

FOLLOW THE LEADER

WORKBOOK GUIDE.

A course dedicated to building confidence in
your own ability to lead groups of young
musicians.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	COURSE OVERVIEW
4	THE IMPORTANCE OF RHYTHM
8	THE IMPACT OF YOU AS A LEADER
12	THE IMPORTANCE OF BODY LANGUAGE
15	KEY MUSIC THEORY
22	CONDUCTING IN THE CLASSROOM

FOLLOW THE LEADER

COURSE OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVES

To be able to clearly and confidently lead groups using rhythmic count-ins and cueing unison endings for both singing and instrumental groups

To be able to clearly identify the importance of leadership and conducting when working with a large group

To be able to define important musical terminology - i.e. tempo, time signature etc.

YOUR PERSONAL GOALS

What is it you would like to gain from taking this course?

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Add any additional notes before starting the course here.



LESSON ONE

THE IMPORTANCE OF RHYTHM

All good musicians have one thing in common, a good sense of rhythm. Rhythm can exist without melody, but the melody cannot live without rhythm. As teachers, we need to understand the importance of rhythm. Teaching good rhythmic skills from the start of a child's musical journey can dramatically accelerate their cognitive development.

In order to incorporate rhythm into our lessons, we must first have a firm understanding of the rules of rhythm. Something we hear from adults and children is, 'I've got no sense of rhythm, or I'm not musical'. However, we have an incredible opportunity to turn this around, as we fully believe everyone can be musical. By exploring rhythm with our classes, through the use of games and activities, this is the first step for them to say 'I am Musical'.

LESSON TOPICS

The Pulse
Tempo
Rhythm

THE PULSE



LET'S TALK ABOUT THE PULSE

A beat is a pulse of time. A ticking clock is a good example. Every minute, the second-hand ticks 60 times, and each one of those ticks is a beat. If you speed up or slow down the second hand, you're changing the tempo of the beat.

The pulse is easiest to find by listening to the drums of a track. Previously, you might have found yourself tapping along to music subconsciously; this is the pulse. In general, most modern music is counted in groups of four, with emphasis put on the first beat.

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

The beat is an essential skill for us to teach early on in a child's development. For example, in 2013 there was a study that found children who were able to keep in time with a beat were more attentive and showed less ADHD-like behaviours than children who hadn't been taught this skill.

It's as simple as that; the beat is the origin of all music and rhythm,



WHY NOT TRY PULSE GAMES?

Can your students hit a drum (or a table with a pencil), in time to the pulse? Can they walk in time with a pulse? These are all great ways to get your children started learning about pulse in a fun, engaging way. Why not think about the various ways in which pulse games can be introduced into your classroom.

THE TEMPO

WHAT IS TEMPO?

The tempo is simply the speed of the pulse. You can use tempo to change the style and feel of the music you're playing, for example when performing, get the children to think about what emotion it makes them feel if you slow the tempo down. What feeling does it portray if you speed up the tempo?

When your children get to the stage where they're composing their own songs, could they change the tempo to show different emotions in their compositions? You can get your children to think about this by listening to music they enjoy. How does the speed of the tempo of a sad song differ from that of a happy, upbeat song?

HOW CAN WE TEACH TEMPO?

Why not try making the class move around the room in time to a piece. Play a song with a slow tempo, and see whether the children can match this in their movements. Now contrast this with a faster beat and see how the children move. This is just one way of actively teaching tempo. You can have so much fun with this, while simultaneously developing the classrooms rhythmic skills.

THE RHYTHM

What about Rhythm?

Rhythm is the placement of sounds within the steady pulse. Start teaching rhythms by linking them to simple words and getting your class to clap the syllables of that word.

For example, you could clap:

THE MU-SI-CAL ME

Once the children are used to copying your words and rhythms, why not get them to take the lead and take it in turns to create a word for everyone else to copy? This is a great way to begin opening their minds to the creativity of music, and how easy it is for them to create a simple rhythm, both independently and as a group.

