
TY'S ONE-MAN BAND

Author: Mildred Pitts Walter

Illustrator: Margot Tomes

Publisher: Four Winds Press

THEME:

Recognizing that music is everywhere enables people to create and enjoy it as an important part of life.

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

On a hot, humdrum day, Ty meets a mysterious man who uses a washboard, comb, spoons, and a pail to create a one-man band. The story leads LeVar on an exploration to a concert in the park where he discovers a rap band, doo-wap group, jazz band, and salsa band—all playing different types of music. An *acapella* singing group and the talented Ben Vereen add to the mix. Then a visit with the music director for **Reading Rainbow** shows how he performs magic with a music synthesizer.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Before viewing the program, ask the class, “Is it necessary to have a musical instrument to make music?” and discuss why or why not.

Discuss with students why they think Andro quietly slips away when the townspeople are making their own music.

Music often creates different feelings in people. Discuss with students how music makes them feel.

CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Obtain a copy of the book *Ty's One-Man Band* and read it to the students. Have them use sounds that they can make with only parts of their bodies (e.g., snaps, clicks, slaps, taps, etc.) to create the sounds in the story.

Have students look around the classroom for items they can use to make music. Encourage them to be creative.

Working in small groups, have students think of a familiar melody and compose words to an original song that can be sung to that tune.

Make an audiotape of common sounds for students to identify. These might be sounds from home or school, inside or outside, city or country sounds, and the like. Play the tape and have students guess the sounds. Play the tape again and confirm correct guesses.

Make a list of all the musical instruments that students can think of. Have students sort them into groups according to the following: strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion. (Younger students may start more simply with categories such as “Strings” and “No Strings.”) Have students look through catalogs and magazines for pictures of musical instruments that they can cut out and glue to their lists.

Have students work in small groups to make music using bottles containing amounts of water. Fill five glass bottles with varying amounts of water. Each bottle should have a different tone when struck with a spoon. (Experiment with the water levels until you have five distinct tones.) Color code the bottles with a few drops of food coloring in the water. Have the groups compose a musical refrain by tapping the bottles and then record their refrain on a piece of paper, using the color codes. Allow each group to share its tune. To add another dimension to this activity, have students add words to their tunes. Word cards could be made ahead of time for them to use, or they can make up their own words.

Enlist the aid of the music teacher in helping students make musical instruments from recyclable materials. Collect items such as cereal boxes (including round oatmeal boxes), string, old keys, plastic soft drink bottles with lids, film canisters, old combs, wood scraps and dowels, sandpaper, margarine tubs or yogurt containers, etc. Have a concert when the students have finished making their instruments.

“Onomatopoeia” is discussed in the program. Explain to students that these are “sound words,” such as “hiss,” “click,” “boing,” and “pow.” Have students listen for these types of words in stories they hear and watch for examples in books and cartoons. Make a class list of sound words and add to it as students find other examples. After they have accumulated quite a few of these words, have each student draw a picture that shows one of the words “in action.” Display the pictures on a bulletin board or bind them into a book for the classroom library.

RELATED THEMES:

dance
types of music

RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:

Program #125 — Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin
Program #90 — Berlioz The Bear
Program #127 — Hip Cat
Program #30 — Mama Don't Allow

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Mildred Pitts Walter began writing because, during the time she was a teacher, she felt there were few books for or about African American children. Many books later, she views herself as writing for all children as she strives to develop “characters who appear real” and bring “children a sense of who they are.” The recipient of numerous awards, including the Coretta Scott King Award for *Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World*, she is also the author of **Reading Rainbow** review book, *My Mama Needs Me*.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:

In a career that spans many years, Margot Tomes has illustrated more than 60 books for children, including folk tales, biographies, and poetry. In addition to *Ty's One-Man Band*, she is also the illustrator of **Reading Rainbow** feature book, *Snowy Day: Stories and Poems* by Caroline Feller Bauer.

BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:

MAKING MUSICAL THINGS
by Ann Wiseman (Scribner's)

THE AMAZING BONE
by William Steig (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

THE BANZA
by Diane Wolkstein, illus. by Marc Brown (Dial)

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:

THUMP, THUMP, RAT-A-TAT-TAT
by Gene Baer, illus. by Lois Ehlert (HarperCollins)

WILLIE JEROME
by Alice Faye Duncan, illus. by Tyrone Geter (Atheneum)

CITY SOUNDS
by Rebecca Emberley (Little, Brown)

BEN'S TRUMPET
by Rachel Isadora (Greenwillow)

THE PHILHARMONIC GETS DRESSED
by Karla Kuskin, illus. by Marc Simont (HarperCollins)

MAKING MUSIC: 6 INSTRUMENTS YOU CAN CREATE
by Eddie Herschel Oates, illus. by Michael Koelsch (HarperCollins)

MAX FOUND TWO STICKS
by Brian Pinkney (Simon & Schuster)

THE LITTLE BAND

by James Sage, illus. by Keiko Narahashi (Macmillan)

SATCHMO'S BLUES

by Alan Schroeder, illus. by Floyd Cooper (Doubleday)

CRASH! BANG! BOOM!

by Peter Spier (Doubleday)

GOBBLE, GROWL, GRUNT

by Peter Spier (Doubleday)

