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**CHRISTINE BATES**

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESSION IN  
COMPOSING IN MUSIC AT KEY STAGE 3**

**M.A.**

**UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

At a time when continuity and progression are considered vital in education in schools it was brought to the writer's attention that teachers are encountering problems in assessing the progression of pupils' work in composing in music.

The relevant literature and documentation of the twentieth century suggests that training and guidance for music teachers in teaching composing has been lacking and there could well be difficulties in teaching and assessing this area of the curriculum.

The investigation took place through interviewing a sample of secondary music teachers of different levels of experience. Their perceptions as to the nature of composing and progression were particularly focused upon.

The results of the investigation show that there is little agreement amongst teachers as to the nature of composing and progression. This was largely due to their diverse perceptions as to the role of composing. Many of the informants lacked experience in this field. Also, there was a mismatch of expectations between SCAA (D.F.E. 1996), the National Curriculum (D.F.E. 1995), teachers and pupils as to what should be achieved in composing at Key Stage 3.

Areas where achievement and progression could be measured were, however, identified in the results. These have been focused upon by the writer in designing part of a curriculum for music at Key Stage 3 in which progression can be measured accompanied by a suitable scheme of assessment.

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**1997**



**12 MAY 1998**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In October 1994 I attended an inset training course for secondary school music teachers in The East Riding of Yorkshire. The course leader asked colleagues attending what they would like to be different, if anything at all, in our schools or classrooms. A colleague answered that she would like her classes to arrive at her lesson "with an open mind". She explained that pupils in her school were arriving at music lessons with negative expectations of its content. After almost an hour's discussion it seemed that this was the case in a number of schools in the area.

I had been told at teacher training college that The School's Council's Enquiry I (1968) had found that secondary school leavers considered music to be one of the most boring and useless subjects within the school timetable. As a result of the 1968 report action was taken to try and raise the profile of classroom music. Yet in 1994 there still seemed to be a problem. I did not cherish the thought of spending the next thirty years in a job where I may be considered invalid by those I respected most. I wanted those who encountered music under my guidance to enjoy their experiences whilst developing as musicians.

I turned to the OFSTED review of inspection findings for 1993/94 where it was stated that standards in music, at the end of Key Stage 3, were lower than in any other subject. There seemed to be a problem not only in the expectations and attitudes of pupils but also in pupils' lack of achievement. I spent some time considering whether it was the pupils' negative expectation that induced low achievement or whether the struggle to attain was causing the negative expectations. Either way the situation meant misery for the teachers and pupils concerned.

I asked myself why this should be the case. Music is a part of the majority of peoples' lives in some form or another. Music can be encountered in the shopping mall, at the cinema, on television programmes or as part of sporting events. Many people, and certainly teenagers, turn to music for relief, enjoyment or escape. Most teenagers listen

to music for much of their spare time. There would not appear to be a reluctance from teenagers to listen to music.

Many of the pupils I teach own electronic keyboards on which they can perform, in some sense, a favourite pop song. Some are much more advanced performers and have achieved success with examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Thus performing did not seem to be a problem for the majority of teenagers that I teach.

Still trying to take a child's perspective I considered composing, the most recent addition to the school music curriculum. Listening and performing are enjoyable and apparently accessible for the majority. Composing is something that pop stars do. Children talk of success here being selling a million albums. Few thirteen year olds have had number one successes in the hit parade. If one of the values of including composing is that we can train pupils in composing, maybe even towards this aim, then it must have some worth. But the tasks so commonly set by colleagues of improvising within a twelve bar blues or inventing an ostinato are far from the tastes of most teenagers and don't match the style of the work of their favourite composers. Thus there would appear to be a mismatch in the expectations of teachers and the pupils.

My own experience is that pupils can quite easily have success in the tasks that I set in composing. This is an age where progress and achievement are important to all in education. We can not expect teenagers to be composing number one hits during our lessons but we could make it clear that we are training them in the same skills as their idols. In order for pupils to understand that they are progressing in composing there would have to be an effective scheme of assessment where it was evident to both teachers and pupils that progress was taking place.

Thus I felt it appropriate to carry out my own formal research into the assessment of progression in composing in the hope of identifying areas where this is possible.

Before carrying out any investigation with teachers or pupils I have sought information from the literature associated with composing in schools of the twentieth century.

In reviewing the literature I will closely examine the following issues:

1. How composing became part of the music curriculum
2. Why composing has become part of the music curriculum
3. The nature of composing in the music curriculum
4. What guidance has been given to teachers for teaching composing
5. How teachers have responded to teaching composing
6. What material has been available for teachers to use in teaching composing and how helpful it has been.
7. Broader educational issues

It is anticipated that in examining these, along with relevant broader educational issues, questions will arise that are of relevance to the contemporary music teacher.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **THE EMERGENCE OF NEW APPROACHES TO CLASSROOM MUSIC**

#### **1.0 The value of music for promoting emotional development**

There was support for the inclusion of music in the school curriculum during the early part of the twentieth century. Hadow (1923) had considered value of music as a means of exercising emotion and judgement. The view was expressed, in the report, that music should be held as equally important as other curriculum subjects and should become a part of the school certificate examination. Despite his consideration of emotional development, for Hadow conventional skills and rudiments were the criteria for the assessment of progress.

The Board of Education (1927) also recognised the value of the expressive qualities associated with music:

"...the real function of music begins at a point where words, intellectually apprehended, have no place. Its inherent significance is outside the range of the purely rational mind. A special exercise of the imagination is needed in order to recognise a musical idea in a particular series of sounds, or to recognise in musical ideas a disciplined expression of deep and obscure human emotions"  
(Board of Education, 1927, p. 240).

New ideas of the arts and music, in schools, were emerging during the first half of the twentieth century which emphasised the value of the arts for promoting emotional development. A report by the Board of Education, in 1931, underlined this when it reported that "activity" and "experience" were of more value than "knowledge" (p.93).

However, as Hadow had advised, it was only through the study and development of rudiments that attainment could be assessed in music.

Music remained unaffected by change. There remained an emphasis on the study of conventional skills and rudiments for assessment purposes rather than an emphasis on the promotion of emotional development through music. Much of the growth in school music during the first half of the twentieth century was seen through the emergence of extra curricular activities.

### **1.1 New experiments in the music curriculum and the issue of progression**

A number of music teachers did, however, seek to incorporate the new approaches to music in their curricula. Some turned to the work of two music educators, Kodaly and Orff. Both Kodaly and Orff were composers and their projects for children, naturally, involved composing.

Kodaly believed that there were problems with the musical education of young people, both in and out of school. He devised projects for the classroom that were based around clapping songs, marching songs, musical response games and singing games. These, he believed would enhance a child's musical awareness, encouraging development in other areas of musicianship.

Kodaly believed that music education should begin in the early ages of a child and continue to be developed throughout school. Progression in composing was clearly an issue for Kodaly. In the first year of the course children are made aware of the pentatonic scale and by the end of the year they are expected to be able to compose simple pentatonic tunes of their own. In the second year the children are expected to deal with more complex rhythms. Then in the third year children encounter changes of time signatures and key signatures and apply them in composing.

Research showed that the average fourteen year old following Kodaly's course was between two and a half and three years ahead of those who were not in their ability to compose. It is important to note that the development of pupils' emotions is not measured. However, progression was the essence of Kodaly's course. Children involved

with his method developed a musicianship that enabled them to perform and compose increasingly complex music and were enabled to attain a satisfactory level of attainment.

