

Music



Ballads

Essential Knowledge

By the end of this unit children will

- Identify the key features of a ballad.
- Perform a ballad using actions.
- Sing in time and in tune with a song and incorporate actions.
- Retell a summary of an animation's story.
- Write a verse with rhyming words which tell part of a story.
- Perform their lyrics fluently and with actions.

Vocabulary

Ballad, chorus, compose, dynamics, emotions, ensemble, facial expressions, features, feelings, instrumentals, lyrics, melody, nonsense words, performance, phrases, poem, pop songs, rehearse, rhyme, solo, stanza, story mountain, summarise, tune, verse, vocabulary, volume

Ballads Intention

To use musical vocabulary to explain the stylistic features of a ballad.

To explore how actions can impact performance.

To plan a musical structure inspired by a story.

To create lyrics that match a melody.

To show awareness of style, structure and features to perform a ballad.

Key objectives:

- Discussing the stylistic features of different genres, styles and traditions of music using musical vocabulary.
- Recognising and explaining the changes within a piece of music using musical vocabulary.
- Describing the timbre, dynamic, and textural details of a piece of music, both verbally, and through movement.
- Beginning to show an awareness of metre.
- Beginning to use musical vocabulary (related to the inter-dimensions of music) when discussing improvements to their own and others' work.
- Composing a piece of music in a given style with voices and instruments.
- Singing songs in a variety of musical styles with accuracy and control, demonstrating developing vocal technique.
- Singing and playing in time with peers, with some degree of accuracy and awareness of their part in the group performance.
- explaining their preferences for a piece of music using musical vocabulary.
- *Offering constructive feedback on others' performances.*

Session 1

Focus	Success criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To use musical vocabulary to explain the stylistic features of a ballad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can name the key features of a ballad.• I can use musical vocabulary to describe the features of a ballad.• I can learn the lyrics of a song and use actions to help me remember it.• I can follow the tune of a ballad.

Before the lesson

- Link: 'Space oddity by David Bowie' on VideoLink.*
- Link: 'Unchained melody by The Righteous Brothers' on VideoLink.*
- Link: 'On my own by Samantha Barks' on VideoLink.*
- Link: 'Everything I do by Brian Adams' on VideoLink.*
- Link: 'I will always love you by Whitney Houston' on VideoLink.*
- A copy of a story or poem which rhymes, such as a book by Julia Donaldson.

* These are external websites and we do not have control over their content – please check before showing them to the children.

- Activity: Blank storyboards (one each).

If you know a child has specific issues, consider discussing the lesson with them in advance and adapting it as needed. They might benefit from adult support. If problems emerge during the lesson, consult your Senior Leadership Team.

It is the teacher's responsibility to check all resources and lesson content to ensure it is suitable for their class setting.

Sensitivities

This lesson covers the song 'Space Oddity by David Bowie', about a fictional character exploring themes of space exploration and loneliness.

Depending on the class context, it may be appropriate to use another ballad song. Examples include 'Count on Me' by Bruno Mars and 'A Thousand Years' by

Christina Perri.

Recap and recall

Before starting this unit you might want to check children can recall:

- That music has different structural features.
- That they can use musical vocabulary to describe music.

Attention grabber

Play each of the following:

- Link: 'Space oddity by David Bowie' on VideoLink.
- Link: 'Unchained melody by The Righteous Brothers' on VideoLink.
- Link: 'On my own by Samantha Barks' on VideoLink.
- Link: 'Everything I do by Brian Adams' on VideoLink.
- Link: 'I will always love you by Whitney Houston' on VideoLink.

The children note down on whiteboards what the pieces have in common, such as similar: speed, instruments, stories, lyrics, mainly a solo.

Main event

These songs are called ballads. A ballad is a story written in short phrases which are called stanzas.

Read the class the rhyming story or poem that you have picked. Ask the children to write down anything that they notice about the words of the story on post-it notes e.g: it rhymes, it tells a story. Display the post-its somewhere so they can be referred to over the course of this topic.

Play the link: 'Space oddity by David Bowie' all the way through.

Ask the children what the story is about and discuss what happens in each part of the song.

