



Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 1

What is Music?

This is the first in a series of lessons across the year groups that focus on disciplinary knowledge. This knowledge consists of how music is composed, performed and interpreted, with the inter-related elements of music being central to this.

By clearly defining music at this early stage in the pupils' learning, they will be able to recognise how important pattern, repetition and structure is in the process of music-making, as mechanisms for organising sound.

Unit 1 Instrumentation 'Whatever the Weather'

Pupils begin their musical learning journey in Year 1 with an in-depth exploration of the instruments that will be at the heart of their musical expression over the course of the primary years. Tuned and untuned percussion instruments are central to composition and performance at this stage. It is important that pupils can identify, name and correctly play a range of instruments so that they can build a solid foundation of practical skills and techniques. In using and handling the instruments, beat is introduced.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Beat (Duration)

Tempo

Unit 2 Timbre 'Sound Stories'

Pupils will begin learning about ways of sharing their musical ideas by writing them down. This process starts with a simple form of notation known as graphic scoring.

They will also be making considered choices, an important part of musical composition, in creating and manipulating sounds to use as sound effects in well-known fairy stories.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Timbre

Dynamics

Curriculum Narrative



Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 1



Unit 3 Singing A

'Inside My Igloo'

Singing is at the heart of the primary music curriculum and here we begin in earnest in developing good practice. The children learn about the importance of vocal warm-ups and are taught the importance of focusing on posture, diction and breathing whilst singing. Developing effective techniques at an early age will ensure pupils' singing is of high quality throughout the primary phase.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch

Beat (Duration)

Unit 4 Duration

'Musical Timelines'

In this unit, the element of duration is introduced, beginning with teaching the pupils about long and short sounds. They also use and extend their knowledge and understanding of graphic scoring to indicate the duration of sounds.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Duration

Timbre

Structure

Unit 5 Singing B

'Pirate Patterns'

Within duration, the pupils now build on their knowledge of beat and begin learning about its counterpart, rhythm. They use the sound patterns of words, breaking them down into syllables, in order to identify, read, perform and compose simple dot rhythms. The green and orange dots symbolise crotchets and quavers, but we don't introduce this language yet. It is important that pupils are able to hear the difference between the long and short sounds and then recreate the patterns. They then learn to sing "Shiver Me Timbers" which allows them to practise the rhythms in a musical context i.e. a song.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Duration (Beat, Rhythm)

Pitch

Dynamics

Timbre



Curriculum Narrative





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Primary Music Curriculum

Year 1

Unit 6 Dynamics and Texture

'Give Me a Sign'

This final unit for Year 1 culminates with pupils applying previous learning about graphic scoring and dynamics. It also introduces the element of texture. Pupils will further explore vocal and percussion instrument sounds, and match them to street signs to develop a different style of graphic notation composition. An added level of complexity comes in the form of texture, with layers of sounds being introduced as part of the composition.

A dynamics focus will be included, introducing the musical signs for loud and quiet.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Dynamics

Texture

Duration (Beat, Rhythm)

Curriculum Narrative





Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 2

Why do we like music so much?

Pupils begin the year by focusing again on disciplinary knowledge. This knowledge consists of how music is composed, performed and interpreted, with the inter-related elements of music as central to this. The fundamentals of structure, especially pattern, the science of how the brain works and the role of emotions are introduced in this lesson. By understanding the role of music in our lives, pupils are able to apply their learning into a broader context.

Unit 1 Duration A

“Two, Four, Six, Eight...”

Pupils are introduced to a specific kind of vocal work – chants and cheers. Using the context of cheerleading as an established cultural musical style, pupils are taught about spoken and sung chants. Prior knowledge about beat and rhythm is extended, as they progress on to combining beat and rhythm, learning about metre and strong and weak beats as part of the duration focus. They are also given opportunities to improvise, for example, in the context of question and answer phrases. They extend their understanding of dynamics, with gradations of sound (f and p).