Orff's theory, as with Kodaly's, was based around simple aural tasks in the early stages. His projects for the classroom began with an emphasis on the basic inflections of speech. Orff devised a set of classroom instruments for children to use which could be easily mastered. These included the xylophone and glockenspiel, derived from Indonesian Gamelan and African Marimba. The recorder along with the lute, guitar, gambas and cellos were also brought in to the classroom.

Orff's projects were, at first, used in Bavaria where they were published in five books *Musik für Kinder*. These were translated into English and adopted in England. Book one dealt with the falling minor third which Orff regarded as the most natural melodic idiom. Gradually children were led to encounter the pentatonic scale. Book two led children to deal with the major scale, accompanied by drone basses and tonic triads. In book three ostinato chords were introduced and in book four the minor mode along with harmony were introduced. At each stage the children applied what they had practised in composing music of their own.

It is evident to musicians that the increasing demand upon children's musical knowledge and ability means that, in following Orff's course, progression can be seen to be made as the children encounter increasingly complex music and develop it in their compositions. As with Kodaly, the nature of progression is based upon the music that the child has produced.



Teachers required training in order to adopt Orff's course in their curricula. Where training was available it was expensive or required much commitment of time and resources.

"The method demands close study and much practical experiment before it can be taught even in a most elementary form. There is no question of staying a lesson ahead of the children; the teacher who is not thoroughly verse in the whole philosophy will be quickly out of his depth" (Horton, 1976, p. 93).

By the 1960s, composing was emerging as a part of the school music curriculum. Urged by Hadow (1923) and the Board of Education (1927) for new approaches in music education, some teachers incorporated the courses of Kodaly or Orff as a means of breaking new ground in school music. Those who chose to include composing perceived it as a means of promoting emotional development. For the purpose of this project it is important to note that in both Kodaly's and Orff's courses, children were seen to make progress in composing, to some extent through the mastery of increasingly complex musical rudiments. However, only those music teachers who felt comfortable with the courses of Kodaly or Orff chose to use them. Those who did not were left to devise their own curricula, which as well as having to be examinable had to emphasise emotional development.

Despite the moves that were being made in music by some teachers, a report published by the School's Council (1968) of the opinions of school leavers, found that music was considered to be one of the most boring and useless subjects in the whole school curriculum. If music was to remain a curriculum subject its nature had to change in more than just a few schools.

## **1.2 The importance of creativity**

*Children and Their Primary Schools* (HMSO, 1967) highlighted the state of contemporary music education in primary schools. It brought to attention points of concern such as the lack of music specialists and the poor availability of resources in primary schools.

The report also highlighted the situation that many schools relied on group music making too often and little time was allowed for monitoring the development of an individual.

"The principle of individual progression is seldom consistently and successfully carried into the musical sphere. In schools where progress in language is carefully checked, the achievements expected in music of older pupils, as compared with younger ones, are often ill defined and vary enormously from school to school" (HMSO, 1967, p.253).

The report criticised music for lagging behind the other arts as a means for creativity and suggested that primary schools include performance and composition as a vehicle for this. The report suggested that children pursue musical activities involved in the exploration of sound. It was stressed, however, that this should be an activity in the early stages of music education and should not become "static and repetitive (HMSO, 1967, p.254).

It was advised that much research should be undertaken to enhance this area of the music curriculum in order to ensure progression in composing;

"Not enough is yet known about how to develop children's creative powers in music (HMSO, 1967, p.254)".

## **1.3 The influence of the Avant Garde**

Outside the classroom exciting innovation had already taken place in the world of contemporary classical music. The music of the Avant Garde was fashionable.

Composers such as Boulez and Stockhausen were focusing on control of pitch, harmony

and timbre. Their music had little sense of the presence of the conventional melody and harmony associated with music of the nineteenth century and before. The nature of contemporary music was unpredictable and sounds and events would appear to happen in a random order. Although much Avant Garde music could be broken down to show tight structure the music was extremely complex and structure was very often inaudible.

The preoccupation of composers with control of sound led to composition for less conventional combinations of instruments. Since Cage's "prepared piano" and the preoccupation with new sounds based on timbre of Edgard Varese in the 1930s and 1940s many composers working during the middle of the twentieth century considered timbre to be of equal, if not of more, importance than the more traditional features of the century before.

The influence of the Avant Garde composers found its way into the classroom through two important publications in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Self's *New Sounds in Class* (1967) and Dennis's *Experimental Music in Schools* (1970) approached classroom music through the contemporary trend of the manipulation of sounds.

Self's publication, which was given the subheading *A contemporary approach to music*, highlights his intention, that features of the contemporary music world be adopted to form the school music curriculum.

The projects presented by Self involve graphic notation (Appendix I) which, Self claims, enables the children;

"to venture among a range of sounds and rhythms with considerable freedom to improvise, to perform that which would not be possible with conventional notation" (Self, 1967, p.2).

Through reading from the graphic scores presented in the book Self felt that quality performances of music of the same nature as the contemporary musical climate could easily be achieved.

In *Experimental Music in Schools* (Dennis, 1970), as with Self, Dennis encouraged the adoption of the contemporary musical sound world in to the classroom. In his introduction Dennis emphasised sound colour and atmosphere. The projects in the book adopt graphic notation as the principle means of notating music. However some composing is encouraged as children are encouraged to take isolated sounds, rhythm patterns, or just sound and improvise with them.

The contemporary music teacher, acquainted with the rigorous notational and harmonic rules of the nineteenth century and before felt uneasy with the radical projects of Self and Dennis and many did not adopt them into their curricula. Thus the nature of classroom music remained unchanged in many schools.

#### **1.4 Music as a subject accessible to all**

A major step forward came with the publication of *Sound and Silence* (Paynter and Aston, 1970). In this publication music was awarded more vitality within the whole school curriculum than ever before, it was considered crucial in the education of all children.

Declaring their own professions as "practising teachers and musicians" (Paynter and Aston, 1970, p.3) with a total belief in their subject's validity, Paynter and Aston set about redefining the nature of classroom music to make it accessible to all as a creative activity:

"...it is as a creative art that music is beginning to play an increasingly important role in education. Like all the arts music springs from a profound response to life itself. It is language, and, as a vehicle for expression it is available in some degree to everyone"  
(Paynter and Aston, 1979, p.3).

Paynter and Aston valued self expression and believed that this could be achieved partly through the exploratory processes involved in composing. *Sound and Silence* presented a series of projects with illustrations as to the content of a music curriculum as a guide for teachers in achieving this.

As contemporary composers, Paynter and Aston drew upon movements in contemporary music in their projects for classroom music.

The projects in *Sound and Silence* were generic. They were based upon cells or ideas drawn from sounds around us, the harmonic series, and poems that were manipulated in order to compose music that expressed pictures, moods or feelings. Along with their contemporaries, Paynter and Aston considered sound to be the raw material with which composers make music. They also believed that through discovering how sound could be moulded and developed a child would gain experience and knowledge of music. The need of the children for more knowledge would lead them to discover new boundaries, forms, structures and ideas, as well as recalling those that they had already experienced. This was the nature of progression for Paynter and Aston.

