



**The Ark**



## **Classroom Activity Pack – The Haircut!**

**The Haircut! by Wayne Jordan & Tom Lane.  
Subject areas: Drama & Music**

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## About this Pack:

This classroom activity pack has been written as a complementary resource for teachers attending with their class at a performance of The Ark's production of *The Haircut!* by Wayne Jordan and Tom Lane.

Whilst the material provided here is complementary to this show, the approach taken in creating this pack is to use the show's rich themes and ideas as a starting point for a range of engaging classroom activities. Thus this pack aims to be a useful resource to teachers whether or not they have seen the performance. For those who have seen the show however, we hope this pack will support you in exploring the experience of the show further with your class.

*The Haircut!* is inspired by the old folk tale of the King with Horses Ears. There are many versions of this story from all over the world and Wayne Jordan (writer/director) has used the Irish version as the inspiration for his script. His version also brings in its own unique elements.

The combination of music with narrative story-telling is a key concept in the show. There is one actor and three musicians on stage. Composer Tom Lane has written music which is played live throughout the performance. In this way the story and the music are woven together.

We hope you enjoy using this pack and find it useful. If you would like to share any of your experiences with us we'd be delighted to hear from you at [TheArkDublin@gmail.com](mailto:TheArkDublin@gmail.com)

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## How to use this pack:

The Haircut! is aimed at children aged 8+ so activities given in this pack are suitable for this age group. However, all the ideas given can be adapted depending on the age and ability of the particular class.

Like the show, the focus in these activities is on the subject areas of drama and music and shows a variety of accessible ways of combining them in the classroom.

Section 1 of this pack begins with simple discussion/reflection and warm-up activities and this is a good place to start with any class. If you are using this pack without having seen the show, you can simply read the Irish version of the story to your class first (see appendix 1 on page 14).

After that, you may wish to use the different sections to structure lesson plans or pick and choose individual activities as you see fit.

When working with any creative group activity it is recommended to create a safe space with the use of some simple ground rules. This will support your class to experiment, speak up with their ideas and support each other. A positive classroom atmosphere will be generated which is vital for creativity to flourish and for pupils' confidence to improve.

Appendix 1 provides background information on the core story as well as 6 versions of it from around the world. Ideas for using these different versions in number of ways are given throughout the pack.

Appendix 2 provides general reference material for approaching classroom music making including use of classroom instruments, exploring sounds and easy approaches to composition. This will be of use to you in implementing the particular music based ideas given here and also helpful for any other music activities you may do with your class.

## Curricular Links:

The activities in this pack cover both the drama and music primary school curricula broadly.

All 3 strands of the music curriculum (Listening and Responding, Composing and Performing) and strand unit Exploring sounds are covered across the activities in this pack.

In the Drama Curriculum, the main Strand - Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding is addressed, as are the 3 Strand units:

- • • Exploring and making drama
- Reflecting on drama
- Co-operating and communicating in making drama

The final section in the pack contains a number of other cross-curricular activities in the areas of SPHE, Literacy and Visual Art.

## Section 1: Introductory Activities

### Recapping the story and the music

Ask the class to think about what they enjoyed from seeing the play. (If you're class hasn't seen it, read the story to them instead – see Appendix 1, page 14).

- What was your favourite moment?
- Who was your favourite character?
- Would you like to know more about any of the characters?
- What did the characters in the story learn?
- Was there anyone in the play you recognised because they are similar to

someone you know?

- What was the everyday life like at the beginning of the play? Were people allowed to be creative and inventive?
- What changed during the play? What do you think everyday life will be like at the end of the play?

Now, ask the children think about the music that was performed at each stage in the story. (If you haven't seen the show simply choose and play a recorded piece of music for your class instead).

Can they remember?

- What instruments were played?
  - Did they ever see or hear any of the instruments played before?
  - Can they mime play the instruments they heard and saw?
  - Did the music remind them of anything they've heard before?
- Can they remember sections where the music was either fast or slow? What was happening in the story then?
  - Did they notice if the instruments were played together at the same time to create a different sound texture?
  - Did any of the instruments play on their own at any point?
  - Did they want to sing along to any of the music?
- Was music played all the time as the story was told? If not, why do they think the composer choose to use silence sometimes?
  - Did they notice if any of the main melodies or tunes repeated at different points in the story? Why might they have been repeated?

### Drama and Music on TV/Film:

The combination of story and music is something very familiar to everyone from TV and films.

Ask the children to discuss their favourite film or TV shows and think about how the story and the music together create action, character, moods or feelings.