CAP - PU - CI - NO

BA - NA - NA

BASE - BALL - BAT

MISS - ISS - IP - PI

DIC - TION - NA - RY

COF - FEE

TEL - I - VI - SION

ED - U - CA - TION

"This is a great way to begin opening their minds to the creativity of music, and how easy it is for them to create a simple rhythm, both independently and as a group."



LESSON TWO

THE IMPACT OF YOU AS A LEADER

Now, it is time to look at the impact you have as a musical leader on your class. It's vital we remain comfortable and in control of our classroom. Our response and approach to music has a significant effect on the children we lead.

Any confusion or stress shown surrounding the work can lead to children losing interest, lacking confidence and even causing disruption to the overall lessons.

LESSON TOPICS

The Impact on the Class

The Impact on You

The Impact on the Music

THE IMPACT ON THE CLASS

LET'S TALK ABOUT THE IMPACT ON THE CLASS

All children learn and respond to music in different ways and at different speeds. It is our job to give them the confidence to come out of their comfort zones and explore their abilities by recognising and meeting each child's independent needs.

Your enthusiasm and energy you put into the work directly affects the energy in the room. Be the energy you would like to see in the room.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

If you want the children to be more active, build your energy and adjust your vocal tone to suit. If you're want to bring the energy down, make your tone quieter, maybe even try whispering. Both of these can be quite a shock if you're not used to being loud or animated in your practice. However, by practising building your energy with sincerity, you will start to see a significant change to the reaction you get from the children.

REMEMBER

It's vital we remain comfortable and in control of our classroom.

THE IMPACT ON YOU



LET'S TALK ABOUT THE IMPACT ON YOU

You are the key to enriching and inspiring children's lives with music. You are the person who allows them to have a creative outlet and that is a big, and sometimes daunting responsibility. You want to be able to make the most of this opportunity, and that can become stressful when you don't necessarily feel entirely comfortable with what you're teaching.

The key to confidence is **familiarity** and **practice**. The more you do something, the easier it will become.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Be honest with the children when you have made a mistake, so they can learn with you, and be included in your learning. This will then start to have positive effects on how you deal with situations that previously may have been stressful. For example, you have already taken a considerable step forward by taking on additional training on how to become a positive leader for your class. By researching, training and practising leadership techniques, you will give yourself the boost to take these into your lessons to see the positive outcome they have on your overall teaching.



"If you make a mistake, take it as a positive, you can learn from it."

THE IMPACT ON THE MUSIC



LET'S TALK ABOUT THE IMPACT ON THE MUSIC

If a group didn't have a leader, the band would struggle to keep a steady pulse throughout the piece of music. For example, without a leader, they have no one to set the tempo at the beginning.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

If there are multiple sections in a song, a leader can signal section changes, helping the children maintain their performance. By adding a leader into the work, it creates more scope for changes in dynamics which can tie the whole performance together. For example, in the chorus, the music can become much more energised and dynamic in contrast to the verse.



"A confident leader should support the children and help them reach their full potential"



LESSON THREE

THE IMPORTANCE OF BODY LANGUAGE

Take a moment to remember your favourite teachers from school. What is it about those teachers that made them your favourite?. Is it simply because they taught your favourite subject? Or, because they were lenient with homework? I can guarantee it won't solely be one of these reasons.

These teachers did not rely on a whiteboard and a classroom to be an inspiring leader. Their mere presence made you feel good and left you wanting to learn more. The teachers' body language significantly contributes to the lasting impact they have on our learning.

LESSON TOPICS

What is Body Language?
The Types of Body Language

WHAT IS BODY LANGUAGE?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Inside a classroom, the body language of the teacher that will often dictate their presence, and the students will respond accordingly. Words can be made up, so it is not unusual to be sceptical about what's being said. Body language, on the other hand, will almost always be taken at face value. And hence, body language plays a positive role not only in classroom teaching but in the education of musical groups.

