



# Rain, rain, go away

Exploring timbre, tempo and dynamics

This unit develops children's ability to recognise how sounds and instruments can be used expressively and combined to create music in response to a stimulus.

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**Glossary**

For definitions of musical vocabulary, click here.

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For alternative themes and activities, click here!

# Rain, rain, go away

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## MEDIUM TERM PLAN

Learning Objectives

Children should learn

Teaching Activities

With your class

Learning Outcomes

Children

### INTRODUCTION: HOW CAN MUSIC DESCRIBE DIFFERENT KINDS OF WEATHER?

1 <sup>st</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how sounds can be used descriptively</li> <li>• that music can describe an environment</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen to <i>Mahachagogo</i> and perform the chant in voices which describe different feelings</li> <li>2. Learn to sing <i>It's gonna be hot</i> and use voices descriptively</li> <li>3. Listen to <i>Light showers, sunny spells</i> to identify and describe the sounds</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use voices and sing expressively</li> <li>• describe different images created by music</li> </ul>
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### EXPLORATION: HOW CAN WE USE SOUNDS TO DESCRIBE THE WEATHER?

2 <sup>nd</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how sounds can be used descriptively</li> <li>• that music can describe an environment</li> <li>• about sounds made by different sound sources</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn to sing <i>Majā pade</i></li> <li>2. Select instruments to accompany <i>Majā pade</i></li> <li>3. Listen to <i>Majā pade</i> to notice and identify the accompanying instruments</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use voices and sing expressively</li> <li>• describe different images created by music</li> <li>• select appropriate instruments and choose and combine sounds carefully</li> </ul>
3 <sup>rd</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about sounds made by different sound sources</li> <li>• how words can describe sounds</li> <li>• how sounds can be changed</li> <li>• how sounds can be combined</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen to <i>Storm</i> and describe the effect</li> <li>2. Perform <i>Storm</i> and control the volume</li> <li>3. Perform <i>Storm</i> with instruments and control volume</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• select appropriate instruments and choose and combine sounds carefully</li> <li>• identify and use descriptive words to create sound pictures</li> <li>• change sounds to reflect different stimuli</li> <li>• select appropriate combinations of sounds</li> </ul>
4 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about sounds made by different sound sources</li> <li>• how words can describe sounds</li> <li>• how sounds can be changed</li> <li>• how sounds can be combined</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sing <i>Gonna build a house boat</i> with actions</li> <li>2. Select and layer sounds for an accompaniment to <i>Gonna build a house boat</i></li> <li>3. Improvise a performance of <i>Builder's yard</i></li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and use descriptive words to create sound pictures</li> <li>• select appropriate instruments and choose and combine sounds carefully</li> <li>• change sounds to reflect different stimuli</li> <li>• select appropriate combinations of sounds</li> </ul>

### BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER: CAN WE MAKE OUR OWN WEATHER COMPOSITION?

5 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how sounds can be organised</li> <li>• how to create a class composition using simple structures</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Add sounds to the recording of <i>Noah's ark</i></li> <li>2. Sing <i>Noah's ark</i> and play <i>Storyteller</i> to recognise the episodes of the story</li> <li>3. Perform <i>Noah's ark</i> without the CD</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• choose carefully and order sounds within simple structures in response to the stimulus of weather</li> <li>• contribute ideas and control sounds as part of a class composition</li> </ul>
6 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how sounds can be organised</li> <li>• how to create a class composition using simple structures</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Perform <i>Noah's ark</i> with instrumental interludes</li> <li>2. Retell the <i>Noah's ark</i> story with instruments</li> <li>3. Appraise the recordings of <i>Noah's ark</i> and share them with another class</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• choose carefully and order sounds within simple structures in response to the stimulus of weather</li> <li>• contribute ideas and control sounds as part of a class composition</li> </ul>

# Rain, rain, go away

Exploring timbre, tempo and dynamics



# 1<sup>st</sup>

## LESSON PLAN

### Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- how sounds can be used descriptively
- that music can describe an environment

### Learning Outcomes

Children

- use voices and sing expressively
- describe different images created by music

### RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD tracks: 53–56

### VOCABULARY:

**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

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

**tempo (plural tempi):** the speed at which music is performed, usually described in terms of fast/slow

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

## Teaching Activities

### 1 Listen to *Mahachagogo* and perform the chant in voices which describe different feelings



This chant explores ways of using the voice expressively to describe different feelings.

