

SCHEME OF WORK 3: What is the role of listening and reflection in the creative process?

LESSON 1

TOPIC AND PURPOSE

First session of 6 exploring listening as a key activity in the composing process.

This lesson will introduce the learners to the use of visual stimuli and improvisation as creative processes to generate ideas.

OBJECTIVE

Using visual stimuli, introduce the learners to improvisation as composition.

ENGAGEMENT

The 'draw your voices' exercise will help engage and stimulate learner ideas.

Using Van Gogh's painting *Starry Night*, the learners will create an improvised vocal group composition developing their collaborative and reflective skills.

STICK-ABILITY

Generating ideas, experiment and take risks.

DIFFERENTIATION

Most pupils will respond intuitively and analytically to the different activities. All pupils will be expected to build on Step 1 by experimenting and improvising during Steps 2, 3 and 4.

Some will go further than this and may contribute more fully to group work by bringing to the improvisation a better awareness of ways in which vocal sounds can be organised and by demonstrating vocal confidence.

A few may go well beyond this and be more expressive, evaluative and analytical in their contribution. They may also bring a raised awareness of the relationship between the mood of the Van Gogh painting and their musical interpretation.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To introduce the learners to improvisation as a starting point for composition, using a visual stimulus.

ACTIVITY ONE

Project an image of Van Gogh's painting *Starry Night*. Brainstorm and discuss the image:

1. Atmospheric words to describe the painting.
2. Describe shapes and textures in the painting.
3. Think about any lyrics that could describe the painting.
4. Discuss how to translate some of the atmospheric words into vocal sounds.
5. How might the atmospheric words be visually represented?

STARTER

'Draw' your voices.

Make any unusual sound with your voice, from 'zzzz'-ing to over-the-top operatic singing, beat boxing sounds to yawning, and let your hands show the sound visually.

Pass the sounds.

Commentary on Activity One:

Note how words to describe shapes or techniques might be the same as words to describe features in music.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment for learning based on teacher observation, shared pupil reflection, listening and appraising the audio recordings of improvisations, and individual self-reflection undertaken in a written reflection task.

Assessment for Lesson 1 is to be diagnostic for both pupils and teacher, and will inform Lesson 2. This will take the form of pupil and teacher feedback, and input through musical modelling for further generation of ideas.

ACTIVITY TWO

Direct a whole group vocal version in which pupils explore their vocal sounds.

Record it and listen back.

Commentary on Activity Two:

Even if it feels unstructured, allow pupils the freedom to explore and experiment with any of the sounds.

Discuss how the piece could be improved:

Could it be more structured?

Use of dynamics?

ACTIVITY THREE

Repeat activity two making changes from the group discussion.

Commentary on Activity Three:

Have improvements been made?

What are the differences between the two pieces?

HOMWORK/FOLLOW UP BEFORE NEXT PRACTICAL SESSION

Lesson 1 composition diary to be completed by each student.

Each student to bring in a visual image (for example a postcard, page from a magazine to the next practical session).

Development class listening session (see attached resources for this lesson).

ACTIVITY FOUR

In groups ask learners to create a small vocal ensemble version, using any of the suggested sounds with the addition of any new sound ideas they have.

Learners will then present these to the rest of the class.

Record the vocal ensembles.

Commentary on Activity Four:

Remind the class that their vocal pieces do not have to stay improvised: improvisatory work can be refined into a 'fixed' composition.

Discuss and appraise as a class.

RESOURCES

Percussion instruments;

Pupils' own instruments;

Laptop/projector to show image
Recording device and playback facility.