

Blackbird by The Beatles

A Beatles' Song About Civil Rights

Please use the accompanying **Activity Manual** for in-depth guidance, knowledge and understanding.

Unit Overview

This is a six-week Unit of Work. All the learning in this unit is focused around one song: Blackbird.

If you are using this Unit of Work as part of the **Scheme**, it has been placed in **Lower KS2, Year 4/Ages 7-8** and is supported by Listen & Appraise documentation, One-page step-by-step / weekly Lesson Plans, and an Assessment Framework. To deliver your music lesson musically, it is very important that you follow the step-by-step planning that accompanies the on-screen resources.

If you are using this Unit of Work flexibly, you will have chosen it from the **Freestyle** options. You decide which age group it will best suit. The Freestyle approach is also supported by Listen & Appraise documentation, Flexible One-page step-by-step /weekly Lesson Plans, a Flexible Planning Grid and an Assessment Framework.

The Strands of Musical Learning in this Unit of Work relate to and progress towards the 'End of Key Stage Expectations (Musical Learning for the end of Lower KS2, Year 4/Ages 7-8)' document. (see supporting Assessment documentation). Your step-by-step learning focus will be the new musical activity or the strand of musical learning that needs particular attention from the previous step (see 'Introduction to Assessment') the remainder of the activities within the lesson are ongoing skills.

Accompanying both approaches is the **Activity Manual**. This manual is a detailed teacher guide for all activities and will provide comprehensive support for all teachers.

How this Unit is Organised; Strands of Musical Learning:

1. **Listen and Appraise** the song Blackbird and other songs by The Beatles:
 - Blackbird by The Beatles
 - Yellow Submarine by The Beatles
 - Hey Jude by The Beatles
 - Can't Buy Me Love by The Beatles
 - Yesterday by The Beatles
 - Let It Be by The Beatles

1. **Musical Activities** - learn and/or build on your knowledge and understanding about the interrelated dimensions of music through:
 - a. Warm-up Games (including vocal warm-ups)
 - b. Flexible Games (optional extension work)
 - c. Learn to Sing the Song
 - d. Play Instruments with the Song
 - e. Improvise with the Song
 - f. Compose with the Song

2. **Perform the Song** - perform and share your learning as you progress through the Unit of Work.

Teaching and Learning support for this unit:

Please use the accompanying **ACTIVITY MANUAL** for in-depth guidance, knowledge and understanding.

There are two supporting documents called **Pop Music and The Beatles and Blackbird and the Civil Rights Movement in a folder named 'The Beatles' Extras!**. You will find this folder alongside all the supporting documentation on the unit homepage.

Listen & Appraise

Each step has a Listen and Appraise document for your use with all the research and information that is needed to complete the tasks and activities you see on-screen.

The main unit song is Blackbird by The Beatles. All musical learning will happen around this song and you will have the option to Listen and Appraise other songs in steps 2-6.

See the individual Listen and Appraise step-by-step supporting documents for complete information. This song teaches us about The Beatles and about Civil Rights - there will be social themes and topics that arise from this song for discussion and/or further investigation.

Musical Activities

The children will be using instruments during this section of the unit.

Using band/orchestral instruments with classroom instruments to create an ensemble that engages all children is exciting! Dependent on the age of the children in your class, some will play these instruments and therefore will want to bring them to the lesson - please encourage this. You wouldn't want to play a glock if you played the trumpet or violin.

Some of the instruments brought to the lesson might be transposing instruments. This means that they will need to play different notes in order to sound the same as a glock or recorder. Don't worry! Below is a list of instruments and the notes they will need to play to match classroom instruments in this unit. Remember that you can ask visiting music teachers to assist with instrumental issues.

Downloadable parts (sheets of printed music) are supplied for these instruments to play in the 'Play Instruments with the Song' section of this unit. There is also an option for classroom instruments to have notated parts on the screen to play along with, as well as by ear. Remember, playing by ear or with a sound-before-symbol approach is the priority. Some of these parts may have few notes but employ more difficult rhythms - **this unit has very straightforward easy and medium parts so make it a priority to learn the melody.** Please use glocks as your main classroom instrument unless you, as a teacher, have experience playing the recorder.

