

## List of Improvisation Prompts:

*(Each prompt can be done free-pitch or pick a scale)*

### Cinematic/Poetic Prompts

Play running music  
Play crawling music  
Play rolling music  
Play quiet music  
Play falling music  
Play rising music  
Play a gentle lullaby.  
Play scary sounds  
Vibe on this piece is freeway traffic  
Make very goofy music  
Make very suspenseful music  
Make wacky sounds

### Musical terms / Technical prompts

Make only wind & breathing sounds  
Play the fastest and most frantic sounds you can  
Play your instrument as a percussion instrument  
Say a word or sentence relating to a household object. Then play your instrument to mimic what you said  
Play the quietest sounds you've ever played on your instrument  
Everyone play a song you know at the same time  
Play very long notes and listen to the way your instrument's vibrations interact with other musical vibrations (tuning)  
Make each note VERY interesting  
Make wild noise for \_\_\_\_ seconds  
Play the most squeaky sounds you can!  
Play only very quiet, low notes  
Leader plays a quick (3-5 second) melody while the group listens. Then tries to imitate leader's phrase  
Leader plays a quick (3-5 second) melody while the group listens. Then everyone responds with their own response

### Physical / Body / Mental state Prompts

Only short notes while wiggling your toes  
Look in all directions around you while you play  
Make funny faces while you play  
March around and make up march sounding music  
Face a real or imaginary window and play for what is outside  
Move around very very slowly and play music that sounds like that  
Lay on the ground and play your instrument

Try to play very seriously  
Imagine a close friend, somebody you love very much, and play for them  
Do warm up stretches while playing your instrument  
Walk around the park while playing your instrument  
Face the corner of the room, and play to it  
Hold your instrument in an unusual way and play it  
Listen to your environment. Pick something that you hear and imitate the sound with your instrument (be a copy cat)

### Animal Sounds / Other sounds

Bark like a dog

Moo like a cow

Slithering snake sounds

Screech like a cat!

Try to make the sounds of a bird playing in a tree

Soaring like an eagle. Incorporate long notes

Squeals like mice

A traffic jam

A rainforest

## **"A SATURDAY WALK" IMPROVISATION PIECE**

(G minor pentatonic)

*do each prompt for 1 minute:*

1. play the sounds of a morning walk
  2. play the song of the bird in the tree
  3. play the footsteps. your's, your dog's, your friend's
  4. stick with only two notes while you play the lines in the sidewalk
  5. stick with only one note as you play the sun shining down
  6. play the sound of the big trees
  7. play a peaceful breeze
  8. play the colors of the flowers
  9. play the shapes of the houses
  10. play arriving back home and taking off your shoes
- the end

## **Other improvisation games:**

### Popcorn improv

Decide on a musician order

Each person improvises a 5-10 second solo after one another

### Musical telephone

Musician #1 plays a phrase.

Musician #2 imitates musician #1's phrase

Musician #3 imitates musician #2's phrase

etc

### 2 section improvisation piece:

Two different scales=two different sections

Conductor cues different sections

### Accompany a tennis game

Make sounds right when the ball is hit, etc

### Conductor Turns the Band On and Off

A conductor (hopefully a young child) will conduct when the band plays. When the conductor's hand is up, the band plays. When the conductor's hand is down, the band stops. ON OFF ON OFF ON OFF etc

## **Some questions for a great conversation about music:**

How did you fall in love with music?

What was music like around you growing up?

What's your earliest musical memory?

How have you been expressing your creativity lately?

What (musical or nonmusical) activities have you been enjoying lately?

Can you describe a period of time or moment where you felt full of inspiration, part of something great, or seriously enjoyed something?

What is something about your instrument that makes it special?

How do you listen to music? What devices, speakers, apps, media, where, etc

Have you really enjoyed any live music recently?

What songs do you know how to play?

