

20th Century

Classical Music

A resource pack for Key Stage 2

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20th Century Classical Music

The world of 20th century classical music is a huge and expansive one, full of dramatic extremes and the pushing of boundaries, where an endless striving for new techniques sits happily alongside the act of mining the past for inspiration. In short, it is almost impossible to summarise in a couple of paragraphs. One of the most important themes that weaves throughout the era is the idea of change. At the start of the 20th century, the music was an overflow of the Romantic era, where lush harmonies and tuneful melodies ruled. That was soon to change, however, as the composers became increasingly disillusioned with the idyllic, idealistic music of the day and started to push against the boundaries and strict guidelines that had dominated classical composition for centuries. It has to be noted that the political climate of the first half of the 20th century had a huge influence – the world wars, Hiroshima, the holocaust and the growing control of Soviet Russia all help us to put the developments in classical music in context and to see the art as a reaction to the events of the time.

Modernist composers started to explore tonality, moving away from the idea of major and minor scales (where music is centred around a single key note). Some composers even moved towards serialism – an almost mathematical approach to composition, where each of the 12 notes of the scale are ordered and must always appear in the same order throughout the piece. Composers were also using increasingly complex rhythmic patterns and systems for composition. In contrast, Minimalism also took hold, crossing over from the art movement, where composers created expansive works based on simple cells of original material.

All of this change and experimentation resulted in a sense of freedom for composers and a more relaxed approach to composition, where wider influences could be explored and inspiration could be drawn from everything that came before – from folksongs to jazz. This all combined to create some of the most interesting, quirky and controversial pieces of music in the whole classical music repertoire.

Notes about the lesson plans

These lesson plans have been created with a class of KS2 children in mind. Each of these lessons would last roughly 90 minutes, but can easily be adapted or split up into chunks to suit shorter session times.

In designing the content of these workshops, I tried to pitch the level at a KS2 class with some musical experience and ability. We know that this is not always the case and you may want to adapt the activities to suit the ability of your group by either simplifying them, or developing ideas if your group need more of a challenge. If your class aren't comfortable with the basic building blocks of beat, rhythm, pitch etc., then I would strongly suggest spending time developing these skills first, before trying this block of work.

In order to make the pack as accessible as possible, I have tried to explain as much of the 'music lingo' as possible. Please don't see this as condescending – I know that some of you are confident musicians who don't need the extra explanations, but I wanted to ensure that teachers who are maybe less confident with music have all the information that they need!

The most important advice I can give you, is to use this pack as a guide – it is not a strict set of rules and steps. I urge you to see it as more a starting point and some guidelines to help you to navigate your way into the complex world of 20th century classical music – an era that can appear complex and unwelcoming, but an era full of some of the most quirky, interesting and challenging music of the classical music canon. Make these plans work for you and your class – adapt it, replace ideas, scrap sections all together – use it however you want, just have fun!

Meet the artist...

Dyzelle is a classically trained violinist, community musician and music educator. She studied for a BMus Hons degree in violin performance at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, and a Master's degree in Community Music from the University of York. As a violinist, Dyzelle has played in many ensembles, groups and orchestra and has performed across the UK, as well as in Europe and the United States of America. Through her work for darts (Doncaster Community Arts), Dyzelle enjoys helping people of all ages and abilities to make music, with a particular passion for music education and for enthusing children and teachers about the world of classical music.

Project 1 - Minimalism

What is Minimalism?

The minimalist music genre was influenced by the American visual arts movement of the same name, along with the music of composers such as John Cage and Erik Satie. Minimalist music is characterised by extreme simplicity of form – a reaction to the complex, intellectually sophisticated style of modern music that had come before it. Originating in the U.S.A in the 1960s, minimalism was seen as a much more accessible, literal style of music, favoured by composers such as Phillip Glass, Terry Riley and Steve Reich. Common features of minimalist composition:

- Ostinati (melodic, rhythmic or harmonic repeated patterns)
- Simple 'cells' or patterns of music that are repeated and gradually changed and developed
- Layered textures and interlocking repeated patterns

Listening list:

- Terry Riley – In C
- Steve Reich – Electric Counterpoint and Clapping Music
- Philip Glass – Glassworks

Equipment needed:

- Speaker or smart board to play the suggested examples
- Tuned percussion: any tuned percussion that you have! For example, hand bells, glockenspiels, vibratones, chime bars etc., enough beaters
- Un-tuned percussion: again – any that you have! For example, gathering drum, hand-held percussion (i.e. shakers, maracas etc.), drumsticks (for chair drumming warm up)

Project activities:

- Quick warm up game: chair drumming (see Appendix 1) – this is just a suggestion – feel free to use your own ideas too!
- Introduce minimalism – show the young people examples of famous minimalist works – e.g. Reich's Clapping Music or Electric Counterpoint and describe what makes it work i.e. The simple melodic or rhythmic ideas that are used in various ways and adapted and layered to create a piece of music
- Create a simple, 4-beat word rhythm (i.e. FISH AND CHIPS AND MUSHY PEAS II II II I), where the 'II' represents a pair of quavers and 'I' represents a crotchet

- Split the class into 2 circles: one group keep a steady beat (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4) by tapping on their knees and, if needed, counting the numbers out loud in a quiet voice. If they have a good sense of beat, you could add a large drum like a gathering drum into the middle of the circle for them to play on (but beware, as sometimes they get a bit excited about the drum and get faster and faster and faster!). The other group will be clapping our word rhythm, by making their hands go with the words and saying the words aloud. Again, if the group are comfortable with this, you could give this group claves to use to tap the rhythm if they are available. This activity is much easier if you have an adult in each circle for the young people to watch and copy. Also, remember to give them a really clear count-in, for example, 'ready steady here we go' (said in the tempo or speed that you are going to be working at). This is a great point to reinforce and discuss the difference between beat and rhythm with the group.
- Swap over, so each circle does the other role
- Explore note displacement (this is a simple, but effective technique sometimes used by minimalist composers): This time, get both circles to clap and say our word rhythm, but start each group on a different beat of the bar i.e. start one group on beat 1 and the other group 2 beats later on beat 3. Again, they will need a really clear count-in for this – to make it easier for you, count one group in and then let them say the rhythm a couple of times before bringing in the next group, so you can get the hand of starting the count-in at the right time!
- As an extension activity, you could easily extend this to more than 2 circles, add in more word rhythms or change the note displacement to be 1 beat or 3 beats apart etc.
- Split into groups and use our word rhythm and tuned percussion to create basic melody 'cell' that will become our ostinato (a short repeated melodic or rhythmic pattern). I would recommend using notes from the C pentatonic scale (a 5-note scale) at first i.e. use only the notes CDE GA - most school percussion should have these notes and all the layers will sound nice together). To do this, get the group to choose a letter for each sound or note of the word rhythm. For example:

FISH AND	CHIPS AND	MUSHY	PEAS
II	II	II	I
CC	EE	DD	C

HANDY HINTS: If you get the young people to place the note C as their first and last note in the rhythm then the phrase will instantly sound more complete and finished. Also, if the group double up the notes for any pairs of quavers i.e. one note for each beat – in this case, making both of the first 2 notes a C, then keeping the same note on the ‘chips and’ notes etc., then it is much easier to play than jumping to a different letter on every note

- Take some time to practise performing the melody ideas – for some young people, this will be a challenge in itself whilst others will pick it up really quickly. I have done this activity with a variety of tuned percussion and find that handbells and vibratones etc. where the group have to work together and they are in charge of a single note each, works well, whereas groups working with two people sharing a glockenspiel etc. require good group work and turn taking!
- At this point, you could bring the groups back together to share and perform their melody ‘cells’ to each other
- In groups, adapt our melodic cell and develop it by using techniques from the list below – start with one or two of these for this session, but here are some techniques that will work well (see Appendix 2 - composition toolkit for more information and descriptions):

sequence
 dynamics
 note addition,
 note subtraction,
 retrograde,
 augmentation
 diminution
 adding a drone

- Give the groups some time to practise playing these new developed versions of their melody cell

- Use the different versions of our melody cell to build very simple structures and pieces. For example, a simple piece might be: Perform original melody cell x 4, then play the note addition version x 4, original x 4 and retrograde x 4. I find it easier to give the groups a printed sheet for them to keep track of their compositions – see Appendix 3 for my template, but feel free to adapt it, or create your own – it’s just there as a guide!
- Give the groups some time to practise these structures or mini pieces, then bring the groups back together and get each group to perform their minimalist piece to the class
- Peer evaluation and discussion - urge the group to share aspects of the piece that they liked and any ideas that they think that particular group could do to make their pieces even better

Extension activities:

You could take this in so many different directions! You could try building and developing the fragments into longer pieces, or grouping them in a mini suite of pieces. You could try using all of the melodic fragments together by layering them and building a structure where they weave in and out of each other. You could add in body percussion or add a vocal line on top – the options are endless!

