

SHAPES, SOUND HOLES, AND STRINGS:

A FEW STRINGED INSTRUMENTS AND THE SOUNDS THEY MAKE

TEACHER'S GUIDE



This teacher's guide contains classroom lessons designed to help teachers introduce their students to some traditional instruments featured in country music and to the sounds they create. These lessons are complemented by a tour of the museum's exhibits and a hands-on experience with the instruments themselves. The lessons address specific curriculum objectives in language arts, math, music, social studies, and science for grades K-8. All curricular connections are based

on the Tennessee state curriculum standards and can be used as interdisciplinary teaching tools. *Teacher Tips*, included in some of the lessons, provide more detailed instructions or suggestions for ways teachers can adapt lessons to the particular needs and backgrounds of their students. The lessons may be taught over several weeks, or condensed into several class periods. Each lesson lists an estimated preparation time and teach time.

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CREATE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT BOOKS:



As part of this unit, students are encouraged to create their own books about the musical instruments. Students will be instructed to add new instruments and information to their books, but they should also have the freedom to use their creativity in making the book their own work. The book should be divided by musical instrument. Each instrument entry should include a drawing of the instrument, the Observation Sheet (template at end of lesson guide), and space for “free” writing and drawing. Books can be made of construction paper and lined paper, and copies of the Observation Sheet can be glued to specific pages. Students should share their work with others when it is appropriate.

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TEACHER TIP:

For younger students, you may wish to create an instrument book as a class. You could use easel paper or poster board for the pages.

You could also create a bulletin board for this unit where you post pictures of each instrument, drawings children create of each instrument, photos of people playing each instrument, or the observation charts students have completed.



Emmylou Harris's custom 1955 Gibson J-200 guitar with inlaid rose and moustache bridge

1 | WHAT DO YOU ALREADY KNOW? WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW?

TENNESSEE STATE CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Language Arts

2.0 The student will develop the structural and creative skills of the writing process necessary to produce written language that can be read, presented to, and interpreted by various audiences. Learning expectations: 2.02 (K-5,6-8), 2.09 (K-5), 2.11 (K-5)

3.0 The student will use Standard English conventions and proper spelling as appropriate to speaking and writing. Learning expectations: 3.01 (K-8), 3.02 (K-8), 3.03 (K-8), 3.04 (K-8)

Music

8.0 Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts. Learning expectations: 8.2 (2,3-8)

Science

14.0 The student will investigate energy and its issues. Learning expectations: 14.1 (4-5), 14.2 (K-3,4,5)

Objective: Students will create a set of statements they believe about musical instruments, how they are made, and how they make sound. They will also create a set of statements determining what they would like to learn about musical instruments. They will evaluate these statements at the end of the unit by reflecting on the lessons and the museum visit.

Materials: construction paper, lined paper, pencil, glue, instrument books

Prep Time: 60 minutes to create instrument books and complete chart



1. Ask students to construct their books.

2. Use the following questions for class discussion:

- Do you play a musical instrument?
If so, what instrument do you play?
- What is your favorite musical instrument?

3. Before starting this unit, create a KWL chart with your class.

This is a chart with three sections or columns, one for each letter: K, W, and L. The K section is what we already know about musical instruments, how they are made, and the sounds they make. The W section is what we want to learn about musical instruments. At the end of this unit, we will complete the L section: what we learned. Once this chart is created, save it for review and use it at the end of the unit.

K	W	L

3

TEACHER TIP:

You may choose to make this an individual activity by asking students to work independently on their KWL charts. Each student can glue the chart at the beginning of his or her book.

2 | WHAT IS SOUND?

TENNESSEE STATE CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Language Arts:

1.0 The student will develop the reading and listening skills necessary for word recognition, comprehension, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and appreciation of print and non-print text. Learning expectations: 1.06 (4-8), 1.07 (K-3)

2.0 The student will develop the structural and creative skills of the writing process necessary to produce written language that can be read, presented to, and interpreted by various audiences. Learning expectations: 2.02 (K-5,6-8), 2.09 (K-5), 2.11 (K-5)

3.0 The student will use Standard English conventions and proper spelling as appropriate to speaking and writing. Learning expectations: 3.01 (K-8), 3.02 (K-8), 3.03 (K-8), 3.04 (K-8)

Science:

14.0 The student will investigate energy and its issues. Learning expectations: 14.1 (4-5), 14.2 (K-3,4,5)

Objective: Students will discuss how sounds are produced through vibration. They will explain how sound travels in waves that move differently in different materials, such as air and water.

Materials: instrument books, paper, pencils, glue

Prep Time: none

Teach Time: varies (30 minutes for class activity; 10 minutes if activity is assigned as homework)

Vocabulary: sound, sound waves, vibration



BOOK ENTRY:

Students can answer these questions in their books. They can also define *sound* in their books. They can find a definition in the dictionary or on the Internet.

Sound is vibrations that travel through air.

1. Ask students to observe and record the sounds they hear throughout the day.

They can use the following questions to make notes in their instrument books or journals:

- Describe the sound you hear.
- What time of day did you hear it?
- Where did you hear it?
- What is creating the sound?

Notes:

TEACHER TIP:

For younger students, you may wish to lead them on a “listening walk.” Give each student a clipboard and piece of paper. Take a walk around your school through the hallway, gym, auditorium, or playground. Ask students to record the sounds they hear in each space. Their observations will help them answer the questions listed above.

For older students, you can adapt this activity to a homework assignment by asking them to record the sounds they hear in their home, on their way home, at the grocery store, or in other places in their neighborhood or community.

2. Using students' collected data, share and discuss the following:

In order to understand how sound moves through musical instruments, we must first examine *sound* in general and how it is created.

- What sounds did you hear throughout the day?
- Where did you hear these sounds?
- How do you think sound is created?
- Are all the sounds created the same way?
- How does the sound make it to your ear?

3. Use the following questions for discussion:

- When you talk to a friend, how does sound get from his/her mouth to your ears?
- How might your bodies behave differently if you create a whisper than if you shout? Why?
- How would a friend's body respond differently if they were listening to us whisper or shout? Why?

4. Share the following with students:

Sound travels through air just like waves travel through water. This is why we say that sound travels in sound waves. When we talk, our vocal cords vibrate, creating noise. This noise then travels through the air in sound waves that hit our ears, causing them to vibrate.

TEACHER TIP:

To demonstrate further the vibrations, attach a piece of string to two points that are apart from one another. Pull on the string so that the students can see the string vibrate. Students could also research the voices and noises of other animals and insects.

