

Unit 10 Play it again

Exploring rhythmic patterns

ABOUT THE UNIT

This unit develops children's ability to create simple rhythmic patterns and perform them rhythmically using notation as a support.

In this unit, children extend their understanding of rhythmic patterns, and in particular, ostinato. They create their own patterns and play them separately and in combination with other patterns. They identify repeated patterns in different types of music.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit links to the ongoing skills unit (unit 8) through reinforcing and extending understanding of rhythm and ostinati. It also helps the children to play their own parts alongside parts played by others in the class. It builds directly on units 3 and 4. It leads to units 14 and 16.

Fitting rhythmic patterns together demands considerable cooperation and skills of teamwork and this unit links directly to PSHE.

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if children and teachers have:

- developed a sense of pulse
- practised keeping a steady beat when performing
- copied and created short rhythmic patterns
- developed their skills through the activities described in units 3 and 4

VOCABULARY

In this unit children will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to:

- duration, *eg rhythm, rhythmic pattern*
- tempo, *eg steady, fast, slow*
- texture, *eg combined rhythmic patterns*
- processes, *eg composing using rhythmic patterns*
- context, *eg use of rhythmic patterns in music from different times and places*

RESOURCES

Stimulus:

- rhythmic patterns in music/ostinati

Sound sources:

- body sounds
- untuned percussion

EXPECTATIONS

at the end of this unit

most children will:

recognise and create repeated patterns; perform with control of pulse and awareness of what others are playing

some children will not have made so much progress and will:

put rhythmic patterns together with some help; recognise rhythmic patterns

some children will have progressed further and will:

recognise how patterns fit together; perform, create and maintain their own rhythmic patterns confidently in time with the other parts; make effective use of the silent beats

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

CHILDREN

POINTS TO NOTE

INTRODUCTION

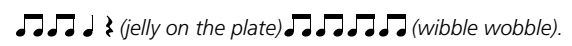
- about repeated rhythmic patterns
- Choose a piece of music that has a clear, repeated rhythmic pattern, such as the accompaniment to the tune in *Tubular bells* by Mike Oldfield. Children listen and clap along with the repeated pattern. Explain that in some types of music a repeated pattern is called an ostinato.

- recognise repeated rhythmic patterns

- Reinforce understanding through 'Copy cats', 'Keep it going' and 'Put a pattern in space'. [Link to unit 8: Listening]




EXPLORATION

- about rhythmic patterns
- how rhythms can be described through rhythmic symbols (notations)
- Chant *Jelly on the plate* to a steady pulse. *How many lines/phrases are there in this chant?* Chant and clap the rhythm (the word pattern) of each line. Describe the pattern using rhythmic symbols:






What do you notice about lines 1, 3 and 4?


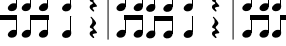

- Ask half the class to tap a quiet pulse on their knees. After four taps, the rest of the class join in with one of the *Jelly on the plate* rhythms and repeat this as an ostinato.


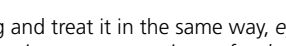

Half the class  |  |  |

Rest

- Transfer the pulse (A) and rhythmic pattern (B) to two instruments. Ask the children to play them together and listen to the combined effect of pulse and rhythm. Practise this using different combinations of instruments and different groups of the class. When it is secure then add a third part (C) that plays the rhythm of the whole chant. This will create three simultaneous parts:

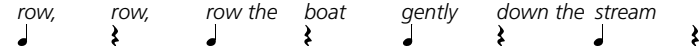
Group A  |  |  |

Group B  |  |  |

Group C  |  |  |

- Choose a well-known song and treat it in the same way, eg *make the rhythm of the first line of Row, row the boat into an ostinato accompaniment for the singing*. Add a slow, quiet pulse – two taps per line, eg

row, row, row the boat gently down the stream



- Ask the children to sing the song several times, exploring different combinations of rhythmic ostinati, eg
 - first time – song and the pulse
 - second time – song with pulse and the ostinato pattern of the first line
 - third time – with the pulse and the ostinato pattern of the second line ('gently down the stream')
- Explore different instruments and make a class performance. [Link to unit 8: Singing]

- repeat rhythmic patterns
- perform a repeated pattern to a steady pulse
- perform with awareness of different parts

