

# How Can Irish Music Tell a Story?

## Warm-Up and Activities for SG15

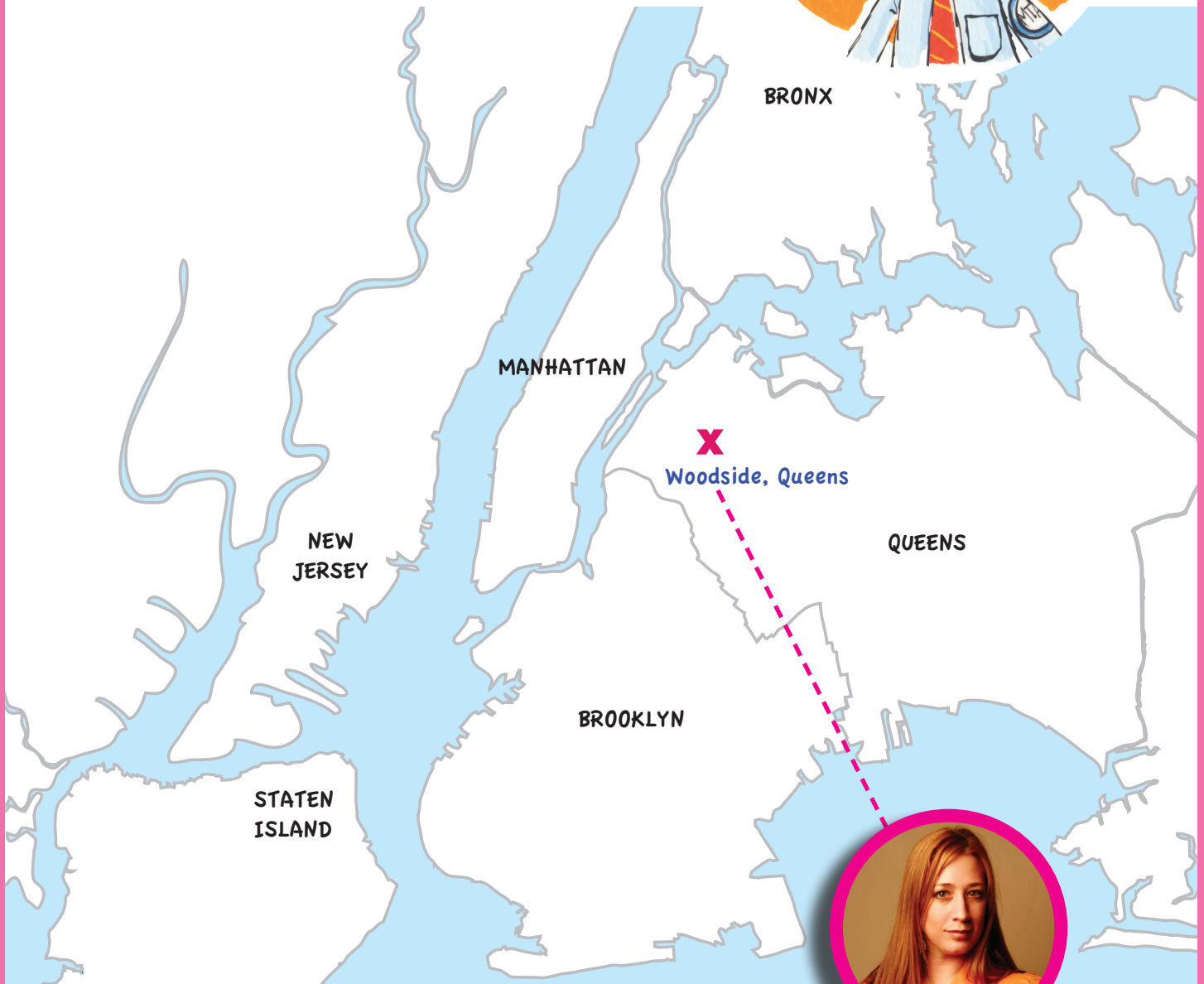
### Find Anne-Marie's Neighborhood (SG15)

Explain to students that the Conductor will now guide them on a journey through New York City to “meet” Anne-Marie, the first of the three featured singers in Musical Explorers. Have students turn to SG15 and help them:

- Locate their neighborhoods or boroughs and color them in.
- Locate Anne-Marie's picture on the map of Woodside, Queens.  
Have students color in a route they could take to get to Woodside.