## Warm-up Activities:

Music Warm-up activity: Music, Mood and Movement

- Ask your class to think back to the music in The Haircut show. (If you haven't seen the show, simply choose a piece of recorded music and play it for them in class instead.)
- Ask them how the music made them feel e.g. happy/sad, dreamy/agitated, calm/excited etc.
- Ask them to imagine the music in their heads and, silently, physically move in any way they like to show the different feelings.
- Next, ask them to find a partner. Person 1 selects a music mood and demonstrates it with a movement. Person 2 mirrors their partners' movement and then tries to guess the mood. Then they swap roles and person 2 demonstrates a different mood with a new movement.

Music Painting:

- Choose a piece of music.
- Prepare the class to listen very carefully to the music.
- After listening once, play the music again and ask the children to paint the shape of the music in the air with their hands while it plays.

The teacher can help support the children in listening and responding to music in this activity with questions such as:

- Does the tune go up and down or stay on one note?
- Are the notes detached and jerky (staccato) or is the music smooth and joined together (legato)?
- Does the music have a big loud sound or small soft sound? How might this change the different shapes that they are 'painting'?

Repeat this process with recordings of different types and styles of music.

Drama Warm-Up Activity: Twenty Questions – What's my secret?

- Tell the class you are going to think of an embarrassing "secret" like the king's – for instance, that you have a tiger's tail or duck's feet.
- The children have to work together, asking Twenty Questions with yes/no answers to try and guess what it is.
- You could give clues, such as where you might find the animal or what having this extra body part might help you do – e.g. you might find this animal by water and this body part might help you be a good swimmer (duck's feet).
- Let the children take turns making up another secret for the king while the rest of the class guesses what it is.

## Section 2: Starting to Create and Perform

### Exploring Sounds: A 'Pile Up' Soundscape

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- Form a circle.  
Using simple classroom instruments (see Appendix 2) give each child an instrument.
- The teacher starts a steady beat on a drum. Alternatively, download a free metronome app on your phone and have that play a steady beat if that's easier.
- Each child starts to play their instrument when the leader looks or gestures to them. They keep playing from then on so the sounds eventually 'pile up' on top of each other.
- When all children have joined in, let the music settle and enjoy listening the overall soundscape and textures of sound.
- The teacher can then slowly peel back the soundscape by gesturing to each person in turn to stop. This gives the class a chance to fully enjoy listening and notice the changing textures as sounds are removed.
- Once they get the idea, give different children the chance to be the leader.
- Discussion on textures and sound combinations is always very interesting after the pile up exercise! Children instantly know what they like and don't like.
- Now, ask the children in small groups if they can invent short soundscapes that suit the new secrets for the king made up in warm up activity above  
E.g. ocean drums or rainsticks could create a watery sound that would suit a person with ducks feet! Maybe the soundscape they create somehow 'gives away' what the secret is?
- Remember to record your soundscape improvisations on a phone or ipad!

### Drama activity: Freeze Frame

- Divide the class into small groups – ask them to try to think of the significant moments in the play they saw. If they haven't seen the play, read them the story first (see Appendix 1) and work from that instead.
- Can they retell the story in 5 moments, creating a still image or frozen picture (with their bodies) of each moment? Suggest they think of it like creating 5 photographs and each one captures a key moment from the story (without adding sound or movement).
- To add further challenge, ask if they can add 1 line of narration or dialogue to each moment.

### Variation: Freeze Frame with Music

- Word Play:  
Words have their own natural rhythm and so they can form the building bricks to create a musical rhythm. Ask the children to choose their favourite line of dialogue or narration from the previous activity. Then ask them to repeat this line continuously until the natural rhythm of the words becomes clear and it starts to sound like a chant or rap.

- Add mood music:  
Using simple classroom instruments (see Appendix 2) ask the children to create one simple sound effect for each of their freeze frame scenes that compliments the mood or action in that scene e.g. fast hand percussion for a dramatic moment or gentle playing of egg shakers or rain sticks for a quiet or sad scene.
- Add in a melody to one scene: Use the pentatonic scale (see Appendix 2) with either chimes or similar instruments to create a short melody for one scene.

**Music Performance activity:**

The 'Sad Procession' by composer Tom Lane is the main melody used in The Haircut show.

Below you'll find the score for this tune with a simple harmony part. This can be taught to your class as a simple singing performance activity. (Note: this theme is written in a minor key. The key it is given in here has been adjusted from the original to suit children's voices).

