

Whole Class Xylophones and Classroom Orchestras

Alex Bondonno Music Lead: Handcross Primary & Cottesmore St Mary



Aims

Whole class xylophones and tuned percussion from yr 2 to 6

Leading to whole class tuned 'orchestras' or orchestra clubs open to all

How:

- Simple scalable pieces that are broken down into short easily learnable segments.
- Colour coded parts
- Reference to notation but not main teaching method
- Choose the easiest key! Avoid flats and sharps.

Classroom Management

- Children work in pairs (number 1 and 2) normally taking turns at first.
- **Divide** melodies into team colours
- Use larger / wooden xylophones where possible
- **Rest position** = mallets down (listening to instructions)
- **Respect position** = mallets ready in the air (ready to play)
- Finger practice
- If things get too fizzy: stand up and reset.
- The Golden Beater!

Techniques: We know how to play our instrument with good technique

- Mallet balanced (hold half way down...*would you hold a pencil at the far end?*)
- How hard do you **strike** the keys to make a good sound? (Not too hard, should definitely not bounce)
- Muting keys (particularly large metal xylophones)
- Use correct mallet for your instrument (small / hard or large / soft)
- Can you show me Respect Position? Rest Position?



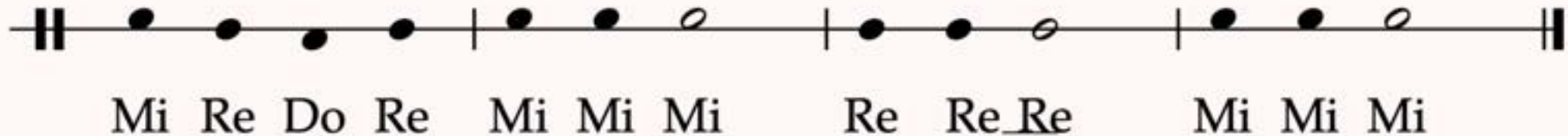
KS1: Kodaly basis

- We have learnt simple Kodaly songs in KS1 and Reception
- We translate these to tuned percussion
- So – Mi: Seesaw up and down / Cobbler Cobbler
- Do Re Mi Fa So: Once a man fell in a well
- We will use chime bars where possible rather than chromatic xylophones



Dot notation

KS1 we will look at notating single line notation and signing and singing this using solfege, then playing on tuned percussion



Once A Man

C D E F G G G

C D E F G G

C D E F G G G

C D E F G G

At KS1 use solfege

Do Re Mi Fa So So So

Do Re Mi Fa So— So—

Do Re Mi Fa So So So

So Fa Mi Re Do- Do-



KS2 Xylophones and Keyboards (ish)

- Use a range of different xylophones and glocks of different sizes.
- Wooden xylophones sound nicest
- Large bass glockenspiels and chime bars are really fun to play
- Keyboards: Yes! But touch sensitive if possible
- Add boomwhackers (good visual cue for bass lines)
- Add classroom percussion, djembe / cajon
- Avoid drum kit as dominates the group (but can be cool)

