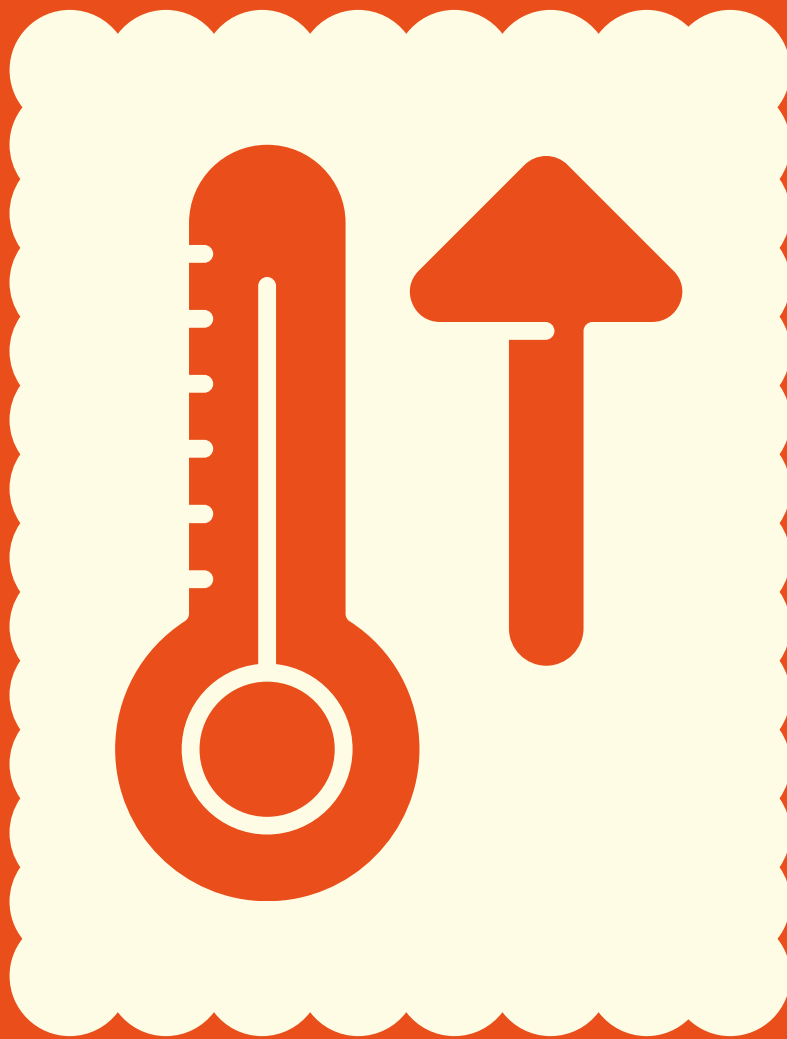


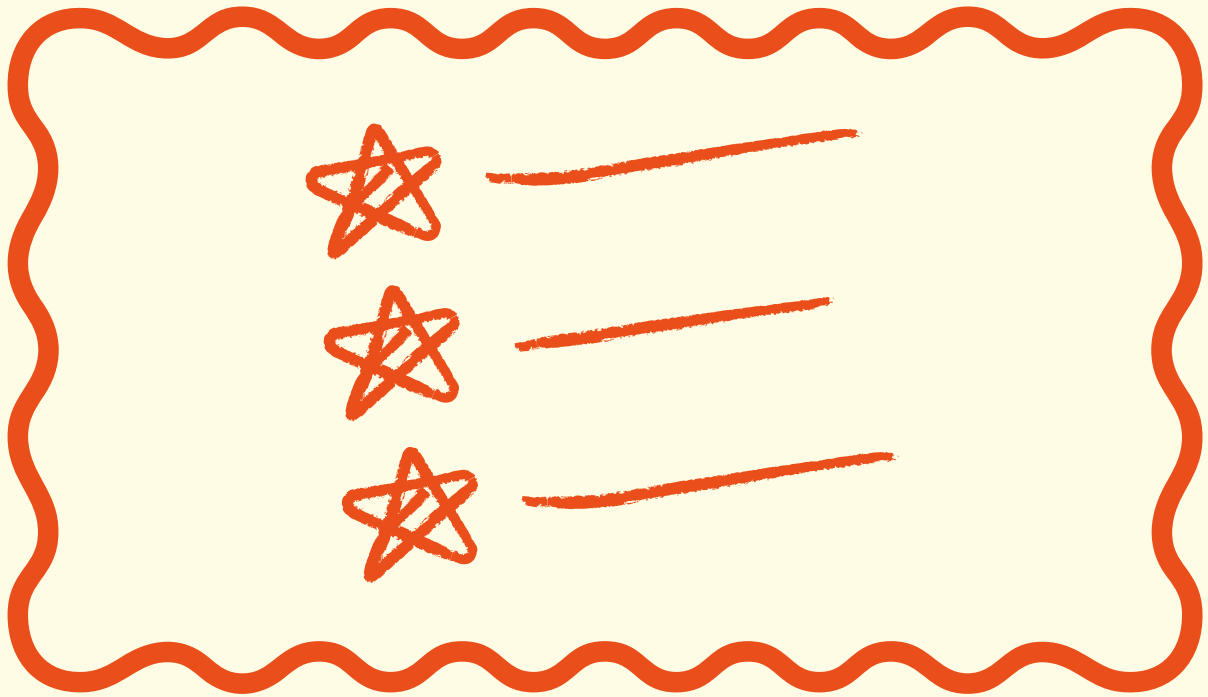
NYJO

Warm-up Exercises



CREATED BY DYLAN ORBA

Learning Objectives



Encourage students to explore sound creatively using their instruments.

