

# Virtual Discovery Kit.

*Be curious.* GRAND  
RAPIDS  
PUBLIC  
MUSEUM

## Music.

**Music is one of the first elements of culture that comes to mind. Music is found in all civilizations and has been for thousands of years. Use this collection to investigate a variety of musical instruments from around the world.**

Explore the musical instruments in the GRPM digital Collections at <https://grpmcollections.org/Detail/occurrences/139> then have fun with these activities.



## Types of Musical Instruments.

While there are hundreds upon hundreds of types of instruments played around the world, all instruments fall into one of four categories: brass, stringed, percussion and woodwind.

**Brass instruments** include the trumpet, trombone, horn and tuba. These instruments are made of metal and the player must blow into the instrument to create a sound.



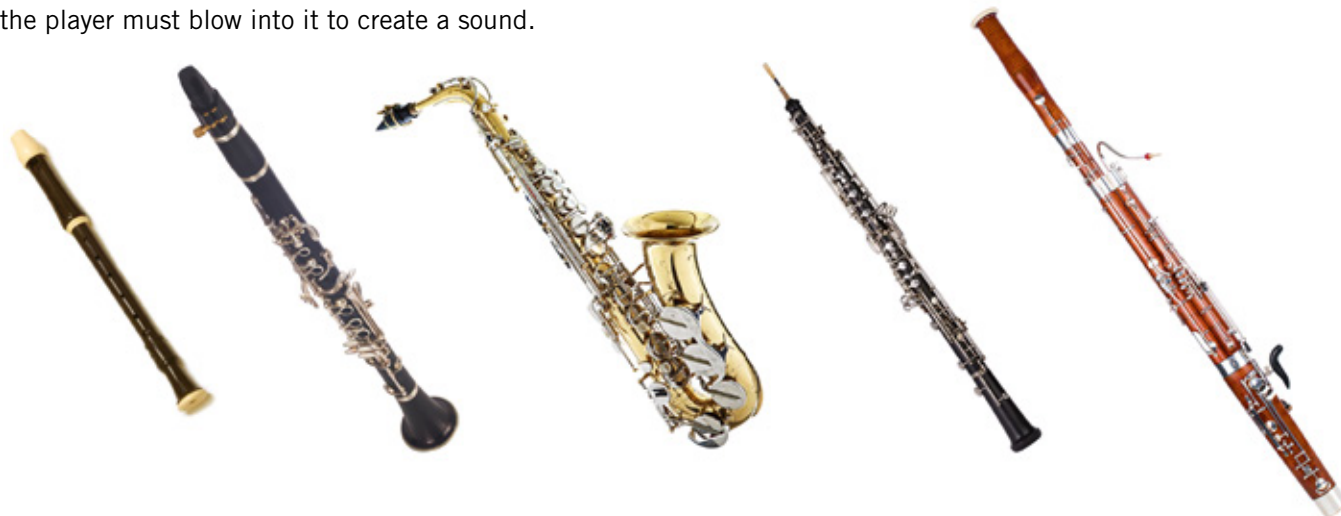
**Stringed instruments** include the guitar, violin, viola, cello, base and harp. Stringed instruments are plucked to create a sound.



**Percussion instruments** include the drums, cymbals, piano and xylophone. A hammer or mallet is used to strike the instrument to produce a sound.



**Woodwind instruments** include the flute, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, bassoon and recorder. These instruments are made of wood and the player must blow into it to create a sound.



**DID YOU KNOW?** The GRPM's [Mighty Wurlitzer Organ](#) can be considered a woodwind instrument. When the keys are pressed, air flows through the pipes to produce a sound.

### What do you think?

- Do you play any musical instruments? Which instruments? How long have you played?

- Are there any instruments you would like to learn how to play?

- Design and sketch a new type of musical instrument; what would it sound like?

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A large rectangular area enclosed by a dotted line, intended for a student to draw a sketch of a new musical instrument.

### References:

- <https://wmich.edu/mus-gened/mus150/appendix.pdf>
- [https://www.yamaha.com/en/musical\\_instrument\\_guide/](https://www.yamaha.com/en/musical_instrument_guide/)

## Instruments Around the World

The instruments in the Music Virtual Discovery Kit were created and used by musicians all around the globe. The table and map below show which country each instrument is from. Look closely at this data and consider:

- Which continent has the most instruments in our kit? What other patterns do you notice?
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- Use what you learned in the previous section to identify which category each instrument is.
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- Go further: Research the most popular instrument in a country you'd like to visit.