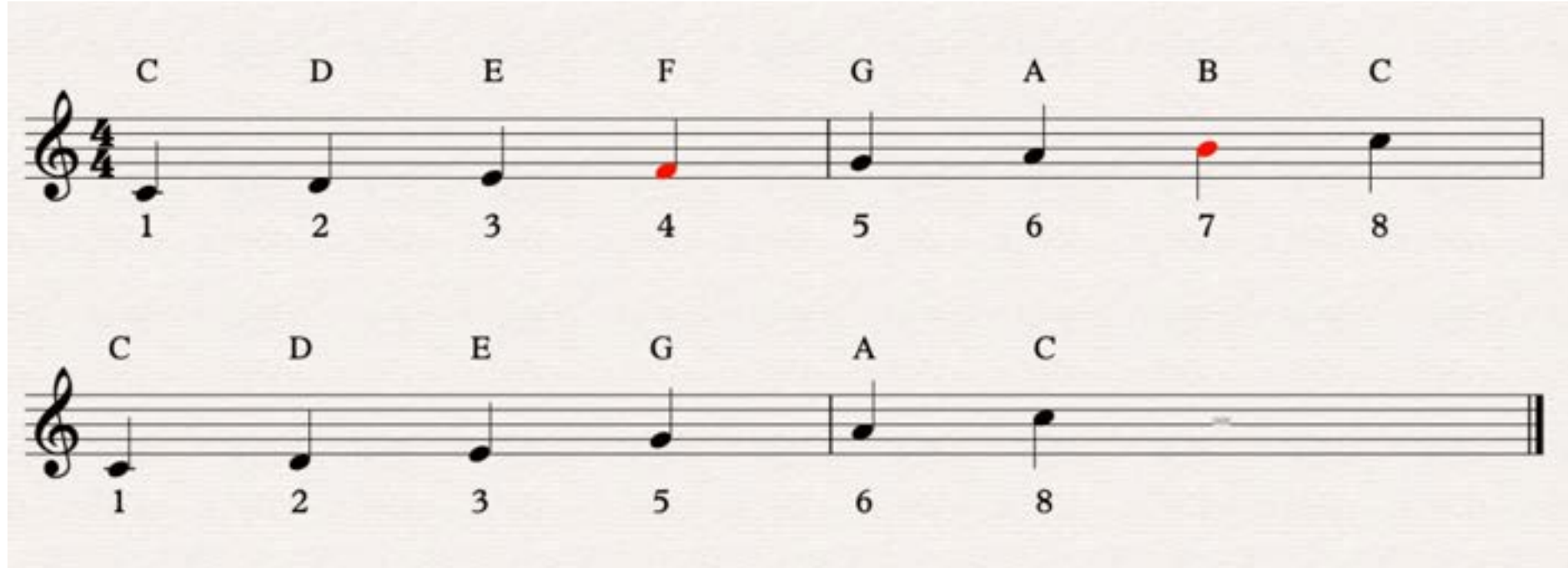


The Pentatonic Scale (Music theory... Sorry!)

Scale: A set of notes in a particular 'key'

Key: Tells us what flats or sharps are in a piece of music. Also if the piece is **Major** or **Minor**.
(**Tonality**)

Pentatonic: A five note scale, normally following a specific pattern. (1,2,3,5,6 of major scale)

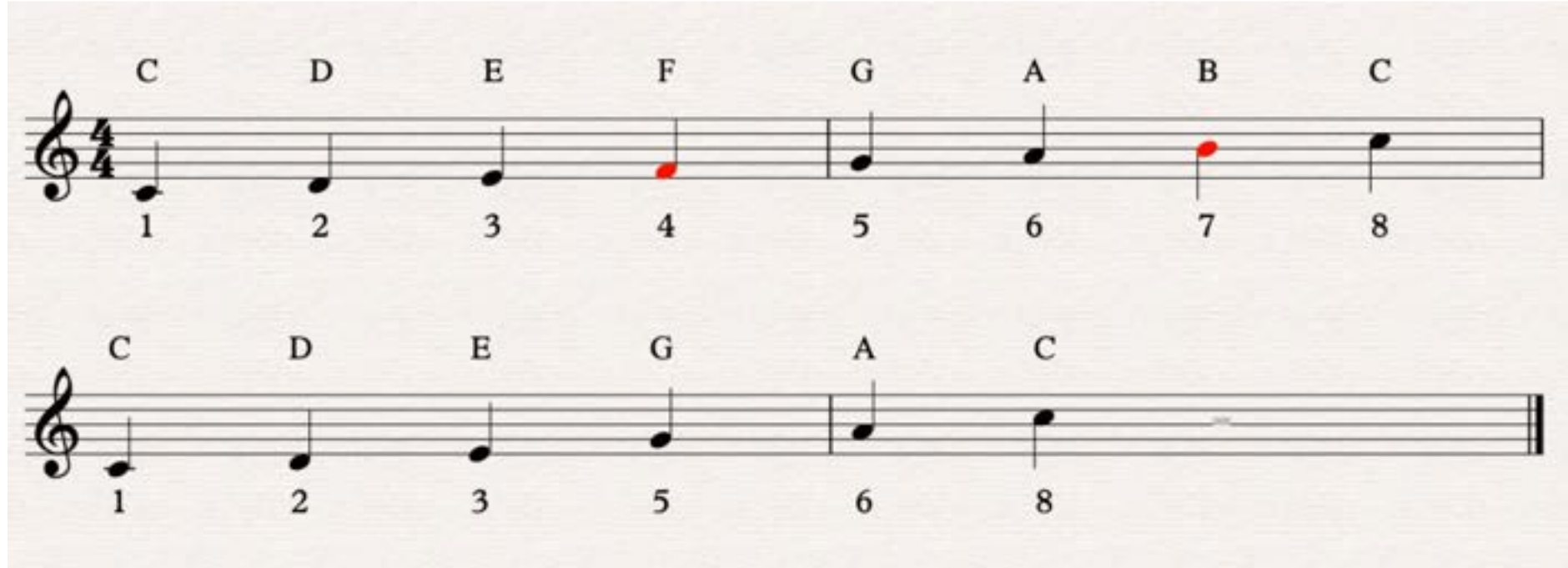


The Pentatonic Scale (Music theory... Sorry!)

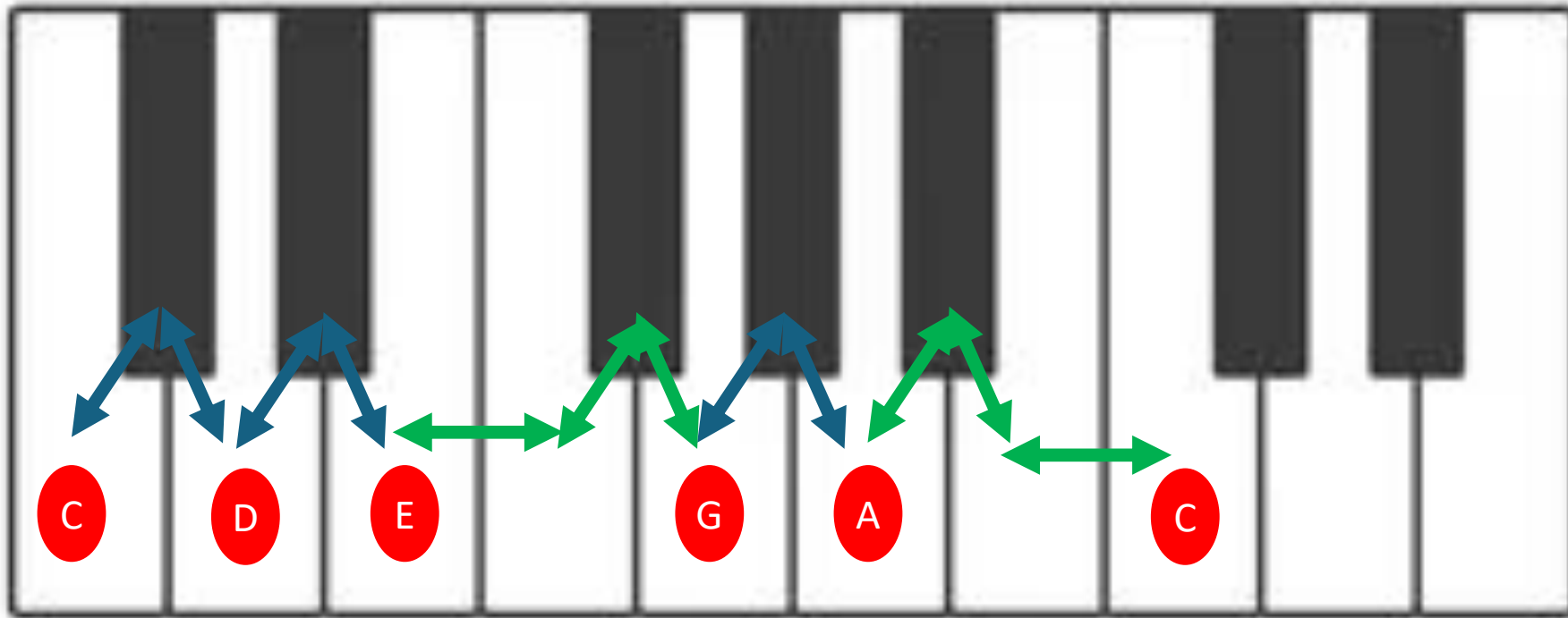
The Pentatonic Scale is a fundamental tool for creating music and is used by most musical cultures around the world.

It is the set of 5 notes which does not contain any **semitone intervals**.

Because of this you can play any note from a particular pentatonic scale together and they will always sound good together (**consonant**).

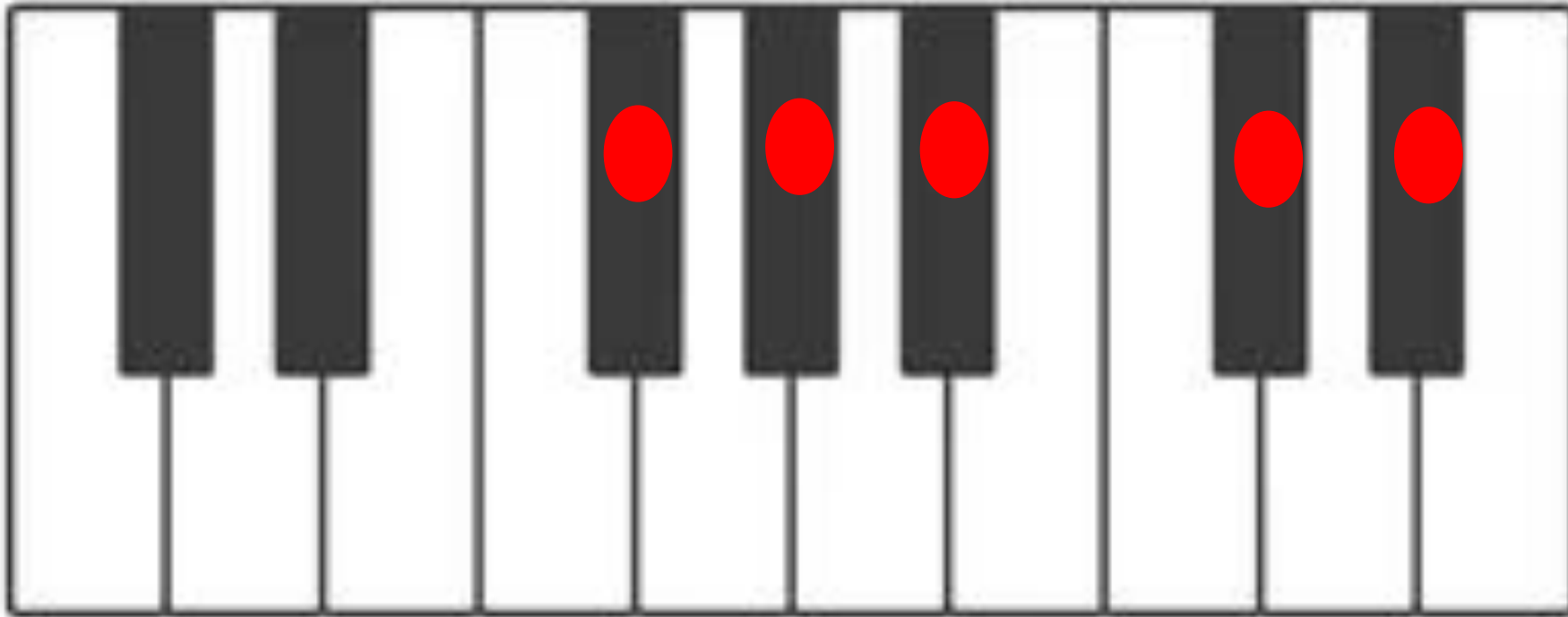


A Semitone is the step from one note to the nearest note. (using black and white keys)



The pentatonic scale only has steps of **2 Semitones** (whole tone) or **3 semitones**. Because of this any of the notes sound good together.

You can explore the pentatonic scale easily by just playing the black notes on the keyboard.



If you start on the F# key the pattern of semitones in the scale will be the same.

How this helps us in our music lessons?

- All the notes from the pentatonic scale will sound good together (**Consonant**)
- The scale can be used to emulate the sound of many musical cultures.
 - e.g. Irish folk music, Chinese folk music, sub-Saharan African music and many others.
- The scale can easily be divided up into 2 sections for playing call and response patterns, or to simplify things further.

C D E / F G C

Pentatonic 1: The Latin Question (By Aiden Massey)

- Key skill: Improvising using a limited tone row on question and answer patterns
 - (This will help the children explore rhythmic and tonal improvisation skills, enabling them to compose note based pieces thereafter.)

1: The Latin Question

(By Aiden Massey)

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piece titled "The Latin Question" by Aiden Massey. Both systems are in 4/4 time and use a treble clef. The notation is divided into "Question" and "Answer" sections, with chord labels (C, Am, F, G) placed above the notes.

System 1:

- Question:** Four measures. Notes: G (quarter), A (quarter), C (half), G (quarter). Chords: C (above first measure), G (below first measure), A (below second measure), C (below third measure).
- Answer:** Four measures. Notes: A (quarter), A (quarter), C (half), A (quarter). Chords: Am (above first measure), A (below second measure), A (below third measure), C (below fourth measure).

System 2:

- Question:** Four measures. Notes: G (quarter), A (quarter), C (half), A (quarter). Chords: F (above first measure), G (below first measure), A (below second measure), A (below third measure).
- Answer:** Four measures. Notes: A (quarter), A (quarter), C (half), A (quarter). Chords: C (above first measure), A (below second measure), A (below third measure), C (below fourth measure).

The Latin Question

Notes are **G A C** **G A A C**



Bass line:

C... C... / A... A...

F... G... / C... C...

The Latin Question Lesson Plan

- Warm up: pulse and rhythm games.
- Clap and learn rhythm of the tune as a group.
- Talk about Q&A phrases in music
- Practice improvising answers to the 'Question'
 - Volunteers first then all try
 - Lower pressure: all do at the same time
- Discuss quality: what makes a good musical answer
 - Rhythmic
 - Innovative
 - Uses space /silence
- Move to instruments and learn the question on tuned instruments
 - Possibly add accompaniment (bass line, and / or percussion)
- Set Question and Improvised Answer
- Improvised question and answer (in pairs)
- Soloist can improvise both question and answer
 - Emphasize quality (Rhythm innovation / silence / dynamics)
 - Fitting the 2 bar / 4 bar structure



Extension

Use whole pentatonic scale C D E / G A C

Extended solos: 8 / 16 bars

Structure of piece: Beginnings and endings

Musical elements

Create own **Musical Question Tune**

The Latin Question: L.O.

- To improvise Q&A phrases *with confidence* based on a three note musical idea.
- To perform with a sense of rhythm, musicality and style.
- + To compose and arrange a piece using the Latin Question as the key musical idea.
- ++ To improvise extended solos using a pentatonic scale, with a sense of timing and structure.

Nights in White Latin

E E DDD C

G A G

E E DDD C

G A G

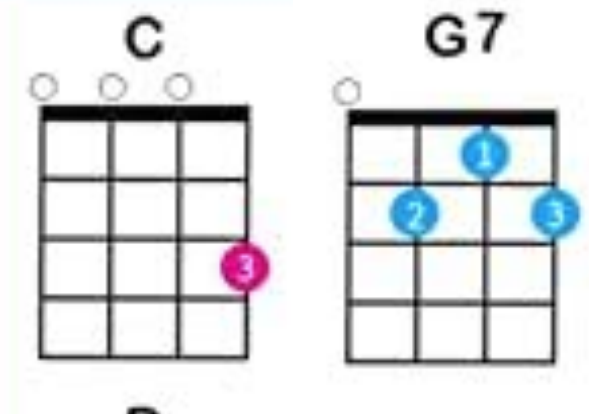
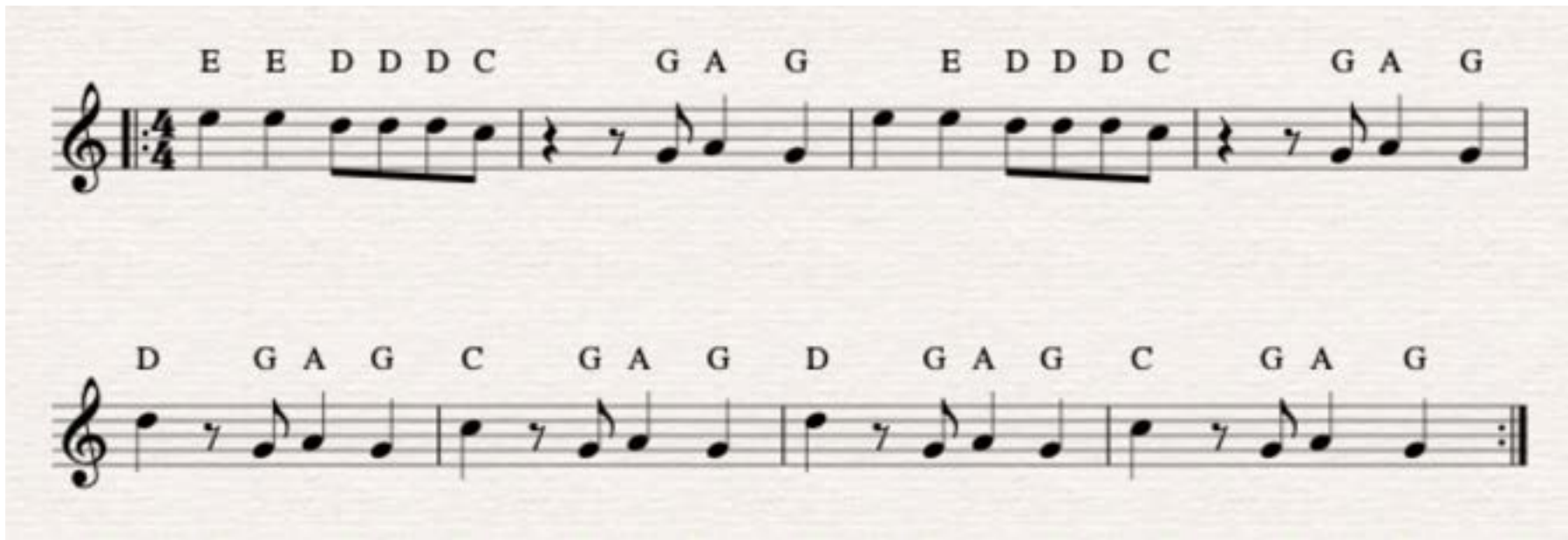
D GAG C GAG D GAG C GAG

BASS LINE

Cc Gg Cc C x2

Gg Gg Cc Cc x2

(easy version Dd Gg Cc Gg)



Nights in White Latin

Aiden Massey

LO

- Key Skill: Performing a full piece as a classroom orchestra / band in 3 or more parts
- Composing elements to fit the style of the music
- Improvising solos as part of a composition.

Here we have the same scale being used as The Latin Question, but we have a full melody.
This tune will also work with with The Latin Question.

- Teaching Ideas
 - Improvised solos
 - Compose a bass line
 - Compose an accompaniment part. (pentatonic)
 - Compose alternative tune (keep GAG section)

Nights in White Latin

Aiden Massey

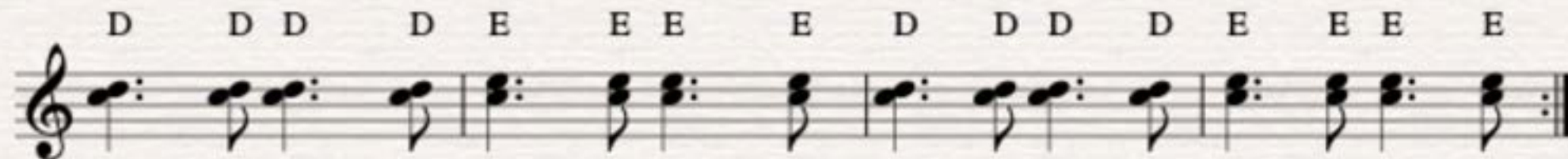
Question

C Pentatonic

Answer



BACKINGS (Bottom note C always works)



S.C. Half Term (LKS2)

- I can perform a pentatonic piece in three parts
 - I can perform with strong rhythm and a sense of pulse
 - I can improvise in musical phrases using a pentatonic scale
-
- I can identify the notes of the keyboard
 - I understand how to read simple notation of notes and rhythm

3: Minor Pentatonic / Blues: Ship Without A Rudder

Eddie Harvey (Jazz In The Classroom)

A A A G D F D | A A C A D
Oh yeah

A A G D F D | A A C A D
Oh yeah

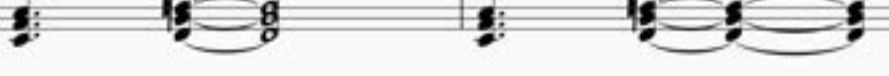
B A A G F A A G F A G F A | A A G F A A G F A G F A

C A A G D F D | A A C A D
Oh yeah

Chords



Bass Line



Extension:

++ This piece is Dorian Mode, solos could be built on the scale

A B C D E F# G A

Solos Blues Scale



Question Blue Note Answer

A G F D G# A C D

Ship without a rudder

1 AA G D F D

• AA C A D' X2

2 AAGF AAGF AGFA

• AAGF AAGF AGFA

1 AA G D F D

• AA C A D'

BASS: (with upbeat)

1: aD... aD...

2: A..... aaA.....

Solos

1 A C D

2 A G F

Ship Without A Rudder



Ship Without A Rudder L.O.

- Perform a piece as a classroom orchestra in at least three parts
 - Arrange and compose own elements of the piece to create a performance with a sense of style and secure rhythm.
 - Improvise solos over accompaniment.
-
- +Understand how to use the 'Blue Note' to create tension in a improvised solo or composition
 - ++Explore soloing using Dorian mode (ABCDEF#GA)

- **Improvisation Opportunities:**

- 2 part Question and Answer melody:
 - Play question, improvise answer
 - Improvise Q and A using melody notes
- Use backing and bass line while children improvise extended solos,
- + B section: Solo improvises over accented hits.
- ++ Add blue note for extra 'colour'

- **Composition Opportunities**

- Any section of this piece could be modified by the young composers.
- Arrange and create performance version
- Create new complete piece using this as model

Other instruments The realistic guide



Guitars / Ukuleles: Yes but they will need help with some chords or simplified versions Chords needed: G or G7 Dm C F Am

Strings: Beginners won't know F natural / C natural (Squashy F & C) but don't stress them with things they don't need to know! (They will be out of tune / quiet anyhow)

Woodwind Brass: Clarinet / Sax / Brass will be transposing so may have 2 extra sharps to worry about (C# / F#) or 3 for alto sax!