## Find Anne-Marie's Neighborhood

It's time for us to begin our musical trip to meet three singers! Find Woodside, Queens, where my friend Anne-Marie lives, on the map below. Let's go!



Anne-Marie

**AIM:** To learn about an Irish singer.


**MATERIALS:** Musical Explorers Student Guide and CD; CD player; pencils, markers, and crayons for students; chart paper and markers; Musical Word Wall

**STANDARDS:** US 1, 6, 8, 9; NYC 1, 2, 3, 5

**SUMMARY:** The first performer we will meet is Anne-Marie Hildebrandt, who represents an Irish musical tradition.

**VOCABULARY:** musical tradition

## Warm-Up and Activities for SG16–17

Warm up students' singing voices with the Yawning Kittens, Bouncy Ball, or Sirens exercises,  Tracks 2, 3, 4, 5.

Sing the "Musical Explorers Song,"  Track 1.


### Meet Anne-Marie! (SG16)

### My Postcard to Anne-Marie (SG17)

- Students will explore Anne-Marie's **musical tradition** through her neighborhood, Woodside, Queens, which is home to a large Irish population.

Explain the concept of **tradition**—a practice or custom that reflects where you come from. Singing songs during the holidays is an example of a tradition.

### LISTENING

Listen to Anne-Marie's recording of "O'ro the Rattlin' Bog,"  Track 6. **Ask students:**

- "What are some words we use to talk about music?" (Refer to Musical Word Wall.)
- "How can we describe her voice with these words?" (For example, is it soft, loud, clear, relaxing?)
- "Does her voice remind you of anything you have heard?"
- "What else do you notice about her singing?" (Possible answers: speaking accent; use of unusual words; a "break" in her voice; use of high, low, soft, or loud singing voice.)

**LOOKING**

On SG16 is a postcard to the students from Anne-Marie. The “front” includes a collage of photos from Woodside, her neighborhood. *Ask students:*

- “What do you notice about the photos of Woodside?”
- “What kinds of places do you see?”
- “Do the places look similar to or different from places in your neighborhood?”

Next, have students carefully look at the pictures of Anne-Marie and document what they notice. *Ask students:*

- “What instruments do you see?”
- “What kind of clothing is she wearing?”

Read Anne-Marie’s postcard to your students. Then, *ask students:*

- “What does she mention about the Woodside neighborhood?”
- “Are there any similarities between the students’ answers and Anne-Marie’s words about Woodside?”

**CREATING**

On SG17 your students can write a postcard to Anne-Marie about their own neighborhoods. Help students write their neighborhood names on the front of the postcard (“Greetings from \_\_\_\_\_”). *Ask students:*

- “What kinds of pictures would you include on the front of your postcard?”
- “What would you tell Anne-Marie about yourself or your life?”
- “What would you tell Anne-Marie about the sounds and places you found in your neighborhood?” (See UNIT 1, Lesson 2, or SG8 and 9.)

Students can draw or write their responses on the “back” of the postcard.

# Meet Anne-Marie!



Greetings from  
**Woodside**



Dear Musical Explorers,  
Welcome to Woodside!  
This neighborhood is  
so alive. It is full of  
churches, restaurants,  
people walking all around,  
and lots of places to  
hear music. I have a  
wonderful time with  
other Irish musicians in  
Woodside. I look forward  
to meeting you soon!  
Your friend, Anne-Marie



Musical Explorers  
c/o Carnegie Hall  
881 Seventh Avenue  
New York, NY 10019

Photos courtesy of Anne-Marie Hildebrandt and Stefan Cohen.

## My Postcard to Anne-Marie

Greetings from



Anne-Marie  
Woodside, NY

**AIM:** To explore how music and lyrics can “paint” a picture.


**MATERIALS:** Musical Explorers Student Guide and CD; CD player; pencils, markers, and crayons; Musical Word Wall

**STANDARDS:** US 1, 4, 5, 6, 8; NYC 1, 2, 3, 5

**SUMMARY:** Students will explore “add-on,” or cumulative, form through the Irish song “O’ro the Rattlin’ Bog.”

**VOCABULARY:** “add-on” (or cumulative form) song, bog, chorus, lyrics, rhythm, steady beat, verse, wildlife

## Warm-Up and Activities for SG18 and 19

Warm up students’ singing voices with the Yawning Kittens, Bouncy Ball, or the Sirens exercises,  Tracks 2, 3, 4, 5.