LET'S TALK ABOUT BODY LANGUAGE

Body Language is defined as a non-verbal, yet powerful form of communication that every individual denotes via his/her gestures, attitude or facial expressions.

We not only respond positively/negatively to spoken words of an individual but also react to that person's body language. This same principle applies to teacher and student relationship in the classroom.



Did you know that only 7% of verbal communication impacts the students and the other 93 per cent is attributed to non-verbal communication?

THE TYPES OF BODY LANGUAGE

What are the different types of body Language?

BODY POSTURE

Walking tall, with body erect and shoulders straight engender confidence. As the first impression a student has of a teacher, their body posture should be very appealing.

EYE TALK

They say eyes are the 'windows to the soul'. Looking straight into a student's eyes creates a positive relationship with them. Teachers should maintain eye-contact while delivering instructions, guidance and discipline. Direct eye contact with students helps drive focus for those who may easily be distracted, ideal for helping conduct a large classroom.

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

This one is easy, Smile. A smile makes communication comfortable and persuasive. It's a mood changer, and having this positive enforcement on the children will help boost their confidence. When conducting, if you give an energetic and happy facial expression, you'd be surprised how quickly this transfers to your students.

VOICE MODULATION

Teachers should use a variety of vocal intonations when presenting new material. For example, loud and soft voice can be used to impact the mood of the music. You can also change your pitch. When trying to create a more energetic or exciting classroom atmosphere, using a high pitched tone of voice can work wonders. In contrast, when bringing the energy in a room down again, taking your tone of voice to a lower pitch can reinstate your authority, and show that it is time to quieten down.

POSITIVE FORCE-FIELD

A Positive Force Field is a collection of positive body language that lowers students' anxiety and boosts their motivation. It includes smiling, leaning, nodding and employing open palms; simply projecting that you are approachable.



LESSON FOUR

KEY MUSIC THEORY

We all want to be efficient in leading music lessons and workshops. This part of the course is designed to give you a basic understanding of reading, writing and playing music.

Although as primary teachers, it may not be necessary to read music fluently, It is an incredibly helpful skill to possess. As you learn to read music, your playing or singing skills will develop accordingly.

LESSON TOPICS

Tones & Semitones

Rhythmic Notes

Time Signatures

Major & Minor

Dynamics

Rhythmic Notation

TONES & SEMITONES

LET'S TALK ABOUT TONES & SEMITONES

All music is made up of tones and semitones; it's like the cellular structure of music. A semitone means a half step. This means that on a piano, if you pick any note, and go directly to the note next door, this is a semitone. It is irrelevant whether it is white to a black note, black to a white note or white to a white note.

G - G# is a distance of a semitone. G# is a semitone above G, and G is a semitone below G#.

If a semitone is called a half step, then a tone is a whole step, or you could think of it as 2 semitones.

So C to C# is a semitone, and C# to D is another semitone. So, therefore, the distance between C & D is a tone.

"One of the most famous pieces to use a semitone is the jaws theme."

RHYTHMIC NOTES

The Different Note Types

How do we go about writing music down in a way that we can universally understand? Music Notation looks complicated, but once you learn a few introductory notes, you'll be able to read music in no time. We can tell how many beats a note is supposed to last because of its shape.



This is a Semibreve or a whole note in the American system. A Semibreve lasts four beats.



This is a minim or a half note. A minim lasts two beats.



This is a crotchet or a quarter beat. It lasts just one beat.



