



Activities at Home

Dear Parents,

The activity for week 7 beginning 19th October is: Music is Marvellous

The activity that we will be covering involves using various items of 'junk' to create our own musical instruments

Our activity includes:

- First, we will talk about different musicians and styles of music throughout our history, and the children will be given the opportunity to listen to excerpts of their music. For example, we will talk about more classical musicians such as Ludwig Van Beethoven and how he was able to compose and play beautiful music despite becoming increasingly deaf, or Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who composed his first piece of music at just 5 years old, as well as more modern artists, such as Louis Armstrong, who used music as a means to make money for his family as a child. We will also look at examples of rhythmic drum music, such as the Chinese New Year drum performances-these are often performed as a group and I would like to give the children the opportunity to see that musicians can be marvellous collectively as well as individually. Children will have the opportunity to listen to excerpts of music from all musicians discussed and offer their own opinions on pieces of music that they did or did not like and why.
- Next, children will be given the opportunity to create their own musical instruments using various items of junk-if you could send any of your own cardboard recycling into school to add to the collection, that would be great! They will be invited to make simple guitars and stringed instruments using cardboard boxes and elastic bands, rain sticks and maracas using rice and boxes, and drums.
- **HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTE**-For hygiene purposes, children will not be able to make any kind of instrument that needs to go into their mouths to be played, and instead will be invited to make instruments which can only be played by the hand-e.g. jingle stick bells, drums, rain sticks etc. Where elastic bands will be made available, only large ones which children can easily manipulate will be used in order to minimise any risk of the band snapping.

You might wish to help your child to explore this topic at home or when you are out and about. Please feel free to approach the teachers for further explanations. Our suggested activities are:

- Encourage your child to think about music that you hear together-for example on the radio, when you are walking around the shops, on television-do they like this music? Why/why not? Encourage them to think about how the music makes them feel, what they think that the music may be about, etc.
- Encourage your child to think of their body as a musical instrument by playing clapping games and follow the rhythm/beat games-e.g. clapping hands, thumping chest, stamping feet. What different ways can they find to make music with their body? This is known as ‘body percussion’ and helps to support phonics skills as it encourages sound differentiation
- If you have any real musical instruments in your house, encourage your child to have a go at playing them. Can they make different sounds with the instrument? If your child is able to recognise letters at this point, you can develop this by writing sounds on the instrument and encouraging them to hit or play the instrument at this point to play a simple tune such as ‘Twinkle Twinkle, Little Star’? For example, writing sounds on a xylophone or keyboard keys and encouraging your child to play them in a certain order. This doesn’t necessarily have to relate to the ‘ABCD’ sounds is your child is not yet familiar with them

