

FILM MUSIC



Main Focus: Composition

Element Focus: Dynamics, Texture and Timbre

This unit enables pupils to recognize appropriate properties in music for a short film clip using the elements of music. By listening and appraising film music from different times, composers and places, pupils gain an understanding of how composers write music for films and then apply this to their own creative work. Pupils look at “James Bond” films, and compose their own short soundtrack to accompany the trailer to “Quantum of Solace” which is then developed by looking at different

atmospheres, moods and effects created by different types of films.

This unit builds on all music work completed during Key Stage 3 particularly in how music can be used to enhance visual images. This unit provides cross-curricular links to ICT (multimedia presentations); English (Media Studies); Mathematics (counting & exact timings/timelines)

What will pupils learn? – Unit Learning Objectives

- How music can enhance the visual images and dramatic impact of film, and can reflect the emotional and narrative messages of the drama.
- How film music uses sound effects, background music and character motifs and themes
- How film music can change the viewer’s interpretation of a scene
- How to create an effective musical narrative for a film scene, using appropriate techniques and structures to create an intended effect.

Prior Learning

It is helpful if pupils have:

- Understood the use and significance of theme tunes
- Learnt to use ICT equipment and notation
- Developed skills, knowledge and understanding of the elements of music and the importance of music in creating an intended effect

Expectations & Learning Outcomes

All pupils will:-

- recognise the need to have and use appropriate music to suit a film
- have a basic understanding of how music goes with moving images and be able to contribute ideas to creative group work
- visualize, notate using a graphic score and create and perform a piece of music using appropriate sound effects for a DVD clip

Most pupils will:-

- compose and perform with a degree of confidence in a group situation

- have a good understanding of how composers manage to compose appropriate music for film and be able to express this by referring to some of the elements of music
- be able to contribute to a successful attempt at a creative piece of writing for the moving image
- visualize, notate using a graphic score and create and perform a piece of music using appropriate sound effects and some melodic writing/performance for a DVD clip

Some pupils will:-

- show a vivid flair for composing and will perform with confidence
- show a thorough understanding and be able to express this using technical language
- show a creative flair when it comes to practical work to produce convincing and appropriate music
- effectively represent visual content showing good selection of sound effects, timing skills and creative planning

Assessment

This unit will be assessed by outcome of each task (composition and listening activities).

Resources

In addition to the resources from the music education websites teachers might like to include:

Stimulus: products in advertising, TV, video, recorded music, pictures, plays

Sound sources: keyboards, instruments (tuned, untuned, own), ICT equipment, recording equipment, TV and video

Music: film music from different times and places and different genres

Language for Learning

The following list contains musical words that are used throughout the project. Teachers may want to use these words in a classroom display or a “Word Wall”. Through the activities in this unit, pupils will be able to understand, use and spell correctly words relating to:

- **Cuesheet** – A detailed listing of musical cues matching the visual action of a film so that composers can time their music accurately to match the visual images.
- **Motif** – A short melodic theme that is associated with a particular character, for example in music composed specifically for a film.
- **Soundtrack** – The music and sound recorded on a motion-picture film. The word “soundtrack” can often mean a commercial recording of a collection of music and songs from a film sold individually as an audio CD.
- **Theme** – A main tune or theme within a film soundtrack, representing a particular character, ideas or object in the story and often returning in the background or in altered form.

Future Learning

Pupils could go on to:

study particular film music/TV composers, e.g. *Ralph Vaughan Williams, William Walton, Sir Arthur Bliss, Bernard Herrmann, John Williams, Christopher Gunning, Elmer Bernstein, Danny Elfman, Jerry Goldsmith, James Horner, Howard Shore, Hans Zimmer*

- undertake a project on how music for films has changed over the last 50 years

Enrichment

Learning could be enriched through:

- attending theatrical productions with live original music, e.g. *some carefully chosen musicals*
- inviting composers of TV/film/advertisements to lead workshops and talk about the technical and musical procedures behind their music