5. Ask students if they have ever noticed how voices sound different when they are underwater.

Why might this be? Explain to them that sound cannot vibrate as fast in water. This creates quieter, more muffled sounds. Also, their eardrums receive sound waves that are traveling much more slowly when they are underwater, which is why they cannot hear them as well. The different materials used to make musical instruments create unique sounds.



Charley Pride with his guitar

3 | THE VOICE—OUR PERSONAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

TENNESSEE STATE CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Mathematics

1.0 Students will sing alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music. Learning expectations:

1.1 (K,1,2,3,4-5,6-8), 1.2 (6-8)

5.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 5.2 (K), 5.6 (K)

6.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 6.3 (4), 6.4 (1)

Science

14.0 The student will investigate energy and its issues. Learning expectations: 14.1 (4-5), 14.2 (K-3,4,5)

Objective: Students will explore their own voices in order to learn how sound is created by vibrations. They will also learn how instrument materials and the shape and size of sound holes affect sound.

Materials: none

Prep Time: none

Teach Time: 20 minutes

Vocabulary: inner ear, larynx, vibration

1. Ask students the following questions:

- Does anyone sing in a choir?
- Do you think of your voice as a musical instrument? Why or why not?
- How do you think your voice is similar to a harmonica? How is it different?
- Look at a diagram of the larynx and talk about how air moves through the chambers.

2. So that your students can further explore their voices, direct them in singing a familiar song together like “Happy Birthday” or “You Are My Sunshine.”

TEACHER TIP:

Instead of singing the suggested songs, have students recite a song or poem they have been learning. You can also have them say the Pledge of Allegiance, or another speaking activity they take part in regularly.

3. Ask students to sing the song while placing their hands on their throat, neck, and chest.

- What do you feel? (vibrations)
- What parts of your body help you talk or sing?
- What parts of your body help you hear?
- Observe what parts of your body you are using.

Share the following information with students:

When you place your hands on your throat, neck, and chest, you are feeling the vibrations of your voice. The air travels from your lungs (in your chest) and hits your voice box, or larynx, to create vibrations (in your throat).

TEACHER TIP:

To extend this lesson, find a diagram of a voice box, or larynx, and the inner ear. Examine the details of these body parts. Discuss how they work. You can find diagrams on the following Web sites:

Larynx:

<http://www.healthnewsflash.com/images/conditions/lar2.gif>

Inner ear:

<http://static.howstuffworks.com/gif/hearing-diagram-2.gif>

5. Ask students to sing the song again.

Have them sing with their mouths open as wide as they can. Then, have students sing with their teeth pushed together.

- Which way is louder? Why might that be?

This activity helps us begin to think about how the design of an instrument and the shape and size of its sound holes determine its sound.

4 | THE GUITAR

TENNESSEE STATE CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Language Arts

1.0 The student will develop the reading and listening skills necessary for word recognition, comprehension, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and appreciation of print and non-print text. Learning expectations: 1.06 (4-8), 1.07 (K-3)

2.0 The student will develop the structural and creative skills of the writing process necessary to produce written language that can be read, presented to, and interpreted by various audiences. Learning expectations: 2.02 (K-5,6-8), 2.09 (K-5), 2.11 (K-5)

3.0 The student will use Standard English conventions and proper spelling as appropriate to speaking and writing. Learning expectations: 3.01 (K-8), 3.02 (K-8), 3.03 (K-8), 3.04 (K-8)

Math

1.0 The student will develop number and operation sense needed to represent numbers and number relationships verbally, symbolically, and graphically to compute fluently and make reasonable estimates in problem solving. Learning expectations: 1.1 (K-8)

2.0 The student will understand and generalize patterns as they represent and analyze quantitative relationships and change in a variety of contexts and problems using graphs, tables, and equations. Learning expectations: 2.1 (K-3,4-8), 2.2 (K-3)

3.0 The student will develop an understanding of geometric concepts and relationships as the basis for geometric modeling and reasoning to solve problems involving one-, two-, and three-dimensional figures. Learning expectations: 3.1 (K-3), 3.2 (K-3)

5.0 The student will understand and apply basic statistical and probability concepts in order to organize and analyze data and to make predictions and conjectures. Learning expectations: 5.1 (K-3)

Music

5.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 5.2 (K)

6.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 6.2 (3), 6.3 (2,4), 6.4 (1)

7.0 The students will evaluate music and music performances. Learning expectations: 7.1 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

8.0 Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts. Learning expectations: 8.2 (2,3-8)

Science

14.0 The student will investigate energy and its issues. Learning expectations: 14.1 (4-5), 14.2 (K-3,4,5)

Social Studies

1.0 Culture encompasses similarities and differences among people, including their beliefs, knowledge, changes, values, and traditions. Students will explore these elements of society to develop an appreciation and respect for the variety of human cultures. Learning expectations: 1.01 (K-5)

Objective: Students will examine a guitar, photograph of a guitar, or recall from memory to describe its physical characteristics: size, shape, strings, and materials. Students will listen to a song featuring the guitar to describe its distinctive sound and how that sound is created.

Materials: Paper, pencils photocopies of the Observation Sheet (page 20) and guitar line drawing (page 21), a guitar or a photograph of a guitar (included on poster), CD (included with lesson guide), CD player

Prep Time: 10 minutes to gather materials and make copies of the Observation Sheet and guitar line drawing

Teach Time: 60 minutes

Vocabulary: blues, chord, ensemble, Europe, lute, parlor, pick, pluck, solo, strum, twentieth century

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Share the following with students:

- We will create or use a chart to collect information about the guitar and to learn about its distinctive sound.

Show students the guitar or images of the guitar.

- Allow students to fill in the appropriate information on their charts. This can be done independently or as a class.
- Ask students to write the name of the instrument. Do you know what this instrument is? What do you already know about this instrument?



BOOK ENTRY:

Encourage students to cut and paste the guitar line drawing into their instrument book. They can color and decorate their instrument. Many musicians have inlaid designs on their instrument in pearl or other woods. Students do not have to use the included line drawing, but instead could draw their own. They should use the next several pages of their books to collect information about the guitar.

1. Share the following information about the guitar with students:

Design: a stringed instrument with a hollow or solid body; long, fretted neck; and, typically, six strings

Materials: wooden body and neck, with metal or nylon strings

History: The guitar had evolved in Europe by 1800 into its present form with six single strings. After delta blues, country music was the first style of popular music based around the guitar. Before the 1920s, the guitar was a refined parlor instrument, overshadowed by the lute, banjo, and mandolin. By the end of the 1920s, however, players were finding the guitar to be more easily played in different styles than the banjo. The guitar could be strummed; its individual strings could be finger-picked in a variety of patterns; or single strings could be picked with a guitar pick for solos and instrumental parts.