- C instruments: Classroom instruments (glockenspiels, recorder), flute, oboe, bassoon, trombone, violin, cello, guitar, ukulele, keyboard
 - In the easy glock part, the notes used are: C and D
 - In the medium glock part, the notes used are: C, D and E

See instrumental parts for other band/orchestral instruments.

Notes to use in Warm-up Games, Improvisation and Composition:

- C instruments: Classroom instruments (glockenspiels, recorder), flute, oboe, bassoon, trombone, violin, cello, guitar, ukulele, keyboard
Notes to play: C, D and E in this order (C is the home note and you will always start with C)
So, note 1 = C, note 2 = D and note 3 = E
- B \flat instruments: Clarinet, trumpet, cornet, tenor horn, euphonium, baritone, trombone in B \flat
Notes to play: D, E, F#
So, note 1 = D, note 2 = E and note 3 = F#
- E \flat instruments: Alto sax, E \flat horn
Notes to play: A, B, C#
So, note 1 = A, note 2 = B and note 3 = C#

Bronze, Silver and Gold Challenges are incorporated into the Games and Improvisation sections of this Unit of Work. These differentiated activities are NOT a measure of attainment but about building musical skills in a fun and challenging way over time.

A. Warm-up Games (including Vocal Warm-ups)

Have fun playing Rhythm and Pitch Games as you progress through the Bronze, Silver and Gold Challenges. All three (Bronze, Silver and Gold) Games Tracks are available here to be progressed through over the 6-step learning episode. You may want to revisit, for example, the Bronze Challenge to embed skills even if you have completed it and moved to Silver.

Get your instruments ready, you will need to use them after the pulse and copy back rhythm games. You can use band/orchestral instruments too if you wish.

Game 1 - Find the pulse, use your imagination.

Game 2 - Rhythm Copy Back:

- Bronze - ‘Clap and say back the rhythms you hear. Use the on-screen words to help you’
- Silver - ‘Your teacher will clap the first 4 rhythms for you to copy back. Your teacher will then choose 1 of you to clap the next 4 rhythms for the class to copy back’
- Gold - ‘Choose 4 leaders to clap rhythms for the rest of the class to copy back’

Game 3 - Pitch Copy Back - Bronze without notation and Silver and Gold with notation:

- Bronze - Copy back: ‘Listen and sing back’ (no notation)
- Silver - Copy back with instruments. The first 4 examples are without notation and the second 4 are with notation: ‘Copy back the riffs you hear using the note C’
- Gold - Copy back with instruments. The first 4 examples are without notation and the second 4 are with notation: ‘Copy back the riffs you hear using the note C and sometimes D. You will always start on C’

Game 4 - Pitch copy back and vocal warm-ups: Use your voices to copy back this time. Use ‘La’ when you are singing back.

B. Flexible Games (optional extension activity)

These games are optional, flexible extension activities with Bronze, Silver and Gold Challenges.

These differentiated challenges are NOT a measure of attainment but about building musical skills in a fun and challenging way. All three Games Tracks are available here to be progressed through over the 6-step learning episode. You may want to revisit, for example, the Bronze Challenge to embed skills even if you have completed it and moved to Silver. The progression is in-built.

C. Learn to Sing the Song: Vocal Warm-ups and Singing

You may have already warmed up your voices in the previous activity but there are more vocal warm-ups, should you wish to use them, in Charanga Sing.

On the screen you will have the option to break the song down into manageable learning sections. There is also a tempo controller that will slow the song down to aid learning.

Add movement to the song and have fun. Let the children use their imaginations to choreograph movement to the song.

D. Play Instruments with the Song: With or Without Notation

On the screen you will see animated glocks and recorders playing easy and medium differentiated parts by ear. Please **do** play the easy and medium parts on the glock if you have no recorder experience. The sheet music tab on your resource will give you access to three differentiated parts for all band/orchestral instruments. These notated parts can be shown on-screen if you are teaching a KS2/Ages 7-11 class and want to introduce notation.

This section of the unit is designed for you to rehearse the instrumental parts. You will rehearse these parts with the section of the song that you will play over when you perform the song as a whole.

E. Improvise with the Song: Using Your Voices and Instruments

These activities have in-built progression for you to follow according to the unit, year group and Key Stage. Work through the challenges as suggested on the One-page Lesson Plan.

