



Making a Buzz

Learning Objectives:

- Pupils recognise and explore how sounds can be made and changed.
- Pupils order sounds within simple structures such as beginning, middle, end.
- Pupils represent sounds with symbols and recognise how the musical elements can be used to create different moods and effects.
- Pupils improve their own work.

Key Topics: Music

Location: Indoors and Outdoors

Equipment:

- Computer with YouTube access, speakers.
- Combs, paperclips, cocktail sticks and other items to make sounds.
- Instruments / percussion

Key Words: Sound, nature, insect, buzz.



Background:

Bugs are all around us - their colours and their sounds are often forgotten in our busy world. Throughout history, musicians and conductors have looked to the insect world for inspiration to make music.

Activity 1

In groups, discuss how insects might make music or sounds which we might use to make music. What part of their body do insects use to make sounds? Why do you think they make these sounds?

Listen to a selection of different pieces to help the students understand what 'bug' music might sound like. What bugs can they imagine flying around when they listen to the different tracks? Suggest they close their eyes to help concentrate on the sounds they hear.

Suggestions include:

[Marks Keyboard Repairs: Insects are all around us](#) – Modern music

[Bill Bailey Insect Nation](#) – Comedy Rock

[Rimsky Korsakov-The Flight of the Bumble Bee](#) - Classical

[Tchaikovsky-The Waltz of the Flowers](#) - Classical

[David Rothenberg's Insect choir](#) – Modern rhythm, based on insect sounds.

Activity 2

After listening to different 'bug music', write a list of the different bugs you heard. For each bug, try to put the sound they make into words. You might like to use your list of words from the 'Pollinators and Poetry' activity.



Activity 3

Visit your local meadow or school grounds and listen for the sounds of nature for 15 minutes. You will need to be silent to do this.

Go back to the classroom and describe the different sounds you have heard. How can you recreate these sounds to make your own insect orchestra?

Try plucking a comb, lightly tapping a table with your fingertips, shaking a container of dry leaves. What other ideas do you have?

You might like to use instruments to present your inspired insect music – a recorder, piano, violin or percussion. If you have created some inspiring sounds, you can record them and mix these sounds with others using mixing software such as [Audacity](#) or [Free Audio Editor 2014](#). These two are free downloads but you can buy other packages.

Short-winged conehead (*Conocephalus dorsalis*)
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