

PRIMARY PROM RESOURCE PACK

ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON – WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2017

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE EVENT AND IDEAS FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TRIP

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MUSIC FOR YOUTH

INTRODUCTION AND RESOURCE OVERVIEW

Welcome to the Primary Prom experience! This is a guide to help introduce the event and to give ideas for getting the most out of your trip. It is designed primarily for the non-music specialist teacher and for the children directly.

The first section is our **Primary Prom Programme** which details everything you will hear on the day as well as telling you when you can get involved! There is always an element of audience participation during the concert and all the relevant information including music and ideas to aid you with your learning can be found in our **Participation Piece** section.

The **Creative Resources** section looks a little closer at musical ideas that are particularly prominent in this concert and offers information that could form the basis of a class project. It introduces particular instruments and ensembles. It also investigates a specific piece of music that the children will hear in the concert and there are some related musical games and activities for all, and some useful links for finding out more information.

The final section **Primary Prom FAQs** answers questions that young people frequently ask about the event. It contains information to prepare you for the concert, and gives suggestions for things to listen out for and to observe. Older children may like to read this section by themselves or it could be approached as a whole class activity. Otherwise, you should find it a useful resource yourself for answering the questions that children ask.

MUSIC FOR YOUTH

Music for Youth (MFY) creates life changing experiences for young people and publicly celebrates their musical achievements through the MFY Season.

With over 45 years' history, MFY presents some of the most prestigious events in the youth music calendar, featuring talented young musicians from all over the UK. Every year we deliver events that showcase the richness and diversity of young people's music making, performed by over 40,000 young musicians, from our Regional Festival Series to the spectacular MFY Prom concerts at the Royal Albert Hall.

Our Festival Series is free and open to young people from all backgrounds and experience. A whole class music project is as welcome as a county wide youth symphony orchestra, a student led rock band or a community based vocal group. We offer a performance platform and progression opportunities to any ensemble and have connections with a large, interconnected group of stakeholders across the UK.

MFY CORE PROGRAMME

Regional Festivals

The Regional Festivals are the gateway to the Music For Youth season and are the foundation of our work. Each Festival provides a unique opportunity for musicians aged 21 or under to perform to new audiences, listen to other groups from their area and get valuable feedback from music professionals. Taking place each year from February to April, 40,000 young musicians take part in around 50 Festivals held in different venues throughout the UK.

How do I get involved? Any type of group can take part and if you're interested in applying for the 2018 Regional Festival series, whether you're a beginner school choir or a steel pan group, you should visit our website www.mfy.org.uk where you can register your groups from Monday 9 October 2017. Maybe you could feature in next year's Primary Prom Concert!

National Festival

The National Festival is the national showcase for the UK's young musicians. Held in July each year, MFY takes over the city of Birmingham for a 5-day festival, celebrating the diversity and enthusiasm of youth music-making across the UK. At the heart of the Festival, around 8,000 young musicians perform in some of the country's premier concert halls, on outdoor free stages and everywhere in between. Performers descend on Birmingham city centre from as far afield as Scotland, Cornwall and Northern Ireland.

MFY Proms

Held over three nights at the Royal Albert Hall in November, 3,000 young musicians from across the UK perform an eclectic mix of musical styles to an audience of friends, families, supporters and VIPs including sponsors, music education specialists and government ministers. These concerts are the finale of the MFY Season and feature high quality, musically diverse performances that highlight the excellent music education work taking place across the country in a variety of different settings. Find out more about MFY and all of its programmes at www.mfy.org.uk.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL

The Royal Albert Hall is one of the most famous venues in the world, regularly presenting some of the best known performers in a range of genres on its stage. From classical music concerts to rock and pop, from opera and ballet to circus, from community events to tennis, the Hall's programme is incredibly diverse.

The Royal Albert Hall was built to fulfil the vision of Prince Albert (Queen Victoria's consort) of a 'Central Hall' that would be used to promote understanding and appreciation of the Arts and Sciences and would stand at the heart of the South Kensington estate, surrounded by museums and places of learning.

Today more than 390 events are staged in the main auditorium each year, and even more events take place Beyond the Main Stage. The Hall has an

unrivalled history of association with the world's greatest musical artists from Verdi, Wagner and Elgar conducting UK premieres of their own works to performances by Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, Frank Sinatra and The Beatles: to enduring legends such as Tony Bennett, Eric Clapton and Mark Knopfler and a new generation of talent such as Adele, Ed Sheeran, and Coldplay.

As a charity the Royal Albert Hall is dedicated to giving access to all by running a thriving Education & Outreach programme working with over 100,000 children, teachers, young people, families and community groups each year. We deliver a wide range of exciting opportunities linked to the Hall's calendar of events and the unique characteristics of the building; these include specially created tours, workshops, projects and schools matinees.

The Royal Albert Hall is a proud partner of Music for Youth.

DID YOU KNOW?

Music for Youth is a supporter of Arts Award. Attending the MFY Primary Prom concerts can contribute towards Arts Award Discover and Explore.

