

Topic & Discussion Lesson Plan



Freddy the Fruity Mouse

The Musical Squirrels Series



A Christmas Story with a Valuable Lesson about Limitations

Gus teaches his friend Chase how to play the bass. Gus explains the difference between a few instruments. He compares the guitar to a bass. And he compares the guitar to a piano so that it is easy to see the similarities. Kids learn about the notes and how to calculate the whole and half steps to find the major scale. Gus explains how all the instruments are the same when learning about music. He teaches an easy way to see the math formula for understanding music theory and how to discover the major scales on the 4 Bass strings.

Book Topics

- Music Theory
- The difference between a guitar and a bass
- What is a Note
- How a Piano is just like a string instrument
- What is a Scale
- The Formula for learning a Scale
- Explains the 1st 4 Notes on each String

Ideas for how to review this book with kids 6-8:

- Briefly introduce guitar and bass. Show images or the real instruments.
- Begin reading and pause to demonstrate each page.

Ask these questions:

- Page 2: What's Gus's favorite kind of music? Answer **Blues**
- Page 4: Write out **A B C D E F G** on the board.
- Page 5: Ask "How many notes are in a scale"? Answer **7 Notes**
- Ask "What are these 7 Notes? Point to the board > Answer **A B C D E F G**
- Page 6: How many strings does a bass guitar have? Answer **4 Strings**
- Page 7: "What are the bars between the notes called?" Answer **Frets**
- Page 22: What is the name of the 4 Bass strings?: **E – A – D – G**
- Optional: Depending on the age and advancement of the child. You can add extra knowledge by explaining that these 4 notes is how we tune the bass instrument. We tune the bass to E A D G to make it easy to play and sound good.)
- Use a diagram or draw 4 lines for the strings and label them. Use the book to help you.

- Whole & Half Steps:** Draw out piano keys on a board with white and black keys.

Explain: Frets are like steps. In-between each fret is a **half step**. Then Demonstrate: Count the half steps. Then count 2 half steps to equal one whole step.

Ask these Questions to summarize the lesson about what they learned:

- "What are the first 4 notes of the E string?" Answer: **E F# G# A**
- "If E is the 1st String, Which string comes after the A string?" Answer **D**
- "How many notes are in the musical alphabet?" Answer **7**



The Musical Squirrel Series

Discussion about the story

Gus the Guitarist

Part 1: Multiple Choice (Circle the Correct Answer)

1. How many strings does a bass guitar have?

- A) 6
- B) 4
- C) 7
- D) 3

2. What letters are used in the musical alphabet?

- A) A–Z
- B) C–M
- C) A–G
- D) E–L

3. What is it called when notes are played in order, one after another?

- A) A song
- B) A chord
- C) A scale
- D) A string

4. What is each metal bar on a guitar neck called?

- A) Note
- B) Fret
- C) Line
- D) Beat

5. What note does the bottom (lowest) string on a bass guitar play?

- A) G
- B) A
- C) E
- D) D



The Musical Squirrel Series

Discussion about the story

Gus the Guitarist

Part 2: Fill in the Blanks

There are ____ letters in the music alphabet.

The four strings on a bass guitar are: ____ - ____ - ____ - ____

A **whole step** is made of two _____ steps.

Gus taught Chase to start learning with the ____ string.

The first four notes on the E string are: E - ____ - ____ - ____

Part 3: Match the Notes to the String

The Notes are not in the correct order to match the string. Write the correct 4 notes of the major scale next to the string.

