



Rudolph's Rag – Teacher Guide Stage: P2/3

About 'Rudolph's Rag'

This is a fun Christmas piece based on Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer in the style of ragtime music. Ragtime music was popular in the early 20th Century. The main characteristic is it has syncopated* rhythms. It began as dance music in American cities such as St. Louis and New Orleans and was played and enjoyed long before it was published as popular piano music. Scott Joplin is the most famous ragtime composer with his piece called '[Maple Leaf Rag](#)'.

*Syncopated rhythms – Syncopation is a musical term meaning a variety of rhythms played together in a musical texture. This makes part or all of a tune off-beat.

Performance

This piece can be performed in three groups with each group playing a section (eight bar phrase) twice, this will be demonstrated in the [Rudolph's Rag performance video](#). At the end there is a build up to the last note which everyone can play together. You can hear the tune play "Rudolph had a shiny nose!" Then immediately play "bang" on the last note. This too will be demonstrated in the video.

Group examples

These **percussion instruments** can be altered to suit whatever combination you prefer or what is available to you in school:

- Group 1 - woodblock
- Group 2 - egg shaker or maraca
- Group 3 - bells/tambourine or tambour

If instruments are limited or out of use at this time, an alternative option could be to use **body percussion**:

- Group 1 - two finger hand tap
- Group 2 - tapping knees
- Group 3 - stamping feet

Overall Performance format

Agree signals for 'start playing' and 'stop playing' and use these to bring each group in and then signal them to stop after their phrase is completed.

Each section has eight bars:

- Section 1 – group 1
- Section 2 – group 2
- Section 3 – group 3

- Section 4 – group 1
- Section 5 – group 2
- Section 6 – group 3

All the groups should play together for the last note - bring them in after you hear the tune for "Rudolph had a shiny nose" **PLAY**. Help the children by saying the words out loud and signal the note they have to play on. Again, this will be demonstrated for you in the performance video.

We can't wait to see you join in and we hope you will share your performance of Rudolph's Rag with us on Twitter by tagging [@GlasgowCREATE](#) and using [#CREATEChristmas](#).