

# Playing an Instrument

## Goal

The VoicePal 8K can be programmed to ‘play’ the notes of the scale. This allows the user to play songs and/or make their own music.

## Materials

- VoicePal 8K
- Markers/Colors
- Poster board or paper
- An instrument such as a piano or xylophone
- Large envelope

## Steps

1. Make an overlay assigning a different color to each button on the keypad. Photocopy the templates included with your device to make the overlay. Color different squares with marker or crayon. The template is also provided in Boardmaker.

Suggested colors:

- Red
  - Blue
  - Green
  - Yellow
  - Orange
  - Purple
  - Black
  - Pink
2. Assign a note of the scale to each color. Here are some suggestions:
    - Do: Red
    - Re: Blue
    - Me: Green
    - Fa: Yellow
    - So: Orange
    - La: Purple
    - Ti: Black
    - Do: Pink

3. Recording Sounds:
  - a. Slide the RECORD/PLAY switch to the REC position.
  - b. Press and hold button to be recorded.
  - c. While continuing to hold, have someone play the note for that button. When finished, release the button. You will hear an automatic playback of the recording.
  - d. Repeat steps b and c for each note.
  - e. When all the notes have been recorded, slide the RECORD/PLAY switch to the PLAY position.
  
4. Color code the music (this can be done in many ways):
  - Color the actual notes on the music according to suggested color code.
  - Put a colored circle above or below each note according to suggested color code.
  - On a blank sheet of paper or poster board, place colored circles in the order of the notes using the suggested color code. This is a nice option for those with visual perception difficulties. The circle size and spacing can be individualized to meet individuals' needs.
  
5. Instructions to user:
  - a. Look at the colored notes.
  - b. Match the color of the note to the same colored button on the VoicePal 8K.
  - c. Press the button.
  - d. Continue this sequence in the order shown on the music until song is complete.

## Activity Variations

1. If the individual can match numbers: Numbers can be used instead of colors to code all the notes. As above, assign the buttons of the device and the notes of the music with corresponding numbers. Recording will be done in the same manner as outlined above.
2. Any instrument can be used during the recording process. This allows the student to participate the same as their peers. For example, if other students are using bells today but their recorders tomorrow, the VoicePal 8K can easily be re-recorded so the students can change instruments.
3. This activity can become a great leisure time choice. Keep a songbook of coded music so the user can practice and play in his or her spare time.
4. Encourage the user to write his or her own music. This is a great inclusive activity. Assign someone to write down the sequence of notes chosen by the user so the music can be re-played later.

## Equipment Variations

1. The VoicePal Levels, Voicepal 8 and VoicePal 8K can be accessed via external switches. Any combination of switches compatible with the device can be used. It is not necessary to have all eight switches be of the same type. Use appropriate visual cues on the switches.
2. Pal Pads come in different colors. This makes visual cueing easy when using external switches.