

Episode: The Instrument Seller

• Sit the children down and play track 5

Story text (Children's book page 10):

The Instrument Seller smiled when they came near.

“What are those?” asked Nina.

“Musical instruments,” said the Instrument Seller. “You play them to make music. Try!” And she gave Nina an instrument from her stall.

Nina shook it but it wouldn't make a sound. The Instrument Seller laughed.

“You need the sound too,” she said. She took back the instrument and popped something inside it. “Try again,” she said, and gave it back to Nina.

Still nothing happened. “You need to move in a special way,” said the Instrument Seller. “Like this.” And when Nina copied her, the instrument made music.

Key points to explore:

- A musical instrument is not just an object that makes a sound. It needs the right sound-making parts and controlled gestures to get it to play.
- Different gestures and materials make different noises.

You will need:

- CD tracks 6 and 7
- A variety of musical instruments from the box
- See dance and art activities for other resources you may require

Optional warm-up activity:

First, explore the idea of preparing to play. Ask children to stand straight, relaxed and quiet, waiting for the music to start. Explain that when the music starts, they should mime playing a musical instrument. Look at some instruments in turn and discuss the kind of movements that would make them play. Introduce different families of instruments: ones you blow, ones you shake, ones you scrape and so on. You could organise the children into groups according to which type of instrument they are going to mime.

(CD track 6 contains a short introduction, followed by sections featuring distinct percussion instruments in turn. Finally, all the instruments play together. Track 7 is a version without percussion - use this once children know the percussion parts, or if you wish to vary the sounds or instruments used.)

Main music activity:

Distribute musical instruments, briefly demonstrating each one. Explain to the children that they should only play when your hand is lowered. When your hand is raised, they should stop. Practise this stop-and-start game. Play track 6. Lower your hand for children to join in. Then do this without the CD. Explore what happens when you raise your hand slowly; does this give a different signal from raising it suddenly? You could ask one of the children to conduct, too. When all the children stop together, award the Instrument Seller icon.

Dance activity:

Run through the types of instrument again. Assign a movement for each one: for example, drum = jump, shakers = shake, scrapers = wriggle; triangle = stretch and so on. Play track 6 and ask children to make these movements to the music according to which instrument they were playing. When listening to other music, can the children jump / shake / wriggle / stretch when they hear those same instruments playing?

Art activity:

Make or decorate instruments for the stall, using tubes from kitchen rolls, yoghurt pots, lentils and rice and so on.

Going further:

Explore different types of sound made by adding sand / rice / dried peas to shakers, or scraping the scraper with a metallic / wooden / plastic beater. Look at the story's implications by handing out empty shakers, or scrapers without sticks. This would also work with other types of instrument, too: wind (unblown then blown); kazoos (blown then voiced); drums and chime bars (without beaters then with). There is some comic potential here!

► Now go on to the Market Walk