



# Hearing History: The American Banjo

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

In this activity, we will make our own mini banjo! The American banjo's origin is traced back to the Caribbean and North America during the 17th century, when enslaved Africans were brought to North America during the transatlantic slave trade. Like a guitar, the banjo is a string instrument and creates sound when the strings vibrate. Let's see if we can label the parts on a banjo and explain how they make a sound.

First, you will need to get your supplies:

- 1 notched wooden stick
- 1 tin lid
- 5 rubber bands
- 1 small wooden block
- 2 pieces of double-sided tape

Parts of a banjo:

- The neck ( notched wooden stick)
- The body/resonator ( tin lid)
- The strings ( rubber bands)
- Bridge (wood block)
- Frets ( lines on neck)



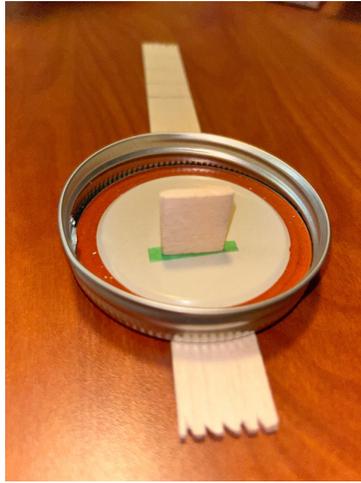
## STEP 1:

Place the tin lid at the other end of the neck, away from the lines on top called frets. These lines change how high or low the sound is.



## STEP 2:

When you've put the lid in the right place, you can use tape to stick the lid to the neck.



### **STEP 3:**

Put the bridge in the middle of the tin lid and use tape to make it stand up straight.



### **STEP 4:**

Put all 5 rubber bands in the notches at the top of the neck, close to the lines called frets. Stretch them carefully over the tin lid to the other end of the neck. Make sure the rubber bands go around the front and back of the neck.

Congratulations! You now have a mini banjo!

If you have more time, add some creative designs to the back of the body and neck with colored markers and stickers!