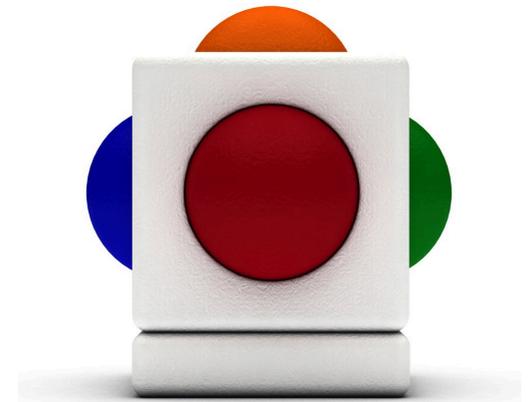


Lesson Spring Garden

Lesson time - Two 40 minute sessions with one/two Skoogs



In this lesson

- Taking inspiration from experiences and from nature
- Selecting sounds to create effects and convey ideas
- Improvising with a pentatonic scale
- Using the Skoog as a sampler to create an atmospheric soundscape
- Recording a performance on the Skoog



Learning Outcomes

Reference with Music Curriculum for Excellence:

- **EARLY (EXA 0-17a)** I have the freedom to use my voice, musical instruments and music technology to discover and enjoy playing with sound and rhythm.
- **FIRST (EXA 1-17a)** I can use my voice, musical instruments and music technology to discover and enjoy playing with sound, rhythm, pitch and dynamics.

Reference with Technological Developments in Society Curriculum for Excellence:

- **EARLY (TCH 0-01a)** I enjoy playing with and exploring technologies to discover what they can do and how they can help us.

Reference with Social Studies Curriculum for Excellence:

- **EARLY (SOC 0-07a)** I explore and discover the interesting features of my local environment to develop an awareness of the world around me.

Support Materials

These can be used as introduction songs and music:

- The book [My First Book of Garden Birds](#) by [Mike Unwin](#) and [Sarah Whittle](#) published by A & C Black Publishers Ltd
- The song [Yellow Daffodils](#) by [Nikki Davies](#) from the book [Everything's Growing](#) published by IMP Ltd

Lesson with progression and or differentiation.

Moira H Thorburn
Music Specialist - City of Edinburgh



In this lesson, pupils are going to create, individually, their very own piece of music, while taking inspiration from the nature. They will improvise with a dynamic instrument of their choice against the backing of a birdsong to create the scene of spring garden.

1. Trip to the park

This lesson begins with a trip to the local gardens and park, for pupils to experience first hand flowers blooming and birds chirping in springtime.

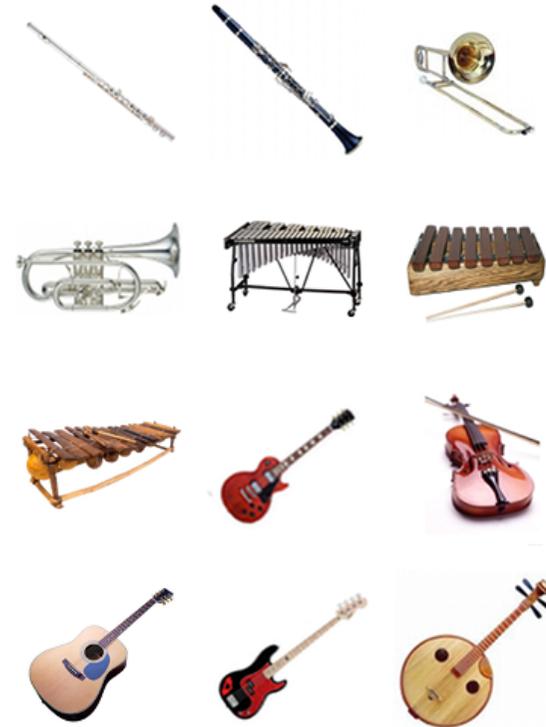
2. Select instruments

Discuss with pupils what instruments would best describe the flowers that they have seen on the trip. For example: you might want to select the clarinet to describe daffodils, because they stand tall and move gracefully in the wind.

