

TUNE IN YOUR EARS!

Delegates' notes for KS1 and KS2

Teachers and practitioners increasingly report that children do not focus or listen purposefully, as they did decades ago. This is hardly surprising given the ever-increasing noise pollution and over-dependence on omnipresent visual stimuli.

Listening can be encouraged and developed through multi-kinaesthetic approaches, not just through one's ears, but using dance, art or preparatory performance to engage children's interest, to elicit responses and introduce a way of embedding pieces from all genres and styles to provide satisfying and long-lasting listening experiences.

UPPER KS1/LOWER KS2: CIRCUS MUSIC by Aaron Copland from 'The Red Pony'

Ideas developed from **Let's Go Zudie-O** published by A & C Black

PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA taken from MES

- Recognise and talk about music in broad terms, using appropriate musical language (the **tempo, dynamics, metre, texture, timbre**) Y2)
- Recognise music from different times identifying key elements that give it its unique sound (Y2).
- Identify repeated rhythmic or melodic phrases in live or recorded music (Y2)
- Listen with concentration to longer pieces / extracts of music (Y3)
- Listen to live/recorded extracts of different kinds of music and identify where appropriate:
 - a steady beat / no steady beat
 - a specific rhythm pattern or event
 - the speed (TEMPO) of the music
 - the volume (DYNAMICS)
 - the melody ...using appropriate musical terms/language (Y3)

LISTENING: WORKING WITH IMAGE and DANCE

- This is a short, but complete piece in three sections (ternary form), depicting a vibrant circus. The outer sections contain sweeping waltz-time rhythms suggesting trapeze artists, unicyclists and tightrope walkers: the middle section is a frenzy, bustling with jugglers, tumblers and clowns engaged in fast-paced comical adventures, usually involving cars that fall apart and buckets of water thrown at hapless victims.
- Each section ends with the ringmaster's 'Ta-da!'
- After an initial hearing, ask children to tell you about different circus performers that they have seen and show relevant images/footage for those who have no circus 'experiences'.
- On the second hearing, offer listening boards with 3 sections. Provide multi-images of all the circus artists and ask children to place these along each section. Are the clowns all in the middle section?
- Use dance to embed listening. Stick strips of masking tape about 3 m long, randomly on the hall floor as 'tightropes'! Arrange children in pairs and ask them to choreograph a tightrope routine for the two outer sections of the piece. Talk about balance, sustained 'frozen positions and mirrored symmetry.
- Try using real umbrellas for the most effective outcome, failing that, rulers or sticks would give a flavour of incorporating balancing aids.
- Next, plan a paired clown routine activity for the middle section with lots of pranks then put the whole dance together! Children will demand many repetitions in order to perfect their dances and ensure that they 'fit' the length of the piece.

DEVELOPING THE LISTENING: composing

- The middle section uses very close intervals (seconds) to create a raucous soundscape. Allow children to experiment with pitched percussion, improvising phrases that use adjacent notes.

UPPER KS2: THE FIREBIRD SUITE (Finale) by IGOR STRAVINSKY

FIREBIRD FANTASY! Y5 & 6 composed by Hilary Miles

This is taken from 'BBC TEN PIECES PLUS' a DVD of follow-up work to the BBC TEN PIECES, including performances pieces for Y1/2, Y3/4 and Y5/6, compositional structures, cross-arts curricular ideas and further listening suggestions. The resource was commissioned by Lincolnshire and Northampton Music Hubs.

PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA taken from MES

- Distinguish differences in timbre and texture between a wide variety of instruments and instrumentation (Y6)
- Identify and discuss 'what happens next' within simple musical structures (Y6)
- Recognise and identify features of expression (phrasing, melody, harmony, different dynamics, metre and tempi) in an extract of live or recorded music (Y6).
- Compare two pieces of instrumental music from different countries/ times and discuss the similarities and differences (Y6)
- Use musical vocabulary and knowledge to help identify areas for development or refinement when composing (Y6)

LISTENING: A PREPARATORY PERFORMANCE

Structure of the piece – a music map is attached

- There are four sections in this piece **A B C & D** with sections **A & B** repeating. Each section includes the notes of Stravinsky's 'Firebird' melody.
- Section A is built on a series of two-note fragments, introduced gradually, first in the recorders and then echoed by glockenspiels and chime bars. The first phrase is 8 beats long: beats 7 & 8 are played on untuned percussion to the rhythm '*l-van*': the fourth phrase ends with the rhythm '*gol-den bird*'.
- Section B uses notes D and F then E and C as echoed 2-note fragments.
- Section C assembles the fragments into a recognisable melody with the rhythmic accompaniment: '*gold-en bird, gold-en bird glow-ing bright-ly in the sky*'. The melody is passed from recorders to glockenspiels/chime bars then they play together.
- In Section D, recorders, glockenspiels/chime bars finally play the melody in canon. The ending uses the rhythm '*in the sky* where pitched instruments play notes in the chord of C major.
- There is a simple guitar part using two chords C /G7: ukuleles plays single open strings C/G.
- Try this piece as a First Access/WCIT whole-class activity to enhance and deepen understanding of the finale of the 'Firebird Suite'. The activity also offers opportunities to reinforce the 'rule' of two mallets per player and the correct grip.

DEVELOPING THE LISTENING: composing

- In small groups compose a short piece based on the notes **C D E F G**.
- Begin by creating a short **melody** using small fragments based on 2 or 3 notes played at a time.
- Compose word rhythms for untuned instruments.
- Gradually add instruments to the piece to build up the **texture** and **dynamics**.
- Lead into a fanfare section based on the word rhythms:
 - '*Firebird, in the sky; golden feathers light up high*'
- Experiment with chords or 'note clusters' to support the melody.
- Decide how to start and end the piece.