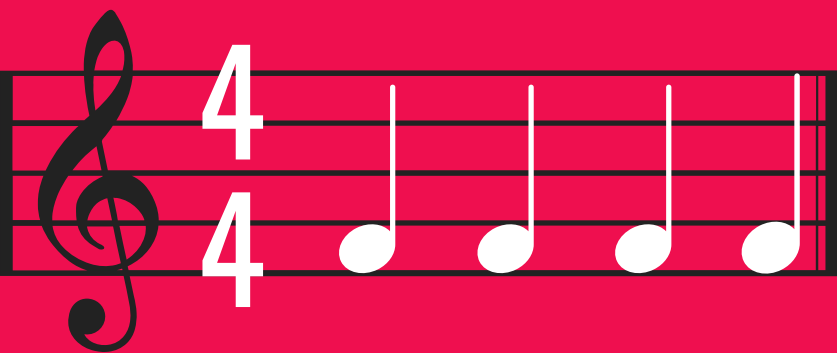
This is a quaver or an eighth note. It is mostly seen in sets of 2. It lasts for half a beat. You can fit 2 of them into one crotchet.

TIME SIGNATURES

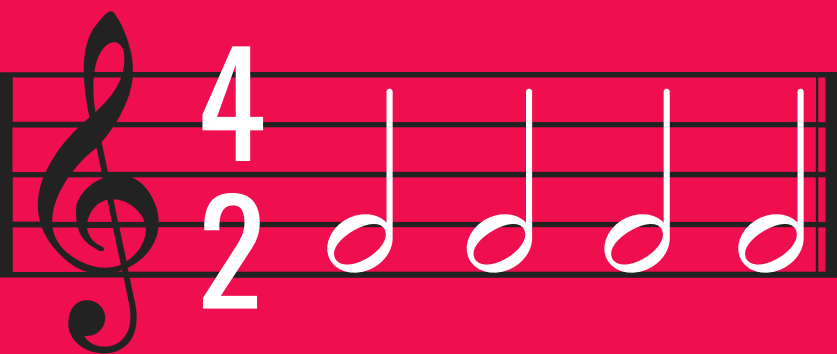
What is a Time Signature?

Time signatures tell us how many notes we count to before going back to 1. We call this is a bar. There are two numbers in a time signature. The top number shows us the number of notes or beats in a bar.

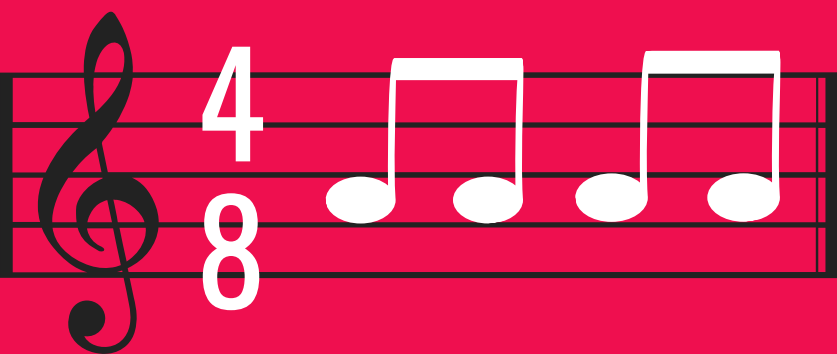
In 4/4, the top number is showing us that there are four beats in every bar, so we count to four before going back to one. The bottom number is a fraction or the type of note we're using.



So in 4/4, we see it's four crotchets per bar.



In 4/2 its four Minims per bar



In 4/8 its four Quavers per bar.

1/4 Note - Crotchet
1/2 Note - Minim
1/8 Note - Quaver

MAJOR & MINOR

What are they?

Major and Minor are tools that composers use to give a piece an emotion, mood or atmosphere. Just like painters arrange colours on a palette, composers arrange notes into combinations of major or minor. Major or Minor doesn't refer to single notes, but to the spaces in between notes. These distances are measured in semitones or tones, as we discussed before. Some combinations make the sound of major, and some minor.

Try this!

Try this out with some chords of your own. If you don't have a keyboard you can use apps like Garageband on a phone or tablet to use a keyboard on them. Start on any note, decide if you want it to be major or minor, then find notes 1,3 & 5 of that scale.

Examples of major & minor chords.