The children fill in a storyboard showing what happens in the song. They add pictures and short sentences or words and phrases to describe what is happening in each section. Explain to the children that they are going to learn to sing the song.

Listen to the first line of the song. The children repeat the line back, following the tune as closely as possible. Ask the children how the tune changes in different sections of the song. You may wish to choose a group of children to say the countdown during the end of verse one.

The children invent simple actions to tell their line of the story e.g. the line 'Ground Control to Major Tom' is repeated. The children devise an action for this and everyone can mime putting a space helmet on for the corresponding line.

Questions:

- What is a ballad? (A piece of music which tells a story.)
- What is a ballad similar to? (A poem.)

- What is a chorus? (Repeated sections of music with the same tune and lyrics.)

Wrapping up

Each group shows the rest of the class their actions – preferably singing the lines at the same time. The rest of the class joins in the singing and then evaluate the different actions. Get them to discuss which ones will help them to remember the lyrics.

Vocabulary definitions

Ballad

A song which tells a story - similar to a poem.

ensemble

A small group of musicians who perform together.

Assessing progress and understanding

Pupils with secure understanding indicated by: identifying the key features of a ballad and performing one using actions.

Pupils working at greater depth indicated by: explaining how the features of a ballad convey a message and performing a ballad with appropriate feeling.

Adaptive teaching

Pupils needing extra support

May benefit from having the lyrics in front of them so that they can work out the storyline from there.

	<p>Pupils working at greater depth</p> <p>Should add a feelings word to each box on their storyboard to say how each of the characters are feeling at different points in the story.</p>
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Session 2

Focus	Success criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore how actions can impact performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can remember the lyrics and tune of a new song. I can perform the song with actions. I understand what a ballad is and can sing in that style.

Before the lesson

- Presentation: Speak like an expert.*
- Link: 'Everything I do by Brian Adams' on VideoLink.*
- Link: 'Space oddity by David Bowie' on VideoLink.*

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If you know a child has specific issues, consider discussing the lesson with them in advance and adapting it as needed. They might benefit from adult

support. If problems emerge during the lesson, consult your Senior Leadership Team.

It is the teacher's responsibility to check all resources and lesson content to ensure it is suitable for their class setting.

Sensitivities

This lesson covers the song 'Space Oddity by David Bowie', about a fictional character exploring themes of space exploration and loneliness.

Depending on the class context, it may be appropriate to use another ballad song. Examples include 'Count on Me' by Bruno Mars and 'A Thousand Years' by Christina Perri.

Recap and recall

Arrange the children in pairs and display the *Presentation: Speak like an expert*. Ask the children to listen to the link: 'Everything I do by Brian Adams' from the previous lesson and explain to their partner what they know about this style of music.

The following questions may help prompt them:

- What is this type of music called? (A ballad which is a piece of music which tells a story.)
- What have the pieces got in common? (Answers could include: speed, instruments, stories, lyrics, mainly a solo, a chorus, verses.)
- What is this style of music similar to? (A poem.)
- What is a chorus? (Repeated sections of music with the same tune and lyrics.)
- What is a stanza? (A story written in short phrases.)

Presentation: Speak like an expert

Take feedback from the children.

Attention grabber

Ask pupils what they think makes a good performance. Explain that they should try to convey the feelings of the song that they are singing. Ask how they think they could do this. Give the example of a well-known line in a song, eg: 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'. The children sing it in a sad way, a happy way, a scared way, etc and discuss what they changed, eg: their facial expression, how they stood, the volume (dynamics) of their voice, their gestures or actions.

Main event

Play the first verse of the song in the link: 'Space oddity by David Bowie' on VideoLink.

The children sing along, recapping specific lines and allowing them time to practise their actions.

The children finish learning the 'Space Oddity' song, with a focus on their performance.

The children come up with some simple actions to go with the chorus of their song so that it's easier to remember the lyrics. It will also help to tell the story of the song.

Go through the words of the chorus, like last lesson – read a line and get the children to repeat back (just speaking them first).

Play the chorus. The children sing back each line.

Decide the actions that the children want to add, asking volunteers to show their suggestions.

