



## Using Story as a Stimulus for Composing



Composing is a creative process where children are given opportunities to select from a variety of sound sources for a range of musical purposes. One such purpose is to create sounds to accompany a story. The text and illustrations in stories provide an ideal stimulus for the children's creative endeavours and offer a structure for their compositions.

(See PPDS website- [Suggested Stories for Composing](#))

### **Suggestions for using stories in Composing:**

Choose stories that have 'sound possibilities', that is, stories that suggest, mention or evoke sounds.

The following sequence could be followed:

- ♪ Teacher reads the story to/with the children
- ♪ Teacher and children identify occasions in the story where sounds could be used to enhance the story
- ♪ Possible occasions include:
  - places.....the sea, forest, in the city; the kitchen, swimming pool
  - weather.....thunder, windy day, rain,
  - events....battle, games, party, shopping,
  - actions.....jumping over the gate; opening the door
  - repeated events eg walking on a journey

For older classes

- characters in the story
- atmosphere.....an eerie castle; the first day of holidays;
- ♪ Ask children to think about possible sounds that could be heard at these moments in the story, extending what is in the story text eg in the kitchen-microwave, clock ticking, water dripping, people eating etc.
- ♪ You may like to record these (write words/draw pictures) in some way for all to see.
- ♪ Invite suggestions from the class on how these sounds might be created and discuss.

- ♪ Invite the children to explore sound making sources that would best portray the purpose to which they have been assigned. (voice; instruments; environment; body). In any one lesson, you may wish to limit to one of the sources, with a view to extending the children's knowledge of that particular sound source. Consider the classroom management- the full class could make the sounds together; groups could work on different sections of the story; individuals may focus on certain parts
- ♪ The children choose appropriate sounds and practise playing these within their group
- ♪ The class/group perform the story/composition. This can be done in a number of ways.... Re-tell the story with sounds coming in at various intervals (following a signal/word in the story); show pictures of the story and put sounds with it; perform the sounds in order, without the text etc
- ♪ Reflect on the performance and consider what went well; what could be changed etc

**Consider extending the composition in future performances:**

- ♪ Put some of the sounds together as an overture before reading the story
- ♪ Use pictures of the key events in the story and use these as a score for the music ie as the teacher points to the sequence of pictures, children make the sounds. A number of pictures could be arranged together.
- ♪ Conduct the class to perform their sounds in sequence ie gesture to different groups/individuals to play (without reading the story)
- ♪ Perform for another class
- ♪ Create a score for the composition

NOTE: Poems will provide a good stimulus for composing and an approach, similar to that of using story, can be taken.