

Primary Music Starter Pack

Target Years: F-6



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Overview

This pack presents a treasure chest of musical activities for specialist and generalist primary school teachers. Each activity can be taught individually or in different combinations to deepen students musical confidence, skills and understandings. These activities can be used by teachers who have limited musical background.

The pack has been divided into five sections:

- Warm-ups and Games
- Exploring Rhythm
- Exploring Dynamics
- Exploring Pitch; and
- Bringing it All Together.

See the Activity Matrix on the opposite page.

The majority of activities in this pack do not require musical instruments, but there are plenty of opportunities to incorporate tuned and untuned percussion instruments if these are available. Many of the activities in this course have been adapted from the ARTS:LIVE Elements of Music courses (F-2, 3-4 & 5-6). Teachers seeking more background information or supporting video content are encouraged to access this complimentary course. The Elements of Music course includes extension activities related to form, timbre and texture.

Musical Experiences

This course includes:

- Body Percussion
- Singing
- Improvisation
- Composition
- Listening Skills
- Playing Instruments
- Musical Games
- Informal and Formal Notation
- Musical Vocabulary
- Musical Interpretation
- Performance

Parts of the resource

- ✓ 27 Musical Activities
- ✓ 6 Games
- ✓ 3 Assessment Activities
- ✓ 4 Song Sheets

Curriculum Links

The activities in this resource relate directly to Australian National and State Primary Music Curriculum Outcomes. These connections have been mapped into a separate document. This information is located on the ARTS:LIVE Primary Music Starter course page.

Primary Music Starter Pack

The table below outlines all the activities in the pack. These activities can be taught independently or in any combination. As you introduce each new activity, encourage students to reflect on how it connects to their prior learning.

Overview

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FOCUS	ACTIVITIES		
Warm Ups and Games	Voice Warm Ups	Hidden Dynamics	Paper Decrescendo
	Bananas in the Sky	Pass the Beat A-Round the Room	Dynamics Circle
Rhythm	Rhythm in a Name	Stepping to the Rhythm	Rhythm Pyramid/ Rhythm Clock
	Call and Response Rhythm	Rhythmic Composition	Rhythmic Layers
Dynamics	Conducting the Class	Making a Rainstorm	Dynamic Call and Response (requires percussion instrument)
	^Dynamic Canons (must be confident with pitch) ^variation of Canons (Pitch)	Peter and The Wolf	Dynamics Quiz
Pitch	Rain, Rain, Go Away	Circle of Pitch (requires a xylophone)	Pitch Statues (requires pitched instrument)
	Pitch Mapping	Canons	Listening for Pitch (requires pitched instrument)
Bringing It All Together	Graphic Notation	Listening Journal	Digital Playground

Dynamic Play

Musical games can be used as energisers throughout the day or at the start of a music class. These two activities integrate the element of dynamics with other musical learning.

Warm Ups
and
Games

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Paper Decrescendo

Everyone starts with an A4 piece of paper (preferably re-used).

The leader (teacher or confident student) counts in bars of 4/4 (1, 2, 3, 4) at a steady tempo.

On the '1' of every bar, everyone tears their piece of paper in half and as the 2, 3 and 4 are being counted, everyone places one half down in front of them to prepare to tear the other half in half again on the next '1'. This repeats as the halves become smaller and smaller. This means everyone is creating a paper ripping sound together, with each rip naturally getting quieter as the paper gets smaller. Therefore this activity turns the whole class into a musical ensemble performing a 'ripping composition' that decrescendos.



Extension

Ask everyone to line up the paper halves that they just ripped up from smallest to largest. Begin the whole group 4/4 count again and have each person pick up their smallest piece and tear it in half on the '1' (and then discard this piece), then pick the next size up, and then rip (again) on the '1', and have everyone continue through each piece of paper. The increased paper size should create a whole group crescendo. This extension is much trickier to do in a large group, but is achievable with patience and focus.

Term	Symbol	Effect
Pianissimo	<i>pp</i>	very soft
piano	<i>p</i>	soft
Mezza piano	<i>mp</i>	moderately soft
Mezzo forte	<i>mf</i>	slightly loud
forte	<i>f</i>	loud
fortissimo	<i>ff</i>	very loud

Dynamics Circle

This is similar to a musical chairs activity that incorporates the different dynamic names and symbols (without the eliminations). Prepare by drawing or printing enough dynamics symbols so that there is one per student, then place these symbols on the floor in a circle (the symbols on the opposite page can be copied and cut out for use).

Ask the class to stand outside the circle, play music (either on instrument or over a sound system; play a song of your choice) and invite students to walk around the circle in time. When the music stops, invite students to stop in front of a symbol and invite students, one at a time, to play 8 crotchet beats (clapping or using body percussion) using the dynamic displayed on the symbol they have stopped near. Continue this activity several times to help students reinforce and explore their understandings. This activity can be simplified for younger students by limiting the number of symbols or by keeping the game moving more quickly (only a few students share each at each stop).

Extension

If you have hand-held instruments, use these in later rounds to extend the students' understanding of dynamics using instrumentation.

Dynamic Symbols

The symbols below can be copied and cut up to use in the Dynamics Circle game (on the opposite page). Make enough so there is one for each student.

Warm-ups
and
Games

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

pp

p

mp

mf

f

ff

Hidden Dynamics

Musical games can be used as energisers throughout the day or at the start of a music class. This activity integrates the element of dynamics with other musical learning.

Warm Ups
and
Games

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year F-6

- Choose a classroom object to hide and a student volunteer who will try to find it (the 'guesser').
- Explain that the rest of the class will be working together as a musical ensemble (trying to make sound in unison) to create musical clues to help the student find the hidden object.
- To keep the game simple and safe, students can sit in a large circle with the guesser in the middle. A quiet sound would indicate that the student is far from the object and a very loud sound would indicate that they are very close.
- Decide on a sound like a vowel sound or vocables (e.g. doo woop, la la, shoop be doop) that the group will make. The ensemble will need to make their clues clear, so it's important that students listen to each other to create a common volume. The teacher or a student volunteer can always lead the volume of the cues.
- Ask the guessing student to close their eyes or blindfold them while the object is being hidden.
- As a group, silently decide where to hide the object. The easiest way is to choose one student to hide the object without speaking.
- Let the guessing begin. If the challenge is too great, reduce the number of students in the ensemble.

Year 3-4

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 section (above) and then try this extension:

- Get out some instruments and change the ensemble from voice-based to instrument-based. Hand out a few percussion instruments to use in the game and have students explore the dynamic possibilities of their instrument before the game starts. Are there ways to muffle sounds? Can instruments like a triangle ever be quiet? There are some instruments that might only be played when the guesser gets very close. If there are no instruments available, you can use body percussion variations – rubbing palms, tapping fingers, clapping hands, clicking, or stomping.

Year 5-6

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 and 3-4 sections and then try this extension:

- Have students play the game in smaller groups using any of the variations above.

Voice Warm-ups

Warm-ups are a playful way to exercise singing muscles and gain more confidence making sounds. Demonstrate each of these warm-up activities and then have the group try together. Be brave and playful!



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Facial Warm-ups

Breathe in slowly through the nose then sigh, louder and louder on each out-breath. Roll the shoulders to help relax the upper body.

Chew one, then two, then three imaginary pieces of chewing gum. Swallow the chewing gum! Different notes are made by making different shapes in our mouths, therefore it's good to wake up the whole mouth.

With softly-closed fists, gently pummel your chest, preferably with an accompanying 'Tarzan' noise. You can also pummel your shoulders, tummy, thighs and anything else you can reach.

Vocal Warm-ups

Lead the following vocal warm-ups and encourage students to notice what is happening in their bodies during each one.