Want to know more?

www.artsawards.org.uk



For more information about everything Music for Youth does, and other opportunities to get involved with, head to www.mfy.org.uk or find us on social media @MusicforYouth

MUSIC FOR YOUTH PRIMARY PROM

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL

WEDNESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2017

Morning Performance: 10.35AM – 12.00PM

Afternoon Performance: 1.50PM – 3.15PM

Welcome to the Royal Albert Hall and this year's Music for Youth Primary Prom in association with the Royal Albert Hall. Our Primary Prom concerts aim to inspire a new generation of young people to take up music and develop their musical potential.

PROGRAMME

Walthamstow School for Girls Steel Band

Aged 15 - 16 from Walthamstow, London

Musical Director: Richard Murphy

Force Field Zack Laurence

Under the Sea Menken / Ashman

At the Sign of the Swinging Cymbal Brian Fahey

Mission Impossible Lalo Schiffrin

Irish Washerwoman trad.

All arr. By Richard Murphy

Harrow Tamil School Orchestra

Aged 12 – 20 from Harrow, London

Musical Director: Mr. Sandrasegara Sadachchara

Palliam (Eastern and Western Mix) Saint Thyagaraja

Swamikal, arr. Sri K Anandanadesan

Urban Flames

Aged 14 - 18 from London

Musical Director: Andrew Gilbert

The Art of Not Letting Go Jack Drummond-Joy*

Loyal Jarntae Murray*

*student composition

All arr. By Andrew Gilbert

Chiltern Music Academy Symphony Orchestra

Aged 12 - 20 from High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire

Conductor: Sally Staffordshire

Mars, the Bringer of War from "The Planets" Gustav Holst

Bromley Youth Concert Band

Aged 13 - 19 from Bromley, London

Conductor: Ian Rowe

Global Variations Nigel Hess

PRESENTED BY

Rachel Leach

Composer/ Animateur/ Presenter

Rachel Leach studied composition with Simon Bainbridge, Robert Saxton and Louis Andreissen. Her music has been recorded by NMC and published by Faber. She has won several awards including, with ETO, the RPS award for best education project 2009 for One Day, Two Dawns.

Rachel has worked within the education departments of most of the UK's orchestras and opera companies. The majority of her work is for the London Symphony Orchestra, where she is a central part of their education team. Rachel has written well over twenty pieces for LSO Discovery and twelve community operas, including many for ETO.

In Spring 2013 Rachel was awarded Honorary Membership of the Royal College of Music in recognition of her education work.

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PROGRAMME NOTES

Walthamstow School for Girls Steel Band

A total of 567 students have learnt steel pans at Walthamstow School for Girls since 1984; that's one new band each year, with most players in each band staying for at least 4 years. Entry to the steel bands is by audition in Year 7, the number of students auditioning each year is regularly above 80. Over the past 33 years the steel bands from Walthamstow School for Girls have performed across Europe, won many competitions and performed at venues from the Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre to Symphony Hall, Birmingham.

Force Field is the theme tune to TVs 'The Crystal Maze'

Under the Sea is from Disney's 'The Little Mermaid'

At the Sign of the Swinging Cymbal is the theme tune to 'Pick of the Pops' from the 1960s

Mission Impossible is the theme tune from the movie of the same name

Irish Washerwoman is a toe-tapping traditional folk tune

Harrow Tamil School Orchestra is made up of students from Harrow Tamil School Association which is a community run school in Harrow, Middlesex teaching Tamil and Fine Arts subjects on Saturdays.

Palliam (Eastern and Western Mix) is an original piece composed by Saint Thiyagaraja Swamikal one of the greatest composers of Carnatic music a form of Indian classical music. Interludes are composed and arranged by Sri Kandiah Anandanadesan.

Urban Flames is a vocal collective based in East London. Formed in September 2016 with 6 young singer-songwriters that met through an Urban Development project, the group has now grown through word of mouth to 20 singers aged 14-18. The group write and arrange their own songs with help from Musical Director Andy Gilbert and have just completed their first 6 track EP. The group have an infectious vibe and when they perform they sing from the heart. The main strength of the group is their songwriting skills and how they are able to write such great hooks and lyrics at such a young age.

The Art of Not Letting Go is an original song by Urban Flames member Jack aged 14

Loyal is an original song by Urban Flames member Jack aged 16

Chiltern Music Academy Symphony Orchestra is the first of three Orchestras at the newly formed Chiltern Music Academy. They have enjoyed performing a wide repertoire including the Dvorak's New World, Shostakovich 5th and Tchaikovsky 5th Symphonies as well as the stunning overtures from Wagner's Die Meistersingers and Verdi's Rienzi. The orchestra went on tour to Salzburg in 2016 and is looking forward to going to Vienna in July 2018. For the last two years they have worked with the Royal Holloway University of London Orchestra in a side-by-side mentoring relationship, sharing orchestral technique and passion in performance.

Mars is the first movement from Holst's "The Planets" Suite written in 1916. The famously relentless 5 beat rhythm starts with col legno strings (where you strike the strings with the wood of the bow) and pervades nearly the entire piece. Brass join in with mysterious chords before the tenor tuba and trumpets play out answering tattoos. After a slower, wailing chromatic passage in the woodwind and strings the relentless rhythm returns to herald a tumultuous ending in which the whole orchestra drives out fragments from the now ingrained rhythm, grinding down to the last earth shattering chord.

