

Medium Term Plan: Decoding Sound and Notation

Year 5 · Unit 4

Learning Objectives

1. Develop and expand musical understanding through critical listening and analysis of contrasting pieces.
2. Read and perform notated melodies with confidence, applying knowledge of pitch, rhythm, and musical expression.

	Summary of Lesson	Key Learning
Weeks 1 & 2	Learning the Song and Pulse • Listen to “Heal The Earth”, exploring pulse, tempo, and overall mood. • Learn the main verse through humming and singing with expressive articulation and varied dynamics. • Introduce simple instrumental drones and experiment with volume and contrast. • Practise ensemble awareness in pairs or small groups, listening to others to maintain cohesion. • Discuss musical terminology, including articulation, melody, and time signatures, to support attentive listening, comprehension, and collaboration. Verse Expansion and Notation Awareness • Revisit the chorus and learn Verse 1, noting small pauses at the beginning of lines. • Practise reading simple notation (D, E, F notes) using “Portsmouth” - Play, reinforcing pitch recognition and rhythmic accuracy. • Rotate roles with half the class playing and half listening to build confidence. • Engage in extended listening activities to explore reggae influences and off-beat emphasis.	Children develop confidence in listening and performing by exploring the pulse, tempo, and mood of “Heal The Earth”. They learn the main verse and chorus, practising expressive articulation and dynamics. Simple instrumental drones support understanding of pitch and ensemble awareness. Through activities with “Portsmouth” - Play, children begin reading notation (D, E, F), reinforcing pitch recognition and rhythmic accuracy. Extended listening introduces reggae influences, helping children identify off-beat emphasis and musical style. Working in pairs or small groups, children collaborate, listen attentively, and discuss musical terminology, building foundational skills in performance, comprehension, and ensemble cohesion.

Weeks 3 & 4	Introducing Contrasts and Improvisation • Learn the second verse of “Heal The Earth” and practise both main and second vocal lines. • Engage in improvisation using notes F, G, A, C, and D to explore pitch, dynamics, and musical contrasts (staccato, legato, crescendo, decrescendo). • Perform short improvised phrases in groups, sharing ideas and reflecting on how contrasts affect the music. Ensemble Integration • Combine learned vocal and instrumental parts, including drones and secondary melodies. • Instrumentalists choose Easy or Medium parts based on confidence, promoting inclusion and support. • Focus on ensemble balance, maintaining the pulse, and integrating contrasts. • Discuss how dynamics, articulation, and note choice influence overall performance quality.	Children expand their repertoire by learning the second verse and practising both vocal lines. Improvisation with notes F, G, A, C, and D encourages exploration of pitch, dynamics, and contrasts such as staccato, legato, crescendo, and decrescendo. Groups perform short improvised phrases, sharing ideas and reflecting on musical effect. Integrating drones and secondary melodies, children balance ensemble sounds, maintain pulse, and apply contrasts effectively. Instrument selection is differentiated to foster confidence and inclusion. Discussions focus on articulation, dynamics, and note choice, reinforcing understanding of musical structure and expression.
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Weeks 5 & 6	Week 5: Rehearsal and Refinement ● Rehearse the complete song with selected instrumental parts, focusing on timing, clarity, expressive delivery, and ensemble cohesion. ● Compare performances and provide peer feedback on musical accuracy, use of contrasts, and overall balance. ● Optional: Incorporate "Tropical Noon" and "Four Into Three" to reinforce reading and listening skills, highlighting rhythmic and melodic differences. Week 6: Performance and Reflection ● Conduct final rehearsals and perform "Heal The Earth", including drones and optional secondary parts. ● Share performances in class, assemblies, or record them for later reflection. ● Discuss learning outcomes related to musical contrasts, notation reading, ensemble skills, and expressive performance. ● Reflect on individual and group progress, celebrating creativity, confidence, and interpretation skills.	Children rehearse the complete song, refining timing, clarity, and expressive delivery. Peer feedback supports evaluation of musical accuracy, ensemble balance, and use of contrasts. Optional pieces "Tropical Noon", "Four Into Three" reinforce listening and reading skills while challenging rhythmic and melodic recognition. Final performances integrate all learned elements, including drones and secondary parts, and can be shared live or recorded for playback. Reflection encourages children to consider their progress in musical contrasts, notation reading, ensemble performance, and expressive interpretation. This stage consolidates confidence, celebrates creativity, and highlights the development of collaborative and performance skills.
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