



Primary School
Curriculum



Music

Arts Education
Teacher Guidelines



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Design Consultancy:	Bradley McGurk Partnership
Designed by:	The Identity Business
Photography:	Christy McNamara
Typesetting:	Spectrum Print Management
Printed by:	Mozzon Giuntina - Florence and Officine Grafiche De Agostini - Novara



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Section 1

Music in the primary curriculum

Music in the primary curriculum

What is music?

Music is so much part of everyday life that its nature and purpose are rarely questioned. It is a diverse and lifelong activity, enjoyed by people of all ages. As a universal part of all cultures, music exists in a great many forms, for a great many purposes and at many levels of complexity.

Music is a non-verbal form of communication that can convey ideas, images and feelings through selected sounds and symbols. Music is a source of history, reflecting the social and cultural context and the era of its creation; at times music can even portray the country, the mood of the people or the thoughts of the individual who lives there.

Music involves people in both making music and listening to music. These are unique ways of knowing because they entail the construction of sound patterns and structures through reflection and analysis. Music making is also a kinaesthetic activity, requiring the body and the mind to co-ordinate and interpret simultaneously.

Most importantly, music is an art that combines many concepts and techniques and uses them to inspire, to imagine, to invent and to express feeling. These are the features of listening and responding, performing and composing, on which the curriculum is based.

Music in a child-centred curriculum

Music is an indispensable part of the child-centred curriculum as one of the range of intelligences and as a special way of knowing and learning. Musical activity challenges the child to act in unique ways to listen discerningly to his/her own music and the music of others, to sing, play or read sensitively and accurately, and to evaluate critically. In posing these challenges, music contributes to the development of artistic awareness, self-expression, self-growth, self-esteem and multicultural sensitivity and, therefore, to the development of the whole child.

An important aspect of music in the curriculum is the way it contributes to the personal, social, mental and physical development of the child. Co-ordination of mind and body is achieved through singing action songs, playing singing games, tapping rhythms, moving to music and playing in time while simultaneously listening to others, following directions or reading from notation.

Speech development is fostered through working with vocal sounds, chanting, singing nursery rhymes and songs, experimenting with vowel and consonant sounds and learning to control breathing. Language development is enhanced through exposure to a wide variety of songs, containing new words, idioms and phrases. These words are used and

extended in responding to music, describing sounds heard, feelings sensed, or stories related.

The development of listening skills, a critical aspect of all learning, receives special attention through the exploration of sound and the identification of and discrimination between sounds in the environment, leading to increased sensitivity to musical works. Listening skills are also emphasised in performing and composing activities, where the development of 'inner hearing' (or thinking in sound) is nurtured.

The development of both long-term and short-term memory occurs mainly, but not exclusively, through performing. Musical activities such as echo-singing and clapping develop short-term memory, while rote learning of songs, rhymes or games help to extend the capacity of long-term memory.

Opportunities to develop the imagination arise in unique ways in the music curriculum, through listening to familiar and unfamiliar musical works, hearing sounds internally, creating sound pictures or stories and expressing feelings and emotions in sound. This type of imaginative work also enhances spatial reasoning, which is the brain's ability to perceive the visual world accurately, to form mental images of physical objects, and to recognise variations in objects.

As a collaborative, interpersonal activity, music develops social skills through group performing or composing projects where ideas, instruments or specific skills are shared. It also provides opportunities for the development of lifelong leadership skills and fosters verbal and non-verbal communication. Music enhances the child's self-esteem through allowing him/her to see his/her own inventions valued and enjoyed by others, and to participate in singing games, songs, dances and group performances where each individual's contribution is vital to the group's success.

Music is an integral part of the child-centred curriculum, not just because it enhances other areas of learning but because it deepens the child's sense of humanity, teaching him/her to recognise beauty and to be sensitive to and to appreciate more fully the world in which he/she lives.

A young girl in the foreground is focused on playing a large, shallow, light-colored drum with two mallets. She is wearing a dark sweater over a white collared shirt. In the background, a boy is smiling and holding a yellow mallet with a round head. The scene is set in a classroom or music room with a dark background.

*Music education recognises
the joy of shared experiences*

The content of the music curriculum

The content of the music curriculum

Basic structure and terminology

Levels

The content of the music curriculum is set out in four levels: infant classes, first and second classes, third and fourth classes, and fifth and sixth classes.

Content strands

The content is presented in three strands at each level:

- *Listening and responding*
- *Performing*
- *Composing*.

Strand units

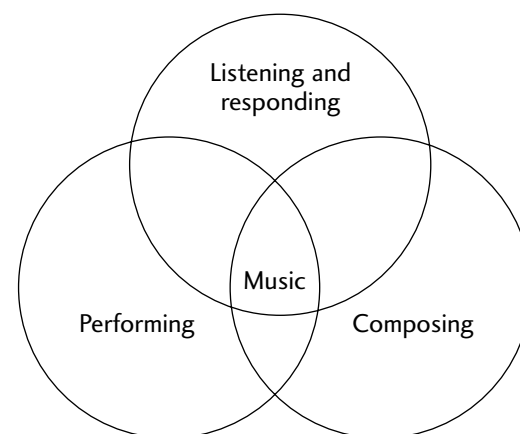
Within each strand the content is organised into strand units, which provide a means of listening and responding to music, singing and playing music, reading and writing music, and making new music.

Musical elements

The musical elements are presented in progressive steps at each of the four levels. They provide both the teacher and the child with a means of thinking and behaving musically while engaging with the strands of the curriculum.

The integrated nature of music

While the curriculum presents *Listening and responding*, *Performing* and *Composing* as three areas, these are not discrete categories. Listening is an essential activity in both performing and composing, and indeed the listening response itself may inspire a performance or composition at another stage. In a similar way, while performing, the performer will listen to the music he/she is playing, considering the expressive and technical qualities of the music and the structure of the composition. Later, he/she may adopt similar approaches when improvising, arranging or composing something new.



The music curriculum comprises the inter-related concepts of listening and responding, performing, and composing.

Strand: *Listening and responding*

Strand units:

- Exploring sound
- Listening and responding to music

Strand: *Performing*

Strand units:

- Song singing
 - unison singing
 - simple part singing
- Literacy
- Playing instruments

Content strands and strand units

Listening and responding

In the *Listening and responding* strand, new emphasis is placed on the range and depth of experiences in listening to music, and on becoming an 'active listener'. The child is encouraged to explore and listen to a range of sound sources, from ordinary household sounds to a variety of percussion and melodic instruments, as well as music in different styles and traditions. Chief among these is Irish music and folk music of other cultures, along with music in the classical and popular vein. While younger children respond instinctively through movement, the importance of a movement response is encouraged at all class levels. Several approaches to listening and responding in a variety of ways are exemplified. These extend into the process of performing and composing, where the child is encouraged to be an active listener while playing with, improvising or arranging his/her own music.

The teacher may set targets for the child to focus his/her listening specifically in the two strand units 'Exploring sound' and 'Listening and responding to music'. Listening activities that require 'listening for' (a structure, a specific feature or an associated idea) may be described as more active listening than 'listening to', which may be considered a more passive activity.

In the strand unit 'Listening and responding to music', the teacher may use recorded music as a focus for the child's listening, although the experience of listening to live music will be of immense value to the child whenever this is possible. The range of responses that the child can make, such as gesture, movement, speech, written or graphic forms, will allow for active involvement with the music and encourage the child to sustain concentration throughout the listening period.

Performing

The *Performing* strand emphasises the importance of active music making, beginning with the voice and later including instruments, as a means of developing musical understanding. The importance of experiencing a wide range of musical activities before the introduction of musical literacy is also emphasised in this strand. Opportunities for the children to make music, as individuals, groups or as a whole class, will occur in two strand units: 'Song singing' and 'Playing instruments'.

The approach adopted in the music curriculum seeks to build on the familiar song-singing aspect of music making in a number of ways. Firstly, the musical elements are developed through a range of simple activities, which gradually increase in difficulty, for example tapping a steady beat while singing, showing when the pitch moves from high to low or vice versa, or feeling the tempo as fast or slow, or the dynamic

Literacy

- rhythm
- pitch
- rhythm and pitch

level as loud or soft. Secondly, simple part singing, which is introduced in third and fourth classes, is prepared in the early classes through simple activities, again incorporating the elements of pulse, rhythm, dynamics, tempo and so on. By fifth and sixth classes, children will have experienced song singing in innumerable and exciting ways and will enjoy the further challenges of part singing while seeking to achieve a more expressive singing quality.

The third and most important departure in the performing strand is the inclusion of music literacy as an integral element of song singing. The simple tunes learned and practised in junior classes are given new meaning in more senior classes, when the child is guided in the discovery of their rhythmic and melodic elements. While specific intervals are not prescribed, several examples of melodic patterns are suggested that may be used to develop an integrated approach to interval training. However, participation in music making at all levels is not contingent upon knowledge of or fluency in musical literacy, and the teacher may run a literacy programme successfully in parallel with an aural approach.

As in the *Listening and responding* strand, playing instruments in infant classes will begin with simple percussion (for example wood blocks, drums or triangles and home-made musical materials such as shakers) to support rhythmic elements. In addition, tuned percussion instruments (for example chime bars or xylophones) are introduced to show how a simple song can be represented on different media. As listening and singing skills improve, the child will be enabled to perform familiar tunes on a melodic instrument, such as the recorder or tin whistle, and by fifth and sixth classes will have acquired sufficient knowledge and skill to attempt playing simple tunes from sight.

Strand: *Composing*

Strand units:

- Improvising and creating
- Talking about and recording compositions

Composing

The importance of developing the child's own creativity through music making is central to the *Composing* strand. In many ways too the composing strand could be considered the ideal listening response and the best way of gaining an understanding of performing activities. Additionally, through the process of composing, the child is given opportunities to recognise the purpose of recording and notating music: to store sound patterns for future revision or retrieval and to enable others to read and interpret what has been previously composed.

Many simple tasks can be easily and effectively incorporated into the music programme as an introduction to

composing. In infant classes, improvising rhythmic or melodic 'answers' to given 'questions' can take place as a natural extension of song singing, while selecting appropriate instruments to create a sound effect can also link successfully with familiar songs and games. As the child grows in confidence, so too will the need to express his/her ideas independently, as in language and other arts areas. Listening to a wide range of musical styles and traditions, singing and playing will extend naturally into composing activity. Graphic notation, invented notation, simplified notation or standard notation may be used to record ideas, in addition to electronic recording.



Improvising with classroom instruments

The musical elements

- pulse
- duration
- tempo
- pitch
- dynamics
- structure
- timbre
- texture
- style

The musical elements

The development of concepts in music is outlined for each level of the curriculum in the section titled 'Concepts development'. The musical concepts are based on the musical elements, which are the building blocks of music and are interrelated in any musical activity. Children will not be required to learn these from memory, but for teaching purposes it is useful to isolate each one and then experience them in the context of holistic listening and responding, performing and composing.

Pulse

Pulse is the underlying 'throb' in music, which may be felt throughout any music with a strong beat, such as a march or a jig. Beats may be strong or weak, or grouped together, for example in threes or fours.

Duration

Duration is concerned with the length of a sound, whether long or short. A resonating instrument such as a gong makes a long sound, while wood blocks produce short sounds. Long and short sounds (and even long and short silences) may be combined in a pattern to make rhythm.

Tempo

Tempo refers to the speed or pace of music. It is determined by the nature of the music, the dexterity of the player, and the complexity of the instruments. Selective use of tempo can create impressions of fear, excitement or calm.

Pitch

Pitch is concerned with the height and depth of sound and the arrangement of sounds, which produces melody. The concept of pitch, of 'higher than' and 'lower than', is one that will take time to absorb.

Dynamics

Dynamics is concerned with the level of sound, loud or soft. It can be determined by the number of players or singers involved and by the degree of energy that is used. Use of the full range of dynamics requires considerable control, but selective use of dynamics can contribute to an expressive performance.

Structure

Structure refers to how a piece of music is organised. Young children become aware of structure from an early age through listening to stories, solving mathematical problems or simply arranging their toys in a certain order. In music, structure is achieved through the use of repetition, pattern and contrast.

The musical elements are the interrelated building blocks of any musical activity.

Timbre

Timbre (also known as tone colour) refers to the quality and variability of sound. Instruments produce different sounds, and voices do not sound identical, even when the same words are spoken or sung. The way in which a voice or an instrument is used affects the characteristic tone and produces differing responses in the hearer.

Texture

Texture is concerned with layers of sound and with how sounds are put together, ranging from a solo instrument to several sound sources together.

Style

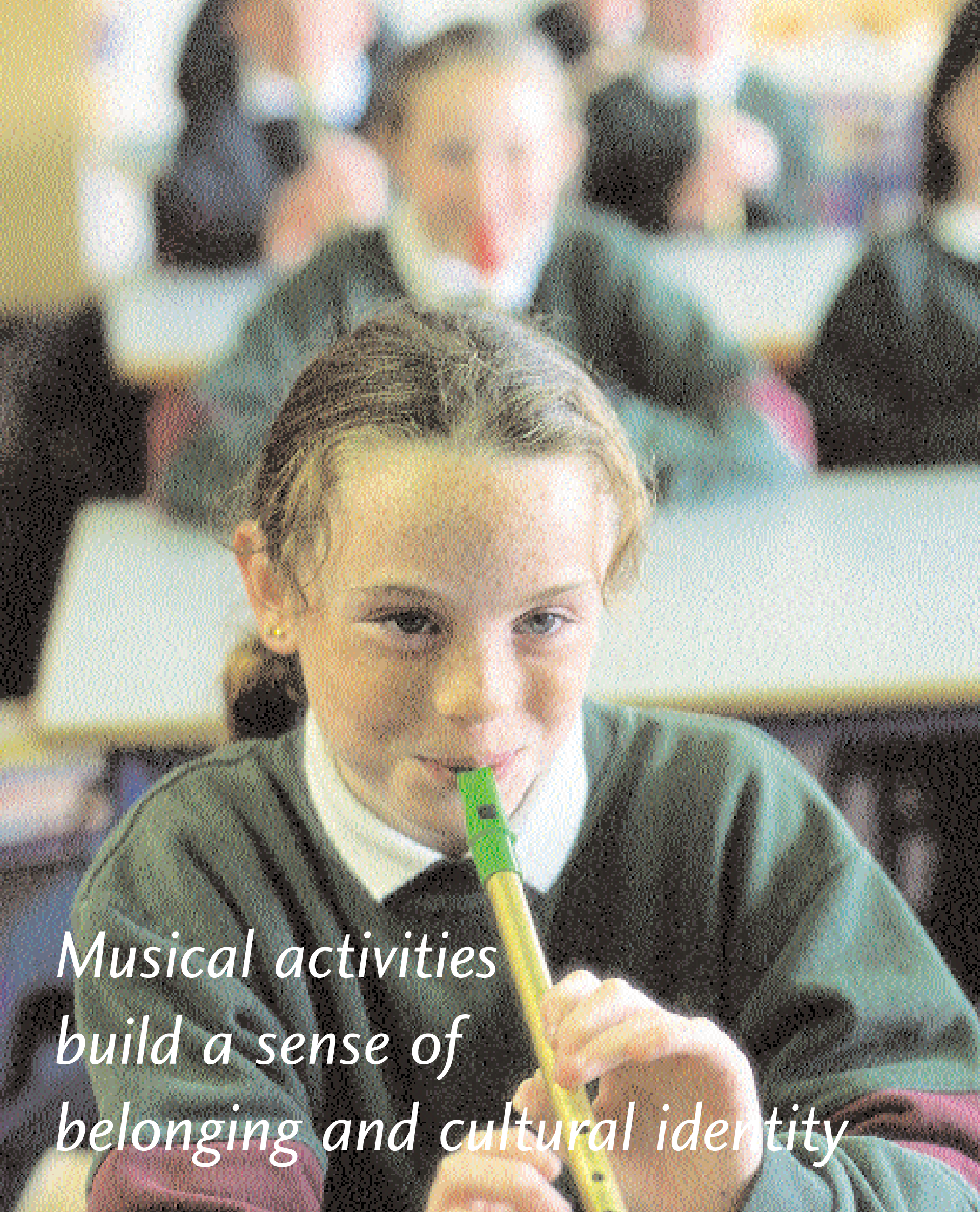
Style is the application of all other musical elements: the selection of instruments (timbre), the combination of sounds (texture), the speed (tempo) and degree of loudness (dynamics) with which they are played, the melodic (pitch) and rhythmic patterns (duration, pulse) and the manner in which the music is organised (structure).

Teaching and learning through the musical elements

At each level, the teacher builds on the listening and responding, performing and composing activities of the previous year, with the musical elements in mind. For instance, a sense of pulse is developed through keeping the beat by marching or tapping, until the point is reached where the child plays or sings with an

internalised regular pulse. Imitating, recognising and performing rhythm patterns in chants or songs advances the child's sense of duration, while listening and responding to music that changes in speed helps the child develop a sense of tempo. The most effective means of developing a sense of pitch for the young child is through imitating simple songs. This also helps the child to develop a sense of pulse, duration and tempo, while selecting the appropriate levels of loud and soft when performing these songs enables the child to develop a sense of dynamics. A sense of structure may be developed through identifying a contrasting or repeated section in a simple song, for example verses and a chorus. Developing a sense of timbre for the child means being able to recognise sounds with a marked difference, such as a drum and a glockenspiel, and using them singly or combined to achieve a particular effect.

Listening and responding to a wide range of musical genres, therefore, while performing and composing new music will lead the child to an individual sense of style and taste and to an increased awareness and enjoyment of making music.



*Musical activities
build a sense of
belonging and cultural identity*

Section 3

School planning for music

School planning for music

While musical activity often occurs spontaneously and is enjoyed by teachers and pupils in a myriad of ways, effective planning is the cornerstone of the implementation of a broad and balanced music curriculum in the school. As in other subject areas, the benefits accruing from developing a school plan in music extend beyond the subject itself, improving learning for the child and creating a more effective organisation in the school.

Planning for music should be a collaborative and consultative process involving the principal, the teachers and, where appropriate, the parents and the board of management. It should be set out after considering the nature of the subject matter, the values and traditions of the school community, what the child is expected to learn, what the teacher is expected to teach, and how the school can support its implementation. Finally, the school plan should address the extent and method of assessment and evaluation of music in the school.

This section examines two aspects of the planning process:

- curriculum planning issues in music
- organisational planning.

Curriculum planning

Some of the issues that may need to be discussed as part of the school's planning for music include the following:

The purpose and nature of music in the school

A useful starting point for discussion is to consider the nature of music itself, the purpose it fulfils as part of the broader, child-centred curriculum, and how it contributes to the full and harmonious development of the child and the recognition of his/her range of intelligences. The way in which music is defined affects the decisions surrounding the content of the curriculum, the approaches to teaching and assessing, the allocation of time and the use of resources.

The strands, strand units and sub-units of the music curriculum:

Listening and responding

- Exploring sounds
 - environmental
 - vocal
 - body percussion
 - instrumental
- Listening and responding to music

Performing

- Song singing
 - unison singing
 - simple part singing
- Literacy
 - rhythm
 - pitch
 - rhythm and pitch
- Playing instruments

Composing

- Improvising and creating
 - Talking about and recording compositions
-

The final stages of curriculum planning should ensure that the following aspects are given due attention:

- breadth, balance and coherence
- time
- approaches to teaching
- health and safety aspects
- integration
- assessment.

A broad, balanced and coherent music curriculum

- the three strands of the curriculum
- the musical elements
- the needs of the children
- sequence of progression and continuity
- selection within the strands

A broad, balanced and coherent curriculum

As the music curriculum allows considerable flexibility for the school in teaching approaches and content suggestions, planning will address the individual needs of the school, the teachers and the pupils. It should ensure that the music curriculum (in listening and responding, performing and composing) at all levels encompasses

- *the three strands of the curriculum*
The aims and objectives contained within the three strands set out in the curriculum statement—*Listening and responding*, *Performing*, and *Composing*—will provide the framework for curriculum planning. Issues to be addressed for each class level will include: the range of listening excerpts, the repertoire of songs, games and instrumental music, the extent of composing projects, and recording techniques.
- *the musical elements*
The development of understanding of the musical elements at each class level (pulse, duration, tempo, pitch, dynamics, structure, timbre, texture and style) should form an equally important aspect of planning, closely linked with the strand units, as outlined in the curriculum.

- *the needs of the children*
Given a systematic music education from junior infants, by first class some children will be singing in tune reasonably well, handling percussion instruments with confidence, beginning to express themselves as young composers and even reading music a little. However, where children have had fewer musical experiences over an extended period, their needs will be quite different.
- *sequence of progression and continuity*
Curriculum sequence refers to the process of building and expanding upon the strands and elements in the curriculum. It ensures that each new learning experience uses previous knowledge as the basis for the elaboration and progressive development of more complex skills, concepts or attitudes. For instance, sequence in music involves ensuring that music literacy in third class builds on music literacy from first and second class level; simple songs learned in infant classes can be recalled for exploring rhythmic and melodic features in senior classes.

Continuity refers to the reinforcement of common curriculum concepts or approaches throughout the curriculum. For instance, at all levels children should have opportunities to listen to familiar pieces of music from time to time, as a backdrop to new listening experiences.

- *selection within the strands*
While the objectives stated in the three strands form the basis of the curriculum at each level, the exemplars given in italic type throughout the document allow the teacher to choose those (or others not listed) that he/she believes best achieve or illustrate a specific learning outcome. From a methodological point of view, the teacher may wish to rely on an approach that has worked successfully in the past or, alternatively, may choose a newer approach to invigorate his/her teaching. The degree of freedom afforded to each teacher, as well as the amount of uniformity of content or method, should form a significant part of the school plan.

The amount of time for the subject

As many worthwhile activities can take place in a relatively short space of time, what is of greater importance in any music lesson is the quality of the learning experience, rather than the quantity of time allocated to it. For this reason, planning plays a critical role in the allocation of time for musical activity. Given that an integrated approach will be widely used at all levels of the primary school, it is more useful to consider the time allocated to music and other arts areas over the course of a fairly longer period, such as a month or a term, and to identify opportunities for integration well in advance.

Teachers may also decide to concentrate the available periods on one aspect of arts education at a time. For instance, the concentration of the work for two or three weeks might be on dance, with a focus on listening to music, to be followed by a period in which the focus would be largely on visual arts (for example making percussion instruments) or on drama (for instance composing and presenting music that tells a story).

Approaches to teaching

Approaches to teaching music can vary greatly from school to school and from class to class. Children benefit enormously from the different strengths of particular teachers, for example mastering tunes on the tin whistle or acquiring an appreciation of a particular genre of music recordings. School planning should take into consideration the range of approaches to teaching music within the school, to ensure continuity where valuable work has begun and to provide support when weaknesses emerge.

Agreement should be reached at whole-school level on the type of approaches to be taken in critical areas such as:

- music literacy (for example the type of notation to be used in the school)
- instrumental work (for example the type of melodic instrument to be chosen and the optimum class level for its introduction)
- appropriate singing and listening material.

Health and safety aspects

When planning for music in the school, the following health and safety issues should be considered:

- the hidden dangers posed by unstable furniture or equipment if children are moving around a classroom
- the storage facilities for equipment, as well as access to and transport of that equipment
- ventilation of the classrooms
- the amount of space available for children to sit or stand (for example when doing choral or instrumental work).



Integration

Engaging children in activity that encompasses a number of objectives from different subject areas is an effective means of teaching and an important principle of the curriculum. Integrated themes can be highly motivating and satisfying for the children and are particularly useful in multi-class situations in small schools.



A traditional instrument such as the bodhrán can provide a stimulus for exploring sound, listening and responding to music, and improvising and creating music.

Planning for integrated learning should ensure that

- the music component is meaningful and consistent with the curriculum. For instance, in choosing a song to fit a theme the teacher should ensure that the range of notes and words of the song are also appropriate for the children
- a manageable number of strands or subject areas is included.

Integration can occur in a number of ways. In the curriculum statement, links within music itself are referred to as linkage while connections that occur between music and other subject areas are described as integration.

Linkage within music

The interrelated nature of the three strands of the curriculum—*Listening and responding*, *Performing*, and *Composing*—lend themselves readily to integrated learning and are positively enhanced by it. For instance, the strand unit ‘Exploring sounds’ in the *Listening and responding* strand may lead directly to improvising in the *Composing* strand, while the ‘Literacy’ strand unit is complemented by work at the recording stage of *Composing*. Similarly, a single recording of vocal music may provide a stimulus for listening, a stimulus for responding and performing by singing along, and a stimulus for composing by creating new music using the same structure or theme.

Integration with other arts areas

Many of the expressive and imaginative aspects of the other arts areas can be supplemented by creative work in music. In addition, the exploration of concepts can be enhanced by aural stimuli. Concepts such as line, shape and pattern in visual arts can be illustrated through music, since music, like line, can be jumpy, wavy, smooth, or broken. Similarly, musical concepts such as tempo or dynamics can be conveyed through long or short lines, or through dark and light lines or shapes, respectively. The development of a personal schema, a system of representing the world in pictures and symbols in the visual arts, could be linked with the development of graphic symbols in composing. Music can also convey different images to different children, and opportunities to illustrate responses to music through visual arts are found in the *Listening and responding* strand.

Themes in music, especially in composing areas, may be explored through dance, drama and gymnastics. Warm-up activities in physical education may involve the use of familiar music from the listening programme, while a selection of folk songs or campfire songs can complement outdoor activities.

Integration with other subject areas

Language

All levels of the music curriculum require the child to listen and respond to music in a variety of ways. Oral descriptions will be a regular feature, and the teacher can take the opportunity to expand both the musical vocabulary and the child's vocabulary in other areas when responding to music. Songs provide the child with instant access to new words and phrases, especially songs in Irish or in modern languages. The child's descriptions of the composing process, either oral or written, provide additional opportunities for language development.