Bromley Youth Concert Band (BYCB) is the premier symphonic wind band within the Bromley Youth Music Trust. Over the years, the band has toured across Europe and the USA / Canada. Recently they took part in the World Music Contest in Kerkrade. BYCB regularly performs in the South London area as well as taking part in regional and national festivals.

Global Variations is a quintessential piece of wind band repertoire. It describes a musical journey starting and finishing in London – listen out for Big Ben. The band then gets on a train to various parts of the world, cleverly described with stylistic features embedded into the composition. A truly global piece of music.

This concert has been designed and developed in partnership with the Royal Albert Hall.

Participation Piece

The Primary Prom participation piece will be taught on the day, so there is **no need for teachers to prepare anything in advance**. However, read on ahead for some ideas of what you can do after the concert to carry on what you've learnt from the participation piece!

The **Chiltern Music Academy Symphony Orchestra** will be performing Gustav Holst's **Mars** from the Planets Suite during this concert and this gives us a great opportunity to have a go at one of the 20th centuries most famous pieces. Here's how...

Background

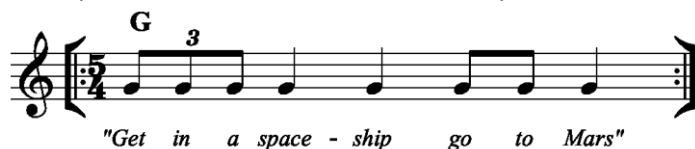
Gustav Holst was a British composer living and working in London 100 years ago. He was a very interesting man fascinated by space, astronomy and astrology as well as alternative faiths, meditation and vegetarianism. In many ways he was completely ahead of his time.

The Planets Suite from 1918 describes 7 planets in music but looks at their influence on the psyche rather than their scientific properties. Each one has a subtitle and Mars – placed right at the beginning of the suite and the most famous bit – is called 'The Bringer of War'.

'Mars' was one of the first orchestral pieces to be written in 5. It features just a handful of strong ideas and three massive climaxes. Below is a method for creating your own version in class with your children. You can do this on body percussion, voice, classroom percussion or any instruments your children might be learning.

Creative project

1. Stand your class in a circle and teach everyone the following rhythm –

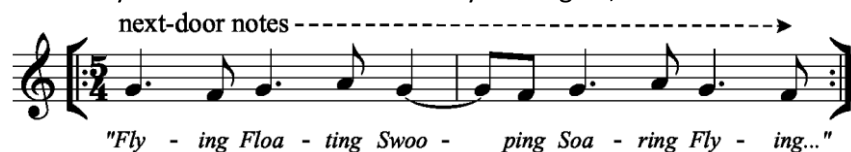


Use the words for memory and encourage your students to keep thinking them over and over as they progress onto clapping and then playing the rhythm on the pitch G

2. Now practice counting to 8, 2 and 10 and clapping on number 1 of each count, like this -



3. Finally demonstrate this uneven rhythm. Again, use the words to help keep things together



Split your circle into three quick groups, start each group on one of the above ideas and try to get all three rhythms going at once!

4. Demonstrate how these patterns work on instruments:

- the 1st idea should be unpitched, or stick to one pitch – G
- 8, 2, 10 should leap up and then step down as follows –



- the 3rd idea moves stepwise up and down from G.

...and encourage your students to choose a different set of instruments for each one.

5. Again quickly split into three groups and challenge each group to make one of the three ideas. Bring the class back together and try layering up these patterns. Discuss how you might order the ideas (Holst creates a crescendo), and how you will signal the ending.

Taking it further

After this Holst creates a march (in 5/4 time!). It is made up for the following three ingredients –

- i. Steady pulse
- ii. Repeating rhythmic patterns (ostinatos) split between two or more players - the term for this is '**hocketting**'.
- iii. Another crescendo

Challenge your class to create their own Holstian march with a crescendo (gradually get louder). This could make up a second climax.

Holst follows this climax with a return to the opening ideas but this time everything is more extreme: louder, thicker, terrifying! So, repeat your first climax again bigger and bolder.

CODA

Holst ends his piece with a manic scurrying sound and then a series of big bangs which seem to be completely random. To re-create this bit, appoint a conductor and encourage them to use simple gestures (wiggling fingers for the scurrying sound? a big point for the bangs?) to signal a similar ending.

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CREATIVE RESOURCES

FOCUS ON BRASS

FRENCH HORN



TROMBONE



TRUMPET



TUBA



There are two ensembles in this Primary Prom that showcase brass players – *Chiltern Music Academy Symphony Orchestra* and *Bromley Youth Concert Band*. Here is some information and some brass-related activities for the class.

Brass instruments are traditionally made of brass metal. Essentially, all brass instruments are long metal pipes, curled and twisted to make them easier to hold. You produce the sound by combining blowing with vibrating your lips to make a ‘buzz’. The instrument (tubes, bell etc.) then fine-tunes and amplifies that sound.