Links to the KS2 Music Curriculum:

- develop an understanding of musical composition, organising and manipulating ideas within musical structures
- play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression
- improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the inter-related dimensions of music
- appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality live and recorded music drawn from different traditions and from great composers and musicians
- develop an understanding of the history of music

Project 2 – Graphic Notation

What is Graphic Notation?

Graphic notation is the representation of music through the use of visual symbols. Evolving in the 1950s, it is often used alongside traditional music notation in experimental music, where the music and the instructions for the performers can't be expressed by standard musical notation alone.

I haven't included any listening lists, as graphic scores are obviously a visual concept. I have included a couple of YouTube clips that demonstrate graphic scores, below. All of the YouTube links were checked at time of writing and all were working well and suitable for KS2. However, please check them before use as they are not my videos and I can't guarantee that there will be no changes! When introducing the concept of graphic scores to groups, I also tend to have a look on Google Images for examples of really nice graphic scores.

Examples of graphic scores:

- <https://youtu.be/bBawmitub64>
A really simple graphic score completed by a school pupil, based around the idea of time travelling around a clock face
- <https://youtu.be/ZsbcBVCWFjc>
Another school project which uses a graphic score to notate a simple composition
- <https://youtu.be/APQ2RKECMW8>
A graphic score for a piece by Chopin

Equipment needed:

- A3 sheets of paper/roll of lining paper/other huge sheets of paper
- Pencils and pens
- Speaker/smart board
- Variety of percussion/instruments

Project activities:

- Introduce graphic scores – show them examples and explain that graphic scores are used to give the performers instructions that can't be written down or conveyed in normal music notation.
- Quick warm up game: Walk this Way – for this exercise, I played different moods of music on my violin and asked the children to guess the mood of the piece i.e. happy, sad, excited, sleepy etc. We then used it as a movement exercise – when I played the

happy music, they had to move around the space in a happy way etc. If you aren't confident doing this on a musical instrument, feel free to use recorded music – I created a Spotify playlist that I have saved on my phone that includes tracks that are great for this activity. Plug it in to a speaker/dock and you are good to go!

- Magic Hand: This is a quick call and response game, where I draw a shape with my hand, whilst making a musical sound or noise that it could represent in a graphic score. For example, I might draw the shape

... ———

with my hand and that would be 'do do do doooooo' (with the last doooooo at a lower pitch than the first three – think of the really famous bit from Beethoven 5!), or an ascending line would correspond to a sound that goes from low to high. If a whiteboard is available, I tend to move on to drawing the magic hand shapes on the board. This probably goes without saying, and you would likely do this automatically, but in order to help link the idea of graphic notation to standard music notation, I always ensure that I work from left to right, and make sure that high and low notes match with high and low on the board. This is really useful to instil the concept of high and low/pitch notation, which due to the abstract nature, is a concept that young people generally struggle with at first.

- I then split the class into small groups and give each group a sheet of A3 paper and some pens/pencils. I played a short fragment of music to them on my violin (again, if you are not comfortable to do this on an instrument, feel free to choose excerpts of recorded music, that evoke the appropriate moods) and asked the groups to come up with their own 'graphic score' for the fragment. I would adapt this activity to the experience level of the group – if graphic notation is new to the group, then I would be fairly relaxed about which direction the groups chose to take their graphic score in and wouldn't stress the accuracy too much. If they are confident with the magic hand/notation exercises and/or standard music notation, then I would approach it by giving them a short, simple fragment that they could do a fairly accurate score for and by pushing them to try and make it a score that a musician could follow.