Questions:

- What is a ballad? (A song which tells a story.)
- What are the features of a ballad? (Telling a story, chorus, rhyming, etc.)
- What do I need to think about when performing in a group? (Listening to each other, staying in time, watching the person leading, etc.)

Wrapping up

As a class, sing the whole piece with the separate groups singing their lines from the previous lesson and the whole class joining in for the chorus. Film the performance and, if possible, perform to a live audience.

Vocabulary definitions

Ballad

A song which tells a story - similar to a poem.

ensemble

A small group of musicians who perform together.

Assessing progress and understanding

Adaptive teaching

Pupils with secure understanding indicated by: singing in time and in tune with the song as well as incorporating actions.

Pupils working at greater depth indicated by: singing with expression, conveying the meaning of the song as well as adding appropriate actions to help tell the story.

Pupils needing extra support

Can either just participate in one section so they don't have to remember it all, or just join in with the chorus.

Pupils working at greater depth

Should sing with expression, thinking about the emotions attached to each line.

Session 3

Focus	Success criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none">To plan a musical structure inspired by a story.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I can write sentences to accompany a storyline.I can summarise a story.

Before the lesson

- Presentation: 3, 2, 1.*
- Link: 'Space oddity by David Bowie' on VideoLink.*
- Link: 'Soar by Alyce Tzue' on VideoLink.*

* These are external websites and we do not have control over their content – please check before showing them to the children.

- Activity: 10 summary sentences (pre-cut - see Adaptive teaching).
- Activity: Story mountain template for ballads (one each).
- Activity: Complete story mountain (for teacher reference).

Recap and recall

Arrange the children into pairs and display the *Presentation: 3, 2, 1*. Play the link: 'Space oddity by David Bowie' on VideoLink.

They need to tell their partner:

- 3 things they remembered about the song and the actions they performed to go with it.
- 2 things they found interesting about ballads.
- 1 thing they still want to know about this type of music.

Presentation: 3, 2, 1

Take feedback from the children.

Attention grabber

Show the children the video on link: 'Soar by Alyce Tzue' on VideoLink. Ask them what they thought of it and what happened.

Main event

The children write the story for a song to go with the animation. The children will only be writing the words in the style of a ballad and not the melody. In *Lesson 5*, the children choose a ballad to go with the animation as a backing track only and then their words can be read over the top like a narrative.

Using the *Activity: Story mountain template for ballads*, the children describe the story in simple terms. The children add key words and phrases for their song.

These describe what's happening and what characters are feeling, but - like poetry - the children should select the best words.

The children discuss the different ways of describing movement, colours and textures to ensure that they selecting the best vocabulary. The children include feelings and describe facial expressions to show what the character might be feeling.

The children write 10 sentences to summarise the story. Use the example sentences as guidance, but encourage them to write their own.

Keep the sentences and story mountains safe, to be used later in the topic.

Questions:

- What do we mean by summarise? (Describe something in a few words.)
- What is a story mountain?
- What is a ballad? (A song which tells a story.)
- What are lyrics? (The words to a song.)

Wrapping up

Ask the children to read their sentences to another group and then give each other peer feedback to ensure they have all included the main parts of the story.

Vocabulary definitions

Ballad

A song which tells a story - similar to a poem.

ensemble

A small group of musicians who perform together.

Assessing progress and understanding

Pupils with secure understanding indicated by: retelling a summary of the story of the animation and understanding a key feature of a ballad.

Pupils working at greater depth indicated by: writing descriptive sentences in rhyming pairs and understanding how a ballad should sound.

Adaptive teaching

Pupils needing extra support

May need a scribe or can create their story mountain using pictures. Can use the given 10 sentences and put them in order.

Pupils working at greater depth

Should write two sentences for each summary (rather than one) but the last words of each must rhyme.

Session 4

Focus	Success criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To create lyrics that match a melody.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can contribute to lyrics written by the class.• I can write lyrics which rhyme.• I can write short sentences to create a story.

Before the lesson

Teacher video: Writing lyrics

- *Presentation: Soar.*
- Link: Writing on the Wall by Sam Smith on VideoLink.*
- Link: Diamonds by Rihanna on VideoLink.*
- Link: Run by Leona Lewis on VideoLink.*
- Link: Winds of Changes by The Scorpions on VideoLink.*
- Link: Hello by Adele on VideoLink.*
- A karaoke version of your chosen song, available on Spotify/Amazon Music/iTunes/YouTube (see Attention grabber).