- Put your hand on your diaphragm. Take a big breath in and slowly hiss it out by making a 'ssss' sound for as long as you can.
- Make a siren sound by going up and down in pitch. Follow the pitch of the sound with your finger. Students will be able to go higher in pitch.
- Sing numbers in the octave, jumping up and down according to the numbers: 1, 1 2 1, 1 2 3 2 1, 1 2 3 4 3 2 1. If you don't know which note to start on or how big to make the jump in sound (interval), just have a go - this activity is more about noticing and trying to make changes in pitch. You can increase the difficulty of the activity by substituting a number for an action (such as a stamp or a clap).
- Ask a student to lead a sequence of notes for the group to copy. Students can also work in small groups leading each other to try different note sequences. Kids learn best from their peers in singing.

Rhythmic Play

Musical games can be used as energisers throughout the day to re-energise students or at the start of a music class. These two activities integrate the element of rhythm.

Warm Ups
and
Games

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Bananas in the Sky

Teach the song (below), in full, to the group, then create your own actions, or work with your students to create actions together. The song uses the same tune as the 'Heads, Shoulders Knees and Toes' song and the words are:

There are no bananas in the sky, in the sky

There are no bananas in the sky, in the sky

There's a sun, and a moon and a coconut cream pie

There are no bananas in the sky, in the sky.

Once students are confident with the whole song, start removing words (and include a rest in their place), but still mark the timing of these position in the song using the action.

This is an elimination game – if any student says the word/s that have been removed, they are out and sit down.



Pass the Beat A-Round the Room

This is a great warm-up for tempo and rhythm.

Students stand in a circle, and in a steady tempo, say the phrase 'Pass The Beat A-Round The Room [rest]'

The word 'around' is split over two beats (A-Round), and the [rest] should be marked silently on shoulders or knees to maintain the tempo.

As the students become more confident, you can speed up the tempo.

This is an elimination game – if a student misses their beat, or says the wrong word, they are out and sit down.

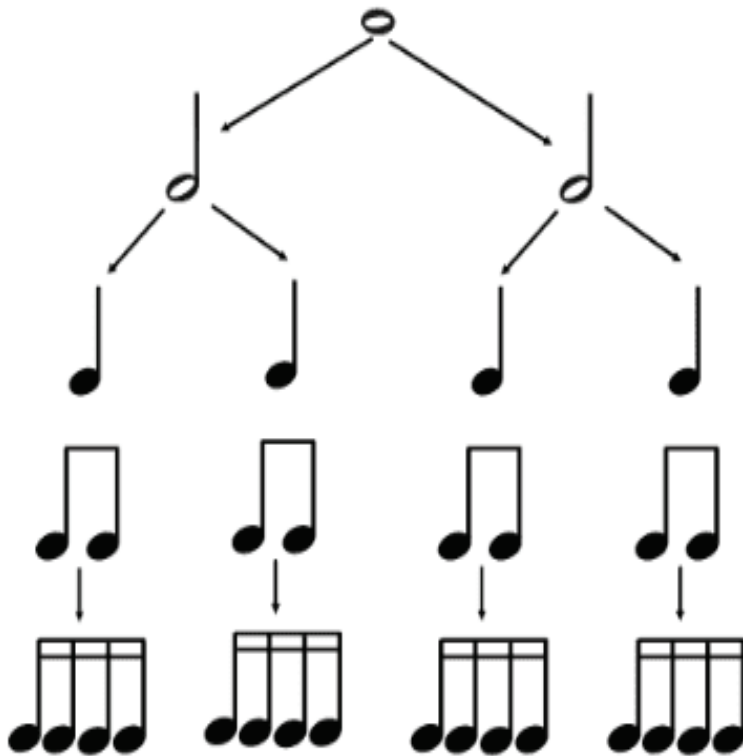
Rhythm Pyramid/Clock

It's important for students to understand that different types of notes have different values. Formal notation should always be introduced in connection with kinesthetic and auditory experiences.

Exploring
Rhythm

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

The Rhythm Pyramid



A whole note - Ta-a-a - (1-2-3-4-)

Half note- Ta-a (1-2-)

Quarter notes - Ta (1-)

Eighth notes - Ti-ti (1-and1-)

Sixteenth notes Ti-ke ti-ke (1-ee-and-a)



Year F-2

- After introducing Rhythm Pyramid, the Rhythm Clock (on the opposite page) can be used regularly to reinforce TA and TEE-TEE rhythms (crotchets and quavers) in 4/4 time (4 crotchet beats per bar).
- Clap one at a time (call and answer) – both student and teacher led.
- Demonstrate how these rhythms can be demonstrated using body percussion such as slapping knees or stamping feet.

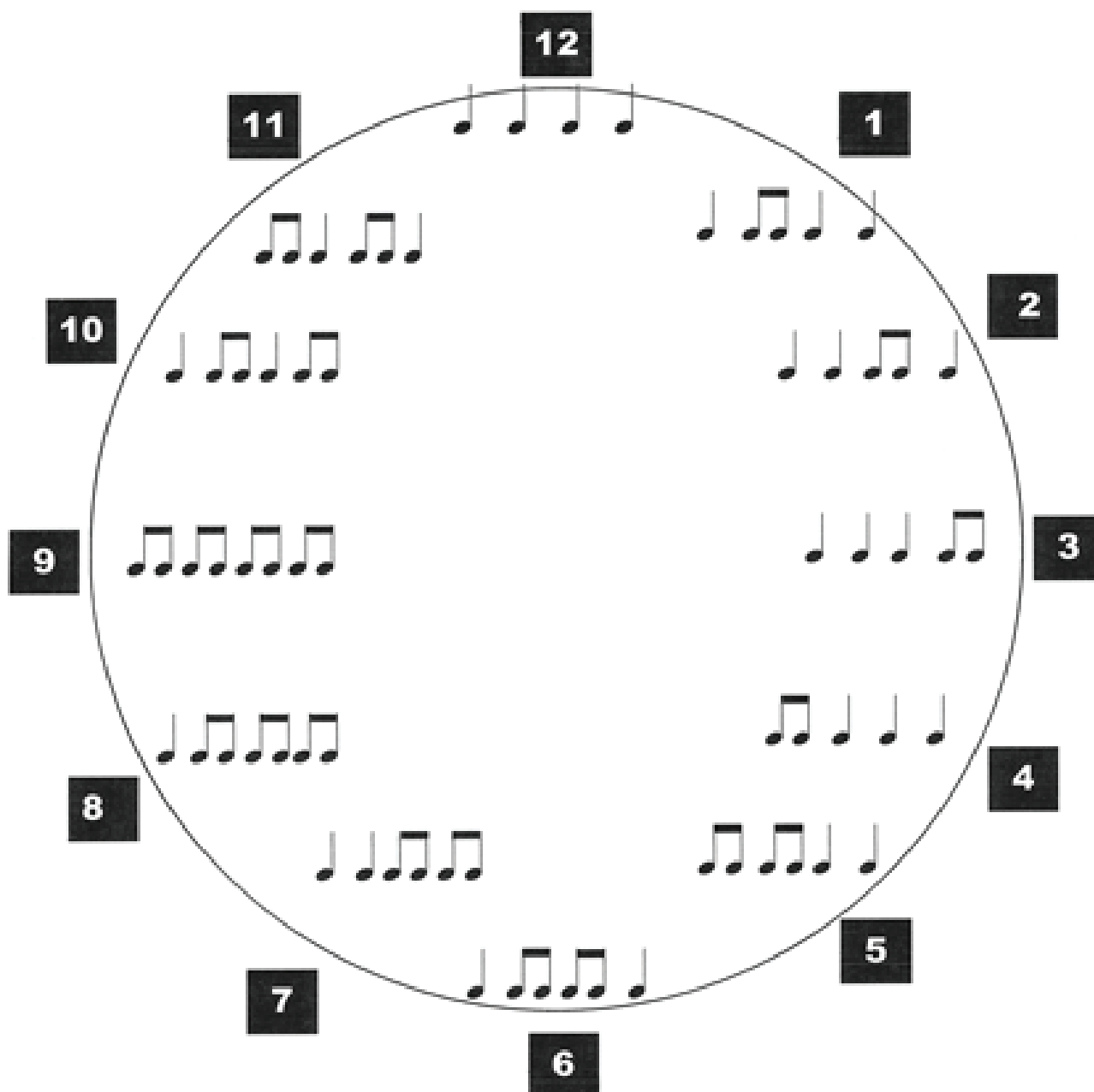
Rhythm Pyramid/Clock

The Rhythm Clock (pictured below) includes lots of different simple rhythmic phrases. Try clapping each of the bars. Try clapping around the clock. Can you join two phrases together in a continuous loop?