A well structured course was emphasised as crucial in order to provide children with a sense of direction and motivation. The projects presented in the book were each planned to be taught over a half term period and an indication was provided in each case as to when the teacher should lead the children to the next stage of the work.

It is important to note that in *Sound and Silence* Paynter and Aston expressed particular concern that teachers did not misinterpret the substance of the book and that children were given a specific task to carry out and that they worked with musical structures within a structured course.

### **1.5 Misinterpretations, misguidance and misunderstandings**

However, it was many of the teachers, as performers and musicologists, who experienced the greatest challenge. Paynter and Aston's projects required teachers to think and plan as composers. This was a new experience for many. Most music teachers were trained instrumentalists and musicologists, not composers. For them progression was achieved through the application of increasingly complex compositional rules and performance techniques. For them, self expression was achieved through the performance of something composed by others.

It is evident that many music teachers would need training in order to incorporate composing into their curricula. Nothing had been offered thus far other than the suggestions of Dennis, Self, Paynter and Aston.

*The Intelligence of Feeling* (Witkin, 1974) and *Arts and the Adolescent* (Ross, 1975) expressed the importance of the processes involved in the arts. They held these as being of equal value to the product. For Ross and Witkin the arts were a vehicle for educational development through means of self expression.

Ross severely criticised music for having lagged behind the other arts subjects, a result of music teachers'

"narrowness of outlook and deeply rooted inertia that long kept their subject free of controversy over self expression and creativity"  
(Ross, 1975, p.52).

Now, more than ever, music teachers had demands upon them to be innovative in their curricula. Those who had not already done so had to deal with the philosophies that had arisen out of the reports of Hadow who favoured self expression through conventional skills in performance, and Plowden who wrote about general learning, the influence of the Avant Garde, and ideas about the value of composing. Music teachers were urged to adopt skills in which they had not been trained.

Witkin (1974) had placed an emphasis on the value of the process. Some interpreted this as giving little, or no, value to the end result of a project. Results were not important as long as pupils did plenty of exploring. The resulting misinterpretations by them were criticised,

"...if I were forced to make a statement about the emperor, I would say that by and large, he was without clothes. Indeed, I find it frightening that I have to write and defend what, in my view, are the normal standards of study in a school against a philosophy of instant results and gratification which must lead to nothing, since the pupils will be given neither skill nor understanding in the art of music"  
(Salaman, TES, 1975).

In his article *Bangs and botheration on the way to nothingness* (TES, 1975) Salaman, although convinced by the need for changes in classroom music, feared that many were "clutching at the first straw" (Salaman, TES, 1975) in the demand for a new type of classroom music. He criticised the nature of the newly emerging school music as one which did not allow for progression and appealed to music teachers to express their views on the subject against those of lecturers, researchers and advisers, whom, he implied, were out of touch with the classroom. Salaman, who was an orchestral performer, very much represented the contemporary music teacher.

### **1.6 The York project**

After the publication of *Sound and Silence* (1970) a long period of time followed during which music teachers were given very few ideas for curriculum content. During this time Paynter was leading a team of researchers in investigating the value of the inclusion of music in the secondary school curriculum and to define its nature and its relationship with other arts. The publication of *Music in the Secondary School Curriculum* (Paynter, 1982) provided the culmination of the findings of the project. Not meant as a "research report," the book presented Paynter's suggestions, influenced by his investigation, as to the nature of classroom music.

The book reflected the view of *Arts and the Adolescent* (Ross, 1975) to some extent in that it valued the processes involved in the arts. The child was the focus as in the projects in the book allowed the child to choose and decide what to incorporate and how to make a piece of music, and not through prescribing a musical grammar within which to work. Thus the function of the teacher was to educate the child through musical experiences.

Paynter began with a review of curriculum content at the time of the publication, a time when "A" level was a foundation for higher education. As many of the music degree courses in the country then were involved with performance and historical content, the "A" level provided a sound test of a student's ability to follow such a course. Naturally the "O" level examination became a foundation to the "A" level and any music teaching that took place lower down the school, was considered only as preparation to the examination courses. Paynter claimed that this made music "...the province of the minority" (Paynter, 1982, p.8) as it was Paynter's view that the technicalities of such examinations were not so easily understood by all pupils and resulted in the alienation of many from the subject. There was clearly an echo of the content of *Sound and Silence* (Paynter and Aston, 1970), in that the nature of classroom music had to change in order to make it accessible to all.

Paynter considered the fact that music has many varieties and forms and that the types of music that adolescents were surrounded by in their own lives were very different to those that they encountered in the classroom. The fact that adolescents were surrounded by music in their personal lives meant that music was valuable to them. Yet it did not serve the same function in the classroom. This, Paynter claimed, was one of the causes of boredom in the classroom, as adolescents knew that music did not exist purely for analytical purposes.



It was Paynter's view that adolescents knew much "about" music but had little conceptual experience of the terms or rules that they had learned. He considered "knowing about" to be too historically based and that it was hands on "experience of" the art that would guide adolescents into the world of music. As in *Sound and Silence* (Paynter and Aston, 1970), Paynter presented projects as a guide for curriculum material that would offer adolescents appropriate experiences in music.

The projects were based entirely upon composing.

"Classroom work should be based upon music making (performing, improvising, composing) and, in the forefront of all activities, the development of aural sensitivity and awareness. Keeping our ears open to sounds - all sounds, any sounds - is the most basic and therefore the most real of musical skills. From there we can develop activities which are inventive, interpretative and perceptual in whatever styles, forms and structures are appropriate for the pupils we teach" (Paynter, 1982, p.28).

The projects in *Music in the Secondary School Curriculum* take, as a starting point, experiments with pulse or rhythmic cells. The cells are developed by adding pitch and melody and then texture and timbre, density and eventually harmony. As the pupils seek to develop their ideas they seek out new knowledge, new experiences and new boundaries.

In Paynter's projects pupils have to make decisions, solve problems and refine ideas. The expression rises out of the ideas.

"Composition is the art of developing structures through which ideas are expanded and which reveal the inherent expression in those ideas" (Paynter, 1982, p.100).

A second, more detailed, plan of work which included time for revisiting ground already covered, refining it, opening up new experiences and new stimuli (introducing pupils to music of other composers being an important stimuli - not forgotten, but serving a different function), further emphasised the importance of planning. Good planning

would enable and ensure progression and continuity, both of which were also considered by Paynter to be of vital importance;

"Art yields insight and we make progress by continuing to look for new possibilities within our materials"(Paynter, 1982, p.59).

The nature of classroom music for Paynter was not preoccupied with either of the extreme poles of technicalities or self expression, but was that of a participatory experience for all, enabling pupils to develop musical skills and concepts through the exploratory processes involved in composing.

Thus in *Music in the Secondary School Curriculum* music teachers were offered Paynter's belief as to the nature of classroom music which adhered to the demands for changes in the subject. With this came suggestions for projects as well as a clear definition of the nature of progression.

However, over a decade had passed since some of these ideas were first promoted in *Sound and Silence* (Paynter and Aston, 1970). During this time misinterpretations had already arisen. Teachers' responses to the changes had already been criticised by Salaman (1975), who felt their desperation for innovation was leading the subject astray to where progression was not achieved. Such was Salaman's concern that soon after the publication of *Music in the Secondary School Curriculum* (Paynter, 1984), his own book *Living School Music* was published. Once again Salaman suggested that those, such as Paynter and Aston, were out of touch with the classroom as he claimed that;

"the concern (of *Living School Music*) lies with living school music in both its senses: living the life of a school music teacher and working to create an environment within the classroom for the music itself to live"  
(Salaman, 1983, p.1).