C MAJOR



E MINOR



MUSICAL DYNAMICS

In music, dynamics define the volume of the music we can play. This can either be loud, which we call forte. Or quiet, which we call piano. There are loads more dynamics we could use. Below are a few more examples

FORTE = LOUD

PIANO = QUIET

FORTISSIMO = VERY LOUD

PIANISSIMO = VERY QUIET

MEZZO FORTE = MEDIUM LOUD

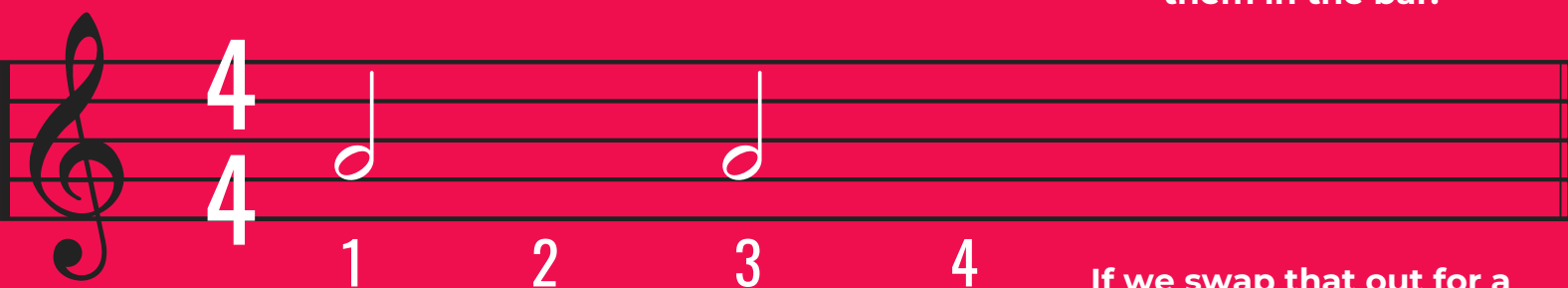
MEZZO PIANO = MEDIUM QUIET

RHYTHMIC NOTATION

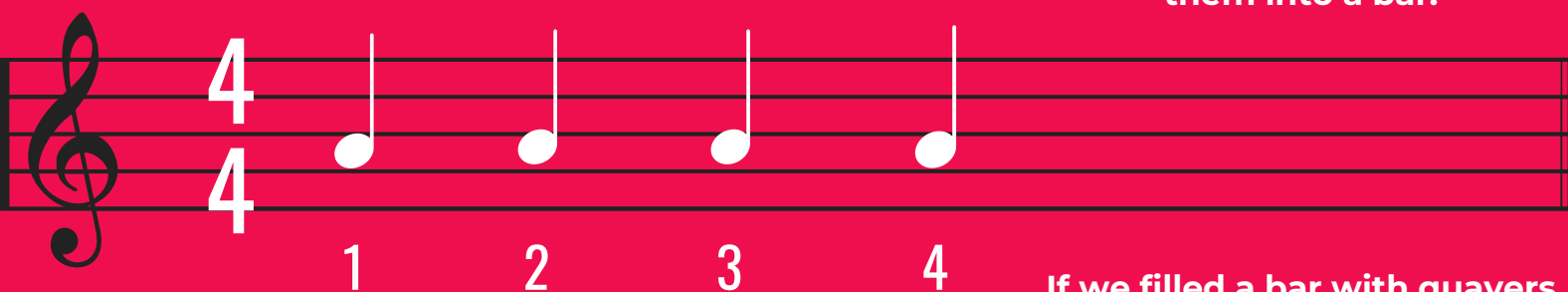
Here we can see a bar, let's stick to our standard 4/4 time signature. This bar has a Semibreve in it. It lasts for four beats, so it leaves no room for anything else.



Now, let's swap that out for a Minim. This lasts for two beats so we can fit 2 of them in the bar.



If we swap that out for a crotchet, we can fit four of them into a bar.