Exploring
Rhythm

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

The Rhythm Clock



Rhythm Pyramid/Clock

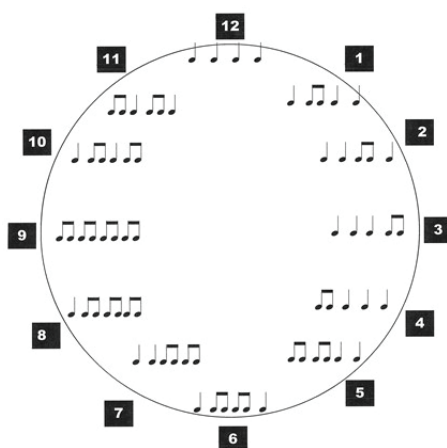
Older students can experiment with combining rhythmic phrases and play these phrases on percussion instruments or as an ensemble. Students can also explore how the pyramid connects with their knowledge of fractions.

Exploring
Rhythm

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year 3-4

- After introducing Rhythm Pyramid, use the Rhythm Clock (see below) to reinforce TA and TEE-TEE rhythms (crotchets and quavers) in 4/4 time (4 crotchet beats per bar).
- Clap one at a time (call and answer) – both student and teacher led.
- Play a rhythm and students need to guess which number has been played.
- Clap 4 in a row (as a 4-bar phrase) – example 'play one o'clock through to four o'clock'.
- Ask students to create a 4-bar phrase using any 4 rhythms (times on the clock).
- Have students play in an ensemble of 4-5 students; each using their 4-bar phrase for a rhythmic clapping composition and performance.



Year 5-6

- After introducing Rhythm Pyramid, use the Rhythm Clock to reinforce TA and TEE-TEE rhythms (crotchets and quavers) in 4/4 time (4 crotchet beats per bar).
 - Clap one at a time (call and answer) – both student and teacher led.
 - Play a rhythm and students need to guess which number has been played.
 - Clap 4 in a row (as a 4-bar phrase) – example 'play one o'clock through to four o'clock'.
- Play around the clock – clockwise.
 - Play around the clock – anticlockwise.
 - Split the class in half – have one half start at 12 and play clockwise; the other half start at 12 and play anticlockwise – where do they meet?
 - Ask students to create a 4-bar phrase using any 4 rhythms (times on the clock).
 - Have students play in an ensemble of 4-5 students; each using their 4-bar phrase for a rhythmic clapping composition and performance.

Call and Response Rhythm

In this activity, the leader claps an eight count rhythmic pattern using a steady tempo which the group then has to copy. The patterns used below increase in complexity. This can be adapted using body percussion. Invite students to lead the activity. What other 8 count Call and Response rhythms can you create?

Exploring
Rhythm

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)



Year F-2

Counts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Actions	Tap head	Tap head	Tap head	Tap head	Tap shoulders	Tap shoulders	Tap shoulders	Rest

Year 3-4

Counts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Actions	Tap head	Tap head	Tap shoulders	Tap shoulders	Tap shoulders	Clap	Clap	Rest

Year 5-6

Counts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Actions	Tap head	Tap head	Tap shoulders	Tap shoulders	Clap	Knees	Knees	Rest

Rhythmic Composition

This activity encourages both rhythmic coordination and creativity. Students are asked to compose rhythmic 'poems' based on the natural rhythm of language.

Exploring
Rhythm

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year F-2

- Give students (in small groups of 3-5) different coloured circles or stickers to paste on a larger piece of paper.
- The children can decide the order of the circles, and are then asked to practice and perform saying their 'composition' aloud together. For instance, a short composition might be 'purple, purple, pink, pink, green purple, green, purple'.
- Emphasis should be put on keeping a steady beat during the performance, in which the whole group is coordinated to recite the composition.
- Activities like this can help to develop language processing skills by emphasising the rhythmic nature of language (such as syllables within words and how individuals words can be accented or emphasised differently). This activity can also reinforce students reading skills by encouraging students to read their compositions from left to right and to look ahead at the next item in each sequence in order to stay in time when reciting the composition.

My Musical Composition



Year 3-4

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 section (above) and then try this extension:

- Have students compose their own short poem based on a specific theme (e.g. trip to the beach); and perform rhythmically, clapping and speaking, as they did with the coloured circles.

My Musical Composition



Year 5-6

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 and 3-4 sections and then try this extension:

- Students translate the rhythm of their poem into musical notation (e.g. red = one crochet, yell-ow = two quavers).

Rhythmic Layers

This activity challenges students to stretch their listening skills, practice rhythm and requires them to work as a team. Prepare by writing a few single-bars of 4/4 rhythms on the board or use the rhythm clock and choose two or more different rhythms.

Exploring
Rhythm

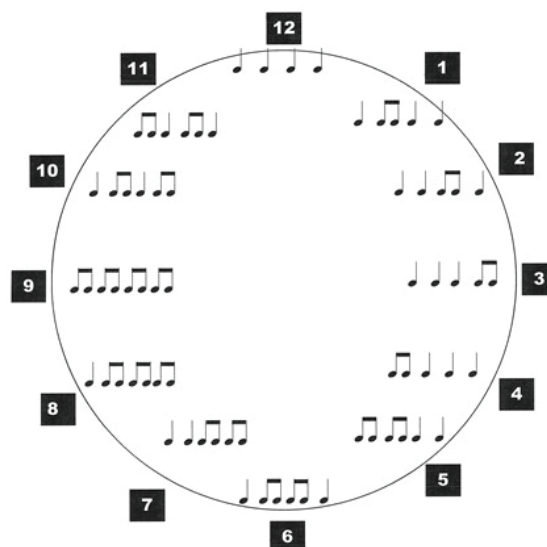
Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year F-2

Using either body percussion or untuned percussion instruments, go through each of the prepared rhythms together as a class, to make sure everyone is comfortable with playing each of the rhythms prepared. Then split the class in half – have one half play one rhythm; the half other plays another rhythm.

Try and choose two rhythms that both end on a crotchet/TA beat (for clarity) and work on playing these two different rhythms together, with a steady tempo, and ending together with clarity and accuracy.

You can ask groups to swap rhythms, and have another go; you can also try adding dynamic variation into the phrases used.



Year 3-4

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 section (above) and then try these extensions:

- Split the class in half and have each play a different two-bar rhythm at the same time; this means that both groups are using patterns that are twice as long.

Year 5-6

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 and 3-4 sections and then try these extensions:

- Ask students to break into four groups and create a two-bar rhythm of 4/4 time
- Come back together as a full class, then practice each rhythm together; and
- Choose two rhythms to play in two groups at once; then three rhythms to play in three groups at once; then all four together in four smaller groups. Each time, becoming slightly trickier as the texture/layers become more complicated.

Conducting the Class

What is a musical conductor and what do students know about this role?
Explain that in this activity some students will have a chance to 'conduct' how the rest of the class play instruments or sings.



Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)



Year F-2

Brainstorm different ways the conductor could move their hands/body to indicate changes in dynamics. For example, the conductor could move their hands up to command a greater volume and down to command a quieter volume. Fast movement between low and high could indicate a fast change in dynamics.