Instrument	Country of Origin	Type of Instrument: brass, stringed, percussion or woodwind
<a href="#">Rattle (E2014.1.346)</a>	Jamaica	
<a href="#">Finger Cymbals</a>	Egypt	
<a href="#">Concertina</a>	Germany	
<a href="#">Castanets</a>	Spain	
<a href="#">Rattles on Wooden Stick (E2007.8.1)</a>	Indonesia	
<a href="#">Raft Zither</a>	Nigeria	
<a href="#">Harp Lute</a>	Africa (exact country unknown)	
<a href="#">Talking Drum and Striking Stick</a>	Nigeria	
<a href="#">Tik Tak Drum</a>	Kenya	
<a href="#">Angklung</a>	Indonesia	



Photo caption: Map created at <https://mapchart.net/world.html>

## Museum Artifact Study

Artifacts are all around us; they are the objects humans make and use. They frame our understanding of our world and the people in it. Everyday objects hold many stories and pieces of information that we can uncover! Take a shoe for instance. It can become the spark for a study of fashion or advertising; it can generate comparisons of human and animal feet; it could even spark questions about gender, sports and culture. <sup>1</sup>

## 'Reading' an Object

Museums tell the story of the past through objects or artifacts made by or used by people in those times. Learning to 'read' an artifact is a skill to be acquired through practice, just like reading a book. Artifact observation helps teach us how to really look at an object and make inferences. Some questions you can ask of any artifact are:

### What is it?

- Describe or draw the object.
- What does it look like, feel like, sound like?
- How big is it?
- What materials is it made from?

### What Was it Used For?

- What can you infer based on your observations?

### Who Made the Object?

- Who used it? Owned it?

### How Has it Changed Over Time?

- Do we use the same or similar object today? If yes, explain. If we no longer use the object, what has taken its place?

### What is the Object's Social Significance?

- Why was it chosen for this collection?
- What story does it tell us? What can we learn from it?

### Where Was This Object Created?

- Where was it used?
- What can we learn about this object based on where it came from?

### When Was This Object Created/Used?

- What does this tell us about the time period in which the object was created?
- What can we learn about the world through this piece? How has the world changed?

**Practice your artifact observations with the [Artifact Observations Guide!](#)  
You can make a detailed observation of each item in the [Music Discovery Kit Collection](#)**



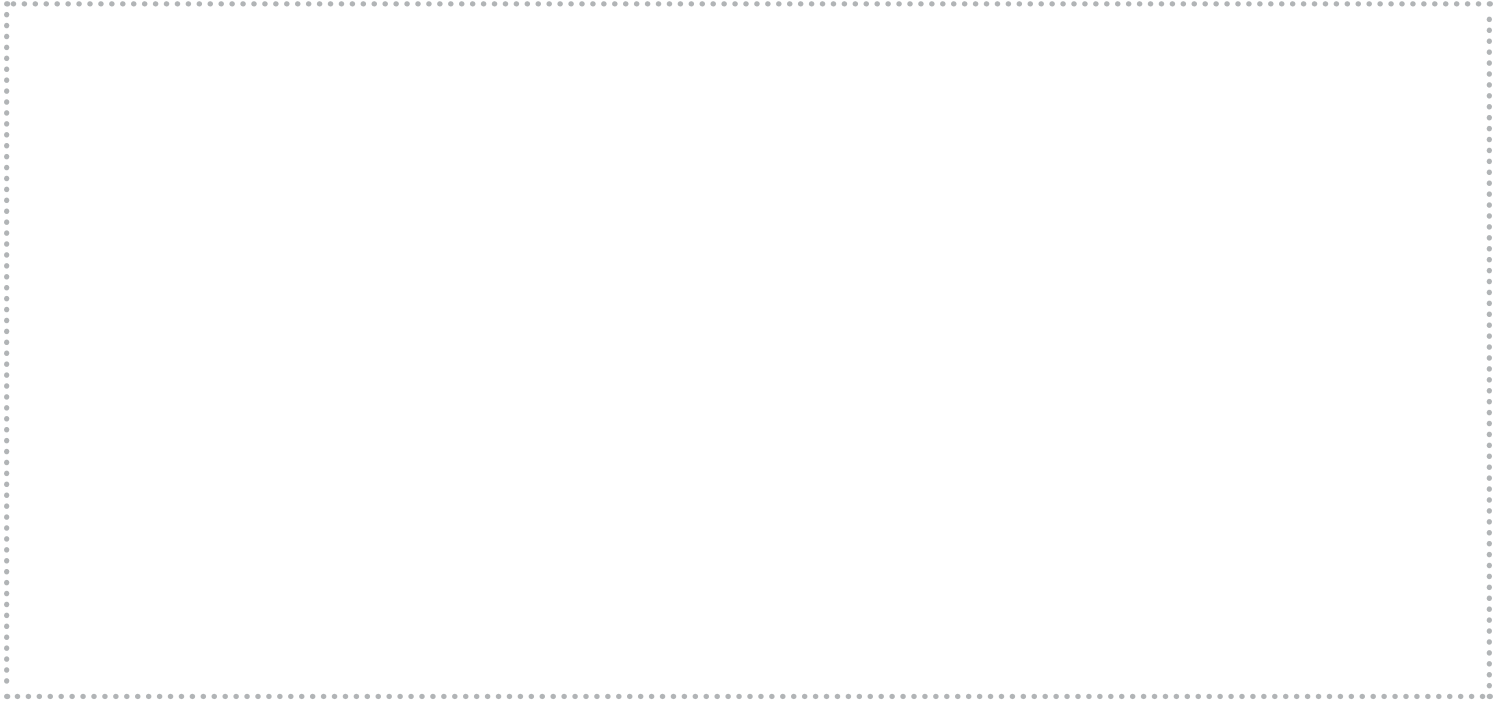
<sup>1</sup> A Teacher's Guide to Learning from Objects, Gail Durbin, Susan Morris, Sue Wilkinson, 1990, English Heritage.

