

Year 8: MUSIC – African Music



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because:

It allows you to explore the rhythmic traditions and musical practices of African Music, particularly the drumming traditions of West Africa and the music of North Africa. You will develop your understanding of how rhythm, texture, timbre and structure work together to create music. Through performing, improvising, composing, listening and appraising, you will learn how music communicates identity, culture and community.

This builds on:

This unit develops your understanding of world music traditions whilst building upon the Musical Elements studied earlier in Year 7. Links to the Curriculum through performing, composing, listening, reviewing and evaluating music. You build upon your knowledge of the Musical Elements, Rhythm and Metre, ensemble performance and listening skills developed throughout Year 7. You will apply your understanding of rhythm, texture, timbre and structure within a new cultural context.

This leads to:

Applying your understanding of rhythm, improvisation, texture and ensemble performance to future topics including Jazz and Blues, Folk Music, Minimalism and Film Music. Students continue to develop their understanding of world musical traditions and gain the knowledge and skills required for GCSE Music listening, performing and composing.

We will learn:

Technical

- How to perform cyclic rhythms accurately and maintain an independent rhythmic part within an ensemble.
- How to play djembe drum techniques including bass, tone and slap sounds.
- How to perform call and response patterns and rhythmic improvisations.

Constructive

- How African Music is built using cyclic rhythms, ostinatos, syncopation and polyrhythms
- How texture is created through layering rhythmic patterns.
- How different African instruments create contrasting timbres and sonorities.
- How call and response functions as a structural device within African Music.

Expressive

- How African Music communicates identity, culture, celebration and community.
- How musical traditions are shared and adapted between cultures.
- How improvisation allows performers to communicate musical ideas.
- How music reflects the traditions and experiences of different communities.

We will develop/practise skills including:

- Performing confidently as part of an ensemble.
- Developing coordination, pulse and rhythmic accuracy.
- Improvising rhythmic ideas using African musical conventions.
- Identifying and analysing rhythmic features in African Music.
- Creating and arranging rhythmic patterns within a group performance.
- Using musical elements to compose and develop an arrangement.
- Applying knowledge of texture, timbre and structure when composing.

You could learn more about this topic by:



African Music



Teaching Gadget



African Drumming

- Researching traditional African instruments.
- Exploring African drumming performances online.
- Listening to music from West Africa and North Africa.
- Using BBC Bitesize Music resources on World Music.
- Watching performances featuring djembe ensembles and call-and-response singing.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Rhythm, Pulse, Beat, Cyclic Rhythm, Ostinato, Polyrhythm, Syncopation, Improvisation, Call and Response, Djembe, Dhol, Talking Drum, Balafon, Mbira, Kora, Bass, Tone, Slap, Vocal Chant, Drone, Maqam Hijaz, Unison, Accompanied, Unaccompanied, Master Drummer, Falsetto, A Cappella.

Your Teacher will assess your knowledge by:

- Completing listening and appraising activities.
- Performing rhythmic patterns and djembe techniques.
- Participating in improvisation and call-and-response activities.
- Completing comprehension and retrieval tasks.
- Creating and rehearsing a group arrangement of *Halawaya*.
- Performing and evaluating a final ensemble performance.
- Demonstrating understanding through questioning, discussion and feedback.

Year 8: MUSIC – African Music



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Year 8: MUSIC – Major Scales, Key Signatures & Accidentals



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Learning about this topic is important because: Understanding major scales, key signatures and accidentals provides the foundation for reading, performing and composing music. In this topic, you will learn how scales are constructed using tones and semitones, how key signatures organise sharps and flats, and how accidentals change pitches within a piece of music. You will use the Circle of Fifths to identify key signatures and develop the theoretical knowledge needed to become a more confident and independent musician. These skills underpin almost every aspect of music making from performance to composition.

This builds on: The Musical Elements, Music Theory, notation, keyboard skills and tonality studied in Year 7. Students apply their understanding of pitch, staff notation and rhythm whilst developing greater fluency in reading and writing music.

This leads to: Tonic Triads, Intervals, Harmony, Composition and GCSE Music. A secure understanding of scales, key signatures and accidentals supports performance, listening, appraising and composing throughout Key Stage 3 and beyond.

We will learn:

Technical

- How to construct and perform major scales accurately.
- How to identify and apply key signatures using the Circle of Fifths.
- How accidentals alter pitch within a piece of music.
- How to read and write scales using correct staff notation.

Constructive

- How tones and semitones combine to create major scales.
- How key signatures organise music into different keys.
- How scales provide the foundation for melody and harmony.
- How theoretical knowledge can be applied to practical music making.

Expressive

- How tonality influences the character and mood of music.
- How performers use scales and key signatures to interpret music accurately.
- How composers choose keys to communicate different musical ideas.
- How understanding musical theory develops confident and expressive performance.