The first days of summer:

D minor pentatonic: Song from Out Of The Ark

Song that we do in class already Summer term with LKS2

ACAD CACD

AGFDF-D-

AGFDF-D-D----

BASS: D--- G--- A--- D---



First Days Of Summer: Lyrics

*These are the first days of summer
Everyone together
Ready for the sun to shine*

*These are the days we'll remember
Memories forever
Its celebration time*

Let's enjoy the sun, now summer has begun
We'll make the most of time with all the family
We'll do the things we love to do,
With friends we love to see
We'll make the most of every opportunity there is

Some Orchestra Repertoire That I Use

- Crocodile Sandwich
- I Feel Good
- Disco

Crocodile Sandwich

(make it snappy!)

Riff: - D C D C A A G A C

Tune:

DDDD C A F G F DD

DDDD C A F G F G A <--- !!!

D F G D F G D F G - - - G F DD

Chords: Dm G

BASS

aD aD aD aD

aG aG aD aD

G G G

aD aD

Tune

A

CHORD: Dm



CHORD: Gm

CHORD: Dm



CHORD: Gm

CHORD: Dm



Riff

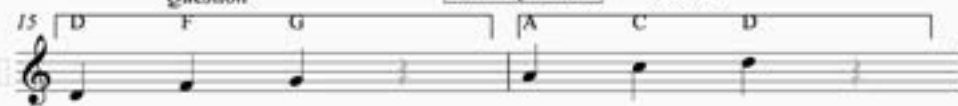


Scales For Improvised Solos

Question

D minor pentatonic

Answer



D Blues Scale

D Dorian Mode



I Feel Good

A AGAGAGA

A AGAGAGA

D DCDCDCD

A AGAGAGA

*EE ** DD

**A C E G B

**(A A A A A)

x3 for end

Section 2

A A' G EGE C

A A' G EGE C

DD DD AA AA

DD DD E!

Bass: A & D (E) Red parts

I Feel Good

A



5



9



13

B

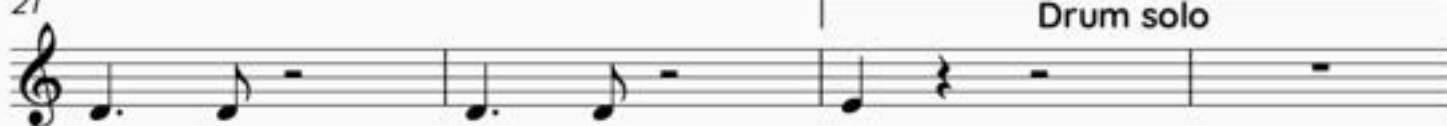


17

C



21



DISCO!

Melody 1

A G F E D

G F E D C (x2)

Melody 2

FED **GAG** EDC **GAG**

FED **GAG** EDC **GAG**

C B A--- **A'**--- **G**----

Bass 1

D G C F

D G C F

Bass 2

G C G C F----**G**----

END: DISCO CC (disco)

A

Section A consists of four measures. The first measure has a green vertical line at the beginning. The melody in the upper staff is: quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4, quarter note D4. The lower staff has: quarter rest, quarter rest, quarter note C4, quarter note B3, quarter rest, quarter note G3, quarter note F3, quarter note E3, quarter note D3. The section ends with a double bar line and repeat signs. The first ending (1.) is a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4. The second ending (2.) is a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4.

B

Section B consists of three measures. The melody in the upper staff is: quarter note G4, quarter rest, quarter rest, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4. The lower staff has: quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4, quarter note D4, quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4, quarter note D4, quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4, quarter note D4. The section ends with a double bar line.

Section B continues with three more measures. The melody in the upper staff is: quarter note G4, quarter rest, quarter rest, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5, quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4. The lower staff has: quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4, quarter note D4, quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4, quarter note D4, quarter rest, quarter note G4, quarter note F4, quarter note E4, quarter note D4. The section ends with a double bar line.

Any Questions or further support?

abondonno@handcross.w-sussex.sch.uk