



lingoda

The earliest musical instruments

SPEAKING

LEVEL
Advanced

NUMBER
C1_1014S_EN

LANGUAGE
English

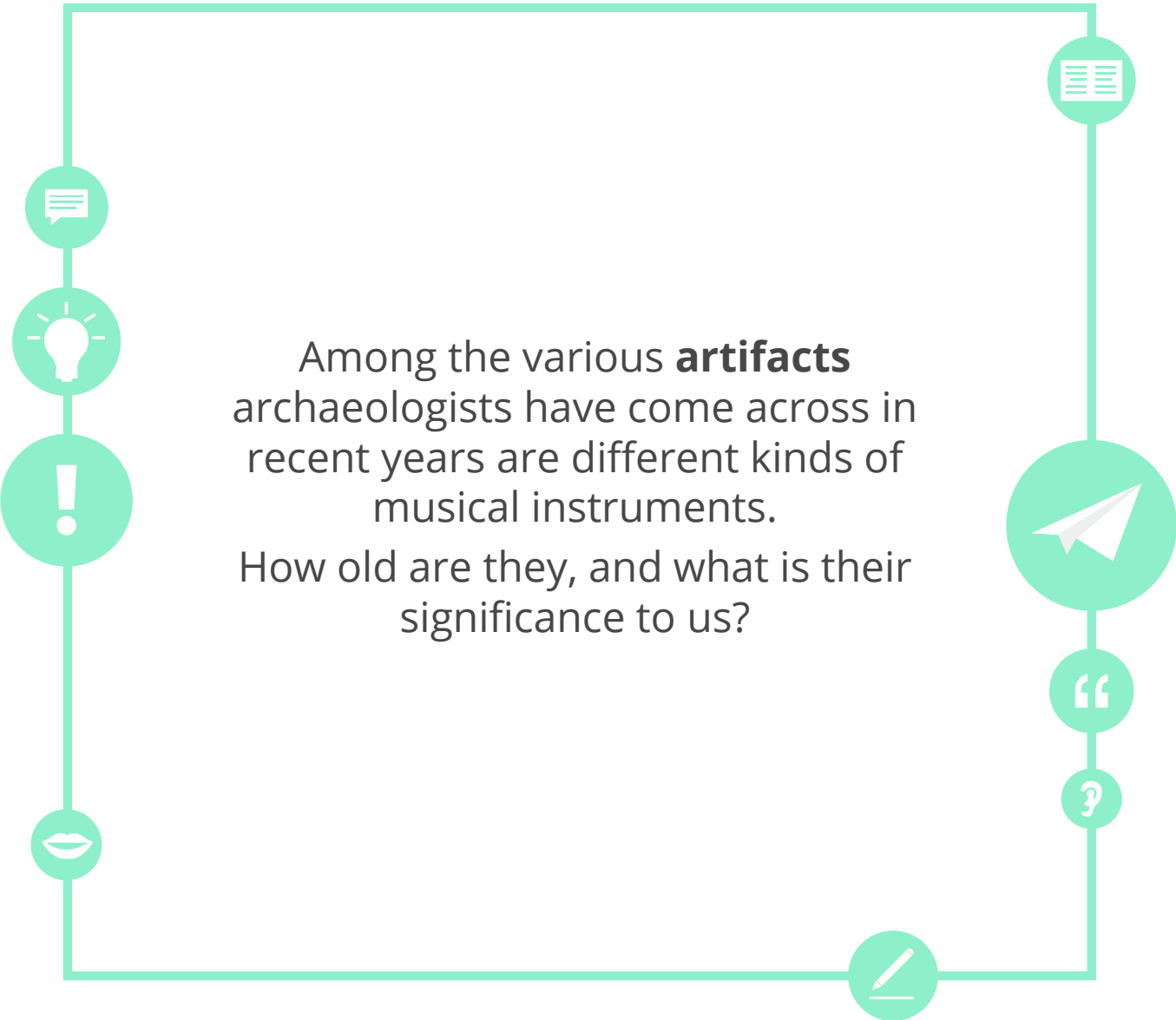




Goals

- Can read and understand a more complex, factual text about musical instruments and archaeology.
- Can discuss how objects are made fluently and in detail.





Among the various **artifacts** archaeologists have come across in recent years are different kinds of musical instruments. How old are they, and what is their significance to us?



Musical instruments

**How many
different musical
instruments can
you name?**





Take a guess



When do you think the first instruments were made?
What kinds of instruments do you think they were?
Are you thinking of any that you named in the last activity?



