

*Music Department  
Transition Project*

Create a Band  
&  
Compose a Song  
at Home

*Welcome to Wykham Park Academy Music Department!*

*This project is designed so that everyone can have a go at making music at home with home-made instruments, using everyday items you are likely to have in the house.*

*It will also help you to organise the sounds that you can create on your instruments into a structured piece of music.*

*If you have a smart phone, tablet, or computer you can perhaps even record your piece - this project will help you to achieve this.*

## A COUPE OF IMPORTANT NOTICES BEFORE WE START:

1) PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE PERMISSION OF YOUR PARENTS/GUARDIANS BEFORE PILLAGING THE HOUSE FOR ITEMS!!

2) PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE PERMISSION AND SUPERVISION IF YOU USE ANYTHING POTENTIALLY

HARMFULL e.g. scissors, blades, empty containers that previsouly had harmful chemicals in

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## Creating a shaker

Any small container either plastic, paper, wood, or metallic (please don't use glass for this) such as paper cups, yogurt pots, plastic fizzy drink bottles



Put in a small amount of any either rice, pasta, crafting beads, hard sweets, or anything small and hard, even little stones/gravel will work

Make sure the lid is firmly fixed or even better if you can tape it up - you could even tape two pots/cups up like the image above!

Check out the YouTube tutorial on how to play a shaker musically:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baiEjwY4GOU>

## Creating a set of straw pipes

You will need drinking straws (the wider the better) and sticky tape for this

Cut the straws in to gradually shorter lengths, place them in order of size and tape together along both sides

Blow across the top of the straws to produce a sound (see the image below) it might take a bit of practice though!



Tip: If you have thin straws try cutting each length in to pairs so you have a slightly wider space to blow over

Check out this guy - he has taken drinking straw instruments to the next level:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJO\\_WQ61j3M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJO_WQ61j3M)

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## Creating a set tin can drums

You will need empty and cleaned tin cans (avoid sharp or jagged edges where the can has been opened please), water balloons, elastic bands or hair bands



Stretch a balloon over the open end of the tin can and use an elastic/hair band to hold it in place (see the image above), different sized tins will give different pitched sounds

Play your tin can drums with anything you can find that will double as drum sticks

Check out the YouTube video below - this person uses glasses instead of tin cans:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hV4x4wA7LRc&t=49s>



## Creating (the classic!) saucepan lid cymbals

You will need a saucepan lid, string

Tie a length of string around the saucepan lid, that's it!



If you have anything to suspend/hang your saucepan lid cymbal from then even better - you could even create a set of cymbals using different sized lids

Play your saucepan lid cymbal with anything you can find that doubles as a drum stick

Check out this kitchen utensil percussion performance:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQfLiTWtqxy>

## Creating bottle top castanets



*You will need two metal bottle tops, cardboard, sticky tape or blu tack (a glue gun would work better)*

*Cut a strip of cardboard approx 5cm by 14cm and fold in half across the width, in the middle of either end attach the two bottle tops with the flat surfaces up, so that when the cardboard is folded they will hit (see image above)*

*Tip: If you have any small elastic bands, loom bands, or even hair bands then wrap one around each side of your castanet to use as finger supports (see image above)*

*Check out this real castanet performance to inspire you:*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPqjE\\_H2k9s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPqjE_H2k9s)

## Creating a set of water chimes

You will need a set of drinking glasses, jam jars, glass bottles, or even wine glasses (if you are allowed?), and tap water



Place the set of glasses/bottles in a row and fill the glasses with decreasing levels of water from left to right, to produce a series of descending pitches

Tap the glass/bottle (gently please) with a home-made drum stick, experiment with a variety of sticks in different places on the glass to achieve different sounds



## Creating a set of bottle whistles

You will need a set of bottles, preferably glass but plastic bottles will still work, and tap water



Set the bottles up exactly as described for the water chimes but this time blow across the top of the bottles

Check out this bottle whistle performance on YouTube (note the home-made shakers being used too?):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAySXYqbc8M>

## Creating a glass harp

You will need a set of thin drinking glasses or preferably wine glasses, and tap water

Set the glasses up exactly as described for the water chimes but this time (whilst holding the base of the glass) slowly rub the flat pad of your finger tip around the rim of the glass



