

Chime Lab: Same Bounces, Different Mood

Ages 9-12 · about 45 minutes, in one sitting

Your child watches two balls bounce around a ring of eight pegs that play notes, then switches the scale from Major to Minor while it plays. The balls bounce exactly the same way, but the mood of the music changes. They find out which notes changed, compare five scales, and set up a ring to fit a mood of their own for you to guess.

What you need

- A computer or Chromebook with a current browser, and headphones or speakers with the sound on. A piano or keyboard, or a picture of one, helps but is not needed.
- The lesson link: mytekdev.com/try/chimelab?lesson=same-bounces-different-mood&ref=fam-chimelab-1. No account, no email and nothing to install.
- Optional: the activity sheet at the end of this plan, printed, and a pencil.

Do it together

1. Open mytekdev.com/try/chimelab?lesson=same-bounces-different-mood&ref=fam-chimelab-1 together with the sound on. A short guide runs along the top; follow it: press **Play**, open **Music**, and change **Scale** from Major to Minor while it plays. Before the switch, ask your child for one word for how the music feels, then ask again after.

You'll know it worked when: The balls keep bouncing as before, and your child gives a different mood word for Minor.

2. Find which notes changed. Major on C is C D E F G A B C. Minor on C is C D D# F G G# A# C. Three notes move down: E, A and B. The app names black keys with sharps, so D# is E-flat, G# is A-flat and A# is B-flat.

You'll know it worked when: Your child circles E, A and B, on the activity sheet or on a keyboard.

3. Press **From the top** in Major, then again in Minor, and watch the balls.

You'll know it worked when: Your child sees that the balls hit the same pegs at the same moments in both, so only the notes changed, and the mood changed with them.

4. Listen to five scales for about 20 seconds each, pressing **From the top** each time (and **Play** if the ring is paused): Major, Minor, Major pentatonic, Blues and Hirajoshi. For each one, pick a mood word and count the notes in one octave. **Stats** lists each peg by its note (W1 C, W2 D, and so on).

You'll know it worked when: Your child finds 7 notes in Major and Minor, 6 in Blues, and 5 in Major pentatonic and Hirajoshi, and can say that with only five notes, spread apart, no two neighbors clash.

5. Your child picks a mood without telling you: a lullaby, a spooky hallway, a sunny morning, a race, or rain on a window. They choose the **Scale** and **Tempo** on the **Music** tab, a sound for each ball on the **Balls** tab, and **Gravity** on the **Ring** tab, and say or write why each one fits. Less gravity means slower, gentler bounces and fewer notes; more gravity, faster and busier ones.

If you get stuck: If they do not know where to start, try Minor and low Gravity for the spooky hallway. **Tempo** does not change the bounces; it changes the feel of the rhythm, not how many notes there are.

You'll know it worked when: Your child has a reason for the scale, the gravity and the sounds.

6. Record it: press **From the top**, then **Record**, let it play for 20 to 30 seconds, and press **Stop** (the Record button's label while recording). **Play take** plays it back. You listen and guess the mood.

You'll know it worked when: You guess the mood, or your child can say which setting would make it clearer.

7. Then the real question, without trying it: if you changed only the sound of the balls from Kalimba to Glass, would the mood change? How?

You'll know it worked when: Your child separates the notes (the scale) from the sound that plays them, and predicts what each does to the mood. That means they see that mood comes from several parts of the music working together.

Talk about it

Ask these while you work together. A child who has understood the lesson can answer them without help:

- What changed when you switched from Major to Minor? What stayed the same?
- Which three notes moved?
- Which scale has the fewest notes in an octave? How does it sound?
- Why did you choose that tempo for your mood?
- Without trying it: if you changed only the sound of the balls from Kalimba to Glass, would the mood change? How?

The last one is the real test. A child who separates the notes (the scale) from the sound that plays them (the timbre) and predicts what each does to the mood understands that mood comes from several musical elements working together.

For younger and older kids

Younger: For ages 7 and 8, compare only Major and Minor, use mood words or a drawn face for each, and skip counting notes.

Older: For ages 12 to 14, write each scale as whole steps and half steps (Major: whole, whole, half, whole, whole, whole, half), find the step pattern of Minor, and explain why Major pentatonic has no half steps at all.

