

In past years you may have been taught that there are four main types of instruments. They are:

1. Strings
2. Woodwinds
3. Brass
4. Percussion

We are going to refine our types by placing the instruments in categories.

Categories of Instruments

HOW SOUND IS PRODUCED

Aerophone

✓ Instruments that produce sound by a vibrating column of air

Idiophone

✓ Simple solid instruments that produce sound by being struck, scraped or shaken

Membranophone

✓ Instruments that produce sound by striking or rubbing a skin or membrane stretched across a resonating air chamber

Chordophones

✓ Instruments that produce sound by striking, rubbing

Electrophones

□ Instruments that produce sound with the aid of electricity.

Some instruments may span more than one category. For example, an electric guitar may be an electrophone, chordophone and, in some circumstances, an idiophone. The next page classifies many of the instruments by their type. The list is certainly not complete but does deal with the instruments that many schools have in their inventory. Feel free to add others as you see fit.

INSTRUMENT

NEEDS

Woodwind

Single reed:

- ✓ Clarinets
- ✓ Saxophones

Double Reed:

- ✓ Oboes (English horns)
- ✓ Bassoons

No Reed:

- ✓ Piccolos
- ✓ Flutes

- ✓ Sound is produced by a vibrating air column
- ✓ Reeds or lips are used to set up the air column

Brass

- ✓ Trumpets
- ✓ French horns
- ✓ Trombones
- ✓ Baritones
- ✓ Euphoniums
- ✓ Tubas

- ✓ Sound is produced by a vibrating air column
- ✓ Cup mouthpiece and vibrating lips set up the air column.

Percussion

Definite pitch: when you hit the instrument you get a specific note.

- ✓ Timpani
- ✓ Xylophones
- ✓ Vibraphones
- ✓ Orchestra bells

- ✓ Hitting, scraping or rubbing the instrument produces sound

Indefinite pitch: when you hit or shake or rub the instrument you do not get a specific note.

- ✓ Bass drum
- ✓ Snare drum
- ✓ Woodblocks
- ✓ Maracas

There are many more.

Strings

- ✓ Violin
- ✓ Viola
- ✓ Cello
- ✓ Double bass
- ✓ Acoustic guitar
- ✓ Mandolin

- ✓ Sound is produced by vibrating the string(s) by bowing or plucking
- ✓ Lengthening or shortening the string by using different finger position changes sound.

Electronic

- ✓ Electric guitars
- ✓ Synthesizers
- ✓ Computers (midi)

- ✓ You need a power source to make a sound.
(Electricity)

Keyboard

- ✓ Piano
- ✓ Organ
- ✓ Harpsichord

- ✓ Striking a key that in turn strikes or plucks a string produces sound

NAME: _____ DATE: _____ Use a musical dictionary or encyclopedias to help you find the answers to the questions given below. You may also use your method book, instrument catalogues or guide, or ask a musician who plays your instrument.

1. What instrument do you play? _____(1)

2. What category of instrument is it? _____(1)

3. What type of instrument is it? _____(1)

4. What other instruments are in the same family of instruments as your instrument?

_____(3)

5. When and where was your instrument invented?

_____(2)

6. What effect will eating gum or candy before or during playing of your instrument have on your instrument?

_____(2)

7. Why should you never 'lend' your instrument to a friend or family member?

_____(2)

(Note: this rubric can be used for the next two assignments also) Level Achieved:

Name: _____

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

_____ Course: The Arts,
Music

Expectations: C3.2

Families of Instruments

Answering basic questions about categories and types of instruments.

Criteria	Level 1 *50-59	Level 2 *60-69	Level 3 *70-79	Level 4 *80-100
Understanding of Concepts	describes the history, construction and use of instrument with limited information	Describes the history, construction and use of the instrument providing adequate information	Describes history, construction and use of an instrument providing good information	Describes history, construction and use of an instrument providing thorough information
Critical Analysis and Appreciation	ID's required knowledge with limited success	ID's required knowledge with some success	ID's required knowledge with considerable success	ID's required knowledge with excellent success
Communication	Rarely uses correct musical terminology	Sometimes uses correct musical terminology	Often uses correct musical terminology	Consistently uses correct musical terminology

☐ The student did not meet the expectations of this assignment.

COMMENTS:

NEXT STEPS: