

Reflect, Rewind and Replay

Consolidate Learning and Perform - Year 4

Step 4

Classical music

The term 'Classical music' has come to be known as a term for music that spans the course of hundreds of years, including all Western music from Medieval Church music, to Stravinsky, to the current day.

It is music that has been composed by musicians who are trained in notating their compositions so that other musicians can play them.

Many people are unaware that Classical music is still being composed today, although it is very different from what was created several hundred years ago.

Classical music differs from Pop music because it is not made just to be popular for a short time or just to be a commercial success. It is different from Folk music, which belongs to the people who want to perform it and passed to future generations by listening and copying.

Breadth of listening across ALL genres and styles of music is so important. Children need to understand where music fits into history and to listen to its great composers and musicians. Listening, knowledge and understanding will inform and guide their future listening.

The only way to understand music is to listen to it. There is a whole world of sound waiting to be discovered.

1. Listen and Appraise

Reflect

Listen to the Bridal Chorus by Wagner, written in 1850, the Romantic period. (See Periods of Classical Music document in the History of Music folder on the unit page.) Stand or sit to find the pulse or just listen to the music.

Use this opportunity to familiarise and build on musical vocabulary. Discuss the music and what you can hear in it.

The following questions can be seen on-screen:

“What can you hear?”

Encourage the children to verbalise their responses to the music. Build upon knowledge from previous units using correct musical vocabulary and terminology. Focus the discussion around instruments, texture, tempo and the other interrelated dimensions of music.

“How does the music make you feel?”

Everybody will feel differently. Music brings many emotions along with it and often each person feels something different. Perhaps share with each other how the music makes you feel.

“How old do you think this music is?”

Ask the children then click on the History tab on the screen to see where this piece fits in time. The Bridal Chorus by Wagner, written in 1850, the Romantic period. (See Periods of Classical Music document in the History of Music folder).

“Does the music tell a story?”

Use your imaginations, remember that music can send your imagination flying. Also, see ‘Fast Facts’.

“Do you like the music?”

It doesn’t matter if the children do or don’t, there is no correct answer to this question and they might change their minds as the unit progresses. Use the question to start a creative discussion!

Fast facts

The composer

- Richard Wagner (1813-1883) was a German opera composer. He was one of the most important opera composers in Germany during the Romantic period. Apart from some music that he wrote as a student, he wrote ten operas which are all performed regularly in opera houses today. Most of his operas are about stories from German mythology. He always wrote the words himself. He changed people’s ideas of what operas should be like. He thought that the drama (the story that is being told with all its tensions) was very important, and he chose the singers for his operas himself, so that he could train them into his way of thinking. The music in his operas did not give the audience a chance to applaud after big solos as it had done in the 18th century; it continues throughout the whole act. He

made his music tell the story by using what he called 'leitmotifs'. These were melodies or short musical phrases which belonged to particular characters in the opera, or to particular ideas. He had more influence on other composers than anybody else in his time. He built an opera house to his own design in the German town of Bayreuth. Nearly all musicians in Europe tried to make a journey to Bayreuth to hear Wagner's music. The Bayreuth Festival still takes place every year there.

The music

- The Bridal Chorus or Bridal March is from the 1850 opera Lohengrin and is a march played for the bride's entrance at many formal weddings throughout the Western world. In English-speaking countries it is generally known as Here Comes The Bride or Wedding March.
- The chorus is sung in Lohengrin by the women of the wedding party after the ceremony, as they accompany the heroine Elsa to her bridal chamber.

The story

- Wagner was very arrogant (big-headed). He thought he could save the world through his music.
- Hitler loved Wagner's music. Wagner's music therefore became the music of Nazi Germany.
- Many people won't listen to Wagner today because they think of it as 'Nazi' music (and, therefore evil). This is especially true in Israel where there are many who suffered at the hands of Nazis during World War Two.

Interesting extras

- His operas are very long - the longest lasts for over five hours.
- They take a lot of energy to perform. Only a very few singers are able to sing them.
- They also take a lot of energy to listen to. You need to prepare yourself before seeing a Wagner opera.

