

TEACHER'S GUIDELINES

FOUNDATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR LITERACY,
NUMERACY AND SKILLS

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

GRADE 8

**TITLE OF CARD: CLASSIFICATION OF MUSICAL
INSTRUMENTS
TEACHER'S CARD 4**

**MOE
MAHATMA GANDHI INSTITUTE
2025**

TABLE OF CONTENT

Teacher’s Guidelines	i
Guide to Educators	ii
Introduction	1
Activity 1	
Activity 2.....	3
Activity 3.....	4
Activity 4.....	11
Exercise 1	12
Exercise 2	
Assessment Criteria	14
Assessment Rubric	15
Extension of Activity	

GRADE 8

TEACHER'S GUIDELINES

CARD 4

Title of Card: **Classification of Musical Instruments**



GUIDE TO EDUCATORS

Title of Card: Classification of Musical Instruments

Competency 4:

Understanding and Application

Element 1:

Demonstrate understanding of fundamental music theory concepts.

Performance Criteria:

- **Level 2:**

Definition and explanation of basic technical terms related to music and their application.

Purpose of Activity:

The purpose of this activity is to introduce students to the systematic classification of musical instruments by exploring their sound production methods and characteristics. Through active listening, group-based sorting games, and visual identification tasks, learners will gain the ability to classify musical instruments into 5 categories: Idiophones, Membranophones (Skin-made percussions), Aerophones (Wind instruments), Chordophones (String instruments) and Electrophones.

This activity enhances auditory discrimination, fosters teamwork, and builds a deeper understanding of global musical traditions.

Resources and Materials:

- Speakers and audios/video clips of diverse instruments (or YouTube links).
- Visual chart of instrument families.
- A classification table worksheet.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- List and describe the five main categories of musical instruments: Aerophones, Chordophones, Membranophones, Idiophones, and Electrophones.
- Identify musical instruments by listening to short audio clips.
- Classify each instrument heard into its correct family based on its timbre, sound quality, and method of playing.

TEACHING TRAJECTORIES/ IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

Introduction

In this lesson, you will learn about the **classification of musical instruments** and how they are grouped based on the way they produce sound. This is especially important in **Indian Classical Music**, where each type of instrument has a special job—some create melody, some keep the rhythm, and others provide the drone. Through fun listening, sorting, and picture-matching activities, you will learn to identify the five main families of instruments: **Idiophones, Membranophones, Aerophones, Chordophones, and Electrophones**. This will help you understand musical sounds better and appreciate instruments from India and around the world.



ACTIVITY 1

WARM- UP

- Ask students to observe the three pictures given below and name any three musical instruments they can identify in each picture.



1.

2.

3.



1.
2.
3.



1.
2.
3.

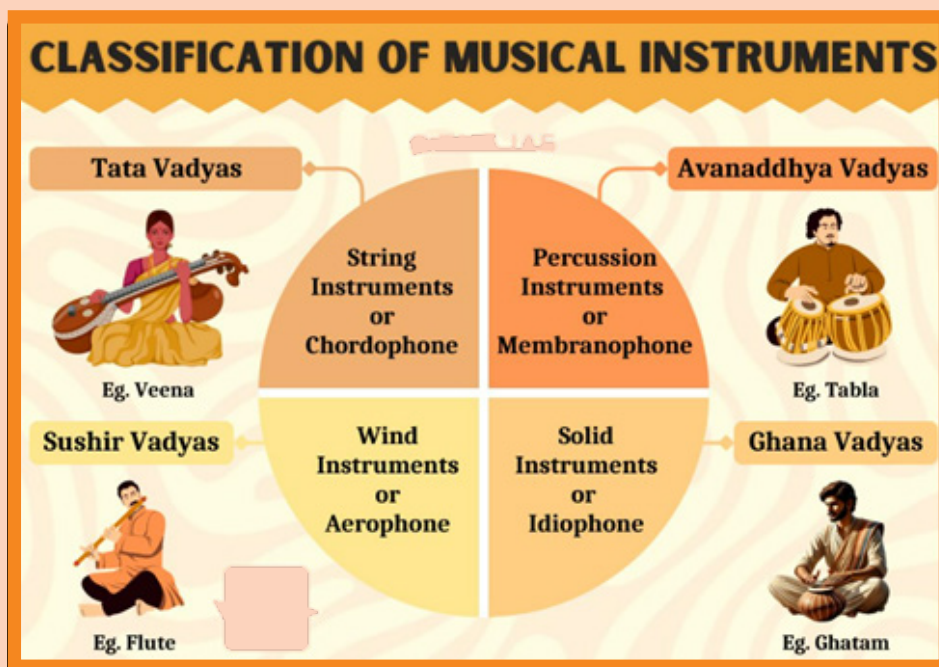


ACTIVITY 2

CLASSIFICATION OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

▪ Bharata classification system

According to Bharata's Natyashastra, musical instruments can be classified into 4 categories based on their sound producing mechanism. These are as follows:



▪ Hornbostel - Sachs classification system

The Hornbostel - Sachs system is a method of classifying acoustic musical instruments which was developed in 1914. Western musical instruments can be classified into 5 categories:

- Chordophones
- Aerophones
- Membranophones
- Idiophones
- Electrophones



ACTIVITY 3

Categories of Musical Instruments



3.1 Tat Vadya/ Chordophones

Tat Vadya are instruments that have one or more strings stretched between two points. They are either plucked, bowed or struck.



From the given list, write down the names of the following chordophones in the spaces provided:

(Santoor, Ukelele, Banjo, Cello, Ektara, Harp)



S _ _ _ _



U _ _ _ _



B _ _ _



C _ _ _



H _ _ _



E _ _ _ _

3.2 Sushir Vadya/Aerophones

Sushir Vadya are instruments that produce sound primarily by causing a column of air to vibrate.



Did you know?



The most ancient and widespread wind instrument is the **bansuri**. The oldest mention is in the *Veda-s*, where it is called *venu*.

Saxophone



Tuba



Horn



Bagpipe



Nadaswaram



Shehnai



Mouth organ



Recorder



Panpipe

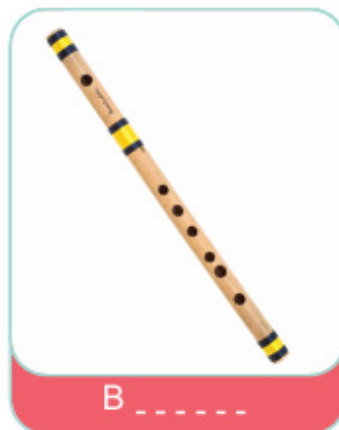
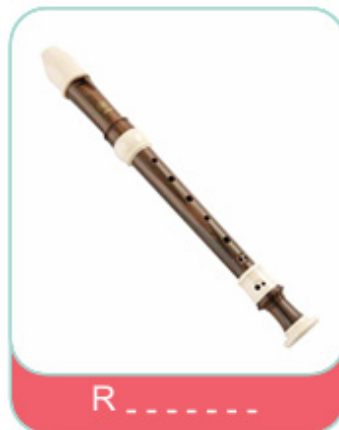


Pungi / Been



From the given list, write down the names of the following aerophones in the spaces provided:

(Recorder, Pan Flute, Saxophone, Bansuri, Mouth Organ, Bagpipe)



3.3 Avanadha Vadya/ Membranophones

Avanadha Vadya are instruments having a vibrating membrane, traditionally an animal skin but often synthetic today, that is stretched over a frame.



Did you know?



The *nagada*, the war drum, dominated the war music of India throughout its history. Before the battle, the royal priests beat them three times and brandished them over the warriors. They prayed to the drums to defeat the enemy with their roaring voice, spread terror among the enemies and conquer them.

From the given list, write down the names of the following membranophones in the spaces provided:

(Conga, Mridangam, Bongo, Dholak, Djembe, Ravanne)



3.4 Ghana Vadya/ Idiophones

Ghana Vadya are instruments in which the whole body of the instrument vibrates when struck, rubbed or set into motion.