Gaeilge

Is féidir an Ghaeilge a chomhtháthú go nádúrtha leis an gceol trí amhráin Ghaeilge agus ceol Gaelach a mhúineadh i gcuraclam an cheoil. Is féidir coincheapanna an cheoil a shníomh isteach i nGaeilge chomh maith le Béarla, mar shampla fada nó gearr (rithim); go tapa, go mall (luas). D'fhéadfadh an múinteoir céimniú a dhéanamh ar an méid Gaeilge a úsáidtear sna ceachtanna ó rang go rang. Is fiú go mór na páistí a spreagadh chun Gaeilge a labhairt eatarthu féin agus iad ag imirt cluichí ceoil, ag cleachtadh nó ag cumadh ceoil ar uirlisí éagsúla.

Is féidir

- bainisteoireacht ranga a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge
- gnáthorduithe a chloisteáil agus a leanúint
- ceisteanna a fhreagairt
- na huirlisí ceoil a ainmniú i nGaeilge

D'fhéadfadh an múinteoir treoracha do struchtúir amhráin (le canadh nó le seinm) a thabhairt i nGaeilge ó am go ham, mar shampla, *Ón tus. Tríd síos. Sin é.*

SESE

Through music the children may gain insights into other cultures. In order to fully comprehend the source of a piece of music, the children should have some understanding of the time, the place and the people to whom it belongs. Recognising the purposes of music, for example to inspire courage, fear, joy, or sadness, links naturally with the skills, concepts and attitudes in the history programme at a local, national and international level.

Music links with science through the exploration of sound. In music, sound is the raw material that prompts listening, making and inventing in an artistic way. In science, sound is a form of energy for investigation and explanation. Control of sound is needed in both areas in order to mould it, to use it expressively and to use it as a form of interaction.

Mathematics

Many aspects of the music programme link with mathematical activity. In working with sounds in music, in patterning and ordering, children engage in mathematical processes, just as they do when they work with beads, blocks and other objects. Both listening and recording activities can help develop one-to-one correspondence. The introduction of simple rhythm skills can also lead to a subconscious understanding of fractions in infant classes (full beats and half beats), while in senior classes, more complex combinations of patterns and values in rhythm complement work in fractions, decimals and number.

Integration throughout class levels

The music programme can serve the needs of multi-level teaching in a number of ways. In the area of performing, older children can provide support for younger children as they learn to use their singing voices, develop a sense of pitch or handle classroom instruments. This in turn can lead directly into the exploration of the rhythmic and melodic elements contained in the songs or accompanying patterns by the older children. Both younger and older groups of children can act as active audience members for each other's performances, listening with interest to their singing, playing or improvisations and offering positive responses, suggestions and encouragement.

Integrated themes

Themes based on a story, a novel or an aspect of SESE can be chosen for integration in a number of ways. A theme such as 'flight' or 'journeys' can include elements from many different subject areas. This approach is very useful in junior classes, especially when a whole school adopts a particular theme for a number of weeks.

Suggested themes for junior and senior classes are given in the following pages.

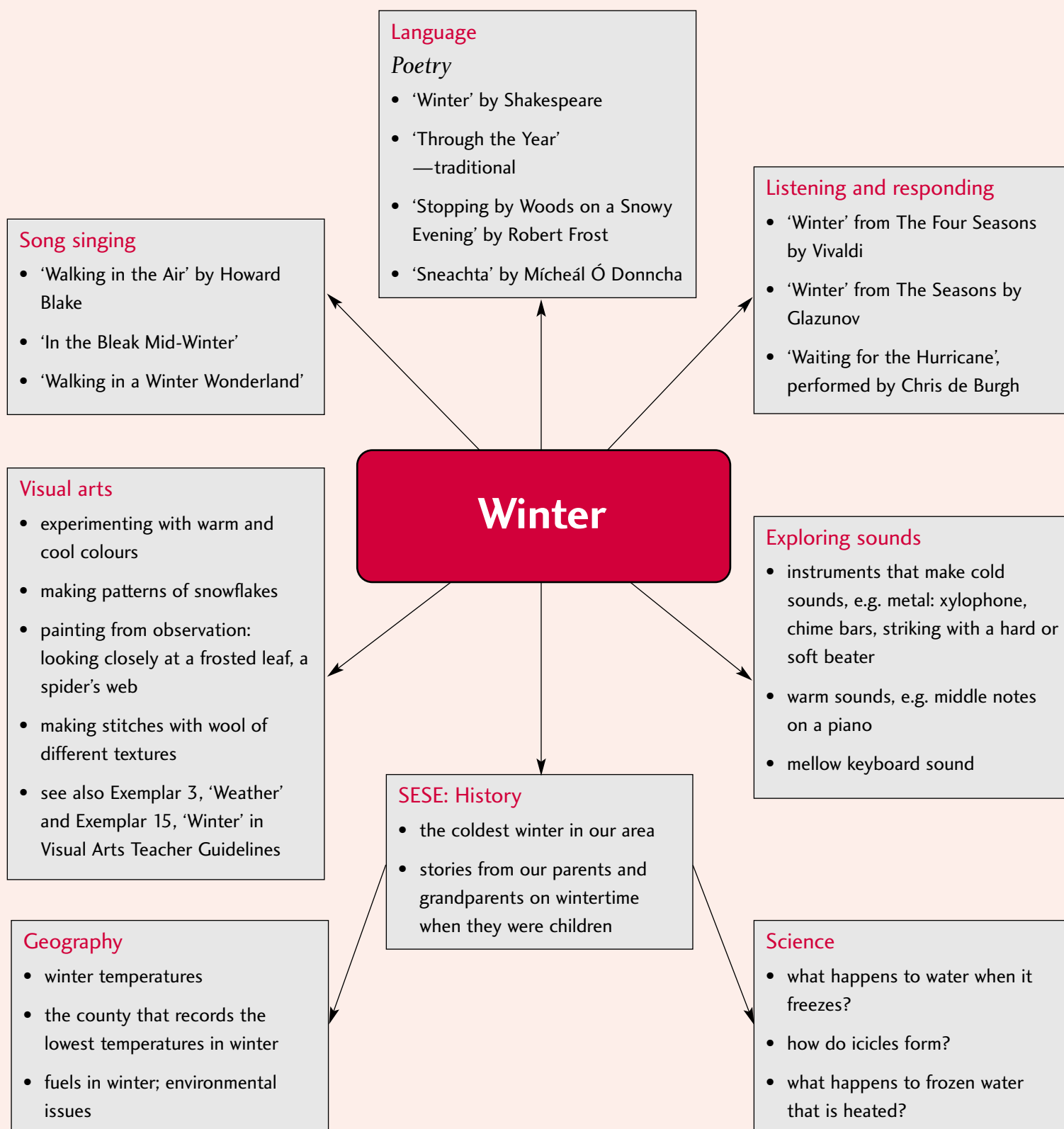
Exemplar 1

Integrated theme for junior classes



Exemplar 2

Integrated theme for senior classes



Assessment tools in music

- teacher observation
- teacher-designed tasks and tests
- work samples and portfolios
- projects
- curriculum profiles

Developing an assessment policy

Musicians of all kinds constantly assess. They listen critically to their own performances and the performances of others, seeking ways to improve the technical or expressive qualities of their work. Classroom music making involves assessing as a natural part of the teaching and learning process as teachers and pupils seek to refine their knowledge, skill and understanding of music processes and products. Discussing and clarifying how pupil progress in music may be observed, recorded and communicated will contribute greatly to the overall policy on assessment. In turn, this will lead to a fuller understanding of the approaches, purposes and issues surrounding assessment in music, and indeed in other areas of the curriculum.

The purposes of assessment

Assessment can serve many functions, but predominantly it is needed to determine where adjustments are needed in instruction and whether the child is adequately prepared for the introduction of the next unit or a higher level. More precisely, assessment in music aims to fulfil the following purposes:

- to meet the needs of the pupils, building on their expertise and understanding and developing their musical potential

- to identify shortcomings in pupil achievement in music
- to inform future teaching
- to summarise what has been achieved so far
- to observe and guide participation in and emerging attitudes towards music and music making
- to provide a basis for reporting and communicating pupil progress to parents and to other professionals
- to guide the decisions regarding the development or effectiveness of the curriculum.

A range of assessment tools

The purposes of assessment may be easily achieved through the employment of a range of assessment tools that are particularly suited to arts activities. Those recommended in the content statement include:

Teacher observation

Observing the children thinking and behaving musically is a fundamental means of access to their learning.

Observation will be based on:

- watching their behaviour as they sing, play an instrument or create their own music, and
- listening to the children as they talk about the music they have listened to.

Teacher-designed tasks and tests

These include the many tasks, informal check tests and learning targets that the teacher sets for the children in everyday teaching. They can be used to provide summative information of achievement in music at the end of a unit of work.

Work samples and portfolios

Portfolios can be used to save all work samples, tests and products of musical learning accumulated over a specific time. They can be presented as documentary evidence or showcase examples of the work achieved. The child can share in the responsibility for his/her own learning and assessment by selecting work samples, reflections and self-assessments to be contained in the portfolio.

Projects

Projects provide opportunities for children to work in collaboration with each other, especially on large-scale schemes. They are useful in the assessment of integrated musical processes.

Curriculum profiles

Curriculum profiles are records of pupil achievement that are primarily based on objectives in the curriculum. They may be used by the teacher to make informal judgements of pupil achievement in music.

Assessment and the aims and objectives of the curriculum

The approaches to assessment will embrace the aims and objectives of the curriculum within the three strands, and the integrated musical elements. While the teacher will observe the children engaging in musical activities, individually, in groups or as a class, in keeping with the philosophy of the child-centred curriculum he/she will record such observations for each child individually.

A common understanding of assessment criteria

Most teachers have little difficulty in rating or ranking the work of the pupils in their class. Those with considerable experience at a particular class level may have developed a personal 'standard' or set of expectations for an age group. Defining assessment criteria, setting standards (or moderating) and sharing work samples, portfolios and projects can demand an added commitment from a group of co-operating teachers. However, the benefits gained can include a heightened understanding of pupils' work and the communication of more useful feedback to the children and their parents.

Recording and reporting: continuity and progression

An adequate system of recording and reporting the work achieved in the classroom is required so that the child's valuable musical experiences will be maintained. Parents and other teachers need to be informed of the progress of the child in all areas of the curriculum, and music is no exception.

Manageability of assessment

Given that all children will be assessed, the teacher will need to develop a simple system for noting progress and achievement, keeping onerous recording to a minimum. Ideally, it should be done 'on the job', where it will have most relevance to both the teacher and the child. The pupils' own collections of work samples, portfolios, projects and self-assessments, together with curriculum profiles, will greatly facilitate the organisation of this task.

Performing with classroom instruments



Top row, left to right: glockenspiel, double wooden agogo, half-moon tambourine, tambour, tulip block, cabasa

Bottom row, left to right: cow bell, maracas, two-tone wood block

Organisational planning

Developing a shared sense of purpose for music

Developing music in the school involves consultation and collaboration between the partners in education. Good communication helps to develop a common purpose and ensures the involvement of boards of management, parents and teachers. Parents play a vital role in nurturing children's interest and development in music throughout their primary school years.

There is also a special need to support class teachers so that they can teach music, make music with children and develop positive attitudes towards music. This may mean seeking the support of organisations outside the school and working in collaboration with them in a spirit of involvement and inclusiveness.

The board of management will provide support for the development and implementation of the school plan for music within the resources available to it. This will involve consultation with all the partners. The music programme will be reviewed as part of the board's overall review of the school plan.

Planning for music in the school should

- result from clear decision-making among the teaching staff
- seek to utilise the interest and aptitudes of individual teachers to the full

- provide real help and support for the teacher
- determine how the school intends to phase in the introduction of the music programme
- involve review and evaluation
- identify how the plan will be communicated fully to the partners in the educational work of the school
- be supported, facilitated and reviewed by the board of management.

The principal and teachers

The principal can provide the initial support for music in the school by raising awareness of its importance as an integral part of a child-centred curriculum. He/she should also ensure that

- teachers are supported in their teaching by colleagues within or outside the school
- the school promotes a balance of listening and responding, performing and composing activities
- sufficient time is allocated to music education in all classes
- a timetable for specific resources is drawn up.

The teacher brings skills of planning, questioning, organising and motivating.

Since music is an essential aspect of an integrated and child-centred curriculum, the class teacher is the most suitable person to present rounded musical experiences in listening and responding, performing and composing in most circumstances. In addition to a wealth of teaching expertise from throughout the curriculum, the teacher brings skills of planning, questioning, organising and motivating children, as well as an understanding of child development and learning.

The role of the teacher could be described as

- participating in listening, singing, playing and improvising activities.
- As with all other subjects, the general organisation for the teaching of music will require co-ordination. A member of staff, particularly in larger schools, may have a special interest or expertise in music, and he/she may wish to take responsibility for the general organisation of the teaching of music in the school. The staff member need not have specialist skills but may enable the expertise of individual teachers to be availed of by others. This expertise may be in choral music, Irish traditional music, playing the piano, leading composing projects, appreciation of pop music or technology. Therefore the co-ordinating role could include functions such as
- creating a positive musical environment, which encourages and values spontaneous sharing of ideas, skills and resources among teachers and pupils alike
 - assisting colleagues in the preparation of schemes of work and in subsequent implementation
 - collecting and communicating information about in-service training, school visits and tours or musical events
 - maintaining and monitoring resources in the school.
- establishing a musical environment that embraces the approach to music in the school and that links naturally with other areas of the curriculum
 - devising a programme of work that seeks to meet the needs of the children in the class
 - providing a range of musical experiences through a variety of approaches
 - facilitating, motivating and responding to the children's work
 - evaluating the programme and assessing the children's work
 - communicating information with parents, in line with the school policy, about the programme in music and the child's progress

Minimum equipment

- a selection of high-quality instruments
- a tape-recorder
- a pitching instrument
- tapes/CDs
- song books

Resources

Facilities and resources

The available resources, their locations and the timetabling of their use should be considered in the process of school planning. These may include

- hardware and software, such as tape-recorders, audio and video recordings, computer technology and keyboards
- percussion instruments and melodic instruments
- teachers' books, song collections, 'ideas' books, etc.

Basic minimum equipment

To implement the music curriculum, schools will require a basic set of equipment, which should be considered at the planning stage. While many percussion instruments can be made from scrap material, it is important that children have experience of playing high-quality instruments. A suggested minimum number of percussion instruments would include instruments that demonstrate different timbres (sound qualities) and different techniques in playing, for example drum, tambourine and triangle. All schools (ideally, all classrooms) should possess a high-quality tape-recorder or CD player, both for the purpose of playing recordings to the children and for recording their musical compositions. Each teacher should have access to a pitching instrument, for example a tuning fork, pitch pipe or quality recorder.

Identifying support for implementation

Support for implementation can be found among many agencies in the community that will be willing to contribute their experience and expertise to the future lovers of music in society as listeners, performers and composers. The most immediate group to be sought by any school will be the families of the children.

The contribution of parents and relatives of the children

Parents as educators

Parents play a crucial role in the implementation of music policy in the school. Since the foundations of music are best set in the early years, the musical experiences acquired in the home are of immense value and should always be encouraged.



Similarly, musical experiences acquired at school may be extended in the home by the parents and the child through

- singing together songs learned at school, or elsewhere
- listening to music together
- playing with 'found' sounds.

Parents and continuing support

The work of senior pupils in the primary school needs to be cherished in a similar way to the emerging musicianship of the young child. It is important that parents continue to be involved in planning issues and be informed of pupil progress at all stages. Parents can give valuable support to the music activities of the older child by

- encouraging active listening
- discussing attitudes towards and taste in music
- allowing time and space to practise or improvise on an instrument
- encouraging positive attitudes to music in general and to school-based activities in particular.

Parents as listeners, performers and composers

Parents can also contribute effectively to music in schools by attending school or classroom events, playing the role of critical listeners or supportive audience members or assisting in the supervision of movement of children. The skills of parent-musicians should also be included when planning for live performances or when creating a class composition.

CD-ROM applications offer support for a variety of musical activities in the classroom and are excellent resources.

For the parent, support for musical activity leads to a better understanding of the life and work of the school, while the teacher may gain a greater insight into the child's growth in music and development as a whole child.

The local library

Local libraries can offer support for classroom projects in a variety of ways. Apart from books, which typically contain information on composers and their works, and orchestral instruments, libraries are increasingly offering audio and visual resources, which can be of immense value to schools in both the planning and the implementation of the music curriculum. Many librarians are able to make material available to schools on a block loan. They can also offer information on local or national arts initiatives, festivals or special lectures.

In addition, special music libraries, such as the Central Music Library in Dublin or those found in universities or colleges of music, can provide sources of information on music education, through books and music journals, as well as maintaining an extensive range of recordings on CD, cassette or vinyl. It is important when embarking on any project to discuss the requirements of the school well in advance and to maintain contact throughout the school year.

Local music organisations and societies

Music organisations abound in most communities, urban and rural. These range from highly visible groups, such as music societies, traditional musicians, dance and music theatre groups to amateur choirs and orchestras. Less obvious patrons of music can include local composers and musicians living in the community, performers and composers from other cultures, professional musicians from orchestras and rock groups, singers, conductors and music publishers, all of whom can contribute to a lively programme.

Information technology

Computers and computer software

Multimedia technology offers high-tech support for listening in the classroom by stimulating the children both visually and aurally. A multimedia computer (containing a CD drive, a sound card, and a pair of loudspeakers or headphones) is designed to combine sound with visual images. The images can include pictures, motion pictures, animation, graphics or charts, standard



notation or text. Many children become familiar with multimedia through interactive video games that mix animation with sound effects and music. The greatest advantage of multimedia is its ability to capture the children's attention through presentations that are inherently motivating.

Multimedia technology is ideally suited for individual or small-group work in the classroom, where the use of headphones can eliminate possible distractions for other children. By clicking a mouse button, children can instantly go to any section of a piece of music, hear various instruments demonstrated, receive background information or attempt a puzzle related to the piece of music. The multimedia software industry is constantly expanding and several music multimedia applications are available that are suitable for classroom use.



Keyboards can be used effectively in the classroom to develop the musical elements.

Keyboards

Keyboards and synthesisers give access to a wide range of sounds and sound effects, which can provide stimulus and ideas for creative music-making. They are widely available to many pupils and in most instances can be used to encourage music-making outside the classroom. The use of built-in features can develop many musical elements in the classroom—pulse, tempo, rhythm, timbre etc.—and be used to explore various musical styles, for example rap, tango, disco or rock. Automatic accompaniments can also be used effectively by teachers or pupils with limited performance skills to add an extra dimension to classroom singing or playing.

Radio, television and video

Several television and radio stations broadcast classroom-based music programmes every season. Like other technological advances, they combine aural and visual stimuli, and many programmes are aimed at specific age groups. They can also present opportunities for integration with other subject areas. Live broadcasts, which usually employ a range of the latest techniques and resources, can provide a highly motivating starting point for classroom activity. Alternatively, recordings from previous years and commercial videos can be examined in their entirety in advance and are therefore more useful to teachers in planning for integrated musical activity in the curriculum.

Festivals, competitions and special events

Many towns and cities hold music competitions, feiseanna, arts festivals or special parades to mark events of national or local significance. Schools too maintain traditions of concerts, pantomimes or arts days or weeks at various times in the school year. Each of these events, whether competitive or non-competitive in nature, can be very motivating for both the teacher and the children, by virtue of the fact that they are usually open to the public. In devising the school plan in music, staff should take the following considerations into account with respect to special music events:

- special events should complement and not replace classroom music
- children should have opportunities to participate in and enjoy both competitive and non-competitive music-making activities
- schools should aim to include all children or as many as possible, not just the most talented performers
- related arts activities, for example pantomime, opera and drama, should be integrated with objectives in the visual arts, dance and drama curricula, as well as other subject areas, where possible.

It should also be remembered that many of these events can be arranged successfully within the confines of the classroom itself: a 'lunchtime concert' on a hot summer's day with invitations issued free to family members can be as stimulating as any externally organised festival.

Education centres and other in-service training providers

Local education centres and other agencies provide support for schools, teachers and parents who wish to enrich their knowledge and skills in music and enhance their pedagogical and assessment techniques.

Professional performers and performances

Several national bodies, such as the National Concert Hall, the Ark, the National Chamber Choir and RTE, arrange music concerts and workshops for teachers and children at primary level. In addition, through support from organisations such as the Arts Council, the Music Association of Ireland and Music Network, it is possible to arrange performances in the school from a wide range of professional musicians. Such schemes enhance the children's musical experience considerably, bringing real performance closer to their lives. As with other special events, school planning should take into consideration the relevance to the curriculum of the programmes on offer and the balance between school-based activity and external agencies.

Community musicians

Most communities include local professional and amateur musicians of high quality who can contribute richly to the quality, diversity and depth of the school music curriculum through regular performing, class or small-group tutoring, demonstrating, coaching and providing feedback.

Artists in residence

'Artist in residence' schemes provide a unique opportunity for children to observe the professional performer, composer or music educator in action. As these schemes require sustained involvement by both the school and the artist, they can be of greater benefit to schools than once-off concerts or workshops. For the artist, the opportunity to become involved with children's creative energies can be exciting and refreshing. Similarly, for the children, the experience of working with and being accepted by a professional musician can be of immense and lifelong benefit.





*Movement and dance
provide a greater
understanding of music*

Section 4

Classroom planning for music

Classroom planning for music

Many of the most important issues for the teacher when planning a programme in music for a class are those discussed above in 'Curriculum planning'.

The following section deals with two aspects of classroom planning:

- the teacher's planning
- planning a unit of work.

The teacher's planning

Several issues will need to be considered by the teacher to ensure effective planning. Among these are the needs of the children, the school plan, time, resources, health and safety aspects and cross-curricular links.

Needs of the children in the class

In planning for the management of music within the curriculum the teacher will need to consider the previous musical experiences of the children. This will determine the level at which the teacher should begin.

Consultation with the former teacher of the class, review of written records and reports, discussions with the children themselves, along with a number of musical activities with an assessment focus, will help the teacher to clarify the learning needs of the pupils at the beginning of the year.

The school plan in music

This will include a rationale for music in the school, the aims and objectives of the curriculum within the three strands, suggested approaches to teaching and assessing, the available resources, timetables, and other related school policy matters. The teacher will need to refer to the school plan in designing his/her classroom programme.

Approaches to teaching

In adopting the teaching methodologies or approaches favoured in the school plan, the teacher will need to consider his/her level of familiarity with

- a variety of appropriate songs
- listening material, spanning a wide range of styles, traditions and eras
- instrumental work (for example the melodic instrument to be taught, in line with school policy)
- music literacy (for example the type of notation used in the school)
- composing, for a range of purposes, using a variety of sound materials and musical elements.

For the teacher who is less experienced in music literacy, the curriculum suggests a variety of progressive and enjoyable activities in listening, singing and playing instruments. Participation in these musical experiences can be beneficial in the preparation of more difficult work in literacy, aural or rhythm training at a later stage.

Time allocated to music should be spread over a number of days rather than as a single block.

Time

Long-term planning will require consideration of the amount of content to be covered, for instance the number of songs to be learned or the range of notes to be explored, and the amount of time to be devoted to particular projects, such as a composing project or involvement with visiting musicians. Short-term planning should ensure that the time allocated to music is spread over a number of days, rather than as a single block. Structured lessons aimed at developing skills are most successful if organised in frequent, short, intensive lessons within the week. In infant classes, musical activities should occur daily, while in senior classes, time for music could be divided over two or three days. Ideally, children in all classes should experience the joy of singing for at least a few moments every day.

Health and safety aspects

When organising a music lesson, it is important to consider the following health and safety issues:

- the level of sound in the room
- ventilation
- the amount of space available for children to sit, stand or move
- access to and transport of musical equipment.

Cross-curricular links

Integrated learning can provide authentic and satisfying experiences both for the teacher and the child. While musical activity lends itself to integration with other subject areas, it is important that at all stages of planning the breadth and depth of the subject is maintained and that time allocated to music blends with other subject areas in a meaningful way. It is preferable to consider how the chosen topic might complement the developmental aspects of music that arise in the yearly scheme, rather than how music (for example a song) might slot in to a chosen topic.

Children with differing needs

Children with differing needs must be enabled to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in music, to experience the musical elements, and to release their creativity by engaging in musical activities in a structured way. The teacher may need to approach the same material in a variety of ways to present it to different children, and therefore some flexibility in planning and preparation will be necessary. In most instances the child with a disability can participate in classroom music, with some modification or adaptation to his/her needs, particularly in the areas of performing and composing.

For instance, a child who has poor co-ordination will need additional time to practise a skill, a suitable musical instrument that is easy to play or an instrument that can be played with one hand (for example a cymbal played with a soft beater). The child should be encouraged to progress musically from playing an instrument with one hand to playing with two (for example from playing bongo drums with one hand to playing with two). A child who is physically disabled will need suitable support for an instrument, or an instrument that is sensitive to touch, such as an electronic keyboard or a drum machine, or an instrument specifically designed or adapted to his/her specific needs.

A child who is hearing-impaired will need a quiet learning environment, while instrumental needs may include a low or high-pitched instrument, according to his/her specific needs. Instruments in which vibrations can be felt (for example drum, bodhrán, stringed instrument) and a sprung wooden floor can greatly increase the sensation of vibration. A child with a visual impairment should encounter music that can be learned by rote and instruments that can be played by touch (for example maracas, castanets or recorders), as well as plenty of time to practise a skill. A good viewing position in the classroom may also be useful, and where notation is used it may be presented as larger than usual or in tactile form (for example magnetic letters or counters on a raised five-line staff).