If we filled a bar with quavers they only last half a beat so we can fit eight of them into a bar.



When we count 1,2,3,4, we're counting every beat. But when a note lasts for only half a beat, we need a way to count in between the beats. The simplest way to do this is to count 1&2&3&4&

RESTS

What about the Rests?

So we've looked at note symbols so far, which make sounds.

But if we want to stop making a sound, we can't just leave space in the bar blank. We have to use something called a rest.

Rests work in precisely the same way as notes.



This is called a semibreve rest, and it plays silence over four beats.



This is called a minim rest, and it plays silence over two beats.



This is called a crotchet rest, and it plays silence over one beats.



This is called a quaver rest, and it plays silence over half a beats.



LESSON FIVE

CONDUCTING IN THE CLASSROOM

Now it's time to look at how we lead and conduct our groups during their lessons. Children will learn faster when they have a confident leader running them through the piece of music they are learning.

Eventually, you can take the conductor out of the equation, and they will have the skills you will have taught them to carry on independently.

But for now, this is the part where you play a large role in helping them perform a piece of music successfully.

LESSON TOPICS

Keeping the Pulse

Starting/Ending a Piece

Starting/Stopping a Part

Changing Dynamics

KEEPING THE PULSE



LET'S TALK ABOUT THE PULSE

The pulse is the first element we need to establish in the music. A pulse is a consistent beat throughout the piece. Similar to our heartbeat, it tends not to speed up or slow down. It gives us the pace at which to perform our parts alongside.

Our arms and legs are powerful tools in conducting; they can help us demonstrate tempo, pulse and cue endings/beginnings of pieces - all without saying a word. Once we have found the pulse in the music, we can click this throughout the piece, with an exaggerated hand clap on every beat one in between

You can do the same with your legs - a hand clap on the one and marching on all other beats.

All variations will work as long as you have something emphasising the first beat of every bar. This will give the children the best chance of remaining in the right place throughout the piece. The more exaggerated the movement, the more likely you will have the children hooked and focused on keeping in time.



TOP TIP!

Most primary level music pieces will be in a time signature of 4/4. Therefore you will only need to count to four each bar and repeat!

STARTING A PIECE

Starting a Piece

Trying to get children to all start at precisely the same time can be a challenge; however, let's explore a few techniques that will make this easier. To give yourself the best chance of having a successful opening, make sure you stand in a place where all the children can see you. Using eye contact check everyone is in a position to start by looking at each child directly before beginning. Once you have done this, use your hands and voice to give a clear count in.

TOP TIP

Always run practices of the beginning regularly; making sure the group knows exactly how many counts they have before they start. The more you practice, the easier it will become.

THIS COUNT SHOULD BE AT THE TEMPO YOU WOULD LIKE THE CHILDREN TO START AT - SO THE COUNT IN IS CRUCIAL FOR THE KIDS TO KNOW HOW FAST THEY NEED TO PLAY. YOU CAN FIND THIS TEMPO BY LISTENING TO THE MUSIC YOU ARE USING. IF YOU AREN'T USING ANY BACKING MUSIC, YOU'LL NEED TO BE CLEAR OF THE TEMPO YOU'D LIKE THE CHILDREN TO GO BEFORE COUNTING THEM IN. TO EMPHASISE THE COUNT IN, USE YOUR ARMS OR LEGS TO MARK OUT THE BEATS



STARTING/STOPPING A PART

Starting/Stopping a Part

There may be times when you have a piece of music to teach that requires individual children to drop in and out of playing. This can mean cueing various parts at different times instead of all together. This can be when it starts to get a little daunting as the children will be looking to you for reassurance of their entries and exits during the piece so similar to the previous parts you will need to make these as evident as possible. By keeping the pulse throughout the piece of music using one of our hands or legs, we can then use our other arm for cueing singers to start and stop throughout.

HOW DO WE STOP A PART?