The book was not intended as a survival guide for music teachers but an account of successful and unsuccessful criteria for teaching music most of which were performance based. Like Paynter and Aston, Salaman did share the concern that music in the classroom should be a practical experience.

Salaman's emphasis was on enabling experience through more technically and skill based means. Salaman stated that the conventions of tonal music did have a place in the music curriculum. For Salaman a more conventional approach was appropriate if it had value. If an exercise brought into focus specific musical detail, then it had value. Vocal performance had value if the children's understanding of the music made them aware of their mistakes and led them to finding a way of putting them right. Most of all, if children understood why they were performing music, then it had value.

Salaman presented the advantages and disadvantages of other means of musical recreation. For example the class percussion band. The class percussion band was an exercise that could be easily structured and the progress of the pupils identified, despite it not being inclusive of such musical elements as pitch and had restricted timbre and effect. Another approach, that of Orff's *Schulwerk*, had its worth in that its generic, yet formal, nature could lead to work within an ensemble and even to such forms as Blues. Pop music's identifiable structures gave children a means to express their own skills within a genre that was meaningful to them. Finally, the classroom orchestra that Salaman had allied himself with nearly ten years earlier, provided a vehicle for children to develop their musical literacy and understanding and was a way of including musicians of all abilities. He provided detail of how instruments could be written for and used successfully to bring about a performance of considerable merit and value.

The recreation of music was largely the means of discovering music for Salaman. He presented in *Living School Music* projects that, through the means of the classroom orchestra, introduced children to specific musical detail.

Salaman accepted Paynter's process of "decision making" stating that the decisions of the children in their work must be made as a sensitive response to a perceivable and specific task. With Salaman the task was set, largely, by himself as the teacher, limiting the wider freedom of choice that was so valuable to Paynter.

Creativity, for Salaman, was achieved through musical arrangement and he thought it to be the best approach to composing. Salaman thought that through arrangement children would work within tight structures, ones that were presented and explained to them rather than, as Paynter and Aston (1970) had implied, were discovered by the children. Through such activities as altering tempo, dynamics, instrumentation and varying ornamentation of music that may already be familiar, the children could identify and understand the specific tasks and make musical decisions upon them. Unlike Paynter and Aston, Salaman based his schemes of work on the pupils' ability to understand and relied, to a certain extent, upon traditional staff notation. His classroom orchestra worked with music from a score and used this as the basis of any arrangement.

The penultimate chapter of *Living School Music* dealt with listening to music, something that had been apparent in the projects in *Sound and Silence* (Paynter and Aston, 1970). Salaman viewed this to be an important part of a child's musical experience. However, listening with focus and attention to detail was how Salaman claimed this activity was most effective.

For Salaman, a successful music curriculum was not centred around composing, but included it in the form of arrangement. Without totally dismissing the beliefs of others such as Paynter and Aston, Salaman put forward a case for a curriculum with knowledge and technical skills at the forefront. Progression occurred in the adoption, by pupils, of increasingly technical components.

### **1.7 The two poles of classroom music**

By the 1980s classroom music was interpreted by a number of teachers to have one of two natures. The first being preoccupied with self expression. Lack of guidance for teachers had led many to interpret this as children exploring for themselves without, the guidance suggested by Paynter, with conventional techniques and structures are revealed to pupils in the quest for results. The other face was one that adhered to the advice of Hadow (1923) and Salaman (1984). Teachers, who were trained as performers and

musicologists, taught pupils by giving them increasingly challenging knowledge and technical expertise. This had been the nature of progression for many teachers and it was the one they understood most clearly.

By the early nineteen eighties a large number of music teachers had still not adopted a successful means of teaching composing to children which ensured progression.

By 1992, Paynter, aware of the misinterpretation by many, wrote ;

"...we now see a need for more detailed help, particularly in matters of musical structure and the ways in which students can be encouraged to generate and develop musical ideals" (Paynter, 1992, p.7).

He acknowledged "...the word 'creativity' itself has been overworked to some extent discredited by misuse and misunderstanding"(Paynter, 1992, p.10).

This response was made in the form of *Sound and Structure*, published in 1992. Paynter recognised a need to emphasise, once more, the importance of structure in composing, with many teachers still troubled by the prospect of the inclusion of composing, seeing it as "...an impossible or pretentious goal...an open invitation to lawlessness, unproductive freedom and standards"(Paynter, 1992, p.22).

Paynter restated his approach to classroom music, that it was creative, a means of communication and valuable to the lives of all. However, this time, he allies creativity much closer to musical structure than before.

Paynter justifies his focus upon structure by claiming that our lives are ruled by structures - dates, anniversaries, diaries - we find them an essential means towards a goal. Artists, whatever the medium, seek to create coherent structures in space or time. Again he emphasises that self expression arises out from this Self expression is

considered, by Paynter, to be a reaction not the starting point, as many music teachers had come to believe.

"...expression is derived from structure...expressive changes in particular (e.g. tempo) during performance are based upon structural properties of the music"(Paynter, 1992, p.12).

Paynter addressed structure on two levels. The first, as in *Sound and Silence* (1970), being the structuring of courses. The second, the specific structure of the music that the children were composing. The former was essential for the childrens' aims and the latter necessary in order to stimulate creativity.

The timing of the publication of *Sound and Structure* was significant, with the proposed implementation of a National Curriculum. The projects and assignments that Paynter presents in the book offers guidance for linking performance and composition with aural response which was to become the essence of music in the National Curriculum. However many teachers criticised the projects in *Sound and Structure* for being too advanced for adolescents and, therefore, of no use in the classroom.

Paynter's concern for progression in composing is emphasised at the end of the book. He calls upon the National Curriculum to "define appropriate stages of attainment" (Paynter, 1992, p.22) which had been ill addressed during the previous two decades of dispute.

### **1.8 An emphasis on progression**

The nature of classroom music had changed greatly as, throughout the mid twentieth century, composing was adopted by teachers into their curricula. However another debate arose, this time concerning progression. Although progression had been at the centre of music educators' work as far back as Kodaly it had become temporarily disregarded due to the misunderstandings and misguidance that had surrounded music teachers.

*The Arts in Schools* (Calouste, Gulbenkian, 1982) highlights the importance of the assessment of progression (p.82) as a means of recognition for both teacher and pupils of the pupil's progression.

In 1979 Keith Swanwick published his own rationale for the music curriculum in schools in *A Basis for Music Education*. In the introduction to the book Swanwick acknowledged the many problems that had arisen from the previous decades' misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Like Salaman, Swanwick had his own comment to make on those interpretations that depicted music education as aimless activity. He claimed that music was more than just "organised sound" (Swanwick, 1979, pp. 8-9), as many had come to interpret it, and that "the crux of it all seems to be that we badly lack any kind of conceptual framework" (Swanwick, 1979, p.5), a plan for development and progression.

In agreement with those before him, Swanwick considered "direct involvement" in musical activities to be paramount and that this was available through composing (C) as well as audition (A) and performing (P). He considered what he called "literature studies" (L), a contextual knowledge of music, and "skill acquisition" (S), a degree of aural, instrumental and notational proficiency to have equal importance as "supporting and enabling roles" (Swanwick, 1979, pp.43-46). These were vital and had been the very components of the music curriculum that many teachers had eliminated in their failed attempts to interpret self expression and creativity into their curricula. Thus he had a model indicated as C(L)A(S)P.