Where a child is experiencing learning difficulties, plenty of encouragement and repetition of instructions will be necessary. Visual symbols and clues (for example hand signs, finger stave, magnetic counters and pictures) can help to reinforce theoretical concepts. A child with emotional or behavioural difficulties will benefit from exposure to a variety of enjoyable musical activities. These activities should be structured and have specific rules and clear instructions. The child should also have a sense of his/her own personal space in which to work and opportunities to experiment with ideas, within limits. The choice of instrumental work should be appropriate to his/her own abilities (ideally an instrument that is easy to play and easy to keep silent).

In most cases the child with a disability can participate in classroom music, with some modification or adaptation to his/her needs, particularly in the areas of performing and composing.

A child who is musically more able should be encouraged to proceed at his/her own pace and allowed to withdraw from group activities at crucial points in his/her development to pursue personal projects and teacher-designed tasks. However, if this withdrawal is to be productive, the child must also learn to return to the group and to make this return easily. The child who is musically more able may also benefit from specialist help (for example from neighbouring primary or post primary schools) in order that his/her talents can be fully developed.

A child from a different cultural background needs to see the music from his/her culture recognised and valued along with the music of the other children in the class. He/she should be encouraged to bring any recordings of music from his/her native country into the classroom, or the teacher may invite a musician from the child's community to perform for the class as part of the listening programme.



Equity issues in music education

In planning and implementing a music programme, teachers should promote equal access to music-making among boys and girls. The following situations in particular should be noted:

Singing

In co-educational schools a balanced song-singing programme should reflect the interests of both boys and girls. Equally, in single-sex schools and classes, the teachers should be aware of the need to show a balance in the selection of songs.

Distribution of instruments

Girls and boys should have equal opportunities to play a range of instruments, for example 'loud' and 'soft' instruments, or 'big' and 'small' instruments, such as drums or Indian bells.

Private lessons

Children who learn an instrument privately should have opportunities to participate in classroom music making. Children with skills on instruments such as the piano, violin or flute should be encouraged to accompany classroom singing and playing to enrich the class programme in listening and performing.

Planning a unit of work

In planning units of work for his/her class, the teacher will be aware of the progress the children in the class have made in music skills, the songs they have learned previously, music they have listened to, and the special needs of some pupils. The teacher may select content suggestions from each strand, adding similar, appropriate examples as necessary. Some areas of content will require more detail than others in order to clarify the teaching steps involved. The teacher will also consider the teaching approaches that could be used between and within strands and how learning activities could produce evidence of children's progress in achieving the objectives of the unit. The outcomes of assessment will provide important information for the planning of follow-up activities and future work in music.

Planning a lesson

In planning a music lesson, the teacher may approach the task in two ways by asking:

- What do I want the children to do during the lesson?
- What do I want the children to achieve from the lesson?

The first question implies a non-specific activity and in some cases perhaps even a non-musical activity, for example listening to 'a tape' or 'filling in' a page in a workbook. The second question is more closely linked with teaching objectives, and by asking it the teacher safeguards against unfocused activity and potentially lost time.

Evaluation

At the end of a lesson or series of lessons, the teacher should review the teaching and learning process in music, for several reasons, which include

- evaluating the effectiveness of teaching
- grouping children for particular activities
- informing planning
- revealing new insights into musical behaviour
- confirming previous findings.

The teacher may seek feedback from the children or request the involvement of a colleague to assist him/her in the process.

Some planning exemplars

The exemplars that follow show how a number of strand units from the curriculum have been combined so as to produce a sample comprehensive plan for teaching, learning and assessment.

Although suggested class levels are given, the unit of work in each case may be modified to suit children's needs and abilities, or adapted for children at higher or lower class levels.



The exemplars include:

- a unit of work for first and second classes, showing the integration of *Listening and responding*, *Performing* and *Composing*
- a unit of work in rhythm skills from the 'Literacy' strand unit
- a unit of work in melodic skills from the 'Literacy' strand unit
- a music lesson plan.

Exemplar 3

Developing a monthly plan

Theme: The sea

first and second classes

Assessment: Teacher observation

Teacher-designed tasks

Strands and strand units

Development

Listening and responding

Exploring sounds

- The child should be enabled to
- discover ways of making sounds using body percussion in pairs and small groups
 - sounds of the sea: vocal sounds to make waves, crashing on the shore, lapping softly on the sand, seagulls screeching
 - explore ways of making sounds using manufactured and home-made instruments
 - fish swimming in the sea: glissando on the chime bars.

Performing

Song singing

- The child should be enabled to
- recognise and sing with increasing vocal control and confidence a growing range of songs and melodies

Listening and responding to music

- The child should be enabled to
- respond imaginatively to pieces of music through movement
 - child may move freely or make swimming or sailing motions
 - talk about pieces of music, giving preferences, and illustrate responses in a variety of ways
 - the music is loud and scary; it makes me think about storms
 - show the steady beat in listening to a variety of live or recorded music

marching, tapping, clapping in time to the music.

The child should be enabled to

- show the steady beat when performing familiar songs keeping a steady beat by clapping while singing 'The big ship sails'
- understand the difference between beat and rhythm

Musical excerpts

'Aquarium' from Carnival of the Animals by Saint-Saëns

'La Mer' (extract) by Debussy

Selection of sea shanties

Teaching points

Look for natural, spontaneous movement and gestures in response to music; encourage the children to show the contrasts in the music between loud and soft sections, or active and quiet sections.

Teaching points

Teach the song or songs by rote, encouraging the children to join in the chorus after the first singing.

Divide the class into two groups: one group claps the beat, the other taps the rhythm.

Choose from a selection of songs on sea themes such as

- ‘Óró Mo Bháidín’
- ‘Skye Boat Song’
- ‘The Big Ship Sails on the Alley Alley O’
- ‘Báidín Fhéilimí’
- ‘I Saw Three Ships’.

The big ship sails on the alley alley o’

beat: ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

v v v v

(stamp)

rhythm:

The big ship sails on the al-ley al-ley o’

* * * * * * * * * * * *

(tap)

Composing

The child should be enabled to

- select sounds from a variety of sources to illustrate a character
- chime bars, triangle, tambour, shakers, stones, sandpaper
- Make sounds for the little fish and the big fish. Now try to show the big fish chasing the little fish. Does he succeed in catching any of them?

Teaching points

First, model the vocal improvisation by dividing the children into groups, and assign one part to each voice. Set a four-beat pulse, which can provide a frame for the chants. When the children are confident and fluent with this, encourage each group to work separately, devising their own chant.

The child should be enabled to

- recall and invent simple melodic and rhythmic patterns, using voices, body percussion and instruments
- vocal improvisations and chants based on fish of the sea, e.g.
cod-fish, cod-fish, cod-fish, cod
plaice, plaice, plaice, plaice
periwinkle, periwinkle, crab, periwinkle
sha ----- rk! sha ----- rk!

Assessment

Listen to children performing the song (or sections of the song) in groups, pairs and some individually. Ask a different small group to show the steady beat while listening. Ask another group to tap the rhythm. Note any difficulties.

Observe the children as they work in groups to represent ideas in sound or create their own chants. Ensure that each child is making a meaningful contribution to the group work. Record observations.

Integration

Language: words and phrases to describe expanses of water, storms, tranquillity, fish, sailing, swimming; writing about the theme from personal experience; reading myths and legends with sea themes (e.g. Sinbad the sailor) and simple non-fiction material about the sea.

Visual arts: mixed-media collage on sea world

Follow-up

Spend a few minutes at the start of subsequent music lessons revising the song or songs learned and also at appropriate moments throughout the following month. Play short extracts from the recorded music, asking the children what the music reminded them of.

Questions to ask the children:

- How should we sing ‘Báidín Fheilimí’, loudly or softly?
- Will the volume be the same throughout the song?
- Should the chorus be different?

Exemplar 4

A unit of work in rhythm skills

first and second classes

This series of mini-lessons may be adapted to suit children at a higher level by using songs and chants that would be more appropriate to their age level. It is intended that the unit be used in a flexible way, and therefore it may be completed in one month, six weeks or a full term by stretching the content of each lesson over two or three weeks. Once again, this will depend on the experience and needs of the children.

Theme: Developing a sense of beat and rhythm
Lead in: Chants, rhymes, songs, echo clapping

Assessment: Teacher observation
 Teacher-designed tasks

Materials	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4
Songs and chants	Introductory activities	saying names in rhythm patterns	Echo clapping and saying <i>ta</i> and <i>ti ti</i>	Echo clapping with <i>ta</i> and <i>ti ti</i>
• 'I Had a Little Nut Tree'	Development	John, Ma-ry, Aoi-fe, Cí-li-an	□ <i>ta ta ti - ti ta</i>	□ Z □
• 'The Lion and the Unicorn'	Concluding activities	feeling long beats and short beats and groups of beats	□ <i>ti - ti ti - ti ta ta</i>	□ □
• 'Ailíú Éanaí'		e.g. marching: one, two or three, four	introducing <i>ta</i> and <i>ti ti</i> and patterns	Introducing rest
Instruments		in groups: one group keeps the beat while another taps a given rhythm pattern	□ <i>ta ti - ti</i>	Z rest
woodblocks	singing, clapping, tapping on a tambour or woodblock	in pairs: playing the rhythm patterns on the wood block, keeping the beat on the tambour	Marching to the beat while clapping the rhythm	Practising various combinations by reading from flashcards
tambour	showing the beat in symbols	***		Z □ Z □ Z □ □ Z Z
flashcards showing patterns	***			

Linkage

Composing: Improvise rhythm patterns on instruments using *ta* and *ti ti*
 Record the inventions using stick notation
Performing: Song singing
 Look for patterns of *ta*, *ti ti* and rest in familiar songs.

Follow-up

Continue to practise patterns of *ta*, *ti ti* and rest through echo-clapping, accompanying familiar songs and chants.

Exemplar 5

A unit of work in melodic skills

third and fourth classes

This series of lessons may be adapted to suit children at a higher level by using songs and chants that would be more appropriate to their age level. It is intended that the unit be used in a flexible way, and therefore it may be completed in one month, six weeks or a full term by stretching the content of each lesson over two or three weeks. Once again, this will depend on the experience and needs of the children.

Theme: Developing a sense of pitch, preparing low *lah* and low *soh*

Lead in: Chants, songs, handsign practice of notes *l, s, m, r, d*, echo-singing patterns that include *s, m, r, d*, low *lah* and low *soh*

Assessment: Teacher observation
Teacher-designed tasks

Song materials

Lesson 1

- The child should be enabled to
 - sing from memory a widening repertoire of songs with increasing vocal control, confidence and expression singing familiar songs, rounds and folk tunes, e.g., ‘Suogân’, ‘Frère Jacques’ as a round and ‘Oró ‘Sé do Bheatha ‘Bhaile’

Lesson 2

- The child should be enabled to
 - recognise and sing familiar, simple tunes in a variety of ways
 Children sing the tune while maintaining a steady beat.
Teacher hums one of three familiar tunes, children name the tune.

Lesson 3

- The child should be enabled to
 - recognise the shape of melodies in standard notation
 In learning songs from notation, children try to follow each of the notes in the songs, tracing where they go up, down or remain the same.

Lesson 4

- The child should be enabled to
 - use standard symbols to identify and sing a limited range of notes and melodic patterns
 Given the first note, can you tell what the other notes were in ‘Frog Went a-Courtin’?

- ‘Land of the Silver Birch’

(notes: *l, s, m, r, d*, low *lah*, low *soh*)

- Revise: ‘Suogân’

(notes: *d, r, m*)

- Other songs:

‘Frère Jacques’

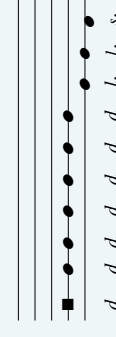
- Teacher sings ‘Frère Jacques’ it what part of ‘Frère Jacques’ it sounds like. Children sing the round, substituting *d-s-d*, for ‘ding, ding, dong’.

- Teacher sings ‘Frog Went a-Courtin’ and children follow the direction of the tune in notation, observing where the tune goes below *doh* to two lower notes, low *soh* and low *lah*.

- In singing ‘Land of the Silver Birch’ children note that the tune begins on low *lah*.

- Children begin by singing the tune with handsigns, with the teacher providing assistance as necessary.

- On a five-line stave, children and teacher establish the notes.



Linkage

Composing: Improvise patterns on melodic instruments such as chime bars or glockenspiel on the notes *l, s, m, r, d*.

Record the inventions using simple notation on a three or five-line stave.

Follow-up

Continue to practise patterns of *l, s, m, r, d* and the new notes, low *lah* and low *soh*, through echo-singing, singing from handsigns and singing new or familiar songs.

Music lesson plan

Date

Class

Time

Resources required

Main focus

Listening and responding

Performing

Composing

Organising the lesson

The strand or strands of the curriculum that the lesson will focus on (listening and responding, performing or composing); the use of a stimulus to begin the lesson (for example an instrument, a song, a listening excerpt, a picture, a poem, a story, an object); how the children will be organised; how the resources will be arranged within the room.

Introduction

Teacher-directed task to introduce topic, establish rapport and group dynamic; warm-up game or song based on, or associated with, the musical features of the lesson.

Development

Main teaching points in the lesson

e.g. particular features to observe in listening, new concepts or skills in singing, playing or reading (music literacy), selecting or using instruments.

Activities for composing, setting of parameters, structure and purpose, organisation as groups or individuals; talking about the process, reworking and recording using electronic equipment and/or notation.

Linkage within music

i.e. how the main activity links with listening and responding, performing and composing

Assessment opportunities

Teacher observation of individual or group tasks, noting involvement of pupils, effectiveness of teaching strategies and any difficulties encountered; teacher-designed tasks, homework, group project, items to be retained for portfolio collections, pupil self-evaluation.

Concluding activity and follow-up

Revising and summarising the main teaching points of lesson in addition to a concluding, music-making activity, such as listening to or performing familiar music. Note integration with other subject areas and implications for future planning.



Developing an awareness of line and shape from the visual arts curriculum can be explored effectively through music and dance.



Approaches and methodologies

Approaches and methodologies

Approaches to the strands

- Listening and responding
- Performing
- Composing

A variety of approaches

In this section, the importance of using a variety of approaches to *Listening and responding*, *Performing* and *Composing* is emphasised. Several useful techniques and methods are recommended that complement the aims and objectives, the integrated musical elements and the exemplars in the curriculum. These may be adapted to suit the policies of individual schools and the needs and interests of children. The approaches outlined are not exhaustive and are generally applicable to children at all class levels. They may be considered in addition to the experience and expertise of the class teacher in achieving similar outcomes.

Whatever approach to the teaching of music is adopted it should

- foster enjoyment in music making
- seek to develop the skills, understanding, knowledge and attitudes of the child
- allow for musical growth and the development of creativity in the child.



Participation in a school choir, ensemble, band or orchestra is a very valuable experience for children that can complement classroom music.

Listening and responding

- listening materials
- selecting listening materials
- recorded music
- Irish music
- music of other cultures

The *Listening and responding* strand of the music curriculum aims to give children opportunities to experience a wide range of musical styles, traditions and cultures. Through enjoyable and varied listening experiences the children are encouraged to listen actively and to focus on what happens in the music. This active approach to listening is central to the music curriculum at each class level and is important for the children's musical development as performers, as composers and as members of an audience.

A theme that is closely related to this active focus is a strong emphasis on the variety of ways in which children can respond to the music they listen to—by moving, talking, writing, dancing, drawing, singing or composing. This concern with responding in several ways is based on the belief that the child's listening is enhanced and more purposeful when different ways of responding are encouraged.

Listening to music repeatedly is an important aspect in the development of imagination, insight and problem-solving. In this way, music can be used not only as a basis for learning in music, but also for learning and activities in other areas of the curriculum.

The teacher's role is therefore to provide a wide variety of listening experiences for the children, to stimulate active listening through questioning, prompting and suggestion, to play examples several times and to present children with opportunities to respond in a variety of ways.

Listening to live performance is a special musical experience. For children, the distinctive quality of live music and the immediacy of participating as active listeners is exciting and uplifting. Communication between performer and audience becomes more real for the children as they experience listening in a direct and personal way.

Opportunities should be sought to present live music to children whenever possible.

Listening materials

An important theme in this strand of the curriculum is the emphasis on a broad range of listening materials and resources, which will serve as starting points for musical exploration. When reviewing the music resources needed for the music programme, all schools should endeavour to include the following:

- recorded music on video, audio tape, CD or music technology
- tuned and untuned percussion instruments
- environmental objects, such as assortments of metals, wood or fibres
- a child in the class who may be studying an instrument privately
- other school instruments, which may include a recorder, tin whistle, piano or guitar
- a musician on the staff, among the parent body or in the locality
- a group, ensemble, band, choir or orchestra visiting the school or at another venue.

Exemplar 6

infant classes

- The teacher shows two or more sound sources, for example a cup and a book.
- The teacher taps each with a metal object, for example a spoon or a triangle beater.

- The children are instructed to close their eyes, and while the teacher makes one of the sounds again, the children try to identify it.

Awareness of sound patterns (rhythm) and sound pace (tempo) flow naturally from this type of activity.

Exemplar 7

first to fourth classes

- The teacher instructs the children to close their eyes and to listen carefully to the sounds they can hear in the room, the playground, the street outside or in the distance.
- In response to their listening, the children are asked to describe what they heard. Over time, and with guidance, their vocabulary and understanding will develop.

- Later, they may devise a form of graphic notation to record what they heard.

The activity is short, takes place frequently, but is effective in developing listening skills over the course of the school year.

Listening excerpts should be

- short
- varied
- good examples from the genre.

They should be played

- several times
- often
- on high-quality audio equipment.

Selecting listening materials

Short, simple listening activities and games will enhance the listening programme in a way that is enjoyable yet accessible for children. These may include listening to and discriminating between environmental sounds and describing them in terms of their source, pitch, dynamics, duration and tempo. These activities should be modified to suit the age and experience of the children.

Selecting recorded music

When choosing music for a particular class level, the teacher should bear in mind the previous listening experiences of the children and should aim to build on these. The teacher should also select short pieces of music that the children can listen to several times over so that they have opportunities to become familiar with the music through a process of gradual, interested discovery, sometimes in collaboration with other pupils. A spiral approach to listening and responding is recommended so that the listening excerpts and sound explorations experienced during the earlier years can be returned to in senior classes. The growing maturity in musical experience of these older children will help them to acquire fresh insight into the music. The following points need to be considered also:

- The selected piece should be short (twenty seconds initially) or a relevant extract from a longer recording. This allows for flexibility in planning enjoyable and varied listening experiences.
- The piece selected should be notable for its quality within the style that it represents.
- Children should have opportunities to hear a recording several times during a lesson so that they can become very familiar with what is happening in the music.
- When the children listen, move, or create while the music is playing, they must be able to compare or justify their work in relation to the music afterwards.
- The teacher should seek to balance responses that encourage imaginative associations with those that focus on structural elements in the music.
- The quality of the audio equipment and the quality of the recording will affect the children's enjoyment of and response to the music.

There should also be occasions when music for listening is presented without discussion.

Over the course of the child's primary school career, the school listening programme should offer music from a wide variety of sources, to include music from written and unwritten traditions, classical and folk, music from Ireland and other countries, choral and instrumental, solo and ensemble, and music for different occasions and purposes. The children will enjoy revisiting excerpts heard earlier in the school year and in previous classes. This approach helps to foster the continuity and progression that are essential parts of the curriculum.

Rather than providing children in junior classes with a lot of theory regarding orchestral families of instruments, they should be introduced to the instruments one at a time as they occur naturally in the listening programme.

On most occasions the teacher will play a recording of the music and ask the children for their responses before drawing attention to the title of the piece, some background information and the composer's intentions. However, there should also be occasions when music for listening is presented without discussion, so that the children are able to hear a piece holistically and make their own interpretations. Generally speaking, the teacher should try to avoid situations where background music is played while the class is involved in another activity.

Part of the musical experiences for the children will include sacred music. Hymns or carols can be incorporated in the music programme along with the standard listening or performing repertoire and explored in a variety of ways. Children can listen to recordings of sacred music to explore the musical features or to identify simple techniques the composer may have used. Musical elements may also be explored: for example, a sense of structure may be experienced in the contrast between the solo and chorus of a hymn tune. The children can also discover how the tempo of a hymn tune can affect the mood and style of a performance.

Traditional Irish instruments

- tin whistle
- Irish wooden flute
- uilleann pipes
- bodhrán
- Irish harp
- fiddle
- concertina
- accordion

Listening to Irish music

Ireland's tradition as a nation of musicians may be traced from early myth and legend to the present-day multiplicity of traditional players, modern composers, arrangers and performers. On leaving primary school, children should have developed an awareness and appreciation of traditional Irish instruments—tin whistle, Irish flute, uilleann pipes, bodhrán, fiddle, concertina, accordion, as well as Irish harp—and should have listened to a variety of Irish music (dance, ballad, lullaby or suantraí, work song, etc.) and musicians.

Like all folk music, Irish music is amenable to a variety of arrangements. For instance, while Beethoven's string quartets will almost always be performed by stringed instruments, a



traditional Irish air such as 'Róisín Dubh' is often sung solo or accompanied, played by different instruments or combinations of instruments, at the performers' discretion. Teachers might choose to focus on this richness and variation as one of the starting points for listening to Irish music. The children can explore this feature of Irish music by comparing different performances of the same tune. A number of suggestions are given in the Appendix.

Listening to music of other cultures

In developing an awareness and understanding of other cultures, and in extending the children's musical experiences, the listening programme should also aim to include some examples of music from other countries. Such music should be introduced as an expression of the life and culture of another country, having particular meaning or importance for the people whom it represents. The teacher should seek to reveal the breadth and depth of musical expression to the children as much as possible and create a sense of authenticity. Some suggestions for approaching music of other cultures include:

- learning songs of other countries
- learning dances of other countries
- learning about occasions when particular music is performed

- having performers from other countries visit the school
- modelling instruments and techniques on styles from elsewhere
- discussing technical or expressive qualities in the music; comparing similarities and differences, for example bongo drums and bodhrán.



Chinese musician playing the pipa

Responding to music in a variety of ways

As well as listening to a range of sounds from a variety of sources, children are encouraged to respond to music in several ways. These include

- moving and dancing to music
- talking about the music, for example describing how it makes them feel or the images it creates
- listening for specific musical features
- listening for specific instruments
- illustrating aspects of the music through drawing or painting
- following a pictorial score of the music
- writing in response to the music
- composing new music using, for example, a similar theme, instrumentation or structure
- singing or playing along with the music.

A number of these approaches are outlined in the following pages, with accompanying exemplar lessons.

Children should be encouraged to think about the music as they move or to think the music.

Responding through movement

Movement helps all learners interpret new experience. Movement to music is valuable because it provides a kinaesthetic experience of musical concepts. As the child moves to a given tempo, he/she focuses mentally and physically on the musical task, internalising the concept. Through observing these movements the teacher can see how well a new concept has been grasped and understood.



Movement can be used to develop many technical and expressive qualities. Muscular activity is closely linked to musical elements such as pulse, tempo, rhythm and dynamics. It can also facilitate creative responses through improvisation, interpretation and imagination. This aspect of the music curriculum links very successfully with the dance programme in providing the children with new learning experiences.

Movements should

- be performed naturally by the children
- express a musical element or elements
- involve mainly gross-motor (whole-body) movement, but also fine-motor movement
- aim to extend the children's co-ordination, balance and suppleness over time
- maintain a balance between vigorous and gentle activity
- be enjoyable.

Exemplar 8

Moving to music

infants to second classes

Games and activities that involve movement to music

Add another movement

The children stand in a circle. One child goes to the centre, moving one part of the body to the beat of the music, e.g. waving an arm. The other children copy this movement. A moment later, another child comes into the centre and starts doing a different movement as well. Everyone adds the second movement to the first. The game is continued for as long as possible before having to begin again.

Moving in space

Children walk, jump, hop and skip to the beat, exploring all the space in the room.

One way only

All the children move in one direction, walking to the beat. On a given signal, they all change direction and move backwards, forwards, or sideways.

Moving in shape and space

Children keep the beat while moving in their own circle. On a given signal, they change to a square (still moving to the beat), then a triangle, pentagon, and diamond.

Exploring line

Groups of five to seven children each follow their group leader, exploring line in various patterns, e.g. figures of eight, zigzags, waves, spirals, thick lines (legs apart, arms out) and thin lines (legs together, arms by the side).

Action songs

Singing songs with actions, such as

‘Head, shoulders, knees and toes’,

‘Buail do bhosa’

‘Everybody do this just like me’,

‘Hokey Pokey’.

Folk dances

See the Dance strand in physical education.

Moving to the beat

Where will we put the beat?

Children and teacher listen to music with a strong beat and choose one part of the body, for example the knee, to respond to the beat. On a given signal, the children change to another part of the body.

Extensions

- Alternating parts of the body in a two-beat sequence: the children show the first beat with a wrist movement and the second beat with a shoulder movement.
- Mark the beat with two different parts of the foot, for example heels and toes.

When the music stops

The children move to the beat around the room. When the music stops, they touch two different parts of the body, e.g. elbow and foot.

Extensions

When the music stops, children take a partner and decide who is A and who is B. The teacher (or leader) names two different parts of the body, e.g. shoulders and head. A's hands touch B's shoulder and B's hands touch A's head. They move around the room in this way until the music starts again, then they separate and move freely to the beat again.

Beat detective

One child, the 'beat detective', is sent out of the room. A second child is then appointed 'beat keeper'. The beat keeper and the other children stand in a circle; the beat keeper moves one part of the body to the beat of the music, and the others copy the movement. Every so often the beat keeper changes the movement. The beat detective comes back and tries to identify the beat keeper. When the music ends, a new beat keeper is appointed and the game begins again.