- The use of the silent beat is very important in rhythm work. Children should be able to feel and hear this in their heads. Use the rest symbol (z) to make sure that the children know that they have to be as aware of a silent beat as a beat that makes no sound. Relate this to the use of the thinking voice, that is, the beat has to be heard and felt in the head and body. This can be reinforced by asking the children to make a physical movement for the silent beats. [Link to unit 8: Singing]
- The use of rhythmic symbols is an essential aspect of musical development and should be developed in the early part of key stage 2, eg use prepared rhythm cards for the pattern to be used in the lesson, eg



- The fitting together of rhythmic patterns is a very important skill, as it lies at the heart of much music making.
- Extension activity:** Ask the class to try making the ostinato get faster and slower while keeping together – quite a challenge!

- that repeated patterns are often used in music
- Choose other music that uses repeated patterns, eg *Unsquare dance* by Dave Brubeck, *2nd movement of Beethoven's 7th symphony*. Let the class clap in time as they listen and copy any repeated patterns. Half the class claps one repeated pattern (ostinato) while the other half taps, or slaps, a second ostinato on their knees.

- identify repeated patterns used in a variety of music

- Dance and movement can reinforce understanding. Ask the class to create movements that can be repeated in time with the music and the particular ostinati being used. [Link to unit 8: Listening]

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

- to compose music using rhythmic ostinati based on spoken phrase
- Taking a theme such as bedtime, make a collection of sleepy phrases, eg *go to sleep, close your eyes now, good night*. *How should they be spoken – quietly/loudly, whispered, using a singsong voice?* Clap their rhythms to a slow pulse as the phrases are spoken. Support this activity by asking a child to provide a quiet, steady pulse on an appropriate instrument, eg a soft beater on a tambour.
- Choose three or four of the sleepy phrases. Divide the class into groups, one for each rhythmic pattern. Listen to them chant and tap their patterns first one after the other, then two together. Experiment with the order. Ask the children: *Which pairs work best together and why?* Transfer the rhythms to instruments. Ask the children to choose the instruments carefully. Use tuned and untuned instruments.
- Make an extended composition using combinations of chanting and playing. Keep a steady beat going throughout the composition. Some of the rhythmic patterns could be used throughout as rhythmic ostinati. Some may only be performed once or twice. Make use of silence. Encourage them to think about the start and finish. Practise and perform.

- compose music in pairs and make improvements to their own work

- Some children will find this difficult and will need to be given more support.
- Extension activity:** Ask children to create interesting combinations of up to four different ostinati and find a way of showing their combinations using rhythmic symbols.
- As with the other units, recording their rehearsals and performance and playing them back is a very useful way of helping children make improvements. Try recording at the beginning and at the end and ask the class what has improved and why.

EXTENSION AND FUTURE LEARNING

In addition to the examples given in the 'Points to note' section, children could go on to:

- create longer ostinati and explore the way the different patterns come together
- use different timbres or dynamics to add interest and variety
- identify ostinati in other music, selecting music from home to show the class
- use more layers of ostinati, making musical use of silent beats, that is, making the texture thinner by not having all parts play all the time
- celebrate their work by performing to other classes in selected groups. The class could choose which compositions to perform. Some children could list the resources required for each piece and work out how to organise the performing space. The class could rehearse the sequence of performances with teacher supervision, but without teacher direction. They could discuss the placing of instruments and the order of the different compositions to get the best effect for the audience. After the performance, the class should discuss how it went

When this unit is repeated, the focus will remain the same, that is, understanding rhythmic patterns, but the content and the expectations should change. The content is changed easily through the use of different musical examples, chants and other stimuli that could be used to explore rhythmic patterns. Expectations are changed by expecting more of the children to achieve the 'most children' and 'some children will have progressed further' statements and by placing greater emphasis on the extension exercises in the 'Points to note' section.

ENRICHMENT

- The class could attend concerts where the ensemble talks about the rhythm features – ensembles that place an emphasis on rhythm are most appropriate.
- Musicians and ensembles could visit the school and invite children to add sections and/or additional layers to their performance.
- The class could work with a professional musician, set designer or director to create a performance that requires the class to consider the choice of music, the performing space, the resources needed, rehearsal time and audience.
- The class could create music with a visiting performer or ensemble.

