

Course: Beatmaking with Mo

Lesson One: Create a Beat

Learning Area: The Arts **Strands:** Music

Time: 60 Minutes

Year Level: 7-10

Content Descriptors 7-8:

- Experiment with texture and timbre in sound sources using aural skills (ACAMUM092).
- Develop musical ideas, such as mood, by improvising, combining and manipulating the elements of music (ACAMUM093).
- Structure compositions by combining and manipulating the elements of music using notation (ACAMUM095).

Content Descriptors 9-10:

- Improvise and arrange music, using aural recognition of texture, dynamics and expression to manipulate the elements of music to explore personal style in composition and performance (ACAMUM099).
- Manipulate combinations of the elements of music in a range of styles, using technology and notation (ACAMUM100).

Learning Focus:

- Students learn about music producer Mo Komba and his process to create electronic music.
- Students use a Digital Audio Workstation to experiment with using drum loops.

Time	Teaching and Learning Strategies	Preparation and Resources:
10 minutes	Prior skills and knowledge Before beginning these lessons with your students, pick a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) that your students will work with. Both Mac and PC have free and low cost options available, such as Garageband, Audacity, Reaper and Mixcraft. Soundtrap is a free online program. Become familiar with your DAW of choice. There are many free online tutorials available to help you. This resource is most suited for teachers with a background in using a DAW. Intermediate experience in making electronic music is also preferable. Please contact The Channel at Arts Centre Melbourne if you wish to enquire about professional learning in this area. It's ideal if you and your students know how to do the following processes on a DAW before you begin this course: • Zooming in and out • Accessing the loop and sample library • Moving around the workspace • Creating a software instrument track (for MIDI) • Creating an audio track (for audio)	Relevant online resources • Beatmaking with Mo Komba video • Choose a Drum Loop activity sheet • Download the drum loops and samples to provide to students • Soundcloud link to IAMMXO • Hip Hop Beat audio track • Hip Hop Beat with bars two and four audio track • Hip Hop Beat with EQ audio track

5 minutes

- Dragging loops and samples into the timeline
- Cutting and pasting audio and MIDI regions
- Recording audio and MIDI
- Using simple plugins – for example: EQ, Filter, Reverb and Delay

Introduction

Introduce students to Mo Komba using the information below and the Beatmaking with Mo Komba video. Consider sharing some of his music with students.

Mo Komba is the stage name of Australian musician Mohamed Komba (also known as IAMMXO). Mo Komba is a singer, songwriter and music producer. He also runs a record label called *Alt. Music Group*. Mo Komba used the stage name Momo when he was in the Australian hip hop duo Diafrix. Diafrix formed in Footscray in 2001 when Mo Komba met Azmarino (Khaled Abdulwahab) at a hip hop clinic. Listen to some tracks produced by Mo Komba as IAMMXO.

15 minutes

Beatmaking

Discuss the Beatmaking with Mo Komba video. What did the students notice about Mo Komba's creative process? Mo moves quite fast when he is editing and manipulating the sounds. Encourage the students to take it slowly and understand that he has been using this equipment for many years. Use these questions to prompt discussion:

- What does it mean to be an electronic music producer? Electronic music producers need to get to know how to use a DAW (Digital Audio Workstation) to create music via the computer. They might also play an instrument or work with other instrumentalists and singers. It is still useful to know about music theory as an electronic music producer and to know about rhythm, melody and harmony.
- What other electronic music producers do the students know and like? Listen to some of the producers that the students suggest and ask them to articulate what they like about the music. This discussion doesn't necessarily need to be in technical or musical terms. It is important to encourage students to have the confidence to vocalise their opinions when it comes to music production and song writing.
- What are the building blocks of a piece of electronic music? What are the similarities and differences between electronic music production and more traditional pop or rock song composition? Generally they can both be built up with a rhythm part (drums), a bassline, a melody and chords. They might also use the same song structures verse, chorus, bridge etc.
- Discuss copyright and the importance of knowing about it when using samples in music. What does Royalty Free mean?

Additional resources required

- DAW (Digital Audio Workstation)
- Audio interface – to record any live vocals or instruments
- Royalty Free Drum Loops
- MIDI controller
- Electronic music examples

30 minutes

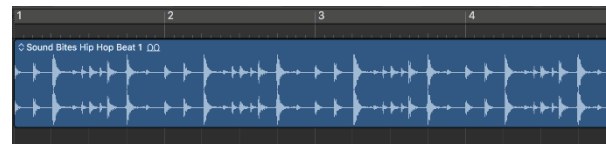
Choose a drum loop

Rhythm is the foundation of a song, it often creates the mood or genre of the song. Choosing a drum loop can set the mood on the song. Hand out the Choosing a Drum Loop activity sheet and discuss the steps involved. This includes:

- choosing a tempo
- listening to a range of drum loops
- choose one and make it sync up with your workstation grid
- Mo talks about collecting drum packs. Discuss what a drum pack is and how students can build up their own collection of drum packs. A drum pack is a set of drum loops that includes the main sounds you would hear on a drum kit such as the bass drum, snare and hi-hat. Drum packs can be purchased online or downloaded free from Royalty Free websites. Many DAWs come with a collection of drum loops that you can use – you will find these in the loop and sample library.

If there is time, students can do the extension activities outlined on the Choosing a Drum Loop activity sheet. This introduces students to two techniques that they can use to alter their drum loop. Altering a drum loop makes it unique.

Firstly, this can be done by cutting and pasting parts of the drum loop. See the example below and consider sharing the Hip Hop Beat and Hip Hop Beat with bars two and four audio tracks so that students can hear the original loop and the altered version.



Hip Hop Beat



Hip Hop Beat with bars two and four have altered to include the 3rd beat pasted into the 4th beat

Secondly, the tone of drum loop can be altered using an equaliser (EQ). Consider sharing the Hip Hop Beat and Hip Hop Beat with EQ audio tracks with students and see if they can hear the difference EQ filtering can make. Mo explains that an EQ changes the volumes of different frequencies of sound. In the



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Hip Hop Beat with EQ audio track, the low and high frequencies are removed, making the drum beat sound hollow. There are more specific steps for altering sound using an equaliser in the activity sheet. Encourage students to take an exploratory approach to this activity by creating and undoing changes to find out what sounds interesting. Experimentation is important at every step of electronic music production.