

Instrumental Newsletter 1

Welcome to the Southampton Music Hub's first instrumental newsletter!

We hope everyone will find something of interest and will be inspired to get their instrument out or do some online research. As a musician you can never be bored – just get your instrument out and start playing. It can be the first piece you ever learnt to play or working slowly and carefully at those tricky notes in your most recent piece.

Warm Up Tip of the Week:

You will need: yourself and your instrument.

Choose a favourite note. If you are a wind or brass player, how long can you play the note using only one breath? If you play a bowed instrument, can you use your whole bow really slowly?

1. Can you play the note loudly?
2. Can you play the note quietly?
3. Try getting louder whilst you play
4. Try getting louder and then quieter as you play
5. Keep a log of how long your note is in seconds each day. Is it getting longer every day?

Practice Tip of the Week:

You will need: yourself, access to a metronome (if you have one or you can download one for free on a smartphone – please ask an adult's permission before downloading!), your instrument and the piece of music you have just started to learn.

1. Choose a bar of short passage you think you can play really well.
2. Set the metronome at 60 (or use the speed of a ticking clock if you don't have a metronome)
3. Play the bar or short passage with the metronome (or clock) five times
4. Increase the speed to 64 on the metronome (or just go a little bit faster) five times
5. Keep increasing the speed until you can't go any faster or you lose control. Remember to record the speed you achieved. See if you can go a little bit faster when you play tomorrow.

Challenge – repeat the above but instead of getting faster – get slower. See if you can get down to 40 – or even lower!



Easter Composition Special

Hot Cross Buns

I am sure most of you know the song “Hot Cross Buns”.

Hot cross buns

Hot cross buns

One a penny, two a penny

Hot cross buns

Notice how repetitive it is? Repetition is great in music – you’d never get away with it in literacy!

Now see if you can come up with your own simple set of rhythms that follow a similar pattern. You may want to make up some “Easter” sentences to help you. Can you fit in some repetition? Try writing the rhythm down. Then try playing in on a single note and check you are happy with it. It is always ok to change your mind, cross bits out, re-write, etc.

Now to add a melody to your rhythm. : Melodies normally start and finish on the same note - what we call the home note or key note. . (There are always exceptions to the rules and Hot Cross Buns is one of them!) Find a way of recording you melody - you can use the letter names of the notes used, string players could write down the fingerings.

Finishing touches – what about some dynamics and speed and mood markings – in Italian if you want to be posh – otherwise English is fine.



Listening Activity:

This week we are going to look at the opening movement of Beethoven's 5th Symphony. You may not recognise the title, but we are sure most of you will recognise it. Click on the link below to have a listen and learn something about this piece and Beethoven.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/barney-harwood-on-beethovens-5th-symphony/zvdd7nb>



Would you like to learn how to play the opening? As mentioned in the clip above, the music is made up of a motif – three short notes followed by a long one, three short notes followed by a long one –

G G G Eflat-----F F F D-----

Extension Activity:

You may wish to listen to other music by Beethoven.

1. Listen to the whole of Beethoven's 9th Symphony
2. Perhaps also listen to the last movement of his 9th Symphony
3. For another well known piece of music by Beethoven try his Moonlight Sonata for Piano

Composition Activities:

1. Create your own piece of music using the rhythm pattern of three short notes and one long note
2. Find a way of writing your music down - you don;t have to use "traditional" music writing



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3. Send your piece electronically to a friend 0 remember to be safe and speak to an adult first. Can they play your piece. Will it sound the same?

More advanced musicians you may want to explore how to compose with motifs further. The following link may give you some ideas of how to develop a motif:

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=how+to+compose+using+a+motif&docid=608047818318876187&mid=76C319F4194C24D6650076C319F4194C24D66500&view=detail&FORM=VIRE>

Have a go and see what you come up with. It doesn't matter if you don't like your first attempt, try something else until you find something you do like.

Detective Work:

See if you can find out the following:

1. How many years ago was Beethoven born?
2. Can you find out three things about what a symphony is?
3. What is unusual about the last movement of Beethoven's 9th Symphony?

Theory:

The music for Beethoven's 5th Symphony has 3 flats in the key signature in concert pitch.

Information Point:

Flats always come in the same order in key signatures – Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, G, Cb and Fb. That's hard to remember so to help ourselves we make up silly phrases:

Battle **E**nds **A**nd **D**own **G**oes **C**harles' **F**ather

Can you see how the first letter of each word matches the order of the flats?

Other rhymes are:

Be **E**arly **A**nd **D**on't **G**et **C**old **F**eet

Or:

Bananas **E**aten **A**fter **D**ark **G**ive **C**ats **F**lu

(Please be assured if you have a cat and they eat a banana after dark they WON'T get flu. However, you wouldn't ever feed your cat a banana would you?)

See if you can think of your own rhythm – the sillier the better as you will remember it!



B	E	A	D	G	C	F
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Theory for the more advanced musician:

Information Point:

Many of you will already know every key signature has a major key and minor key that goes with it. Beethoven's 5th Symphony is in C minor – it has three flats in the key signature. The major key that also has three flats is Eb major, so we would say Eb Major is the relative major key of C minor.

For your grade 5 theory exam you will have to know to work out the relative major or minor keys from key signatures. (It is also good to know this even if you don't do grade 5 theory so keep reading....) How do we do this?

1. Relative minor - count DOWN 4 semitones from the key note.

For example: the music is in Eb major, to count down 4 semitones you would go Eb – D – Db – C. The relative minor would be C minor.

2. Relative major – count UP 4 semitones from the key note.

For example: the music is in D minor, to count up 4 semitones you would go D – D# – E – F. The relative major is F Major.

Can you work out the following – answers will be in the next edition.

1. Relative minor of C major
2. Relative minor of Bb major
3. Relative minor of G major
4. Relative minor of F# major
5. Relative major of A minor
6. Relative major of E minor
7. Relative major of Ab minor
8. Relative major of B minor

Please see the Southampton Music Hub website for instrumental tutorials and KS1 and KS2 curriculum activities -www.southamptonmusicclub.org