In a large space, it may be helpful to create a boundary line and confine music and movement activities to a smaller area.

Space

Children need ample space for movement activity. Ideally movement sessions should be held in a general-purpose hall or a large room with enough space for the children to move freely. Where this is not possible, the class may be divided into groups to take turns moving, and children can also move on the spot for some activities.

Large spaces may present problems in controlling groups and cause difficulties in listening. If the space is too large, it may be helpful to create a boundary line and confine the activities within a portion of the room. Some basic rules may also be established in advance of the movement activity.

Singing games

Many actions arise naturally from songs and go naturally with them. Singing games develop a sense of rhythm through body movements simply because the child is fully involved while enjoying the games and performing the rhythmical movements that the words of the songs suggest. (See Exemplar 9)

Action songs

Songs that can be sung with accompanying movements provide another engaging and enjoyable introduction to rhythmic response to music. They are especially useful when space is limited, since many of them can be performed in the child's own space. After the songs are memorised, the children can omit words or phrases while the motions continue. Action songs are an ideal means of developing a sense of pulse as well as rhythm. (See Exemplar 10)

Some basic rules for movement

- Start to move only when the signal is given or when a sound begins.
- Listen carefully to the music or to the source of the sound as you move.
- Always stop when the sound stops or when a prearranged signal is given, such as a beat of a drum or a shake of a tambourine.
- Do not touch anyone as you move, unless it is a specific part of the movement activity.

Exemplar 9

Singing game

infants to second classes

'I Sent a Letter'

Traditional singing game

Sung:



I sent a let - ter to my friend and on the way I dropped it.



One of you must have picked it up and put it in your pock - et.

Chanted



One, two, three ... ten!

Sung:

'I sent a letter to my friend and on the way I dropped it.

One of you must have picked it up and put it in your pocket.'

Chanted:

'One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten!'

Young children enjoy playing this game of finding and losing objects. The children stand in a circle, with one child walking around the outside. At the end of the song, the child on the outside drops the letter at the feet of one of the children and starts to run around the circle. The child who has the letter at his/her feet must try to catch the first child. If the second child manages to catch the first child by the count of ten, the second child becomes the leader and the game is repeated.

Exemplar 10

Action songs

infants to second classes

'Buail do Bhosa'

Buail do bho - sa, Buail do bho - sa, Bo - sa bea - ga mí - ne.

Buail do bho - sa, Buail do bho - sa, 'Sgheo - bhaidh tú féi - rín Dé hAoi - ne!

'If You're Happy'

If you're hap - py and you know it clap your hands. (clap, clap) If you're

hap - py and you know it clap your hands. (clap, clap) If you're

hap - py and you know it then you sure - ly want to show it. If you're

hap - py and you know it clap your hands. (clap, clap)

Accurate claps, taps, nods right on the beat are essential for keeping these songs moving along rhythmically, but any practice of the actions in isolation should be kept short, as the songs should be enjoyed for their own sake.

Listening and moving with musical elements

Movement provides a vehicle for the development of children's understanding of many of the musical elements. Children should be encouraged to use any movements they wish to illustrate various concepts, but the suggestions given below can provide a useful starting point.

Rhythm

- long sounds pulling, taking long steps, pushing with a partner, sawing wood
- short sounds short steps, hammering, quick bounces
- even sounds running, walking, sliding, swaying
- uneven sounds galloping, skipping
- patterns a variety of body movements in response to the rhythm of songs, rhymes and singing games
- accent, metre simple body movements or body sounds to imitate strong and weak beats

Melody

- high and low going from higher to lower, from standing to crouching
- melodic shape bending, moving up and down, swaying

Tempo

- fast running, galloping, skipping
- slow standing, jumping
- moderately fast/slow hopping, walking
- getting faster, getting slower gradual change of speed and movement

Dynamics

- loud/soft heavy/light movements, strong/weak movements, energetic/delicate movements
- various degrees of loud and soft; getting louder, getting softer various degrees of weight or muscular tension, gradual change of tension
- sudden changes from loud to soft sudden changes of tension

Texture

- single sounds, sounds together children can move singly or together, or groups can move singly or together
- drone or accompaniment maintain a movement while another performs a contrasting movement

Structure

- verses or phrases children use different movements to accompany each verse or phrase
- beginning and end show start and stop movements
- AB form or ABA form children perform contrasting movements for A and B

Exemplar 11

Listening and responding to Irish music

all classes

The increasingly wide range of recordings of Irish traditional music enables teachers to select many rich examples of traditional music (and traditional music fused with modern ideas) to be included in the listening programme. The range of purposes for listening and the variety of responses can also be addressed through listening to samples of Irish music.

A discussion surrounding the music

The types of responses the children will make to different pieces of music and the discussions that may arise will vary greatly, depending on the type of music being played.

The following questions may be asked to prompt discussion:

- Where have you heard music like this before?
- What does it remind you of?
- How does it make you feel?
- Has the music a strong beat?
- Is the music fast or slow?
- How many players can you hear—one, two or more than two?
- Can you name any of the instruments that you hear?
- How would you move to this music?
- Can you hum the melody?
- Do you hear any decorations to the melody?
- Are there any repeated sections?
- Are the endings the same in the repeated sections?

Recordings of Irish music could include:

Groups of musicians

for example the Artane Boys' Band, a céilí band, the Chieftains, Na Casaidigh, Altan, Planxty

Instrumentalists

for example Mary Bergin, Martin Hayes, Sharon Shannon, Willie Clancy, Eileen Ivers, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Matt Cranitch

Vocalists

for example Nóirín Ní Riain, Anúna, Dolores Keane, Paul Brady, Andy Irvine

Modern influences

for example Clannad, Enya, Shaun Davey

Composers of concert music

for example John Buckley, Marion Ingoldsby, Gerard Victory, Jane O'Leary



Exemplar 12

Listening and responding with pictures

third to sixth classes

This approach provides opportunities for exploring a diverse range of sounds drawn from any number of sources. The teacher can select classroom instruments, home-made instruments, objects from displays in the classroom or of course his/her own voice to create sound ideas. While the focus of the lesson will dwell mainly on *Listening and responding*, it may also be successfully integrated with the strand unit 'Making drawings' in the *Drawing* strand of the visual arts curriculum.

Materials

- Drawing tools such as crayons, hard and soft pencils, pens, charcoal, pastels
- Paper, divided into six sections
- Up to six sound sources or instruments, contrasting in timbre or played in a variety of ways

'A landscape, torn by mists and clouds, in which I can see ruins of old churches, as well as of Greek temples—that is Brahms.'

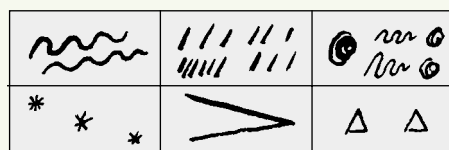
Edvard Grieg

Step 1

Once the materials are distributed, the teacher instructs the children to close their eyes and listen to the first sound-making source. The sound is played twice and the children are encouraged to illustrate it in whatever way they wish in the first box on their paper. The teacher assures the children that there are no right or wrong ways to do this.

Step 2

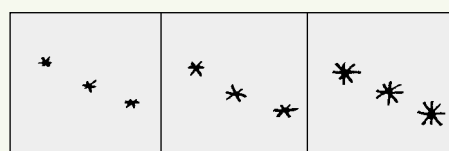
With all the sounds completed, the children discuss and compare their illustrations in pairs or small groups. The sounds are played again and the children give reasons for illustrating a certain sound in a particular way.



Step 3

The listening exercise may be extended by

- arranging three sounds in a sequence
- varying the dynamic level of some of the sounds.



Varying the dynamics

Again, the children discuss and compare results.

Exemplar 13

Listening, comparing and contrasting

third to sixth classes

Music with descriptive titles can provide a stimulating starting point for listening to music. While the musical excerpts should be chosen primarily for their musical integrity, it is worth while deliberately seeking two contrasting pieces when the objective is to explore as many aspects of the music as possible. Again, the children should have opportunities to hear the pieces on several occasions before any discussion arises.

Step 1: Listening

The teacher plays both recordings of the music at the beginning of the lesson, without referring to the titles. In this case the pieces chosen are 'The Flight of the Bumble Bee' by Rimsky-Korsakov and 'The Lark Ascending' by Vaughan Williams.

Step 2: Describing

The pieces are discussed individually, with attention focused on the musical elements. For younger children, the teacher may refer only to descriptive language, such as fast, slow, loud, soft, lots of short notes, etc., rather than the technical terms of tempo, dynamics or duration. It is not necessary to explore all elements involved in the piece, but the children's descriptions may include some of the following aspects. They could be recorded on the blackboard in the following manner:

The Flight of the Bumble Bee

Pulse: strong, regular beats

Duration: short notes in a continuous running pattern

Tempo: very fast

Dynamics: medium loud

Pitch: hovers around a few notes at a medium pitch, moving up and down in small steps

Timbre: mainly on stringed instruments, with some woodwind

Structure: repeated sections

Mood: excited, busy, energetic

The Lark Ascending

Pulse:	no strong sense of beat
Duration:	mixture of long and short notes
Tempo:	slow
Dynamics:	quiet
Pitch:	ranges from high to low, extending to very high notes in places; moves smoothly up and down
Timbre:	played mainly on stringed instruments, with violin solo
Structure:	separate sections not clear and little repetition
Mood:	calm and peaceful

Step 3: Expressing

The teacher may ask the children to describe what the music suggests to them. Having listened to their responses and recorded them on the blackboard, he/she may then explain to the children that the music expresses two different forms of flight that exist in nature and may ask the children to suggest the types of creatures involved. If necessary, the teacher may tell the children the names of the creatures depicted and also the titles of the pieces.

Step 4: Extending

As a form of extension, the teacher may ask the children to explain the techniques that they think the composers used to achieve the effects of movement and flight in their compositions. These could be referred to in a later composing session on the theme of flight. At a later date, the children could listen to other recordings by these composers, for example 'The Wasps Overture' by Vaughan Williams, comparing it with either or both of the previous recordings.

Integrating responses with other curricular areas

The recordings may also be used for

- moving to music in the *Dance* strand of the physical education curriculum
- exploring patterns and rhythm in visual arts
- linking with the strand unit 'Plant and animal life' in science
- as a stimulus for oral and written language development.

Performing: song singing

A sense of continuity and satisfaction can be achieved through the singing of songs learned in previous years.

The voice is everyone's first instrument. It surpasses all other instruments in terms of accessibility, flexibility, portability and cost. In this respect it forms the key to access to music education in the classroom.

Song singing

Song singing is an ideal way of engaging large groups in enjoyable and fulfilling music making. A sense of continuity and satisfaction can be achieved at every class level through the singing of songs learned in previous years. In the teaching of singing, the emphasis must always be placed on the joy of singing and on leading the children to use their voices to make beautiful music. Very young children learn songs by ear (or by rote). Older children enjoy combining learning by ear with the reading of music. The teacher sings or plays the song from a record, or plays the melody on an instrument, and the children sing it back. However, even when learning by ear, children benefit from seeing the printed music while singing and listening, as they may learn to follow the shape and direction of the music. In this way, learning by ear can complement skills in listening and reading.

Teaching a song by ear

Using the voice

This is by far the best method, as the teacher can instantly let the children re-hear a phrase that they have not picked up correctly, without having to upset the flow of the lesson by rewinding a tape or repeating the melody line on an instrument. The class teacher who sings with his/her own class is the expert, and therefore the teacher's voice is the best one. However, it is useful to take a comfortable starting note for the children from a pitched instrument before beginning.

Using a recording

Generally speaking, it is preferable if the teacher sings for the children. If a tape-recorder is used it is vital that it includes a tape counter and that rewinding is efficient. Similarly, it is important that the teacher remains involved, using the tape-recorder as a resource rather than as a substitute. Playing the tape as 'background' during another lesson should be avoided if possible.

Using a melodic instrument

While the teacher's own voice is the preferred option, playing a melodic instrument to teach songs can work very well. The teacher has to be careful, however, that he/she can still direct the children's singing easily and remain focused on their singing rather than on his/her own playing.

Select a song on the basis of its

- appeal
- genre
- suitability of words
- range of notes.

Selecting a song

When choosing a song, the teacher should keep the following criteria in mind:

- it appeals to the teacher
- the teacher thinks it will appeal to the children
- it forms part of a selection of styles, within the yearly scheme
- the words are appropriate to the child's stage of development and emotional understanding
- the range of notes is suited to the children's voices.

In choosing a song in Irish, teachers should be sensitive to the difficulties a class may encounter with unfamiliar words or themes. Any preparatory work that might be undertaken as part of the Irish or history programme would be of great benefit.

Preparation

Ideally, the teacher should know the song by heart and should not need to rely too much on a copy of the music. Rhythm and melody must be accurate, as correct concepts in music are just as important as correct concepts in mathematics. Every endeavour should be made to gain an understanding of the words, context and purpose of the song in order to convey its entire meaning to the children. If he/she is learning the song for the first time, it can be very helpful for the teacher to note any difficulties encountered, as these are likely to challenge the children also. Marking up a copy of the music to show where breaths should be taken and to indicate dynamic changes can also prove useful. Words and music are best displayed for the children on a board or chart, or projected onto a screen, to help focus their attention on the salient features. This also promotes good posture when singing.

Procedure

In introducing the song, the teacher may choose one of the following approaches:

- integrating the song with another curriculum area
- linking the song with a story or poem
- using a suitable picture to set a scene

Teaching a song

- starting note
- communicate
- something to listen for
- work on the first verse
- something to do each time
- discuss the theme

- presenting the song with little or no discussion, thus avoiding unnecessary talk and letting the song speak for itself.

Whether the teacher sings or plays the song from a recording, he/she should also

- give a comfortable starting note from a pitched instrument
- look at the children and communicate with them
- give them something specific to listen for to help their concentration
- sing the whole song through and thereafter work with the first verse only (and chorus, if applicable), concentrating on words, beat, rhythm, melody, diction, style and expression, usually in that order
- discuss briefly the theme or message of the song, clarifying the meaning or pronunciation of obscure words.

The song will need several hearings before the children will be able to perform it independently. However, on each repetition a different task should be given to the children to focus their attention, for example beating the rhythm, showing the shape of the tune with gestures, singing the melody to 'la-la', whispering the words or joining in with a simple refrain.

Singing ranges

When teaching singing the teacher is reminded of the need for care and for attention to quality of outcome. This is dependent to a great extent on the teacher's awareness of the range of a song, the range of the children's voices and the teacher's own vocal range.

'Tessitura' refers to the range that comprises the majority of notes. It can be used to describe the most comfortable singing range for a child or adult (for example, a singer may have a high or low tessitura) or, similarly, the compass of a song within which most notes may be found. The ability of children to sing in tune often depends on the difficulty of the song and whether or not it lies within their comfortable vocal range. The teacher should choose songs that match the vocal range of the children, striving for good tone even from an early age.

Vocal range

For children in infant classes (four to five-year-olds), the vocal range is usually five to six notes (fig. 1). Few are capable of singing a song covering an octave. Keys should be chosen to suit the children, not the teacher or an accompanist.

Through careful treatment, the vocal range of the average child will reach an octave by the age of seven or eight (fig. 2), and by the end of sixth class most children should achieve a vocal range of approximately one-and-a-half octaves (fig. 3).



fig. 1



fig. 2



fig. 3



Action songs are an ideal means of developing pulse and rhythm.

Speech rhymes can help demonstrate fast and slow

*Speak very quickly, talk very fast,
Sound like an engine clattering past,
Clittering, clattering, down the track,
Rattling there and rattling back.*

Singing with the musical elements in mind

Pulse or beat

'Beat' is the word used to describe the sensation experienced as pulse, which is the underlying 'throb' in music. While most children have a good sense of rhythm, they tend to have greater difficulty keeping the beat steady.

Chanting is a particular rhythmic use of the voice related to both speaking and singing. Babies do it spontaneously, repeating random syllables such as 'do-do-da-da' or 'mam-a mam-a mam-a'. As speech is acquired, children join in familiar rhymes, often beginning by chanting the rhyming words. This helps to develop an awareness in the young child of the beat or pulse underlying music.

Nursery rhymes and playground and street games can be used in several ways, while older children will enjoy working with age-appropriate chants, choral verse or creating their own forms, through, for instance, a rap.

Activities for developing the beat should include:

- chanting rhythmically
- clapping, marching, tapping, thigh-slapping, arm-swinging or rocking the beat, while chanting the words
- using gestures.

When well known, simple percussion may be added to

- keep the beat

- add tone colour
- illustrate the words
- give interest and variety.

Suitable instruments for keeping the beat are claves, drums, wood blocks and cymbals. For special effects, jingle sticks, triangles, bells, maracas and tambourines are very useful. The children should be encouraged to choose an instrument and to keep the time while chanting.

Tempo

Tempo refers to the speed or pace of music. Children may show fast and slow tempos and changing tempos through movement: for example, the teacher may clap or play a rhythm with a selected tempo. The children should be encouraged to keep the beat in various ways, such as

- clapping, clicking, slapping, tapping, marching to the beat, etc.
- working as a unit in a circle: clapping the hands of the adjacent children
- working in pairs: discovering new ways of keeping the beat
- marching, skipping or dancing to the beat.

With some speech rhymes, percussion instruments may also be used to demonstrate the tempo. Suggested instruments include maracas, jingle stick, triangle and wood block.

Rhythm

Rhythm is a succession of sounds (with or without silences) of long, short or equal duration. The following activities may help the teacher and children to develop awareness, accuracy and understanding of rhythm patterns:

- echo clapping the rhythm in phrases (imitating the teacher's rhythmic clapping)
- clapping or tapping the rhythm of the words
- marching the beat and clapping the rhythm
- working in two groups: one group taps the beat while the other group taps the rhythm
- working in pairs: tapping the rhythm on the partner's shoulders
- working in pairs: tapping the rhythm on the partner's shoulders while he/she taps the waist
- teacher taps the rhythm and stops: children indicate at which word the teacher stopped.

The basic concepts of dynamics, accent and phrasing may be explored through echoing rhythm patterns in a similar manner, with individual children taking it in turn to lead the class.

As a step towards Composing, the children may in turn provide a contrasting reply to a given pattern.

Melody

While rhythmic elements are relatively easy to teach, learning the melody of a song can often prove to be more difficult. Mistakes in melody are almost impossible to rectify, so it is essential to monitor very carefully how the children pick up the tune in the early stages.

Some of the following ideas will help the children learn the melody correctly:

- Songs containing built-in responses or echoes (e.g. 'Li'l Liza Jane') provide an ideal starting point, as the children can participate by singing sections on their own with little effort.
- Often if the song has a verse and chorus, the teacher can teach the chorus first and have the children sing this in turn, with the teacher singing the verses.
- The children can imitate melodic phrases from the song directly (echo-sing), particularly the more difficult phrases.
- The teacher sings to 'la-la', hums, whistles, sings with tonic solfa or plays on an instrument a section that the children must identify, either through words or notation.
- The children can be encouraged to look for the same or different aspects of the melody in the song—repeated phrases, contrasting phrases, etc.—and then sing them.

- The children can be encouraged to discover sections in the song where the melody moves by step, leaps or repeated notes and then show these with hand movements while singing.
- The teacher hums a section of the tune and stops; the children must then identify the stopping place.

Expressive qualities

In developing expressive qualities in singing, the teacher may draw upon some aspects of the listening programme by

- comparing songs with contrasting styles, either through recordings or classroom singing. For example, a marching tune and a lullaby could be compared in terms of tempo (speed), dynamics (loud or soft), mood, tone quality, or where the climax comes
- asking the children to choose how the songs should be performed
- asking the children to describe what happens to a tune when it is sung in a style unsuited to the words or meaning.

Effective singing skills

The teacher should always give a comfortable **starting note** to the children (preferably through his/her own singing, from a pitched instrument) and encourage them to hum it. This starting note should be referred to every time the song is performed.

An instrumental **introduction**, such as the last phrase of the song, or a short ostinato based on the chords of the song, may be used as an effective way of establishing the key and ensuring that the children begin on the correct note.

The **tempo** should be given by counting the children in at the correct speed on the correct beats, or else some verbal indication should be given such as 'Are you ready?' sung to the beat on the starting note of the song. For example, for the tune 'My Grandfather's Clock' show the pulse, then count three beats, as this tune begins on the fourth beat of the bar.

If the teacher plays an instrument, it may be used to **accompany** the teacher's own and, later, the children's singing. The keys chosen to play in should be suited to the children's voices and not merely to the printed music or to a set of chords that the teacher finds easy. Many schools have electronic keyboards equipped with a 'transpose' facility. At the push of a button the pitch of a song can be raised or lowered, allowing the teacher to easily find a comfortable key for the children to sing in. Once the children have

learned the music, the teacher may use a recorder or other instrument to provide a descant or harmony part to the singing.

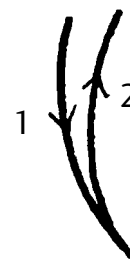
If a **piano** is available, it should be borne in mind that it will need to be tuned regularly, especially if it is often moved from one classroom to another or to and from a general-purposes room. Overuse of the piano or playing it at a level that drowns out the children's singing should be avoided. The teacher should at all times listen to the children's singing and encourage them to listen to themselves and the class.

Conducting

Simple but convincing conducting gestures can stimulate and inspire confident performing. At first the emphasis might be simply on starting the groups of singers together or on bringing the song to an end with a clear gesture. The teacher might then work with the children on maintaining a steady beat throughout a song.

The teacher should try to avoid overusing his or her face, head or feet in conducting. Gestures should ideally be limited to the teacher's hands, and the children should be encouraged to follow the teacher's beat at all times. The right hand is usually used to give the beat and the left hand to add expression. The teacher should also try to ensure that signals are consistent.

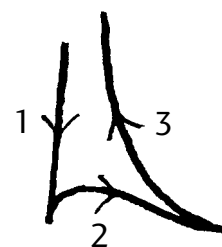
Conducting in 2



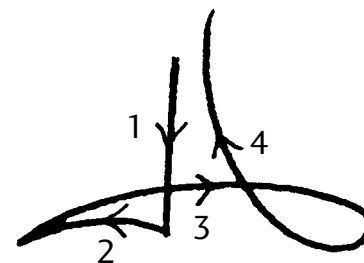
Practising conducting in front of a mirror can improve co-ordination immensely.

It should be remembered that a downward beat usually indicates a strong beat and that an upward beat indicates a weak or 'off' beat.

Conducting in 3



Conducting in 4



The size of the beat as conducted can indicate the volume of sound required: big movements should be used for loud sounds and small movements for quiet sounds.

Improving vocal quality

Activities or techniques to improve singing or playing should always be short, frequent and enjoyable. The teacher should bear in mind that such activities provide a gateway to improved performance and are not an end in themselves.

Posture

Standing or sitting so that the lungs can work without constriction or discomfort is essential. Both teacher and children need to be poised and ready for action, but comfortable and relaxed. Saying to the children, 'Stand (or sit) up straight' can have the undesirable effect of making the children stiff and uncomfortable. A more useful form of encouragement is to say, 'Stand (or sit) tall,' as this ensures a more relaxed, but equally poised, posture.

Mouth shape

The mouth must be open for good singing, more than for speech. In performance, exaggerated enunciation can help in creating clear diction and improved projection and sound.

Breath control

The aims in developing good breath control should be to acquire the following aspects of breathing:

- the ability to fill the lungs fully
- the ability to take a good breath quickly
- the ability to control the escape of the breath.

Attempting to gain extra breath by lifting the shoulders can be counter-productive in singing, because it tenses the neck and tongue muscles. It is essential to breathe deeply so that the lungs expand in the chest like a balloon: down and out.

Children could be encouraged to practise taking in enough air to keep their singing voices going by

- breathing in, and then holding a singing sound, 'ah' or 'noh'
- saying sections of the alphabet in one breath.

This will make them aware of the needs of breathing in singing.



However, breathing exercises in isolation are of little benefit to young children. It is more useful for the teacher to ensure that the children get into the habit of taking a deep breath before they sing, not to release it too quickly, and to encourage them to sing with the phrases of the music, that is, to take breaths at the sensible points.

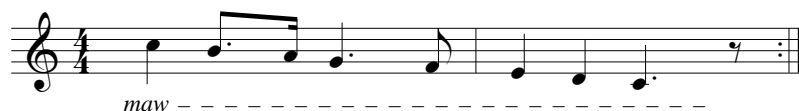
Simple vocal exercises

Although voice exercises are generally associated with more formal choral singing, it is useful for both the teacher and the children to warm up the voice before singing, especially if using a recording as a resource. The following suggestions include some general rules:

- Humming exercises: phrases of music that include broad vowel sounds, such as 'ma' or 'maw', are most useful.



- Humming should start at a high but comfortable pitch and work downwards, for example 'Joy to the World', first phrase, hummed or sung to 'maw'.



- High notes should be sung softly. Children should be encouraged to use only the head voice—the sweet, fluty resonant tone—and never a rough, ‘shouty’ raucous voice.



- The vowel sounds found most often in singing are the Italian vowel sounds. They sound like this in English:

A as in car

E as in air

I as in tee

O as in court

U as in school.

- The vowel colours should be exaggerated so that they are all distinct and pure. The following exercise may be of help:



Gradually ascend in pitch, starting next on D and using two other vowel sounds.

- Consonants should also be clear but unobtrusive, pronounced distinctly and quickly. The following exercise, using a familiar tongue-twister, can be challenging but fun for the children to try. The teacher may substitute other tongue-twisters or indeed phrases in other languages.



