



Cyclic patterns

Exploring rhythm and pulse

This unit develops pupils' ability to perform rhythmic patterns confidently and with a strong sense of pulse.

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Glossary

For definitions of musical vocabulary, click here.

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For alternative themes and activities, click here!

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MEDIUM TERM PLAN

Learning Objectives

Children should learn

Teaching Activities

With your class

Learning Outcomes

Children

INTRODUCTION: HOW DOES SOME MUSIC USE CYCLIC PATTERNS?

1 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about cyclic patterns 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transfer speech patterns onto drums and use the rhythms as starting points for improvisation 2. Perform two African greetings as a call and response accompanied by body percussion 3. Combine the beat, rhythm and tempo in a performance of <i>Cyclic greetings</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify different aspects of pulse by clapping and moving
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EXPLORATION: HOW CAN DIFFERENT SOUNDS BE USED RHYTHMICALLY?

2 nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that percussion instruments can produce a wide range of sounds • about particular cyclic patterns 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn about African percussion instruments 2. Learn the djun djun cyclic pattern 3. Rehearse the djun djun cyclic pattern with the bell cyclic pattern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and control different ways percussion instruments make sounds • identify rhythmic patterns, instruments and repetition • subdivide the pulse keeping to a steady beat • explore and perform a cyclic pattern
3 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how different patterns can fit together 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise the djun djun and bell cyclic patterns and learn the cue 2. Rehearse starting and stopping the djun djun cyclic pattern following the cue 3. Learn African dance movements to perform with the cyclic patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify rhythmic patterns, instruments and repetition • subdivide the pulse keeping to a steady beat • explore and perform a cyclic pattern
4 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how different patterns can fit together 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rehearse ways of altering and embellishing rhythms 2. Take turns improvising over the djun djun and bell cyclic patterns 3. Record and appraise group performances of the cue, cyclic patterns and solo improvisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore and perform a cyclic pattern • keep a steady pulse and improvise rhythmic patterns

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER: CAN WE MAKE OUR OWN CYCLIC PATTERN?

5 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to invent simple rhythmic patterns • how different patterns can fit together 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn the song, <i>Degu degu degu</i> 2. Use song lyrics to generate new rhythms for cyclic patterns 3. Perform the cue, djun djun and bell patterns with the new cyclic patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • invent simple rhythmic patterns • explore and perform a cyclic pattern
6 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to expand rhythmic ideas using timbre and duration and by rearranging the rhythmic material 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plan African drumming group performances 2. Rehearse group performances 3. Appraise the group African drumming performances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make improvements to their own work • create and develop ideas

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1st

LESSON PLAN

Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- about cyclic patterns

Learning Outcomes

Children

- identify different aspects of pulse by clapping and moving

RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD tracks: 1–4
- Copies of the *Cyclic greetings* photocopyable (book, p9)
- A selection of hand drums and untuned percussion
- CD-ROM picture 1
- An area large enough for everyone to stand in a circle

Teaching Activities

- 1** Transfer speech patterns onto drums and use the rhythms as starting points for improvisation



The class learn how speech patterns can be used to create rhythmic patterns and how this is relevant to African music.

- 2** Perform two African greetings as a call and response accompanied by body percussion



The class play a call and response greeting game and learn how to create a cyclic pattern.

- 3** Combine the beat, rhythm and tempo in a performance of *Cyclic greetings*



The class extend the greeting game and develop their rhythm skills.

SUPPORT: encourage those who are less confident playing the rhythm patterns to play the beat at first, joining in with the rhythms later when they have become more familiar.

VOCABULARY:

call and response
cyclic pattern
pulse/beat
rhythm
tempo (tempi)

Lesson Extension

Research information about West African music and dance.

Cyclic patterns

Exploring rhythm and pulse



2nd

LESSON PLAN

Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- that percussion instruments can produce a wide range of sounds
- about particular cyclic patterns

Learning Outcomes

Children

- identify and control different ways percussion instruments make sounds
- identify rhythmic patterns, instruments and repetition
- subdivide the pulse keeping to a steady beat
- explore and perform a cyclic pattern

RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD tracks: 5–9
- CD-ROM picture 2
- A selection of hand drums and cowbells/agogo bells
- An area large enough for everyone to stand in a circle

Teaching Activities

1 Learn about African percussion instruments



The class listen to different African drums – the djembe and djun djun – and learn about how they are made and played.

2 Learn the djun djun cyclic pattern



The class learn to perform an African cyclic pattern in time to a steady beat.

SUPPORT: practise the cyclic pattern at the two different tempi throughout the week following the lesson to develop the children's confidence.

3 Rehearse the djun djun cyclic pattern with the bell cyclic pattern



The class learn to combine two different cyclic patterns.

VOCABULARY:

accent
cyclic pattern
improvise
pitch
pulse/beat
tempo (tempi)

Lesson Extension

Is anyone able to perform the djun djun and bell cyclic patterns at the same time?