**What do you
think a
community or
society's music
says about it?**

mood

experience

energy



New words: try to put each in a sentence!

ivory

A type of yellow bone which comes from the tusk of an elephant or woolly mammoth. **Ivory** was once used to make the keys of a piano, before rules against elephant hunting were instated.

carbon dating

A method used by archaeologists to estimate how old an item is. It measures the **carbon** levels in the object.

percussion

Different kinds of musical instruments which are used to create a rhythm. They are hit using your hand or a stick of some kind.

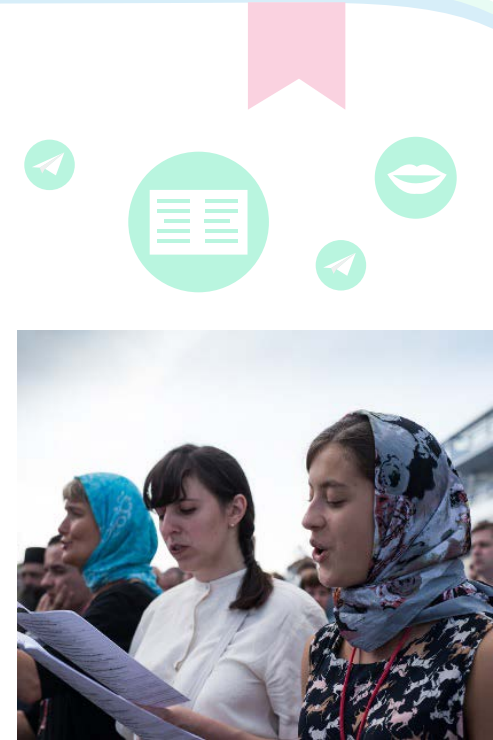
melody

A musical tune which can form part of a bigger piece of music. **Melody** is often the main tune you will hear in a piece.



Our earliest resources

It's strongly believed by experts that the huge **array** of sounds that human vocal chords can make were the foundations of humankind's long and fascinating relationship with music. Different facets of the human voice including singing, humming, whistling, yawning, clicking and coughing all could have been tools for prehistoric man's musical expression.





Our earliest resources

Have a look around you - how many different kinds of percussion instruments could you **fashion** with the materials in your immediate **vicinity**? In a similar **vein** of using all available resources, it's also thought that **percussion** played a significant role in Prehistoric music. It's likely that clapping hands was the first technique used to create a beat, along with banging stones together.





The first instrument



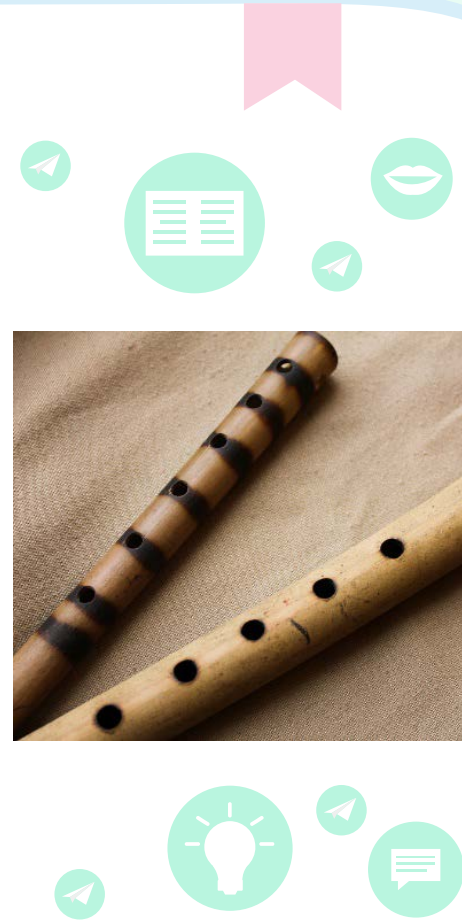
It was in north western Slovenia in 1995 that archaeologist Ivan Turk came across what could be considered as the oldest musical instrument to date. Estimated anywhere between 43,000 – 82,000 years old, the Divje Babe flute is a small wind instrument made from the **femur** bone of a young cave bear. This flute would have been carved by Neanderthals, **rival** species to humankind, and the four holes down its length were thought to correspond to four notes of the diatonic scale (do, re, mi etc.). More recently in 2015, however, it came out that these holes were unlikely to have been made by Neanderthals, but rather by hungry spotted hyenas, whose teeth would have been more than capable of puncturing the bones of young mammals.



Earliest bone flutes

More recently between 2009 and 2012, various flutes made from bird bones, specifically vultures, and mammoth **ivory** were discovered in mountain caves in the south of Germany.