As a class, decide on the exact signals the conductor will use. Choose a student to play the role of the conductor and ask them to stand where everyone in the class can see them. If you are using instruments, choose un-tuned percussion instruments that can be played simply by shaking or striking. This makes it easier for students to focus on playing louder or softer. Students can create quieter or louder sounds by varying how gently or powerfully they shake or strike their instruments.

The teacher should model appropriate ways to play louder and quieter sounds on instruments. If you are singing, choose a song that the whole class already knows. Again, this allows students to only focus on the changes in dynamics. A very simple approach to this activity is to have the class drone one long sound (e.g. a vowel sound [ooo, iii, uuu]).

Students must pay close attention to the conductor, watching and listening for dynamic changes and adjusting their playing/singing accordingly.

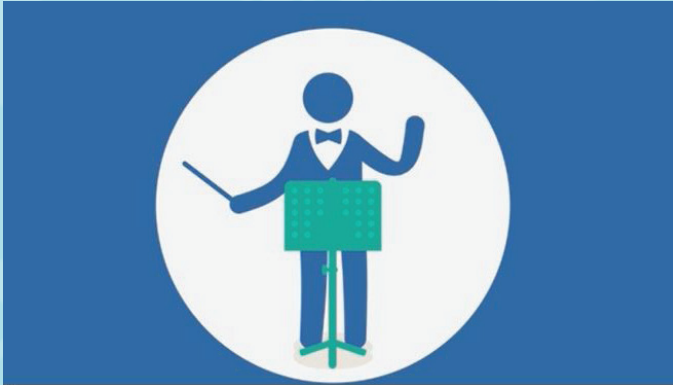
Allow for five or so students to have a go and if it's popular with the students, this can be an activity to come back to at any time to enjoy and consolidate the idea of dynamics. There are extensions on the other side of the page.

Conducting the Class

Once students are familiar with working with a conductor, it can be incorporated into other musical activities and be used to explore other elements.

Exploring
Dynamics

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)



Year 3-4:

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 section (on the other side of the page) and then try these extensions once students are confidently following the conductor:

- Create more signals for the activity. For example, the conductor can give commands to smaller groups of students by pointing at them first or the conductor can make a signal like a fist to indicate that a command is for the whole class
- Allow for five or so students to have a go and if it's popular with the students, this can be an activity to come back to at any time to enjoy and consolidate the idea of dynamics; and
- Split the class into two groups, with the conductor to indicate dynamics for each group at the same time. The left hand is the direction for one group, the right hand is the direction for the other group. They can indicate the same dynamics, or opposite dynamics, or hold one group at soft whilst manipulating the other group.

Year 5-6:

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 and 3-4 sections and then try the following extension:

- Divide the class into small groups (4-5 students in each group) and ask them to choose a short song (nursery rhyme length) and have one conductor, and the rest of the group as performers, and decide on dynamic variations for their song/group, and rehearse and perform for the class.

Making a Rainstorm

In this activity students use body percussion to make a whole class rainstorm soundscape. This activity weaves in musical vocabulary which supports students to understand the concept of dynamics.



Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year F-2:

Ask students to make a circle and explain that the goal is to create the sound of a storm building using only their hands. Movements will be passed around the circle. This means the teacher starts a movement and the person to their right will join in, and then the next student to their right will join in and so on around the circle, creating a wave of sound.

Once the movement returns to the leader they introduce the next movement and start a second wave. Encourage students to focus on the person to their left rather than the leader.

Rainstorm steps:

- rub hands together (pianissimo; this is the wind)
- tap one finger on the palm of your hand (pianissimo; these are the first raindrops)
- tap all four fingers on the palm (piano; many more rain drops)
- vigorous clapping (forte; it's getting more intense)
- slap on the floor, or your thighs or stamp (fortissimo; thunder enters)

Once students are familiar with this activity, Invite students to volunteer to lead the group.

Year 3-4

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 section (above) and then try these extensions:

- Try the activity forward and backwards (crescendo and decrescendo) by repeating all the movements in the reverse order to show the storm dying down, this continues until the group is back to step one - rubbing hands together and gradually stop ending with absolute silence.
- Invite students to volunteer to lead the group in this activity.

Year 5-6

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 and 3-4 sections (above) and then try the following extensions:

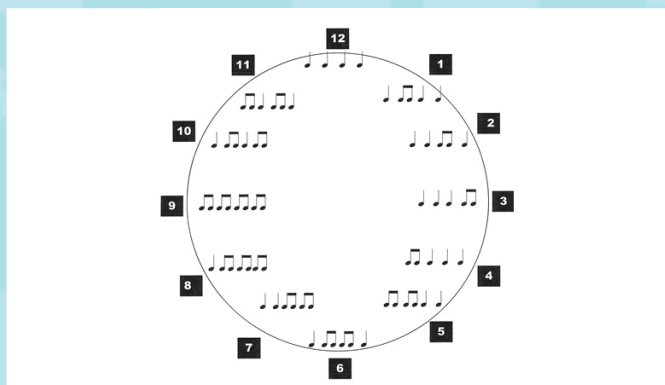
- Divide students into two or three smaller groups, and have them create their own dynamic rainstorm. Encourage them to include some new actions to build and diminish the dynamics throughout. Rehearse, and perform for the class.

Dynamic Call and Response

Most students are familiar with clapping back a rhythm but this concept can be extended in many ways including: using a larger variety of rhythmic patterns; incorporating percussion instruments; and by changing and playing with the dynamics of patterns.



Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)



Year F-2

Prepare for this activity by writing a few different simple bars of 4/4 rhythms on the board where students can see them. These can be taken directly from the Rhythm Clock (see image above and a larger version in the 'Exploring Rhythm' section). Ideally there is a percussion instrument for each student (although body percussion can be a substitute).

Organise the class into a circle and explain that they will be completing a call and response activity. Go through each of the prepared rhythms using call and response. The teacher plays a rhythm and the group immediately follow. Cycle through several patterns in order and play with different dynamics, sequences and tempos. Once students are comfortable with this, they can choose one of these rhythms and prepare to play it for the group.

Year 3-4

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 section (above) and then try these extensions:

- Each student will play their pattern and the class will repeat it back as a group. Ideally, the class can do this without missing a beat. It can be helpful to have someone to keep the 4/4 beat going in the background using a tone block, a metronome app, or by clapping
- Once the group is comfortable with this activity, encourage each student to consider the dynamic they are choosing. Are they playing softly or loudly? Encourage students to make an intentional choice about the dynamic they are using and have the group imitate the volume and rhythm precisely; and
- Instead of using the rhythm patterns on the board, invite students to make up their own rhythms.

Year 5-6

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 and 3-4 sections and then explore the following extension:

- Divide students into smaller groups, and ask them to create a rhythmic piece (4-8 bars in length; depending on confidence); that includes dynamic contrast. Rehearse and present to the class.

Dynamic Canons

One of the most effective ways of reinforcing student understandings of dynamics is through the use of a basic canon (or round). This activity helps reinforce dynamics, in context, through ensemble work. There are larger versions of the musical scores in the 'Exploring Pitch' Canon activity.

Exploring
Dynamics

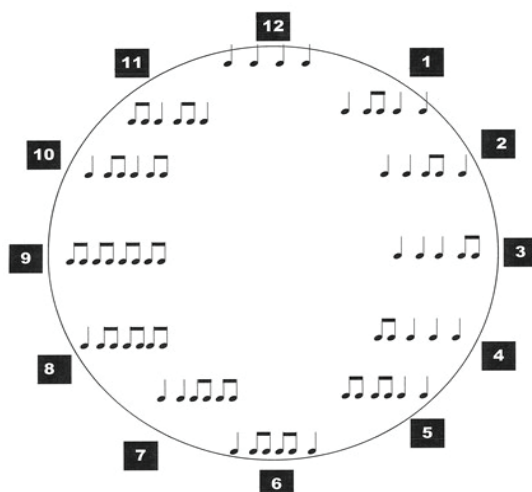
Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year F-6

These canon/rounds songs can be used from F-6. There are four example songs included and they get progressively more difficult. The trickier songs can be introduced as students gain more confidence using their voice, pitching, and singing as a group.