- Link: Soar by Alyce Tzue on VideoLink.*

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- Activity: Storyboard (one each or one per group).

Recap and recall

Display the *Presentation: Soar*. Arrange the children into pairs and ask them to tell the story of 'Soar' to their partner.

Show them the animation again on the link: Soar by Alyce Tzue on VideoLink and discuss if there were any parts that they missed.

Presentation: Soar

Attention grabber

In our next two lessons, we are going to create a ballad to go along with the animation from the link: Soar by Alyce Tzue, using an existing song and new lyrics that we create ourselves.

Listen to the songs from the following:

- Link: Writing on the Wall by Sam Smith on VideoLink.

- Link: Diamonds by Rihanna on VideoLink.
- Link: Run by Leona Lewis on VideoLink.
- Link: Winds of Changes by The Scorpions on VideoLink.
- Link: Hello by Adele on VideoLink.

Ask the children to vote on which one they want to write new lyrics for. When they perform, they will need to use a karaoke version so that their new lyrics can be heard, but for the listening activity, you may want to listen to the original versions.

Questions:

- What is a stanza? (A verse.)
- What is a chorus? (A repeated section of music with the same tune and same lyrics.)

Main event

Based on the animation, the children will write the lyrics for their own ballad. The children will use the words and phrases as well as their sentences from the previous lesson.

This will be very much like writing a poem; it will have stanzas (verses) and the children will write a chorus to fit their chosen song.

Class chorus

Invent the chorus as a class, modelling the lyric writing process which the children can then apply when writing the verses in their groups.

The chorus needs to be four lines long and rhyme. The chorus should include the word 'soar'. The children to suggest words that rhyme, all to do with the

animation, eg: fly – sky – high – by.

Write this example up for the children:

I wanted my plane to soar up away,

To reach right up to the sky,

It just kept crashing down and down,

Until a small person dropped by.

Write a chorus with the class and then get the children to rehearse singing it to the tune they have chosen. The children can also think about the actions they might want to accompany the lyrics. They might do this instinctively, but it's worth mentioning it to encourage them to do so.

Group verses

Divide the class into eight mixed-ability groups of three or four with a competent writer in each. Hand out the *Activity: Storyboard* (one each or one per group).

Play the animation via the link: [Soar by Alyce Tzue](#) and pause at the following time codes, summarising what is happening and allocating each group on of the following parts:

- 00:00 – 00:35 (the plane falls).
- 00:35 – 01:08 (some help and ideas appear).
- 01:08 – 01:38 (a pencil appears and a photo is taken).
- 01:38 – 02:10 (things appear in the sky).
- 02:10 – 02:43 (ideas are tried out).
- 02:43 – 02:56 (things don't work out).

- 02:56 – 03:45 (a plan appears).
- 03:45 – 04:29 (end – stars appear).

Explain that the children will create a storyboard to show what happens in their allocated part in more detail. The children will also need to write corresponding words and phrases, ideally that rhyme, for each picture they draw. This will help them form the basis of their verse. Replay the animation, ensuring that everyone knows exactly what to do.

Ensure the children have drawn the story mountains for their section of the song (with corresponding keywords and phrases). They should then put these into sentences ready for their verses. They can work together on creating these, using ideas from all the storyboards within the group, if applicable. Like the chorus, the children write four lines to create a rhyming verse related to their animation section. The lyrics must fit the tune of the song you have chosen.

Support groups who are struggling to find rhyming words.

Questions

- What is a stanza? (A verse.)
- What is a chorus? (A repeated section of music with the same tune and same lyrics.)

Wrapping up

Have a run-through of the song by playing the animation and then getting the children to sing their verses with the chorus being sung by everyone in between each verse. They should be encouraged to add their actions to the chorus.

Vocabulary definitions

Ballad

A song which tells a story - similar to a poem.

compose

To create an original piece of music.

ensemble

A small group of musicians who perform together.

happy

Felling, showing or causing pleasure.