We will develop/practise skills including:

- Identifying tones and semitones on the keyboard and stave.
- Constructing major scales using the correct pattern of intervals.
- Reading and writing scales using accurate staff notation.
- Recognising and identifying key signatures quickly.
- Applying accidentals correctly within musical examples.
- Using the Circle of Fifths to identify related keys.
- Performing major scales accurately on the keyboard.
- Applying theoretical knowledge to practical musical tasks.
- Developing speed, accuracy and confidence when reading notation.
- Evaluating and checking written musical work for accuracy.

You could learn more about this topic by:



Major Scales



Teaching Gadget



Accidentals and key signatures

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Staff Notation, Treble Clef, Bass Clef, Ledger Lines, Tone, Semitone, Sharp, Flat, Natural, Accidental, Major Scale, Key Signature, Circle of Fifths, Tonic, Keyboard, Interval, Octave, Ascending, Descending.

Your Teacher will assess your knowledge by:

- Completing retrieval and theory activities throughout the topic.
- Constructing and writing major scales accurately.
- Identifying key signatures and accidentals from written music.
- Performing major scales confidently on the keyboard.
- Completing theory workbook exercises on scales, key signatures and accidentals.
- Demonstrating understanding through a written assessment on scales, key signatures and the Circle of Fifths.

Year 8: MUSIC – Tonic Triads & Intervals



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Learning about this topic is important because:

Understanding tonic triads, chords and intervals provides the foundation for harmony in music. In this topic, you will learn how chords are constructed from scales, how intervals measure the distance between notes and how tonic triads form the basis of harmony in Western music. You will apply this knowledge through practical keyboard work and written theory, developing the skills needed to perform, compose and analyse music with greater confidence and accuracy.

This builds on:

The Musical Elements, Music Theory, Major Scales, Key Signatures and Accidentals, Keyboard Skills and Jazz and Blues. Students apply their understanding of notation, tonality and scales to develop harmonic knowledge and practical keyboard skills.

This leads to:

Minor Scales, Harmony, Composition, Keyboard Performance, Folk and Fusion and GCSE Music. Understanding chords and intervals underpins composition, accompaniment, listening, appraising and performance throughout Key Stage 3 and beyond.

We will learn:

Technical

- How to identify and perform tonic triads accurately.
- How to recognise and calculate melodic and harmonic intervals.
- How to construct and perform chords I, IV and V in different keys.
- How to use correct keyboard technique when performing chords and arpeggios.

Constructive

- How triads are built from major scales.
- How chords create harmony and accompaniment.
- How intervals form the foundation of melody and harmony.
- How chord progressions are organised within different keys.

Expressive

- How harmony influences the mood and character of music.
- How composers use chord progressions to create musical interest.
- How performers use accompaniment patterns to support melody.
- How understanding harmony develops expressive and confident performance.

We will develop/practise skills including:

- Constructing tonic triads in the key of C, G, F majors.
- Identifying melodic and harmonic intervals accurately.
- Performing chords and arpeggios fluently on the keyboard.
- Applying scales and key signatures when building chords.
- Recognising chord progressions by sight and sound.
- Using harmonic vocabulary accurately in written work.
- Applying theoretical knowledge to practical performance.
- Developing speed, precision and accuracy in notation tasks.
- Evaluating harmonic progressions using appropriate musical terminology.
- Building confidence and independence when solving musical theory problems.

You could learn more about this topic by:



Tonic Triads



Teaching Gadget



Intervals

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Tonic, Triad, Chord, Interval, Harmonic Interval, Melodic Interval, Root, Third, Fifth, Arpeggio, Tonic Chord, Primary Chords, I, IV, V, Scale, Key Signature, Major, Harmony, Accompaniment, Staff Notation, Treble Clef, Bass Clef.

Your Teacher will assess your knowledge by:

- Completing retrieval and theory activities throughout the topic.
- Constructing tonic triads, chords and intervals accurately.
- Identifying chords and intervals from written and listening examples.
- Performing chords and arpeggios confidently on the keyboard.
- Applying harmonic knowledge to practical and written musical tasks.
- Completing a written assessment on tonic triads, chords and intervals.

Year 8: MUSIC – Music History



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Learning about this topic is important because: Understanding Music History helps you discover how music has developed over time and why different musical styles sound the way they do. In this topic, you will explore the Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods, learning about influential composers, instruments and musical forms. You will develop your listening, performing and analytical skills whilst recognising how music reflects the culture, society and technology of each historical period. This knowledge provides an important foundation for understanding Western Classical Music at Key Stage 3, GCSE and A Level.

This builds on: Knowledge of the Musical Elements, Instruments of the Orchestra and Music Theory. Students will apply their understanding of pitch, rhythm, texture, timbre and structure whilst recognising how these musical elements developed across different historical periods.

This leads to: Minimalism, Film Music and GCSE Music. Understanding historical styles, forms, instrumentation and musical features will support listening, appraising, performance and composition throughout Key Stage 3 and beyond.

We will learn:

Technical

- How to identify the musical features of the Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods.
- How composers use the musical elements within each period.
- How to recognise different orchestral instruments and ensembles.
- How to perform music accurately from different musical periods.