Develop strong listening and ensemble awareness skills by reacting to and engaging with their peers' sounds.

Introduce improvisation in a non-intimidating way, focusing on playfulness and experimentation rather than structured solos.

Help students become comfortable making spontaneous musical choices without overthinking.

These warm-ups are designed for teachers to run with their class. The goal is to create a relaxed environment where students can freely experiment with sound and gradually build their confidence in improvisation without feeling pressure.

The Click Game

Step 1: Small Group Exploration

1. Divide the class into small groups, ideally pairs, but group sizes are at the teacher's discretion.
2. Each group explores the shortest sounds they can create with their instruments.
3. Encourage students to think outside the box and explore extended techniques.

Some examples include:

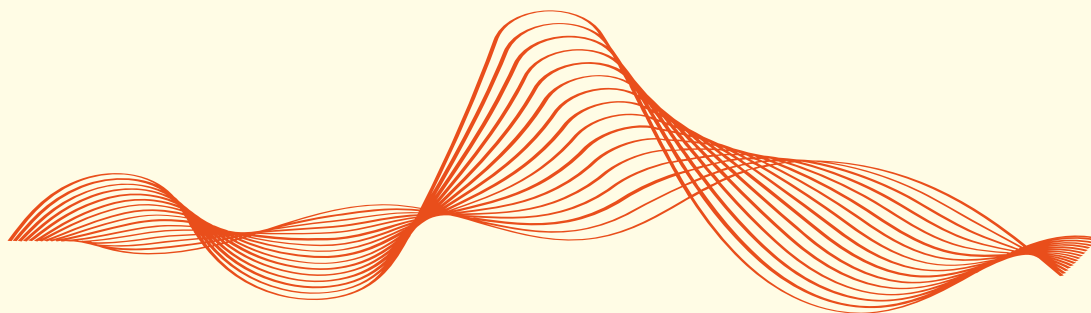
Brass players can tap their mouthpieces.

Guitarists can slap the body of their instruments.

Wind players can use key clicks or breath sounds.

Percussionists can use stick clicks or rim taps.

These are just suggestions—students should come up with their own creative ideas! Walk around and engage with each group, providing suggestions if students seem unsure.



Step 2: Sharing and Developing the Game

1. After around 3-4 minutes (or longer if needed, at the teacher's discretion), bring everyone into a circle.
2. Go around the circle, having each student demonstrate a short sound.
3. Once they're comfortable, have them reduce the space between sounds, aiming for a continuous flow of noises moving around the circle.
4. Achieving a completely seamless flow is quite difficult, which means this activity provides a lot to work with.
5. Allow the game to evolve – students will naturally experiment more as they get comfortable.
6. Finish the game whenever you feel it is appropriate, but around 5 minutes is a good guideline.

Key teaching point: Avoid framing this as 'improvisation'—students may overthink it! Instead, let them experience the concept naturally.





Follow the Leader.



Step 1: Creating Scribbles

1. Again, split the class into pairs or groups of three, but group sizes are at the teacher's discretion.
2. Each student explores longer, more textured sounds (referred to as 'scribbles').
3. Emphasize that these do not need to be musical notes – extended techniques, non-harmonic sounds, and unconventional approaches are encouraged.

Step 2: Introducing Leadership & Listening

1. Assign one student as the 'leader' of each group.
2. The leader freely improvises but must leave deliberate gaps in their playing.
3. During these gaps, the rest of the group immediately fills the space with their 'scribbles.'
4. As soon as the leader resumes playing, the group must stop their scribbles instantly.
5. This develops critical listening skills and teaches students to be reactive and aware of their peers.

Step 3: Rotating Leadership & Adding Nuance

1. Demonstrate the exercise yourself before letting students try.
2. Encourage the leader to be playful, using unpredictable gaps to challenge the group.
3. The leader should also use body language to signal when they are about to stop or start playing.
4. After a round, allow the leader to pick the next leader, or the teacher can choose.
5. Repeat the exercise until everyone has had a chance to lead.

Mini Quiz



1. CAN YOU NAME TWO DIFFERENT WAYS YOU MADE A SHORT SOUND IN 'THE CLICK GAME'?

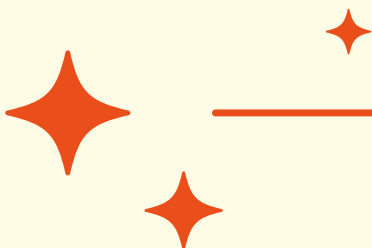
Answers will vary (e.g., tapping the mouthpiece, slapping the guitar body, key clicks, breath sounds, etc.).

2. WHAT WAS THE HARDEST PART OF MAKING THE SOUNDS GO CONTINUOUSLY AROUND THE CIRCLE?

Answers will vary (e.g., reacting quickly, making sure the sound connected smoothly, listening carefully, etc.).

3. WHY DO YOU THINK LEAVING SPACE IN MUSIC IS IMPORTANT?

Answers will vary (e.g., it helps create contrast, makes the music more interesting, allows others to respond, etc.).



Key Words



Extended Techniques: Unconventional ways of playing an instrument to produce unique sounds (e.g. key clicks, breath sounds, tapping the instrument body).

Improvisation: Creating music spontaneously, without a set plan.

Listening Skills: The ability to pay attention to and respond to the sounds made by others in an ensemble.

Scribble: A playful, freeform sound that does not need to be a proper note, used in the 'Follow the Leader' exercise.

Call and Response: A musical conversation where one player makes a sound and others respond.

Coordination: The ability to time and control movements and sounds in sync with others.





If you have any questions about the content within this worksheet, please contact us on projects@nyjo.org.uk.

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