Assessing progress and understanding

Pupils with secure understanding indicated by: writing a verse with rhyming words which tell part of a story.

Pupils working at greater depth indicated by: writing a rhyming verse with a clear storyline running through it.

Adaptive teaching

Pupils needing extra support

Could start by making a list of rhyming words related to their screenshot/section of animation which can then feed into the lyric writing process.

Pupils working at greater depth

Should be writing and leading their group in the discussions over lyrics.

Session 5

Focus	Success criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none">To show awareness of style, structure and features to perform a ballad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I can write nonsense words to fill time in my ballad.I can accurately perform my lyrics with confidence.

Before the lesson

Teacher video: Singing my ballad

- *Presentation: Keyword.*
- *Audio: Octopus.*
- A karaoke version of your chosen song from *Lesson 4 - Writing lyrics*, available on Spotify/Amazon Music/iTunes/YouTube.
- *Link: Assessment Music: Ballads.*
- *Link on VideoLink: Soar by Alyce Tzue.* - this is an external website and we do not have control over its content - please check before showing it to the children.*

Recap and recall

Arrange the children into pairs. Display slide 1 of the *Presentation: Keyword* and ask the children to answer the questions and write these on a whiteboard.

- In your own words, write a definition.
- Use the term correctly in a sentence.
- Create a question where the keyword is the answer.
- What other words are connected to the keyword?
- Draw or find a picture to illustrate this keyword.

Presentation: Keywords

Take feedback from the children and then display slide 2. Ask the children to share their verses with their partners. Can their partner suggest any improvements?

Attention grabber

In ballads (and very often in pop songs) you can hear what are called nonsense words, which are used to fill in time.

Play the *Audio: Octopus*

Ask the pupils what they think the nonsense words are in this song. Explain that made-up words, or 'la' sounds, are nonsense words in music.

In small groups, get the children to create a string of nonsense words using any of the following:

La

Na

Nay

Hey

Ooh

Ah

Da

Dee

Oh

Get them to write them down and practise saying them.

Main event

The children have already written the lyrics to a ballad based on the animation 'Soar'. You wrote a chorus as a class and each group should have written a verse last lesson. The children read their verses to each other and check that they are happy with them.

Give the children time if they still need to work on finishing their verses.

The children come up with some movement to go with their words. The children read their verses to the class and show the actions that go with them.

As a class, decide the order of the verses, making sure that each group knows when it's their turn. You could line them up in verse order.

The children read their verses in order, then repeat this, with the whole class saying the chorus in between each verse.

If the children need to fill gaps, (ie: that part of the animation is still playing but they have run out of lyrics), then they can add the nonsense words that they came up with in the Attention Grabber.

Questions:

- What is a verse?
- What is a chorus?
- What are nonsense words? (Words which have no meaning and are often used for filling time in songs - usually pop songs.)

Give all groups a chance to practise their verses with the karaoke version of the chosen song playing in the background.

If possible, show the animation as well so that they get an idea of how long it should last. Link: [Soar by Alyce Tzue](#).

Wrapping up

Ask pupils to perform the ballad. Play the music and the animation on link: [Soar by Alyce Tzue on VideoLink](#). The children say their lyrics over the top, incorporating the movements if they can. Record this so that you can play it back to them.

Optional - provide each child with the *Quiz - pupil answer sheet* and display the *Unit quiz* (see link: [Assessment - Music Y3: Ballads](#)). Read each question aloud and allow the children time to answer. Reveal the answers and ask them to self/peer mark their answer sheets.

Vocabulary definitions

Ballad

A song which tells a story - similar to a poem.

compose

To create an original piece of music.

ensemble

A small group of musicians who perform together.

happy

Felling, showing or causing pleasure.

Assessing progress and understanding

Pupils with secure understanding indicated by: performing the lyrics fluently and with actions.

Pupils working at greater depth indicated by: performing solo nonsense sections and using expression when reading their lyrics.

Adaptive teaching

Pupils needing extra support

Could opt-out of either the movement or saying the words. They also don't need to say the nonsense lines.

Pupils working at greater depth

Could be given solo nonsense sections for the performance and should lead their group, ensuring that they all perform in time.