As the students become more familiar with the notes and structure of each song a dynamic inquiry process can be introduced. Invite students to discuss and provide suggestions about how the dynamics of the song could be developed. Which part should be quiet? Which part should be loud? This could also relate to the format/structure of the canon/round. For example, the first time the canon is sung quietly and as the round is repeated, the group gets increasingly louder. Encourage students to consider how the dynamics changes the feel of the song. This process can lead to a performance of one of the canons.

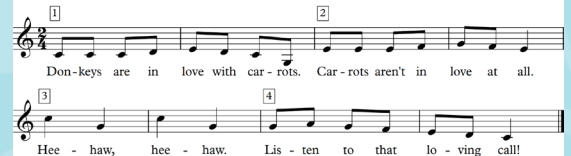
A dynamic inquiry process can also be applied to a rhythmic ensemble activity (instead of a canon song). For example - the Rhythm Clock (below) can be used to lead an ensemble percussion activity (involving body percussion or untuned percussion instruments) and the group can consider: Which part should be quiet? Which part should be loud? Develop musical compositions and support students to understand more about dynamics.



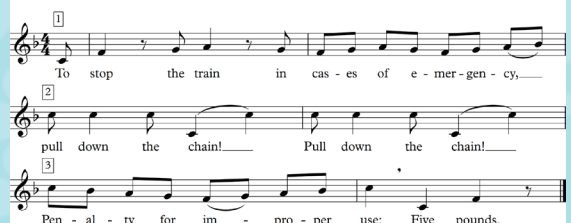
Donkeys and Carrots

(round)

Belgian folk song



To Stop the Train



Ah, Poor Bird

Folk Song



One Bottle of Pop

Folk Song



Peter and the Wolf

This activity draws on the widely known and commonly available Peter and the Wolf story and composition. Through the activity, students become familiar with the various characters and the way they are represented musically. This activity creates a rich context to talk about musical dynamics.



Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)



Year F-6

Locate a version of the story and music and read the story of *Peter and the Wolf* to your students. With help from students, write a list of the characters in the story on the board.

Read the story again and have students write a list of character traits for each character.

- Ask students to share what they wrote for Peter's character traits. Have students describe how they think his music might sound, then play Peter's theme. Does it sound the way they thought it would? Explain that Peter's theme is played by the string section of the orchestra. Listen again, and this time have students imagine Peter in the meadow.
- Next, without telling students whose theme it is, play the bird theme. Have students guess what character is represented by the music, then reveal the correct answer. Discuss what makes the bird's theme sound like a bird. Tell students that the excerpt is played by the flute, which is commonly used to depict the sound of a bird. The flute is in the woodwind family.

This activity can be a great introduction to the different instruments and instrument families in the orchestra. Encourage students to discuss and identify dynamics associated with each instrument and how this relates to the emotions of the story.

This process of investigation can be applied to other orchestral pieces designed for children such as *The Carnival of The Animals* featured in The Elements of Music 5-6 course and *Little Red Riding Hood* (featured above and included in the ARTS:LIVE Fairy Tale Dance resource).

Dynamics Quiz

What musical terms do you know? Which words, pictures or symbols can be matched together? Could you add in any other symbols, words, pictures or examples?

Exploring
Dynamics

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)



Conductor



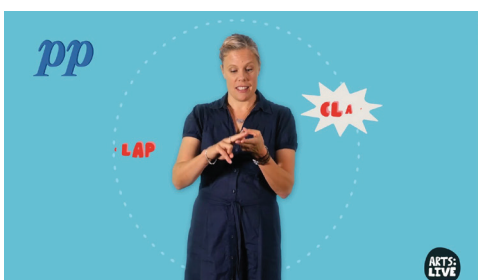
Forte



Piano

Pianissimo

a sound
that gets
louder
and louder



Conductor

Rain, Rain Go Away

Songs can be sung in many different ways and it can be useful to use different approaches. This will ensure students become more familiar with the song without getting bored.

Exploring
Pitch

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)



Lyrics

*Rain, rain,
go away,
come again,
another day.*

Year F-2

Tell students that you are going to be investigating different ways they can make the rhythm of the nursery rhyme and song *Rain Rain, Go Away*; whilst focusing on maintaining the tune and pitch of the song.

Begin by singing the song with the class. Here are some different ways to sing the song:

- The teacher sings the whole song first, then students echo
- The teacher sings half, the students sing the other half i.e. Teacher: Rain, rain, go away
Students: Come again another day
- Go around the circle and have each student sing two words or one line from the song
- For example, student A sings 'rain rain', student B sings 'go away.' This can be directed by pointing at students or by having lyrics written on the board. This will reveal who knows the song and who is still learning it; and
- Internalise it: Encourage students to practice singing the song in their head. This can be supported by having a group alternate between singing out loud and singing in their heads. This can be directed by using an open hand for singing out loud and closed hands for in your head. This challenge will take lots of concentration but will help students to internalise timing, pitch and words.

Rain, Rain Go Away

Any song can become a resource to explore musical learning and there are many ways that each song can be explored. Support and extend your students with the strategies presented below.

A pink starburst badge with the text "Exploring Pitch" in white.

Exploring
Pitch

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year 3-4

Begin by singing the song with the class. 'Rain, rain, go away come again another day'. Explore the approaches described in the F-2 section (on the other side of the page) and then try these extensions:

- Students sing the whole song together, whilst keeping the beat on their knees. This can be a good opportunity to discuss the difference between rhythm and beat. Once students know the song well and it's in their heads, it's time to explore the pitch and rhythm of the song
- Discuss the long and short sounds of the song; the high and low pitches within the song. This can be done by writing out the lyrics, discussing the syllables in words and discussing how this might relate to the rhythm; and
- Explore these techniques and activities using a different song.

Year 5-6

Begin by singing the song with the class. 'Rain, rain, go away come again another day'. Explore the approaches described in the F-2 and 3-4 sections, then try these extensions:

- Invite students to make the rhythm of song using clapping, body percussion, percussion instruments or by tapping it on different surfaces (such as tables or walls)
- Turn the song into a simple group ensemble piece by amalgamating the different approaches used in the class. For example, the class could be split into four groups. Each group could sing two words or make the rhythm of this part using different instruments:
 - Group A - rain rain
 - Group B - go away
 - Group C - come again
 - Group D - another day
- Have the group play the song four times - the first time they just say the words, the second time they make the rhythm using clapping or un-tuned percussion instruments, the third time they could say the rhythm names (as in taa, taa, ti ti ta instead of the words 'rain, rain, go away') and the fourth time they could sing it; and
- Explore the techniques and activities from this lesson using a different song.

Circle of Pitch

It's useful to explore pitch using tuned (or pitched) instruments such as a xylophone, glockenspiel or piano keyboard. This gives students a concrete, visual and auditory reference point to support their understandings.

Exploring
Pitch

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year F-2

Have a tuned percussion instrument ready to demonstrate on and have students sit in a circle.

- Play a series of three notes that range from high to low sounds, and have students try and match these sounds with their voices
- Choose a new sequence and repeat
- Pass a tuned percussion instrument around the circle for each student to have a go of playing a range of three notes; and
- On each turn, the rest of the class should match the instrument sounds with their voices. Continue this until each student has had a turn.