For Swanwick, music had two meanings. The first was a "surface level" meaning, that was what music meant "to" the listener as the listener related it to his previous knowledge. The second, "deeper level", was concerned with what music meant "for" the listener through the listener's feelings for music that were aroused during audition (Swanwick, 1979, pp.50-51). Swanwick also applied this idea to composing and performing.

Swanwick wrote that when composing the "clarity" of the task in hand, the "meaning to" was the starting point. The "intensity", the feelings, of the composer would take over at various points during composition, the "meaning for" (Swanwick, 1979, pp.51-53). In performance, whilst playing the notes and following directions from the composer within the structures of a particular piece of music would reflect the performer's "meaning to", the performer's translation of the music in order to create "impact", provided the "meaning for" the performer and audience. In each instance the parameters C(L)A(S)P were vital. For Swanwick the relation of contextual knowledge and self expression was necessary in order to educate through music. Also, for Swanwick, music education was not concerned with composing alone, but the interrelation of all aspects of the subject.

Swanwick considered how the meaning of the term "creativity" had become misinterpreted when held in relation to other fashionable terms such as "self expression, self fulfilment and self awareness" (Swanwick, 1979, p.81). He considered a number of definitions and interpretations of the term and claimed that one's ability to be creative can be seen in each of the five parameters of his model, C(L)A(S)P, and not through composing alone as many had been led to believe.

*Music, Mind and Education* (1988) was a step further, by Swanwick in justifying his rationale for music education. He considered the psychology of music education to a greater extent than it had ever been done before. He based much of his research upon Piaget's theory of development in learning (1951). Swanwick incorporated some theories of Piaget in music education. Some, brief, explanation of Piaget's theory is necessary here in order to show how Swanwick related the two.

Piaget identified two complementary processes in learning that were apparent within every one when faced with new experiences. The first is imitation where one seeks to imitate what others do in order to conform to the outside world. The second is imaginative play where one seeks to act upon experience in one's own way, re-defining it or experimenting with it.



Swanwick took these two processes and translated them in his own way, applying them to music education. The first, imitation, he translated to be music imitating one's feelings, hence imitation was a form of self expression for Swanwick. The second, imaginative play, he translated as experimenting with musical structure.

Swanwick applied his philosophy to create a developmental spiral for the ages of 0-15+ (Appendix II) to which he added another of Piaget's developmental theories, "mastery" over materials and Swanwick's own level of "metacognition". Swanwick presented definitions of the eight developmental modes as from a child responding to the sounds of music, manipulating his ability to play an instrument in order to compose music that has increasingly the child's own "surprises" and affects within it.

It is worth considering teachers' reactions to *Music, Mind and Education*. Most music teachers are trained as performers or musicologists. Few have encountered the theories of Piaget in any great depth. Few are familiar with psychology and many would find difficulties in interpreting *Music, Mind and Education* and applying it to their own curricula. The book was an attempt by Swanwick to justify his rationale for a music curriculum yet for musicians unacquainted with Piaget or general Psychology and desperate for curriculum material and a scheme for assessment, it was of little practical use at all.

However, the book did offer some criteria for assessing the quality of composing at G.C.S.E. The implementation of the G.C.S.E. examination in music was the first instance in England and Wales where the teaching of music through composing was compulsory. Composing took 30% of the whole examination, the other 70% comprising performing and listening. Detailed criteria for assessing the composing component were listed in the syllabus with a scheme for awarding each portfolio of compositions with a mark. However, it is important to note that the criteria and marking scheme are applied at the end of the two year course and do not provide detail for assessing a child's progress within the two year course. However, students have achieved sound grades at

G.C.S.E music and the number of pupils opting to follow the two year course are continually growing. Thus it would appear that teaching composing in a way that ensures progression and achievement at this level is possible. However, only by means of sufficient research to define how teachers are training pupils as composers at this level may we define whether similar problems are occurring here. In both cases there are still no apparent criteria to guide teachers of composing before the age of 14.

### **1.9 Summary**

The 1960s to 1980s were turbulent times in music education with demands upon music teachers to change their approach to teaching music. They were expected to design curricula, for which they had no training, in which pupil progress could be assessed. More recent developments in education have enhanced the problems facing music teachers and will be examined in Chapter 2.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **RECENT AND CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION**

#### **2.0 Confirmation of the nature of music in schools**

The 1960s to the 1980s were turbulent times in education, so too was the approach to the 1990s. The Government announced their intention to implement a National Curriculum in schools in England and Wales. This was to ensure progression and continuity in the schools' curricula and teaching.

The content of music in the National Curriculum included composing. For the first time composing was to be compulsory in every school in England and Wales at all ages. Along with composing appeared listening and appraising and performing.

"Listening, composing and performing are the three main activities of musicians. It is logical therefore that children pursuing music as a foundation subject in schools should also, at a level appropriate to their age and ability, become listeners, performers and composers" (DES, 1990, p.13).

The 1990 DES Interim Report for music proposed a curriculum structure that echoed the theories, philosophies and rationale of the previous three decades.

The two proposed Profile Components comprised each of the parameters of Swanwick's model, C(L)A(S)P (1979). The Profile Component, "Making music" included performing and composing. Profile Component 2, "Understanding music" included listening and knowing (on a factual and contextual basis), thus providing four Attainment Targets.

The draft proposals, "Music ages 5 to 14" were published in 1991. With the number of Attainment Targets reduced to three, performing, composing and appraising, they emphasised the importance of composing within the music curriculum;

"The task of composing will lead to pupils thinking carefully use. It will also lead them to consider the best way of recording or notating the piece; and enable them to listen with enhanced perceptiveness to the ways in which established composers use the same elements" (DES, 1991, p.14).

An echo of Paynter's philosophy, that composing was the vehicle for discovering music, was promoted as practice across England and Wales. The working group did recognise, however, that some music teachers would still be uncertain about how to teach composing. It was specifically those teachers who would, therefore, be turning to the National Curriculum for guidance.

### **2.1 The issue of progression in composing in the National Curriculum**

The working group defined a model for progression. Four key words indicated the various stages within a progressive framework;

**recognise**

**identify**

**distinguish**

**discriminate (DES, 1991, p.17).**

The working group claimed that the achievement of one would lead pupils to the next. However the working party did not present a clear guide as to when and how music teachers could, themselves, identify each stage of this model in composing. It was left to the teachers to relate the detailed provision to the working group's model.

The Detailed Provision for each key stage indicated the key areas of musical experience for each attainment target (Appendix III). One way of identifying the progressive nature of the detailed provision is if teachers sort the detailed provision under the headings associated with the model "recognise, identify, distinguish, and discriminate". Table 1 illustrates a possible interpretation of this.

	<b>Recognise</b>	<b>Identify</b>	<b>Distinguish</b>	<b>Discriminate</b>
Key Stage 1	create organise choosing combining	response		
Key Stage 2		respond	develop choose specific	
Key Stage 3			develop	revise refine

**Table 1** An interpretation of the progressive nature of the detailed provision for Key Stages 1,2 & 3

Thus during Key Stage 3 pupils are expected to develop, refine and revise their compositions. In comparison, at Key Stage 1 pupils have to simply create, choose, organise and combine ideas. The implication is that during Key Stage 3 pupils are expected to create more and assess more of their work for themselves.

