

# Listen, Imagine, Compose

Meeting the unfamiliar: the case of a year 9 class learning to value contemporary art music

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Ofsted's 2009 report *Making More of Music* highlights weaknesses in current secondary school music provision, including the lack of attention to internalising sound as the basis for creative thinking; the lack of quality in depth in pupil responses; insufficient understanding of what musical progression involves, **and the fact that composing activities are rarely related to the work of established composers.**

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# 1. Introduction

It's cold today and the percussion teacher asks Lizzie if there's a warm room to do his teaching in. There is, and the teacher wants to tell about one of his pupils who recently performed brilliantly on his debut in a local ensemble. Lizzie confirms the boy's talent.

A boy calls in to return a Jazz folder and Lizzie wants to know the title of his piece to be performed in the upcoming Christmas Concert. Break time comes and girls gather around the photographs on display in the corridor pleased to see themselves displayed in this way.

We set up the room for the incoming year 9s and today's session. Composer Fraser arrives and together we quickly tell how our week has been. I ask Fraser about his current composing work. Songs for primary school children in Croyden and the London Mozart Players and part of a Wider Opportunities Project.

The class gather and there is impromptu music making with electric guitars showcasing their riffs and snatches, revealing short living moments of virtuosity.

Lizzie's call to order; Fraser introduces Takemitsu's Dark mode:

D Eb G A C D Bb A G Eb D

But first a listening exercise; counting up from 1-25; the challenge of listening, sensing, creating and organising a time span. There is great enthusiasm for this. Tara is beside herself with excitement as she moves

to the edge of her seat longing for group success and the promise of group empathy achieved.

There are a few false starts but before long they have made it. There is a sense of achievement and satisfaction.

In each placing their number within the time span created, Fraser encourages concentration on the moment of placing ('existing in the moment') and discourages both pre-planning and impulsiveness. The structuring of time, the thinking through of the whole, is at the forefront of Fraser's pedagogy and in the light of Takemitsu's work the interest is now on creating non-pulse based rhythm as it fills time.

We move to instruments and the 1-25 exercise is adapted. Fraser urges intentional musical gestures and there is gradual realisation that these can be risk taking and a kind of breaking out, sounds 'imaginatively sculpted'. Tara and Tabi's Eb interjections are interesting.

How to imaginatively sculpt musical ideas is ever before us! How can we make this special, characterful, distinctive, have a personal imprint? How can you give the idea space to breath, live, grow, die?

Now together playing with the Dark mode before working in groups. Two groups making a unison line; two creating texture.

'Gentle, slow, precise with points of repose; atmosphere at dawn'. This is the injunction.

I lead a unison group and we make a chained melody. I especially nurture Emma and Melody on xylophones into a ‘sculpting’ frame of mind. They are pleased and become proud. I encourage all to slow down, take time (‘to take time’ is an interesting idea!), make it count, imagine your phrase more sharply, define it more clearly, bring together outward expression with mental image, confirm intention, be a part of the whole throughout.

The sun moves round and floods the corner of the room where I am standing and I enjoy this new found warmth, and gaze across the car park full of silver coloured cars; what conformity and lack of imagination I think, and across the road beyond the conifers and silver birch to the grand houses of Harpenden and the material comfort of the class before us learning to listen, imagine and compose.

(Observation: December 12, 2011)

## **2. The context and the participants**

This is a description of the fifth session in a project bringing together class teacher Lizzie, composer Fraser and myself labelled researcher. We are working with a Year 9 class of 25 who have opted to follow a year 9 enrichment course following the end of their compulsory music education in year 8. Their musical enrichment year acts as a bridge to their beginning a GCSE course in year 10 should they choose to. The school is committed to teaching ‘21st Century Learning Skills’, one of which is ‘open-mindedness’. The class comprise a good number of what Lizzie refers to as ‘traditional musicians’ meaning those who have had formal

instrumental tuition. The class are considered generally amongst the more able in the year.

Lizzie, secondary school music teacher of twelve years and fairly recently in this her second post, has welcomed the project which fits well with the idea of enrichment and a year in which there is freedom from the usual rigours of assessment for accountability as part of the school's regime of pupil progress tracking. Lizzie is a reluctant composer.

