

All aboard
the story
train!



SING A STORY

Resources for teachers and practitioners
by John Webb

MID WALES MUSIC TRUST

HAfREN
Y LLEGLID AR GYFFER ADLONIANT
THE ENTERTAINMENT VENUE

Sinfonia
Cymru

All aboard the Story Train!

Welcome to the Sing a Story project for Foundation Phase children and their teachers. The interactive Sing a Story concert will be presented by musician John Webb, actor Charlotte Mafham and five musicians from Sinfonia Cymru. They will take us on a journey to Storyland to meet various characters: the three little pigs, the big bad wolf, the grand old Duke of York, and a very naughty rabbit, amongst others!

And everyone in the audience will be very much involved ... you'll need to watch out, as some of you might well get bopped on the head by a naughty rabbit!

The concert is supported by **this pack**. In it you'll find further details about the performance including the songs we'll be singing, the stories we'll be sharing and the performers and musical instruments you'll be meeting. We have also included some ideas for further activities you can use with your class to prepare them for the visit or to follow it up.

The children's enjoyment and understanding would be enhanced if you are able to do the following **before the concert**:

- **Learn** the Sing a Story song (the words are on page 4 of this pack, and we have emailed a guide track to your school: please let us know if you have any problems accessing it)
- **Sing** the Grand Old Duke of York (guide track emailed)
- **Read** some of the stories
- **Look** at pictures of the instruments you'll be meeting at the performance (see pages 5 – 7)



The Stories

Sing a Story is based around several stories which you might like to explore further with your class. You can find more information about them and suggested classroom activities on pages 9 – 11 of this pack.

Train Ride by June Crebbin

The original story uses the rhythms of the words to convey a train's movement. Between each of the other stories in our concert we will be getting back on the train, which will take us to a new story or to meet a new character.

Three Little Pigs - text by Robert Adederian

This new telling of the tale has all the traditional elements and showcases each of the instruments as different characters in the story.

The Grand Old Duke of York

We meet the Grand Old Duke, but he keeps asking us to do some strange things with his song!

Little Rabbit Foo Foo - text by Michael Rosen

A very naughty rabbit who likes to bop creatures on the head. Despite several warnings, he does so once too often....



The 'Sing a Story Song'

The concert starts with a call and response song. We are emailing a recording which you should receive together with this teacher's pack.

Please familiarise your children with the song if you can. In the performance John will sing each phrase before everyone else sings it back.



Fm⁷
E
Fm⁷
E
Fm⁷
E

4 Fm⁷
E
A^b
D^b
F[#]
B

7 E
A
F[#]
A^o
Fm⁷
E

10 Fm⁷
E
Fm⁷
E
Fm⁷
E

Sing a sto - ry Sing a sto - ry share a song share a song mak - ing mu - sic mak ing mu - sic
 all day long all day long On our jour - ney On our jour - ney With new friends With new friends
 come and join us come and join_ us 'till it ends 'till it ends Sing a sto ry Sing a sto - ry
 share a song share a song_ mak - ing mu - sic mak - ing mu - sic all day long all day long



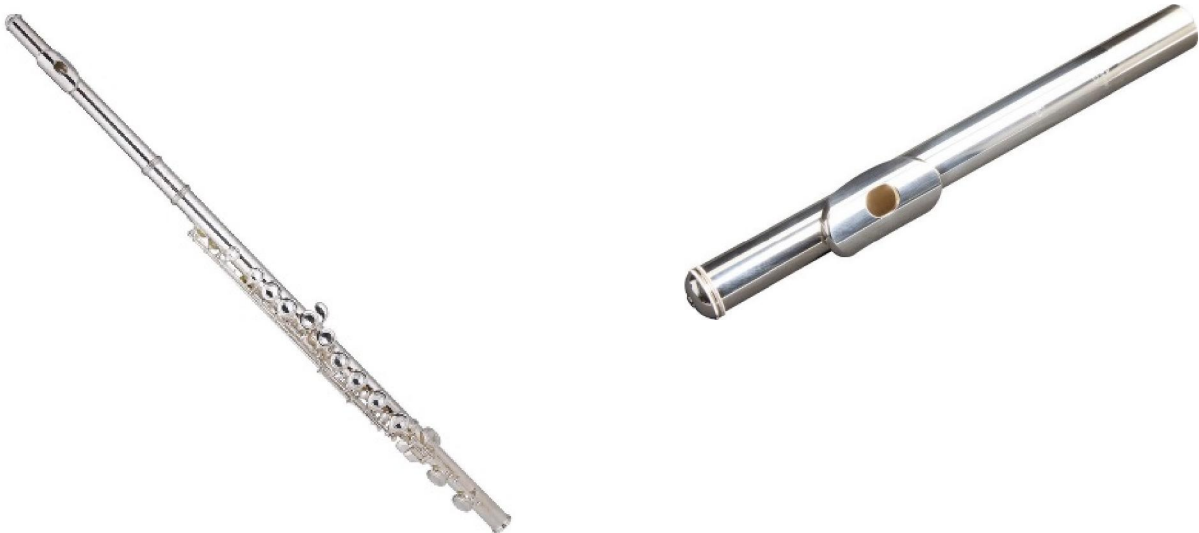
The Instruments

The music you will hear in the concert has been written by John Webb. It will be performed by five instrumentalists from Sinfonia Cymru and you will meet them at the start of the concert. There are three woodwind instruments, one string instrument and one percussion instrument:

Wind instruments:

To make the wind instruments work the players blow down them. They press the metal keys on the instruments to change the pitch (high or low sound) of the note they produce.

Flute:

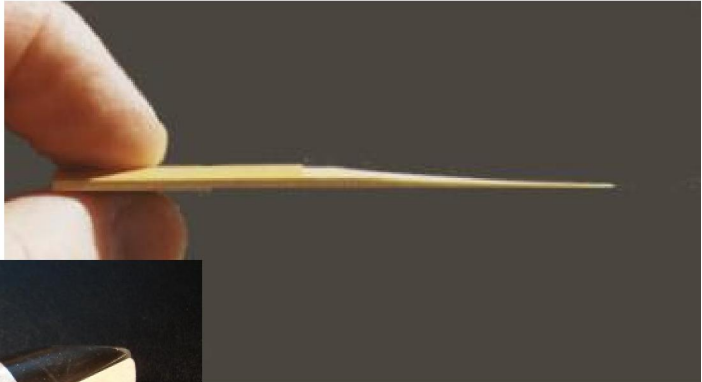


The flautist blows across a hole in the instrument to produce a note. This is just like blowing across an open water bottle. The amount of water in the bottle determines the pitch of the sound you produce.



Clarinet:

In the top of the instrument is a thin slither of bamboo: this is called the **reed**. It is held on the head of the clarinet with a metal bracket called a ligature. When the musician blows air past this, it vibrates to create a note.



Bassoon:

The bassoon also uses bamboo to create a sound, but instead of one piece, there are two, which vibrate together to create a buzzing sound, which produces the note. The reed is placed onto the end of a curved piece of metal called the crook.



You can create a 'bassoon' using a straw. Flatten about 1cm of the end of the straw. Cut this flattened section into a point. Blow through the cut end to create a buzzing sound: you will probably have to adjust the tension of your lips and the amount of straw in your mouth until you can get the sound.

There are lots of websites showing how to do this in more detail: search for 'straw instrument'.



String instruments: Violin

The violin is the smallest member of the string family. It is made of wood and has four strings stretched along its body. It is normally played with a bow, which is a separate length of wood with hair from a horse's tail strung along it. But the violin can also be played *pizzicato* (plucked) with a finger.

You can create a string instrument using sturdy boxes and elastic bands. The pitch each elastic band produces depends on the thickness of the band and how tightly it is strung. This is exactly the same as on a real instrument, where the lower strings are thicker and less tensely strung.



Percussion: Marimba

The Marimba is like a large xylophone. The keys are made of wood and resonate (make a sound) when they are struck with mallets, which is the proper name for what are often called beaters.



The vertical objects underneath the keys are hollow tubes called **resonators** which amplify the sound (make it louder), and also make it fuller and richer. The percussion player will also be playing some other instruments at the concert, including drums and cymbals.



General music activities for your class

Making instruments

Create your own band by making your own instruments.

In the instrument descriptions above there are ideas for making versions of some of the instruments:

- Flutes out of water bottles
- Bassoons out of plastic straws
- Violins out of sturdy boxes and elastic bands

You could also try making:

- A xylophone out of glass bottles filled with different amounts of water, which is then tapped (gently!) with a beater or stick
- Drums from boxes and washing-up bowls
- A carrot (or parsnip) instrument – see the YouTube video <http://tinyurl.com/zvt4p3l>

Listening & watching

Before coming to the concert, you could show your class some videos or recordings of musicians playing the instruments they will see in the concert. You can find the following pieces on YouTube or Spotify:

- Flute: *Syrinx* by Claude Debussy. This is a slow, mysterious and very beautiful piece.
- Clarinet: *Clarinet Concerto (second movement)* by Aaron Copland. This is very rhythmic and spiky.
- Bassoon: *Partita (third movement)* by Gordon Jacob. A very fast and jolly piece.
- Violin: *Danse Macabre* by Camille Saint-Saens. This is for full orchestra with a solo violin, and describes a devilish dance.
- Marimba: *Nagoya Marimbas* by Steve Reich. Two marimbas playing a very rhythmic piece.



Singing activities

To encourage the children to sing or get used to call and response you could try:

- Singing the register in the morning
- Using the story 'We're going on a bear hunt' as a call and response
- 'Have you got your ? voice?': you lead a question with the group which explores different voices. Have you got your speaking/whispering/squeaky/low/high (etc) voice, using the appropriate voice. The class replies in that voice 'Yes, I've got my speaking/whispering/squeaky/low/high (etc) voice'. At some point also use your singing voice.
- Have sung conversations with individuals as they play – you may not initially get a sung response, but keep trying. If you're stuck for a tune use the children's playground chant 'nah nah-nah nah nah' as a starting point.

More about the Stories

1. *Train Ride* by June Crebbin

Train Ride describes a small girl's journey on a train and the things she sees on the way. At the concert we'll be reading the story and acting it out with props and you'll hear the train speeding up and slowing down. The audience will also join in with the train sometimes with a strong *Choo, choo, choo!*

If you have the book it would be useful to familiarise the children with the various elements in it. Here is the text:

We're off on a journey out of the town, *what shall I see? What shall I see?*

Sheep running off and cows lying down, *that's what I see. That's what I see!*

Over the meadow up on the hill, *what shall I see? What shall I see?*

A mare and her foal standing perfectly still, *that's what I see. That's what I see!*

There is a farm down a bumpety road, *what shall I see? What shall I see?*



A shiny red tractor pulling its load. *That's what I see. That's what I see.*
Here in my seat my lunch on my knee. *What shall I see? What shall I see?*
A ticket collector smiling at me. *That's what I see. That's what I see.*
Into the tunnel, scary and black, *what shall I see? What shall I see?*
My face in a mirror staring back. *That's what I see. That's what I see.*
After the tunnel when we come out. *What shall I see? What shall I see?*
A gaggle of geese strutting about. *That's what I see. That's what I see.*
Over the tree tops high in the sky, *what shall I see? What shall I see?*
A giant balloon sailing by. *That's what I see. That's what I see.*
Listen! The engine is slowing down. *What shall I see? What shall I see?*
A market square a seaside town. *That's what I see. That's what I see.*
There is the lighthouse, the sand and the sea,
Here is the station, who shall I see?
There is my grandma, welcoming me, welcoming me.

Classroom activity:

You could use the Train Ride call and response as a basis for a classroom activity related to what everyone can see in different places:

Teacher: Sitting on the carpet, looking at the tables
All reply: What can we see? What can we see?
A child describes something they can see
All: That's what I see, that's what I see.

This could be adapted for lots of other places: garden, classroom, etc.

2. Three Little Pigs (text by Robert Adederian)

This version of *Three Little Pigs* follows the traditional tale, so finding time to familiarise the children with it would be great. There'll be audience participation when the wolf tries to blow down the pigs' houses!

Classroom activity:

You and the children could explore what could be made from straw, sticks and bricks. This could range from making actual shelters(!) to using these materials in pictures of the pigs houses.