- After each group has created a score, swap them around, so you give each group a score created by another group. Ask them to look at the score and discuss what it could mean/what it would show musicians: what does it tell you about the mood of the music? Does it tell you which instruments might work well? Does it give you instructions about the actual notes to play/how to play them, or does it show you an overall effect that the ‘composers’ want to achieve? There are no right or wrong answers here, just their interpretations. Once the group have ideas, distribute instruments to each group and give them some time to create a short piece/musical fragment based on what is in front of them. I normally have to do quite a lot of reassuring at this point, again, that there is no right or wrong answer and that every group would interpret that one score in different ways.
- Once the group have had a chance to explore ideas, bring the groups back together and get them to perform their ideas to each other. Encourage the class to give feedback – what they liked and why they liked it, what they found interesting etc.

Development ideas:

- Introduction of rhythm notation
If my group are confident with the Magic Hand exercise, I sometime use this as a point to introduce the very beginnings of rhythm notation. I start by drawing lots of simple 4-beat rhythm patterns using magic hand or the whiteboard exercise above (I use short lines and long lines to show crotchets and quavers) and then progress on to introducing rhythm/stick notation. I keep it really simple to begin with and always start with 4 beat patterns using only crotchets and quavers, before adding in more complicated rhythms and time signatures.

Links to the KS2 Music curriculum:

- Develop an understanding of musical composition, organising and manipulating ideas within musical structures and reproducing sounds from aural memory
- Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression
- Use and understand staff and other musical notations

Project 3 – Aleatoric Music

What is Aleatoric Music?

Aleatoric Music, also known as chance music, (aleatory from Latin alea, “dice”), is a 20th-century style of music where elements of the music are left up to chance, or for the performer to decide. Aleatoric pieces often have sections with instructions such as ‘play this for x minutes’ or where the performer can choose which note/section to play.

Listening List:

- Terry Riley: In C
- John Cage: 4’33’’ – in this piece, the musical performers do not play a single note – the ‘music’ comes from whatever sounds and noises the audience hear during the 4 minutes and 33 second duration of the piece – controversial, but a great one for class discussions!

Equipment needed:

- One or more large dice/die
- Flipchart sheets/whiteboard and pens/large sheets of paper
- Bluetooth dock/speaker/smartboard to play suggested tracks
- Tuned percussion: anything that you have! For example, glockenspiels, xylophones, chime bars, vibratones, hand bells etc. beaters
- Un-tuned percussion: again, any that you have! For example, claves, (gathering) drum/s

Project activities:

- Introduce aleatoric music – show them examples of Terry Riley’s In C or John Cage’s 4’33’’ and discuss the impact that chance would have on a piece of music. For example, ‘Every performance would be different – how do you feel about this?’ Or if the players are making decisions about what to play or how to play it, is it still the piece the composers wrote? For John Cage’s 4’33’’, the audience also have an influence, as the noise they make during the performance becomes part of the ‘music’ – how do they feel about this?
- As a class, use a dice (to compose four note melodies to be played by tuned percussion – for this, I allocate the numbers 1-6 to specific notes and whichever number comes out becomes the next note in my melody. I often base compositions like this on a pentatonic scale (a scale that uses 5 notes), in the key of C – so using CDEGA – so that all of the parts will sound pleasant together

and there aren't too many horrible clashes! On the sheet below, I have given a couple of examples of 4 note melodies to get you started, but feel free to use your own ideas! You could write different melody ideas for different groups of instruments like hand bells, glockenspiels etc. or just stick with the same 3 or 4 ideas for all of the tuned percussion – whatever works for you!

- Gather all of the melody ideas together on a sheet or whiteboard. Split the class into small groups and give each group some tuned percussion instruments. If tuned percussion is limited, then choose a handful of people to play whichever instruments you have and then take turns and swap over (you could turn the rest in to 'music critics' or audience members). Once you have several groups/players set up with tuned percussion, allow them to choose which melody fragment from the list that they want to play. Act as the conductor and count them in to start playing and when to stop. Feel free to experiment with different ideas: getting everyone to try and play at the same speed, letting everyone choose what speed to play at, bringing in different players/groups one by one and stopping them one by one too, so you have players dropping in and out, getting the players to choose how many times through they play their fragment and then stop themselves etc. etc. Try and encourage players to listen to the other parts that are going on, so they can get a feel for how and where their parts might fit in. Remember, there are no right and wrong answers and every 'performance' will be completely different!
- As well as tuned percussion instruments playing the melodies you compose, try adding in different instruments! On the sheet below, I have included rhythm ideas for some un-tuned percussion, like claves and drums etc. Remember, you don't need lots of fancy instruments to make this work – you can add things like vocals, or body percussion parts if you have limited resources!
- For creating rhythms, there are various ways you could use to create rhythms:
 - If your group can read basic stick/rhythm notation, then you could get the group to compose their own rhythm patterns, or even use a dice and allocate certain note values to the numbers. If you are doing this, then keep it simple – I'd suggest using just crotchets and quavers in order to keep rhythms easy. For example, you could do even numbers = crotchet, odd numbers = pair of quavers or 1-3