Most modern brass instruments use *valves* to change the notes. These are sprung buttons that you push

down and raise, instantly shortening or lengthening the pipe, in order to raise and lower the pitch. The trombone is the only instrument where you change the pitch by sliding a loop of tube. You might see a trombone player using a water spray in the concert. This is to make it possible to move the slide in and out smoothly.

The saxophone is a very different instrument as you produce the sound by blowing against a bamboo *reed*. Although the saxophone is brass in colour and is often played in bands alongside brass instruments, it isn't in the 'brass instrument family' and actually it requires a very different sort of technique to play.

BRASS INSTRUMENTS AND ENSEMBLES

You will find brass players in many types of music (*orchestral, folk, jazz, pop etc.*) but you will also hear bands that are entirely brass or, at least predominantly brass. Brass ensembles have a very distinctive, rich sound and are well known for their sonorous harmonies. They can have a lot of power and play very loud, but they can also sound very mellow and gentle.

Here are some ensemble types:

Brass Band

This is a large group of brass players (trumpets, cornets, trombones, bass trombones, tenor horns, euphoniums, tubas) often with percussion too. A *Colliery Band* is a brass band originally formed within coal mining communities. This is a longstanding tradition in Britain particularly.

Big Band

A type of swing/jazz band originally from the USA predominantly made up of brass players but with some woodwind and percussion too (flute, sax, clarinet, etc.).

Wind Band, Concert Band and Marching Band

These are frequently brass-heavy bands that would also include woodwind instruments (flute, clarinet, etc.) and percussion. Their origins are generally from

the military, and the instruments might be played whilst marching.

Brass Quartet, Brass Quintet

Four or five players (of different brass instruments), that play interesting arrangements, or compositions in harmony.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASS

Research the *French horn, trumpet, trombone* and *tuba*. There is plenty of information on the internet about the history, the sound, and how to play them. The ESP software package 'The Dums' would be great for this. More information about 'The Dums' [here](#) (please note that there is cost for this resource).

Try producing the 'buzz' needed to make your first note on a brass instrument. There is lots of advice [here](#).

Watch trumpeter Wynton Marsalis playing an extraordinary [jazz improvisation](#). See how his trumpet has a personalized design. He has also placed a 'mute' into the bell of the trumpet to make the sound more muffled.

Watch horn player Martin Lawrence ([from the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment](#)) make a horn out of a hose pipe and funnel, and then play some amazing music on it. Maybe you could try this yourself!

BRASS ENSEMBLES TO LISTEN TO

A clip of the award-winning Grimethorpe Colliery Band. The story of this mining band is told in the feature film "[Brassed Off](#)"

The Gomalan Brass Quintet playing Ennio Morricone (['The Good the Bad and the Ugly'](#))

A recording of Giovanni Gabrielli's '*Canzon à 12 in Double Echo*'. This shows how fantastic brass instruments can sound when used to play antiphonal (echoing) music. There's a [clip](#) here but a CD

recording would give a better idea of what direction the sound is coming from.

Musicians playing enormous *Alphorns* on a mountain in Switzerland. Alphorns are not made of brass but have the same sort of 'mouthpiece' and the method for creating a note is the same.

FOCUS ON CHOIRS

The **Primary Prom** features Urban Flames. Here is some information and some activities to prepare for the concert experience.

A *choir* is a group of singers who perform together. There are church choirs, gospel choirs, community choirs, school choirs – all manner of people involved in the activity of singing with others. A choir that sings without any accompanying instruments is often referred to as an *acapella* choir. The choir usually plays an important part in an opera or in a musical, although in that case it would be called the '*chorus*'.

Men, women and children have different ranges of voices so it is quite common to see choirs divided by gender and by age. A 'mixed choir' means both men and women. Other choirs might be referred to as 'male voice choir', 'women's choir' or 'children's choir'.

The large numbers of voices within a choir makes it possible to sing in 'harmony', and this is a big feature of the choral (or *choir-like*) sound. One convention is to split the choir into 'parts' so that each singer becomes part of a sub-section of the choir. You might hear someone say, for example, "I sing Alto", or, "I'm a Bass". The highest voice group in a mixed choir is *Soprano*. The two middle voices are *Alto* and *Tenor*, and the lowest is *Bass*. It is likely that most of the sopranos and altos will be women and that the tenors and bass will be men, but this is not always the case.

Choirs exist all around the world. It would be surprising to hear of a culture (past or present) without a group-singing tradition of some sort. Different choirs have different sounds, and even two choirs singing the same music might sound totally different.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASS

It's possible that there are children in the class who sing in a choir: maybe they sing in the school choir.

Perhaps the children could share some of their thoughts with the class. "What does it feel like?" "What is the biggest challenge?"

Watch an entertaining documentary [clip](#) about being a member of the Royal Opera House choir.