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch

Beat and Rhythm (Duration)

Dynamics

Unit 2 Structure

‘Jolly Jingles’

Following on from chants and cheers, pupils now learn about jingles. They are given the opportunity to compose simple lyrics for the first time and are also introduced to a new musical form, namely scat. Through these mediums, pupils learn about the importance of repetition within musical structures, and this prepares them for applying the learning when asked to identify repetition in future units. They also begin to read and perform simple three note pitch sequences.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

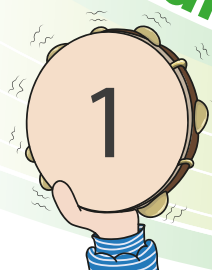
Timbre

Texture

Pitch

Structure

Curriculum Narrative



Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 2



Unit 3 Instrumentation

'Happy Families'

In this unit, pupils consolidate prior learning as they are now introduced to a wider range of classroom percussion instruments, before moving on to other instrument families. They learn about the different instrument families and their commonalities, including how they are played (in general terms rather than specifics) and the materials they are made from. They also begin learning a tuned instrument, with the introduction of the popular woodwind family member, the recorder. By interweaving the teaching of the musical elements with instrumental tuition, pupils find it easier to contextualise their learning and develop a deeper understanding of the subject. They are also introduced to the concept of a rest in music as the sign for silence and will meet this again in more detail as their learning progresses.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Timbre

Rests (Duration)

Unit 4 Singing

'The Boring Song'

This antithetically (big word – we had to look it up!) titled unit is designed to teach pupils the importance of music as an essential element of culture. With a specific focus on singing, they learn about music from around the world. They are able to explore a range of styles, including a lullaby from Africa, building on from Year 1 unit, 'Inside my Igloo', and a contrasting festival song from Brazil. They will study features and characteristics of different kinds of songs, and how the use of musical elements, such as dynamics and tempo, influence the mood of the piece.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Timbre

Dynamics

Tempo

Pitch



Curriculum Narrative





Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 2

Unit 5 Duration B

'How Does Your Garden Grow?'

The pupils should now be able to differentiate between long and short sounds so, following on from dot notation, they move on to learn about standard notation for the first time. They specifically focus on crotchets, quavers and crotchet rests in this unit. They learn to read and write these notes using standard notation linked to duration. They improvise and develop their working knowledge of rhythm patterns. They also continue to learn the recorder within the context of the core music curriculum, using the instrument to develop improvisation and performance skills.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Crotchets, quavers, crotchet rest (Duration)

Pitch

Unit 6

'Make a Hullabaloo!'

This unit is the culmination of learning from across Key Stage 1 and is designed to give pupils the opportunity to express their knowledge and skills in a different context. It centres on Jangleland, a sound-filled fictitious kingdom. The accompanying map provided uses symbols to indicate a range of locations. Pupils are going to compose and annotate for chosen locations. They are introduced to the recording software, Audacity, and begin to use technology to record and manipulate sound. They also look at a contrasting location, the Musical Fairground. They will have learnt how to play the notes G, A, B and C on the recorder, by the end of this unit, and have experience of playing by ear and improvising.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Beat - double time (Duration)

Tempo

Texture

Pitch

Timbre

Dynamics

Structure

Curriculum Narrative





Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 3

How do we communicate musically?

Pupils begin the year by focusing once again on disciplinary knowledge. This knowledge examines how music is communicated, not only through performance, but in written form during the process of composition. Having already learnt about graphic scoring, the basics of standard western notation, including the use of the staff and clefs, are introduced. By understanding the 'language' of music, pupils are better equipped to share their own musical ideas and 'read' and interpret those of others.

Unit 1 Notation 'Codebreakers'

The pupils will learn about the origins of scribed and written music in this unit, leading to an understanding of the purpose and use of staff notation. Building on from dot notation and simple note values, they understand the importance of the staff in showing changes in pitch, and how the notes are used to inform musicians about what and how they need to play. Pupils also have the opportunity to apply what they have learnt by writing down their own simple compositions and playing them, using the elements of standard notation they have learnt about so far.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch

Rhythm (Duration)

Unit 2 Singing 'All Together Now!'

Pupils' prior learning includes different types of songs, such as lullabies and chants. Now, in this unit they will learn about different song structures. They are introduced to the term 'unison' and join in with unison singing, as well as 'verse, chorus' structured songs and they also learn some action songs. They are introduced to two-part rounds and begin to practice this style, maintaining their own part. This will introduce them to simple harmonising and will help them to understand that carefully chosen notes played or sounded at the same time can sound pleasing to the ear.

