

Recycled Instruments



Introduction

At times, people who love music need to find creative ways or overcome obstacles to become musicians.

Supplies

- Online video: “Landfill Harmonic Trailer” (Landfill Harmonic): youtu.be/wCjbd21fYV8
 - Common objects that could be found in recycling bins or around home (make sure to only choose objects that would be safe for kids to handle) such as jars, bottles, boxes, cans, old pens, lids, foil pans, paper-towel rolls, buckets, trash can lids, spoons, etc. A variety of materials, such as plastic, wood, metal, and paper, can be fun.
 - Materials for construction such as string, rubber bands, packing tape, and glue
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Prepare

Familiarize yourself with the “Landfill Harmonic Trailer” video: youtu.be/wCjbd21fYV8

Get kids thinking

Write “Makers and Styles” on the Music Mural.

Talk about how yesterday you made music with your own bodies and voices. If you didn’t have money to buy an instrument, and you didn’t want to make music with your voice or just your body, how could you do it?

Some kids may think of the idea of *making* an instrument.





Start with a Book: Tune In! Toolkit

Recycled Instruments

Tell the kids about the true story of the Recycled Orchestra of Cateura (Orquesta de Instrumentos Reciclados de Cateura):

In Asunción, Paraguay, many families didn't have money to buy musical instruments. An organization donated some instruments to start a music school. But there was a problem. More kids wanted to learn to play than there were instruments for them to use. In Asunción, there was also a landfill (a trash dump) and many families made their money by finding objects in the dump that had some value and then selling those objects. They were known as "garbage pickers" or "recyclers." One of these recyclers began to make musical instruments for the kids out of objects he found in the trash. The children used these instruments and took music lessons. Their orchestra was invited to play around Paraguay and then people around the world heard about them and invited them to play. In 2012, a movie was made about them.

You can watch a summary of the movie and see some of the instruments and musicians in this video: youtu.be/wCjbd21fV8





Recycled Instruments

Let's get started!

STEP 1: Take a look at the materials you collected that could be recycled. Brainstorm how they might be used to make sounds. Remember that an instrument doesn't have to be complicated. Experiment with how using the objects in different ways will make different sounds.

For example, let's say you have collected:

- two foil pie pans
- a pen
- a shoelace
- a large rubber band
- a cardboard box

COULD THESE OBJECTS MAKE DIFFERENT SOUNDS BY:

- tapping two foil pans together?
- tapping a foil pan against a box?
- strapping a foil pan to a box with tape and then tapping it with a pen?
- using the shoelace to hang up a foil pan and then tapping it with a pen in midair?
- tapping the box with the pen?
- attaching the cut rubber band to the box with tape and then snapping it against the box?
- attaching the cut rubber band to a foil pan with tape and then snapping it against the pan?
- making a shaker by filling one foil pie pan with pebbles or rice and taping another foil pie pan over it to seal it up?

STEP 2: Once kids have had a chance to make an instrument out of one or more objects, encourage them to demonstrate what sound(s) their instrument makes.



Favio Chávez, director of the Recycled Orchestra of Cateura

