

8. Reflecting on the role of EXPERT COMPOSERS AND PERFORMERS (coded YELLOW in the 2014 report)

	<i>Pedagogical Issues/Learning Issues (numbers in the left hand column correspond to the 2014 report)</i>	<i>Question</i>	<i>Suggestions/Discussion</i>
44	When pupils are not composing for themselves to perform this means that they are not limited by their own technical accomplishments. This allows them to concentrate on quality of ideas and their realisation and frees them up cognitively to concentrate on the composing aspects of the task.	Where could you access expert performers for your pupils to compose for?	Think about bringing in professional musicians for your pupils to compose for. This could be a member of a local professional orchestra, a peripatetic teacher, or a music student. Ask your local music hub for suggestions as to who would be appropriate to use, and how this might be funded.
40	Visits from expert musicians are often time limited.	How can you make the most out of sessions with a visiting expert musician?	Encourage pupils to do research as a pre-composing task. This encourages peer-to-peer learning, pools existing pupil knowledge and allows the teacher to build upon pupil prior knowledge. For example, pupils knew they were going to composing for a particular saxophonist. Using the internet they were able to source information about the possibilities of the instrument (range, extended techniques etc.) the kind of music it performed and the performer who they were writing for.
45	Expert performers, whether professional visiting musicians, peripatetic teachers or music teachers can be an excellent composing resource for pupils and support their development and identification as composers as opposed to being performer and composer.	What does composing for an expert musician offer pupils composing that is different from them composing for peers or for themselves?	<p>Pupils working with a professional musician can use them to figure out ideas, explore different options through giving the performer specific instructions. This fosters independent learning and adds a level of excitement at hearing their music played by an experienced performer.</p> <p><i>'I am really just trying to give her an idea of what it sounds like, so she can see if it sounds like what she thought it was going to sound like.'</i> professional musician.</p> <p><i>It became a piece in its own right, even if it wasn't how I initially wanted it to sound, it became something different, which I was pleased with.'</i> Pupil</p>

46	Questioning is a crucial part of supporting pupil composers. Just as questioning by the teacher/composer of the pupils should be about uncovering their intentions, the performer's questions are aimed at uncovering their performance intentions.	What kind of questioning is effective from an expert performer to the pupil composer?	<p><i>'The first job is to be sure, as a player, that I am seeing the specific, objective instructions - pitches, rhythms, articulations, and dynamics - correctly; then I could work toward the more subjective things that might be implied by the score.'</i> Typical first level questions might be 'What is this note?', 'You had a sharp there, shall I carry it forward to this point too?', 'How fast does it go?'. This might move onto 'What does this mean, can you tell me?'. <i>'It is the player's job not just to play the specifics accurately but also to find this implied potential and make it a reality. With such young composers, often their pieces had a potential of which they weren't 100% aware and which wasn't always intended. And sometimes because scores were unfinished, they could imply various potentials. So by asking these questions I could zero in on what it was intended a bit better. And if the answers were vague or unsure, I could demonstrate a few different potentials and that might help them decide or be clearer in their imaginations about their creations, and help them see perhaps by notating more specifically in one way or another they might communicate their intention to the player more clearly and then have a better chance of having a real performance get close to matching their imagination.'</i></p> <p>Professional performer</p>
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