**Ruth Tracy**

**Double Bass**

**Materials:**

Double Bass

Bow

Music

The double bass is one of the largest stringed instruments in the world. When you pluck a string, it vibrates up the string into the bridge. The bridge is held on only by the tension of the strings holding it down. The vibrating bridge vibrates a piece of wood underneath the bridge inside the bass called a dowel. This in turn makes the wooden structure of the bass vibrate, which makes the air vibrate. This area is called the vibration chamber. The sound comes out of the “F-holes” and into the air. The vibration chamber is the most important part, because if the vibration chamber were not there, the bass would be very quiet. The bow works on the same principal, except that that it makes the strings vibrate more and for a longer time. The bow is made out of horsetail hair, usually from Siberia or somewhere else cold. The hair has barbs on it, and the colder the place where the horse was, the thicker the hair will be. The barbs grab the string, and this draws the note out for longer. You also put *rosin* on the bow, which is dried tree sap. This makes the bow sticky, the better to grip the string with. You tune the bass by turning knobs on the top of the neck, which turn gears, which turn the strings to make them longer or shorter. The shorter the string, the higher the note. You get different notes then just the open string by pressing down the string closer to the bridge. The closer to the bridge you press, the higher the note is.