SECTION A FIREBIRD FANTASY: RECORDERS and TUNED PERCUSSION

Recorders echoed by glockenspiels, then echoed by chime bars

	Recorders	Glockenspiels	Chime bars	2 silent beats
1 st phrase	G F	G F	G F	* *
2 nd phrase	E G	E G	E G	* *
3 rd phrase	D C	D C	D C	* *
4 th phrase	F E	F E	F E	* *

Repeat this section

SECTION B (short) FIREBIRD FANTASY RECORDERS and TUNED PERCUSSION

Recorders echoed by glockenspiels + chime bars playing TOGETHER

	Recorders	Glocks & chime bars together
1 st phrase	D F	D F
2 nd phrase	E C	E C
3 rd phrase (repeats phrase 1)	D F	D F
4 th phrase (repeats phrase 2)	E C	E C

SECTIONS C and D FIREBIRD FANTASY: RECORDERS and TUNED PERCUSSION

SECTION C

1st phase	Recorders	G F E G	D C * *			
2nd phrase	Chime bars and glocks	G F E G	D C * *			
3rd phrase	Recorders, Glocks AND chime bars TOGETHER	G F E G	D C * *			
SECTION D	Recorders	G F E G	D C G F	E G D C	* * E E E	E E E E E E
	Glocks AND chime bars TOGETHER	* * G F	E G D C	G F E G	D C GG G	GG G GG G

ALL SECTIONS - FIREBIRD FANTASY: untuned percussion: woodblock, Tibetan bells, maracas etc.

SECTION A

1 2 3 4 5 6 I-van, 1 2 3 4 5 6 I-van

1 2 3 4 5 6 I-van, 1 2 3 4 5 6 gold-en bird **repeat this section**

SECTION B

1 2 3 4 5 6 gold-en bird, 1 2 3 4 5 6 gold-en bird

SECTION C

gold-en bird, gold-en bird, glow-ing bright-ly in the sky

gold-en bird, gold-en bird, glow-ing bright-ly in the sky

gold-en bird, gold-en bird, glow-ing bright-ly in the sky

SECTION D

gold-en bird, gold-en bird, glow-ing bright-ly in the sky

gold-en bird, gold-en bird, glow-ing bright-ly in the sky, in the sky, in the sky

Tune in our Ears. The Early Years. Linda Bance.

Sound is everywhere. Rarely is there a moment in our lives when sounds are not there. Even when we think that it is all quiet, there is the hum of the computer, the central heating starting up or maybe back ground traffic noise heard from a distant road. The brilliant Bonny Langford once said. "We are hearing things all day long but are we really listening?" What a good question.

The difference between hearing and listening is simple.

Hearing is simply the act of perceiving sound by ear. Listening is something that we are consciously choosing to do and most people tend to be hard of listening rather than hard of hearing but listening leads to learning!

The Minimum Expected Standards document produced by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham makes reference to listening in their guidelines lines for working musically with young children at the foundation stage. It suggests three areas of musicality that we can work towards and this workshop will look at how listening activities can support these three areas. To Listen, reflect and appraise, to perform and to explore and compose .

In terms of listening what is progress at the foundation stage?

It could mean simply that children are getting ready to listen. That they are concentrating. That they are beginning to be able to use words that explain what they can hear or how the music is making them feel. They might be exploring movement and showing you what ideas the music is giving them. With careful observation and extended offerings from the teacher this could go on to developing an awareness of musical concepts for example. Quiet, fast, slow, loud, sudden crashes! We are aiming to heighten the musical awareness of our very young children.

Throughout all of the foundation stage it is hoped that there is still plenty of time and resources to allow children to explore and create music in their own time so that the composing element can be their own creations based on their own experiences both from school and home. This is an exciting time musically for our young. We need to get it right to allow little creative composers, players and of course listeners.

How do young children listen to music?

Our children are active listeners. They do not necessarily need to sit still and there are many ways of engaging children in the process of developing good listening skills.

Whether in a formal circle within the reception area or in the quiet book corner. Here are some ways we can help children in the foundation stage really listen

Tuning in.

Mary's Rap!

1,2,3,4 Mary's at the kitchen door.

5,6,7,8 Oli's at the garden gate.

Rhythm patterns.

Can you play?

Can you play a pattern?

Can you play a pattern?

Can you play a pattern when Gina plays for you?

Singing about percussion instruments that we are playing.

Play the music! (Tune: Ski to my lou!)

Play the music tra la la. Play the music tra la la.

Play the music tra la la. Skip to my lou my darling.

Other verses: Play the drums. Bang

Listening to a piece of music.

Some questions could include
What did you hear? How did the music make you feel? What could you do with the music?
The answers will depend on their culture, perceptions of life so far, their existing knowledge of sounds and musical instruments and their creative and imaginative development.
Our idea of what music is all about is not necessarily what children think it is. In Nicola Burke's study of listening with children a group were played the waltz of the Blue Danube.

Music played: *The Blue Danube by Strauss*

Question "What can you hear?"

Answers "Music" "Flying" "It's violins" "Beanstalks" "Instruments, I can't hear any people"

Nicola asks – "Is this a song?" The girl replies "No, there's no people singing."

<https://macbirmingham.co.uk/project/tune-into-listening-project>

March Past of the Kitchen Utensils.

Ralph Vaughn Williams.

This humorous piece has an emphasis on four beats and a regular pulse. Includes also short sounds, loud, quiet and large bursts of sound rather like that of Haydn's Surprise Symphony.

Play the music to the children

Talk about the marching beat, the bursts of sound. What can we do on these?

Jump, fall, change direction.

Make a band using kitchen utensils.

Larger steps. Maybe you could march around quietly like a mouse and then be startled when the cat jumps out at you.

And rest!