

## Making Natural Music

A resource from the Field Studies Council

This resource is designed for you to adapt to your grounds, your students and your equipment resources.

A suggested path through the activity is shown below.

### Starter activity: Collecting different sounds

Conduct a silent sit spot. Give learners time to find a space to sit in the grounds of school or natural space and listen. Ask them to listen for natural and man-made sounds over a 2 or 3 minute period and then discuss all the sounds heard. This could include starting to introduce terms such as pitch, tone and tempo.

### Activity: small groups dependent on class size

Give learners instruction to collect natural items that could make music, a range of items will be needed to give different tones and pitches. Examples could include:

- Relatively large sticks or bits of wood.
- Medium sized stones.
- Small stones or gravel.
- Large pine cones and small sticks.
- Dead or dried leaves.
- Any other swishing, soft or high pitch sounds that can be identified. As an example, some learners may want to try to blow a tune on a blade of grass.

Once the “instruments” have been compiled learners can practice making sounds with them, any other non-natural materials can be added at this point such as: toilet roll tubes to put gravel in, cups or containers in which to shake leaves.

After some practice time, challenge the learners to line up ordering themselves from lowest pitch to highest pitch:

Large sticks being hit together – stones being hit on a flat surface or together – small stones / gravel in a tube – pinecones being scraped or brushed with sticks – dead leaves being crumpled or shaken – any other high pitch sounds found.

Start the low pitch sounds in a slow repeating rhythm, this acts as a metronome of base beat. Once they are in time, add on a half beat the stones. Every fourth beat introduce a double shake of the stones. Then add continuous shaking of the leaves under all the sounds. Every eighth beat add your highest pitch sound or grass blowing sound.

Try to get learners to keep the rhythm going until a harmony is created.

Plenary: learners can try to create their own tune in time with the base beat – be creative!