## The Haircut Sad Procession

Tom Lane

**Melody**  $\text{♩} = 82$

**Harmony**

l m l m l m l m

l t d t l m l t d t l m

l m l m l m l m

9 f s l t l t l t d r m

f d f d f d f m

Harmony: This steady repeating bass pattern will give support to the melody so teach this part first. Sing through to 'la' & if possible give support with piano or another instrument. If you are familiar with tonic solfa, sing the solfa syllables & add in hand signals. Melody: Next teach the melody part. Get the children to sing 'dee' through this melody (it will make the higher notes easier). Ask the children to describe the shape of the melody and whether it is ascending or descending. See if they notice any repeating rhythmic patterns. Ask them to 'paint' the shape of the melody in the air as they sing. Next: Divide the group in half. Decide which half will sing the harmony and which will sing the melody. Set up the beat and sing the two parts together. As on the score the harmony line will start on its own and then be joined by the melody after 4 bars. Once they are comfortable with the notes, ask the class to think about where it might sound good to get louder or softer (adding dynamics). If you wish, you can also get the two groups playing this music using pitched instruments such as chime bars or bells. Create a third group playing drums with a simple rhythm for further fun! Use the links to our 2 guide audio recordings below to help teach these parts if needed: On this track you'll hear first the Harmony line played on piano, followed by the melody, followed by both parts played together: <https://soundcloud.com/the-ark-music/sad-procession-piano-guide> On this track you'll hear first the Harmony line sung, followed by the melody, followed by both parts sung together and repeated. <https://soundcloud.com/the-ark-music/sad-procession-sung-guide>

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## Section 3: Exploring Stories from Around the World

### Where in the world do the stories come from?

- Tell the class that versions of this story have been found as far away as Greece, France, Central Asia, Korea, Somalia, Wales and Ireland.
- Look at these places on a map and point out how far apart they are from each other.
- These stories originate from a time long before there was any form of communication between such far off places.
- Ask the class for their thoughts and suggestions as to how all these different places shared similar stories.

### Showing a Story Variation:

- In the same groups as before give each group a version of the story from a different culture (6 different versions are provided in Appendix 1).
- Ask them to read the story and to highlight differences between this version and the version in the show. (You can use the Irish version in the appendix for comparison instead if your class hasn't seen the show).
- Ask them to tell this version in 5 frozen pictures with 1 line of narration / dialogue – highlighting the differences between the 2 stories. If they desire they could bring each picture to life for 10 seconds adding movement and dialogue.
- If willing, each group could share this version of the story with the class.

### Variation with music:

Ask the children, if they were creating or choosing music for this different version of the story, what kind of music do they think would suit the different scenes:

- Would they make the music fast or slow? Somewhere in between?
- Loud or soft or somewhere in between?
- Would the music be choppy (staccato) or smooth and joined together (legato)?
- Would the music be deep and low or bright and high in pitch?
- Would there be singing?
- Should there be a dramatic music moment to illustrate a key moment in the story?
- Having thought about these questions, now ask them to tell the new version of the story in the 5 freeze frames again. This time challenge them tell the story in sound only. They should not to use any classroom instruments but instead use found sounds (e.g. ordinary objects in the room such as pens, books, paper, bubble wrap, shoe Velcro etc) or body percussion (claps, stamps, clicks etc) or their singing voices to create the soundscape (see Appendix 2 for more on this). Vowel sounds (ah, oh etc) can be a simple and effective way to use their voices to sing melodies for this activity.
- Remember to record your soundscape improvisations on a phone or tablet!

## Section 4: Create Your Own Story with Music

### Spot the changes

Tell the class that the play they saw (The Haircut!) was an adaptation of an old Irish story (see Appendix 1). When writing the play the playwright kept the fundamental elements of the story but changed some details.

- What elements of the story do you think he changed? Why do you think he decided to make these changes?
- Ask the class to think about elements from the play they think might have been included in the original story and what elements they think the playwright adapted and re-imagined. Make a list with 2 headings and collect the children's suggestions under each one:
  1. Elements from the original story
  2. The playwrights' own ideas and adaptations

### Your turn – adapting your own story

- . Divide the class into small groups.

Ask them to choose a well-known story – such as a fairy-tale like Rapunzel' or an Irish legend such as 'The Children of Lir' or 'the Salmon of Knowledge'.
- Invite the class to come up with ideas of how they could adapt and change the story to appeal to an audience today.
- They can keep the fundamental elements of the story the same but change some details. They can either write the story, develop it as a story-board or act it out for the class.

Here's an example one class came up with based on the story of Rapunzel:

One day Rapunzel bought some shampoo from a market. On the bottle of shampoo it said "this shampoo will give you long, strong and shiny hair". However when Rapunzel tried the shampoo her hair kept on growing and growing at a very fast rate. When the makers of the shampoo saw what happened they decided to hide Rapunzel away so no one else would see what happened to her. They hid her away on the top floor of a block of flats where no one could see her. In the end she makes a rope out of her own hair so she can climb out of the window and escape!

### Your turn: making music for your new story

- . Get out your classroom instruments (see Appendix 2).

Organise your instruments by category - woodwind, metal, shaker, drum, stringed etc.
- Assign an instrument category to different groups in the class.
- Set a steady beat or a simple rhythm.
- Allow each instrument group to play along to the rhythm one at a time thus allowing the class to hear the various sound families.
- Experiment with sound combinations by combining different groups.
- Ask the children to pick instrument groups and combinations which create an interesting sound texture.

- Ask the children what they thought of the arrangement? What groups of instruments worked well together and why?
- Now, thinking about their newly created story from their previous activity, would the music they've just played suit any part of that story? Would they make any changes to it to make it fit better?

The children are now composing and arranging music.

### Playing with Numbers

- Form a Circle.
- Assign a numbers to each child from 1 to 4 (or higher if you like)
- All the 1s play together, all the 2s play together etc.
- Give out instruments randomly or by instrument category e.g. wooden, metal etc (see Appendix 2).
- This can be as random as you like and is great fun for the kids to choose.

Now, decide on a musical arrangement using the group numbers.

Arrangement Example:

- All play
- Groups 4 + 2 play
- Group 4 only play
- Group 3 + 1 play
- Group 1 only plays
- All play
- End

- Set up a steady beat.
- Cue the groups to play the arrangement in a number of different ways:
  - Call out the group number
  - Point to numbers written on the board.
  - Gesture towards or look at a group
  - Hold up number cue cards.

Once the children get the idea, give different children a chance to conduct the music cueing the arrangement as they wish using any of the above methods. They may also want to try re-arranging the music and then conducting their new arrangements.

### Character theme-tunes: Linking to your story to music

- Now assign character, a key object or location from your newly adapted story from the 'adapting your own story activity' above to each group instead of a number.
  - e.g. Rapunzel = group 1
  - Shampoo bottle = group 2
  - Shampoo Makers = group 3
  - The block of flats = group 4
- In their groups, ask the children to think about whether they should change the kind of instruments and sounds in each group now so that they suit the character or object they are representing. How might they change the

instruments they are using and/or how they are playing them to convey their story element through music? E.g. the Rapunzel group might choose chime bars in a pentatonic scale (see appendix 2) so they can create a pretty melody to represent her; drums or low percussion might suit the Shampoo Makers as the 'bad guys'.

- Perform your arrangement again using the character/object/location names to cue it instead of numbers. Repeat with different children conducting as before.
- Remember to record your composition and take note of the instrument combinations.
- If possible, perform your new story with music to another class in the school.

## Section 5: Further Cross Curricular Activities

SPHE:

### Exploring the moral of the story - Class Discussion

In some versions of the Irish story the King is given horses' ears because he kicks a horse in bad temper and an old woman with magic powers gives him horse's ears as a punishment for being cruel to an animal.

- Does this change the story?
- Do you feel differently about the King if he was given horse's ears as a punishment?
- Do we need to see that the King is now kind to animals because he was ashamed of his behavior as well as embarrassed about the ears?

### Moral differences

When the different versions of the stories have been seen ask the class to think about the different messages or morals in each one, for example in some versions the message is that the King shouldn't be ashamed of his ears as appearance and physical differences don't matter and in others the moral is focused on the barber, saying you should never share something told to you in secret.

Ask the class to discuss these questions in pairs:

1. Should you always keep a secret? Are there times when sharing a secret is the 'right' thing to do? Are there other times when you shouldn't share a secret? What happens when a secret is finally freed?
2. Are actions more important than appearances? Are the actions of a person what shows their worth not how they look?

### Moving Debate: Agree or Disagree

When the class have discussed these ideas in pairs explain that they are going to explore these ideas further.

Put up a sign on one side of the room saying Completely Agree and on the other side Completely Disagree. \_\_\_\_\_

Tell the class you are going to ask them to think about one of the questions they have been discussing – such as "It is always wrong to share a secret" and they will be asked to vote with their feet if they agree or disagree. If, for example, they think it is always wrong to share a secret they should stand by Completely Agree or if they disagree they should stand by Completely Disagree – or they can stand somewhere in between the 2 extreme positions but indicating a preference one way or the other. When the pupils have voted with their feet they might be asked to explain why they have decided to stand in that position.

Statement 1: It is always wrong to share a secret.

In the Somalian version the barber is told that 'for telling the King's secret you will spend the rest of your life in prison and you will learn that it is always

important to keep your promises to others and not to share secrets.' What do you think- is it always wrong to share a secret? Agree or Disagree.

Statement 2: Do appearances matter?

Do you think the King was right to keep his secret hidden as people wouldn't want a King with horses ears or does the fact that the King has something different about himself make him a better King? Agree or Disagree

Statement 3: Does honesty count?

The King will be a better ruler after his secret is known as he will have nothing to hide and can be more open and honest. Agree or Disagree.