Sing the “Musical Explorers Song,”  Track 1.

## Exploring an Irish Bog: “O’ro the Rattlin’ Bog” (SG18)

Explain to students that:

- A **bog** is a place where water collects and has lots of plants and wildlife growing in it. Bogs are common in Ireland, and add to the country’s famed greenness.
- “O’ro the Rattlin’ Bog” is an **“add-on” (or cumulative form) song**. It starts with a **chorus**, which is the part of a song that returns over and over again. The chorus to this song is:

O’ro the rattlin’ bog, the bog down in the valley-o,  
O’ro the rattlin’ bog, the bog down in the valley-o.

The song grows with each verse we “add on” to the chorus. A verse is like a short poem that tells the story of the song:

**Verse 1:** And in that bog, there was a tree, a rare tree, a rattlin’ tree,  
With the tree in the bog, and the bog down in the valley-o.

### Chorus

**Verse 2:** And on that tree, there was a limb, a rare limb, a rattlin’ limb,  
With the limb on the tree, and the tree in the bog, and the bog down in the valley-o.

### Chorus

**Verse 3:** And on that limb, there was a branch, a rare branch, a rattlin’ branch ...

### Chorus

**Verse 4:** And on that branch, there was a twig, a rare twig, a rattlin’ twig ...

### Chorus

**Verse 5:** And on that twig, there was a nest, a rare nest, a rattlin’ nest ...

### Chorus

**Verse 6:** And in that nest, there was an egg, a rare egg, a rattlin' egg ...

**Chorus**

**Verse 7:** And in that egg, there was a bird, a rare bird, a rattlin' bird ...

**Chorus**


**Verse 8:** And on that bird, there was a feather, a rare feather, a rattlin' feather ...

**Chorus**

**Verse 9:** And on that feather, there was a flea, a rare flea, a rattlin' flea ...

**Chorus**

## LISTENING

- Listen to "O'ro the Rattlin' Bog,"  Track 6, with your students a couple of times.
- On the second and third time, have students clap a **steady beat** along with the recording. The steady beat is also the pulse of the music. It keeps going throughout the entire song.
- Ask students to identify some of the key words they hear. Reflect on these words as a class. Explain that in music, the words are called **lyrics**.
- Practice singing the chorus with your students.

## LOOKING

Have students look at the photos of Irish bogs on SG18. *Ask students:*

- "What do you notice?"
- "Do you think this would be a good place for wildlife? Why?"
- "Do you see any wildlife? If so, what?"

## CREATING a Musical Text Collage

- The most prominent feature of this song is the **add-on**, or cumulative aspect. As each new object is introduced in the song, the song grows longer and more detailed.
- Below are the first five lines of the song with the objects placed in parentheses:  
O'ro the rattlin' (bog) , the (bog) down in the (valley) -o  
And in that (bog) , there was a (tree) , a rare (tree) , a rattlin' (tree) ,  
With the (tree) in the (bog) , And the (bog) down in the (valley) -o  
And now on that (tree) , there was a (limb) , a rare (limb) , a rattlin' (limb) , etc.

Assign each of the (underlined) words to different students. Sing the song, and whenever their word occurs, have each of those students make a sound (examples: clap, snap, tongue click). Explain to your students that this is similar to clapping for missing letters in the song "B-I-N-G-O." Together, your words and sounds will form a musical collage.

- Try this with the CD as Anne-Marie sings the song.  Track 6

**Extension 1: CREATING Original Text**

- With your students, create a poem in the same **add-on** style as “O’ro the Rattlin’ Bog.”
- Choose an object from the classroom and create new lyrics to the song, using the same formula. For example:

O’ro the rattlin’ class, the class down in the school-o

In that class, there was a desk, a rare desk, a rattlin’ desk

With the desk in the class

And the class down in the school-o

Now on that desk there was a pencil, a rare pencil, a rattlin’ pencil, etc.

**Extension 2: CREATING Original Rhythms****My Name Has a Rhythm (SG19)**

Make sure students know that rhythms are sounds that last for a certain length of time.