- The four operas Das Rheingold, Die Walküre, Siegfried and Götterdämmerung form a set known as Der Ring Des Nibelungen (The Ring Of The Nibelung or simply The Ring). They are meant to be performed together over four days. That's a lot of music (over 15 hours).
- Die Meistersinger Von Nürnberg is different from his other operas—it's a comedy.

History

Look at the on-screen diagram to see where this piece of music sits in history, time and space.

Rewind and Listen Out!

A listening activity to remember instruments and their sounds.

Using the on-screen listening tool, play the musical extract; you will all have heard it earlier in the year. Ask the children if they have heard it before.

You will be asked the question:

“Which of the following can you hear in this musical extract?”

Listen to the extract and name the instruments/voices that you can hear. Click on the instruments you see in the pictures to hear their sounds. This will help the children familiarise themselves with different instruments and voices.

1. Press the play button to listen to the musical extract.
2. Listen to an example of each instrument or voice by pressing the play button on each picture.
3. Select the instruments that you think are correct and press submit! You will see which instruments you guessed correctly.

The extract you will hear is Lean On Me sung by The ACM Gospel Choir. The answer to the question is: female voice, keyboard, bass, drums, choir, electric guitar.

Reflect

Composers and Composition

- A. Watch the video “How would you describe your job as a composer?” (About the composer - Nico Muhly.)
- B. For more information, video and activities about Nico Muhly please go to ‘Collaborations’ and then ‘Friday Afternoons 2014’ on the Charanga site.

2. Musical Activities

There are a lot of activities here so please do not worry if you don't do them all.

Composition activity using the Music Explorer resource

The on-screen Music Explorer composition resource will guide you through the following options:

- **Option 1:** A way into composition with your class using glockenspiels and/or recorders.
- **Option 2:** A more differentiated approach to composition in groups using a mix of classroom and band/orchestral instruments. For this approach please use the Music Explorer tool in the Freestyle view in the Creative Apps section.

Option 1

- Select '3-note set' to begin (use more notes as you progress or for a differentiated approach).
- Select a backing track.
- Select a view to get started - select 'Pulse'.
- Click play then find the pulse together as a class.
- Select the button next to the heart button near the bottom of the screen. This button is the Rhythm Grid button. This will bring up eight empty bars on the screen. You can fill in those bars together. Drag and drop four 1's into the first bar and one 1 into the second bar. Repeat this onto the next three lines and click play. Clap along together.
- Select the button next to the Rhythm Grid button which has three notes on it. This button is the Rhythm Notation button and when you click on this, the rhythm you created as a class will turn into rhythmic notation.
- Select the button next to the Rhythm Notation button. This button is the Note Grid button and the rhythm will turn into pitch. You have chosen the 3-note set so only have the choice of those notes only. Click on the notes and the pitch will change. Start with the first note and end with that same note (this is your 'home' note). Start to drag and drop simple rhythm blocks into the bars and then decide upon the pitches.
- Select the button to the right of the Note Grid button. This button is the Notation with Note-names button, and your composition will become formal notation with the note-names written underneath for you all to play! Well done!
- If you select the final button this is the Notation button. Click this and the note names will disappear!
- Perform this together.

Option 2

- Work in groups.
- Select the appropriate note set to suit your instrumental group.
- Select a view to get started - you decide.
- Progress to creating an 8-bar composition for your group to play with block notation or formal notation, it's up to you.
- Perform to the class.

Rhythm Grid work

Have fun as a class or in groups, creating your own rhythms and clapping or playing them back.

- a. Choose a time signature
- b. Click on 'options' to choose a backing, a preset and/or blobs, notes or symbols
- c. Drag and drop your chosen blobs/notes/symbols into the grid
- d. Play the track
- e. Clap the rhythm
- f. You can listen to your rhythm
- g. You can 'shuffle' your rhythm
- h. You can turn the grid

The Language of Music

Music has its own language which you will get familiar with over time. Watch the cartoons and videos to embed your learning.

Rewind and Replay (Revision)

Revisit any of the songs or activities from this year.

3. Perform/Share

Replay

Prepare for a performance of songs and activities from the year.