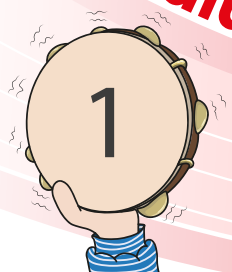
Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch

Texture

Dynamics

Curriculum Narrative



Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 3



Unit 3 Tempo

'The Hare and the Tortoise''

In this unit, pupils consolidate prior learning about fast and slow, as they are now focusing in more detail on how the speed of a piece of music impacts on its overall mood. Further learning about tempo measurement (BPM) and study of tempo variations and gradations of change, specifically by learning and applying the terms 'allegro' and 'adagio', helps to refine the pupils' overall understanding of this important musical feature.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Tempo

Dynamics

Texture

Unit 4 Texture and Technology

'Abracadabra!'

With an ICT focus, this unit introduces technological techniques that are used to change and manipulate sound. Following on from their learning in Key Stage 1, the pupils become more familiar with, and proficient in using, Audacity, a free download used in many educational settings. Pupils will identify sounds that have been manipulated, examine how they have been changed and experiment with their own sound design. They will then apply their knowledge of texture, in particular, to produce soundscapes.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Timbre

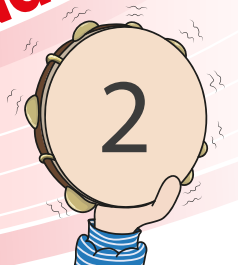
Texture

Dynamics

Structure



Curriculum Narrative





Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 3

Unit 5 Structure

'Jungle Rhythms'

The pupils build on prior learning about songs from other cultures, with a specific focus on music from Africa. They learn about different types of African drums and how they are played, with an emphasis on rhythms. Having already previously experimented with simple on-the-spot improvisation, pupils see how improvisation is a vital element of African music and have the opportunity to practise their own. They are also introduced to the concept of a drone as a first step towards harmonisation.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Structure

Duration

Pitch

Unit 6 Composition

"I Write the Songs"

This unit is designed to give pupils the opportunity to express their musical knowledge and skills through different elements of composition. It helps pupils see how they can communicate their own musical ideas and offers them a range of opportunities to become more confident in the field of composition. From rhythmic to melodic pieces, they are applying their key knowledge of structure to create phrases which can be used as ostinati, as well as trying their hand at simple songwriting!

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Duration

Tempo

Texture

Pitch

Timbre

Dynamics

Structure

Curriculum Narrative





Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 4

How do we interpret and respond to the music we hear?

This aspect of disciplinary knowledge focuses on the importance of understanding the language of music in order to help interpret music, with fidelity. The pupils will learn about the subjective nature of music and how people react to music based on personal opinions and feelings. They will learn how and why people's musical tastes differ, and that preferences are often linked to circumstances, experiences and personality.

Unit 1 Duration

"Music Rules, OK!"

Having already learnt the basic principles of staff notation, the pupils will further develop their knowledge and understanding of music theory with a focus on additional standard rules in the Western musical culture. Building on from learning about the importance of the staff in showing changes in note pitch and duration, they will learn about the rules related to time signatures, bars, bar lines and ledger lines.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Beat (Duration)

Rhythm (Duration)

Pitch

Unit 2 Singing

'Freedom Songs'

Pupils' prior learning includes unison singing, as well as rounds, 'verse, chorus' and call-and-response songs. In this unit, they are introduced to freedom songs and their origins, looking at how and why they were composed for specific purposes and different situations. They will learn about the role of freedom songs – cultural and political – in different contexts.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch (Harmony)

Texture (Harmony)

Dynamics

Curriculum Narrative



Music crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 4



Unit 3 Instrumentation 'Comedy Characters'

Pupils further develop their understanding of instrumentation by learning about the importance of choosing instruments for a purpose when composing. This may be to in order to refelect a mood, emotion or distinctive feature. This is specifically linked to character portrayal in this unit. They not only extend their knowledge of individual instruments and their timbres, but how instruments can be played in a way that reflects a character in some way.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Timbre

Tempo

Dynamics

Unit 4 Tonality "Why did the singer climb a ladder?"

