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Hello and welcome to Episode 24 of Busy Kids Love Music, a podcast for music-loving families. I'm Carly Seifert, the creator of Busy Kids Do Piano and I'm thrilled to have you joining me today for musical discoveries. Today's episode is brought to you by my free online music camp called Busy Kids Do Music Camp. This free camp is a 5 day camp that explores music from Carnival of the Animals, the orchestra and basic musical concepts. You can join by visiting busykidsdopiano.com/musiccamp, and I'll also pop a link to enroll in this episode's show notes.

In today's episode, we're going to be learning about an ENORMOUS instrument that sounds like this...

Do you know what instrument that is? If you guessed the double bass, then you are correct. As I said, a double bass is an enormous instrument -- from bottom to top it is about 6 feet tall. A double bass is part of the string family of instruments which includes violins, violas and cellos. These instruments all look alike, but are different sizes. The double bass is the largest of the instruments in the string family. The word pitch means how high or low the sound of an instrument is. The double bass makes a really, really low sound.

You might think that the bass is a loud instrument because it is so large, but the notes are so low that they aren't quite as loud as other instruments. For this reason, there is very little music written for a solo double bass. In a large orchestra there is usually around 8 double basses that are played so that there is enough volume and the audience can hear the notes that the bass plays. (fade music) A musician who plays the double bass is called a double bassist, and she can stand or sit while playing the instrument. One famous classical piece that uses a double bass comes from Camille Saint Saens Carnival of the Animals and is called "The Elephant". Listen to a bit of this piece. Does it sound like an elephant to you?

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The bass began to replace some wind instruments in jazz music beginning around the 1920s. Because it is the quietest instrument in a jazz band, many players used a “slap style” of slapping and pulling the strings to produce a sound that can cut through the sounds of the instruments in the jazz band and be better heard. Here’s what it sounds like.

The bass is also used in bluegrass music. For bluegrass music, it is typically played by plucking the strings.

Because the double bass is used in such a variety of musical styles, this week’s listening calendar is going to be filled with variety, too! You can head over to my site at busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/24 where I’ll link you to a playlist of 10 songs having to do with this episode’s theme -- which is, the double bass. This playlist is a way for you to go deeper with what we’ve learned about in today’s episode until a brand new episode of Busy Kids Love Music airs again in two weeks. I hope you’ve enjoyed learning about the double bass with me today, and I look forward to connecting with you again in two weeks for another episode of Busy Kids Love Music. Bye for now!