The 1991 draft proposals also provided statements of attainment supported by ten levels of progression within Key Stage 3 (Appendix IV). These statements of attainment were an indication of what should be achieved in order to define a child's progression.

Each level indicated a progressive step. As with the detailed provision, the components of each statement of attainment can be sorted when associated with the progressive model of the document. This is illustrated in table 2.

	<b>Recognise</b>	<b>Identify</b>	<b>Distinguish</b>	<b>Discriminate</b>
Level 1	explore select	sort		
Level 2		investigate choose	combine	
Level 3			explore select	
Level 4			devise develop	
Level 5			develop combine	
Level 6			improvise compose arrange	
Level 7			create	evaluate revise
Level 8				produce
Level 9				produce
Level 10				produce

**Table 2** An interpretation of progression within the statements of attainment for levels 1-10

Each statement of attainment, like the detailed provision, was allied to a statement of attainment of technical skills. Thus it is possible to place "explore" and "select" under two different headings, as at level three pupils are expected to "explore and select" in order to produce a composition with a "perceivable musical shape" (DES, 1991, p.40). Thus the child would explore further, in a more informed manner.

It is important to note that technical progress and structure are evident in each of the levels. The first three levels are concerned with exploring and mastering sound as well as encountering musical structure. At levels 4 and 5 the emphasis is on extending the range of sounds and focusing on specific musical structures. At levels 6 to 10 pupils are required to draw upon previous knowledge and develop this into sophisticated pieces of music. Examples are set along-side each statement of attainment as ideas for attaining each. The examples can be seen to be progressive. Simple call and response exercises progress towards music of more detailed and complex form and elements and of a greater variety.

Within each level is a statement concerning notational skills. These see notation progressing from primitive means, tape recording, producing graphic scores to the literacy of staff notation and that "From levels 6 to 10 it is assumed...that pupils will be able to record and/or notate their own compositions" (DES, 1991, p.40).

The final guidance for progression, in the draft proposals, for composing was found within the end of key stage statements that the children would work towards (Appendix V). These, also, were closely allied to the four key definitions for progression in the document.

	<b>Recognise</b>	<b>Identify</b>	<b>Distinguish</b>	<b>Discriminate</b>
Key Stage 1	investigate	choose	combine	
Key Stage 2			devise develop	
Key Stage 3				improvise compose arrange

**Table 3** An interpretation of progression by the end of key stage statements 1,2 & 3

The draft proposals for the National Curriculum provided music teachers with the most specific guide for progression and continuity in composing that they had ever had. It included all components of composing which had been debated in previous decades, creativity, self expression, conventions, technical skills and notation.

## **2.2 Reactions**

The proposal of a National Curriculum in England and Wales brought with it strong reaction and, at the very least, scepticism or controversy amongst teachers of all subjects. Teachers of many subjects claimed that a National Curriculum was too prescriptive and would diminish their own professional capabilities. Many also felt that in seeking to cover all prescribed areas their work load would be increased considerably. Some felt that this would interfere with their concentration on the quality of their work

within the classroom. Thus before the publication of *Music in the National Curriculum* (DES, 1992) the draft proposals were edited in accordance with teachers' concerns.

In *Music in the National Curriculum*(1992) the content from *Music ages 5 to 14* was reduced. The, previously, three Attainment Targets were condensed into two, Performing and composing and Listening and appraising.

In *Music Education and the National Curriculum* (1992), Swanwick was critical of the Working Party's decision to reduce the number of Attainment targets. He expressed a fear that teachers would consider performing and composing to have less value, within the curriculum. He feared that composing would become a diminished area, as it was still the one area that some teachers felt unhappy about teaching. This would mean a considerable step back in time. Swanwick considered the art of composition to be "in the richest sense of the term, *appraising* music" (Swanwick, 1992, p.10) and thus of vital importance in order to progress in other areas of the subject.

Swanwick presented what he called a "thumbnail sketch" of musical development consisting of a short statement for each of the four key stages. Each statement related to the levels within his developmental spiral (1988 & Appendix II).

#### ***Key stage 1***

**Students should be able to recognise and identify different musical materials and use these skilfully to express an atmospheric or dramatic sequence.**

This reflected the "mastery of materials" part of the spiral;



### ***Key stage 2***

**Students should be able to distinguish and discriminate melodic and rhythmic devices found in songs and instrumental pieces and use these expressively.**

This reflected the "expression" part of the spiral;

### ***Key stage 3***

**Students should be able to draw attention to and exploit repetitions and contrasting musical ideas involving awareness of the expressive potential of harmony.**

This reflected the "form" part of the spiral;

### ***Key stage 4***

**Students should be able to discriminate between various idiomatic practices and demonstrate this knowledge in their own musical work and through verbal articulation.**

The work of the children, at this stage, would have "value" to them.

Within this framework Swanwick presented his own criteria for assessing qualitative development, that he claimed "have already been found to be useful and reliable" (Swanwick, 1992, p.17). These criteria, in the form of eight different levels, reflected the eight developmental modes of his spiral (Swanwick and Tillman, 1988).

Thus Swanwick (1992) made suggestions as to the nature of progression. However it was still up to teachers to interpret these ideas in to their curricula and to decide repertoire, techniques, styles, activities, i.e. all the content of a music curriculum, for

themselves. Even with the implementation of a National Curriculum, there is still no agreed syllabus content for music.

*Music in the National Curriculum* was implemented in 1992. In the interests of simplicity the number of Attainment Targets was reduced to two, with performing and composing combined together. The levels of attainment were omitted, as was any framework for progression. There was no reason given to teachers for this action.

Each of the End of Key Stage Statements referred to those of the draft proposals. However, the detailed provision of the Draft Proposals and levels of attainment were replaced by Programmes of Study which gave examples of projects through which each Programme of Study may be applied (Appendix VI).

The terminology within the Programmes of Study was similar to that of the Draft Proposals; "...investigate...choose...combine...devise...develop...compose...arrange...", yet without the levels of attainment it is difficult to judge at what level teachers should apply each.

At Key Stage 2 the document prescribed "...musical ...structure...where appropriate..." (DES, 1992, p.4) yet it was left up to teachers to determine "where appropriate", the same problem that they have faced over the previous twenty years. At Key Stage 3 the document prescribes a "wide range of musical styles", which is, as Swanwick (1992) had criticised it as, "quantitative" and not "qualitative" (Swanwick, 1992, p.17).

Whereas the working group had drawn upon the work of those such as Paynter, Aston, Salaman and Swanwick, for it would have been absurd not to have done, they had not taken the philosophies of those theorists and created a clear cut model for the music curriculum that would enable progression and continuity, but provided little more than a description of the nature of classroom music.

The National Curriculum underwent scathing criticism from teachers. The main complaint was related to the amount of extra administrative work teachers were having to complete. With the threat of industrial action and the gross unpopularity of the National Curriculum the document was once again reviewed. The main aim of the review would be to "simplify and clarify the programmes of study" reducing content and, therefore, allowing more for the professional judgement of teachers" (DFE, 1994, letter from Sir Ron Dearing to John Patten).