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**Literacy:**

### **In role as Journalists - Newspaper Reports**

Ask the class to imagine they were journalists at the King's Palace on the day when the King's secret is revealed and everyone learns about his ears.

Ask them to write a headline and article describing what happened. In the article they could include interviews with other people present at the time, including the musician, the barber, a guest, a child, another King, one of the cooks.

There might be some people who are not happy about the fact that he has revealed his secret - such as the people who make his crowns and head-coverings as their business might reduce significantly now the King has revealed all.

The pupils could go in role as the journalist and observers and re-enact the interviews first before they write them up for the article. Together they could

come up with a series of questions the journalist might ask such as - where were you when the news about the King's ears broke? What was your reaction? What did you think? What do you think might happen next?

In groups they could create the front page of the newspaper with head-lines, articles, interviews and pictures.

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**Visual Art:**

### **Crown Makers for the King**

Design a series of crowns or head coverings for King which would keep his ears hidden. These head coverings might be worn in different seasons, for particular events or have different purposes such as something he could wear when skiing, swimming in the sea, going to a party, having a bath.

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## Appendix 1: Story Background & Different Versions

### Background Information: The many Kings with horse's (or donkey) ears from around the world

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The story at the heart of *The Haircut* and this classroom pack has universal appeal as versions of this tale are found in different cultures and traditions from around the world, including from Ancient Greece, France, Somalia and Wales. In all these stories a king or emperor, due to some misfortune, is given donkey or horse ears and they then all go to great lengths to hide this secret, growing their hair long, wearing large hats or crowns. The person chosen to cut the King's hair is then bound to secrecy often in fear of death or punishment. However they suffer greatly having to keep the secret and eventually share this secret to an external body, e.g. into a well or into a hole in the ground.

Current thinking is that the original reference to the King with Donkey's Ears goes all the way back to King Tarkasnawa, a King of the Hittite in the west of present-day Turkey around 1600 BC. And if that's true, then variations of this story have possibly been doing the rounds for thousands of years!

While the fundamental elements of the story stay the same, there are variations in each version of the story. Sometimes the King has horse ears, other times donkey's ears. The place the barber chooses to share the secret often changes - for example he might whisper the secret into a hole in the ground, into a well, to a tree (in particular a willow), or to some tall reeds. The instrument which reveals the secret also changes - it can be a pipe, a harp, or just carried on the wind.

A note on the different endings:

The ending of the story and the moral of the tale can change - for example the emphasis might be on the idea that the quality of a person cannot be judged by their appearance but in other versions of the story, for example in the Somali story, the moral of the tale is to do with keeping promises and not sharing secrets so in this version the poor barber has to spend the rest of his life in prison for breaking his promise and sharing the King's secret.

Another theme in some of the stories is that anyone, even the King, can be born with a physical difference and he has to learn to accept who he is and to be proud of what makes him different and unique.

## **Different versions of the story from around the world:**

### **1.Irish version:**

According to an Irish legend there was a King Labraid Loingsech who was given horse's ears as a punishment when he was young for being cruel to a horse. The King was so embarrassed and ashamed that he decided to only have his hair cut once a year and the barber who was chosen to cut his hair was put to death as soon as he'd finished. A widow, hearing that her only son had been chosen to cut the King's hair, begged the King not to kill him, and eventually he agreed so long as her son kept the secret. However the burden of keeping the secret was so heavy that the young barber fell ill. A druid advised him to go into the woods and tell his secret to a large willow tree in the middle of the woods, and then he be relieved of his burden. The young barber did what the druid suggested and immediately felt better.

However some time later the King's harper needed to make a new harp. So he went into the woods to cut down a willow tree to make a new harp and he happened to cut down the very tree the barber had whispered his secret to. When the new harp was played for the King the harp sang out "Labraid Loingsech has horse's ears'. The King was initially very angry but eventually admitted his secret and from then on whoever cut his hair was safe and they were no longer put to death afterwards.

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### **2.A condensed version from Asia:**

An ancient legend from Central Asia, the King of the Ossounes had donkey ears. He hid them and ordered each of his barbers be killed so they couldn't tell his secret. However one of the barbers was advised to whisper the secret into a well after sundown but he didn't put the lid back on the well afterwards. The well water rose up and flooded the kingdom, releasing the secret and creating a great lake called Lake Issyk-Kul.

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### **3.King Midas Version from Ancient Greece.**

Midas was a mythical King who was famous for his ability to change anything he touched into gold. He was also famous for a more unfortunate trait; he was given donkey's ears as a punishment when he was a judge in a music competition.

The competition was between Apollo who was one of Ancient Greece's greatest Gods - he was the God of sun, light, knowledge, music, art, and poetry and Pan -the God of shepherds, sheep and goats. Pan said his flute of reeds could produce a more beautiful tune than Apollo's silly harp. So, they decide to have a musical dual and King Midas was one of the judges. All the judges chose Apollo as the winner apart from Midas who chose Pan. Apollo was so angry with Midas he said "The problem must be your ears, they are too small", and he put a magic spell on Midas and gave him donkey's ears.

King Midas was so horrified he hid his ears from that day on with big hats, turbans, helmets and scarves. The only person who knew was his barber and Midas made him promise to never tell a soul. The barber kept his promise but keeping such a big secret was driving him crazy so eventually he went up a mountain, and dug a hole in some reeds. He looked around to make sure no one was listening and then whispered into the hole "King Midas has the ears of an ass. King ass ears! King ass ears!" Releasing the secret made him feel much better and he returned home happier, but still sure he had kept his word to the King.

However, whenever the wind blew through the reeds a voice could be heard saying "Midas has the ears of an ass. King ass ears! King ass ears!", and the sound travelled well in the mountains. Before long everyone in the Kingdom knew the King's secret. Midas found the hairdresser had whispered the secret and at first he was going to kill him, but then decided not to. Apollo then decided that King Midas had changed his ways and gave him normal ears again.

<https://www.ancient.eu/midas/>

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#### 4. The King with Donkey Ears - A Somalian Story

A long time ago, there was a King who had floppy ears shaped just like the ears of a donkey. The King was very embarrassed about his ears and always covered them up when he was in public so no one would discover his secret. The only person who ever saw the King's ears was his hairdresser. The King often warned the hairdresser, 'You must promise never to tell anyone that I have ears shaped like a donkey or I will send to prison where you shall remain for the rest of your life.'

The hairdresser found it very hard to keep this secret because he wanted to tell all of the villagers about the King's ears, but he always remembered the King's warning and so kept the secret to himself for many years.

But one morning, the hairdresser woke up and knew that he could keep the secret to himself no longer. He walked out of the village into the countryside and when he was sure that he was all alone he found a patch of flat grass and began to dig with his hands until he made a very deep hole. He leaned over into the hole and shouted at the top of his voice, 'The King has ears shaped like a donkey! The King has ears shaped like a donkey!'

Once he had shouted out the King's secret, the hairdresser felt much better. Then he covered over the hole with earth and grass and returned to his home, reassuring himself that he had not betrayed the King's trust.

Many years later, they were building a new school and the playground was built exactly in the place where the hairdresser had whispered the secret into the hole. One day a young boy discovered the hole and when he cleared the earth away a loud voice escaped for all the children to hear... 'The King has

ears shaped like a donkey! The King has ears shaped like a donkey!' The children were very surprised to hear the hairdresser's voice, and they giggled and laughed about the King's secret. That evening the children told the secret to their parents and the parents told the secret to the rest of their family and all their friends. Very soon the whole village knew about the King's ears and they all giggled and laughed because they now knew why the King always covered up his head whenever he was out in public.

Soon the King realised that everybody knew his secret and he was very embarrassed and angry. The King remembered that only one man knew about his donkey shaped ears and so he told his guards to throw the man into the prison where he was told he would spend the rest of his life.

The hairdresser pleaded with the King to let him go, but the King said to the hairdresser, 'You promised me that you would not share my secret but you could not keep it to yourself. I trusted you and you betrayed me. For this you will spend the rest of your life in prison and you will learn that it is always important to keep your promises to others and not to share secrets.'

And so the hairdresser remained in prison for the rest of his life and always regretted sharing the King's secret when he had promised not to do so.

<http://worldstories.org.uk>

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## 5. The King with Donkey Ears from Korea.

There once was a king with a big problem. He woke up one morning and found his ears had grown overnight. His ears kept growing for 3 days until they were as big as donkeys. He was very worried as he thought he would not be respected as a King with such big ears. He didn't want to be laughed at so he pretended to be ill and stayed inside, never going out. Then one day he thought he would ask a famous hat maker for some help. He invited the hatter to the Palace and asked him to make him a large hat to cover his ears but he said if you tell anyone about my ears you will be killed. When the hatter saw the King's donkey ears he wanted to burst out laughing but he knew he couldn't laugh in front of the King so he shut his mouth tightly. The hatter made a big hat which covered the King's ears completely and the King was so pleased that he told everyone he felt much better and started going out. But for the hatter life became very difficult as every time he thought of the King's ears he started laughing and he couldn't stop. He laughed all the time - day and night. He laughed while eating, while walking along the road, even when he was sleeping. When anyone asked what he was laughing at, he had to say "nothing, nothing at all" as he knew he couldn't tell anyone the secret. People started to say the hatter was crazy as he was always laughing to himself and the hatter began to feel he was becoming quite crazy. It was so hard to keep the secret when he was dying to tell someone.

