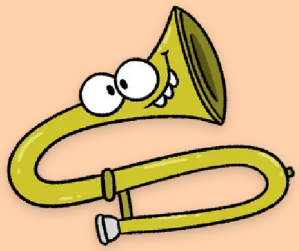
MUSIC THEORY · INSTRUMENT FAMILIES · GRADES 1–3

Instrument Families Sort

Write each instrument from the word bank under its family: strings, woodwinds, brass or percussion.



Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Word bank

trumpet · violin · flute · snare drum · cello · tuba · clarinet · xylophone · harp · trombone · oboe · triangle · guitar · French horn · saxophone · cymbals

Write four instruments in each family.

Strings	Woodwinds	Brass	Percussion

Surprise: the **saxophone** is made of metal, but it is a woodwind because you blow past a thin wooden reed to play it.

Art © Kevin Coulston

MUSIC THEORY · INSTRUMENT FAMILIES · GRADES 2–4

How Instruments Make Sound

Every sound starts with something that vibrates. Match each family to how it makes sound, then answer the questions.



Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Match each family to the way it makes sound.

Strings ●	● Your lips buzz into a metal mouthpiece.
Woodwinds ●	● A string shakes when you pluck it or pull a bow across it.
Brass ●	● You hit it, shake it or scrape it.
Percussion ●	● Air shakes when you blow across a hole or past a thin reed.

Circle the right answer.

A violin player pulls this across the strings. (a bow) (a reed)

A clarinet player blows past this thin piece of cane. (a slide) (a reed)

A trombone player changes notes by moving this. (a slide) (a bow)

Which one is a percussion instrument? (a flute) (a tambourine)

A short string makes a sound that is (higher) (lower)

A big, long tube makes a sound that is (higher) (lower)

Art © Kevin Coulston

MUSIC THEORY · INSTRUMENT FAMILIES · GRADES 2–5

Instrument Riddles

Read each riddle and write the instrument from the word bank.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____



Word bank

flute · harp · piano · triangle · trombone · tuba · violin · xylophone

Who am I? Write the instrument.

I have 88 black and white keys.

_____

I am made of brass. I change notes with a long slide.

_____

I am a woodwind with no reed. You hold me sideways and blow across a hole.

_____

I am tall and I have many strings. You pluck me with both hands.

_____

I am a metal bar bent into three sides. Tap me and I ring.

_____

I am the biggest brass instrument and I play the lowest notes.

_____

I am the smallest string instrument in the orchestra. You tuck me under your chin.

_____

My wooden bars are lined up like piano keys. You hit them with mallets.

_____

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MUSIC THEORY · INSTRUMENT FAMILIES · GRADES 1–5

Instruments Word Search

Find twelve instruments. They go across, down and diagonally.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____



B	S	F	T	G	U	I	T	A	R	S	H
U	Y	K	U	W	O	E	N	E	Y	O	T
S	A	G	B	B	I	M	T	Y	O	O	G
Y	Y	D	A	S	B	F	C	E	L	L	O
R	T	P	R	E	F	L	U	T	E	A	C
U	A	R	I	U	O	B	O	E	V	T	L
I	C	N	O	A	M	M	A	S	I	R	A
Y	R	F	I	M	N	T	F	R	O	U	R
U	E	G	M	M	B	O	Y	I	L	M	I
O	C	R	N	P	P	O	K	T	I	P	N
R	B	T	W	W	F	A	N	S	N	E	E
H	A	R	P	R	I	R	S	E	R	T	T

- ☐ violin
- ☐ cello
- ☐ harp
- ☐ flute
- ☐ clarinet
- ☐ oboe
- ☐ trumpet
- ☐ trombone
- ☐ tuba
- ☐ drum
- ☐ piano
- ☐ guitar

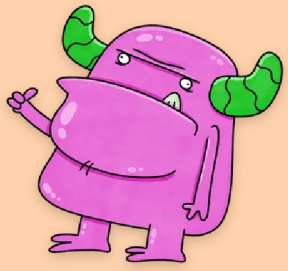
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MUSIC THEORY · INSTRUMENT FAMILIES · GRADES K–5

Invent an Instrument

Draw a brand new instrument. Then tell how you play it, what family it is in and how it sounds.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____



Draw your instrument. Add labels for its parts.

My instrument is called _____

Its family (circle one): strings · woodwinds · brass · percussion

Its sound (circle): high · low · loud · soft · smooth · bumpy

How do you play it?

_____

What is it made of?

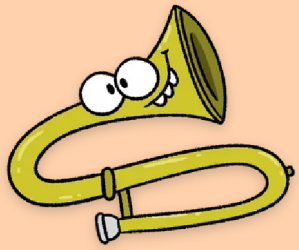
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ANSWER KEY · INSTRUMENT FAMILIES · GRADES 1–3

Answer Key: Instrument Families Sort

Answers for grown-ups. Where kids write or draw their own ideas, the key shows one example.



Word bank

trumpet · violin · flute · snare drum · cello · tuba · clarinet · xylophone · harp · trombone · oboe · triangle · guitar · French horn · saxophone · cymbals

Write four instruments in each family.

Strings	Woodwinds	Brass	Percussion
violin	flute	trumpet	snare drum
cello	clarinet	trombone	xylophone
harp	oboe	tuba	triangle
guitar	saxophone	French horn	cymbals

Surprise: the **saxophone** is made of metal, but it is a woodwind because you blow past a thin wooden reed to play it.

