

SCHEME OF WORK 5: How can Composers and Performers be best used as a resource in the classroom?

LESSON 4

TOPIC AND PURPOSE

How do we know when a piece is finished and how can the performance of a work enhance the composition itself?

How can we convey our intentions meaningfully to the performer(s)?

OBJECTIVE

For learners to finalise their compositions through working with composer and performer, asking how their notation can garner the best possible results.

ENGAGEMENT

Through discussing their compositional aims with performer and composer, they will build confidence and be afforded the opportunity to hear their work develop shape.

STICK-ABILITY

To think independently about what they want to hear in their composition, and to learn the best strategies for conveying their ideas to a performer.

DIFFERENTIATION

Embedding:

Learners will have their compositions close to completion, making informed choices through discussing their ideas with the composer and having work in progress played through by the performer.

Enhancing: Some will go further than this and respond in class to the sound of their music as it is played, and commented upon by the composer, making effective changes to the music as it nears completion.

Extending: A few may go well beyond this and use the performance of the work in progress as a means to build upon previous ideas, creating new contrasting, but complementary, sections.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Responding effectively to performance of the composition in order to build towards effective completion of the work.

Considering the most effective means within the specific work (i.e. not generically) of conveying their intentions to the performer.

STARTER

Reflection on how effectively each learner feels they are responding to the particular instrument they are writing for. Do they now feel they have more confidence in their understanding of the instrument? Are there remaining questions?

ASSESSMENT

Observe and note the learners' ability to listen critically to the performance of their compositions, noting where appropriate if the notation could be built upon to further enhance the performance of the work.

Learners could reflect on their learning both verbally and through a written diary of their experiences.

ACTIVITY ONE

The performer will play through each composition in progress, asking the pupils how close the performance was to what they had imagined. If there are substantial differences, are there means of notation that could convey more clearly to the performer what they want?

Ask the learners questions about this experience. Please see commentary for some examples.

Commentary on Activity One:

What works effectively so far in the composition? Is there anything that sounded quite different to what was expected- positive or otherwise?

Based on the performance is there anything that could be notated clearer for the performer?

Does hearing the work so far give ideas on how to complete the piece? Would any ideas benefit from being moved around?

ACTIVITY TWO

The second part of the session will allow learners to work independently with supervision from the composer *and* performer, both briefly moving from learner to learner. Having been asked in activity one to reflect on their experience of hearing the music, the learners will now work on implementing what they have experienced to aim towards completion.

Commentary on Activity Two:

If there was any passage that was particularly tricky for the performer, how can this be modified while retaining your original intention?

Has the experience of hearing the work so far given you any ideas for possible last-minute changes- a new section even?

ACTIVITY THREE

The final part of the session will bring the class together as a group, reflecting on what each learner feels they need to do in order to finish the work effectively. They will be invited to discuss (again) what they have learned about the instrument. Has anything surprised them about their own compositions?

Commentary on Activity Three:

What have they learned about musical structure so far? Is there one 'correct' method of structuring a piece?

How much do they feel they have built ideas around the instrument itself? Have they managed to 'get away' from their own instrument (assuming it is not the same) while composing this piece?

HOMEWORK

Work towards finishing the pieces. (It may be appropriate to have a further session without composer and performer in advance of Lesson 5.)

RESOURCES

Classroom instruments;

Learners' own instruments.