There is a saying that when you hold in something that you really want to say you can become quite ill and soon the hatter did become quite ill himself. But he didn't want to tell the secret to a person so he went to a bamboo forest and shouted into the trees "The King's ears are donkey ears. The King's ears are donkey ears." Once he had shared the secret he felt better as a huge weight had been lifted off his chest. However something strange happened. Every time the wind blew through the bamboo forest a voice could be heard saying "The King's ears are donkey ears. The King's ears are donkey ears." Even when the King ordered the bamboo forest to be chopped down the words could still be heard on the breeze every time the wind blew so the King realised there is no point trying to keep the secret. In one version from South Korea - the hatter says to the King "do not to be ashamed of your ears, they are a gift from God and you can use them to make sure you listen well to your people" which the King does and thereby becomes a better person.

Source of this version - Summarised from Korean Stories For Language Learners: Traditional Folktales in Korean and English By Julie Damron and EunSun You, Published Tuttle Publishing 2018

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## 6.A version from Wales - King March

Once upon a time, in Wales, there was a King called March Ab Meirchion. King March was a great sea trader and he was loved as fair, kind and generous King. He had all the wealth and possessions he could need and should have been a happy and contented man but he had a big secret that he was ashamed of and was terrified someone would discover it.

His secret was that he had been born with the ears of a horse. King March grew his hair really long and wore a special crown to hide his physical difference. The only person who knew his big secret was his barber Bifan. King March made Bifan take an oath that he would never ever reveal his secret and if he ever did tell the secret, the King would have his head cut off.

Over the years the secret remained hidden. March's Kingdom prospered and the people were happy apart from Bifan who was greatly troubled by keeping the secret to himself. He went to see a doctor who said he was suffering because he was keeping a great secret to himself and if he wanted to be cured he would have to share the secret. Bifan was dismayed - he did not want to lose his head but he didn't want to die of depression. The doctor then suggested if he shared the secret with the earth it might make him feel better.

So Bifan went to a wild and secluded place where there was a river bordered by a bed of reeds. He lay on the ground and whispered his secret into the ground. Immediately he felt better and he soon regained his health.

Sometime later King March decided to hold a great feast and called for the greatest piper in Wales to come and play at the feast. On the way to the feast the piper decided to cut some reeds to make a pipe to play at the feast and as it happened he cut the reeds down at the very spot where Bifan had told his secret to the earth. On the day of the great feast the piper stood up to play his pipe but when he went to play the pipe the only sound that came out were the words "King March has horse's ears" over and over again. King March was ashamed and humiliated and in his anger, he drew his sword to kill the piper but the piper begged for mercy, explaining that it wasn't fault and he had only wanted to make a new pipe to play for the King and his guests. Bifan then stepped forward and told the King that the secret was making him ill so he had shared it with the earth. King March raised his sword to kill the barber but suddenly he burst out laughing. He felt great relief that the secret was out and took off his crown to show his huge horse's ears to all his guests. Instead of laughing and making fun of the King the guests all cheered him for being brave enough to show his ears in public. March realised it wasn't how a person looked that was important but the quality of their deeds. From that day on he kept his hair cut short so the world would see him as he really was and would judge him by the actions and not his looks.

<https://folkrealmstudies.weebly.com/welsh-legends-king-marchs-ears.html>

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## Appendix 2: General Notes on Classroom Music-Making

### Classroom Instruments

Ideally your school will have a varied and interesting bank of instruments. If not, it is really worth the relatively small investment. These can be divided into different categories (or families) of sounds - wooden, metal, shakers, drums, strings and so forth. Unpitched percussion instruments such as small hand drums, shakers and rainsticks are a great starting point for building a classroom instrument bank.

Pitched percussion such as hand bells and chime bars are also an easy way into working with melody. See the section 'Composing with an instrument' below for more on using these.

Making instruments: If you don't have the resources to buy instruments, simple handmade ones can also be very effective. Used cartons and jars filled with rice or pasta are a cheap and easy way to make shakers. Card, plastic and glass containers will each create a different tonal quality to your shakers. Pots and pans have always made great drums! Old keys and washers attached to string can transform into a magical and beautiful wind chimes. Tin cans or a Pringle boxes are great drums. Chopsticks make strong drum sticks whilst paint brushes as drum sticks will make a softer sound.

Exploring sounds is an important element of the music curriculum and is the foundation for all musical creation. Children should be given time to experiment with how to create sounds with different classroom instruments. For example, with drums encourage children to strike with the hand, stroke or use their fingertips as well as trying out different types of sticks (mallets) with soft or hard heads (e.g. chopsticks or paintbrushes) to hear how each way of playing creates a different type of sound.

