

Redefining Rhythm

A CPD Course for Teachers

This two-hour intensive course focuses on how to develop new and necessary rhythmic skills in young musicians. Many music education scholars agree that mastery of rhythm and time-keeping are the weakest links in the education of many young musicians. To address this concern, *The Junkman™* has created this CPD course designed to aid teachers in increasing pupil awareness about the intricacies and nuances in rhythm and keeping time.

Topics covered include:

- The different types of rhythm
- Playing from the head vs playing from the gut
- Playing and maintaining a groove
- Rhythm in a group(ensemble) situation
- Playing ahead-of, behind, or on the beat
- Multiple rhythms played simultaneously
- Polyrythms: What are they? How do we decipher them? How we play them?
- Rhythm in improvisation
- Additional related topics

For the majority of the course, the teachers become percussionists. Each participating teacher will use a pair of provided sticks and will play upon a reused or recycled material made from either wood, metal, or plastic. Playing on these materials frees teachers (and later, pupils) from the many techniques one needs to simultaneously address when playing a traditional music instrument. There's no worry about tone, timbre, intonation or the finite motor skills used in bowing, breath control, articulation. They simply focus upon feeling and playing the beat or rhythm.

We will also explore rhythm in the process of improvisation in both a solo and group situations. Then, once the class has developed a group proficiency, they will switch to their actual music instruments, and we will re-explore all the areas covered throughout the course using their traditional music instrument of choice.

Due to the extreme interactivity of this workshop, it is recommended that a maximum of 30 teachers participate in the event. *The Junkman* supplies all materials with the exception of a request for each participant to come to the class with their own personal, traditional musical instrument.

HOP (Help Our Planet Environmental Education Initiative)

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Twenty five years ago, when *The Junkman*[™] traded traditional instruments for recycled and reused materials, the Green Movement and the concept of taking care of our environment were in their infancy. In those days, environmental action in a typical school consisted of one or two classes collecting/reusing paper or collecting used bottles.

Even in the primitive stages of the Green Movement, it was clear that humans need to make massive changes to save the planet from the debris and toxic fallout of the Industrial Revolution. As *The Junkman* had already committed to using junk and reused materials because of the highly original & exciting sound colours these objects produced, it became immediately clear that his work in the schools needed to meld music education with environmental awareness and stewardship. As the younger generation represented the future citizens and leaders on the world, they would be the generation that implemented the necessary changes to create a healthier planet earth.

This integration of music and environmental responsibility would eventually become *The Junkman's* HOP (Help Our Planet) Environmental Education Initiative.

This two hour course will focus upon Eco-Chants, the backbone of HOP. It will also focus upon ancillary tasks and programs that teachers can implement to further educate their students and increase the scope and reach of HOP in their respective school/communities.

An Eco-Chant is a very short, habit changing message set to a corresponding rhythm. Eco-Chants fall into two categories:

1. Our Planet: Air, Soil, Water, Change (our habits), Littering, Pollution, Energy, Questions (we should ask), Landfills, Plastics, and Climate Change.
2. Our Complete Environment: Respect, Bullying, Kindness, Purpose, Violence, Truth, Pride, Differences, Inclusiveness, and Listening.

Samples of Eco-Chants:

- Water - *We should ne-ver waste wa-ter.*
- Change: *Think before you throw a-way.*

- Respect: *Show re-spect, earn re-spect.*
- Inclusiveness: *Cel-e-brate our diff-ren-ces.*

Playing a number of Eco-Chants in a row is what we call a *Junkjam™*. Each attendee will receive a copy of *The Junkman's* catalogue of 90 Eco-Chants covering all the areas mentioned above. *The Junkman™* will also share the techniques he has developed to enable the *Junkjam* to flow smoothly - including the introduction of the next Eco-Chant, beginning that chant together as a group, dynamics changes as the chant proceeds, and closing out of one chant and flowing seamlessly into another.

Finally, *The Junkman™* will review actions and projects that a classes can undertake within the school and/or within its neighbouring community to further positive efforts towards a healthier planet.

The Make & Take: making real percussion instruments from reused materials

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Most children love percussion, and making simple percussion instruments that they can take home is always a huge hit! Using reused materials for all the functioning parts introduces children to the amazing world of tone colours that these materials possess while also giving the resulting instruments a high level of durability. For example, a maraca made with a pvc tube will be far more durable and have a more defined sound color when compared to a maraca made with a cardboard tube or a plastic cup.

This two-hour session will find all attendees making several instruments that they can take back to to their classrooms and make with their students. Our session will begin with everyone making a set of wind chimes. These are always a huge hit with children from level 3 and up. *The Junkman* will supply all needed materials, tools, and hardware. Here are essentially four functioning parts in a set of wind chimes:

1. A base - usually a small piece of wood, not very thick, from which all the sound-making objects will be suspended..
2. Sound-making objects can be sea shells, brass or metal keys, small pieces of metal, plastic jar lids, large screws, nails or bolts, or small pieces of wood

3. Polypropylene fishing line to connect each suspended sound-making object to the base
4. Some sort of very thin wood or plastic that is suspended from the base that will catch the wind and activate the sound-making objects

As making a set of wind chimes involves a sufficient amount of tying the polypropylene to each sound-making object and then attaching the other end to the base, it is more suitable for the older students. If you do have a situation where younger children wish to make wind chimes, you can invite older students to come visit and help the young students tie the knots. As the young children always look up to the older students, this way of working never fails.

In addition to the set of wind chimes, each attendee will make two additional instruments to be selected from the following: Rain Stick, Jingle Sticks, Shakers, Slap Stick, Spoon Strikers, Finger Bells, and/or Brushes. *The Junkman™* will supply each attendee with a Recipe Card for each instrument that includes ingredient list, tool list, and the step-by-step procedure on how to construct the instrument.

Finally, the course will close with *The Junkman™* and all attendees creating a class composition that demonstrates all the various ways of playing each of the instruments