Year 3-4

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 section (above) and then try this extension:

Show notes in the C Major scale on the manuscript on the board, and talk about high, middle, low pitch with regards to that scale; along with the respective notes on the xylophone; and the best way to form melody (using smaller musical steps or intervals). Then go around the circle again with this in mind, asking the students to play a melody of five notes and discuss each melody, noting what made it easy/difficult to sing back.

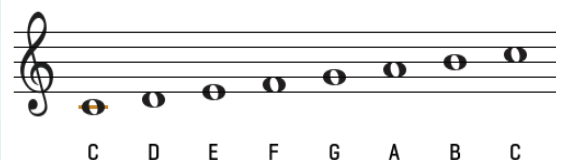
Year 5-6:

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 and 3-4 sections (above) and then try this extension:

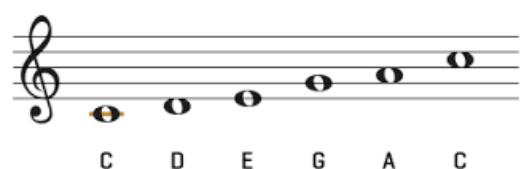
Discuss C pentatonic scale; and how the removal of certain notes can create stronger melodies, and then go around the circle again with this in mind, asking the students to play a melody of five notes and discuss each melody, noting what made it easy/difficult to sing in response.



C major scale



C major pentatonic scale



Team Pitch Statues

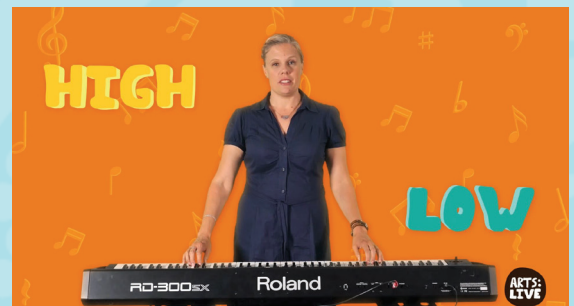
This is an active way for students to develop their listening ears and their understandings of pitch. It can be a more collaborative or competitive activity depending on how it is introduced.

Exploring
Pitch

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year F-2

- Organise students into teams of three and have students decide who is number one (1st sound), two (2nd sound) or three (3rd sound). Depending on their number, they will need to listen for the 1st, 2nd or 3rd sound. They should stand in a line, in this order.
- Using a keyboard or tuned percussion instrument, establish the difference between a low- or high-pitched sound.
- Play students a sequence of three notes that vary between low and high pitch, these can be played in any order or combination such as low, low, high or high, low, high etc.
- Students then have the challenge to listen, decide and represent these changes in pitch using a frozen low or high body position. As students gain confidence doing this, only allow five seconds for them to get in place.



Year 3-4

Explore the approach described in the F-2 section (above) and investigate the 5-6 extensions if your group is ready.

Year 5-6

Explore the approach described in the F-2 section (above) and then try these extensions:

- Increase size of groups; play five notes, and ask students to represent these notes using in their frozen body position; and
- Ask students to prepare a short performance in their groups of five; they will map out their own positions, and sing the notes that correspond with their chosen high/mid/low physicality.



Pitch Mapping

A pitch map is an informal and visual way to show changes in pitch. Ask students if they have any ideas about how changes in pitch can be recorded. This can be an age appropriate way to start discussions about formal musical notation.

Exploring
Pitch

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year F-2

Using a marker on the whiteboard, ask a student to draw a squiggly line that goes from left to right. This line will be used to direct the group to make changes in pitch as they sing or play instruments.

Explain that in musical notation, the positions of dots on a staff also show us how high or low a sound is. The emphasis is on demonstrating and exploring changes in pitch rather than exactly or accurately representing pitch.

Year 3-4

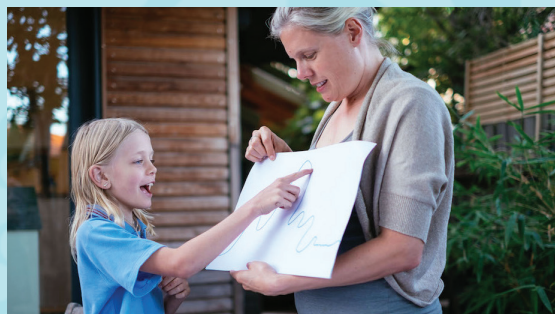
Explore the approach described in the F-2 section (above) and then try these extensions:

- Invite a student to point along the line to lead the class in following the rise/fall of the pitch
- One or two students can be chosen to try and demonstrate these changes using a pitched percussion instrument; and
- Explore these activities in smaller groups.

Year 5-6

Explore the approaches described in the F-2 and 3-4 sections (above) and then try these extensions.

Show this movement on a manuscript with music notation in C Major, to keep it simple and straightforward, and be able to translate to an instrument like a xylophone; and practice singing up and down in the direction of the notes (on pitch, if you think the students are ready).



Canons

One of the most effective ways of reinforcing pitch is through the use of a basic canon (or round). Below are a range of canons (from easy to difficult). These can be used from F-6 and the harder rounds can be explored as students become more confident using their voice, pitching, and singing as a group.

Exploring Pitch

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Donkeys and Carrots

Belgian folk song

1 2

Don-keys are in love with car-rots. Car-rots aren't in love at all.

3 4

Hee - haw, hee - haw. Lis - ten to that lo - ving call!

Detailed description: The musical notation for 'Donkeys and Carrots' is written on two staves. The first staff contains measures 1 and 2, and the second staff contains measures 3 and 4. The melody is in 2/4 time and consists of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are written below the notes.

To Stop the Train

1

To stop the train in cas - es of e - mer - gen - cy, —

2

pull down the chain! — Pull down the chain! —

3

Detailed description: The musical notation for 'To Stop the Train' is written on three staves. The first staff contains measure 1, the second staff contains measures 2 and 3, and the third staff contains measure 4. The melody is in 4/4 time and consists of quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, with some rests. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Ah Poor Bird

Folk Song

1 2

Ah, poor bird, take your flight,
Ah, poor bird, as you fly,

3

up a - bove the sor - row of this dark night.
can you see the dawn of to - mor - row's sky?

Detailed description: The musical notation for 'Ah Poor Bird' is written on three staves. The first staff contains measures 1 and 2, and the second staff contains measure 3. The melody is in 4/4 time and consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Canons