Posture Rap

Feet on the floor, one slightly ahead,
 Relax those knees, don't lock them dead!
 Hips rolled under, stretch the spine so tall,
 Sternum up, don't let it fall!
 Shoulders should be back and down,
 Head is high, don't wear a frown!
 Keep your hands down at your sides;
 Let the seam lines be your guide!
 This is how you stand to sing
 If you want your voice to ring!

Kenneth H. Philips

Exemplar 14

Teaching a song

first to sixth classes

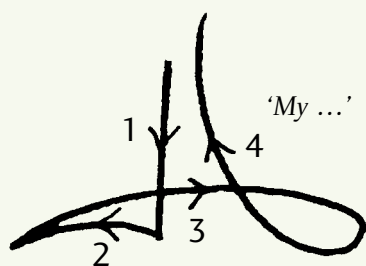
Whether a teacher decides to teach a song by ear or through a combination of learning by ear and learning from notation, the following song example illustrates some of the teaching points that have been outlined in the previous pages. The approach is flexible and may be adapted for different songs or for different teaching styles. It shows how a single tune can be presented in several ways while focusing the children's attention on a different aspect each time.

Although this is a song-singing lesson, the emphasis lies mainly on listening and responding in order to familiarise the children with the song. Preparing a song for performing would require a different set of teaching points. A final point to bear in mind is that song-singing lessons should be varied by singing familiar songs at the beginning or at the end of the session, or by learning a section of a different song.

My Grandfather's Clock

My grand-fath-er's clock was too tall for the shelf so it stood nine-ty years on the floor. It was tall - er by half than the old man him - self, though it weighed not a pen - ny-weight more. It was bought on the morn on the day that he was born, it was al-ways his plea- sure and pride, but it stopped, short, ne-ver to go a-gain when the old man died. Nine-ty years with-out slum-ber-ing, tick tock tick tock, His life's sec-onds num-ber-ing, tick tock tick tock, but it stopped, short, ne-ver to go a-gain when the old man died.

This song is conducted in 4 and it begins on the fourth beat of the bar:



Teaching points

- As the starting note indicated in the music is D, the teacher may take this from a D tin whistle (all holes covered), a pitch pipe, keyboard or other pitching instrument.
- The teacher tells the children that he/she is going to sing (or play on a tape-recorder) a song that tells a story, and that he/she will ask them to relate the story at the end.
- The teacher sings (or plays a recording of) the song, looking at the children and communicating with them.
- Then he/she may ask the children to relate the story of the song.
- Before singing the first verse again, the teacher may ask the children to listen to find out how tall the clock is and how old the clock is.
- On the next singing the teacher may hum the tune, stopping at the end of each phrase (i.e. on the words 'floor', 'more', 'pride' and 'died'), asking the children to listen for any phrases that sound the same as or different from each other (phrases 1, 2 and 4 are similar).
- The teacher may encourage the children to keep the beat by tapping softly with pencils during the next singing.
- The children will be ready to join in the next singing on the repeated line 'But it stopped, short, never to go again ...' but they may need some encouragement.
- Next, the teacher may display a copy of the words, either projected onto a screen or on a wall chart, and encourage the children to sing the first verse along with him/her.
- The children may choose, with guidance from the teacher, one or two instruments with contrasting timbres to accompany the next singing, for instance a tambour and a two-tone wood block.
- The teacher may suggest that the tambour keeps the beat while the wood-block plays a repeated pattern (or ostinato) for the next singing.
- Small groups or individual children may be selected to perform the song, with and without the accompaniment.
- The final performance of the song is given by the whole class.

Developing part singing

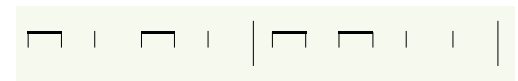
Simple part singing adds colour, depth and immense satisfaction to everyday classroom singing. Yet it need not require the expertise of specially chosen singers to experience success. Many of the activities suggested below occur as spontaneous and logical extensions to unison singing (i.e. all children singing the same part), and so, by keeping the musical elements in mind, simple part singing can be both achievable and rewarding.

The music curriculum introduces simple part singing in the Performing strand by presenting a number of devices that gradually increase in difficulty. These are *ostinati* (patterns that are repeated over and over), *drones*, *rounds*, *partner songs* and *part songs*.

Ostinato

Opportunities for activities that incorporate the use of *ostinati* occur at all levels throughout the music curriculum. Even in infant classes, keeping the beat through clapping or marching will prepare the child for two-part work at a later stage. From keeping a steady beat the child progresses to an awareness of the rhythm pattern and later to a repeated rhythm pattern or *ostinato*. An *ostinato* is most effective when it provides a contrast to the rhythm or melody that it accompanies.

For example, if the rhythm of a song is



an *ostinato* could provide a contrasting pattern, such as



Drones

Long, held notes or chords are also very useful in the development of part singing. Teachers can introduce the concept to children at a very early stage through the use of hand signs. For instance, the teacher may indicate to one half of the class to sing *mi*, while the other half sings *lah, soh, mi*.

Group 1:

m - - - l - - - s - - - m - - - d - - - m

Group 2:

m - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Similarly, pentatonic tunes may be accompanied by sustained notes or chords based on melodic patterns in the tune. These may be played on one or two chime bars at first to enable the children to experience a sense of harmony.

Later the teacher may teach the second part directly or pose an added challenge for the children by asking a question such as ‘Who can work out the secret tune played on the chime bars?’ and ‘Who can sing the secret tune?’

Children should not be allowed to block their ears right from the start, as good part singing requires that the singers listen to the other voices in order to blend beautifully together.

Teaching rounds

The following teaching steps may be used in teaching rounds in a structured manner:

- Teacher teaches the round by ear first (See ‘Teaching a song by ear’ on p. 70). It is advisable to spend several sessions ensuring that the tune is completely secure.
- When the tune is secure, the teacher enters softly as the second voice. This helps the children to become accustomed to the harmony.
- Teacher begins the round and indicates to the children when they are to enter.
- The class is divided into two groups.
- Two groups perform while the teacher adds the third voice.
- The class is divided into three groups.
- When secure, the children may try in pairs or trios.

Children should be encouraged to perform rounds very softly, or even humming, so that they can listen to the interweaving of all parts. It is important that the performance of rounds does not develop into a shouting contest of speed. The teacher should ensure that phrase endings are together by giving the children a signal to stop at a given point or end of phrase to listen to the other parts.

The performance of the round can be extended by combining instrumental playing with the vocal line. Rounds with a minor tonality may also be tried.

Partner songs and part songs

A similar procedure should be followed for teaching partner or part songs. Again, the children should be able to sing each partner song confidently before attempting to sing them together. When adding an unfamiliar second part above or below the melodic line, songs or tunes that are already very familiar to the children (for example nursery rhymes or Christmas carols) can provide a secure base to which the new part may be added.

Public performances

School assemblies offer wonderful opportunities for a range of musical encounters on a semi-formal basis throughout the school year. These include opportunities for children to perform their own or others' work or to form part of the audience. While the performers have the opportunity to develop a sense of occasion and a sense of audience, such an event can be of varying duration, style or content and yet contribute enormously to the cultural life of the school.

The school concert, pantomime, operetta or arts evening provides a special public forum for the performance of music. As with other musical activity, it should flow naturally from the class music, visual arts and drama programme and vice versa. The production should be an enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

In many schools, expertise in choir, band or music theatre may be readily available among the staff, parent body or in the wider community and opportunities should be taken to encourage talents and support initiatives.



School-based performances can enrich classroom activities.



The National Children's Choir performing in The National Concert Hall



A recorder ensemble performing at Córphéile na Scoileanna

Choirs and bands

Participation in a school choir, ensemble, band or orchestra is a very valuable experience for children. Its inclusion in the school curriculum can complement rather than replace classroom music. Its work should be enthusiastically supported by the principal and the entire staff of the school.

When, where and what a group sings or plays depends on many factors. In many instances, school choirs and instrumentalists perform a liturgical function on special occasions. However, consistency is very important and children need continual monitoring and regular opportunities to perform if they are to flourish. A repertoire varied with regard to style, tempo, period, language, mood, range, number of parts, complexity and technical demands will best capture the imagination of the performers and listeners.

Overcoming singing difficulties

Singing should be part of classroom life throughout the school year, but sometimes lack of practice during holiday periods can result in poor vocal production. However, regular energetic and enjoyable singing in the first weeks of each term can help revitalise vocal music making.

Occasionally a teacher may encounter individual children with singing difficulties. These are sometimes referred to as being 'tone-deaf', but in fact they rarely suffer from an absolute condition of tone-deafness. The problem usually lies with voice production rather than with hearing difficulties.

Singing difficulties could be divided into several categories, and the following suggestions may be of use to teachers attempting to remedy individual problems:

Working with individuals

- The child should be encouraged to attempt a range of vocal responses that transcend his/her normal production. These might include vocal play, such as animal or bird impressions, foreign accents, cartoon voices or imitations of engine noises or sirens.
- The child should be encouraged to develop an expanded range through moving in small, smooth steps away from the basic range they can

produce. This may be tried also in pairs: moving from an agreed pitch upwards or downwards in turn.

- In cases of underpitching, male teachers may find that individual children respond more accurately to the teacher's falsetto range than to his normal tenor–bass range.
- The teacher may help the child to discover that sound is vibration (in instruments as well as in voice) and hums so that he/she discovers lips, vocal cords, nose cavities and chest cavities all vibrating when sound is made.

Working with groups or whole class

- Underpitching or overpitching can also occur for some children when trying to match the sounds produced on an instrument, such as a guitar or piano. Encouraging the children to sing in response to the teacher's voice can remedy this problem.
- For the singing lesson the class could be regrouped so that weaker singers are in front of more capable singers. This reorganisation must be done under some other guise, so that no child feels musically inadequate. Otherwise this would defeat the very purpose of regrouping.
- As a class activity all children should hum their own sound, listening around the room until everyone's is the same.

Approaches to music literacy

A vast range of experiences in Listening and responding, Performing and Composing throughout the curriculum can be enjoyed by children without reference to music reading and writing. Nevertheless, knowledge of the rudiments of music literacy permits access to a whole realm of deeper knowledge, skills and understanding. For the child, some of the benefits of being musically literate include the ability to

- explore new music independently
- record his/her own music for future retrieval or revision
- share his/her own music with others and observe how others interpret and perform it
- understand how another composer created music and achieved certain effects
- think in sound, which contributes to better musicianship
- develop an appetite for future learning in music.

Music reading and writing should be preceded and succeeded by extensive experience of listening and responding, performing and composing without notation. Children at all levels should encounter rich and enjoyable musical experiences throughout the strands of the curriculum, and with the teacher's facilitation, should come in contact with cards, posters or books with notation in them. As a result, the children themselves will become enthusiastic about making music and will be aware of the possibilities of recording music in different ways.

The key to successful music literacy in the classroom lies in long-term planning, co-ordination and follow-up in which the school policy plays a crucial role. A number of useful techniques that may be used for teaching music literacy in an integrated, musical way are outlined in the following pages. Teachers may choose from among these and other methods in developing an approach that best suits their needs. They range from the representation of musical concepts in pictures (graphic notation) to a number of tools that enable the child to gain an understanding of the concepts of rhythm and pitch. These are the foundation stones that gradually lead the child to reading music with understanding, confidence and fluency from the full five-line stave.

Graphic notation

Children of all ages enjoy drawing pictures of their ideas and inventions. In many ways the concept of graphic notation is closely linked with the development of the child's personal symbol system in visual art. The introduction of graphic notation in infant classes also supports the development of the child's ability to match, classify, sequence and count, as well as preparing the child for using conventional or standard notation at a later stage.

The best time to introduce music notation is the moment when the child expresses a need to record his/her musical pieces or collection of sounds so that they can be recalled on another occasion. The first stage in pictorial representation is simple pictures to represent sounds or songs, for example a picture of a sheep to represent 'Baa, baa, black sheep' or a butterfly to represent 'Féileacáin'.

The second stage involves illustrating simple concepts in pictures or symbols. The teacher may discuss with the

children what kind of picture or shape could best represent a sound. By accepting their ideas, the teacher fosters and develops the children's confidence in their own ability to record. As the sound source changes, for example vocal sound, body percussion, untuned or melodic instruments, the children will recognise the need to modify their original symbols, and in this way the teacher can assist the children in developing their own rules for recording. The children should always sing, play or listen to the sound before considering it in symbolic form. Simple activities involving echoing, echo-clapping or improvising rhythmic or melodic answers to given phrases together with movement activities can enhance the children's understanding of the recording process. For instance, crouching down low and stretching up high will reinforce the concept of pitch differences. Similarly, marching to music will support the concept of steady beat, while stamping heavily for a loud beat will encourage the children to consider ways of recording the experience.

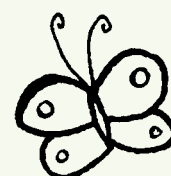
Guess the tune game



'Twinkle, twinkle'



'Baa, baa, black sheep'



'Féileacáin'

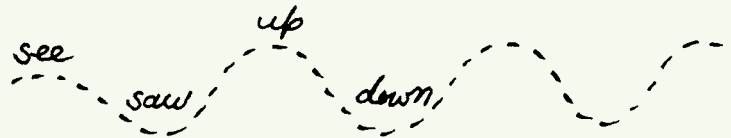
Teacher hums two tunes and the children select the appropriate picture to match each one.

Exemplar 15

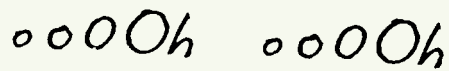
Representing concepts



high and low



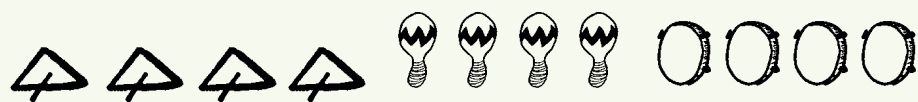
pattern of high and low sounds, or a simple tune



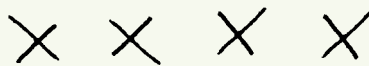
vocal sounds



different instruments



taking turns



showing beats in the air



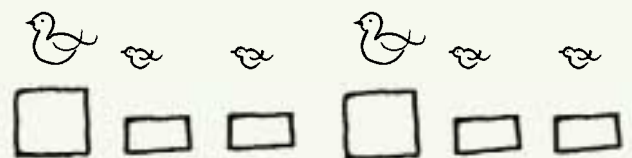
steady beat



loud and soft beats



beats and silent beats (rests)



beats and half beats (rhythm patterns)

Notating rhythm

- rhythm syllables
- stick notation
- standard note values

Standard notation

Standard notation need not replace graphic notation but rather can be introduced to complement graphic forms. The easiest way of approaching standard notation is to become confident with notating separately the two main elements of music— rhythm and pitch—before attempting them in combination.

While children generally will not be introduced to formal, standard notation until they have completed three or four years of the primary cycle, simple but carefully chosen songs for junior classes can provide the key to developing musical concepts at a later stage. For instance, familiar songs can be used in senior classes to emphasise features such as rhythm patterns, shape of melodies, structure, tempo and key signatures. In a similar way, older children may experience musical forms that may not be ‘analysed’ until they reach second or third level. At all stages, therefore, the children hear and experience sound before proceeding to a more conscious understanding of the musical concept through naming or notating.

Notating rhythm

Of the two main components of music, rhythm and pitch, skills in rhythm are the easier to acquire. From infant classes onwards children need lots of opportunities to feel the pulse in music, and movement is essential so that they can grasp that concept. The child must be able to feel and move in time to the beat before he/she can read rhythm notation with success. As in graphic notation, the beat can be represented in several ways in the early stages before being shown as a single stick. Half beats and silent beats may be introduced almost immediately without posing difficulty for the child. Many variations can be created using these three rhythmic elements (full beat, half beat and full-beat rest), as well as several musical games.

Rhythm syllables

As an aid to teaching rhythm, the syllable system (for example *ta, ti ti*) is very useful. It allows children to chant a pattern correctly in rhythm, which would be impossible if they used note value names, such as ‘crotchet’, ‘quaver’, and ‘minim’. The syllables are not names but expressions of duration. They are voiced, and generally not written as words. Their written representation is stick notation.


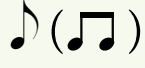







Stick notation

Stick notation is a type of musical shorthand that makes writing music without manuscript paper both easy and fast. Unlike some shorthand forms, it can be used to notate many complex rhythms. Children find it easy to learn, and such notation can easily be converted to staff notation at a later stage.

Once the rhythm names are familiar to the children, they may be reinforced in a musical way through games and activities, combined with known melodies (identifying rhythmic elements), or the patterns may be used as accompaniment to known tunes (rhythmic ostinato). They are best presented as flashcards in simple stick notation at first and later with the note blobs ('the shoes on the sticks').

Note values

The following table shows the different note values that may feature in a music literacy programme in the primary school. While teachers may be familiar with note names such as 'crotchet' and 'minim', arising perhaps from previous experiences of learning an instrument (e.g. piano or violin), children will acquire an understanding of note values or duration more easily through using rhythm syllables in the early stages. An extended version of this table may be found in the Appendix.

Note value	Note name	Rhythm syllable	Staff notation	Stick notation
one beat	<i>crotchet</i>	<i>ta</i>		
half beat	<i>quaver</i>	<i>ti ti-ti (for two)</i>		↑ (□)
one beat rest	<i>crotchet rest</i>	<i>(gesture)</i>		Z
two beats	<i>minim</i>	<i>ta-aa</i>		∩
four beats	<i>semibreve</i>	<i>ta-aa-aa-aa</i>		○
three beats	<i>dotted minim</i>	<i>ta-aa-aa</i>		∩.
one-and-a-half beats	<i>dotted crotchet</i>	<i>ta-i</i>		.
one-and-a-half beats plus a half beat	<i>dotted crotchet, quaver</i>	<i>ta-i ti</i>		. ↑
one beat plus a half beat	<i>crotchet, quaver</i>	<i>ta ti</i>		↑

All rhythm notation should be learned in the context of familiar songs and melodies.

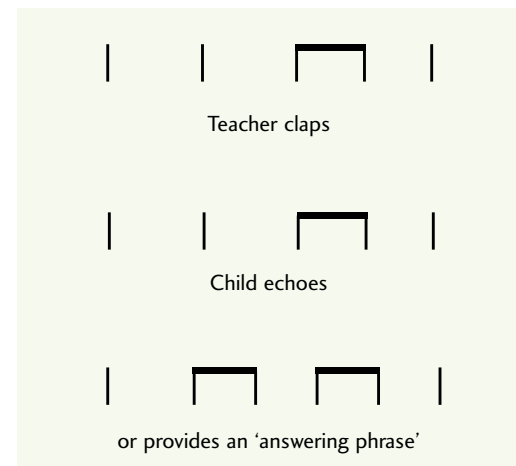
Learning rhythm notation through games

- Echo-clapping

Echo-clapping can be used to reinforce musical patterns and to prepare new ones. As a short activity, it can fit easily into a busy school day, provide a contrast from paper-and-pencil work, or function as a warm-up activity to a longer music lesson. As well as developing a sense of beat and rhythm by encouraging the children to respond immediately, it can be used by the teacher to provide opportunities for improvisation. Individual children can be invited to lead the class with a given pattern, to improvise an answering phrase or to provide a simple ostinato (a pattern that is repeated over and over) to a familiar tune.

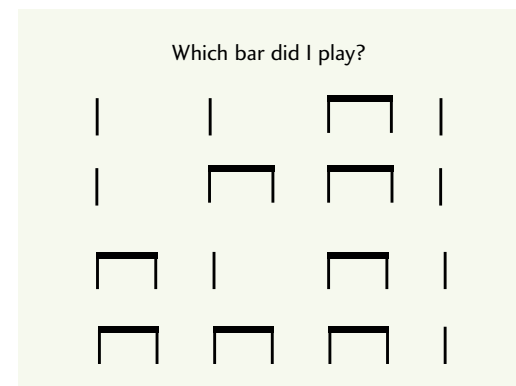
- Work it out

Children enjoy the challenge of working out rhythm patterns. The teacher can present a number of patterns to the children in 2/4, 3/4 or 4/4 time, depending on the age level, maturity and experience of the class, and invite the children to detect which one he/she is playing or tapping. The children can respond, for example, by saying 'It's the second bar' and by repeating the correct pattern.



- Rhythm dictation

Rhythm dictations can be fun, and children find them easy and manageable. As with other activities, they can be presented at a difficulty level suitable to the class and gradually extended during the school year. Individual children also enjoy giving the dictation, and correct answers can be practised and reinforced as a whole class.



Exemplar 16

Sequence for teaching a new element

Moving from known full beat to the unknown half beats:

						┌───┐		
<i>ta</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ta</i>
	┌───┐	┌───┐		┌───┐	┌───┐	┌───┐		
<i>ta</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ta</i>	

A second new element, the full beat rest, may be introduced in a similar way:

						Z	
<i>ta</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>rest</i>	<i>ta</i>
	Z	Z		Z	Z	Z	
<i>ta</i>	<i>rest</i>	<i>rest</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>rest</i>	<i>rest</i>	<i>rest</i>	<i>ta</i>

The three elements may then be combined:

	┌───┐	┌───┐			┌───┐	Z				
<i>ta</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>rest</i>	<i>ta</i>			
┌───┐	Z	┌───┐		Z	┌───┐	Z				
<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>rest</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>rest</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>rest</i>	<i>ta</i>

Other patterns may be introduced in a similar way, in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 or 6/8 time, depending on the children's experience of rhythm through listening and performing and on the children's age level and maturity.

♩	┌───┐	┌───┐	┌───┐	♩		♩	
<i>ta-aa</i>	<i>ti-ri</i>	<i>ti-ri</i>	<i>ti-ri</i>	<i>ti-ri</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>co</i>	<i>pa</i>

Pitch notation

- tonic solfa
- hand signs
- absolute pitch names
- finger stave

Notating pitch

As with rhythm notation, informal experiences of singing, listening to and playing music will precede notation of pitch and melody. The children will have enjoyed discovering ways of recording melody using graphic notation. The need to recall phrases and melodies with more precision so that others may read them will create a need for a standard form of pitch notation. Two-note and three-note tunes learned in infant classes can also contribute to the introduction of music literacy. As the shape of these tunes will be familiar to the children, the relationship between the written form of the notes will be easily apparent. For instance, a tune such as 'Hey ho' will have been sung, moved to or 'drawn' in the air before it is represented in notation.

Tonic solfa

Tonic solfa is a valuable and versatile tool in the acquisition of music literacy. In the tonic solfa system, the home tone or tonal centre of a song is doh in major keys and lah in minor keys, whatever the key may be. The solfa names—*doh, re, mi, fah, soh, lah, ti, doh*—represent the eight notes of a major scale. The advantages of this for teaching music literacy skills and sight-reading is that, for instance, soh-mi, once learned in one key, may be applied to any point of the staff. As sight-singing vocabulary increases, the child moves confidently from reading two lines to all five of staff notation. Solfa names are usually written in shorthand as lower-case letters: *d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d'*.

Hand signs

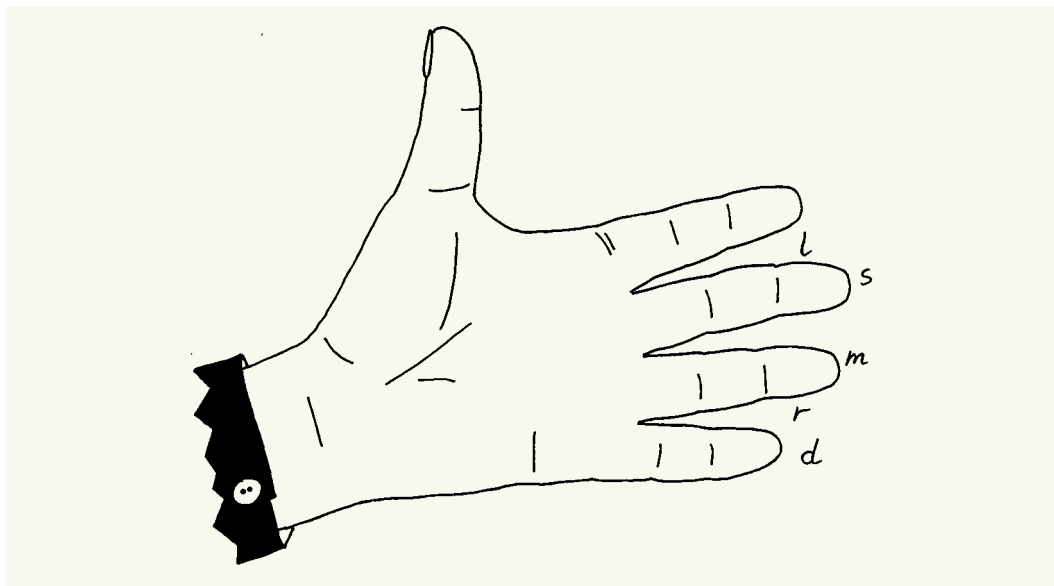
Hand signs are also a useful aid in the teaching of music literacy in general and in the teaching of intervals in particular, reinforcing the sense of interval kinaesthetically. They present a visualisation in space of the high-low relationship among the notes being sung. (See Appendix).

Absolute pitch names

Learning a melodic instrument usually gives rise to the introduction of absolute pitch names. These are the fixed pitch names given to notes. For instance, the scale of C major is represented as C D E F G A B C. Absolute pitch names are usually introduced when the child is confident in using tonic solfa on a five-line staff and understands the concept of the moveable *doh*. Singing with absolute pitch names should always be done with reference to a tuning instrument, for example a tuning fork, pitch pipe, good-quality recorder, piano or keyboard. This can be very useful for developing a sense of key and for enhancing musical reading, as the name of the note is reinforced both by its sound and by its symbol. Absolute pitch names are sometimes referred to as letter names and are written in capital letters.