- Have students stand or sit in a circle. Choose a leader to begin. The leader will create a “name rhythm” by saying his or her name while clapping the syllables of his or her name.
- Then, the student to the left of the leader says the leader’s “name rhythm” and adds his or her “name rhythm.”
- Continue going around the circle, with each person adding adding his or her “name rhythm” to the existing “name rhythm” chain.
- Students can notate their “name rhythms” on SG19 using graphic notation (lines or shapes). For example, here are “Lisa,” “Bobby,” and “Marie”:



- Have students perform their “name rhythms” while showing the class their name notations.
- Try creating a pattern by putting two student names together. Add another student’s “name rhythm” to the mix and try this with up to four names.
- If time allows, divide students into groups of four and have them create rhythmic patterns using the same formula. Students can notate their patterns on SG19, if desired.

**Extension (Music Teacher):** Show students what their name rhythms look like in musical notation by drawing their rhythms on individual index cards.

## Exploring an Irish Bog: “O’ro the Rattlin’ Bog”



**LISTENING:** These are the photos that go with our song, “O’ro the Rattlin’ Bog.”

These are pictures of bogs in Ireland. Bogs collect water and have lots of things living and growing in them.



**LOOKING:** What do you notice about the bogs?

# My Name Has a Rhythm

**LISTENING:** It sounds ...



**LOOKING:** My name has a rhythm.  
It looks like this ...



**CREATING:** Our group rhythm looks like this ...



**AIM:** To discuss how can music tell a story and create a mood.


**MATERIALS:** Musical Explorers Student Guide and CD; CD player; pencils, markers, and crayons; Musical Word Wall; cards with different moods written on them; hat or bowl


**STANDARDS:** US 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9; NYC 1, 2, 3

**SUMMARY:** In the song “Johnny’s Gone for Soldier,” students will explore how lyrics and melodies can create a sense of mood.

**VOCABULARY:** Gaelic, mood, soldier, war

## Warm-Up and Activities for SG20–23

Warm up students’ singing voices with the Yawning Kittens, Bouncy Ball, or the Sirens exercises,  Tracks 2, 3, 4, 5.

Sing “O’ro the Rattlin’ Bog,”  Track 6, and the “Musical Explorers Song,”  Track 1.

### “Johnny’s Gone for Soldier” (SG20 and 21)

- Irish people have fought many wars over the course of hundreds of years. In many of these wars, Irish soldiers were often taken to countries outside of Ireland to help defeat another country’s enemies. Irish soldiers have fought in wars in England, France, Spain, the Netherlands, and the United States.
- The map on SG61 shows the location of Ireland.
- “Johnny’s Gone for Soldier” captures the regret, loss, and sadness a young woman feels when her beloved leaves Ireland to become a soldier somewhere else.
- The chorus of this song incorporates words in Gaelic, a language spoken by certain people in Ireland, Scotland, and the Isle of Man, an island in the Irish Sea off the coast of Great Britain.

### LISTENING

Listen to “Johnny’s Gone for Soldier,”  Track 7, with your students. **Ask students:**

- “What do you hear?”
- “How do you feel when you listen to this music?”
- “What are some music words we can use to describe what we hear?” (Refer to Musical Word Wall.)
- “Are there any words that sound like they are in a different language?”
- “Which ones?”

Look at SG22 and explore the Gaelic words in the song’s refrain. “Shule, shule, shule, agra” means “Come, come, come, my love.”

### LOOKING

On SG20, there is a picture of soldiers. **Ask students:**

- “What do you see?”
- “What does the picture tell you?”
- “How do you feel when you look at the picture?”
- “If there were music to go along with this picture, what might it sound like?”

Have students record their thoughts.

## LISTENING

**Extension:** You can teach your students some additional conversational Gaelic phrases phonetically. Pronunciation for the phrases is included on the CD.