*Composing is something that I've often shied away from. While I enjoy tinkering and playing around on the piano, I always think that I lacked a proper composition education in terms of actually being taught how harmony went together. I think if I'd been taught that more formally it would have put me in a lot better stead and would have made me more confident. The school I went to was strong on performing, I was able to do loads of performing. My GCSE compositions were nice enough, and I got good marks, but I remember thinking it's not particularly exciting what I'm doing. I have never thought of myself as a composer. Learning that I could improvise as apart of teacher training helped and through the years I've built up my confidence and I'm very happy and very confident in teaching GCSE Composition now. But A Level, I've always worked with somebody who was more qualified and that has let me off the hook.*

(Interview, July 2011)

Lizzie's strong identity as a musical performer, and not uncommon amongst secondary school music teachers, has not precluded

development as a successful teacher of composition as determined by the GCSE specification. In a very different place, Fraser has a working life as a composer combined with leading educational projects such as this. Fraser brings to the project the piece Gadget, a concerto for the performing group 'Between The Notes' and the Gürzenich Orchestra based in the Netherlands (see <http://vimeo.com/20875233>). The work's premiere was given under the direction of Markus Stenz in a concert to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Köln Philharmonie in September 2006. Perhaps unsurprisingly Gadget is a piece unknown to the year 9 class, to Lizzie and myself and a good choice through which to address the project's central research question and its subsidiaries:

How do we introduce music to young people that they don't already know about and make it relevant to their learning and with reference to musical and extra-musical context?

How will/will attitudes change towards composing; towards unfamiliar music?

In bringing together composer and classroom teacher another questions arises.

How does the teacher assimilate composer practices, so that these can be transferred to other contexts?

### **3. The unfamiliar**

The idea of introducing what is unfamiliar to young people might seem uncontentious. What else could education be about? Why come to school if all we do is work with what we know already? Well, not so uncontentious and certainly not unproblematic. For example, Bernstein (1971), theorising about the educational failure of working class children argued that the formal culture of the school embodying the unknown and unfamiliar and in particular its manner of transmission required the key to an ‘elaborated code’ which many of these children didn’t possess. Bernstein maintained that

The context in which children learn is usually a middle-class one. Should we try to coax them to the ‘standard’, or seek what is valid in their own lives?

(Bernstein, 1971a: 61)

Accessing the unfamiliar wasn’t straightforward and the idea of composing music a strange one. Or to take another theoretical position and based on Piaget’s notion of assimilation and accommodation, the twin processes by which our mental schemas (ways of thinking) are changed and expanded, the unfamiliar needs to be made sense of through ways of thinking and acting that already exist in the child yet at the same time in need of disturbing (See Finney, 2009). Here it may only be helpful to think of Piaget as providing a useful working metaphor, and one that easily fits with common assumptions and folk theories of learning. There is common talk of acknowledging prior learning, building on existing understanding, level of challenge, freedom and constraint in

task setting and so on<sup>1</sup>. Although there is little attention to children's ways of thinking, ways of making sense other than some loose appreciation of individual learning styles. But learning styles tell nothing about mental schemas and predominant thought structures at stages of development.

The unfamiliarity of 'contemporary' music is likely to present a particular challenge to, in this case, the 14 year-old. How will it be contextualised, how can it be located within any pre-existing schema? How will it relate to the stage of these pupils' musical development. According to Ross (1984) and Swanwick (1988) these pupils work with what is conventional, what they are currently aware of through the common language of music while on the cusp of finding greater levels of personal expression. The essential vernacular musical experience of the class might be considered doubly distant from their experience of contemporary art music which in the first place is ill-tuned to the common formal structures of periodic phrasing, harmonic conventions, extended phrases and developmental variation, for example, when this way has become largely obsolescent for the contemporary composer and where irregularity in the use of structural elements (Benzi and Addessi, 2004) is the norm. Yet, this may of course be precisely what will enable the move from the vernacular to finding personal expression. Beyond this is the contemporary composer's 'conceptual' focus where metaphorical thinking structures the work. The use of overarching metaphor, often the title of the piece and an abstraction, may be capable of resonating in multiple directions for the

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<sup>1</sup> Jolyon Laycock (2005) in *A Changing Role for the Composer in Society* analyses the practice of composers in this respect through reference to Bernstein's concepts of 'classification' and 'framing' (Bernstein, 1971b).

imaginative listener, and may provide the bridge to comprehension and understanding.

Or to consider another position provided by Green (1988; 2008) – musical experience can be positively identified with and positively assimilated if there is an easy dialectical exchange between access to the inherent meanings of the music and its delineations. Inherent or inter-sonic meanings are derived from getting to grips with the music's syntax, its inner logic, understanding how one bit relates to another, while delineated meanings, essentially social in character, are all those matters extra to the music that flood in and that easily dominate reception. In this view and in the case of unfamiliar music the experience may simply alienate and particularly so if there is no positive engagement or way into the music's inner logic. This is perhaps an obvious but nevertheless useful explanatory idea and links to both the question of 'relevance' and to the project's 'musical' (inherent) and 'extra-musical' (delineated) focus.

