

Lesson Plan

Orgelkids organ



Short description:

The Orgelkids organ is a lesson box containing a craftsman built pipe organ. In the box are the parts with which children can assemble (under guidance of an organ builder or organist) themselves. The building process can be prepared by several small groups, after which the organ is assembled and can be played by the children.

The building of this organ can be part of one or more lessons in which the organ is the focus. This lesson plan consists of ideas for concrete tasks and lesson suggestions. The material is especially suited for children of 8 to 12 years of age.



www.orgelkids.org

An educational organ project with the Orgelkids organ

Development of an organ project of several successive lesson activities spaced one or two weeks apart.

Lesson 1: introduction – What kind of instrument is an organ?

The first lesson is given at school, by the school's own staff, or by a music specialist. The lesson can consist of a lecture in which the organ is introduced. This subject fits well in a general lesson about music instruments, with emphasis on wind instruments. The teacher can show several types of instruments.

Goals:

- Activation of prior knowledge about music instruments.
- Explanation about various families of instruments
- Introduction of the largest instrument (the organ) and awakening curiosity about the next, upcoming lesson.

Preparation:

- Gather materials on the internet with videos of various music instruments (e.g., via Schooltv, Klassetv, Docukit). Or use the materials on the website www.orgelkids.nl/instrumenten (*under construction*).
- Copy the associated worksheets for groups of students.
- Gather inasmuch as possible, an example of every family of instrument (real or toy version): guitar, drum, violin/string, flute/recorder, piano/keyboard. Ask children to bring their own instruments to the lesson.

Introduction:

- Ask the children which instruments they know about. Allow children who play an instrument to tell about them. (Note the names and instruments in preparation for the next lesson!)
- Draw a word web on black/white board of the instruments the children name.

Core:

- Discuss with the children, preferably for at least a few instruments, which different families of instruments there are. Wind instruments (brass, reed, flutes), percussion, pluck/strum instruments, keyboard instruments.
- Guide the students to categorize the named instruments on the basis of how they are played.
- Let the children, in groups, find more information about the various families of instruments (on the website of your School television channel or Youtube there are videos about music instruments. Use the school's media library for books or other information.
- Use the worksheets from the videos from School television or the materials from a music lesson method.

Conclusion:

- Ask the children if they know what is the biggest instrument of all. If needed, help them to come to the idea of a church/concert organ.
- Ask who has seen a large church or concert organ up close.
- Discuss which family of instrument an organ belongs: is it a keyboard instrument or a wind instrument? How would you recognize that?
- Challenge the children to think of what they would like to know about such an instrument. Tell them that they will soon get to know the large church organ.



Lesson 2: Building the Orgelkids organ

The building (assembly) of the Orgelkids organ is the central part of this second lesson. This lesson is led by an organist working closely with the groups teacher. The work consists of several component preparation tasks which can be done simultaneously by small groups of students and the subsequent assembly of the components into the finished instrument. The total time to build the organ is about 45 minutes.

It is recommended to allow another 60 minutes to give students the opportunity to play the organ themselves and then to disassemble it.



Goal:

- Discover how an organ is built and what the most important parts are called.
- Understand how the instrument physically works and what is needed to play it.
- Stimulate curiosity about the upcoming excursion to a church/concert organ and what kinds of music can be played on it.

Preparation:

- Find out which children can play a keyboard instrument (e.g. piano, keyboard, organ, accordion). Note the names so the organist knows who they can ask to demonstrate.
- Assign students beforehand to groups with the following tasks:

<i>Task</i>	<i>Capabilities needed</i>	<i>Students' names</i>
a. Assembling the frame	3 students who can read/recognize Roman numerals	
b. Sorting and arranging keys in proper sequence	3 or 4 students	
c. Placing keys in the framework	2 or 3 students, possibly those from b.	
d. Placing the wind chest	2 students who can work safely	
e. Connecting the keys to the valves of the wind chest	2 students who can work safely and quickly, and one student to pass the "hooks" or tracker wires.	
f. Arrange open pipes in sequence	3 or 4 students	
g. Arrange closed pipes in sequence	3 or 4 students	
h. Placing storage bellows	2 students	
i. Placing pump bellows and attaching tubing	2 students	
j. Place slides and pipe sticks	2 students	
k. Place pipes on the pipe sticks	4 students	
l. Playing and pumping	Several teams of 2 students	