Sing a song! Turn the class into a choir. Find a willing conductor. There is a wealth of songs available on the interactive resource '[SingUp](#)'. Many schools have signed up for this resource. Alternatively, you could use a song that the class is already familiar with. If you choose a 'round' (e.g. 'Hey Mr. Miller,' 'London's Burning') you will find it possible to launch the class into harmony with relative ease. QCA Unit 17 'Roundabout' includes some good ideas for introducing rounds.

Research some famous choirs, past and present: 'The Foundling Choir', 'Vienna Boys Choir', 'Harlem Gospel Choir', the 'Virtual Choir'.

CHOIR RECORDINGS TO LISTEN TO

Ten thousand men from many male-voice choirs singing the Welsh hymn '[Gwahoddiaid](#)' (I hear thy welcome voice) at the Cardiff Arms Stadium in 1993.

[Le Mystere Des Voix Bulgares](#) – a women's choral singing group in Bulgaria. Listen to the distinctive tone of the voices, the percussive 'yip' sound and the drone! This means singing on one note.

[Ladysmith Black Manbazu](#) - this is a famous male choir from Ladysmith, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This has its roots in church singing (Methodist) combined with *Isicathamiya*, and *Mbube* (two traditional Zulu singing styles). *Isicathamiya* means 'tread softly' and *Mbube* means 'like a lion'. Listen out for the 'call and response', and the famous Zulu 'clicking' sound.

Vocalize – young people from the dynamic singing group 'Vocalize' (Sedgehill School, London) performing in the [Music for Youth Primary Prom](#) at the Royal Albert Hall in 2013.

MORE ABOUT ORGANISING A 'CHOIR'

The BBC Sing! Project. www.bbc.co.uk/sing In this BBC singing site there are some useful tips on how to set up and run a choir – including warm up activities and singing technique. There is also a recorded [BBC programme](#) with Gareth Malone explaining how a choir works and what its benefits are for those taking part.

Sing Up www.singup.org is useful, not only for its song bank (recordings, lyrics, notation), but for its advice on looking after the voice, running a singing lesson or choir rehearsal and for training opportunities.

MUSICAL ACTIVITIES AND GAMES

This is a section of short, fun activities related to the Primary Prom experience. They're designed to raise interest and enthusiasm, and to strengthen children's memory of the day. There is a clear learning objective to each game. Within the pack there are practical activities suited for children of different ages.

Try these activities in the classroom - or even on the way home!

CONCERT HALL 10 QUESTIONS (REDUCED FROM THE USUAL 20!)

This would be a good activity to try after the concert event. Assign a 'character' to the children (or pairs of children) *i.e. conductor, presenter, stagehand, lighting technician, cellist, bass player, lead violin in orchestra, sound engineer, choir member, percussion player, solo singer, etc.*

Ask the class to find out who they are by asking questions to which the answer can only be "Yes" or "No". See if they get there within ten.

Question examples: Were you singing? Were you wearing black? Did you play your instrument with a bow? Were you holding a microphone?

INSTRUMENTAL MIME

In groups, get the class to practice a quick instrument mime. Tell them to choose one instrument each, but mime playing as a group. Maybe they could think about what instruments would sound interesting together. Take turns to do a quick group performance. They will need to make their actions very clear. Encourage the children to respond a little to each other's playing – at least, starting and stopping at the same time so that it has the feel of a 'performance'.

Ask the rest of the class to say what each instrument was. This can be quite challenging when there is a lot of players to watch!

For younger children, play the game one person at a time.

BE A CONDUCTOR!

The class may already know how to indicate the beats in the bar, and how to help keep musicians in the right place with gestures. If not, have a go together!

To beat music with a two beat feel: Using your right hand, start with your hand raised just level to your forehead. Lower it swiftly to a point roughly in front of your stomach. Let it bounce there and bring it up and slightly to the right – as if you're drawing a backwards tick mark. For the second beat, do the same thing in reverse – starting to the right of your stomach and returning to the space in front of your forehead. Count aloud while you do it and repeat until it feels natural.

To beat music with a three beat feel: This needs the same bounce feel as before but with an extra movement. The first stroke goes down, the second goes away from your body and to the right, and the third goes back up to where it started. It has a triangular movement. All conductors look different when they do this, so it doesn't matter if you have your own personal style. The important thing is that the musicians, who are following you, are very sure exactly when the beat comes.

To beat music with a four beat feel: Like before, this adds an extra move. Down, across your body to the left, back out to the right, then up to the starting point. If you'd like a bit more help, there's plenty of online resources for beginner conductors.

Get your class conducting and singing some simple songs.

Try:
'One, two, three, four five – once I caught a fish alive'
(2 beats)

'We Wish You a Merry Christmas' (3 beats, start conducting on the 'wish')
'Frere Jacques' (4 beats)

When your class conductor feels confident, get them to experiment with the speed.

IMAGINATIVE CONDUCTING!

Of course, conducting is much more than just marking the beats. For much of the time conductors are more involved in bringing out expression from the players. Try putting some orchestral music through your classroom sound system and letting the children be imaginary conductors. They will, of course, be responding to the music rather than leading it. With more playings of the piece you will find that their interpretation gets more fine-tuned. Eventually they might start to take a lead.