Carbon dating of these finds shows them to be between 42,000-43,000 years old. This time, there was far less doubt surrounding their authenticity. To convert mammoth ivory into anything resembling an instrument would have required a great deal of **perseverance** and **attention to detail**. Composed of solid material, the mammoth **tusk** would have had to have been split first, then have both of its halves carefully **hollowed out**, and finally bound back together, its **seam** glued together so that both halves were airtight.





Earliest bone flutes

Any kind of bone, already **hollow** in the centre, would have been far less serious an undertaking! The **melodies** produced by this type of flute would have been relatively complex. These instruments were discovered alongside various figurative art, personal ornaments and mythical imagery, which indicates the emergence of a rich culture in art and belief far earlier than might have been supposed.





New vocabulary: discuss the meanings with your teacher

seam

perseverance

rival

attention to detail

to fashion

vicinity

tusk

hollow

array



Text in focus

Use the text to help you answer the following questions.



1

Look back to the text and find as many phrasal verbs as you can. Are they easy to spot? How many are there?

2

Did you come across any new or unfamiliar ways of expressing an idea?

3

Were you particularly surprised by any of the dates or discoveries in the text?





The joys (and pitfalls) of discovery

For ten years, it was thought that the Divje Babe flute was the first musical instrument, and made by Neanderthals, no less.

Have you ever thought you made a discovery for it to be proven false? Or can you think of other examples of this happening?





Big question

**Do you think it's important
to know about the history
of humankind?**

**Is the work of
archaeologists important?**

understanding

bigger picture

insight

old news



A matter of opinion

Look at some of the opinions about archaeological discovery below. Role play a conversation with one of the people using their opinion as a starting point. Use your answers from the previous activity to help you. You may either agree with the person or debate with them and persuade them to adopt your opinion.



I love old things and finding things out about the history of the world! To be honest though, I haven't much interest in what humans did – I love the side of archaeology that studies much older things like dinosaurs and fossils...what's it called again? Oh – Paleontology!



I think that investing time in learning about the history of humanity is a very important endeavour. Knowing that music is a trait that stretches back to our very beginnings – well, that is exciting news, and it says a lot about us!



There's quite enough to be keeping up with in the modern world, let alone getting hung up on what happened thousands of years ago. Are people honestly trying to tell me that obsessing over tiny bones with holes is going to tell us more about humankind? We're different now!



Get ready to listen



The next few slides will focus on training your listening comprehension.



Fill in the gaps

As you listen to your teacher read, fill the gaps in these sentences below. Then move to the listening activity on the next slide!

Various musical _____ from between 37,000 years ago up until about 2000 BC have been continually discovered, increasing in sophistication through the _____.

Different kinds of percussion instruments, various wind instruments, string instruments and even early musical _____ have been added to the list of objects _____ from past societies.





Listen and categorise

As you listen to your teacher read, categorise each thing mentioned into one of two lists: instruments and materials used to make them. Can you say which family each kind of instrument belongs to: wind or percussion?

drum

mallet

gourd

bamboo

giant cane

pan pipes

elephant skin

xylophone

instrument

material



New vocabulary: guess the meaning and discuss

gourd

harmony (musical)

to unearth

fragmented

artefact

prior



Instruments and their discovery

Were you surprised by any of the instruments mentioned in the listening text and when they were discovered? Explain your answer.



How things were made

The listening text describes how different instruments were made. In your own words, try to explain how each of the things below were made. What kind of person or profession would normally make each thing?



Describing sound and music

In the listening text, one adjective used to describe is **resonating**. This adjective also had a corresponding verb: **to resonate**. What do you think this family of words means exactly?

Can you think of other words that can be used to describe sound? Which example below uses the **adjective**, and which uses the **verb**?



Uncle Jack's booming voice **resonated** throughout the entire house!



It was a beautiful, **resonating** sound, unlike anything Mary had ever heard before.



Explaining unusual things

The listening text described how an early xylophone was made. Can you use your own words to explain a xylophone, the kinds of sounds it makes, and the kinds of music in which it is normally heard? Pretend you're explaining all of this to someone who has never seen one before.