- As teacher/leader, view beforehand the information in the instruction video about the Do-organ: <http://www.orgelkids.nl/orgelkids-doe-orgel/>
- And watch the report by Zanna en Kaj: <http://www.orgelkids.nl/zanna-en-kaj-bouwen-een-orgel/>

Introduction:

- In the previous lesson we worked with various types of instruments and we discussed the largest instrument of all—the pipe organ.
- Discuss with the children where you can find the organ (namely, in churches and concert halls).
- Involve the children in the story of the beginnings of the construction of the organ in the church. How did this organ come to be here? *NB: this story can be made more specific with anecdotes about the actual history of the large organ they will be visiting. Depending on the origin of most of the organs in the Netherlands, one of the variations below may be applicable.*

Variant A: The congregation wants to sing

A beautiful large church has been built. The people gather in this church to sing and pray to God. They read the bible and listen to the minister or pastor's sermon. In order to sing the hymns together well, the organist provides leadership. But in such a large church, naturally a very large organ is also needed. The members of the church have saved the funds needed to have such an organ built.

Variant B: The city government wants to brag

Long ago, city governments wanted to show how well things were going in their cities. Everyone should know that the city was rich and important. The city mayors had an idea. If the city's church had a magnificent, large organ, then we can show how well things are going with us. Preferably an even bigger and more beautiful organ than the neighboring cities.

Variant C: A wealthy farmer wants to do something for the public

Long ago, a very rich farmer who owned much land lived in this area. Many people from the village and the surrounding region worked for him on his land. The farmer lived on a large estate in a mansion that almost looked like a castle. But the farmer also wanted to do something special for the village. Something that he could brag about too. What if he gave the village church a beautiful new organ? That would make the villagers happy and show that he cared about his community.

Tip: It may be possible or desirable to expand on the historical background and significance of the local church. In that event, rather than a short introduction, it is recommended to supplement with a special history lesson or module.

So, we need an organ. Usually, it would be best to find an organ builder who could tell us about it. Quite far from here we found a very good organ builder. He thought it would be better to show us a small, model organ first. So he built an organ that could be taken apart and stored in a box or crate. Yesterday he came to our town and he's staying at a hotel. That's all well and good, but we can't hear the organ play while it's in that box. The organist is so curious that he/she wants to get started. Will you all help to put the organ together?

Core:

The organist briefly tells some important instructions about how we will assemble the organ kit. The children will work in small groups to prepare the components or parts of the organ. The instruction sheets in the crate will tell each group how to get started.

NB: the Do-organ is soundly made, but it must still be handled with care. See that the children execute their tasks as instructed and intended. Don't allow them to blow into the pipes. That is not only unhygienic, but the moisture in their breath could damage the pipes. Once all the parts or components have been assembled, the organist can explain by means of a lecture or discussion with the children. Questions to stimulate discussion and participation could include the following:

- Which pipes do you think have a higher tone: the long or the short pipes?
- Do you think the open or the closed pipes will have a higher tone
- How does the air or wind get into the organ?

- How can you make a particular tone with a key?
- How can you get 3 different sounds by playing the same key?
- Why do you have to continue pumping?

Closing:

- Return to the question asked at the end of the first lesson: Is the organ a keyboard or a wind instrument? Have the children been able to discover this themselves during this lesson?
- Tell the children they are going to go on an excursion (field trip) to see a real, large organ in a church or concert hall and an organist will let them hear all the sounds it can make.



Lesson 3: Seeing the big organ

The third lesson is an excursion (field trip) to the church. Now that the children have learned how an organ is constructed, they know all the important principles of the organ instrument. During the tour and explanation, they can associate the knowledge gained from the small kit organ to the scale of the real instrument. This applies to both the organ building technology as well as the playing or performing on it. A subsequent concert is the best way to let the children hear, experience (and feel) the color tones of the organ.



Goal:

During an excursion, children can recall what they discovered and learned with the construction of the Do-organ.

A tour conducted by the organist showing the components of the organ, and the keyboard, makes the similarities (and differences in scale) very clear.

A concert gives the children insight and listening experience on the various sounds and music styles that can be produced with a pipe organ.