For the sheer joy of it (and to marvel at his expertise) watch Jonathan, aged 3, 'conducting' the last movement of [Beethoven's Fifth Symphony](#).

SINGING DRONE

In the Prom, your class will have heard performers singing in *harmony*. Your class may already be familiar with singing 'in parts' themselves. Most children have had some experience of singing a 'round', which might take them automatically into three or more harmony parts. This activity would be a different sort of challenge...

Choose a simple song: the simpler, the better. It's best if it is a tune that starts and ends on the same note. 'Ten Green Bottles', 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star', 'Frere Jacques' or 'Pease Pudding Hot' would be ideal.

First sing the song as usual; making sure that it is in tune and with a good clear sound. Then try it again, but this time singing it all on the same pitch as the starting note. So, instead of a tune it becomes a sung *drone*. Make sure that the class is singing, not speaking. This is harder than you might imagine.

When the class is confident with both parts, divide the class and do the two activities at the same time. Done well, this will sound discordant but extraordinary.

Listen to the ['Le Mystere Des Voix Bulgares'](#) clip from 'Focus on...Choirs' to hear how exciting a harmonic drone can sound.

PRIMARY PROM FAQs

WHAT IS A "PROM"?

Promenade concerts ('proms' for short) were very popular in Victorian times. They were outdoor concerts, originally held in one of the London parks or 'pleasure gardens'. They were popular with all sorts of people as they were free and also rather informal. You would be able to walk around (promenade) or have a picnic whilst you listened to an orchestra playing popular music of the day.

In 1887 the 'impresario' Robert Newman and the conductor Henry Wood hatched a plan to make an indoor concert series that had the same sort of popular appeal as the outdoor 'Prom'. Particularly, they wanted to give opportunities for everyone (factory workers, tradesmen, people in service) to hear performances that were of very good quality. They wanted to present the 'best' music (often new music) performed by the 'best' musicians (often new, young stars) to the biggest audience! Although the experience wasn't free, tickets were kept cheap by creating standing spaces, or spaces to sit on the floor. Like with many Victorian reformers, Newman and Wood were keen to educate people. The concerts were sometimes long and challenging, but still with a relaxed atmosphere and the opportunity to eat, drink and smoke!

These Prom concerts took place in a number of venues before moving finally to the Royal Albert Hall in South Kensington. They were, and are still, enormously popular. Perhaps members of the class have seen some of the concerts on television throughout the summer months, or possibly attended one of them.

In the 1950s, the organisation of the Proms was taken over by the BBC, and since then, each concert has been broadcasted live on BBC radio. There have been some changes over the years, but the spirit remains

the same – an experience of quality at a (relatively) low cost.

Taking place in four locations across the UK, these exciting free concerts are performed by young people for young people. They aim to inspire the next generation of musicians by providing around 20,000 primary school children an experience of live music in a high-profile concert hall, performed by other young people from their locality. The concerts are supported by teacher resources.

WHERE ARE WE GOING AND WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE WHEN WE GET THERE?

The Royal Albert Hall is an amazing place! It is one of the largest concert halls in the world, and with many interesting and unusual features. It was built in memory of Prince Albert (Queen Victoria's husband), and was officially opened in 1871 by Prince Edward, Queen Victoria's son. Prince Albert was very enthusiastic about music, science and the arts generally, and the Royal Albert Hall was thought to be a fitting commemoration for his life.

The first thing that you will notice is that it is *huge*, and that it is round and with a large domed roof. When you get inside you will see that all of the corridors are curved. The building is very tall and there are many layers of corridors. Take care. It is very easy to get lost and walk round in circles!

HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

The mosaic frieze This runs all the way around the outside of the building. There are sixteen different subjects on the frieze, all connected to the Arts and Sciences (painting, woodwork, music, sculpture, astronomy, philosophy etc.). Above the frieze is an inscription dedicating the Hall to the advancement of the arts and sciences in memory of Prince Albert. **The date of opening is written in Latin numerals MDCCCLXXI. Does anyone in the class know how to work this out?**

The old gas lighting jets Although the building now has electric lights you can still see some of the old gaslight fixtures. When it was built, the Hall was

completely lit by gas and there was a specially invented system whereby the whole hall, with thousands of gas lamps, could be lit up within ten seconds.

Rooms, stairs and corridors There are many rooms, stairs and corridors that are not usually open to the public. These are rooms for the artists (green rooms),



The corridor photographs All along the corridors are framed photos and drawings of famous people who have performed at the Royal Albert Hall. These include many musicians (singers, instrumentalists, conductors, bands) and also wrestlers, boxers, tennis players, comedians and ballet dancers. Because of its size, the Royal Albert Hall has been used for many different kinds of events.

walkways to get the performers quickly to a different area of the stage (possibly the highest balcony), stage

machinery rooms, staff canteens, boiler rooms, laundry rooms...the list is endless. Maybe you can spot some of these.