In this unit, pupils will be taking the next big step in their understanding of how music is organised. They will be introduced to the system that forms the foundational basis of composition in Western classical music, known as the key system. After first learning about scales, they then move on to the concept of major keys and how they relate to scales. The pentatonic form is also included in this unit. They then move on to learning some principles to help with aurally identifying major and minor keys.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch (Tonality)

Structure



Curriculum Narrative





Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 4

Unit 5 Timbre 'The Magic Music Box'

In this unit, pupils are introduced to the first music-playing device, the music box. They learn about two pieces of music that are music box favourites – 'Für Elise' and 'The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy'. They are also introduced to a similar-sounding keyboard instrument that they haven't met before called the celesta, building on prior learning about instrumentation. They investigate the performing techniques of legato and staccato, and apply their prior learning about tonality (major, minor and pentatonic) when listening to music. They go on to compose their own music box pieces. Their listening repertoire is also widened with an introduction to the traditional Indonesian music of Gamelan.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Timbre

Pitch

Duration

Unit 6 Make a Hullabaloo!

Pupils have learnt about the percussion family, including concussion instruments. Now, they build on this by looking at the use of a variety of natural materials in making unusual percussion instruments. Starting with stones, pupils learn about ringing rocks and lithophones. They have also gained experience previously in African drumming. As a development of the cultural strand of instrumentation, they now learn about wooden Aboriginal clapping sticks and their cultural context. They also look at glass, which is made from a mixture of sand, limestone and soda, and learn how glass is used in music-making.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch

Timbre

Duration (beat and rhythm)

Curriculum Narrative





Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 5

What are the components of musical composition and how do they work together?

In this disciplinary knowledge lesson, pupils use what they have already learnt to deepen their understanding of how the elements of music integrate to form the basis of all musical composition. Knowing how to apply their developing knowledge of these interrelated components in their own compositions is essential, enabling pupils to be able to realise their desired musical intentions and outcomes.

Unit 1 Rhythm Patterns

'I've Got Rhythm'

Building on from prior learning about ostinato and call and response rhythms, pupils will extend their knowledge of rhythm patterns in this unit. They will explore the difference between Western linear music and typically cyclic African and Asian music. Pupils have the opportunity to learn about Gahu music, a specific cyclic style, and will be able to replicate and compose their own cyclic patterns.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Beat (Duration)
Rhythm (Duration)
Structure

Unit 2 Musical Shows

'Spaced Out'

Extending pupils' broadening repertoire, this unit will explore the genre of musicals. They will learn about the key features of musical theatre and engage with project work, researching and presenting information about a specific musical of their choosing. The unit culminates in the composition of a mini musical, based on the first moon landing.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Structure
Dynamics
Tempo
Duration
Timbre

Curriculum Narrative



Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 5



Unit 3 Singing

'An Occasional Song'

So far, pupils have learnt about songs from other times, places and cultures. This learning is brought together in this unit about occasional songs – songs for special occasions. Pupils will meet songs linked to the occasion of Hanukkah, the Jewish festivals of lights. They will also focus on Chinese New Year and learn a song related to this special occasion, leading to consolidation, in a meaningful context, of their understanding of pentatonic music.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch (Tonality)

Timbre

Structure

Unit 4 Genres and Styles

'In Full Swing'

Pupils have already learnt about genres such as slave music and ragtime, and this leads naturally into this next era of Western musical styles – jazz and swing. Taking its origins from ragtime, blues, spirituals, work songs, and even military marches, African-Americans in the South developed this new style of music that came to be known as jazz. The pupils' prior learning about improvisation, and skills development linked to this, will enable them to confidently improvise over riffs, creating their own swing groove!

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

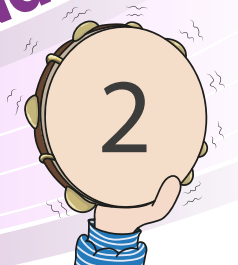
Duration (rhythm)

Timbre

Dynamics



Curriculum Narrative





Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 5

Unit 5 Soundtracks 'At the Movies'

Using what they already know about the combined effects of the interrelated musical elements in music-making, pupils will explore the effects of music when used within films. They will already have studied the genre of musicals, and this is a follow-on unit to consolidate and extend their understanding of some of the core principles of composition.