Preparation:

Choose an appropriate repertoire that will allow the children to experience a variety of color tones. This can take several forms:

- Via a fairytale in which the adventures of the story characters are expressed musically.
- Via a quiz with listening questions (e.g. with imitations of animal sounds, or sound illustrations of animal behavior)

Core:

- Tour and concert by an organist.
- Possibly allowing children who play a keyboard instrument, the opportunity to play something.

Closing:

- Ask the children what they experienced and how they appreciated it. Help them to express their answers by asking:
 - o A pipe organ is....
 - o Organ music sounds like....
- Gather the childrens' expressions and present them on a poster or on an Orgelkids web page. Do any of the kids want to become an organ builder or an organist when they grow up?

Available materials for this lesson

In the Netherlands we called the Orgelkids organ kit 'het Doe-orgel' (Do-organ), which expresses you have to *do* something to explore it. Not just watching someone who demonstrates it, but be an organ builder yourself.

The following materials to assist with this lesson are available from Orgelkids:

- The Orgelkids Do-organ, with instruction sheets, can be rented (in the Netherlands and Belgium). <http://orgelkids.nl/hoe-werkt-het/?lang=en> (<http://orgelkids.nl/reserveren/>)
- PowerPoint presentations, as introductions for the students, to display on the digital school board. <http://orgelkids.nl/other-materials/?lang=en>
- Poster (mindmap) with all the information from the presentation as a PDF, designed to be printed and given to the children afterwards. <http://orgelkids.nl/poster/>
- E-book with photos showing the building/assembly of the Do-organ: Zanna en Kaj build an organ. <http://orgelkids.nl/e-book-zanna-en-kaj-bouwen-een-orgel/>
- Information pages to accompany the lessons on the Orgelkids website Orgelkids (*in preparation*)
- Instruction sheets for children about the building of the Do-organ. <http://orgelkids.nl/instructiekaarten/?lang=en>
- Instruction video for the teacher and organist in which the organbuilder Wim Janssen demonstrates the assembly of the Do-organ (with subtitles in English). <http://orgelkids.nl/instructiefilm/?lang=en>
- Inspirational video about the Do-organ in use by children. On the homepage of Orgelkids and on <https://vimeo.com/166271700>
- There is a game (for smartphones) to learn more about all materials organs are made of (oak wood, leather, etc.) <http://orgelkids.nl/2017/03/orgelkids-the-game/> (translation in English will be available soon)
- Step-by-step plan for children: How can I present a speech about the organ: <http://www.orgelkids.nl/spreekbeurt-houden-over-het-orgel/> (only in Dutch)

Education-communication-inspiration

Tips on using the Do-organ

For a successful project, we gladly share the following tips:

1. Familiarize yourself with the Orgelkids lesson plan (on the website).
2. Decide whether to do a single experience or a series (example 2 lessons and a field trip/concert).
3. Decide on the appropriate core message: is it about the instrument, your particular organ, your church, music lessons, an excursion/concert?
4. Plan a pilot with one school or teacher with which/whom you have a connection. Together evaluate how it went and plan to include more schools/classes the next time it is done.
5. Invite the local press or send them a press report emphasizing the core message. Take photos!
6. Seek cooperation with schools by way of, e.g., the school board or administration, the superintendent, community cultural coordinator, music school, parents.
7. Reflect on the locale inspiration for teachers: what makes the organ an interesting subject in your community/region?
8. Start early with the solicitation or developing of funding (perhaps before the project is even begun, for example from Culture Funds).
9. Think of what is needed for logistics. Organize parents for an excursion to the church and plan the supervision of the children. (Relieve the teacher of this responsibility)
10. Organize an inspirational evening for parents/caregivers. Let several children collaborate on the presentation.
11. Come up with a nice, tangible souvenir for the kids (poster, sticker, card) in combination with your own project page on Orgelkids.
12. Let the kids give their own reports about their experiences.
13. Repeat the project. After a number of times/years it will become a recognized event with its own, growing following.
14. Make the concert attractive and interactive (e.g. with a listening quiz)
15. Combine the project with an exceptional childrens' performance for the region. Example, the performance Caecilia by Ton Koopman.
16. Make use of the Do-organ for children and parents to familiarize with the organ during the instrument selection process, e.g., during an information market at a music school.
17. As organist be welcoming to children at the keyboard.

Much success!



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