Working with the unfamiliar and in particular the music of contemporary art music practice with the intention of critically engaging a class of fourteen year-olds in its values and aesthetic ideology, is the task in hand.

#### **4. Project aims, methods and procedure**

Following planning meetings the project aims were set. Throughout the 6 sessions, each lasting two hours, and frustratingly short for Fraser, the class will be introduced to two contrasting pieces of contemporary music:

Gadget by Fraser Trainer

<http://vimeo.com/20875233>

Tree Line by Toru Takemitsu

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5B0pqZexzMU>

Fraser writes:

*In each case the work's musical language will be examined, its influences and context as well as the compositional building blocks of the music, the way it works and the similarities and differences between each. After identifying the creative elements the students will work practically to use and adapt the compositional elements for themselves in order to compose/devise their own music through a collaborative process. As well as building and developing their pieces as the project progresses we will examine how the students identify and engage with contemporary music and what (if anything) makes it relevant to them as listeners, performers and or composers.*

<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Data collection</b>
<b>Session1: November 7 2011</b> Exploring how to examine the musical language of the piece Gadget, it's influences and context as well as its building blocks.	Observation: participant and non-participant Teacher Diary and Video Review (TDVR)
<b>Session 2: November</b> Working with Gadget's use of multiple cycles based on 3, 4, 5, 6 beat rhythmic cells making a machine-like texture.	O: p and n-p TDVR

<p><b>Session 3: November 28<sup>th</sup>,</b> The creation of individual material within a closed structure; how to refine and develop material: how to give material musical significance.</p>	<p>O: p and n-p TDVR Pupil online commentaries (POC)</p>
<p><b>Session 4 December 5<sup>th</sup></b> Small group composing using material and strategies.</p>	<p>O: p and n-p TDVR</p>
<p><b>Session 5 December 12<sup>th</sup></b> From whole class to small group back to whole class; the placing of sounds within a time span; sculpting what is imagined, the making of melody.</p>	<p>POC  O: p and n-p TDVR</p>
<p><b>Session 6 January 9<sup>th</sup> 2012</b> Whole class workshop, inventing material within structures; thinking through time; responding to the DVD performance of Gadget.</p>	<p>O: p and n-p  TDVR O: n-p</p>
<p><b>Showcase Evening January 25<sup>th</sup></b> Featuring a performance of ‘contemporary Composition’ conducted by Kate Bevan.</p>	
<p><b>Symposium report and secondary school music teachers’ workshop March 17<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p>Presentation and workshop David Ashworth’s account  Focus Group</p>

A second part of the procedure involved Lizzie replicating the sessions with a parallel class. At the outset Lizzie had asked: how does the teacher assimilate composer practices so that there is transferability to other schemes of work?

## **5. Pedagogic principles observed**

So how did Fraser set about introducing unfamiliar works to this class of thirteen-fourteen year-olds? How were the class engaged in the values and aesthetic of contemporary art music? What pedagogical principles were at work?

### The correspondence principle

In the introduction above we see extracted from the work both materials, in this case the dark mode used by Takemitsu in *Tree Line*, and compositional strategies, placing and sculpting each sound, making points of repose, knowing within the time span. In the case of *Gadget* it was the building of cyclical patterns through repetition and accumulation, the creation of polyrhythmic textures giving rise to melodic patterns derived from a pool of pitches, the interlocking and layering of patterns of varying length, the creation of dark dense textures and working within palindromic structures. These were the materials and strategies working in support of the machine metaphor that was *Gadget*. However, as important as the assimilation of material and composing strategies, was a demand for an essential level of musicianship.

## Workshop musicianship

The class worked intensively as a unit in the assimilation of new musical material and at the same time mastered unfamiliar compositional strategies. In all this there was a persistent and insistent demand for musical precision in the cause of individual and ensemble musicianship. Musical gestures had to be given intention by being imagined, sculpted and attended to in their execution. It mattered greatly that there was precision in attack and quality in duration. It was a matter of priority that each sound in relationship to the positioning of other sounds was understood as part of an architectural whole. It was during the first two sessions that this way of working and thinking was established. The class were being moulded into a group working for each other and Fraser, and together with increasing demands and rising expectations. For Fraser establishing a listening-thinking ethos to the workshops was a non-negotiable prerequisite for imagining and composing. Lizzie later noted that:

*All the students were treated as musicians, equal to the composer, and were told that 'every sound matters'. The students spent considerable time on 'simple' activities, such as clapping and listening, and there was a very high level of concentration in spite of the amount of repetition.*

## Listening, imagining, composing within closed structures

Session 3 built upon the intensive work of the previous two sessions. The class had been learning how to work as a group, how to listen to each other, and in this how to be attentive to the sounds each made.