### Sound Exploration with Found Objects, Voice and Body

Sounds are all around us and tapping into in our immediate environment can unveil a wealth of wonderful found sounds to explore.

Classrooms are filled with tonal exploration options: finger tapping on wooden furniture vs metal radiators and sinks, walls, floors and doors, rustling leaves and snapping twigs, ripping, flapping or crinkling paper, popping bubble wrap, flicking pages in a book and so on.

The Voice is fundamentally our first instrument and our primary way of communication. It has amazing versatility including both speaking, singing and more. With the voice we can instantly express emotion, demonstrate dynamics, imitate animals, machinery, characters, the weather and so on. Children should be encouraged to sing, hum and explore with their voices regularly so that they develop vocal confidence, creativity and flexibility.

Body percussion is a fun and accessible way to embody sound and create a strong physical understanding of beat and rhythm. Body percussion sounds can include: hand claps, thigh claps, foot stomps, finger clicks and flicks, cheek

pops, chest taps, tongue clicks etc. Using a hand clap onto the surface of a desk in combination with body percussion sounds will vary the sound textures and can shake things up. Working with partners to create body percussion patterns is also great fun and children love it.

## Simple Approaches to Composition

Composer's Toolkit of Questions:

Composition is largely a process of exploring sounds and making decisions. A simple way to start is to ask some key questions and make choices. Pick a few of these questions as a starting point to any music-making activity in the classroom:

Story line/ emotion

- What feeling, mood or story do we want to create with our music?
- happy/sad; spooky/fun; dreamy/adventurous etc.

Instruments

- What instruments will we use to create the story/ mood we want?
- Strings, woodwind, brass, percussion, voice, recorded sounds, sounds from objects found/ made at home?
- Will we layer them up to create different textures or harmonies?

Melody/ theme

- What instrument will perform our melody?
- Will we use singing or an instrument or both?!
- Do we want our melody to start low down, up high or will it start in the middle and where will it go to next?
- Do we want the music to be choppy (staccato) or smooth and flowing (legato)
- Would long notes work or will we use shorter notes?

Tempo

- Do we want to create a slow or fast piece of music?
- What pulse/ beat would work?
- Will we change it to vary the music by getting faster or slower at different points?

Time Signature

- Do we want to create steady regular beat e.g. March time (4/4)
- Would a dance feel be better e.g. Waltz time (3/4)

Dynamics

- Do we want our music to be loud or soft or somewhere in between?
- Would it work if it the music got louder or faded away and became softer?
- Should the music stop at some points?

Rhythm

- Would it work if it has a regular rhythm or will we break up our beat?
- If we are using words, can the natural rhythm in the words create our rhythm?

Drama and Special Effects

- Do we need to create a special sound for a dramatic moment? eg. a trumpet call, drum roll, bells, silence.

## Composing with an Instrument

We can pick up an instrument and by simply playing around, create a lovely piece of music. It is great fun to just play and see what happens and with practice children will intuitively start to create interesting variations of volume, tempo and rhythm with a simple instrument.

It is crucial to create a safe space – in improvising and creating music there are no wrong notes or mistakes, just choices to be made. Encourage the children to experiment and emphasise the importance of listening to the sounds they are making and how it combines with the sounds others are making. This will help them to make more musical choices. Simple ground rules such as agreed gestures for start/stop and turn taking are also important.

## The Pentatonic Scale

Tuned percussions such as chime bars are very useful and easy to use. Even if you or your students have not formally learned to play an instrument, tuned chime bars or glockenspiels are wonderful starting points into improvisation and composition.

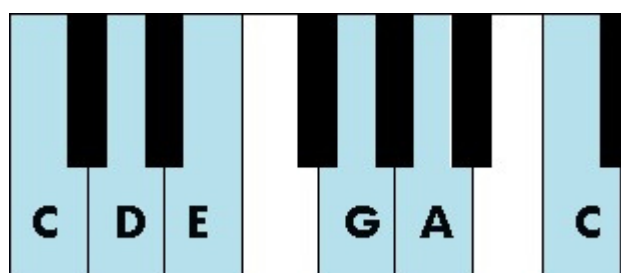
Working in the pentatonic key is easiest approach when using pitched instruments. This means you simply take out 'fa' and 'ti' (or the notes F and B in the key of C). This leaves you with a simple 5 note scale – hence the name pentatonic.

By doing this you remove the semi tones and this means you will be guaranteed a melodious result with any composition using these 5 notes. Pentatonic Scale in the key of C:

This is the pentatonic scale given in standard notation and tonic solfa:



This is how the pentatonic scale looks on a piano or keyboard – you only use the notes highlighted in blue:



**Activity Pack created by Joanna  
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**We would be very happy to  
receive any feedback, images or  
recordings made by the children  
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