic light colour cards, ask each group to play their instrument and follow the conductor's signals.

Make sure the groups exchange instruments so that everyone has an opportunity to play each one.



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## Activity 3: Move To The Pulse

Read *Each, Peach, Pear, Plum* to the class. Draw the children's attention to Tom Thumb up in the tree, while you read out the line: Each Peach, Pear, Plum, I spy Tom Thumb. Ask the children if they already know the nursery rhyme of Tommy Thumb.

Sing the first verse. Teach the children the names of his other finger-friends too. Ask them to use all their fingers to clap along to an audio version of the song. You can find one online. Alternatively, ask them to use their percussion instruments to play along, following the traffic light signals.

Teach the class that the steady beat we clap or play along to is called a **Pulse**. Display **Resource 3: Pulse Visual**, if you feel this is suitable. Encourage them to find their own pulse. Talk to your class about a stethoscope. Tell them that a doctor might use it to find our pulse. Explain that just as we need a heartbeat, a piece of music needs a pulse.

Instead of clapping, ask the children to lift up their fingers one at a time to move to the pulse of each verse. Young children find this very difficult at the start. With regular practise, they will develop these important fine motor skills.

You may need to show them how to use their other fingers to hold back the fingers they don't need.

Tell the children that they are going to perform and play their instruments to accompany the **Rhyming Land Chant**. Ask the class to join the same groups as before. Ask two of the groups to find the pulse of the chant using finger movements. Ask the other groups to play the pulse on their percussion instruments. Make sure all the groups follow your traffic light signals so that they know when to stop, get ready and go.

Continue reading *Each, Peach, Pear, Plum* to find nursery rhyme characters that the children know already. Encourage the children to sing the rhymes and work out the pulse of each one, using body movements or percussion instruments.

