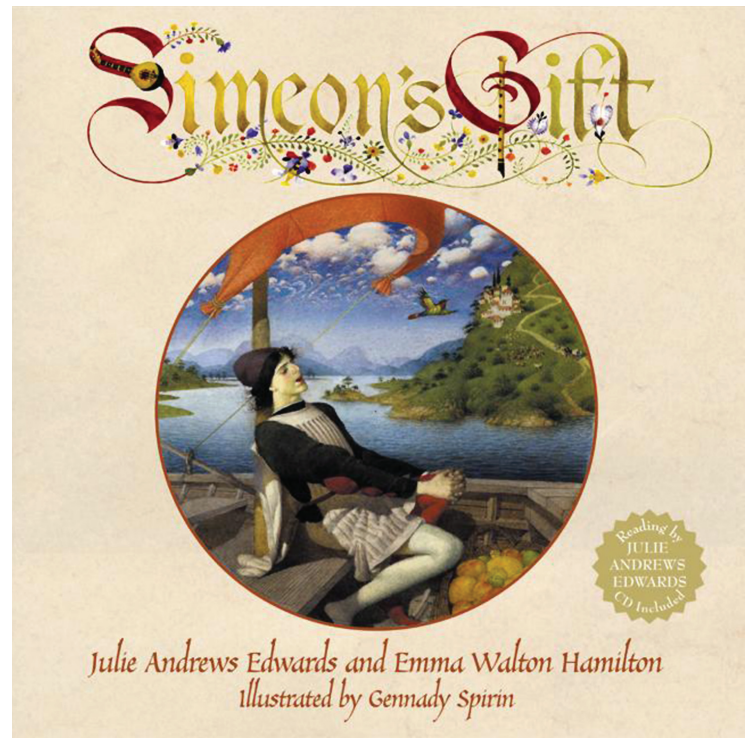


Simeon's Gift

Musical Activities



Simeon, a simple musician, learns about the elements and craft of music and grows into a brilliant composer by the end of his journey. By studying concepts such as rhythm, harmony and language, he is able to hear music in the sounds of nature and to create his own symphonies.



Make a study of sounds from nature!

- * Which sounds are innately musical?
- * Which sounds are rhythmic, or could be repeated to create a natural rhythm?
- * Can you hear a musical sound or a series of tones, like a bird song, and adapt it into a melody?

Make a musical thunderstorm!

You don't need any musical knowledge at all - if you have access to a piano, you can create a thunderstorm or other sounds from nature with music.

- * Experiment with white keys and black keys, low notes and high notes, and playing the keys heavily or lightly, quickly or slowly.
 - * Find and play the notes that sound most like:
 - Thunder
 - Rain – Heavy downpour or light sprinkles
 - Lightning
 - A bullfrog
 - Wind
 - Horse (or deer) hooves
 - A flower
 - A bird
- ... what other sounds from nature can you come up with?

Make your own simple musical instruments!

Drum

Materials:

- Something to use for the frame (tin can, carpet tube, ceramic pot, wooden frame)
- Parchment paper bigger than the diameter of the frame
- White glue
- Rubber bands
- Tissue paper
- Paint, markers or colored tape to decorate the drum
- Wooden dowel and beads for drum sticks

Instructions:

- Cut eight sheets of parchment paper 1" larger in diameter than the drum frame.
- Apply a thin even layer of glue to one sheet of paper. Make sure glue covers the entire paper. Place the next sheet on top and repeat the gluing procedure until all eight sheets have been glued on.
- Center drum frame on the glued together parchment paper (drum head) and glue it on. Use rubber bands to secure it while it dries.
- Optional: Glue colored tissue paper on the drum head and decorate the frame.
- Allow to dry overnight before playing.
- Drum sticks can be made from wooden dowels with beads glued on the end.