The first usable electric guitar was introduced by the Rickenbacker company in 1932, giving guitarists the volume necessary to compete with other instruments in a large band.

Adapted from the *Encyclopedia of Country Music* (Oxford University Press).

Playing Technique: The strings of the guitar are strummed or plucked with one hand, while the other hand presses down on the strings to make notes or chords.

Some styles of music in which the guitar can be heard: country, rock, folk, classical, bluegrass, jazz, blues.

WHAT DO YOU HEAR?

3. Play a sound clip of the guitar from the accompanying CD and consider the following.

Students may write their answers in their journals or discuss them in small groups, or this may be discussed as a class.

- Use your chart to write down how you think this instrument sounds.
- Have you heard this instrument before? Where? In what song?
- Do you like the sound it makes? Explain.
- How do you think its design contributes to its distinctive sound? Think about its shape, size, what it's made of, the size of its sound hole, and what the strings are made of.
- Does the sound of the guitar remind you of another instrument or a sound heard in nature?

Notes:

5 | THE BANJO

TENNESSEE STATE CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Language Arts:

1.0 The student will develop the reading and listening skills necessary for word recognition, comprehension, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and appreciation of print and non-print text. Learning expectations: 1.06 (4-8), 1.07 (K-3)

2.0 The student will develop the structural and creative skills of the writing process necessary to produce written language that can be read, presented to, and interpreted by various audiences. Learning expectations: 2.02 (K-5,6-8), 2.09 (K-5), 2.11 (K-5)

3.0 The student will use Standard English conventions and proper spelling as appropriate to speaking and writing. Learning expectations: 3.01 (K-8), 3.02 (K-8), 3.03 (K-8), 3.04 (K-8)

Math:

1.0 The student will develop number and operation sense needed to represent numbers and number relationships verbally, symbolically, and graphically to compute fluently and make reasonable estimates in problem solving. Learning expectations: 1.1 (K-8)

2.0 The student will understand and generalize patterns as they represent and analyze quantitative relationships and change in a variety of contexts and problems using graphs, tables, and equations. Learning expectations: 2.1 (K-3,4-8), 2.2 (K-3)

3.0 The student will develop an understanding of geometric concepts and relationships as the basis for geometric modeling and reasoning to solve problems involving one-, two-, and three-dimensional figures. Learning expectations: 3.1 (K-3), 3.2 (K-3)

5.0 The student will understand and apply basic statistical and probability concepts in order to organize and analyze data and to make predictions and conjectures. Learning expectations: 5.1 (K-3)

Music:

5.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 5.2 (K)

6.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 6.2 (3), 6.3 (2,4), 6.4 (1)

7.0 Students will evaluate music and music performances. Learning expectations: 7.1 (1,2,3,4,5)

8.0 Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts. Learning expectations: 8.2 (2,3-8)

Science:

14.0 The student will investigate energy and its issues. Learning expectations: 14.1 (4-5), 14.2 (K-3,4,5)

Social Studies:

1.0 Culture encompasses similarities and differences among people, including their beliefs, knowledge, changes, values, and traditions. Students will explore these elements of society to develop an appreciation and respect for the variety of human cultures. Learning expectations: 1.01 (K-5).

Objective: Students will examine a banjo, photograph of a banjo, or recall a banjo from memory to determine its physical characteristics: size, shape, strings, and materials. Students will listen to a song featuring the banjo to describe its distinctive sound and how that sound is created.

Materials: Paper, pencils, photocopies of Observation Sheet (on page 20) and banjo line drawing (page 22), banjo, or photograph of banjo (included on poster), photograph of guitar (included on poster), CD (included with lesson guide), CD player

Prep Time: 10 minutes to gather materials and make copies of the Observation Sheet and banjo line drawing

Teach Time: 60 minutes

Vocabulary: African slaves, bluegrass, drone string, fret, lute, New World, pluck, resonator, strum, tension, West Africa

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

1. Share the following with students:

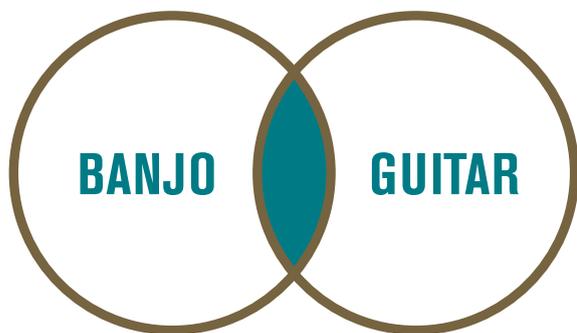
We will create or use a chart to collect information about the banjo and learn about its distinctive sound.

2. Show students the banjo or images of the banjo.

- Allow students to fill in the appropriate information on their charts. This can be done independently or as a class.
- Ask students to write the name of the instrument. Do you know what this instrument is? What do you already know about this instrument? How is this instrument similar to a guitar? How is it different?

TEACHER TIP:

An adaptation can be made to this activity by using a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the guitar and the banjo.



BOOK ENTRY:

Encourage students to cut and paste the banjo line drawing page into their instrument book. They can color and decorate the instrument. They do not have to use the included line drawing, but instead could draw their own. They should use the next several pages of their books to collect information about the banjo.

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Share the following information about the banjo with students:

Design: a stringed instrument with a circular body, covered in front with tightly stretched material (the head); a long, fretted neck; and, typically, five strings

Materials: metal rim; wooden or metal resonator; skin, parchment, or plastic head; wooden neck; metal strings

History: American banjos are descendants of a family of lutes from West Africa and the Middle East. African slaves brought the instruments to the New World and further developed them here.

Most common today is the five-string banjo, where the fifth string is a short string usually tuned to function as a high drone. Five-string banjos may have an open back or a metal resonator back, and are almost always steel-strung. Banjos may be fretted or fretless, acoustic or electric, mass-manufactured, or individually handcrafted.

In early recordings and broadcasts of country music, the banjo brought not only its distinctive

finger-picked sounds, but also its African style. Today the banjo is popular around the world, particularly as played in the three-finger style perfected by Earl Scruggs.

Adapted from the Encyclopedia of Country Music (Oxford University Press).

Playing Techniques: Banjos are plucked or strummed with the fingers, often with picks attached to the ends of the fingers and thumb. One hand plucks or strums while the other hand presses down on the strings to create notes and chords.

Some styles of music in which the banjo can be heard: country, bluegrass, folk

TEACHER TIP:

Students can learn about luthiers, people who make stringed instruments. There are many luthier organizations in the United States, like the Guild of American Luthiers. Invite a luthier to visit your class. The Tennessee Arts Commission (www.arts.state.tn.us) keeps a list of such people in our region.

WHAT DO YOU HEAR?

3. Play a sound clip of the banjo from the accompanying CD and consider the following.

Students may write their answers in their journals or discuss them in small groups, or this may be discussed as a class.

- Use your chart to write down how you think this instrument sounds.
- Have you heard this instrument before? Where? In what song?
- Do you like the sound it makes? Explain.
- How do you think its design contributes to its distinctive sound? Think about its shape, size, what it's made of, the size of its sound hole, and what the strings are made of.
- Does the sound of the banjo remind you of another instrument or another sound?
- How does it sound similar to a guitar? How does it sound different?

6 | THE FIDDLE

TENNESSEE STATE CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Language Arts:

1.0 The student will develop the reading and listening skills necessary for word recognition, comprehension, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and appreciation of print and non-print text. Learning expectations: 1.06 (4-8), 1.07 (K-3)

2.0 The student will develop the structural and creative skills of the writing process necessary to produce written language that can be read, presented to, and interpreted by various audiences. Learning expectations: 2.02 (K-5,6-8), 2.09 (K-5), 2.11 (K-5).

3.0 The student will use Standard English conventions and proper spelling as appropriate to speaking and writing. Learning expectations: 3.01 (K-8), 3.02 (K-8), 3.03 (K-8), 3.04 (K-8)

Math:

1.0 The student will develop number and operation sense needed to represent numbers and number relationships verbally, symbolically, and graphically to compute fluently and make reasonable estimates in problem solving. Learning expectations: 1.1 (K-8)

2.0 The student will understand and generalize patterns as they represent and analyze quantitative relationships and change in a variety of contexts and problems using graphs, tables, and equations. Learning expectations: 2.1 (K-3,4-8), 2.2 (K-3)

3.0 The student will develop an understanding of geometric concepts and relationships as the basis for geometric modeling and reasoning to solve problems involving one-, two-, and three-dimensional figures. Learning expectations: 3.1 (K-3), 3.2 (K-3)

5.0 The student will understand and apply basic statistical and probability concepts in order to organize and analyze data and to make predictions and conjectures. Learning expectations: 5.1 (K-3)

Music:

5.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 5.2 (K)

6.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 6.2 (3), 6.3 (2,4), 6.4 (1)

7.0 The students will evaluate music and music performances. Learning expectations: 7.1(1,2,3,4,5)

8.0 Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts. Learning expectations: 8.2 (2,3-8)

Science:

14.0 The student will investigate energy and its issues. Learning expectations: 14.1 (4-5), 14.2 (K-3,4,5)

Social Studies:

1.0 Culture encompasses similarities and differences among people, including their beliefs, knowledge, changes, values, and traditions. Students will explore these elements of society to develop an appreciation and respect for the variety of human cultures. Learning expectations: 1.01 (K-5).

Objective: Students will examine a fiddle, photograph of a fiddle or violin (the same instrument), or recall a fiddle from memory to determine its physical characteristics: size, shape, sound holes, strings, and materials. Students will listen to a song featuring the fiddle to describe its distinctive sound and how that sound might be created.

Materials: Paper, pencils, photocopies of Observation Sheet (on page 20) and fiddle line drawing (page 23), fiddle or photograph of fiddle (included on poster), CD (included with lesson guide), CD player

Prep Time: 10 minutes to gather materials and make copies of observation sheet and banjo line drawing

Teach Time: 60 minutes

Vocabulary: bluegrass , bow, bridge, British Isles, Europe, Middle Ages, North America, western swing,

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

1. Share the following with students:

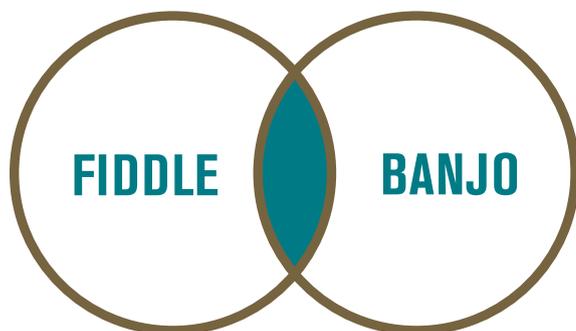
We will create or use a chart to collect information about the fiddle to learn more about it.

2. Show students the fiddle or images of the fiddle.

- Allow students to fill in the appropriate information on their charts. This can be done independently or as a class.
- Ask students to write the name of the instrument. What do you already know about this instrument? How is this instrument similar to a guitar? How is it different? How is this instrument similar to a banjo? How is it different?

TEACHER TIP:

An adaptation can be made to this activity by using a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the guitar and the fiddle and the banjo and the fiddle.



BOOK ENTRY:

Encourage students to cut and paste the fiddle line drawing into their instrument book. They can color and decorate the instrument. They do not have to use the included line drawing but instead could draw their own. They should use the next several pages of their books to collect information about the fiddle.

Share the following information about the fiddle with students:

Design: a bowed instrument with a hollow, figure-eight-shaped wooden body, a short neck, and four strings

Materials: wooden body and neck, metal strings, wooden bow strung with horsehair

History: Brought to America from the British Isles, the fiddle is one of the principal instruments in country music. In classical music it is called a violin. In its early years, the fiddle was used primarily as a dance instrument, and it still is in many folk music traditions throughout Europe and North America.

The fiddle is the focus of many country music styles, like western swing and bluegrass. Bill Monroe, the father of bluegrass, was greatly influenced by the music of his uncle, who was a master old-time fiddler from Kentucky. Country artists such as Hank Williams, Buck Owens,

Porter Wagoner, Merle Haggard, Emmylou Harris, Ricky Skaggs, and Garth Brooks have featured fiddlers prominently in their touring bands and on their recordings.

Adapted from the Encyclopedia of Country Music (Oxford University Press).

Playing Technique: The strings of the fiddle are bowed or plucked with one hand, while the other hand presses down on the strings to make notes or chords. The fiddle is held nearly horizontal by the player's arm, with the lower part supported against the collarbone or shoulder.

Some styles of music in which the fiddle can be heard: folk, bluegrass, country, classical, rock, jazz

WHAT DO YOU HEAR?

3. Play a sound clip of the fiddle from the accompanying CD and consider the following:

Students may write answers in their journals or discuss them in small groups, or this may be discussed as a class.

- Use your chart to write down how you think this instrument sounds.
- Have you heard this instrument before? Where? In what song?
- Do you like the sound it makes? Explain.
- How do you think its design contributes to its specific sound? Think about its shape, size, what it's made of, the size of its sound hole, and what the strings are made of.
- Does the sound of the fiddle remind you of another instrument or another sound?
- How does it sound similar to a guitar? How does it sound different? How does it sound similar to the banjo? How does it sound different?

7 | LESSON SEVEN: THE MANDOLIN

TENNESSEE STATE CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Language Arts:

1.0 The student will develop the reading and listening skills necessary for word recognition, comprehension, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and appreciation of print and non-print text. Learning expectations: 1.06 (4-8), 1.07 (K-3)

2.0 The student will develop the structural and creative skills of the writing process necessary to produce written language that can be read, presented to, and interpreted by various audiences. Learning expectations: 2.02 (K-5,6-8), 2.09 (K-5), 2.11 (K-5)

3.0 The student will use Standard English conventions and proper spelling as appropriate to speaking and writing. Learning expectations: 3.01 (K-8), 3.02 (K-8), 3.03 (K-8), 3.04 (K-8)

Math:

1.0 The student will develop number and operation sense needed to represent numbers and number relationships verbally, symbolically, and graphically to compute fluently and make reasonable estimates in problem solving. Learning expectations: 1.1 (K-8)

2.0 The student will understand and generalize patterns as they represent and analyze quantitative relationships and change in a variety of contexts and problems using graphs, tables, and equations. Learning expectations: 2.1 (K-3,4-8), 2.2 (K-3)

3.0 The student will develop an understanding of geometric concepts and relationships as the basis for geometric modeling and reasoning to solve problems involving one-, two-, and three- dimensional figures. Learning expectations: 3.1 (K-3), 3.2 (K-3)

5.0 The student will understand and apply basic statistical and probability concepts in order to organize and analyze data and to make predictions and conjectures. Learning expectations: 5.1 (K-3)

Music:

5.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 5.2 (K)

6.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 6.2 (3), 6.3 (2,4), 6.4 (1)

7.0 The students will evaluate music and music performances. Learning expectations: 7.1(1,2,3,4,5)

8.0 Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts. Learning expectations: 8.2 (2,3-8)

Science:

14.0 The student will investigate energy and its issues. Learning expectations: 14.1 (4-5), 14.2 (K-3,4,5)

Social Studies:

1.0 Culture encompasses similarities and differences among people, including their beliefs, knowledge, changes, values, and traditions. Students will explore these elements of society to develop an appreciation and respect for the variety of human cultures. Learning expectations: 1.01 (K-5).

Objective: Students will examine a mandolin, photograph of a mandolin, or recall a mandolin from memory to determine its physical characteristics: size, shape, sound holes, strings, and materials. Students will listen to a song featuring the mandolin to describe its distinctive sound and how that sound might be created.

Materials: Paper, pencils, photocopies of Observation Sheet (on page 20) and mandolin line drawing (page 24), mandolin or photograph of mandolin (included on poster), CD (included with lesson guide), CD player

Prep Time: 10 minutes to gather materials and make copies of the observation sheet and mandolin line drawing

Teach Time: 60 minutes

Vocabulary: Bill Monroe, bluegrass, composer, Handel, lute, Mozart, Renaissance Italy, Verdi

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

1. Share the following with students:

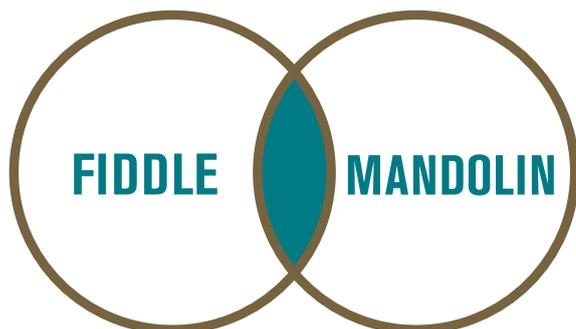
We will create or use a chart to collect information about the mandolin to learn more about it.

2. Show students the mandolin or images of the mandolin.

- Allow students to fill in the appropriate information on their charts. This can be done independently or as a class.
- Do you know what this instrument is? What do you already know about this instrument? How does the mandolin look similar to a guitar? How is it different? How is it similar to a banjo? How is it different? How is it similar to a fiddle? How is it different?

TEACHER TIP:

An adaptation to this activity can be made by using a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the mandolin and the guitar, the mandolin and the banjo, or the mandolin and the fiddle.



BOOK ENTRY:

Encourage students to cut and paste the mandolin line drawing page into their instrument book. They can color and decorate the instrument. They do not have to use the included line drawing but instead could draw their own. They should use the next several pages of their books to collect information about the mandolin.

14

Share the following information about the mandolin with students:

Design: a pear-shaped instrument with a short, fretted neck and eight paired strings

Materials: wooden hollow body; wooden neck; and metal strings

History: The mandolin comes from the ancient lutes of Renaissance Italy. It took its present form, with a short neck and eight paired strings, in early eighteenth-century Naples, Italy. It remains an important instrument in Italian popular music.

Mandolin orchestras, with mandolas, mando-cellos, and even an occasional mando-bass, were popular in the United States in the early twentieth century.

American luthier Orville Gibson introduced a flat-backed, scroll-bodied mandolin in 1898. In 1923, Lloyd Loar introduced an improved design, the Gibson F-series. The model's better tone and greater volume enhanced the mandolin's appeal. Bill Monroe, the father of bluegrass music, used an F-5 to create his distinctive sound, and today that model is most common in country and bluegrass music.

Adapted from the Encyclopedia of Country Music (Oxford University Press).

Playing Technique: The mandolin is plucked or strummed using a pick with one hand, while the other hand presses down strings to make notes or chords.

Some styles of music in which the mandolin can be heard:

country, bluegrass, folk, classical, rock

WHAT DO YOU HEAR?

3. Play a sound clip of the mandolin from the accompanying CD.

Students may write answers in their journals or discuss them in small groups or this may be discussed as a class.

