

Big ideas in Music

Performing - Singing and Playing instruments

Nursery	Sing a song with others and try to move in time with the music. Combine singing with the movements of the song	Play an instrument (untuned percussion or body percussion) in time to the pulse of the music	Listen, respond, and vocalise chants with others	Sing the shape of the tune (e.g. by moving their voice up and down, down and up with the song)	Physically imitate the actions of musicians. come up with ideas of actions or movements to accompany the lyrics	Experiment with ways of playing instruments (e.g. volume – dynamics)
Reception	Sing with a sense of pitch, following the shape of the melody with their voices. Match the pitch of a 4-note (la-so-mi-do) call-and response song.	Sing a tune with 'stepping' and 'leaping' notes. Sing in call-and-response.	Develop a sense of beat by performing actions to music. Mark the beat of the song with actions.	Play a steady beat on percussion instruments. Play an accompaniment using tuned and untuned percussion, and recognise a change in tempo. Play different instruments with control.	Sing and play a rising and falling melody, following the shape with voices and on tuned percussion.	Explore dynamics with their voices and instruments.
Year 1	Sing simple chants and rhymes from memory, singing collectively and at the same pitch, responding to simple visual directions (e.g. stop, start, loud, quiet) and counting in. Sing familiar songs in both low and high voices and talk about the difference in sound.	Sing songs with a very small range (mi-so), then slightly wider. Include pentatonic songs	Sing a wide range of call-and-response songs to control vocal pitch and to match the pitch they hear with accuracy.	Walk, move, or clap a steady beat with others, changing the speed of the beat as the tempo of the music changes. Use body percussion and classroom percussion, playing repeated patterns (ostinati) and short pitched patterns on tuned instruments to maintain a steady beat. Respond to the pulse in recorded/live music through movement and dance	Perform short copycat rhythm patterns accurately, led by the teacher. Perform short repeating rhythm patterns while keeping in time with a steady beat. Perform word-pattern chants; create, retain and perform their own rhythm patterns.	Explore percussion sounds to explore storytelling. Follow pictures and symbols to guide singing and playing e.g. 4 dots = 4 taps on the drum.
Year 2	Sing songs regularly with a pitch range of do-so (e.g. C-G) with increasing vocal control. Sing songs with a small pitch range, pitching accurately.	Play a range of singing games based on the cuckoo interval (so-mi) matching voices accurately, supported by a leader playing the melody. The melody could be played on a	Know the meaning of dynamics (loud/quiet) and tempo (fast/slow) and be able to demonstrate these when singing by responding to (a)	Walk in time to the beat of a piece of music or song. Know the difference between left and right to support coordination and shared movement with others. Mark the beat of a	Play copycat rhythms, copying a leader, and invent rhythms for others to copy on untuned percussion. Read and respond to chanted rhythm patterns, and represent them with stick	Respond independently to pitch changes heard in short melodic phrases, indicating with actions (e.g. stand up/sit down, hands high/hands low). Recognise dot notation and match it to 3-note