Auditorium Before the concert starts you will be taken into the auditorium and given a seat. This is where

the concert takes place. Have a good look around. The size and design is very impressive. The Royal Albert Hall can hold over 5,000 people. Some of you might have friends from other schools in the audience but you would probably need binoculars to find them! There are seats all around the hall, including behind the main performing area. Right at the top there is a 'balcony', and there are individual 'boxes' all the way round on the middle levels. Some of the box seats were sold before the Royal Albert Hall opened and are still privately owned. They are on a 999-year lease.

The organ and organ pipes Right at the front of the auditorium there is the 'Great Organ' and its organ pipes. This is the second largest pipe organ in Britain, with 9,999 pipes! You could try counting them but some of them are hidden. The lowest sound (from the largest pipe) is so low that you would only hear it as a rather disturbing rumble.

The glass roof and the 'mushrooms' The roof of the Royal Albert Hall is one of the biggest domes ever to be made out of glass. It is quite hard to see it from the inside because of all the technical equipment attached to it. Particularly, there is now a series of large fiberglass 'mushrooms' bolted to the roof frame. The 'mushrooms' help to make the sound less reverberant. I wonder if you can count how many there are?

There will be a lot happening before the concert starts. Many people will have been at the venue a long time before you get there, working hard to make the event run smoothly. The musicians will have been doing 'soundchecks' and will have been practicing getting on and off stage. It's likely that they will do a little extra rehearsing – particularly if several different groups are getting together for an item.

There will be teams of people sorting lighting, sound and stage equipment. Everything needs to be preplanned – the number of chairs, music stands, making the electrical cables safe, setting the sound levels, setting the lighting so that it falls on the performers without dazzling them...this can all be fascinating to watch if you get to your seat in good time.

WHO WILL BE PLAYING?

The performers are all young people. Most are school children alongside some student performers. They will be performing as part of a group – maybe in a band, a choir, an orchestra or a mixed 'ensemble' of some sort. Each *Prom* concert showcases different young performers and no two concerts are the same.

The performers are frequently groups that are quite local to the area. Some of them may be familiar to you already. Maybe there are some keen musicians in the class that could consider joining up in the future!

The 'Prom' will have a *presenter* who will introduce the groups and their items.

WHAT WILL THE MUSIC BE?

The tradition of the 'Prom' is to introduce a wide variety of music. It is likely that members of the class will know some of the tunes or songs in the concert but there will be a lot that is new. See page 5 for the programme.

Music comes in to existence in different ways. To help the class understand each piece a little more it would be good to run through some of the terminology that is frequently used.

HERE IS A HANDY LIST:

'Music composed by...'

Some music has been made up and written down by a 'composer'. Because it has been written down it becomes more fixed and it is then possible to give it to other musicians to play. Many creative musicians now use recording technology to both compose and preserve their ideas. Perhaps the class could make a list of 'composers' (past and present) that they know of.

'Music arranged by...'

This means that someone has taken a piece of music

(either someone else's, or perhaps a folk song) and made up their own version of it – possibly for a completely different group of musicians. For example, you might have “Happy” (Pharrell Williams) *arranged*, or arr. for Brass Band by *J Bloggs*. The class might have come across other forms of arrangement. Consider the musical terms ‘cover’ and ‘mash-up’.

‘A devised piece’

This is when a piece of music is made up (in part, at least) by the people who are performing it. Some music evolves out of rehearsing and contributing ideas jointly. Sometimes, a *composer* will work with a set of performers to get their ideas, and will then mould the ideas into a more structured piece of music.

‘Trad.’

This is short for ‘traditional music’. It means that it is the music that we associate with a particular place (and history). We don’t know who composed it – it evolved over time and within communities of people.

‘The folk process’...

This means that the music (a song, for example) was made up by someone in the past but has been changing constantly with each new generation of people singing it. They have learnt it ‘by ear’ and given it their own interpretation. Imagine a singing game of ‘Chinese whispers’...

An ‘improvised’ piece, or a piece with ‘improvisation’

‘Improvisation’ means to *make it up as you go along*. In practice, what this really means is that you use the vast ‘library’ of ideas that you have in your head (and have practiced thoroughly) but in a way that is unique in this new performing situation. Some musicians use a lot of improvisation. Jazz players, for example, frequently take it in turns to play solos that are likely to be ‘improvised’. They might suddenly stand up, or there may be a ‘spot-light’ on them so that you can see clearly whose turn it is.

‘Chance music’

Imagine a piece of music (or sections of a piece) where the instructions for how to play it are constantly changing. With ‘chance music’ you might

roll a dice to choose how to start, or end, or what emotion it might have, or which of the performers will be performing, and in what combination. You might have a piece of music in which the performers themselves decide spontaneously how the music will continue. This lead to fantastically exciting performances – particularly with experienced musicians with a passion for inventiveness.

‘Music commissioned by...’ This means that someone has requested for something to be composed. Generally, the ‘commissioner’ will encourage the composer and pay him/her for their time and ideas. They would set a deadline for the finished work and give it an opportunity to be performed. Charities that take an interest in keeping music alive and exciting, and helping young people to succeed with their work, commission a lot of new music.

WHAT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO LISTEN OUT FOR WHEN THE MUSIC STARTS?