Keep going

- Try Dorian and Whole tone. Which notes does each one change compared with Major? How does each feel?
- Change Key from C to another note. Does the mood change, or only how high or low it sounds?
- Pick Tune above the ring and click a peg, then choose Gate: it sings only on every 2nd hit (or 3rd, up to 8th). How does that change the feel?

Bring it into other subjects

- Language arts: write a short scene for one of the mood cards, and choose a scale to play under it.
- Science: sound is vibration. Why does a heavier, slower bounce not change the notes, only when they happen?
- Social studies: the Hirajoshi scale comes from Japanese music, and the pentatonic is used in folk music all over the world. Find a song that uses each.
- Math: count the peg hits for a minute. Which peg gets hit most, and why?

For your records

Ready to copy into an hour log, a portfolio or a transcript.

LESSON	Chime Lab: Same Bounces, Different Mood
SUBJECTS	Music
TIME	45 minutes
WHAT WE DID	Compared how five musical scales feel by playing them on the same bouncing rhythm, and found the three notes that change between major and minor. Set up a ring to fit a chosen mood, recorded it, and explained each choice.
SKILLS PRACTICED	major and minor scales; counting notes in an octave; naming mood in music; explaining musical choices

Activity sheet (optional)

Name: _____ Date: _____



Open the app: scan the QR code, or go to mytekdev.com/try/chimelab?lesson=same-bounces-different-mood

Essential question: How can the same rhythm feel happy, sad or spooky?

1. Major on C: C D E F G A B C. Minor on C: _____. Circle the notes that changed.
2. Listen to each scale for 20 seconds (press From the top each time).

SCALE	ONE MOOD WORD	NOTES IN ONE OCTAVE
Major		
Minor		
Major pentatonic		
Blues		
Hirajoshi		

Mood cards: a lullaby, a spooky hallway, a sunny morning, a race, rain on a window.

1. **Build it.** Choose **Scale** on Music, a sound for each ball on Balls, and **Gravity** on Ring (less gravity, slower bounces).
2. **Record it.** Press **From the top**, then **Record**. After 20 to 30 seconds, press **Stop**.

MY MOOD CARD	SETTING	WHAT I CHOSE	WHY IT FITS
	Scale		
	Gravity		
	Sounds		

3. My listener guessed: _____. How can the same rhythm feel happy, sad or spooky?

Quick check

Name: _____

1. You change Scale from Major to Minor. What changes? (A) where the balls bounce, (B) which notes the pegs play, (C) how fast the balls fall.

2. How many notes are in one octave of the Major pentatonic scale? (A) 5, (B) 7, (C) 12.
3. Name two settings you chose for your mood card, and how each one helped the mood.
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Answers

Read from the app on the starter ring (key C, eight pegs from low C up to high C). The app names black keys with sharps: D# is E-flat, G# is A-flat, A# is B-flat.

SCALE	THE EIGHT PEGS PLAY	NOTES IN ONE OCTAVE
Major	C D E F G A B C	7
Minor	C D D# F G G# A# C	7 (E, A and B move down)
Major pentatonic	C D E G A C D E	5
Blues	C D# F F# G A# C D#	6
Hirajoshi	C D D# G G# C D D#	5

With fewer notes than pegs, the pentatonic, blues and Hirajoshi rings reach past high C. Mood words vary: any specific word with a reason is correct. The bounces are the same in every scale: after From the top, each peg is hit at the same moments whatever the scale.

QUICK CHECK	ANSWER	WHY
1	B	The scale sets the notes; the bounces stay exactly the same.
2	A	C, D, E, G and A: five notes before C again.
3	Any two settings with a reason	For example: Minor for a spooky hallway because three notes are lower; low gravity for a lullaby, so the balls drift and play fewer notes.

If your state or umbrella school asks, this lesson covers National Core Arts Standards, Music MU:Re7.2.4a, National Core Arts Standards, Music MU:Re7.2.5a, National Core Arts Standards, Music MU:Cr2.1.5a.

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The app this lesson uses is free and runs in the browser, with nothing to install and no account needed. It is at mytekdev.com.

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