Act out the story with some props: the pigs could wear different hats (a knotted hanky, a cap and a hard hat, perhaps), and the wolf could have some ears!



3. The Grand Old Duke of York

We'll meet the Grand Old Duke, and sing his song (the recording of the tune has been emailed to you along with this pack) – perhaps doing some silly things with it! So it would be great if the children were familiar with the song.

Classroom activity:

You can use the song to explore different speeds, sometimes singing it fast, sometimes slow (perhaps because the duke is tired – see below). Or you can try missing out the words 'up' and 'down'. Can everyone sing it fast *and* miss out the words 'up' and 'down'?

The Grand Old Duke of York gets very tired after singing his song, so at the end we'll hear part of a piece of music which might help him get to sleep. It's the first part of Haydn's Symphony 'Le Matin'. You can find a recording here <http://tinyurl.com/35erw48>.

We'll hear the first 2 minutes of the piece in the concert.

4. Little Rabbit Foo Foo

This is a great story to learn and children love it! It's based around the first part of the French folk song 'Allouette', which you can find on YouTube. We'll be acting it out, and may need audience help from the audience who can become the mice, worms, tigers and goblins in the story!

Classroom activity:

If you read the story with the children, see if you can find some props so they can take it in turns to become the fairy and Little Rabbit Foo Foo:

Little Rabbit Foo Foo: Rabbit ears, Rabbit tail, a blow-up hammer

Fairy: Flowery hat, handbag

At the end of the story, Foo Foo is turned into a goony, but what's a goony? Perhaps children can draw their own version of a goony and create a goony song?



The Sing a Story project team:

Mid Wales Music Trust

MWMT was established in 2009 to enable more people across mid Wales to learn about be inspired by high quality live music. We collaborate with many organisations including The Hafren, Sinfonia Cymru, Arts Connection and Brecon Baroque Festival. Our music projects for schools have included Peter and the Wolf, The Story of Babar, a new production of The Tempest for primary schools and The Carnival of the Animals. www.mwmt.org.uk; catrin@mwmt.org.uk

Sinfonia Cymru

Sinfonia Cymru is Wales's professional chamber orchestra, made up of outstanding musicians in the early stages of their professional careers. They perform all over Wales and beyond, and as well as giving performances in traditional concert halls they regularly perform in unconventional spaces including pubs and cinemas. www.sinfoniacyrmu.co.uk; james@sinfoniacyrmu.co.uk

John Webb is a composer and workshop leader: he writes, leads education and



community projects, conducts, and trains teachers, amongst other things. Recent work includes: *Into the Light* for the Aurora Orchestra and Buckinghamshire Music Hub (which won a 2016 British Composers Award) which was first performed in the Royal Albert Hall with 2,000 KS2 performers; *The Last Plantagenet* which received its first performance in DeMontfort Hall Leicester, conducted by the composer; and *The Girl Who Never Looked Up* for the National Theatre Learning Department. As a workshop and project leader he is currently working for organisations including the Philharmonia Orchestra on its iOrchestra Project, Wigmore Hall, Mid Wales Music Trust and the

Royal Academy of Music. He works with a large variety of participants, from very young children and families to vulnerable adults, deaf students, music students and prisoners. No two weeks are the same, and he wouldn't have it any other way. www.johnwebbcomposer.co.uk

Charlotte Mafham



Charlotte has performed Sing A Story at Wigmore Hall in London and Music in the Round, Sheffield. She trained at Arts Ed and in puppetry with Blind Summit. Her recent credits include: 2 international tours as the Narrator and viola player in 'The Snail and the Whale', 'Melancholy' (Little Angel Theatre), 'Henry V' (Asylum Chapel), 'The Girl Who Cannot Die' (Brighton Fringe and Rose Theatre, Kingston) 'Troilus & Cressida' and 'Coriolanus' (Tristan Bates); 'Rumpelstiltskin' (UK Tour) and 'The Just So Stories' (The King's Head). Charlotte was a puppeteer in the finale parade at the Queen's 90th birthday 'Patron's Lunch'. She also plays viola for the Whitehall Orchestra and the charity fundraising Amici Orchestra.

Thank you / Diolch yn fawr

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