This will take a bit of practice so here is a YouTube link to watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbOt5lvq4Ow>

There are even professional glass harp performers too:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgoaehDEBrU>

## Creating a rubber band guitar

You will need a tissue box (or any box if you don't have one), and elastic bands



Simply wrap the elastic bands lengthways across the tissue box and either pluck or strum the 'strings'

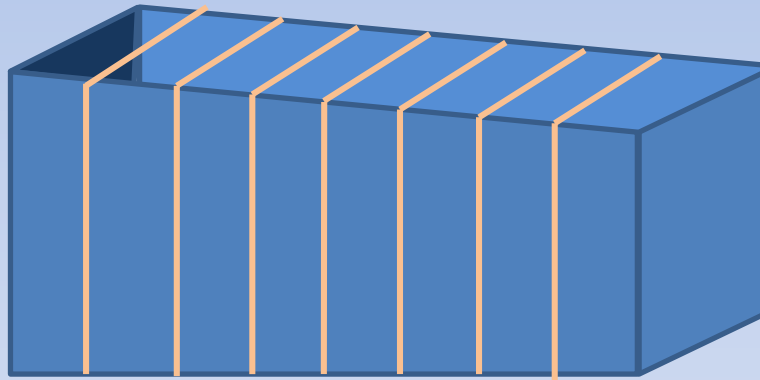
The tauter the elastic band the better quality of sound you will get - also try using different sized elastic bands and experiment with a variety of different tensions and sounds they produce

Check out this guy who has literally attached an elastic band to his guitar:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCFTFzIAhTQ>

## Creating a rubber band harp

You will need a small box, elastic bands

Cut the box so that it looks like the diagram below:



Stretch a series of elastic bands over the box and strum them - they will produce different pitches

## Creating a Performance Grid

Now you have your instruments you will want to begin creating a composition

One easy way is to make a performance grid - here is an example below:



	Beat 1	Beat 2	Beat 3	Beat 4
Straw Pipes				
Glass Harp				
Tin Drums				
Cymbal				



## Creating a Performance Grid pt 2




You will need some other members of your family to help here (unless you have an app that allows you to record multiple layers over the top of each other?)

Draw a star, or cross, or any symbol in the boxes below the beats e.g.

	Beat 1	Beat 2	Beat 3	Beat 4
Straw Pipes				

Now count 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 over and over (out loud or in your head) and play your pipes on the beats that you have starred

If you want to make it a bit more complex then you could add two or more stars per beat (e.g. this would mean to play two quicker notes on beat 1):

	Beat 1	Beat 2	Beat 3	Beat 4
Straw Pipes	 			

# Creating a Performance Grid pt3

If you can get 2 or more layers going at the same time then your composition will begin to sound much more interesting

	Beat 1	Beat 2	Beat 3	Beat 4
Straw Pipes				
Glass Harp				
Tin Drums				
Cymbal				

# Creating a Contrasting Section

If you create a different Performance Grid, with different patterns and perhaps some variation in the instruments you will then have a contrasting section:

	<i>Beat 1</i>	<i>Beat 2</i>	<i>Beat 3</i>	<i>Beat 4</i>
<i>Shaker</i>				
<i>Glass Harp</i>				
<i>Tin Drums</i>				
<i>Guitar</i>				

# Adding Structure & Expression to your Composition

If you have two contrasting Performance Grids you can now add some structure to your composition

For example - if you play your original grid follow by the contrasting grid then this is called **BINARY** form

If you play your original grid, follow by the contrasting grid, then the original grid then this is called **TERNARY** form

How about bringing in each instrument/layer one at a time - so that you go from 1 musical layer up to 4 musical layers? This is called **TEXTURE**

You can add volume changes e.g. section 1 played softly, section 2 played loudly? This is called **DYNAMICS**

A bit more challenging - how about playing the different sections at different speeds? Or gradually speeding up or slowing down? This is called **TEMPO**

## Use your imagination - be Creative!

The more detail you add to your composition the better it will become (but you don't necessarily need to have tempo, dynamic, and/or texture changes happening all at the same time otherwise your composition may become too cluttered with ideas)

Most importantly make sure you have fun!