

musical
storyland

BBC Teach



The Baobab Tree

While watching the programme

Where in programme	Activities	Areas of musical learning
<p>Opening section - Instruments The instruments being played are: 1: The n'goni - a stringed instrument from West Africa; its body is made of wood or calabash and it is plucked. 2: The djembe - a drum from West Africa made from wood, animal skin and ropes. It is played with the hands 3: The calabash drum - half a gourd which is played by parts of the hand - palms, fingers and wrist. 4: The clarinet - a woodwind instrument. The clarinet is made from wood, plastic or resin, with a single reed on the mouth-piece and metal keys. It is blown. 5: The cello - a string instrument. The cello is made from wood with metal strings. It is bowed or plucked.</p>	<p>Foundation activities Can the children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeat the name of the instrument? Copy how the performer is holding and playing their instrument? Extension activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how each instrument is making its sound (blown/plucked with fingers/tapped/etc)? Describe the sounds the instruments make? Which instruments they most like the sound of and why? Advanced activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise and describe the materials the instruments are made from? Say something about how each instrument sounds after it has been introduced (eg is it playing loudly/quietly, slowly/quickly, funny/thoughtful/sad/etc)? </p>	<p>In this section of the programme the children will begin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discovering instruments and how they are held and played. Understanding how instruments make their sounds. Discovering the materials from which instruments are made. Thinking critically about what instruments sound like and which they prefer. Recognising difference between the instruments' sound.
<p>Throughout the programme</p>	<p>Children on screen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage your child/children to join in with the actions/vocalising of the children. Also encourage them to think of their own responses. <p>Core musical activity - Wise Old Owl song</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage your child/children to sing along. 	<p>In this activity the main areas of musical learning are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening Using singing voices Pitch-matching (singing the same notes as the animals) Anticipating Collaboration Turn-taking

Immediately after watching the programme**Plenary and comprehension questions**

- Why were the animals hungry and thirsty at the beginning of the story? (Because the humans had taken all the food and water)
- What happens when you say the name of the magical 'Baobab' tree three times? (Water will flow from the roots and fruit will grow from the branches)
- Which three animals visited the owl on the mountain to get the name of the tree? (First Cheetah, then Elephant, finally Snail)
- Can you describe some characteristics of each of these animals? (Prompts - size, physical features, how many legs, skills - eg speed, strength, determination)
- Which one of these creatures was successful in remembering the name of the tree? (Snail)
- Why do you think Snail was successful when Cheetah and Elephant were not? (The children's own thoughts)

Music

- Can you describe what the music is like when each of the three animals are making their way to the Wise Old Owl? (Prompt: Cheetah = quick; Elephant = slow)
- What does the music sound like when the Baobab Tree grows fruit and gives water at the end of the story?
- Which music/sounds/instruments did you like most in this story and why? (Discussion)

In this activity the children will:

- Demonstrate that they understand what they have seen and heard.
- Apply reasoning.
- Communicate their feelings about the story and the music.
- Think creatively.



Instruments (left to right): cello, clarinet, n'goni.

Further follow-up activities

Movements

Age 3 - 7 years

Time - 30 minutes

Resources - instruments (optional)

Group discussion time

Talk about all the animals in the story. Did you expect it to be the snail who was successful? Why/Why not?

Foundation activity

Can the children demonstrate how each animal in the story might move? Can they describe the movements with words? You could use the chant below and move as suggested...or adapt and use the children's words.

Stomp like an elephant

Run like a cheetah

Glide like a snail

Extension activity

Can the children be the different animals as they sing the Baobab tree song? How would a snail sound if it was singing? (Idea: smooth and long). Or a cheetah? (Idea: fast and jerky).

Advanced activity

The children could work out how to present their animal Baobab song back to the class, working in different groups for each animal. They could all move and sing or they could split into groups, so that some are moving and some are singing.

Take it further

The children could choose to add in their own instruments/soundmakers, thinking about the animal they are being. How could they play a tambourine, so it sounded like an owl/snail, etc.

Musical learning

Listening / Collaborating / Musical creativity and expression

Exploring instruments

Age 3 - 7 years

Time - 30 to 45 minutes

Resources - junk modelling: rice/pasta/lentils/glue/etc

Group discussion time

Can you remember the main instruments we heard in the story? Listen again to the sounds that they make. How would you describe their sounds?

Foundation activity

Make your own instruments in a junk modelling session. Are there any sounds you can make that go well with the story/sound like the instruments you have heard? Some suggestions for making instruments:

- shakers: rice/lentils/pasta in a dry bottle
- drums: coffee tin/plastic tubs
- box guitars: margarine tub with elastic bands
- Further ideas for homemade instruments at [BBC Teach: Bring the Noise](#)

Extension activity

Rewatch and/or retell the story, accompanying the story with the instruments you have made. Can you make your instruments sound louder/quieter? How do you do this? (Shake/tap/pluck harder to make the sound louder and softer to make the sound quieter).

Advanced activity

Explore/research the instruments played in the story. Consider where the instruments originally come from; how the instruments are played; how they make their sound; any famous musicians who play them.

Take it further

Use your instruments to add sounds to other stories which may be read in the class.

Musical learning

Listening / Collaborating / Musical creativity and expression