		piano, acoustic instrument, or backing track. Sing short phrases independently within a singing game or short song.	the leader's directions and (b) visual symbols (e.g. crescendo, decrescendo, pause)	listening piece by tapping or clapping and recognising tempo as well as changes in tempo. Begin to group beats in twos and threes by tapping knees on the first (strongest) beat and clapping the remaining beats. Identify the beat groupings in familiar music that they sing regularly and listen to.	notation including crotchets, quavers, and crotchet rests.	tunes played on tuned percussion
Year 3	Sing a widening range of unison songs of varying styles and structures with a pitch range of do–so, tunefully and with expression. Perform forte and piano, loud and soft. Perform actions confidently and in time to a range of action songs.	Develop facility in playing tuned percussion or a melodic instrument such as violin or recorder	Play and perform melodies following staff notation using a small range (e.g. do-mi or C-E) as a whole class or in small groups.		Individually (solo) copy stepwise melodic phrases with accuracy at different speeds; allegro and adagio, fast and slow. Extend to question-and-answer phrases.	Introduce the staff, lines and spaces, and clef. Use dot notation to show higher or lower pitch. Introduce and understand the differences between crotchets and paired quavers. Apply word chants to rhythms, understanding how to link each syllable to one musical note.
Year 4	Continue to sing a broad range of unison songs with the range of an octave (do–do), pitching the voice accurately and following directions for getting louder (crescendo) and quieter (descrescendo).	Sing rounds and partner songs in different time signatures (2, 3 and 4 time) and begin to sing repertoire with small and large leaps as well as a simple second part to introduce vocal harmony.	Develop facility in the basic skills of a selected musical instrument over a sustained learning period.	Play and perform melodies following staff notation using a small range (e.g. Middle C–G/do–so) as a whole-class or in small groups.	Perform in two or more parts (e.g. melody and accompaniment or a duet) from simple notation using instruments played in whole class teaching. Identify static and moving parts.	Copy short melodic phrases including those using the pentatonic scale (e.g. C, D, E, G, A).
Year 5	Sing a broad range of songs from an extended repertoire with a sense of ensemble and performance. This should include observing phrasing, accurate pitching, and appropriate style.	Sing three-part rounds, partner songs, and songs with a verse and a chorus.	Play melodies on tuned percussion, melodic instruments or keyboards, following staff notation written on one staff and using notes within the Middle C–C'/do–do range. This should initially be done as a whole class with greater independence gained each lesson	Understand how triads are formed, and play them on tuned percussion, melodic instruments or keyboards. Perform simple, chordal accompaniments to familiar songs.	Perform a range of repertoire pieces and arrangements combining acoustic instruments to form mixed ensembles, including a school orchestra.	Further understand the differences between semibreves, minims, crotchets and crotchet rests, paired quavers, and semiquavers. Understand the differences between 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 time signatures. Read and perform pitch notation within an octave (e.g. C–C'/do–do). Read and

			through smaller group performance. Develop the skill of playing by ear on tuned instruments, copying longer phrases and familiar melodies			play short rhythmic phrases at sight from prepared cards, using conventional symbols for known rhythms and note durations.
Year 6	Sing a broad range of songs, including those that involve syncopated rhythms, as part of a choir, with a sense of ensemble and performance. This should include observing rhythm, phrasing, accurate pitching, and appropriate style.	Continue to sing three- and four-part rounds or partner songs, and experiment with positioning singers randomly within the group - i.e. no longer in discrete parts - in order to develop greater listening skills, balance between parts, and vocal independence.	Play a melody following staff notation written on one stave and using notes within an octave range (do–do); make decisions about dynamic range, including very loud (ff), very quiet (pp), moderately loud (mf), and moderately quiet (mp). Accompany this same melody, and others, using block chords or a bass line. This could be done using keyboards, tuned percussion or tablets, or demonstrated at the board using an online keyboard.	Engage with others through ensemble playing with pupils taking on melody or accompaniment roles. The accompaniment, if instrumental, could be chords or a single note bass line.	Further understand the differences between semibreves, minims, crotchets, quavers, and their equivalent rests. Further develop the skills to read and perform pitch notation within an octave (e.g. C–C/ do–do).	Read and play confidently from rhythm notation cards and rhythmic scores in up to 4 parts that contain known rhythms and note durations. Read and play from notation a four-bar phrase, confidently identifying note names and durations.