Session 2 had marked the difficult transition from bodily made music to the medium of instruments and working in family instrumental groups; five guitars, five keyboard, three vocal, two percussion, two strings, two mallets, two woodwind. They were being taught how to create individual material within a closed structure; how to refine and develop material: create cells, make phrases; extend, adumbrate musical ideas; how to build musical textures from differently paced ideas; and throughout how to give material musical significance. Material and structures worked in correspondence with the opening of ‘Gadget’.

The material given was twofold. A pitch pool A B C D Eb F G A and the stimulus provided by a two bar riff derived from the pitch pool played throughout by Fraser (See appendix 1). Both pitch patterns and the nature of the spaced riff were disruptive of norms calling for fresh musical thinking (imagining). Each pupil created their own two or three note cell with Fraser’s power riff being responded to with sharp rhythmical responses. As ideas were refined so an extended piece was assembled.

Tutti – keyboards – mallets, vocals, strings – tutti – acoustic guitars  
winds – tutti – percussion, electric guitars – tutti

The piece was rehearsed intensively and by the end of the session the class had arrived at an unimagined place through their imaginative responses to the musical language of Gadget.

## **6. What did this mean for the class?**

Lizzie placed four questions on the department's virtual space where a recording of Gadget could also be listened to. Students were asked to respond.

**1. How did it feel to be part of the composing process in today's session?**

**2. What title would you give the piece we composed today?**

**3. What style of music do you think the piece was in and why do you think that?**

**4. What did you learn from the session?**

In response to the first question there were expressions of great pleasure at making a piece in which individual contributions mattered and where the challenges set had been mastered. The principle of 'individuality within community' had created a sense of solidarity, satisfaction and surprise. A sample of pupil comments illustrate both this general level of satisfaction in working as a unit and at the same time making something completely new 'that only a few people know about'.

*It felt good to be part of the composing process. When we all got the piece right, it sounded really energetic and tight together ... The vibe was really good and electrifying ... it was fun and something different and moreover I was amazed at our end result and I felt very pleased and proud to be part of the composing process ... It felt fun to be making this big wall of sound with everyone ... it felt good being part of something new that only a few people know about ... it felt exciting to be part of the class composition and it was satisfying to know that without my riff, the piece of music wouldn't be quite complete.*

(Music Department Virtual Learning Site)

What had been made was viewed as ‘something different’ and disruptive of normal expectations. In response to questions 2 and 3 there was a good deal of circumspection. Many rejected the idea of a title altogether. For example: ‘You don’t really need a title because it’s a mixed music’. The idea of mixing was commonly expressed and this became conflated with the music’s perceived genre. What seemed important to pupils was the music’s uniqueness, its newness, originality achieved through the fusing of different elements and everybody’s individual ideas.

For one pupil what they saw as an experience of making a musical hybrid led to the title 'Urban' and for another ‘Mish-mash’ and there was the suggestion ‘Out of the Blue’ ‘... because it was just so random and unique and hard to put it into a musical category’. Then came 'Tribal World' or 'Mass Art Rock Music’, maybe even some 'Urban Jazz indie sort of thing'.

The commonly felt uniqueness of the music led to another pupil naming the piece 'Exploring the Undiscovered' justified programmatically.

*I can imagine being a pair of eyes, maybe of a small insect of creature, maybe even a paranormal or extra-terrestrial being scrambling through winding and spiraling tunnels or passageways, searching for something, completely oblivious to where it may be, Unaware of this new land, meets something unusual and surprisingly frightening, I could imagine dramatic atmospheres and abstract landscapes in a large scale, building up layers slowly and earthly into something sharp and dramatic.*

In response to the fourth question, beyond the persistent restatement of the surprise in achieving a unity and wholeness from diverse elements, there was reference to learning how to create musical ideas, how to work with small amounts of material, how to assemble material into a whole and how it was possible to think and imagine outside of existing categories.