### 2 Learn to sing *It's gonna be hot* and use voices descriptively



The children explore ways to sing the verses of this song to express the different weather of each verse.

### 3 Listen to *Light showers, sunny spells* to identify and describe the sounds



The children identify and discuss the ways sounds are used descriptively in this piece of weather music.

**SUPPORT:** suggest that the children close their eyes to focus their listening. Play the music more than once so that the children may notice different things.

### Lesson Extension

Ask the children to demonstrate ways *Mahachagogo's* voice might change if he was wet, frozen, blown by the wind ...

# Rain, rain, go away

Exploring timbre, tempo and dynamics



# 2<sup>nd</sup>

## LESSON PLAN

### Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- how sounds can be used descriptively
- that music can describe an environment
- about sounds made by different sound sources

### Learning Outcomes

Children

- use voices and sing expressively
- describe different images created by music
- select appropriate instruments and choose and combine sounds carefully

### RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD tracks: 57–59
- Variety of percussion instruments

## Teaching Activities

### 1 Learn to sing *Majā pade*

The children learn a song which describes different weather.

### 2 Select instruments to accompany *Majā pade*

The children choose appropriate instruments to accompany each verse of the song and explore sounds which describe the featured weather.

*SUPPORT: record the performance and discuss which sounds were most effective. If any of the sounds were too loud and drowned out the singing it may be more apparent to some players than when they are absorbed in playing.*

### 3 Listen to *Majā pade* to notice and identify the accompanying instruments

The children identify the instruments used as an accompaniment to the song and discuss the descriptive qualities of the sounds. They compare these sounds with their own choices from activity 2.

### VOCABULARY:

duration

dynamics/volume

pitch

timbre

### Lesson Extension

Ask the children to make up other verses for *Majā pade* which describe different weather, eg

*Strong wind, strong wind,  
blowing and howling,  
Let's all be happy listening  
to the strong wind.*

# Rain, rain, go away

Exploring timbre, tempo and dynamics



# 3<sup>rd</sup>

## LESSON PLAN

### Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- about sounds made by different sound sources
- how words can describe sounds
- how sounds can be changed
- how sounds can be combined

### Learning Outcomes

Children

- select appropriate instruments and choose and combine sounds carefully
- identify and use descriptive words to create sound pictures
- change sounds to reflect different stimuli
- select appropriate combinations of sounds

### RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD tracks: 60–61
- Variety of percussion instruments

## Teaching Activities

### 1 Listen to *Storm* and describe the effect



As they join in with this chant, the children control the volume of their voices to match the changes in the recording. They discuss how the words and voices are used descriptively.

### 2 Perform *Storm* and control the volume



The children explore two different ways of changing and combining voices to create the effect of a storm.

*SUPPORT:* check that the tempo remains the same as the volume increases (the tendency will be that the children speed up as they become louder). If necessary, practise with a steady beat played on a drum.

### 3 Perform *Storm* with instruments and control volume

The children select appropriate instruments to match the words of the chant and control the volume of playing as they perform two different structures which combine the sounds.

### VOCABULARY:

**crescendo:** getting louder  
**diminuendo:** getting quieter  
**dynamics/volume**  
**tempo**  
**timbre**

### Lesson Extension

Ask the children to suggest another way to perform *Storm*, eg alternating voices with instruments in each line so that the instruments play 'splish splash' with increasing and decreasing volume.

# Rain, rain, go away

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# 4<sup>st</sup>

## LESSON PLAN

### Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- about sounds made by different sound sources
- how words can describe sounds
- how sounds can be changed
- how sounds can be combined

### Learning Outcomes

Children

- identify and use descriptive words to create sound pictures
- select appropriate instruments and choose and combine sounds carefully
- change sounds to reflect different stimuli
- select appropriate combinations of sounds

### RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD tracks: 62–63
- *Builder's yard* photocopiable (p48): cut into four cards
- Variety of percussion instruments
- Cowbell

## Teaching Activities

### 1 Sing *Gonna build a house boat* with actions

The children learn a song which includes onomatopoeic word patterns.

*SUPPORT: make some of the building actions on alternate sides of the body to help develop the children's coordination skills as they move to the beat, eg tap hammer on right and left side, swish paintbrush across in front of body from left to right.*

### 2 Select and layer sounds for an accompaniment to *Gonna build a house boat*

In groups, the children select instruments and sounds to match the descriptive word patterns of the song. They perform these as an accompaniment.

### 3 Improvise a performance of *Builder's yard*

Using a pictorial score, a conductor leads groups of players in an improvisation of descriptive sounds. Two conductors lead another improvisation which combines sounds.