Composing - Improvise and Compose

Nursery	Work cooperatively and take turns using musical instruments.	Create music based on a theme.	Experiment with ways of playing instruments.			
Reception	Improvise a vocal/physical soundscape.	Explore making sound with voices and percussion instruments to create different feelings and moods.	Explore storytelling elements in the music and create a class story inspired by the piece.	Make up a simple accompaniment using percussion instruments. Make up new lyrics and accompanying actions.	Compose a body percussion pattern and perform it to a steady beat.	
Year 1	Improvise simple vocal chants using question-and-answer phrases.	Create musical sound effects and short sequences of sounds in response to a stimulus (e.g. a rainstorm or a train journey). Combine to make a story using classroom instruments or sound-makers.	Understand the difference between creating a rhythm pattern and a pitch pattern. Invent, retain, and recall rhythm and pitch patterns and perform these for others, taking turns.	Use music technology to capture, change, and combine sounds.	Recognise how graphic notation can represent created sounds. Explore and invent own symbols.	
Year 2	Create music in response to a non-musical stimulus (e.g. a storm, a car race, or a rocket launch).	Work with a partner to improvise simple question-and-answer phrases, to be sung and played on untuned percussion, creating a musical conversation.	Use graphic symbols, dot notation, and stick notation, as appropriate, to keep a record of composed pieces.	Use music technology to capture, change, and combine sounds.	Create rhythms using word phrases as a starting point.	Create and perform their own chanted rhythm patterns with the same stick notation.
Year 3	Become more skilled in improvising (using voices, tuned and untuned percussion, and other instruments), inventing short 'on-the-spot'	Structure musical ideas (e.g. using echo or question-and-answer phrases) to create music that has a beginning, middle, and end. Pupils should compose in response	Combine known rhythmic notation with letter names to create rising and falling phrases using just three notes (do, re, and mi).	Compose song accompaniments on untuned percussion using known rhythms and note values.		

	responses using a limited note range.	to different stimuli e.g. stories, verse, images (paintings and photographs), and musical sources.				
Year 4	Improvise on a limited range of pitches on the instrument they are now learning, making use of musical features including smooth (legato) and detached (staccato).	Begin to make compositional decisions about the overall structure of improvisations and continue this process in composition tasks. Capture and record creative ideas using any of: graphic symbols, rhythm notation and time signatures, staff notation, technology.	Combine known rhythmic notation with letter names to create short pentatonic phrases using a limited range of 5 pitches suitable for the instruments being learnt. Sing and play these phrases as self-standing compositions.	Arrange individual notation cards of known note values (i.e. minim, crotchet, crotchet rest, and paired quavers) to create sequences of 2-, 3- or 4-beat phrases, arranged into bars.	Introduce major and minor chords. Include instruments played in whole-class/group/individual teaching to expand the scope and range of the sound palette available for composition work.	Explore developing knowledge of musical components by composing music to create a specific mood, for example creating music to accompany a short film clip.
Year 5	Improvise freely over a drone, developing sense of shape and character, using tuned percussion and melodic instruments	Improvise over a simple groove responding to the beat, creating a satisfying melodic shape; experiment with using a wider range of dynamics, including very loud (fortissimo), very quiet (pianissimo), moderately loud (mezzo forte), and moderately quiet (mezzo piano). Continue this process in composition tasks.	Compose melodies made from pairs of phrases in either C major or A minor or a key suitable for the instrument chosen. These melodies can be enhanced with rhythmic or chordal accompaniment.	Working in pairs, compose a short ternary piece.	Use chords to compose music to evoke a specific atmosphere, mood, or environment. Equally, pupils might create music to accompany a silent film or to set a scene in a play or book.	Capture and record creative ideas using any of: graphic symbols, rhythm notation and time signatures, staff notation, technology.
Year 6	Create music with multiple sections that include repetition and contrast.	Use chord changes as part of an improvised sequence.	Extend improvised melodies beyond 8 beats over a fixed groove, creating a satisfying melodic shape.	Plan and compose an 8- or 16-beat melodic phrase using the pentatonic scale (e.g. C, D, E, G, A) and incorporate rhythmic variety and interest. Play this melody on available tuned percussion and/or orchestral instruments. Notate this melody.	Compose melodies made from pairs of phrases in either G major or E minor or a key suitable for the instrument chosen. Enhance improvised/composed melodies with rhythmic or chordal accompaniment.	Compose a ternary piece; use available music software/apps to create and record it, discussing how musical contrasts are achieved.