Of the three documents for music within the National Curriculum the 1995 version was by far the least helpful in offering guidance for music teachers. The Levels of Attainment were still absent and the number of Attainment Targets remained at two. As guidance for progression and continuity the document again provided End of Key Stage Statements (Appendix VII). These were, again, vague offering some detail as to what the children should have been doing but little specific indication as to what they should have achieved as they progress from stage to stage as well as within each stage, as can be seen in Table 4.

Dearing's aim to reduce the content of the document led to the Programmes of Study in the 1995 document (Appendix VIII) offering little in relation to projects or examples of how children should develop their musical skills. The terminology related to that of the other two documents, however this time it was difficult for teachers to identify progression between each Key Stage.

Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
improvise	improvise	improvise
explore	explore	arrange
create	create	select
select	select	combine
organise	combine	develop
	organise	

**Table 4** The lack of progress in programmes of study in Music in the National Curriculum

At Key Stages 2 and 3 "musical structures" are mentioned, although they are not detailed. At Key Stage 3 it is prescribed that children should compose in a "variety of styles"(DFE, 1994, p.7). There is no indication of how the composing at Key Stage 3 would show progression from Key Stages 1 and 2. At a glance Table 4 seems to imply that pupils do the same thing in all three Key Stages.

Models for progression are not apparent and the little guidance that is had been given is omitted without reason. It is appropriate, after the evidence which has already been brought to attention, to ask what would be an effective model of progression in composing for teachers. No case studies or examples of children's work are presented. No guidance as to appropriate teaching methods or analyses of childrens work are given in order for teachers to see what children can achieve and what helps them to achieve.

The implementation of a National curriculum can be seen to have failed to provide music teachers with the guidance they had for so long needed in order to teach composing in a way which ensures progression.

### **2.3 Material available for teachers**

Many music teachers have turned to published material for an aid to composing. It is important in this thesis to examine the nature of material that is currently available to teachers and to consider whether this offers a means of progressing in composing.

*Out of bounds* (Ellis, 1987) was designed in response to the announcement of the inclusion of composing within music at G.C.S.E level. Ellis claimed that the three areas, composing, listening and performing should "be included and interlinked in a practical course of music education" (Ellis, 1987, p.5). The material is aimed at children in the first three years of secondary school.

In the introduction Ellis, like Swanwick (1979), allied his work with that of Suzanne Langer, expressing the value of music as a means to the representation of feelings and emotions. It is through practical music making that one can express emotions. Like others before him, Ellis emphasised the importance of working within structures.

Ellis's first project (Appendix IX), aimed at the beginning of the first year of secondary school, deals with composing music by producing patterns that resemble Morse code, or bell chimes. Music is composed by the invention and arrangement of number patterns, as bell chimes are worked out or the alternations of long and short sounds, like Morse code. The compositions would appear to be structured through more mathematical than musical means to the traditionally trained musician working as a music teacher. They don't specify a style or idiom, there are no prescribed rules of melodic or harmonic progression.

Other projects take poems, plays, dimensions in space or time as the form of musical structure. There are no references to the many forms, orders and structures of western music to which music teachers are accustomed. Of course, teachers could apply conventions if they wanted to but contemporary teachers who are having to compile documents and reports for school inspectors may prefer to save time by using the

material as it appears.

For many teachers the content of *Out of Bounds* would appear to be an echo of that which teachers had been criticised for in the 1970s (Salaman, 1975).

There is little guidance from Ellis as to how pupils may progress as composers in tasks that he sets.

The ideas and techniques incorporated in Ellis's course are based on those of the Avant Garde composers, who were successful in using them. Ellis's approach is one which may become misinterpreted by teachers who associate the absence of a scheme for progression with the emphasis on structure outside of musical conventions. Thus *Out of Bounds* may not provide a satisfactory course for many.

*Music Matters* (Hiscock & Metcalfe, 1992) has become a popular source of lesson material for music teachers. It was designed as a complete music course for Key Stage 3 that would ensure progression. There are hints of Swanwick (1988) in the general introduction as Hiscock and Metcalfe claim that the projects follow "a developmental spiral in that they accumulate skills and revisit, strengthen and build upon previous knowledge and experience" (Hiscock and Metcalfe, 1992, p.5).

Hiscock and Metcalfe intended projects in *Music Matters* to follow on from knowledge and experience that had been gained at key Stages 1 and 2. It is important to note that there was no similar publication for these Key Stages until recently. *Music Matters* does, however, include ready made work sheets, lesson plans and listening material.

On assessment Hiscock and Metcalfe have nothing more to say than "a way of managing assessment as an integral part of the course needs to be found" (Hiscock and Metcalfe, 1992, p.7).

There are no criteria for assessment. There is a "Teacher Assessment Sheet" which comprises a series of empty boxes for teachers to note down comments on individual or group compositions - a blank piece of paper for teachers to write on.

The first project "Building Bricks" deals with the elements of music. Having discussed the various elements and listened to some examples of music in order to encounter each one the children are required to produce a "structured group composition" (Hiscock and Metcalfe, 1992, p.8). The children are given a copy of the "Bumps and Crashes composing sheet" (Hiscock and Metcalfe, 1992, p.13) as an aid which presents them with a choice of ideas for their composition and some empty boxes in which they can note down their own ideas and plans.

The project could be interpreted as an invitation for the children to produce a sequence of sound effects. It may be interpreted as a lesson in "Bangs and Botherations" (Salaman 1975). The publication is based on the assumption that children are able, by the end of Key Stage 2, to compose and structure melodies and harmonies, perform on a variety of instruments, and record their music in some form of notation and be proficient in all of this. This is, itself, an important broader issue and will be discussed in section 2.5.

Other projects in the Year 7 course deal with more conventional structures, such as ostinato form, marches and waltzes. However in a project where children have to produce " a piece which demonstrates a gradual change from complete lack of organisation to total organisation" (Hiscock and Metcalfe, 1992, p.60), can be seen to break down any sense of structure that children have gained if it is treated in a way that reflects the misinterpretations of previous years. There is no guidance in the publication as to how each project can be delivered using conventions or what skills must be acquired in order to tackle each of the projects. Children, who listen to pop music, are used to tonality, melody and structure.

It is not until the beginning of Year 8, in *Music Matters*, that children are taught how to compose a melody. In the first project of Year 8 they are required to "compose individually an eight-bar, two phrase, question-and-answer tune to a given rhythm" (Hiscock and Metcalfe, 1992, p.82). This project deals with traditional structure through practical, first hand experience. However, placed one year into the course it can be seen by the typical music teacher to fail to serve its purpose until very late on.

It is expected that children will develop their ability to compose melodies, harmonies and structures which are true to the conventions of the nineteenth century and before, as well as to pop music. Even if children are aware of conventions in music what is missing from the material which is available to teachers is guidance as to how to approach these in composing. As with the National Curriculum there are no case studies, analyses or examples to help teachers to identify where achievement lies.



## 2.4 SCAA on progression

Since this project began guidance for teachers in assessing progression in composing has been offered by SCAA in the form of the *Exemplification of Standards. Music: Key Stage 3* document (SCAA, 1996). SCAA present a series of End of Key Stage Descriptions for each of the attainment targets in music at Key Stage 3. These are for the purpose of helping the teacher to make summative judgements of a pupil's achievement (SCAA, 1996, p.2).

