

Subject: Music

Golden Concept: Listening and Appraising

Purpose:

Listening and appraising are essential components of the music national curriculum in many educational systems. The purpose of these elements is to develop students' musical understanding, appreciation, and critical thinking skills. Some key objectives associated with listening and appraising in the music curriculum are: cultural awareness, musical understanding, critical thinking skills, historical context, creativity and expression, communication skills, aural skills and lifelong appreciation. Listening and appraising in the music national curriculum serve to enrich students' musical experiences, broaden their cultural perspectives, and equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to engage with and appreciate music in a meaningful way.

Assessment:

Assessment in music education should be formative, allowing for ongoing feedback and improvement, as well as summative, providing a comprehensive evaluation of a student's overall musical development. This can be done through solo and ensemble performance, composition and improvisation work, music theory (aural skills and written tests), written responses to critical listening, music technology projects, peer and self-assessment, and student reflections in journals and portfolios. It's important for assessment methods to align with the specific learning objectives and outcomes outlined in the music curriculum. Additionally, considering the diverse nature of musical skills, a combination of assessment strategies is often necessary to capture the breadth of students' musical abilities.

Cross curriculum:

Mathematics: Studying rhythm in music involves understanding time signatures, note values, and fractions. This can reinforce mathematical concepts. Recognising patterns in musical compositions can contribute to a better understanding of mathematical patterns and sequences.

English: Studying song lyrics provides an opportunity for literary analysis, exploring themes, symbolism, and poetic devices. Writing song lyrics or creating narratives inspired by music encourages creativity and language skills.

Science: Understanding the physics of sound production and propagation is a natural link to physics concepts. Exploring the construction of musical instruments involves principles of acoustics and materials science.

History: Exploring different musical eras introduces students to historical periods and social contexts. Studying the lives of composers and musicians provides historical and biographical perspectives.

Geography: Investigating music from various cultures enhances geographic knowledge and understanding of global diversity. Examining regional musical styles can be tied to geography, climate, and cultural traditions.

PE: Music often accompanies physical activities, and dance can be integrated into music lessons to explore the relationship between movement and rhythm. The tempo of music can be linked to physical activities, such as coordinating exercises with different musical tempos.

Computing: Exploring music production software, digital instruments, and recording techniques connects music with technology. Integrating music into multimedia projects, combining audio and visual elements.

Art and DT: Creating visual art inspired by music or designing album covers involves artistic expression.

Key Stage or stage breakdown:

Stage 1 & 2: Introduce students to a variety of sounds, including musical instruments and everyday sounds. Explore fundamental musical elements such as pitch, rhythm, and dynamics through simple activities and songs. Use music to tell stories and express emotions, helping students connect music with narratives.

Stage 3 – 6: Deepen understanding of musical elements, including melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre. Engage students in active listening exercises where they analyse and identify different elements in various pieces of music. Introduce students to music from different cultures and historical periods, fostering cultural awareness. Introduce basic music notation and symbols to help students connect what they hear with what they see on the page.

Stage 7 – 9: Explore a broader range of musical genres, including classical, jazz, folk, and contemporary styles. Develop critical listening skills, encouraging students to evaluate and appraise music based on more nuanced criteria. Explore the historical and social context of significant musical works, linking music to broader cultural movements. Analyse musical compositions in more depth, considering the choices made by composers and their impact on the listener.

Stage 10 – 11 (BTEC Music & Sixth Form Enrichment): Students may have the option to specialise in particular areas of music, such as performance, composition, or music technology. Engage in extended analysis of complex musical works, delving into the intricacies of structure, harmony, and form. Encourage independent exploration of musical genres and styles, allowing students to develop their unique musical preferences and insights.