Listening and Appraising

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Nursery	Give focused attention to the teacher, responding appropriately and following instructions.	Identify an instruments sound and/or describe the sound of instruments.	Explain what music makes them think of, sound like, or feel like using words, movement, drawing etc.			
Reception	Identify and describe contrasts in tempo and dynamics.	Begin to use musical terms (louder / quieter, faster/slower, higher/lower).	Respond to music in a range of ways (e.g. movement, talking, writing).	Enjoy moving freely and expressively to music.	Listen to music and show the beat with actions.	
Year 1	Develop awareness of duration and the ability to move slowly to music.	Recognise the difference between a pattern with notes (pitched) and without (unpitched).	Respond to musical signals and musical themes using movement, matching movements to musical gestures in the piece.	Listen actively by responding to musical signals and musical themes using appropriate movement.	Describe the features of music using musical vocabulary (e.g. that it has a steady beat, beginning to name the instruments).	Recognise how graphic symbols can represent sound.
Year 2	Show the following durations with actions: 'walk' (crotchet) and 'jogging' (quavers). Identify different qualities of sound (timbre) (e.g. smooth, scratchy, clicking, ringing, and how they are made).	Recognise and play echoing phrases by ear.	Recognise and respond to changes of speed (tempo), the length of notes (duration – long/ short), short/detached/ smooth (articulation), and pitch (high/low) using music vocabulary, and/or movement.	Listen with increased concentration to sounds/music and respond by talking about them using music vocabulary, or physically with movement and dance.	Listen actively and mark the beat by tapping, clapping, and swinging to the music.	Understand and explain how beats can be grouped into patterns and identify them in familiar songs.
Year 3	Respond to and recognise crotchets and quavers, and make up rhythms using these durations to create accompaniment ideas.	Listen and identify where notes in the melody of the song go down and up. Recognise and copy rhythms and pitches C-D-E.	Develop active listening skills by responding to musical themes through movement.	Develop a sense of beat and rhythmic pattern through movement. Move in time with the beat of the music.	Begin to develop an understanding and appreciation of music from different musical traditions. Identify that music from different places in the world use different instruments, have a different beat, and are	Understand some musical structures (Rondo form, Verse / chorus song structure)

					different speeds. Pupils can use some musical vocabulary to describe these things.	
Year 4	Listen and appraise, recognising elements of the music that establishes the mood and character (e.g. the rhythm).	Understand that instruments can be used individually and in combination to create different effects of timbre and texture.	Listen and move in time to songs and music.	Compare music extracts and understand that the pentatonic scale features in lots of music traditions and cultures	Listen and appraise, recognising and talking about the musical characteristics of a fanfare using music vocabulary	Identify similarities and differences between pieces of music.
Year 5	Recognise individual instruments and voices by ear.	Talk about music using appropriate music vocabulary (e.g. the purpose of the music, key elements that give the music its unique sound, the ways the voices are used, the contrasting texture of solo voice and choir, singing in harmony, the lyrics.)	Listen and appraise, identifying the structure of songs, analyse them and understand techniques for creating a song.	Identify drum patterns, basslines, and riffs, and play them using body percussion and voices.	Develop listening skills and an understanding of how different instrumental parts interact (texture) by responding to each part through movement. Listen, appraise, and respond to music using drawings and words. Recognise that music can describe feelings and tell a story.	Listen and match vocal and instrumental sounds to each other, and to notation.
Year 6	Listen and describe features of the music using music vocabulary. Explore the influences on an artist by comparing pieces of music from different genres. Develop knowledge and understanding of a variety of musical styles talking about them using music vocabulary.	Identify features of timbre, instrumentation, and expression in an extract of recorded music.	Use musical knowledge and vocabulary to discuss similarities and differences in pieces of music.	Identify changes in texture between parts moving together (homophonic texture) and parts moving independently (polyphonic texture). Listen and appraise, recognising and identifying key musical features such as rhythm, tempo, timbre, structure, and instruments.	Identify ways songwriters convey meaning: through lyrics, the music, and the performance. Understand different ways that rhymes work in songs. Identify different elements of a song's structure.	Demonstrate coordination and keeping a steady beat by dancing to music.