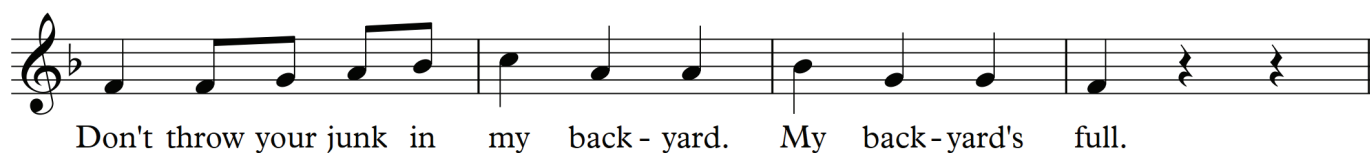
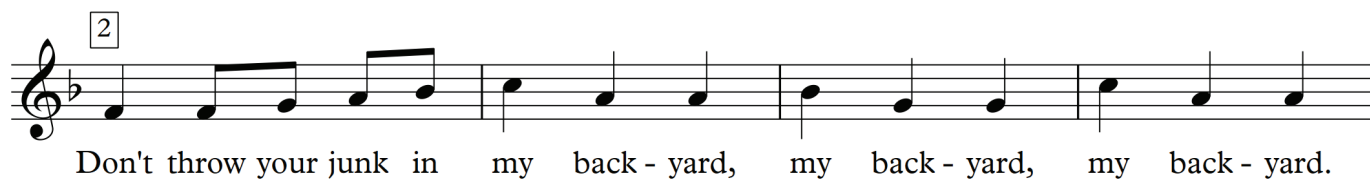
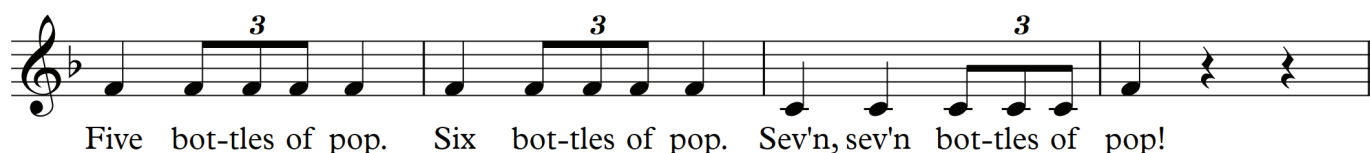
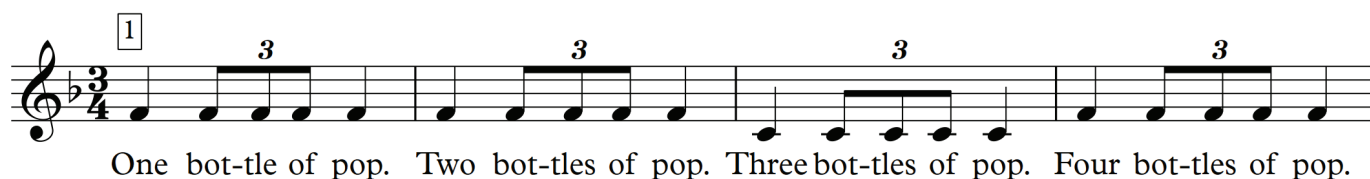
One of the most effective ways of reinforcing pitch is through the use of a basic canon (or round). These can be used from F-6 and the harder rounds (see below) can be explored as students become more confident using their voice, pitching, and singing as a group.

Exploring
Pitch

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

One Bottle of Pop

Folk Song



Listening for Pitch

Ear training is an important part of understanding the language of music. In this activity, students will need to listen and try to work out how the pitch is changing.

Exploring
Pitch

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year F-2

Play a sequence of notes (a melody) on a tuned instrument like a xylophone and ask students to use their hands to indicate the changes in pitch. Students can demonstrate the changes as you play or after you have finished the sequence (the latter is trickier).

Repeat this activity with a student leading the group. One student plays three notes while the class has their eyes closed. Students can put their hands up afterwards to say the three-note pattern that was played (such as higher, higher, lower or lower, higher, lower).

Year 3-4

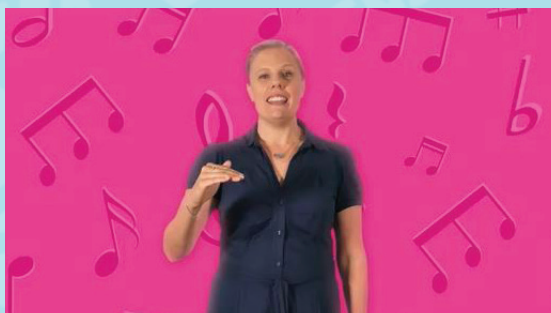
Explore the approach described in the F-2 section (above) and then try these extensions:

- Split students into pairs and ask them to continue the activity in their pairs; and
- Each student can choose a sequence of eight notes while their partner listens and tries to demonstrate the changes with their hand. If you don't have enough pitched instruments for each pair to have one, ask students can sing a sequence of notes to one another, and complete the activity this way.

Year 5-6

Explore the approach described in the F-2 and 3-4 sections (above) and then try this extension:

- Using a tuned percussion instrument, play a series of notes to the class and then ask students to sing back, and show the higher-middle-lower movement over the notes using their hands at the same time.



Graphic Notation

In this activity children explore how simple shapes, lines, and patterns can inspire sound making and vocal improvisation. This activity begins in a larger group, then students can draw their own graphic notation charts in smaller groups to inspire another group's musical composition.

Bringing
it all
Together

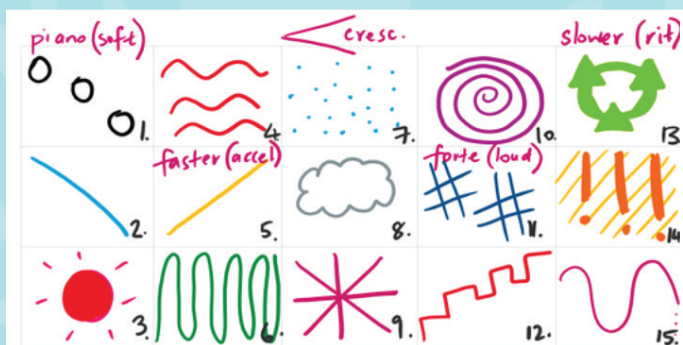
Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Year F-2

Present students with a couple of simple shape images. Point to each image and create a 'matching' noise using your voice, body percussion, instrument or a found object. Have students draw a few example shapes, with other students to have a go at making up a matching sound. This is an open ended activity, so there is no wrong answer.



Then give each student a piece of paper and ask them to work in pairs drawing shapes and swapping images to inspire sound making. Performers can interpret the images however they want, with whatever 'instruments' they have. This activity can be made increasingly complex by increasing the number of images on each page, or by having students work in larger groups when drawing and performing.



Year 3-6

Explore the approach described in the F-2 section (above) and then try these extensions:

- Students use a variety of shapes and colours with the addition of musical terminology
- Inclusion of directions throughout the piece make the composition more legible to the performer and give more guidance for interpretation; and
- As a further extension, have students research graphic notation examples from the internet and then use these to inspire their music making.

Graphic Notation

There are many ways to assess this activity and we suggest that you develop a rubric based on the learning areas that you have been focused on. There is an example below.



Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
Composition					
Variation of images and colours in composition					
Creative use of all boxes within the grid provided					
Performance					
Considered interpretation of the composition					
Use of instruments					
Teacher comment:					

Marking Guideline:

1. Working significantly below expected level of achievement
2. Working towards expected level of achievement
3. Working at expected level of achievement
4. Working beyond expected level of achievement; and
5. Working significantly beyond expected level of achievement.

Victorian Curriculum Scope and Sequence

Strands covered in this task:

- Express and explore ideas (all levels)
- Music practices (all levels)
- Present and perform (all levels); and
- Respond and interpret (all levels)

Quality Music Education Framework Characteristics Covered in This Task:

- Engagement
- Creativity and activity
- Student-centred learning; and
- Progression.



Listening Diary

A listening diary can be introduced as a calming, regular activity and it can be a great way to expose students to different types of music. Over time, this will develop students' listening skills, their music appreciation and their musical vocabulary. Each listening session can have a different focus. There are some examples below.

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Level F-2

Song:

Artist:

Discussion:

- What instruments can you hear?
- How does the song make you feel? Happy? Sad? Excited? Joyful?
- What parts of the song make you feel like that? The instruments? The lyrics?

Level 3-4

Song:

Artist:

Task:

- Prior-learning: introduction DYNAMICS, PITCH and RHYTHM.
- Make glossary of terminology/language used to talk about these elements.
- Students to draw up a table in their journals:

ELEMENTS	DYNAMICS	PITCH	RHYTHM
Definition	Loud & Soft	High & Low	How the Sound Sounds
Students' observation in listening			

Students should have 3 points for each element (relating to different parts of the song/different instruments)

Extension task – each student (or pairs or groups of three) gets to choose the next song for the listening journal, and leads class discussion.



Listening Diary

There are many ways to assess this activity and we suggest that you develop a rubric based on the learning areas that you have been focused on. There is an example below.



Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Level 5-6

Song:

Artist:

Task:

- Prior-learning: use ARTS:LIVE Elements of Music Course to introduce the ELEMENTS OF MUSIC
- Make glossary of terminology/language used to talk about these elements
- Students to draw up a table in their journals:

ELEMENTS	DYNAMICS	PITCH	TIMBRE	RHYTHM	TEXTURE	FORM
Definition	Loud & Soft	High & Low	How the Sound Sounds	Long & Short	Thin & Thick	Verse Chorus Bridge etc
Students' Observation in Listening						

They should have 3 points for each element (relating to different parts of the song/different instruments)

Extension task – each student (or pairs or groups of three) gets to choose the next song for listening journal, and leads class discussion.

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
Use of correct language & terminology					
Expected number of observations for each element for the task					
Extension: presenting song and leading class discussion					

Teacher Comments:

Listening Diary

These marking guidelines are continued from the previous page.



Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)

Marking Guideline:

1. Working significantly below expected level of achievement
2. Working towards expected level of achievement
3. Working at expected level of achievement
4. Working beyond expected level of achievement; and
5. Working significantly beyond expected level of achievement

Victorian Curriculum Scope and Sequence – Strands Covered in This Task:

Respond and Interpret

F-2: Respond to music, expressing what they enjoy and why; Respond to music, communicating their preferences and discussing where and why people in their local area make and perform music, including the music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music.

3-4: Identify features of the music they listen to, compose and perform, and discuss the purposes it was created for including the music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, using music terminology.

5-6: Explain how aspects of the elements of music are combined to communicate ideas, concepts and feelings by comparing music from different cultures, times and locations including the music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Quality Music Education Framework Characteristics Covered in This Task:

Engagement; Creativity and activity; Student-centred learning; Progression; Excellence; Authenticity

Resources:

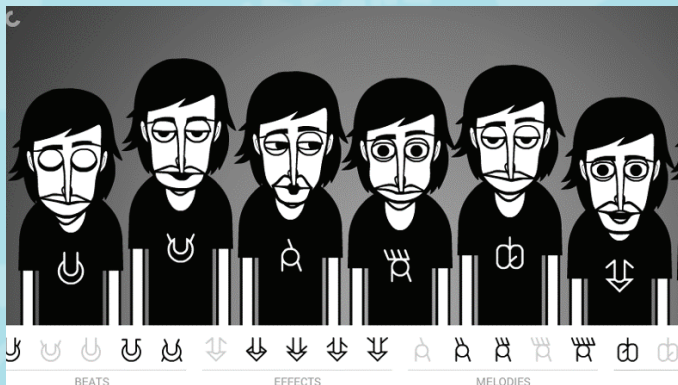
- Spotify
- YouTube; and
- Australian Music Centre <https://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/>
(including *The music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*).

Digital Playground

There are many free online music composition programs. We have suggested accessing the free components of Incrediblox (software available online at www.incrediblox.com). This program has an interface that should be accessible to all primary years. Any compositions that students create can be recorded and assessed.

Bringing
it all
Together

Find more resources at artslive.com



Year F-2

Create an Incrediblox composition using different beats, effects and melodies. This task can be completed as a class activity or in smaller groups; depending on what computer/device access is available. This activity can be a great way to help students apply their existing musical knowledge. Encourage students to think about how the composition uses elements like pitch, rhythm or dynamics to make the composition interesting.

At this level, and in a full-class format, assessment can only be created by recording students discussion or reflection about the composition using a simplified version of what is outlined below.

Year 3-4

PRE-TASK LANGUAGE:

Beats, effects, melody, voice, composition, tracks, loops, recording, playback, musicality.

TASK:

Using Incrediblox, your task is to create an interesting composition using BEATS, EFFECTS, MELODY and VOICES. At the end of this task, you will present your compositions to the rest of the class.

You have seven tracks to use in this program, and how you choose to use them is up to you. Complexity does not necessarily equal musicality.

Things to think about:

- How many BEAT tracks do I need to create a good foundation?
- Do I want to use EFFECTS in my piece, or rely on the other tracks to create the piece?
- How many MELODY tracks do most pop songs have? One? Two? More?
- What is the role of the VOICES track?

You need to include:

- At least one of each of the elements available; and record at least 10 loops; and you can choose how you feature the loops available.

You will be marked on the following:

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
Tracks used in composition (How many tracks were used throughout composition?)					
Elements used in composition (Were all elements included throughout the composition?)					
Manipulation of recording (use of solos etc.) (Was the use of looping and layering evident throughout the recorded composition?)					

Teacher comment:

FOR THE TEACHER ONLY:

Marking Guideline:

- Working significantly below expected level of achievement: (less than 4 tracks; only covers some elements; recording isn't manipulated)
- Working towards expected level of achievement: (4-5 tracks; only covers some elements; recording is manipulated slightly)
- Working at expected level of achievement (at least 5 tracks; covers all elements; recording is manipulated)
- Working beyond expected level of achievement: (more than 5 tracks, covers all elements; recording is manipulated); and
- Working significantly beyond expected level of achievement: (uses all 7 tracks; covers all elements; extended and highly-manipulated recording).

Victorian Curriculum Scope and Sequence – Strands Covered in This Task – Level

5-6:

Explore and Express Ideas:

Explore ways of combining the elements of music using listening skills, voice and a range of instruments, objects and electronically generated sounds to create effects

Music Practices:

Develop and practise technical skills and use of expressive elements of music in singing, playing instruments, improvising, arranging and composing

Present and Perform:

Rehearse and perform songs and music they have learnt, including their own compositions, combining aspects of the elements of music and using performance skills, to communicate ideas and intentions to an audience

Quality Music Education Framework Characteristics Covered in This Task:



Digital Playground

There are many ways to assess this activity and we suggest that you develop a rubric based on the learning areas that you have been focused on.

Bringing
it all
Together

Find more resources at [artslive.com](https://www.artslive.com)



Year 5-6

KEY LANGUAGE:

Beats, effects, melody, voice, composition, tracks, loops, recording, playback, musicality.

TASK:

Using Incredibox, students are to create an interesting composition using BEATS, EFFECTS, MELODY and VOICES. At the end of this task students will present compositions to the class.

There are seven tracks to use in this program and students can use them however they want. Complexity does not necessarily equal musicality.

Things students should think about:

- How many BEAT tracks create a good foundation?
- Does the student want to use EFFECTS, or rely on the other tracks to create the piece?
- How many MELODY tracks do most pop songs have? One? Two? More?
- What is the role of the VOICES track?

Students need to include:

- At least one of each of the elements available; and record at least ten loops; and students can choose how to feature the loops available.

Assessment rubric:

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
Tracks used in composition (How many tracks were used throughout composition?)					
Elements use in composition (Were all elements included throughout the composition?)					
Manipulation of recording (Used of solos etc.) (Was the use of looping and layering evident throughout the recorded composition?)					

Teacher comment:

FOR THE TEACHER ONLY:

Marking Guideline:

- Working significantly below expected level of achievement: (less than 4 tracks; only covers some elements; recording isn't manipulated). Working towards expected level of achievement: (4-5 tracks; only covers some elements; recording is manipulated slightly)
- Working at expected level of achievement (at least 5 tracks; covers all elements; recording is manipulated)
- Working beyond expected level of achievement: (more than 5 tracks, covers all elements; recording is manipulated); and
- Working significantly beyond expected level of achievement: (uses all 7 tracks; covers all elements; extended and highly-manipulated recording).

Victorian Curriculum Scope and Sequence – Strands Covered in This Task – Level

5-6:

Explore and Express Ideas:

Explore ways of combining the elements of music using listening skills, voice and a range of instruments, objects and electronically generated sounds to create effects

Music Practices:

Develop and practise technical skills and use of expressive elements of music in singing, playing instruments, improvising, arranging and composing

Present and Perform:

Rehearse and perform songs and music they have learnt, including their own compositions, combining aspects of the elements of music and using performance skills, to communicate ideas and intentions to an audience

Quality Music Education Framework Characteristics Covered in This Task:

