

Drumming: Give it Some Stick



Pounding out your frustrations on the drums is a perfect, healthy family activity, says **Lucy Atkins**

(1) Rock drumming lessons may not seem an obvious family activity, but an hour with teacher Nigel Ralf turns out to be the best entertainment money can buy – not just for adults, but for children too.

(2) The benefits of rock drumming are 8. First, there is the simple, therapeutic joy of hitting. Then there are the newly discovered health effects. Researchers recently studied Clem Burke, the drummer from Blondie, and discovered that he burned off up to 600 calories per hour. His fitness, they found, was similar to that of a professional footballer. The researchers now plan to develop rock-drumming programmes in schools as an ingenious way to get either chubby or non-sporty, computer-obsessed children to 9.

(3) Ralf, of course, is already doing this. “Drumming is seen as cool,” he says, “and although you work up a

definite sweat, no child thinks of it as exercise.” They are, after all, still sitting down.

(4) There are also many psychological 10. For example, drumming is used to treat depression and other mental illnesses, as well as in drug rehabilitation programmes and as an aid to stop smoking. The idea is that banging a drum activates the brain’s pleasure centres, tackles stress, takes you out of your self-obsessed routine and promotes a sense of community.

(5) Best of all, it is enormous fun – for all ages. I first discovered this at the school summer fête, where Ralf put on a drumming competition for children. I became hooked. My children may have been 11 to see their mother wildly hitting the drums, but they still agreed to come to a family lesson.

(6) Our hour-long session begins with maths. Not a good start – I see my children turn pale – but, says Ralf, “in drumming, maths is easy”. It is all about recognising multiples of four so you can go at different speeds. We are using electronic drum sets, which are more compact and, 12, have volume control (you can even plug in headphones to avoid upsetting the neighbours).

(7) Next, Ralf introduces us to the basic ‘four-beat rock rhythm’. This involves a surprising degree of mental flexibility: two hands and a bass-drum foot, each doing

something different 13 your brain keeps a one-two-three-four rhythm. It is a brain-aching exercise in coordination, which, he points out, must have knock-on benefits in sport, 14 boosting sluggish brain cells.

(8) “Virtually any child – or adult – can get some sense of achievement from drumming,” says Ralf, who left a job in electronics to teach drumming in primary and secondary schools in Oxfordshire. “It’s also a great way to get people interested in other musical instruments.” Though he offers private lessons, most pupils come to group tutorials after school or to holiday rock schools. “I get lots of mad mummies wanting

a go,” Ralf says. “The dads are often more 15. Perhaps they don’t want to look as if they don’t know what they’re doing.”

(9) It has been brilliant learning something new. All in all, our family rock-drumming lesson is a roaring success. We leave relaxed and smiling, energy spent.

Nigel Ralf runs Drum Beats in Oxford. One-hour private lessons cost £26; group lessons from £8 per child, ages eight and above. (www.drum-beats.co.uk; 07910 433265)

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Tekst 3

Kies bij iedere open plek in de tekst het juiste antwoord uit de gegeven mogelijkheden.

1p 8

- A limited
- B many
- C overrated
- D unknown

1p 9

- A be more social
- B get some exercise
- C perform better at school
- D start playing football

1p 10

- A advantages
- B problems
- C questions

1p 11

- A disappointed
- B excited
- C horrified
- D thankful

1p 12

- A alarmingly
- B deafeningly
- C essentially
- D old-fashionedly

1p 13

- A as soon as
- B because
- C if only
- D while

1p 14

- A instead of
- B not to mention
- C without

1p 15

- A active
- B determined
- C eager
- D hesitant
- E mature

Bronvermelding

Een opsomming van de in dit examen gebruikte bronnen, zoals teksten en afbeeldingen, is te vinden in het bij dit examen behorende correctievoorschrift, dat na afloop van het examen wordt gepubliceerd.