A flat open palm facing the children is a clear indication that they should not be playing at this time. Therefore when you take the palm away, they will know to expect to come in soon. This is also a great way of stopping a piece during practice when you would like to go back and correct or work on any parts that need additional support.

To give yourself the best chance of this being a success, make sure the children are positioned in the parts that they are singing. Therefore you can ensure groups starting together can be cued in easily.



ENDING A PIECE

Ending a Piece

Having a successful ending to a song will give your children a huge boost in confidence going forward. Similarly to how you would start the piece you're going to need to do some more physical and verbal counting.

The trick to a successful ending is to be prepared. You need to be clear on exactly where you'd like to put the end in at least a full count or four beats before you attempt it. By doing this, you can then give the children a verbal cue or hand signal to signify the ending count is about to happen.

BOTH OF THESE TECHNIQUES WORK WELL; HOWEVER, THEY WOULD BE REDUNDANT IF THE CHILDREN WEREN'T FOCUSED ON YOU AS THE LEADER OF THE GROUP. ENSURING THE CHILDREN ARE FOCUSED ON YOU DURING THE PIECE BEFORE YOU CUE AN ENDING IS A VITAL PART OF CONDUCTING. YOU CAN TELL IF YOU HAVE THEIR ATTENTION BY CHECKING FOR EYE CONTACT BEFORE SIGNALLING AN ENDING CUE.



CHANGING DYNAMICS

Once we have mastered leading a group of children, We can now start to look at what else we can add to the piece. Our bodies can enable us to change the dynamics and mood of a piece.

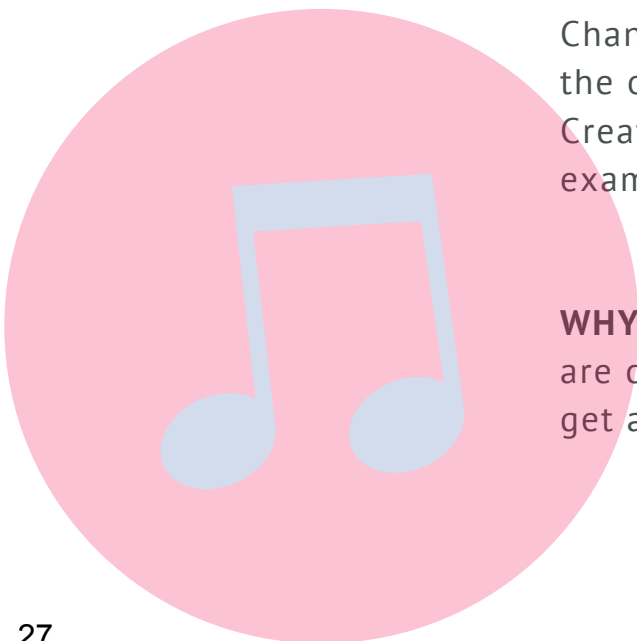
HOW DO WE CONDUCT DYNAMICS?

By making our bodies smaller, leaning forward and bringing our hands closer together when conducting we create a sense of quiet, as opposed to raising our bodies and making our movements wide and large to ask the group to give us a louder dynamic.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Being able to command dynamics whilst conducting is a crucial skill for being a capable conductor. Once you master one, you can try to add in multiple dynamics throughout one piece. Changes in dynamics can completely transform the overall feel and emotion of a piece of music. Creating moments of intensity or suspense for example.

WHY NOT TRY THIS: One section of the piece you are conducting could start quietly and then try to get a louder dynamic in a separate section





Name

Occupation

28



FOLLOW THE LEADER

Why not use this opportunity to reflect on the work you have done so far?

What are the benefits of leadership training in association with the Primary Music Curriculum?



FOLLOW THE LEADER

Why not use this opportunity to reflect on the work you have done so far?

What elements of leading musical groups were you unsure/unconfident with prior to taking this course?

What elements of leading musical groups do you feel have improved since taking this course?



www.themusicalme.com