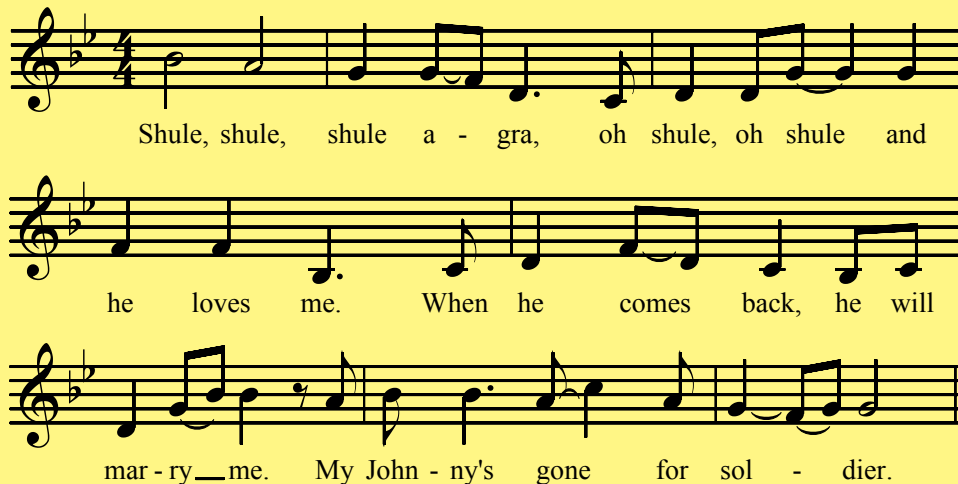
- **Good day / Hello** = Dia duit! (Phonetic: djiah gwich). 🎧 Track 8
- **Good day / Hello (reply)** = Dia is Muire duit. (Phonetic: djiahs murrah gwich). 🎧 Track 9
- **How are you?** = Conas tá tú? (Phonetic: co-nas tah tu). 🎧 Track 10
- **I'm well.** = Táim go maith. (Phonetic: tah-im go mah.) 🎧 Track 11
- **Thank you** = Go raibh maith agat (Phonetic: guramahagut) 🎧 Track 12

You can find more common Gaelic phrases online at the following websites:

- [ireland-information.com/irishphrases.htm](http://ireland-information.com/irishphrases.htm)
- [english.glendale.edu/gaelic.html](http://english.glendale.edu/gaelic.html)

## Your Singing Part for “Johnny’s Gone for Soldier” (SG22)

Teach your students the chorus from “Johnny’s Gone for Soldier.” 🎧 Track 7



Shule, shule, shule a - gra, oh shule, oh shule and  
he loves me. When he comes back, he will  
mar - ry me. My John - ny's gone for sol - dier.

Continue practicing this chorus. Your students will sing along with Anne-Marie during the concert.

## CREATING a Mood Game

- Prepare for this activity by writing down various moods on small slips of paper. Fold the slips in half and place them in a hat or bowl.
- Refer to SG20 and 21. Look at the picture of the soldiers and review students' answers to the question, "How do you feel when you look at this picture?" and discuss how music can create moods that also inspire similar feelings.
- Ask students to make vocal sounds that represent different moods, such as happy or sad. Repeat several times.

- Select a student to come to the front of the class and select out of the hat or bowl one of the folded slips of paper with a mood printed on it. Ask the student to face away from the rest of the class so no one can see his or her facial expression.

The student should make a sound with his or her voice to represent the mood.

Ask students:

- “Can anyone guess what the mood was?”
- “Why do you think so?” (For example, I thought the mood was angry because the sound was low and deep.)
- “What are some of our musical words we can use to describe the mood?” (Refer to and add to Musical Word Wall.)

Document which musical elements students change to create different moods. Repeat this activity frequently and use it as a warm-up exercise.

### Variations on a Nursery Rhyme (SG23)

Divide the class into groups. Give each group a familiar song or chant (for example, a nursery rhyme such as “Hickory, Dickory, Dock”; “Three Blind Mice”; or “Humpty Dumpty”) and have them create a few variations on it. For each variation:



- Select a mood, such as happy, sad, angry, or excited. Refer to the words you added to the Musical Word Wall.
- Decide on the tempo, dynamics, and pitch for the variation. Review these terms, if needed, by referring to the Musical Word Wall.
- Try singing the melody the way you’ve decided.
- Using voices or percussion instruments, add a background to the melody to help convey the mood.
- Present the variation to the class.

Ask the other students:

- “Can you guess what the mood was?”
- “Why do you think so?” (For example, I thought the feeling was angry because the sound was low and deep.)

Decide which variation is your favorite and write it for the class on the blackboard or on chart paper. Have students copy it into their books on SG23.

### Listening for Mood (SG24)

Listen to both “O’ro the Rattlin’ Bog,”  Track 6, and “Johnny’s Gone for Soldier,”  Track 7, once again.