Art © Kevin Coulston

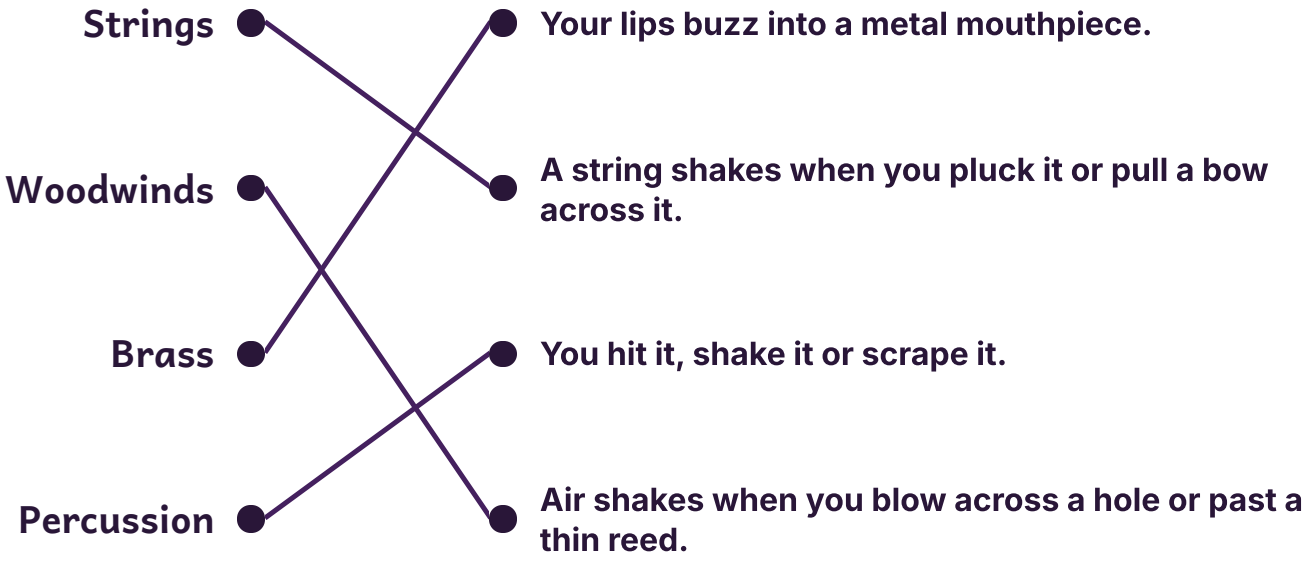
ANSWER KEY · INSTRUMENT FAMILIES · GRADES 2–4

Answer Key: How Instruments Make Sound

Answers for grown-ups. Where kids write or draw their own ideas, the key shows one example.



Match each family to the way it makes sound.



Circle the right answer.

A violin player pulls this across the strings. **a bow** / a reed

A clarinet player blows past this thin piece of cane. a slide / **a reed**

A trombone player changes notes by moving this. **a slide** / a bow

Which one is a percussion instrument? a flute / **a tambourine**

A short string makes a sound that is **higher** / lower

A big, long tube makes a sound that is higher / **lower**

Art © Kevin Coulston

ANSWER KEY · INSTRUMENT FAMILIES · GRADES 2–5

Answer Key: Instrument Riddles

Answers for grown-ups. Where kids write or draw their own ideas, the key shows one example.



Word bank

flute · harp · piano · triangle · trombone · tuba · violin · xylophone

Who am I? Write the instrument.

I have 88 black and white keys.

piano

I am made of brass. I change notes with a long slide.

trombone

I am a woodwind with no reed. You hold me sideways and blow across a hole.

flute

I am tall and I have many strings. You pluck me with both hands.

harp

I am a metal bar bent into three sides. Tap me and I ring.

triangle

I am the biggest brass instrument and I play the lowest notes.

tuba

I am the smallest string instrument in the orchestra. You tuck me under your chin.

violin

My wooden bars are lined up like piano keys. You hit them with mallets.

xylophone

Art © Kevin Coulston

ANSWER KEY · INSTRUMENT FAMILIES · GRADES 1–5

Answer Key: Instruments Word Search

Answers for grown-ups. Where kids write or draw their own ideas, the key shows one example.



B	S	F	T	G	U	I	T	A	R	S	H
U	Y	K	U	W	O	E	N	E	Y	O	T
S	A	G	B	B	I	M	T	Y	O	O	G
Y	Y	D	A	S	B	F	C	E	L	L	O
R	T	P	R	E	F	L	U	T	E	A	C
U	A	R	I	U	O	B	O	E	V	T	L
I	C	N	O	A	M	M	A	S	I	R	A
Y	R	F	I	M	N	T	F	R	O	U	R
U	E	G	M	M	B	O	Y	I	L	M	I
O	C	R	N	P	P	O	K	T	I	P	N
R	B	T	W	W	F	A	N	S	N	E	E
H	A	R	P	R	I	R	S	E	R	T	T

- ☐ violin
- ☐ cello
- ☐ harp
- ☐ flute
- ☐ clarinet
- ☐ oboe
- ☐ trumpet
- ☐ trombone
- ☐ tuba
- ☐ drum
- ☐ piano
- ☐ guitar

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