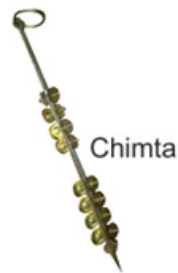
Cymbals



Manjira



Triangle



Chimta

Maracas



Tambourine



Natuvangam



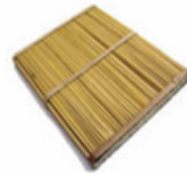
Chimes



Ghungroo



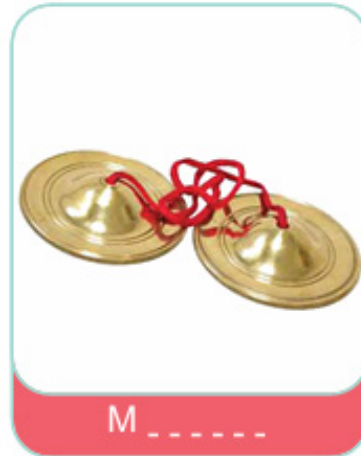
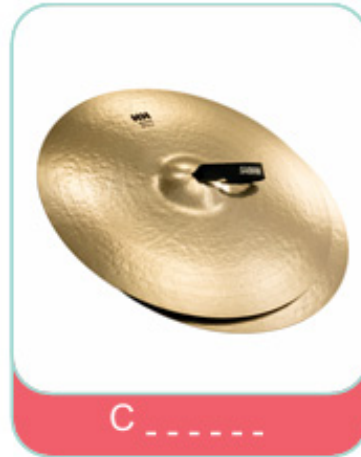
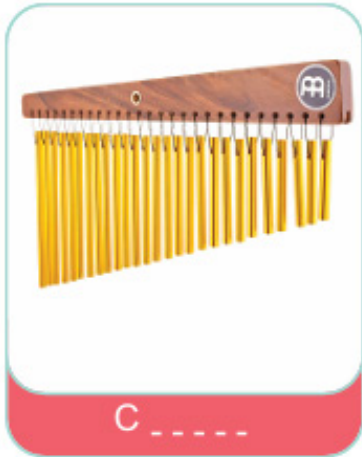
Did you know?



The **maravane**, also known as the Kayambe, is a thin rectangular box made out of shoots of dried sugar cane flowers and filled with dried seeds, which gives the rhythmic sound. It is one of the traditional instruments used in the Mauritian sega.

From the given list, write down the names of the following idiophones in the spaces provided:

(Manjira, Cymbals, Chimes, Triangle, Maracas, Ghatam)



3.5 Electrophones

Musical instruments grouped under the electrophone's category produce sound when the electrical signals produced are converted to sound by the use of mixers, amplifiers and loudspeakers.



ACTIVITY 4

Listening & Sorting Game

- Listen carefully to the audios played by your teacher.
- Identify the musical instrument based on its sound.
- Identify the category of the musical instrument and justify your answer; why do you think that particular instrument belongs to that category.



Exercise 1:

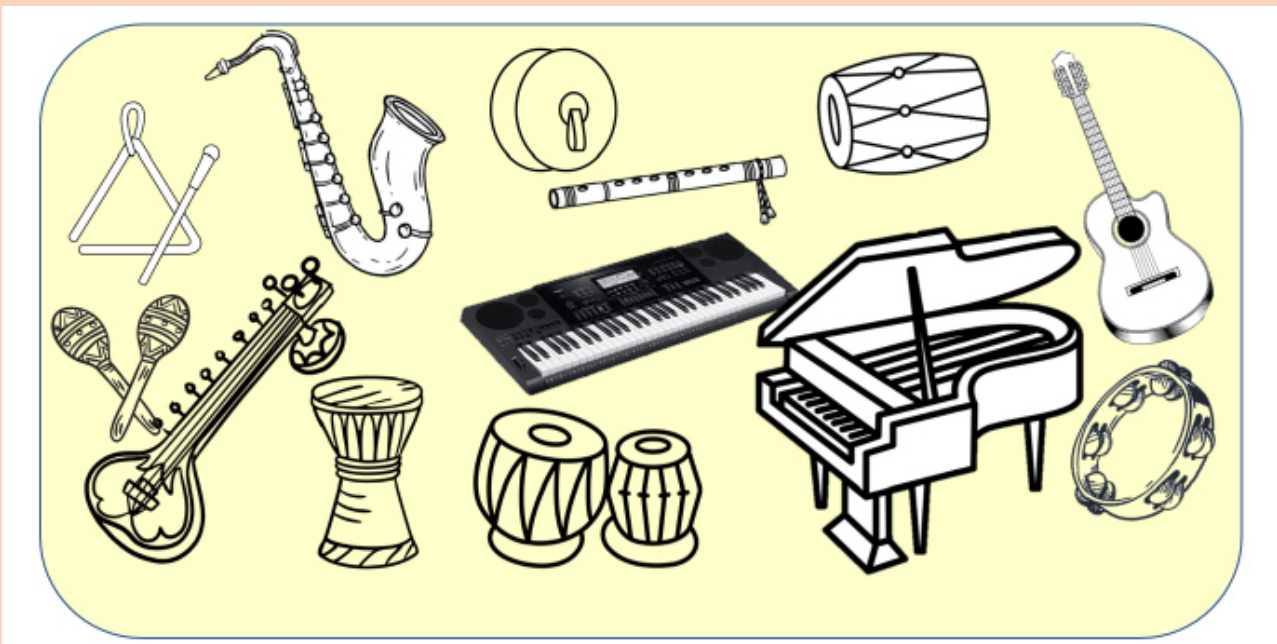
1. Word Search Puzzle

R	A	V	A	T	C	O	B	O	E	L	F
A	R	I	P	E	O	N	A	N	A	F	A
D	H	O	L	W	N	A	S	A	U	B	I
S	U	L	U	S	G	I	S	D	E	K	T
V	O	I	L	I	A	P	T	A	O	Y	I
R	J	N	C	T	R	I	U	S	I	L	S
S	N	K	P	A	K	H	A	W	A	J	A
A	A	L	H	R	P	A	M	A	C	R	R
N	B	A	N	S	U	R	I	R	G	S	A
E	U	M	F	G	U	I	T	A	R	T	N
E	T	U	L	F	D	R	U	M	S	V	G
V	O	N	T	R	I	A	N	G	L	E	I

1. Guitar
2. Nadaswaram
3. Violin
4. Cello
5. Banjo
6. Piano
7. Conga
8. Triangle
9. Drums
10. Dhol
11. Pakhawaj
12. Flute
13. Tuba
14. Harp
15. Sitar
16. Sarangi
17. Duff
18. Bansuri
19. Veena
20. Obeo

Exercise 2:

2. Carefully cut out each instrument and stick it under its correct category in the table below.



<u>IDIOPHONES</u>	
<u>MEMBRANOPHONES</u>	
<u>CHORDOPHONES</u>	
<u>AEROPHONES</u>	
<u>ELECTROPHONES</u>	

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Learners will be assessed through listening activities, sorting tasks, discussion, and written exercises. The assessment focuses on correct classification, understanding of sound production mechanisms, and accurate identification through auditory and visual cues.

1. Understanding of Instrument Categories

- List and describe all five categories: Idiophones, Membranophones, Aerophones, Chordophones, Electrophones.
- Demonstrate understanding of each category's sound-production mechanism.
- Recognise the difference between Bharata's classification and the Hornbostel-Sachs system.

2. Identification Through Listening

- Identify a musical instrument when hearing it in an audio clip.
- Correctly match each instrument to its category based on timbre, pitch, and playing technique.
- Provide reasoning for their classification (e.g., "The sound comes from a vibrating membrane, so it is a Membranophone").

3. Visual Recognition and Sorting

- Recognise instruments through pictures and place them accurately under their correct category.
- Use visual cues such as strings, keys, body shape, membrane, pipes, or electronic components to decide classification.

4. Use of Correct Terminology

- Use technical terms such as "string vibration", "air column", "membrane", "body resonance", "electronic amplification".
- Apply terminology accurately when explaining classifications.

Assessment Rubric

Criteria	Basic	Intermediate	Proficient
Understanding of Instrument Categories	Identifies only a few categories; shows limited understanding of sound-production concepts.	Identifies most categories with partial explanation of how they produce sound.	Clearly defines all categories and confidently explains sound-production mechanisms.
Identification Through Listening	Struggles to identify instruments or families; relies heavily on guidance.	Identifies some instruments correctly; classification shows partial accuracy.	Accurately identifies instruments by ear and clearly justifies the classification.
Visual Recognition & Sorting	Misclassifies several instruments; uses limited visual cues.	Categorises most instruments correctly; minor mistakes.	Classifies instruments accurately using clear visual reasoning.
Use of Technical Terminology	Uses minimal or incorrect terminology.	Uses some terms correctly but inconsistently.	Uses appropriate technical terms confidently and accurately in explanations.

Extension of Activity

- **Create a poster on the theme “Classification of Musical Instruments”. It can be done in groups or individually.**
- **Ask each student to choose one musical instrument (e, g. Sitar, Tabla, djembe, Flute, Guitar... etc) Briefly research how it’s played and how it fits into a classification system. Share findings informally with the class.**



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