Finger stave

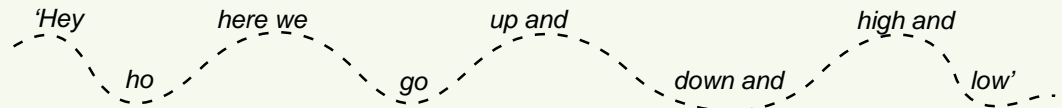
The finger stave is an effective tool for understanding the five-line staff in a tactile way. Each finger represents one line of the staff. The teacher or child extends the fingers of one hand, palm inwards, and points to the relevant notes with the other. The child can then read or sing the music on his/her finger stave using tonic solfa or letter names. As with hand signs, the finger stave is useful in the teaching of intervals in particular, reinforcing the sense of interval kinaesthetically.



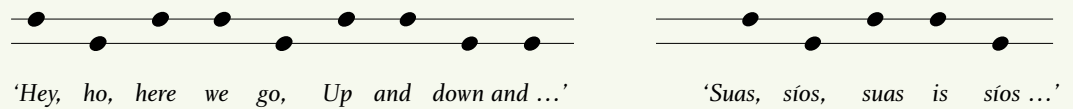
Exemplar 17

Stages of pitch notation

1. The words of a two-note tune show the shape of the melody

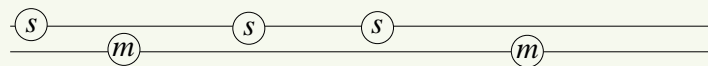


2. The familiar tune is represented on two lines, with a 'blob' for each note.

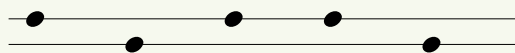


3. Next, the teacher explains that the upper note is called *soh* (*s*) and the lower note *mi* (*m*).

The 'blobs' may show the position of *soh* and *mi*.



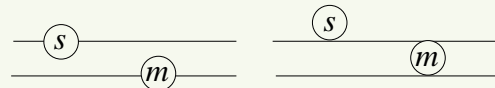
4. The notes are presented without any clues.



5. Even at this early stage it is important that the children realise that *soh* and *mi* are moveable and can be shown at a higher or lower pitch. An easy rule to remember is:

'If *soh* is on a line, *mi* is on a line. If *soh* is on a space, *mi* is on a space.'

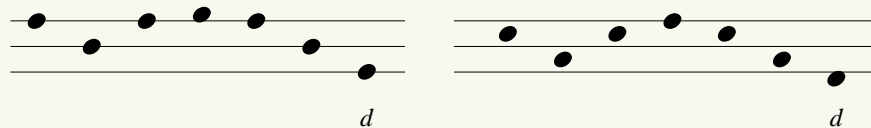
Understanding and applying this simple rule is an essential step towards gaining the confidence to read music in different keys at a later stage.



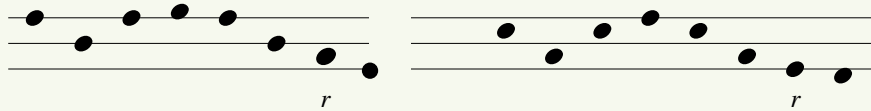
6. Another familiar tune is used to illustrate a new note, *lah*, and melodic patterns are read and sung at different pitches.



7. The next new note, *doh*, is added and an extra line is required.



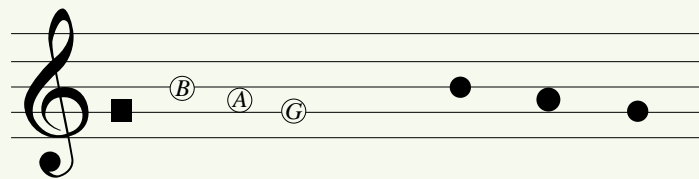
8. In a similar way, the fifth note, *re*, is introduced, completing the notes of the pentatonic (meaning 'five notes') scale.



9. Finally, the five-line staff is introduced. Rhythm values may also be added.



10. The treble clef shows the position of G, and other notes (absolute pitch names) and simple key signatures may be learned.



11. As the remaining notes in the diatonic scale are learned (*fa* and *ti*), simple key signatures may be explored.



G major



D major



F major

All stages of musical literacy are closely linked with the song singing programme.

Pentatonic means 'five notes'.

The notes of the doh-pentatonic scale are

- *lah*
- *soh*
- *mi*
- *re*
- *doh*

Examples of pentatonic music can be found in many folk songs around the world.

Pentatonic music

Pentatonic music can play an important role in the development of musical literacy. The term 'pentatonic', from the Greek word *pente*, five, is used to describe a scale comprising only five notes (such as the black keys of the piano, or other notes in the same position relative to each other). A pentatonic scale could also be regarded as any major scale with the fourth and seventh notes removed. The major key signature still prevails: for example, if a song has the key signature of C major and there are no Fs or Bs in the music, then we may say that the melody is in C pentatonic.

Pentatonic music exists throughout the world—from children's singing games and various folk song cultures to the work of composers. Its use in the early stages of musical training and development is highly recommended, as there are no semitones in it.

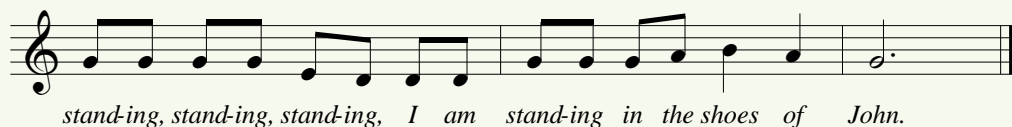
This absence of semitones makes it much easier to improve intonation, as it is based on the 'pillar tones', the first, second, third, fifth and sixth degrees of a major scale (*d, r, m, s, l*).

Because the scale is free of harmonic clash, discords are momentary and not unpleasant. The child, however, can remain completely free of this technical knowledge and still use the scale as a basis for improvisation, embellishment of songs and, later, melody writing.

Ultimately, the young child nurtured on pentatonic music in the early stages, without the support of a piano, will develop a healthy, discriminating musical ear.

Exemplar 18

'Shoes of John'



Inner hearing

The ability to internalise sound is an essential aspect of musical development. When the child begins to internalise sounds, his/her ownership of musical concepts and independence in musical thinking become more established. Hearing a piece of music in one's head happens naturally if one has listened to the music on numerous occasions. However, for the child, the ability to look at notation or at silent, lifeless instruments and think in sound is a skill that requires more deliberate instruction.

This skill can be acquired through

- the development of short-term memory
- the development of long-term memory
- using the voice.

The following suggestions, using rhythmic or melodic elements, can aid in this development:

- imitation of the teacher's singing of short, previously unheard phrases
- recalling previously learned phrases: for example, teacher hums a tune without the words as the children try to identify it

- singing silently (in one's head) long phrases within a song: for example, at the teacher's indication the children stop singing 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star ...' but continue the tune in their heads, re-entering at a given point, together and in tune: '... like a diamond in the sky'
- improvising from given phrases
- recalling improvisations and compositions for notating later.

Exemplar 19

Introducing a new note

In the following exemplar the approach to introducing a new note may be adapted to suit the age, maturity and previous experience of the children. In this instance, the songs chosen for introducing a new *re* are a traditional American tune, 'Here comes a bluebird' and an Irish song, 'Ailiú Éanaí'.

'Here Comes a Bluebird'

doh Here comes a blue - bird, in through my win - dow, Hey,

did - dle dee - a day - day - day. Take a lit - tle part - ner,

hop in the gar - den, Hey, did - dle dee - a day - day - day.

'Ailiú Éanaí'

Ail - iú éan - aí ail - iú éan - aí, Shiúl - as an drúcht 'san

ghrian ag éir - í, Ail - iú éan - aí, ail - iú éan - aí.

The first and third phrases of 'Here comes a bluebird' contain only the notes known very well by the children, *s*, *m*, *l*, while the second and fourth phrases end with *d-m-d*, also known by the children. 'Ailiú Éanaí' also contains patterns of *l*, *s*, *m*. The new note might be introduced as follows:

Step 1: Teaching the song by rote

The teacher should teach the song 'Here comes a bluebird' by rote and without referring to the notation, engaging the children with actions and movements as appropriate.

Step 2: Revising melodic patterns

Familiar melodic patterns *s-l-s-m* and *d-m-d* should be revised, with the children using hand signs. Reading from a three-line or five-lined staff may also be included, depending on the stage of development of the children in music literacy. Note that key signatures i.e. sharps and flats are not referred to.

Step 3: Listening carefully to the music

The teacher should ask the children to sing the first and third phrases in solfa, showing hand signs, and humming the second and fourth phrase. He/she may then have them look at the parts that go 'day, day, day' to discover that this pattern is *d-m-d*. From the final *doh* the children should be encouraged to sing to find what the first note of the last

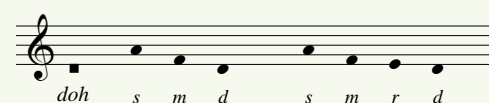
phrase is (*mi*). Then the entire last phrase should be sung, substituting a hummed sound for the unknown note.

Step 4: Discovering the new note

At this point the teacher may ask the question, is the new note higher or lower than *doh*? than *mi*? If the children aurally perceive that the new note is higher than *doh* and lower than *mi*, the teacher may give its solfa syllable, *re*, and its hand sign.

Step 5: Recognising the new note

If the teacher then places the known parts of the song on the blackboard on a three-line or five-line staff, the children, having felt the position of *re* with hand signs, can easily derive its position on the staff



and can express the rule that

If *doh* is on a line, *mi* is on a line, and *re* is on the space between.

If *doh* is on a space, *mi* is on a space, and *re* is on the line between.

Once *re* has been learned it can be practised in the context of other folk songs and melodic patterns, for instance, 'Ailiú Eanaí'.

Performing: playing instruments

Selecting instruments

- quality
- variety of timbre
- variety of playing technique
- number of instruments
- accessibility

All children derive a great deal of enjoyment and satisfaction from playing instruments. Very significant dimensions are added to music learning through playing instruments as the child sees, hears and feels rhythm and pitch relationships. The interrelated strands of *Listening and responding*, *Performing* and *Composing* are also realised as the child's attention is focused on listening attentively and critically to his/her improvisations and compositions (and the compositions of others) and performing them according to the composer's wishes.

Playing percussion instruments

Percussion instruments may be used at all class levels in several ways, for instance to

- represent a given pulse, rhythm or pitch
- improvise a pulse, rhythm or pitch
- add an original phrase
- add a contrasting phrase
- create background colour for poetry or prose.

Percussion instruments fall into two broad categories: tuned and untuned instruments. The untuned instruments have a fixed, but unspecified, pitch, for example shaker or cymbal. The tuned percussion instruments have fixed, specified pitches and can produce a melody, for example glockenspiel or xylophone.

When selecting instruments, the following points should be noted:

Quality of instruments

The superior tone quality and durability of a small number of good-quality instruments will provide more worthwhile and enjoyable musical experiences for the child than a multiplicity of inferior instruments.

Variety of timbre and playing techniques

The chosen range of instruments should reflect a variety of timbre and playing techniques: for example, a triangle, cymbals and a drum will provide a minimum variety of timbre and technique. Conversely, if buying a set of triangles of different sizes, care should be taken to ensure that they are of equal thickness for ensemble playing.

Number of instruments

The initial selection can be added to by instruments made by the children. Over time, a class set of quality instruments should be acquired.

'... I got to try the bagpipes. It was like trying to blow an octopus.'

James Galway

Melodic instruments

- chime bars
- glockenspiel
- xylophone
- metallophone
- tin whistle
- recorder
- keyboard
- guitar
- piano

The child should sing the melody, clap the rhythm, move to the music and hear or feel the music internally before playing.

Accessibility

Display areas are useful for motivating worthwhile experiences and, when monitored carefully, will provide opportunities for controlled activities for individuals or pairs.

Handling instruments

For the children, basic rules such as the following may be agreed in advance:

- respect for the instruments
- a limit on the number of players per instrument (one or two usually)
- soft playing (loud playing to be used sparingly)
- self-control when playing.

Learning a melodic instrument

Melodic instruments create opportunities for children to explore and perform music with a wide range of notes and tone colours. The relationship between different notes and the concept of melody can be quickly acquired through observing and handling the instruments. Children soon discover a very important principle of sound: larger instruments produce lower sounds, while smaller instruments produce higher sounds. The letter names for the notes or absolute pitch names may also be instinctively learned from working with bar instruments (for example a glockenspiel) or recorders. Gradually, as children grow in maturity,

the challenges presented by instrumental parts of various levels of difficulty can also be enjoyed.

Considerations when selecting a classroom instrument

- Quality of instrument, including tuning, tone and durability
- Simplicity of technique

Instructional considerations

Where a school decides to introduce melodic instruments, such as the recorder or tin whistle, planning should consider how continuity in teaching will be maintained throughout the school. Ideally, approaches to teaching and learning should aim to be musical rather than mechanistic: that is, the child should sing the melody, clap the rhythm and hear or feel the music internally before attempting to play. The teacher should seek to integrate the skills, concepts and understanding already acquired in other aspects of the music curriculum with the instrumental programme: that is, songs learned in junior classes and melodies listened to in the *Listening and responding* strand should form the bulk of the repertoire, especially in the early stages.

The recorder

The recorder is an ideal classroom instrument. The modern plastic recorder has excellent pitch, yet it is extremely sturdy. It combines very well with children's voices, and with other instruments. It is relatively easy to learn, and a whole class can learn together. The recorder has one of the richest and most varied repertoires of any instrument, ranging over the mediaeval, Renaissance, baroque and contemporary periods. As a stepping-stone to other instruments, the recorder is without equal. Recorder fingering is employed in wind instruments such as the flute and the clarinet, and the sense of pitch and music literacy that will result from a sequenced programme of recorder playing will enable the child to learn any other instruments with greater ease and confidence.

Recorder playing is an excellent method of introducing the class to solo and ensemble performance. After only a few lessons, the child will have mastered enough notes to be able to play simple folk songs and to take part in group music making in an enjoyable and meaningful way. The first notes learned on the recorder—usually the first five notes of the scale of G—are also at an excellent pitch for accompanying parts of the children's songs or for providing simple ostinato patterns.



The recorder provides opportunities for children to experience the joy of playing in an ensemble.

Purchasing a recorder for classroom use

It is desirable that all the class should purchase the same make of recorder, as this improves the timbre and tone consistency of group music making. The recorder that has three joints is preferable, as children with smaller hands can twist the bottom joint to an acceptable position. Ideally, each child should have his/her own instrument—both for reasons of hygiene and for facility in practising the instrument. It is worth spending a little more to purchase an instrument from a reputable manufacturer; there will be savings in the long run with respect to tuning and reliability.

Left-handed players

It is recommended that left-handed players learn to play in the traditional pattern, that is, with the left hand at the top of the instrument and the right hand at the lower end of the instrument. Otherwise the child will have difficulty in covering the ‘half-holes’ in the instrument, which are arranged for the player with the dominant right hand. Also, the child will have problems when he/she moves to playing tenor recorder. It is possible to purchase instruments specially constructed for left-handed players, but these are very expensive and not widely available.

Care of the recorder

Children should be taught from the beginning to have respect for their instrument, to gently warm it before playing (this affects the tuning), and to dry and clean it after use. When playing the instrument, children should clasp it gently between the lips: there is no need to bite the top.

Selecting an approach or tutor

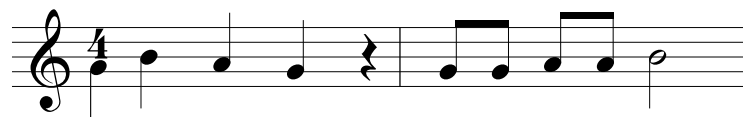
The teacher could explore the various tutors (teaching texts) available and choose the tutor he/she considers would best suit his/her class, considering such factors as clarity, sequence, repertoire selection and value for money. Since the literacy programme will be integrated with the singing and instrumental work from the beginning, the teacher may wish to explore simple rhythmic and melodic features with the recorder before progressing to a more formal, graded approach. For instance, the teacher may explore rhythm patterns on a single note, say B, the easiest note to play:



on two notes:



or on three notes, for example B, A, G
(*m, r, d* in tonic solfa), playing simple,
familiar melodies and improvising new
ones:



When notation is used, the children should always be encouraged to clap the rhythm and sing the melody in solfa or with words before playing. This helps them to hear the sound internally (inner hearing) and contributes to a more musical performance.

Each child should have his/her own copy of the music, both to facilitate practice and to encourage familiarity with printed music. Some schools overcome this initial expense by providing sets of music for the class, which can be reused by subsequent classes.

The tin whistle

The tin whistle is a very popular instrument in many schools. It is the cheapest instrument available. In the hands of an expert it is capable of great sweetness and expressive tone, yet children can successfully use it to reproduce their favourite folk songs, Christmas carols and simple classics.

For reading music, the method most favoured by tin-whistle players is tonic solfa, combined with staff notation. The tin whistle in the key of D is the most appropriate for use in the primary school, as this key is suitable for combining with the singing class. The D tin whistle is also a manageable size for children's hands.

A variety of tin whistles are available in the music shops, in brass or nickel. Nickel is slightly more expensive. It has a more durable finish, and some players claim its tone is superior. When

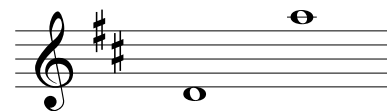


The tin whistle provides a practical and accessible link with an enormous range of traditional Irish music.

teaching a class, it is worth while making sure that every child uses the same brand of tin whistle, so that the tone will be consistent.

The teacher should ensure that the mouthpiece is fully pushed down before playing. This affects the instrument's tuning. Also, the instrument should be warmed, either in the hand or by blowing lightly through it.

The range suitable for class playing is usually *doh* to high *soh*:



Of course it is possible to produce notes higher than this, but individual players and instruments vary to a considerable degree in the upper notes (which are achieved by harder blowing), and squeaking and inaccurate pitch become a problem.

Accidentals (sharpened or flattened notes) are possible on the tin whistle, usually by half-covering a hole. However, these are not ideal for group playing, as thirty different children will have thirty different attempts at 'half-covering'! In this respect, the instrument may not be as versatile as the recorder.

As with recorder playing, if the children are taught the tin whistle through notation they should be encouraged to clap the rhythm and sing the melody in solfa or with words before playing. This helps them to hear the sound internally (inner hearing) and contributes to a more musical performance.

Composing

‘The material of music is sound and silence. Integrating these is composing.’

John Cage

Composing is a vital ingredient in the process of learning. It is concerned essentially with developing the children’s creativity within the framework of their thinking in music. As they compose they become increasingly aware of the sounds they are making as well as the sounds of others. In this respect the process of composing engages the children in learning that requires both co-operation and collaboration. Creating a piece of music for a particular purpose also involves children in organising, decision-making and problem-solving, and therefore it extends them beyond the task of simply making rhythmic or melodic patterns.

Most children come to school with a wealth of musical experiences behind them. They have been exposed to a range of music in their everyday lives—through listening to background music, musical mobiles or toys, songs sung to them, children’s programmes on television or

radio (as well as jingles and signature tunes, popular, traditional or classical music and videos) and various song recordings on cassette or CD. Many children will also have played with simple instruments such as xylophones, shakers or drums, creating their own music and establishing their personal taste.

Children naturally play with and explore rhythmic melodic features through singing and through simple instruments, varying tempo and dynamics instinctively. In the classroom this spirit of discovery is built upon in each strand of the curriculum and at all levels. In the *Listening and performing* strand the child is given structured opportunities for exploring sound, for singing simple songs and playing instruments in the *Performing* strand and for improvising, discussing, evaluating and recording in the *Composing* strand.

Improvising is an excellent way for pupils to experiment with musical ideas in an immediate and spontaneous way.



Why compose?

- to accompany a song or story
- to explore musical elements
- to experiment with sound
- to portray a character, mood or setting
- to illustrate events
- to convey an abstract concept

Composing for a range of purposes

The curriculum outlines a progressive range of purposes in composing activities, although it should be acknowledged that development in this area is spiral rather than linear, and progress may not always be predictable or clearly evident in every activity. The range of purposes for composing includes music

- to accompany a nursery rhyme, chant, song or game
- to accompany a story or a poem, creating simple sound effects
- to explore musical elements such as pulse, rhythm, melody, dynamics, tempo, structure, timbre and texture
- to create a rhythmic or melodic ostinato (a repeated pattern) to accompany a song or a chant
- to experiment with sound (chance music)
- to represent a character, e.g. a 'baddie' or a 'good fairy'
- to represent a mood, e.g. 'sad' music, 'happy' music
- to illustrate a sequence of events, e.g. the gingerbread man running away from the little old woman, the old man, the boy, the girl, the cat, etc.
- to convey an atmosphere, e.g. outer space, the circus

- to illustrate an abstract concept, e.g. confusion, joy, awakening
- to illustrate a line or an extract from a text in poetry or prose, e.g. 'Where the pools are bright and deep/Where the grey trout lies asleep ...'

'Sruthán beag mé, sruthán beag mé
Ó thaobh an chnoic a thagaim;
Is bím ag léimneach is ag rith
Is am ar bith ní stadaim.'

Gradually, with added experience of various techniques and styles, the children will arrive at unique and individual approaches to composing. However, they will require guidance and support at all class levels, especially in the early stages.

Organising composing activity

Most composing work will begin with a warm-up activity, such as a simple rhythm game, a vocal improvisation or a singing conversation. As the improvisations unfold, the teacher will need to help the children to find ways of giving structure and shape to their work. The simplest way of introducing structure is through establishing clear start and stop signals, and the children should be encouraged to work towards responding to these cues. While they will be exposed to a wide variety of sound-making materials, the teacher may need to limit the choice of sounds available to them in the early stages, otherwise their composition may lack clarity and shape. Also, thirty children

While improvising is a 'hands-on', instinctive approach to music, composing may involve greater experimentation, consideration and reflection.

Teachers have responsibility for children at all levels of ability in helping them to have shape and direction in their compositions.

improvising at once can result in quite a cacophony in the classroom! It is important that children listen closely to the sounds they are producing as they make them, varying and modifying as necessary. Therefore, the children will require time and space, individually or in small groups, to make their discoveries. Drawing up a few basic rules in conjunction with the children will facilitate smooth organisation and ensure quality learning experiences for all children. These may cover

- starting and stopping signals
- the handling of instruments
- sound levels
- time spent at each activity
- movement to and from the music area
- the maximum number of children who may work in the music area at any time.

The teacher should focus the children's attention on the effective use of a few ideas, rather than overstimulating them with a huge variety of sound-making materials. This applies to children at all stages and levels of ability. While this may appear teacher-directed, the opposite is true: children need a narrow focus in order to ignite their capacity for divergent thinking.

Limits may be decided on the basis of

- available instruments
- musical elements

- a range of musical purposes.

They may be combined and arranged individually, in groups or as a whole class.

Available instruments

These include the use of vocal sounds, body percussion, home-made instruments or 'found' sounds, tuned and untuned percussion instruments, simple melodic instruments and any other instruments available in the school—a piano, guitar, keyboard or accordion—as well as the range of playing techniques that may be employed.

Musical elements

The musical elements include those stated in the curriculum (pulse, duration, tempo, pitch, dynamics, structure, timbre, texture and style) as well as any additional emphasis that the teacher may wish to introduce. They may be approached singly, for example 'Can you make a rhythm pattern to answer this one?' or in combination, for example 'Can you make a melody that begins loudly and ends softly?' Thus, the boundaries in which the children work may gradually be widened.

The following pages outline a number of possible approaches to composing as a guide for getting started.

Exemplar 20

Accompanying a story, song or game

This lesson may be adapted to suit children of various ages, depending on their previous experience. While the use of the story 'The Elves and the Shoemaker' suggests younger children, older children will require an equally familiar but more complex story, around which their first efforts at composing may be framed.

In the early stages, the children will be concerned mainly with sound effects to accompany a story, poem or song and the way in which these can be incorporated into the narrative. The accompaniment will focus on the obvious features in the story or text, or a predictable high point, for instance '... And he huffed, and he puffed, and he blew the house down!' Later the chosen sounds are recorded symbolically so that others can interpret them.

Step 1: Setting the scene

The teacher reads the story to the children and together they collaborate to identify the main theme, events or characters:

- the elves
- the shoemaker and his wife
- cutting out leather
- the elves hammering and sewing
- scampering off when the job is completed.

Step 2: Choosing instruments

The teacher encourages the children to think about sound-making sources (body percussion, vocal sounds and classroom instruments) that might be used to illustrate aspects of the story.

Step 3: Identifying features

The common features in the sounds may be discussed:

- the shoemaker at work
- the shoemaker's wife at work
- the elves at work
- heavy hammering sounds
- light hammering sounds.

Step 4: Illustrating characters

The children may work collaboratively in groups to illustrate specific characters. After choosing the appropriate sounds, the children may wish to modify them to add more expression:

- the dismay of the shoemaker when he realises how little leather is left (the shoemaker tune may be played softly, eventually dying away)
- the surprise at finding the shoes already made (the shoemaker tune at a walking pace, then stopping suddenly in the middle of the tune)
- the excitement of waiting to see who has been secretly working for them (tunes or patterns from the shoemaker and his wife, followed by the light hammering sounds of the elves).

Step 5: Telling the story in sound

The final telling of the story should be taped and listened to so that the children can reflect upon and evaluate their composition before reworking it as necessary.

Exemplar 21

Accompanying a poem

As in the previous lesson, this approach may be adapted to suit children of various ages, depending on their previous experiences.

The poem 'The Leaves' (by an unknown poet) may be more suited to younger children, while older children will enjoy 'Chuala mé an Ghaoth' (by Colm Mac Lochlainn) around which their composing may be framed.

Step 1: Reading the poem

Having selected a poem to present to the class, the teacher should read it to the children and discuss the content, images and mood that the poem conveys.