(Courtesy of www.satisfied-mind.com)

Flute

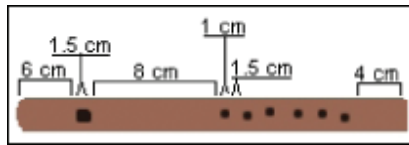
Materials:

- Cardboard wrapping paper tube
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Small, flat piece of cardboard
- A pen



Instructions:

- Cut the wrapping paper tube into an approximately 32 cm long tube. This will serve as the body of your flute.
- Next, you need to punch the mouth hole and finger holes into your flute. Use the scissors to make the mouth hole. It should be about 6 cm from the end of the flute, and the hole should be about 1.5 cm long and 1 cm deep.
- You can use the pen to punch the fingerholes, which should be a bit smaller than the mouth hole (about 1 cm square or round). Place the first fingerhole about 8 cm down from the mouth hole, and punch 4 or 5 more holes, each about 1.5 cm apart from each other. You should have about 4 cm left with no holes in it at the end of the tube.

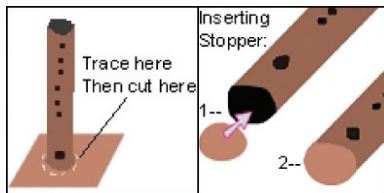


- (Note: to make the flute play an in-tune scale, you will have to tweak these measurements a little bit.)
- The final element to make the flute play is a stopper. In a modern Boehm flute, the stopper is usually made of cork and metal, but in this flute, cardboard will work just fine. Place the flute on end, on top of your small piece of cardboard and trace a circle around it. Cut out the circle and push it down about half a centimeter into the end of the flute with the mouth hole. The stopper should fit snugly inside the tube, with as little space around the edges as possible. It should not be at a slant, but be very straight and secure.

How to Play:

Any flute - metal, wood, or cardboard - can be difficult to play at first.

The flute is held to the right. The left hand goes on the first three fingerholes (your right hand knuckles should be facing away from you) and the right hand should go on the remaining two or three holes (your left hand knuckles should be facing towards you). To play the flute, purse your lips and place your lower lip so it covers about a quarter of the blow hole. It



might help to look in the mirror to make sure you are positioned correctly. Blow a thin, fast stream of air across (rather than down) the hole. After practicing for a couple minutes, you should be able to produce a tone. Once you can do this consistently, try moving your fingers over the holes.

(Courtesy of <http://library.thinkquest.org>)

Rainstick

Legend has it that the Chilean Indians invented the rainstick to invoke rainy weather...

Materials:

- Cardboard tube (from paper towels, wrapping paper, fabric, mailing)
- Straight pins (for thin tubes like paper towel or wrapping paper) or small nails (for thick tubes). Pins or nails should be no more than about 1" long – they must be shorter than the diameter of the tube.
- Rice, beans, seeds, unpopped popcorn, sand, shells, gravel or beads for filling
- Hammer (if using nails)
- Masking tape
- Materials for decorating the outside (fabric, colored masking tape, papier mache, paint)

Instructions:

- Paper tubes have a spiral seam. Use a marker to draw dots about half an inch apart, all the way down the spiral seam of the tube.
- Insert pins or nails into the dots on the side of the tube in a spiral pattern.
- Wrap tape around the tube to hold the nails or pins in place.
- Cut two circles of paper just a little bigger than the ends of the tube. Tape one of the circles over one end of the tube. Cover the circle with tape so the whole end of the tube is sealed shut.
- Put a handful of rice or beans into the open end of the tube. Cover the open end with your hand, and turn the tube over. Add more rice or beans until you like the sound. (Beans will make a harder sound, and rice will make a softer sound. Try different ingredients for different sounds.)
- Put the second circle of paper over the open end of the tube, and seal that end shut with tape.
- Decorate the outside of the tube with colored tape, fabric, markers, paint or papier mache.
- Your rain stick is complete. Turn it over and listen to the rain!

(Courtesy of <http://www.exploratorium.edu/frogs>)