Cyclic patterns

Exploring rhythm and pulse



3rd

LESSON PLAN

Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- how different patterns can fit together

Learning Outcomes

Children

- identify rhythmic patterns, instruments and repetition
- subdivide the pulse keeping to a steady beat
- explore and perform a cyclic pattern

RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD tracks: 5–14
- Copies of the *African dance* photocopiable (book, p12)
- Videoclips 1–4
- A selection of drums and cowbells/agogo bells

Teaching Activities

1 Revise the djun djun and bell cyclic patterns and learn the cue

The class learn to perform a musical cue and learn that this is a rhythmic signal used in African drumming to indicate when the cyclic accompaniments should start and stop.

2 Rehearse starting and stopping the djun djun cyclic pattern following the cue

The class learn to perform the cue and the djun djun cyclic pattern together, as would be done in traditional African drumming.

3 Learn African dance movements to perform with the cyclic patterns

The class learn some simple African dance movements to accompany the cyclic patterns they have learnt, and how the cue signals the dancers to change movements.

SUPPORT: dancers need to move in time with each other for the moves to look most effective. Try counting aloud or getting children to count aloud during rehearsal.

VOCABULARY:

accompaniment

cue

cyclic pattern

pulse/beat

rhythm

tempo (tempi)

Lesson Extension

Can anyone tap any of the rhythms learnt (cue, bell, or djun djun) and the beat at the same time? Tap the beat with one hand on a knee/table top, and the rhythm with the other. Play the rhythm with the dominant hand and then swap.

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4th

LESSON PLAN

Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- how different patterns can fit together

Learning Outcomes

Children

- explore and perform a cyclic pattern
- keep a steady pulse and improvise rhythmic patterns

RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD tracks: 1, 5, 12
- Recording equipment to record work in progress
- A selection of hand drums and other untuned percussion

Teaching Activities

1 Rehearse ways of altering and embellishing rhythms



Individuals create, extend and develop rhythmic patterns through improvisation.

2 Take turns improvising over the djun djun and bell cyclic patterns

In groups, the class combine the beat, the cue, the bell cyclic pattern and the djun djun cyclic pattern to provide a steady 'backing track' while one person improvises.

3 Record and appraise group performances of the cue, cyclic patterns and solo improvisations

The class learn to evaluate their performances both positively and critically.

SUPPORT: encourage students to use correct terminology when describing what they hear, eg rhythm, tempo, beat. They should be familiar with these terms and understand the difference between them.

VOCABULARY:

cue

cyclic pattern

improvisation

pulse/beat

rhythm

tempo(tempi)

Lesson Extension

Can anyone perform an extended improvisation in time to the beat? Instead of asking them to improvise for four or eight beats, can they continue for a longer period of time?

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5th

LESSON PLAN

Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- how to invent simple rhythmic patterns
- how different patterns can fit together

Learning Outcomes

Children

- invent simple rhythmic patterns
- explore and perform a cyclic pattern

RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD tracks: 14–17
- A selection of hand drums, cowbells, agogo bells and other untuned percussion
- Recording equipment to record work in progress

Teaching Activities

1 Learn the song, *Degu degu degu*

The class learn a song to perform with the cyclic patterns they already know.

2 Use song lyrics to generate new rhythms for cyclic patterns

The class focus on the lyrics they have just learnt to create new rhythms that they can develop into cyclic patterns.

3 Perform the cue, djun djun and bell patterns with the new cyclic patterns

As a whole class, the children combine the beat, the cue, the bell cyclic pattern and the djun djun cyclic pattern to provide a steady 'backing track' for the new cyclic patterns they have developed.

SUPPORT: Now that the material has become more complex (polyrhythmic) some children may find it harder to maintain their rhythm. Ensure that there are confident players in each group, and give the groups plenty of practice playing on their own with the beat. Gradually build up the number of groups playing together, only adding another rhythm when everyone is secure.

VOCABULARY:

cue
cyclic pattern
polyrhythm
pulse/beat
rhythm

Lesson Extension

Can any of the children sing the song at the same time as accompanying themselves with the beat (or even one of the cyclic patterns).

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6th

LESSON PLAN

Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- how to expand rhythmic ideas using timbre and duration and by rearranging the rhythmic material

Learning Outcomes

Children

- make improvements to their own work
- create and develop ideas

RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- A selection of hand drums, cowbells, agogo bells and other untuned percussion
- Recording or filming equipment (if available) to record the performances

Teaching Activities

1 Plan African drumming group performances

In groups, the class decide how to put together a final performance from everything they have learnt. They must include the beat, cue, djun djun and bell cyclic patterns.

2 Rehearse group performances

In groups, the class rehearse for their final performances. The teacher circulates, monitors progress and assists as necessary.

SUPPORT: it is better to perform one cyclic pattern with the beat really confidently than to try to include too much in the performance. Encourage less able students/groups to focus on doing one part really well rather than several without confidence.

3 Appraise the group African drumming performances

The final performances are recorded for appraisal purposes. The class evaluate their performances both positively and critically and reflect on their learning during the unit as a whole.