The children may receive copies of the poem or see it written on a chart or projected onto a screen. Unfamiliar words or expressions should be explained.

Step 2: Selecting sounds

Sounds should be selected from a variety of sources to illustrate various lines—not all lines may be chosen, as the children may wish to concentrate on one or two particularly descriptive sections. The children will need to choose sounds that conjure up images of autumn and cold weather, for example metal objects or instruments struck with hard beaters.

The Leaves

*The leaves had a wonderful frolic,
They danced to the wind's loud song,
They whirled, and they floated, and scampered,
They circled and flew along.
The moon saw the little leaves dancing,
Each looked like a small brown bird.
The man in the moon smiled and listened,
And this is the song he heard.
The North Wind is calling, is calling,
And we must whirl round and round,
And then when our dancing is ended
We'll make a warm quilt for the ground.*

Anon.

Chuala mé an Ghaoth

*Chuala mé an ghaoth
Ag bualadh na bhfuinneog,
Ag canadh ar na doirse,
Ag séideadh na nduilleog.*

*Chuala mé an ghaoth
Ag luascadh an chrainn,
Ag leagan na slinnté
Anuas ón díon.*

*Chuala mé an ghaoth,
An oíche go léir,
Ag séideadh na fearthainne
Tríd an aer.*

Colm Mac Lochlainn

Step 3: Performing and recording

The poem is then performed and recorded with the vocal and instrumental accompaniment. The accompaniment and the poem itself may also be recorded separately and all three versions compared.

The task of accompanying various lines will heighten the awareness of the meaning of specific words and phrases. This will lead in turn to a deeper understanding and more expressive performance of the poem and will complement work in visual arts and in the language area.

Exemplar 22

Using musical elements

Exploring various musical elements can provide a particularly useful vehicle for improvising and composing. In the example given below, three elements are explored: dynamics (loud/soft), tempo (fast/slow) and simple structure, although a teacher could choose to extend this by adding other elements, such as timbre and texture. The materials used in this instance are widely available, and again the teacher may choose to vary this, depending on individual circumstances. The activity also focuses attention on the importance of listening as part of the creative process in music making.

Step 1: Improvising with materials

Each child is given a piece of paper and asked to experiment (or improvise) with this material to make a sound.

Step 2: Listening to and performing sounds

The child listens to the sound produced, and to the sound produced by the children seated nearby, as they perform in turn.

Step 3: Exploring the musical elements

First, each child varies the tempo of his/her sound and listens in turn to the others. Next, each child varies the dynamics of his/her sound and listens to the others.

e.g. Sam:  soft, fast sound
Joan:  loud, fast sound

Step 4: Exploring structure

The teacher explains how different sounds may be arranged, for example Sam's sound (A), Joan's sound (B), then Sam's again (A), to make a pattern, ABA. The children, in pairs or groups, work in collaboration to arrange their sounds to make a longer composition, with assistance from the teacher as necessary.

Step 5: Talking about and recording

Each child decides on his/her favourite version, records it on tape and devises simple graphic notation for recalling at a later stage. A title may also be assigned,

e.g.



The children also perform them in turn for the class. Similar steps may also be followed using a variety of body sounds, objects such as scrap metal, wood or string, or purchased percussion instruments. The compositions may reflect an idea, a sound effect accompanying a story or a composed story in themselves.

Children will need time and space when improvising and it may take more than one session to discover what works best.

Exemplar 23

Composing with rhythmic elements

Rhythmic elements link naturally with work in the 'Literacy' strand unit, although in the early stages the child needs only to perform his/her invented pattern from memory. At a later stage, and depending on the developmental needs of the child, the specific rhythmic elements may be identified and notated.

Vocal improvisations are suggested as part of the 'Improvising' strand unit in the curriculum for first and second classes, but they can be successfully incorporated in the improvising activities of all classes, either as a warm-up or as a more extensive lesson. Themes for vocal improvisations can be drawn from any number of sources: e.g. names of the children in the class, local place-names, mountain ranges, animals, car manufactures or favourite food.

Step 1: Selecting theme and pulse

Once the theme has been agreed upon, the teacher sets a steady beat, to which the vocal sounds are added. A four-beat structure is easiest to build on in the beginning, but other variations in three or five should also be explored. In this example Irish towns provide the theme.

Step 2: Improvising lines

The teacher may choose individuals to perform a given part or allocate groups of children to a part. Each line may be varied by adding rests, changing the dynamics (loud and soft) or the vocal range (high and low voices) or through combining individual words.

Group 1	Boyle	Boyle	Boyle	Boyle
Group 2	Tubbercurry	(rest)	Tubbercurry	(rest)
Group 3	(rest)	Castlebar	(rest)	Castlebar
Group 4	Sligo	Sligo	Sligo	Sligo

Step 3: Talking about and recording

Having improvised with each line in a number of ways, the children decide on their favourite version, and this is recorded, using a classroom tape-recorder or other suitable device. The children listen to the recording and discuss some improvements, where necessary. On another occasion the teacher may replay the recording to identify the rhythmic elements. A notated version of the above improvisation may thus be recorded as

Group 1				
Group 2	≡	Z	≡	Z
Group 3	Z	≡	Z	≡
Group 4	┌	┌	┌	┌

Extension

The above activity may be extended in a number of ways, firstly, by encouraging the children to transfer each line of rhythm from the vocal improvisation onto a different percussion instrument, and secondly, by using the individual words as patterns for new directions in composing.

For instance, individual children may arrange the given rhythm patterns to make new patterns, performing them on an instrument of his/her choice:

Áine's rhythm (on the drums)				
Tom's rhythm (on the Indian bells)		Z		Z
Seán's rhythm (on the triangle)	┌───┐		┌───┐	
Cara's rhythm (on the tambourine)	┌───┐	┌───┐	┌───┐	┌───┐

The patterns may be combined in various ways:

Áine's rhythm				
then Seán's rhythm	┌───┐		┌───┐	

Then Tom and Cara's rhythm (together)	Z Z	(bar rest)	Z Z
	┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐	┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐	(bar rest)

Seán performs his friends' patterns alone on the Indian bells

┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐						┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐		Z Z
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Exemplar 24

Composing using melodic elements

As with rhythmic elements, composing melodies should always begin from a given structure. Not only does this provide a secure starting point, but it also ensures that progression can be more easily observed and monitored.

Singing conversations

The curriculum suggests singing conversations at all levels as a useful means of getting started in melodic composition. These can be based on simple melodic patterns, involving two or three notes, and may be performed with several variations. For instance, the teacher may sing a question such as ‘Do you like playing the chime bars?’ based on the notes *l*, *s*, *m*, to which the child sings a response using the same notes. A literacy element can be easily incorporated by using hand signs:

Teacher demonstrates

l l
s s *s*
m
Child imitates using hand signs

Teacher demonstrates different patterns

l *l l*
s *s s* *s*
m
Child imitates or provides a new answer

Individual children can then lead the class or group in turn, composing their own patterns.

Combining familiar rhythm patterns with melody

Rhythmic elements that have been explored at an earlier stage can be added to the melodic patterns. For example, the word patterns from vocal improvisations can be added to groups of notes or simple scales that are already familiar to the ear.

s *s* *s* *l* *l* *l* *l* *m* *m*
Boyle Sli - go Tub-ber- cur - ry Sli - go
| ┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐ ┌───┐

Pentatonic tunes

The notes of the pentatonic scale, *d*, *r*, *m*, *s*, *l*, can be used to create melodies that are tuneful and easy to play or sing. Children enjoy experimenting with these notes on a keyboard using the black keys. Simple accompaniments involving drones can also be added easily and effectively, and the resulting composition can be notated in solfa.

'Free singing'

Open singing conversations are more difficult to notate but they provide a gateway for more advanced exploration of melody, dynamics, mood and structure. They provide links with operatic structures such as duet, aria and recitative and they can also be integrated with other curricular areas, for instance 'getting into character' as part of a unit in history. An example of this can be found in the Great Famine (see Teacher Guidelines: History), where two types of landlords one caring and one irresponsible, could be contrasted.

Musical questions for the children when composing melodies for these characters could be:

- What kinds of voices will they have—high or low?
- Will they both sing the same tune?
- Will they both sing in the same way or will one be loud and rough and the other softer and more gentle?
- Will they sing quickly or slowly?
- How many lines should they sing?
- How will the song be organised?
- Will there be a repeated section?
- Will they sing any lines at the same time?

- What words should receive special emphasis?
- How should words be emphasised?

As a project such as this will involve many musical choices and decisions, several composing sessions may be required. The process of discovery and decision-making should be recorded in whatever way the children can manage, indicating the words of the melody, the notes of the tune and the rhythm pattern as well as their own reflections on the task. The process may involve several drafts, which could form part of an extended performance project. All stages of the process should be retained in a portfolio for future review. A recording mechanism such as a tape-recorder or camcorder can add an extra dimension to both the drafting and the review stages.

A useful time for talking about the composing process is when the child has completed his/her first draft.

Talking about and recording compositions

Talking about and reflecting on what has been done in the composing class is an important aspect of the composing process. While the teacher will facilitate and nurture the child's inventions and discoveries, he/she will also encourage the child to review the composition to ensure that the child has realised his/her intentions. In the same way, the child should recognise that revision is a natural part of the composing and performing process and that all performers and composers in the 'real world' constantly review and revise their own work. Talking about the process and evaluating it can take place at various points in the process, but a useful time is when the child has

completed his/her 'first draft'. The experience of listening objectively to his/her own recorded composition can stimulate both verbal and non-verbal thinking at a high level. The interplay of teacher observation and pupil self-assessment in this area will contribute enormously to the teacher's understanding of the child's growth and development as a musician. In addition, discussions in the *Listening and responding* strand, where the child is allowed to express his/her preferences and give reasons for them, will provide a model for his/her self-evaluation in composing at a later stage.

Notating

Notation—either standard or invented—is not an essential component of composing, but it can help the process of thinking and planning if children write down or record their musical ideas. In the early stages, when children start inventing music, they will find no need to write it down. Later on, as they are trying to recall, they will recognise the need to invent a system of reminders that can be understood by themselves and others. If the children are encouraged to present their musical ideas with personal symbols or pictures, and subsequently to interpret them for others, musical notation of all kinds will be given meaning and reality for them. Skills developed in the strand unit 'Literacy' will also acquire greater relevance for the children. Also, work in this area can



be integrated successfully with work in mathematics (pictograms, 2D shapes), in visual art (drawing, developing a personal schema) and later in geography (understanding the key in map reading).

Involving professional composers

The involvement of professional composers and musicians with schools, through various schemes, can create a considerable catalyst for a synthesis of composing and performing skills with creative stimuli. The experience of hearing a professional musician or ensemble perform either the child's music or music from other sources can change the life of a young composer, and the opportunity to sing or play alongside such musicians can greatly influence the young performer. The interest generated among children, parents and teachers by such occasions is inestimable.

All children should develop the ability to operate musically in both written and unwritten traditions—by listening and responding, performing, reading, writing, improvising and composing.



Improvising with *anklungs*

Information and communication technologies

Software for listening can be used to

- listen to the sounds of instruments
- listen to musical excerpts
- see pictures of instruments
- see instruments being played.

For the teacher, no programming knowledge is required to create a multimedia listening lesson when using 'listening maps'.

The use of information and communication technologies can be highly motivating in the classroom. Multimedia materials in particular are an enormous asset to the study of music. With only a multimedia computer and a pair of headphones, children working individually, in pairs or in small groups can listen to music, explore and learn about music, practise skills, research topics and share ideas with others outside the classroom.

Software for listening

Multimedia systems allow children to see high-quality pictures of individual instruments and listen to them being demonstrated. The children may listen to excerpts from particular pieces or entire performances. In addition, some software packages include a ready-made 'listening map', which can help guide the children around the listening excerpt. Other packages allow the teacher to create form charts and add text messages to accompany any available CD. With this software, the teacher can design a visual aid to any listening lesson. Since the teacher writes the messages, the script can be designed for any age or class level, and the lessons can be tailored to a teacher's specific need.

Synchronised text messages are especially useful. These text messages are synchronised with selected points in the recording. For the teacher, no programming knowledge is required to create a multimedia listening lesson through this kind of software. Once the analysis of the music is done, the chart and the text can be constructed in about the time it would take to make a worksheet. One of the greatest advantages of this system is the ability to play back at any point on the CD, with pinpoint accuracy to the desired section. Ready-made listening maps can also provide a guide to music that might otherwise be inaccessible in the classroom.

Projection systems

The pictures and information in multimedia systems can be shared with large groups of children by using a projection system. This allows all children to view the contents of the computer screen through a clearer monitor. In some cases, a standard television set in normal room light can be used as an effective projection system.

The internet can be used for

- school music projects
- school-to-school link-ups
- downloading songs and sheet music.

Internet

The world wide web is a vast public arena of potentially infinite resources. Many primary schools set up their own web sites to present information about their schools, such as school policy, forthcoming events, children's work and curricular activities. A home page can be very useful for the teaching of music for several reasons. Schools may wish to inform others about musical events or performances in the school, to communicate with other schools and music organisations and to receive feedback. Many modern music keyboards are MIDI- compatible (musical instrument digital interface). These keyboards can be connected to a school computer allowing children to store their music as a computer file. With the help of MIDI equipment, it is feasible to produce on-line music performed by the children. MIDI files are a highly efficient method of transmitting musical information over the internet, because of their small file size.

Notation software

Several notation software packages that can be used by children in primary schools are widely available. Many more are continually being revised and upgraded and can be readily accessed at the distributors' web sites. This software allows children to record their own music simultaneously—either sung or played—in standard or graphic notation. The printed version can then be saved for future sharing, performing, reviewing or rearranging.

Looking closely at children's work

Any discussions on the children's work should be constructive.

The musical development of the child may be closely observed in many teaching situations suggested in the curriculum. Teacher observation, teacher-designed tasks and the use of portfolios will enable the teacher to monitor the effectiveness and understanding with which various activities have been undertaken. A description of these tools is given in the assessment statement in the curriculum.

In the course of day-to-day teaching, the teacher may observe the children's integrated work throughout the three strands, or in specific strands. This will depend on the learning outcomes that the teacher has planned for the lesson, within a scheme of work. For instance, in teaching a melodic instrument, the teacher's main objective may be that the children will be able to sing and play a number of simple tunes and to improvise melodic patterns at the end of a series of lessons. Within a single lesson, however, the teacher may wish to observe the child's ability to hold the instrument correctly, to listen to and follow directions, to concentrate on a particular task, to work successfully with a partner and to persevere when a situation becomes particularly challenging.

Other aspects of musical work will be less teacher-directed and perhaps will demand more independence, initiative and creativity from the child. In these situations the learning outcomes may be less quantifiable, and therefore the teacher will need to pose a different set of questions in order to gauge the effectiveness of his/her teaching. The teacher will need to show special sensitivity when the creative work of the children is discussed openly. The children will have their own personal pride in what has been created, and while they should be encouraged to discuss one another's work, it should be done in a constructive spirit of generosity.

Such observations feed directly back into the teaching and learning process, emphasising areas of weakness or strength in the children's achievement, providing useful summative information and guidelines for future planning.

In looking at the children's work in each of the three strands, the teacher will also discern the development of the integrated musical elements as they emerge.

Listening and responding

During class work where the focus is predominantly on the *Listening and responding* strand, the teacher may pose the following questions in relation to one or more children:

- Does the child enjoy the music?
- Is he/she really concentrating on the listening source or is he/she distracted by other stimuli? If the child has difficulty concentrating, is this because of the sound quality of the performance or recording, the communication of the performer, the relevance of the music itself to the listener or some other factors?



- Is the purpose of the listening extract (or performance) clear to the child?
- How does the child move to the music? If he/she is encouraged to move to the music, are these movements natural or inhibited? Can the child move in time to the beat of the music? Can the child co-ordinate feet and hands, showing beat and rhythm? Can the child show the shape of the tune, for example moving from high to low? Does the child show sensitivity to expressive phrases or sections?
- How does the child describe the music? Does he/she show a sense of openness towards unfamiliar music or towards music of different cultures and eras? Can the child discuss features in the music as well as express preferences?
- How does the child record or illustrate responses to music?
- Has the listening experience any impact on work in other areas of the music curriculum (linkage) or in other subject areas (integration)?

Performing

Where the focus of a lesson is predominantly on the *Performing* strand, the teacher may pose the following questions in relation to one or more children:

- Does the child participate in the performing activity with enthusiasm? If the child shows little interest in the music, is this because of the manner in which it is presented, the newness or staleness of the experience, the difficulty level, or the relevance of the music to the child?



- How does the child deal with the musical elements? Is he/she capable of keeping a steady pulse? of maintaining accurate rhythm? keeping the correct pitch? remembering the words when singing? varying the dynamics or tempo?
- Does the quality of the child's singing or playing change if he/she is performing alone or with others?
- Can the child cope with the technical and co-ordination demands of playing a percussion or melodic instrument? Is the pace of the class too fast or too slow? Is the child progressing at an appropriate rate for his/her age? If the child is learning an instrument outside school, is he/she sufficiently challenged by the class activity?
- Does the child work well with others? Does the child listen carefully to instructions and respond appropriately to the cues of the conductor?

Composing

As many composing tasks will involve group work, the teacher will need to visit each group in turn and observe the children as they work. The contribution that each child makes to the group will then become apparent.

At times, the balance within a group may need to be evened out, with the teacher ensuring that each child is given a significant task. When each group has performed its completed work to the class, the children may need to be prompted to discuss one another's work. Each child might also write a short assessment of his or her own contribution to the piece and an opinion of the effectiveness of the group's music. This task can provide valuable insight for the teacher into the composing process.

The following are some questions the teacher may ask of himself/herself or put to the class after listening to the finished result in a composing lesson.

- Had the piece a specific aim—to accompany a story, to describe something, to amuse, to frighten or to inspire? Did it achieve this aim?
- Was the piece too long, too short or just right?
- Did it sound as if the performers were playing at random, or could some form of overall organisation be detected?
- Did the music contain contrasting sounds or did it sound the same all the way through? Was there any repetition in the piece? Was this what the children intended?
- Did the music involve the use of several instruments or just one or two? Were specific techniques used, for instance sliding across several notes, hopping off some notes or alternating quickly between two or more notes?
- Can the children perform their piece again, making it sound substantially the same?
- Can the children explain how they planned and organised their piece?
- What do the children themselves feel about the piece of music they have composed?
- What is the response of their classmates to the music?

*Children delight in
improvising and arranging
sounds to illustrate new
musical ideas*



Section 6

Appendix

Musical instruments suitable for primary schools

Homemade instruments and found sound sources

Paper

drawing paper
tissue paper
sugar paper
sandpaper
glasspaper
emery boards
paper bags
egg cartons
newspaper
corrugated card
strong cardboard
greaseproof paper
paper towel cylinders
toilet roll cylinders
Cellophane

Metal

foil containers
silver foil
baking trays, cake tins
cans
oven shelves
cast iron saucepans
cutlery
copper tubing
tools
paper clips
springs
buckets
washers
bottle tops
nails, screws, bolts
toys
bicycle pump

Plastic

spoons
ballpoint pens
bowls
plant pots
funnels
curtain rail
food containers
cups
drink bottles
rulers
yoghurt pots
toys
carrier bags
combs and brushes
buttons and cotton reels
chopsticks

Rubber

tyre tubing
balloons
rubber bands

Natural objects

twigs
pine cones
pebbles
dried leaves
dried peas, beans, rice
sand
seed pods
walnut shells
sea shells
blades of grass

Glass, ceramics

earthenware flowerpots
glass bottles
marbles
drinking glasses

Wood

pencils
chopsticks
chopping boards
lollipop sticks
boxes
rulers
wooden spoons
bowls
off-cuts
broom handles

Fabrics and fibres

velvet
raffia
taffeta
cotton wool
string

Tuned (or pitched) percussion

chime bars	all notes
glockenspiels	all notes
metallophones	all notes
xylophones (soprano, alto, bass)	all notes

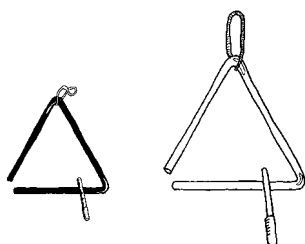
Untuned (or unpitched) percussion

bells (e.g. cow bells of various sizes)
 claves (different pairs of sizes)
 cymbals (including one large cymbal on a stand)
 drums (bongos, tambours, tabla)
 gongs
 Indian bells
 jingle sticks (jingle bells)
 maracas (wooden, plastic)
 snare drums (various sizes and shapes)
 tambourines (various sizes and shapes)
 triangles (of equal thickness, but various sizes)
 wood blocks (tulip block, two-tone wood blocks)

Melodic instruments

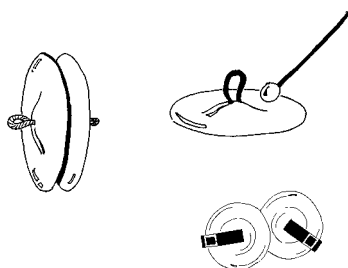
tin whistle in D for class use (although schools could compile a range for individual pupil use)
 selection of other tin whistles for exploring sound and composing, e.g. in G, F or C
 descant recorder for class use
 tenor, sopranino and alto recorders for ensemble work
 keyboards
 synthesisers

How to hold and play some percussion instruments



Triangle

The triangle is held in one hand, suspended from the top corner by a cord or leather holder. The beater is held in the other hand and the instrument can be struck either on the outer side, or lower inner side. The touch should be delicate and springy, like bouncing a ball. The beater can also be struck rapidly against the inside base and the side of the instrument producing a trill, or tremolo effect.



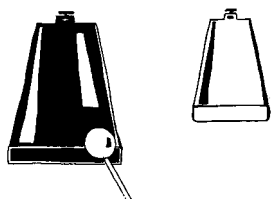
Cymbals and finger cymbals

The cymbals are traditionally played by holding the leather holders in each hand and clashing them together. The sound can be allowed to vibrate, or can be dampened by pressing the cymbals against the body. For younger children, a single cymbal can be suspended from its holder and struck with a variety of beaters to provide different sounds. To achieve a delicate sound one cymbal may be struck gently on the edge of the other. Finger cymbals are mini cymbals, held between the fingers and struck together to produce a clear bell-like tone. They may also be mounted on the fingers with elastic loops.



Indian bells

This instrument consists of two brass disc shapes, joined by a piece of string. The cord should be held loosely in each hand and the lower bell struck with the upper, so that the edge of one disc bounces against the flat surface of the other.



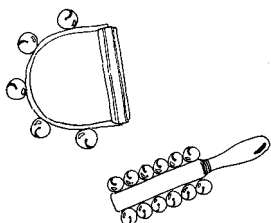
Cow bell

The cow bell may be cupped in one hand and struck with a beater which is held in the other hand. The cow bell may also be suspended by its upper loop, and struck either on the inside or on the outside.



Metal agogo bells

This instrument is held in the mid section and struck with a beater. It has a clear, bell-like sound, and each bell produces a different tone.



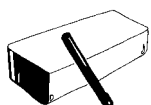
Jingle stick and sleigh bells

A jingle stick has a wooden handle, with two or more bells fixed at each end. It may be played by shaking the handle or by tapping smartly against the other hand to produce a sharper rhythm. A sistrum is similar to a jingle stick except that it has more bells. Sleigh bells are semi-circular in shape and may also be played by gripping the handle and gently shaking the instrument.



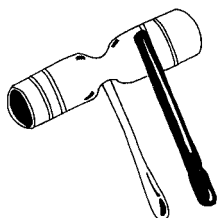
Cabasa

This can be played by shaking it. Alternatively, and more usually, it is played by rotating the beads against the central metal cylinder to produce a grating sound.



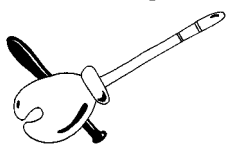
Wood block

The single toned wood block is a cuboid-shaped block of hard wood. It is held in one hand and struck with a beater. It is most effective when it is played with a pair of drumsticks.



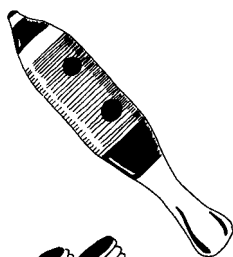
Two-tone wood block

As the name suggests, this instrument can produce two different tones. It is held by the handle and each side is struck with a wooden beater.



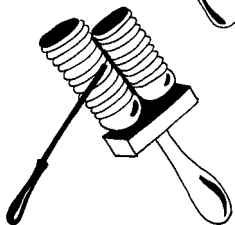
Tulip block

The tulip block is shaped like a tulip with a hollow head. It is held in one hand and played with a stick which is held in the other hand. Different parts of the head can create different sounds.



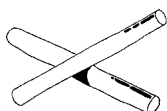
Guiro

The guiro is an oval-shaped instrument with a ridged surface. It may have finger holes to help hold it. It is held in one hand and scraped with a stick held in the other hand producing a rasping sound. Guiros are made of a variety of materials including metal and wood. Metal guiros often have more than one type of serrated surface, so that it is possible to produce a greater variety of sounds on them.



Wooden agogo

The wooden agogo may be struck like the two-tone wood block or scraped like the guiro.



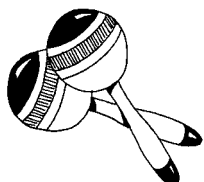
Claves

These are hardwood sticks, in varying thicknesses. One stick is held cupped in one hand and struck with the other stick.



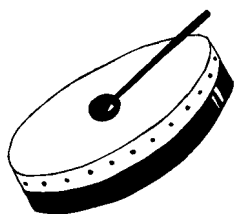
Castanets

The castanets mounted on a wooden handle are easy to hold and produce a clear rhythm. The children can hold the instrument in one hand and clap it into the palm of the other hand. Sometimes, the castanets may be manufactured using a strong elastic band to connect each pair. The instruments are held between the fingers, and clicked together in a pinching motion.