## **7. Opening ears - opening minds**

How do we introduce music to young people that they don't already know about and make it relevant to their learning?

What can we draw upon to help explore the values and contexts of contemporary music?

How will/will attitudes change towards composing; towards unfamiliar music?

The evidence was mounting as the class accepted their journey of going where they had not gone before and the eighteenth item in year 9's January showcase evening featured a piece titled 'Contemporary Composition' conducted by Kate Bevan. In introducing the performance the audience were invited to listen with open minds!

Six weeks later an hour-long focus group meeting was arranged. Rory, Eleanor, Holly, Kate, Melody and Martin were selected by their music teacher as representative of the class and met with the John Finney.

What had they learnt? Kate boldly spoke for the whole class and there was no demure from others, only elaboration.

*We were confused about it to start with but after all the composing and learning how to put things together and combining things it worked really well. Everybody in our class can now listen to Gadget and get their head around it and get into the music. Once you have got your head around the language, once you have done this then you enjoy it.*

Members of the group spoke of perceptions being changed, changed understanding of what was involved in composing, who a composer was, and changed perceptions of what music was. Recurrent was the theme of learning how to assemble material.

*Fraser gave us the knowledge of how to do it, how to create within a structure.*

There was also an acknowledgement that they had learnt strategies for listening: dreamy listening; listening for inspiration; listening for detail; listening for imagery.

It was clear that the mediation of a contemporary work through the approach adopted made sense, opened minds and provided for ways of approaching the unfamiliar. There was reflection too on coming to understand unfamiliar texts in their English lessons, the challenge of coming to understand Shakespeare, for example, and there was a tale of how a teacher had failed to mediate a novel by George Orwell. In this case they just didn't get it. The work remained a mystery.

In the sixth and final session the class had watched a performance of Gadget in which Fraser was viewed playing the keyboard. Attention was riveted and particularly on the part Fraser was taking, and there was fascination with the range of instrumental resources used and not what might be expected of an orchestra. This was yet another example of stereotypical thinking being challenged. And now was an opportunity to ask Fraser some questions. (See Appendix 2)

The experience of meeting a composer and being taken inside a composer's way of thinking, meeting with his values and aesthetic commitments through 'wall to wall' musical workshopping underpinned by the language and syntax of the composer's work proved to be critical in the process of opening of minds to the unfamiliar and to making this of relevance to pupil's learning.

In terms of ‘relevance’ Lizzie observed that rather than building ‘relevance’ into the project at the outset, it was the students themselves who ensured this by bringing their own musical experience to the project as a means of appropriating and making sense of the material in order to assimilate it. In other words through immersion in the language of the contemporary works and the micro pedagogy employed there was sufficient space made for this process. Lizzie notes that it was through ‘the emphasis on exploration that they found a way of relating new musical experience to what they understood already when they needed to’.

Through intensive working with the language used by a contemporary composer, the irregular use of structural elements, pupils learnt how to think inside musical processes as part of their developing composing practice. There could be no ‘easy’ listening, or easy assimilation to existing ways of thinking. In this way attention to inherent meanings proved to be the route to positive delineations?

The students had experienced continual disruption of the pattern of their musical thought demanding continual re-thinking and the enrichment and expansion in ways of thinking. The approach of sustaining whole class work within which individual musical imaginations were nurtured, ensured that there was no regression to norms. Listening, imagining and composing had been experienced as a highly integrated set of musical processes.

## **8. How does the teacher assimilate composer practices, so that these can be transferred to other contexts?**

From the inception of the project Lizzie saw the opportunity to see what impact direct access to a composer would have on 9A, what impact the teacher as ‘composer’ would have on 9D and what impact all this would have on Lizzie. To what extent would she defend the status quo, to what extent would there be a ‘letting go’ and rethinking the teaching of composition? In the event Lizzie had come to value learning to

- Explore different sound-worlds
- Think outside the box when composing
- Widen the palette of compositional tools

And felt empowered to

- Place composition ‘higher on the agenda’

Lizzie admitted that working in parallel with a professional composer had been challenging for her at first, until she realized that it made sense to work in her own way rather than try to emulate Fraser. This was also evident from the video accompanying her presentation to other music teachers in March. Lizzie’s diary account of her teaching tells of this and of growing confidence as a workshop leader and here reports of a significant moment in her teaching.