VOCABULARY:

improvisation

polyrhythm

pulse/beat

rhythm

tempo (tempi)

Lesson Extension

Write a detailed evaluation of your group's performance.

What did they learn?

What skills do they feel they have developed?

What did they enjoy?

What did they find difficult?

Glossary

accent

a stress or extra push on a note to emphasise it and make it sound slightly louder

accompaniment

the underlying sounds used to support a melody line

acoustic sound

any sound made without electronic amplification or processing

articulation

the formation of clear and distinct sounds

attack

the way a sound starts, usually described in terms of hard/fast or soft/slow

balance

the appropriate relative volume of the parts

bass

the lowest part in a musical composition/the lowest note in a chord

body percussion

sounds that can be made using parts of the body, eg clapping, tapping knees ...

call and response

the call may differ, but the response is always the same

chord

three or more notes played at the same time

chord sequence

two or more chords played one after the other in a deliberate order

cluster

a group of notes that are close in pitch and sounded together

coda

end section

conductor

the person elected to lead the group

cue

a musical signal used to control aspects of the piece, eg starting and stopping or changing speed

cyclic pattern

a melodic or rhythmic pattern that repeats itself over and over again

decay

the time a sound takes to die away, usually described in terms of long or short

drone

a sound, or sounds, played constantly throughout all or part of a piece as an accompaniment

drum machine

a piece of musical hardware which contains drum sounds and enables sounds to be sequenced and layered

duration

the word used in music to refer to the length of a sound or silence

dynamics/volume

the volume of the music, usually described in terms of loud/quiet

electronic music

music produced entirely by electronic means

ensemble

performance by a group

entry point

point in a round when the next performer may begin

expression

when a singer or instrumentalist sings or plays with feeling, using changes in dynamics, tempo and timbre

free/arhythmic

music which has no discernible steady beat

glockenspiel

a tuned percussion instrument with metal bars

graphic notation

a form of notation in which the composer freely invents symbols which give an impression of sound

graphic score

a score in which musical intention is recorded by means of graphic notation

harmony

any number of changing layers of sound, sung or played at the same time

improvise

inventing music as you go along

improvisation

music invented as you go along

jazz

a style of music which originated in the 19th century characterised by use of improvisation

layers

individual lines of music performed together to create texture

layering

the process of creating texture by combining layers of sound

lyrics

the words of a song

melody instrument

usually refers to an instrument which plays a single line of melody, eg clarinet, recorder, flute

melodic phrase

a short section of melody

metre

the grouping of beats into twos, threes, fours, etc. Waltz music is grouped in threes: ①2 3 ①2 3

musical elements

pitch, rhythm, timbre, dynamics, tempo, duration, texture, structure (see definitions)

notation

ways of writing music down

orchestration

the specific instruments chosen by a composer to perform the different parts of a piece of music

ostinato (plural ostinatos/ostinati)

a short rhythmic or melodic pattern that is repeated over and over

phrase

a short section of music

pitch

refers to the complete range of sounds in music from the lowest to the highest

pitch movement

the steps and jumps by which melody moves up and down

polyrhythm

more than one rhythm played at the same time

prelude

a substantial musical introduction to a piece

processed sound

a sound that has been changed by means of an electronic device

pulse/beat

pulse and beat are used synonymously to refer to the regular heartbeat of the music - the 'steady beat'

rest

a silence

rhythm

patterns of long and short sounds played within a steady beat

rhythmical

music which is underpinned by a steady beat

riff

a repeated pattern

rondo

a musical structure which alternates contrasting sections of music with repeated sections, eg A B A C A D A

round

a piece of music in which two or more performers or groups start one after the other. As each performer reaches the end of the music, they start again - the music going round and round - hence the name

sampling

the act of recording sounds, digitally encoding them and altering them electronically

score

all the parts of a piece written down

soundmaker

any sound source used as a musical instrument

soundscape

a picture in sound

strong beat

any accentuated beat or beats, usually the first in the group, eg ①2 3 ①2 3

structure

most music is underpinned by a structure which may be as simple as beginning, middle and end

synthesising

the process of creating new sounds electronically

tempo (plural tempi)

the speed at which music is performed, usually described in terms of fast/slow

texture

layers of sound, eg the two layers of sound created by a melody accompanied by a drum beat

timbre

quality of sound, eg squeaky. All instruments, including voices, have a particular sound quality which is referred to as timbre

triad

refers to a particular type of three note chord, examples of which are C major (C E G) or A minor (A C E)

tuned

pitched

tuned percussion

the family of instruments which includes chime bar, glockenspiel, hand chime, metallophone, tubular bell, xylophone

unison

when everyone sings or chants the same thing at the same time

untuned

of indefinite pitch

untuned percussion

percussion instruments which make sounds of indefinite pitch

volume

see dynamics

word rhythms

rhythms created in the course of saying a word, or by creating a pattern of words which may be repeated, making a rhythm

word setting

how the words relate to the music

xylophone

a tuned percussion instrument with wooden bars