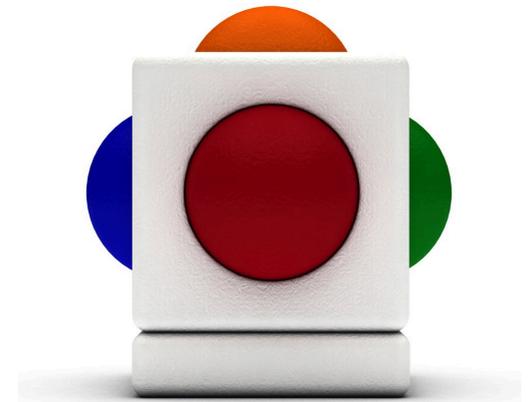


Lesson Valentine's Day

Lesson time - 30 minutes with 2 Skoogs



In this lesson

- Learning and discussing ideas around the theme of Valentine's Day
- Selecting sounds to create effects
- Improvising with the pentatonic scale
- Co-operating and working as a group to create a musical work
- Playing with a backing track



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.

References with Mental and Emotional Wellbeing Curriculum for Excellence:

- **EARLY (HWB 0-06a), FIRST (HWB 1-06a), SECOND (HWB 2-06a)** I understand the importance of mental wellbeing and that this can be fostered and strengthened through personal coping skills.

Support Materials

These can be used as introduction songs and music:

- The song [Valentine's Questions](#) from the book [Harlequin](#) by A & C Black Publishers Ltd
- The themes from the movies [The Godfather](#) and [Love Story](#)
- Martini's [Plaisir d'Amour](#) sung by [Andrew Bocelli](#) from his album [Sentimento](#)
- A selection of love songs from [Rodgers and Hammerstein's](#) musicals and Bernstein's [West Side Story](#)
- Teacher's favourite romantic song (eg. [For the First Time](#) by [Rod Stewart](#) from his CD [If We Fall in Love Tonight](#))

Lesson with progression and or differentiation.

Moira H Thorburn
Music Specialist - City of Edinburgh



In this Valentine's Day themed lesson we are going to explore the theme of love, romance, and friendship with the aid of the Skoog.

1. Listen and share

Teach the song [Valentine's Question](#) from [Harlequin](#) to the class, and listen to the various piece of music listed in the [Support Materials](#) list. Encourage pupils to comment on the music, and also share with the class the titles of pieces, music, or songs that they consider romantic and/or sentimental. Listen to these together too.

2. Discuss

Discuss what the words [romance](#) and [love](#) mean to them. For some pupils it may be easier to discuss the idea of [friendship](#).

3. Word wall

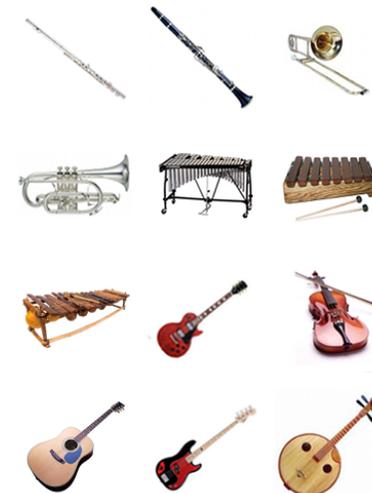
Make a word wall using the language we have used in our discussion. Different groups of pupils will come up with different list of words, as emotional concepts are different to different people.

4. Explore instrument sounds

Let's begin creating our very own piece of romantic music. Discuss with the pupils what instruments they think might be good for our melody, and have a listen to them by setting your Skoog to these instruments. A few examples are harp, violin, Spanish guitar, cello, and saxophone.

You can first of all explore the dynamic instruments, 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.



You can also try MIDI, which will give you access to the 128 different sounds on your computer sound card:

1. First of all let's switch on MIDI - go to the [MIDI Tab](#) .
2. Click on the red MIDI On/Off button so that it turns green.



3. If you want MIDI sound only, check the [Mute](#) box near the bottom left corner of the Skoog Window.
4. Pick from one of 128 different MIDI sounds in the MIDI instrument menu on the [MIDI Tab](#), just right next to the MIDI button. Make sure [MIDI Channel](#) is set as one of [MIDI 1-10](#), and not Percussion. MIDI instruments have no effect on the Percussion channel.
5. However, if it is percussion sounds that you are after, pick [Percussion](#) under the [MIDI Channel](#) menu. Here each note will play a different percussion sound - so pick the ones you want in the [Notes Tab](#) (remember to select [User Defined](#) first).