- Use your chart to write down how you think this instrument sounds.
- Have you heard this instrument before? Where? In what song?
- Do you like the sound it makes?
- How does its design contribute to its distinctive sound? Think about its shape, size, what it's made of, the size of its sound hole, what the strings are made of.
- Does the sound of the mandolin remind you of another instrument or a sound heard in nature?
- How does it sound similar to a guitar? How does it sound different? How does it sound similar to the banjo? How does it sound different? How does it sound similar to the fiddle? How does it sound different?

8 | ALL TOGETHER NOW!

TENNESSEE STATE CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Music:

5.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 5.2 (K)

6.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 6.2 (3), 6.3 (2,4), 6.4 (1)

7.0 The students will evaluate music and music performances. Learning expectations: 7.1(1,2,3,4,5)

8.0 Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts. Learning expectations: 8.2 (2,3-8)

Objective: Students will listen to a song featuring the guitar, banjo, fiddle, and mandolin in order to identify each instrument's distinctive sound and to evaluate how the instruments sound when played together.

Materials: CD player, CD (included with this lesson guide)

Prep Time: None

Teach Time: 20 minutes to listen to the song and answer discussion questions

1. Listen to the song on the CD in which all of the instruments are featured.

2. As you listen to the song, answer the following questions:

- Can you identify each individual instrument?
- Do the instruments sound different played all together than they do when heard independently? Explain.
- Do you like the instruments better by themselves or as a group?



Patsy Montana with the Prairie Ramblers.

Left to right: bassist Jack Taylor, banjo player Chick Hurt, singer and fiddler Patsy Montana, fiddler Tex Atchison, and guitarist and harmonica player Salty Holmes. A mandolin can be seen in the foreground.

9 | Who Plays?

TENNESSEE STATE CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Language Arts:

1.0 The student will develop the reading and listening skills necessary for word recognition, comprehension, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and appreciation of print and non-print text. Learning expectations: 1.06 (4-8), 1.07 (K-3)

2.0 The student will develop the structural and creative skills of the writing process necessary to produce written language that can be read, presented to, and interpreted by various audiences. Learning expectations: 2.02 (K-5,6-8), 2.09 (K-5), 2.11 (K-5)

3.0 The student will use Standard English conventions and proper spelling as appropriate to speaking and writing. Learning expectations: 3.01 (K-8), 3.02 (K-8), 3.03 (K-8), 3.04 (K-8)

Music:

5.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 5.2 (K)

6.0 Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music. Learning expectations: 6.2 (3), 6.3 (2,4), 6.4 (1)

7.0 The students will evaluate music and music performances. Learning expectations: 7.1(1,2,3,4,5)

8.0 Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts. Learning expectations: 8.2 (2,3-8)

Objective: Students will explore what it takes to learn to play an instrument. They will reflect on some of the artists they like to listen to, and how those artists became skilled musicians.

Prep Time: None

Teach Time: varies (time to allow students to conduct research)

Materials: Computer with Internet, pencils, paper

1. Discuss the following questions with students:

They may either share their answers aloud, or write them in a journal.

- Do you play an instrument?
- If so, how did you learn to play it?
- What made you start playing it? OR How did you become interested in that particular instrument?
- If you do not play an instrument, is there an instrument you would like to learn how to play?
- What steps would a person take to learn to play a musical instrument?



Earl Scruggs playing his banjo

10 | WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS?

TENNESSEE STATE CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

Language Arts:

2.0 The student will develop the structural and creative skills of the writing process necessary to produce written language that can be read, presented to, and interpreted by various audiences. Learning expectations: 2.02 (K-5,6-8), 2.09 (K-5), 2.11 (K-5)

3.0 The student will use Standard English conventions and proper spelling as appropriate to speaking and writing. Learning expectations: 3.01 (K-8), 3.02 (K-8), 3.03 (K-8), 3.04 (K-8)

Music:

8.0 Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts. Learning expectations: 8.2 (2,3-8)

Science:

14.0 The student will investigate energy and its issues. Learning expectations: 14.1 (4-5), 14.2 (K-3,4,5)

Objective: Students will evaluate their original set of statements about stringed instruments to determine what they have learned and what they would still like to learn.

Materials: KWL charts created at beginning of unit, paper, and pencils

Prep Time: 5 minutes to gather KWL charts from Lesson 1

Teach Time: 20 minutes

TEACHER TIP:

You may wish to make this an individual activity by asking students to write their own responses to the following questions before sharing their thoughts with the class.

1. After learning about the musical instruments and visiting the museum, review the KWL charts created by your students before their visit and use the following questions for discussion:

- Are all the items on our “what we KNOW” list correct?
- If not, what changes do we need to make to the incorrect items?
- What did we LEARN about musical instruments from these lessons and from our museum visit that we can put in our “L” section?
- Were our questions answered? If not, how can we find the information we still do not have?

Bill Monroe’s Gibson F-5 mandolin



SONGS ON THE COMPANION CD

1. Acoustic Guitar

“Blackberry Blossom”

Performed by Norman Blake and Tony Rice with Doc Watson

From the CD *Black Mountain Rag* by Doc & Merle Watson
Courtesy of Rounder Records 1166-11620-2 • 3:13
www.rounder.com

2. Banjo

“Home Sweet Home”

Bela Fleck & Earl Scruggs

From the CD *The Bluegrass Sessions: Tales from the Acoustic Planet, Volume 2* by Bela Fleck
Courtesy of Warner Bros. 9-47332-2 • 2:21

3. Fiddle

“Sally Ann”

Mark O’Connor

From the CD *The Championship Years* by Mark O’Connor
Country Music Foundation Records CMF-015-D • 1:11

4. Mandolin

“Old Favorite’s Medley”

(“The Girl I Left Behind,” “Dixie,” “Liberty,” “Arkansas Traveler,” “Whiskey Before Breakfast,” “Dixie” reprise)

Chris Thile with Byron Berline, fiddle;
John Moore, harmony mandolin; Scott Thile, bass;
and Pete Wernick, banjo

From the CD *Leading Off...* by Chris Thile
Courtesy of Sugar Hill CD-3828 • 4:20

5. Ensemble, with Fiddle, Banjo, Guitar, and Mandolin Solos

“Get Up John”

Ricky Skaggs, mandolin; with Bobby Hicks, fiddle;
Marc Pruett, banjo; Bryan Sutton, guitar; Paul Brewster
and Dennis Parker, rhythm guitar; and Mark Fain, bass

From the CD *Bluegrass Rules!* by Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder
Courtesy of Rounder Records 0801 • 4:06

The staff of the Country Music Hall of Fame® and Museum thanks the following local teachers who gave their time and valuable input during the development of this resource:

Ronda Armstrong	Stanford Elementary Montessori Design Center
Margi Jared	Tulip Grove Elementary School
Rafiq Vaughan	Bass Middle School
Carol Wendt	Dodson Elementary School
Jo Ann Young	The Covenant School

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Books:

The Encyclopedia of Country Music
Edited by Paul Kingsbury
Oxford University Press, 2004
ISBN# 10: 0195176081
ISBN# 13: 978-0195176087
CALL # 781.642 B596i

Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd Ed.
By Stanley Sadie and John Tyrell
Oxford University Press, 2003
ISBN# 10: 0195170679
ISBN# 13: 978-0195170672
CALL# 780.3 N53226 2001

The Kingfisher Young People’s Book of Music
Edited by Clive Wilson
Larousse Kingfisher Chambers Inc., 1999
ISBN# 10: 0753452502
ISBN# 13: 978-0753452509

Musical Instruments: From Flutes Carved of Bone, to Lutes, to Modern Electric Guitars
Scholastic, 1994
ISBN# 10: 0590476386
ISBN# 13: 9780590476386
CALL # J784.19 M9876

CD’s:

Black Mountain Rag, Doc & Merle Watson
Rounder Records Corp., 2006

Bluegrass Rules!, Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder
Rounder Records Corp, 1997

The Bluegrass Sessions, Bela Fleck
Warner Brothers Records, 1999

The Championship Years, Mark O’Connor
Country Music Foundation, Inc, 1990

Leading Off, Chris Thile
Sugar Hill Records, 1994

DVD:

Discover Bluegrass: Exploring American Roots Music. IBMA.

Web Sites:

www.countrymusichalloffame.com

www.grovemusic.com

Send students’ work to the museum’s education department. We are always interested in seeing students’ work and reading their ideas.

School Programs Coordinator
Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum
222 Fifth Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203
Fax: 615-255-2245
education@countrymusichalloffame.com

SHAPES, SOUND HOLES, AND STRINGS

OBSERVATION SHEET

LOOK

Name of musical instrument: _____

Strings: How many? _____ What are they made of? _____

What is the body of the instrument made of? : _____

Describe the design and shape: _____

Sound holes: How many? _____ Shape? _____

Tuning pegs? _____ How many? _____

LISTEN

Describe the sound it makes: _____ Is it high-pitched? Low-pitched? _____

Is it a happy sound? _____ Sad sound? _____ Rough sound? _____ Smooth sound? _____

Played with a bow _____ strummed _____ plucked _____

Does the sound remind you of something else you hear in nature or elsewhere? _____

Do you like the sound? _____ Explain: _____

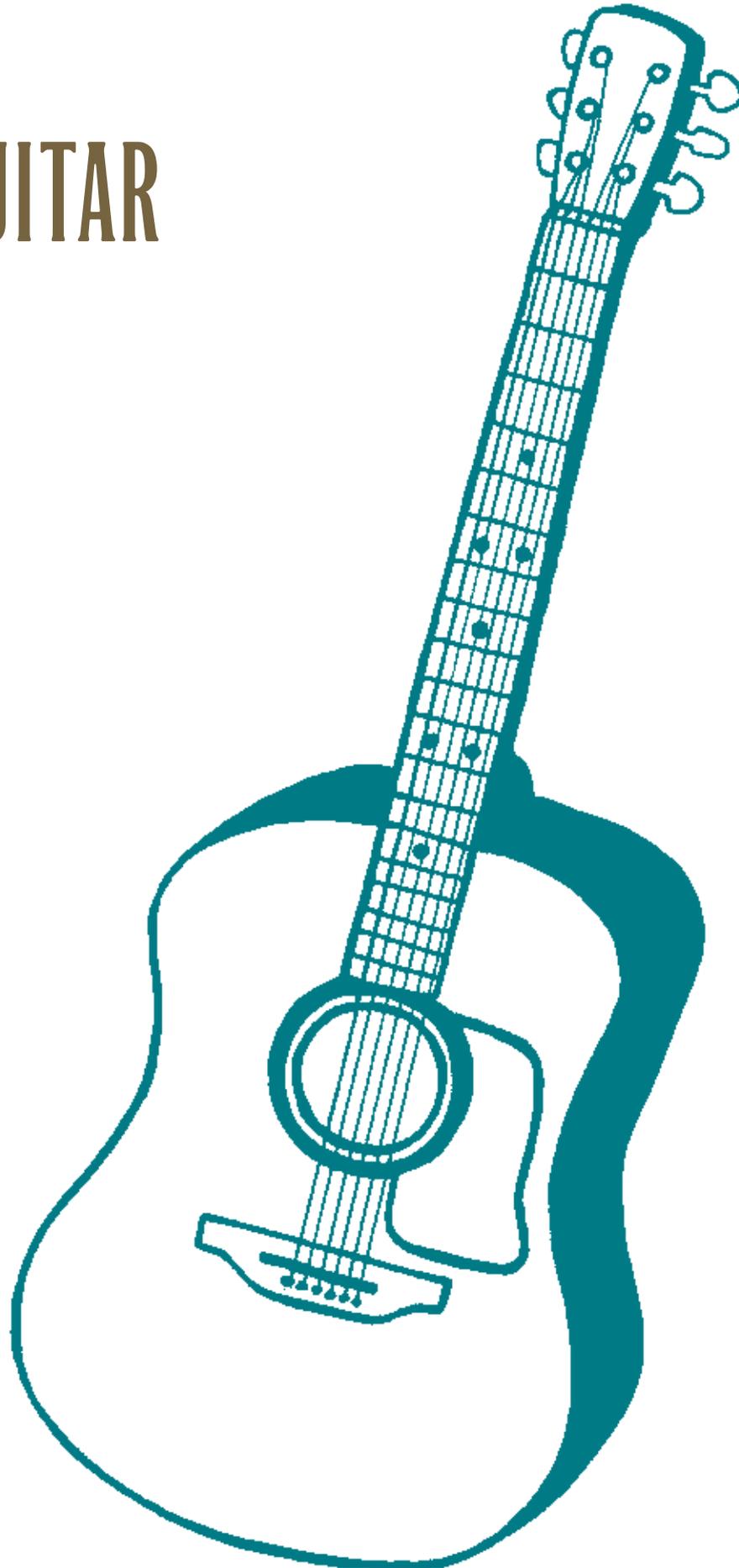
Have you heard this instrument before? Where and when?