Get each of your pupils to pick their own instrument of choice.

We are going to use a dynamic instrument - which will give you more control over expressivity:

1. In the Skoogmusic software, go to the [Instruments Tab](#).
2. Click on one of the 12 instruments.



3. Select a birdsong

Now that we have a 'flower', each pupil selects a birdsong to go with it. This can be any sound files in .wav, .aiff, or .mp3 format, and we can import it in the Skoogmusic backing loop player:

1. The [Backing Loop Player](#) is located in the Skoogmusic Window across the top of the screen.



2. Locate your birdsong of choice in your file browser.
3. Click and drag your birdsong sound file across to the Skoogmusic Window, and drop it in the bubble that says [Drop Loop Here](#).
4. When the border of the bubble stops blinking and the player reads [Ready](#), the sound file has finished being imported. Click [Play](#) to start playing the backing track.



5. If you want to control the volume of your backing track, just drag and adjust the slider in the loop player. You can also pan your backing track to the left and right too.
6. The player will loop the track when it ends. Click [Stop](#) to stop playing.



4. Pick a scale

We will improvise on this Skoog using the notes of a pentatonic scale:

1. Go to the [Notes Tab](#) 
2. In the [Scale](#) menu underneath the keyboard, select either [Major](#) or [Minor](#) Pentatonic.
3. In the [Tonic](#) box on the [Notes Tab](#), select the name for the key that you want.



You can also use the folder of samples [British Birds](#) included in this lesson plan (and downloadable at www.skooomusic.com/sites/default/files/downloads/SamplesPack.zip), or any other samples you want instead that are in either [.wav](#) or [.aiff](#) format. By doing so you pupils can create and record their own birdsong:

1. Go to the [Samples Tab](#).
2. Locate the file that you wish to use in your file browser - the Samples Tab can take either the [.wav](#) or [.aif](#) format, or a Sample Set folder as in the case of the British Birds folder.
3. Click on the file and drag it across to the Skoog Window; drop it on the [waveform box](#) for whichever side you wish to assign the sample to.
4. At the top of the [Samples Tab](#), pick one of the playback functions ([Scrub](#), [Trigger](#), [Press&Hold](#)).

5. Record the individual pieces

For each of the pupils, we are going to record them playing their very own piece.

1. The [Audio Recorder](#) is located in the Skoogmusic Window across the top of your screen.

2. Check you levels with all the parts playing - a mini rehearsal if you like! Make sure the level indicator does not go into red. If it does, reduce the volume of each Skoog and that of the backing track.



3. When you are ready, click on [Record](#). The button will change to [Start](#) and a file browser window will open to prompt you for a save location for you recording.
4. Once you have chosen your save location for your sound file, the [Start](#) button will start flickering. Click on it to begin recording - the button will then change to [Recording](#).



5. Improvise on the Skoog (with the dynamic instrument)!
6. Click [Stop](#) to stop recording.

If you are creating your own birdsong too, you can record the birdsong first using the steps above, drag the recording into the Backing Loop Player as in [Step 3](#), then record again - this time with your instrument of choice instead.

This concludes our first lesson.



6. Long Group Piece

In this second lesson, we are going to follow the same steps as the last lesson, but this time to create a longer and more complicated piece as a class.

This time we don't have to stick with just one instrument - how about everyone getting their pick of instruments? You might find it helpful to discuss and decide on the order of the instrumentation before recording or playing anything.

You might also want to use an audio editor, such as Audacity or Logic Pro, to help make the placement of different sounds easier. This can also open up other creative opportunities, such as adding on another layer of Skoog sound or birdsong, or audio effects etc.

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES Get everyone to create their own large flower mask, and come up with a simple dance routine that they can dance to their composition.



For more information

For more ideas on creating music with the Skoog, see [Chapter 6](#) of the Skoogmusic User's Guide.

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