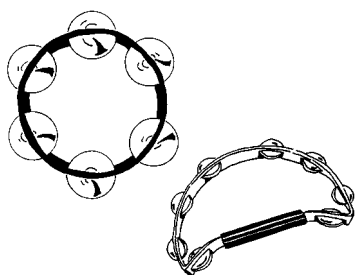
Maracas

Maracas are held in each hand, and shaken to produce the desired effect. One maraca per child is sufficient for young pupils. Different sound effects can be achieved by varying the intensity and/or the speed of the shaking motion.



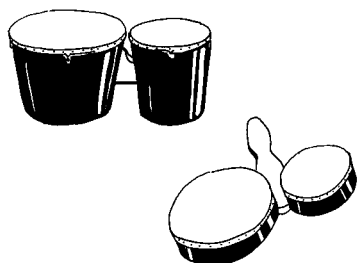
Tambour

The tambour is basically a tambourine without the jingles. The tambour may be struck with the hand, but more usually a soft, felt beater is used. The tambour is an excellent drum substitute, and the larger sizes, which produce lower tones, provide a very good way of playing accented pulse.



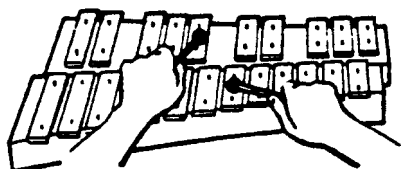
Tambourine

The tambourine is like a tambour, but it has jingles around the head. It may be played in a number of ways to achieve different effects. It can be held by the rim and shaken to produce a jingling tremolo effect, with varying intensity and speed. It can also be held in one hand and struck or tapped with the other, using finger tips, knuckles and palms to produce varying degrees of volume. Tambourines come in several varieties – with or without a skin and in interesting shapes, like the half-moon tambourine.



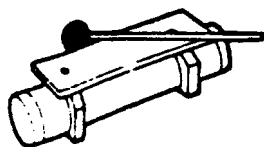
Bongos

These are twin-headed drums, which are played with the open palms of the hands, or the finger tips, depending on the sound effect required. Bongos are usually held between the knees, but younger children find it easier to place them on a soft surface (folded towel), sitting in front of the instrument and playing with their hands. More expensive bongos may be mounted on stands.



Glockenspiel, xylophone and metallophone

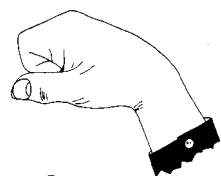
A glockenspiel is an instrument which has steel keys, varying in size. The tone is clear and bell-like, with good resonance. The notes are arranged like those of a piano and are struck with a beater or pair of beaters. A xylophone is similar to a glockenspiel, except that it has wooden keys, mounted on a resonating box. The notes are shorter in duration than those of the glockenspiel and 'drier' in tone colour. The bars of a metallophone are made of aluminium alloy, and the notes resonate for a very long time.



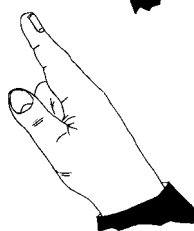
Chime bars

These may be purchased individually and each comes with its own beater. The bars come in varying sizes and the notes are usually labelled by their staff name, shown in letter form, e.g. C, D, E, F, etc.

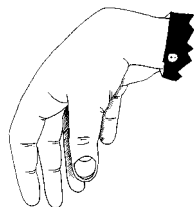
Handsigns



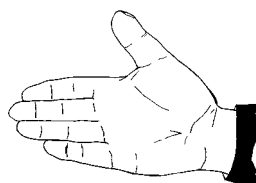
doh'



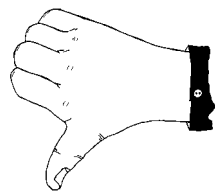
ti



lah



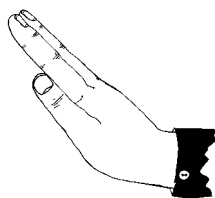
soh



fa



mi

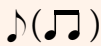















re



doh

A suggested sequence in rhythm

Note value	Note name	Rhythm syllable	Staff notation	Stick notation	Rhythm patterns
one beat	<i>crotchet</i>	<i>ta</i>			
half beat	<i>quaver</i>	<i>ti</i> <i>ti-ti</i> (for two)		↑ (□)	□ □ □
one-beat rest	<i>crotchet rest</i>	(<i>gesture</i>)		Z	z □ z
half-whole-half	<i>quaver-crotchet-quaver</i>	<i>syn-co-pa</i>		↑ ↑	↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ □ □ ↑ ↑
two beats	<i>minim</i>	<i>ta-aa</i>			□ ↑ ↑
three beats	<i>dotted minim</i>	<i>ta-aa-aa</i>			 Z 
four beats	<i>semibreve</i>	<i>ta-aa-aa-aa</i>			
one-and-a-half beats	<i>dotted crotchet</i>	<i>ta-i</i>		.	. ↑ . ↑ □ z
Extension in Rhythm					
quarter beats (in fours or twos)	<i>semiquaver</i>	<i>ti-ri-ti-ri</i>			□ □
	<i>quaver plus two semiquavers</i>	<i>ti ti-ri</i>			□ □ □ □
		<i>ti-ri ti</i>			□ □ □ □
Time signatures	Staff notation	Stick notation			
Example	$\frac{2}{4}$			□ □	
2 crotchet beats in a bar	$\frac{3}{4}$			□ □	
3 crotchet beats in a bar	$\frac{4}{4}$			z □ □	
4 crotchet beats in a bar	$\frac{6}{8}$			□ □ □ ↑	
6 quaver beats in a bar	$\frac{9}{8}$			↑ □ □ □ □	
9 quaver beats in a bar					

A suggested sequence in melody

Pitch (tonic solfa: emphasises moveable pitch)	Intervals (in tonic solfa)	Melodic patterns	Absolute pitch (letter names: emphasises fixed pitch)
<i>s, m</i>	<i>s-m m-s</i> ; (minor third)	<i>s-m-s-s-m-m</i> <i>m-m-s-s m-s</i>	
<i>l, s, m</i> (in handsigns only)	<i>l-s s-l</i> (major second) <i>l- m m-l</i> (perfect fourth)	<i>s-l-s-m s-s-l-l-s-s-m</i> <i>l-(s*)-m l-m l-l-m-m</i> <i>m-s-l m-(s)-l m-l</i>	
<i>l, s, m / m, r, d</i> (handsigns and 2- or 3-line stave)	<i>m-d d-m</i> (major third) <i>m-r r-m</i> (major second) <i>r-d, d-r</i> (major second)	<i>s-m-d d-m-s</i> <i>s-l-s-m d d-m-s-l-s</i> <i>m-r-d d-r-m</i> <i>d-d-r-r-m-r-d</i>	
<i>l, s, m, r, d</i> (handsigns and 3-line stave)	<i>s-d, d-s</i> (perfect fifth) <i>l-r, r-l</i> (perfect fifth)	<i>s-m-d s-(m)-d s-d</i> <i>d-(m)-s d-s</i> <i>l-s-m-r-d l-(s)-m-r-d;</i> <i>l-(s-m) r l-r</i> <i>d-r-m-s-l r-(m-s)-l r-l</i>	B, A, G E
<i>l, s, m, r, d</i> (handsigns, finger stave and 5-line stave)	<i>d-l, l-d</i> (major sixth)	<i>d-r-m-s-l d-(r-m-s)-l</i> <i>d-l</i> <i>l-s-m-r-d l-(s-m-r) d</i> <i>l-d</i>	D', C' (octave above middle C)
<i>l, s, f, m, r, d</i> low <i>s</i> , low <i>l</i> , (handsigns, finger stave and 5-line stave) key signatures C, G major	<i>d-l, l-d</i> (minor third) <i>d-s, s-d</i> (perfect fourth) <i>m-l, l-m</i> , (perfect fifth) <i>m-s, s,-m</i> (major sixth)	<i>d-l, l-d</i> <i>m-r-d-l-d</i> <i>d-l,-s, d-(l)-s, d-s,</i> <i>m-r-d-l,-s;</i> <i>m-(r-d)-l, m-l,</i> <i>l-(d-r)-m l,-m</i> <i>m- (r-d-l)-s, m-s,</i> <i>s,- (l-d-r)-m s,-m</i>	F, D, C (middle) F [#]
<i>d', t, l, s, f, m, r, d</i> (5-line stave) key signatures: D and F major	<i>r-s, s,-r</i> (perfect fifth) <i>r-l, l,-r</i> (perfect fourth) <i>s- s, l- l</i> , (perfect octave) <i>d'-d</i> (perfect octave)	<i>(m)-r-d-l,-s,</i> <i>r-(d-l)-s, r-s,</i> <i>s,- (l-d)-r s,-r</i> <i>r-(d)-l, r-l,</i> <i>l-(d)-r l,-r</i> <i>s-m-r-d-l,-s,</i> <i>s-(m-r-d-l)-s, s-s,</i> <i>l-s-m-r-d-l,</i> <i>l-(s-m-r-d)-l, l-l,</i> <i>d'-l -s-m-r-d</i> <i>d'-(l -s-m-r)-d d'-d</i>	E' C [#] , B ^b
	<i>d-t</i> (semitone) <i>f-m</i> (semitone)	<i>d-t-d d-t-l-s</i> <i>s-f-m-r-d d-r-m-f-s</i> <i>d'-t-l-s-f-m-r-d</i> <i>d-r-m-f-s-l-t-d'</i>	

d' denotes high doh
s, denotes low soh
l, denotes low lah

*The note is not
sounded aloud but
is heard internally.

Listening to music: a selection of examples

Irish music

Many of the following recordings are distributed by Cló Iar-Chonnachta

Groups

Altan, *Blackwater*

Na Casaidigh, *Óró na Casaidigh*

The Chieftains, *The Chieftains albums*

Clannad, *In Concert*

Donal Ring Céilí Band, *Come to the Céilí*

Solo artists

Derek Bell (harpist), *Ancient Music for the Irish Harp*

Mary Bergin (tin whistle player), *Feadóga Stáin*

Willie Clancy (piper), *The Piping of Willie Clancy, vols. 1 and 2*

Martin Hayes (fiddler), *The Lonesome Touch*

Matt Molloy (flute player), *Stony Steps*

Colm Murphy (bodhrán player), *An Bodhrán/The Irish Drum*

Eilín Ní Bheaglaoich (singer), *A Cloak of Many Colours*

Sharon Shannon (accordion player), *Out the Gap, Each Little Thing*

Compilations of traditional Irish music

Bringing It All Back Home (BBC)

Ceiliúradh (Cló Iar-Chonnachta)

River of Sound (RTE)

Seoda Sean-Nóis as Tír Chonaill (Various Artists)

Trad at Heart (Dara)

Traditional Music of Clare and Kerry (RTE)

Traditional Music of Galway and Limerick (RTE)

Traditional Music of Ireland (HMV)

Traditional Music of Ireland, vols. 1 and 2 (Cló Iar-Chonnachta)

Traditional Irish music in a modern style

Anúna, *Omnis*

Enya, *Shepherd Moon*

Tadhg Mac Donnagáin, *Raifteirí san Underground*

Nóirín Ní Riain, *Soundings*

Colm Ó Foghlú, *Echoing*

Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, *Cry of the Mountain, Between Worlds*

Recordings of concert music by contemporary Irish composers available from the Contemporary Music Centre:

John Buckley, *Three Lullabies for Deirdre*

Patrick Cassidy, *The Children of Lir*

Shaun Davey, *The Brendan Voyage*

John Gibson, *Reflections in the Water, Imaginaire Irlandais*

Ronan Hardiman, *Lord of the Dance*

Bryan O'Reilly, *The Children of Lir*

Seán Ó Riada, *Mise Éire, Saoirse*

Bill Whelan, *Riverdance, The Seville Suite*

Compilations

Contemporary Music from Ireland, vol. 1

featuring music by Sweeney, Deane, Martin, Barry, O'Leary, Gardner, Kinsella, Boydell, Buckley

Contemporary Music from Ireland, vol. 2

featuring music by Guilfoyle, J. Wilson, Hayes, I. Wilson, Bodley, Corcoran, Johnston, Farrell, Doyle

Irish Fantasy

featuring music by Ferguson, Esposito, T. C. Kelly, Stanford, Nelson

Romantic Ireland

featuring music by Victory, Potter, O'Connor, Larchet, Duff, Ó Riada

Jazz

Ronan Guilfoyle, *Septet Music*

Music from different eras

Many of the following titles are widely available under various labels.

Baroque era (1600–1750)

- J. S. Bach, 'Air' (from *Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D major*), 'Bandinerie' (from *Orchestral Suite No. 2 in B minor*)
- G. F. Handel, *Music for the Royal Fireworks*
- A. Vivaldi, *The Four Seasons*

Classical era (1750–1820)

- L. van Beethoven, *The Pastoral Symphony (Symphony No. 6)* and *Symphony No. 5* (first movement)
- J. Haydn, *The Surprise Symphony (Symphony No. 94 in G, first movement)* and *The Toy Symphony*
- W. A. Mozart, 'Ah, vous dirai-je, maman' (variations on 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star') and *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*

Romantic era (1820–1920)

- F. Mendelssohn, *Hebrides Overture*
- C. Saint-Saëns, *Carnival of the Animals*
- R. Strauss, *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (opening movement)
- R. Wagner, *Ride of the Valkyries* (Die Walküre, beginning of act III)

Modern era

- B. Britten, *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*
- C. Debussy, *The Little Shepherd*
- G. Holtz, *The Planets*
- I. Stravinsky, *The Soldier's Tale*, *The Rite of Spring* and *The Firebird*
- H. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras*, No. 2 and No. 5

Music in various styles

Examples of performers

Folk singers: Simon and Garfunkel, Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan

Country and western music: Patsy Cline, Suzanne Prentice, Hank Williams

Blues: Billie Holliday, B. B. King, Bessie Smith, Ella Fitzgerald

Jazz: *Greatest Hits* by Louis Armstrong, *What is Jazz?* by Leonard Bernstein

Swing, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Glen Miller

Soul: Otis Redding, Tina Turner, Arethra Franklin

Rock and Roll: Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the Beach Boys

Popular: U2, Boyzone, the Cranberries, Oasis

Opera

E. Humperdinck, 'Evening Prayer' (from *Hansel and Gretel*)

W. A. Mozart, 'The Bird Catcher Song' (from *The Magic Flute*), *The Marriage of Figaro*

J. Offenbach, 'Barcarolle' (from *Tales of Hoffmann*)

G. Puccini, 'Nessun Dorma' (from *Turandot*), 'The Humming Chorus' (from *Madame Butterfly*)

G. Verdi, 'La Donna è Mobile' (from *Rigoletto*)

Musicals and operettas

L. Bart, *Oliver!*

W. Gilbert and A. Sullivan, *HMS Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado*

A. Lloyd Webber, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*, *Cats*, *Aspects of Love*

R. Rogers and O. Hammerstein, *The Sound of Music*, *South Pacific*

C. Michel Schönberg, *Les Misérables*

C. Strouse, *Annie*

Film music

J. Williams, themes from *ET*, *Superman*, *Jaws*

E. Morricone, themes from *The Mission*, *Cinema Paradiso*

The following titles are distributed by Cló Iar-Chonnachta:

Music of other cultures

J. and C. Perri, *El Condor Pasa*

H. and G. Turkmenler, *Songs and Dances from Turkey*

Adzido, *Under African Skies*

Chinese Classical Folk Music, *The Chinese Flute*

Bushfire-Didgeridoo, *Music of the Australian Aborigines*

Music for various purposes

Music with a strong sense of beat

J. Strauss, *Radetzky March*

Irish dance music (various jigs, reels, hornpipes, etc.)

S. Moradi, 'Savar-Bazi' from *The Music of Lovestan, Iran*

P. Simon, *Graceland, Rhythm of the Saints*

Fleetwood Mac, *Tusk*



Music with a story line

The Beatles, *Ob la di*

Mary Black, *Sonny*

Chris de Burgh, *A Spaceman Came Travelling*

P. Dukas, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*

G. Kleinsinger, *Tuby the Tuba*

Carole King, *Smackwater Jack*

S. Prokofiev, *Peter and the Wolf*

B. Smetana, *The Moldau (Má Vlast)*

Music with an illustrative title

L. Anderson, *Typewriter, Sleigh Ride*

H. Blake, 'Walking in the Air' (from *The Snowman*)

C. Debussy, 'Golliwog's Cakewalk' (from *Children's Corner Suite*)

G. Miller, *Chatanooga Choo Choo*

L. Mozart, *Sleigh Ride*

N. Rimsky-Korsakov, *Flight of the Bumble Bee*

M. Mussorgsky, M. Ravel, 'Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks' (from *Pictures at an Exhibition*)

Music with familiar melodies (e.g. from advertising)

Goldman, *Children's March* (features ten well-known nursery rhymes)

I. Stravinsky, *Greeting Prelude* (features Happy Birthday)

Carly Simon, *Itsy Bitsy Spider*

R. Vaughan Williams, *Fantasia on Greensleeves*

Gentle music

Procul Harum, *A Whiter Shade of Pale*

Enya, *Orinoco Flow*

E. Grieg, *Holbert Suite*

M. Ravel, 'Petit Poucet and Prelude' (from *Mother Goose Suite*)

G. Bizet, 'Berceuse' (from *Jeux d'Enfants*)

Music for a happy occasion

B. Smetana, 'Dance of the Comedians' (from *The Bartered Bride*)

A. Dvořák, *Carnival Overture*

G. Bizet, 'Galop' (from *Jeux d'Enfants*)

Exciting, energetic music

F. Grofé, *Grand Canyon Suite*

L. van Beethoven, *Cariolan Overture*

S. Rachmaninov, *Isle of the Dead*

Marches, majestic music

E. Elgar, *Pomp and Circumstance Marches Nos. 1–4*

F. Mendelssohn, 'Wedding March' (from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*)

R. Rogers, 'March of the Siamese Children' (from *The King and I*)

G. Verdi, 'Grand March' (from *Aïda*)

W. Walton, *Crown Imperial March*

R. Wagner 'Grand March' (from *Tannhäuser*)

Music for worship

Chants and hymns from Taizé

Christmas carols: *Scenes from an Irish Childhood* recorded by Cór na nÓg

G. F. Handel, 'Hallelujah Chorus' (from *Messiah*)

Gregorian chant: *The Monks of Glenstal Abbey*

Recordings of various church and cathedral choirs

Tibetan Monks of the Bon Religion

A. Lloyd Webber, *Requiem*

W. A. Mozart, *Requiem*

Information sources for music materials and activities in schools

The Ark, Children's Cultural Centre
11a Eustace Street
Dublin 2
Tel. (01) 6707788
email info@ark.ie
<http://www.ark.ie>

Education and Outreach Officer
National Concert Hall
Earlsfort Terrace
Dublin 2
Tel. (01) 4751666
email lucy.champion@nch.ie

The Contemporary Music Centre
95 Lower Baggot Street
Dublin 2
Tel. (01) 6612105
email info@cmc.ie
<http://www.cmc.ie>

Central Music Library
ILAC Centre
Henry Street
Dublin 1
Tel. (01) 8734333
email cicelib@iol.ie
<http://www.ireland.iol.ie/resource/dubcitylib/>

Fuaim: The Association for the
Promotion of Primary Level Music
Education
Drumcondra Education Centre
Drumcondra
Dublin 9
Tel. (01) 8379799
<http://www.scoilnet.ie/fuaim>

Córfhéile na Scoileanna
Drumcondra Education Centre
Drumcondra
Dublin 9
Tel. (01) 8379799

The National Children's Choir
Colette Hussey
16 Rocwood
Bray Road
Stillorgan
Co. Dublin
Tel. (01) 2783283

Music Association of Ireland
69 South Great George's Street
Dublin 2
Tel. (01) 4785368



Cumann Náisiúnta na gCór/Association
of Irish Choirs
Drinan Street
Cork
Tel. (021) 312296
email cnc@iol.ie

Irish World Music Centre
University of Limerick
Limerick
Tel. (061) 202590
email paula.dundon@ul.ie
<http://www.ul.ie/~iwmc/>

Folk Music Society of Ireland
15 Henrietta Street
Dublin 1
Tel. (01) 8730093
email npupipes@iol.ie

Kodály Society of Ireland
PO Box 4569
Dublin 7

Education Centres
(See telephone directory for local
centres)

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann
32 Belgrave Square
Monkstown
Co. Dublin
Tel. (01) 2800295

Irish Traditional Music Archive
63 Merrion Square
Dublin 2
Tel. (01) 6619699

The Arts Council
70 Merrion Square
Dublin 2
Tel. (01) 6611840
email info@artscouncil.ie
<http://www.artscouncil.ie>

Music Network
Developing Music Nationwide
Ship Street Gate
Dublin Castle
Dublin 2
Tel. (01) 6719429
email musicnet@indigo.ie

Ceol
Smithfield Village
Smithfield
Dublin 7
Tel. (01) 8173820
email info@ceol.ie
<http://www.ceol.ie>

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Fraze, J.	<i>Discovering Orff</i>	New York, Schott, 1987
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Gray, A.	<i>The Popular Guide to Classical Music</i>	New York, Birch Lane, 1993
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Mills, J.	<i>Music in the Primary School</i>	Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991
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Odam, G., Culp, C., Eisman, L., and Hoffman, M.	<i>Silver Burdett Music</i>	London, Simon and Schuster, 1989
Ó Riada, S.	<i>Our Musical Heritage</i>	Dublin, Dolmen Press, 1982

Paynter, J.	<i>Sound and Structure</i>	Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992
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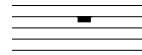
Glossary

The definitions below are commonly understood working definitions for use with the primary curriculum and teacher guidelines.

accent	the emphasis on a selected beat or beats in a bar
beat	the steady, continuous pulse underlying the music
body percussion	using different parts of the body to create different sounds and rhythms, for example clap, stamp, slap, etc.
cabasa	a percussion instrument, cylindrical in shape and covered in strings of metal beads that rotate freely on the curved surface to produce a grating sound
descant	an added part above the melody line in the treble clef
diatonic	built on the notes <i>d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d'</i>
drone	long, held note or notes
dynamics	the loudness and softness of a piece of music, for example lullaby—soft (<i>p</i>), march—loud (<i>f</i>)
hand signs	gestures used to indicate pitch in solfa
harmony	two or more sounds played or sung together
interval	the distance between two notes of different pitch
key signature	indicates where <i>doh</i> lies at the beginning of a piece of music
major scale	a scale built on the notes <i>d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d'</i> , also known as the diatonic scale
metre	the basic grouping of beats in each bar of music, as indicated by the time signature

minor scale	a scale built on the notes <i>l, t, d, r, m, f, si, l</i> , beginning on <i>lah</i> instead of <i>doh</i> , with a sharpened seventh note (<i>si</i>)
modal scale	a scale built on the notes of the major scale but starting and finishing on notes other than <i>doh</i> ; for example the re mode: <i>r, m, f, s, l, t, d' r'</i>
mood	type of feeling created by music, for example happy, sad
octave	the distance between notes of the same name, eight letter notes higher or lower: for example D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D
ostinato	a constantly repeated musical pattern, rhythmic or melodic
pentatonic scale	a scale comprising five notes: <i>d, r, m, s, l</i> , widely used in folk music. Pentatonic scales can begin on any note: for example, mi-pentatonic comprises the notes <i>m, s, l, d, r</i> . Pentatonic scales can be played on the black notes of a piano: for example, beginning on F# the first three notes together are <i>d, r, m</i> , while the next two black notes are <i>s</i> and <i>l</i> .
percussion instruments	instruments that are struck or shaken, for example tambourine, triangle; tuned percussion instruments are tuned to a specific note at concert pitch; untuned percussion instruments are not given specific tuning
phrase	a natural division in the melodic line; similar to a sentence or part of a sentence
pitch	a term referring to the high/low quality of a musical sound
pulse	the underlying 'throb' in music

rest no sound for a specified length of time, according to the musical sign, for example:



semibreve rest
4 beats



minim rest
2 beats



crotchet rest
1 beat



quaver rest
half beat

rhythm different durations of sounds, long and short

rhythm syllables words or syllables used to demonstrate duration in rhythm

round one melody strictly imitated in pitch and rhythm, any number of beats later; usually two, three or four parts, repeated any number of times

staff notation notes written on a five-line staff


stick notation a form of shorthand used for notating rhythm quickly and easily; for example a crotchet is represented as simply: †

structure overall plan of a composition, for example AB: two contrasting sections

style the combination of tempo, timbre and dynamics

syncopation the occurrence of unexpected accents in metred music

tempo speed or pace of the underlying beat

texture	refers to combinations of sounds: single sounds or sounds together
timbre	tone colour; refers to the characteristic sound produced by different instruments, for example trumpet, violin
time signature	the sign placed at the beginning of the music indicating the number of beats in each bar
tonic solfa	moveable pitch names, <i>d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d'</i>
treble or G clef 	the fixed pitch sign placed at the beginning of the staff to identify the fixed pitch name G
tremelo	rapid iteration of a note, or alternation of two notes

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These guidelines have been prepared under the direction of the Curriculum Committee for Arts Education established by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

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	Sarah Gormley (<i>from 1995</i>)	National Parents Council—Primary
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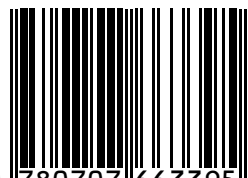
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For access and permission to take photographs the publishers make grateful acknowledgement to the following: the boards of management, principals, teachers and pupils of the primary schools countrywide who co-operated with the project.

ISBN 0-7076-6339-3



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