Constructive

- How musical forms developed across the Baroque, Classical and Romantic eras.
- How composers organised and structured their music.
- How orchestras, instruments and ensembles evolved over time.
- How musical ideas were developed using different compositional techniques.

Expressive

- How composers communicated emotion and character through music.
- How music reflected the culture and society of each historical period.
- How performers interpret music in different historical styles.
- How listening critically helps us understand the purpose and meaning of music.

We will develop/practise skills including:

- Identifying the characteristics of different musical periods.
- Listening critically to compare styles, composers and performances.
- Using musical vocabulary accurately when describing music.
- Performing music from different historical periods.
- Recognising musical forms, textures and instrumental combinations.
- Analysing how composers develop musical ideas.
- Making comparisons between musical styles and historical periods.
- Evaluating performances using appropriate musical terminology.
- Communicating musical understanding through extended writing.
- Developing confidence, resilience and independence as musicians

You could learn more about this topic by:



BBC Bitesize



Classical Fm Guide to the Musical
Periods



Elements Quiz

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Orchestra, Chamber Music, Concerto, Sonata, Symphony, Binary Form, Ternary Form, Rondo Form, Minuet and Trio, Sequence, Imitation, Ornamentation, Fugue, Ground Bass, Ritornello, Sonata Form, Exposition, Development, Recapitulation, Programme Music, Leitmotif, Dynamics, Texture, Timbre, Harmony, Melody.

Your Teacher will assess your knowledge by:

- Completing retrieval and listening activities throughout the unit.
- Identifying composers, instruments and musical features from listening extracts.
- Performing music from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods.
- Using musical vocabulary to compare and analyse musical styles.
- Completing an extended piece of writing on the characteristics of the three musical periods.
- Evaluating your own work and the performances of others using appropriate musical terminology.

Year 8: MUSIC – Jazz and Blues



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Learning about this topic is important because: Jazz and Blues have had a profound influence on popular music across the world. In this topic, you will explore the origins and development of the Blues and discover how it evolved into a range of Jazz styles. You will learn about the musicians, instruments and musical features that define these genres, including chords, improvisation, swing rhythms and walking bass lines. Through listening, performing and composing, you will develop an understanding of how Jazz musicians communicate creatively whilst performing as part of an ensemble. The topic culminates in a performance of **In the Mood**, bringing together the key musical features studied throughout the unit.

This builds on: Knowledge of the Musical Elements, Music Theory, notation, keyboard skills and Instruments of the Orchestra. Students apply their understanding of rhythm, harmony, timbre and structure whilst developing ensemble performance, improvisation and listening skills.

This leads to: African Music, Music History, Folk and Fusion and GCSE Music. The harmonic understanding, improvisation, ensemble performance and listening skills developed in this topic underpin future composition, performance and appraising work.

We will learn:

Technical

- How to perform swing rhythms accurately using staff notation.
- How to identify and perform the 12-bar blues chord sequence.
- How to recognise and perform primary and seventh chords.
- How to perform improvisations using the Blues Scale.

Constructive

- How Jazz and Blues are structured using the 12-bar blues.
- How walking bass lines and chord progressions create harmonic foundations.
- How riffs, ostinatos and improvisation develop musical ideas.
- How frontline and rhythm section instruments work together within an ensemble.

Expressive

- How Jazz and Blues communicate emotion, style and character.
- How improvisation allows performers to express musical ideas creatively.
- How different Jazz styles developed from the Blues.
- How music reflects the social and cultural history of the Blues.

We will develop/practise skills including:

- Performing confidently using swing rhythms and accurate notation.
- Reading and applying staff notation during performance.
- Performing the 12-bar blues chord sequence and walking bass line.
- Improvising confidently using the Blues Scale.
- Listening critically to identify Jazz and Blues features.
- Working collaboratively to rehearse and perform as an ensemble.
- Researching and communicating ideas through the Blues marketplace activity.
- Applying harmonic knowledge to create and perform musical ideas.
- Evaluating performances using appropriate musical vocabulary.
- Developing confidence, creativity and resilience through rehearsal and performance.

You could learn more about this topic by:



Blues Music



The History of Jazz



12 Bar Blues



Walking Bass Line

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Jazz, Blues, Swing, Ragtime, Bebop, Dixieland, Modal Jazz, Work Songs, Spirituals, Twelve-Bar Blues, Blues Scale, Improvisation, Walking Bass Line, Riff, Ostinato, Syncopation, Chromatic, Primary Chords (I, IV, V), Seventh Chords, Frontline, Rhythm Section, Ensemble, Virtuoso.

Your Teacher will assess your knowledge by:

- Completing listening and retrieval activities throughout the topic.
- Researching and presenting information during the Blues marketplace activity.
- Performing the 12-bar blues chord progression and walking bass line.
- Demonstrating improvisation using the Blues Scale.
- Performing **In the Mood** as part of an ensemble.
- Completing an extended piece of writing using appropriate musical vocabulary to explain the development and characteristics of Jazz and Blues.