Decide on which two instruments you want to use in our music and set up your two Skoogs with these two instruments using the instructions above.

5. Adjust sensitivity

While exploring all the different instruments and sounds, you might find it helpful to adjust the sensitivity.

This is for when you want to increase the sensitivity for all five sides of your Skoog - uniformly, so they all increase by the same amount.

1. Go to the [Skoog Tab](#) , and locate the sensitivity bar near the bottom of the tab.

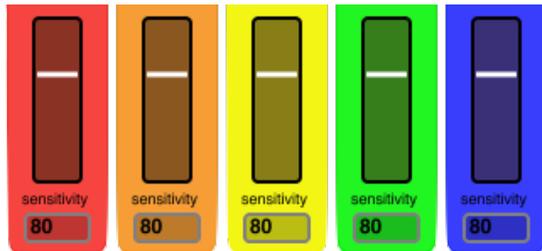


2. Click on the **+** sign if you want to increase sensitivity, or if you want to decrease it, click on the **-** sign.
3. All sides on your Skoog should now be more/less sensitive!



If you want to adjust the sensitivity by different amounts on each side, then the [Settings Tab](#) is where you can go:

1. Decide which side you want to adjust, and find its sensitivity slider close to the bottom of the [Settings Tab](#) (they are all colour coded!):



2. Grab the white line on the slider with your mouse, and drag it up to increase sensitivity - or drag it down to lower sensitivity. The number in the [Sensitivity Number Box](#) should change accordingly. Let go of your mouse when you find the optimal level.
3. Press into the side that you have just changed and see if you like its sensitivity - adjust again if it is still not perfect.

WHY? You might wonder why you would want to change the sides' sensitivity individually: it will make it easier for you to play in different alternative ways! Have a look at [Lesson 1: The Basics](#) in the [User Guide](#).

6. Pick a scale

Now that you have picked your instruments, we will select a couple of pentatonic scales to put on the Scoogs.

NOTE Pentatonic scale is a set of 5 notes that are commonly used in folk music. It is also great as a palette of notes for improvisation, as every combination of notes within the scale will sound nice; hence no risk of playing a 'wrong' note! To learn more about them have a look at our [Notes on Pentatonic Scales](#) on our website (www.skoogmusic.com/sites/default/files/downloads/PENTATONICS.pdf).

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.
4. Have a play with both [Major](#) and [Minor](#) keys, and experiment with putting different combinations of keys on the two Scoogs; remember they do not have to be in the same key! (Major on one, Minor on another; experiment!).



7. Question and answer

Discuss with the class how they want to play their melodies too - **legato** (smooth and flowing) or **staccato** (detached and 'jumpy').

Now play the two Skoogs as a couple with a question and answer kind of response. Get pupils to choose a partner to work with, and each pair gets their own turn on the Skoogs. Perhaps get them to play notes of the same length, at least to start off with, and keep to short rhythmic motifs.

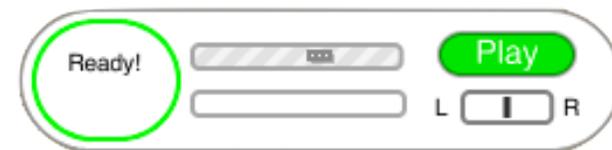
The class might decide to add a loop in the background; here is how you will do it from within the Skoogmusic software (make sure the loop you will be using is in .wav, .aif, or .mp3 format):

1. The **Backing Loop Player** is located in the Skoogmusic Window across the top of the screen.

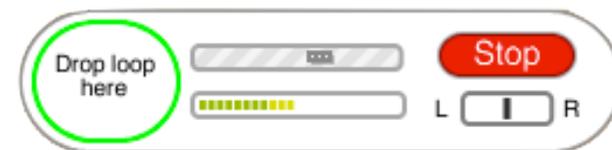


2. Locate your backing track of choice in your file browser.

3. Click and drag your backing track 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. Go wild on your Skoog! 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.



FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES Instead of playing in a question and answer response - the class can try playing both Skoogs together, or have one player copying the pitch of the note played by another.



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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