String

Correct Notes

Notes

E

A – B – C# – D

A

G – A – B – C

D

E – F# – G# – A

G

D – E – F# – G



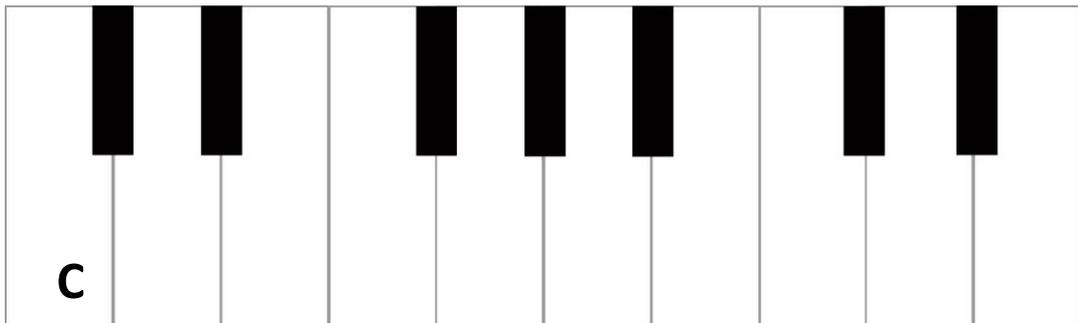
The Musical Squirrel Series

Discussion about the story

Gus the Guitarist

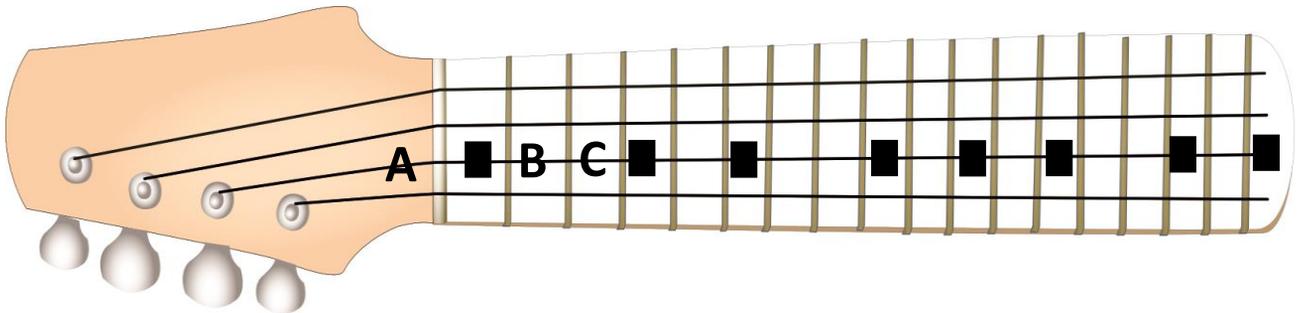
Part 4: Fill in the Piano Notes on the Keys

The first note is done for you. (Hint: What comes after C?)



Part 5: Fill in the Bass Notes on the 2nd String.

The first 3 notes is done for you. Finish the rest of the scale. (*Hint: This is the same as above. The black spaces are the black piano keys called sharps.*)





The Musical Squirrel Series

Discussion about the story

Gus the Guitarist Answer Key

Part 1: Multiple Choice:

1. Answer B: **4**
2. Answer C: **A–G**
3. Answer C: **A scale**
4. Answer B: **Fret**
5. Answer C: **E**

Part 2: Fill in the Blanks

There are 7 letters in the music alphabet.

The four strings on a bass guitar are: E - A - D - G

A **whole step** is made of two half steps.

Gus taught Chase to start learning with the E string.

The first four notes on the **E** string are: **E** - F# - G - A

Part 3: Match the Notes to the String

Match the first four notes in the scale. And write out the correct notes.

<u>String</u>	<u>Correct Notes</u>	<u>Notes</u>
E	E – F# – G# – A	A – B – C# – D
A	A – B – C# – D	G – A – B – C
D	D – E – F# – G	E – F# – G# – A
G	G – A – B – C	D – E – F# – G

Explanation: These are the first four notes in the **major scale** pattern (whole, whole, half) starting on each string.



The Musical Squirrel Series

Music Discussion

More Music Lessons on the differences between the Guitar and Bass
(Not covered in the story of Gus the Guitarist.)

The Difference Between Guitar vs. Bass

Feature	Guitar	Bass Guitar
Number of Strings	Usually 6 strings	Usually 4 strings
Sound	Plays higher notes (melodies and chords)	Plays lower notes (deep, strong sounds)
Role in Music	Plays the main tune , chords, or solos	Plays the beat and rhythm with the drums
Tuning (String Notes)	E – A – D – G – B – E	E – A – D – G
Size	Usually Thicker and lighter	Taller and heavier body and neck
Who Plays What?	Great for rock, pop, country, and solos	Great for grooves, blues, funk, and rhythm

Easy Way to Remember the difference:

- The guitar is like the singer it plays the fun, catchy parts.
- The bass is like the heartbeat: it keeps the beat and holds the music together.

Example from Gus the Guitarist Story:

- Gus plays the guitar and teaches Chase how to play the bass.
- He shows that the bass has fewer strings but still plays important notes that help build the music.