= crotchets and 4-6 = quavers. If your group are more advanced and comfortable with rhythm notation, then you could add in crotchet rests or minims etc.

- If you need a more simple option, make up easy word rhythms around a topic – foodie rhythms is always a great one for generating ideas. For example:

Fish and	chips and	mushy	peas

Or

Toast	and	orange	juice

- Have fun exploring! Remember, there is no right and wrong when it comes to composing pieces of music (especially Aleatoric music), and sometimes the best music happens by accident!

Extension activity:

Try recording a performance (or even several versions) of your piece. Get the class to listen really carefully and evaluate their composition: what would they change? Which bits worked well and why? What other methods could we try to change the piece further i.e. structures, textures, instruments etc.? What did they find difficult about creating and playing the composition? What was their favourite part of the process?

Links to the KS2 music curriculum:

- To create and compose music on their own and with others
- Understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the inter-related dimensions:
- Develop an understanding of musical composition, organising and manipulating ideas within musical structures
- Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression
- Improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the inter-related dimensions of music
- Appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality live and recorded music drawn from different traditions and from great composers and musicians
- Develop an understanding of the history of music

Aleatoric composition fragments

Group 1 - claves:

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 1. I like fish and chips | | | | |
| 2. Fish and chips and ice-cream | | | | |
| 3. | | | | |
| 4. | | | | |

Group 2 – gathering drum:

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 1. Cherries, grapes and raspberries | | | | |
| 2. Orange juice, orange juice | | | | |
| 3. | | | | |
| 4. | | | | |

Group 3 – body percussion:

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 1. Broccoli and carrots | | | | |
| 2. Grapes, grapes, peach, peach | | | | |
| 3. | | | | |
| 4. | | | | |

Group 4 – large glockenspiels

1. CDCC
2. CDEE
- 3.
- 4.

Group 5 – small glockenspiels

1. CAGG
2. AGEE
- 3.

Project 4 - Musique Concrète

What is Musique concrète?

Musique concrète, (French: “concrete music”), is an experimental technique of music composition, that uses recorded sounds as their source material. The technique was developed around 1948 by the French composer Pierre Schaeffer and his associates and involves using and editing the recorded sounds to create musical soundscapes. Composers used lots of varied techniques to alter and develop the source material, like chopping it up in to bits, playing it backwards, using special effects in the studio etc.

Recommended listening:

(again, these Youtube links have been checked at time of writing, but please check before use)

- **Pierre Shaeffer – Etude aux chemins de fer**
<https://youtu.be/aL77mHnCrNs>
Generally considered as the first piece of musique concrète, created in 1948 from sounds captured from a train
- **Gyorgy Ligeti – Artikulation**
https://youtu.be/71hNI_skTZQ
Weird and wonderful! This version actually has a graphic score to show the textures of the piece too
- **Gilles Gobeil - Associations Libres**
<https://youtu.be/dgzpRJEfc>
A collaboration between the artist and guitarist René Lussier, full of interesting sounds and guitar textures layered over an expressive soundscape
- **Doctor Rockit – Cameras and Rocks**
<https://youtu.be/xBsSd2dLMx4>
Something completely different - an experimental dance musician who was inspired by musique concrète and often used every day sounds as the inspiration and source material for his music

Equipment needed:

- iPad, speakers/dock/smartboard for playing the examples

Project activities:

- Quick warm up game: Owl Ears (**see appendix 4**)
- Introduce musique concrète and play the group examples. A lot of musique concrète will sound bizarre and ‘weird’ at first, as it is so different, abstract and experimental, compared to all of the music that the young people have likely been exposed to. This is

partly why I love exploring the genre with people who are just learning about classical music. Musique concrète also opens up a great opportunity for discussion: is it music or noise? What does it sound like? Do you like the music? What is it you like or dislike? Can you recognise where any of the sounds came from/what might have made the noises?