## Artifact Observations

Object Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Accession Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe and/or sketch your detailed observations of the object.

Consider its texture, appearance, shape, and size. Record labels, patterns, markings and anything else you think is interesting!



### Record Measurements:

Don't forget the units!

Length: \_\_\_\_\_

Width: \_\_\_\_\_

Height: \_\_\_\_\_

### Record Materials.

What is the object made from?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

### Other thoughts and wonderings.

What did you learn about this object?

What are you curious about?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Create your Own Instruments

Use the artifacts in this collection as inspiration to create your own set of instruments and put together a band!

### Drums

Drums - the simplest of instruments to make yourself. Find an old coffee can, yogurt tub, soup can, or plastic food storage container, flip it over and count out the beat. Take your instrument up a notch with balloons and rubber bands; stretch a latex balloon over the top opening of your drum and secure with a rubber band or two.

- How did the sound of your drum change by switching the “skin” of the batter head (the part of the drum you tap)?

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### Tambourine

Every band needs a tambourine! You can create a simple tambourine with two paper plates, a hole puncher, ribbon and jingle bells.

First, decorate the bottom side of your paper plates markers, colored pencils, crayons, or paint. If you use paint, let it dry.

Flip your plates over so that the tops (the side you normally eat on) are together, then use the hole puncher to punch 4-6 holes. Thread your jingle bells on the ribbon and tie your plates together.



### Rattle

Gather up what is available at home to create your own rattle!

First, you'll need a container. It can be a water bottle, a food storage container, even a toilet paper roll. Then, you'll need to find items that make noise when they jingle together - rice, beans, beads, bottle caps, or coins will do. If you use a toilet paper or paper towel roll for the body of your rattle, you'll also need to find some construction paper and tape to seal up the ends.

Decorate your rattle with a custom design using markers, colored pencils, crayons, or paint. Now might be a good time to go find your jingly items. Once your rattle is dry, fill it with enough jingly items to rattle around. If needed, cut your construction paper to cover the holes on either end of your tube, then tape together.

Shake, rattle, and roll through the house! You've just created another instrument for your band!



**What do you think?**



- What do you think is the coolest instrument in this kit? Why?

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- What is your favorite genre of music? What do you like about it?

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- If you could have dinner with any musician, who would it be and why?

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- How do you usually listen to music? On the radio? Streaming service? Live?

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- How does music impact your life? Do you have any routines or traditions involving music?

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- What was the most interesting thing you learned in this discovery kit?

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## Learn more!

### Explore the Billboard charts to find out,

<https://www.billboard.com/charts>

- What is the #1 song (any genre) this week?
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- What was the #1 song (any genre) this week in 2019?
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- What was the #1 song (any genre) the week you were born?
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### Use MusicMap to learn more about different genres of music through an interactive timeline.

<https://www.musicmap.info/>

- How many genres and super-genres can you count?
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- Are there any genres you didn't know about?
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### Explore Classics for Kids, a project of Cincinnati Public Radio, to learn about classical music, to listen to snippets of compositions, and to play fun educational games.

<https://www.classicsforkids.com/>

### Visit Musicnotes NOW to learn the basics of reading sheet music and access free instructional resources.

<https://www.musicnotes.com/now/tips/how-to-read-sheet-music/>