

# History of the World in Seven Acts

## Lesson Plan 1

### Exploring Duration – Long and short sounds

This lesson plan will take approximately 40 minutes to deliver.

#### TEACHER INSIGHT

Music consists of long and short sounds. In this lesson we investigate the resonance of different materials.

#### ACTIVITY 1

Watch film 1 (1 minute 42 seconds) – Tom’s introduction.

Then, watch films 2 (38 seconds), 2a (25 seconds) and 2b (30 seconds). These short clips explore DURATION on the piano, the violin, and the bass clarinet.

Can the children suggest how each instrument might make short and long sounds BEFORE watching each film?

#### ACTIVITY 2

An investigation into how we can make long and short sounds on \*percussion instruments or \*\*everyday sound makers.

##### RESOURCES

If using \***percussion instruments**, select a few percussion instruments ensuring that there are an equal amount of **wooden instruments** (e.g. woodblock, castanets, claves, guiro, xylophone) and **metal instruments** (e.g. cymbal, triangle, indian bells, glockenspiel).

If using \*\***everyday sound makers**, locate a range of **wooden items** to hit (e.g. a broom handle, a wooden chair, a wooden chopping board, a wooden table top, a rounders/cricket bat) and **metal items** (e.g. a radiator, a frying pan, a metal filing cabinet with the drawers open, a metal handrail. Check the metal items have a sound that resonates to some extent.)

##### INVESTIGATION

One child plays a single sound on an instrument. Another child times the length of the sound using a stopwatch or the second hand on a clock. The rest of the class put their hand up when they can’t hear the sound any more. They can use the **downloadable worksheet** to note each instrument’s name and the length of its sound after it is timed.

After timing a few instruments, the children might get the idea that metal vibrates and therefore produces a longer, ringing sound, whereas wood makes a short, dry sound. At this point, ask them to predict the amount of seconds for each instrument’s sound.

#### ACTIVITY 3

Discuss and complete the conclusion on the **downloadable worksheet** from **ACTIVITY 2**.



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## Lesson Plan 1 continued

### Exploring Duration – Long and short sounds

#### **ACTIVITY 4**

Watch film 2c (26 seconds) – which explores DURATION on percussion instruments.

*In this clip, the percussionist shows that to make a longer sound on a wooden instrument, he has to use two beaters and keep 'rolling' on the instrument. The tam tam rings on after only one hit!*

#### **ACTIVITY 5**

Watch film 3 (1 minutes 59 seconds) – Listen to a clip from *History of the World in Seven Acts*. This section, called 'Egg' demonstrates the piano, woodblocks and cello playing short notes. The violin and flute play a mixture of short and long sounds.



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