- Discuss the sounds they hear around their school environment every day – which sounds make them think of school i.e. the bell ringing for lunch, the sound of chairs scraping on the floor, the sound of a football hitting the tarmac outside etc.? Most importantly, which sounds would make great ‘source material’ for our Musique concrete compositions? I have found that a mix of different timbres/different sound qualities and textures make the most interesting pieces – try and encourage the groups to come up with the most original, interesting sounds they can rather than recording a series of sounds of them tapping on various surfaces. From a practical perspective, this activity works well when the weather allows you to go outside and record in the playground, but it can be done indoors, either just in a classroom/hall, or as a tour of the building – whatever works well for you.
- The technical aspect! At the time of designing this resource pack, I used an iPad app called Madpad HD to record and edit the source material. However, the app is no longer available to buy, as it doesn’t work with the most recent apple updates. After asking many knowledgeable tech types, they have recommended using apps called Samplebot and also Keezy as great alternatives. The apps all work in a similar way: you record a set number of short audio clips, these are then saved as a set of ‘buttons’ which you can use to trigger the sounds to build up and record a new piece.

If you don’t have the luxury of iPads or tablets, you could always use any digital recording device and then use free software like Audacity to edit the sounds and compose. Whichever option you choose, make sure you allow yourself plenty of time to explore the tech, before you use it in the lesson, so that you feel comfortable using it and fixing the common issues that the children might face whilst using the technology.

- Split the class in to small groups and give each group an iPad or tablet and talk them through the instructions for that particular app

- Head off to the location/s you want to record your source sounds and have fun exploring all of the different sounds and sound textures – think rustling leaves, squeaky swings, the pages of a book being flicked through really quickly, a door slamming etc – the options are endless and there are sounds all around us that we have probably all taken for granted!
- Come back together and get each group to share one or two of their favourite sound clips with the rest of the class
- Get the class to split back in to their groups and give them some time to explore their sounds and how they want to combine and layer them to make a piece of music
- Demonstrate how to record pieces and save them
- Record piece
- Listen back and evaluate it.

Share the finished pieces with the class and encourage the other groups to offer feedback about what they liked about the piece and any ideas they have to make the piece even better.

Extension activities:

- Give the group some time after the sharing to explore and redo their pieces/record new ones. What do they want to improve/do differently? Do they want to use the sounds to create a soundscape or a story through sound? These pieces could be played at an assembly, or shared on the school Facebook/website etc.
- You could also use the app to link to other areas of the curriculum. For example, you could use the app to recording and make a piece of music that uses snippets of facts learned around a topic, or to link with creative writing in literacy etc. use it however it works for you

Links to the music curriculum:

- Perform, listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions
- To create and compose music on their own and with others
- Use technology appropriately

- Understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the inter-related dimensions
- Develop an understanding of musical composition, organising and manipulating ideas within musical structures
- Improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the inter-related dimensions of music
- Listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory
- Appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality live and recorded music drawn from different traditions and from great composers and musicians
- Develop an understanding of the history of music

Appendix 1 - Chair Drumming

This is a great warm up that can be adapted for all ages and skill levels and a great way to build confidence and explore rhythm.

Equipment needed:

Enough drumsticks for the group (1 will do, but for more advanced groups, they could move on to 2 drumsticks each). If you don't have drumsticks, you can use claves, or even chopsticks. I tend to use a set of different coloured, light-up drumsticks, which are very popular, but can cause fights about which colour people want and some being brighter than others etc. etc.!

Instructions:

Get the group sitting in a circle. If the group are sitting on chairs, I normally get everyone to flip their chairs upside down (carefully) and sit behind the chairs, facing in to the middle of the circle, so their chair is in front of them and becomes their 'drum kit'. You can always do this without the chairs, where the group tap on the floor, but obviously this depends on the floor surface and whether the drumming can be heard clearly. I have colleagues who have used tubs or buckets to drum on instead.