Talking about instruments

Do you play an instrument? Or have you ever done so in the past? Describe your instrument, the sounds it makes and the music you play on it using the words below to help. If you don't have one, either describe a friend's or invent one!



sound

resonating
rich
high pitched

appearance

colour
shape
material

type

wind
string
brass
percussion

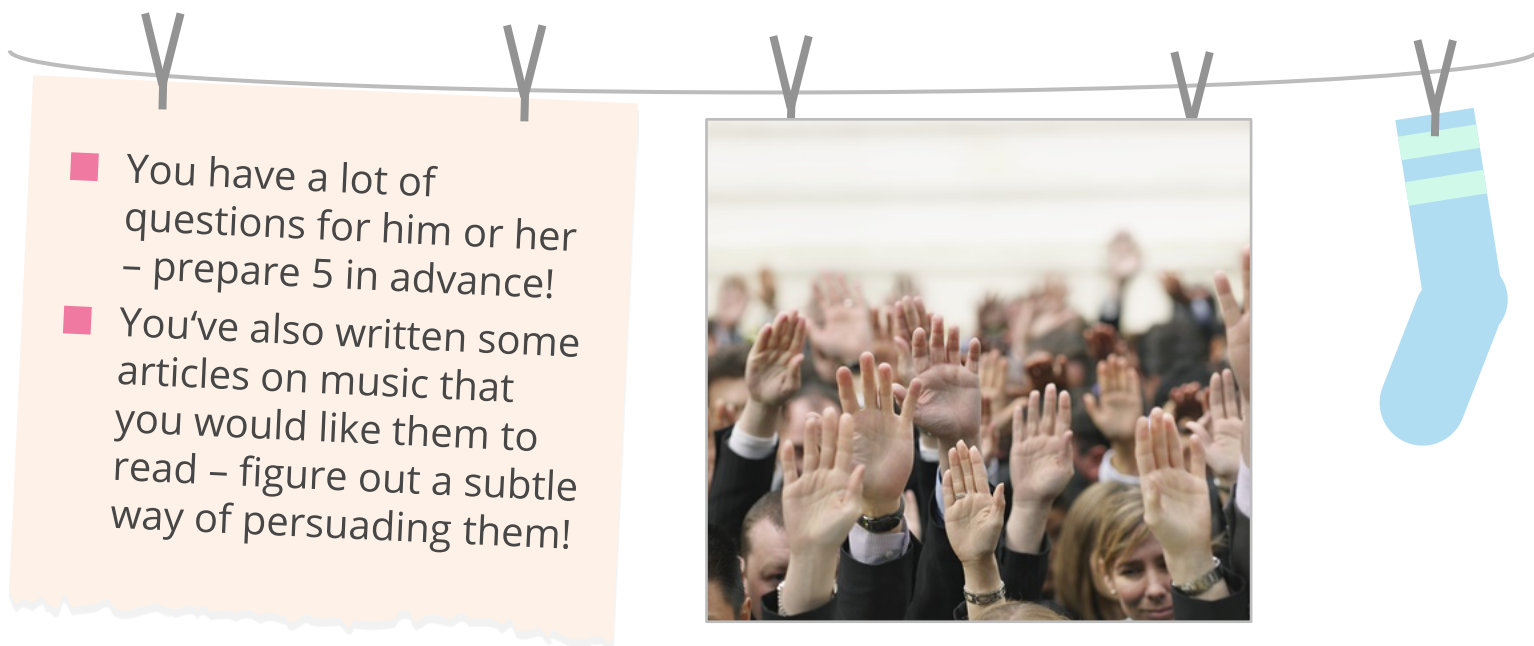
music

rock
classical
blues
folk



Imagine this

A well known archaeologist who was responsible for discovering one of the early instruments mentioned in the text is coming to speak at your local community hall.





An impromptu interview

Today is your lucky day! You have managed to wrangle a short one-on-one interview with this archaeologist. The interview will be recorded and aired on a local radio station. Role play the interview using the questions you have prepared with your teacher. When you have finished, swap roles.

It's a real privilege to be talking to you here, today!



Likewise – it's a pleasure to be here!



Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





Transcription

Various musical **artefacts** from between 37,000 years ago up until about 2000 BC have been continually discovered, increasing in sophistication through the ages. Different kinds of percussion instruments, various wind instruments, string instruments and even early musical notation have been added to the list of objects **unearthed** from past societies.

On the older end of the scale, at about 37,000 years old, an elephant skin drum is the first known percussion instrument to be discovered. Pan pipes from Greece, fashioned from bamboo and giant cane, were found as a development from the bone flutes of 10,000 years **prior**.

Most recent of the discoveries in 2000 BC was the finding of the first musical notation; a Cuneiform tablet was discovered in Nippur, Iraq, which illustrates **fragmented** instructions for performing music. The notation indicates a composition using a diatonic scale, and shows **harmonies** moving in thirds.

Last but not least, a xylophone from 2000 BC was unearthed in southeast Asia. A more striking find, it is thought to have been constructed by placing wooden bars on a series of hollow **gourds**. These gourds were responsible for generating the **resonating** notes typical to a xylophone when struck by a mallet.



