



National Curriculum Music – skills ladder

Breadth of study	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Controlling sounds through singing.	Use the voice in different ways such as speaking, singing and chanting. Perform simple rhythms, poems, rhymes and songs by copying. Copy and create patterns with their own voices.	Perform with an awareness of others. Take part in a group singing performance. Create patterns with their own voices (high, low to investigate pitch, quiet, loud for dynamics, long short for duration).	Sing songs in ensemble following the tune (melody) well. Perform songs to an audience.	Sing simple songs with others or individually, remembering the melody and keeping in time. Perform in tune and with expression.	Sing a range of songs in tune with expression, as part of a group or individually. Listen to a second part and know that ostinato is a repeating pattern in singing. Perform with an awareness of tempo and dynamic. Evaluate their own singing and make improvements.	Sing a separate part in a group performance, keeping in time with the group, e.g. sing or play a part in a round. Perform with an awareness of tempo, dynamic and musical style. Evaluate different types of singing (gospel choir, rock band, solo voices) and give their preferences.	Sing an individual role in a group performance, from memory or by reading notation, singing solos , accompaniments or directing the group. Perform own part in a round or other split part. Maintain a harmony (singing higher or lower than the main melody) in a song. Evaluate different types of singing from different cultures and heritages, and discuss their preferences.
Controlling sounds by playing.	Use a range of percussion instruments to accompany well known rhymes with a steady pulse. Select their own instrument	Make and control long and short sounds (duration). Investigate pitch by using chime bars, copying high and low notes.	Follow instructions on how and when to sing/play an instrument. Develop awareness of pitch by identifying higher and lower notes.	Play notes on instruments clearly and including steps/ leaps in pitch. Improvise (including call and response) within a group using 1 or 2 notes.	Perform with control and awareness of what others are playing. Improvise (including call and response) within a group using 3 or 4 notes.	Perform in solo and ensemble contexts using a variety of techniques, confidently, expressively and in tune. Lead a call and response pattern involving 3 notes.	Maintain own part in a round/ sing a harmony/ play accurately with awareness of what others are playing. Play more complex instrumental parts. Improvise using 5 notes of the pentatonic scale.
Creating and developing musical ideas (composing)	Adapt well known action songs with own sounds eg'Old Macdonald had a farm'. Suggest new actions/sounds for a well -known song or rhyme.	Create a sequence of long and short sounds with help (duration). Clap longer rhythms with help. Make different sounds (high and low– pitch; loud and quiet– dynamics; fast and slow-tempo; quality of the sound- smooth, crisp, scratchy, rattling, tinkling etc.– timbre).	Carefully choose sounds to achieve an effect (including use of ICT). Order sounds to create an effect (structure- beginnings/endings). Create short musical patterns. Create sequences of long and short sounds- rhythmic patterns (duration). Control playing instruments so they sound as they should. Use pitch changes to communicate an idea. Start to compose with two or three notes.	Compose and perform melodies using two or three notes. Use sound to create abstract effects (including using ICT). Create/ improvise repeated patterns (ostinati) with a range of instruments. Effectively choose, order, combine and control sounds (texture/ structure).	Compose and perform melodies using three or four notes. Make creative use of the way sounds can be changed, organised and controlled (including ICT). Create accompaniments for tunes using drones or melodic ostinati (riffs). Create (dotted) rhythmic patterns with awareness of timbre and duration.	Compose and perform melodies using four or five notes. Use a variety of different musical devices including melody, rhythms and chords . Record own compositions. Create own songs (raps-structure). Identify where to place emphasis and accents in a song to create effects (duration).	Compose and perform melodies using five or more notes. Show confidence, thoughtfulness and imagination in selecting sounds and structures to convey an idea . Create music reflecting given intentions and record using standard notation. Use ICT to organise musical ideas (where appropriate). (Combine all musical dimensions).
Responding and reviewing (appraising)	Hear, listen and respond to the pulse in music. Identify when a pulse is faster or slower.	Hear, listen and respond to the pulse in music. Hear, listen and respond to different moods in music. Identify texture– one sound or several sounds? Choose sounds to represent different things (ideas,	Identify the pulse in music. Recognise changes in timbre (sound quality- smooth, crisp, scratchy, rattling, tinkling etc.), dynamics (loud and quiet), tempo (fast and slow) and pitch (high and low).	Internalise the pulse in music. Know the difference between pulse and rhythm. Start to use musical dimensions vocabulary to describe music–duration, timbre, pitch, dynamics,	Know how pulse stays the same but rhythm changes in a piece of music. Listen to several layers of sound (texture) and talk about the effect on mood and feelings. Use more musical	Know how pulse, rhythm and pitch fit together. Use a range of words to describe music (eg. duration, timbre, pitch, dynamics, tempo, texture, structure, beat, rhythm, metre, silence, riff, ostinato, melody,	Know how the other dimensions of music are sprinkled through songs and pieces of music. Use musical vocabulary confidently to describe music. Work out how harmonies



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		thoughts, feelings, moods etc.).	Start to recognise different instruments.	tempo, texture, structure. Use these words to identify where music works well/ needs improving.	dimensions vocabulary to describe music—duration, timbre, pitch, dynamics, tempo, texture, structure, rhythm, metre, riff, ostinato, melody, harmony. Identify orchestral family timbres. Identify cyclic patterns.	harmony, chord, flat, sharp, dotted rhythm, staccato, legato, crescendo, diminuendo). Use these words to identify strengths and weaknesses in own and others' music.	are used and how drones and melodic ostinati (riffs) are used to accompany singing. Use knowledge of how lyrics reflect cultural context and have social meaning to enhance own compositions. Refine and improve own/ others' work.
Listening and applying knowledge and understanding		Listen for different types of sounds. Know how sounds are made and changed. Make sounds with a slight difference, with help. Use voice in different ways to create different effects.	Listen carefully and recall short rhythmic and melodic patterns. Use changes in dynamics, timbre and pitch to organise music. Change sounds to suit a situation. Make own sounds and symbols to make and record music. Start to look at basic formal notation- play by ear first. Know music can be played or listened to for a variety of purposes (in history/ different cultures).	Know number of beats in a minim, crotchet, quaver and semibreve and recognise symbols (duration). Play with a sound-then-symbol approach. Use silence for effect and know symbol for a rest (duration). Describe different purposes of music in history/ other cultures.	Combine sounds expressively (all dimensions). Read notes and know how many beats they represent (minim, crotchet, semibreve, quaver, dotted crotchet, rests). Know that sense of occasion affects performance. Describe different purposes of music in history/ other cultures.	Create music with an understanding of how lyrics, melody, rhythms and accompaniments work together effectively (pitch/texture/ structure). Read/ work out the musical stave (notes as Year 4). Perform songs in a way that reflects the meaning of the words, the venue and sense of occasion so that the audience appreciates it. Describe different purposes of music in history/ other cultures.	Use increased aural memory to recall sounds accurately. Use knowledge of musical dimensions to know how to best combine them. Know and use standard musical notation to perform and record own music (adding dotted quavers). Use different venues and occasions to vary performances. (Combining all musical dimensions). Describe different purposes of music in history/ other cultures.

Aims

The national curriculum for music aims to ensure that all pupils:

- perform, listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions, including the works of the great composers and musicians
- learn to sing and to use their voices, to create and compose music on their own and with others, have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, use technology appropriately and have the opportunity to progress to the next level of musical excellence
- understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the inter-related dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations.

Attainment targets

By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.