REFLECT

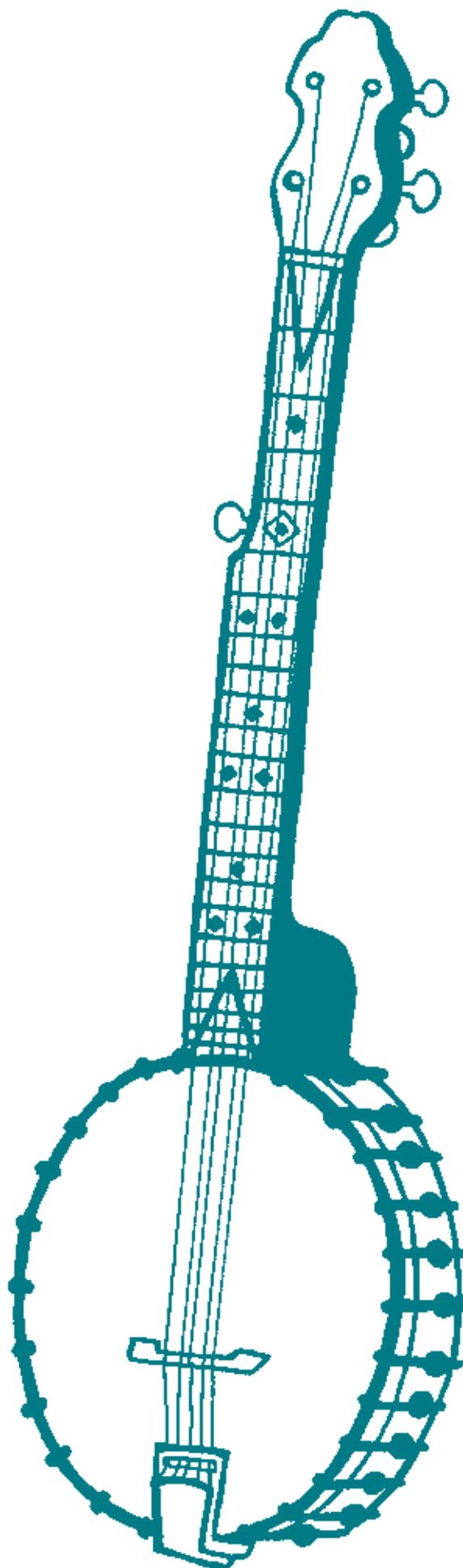
How do you think this instrument's design and materials help to create the sound that it makes?

If you could redesign this instrument to change the sound, how would you do this? How would the sound be different? What would the instrument look like?

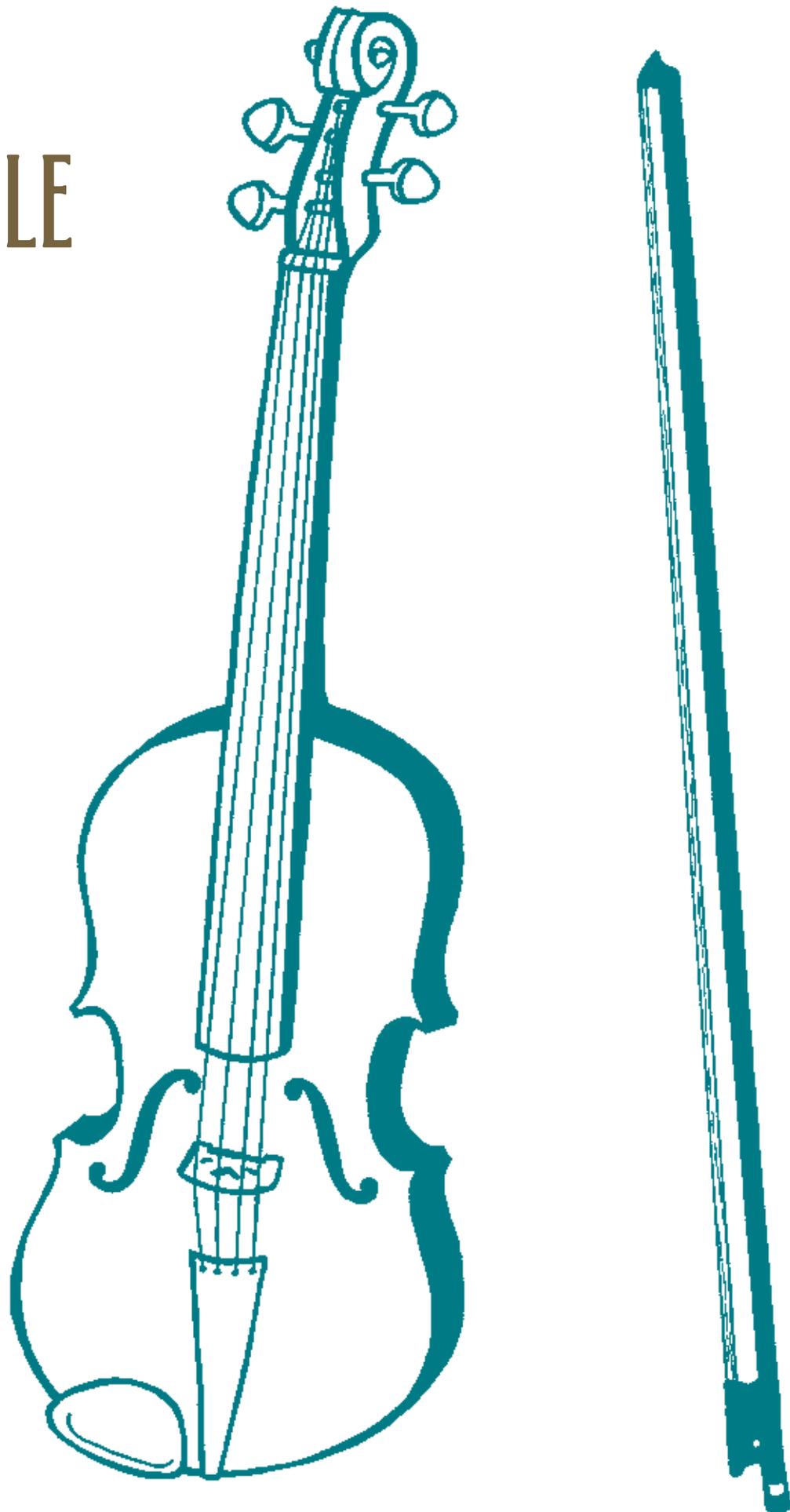
GUITAR



BANJO



FIDDLE



MANDOLIN

