



On pitch

Background knowledge

The faster an object vibrates, the higher the sound it makes. The slower an object vibrates, the lower the sound it makes. How rapidly a guitar string, drum skin, or column of air in a recorder vibrates is called its pitch. Pitch is one property of sound. Musical instruments and singing voices can have a high or low pitch.

Science activity

Look at these musical instruments. Draw a line to each instrument to the way you change its pitch.



Xylophone

Tuning fork

Drum

Make its string longer or shorter.

Make the column of air longer or shorter.

Increase or reduce its size.

Change the size of its membrane.

Make its skin tighter or looser.



Recorder



Violin

If the air column on the recorder is increased, what will happen to its pitch?

Science investigation

Try making a musical instrument out of straws. Using a ruler, cut three straws to different lengths and tape them together in a row from longest to shortest. If you cannot blow hard enough to make a sound, ask an adult to help you.