To start with, I explain to the group that I am going to tap a short rhythm pattern, that they have to listen to and then tap straight back to me, all together. This is a great opportunity to talk about/reinforce the difference between the concepts of beat and rhythm. I tend to introduce 4-beat patterns to begin with, as I tend to do a lot of work making sure groups are settled in 4/4 time, before introducing other time signatures. This is a great activity to return to when introducing new time signatures such as 3/4 etc.).

Once the group are confident at copying back various 4-beat patterns that I give them, I explain that I am going to 'pass the solo' – which means that we go round the circle, and each person takes a turn to play their own 4 beat pattern and the group will copy it straight back like before. Depending on the group and their skill level, I might spend some time talking about 4 beat patterns, or I may just ask them to make a short, simple pattern like mine.

As I have said before, this activity is great and really adaptable. It is great for exploring beats and rhythms, and I often use it as a preparatory activity before introducing the basics of rhythm notation. It is also great for working on recalling rhythms with accuracy and developing critical listening. As mentioned above, I have also used it to explore more complex rhythms and time signatures.

Links to music curriculum:

- Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression
- Listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory
- Use and understand staff and other musical notations

Appendix 2 - Composition toolkit

A few tricks of the trade, to transform even the most basic melodies into exciting compositions

Augmentation	playing the melody where the note lengths are longer (often with the note values at double the original value i.e. half speed)
Diminution	playing the melody where the note lengths are shorter (often half the original value, or twice as fast)
Drone	any note played throughout the composition as a sustained bass note
Dynamics	volume control – louds and softs
Note Addition	where notes are added in to a repeated phrase
Note Subtraction	where notes are taken away from a repeated phrase
Retrograde	where a series of notes/repeated phrase is brought back, but played backwards
Sequence	a repeated phrase that appears at a different pitch from the original

Appendix 3 – minimalist composition sheet

Notes we can use:

C D E G A C (notes from the C pentatonic scale)

Basic melody 'cell':

— — — — — — — —

Retrograde (backwards):

— — — — — — — —

Note addition:

— — — — — — — —

Note subtraction:

— — — — — — — —

Appendix 4 – Owl Ears

A great warm-up to get the group to actively listen and think about their surroundings.

Equipment needed:

None.

Instructions:

Get the group to sit quietly with their eyes shut and encourage them to listen – to really listen – to the noises they can hear. Give them a set time to do this and then ask the group to share what they heard. Were there any sounds that surprised them? Were there any noises that they had never noticed before? Did you hear any sounds that you might not hear anywhere else? You can do this activity anywhere – either in the normal classroom environment, or outside!

Appendix 5 – Listening List and Resources

Minimalism:

- Terry Riley – *In C*
- Steve Reich – *Electric Counterpoint and Clapping Music*
- Philip Glass – *Glassworks*

Graphic Notation:

- <https://youtu.be/bBawmitub64>
A really simple graphic score completed by a school pupil, based around the idea of time travelling around a clock face
- <https://youtu.be/ZsbcBVCWFjc>
Another school project which uses a graphic score to notate a simple composition.
- <https://youtu.be/APQ2RKECMW8>
A graphic score for a piece by Chopin

Musique concrète:

- **Pierre Shaeffer – Etude aux chemins de fer**
<https://youtu.be/aL77mHnCrNs>
Generally considered as the first piece of musique concrète, created in 1948 from sounds captured from a train
- **Gyorgy Ligeti – Artikulation**
https://youtu.be/71hNI_skTZQ
Weird and wonderful! This version actually has a graphic score to show the textures of the piece too
- **Doctor Rockit – Cameras and Rocks**
<https://youtu.be/xBsSd2dLMx4>
An experimental dance musician who was inspired by musique concrete and often used every day sounds as the inspiration and source material for his music.

Aleatoric Music:

- Terry Riley: *In C*
- John Cage: *4'33''*

Websites:

- Chrome Music Lab – fabulous, free online resources and experiments in sound (great for linking music with art, science and maths)
<https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com/>
- BBC 10 Pieces – a great resource from the BBC, exploring various famous classical music pieces. It comes with lots of

teacher resources and also classroom arrangements of several pieces

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04pc0j8>

- The Birmingham Contemporary Music Group have some lovely resources for music activities based around contemporary and modern compositions

<http://resources.bcmg.org.uk/>

- The Contemporary Music Centre Ireland

<https://www.cmc.ie/resources>



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