

**Anima Phonics:
Letters and Sounds Updated
Phase 1**

Aspect 2:
**Istrumental
Sounds**

Aspect 2: General sound discrimination – instrumental sounds

These activities promote speaking and listening through the use of musical instruments (either purchased or made by the children). They do not replace the rich music provision necessary for creative development in the wider educational programme.

Tuning into sounds

Main purpose

- To experience and develop awareness of sounds made with instruments and noise makers

New words to old songs

Take a song or rhyme the children know well and invent new words to suit the purpose and the children's interests. Use percussion instruments to accompany the new lyrics.



Which instrument?

This activity uses two identical sets of instruments. Give the children the opportunity to play one set to introduce the sounds each instrument makes and name them all. Then one child hides behind a screen and chooses one instrument from the identical set to play. The other children have to identify which instrument has been played.



Develop the activity by playing a simple rhythm or by adding a song to accompany the instrument (e.g. *There is a music man. Clap your hands*) while the hidden instrument is played. This time the listening children have to concentrate very carefully, discriminating between their own singing and the instrument being played.

Adjust the volume

Two children sit opposite each other with identical instruments. Ask them to copy each other making loud sounds and quiet sounds. It may be necessary to demonstrate with two adults copying each other first. Then try the activity with an adult with one child.



Use cards giving picture or symbol cues to represent loud or quiet (e.g. a megaphone, puppet of a lion; a finger on the lips, puppet of a mouse).¹

Grandmother's footsteps

'Grandmother' has a range of instruments and the children decide what movement goes with which sound (e.g. shakers for running on tip-toe, triangle for fairy steps).

First an adult will need to model being Grandmother. Then a child takes the role.

¹ Activity based on Looking and Listening Pack ©Heywood Middleton & Rochdale Primary Care Trust. Used with kind permission.

Grandmother stands with her back to the others and plays an instrument. The other children move towards Grandmother in the manner of the instrument while it is playing. They stop when it stops. The first person to reach Grandmother takes over that role and the game starts again.

Look, listen and note

Look, listen and note how well children:

- identify and name the instruments being played;
- listen and respond as the instrument is being played.

Listening and remembering sounds

Main purpose

- To listen to and appreciate the difference between sounds made with instruments



Matching sound makers

Show pairs of sound makers (e.g. maracas, triangles) to a small group of children. Place one set of the sound makers in a feely bag.

The children take turns to select a sound maker from the feely bag. Once all the children have selected a sound maker, remind them to listen carefully. Play a matching sound maker. The child with that sound maker stands up and plays it.

This activity can be adapted by playing the sound maker behind a screen so that the children have to identify it by the sound alone¹.

Matching sounds

Invite a small group of children to sit in a circle. Provide a selection of percussion instruments. One child starts the game by playing an instrument. The instrument is then passed round the circle and each child must use it to make the same sound or pattern of sounds as the leader. Start with a single sound to pass round the circle, and then gradually increase the difficulty by having a more complex sequence of sounds or different rhythms.

Look, listen and note

Look, listen and note how well children:

- are able to remember and repeat a rhythm;
- discriminate and reproduce loud and quiet sounds;
- are able to start and stop playing at the signal.

¹ Activity based on Looking and Listening Pack ©Heywood Middleton & Rochdale Primary Care Trust. Used with kind permission.

Talking about sounds

Main purpose

- To use a wide vocabulary to talk about the sounds instruments make.

Story sounds

As you read or tell stories, encourage the children to play their instruments in different ways (e.g. *Make this instrument sound like giant's footsteps, ... a fairy fluttering, ... a cat pouncing, ... an elephant stamping*). Invite them to make their own suggestions for different characters (e.g. *How might Jack's feet sound as he tiptoes by the sleeping giant? And what about when he runs fast to escape down the beanstalk?*). As the children become familiar with the pattern of the story, each child could be responsible for a different sound.

Hidden instruments

Hide the instruments around the setting, indoors or outdoors, before the children arrive.

Ask the children to look for the instruments. As each instrument is discovered the finder plays it and the rest of the group run to join the finder. Continue until all the instruments are found to make an orchestra.



Musical show and tell

Invite groups of children to perform short instrumental music for others. The others are asked to say what they liked about the music. (They will need a selection of instruments or sound makers and some rehearsal time.)

Animal sounds

Provide a variety of animal puppets or toys and a range of instruments. Encourage the children to play with the instruments and the animals. Discuss matching sounds to the animals. Give a choice of two instruments to represent a child's chosen animal and ask the children to choose which sound is the better fit: *Which one sounds most like the mouse? What do you think, David?*

Look, listen and note

Look, listen and note how well children:

- choose appropriate words to describe sounds they hear (e.g. *loud, fierce, rough, squeaky, smooth, bumpy, high, low, wobbly*);
- match sounds to their sources;
- use sounds imaginatively to represent a story character;
- express an opinion about what they have heard.

Considerations for practitioners working with Aspect 2

- If a child is reluctant to attempt to copy actions with an instrument, spend a little time building confidence and interest in copying games. Present the child with a set of instruments. Have an identical set to hand. Allow the child to explore and copy back what the child does. Copying children's actions can build confidence and make them feel their contribution is valued. If the activity results in an enjoyable copying game, the adult can subtly attempt to switch roles by taking up a different instrument and making a new sound for the child to copy.
- It will take a little while for some children to make a link between an animal and a corresponding instrument sound. Where necessary to support this, allow plenty of time for the children to play with the animal puppets or toys and talk about the sounds the animals make.
- Provide a variety of animal puppets or toys and a range of instruments. Sit alongside the children to play the instruments and encourage discussion about choices of instruments appropriate for the sounds the animals make.
- Encourage discussion with the children about why they have chosen the instrument to represent their particular animal.

The activities in Aspect 2 also provide opportunities to explore with the children their experience of music at home. Ask parents or carers whether they have any instruments they can bring in, either to play for the children or for the children to look at.