They will identify the main musical elements and devices used within specific film genres, and apply this knowledge when composing their own piece of music, matched to a particular film genre.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch (Tonality)

Timbre

Duration (beat and rhythm)

Dynamics

Texture

Unit 6 Carnival Music "Arriba El Carnaval!"

Continuing their cultural exploration of music, in this unit pupils will learn about some of the biggest carnivals in the world and the music for which they are famous. They will learn about about the key features of samba, calypso, waltz and jazz music. For each of these musical genres, pupils perform and / or create their own rhythmic or melodic patterns, following the musical conventions. They will build on their knowledge of harmony and chords, notating and creating chord sequences and improvising melodies on top of these. They will bring this learning together in a performance poem about the carnival music they have been introduced to, composing accompaniments in the four different styles of music.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch

Timbre

Duration (beat and rhythm)

Curriculum Narrative





Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 6

How has technology changed the way we interact with music?

Pupils begin the year by learning about how technological inventions have led to radical changes in the way we interact with music. They will learn how 'portable music' developed, leading to the creation of online platforms and streaming services, which have transformed the way music is distributed and consumed. It will help them realise how privileged we are to have music at our fingertips, as up until recently the only way music could be accessed was in a live setting.

Unit 1 Instrumentation 'Dancing With Keys'

Pupils' prior learning about instrumentation will be built on further, as they listen to and learn about instruments at the highest and lowest extremes of pitch. They will also be introduced to the four main pitch voices – soprano, alto, tenor and bass, in both singing voices and instruments. The history of the evolution of the keyboard, one of the most popular Western instruments, will be explored and its subsequent impact on the history of music.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Timbre

Pitch

Unit 2 Tonality 'Scaling Up'

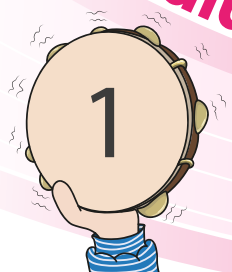
In this unit, the learning so far about major and minor keys and scales will be taken further with the introduction of the sign known as a 'sharp'. This will lead to progression in understanding about the key of C major to the key of G major and will help embed the tone / semitone pattern they have already learnt about. They will also extend their range of note and rest durations with the introduction of semiquavers.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch (Keys)

Duration (Semiquavers)

Curriculum Narrative



Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum Year 6



Unit 3 Composers 'Musical Rivalries'

Having learnt about a range of composers through their repertoire studies, pupils will now focus on the relationships between some of them, specifically the Frenchmen, Debussy and Saint-Saëns, and the Germans, Brahms and Wagner. Pupils will also learn about more recent acrimony in the form of Lennon and McCartney, and how this impacted on the music of The Beatles.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Duration (Polyrhythms)

Pitch (Chords)

Unit 4 Variations on a Theme 'Three is a Magic Number'

Pupils are introduced to all things musical related to the number three! Trios, triads, three-part rounds, The Three Degrees and ternary form will all feature in this unit. They will sing, listen, and, following exploration of ternary form, they will compose their own music in a 'Composition Challenge'. They will use a range of notation and recap on prior learning about chords and harmony.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch (Chords, Harmony)

Structure

Texture

Unit 5 Genres and Styles 'Pomp and Circumstances'

So far, the pupils have learnt about a wide range of musical styles and genres. The last stop-off on this part of their musical journey will focus on ceremonial music, like military music, national anthems and music linked to other prestigious events, such as royal weddings. The unit will culminate in the composition of a school anthem which can then be taught to, and sung by, everyone in the school community!

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Pitch (Chords, Harmony)

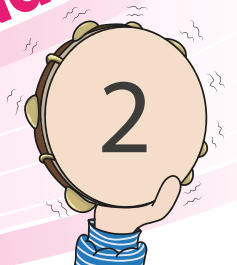
Structure

Texture

Dynamics



Curriculum Narrative





Music Crew!

Primary Music Curriculum

Year 6

Unit 6 Make a Hullabaloo!

Pupils will be at the end of the school year and, probably making the transition from primary to secondary. To mark the end of all this Hullabaloo! they will undertake three projects, which will not only test their skills and knowledge recall in practical ways, but will also produce purposeful and relevant outcomes which can be used as part of leavers' events.

Development of Inter-related Elements of Music

Timbre
Structure
Tempo
Texture
Dynamics
Pitch
Duration

Curriculum Narrative