### VOCABULARY:

**conductor:** the person elected to lead the group

**dynamics/volume**

**improvisation:** music invented as you go along

**score:** all the parts of a piece written down

**tempo**

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

**timbre**

### Lesson Extension

Ask the children to make up extra verses for *Gonna build a houseboat* using their own onomatopoeic word patterns, eg *drill - vrrr vrrr vrrr vrrr*. Select appropriate instruments to accompany these new verses.

# Rain, rain, go away

Exploring timbre, tempo and dynamics



# 5<sup>th</sup>

## LESSON PLAN

### Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- how sounds can be organised
- how to create a class composition using simple structures

### Learning Outcomes

Children

- choose carefully and order sounds within simple structures in response to the stimulus of weather
- contribute ideas and control sounds as part of a class composition

### RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD track: 64
- *Noah's ark* photocopiable (p50); enlarged and cut out into cards
- Variety of percussion instruments
- Recording equipment

## Teaching Activities

### 1 Add sounds to the recording of *Noah's ark*

The children listen to the recording then improvise sounds from a variety of sound sources explored in previous lessons: voices, body percussion, instruments.

### 2 Sing *Noah's ark* and play *Storyteller* to recognise the episodes of the story

This game familiarises the children with the episodes of the story and helps them to learn the song.

### 3 Perform *Noah's ark* without the CD

The children perform the song without the CD and make decisions about how to sing it expressively, and about the vocal and body percussion sounds they will add.

*SUPPORT:* use the *Noah's ark* photocopiable to remind the children of the verses of the song.

### VOCABULARY:

duration

dynamics/volume

pitch

timbre

tempo

texture

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

### Lesson Extension

Ask the children to devise actions to add to each verse of *Noah's ark* and perform these together as you sing the song.

# Rain, rain, go away

Exploring timbre, tempo and dynamics



# 6<sup>th</sup>

## LESSON PLAN

### Learning Objectives

Children should learn

- how sounds can be organised
- how to create a class composition using simple structures

### Learning Outcomes

Children

- choose carefully and order sounds within simple structures in response to the stimulus of weather
- contribute ideas and control sounds as part of a class composition

### RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- CD track: 64
- *Noah's ark* photocopiable (p50); enlarged and cut into cards
- Variety of percussion instruments
- Recording equipment
- Filming equipment (optional)

## Teaching Activities

### 1 Perform *Noah's ark* with instrumental interludes



The children select instruments to describe the six episodes of the song, then create group compositions to play as instrumental interludes between the verses.

### 2 Retell the *Noah's ark* story with instruments



In groups, the children retell the *Noah's ark* story with instruments alone using the pictorial score to remind them of the order.

### 3 Appraise the recordings of *Noah's ark* and share them with another class

The children listen to and compare the effectiveness of recordings of their different versions of the *Noah's ark* story.

*SUPPORT:* some groups may need support in organising the structure of their music. Encourage them to use their own ideas, but if necessary be prepared to help them choose a structure.

### VOCABULARY:

duration

dynamics/volume

pitch

tempo

texture

timbre

score

structure

### Lesson Extension

Invite small groups to dramatise the story in response to the four different recordings.



# Glossary

## accompaniment

the underlying sounds used to support a melody line

## body percussion

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

## call and response

a style of song in which a leader sings a short melody (the call) and a chorus of singers respond with an answering short melody (the response)

## chord

two or more notes played at the same time

## conductor

the person elected to lead the group

## crescendo

getting louder

## diminuendo

getting quieter

## drone

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

## 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

## glockenspiel

a tuned percussion instrument with metal bars

## graphic score

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

## improvisation

music invented as you go along

## layering

the process of creating texture by combining layers of sound

## musical elements

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

## notation

ways of writing music down

## ostinato (plural ostinatos/ostinati)

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

## phrase

a small unit of melody, often corresponding to a line of a song in vocal 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 a melody moves up and down in pitch

## playing methods

acoustic (non-electronic) sounds are made by shaking, scraping, tapping or blowing a soundmaker

## pulse/beat

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

## rhythm

patterns of long and short sounds played within a steady beat

## score

all the parts of a piece written down

## soundmaker

any sound source used as a musical instrument

## sound sources

sounds in music may come from any source - there are no limitations

## structure

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

## 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

## tuned percussion

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

## untuned percussion

percussion instruments which make sounds of indefinite pitch

## xylophone

a tuned percussion instrument with wooden bars