There’s something to be said for just relaxing and letting the music make its impact!

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS THAT THE CLASS MIGHT CONSIDER:

Beginnings, endings and the shape within What’s the first thing that you hear out of the silence at the beginning? How did it make you feel? How does it build up? Any sudden surprises? Did anything make you jump, fill you with dread, make you feel sad? Are parts of the music repeated? What’s the final sound? What’s the feeling you’re left with? What did you enjoy?

Words of songs

Can you hear the words and understand their message? How does the music help to convey the message? Are they singing in *unison* (all the same thing) or in *harmony*? Are there any solo parts? What is the impact of the change from one section to other?

Instruments

You will see and hear many different instruments in the concert. Which ones do you recognise? Listen not only to the variety of instruments but to the variety of sounds that each instrument makes. All instruments can play both loudly and quietly. Listen out for gentle and simple moments, and for the moments of virtuosity and technical wizardry. *Try shutting your eyes!* Does that make it sound different?

WHAT ELSE WOULD BE INTERESTING? WHAT COULD I WATCH OUT FOR?

Conductors

Some music will be held together and directed by a 'conductor'. The conductor stands in front of the musicians and uses hand/arm gestures to give musical instructions (when to start and stop, what speed to go, how loud or quiet to play/sing), as well as encouraging expression and giving the musicians confidence.

Performers

It's always interesting to watch the performers play their instruments and to see the variety of techniques that they use to make the different sounds. If you watch very carefully you might even see them counting the rests before they start to play!

Playing from memory?

Are the musicians playing from written music? There may be visible music stands. If they are playing without music notation, would they have learnt it that way?

It is true that some types of music rely on the musicians being quick at reading notes. Some pieces are so long and complicated that it would be difficult to learn it all without having something written down. Some music requires the musicians to use different skills – or just to have an excellent memory!

'Acoustic' or 'Electric'?

If an instrument needs electricity for you to hear the sound it is called an 'electric' instrument. Otherwise, it is called 'acoustic'. A violin is an acoustic instrument but a bass guitar is electric. In a large hall acoustic instruments often have microphones attached to them (called 'pick-ups') or microphones on stands in front of them. There are also 'ambient microphones' at the front of the stage that pick up sound in a general way and spread it around the hall through the PA system. Watch out for which instruments/voices need individual microphones. Is it related to the size of the group performing?

Location

Where are the performers positioned? Sometimes they are set apart from each other to make it more exciting – particularly if the music has echoing passages in it, or if there's an element of drama/storyline in the performance. Do the players move around as part of the performance? How do they get to and from their performing position?

Technical crew

All large concert venues need teams of sound engineers, lighting technicians and stagehands. These jobs are highly skilled, and a performance can be ruined if the technical teams get it wrong. Watch out for what needs to happen in between pieces of music. The stage crew will be busy moving chairs, music stands, instruments (some very large), and helping the performers exit and enter. The lighting team will be controlling the lights for the audience (house lights) and for the stage. Each performing group will have different lighting requirements. The sound team will be making sure that the microphones are in the right place, balancing the levels and making sure that there is no unwanted echo or 'feedback' for the audience. There may also be recording and broadcasting engineers if the concert is going out to a wider audience.

USEFUL LINKS

www.mfy.org.uk

Music for Youth is a national music education charity providing free access to performance and audience opportunities for young musicians across the UK through our annual season of festivals and concerts. Please contact us if you would like to become more involved or more information can be found in the resource pack on page 3.

www.royalalberthall.com/about-the-hall/education

The **Royal Albert Hall** delivers innovative education programmes and outreach projects for thousands of children and adults each year. Whether it is providing a child with their very first opportunity to pick up an instrument, or improving the quality of life in a care home through the power of music, the Hall's work has a positive and lasting effect on everyone involved.

www.triboroughmusicclub.org

The Music Education Hub for the **Tri-Borough London** group. If you are looking for a particular music activity for children within Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham, or Kensington and Chelsea Boroughs, they will be able to help you here.

www.musicmark.org.uk/members

Useful information, including lists (and web addresses) of Music Hubs throughout Britain (including the London Boroughs).

www.bbc.co.uk/proms

The website for the **BBC Promenade Concerts**. There is lots of interesting, historical information here.

www.efdss.org

Website of Cecil Sharp House, the home of the **English Folk Song and Dance Society**. They also have information and links to folk and traditional music from other countries. They run lots of school-based and holiday activities for children.

www.singup.org

Sing-up! Sing-up provides an extensive on-line song bank (notated music, backing tracks, suggestions for teaching) for use in the classroom. It is primarily a resource for KS1/2 but is now extending its resources for use in KS3. Additionally, Sing-up provides a National network of training sessions and workshops for teachers. There is some useful information about choirs and choir singing.

www.musicroom.com

Musicroom. An online mail order site for music books and sheet music

www.tes.co.uk

TES. A digital teacher community online – news, classroom resources, interesting articles, lesson plans, jobs etc.

CREDITS

THE PRIMARY PROMS ARE PRESENTED BY MFY IN ASSOCIATION WITH ROYAL ALBERT HALL.



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