*I have tried to follow Fraser’s lessons more or less with them. I have had varying results so far but was particularly pleased with what was achieved today in 35 minutes.*

*I had mixed results in the lessons from session 4. The class didn’t seem ‘to take’ to the ideas of layering ostinatos using a mode. As*

*they seemed less 'on board' I lost my confidence to 'refine' their composing ideas to make some form of coherent sound.*

*I thought about this after the lesson and realised that I needed to take more of a back seat and not panic so much if it wasn't sounding like Fraser's version, but also that the main issue was LISTENING. Pupils were not listening to each other's patterns and not responding, which obviously overall was making my refining job harder. Guitarists also felt unhappy playing anything but diatonic chords and trying to get them to play monophonic riffs led to some discontent!*

*So, in the lesson the following day I talked to them about the role of the musician as listener as well as composer and performer, provoked a bit of healthy competition, saying how well the other class had done with this with the professional composer, and I tried to relax! The result in this lesson was far more success with a much larger degree of involvement, engagement and enjoyment. They were thrilled with the end result and were 'right there with it' as I directed their ostinato patterns in and out of the soundscape. They were genuinely listening, some of them were adapting parts without help as necessary and I felt more confident to refine those patterns that needed it.*

*When I listened back to it, it wasn't quite as coherent as I'd felt it was at the time as I know that the musical experience was shared by all at the time and that that alone was a success.*

*(Teacher Notes: 'Trying to imitate the professional experience!'*  
9/12/11)

## 9. Conclusions

Together we have learnt:

1. How to listen more deeply and critically
2. How to take risks and move beyond norms and stereotypes
3. That composing is a slow process and that it is important to learn how to stay with the process
4. That 'relevance' is created by the participants and in particular through the ethos generated by the workshop leader
5. That repertoire-based composition teaching works

Key questions

1. How can time be found in the school music curriculum for sustained periods of workshoping?
2. Is a composition-centred curriculum incompatible with the prevailing conception of a music curriculum?
4. To what extent is it possible to deploy an alternative model of learning in the school, that is, one rejecting the use of 'behavioural objectives' and beholden to associated forms of school accountability? Instead of 'doing' and 'learning' what about 'making music well' and 'knowing music well'?
4. How will Lizzie's learning translate to teaching composition at GCSE?

Implications for our practice

1. For Lizzie, that she continues to explore ways of developing workshop composition teaching
2. For Fraser, that he continues to use his own work in his teaching; the presence of the composer and his work together is important.
3. For John, that he notes and thinks more about the distinction between musical materials, compositional strategies and the music's architecture (not structure) and how these interrelate in the teaching of composition.
4. For all, that we 'look after every note'; 'make it matter if *you* think it matters'!

#### Unexpected outcomes

For Fraser, the way in which boundaries collapsed for the students in moving from 'the counting up game' to instruments leading to a purple patch of intense creativity.

For Lizzie, the discovery that boys rather than girls were the risk-takers in the parallel class.

For Lizzie, the pupils' capacity for sustained involvement in the process of the music making

For John, that pupils were able to categorise listening styles in novel ways.

Nuggets:

1. Aim to make authentic connections  
play to the strengths of the artist/teacher - try to follow the creative  
methods or starting points as closely as possible

2. Work as intensively as possible  
Composing benefits from an intensive approach - so does group work,  
risk-taking and group cohesion. Creative projects are an opportunity to  
work very differently from class music lessons. This increases the chance  
to truly inspire!

3. Hand over the tools for creativity  
Don't worry about relevance! It's the empowerment and opportunity to  
create / hear / understand that will make it relevant.

4. Style is not important  
Compositional models really work, but it's not about imitating style. The  
really useful skills are to understand compositional fundamentals that  
may apply to all forms of music-making - the material elements of  
composing.

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## Appendix

### Questions asked of Fraser

Tom J	How long have you been in the music industry?
Tabi	How do you develop rhythmic skills?
Esme, Melodie and Anon and Digby	How long does it take to compose a piece of music?
Lauren	How did you decide on the theme for your piece?
Alice	How many pieces have you written that have been played by a big orchestra?
Ollie	What type of music was your piece?
Tara	What made you interested in music?
Anon	How do you write that style of music without making it horrible?
Emma	What inspired you to write a piece about technology?
Kate	Do you compose music before you title it?
James J	How hard is it to coordinate all the instruments in an orchestra?
Martin	How would you put an electric guitar into a classical piece?
Charlie	Why do some pieces of music remind us of events?
Abby	What happens if you can't compose?

Tom W

What type of music do you like composing most?

Yasmin

Why did you want to become a composer?

Ellie

Do you prefer listening to music in the light or the dark?

Anon

Do you have to know how to play piano to compose music?