Have students focus on the moods these songs convey and pinpoint why they convey those feelings. Referring to the musical categories from UNIT 1, Lesson 2, and the Musical Word Wall, ask students whether these songs are:

- Fast or slow
- Loud or soft

Ask students to identify which sounds they hear in the background (“what is going on besides the melody”)?

Students can document (write or draw) their observations on SG24.

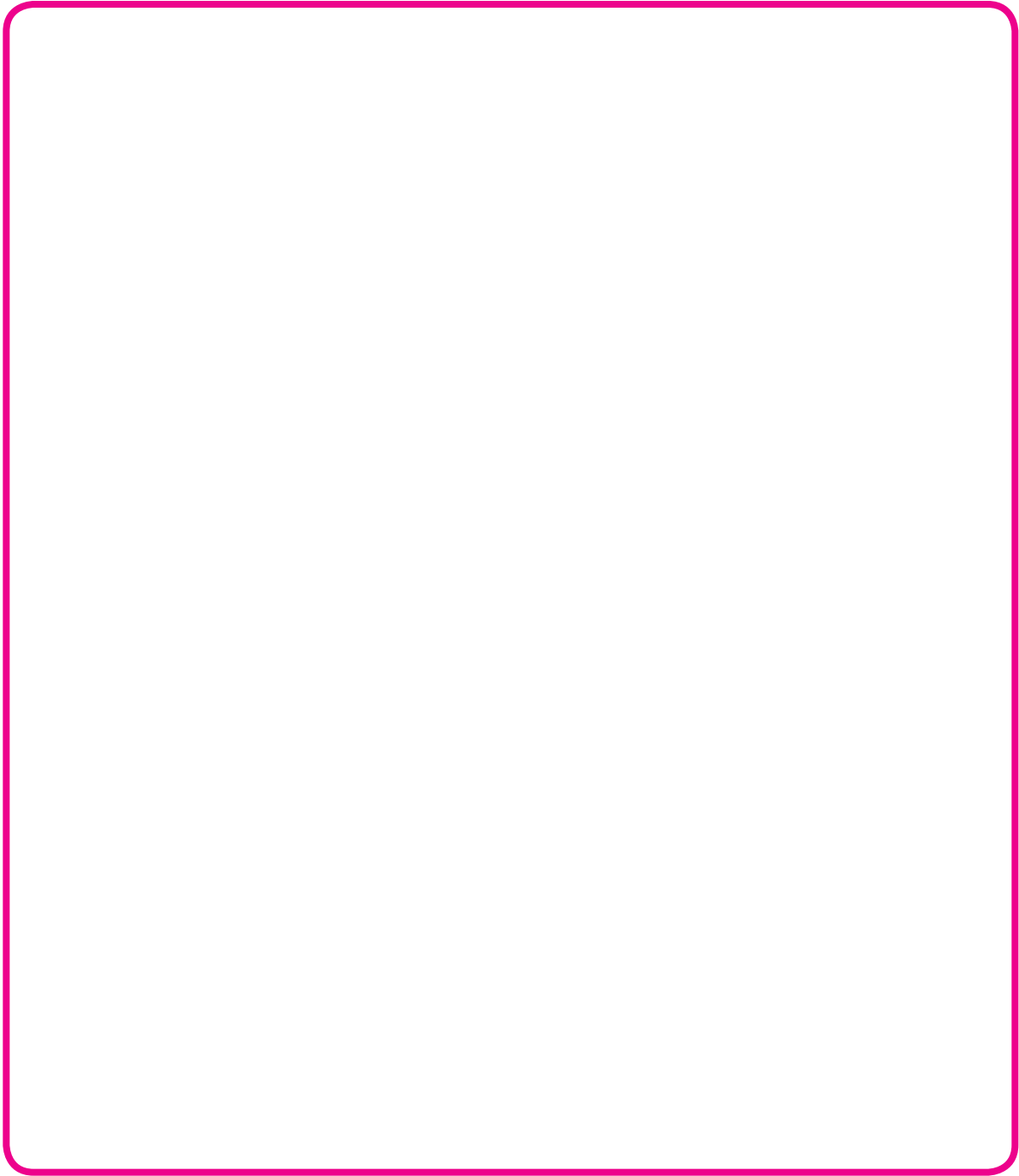
While students are completing the activity, ask them how each of these elements affects the overall feeling or mood of the music in these songs.