Bronze Challenge	Silver Challenge	Gold Challenge
Sing, Play and Copy back	Sing, Play and Copy back	Sing, Play and Copy back
Listen and sing back.	Listen and copy back using instruments, 1 note, C.	Listen and copy back using instruments, 2 notes, C and D.
Play and Improvise	Play and Improvise	Play and Improvise
Using your instruments, listen and play your own answer using 1 note, C.	Using your instruments, listen and play your own answer using the notes C and sometimes D.	Using your instruments, listen and play your own answer using the notes C, D and sometimes E.
Improvise!	Improvise!	Improvise!
Take it in turns to improvise using 1 note, C.	Take it in turns to improvise using 1 or 2 notes, C and D.	Take it in turns to improvise using 3 notes, C, D and E.

On the screen you can select your activity:

1. Sing, Play and Copy Back

- Bronze - Singing copy back
- Silver - Copy back using your instruments, 1 note, C
- Gold - Copy back using your instruments, 2 notes, C and D. You will always start on a C

2. Play and Improvise! (You will be using the notes C and D)

Question and Answer using instruments:

- Bronze - Question and Answer using instruments with the note C in your answer
- Silver - Question and Answer using instruments with the notes C and sometimes A in your answer. Always start on a C
- Gold - Question and Answer using instruments with the notes C, D and sometimes E in your answer. Always start on a C

3. Improvisation! (You will be using the notes C, D and E)

- Bronze - improvise using 1 note, C
- Silver - improvise using 1 or 2 notes, C and D
- Gold - improvise using 2 or 3 notes, C, D and E

Take it in turns to improvise using the skills you have acquired. Use 1 or 2 notes. Practise improvising over the track of the song you are learning. You can clap, sing or play, you decide. Take it in turns to improvise or, play in groups.

Using the notes from your activity, improvise within the given performance option in 'Perform the Song'. You can improvise all together, in groups or as a solo - you decide.

F. Compose with the Song: Using your Instruments

Add a selection of the children's compositions during the playing/instrumental section of this song.

The on-screen Music Explorer Composition Tool will guide you through the following options:

Option 1: A way into composition with your class using up to 3 notes

Option 2 (Extended option): A more differentiated approach to composition in groups using a mix of classroom and band/orchestral instruments

Option 1

- Select '3 note set' (C, D and E). You can use 1, 2 or 3 notes in your composition.
- Select a view to get started - select 'Pulse'.
- Click play then find the pulse together as a class.
- Select the button next to the heart button near the bottom of the screen. This button is the Rhythm Grid button. This will bring up 8 empty bars on the screen. You can fill in those bars together. Drag and drop four 1's into the first bar and one 1 into the second bar. Repeat this onto the next three lines and click play. Clap along together. This rhythm is Bronze Improvisation Riff 1.
- Select the button next to the Rhythm Grid button which has 3 notes on it. This button is the Rhythm Notation button and when you click on this, the rhythm you created as a class will turn into rhythmic notation.
- Select the button next to the Rhythm Notation button. This button is the Note Grid button and the rhythm will turn into pitch. You have chosen the 3 note set so only have the choice of the notes G, A and B. Click on the notes and the pitch will

change. Start with a G and end with a G (this is your 'home' note). Start to drag and drop simple rhythm blocks into the bars and then decide upon the pitches.

- Select the button to the right of the Note Grid button. This button is the Notation with note-names button, and your composition will become formal notation with the note-names written underneath for you all to play! Well done!
- If you select the final button this is the Notation button. Click this and the note-names will disappear! (This is an option for extension work.)
- Perform this together as part of the song you are learning.

Option 2 (Extended option)

- Work in groups.
- Select the appropriate note set to suit your instrumental group.
- Select a view to get started - you decide.
- Progress to creating an 8-bar composition for your group to play with block notation or formal notation, it's up to you.
- Perform to the class and decide which 2 compositions will be part of your performance.

Performing the Compositions

When performing with the track, children will play their composition during the playing/instrumental section.

When the children are ready to play their compositions as part of the whole song, move to the performance section of the unit.

Which Instruments and Which Notes? (see Activity Manual for support)

Perform and Share

Remember to add some movement.

The structure of this song:

- Introduction
- Verse 1
- Bridge
- Chorus
- Verse 2
- Bridge
- Extended chorus

These are the options on the screen:

- Perform the whole song

- Perform the whole song with your activities of choice