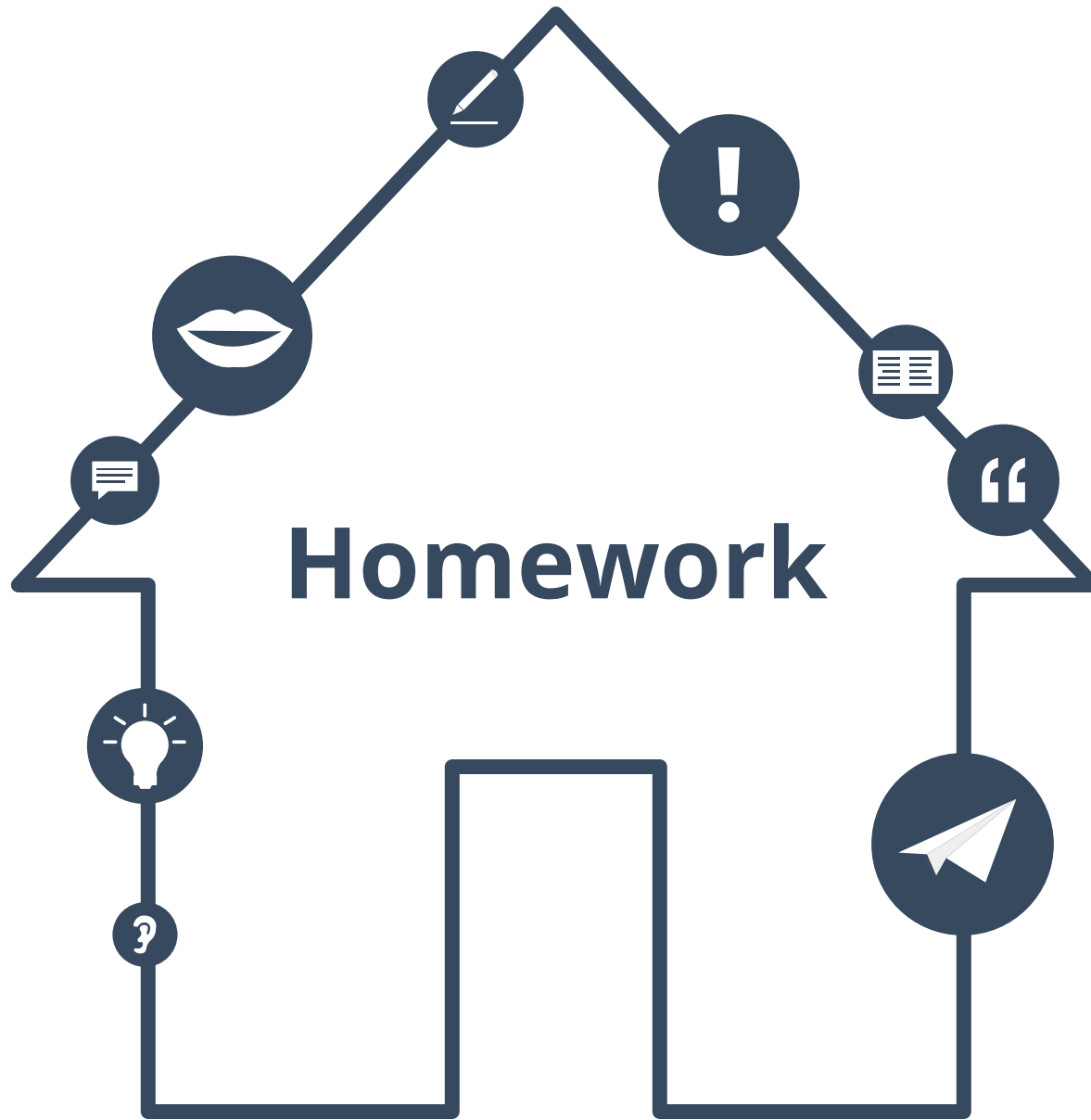
Answer key

Questions p. 14:

1. 3 phrasal verbs: to come across, to come out, to hollow out, to look around.

Fill in the gaps p. 19:

1. artefacts; 2. ages; 3. notation; 4. unearthed.





Vocabulary flashcards

Go back through the lesson and pick out the words you found most difficult. What was it about them you found challenging?





Writing activity

Describe your favourite object: what it looks like, how it was made, and above all, what you like to do with it.

ancient

rough times

I bring it with
me wherever I
go...

falling apart

good times

brand new

A vertical column of ten small circles on the left side of a large white rectangular area, which serves as a writing space. To the right of these circles are ten horizontal lines for writing.



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