## “Johnny’s Gone for Soldier”



**LOOKING:** Here is a picture of some soldiers.  
When I look at it, I feel ...

I imagine the music for this picture sounds like ...

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thick magenta border, intended for a drawing or response.

## Your Singing Part for “Johnny’s Gone for Soldier”



We’re going to sing “Johnny’s Gone for Soldier”  
with Anne-Marie in the concert.

Here’s what we’ll sing:

Shule, shule, shule a gra  
Oh shule, oh shule, and he loves me,  
When he comes back, he will marry me  
My Johnny, he has gone for soldier.

## Variations on a Nursery Rhyme

Our nursery rhyme is:

We changed the mood to

and made it ... **faster** or **slower**,  
**louder** or **softer**,  
**higher** or **lower**,

and added ...



## Listening for Mood

**LISTENING:** Are these songs ...

<i>O'ro the Rattlin' Bog</i>	<i>Johnny's Gone for Soldier</i>
Fast or slow?	Fast or slow?
Loud or soft?	Loud or soft?

What other sounds do you hear?

**AIM:** To identify, read, and write rhythms and melodies on the staff.

**MATERIALS:** Musical Explorers Student Guide and CD; CD player; pencils, markers, and crayons for students; chart paper; Musical Word Wall




**STANDARDS:** US 1, 5; NYC 1, 2

**SUMMARY:** In this lesson, we will explore musical notation by reviewing the musical staff and introducing the treble clef and five-note scale (middle C to G). This will prepare students for exploring the scale used in Indian music in the next unit.





**VOCABULARY:** clef, G clef, quarter note, scale, syllables (do-re-mi-fa-sol), treble clef

**NOTE:** For simplicity's sake, we have structured this lesson's note reading and learning around the pitches C–G. Please be aware that typically, when singing a five-note scale, students this age may be more comfortable singing in a slightly higher range (G-A-B-C-D).

## Warm-Up and Activities for SG25

- Warm up students' singing voices with the Yawning Kittens, Bouncy Ball, or Sirens exercises,  Tracks 2, 3, 4, 5.
- Sing one of the following as a warm-up: the "Musical Explorers Song,"  Track 1; "O'ro the Rattlin' Bog," Track 6; or "Johnny's Gone for Soldier,"  Track 7.
- Have the students follow the musical contour, or shape, with their hands and arms.

## The Five-Note Scale (SG25)

- Introduce the term **scale**: A scale is a series of notes in a certain order. Add this term to the Musical Word Wall.
- Introduce the terms **G clef** and **treble clef**. The G clef, also known as the treble clef, is the symbol of the beginning of each musical example SG25. It tells us the particular range of pitches that the notes represent on the staff.
- Since students have not yet learned about note values, explain that they will be using musical notation to read and write notes on the staff. The note they will see and use looks like a filled-in circle with a stem and is called a quarter note. Add this term to the Musical Word Wall.
- On SG25 introduce and sing a five-note scale, starting on middle C: C-D-E-F-G.  Track 13
- These pitches have other names, too: do-re-mi-fa-sol.  Track 14
- Sing the five-note scale (ascending and descending) with note names: C-D-E-F-G-F-E-D-C.  Track 15
- Sing the five-note scale (ascending and descending) with syllables: do-re-mi-fa-sol-fa-mi-re-do.  Track 16

**Extension (Music Teacher):** For an added challenge, have students draw the five-note scale on chart paper. You can also have them write notes in a different order (example: C, D, F, E) and perform your new scales as a class.

# The Five-Note Scale

## LISTENING and LOOKING

Now let's learn more! These five notes, or pitches, are called C, D, E, F, and G (or de, re, mi, fa, sol). Together, they make up a five-note scale. A scale is a series of notes you hear in a certain order.

A musical staff in treble clef showing five notes: C, D, E, F, and G. Below each note are its letter name and its corresponding solfège syllable: C (Do), D (Re), E (Mi), F (Fa), and G (Sol).

A musical staff in treble clef showing a descending five-note scale: C, D, E, F, G, F, E, D, and C. Below each note are its letter name and its corresponding solfège syllable: C (Do), D (Re), E (Mi), F (Fa), G (Sol), F (Fa), E (Mi), D (Re), and C (Do).

**AIM:** To discuss how rhythm can help tell a story and create a mood.





**MATERIALS:** Musical Explorers Student Guide and CD; CD player; pencils, markers, and crayons; chart paper; Musical World Wall

**STANDARDS:** US 6, 9; NYC 1, 2, 3

**SUMMARY:** The following lesson will help your students to explore the relationship between movement and music.


**VOCABULARY:** bodhrán

## Warm-Up and Activities for SG26–30

- Warm up students' singing voices with the Yawning Kittens, Bouncy Ball, or the Sirens exercises,  Tracks 2, 3, 4, 5.
- Sing one of the following as a warm-up: the "Musical Explorers Song,"  Track 1, "O'ro the Rattlin' Bog,"  Track 6; or "Johnny's Gone for Soldier,"  Track 7

## Imagining Movements (SG26 and 27) Exploring Irish Step Dancing (SG28)

### LISTENING

Listen to the Irish instrumental dance selection.  Track 25. This piece features the **bodhrán** (BAO-run), the Irish frame drum, as a main instrument. Pictures of bodhráns are on SG29.


- While listening, have students clap the steady beat along with the recording.
- **Ask students:** "What kind of dancing do you imagine people doing to this music?"
- Brainstorm a list of words to match the kinds of movements they imagine (for example, skipping, jumping, bouncing, sliding, and galloping).
- You can write the list on a piece of chart paper, and students can draw the movements on SG27.

### LOOKING

On SG28 there are pictures of traditional Irish step dancers. **Ask students:**

- "What do you notice about the dancers' feet and legs?"
- "What do you notice about their upper bodies?"
- "Can you describe the clothing the dancers are wearing?"
- "What kind of music do you imagine would match the pictures?"
- "Would it be slow or fast?"
- "Bouncy or smooth?"
- "Why?"


**CREATING**

- Try out each of the movements from the list students created after listening to the Irish instrumental selection on  Track 25.
- Ask students to do the movements while keeping their upper bodies very still and straight, as Irish step dancers do.
- Play a game in which students move to the music until you press pause. At this point, all students must freeze.

**Extension:** When the music begins, call out a movement from the list (for example, gallop). When the students resume moving, they can try this kind of movement until you pause the music again. Remind them to keep their upper bodies very still.

Try this several times. Choose student leaders to take turns calling out the movements.

**Exploring the Bodhrán (SG29 and 30)****LISTENING**

- Listen to  Track 25 featuring the bodhrán again.
- What do students notice about the sound of the bodhrán? (Possible answers: It is very rhythmic; it helps to keep the beat in the music; it sounds **high**; it sounds **low**.)

**LOOKING**

- Look at various pictures of a bodhrán on SG29. What do the students notice about the drum?
- They can document their ideas by writing or drawing on SG29.

**CREATING a Drum**

Look at the picture of the bodhrán again. [Ask students:](#)

- “Can you imagine how you could make your own drum?”
- “What types of materials could you use?”
- “What would it sound like?”
- Have students write or draw their drum on SG30.
- Ask students to collect materials to bring in and make their own drums. Make sure to mention that they should collect containers that are clean and safe (with no residue of pesticides, chemicals, or cleaning products). (More information about drum-making will be given at the Professional Development session.)
- Once students have made their drums, explore how a rhythm on a drum could represent different moods.
- Play the musical mood guessing game from UNIT 2, Lesson 3, but this time have students make a sound on their drum instead of with their voices.
- Discuss the moods students created with their drums. “[Was it easier to guess moods with voices or with drums?](#)”
- In small groups, select a few students to play along as you listen to “O’ro the Rattlin’ Bog” once again. 🎧 Track 6
- Now that your students have learned more about the bodhrán, point out that Anne-Marie plays it in this recording

# Imagining Movements





## LISTENING

When I listen to Irish dance music, I can imagine the dancers' movements, which look like ...

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick magenta border, intended for drawing or writing.

## Exploring Irish Step Dancing

**LOOKING:** Here are some Irish step dancers.



Do you think the music they are dancing to is ... (circle)

**fast** or **slow**?

**loud** or **soft**?

**bouncy** or **smooth**?

## Exploring the Bodhrán

**LISTENING:** How does the bodhrán, an Irish frame drum, sound?



**LOOKING:** This is what a bodhrán looks like.



**CREATING:** How can I make a drum?

