



World Kids

Fun for kids! True stories!



PAL Project

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Can you guess from the pictures what the subject of this month's PAL Page is? We're going to talk about **MUSIC** around the world. No matter where you live or what your life is like, I bet you have noticed one thing - if a little child is crying and you start to play some music or sing to him, he will stop to listen! Many little children will be happy for ages sitting on the floor and banging with a spoon on some old pots; and as soon as a child can walk he or she will often start trying to dance when music is played! It is amazing but it is true all over the world.



In some countries children are taught to read musical notes in school and even to play instruments like the recorder, tambourine or drums. Older students may go on to learn an instrument like the trumpet, violin or piano, and in the **USA** many schools have marching bands where the students play tunes to entertain during the half-time break of a football game. Many young people like to learn to play the guitar, keyboard or drums so they can play popular songs heard on the radio and TV - but sadly in many countries where even children have daily access to computers, iPods and other technology, the phrase "playing music" has now just come to mean pushing a button to **HEAR** music, not **PRODUCE** it!

But even if you live in a country where such new technology is hard to obtain, or **NO** music is taught in the schools, it is not hard to find a way to make music using things that are just found lying around! Of course the cheerful singing of birds and humming of bees have inspired mankind to sing since the beginning of time, and so it's not surprising that there are **LOTS** of references in the Bible to singing and dancing, and even to making and playing musical instruments.

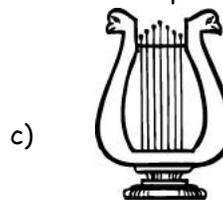
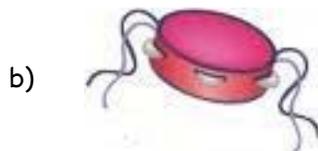
Do you know where the **FIRST** mention of playing musical instruments is found in the Bible?
Read in **Genesis 4:21** about Jubal who lived **BEFORE** the Flood and was called the "Father of all who play harp and flute".....



Musical instruments in the Bible

Can you match the right instrument with each story?

1. What instrument did David play to soothe King Saul when he was upset?
2. What instrument did Miriam play to lead the dancing after the Israelites crossed the Red Sea?
3. What instrument did the priests play when the people shouted and the walls of Jericho fell down?
4. What instrument did the Levites play as the foundation of the temple was laid before rebuilding?



.....and did you know that in **2 Chronicles 20:21** the Israelites went to battle led by the singers singing loudly and God caused their enemies to panic and start killing each other?



Music is important all over the world and is a part of most celebrations so it is not surprising that there are many different kinds of musical instruments. As a child growing up in **England**, I learned to play the piano (although I've barely touched one since!) and I've always enjoyed music, so as I traveled to different countries it's been fascinating to learn about different kinds of instruments, singing and dancing. My aunt was from **Scotland** and so she always loved the sound of bagpipes - which are famous there and often known around the world because of the song "Amazing Grace".

When my husband and I went to live in **Mexico** we quickly learned about the most famous musicians there - the Mariachi groups, who wear very elaborate costumes. But in the mountains, where most of the native Indian people live (who are VERY poor) the most common type of music heard is the flute, which is a very simple instrument yet when several are played together the music is fascinating. Later I visited South America (where the flute is also commonly played) and one day I came across this man playing in a market place in **Chile**. His flute is rather more elaborate and of course because he has to play his guitar with his hands, the flute is strapped to his neck! Maybe you have seen someone who can play several different musical instruments at the same time - it must be VERY difficult to do!



In countries where most people are very poor, such as in Africa and parts of Asia, often people make their own version of an instrument out of locally available materials. When I visited a remote village in **Togo**, West Africa a couple of years ago, many of the village children gathered to sing me some of their songs and I was amazed to see two small boys (probably less than 10 years old) providing excellent music on a drum that was just an old plastic container! They just beat on it with their hands, but the rhythm was as good as if they were using a "real" drum! Of course a wide variety of drums are found all around the world, from bongo drums to kettle drums and **Caribbean** steel drums - even to the similar "gongs" found in many Buddhist countries.

One fascinating instrument that is now found in many American churches is known as a "rainstick". It is believed that these originated in **Chile** and were made from a dried cactus. They are just like a long, thin stick but when turned upside down they make an intriguing sound like gently falling rain. Similar rainsticks are also used in Africa and India. If you would like to make your own version of a rainstick, here are some easy instructions: http://www.highlightskids.com/Express/Crafts/Toys/C1096_rainStick.asp



When I visited **Kenya** a few years ago, I was given a very special gift by a group at a church there. I don't know what this instrument is called and it is very hard to describe, but a lady cheerfully played it for me. I feel very privileged to have been given it as it must have taken many hours to make - you can see it in the photo on the left. It has a wooden frame, and the center is made of thin reeds (probably filled with tiny seeds) and laced together tightly. On the ends there are lengths of wire on which are threaded flattened caps of coca bottles. As it is shaken and rhythmically moved in different directions it produces a variety of sounds - quite fascinating!



In another place I bought another strange small instrument made out of a dried gourd and some bent pieces of flexible metal (shown on the right) - although I haven't learned how to play it yet! Undoubtedly there must be HUNDREDS of strange musical instruments made and used around the world. That may be why we read in **Psalm 150** that we should praise God with many different musical instruments and **Psalm 100** starts with "Make a joyful noise to the Lord all you lands!" Our Heavenly Father truly loves it when we all sing and praise him with music!



'Til next time,

Your Friend,

Shirley