Section one of the document details the areas in which progress should be made. In composing these areas comprise the "exploration and development of ideas" and "the communication of ideas" (SCAA, 1996, p.5). SCAA suggest that skills in notation and aural perception should also be developed to enable progress elsewhere in the subject. Particular emphasis is placed upon the mastery of notational skills as it is suggested that;

"Increasing use of musical notations enables pupils to perform a wider range of music, to fix ideas so that these can be developed and refined when composing, and to analyse more complex and longer pieces of music.( SCAA, 1996, p.6)"

The document emphasises the complementary nature of the two attainment targets.

To help teachers assess achievement, in the areas prescribed by SCAA, four levels of achievement are described (Appendix X). The first is working towards the end of key stage description, the second achieving the components of the description, then the third working beyond and finally exceptional achievement.

There is significant emphasis on achievement. The four levels of achievement indicate that SCAA expect pupils to work at a level equal, above or beyond the end of key stage description. Little information is given in respect of pupils working towards the end of key stage description. This is a level at which the majority of pupils will work from the beginning of Key Stage 3. This covers everything which is taught until pupils achieve the

end of key stage description. It is evident from the Literature Review that this is an area where teachers may need more detailed guidance.

The document details specific areas in composing where progression should be made. These include, control and interpretation, ensemble skills, exploration and development of musical ideas and communication of ideas. There is particular emphasis on skills, knowledge and musical structures within each.

Another expectation is that pupils have achieved the end of key stage description in composing for key stage 2. Secondary school teachers are required to deliver Key Stages 3 and 4, not Key Stage 2, even to those who have not met the end of Key Stage 2 description.

The *Optional Tests and Tasks* document (SCAA, 1996) details six units headed "what will be tested in the unit" (SCAA, 1996, p.4). It is significant that the vocabulary is "tested" and not "experienced" or "encountered". This suggests a significant shift back to the years immediately following the Hadow Report (1927) and not the more recent beliefs which evolved from Witkin (1974) and Ross (1975).

The document highlights areas where assessment may occur in all components of music. These include observation of work in progress, observation of the end result, pupils' comments (spoken) and pupils' comments (written) (SCAA, 1996, p.7). However no criteria for assessment in composing is given.

In the optional tasks that are detailed, again, there is much emphasis on the nineteenth century conventional form, structure as well as performance, notational and other technical skills. This would suggest that pupils are to have mastered these at Key Stage 2.

Thus in the SCAA publications guidance is offered to music teachers as to the nature of composing, the designing of a project and areas of assessment. There is also a clear statement of what pupils are expected to achieve at the end of Key Stage 3. However detail of how pupils are to develop towards achieving the end of key stage description is not provided.

## **2.5 Other broader issues**

The introduction of a National Curriculum in schools has forced upon schools issues of staffing, time tabling and resourcing. Some music departments have had to resource composing. This has meant purchasing electronic keyboards, computer hard and software, or more traditional classroom instruments such as tuned percussion. This can cost departments thousands of pounds. Many departments, or indeed schools, do not have funding available on such a scale.

There are few music specialists teaching in any one primary school. Thus most of the music curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 is delivered by non subject specialists.

If pupils are expected, by the National Curriculum, to work in groups then a musician, as teacher would prefer that each group use a separate space in which they will not be disturbed by others. Empty classrooms and practice rooms are a luxury that many schools do not have.

The introduction of Core Subjects by the National Curriculum has meant that schools have had to alter timetables to fit everything in. This too has implications for the successful delivery of music in schools as many are only delivering the minimum.

Chapters 1 and 2 of this investigation have brought to attention the problems that music teachers have faced when attempting to teach composing at Key Stage 3 in a way which ensures progress. This has been due to misunderstandings, misinterpretations and misguidance as to the nature of progression in composing and of composing itself. There

are also broader issues, indicated in this section, that affect all subjects which may also hinder progression in composing at Key Stage 3.

## **2.6 An overview of the evidence**

Innovation in the music curriculum in the twentieth century has ensured that classroom music has risen in both status and profile. It is currently a compulsory subject in schools in England and Wales throughout Key Stages 1 to 3.

Spurred on by the fashions of the 1960s and 1970s for a curriculum that enabled "creativity" and "self expression" music has become a practical subject, one that ensures "hands on" experience that is accessible to all. However, the suggestions which have been made as to this approach in music have been largely ill used and misinterpreted by many.

Many music educators have published their ideas as to the nature of classroom music. For many this has included composing. Yet many of these publications have not offered specific criteria for the assessment of progression in composing.

Music teachers have been trained as performers or musicologists. Many need suggestions as to how composing can be taught and its achievement assessed within each Key Stage.

Assessment of progression in composing is problematic as there is little consistency as to the nature of composing in the classroom. Some theorists have offered philosophies as to what should be assessed yet no specific criteria for assessment has been offered to teachers.

Different techniques for notating and recording compositions have been devised in an attempt to make music accessible to all.

Assessment of composing appears to have been, possible and successful at G.C.S.E where criteria for assessment are detailed.

Teachers turned to the National Curriculum for guidance in progression, yet disputes between teachers and the government had resulted in guide lines for assessment, such as levels, being omitted in the 1994 document.

SCAA's recent publications (1996), in support of the National Curriculum, have detailed where progression should occur, yet again no detailed criteria for assessment are presented.

It would appear that assessment of composing is an area of the music curriculum which is in considerable disarray.

## SUMMARY

The evidence examined in Chapters 1 and 2 indicates:

- a. Composing is a valuable part of music education.
- b. There are different reasons for the inclusion of composing in the music curriculum.
- c. Methods of teaching composing are varied.
- d. There are problems in assessing progression in composing at Key Stages 1 to 3.
- e. There is concern as to appropriate techniques for notation.
- f. There would appear to be fewer problems with assessing progression in composing at G.C.S.E.
- g. There would appear to be a lack of effective material or training for guiding music teachers in teaching composing

The next chapter of this thesis will address the method for investigating these issues in order to try to determine effective means of teaching and assessing composing at Key Stage 3.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **A CONSIDERATION OF APPROPRIATE METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter gives critical consideration of the method for data collection that is considered to be most suitable for an investigation into the appropriate methods of teaching composing to ensure progression at Key Stage 3. The process for data collection will then be described.

#### **3.1 Possible reliable and valid methods for this thesis**

There are a number of methods that would be both reliable and valid. The nature of this enquiry demands a focus on ideas of teachers and how these affect the progress of children in music. Reliable methods for an investigation of this project's nature would include the interview, the questionnaire or the case study. The first two allow teachers the opportunity to describe the effectiveness of their ideas for teaching composing. The latter allows the researcher the experience of witnessing at first hand the effectiveness of teachers' methods for teaching composing.

#### **3.2 The interview as the method for the investigation**

The interview is very often used as one of a range of survey methods in social research and is described by Cohen and Mannion as an "unusual method for data collection in that it involves the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals" (Cohen and Mannion, 1995, p.271). Although the interview is more commonly used as support for other methods of data collection such as the questionnaire, in this instance, it is considered to stand alone as the most reliable method.

Cohen and Mannion (1995, p.273) outline four different types of interview, the structured interview, the unstructured interview, the non-directive interview and the focused interview.

There are time constraints imposed on this to which the unstructured and non-directive interview may present problems. However, the structured and focused interview are considered to be too limiting for this project as the nature of the topic is such that the interviewee may link one issue with another and the interview must, therefore, be semi-structured. The semi-structured interview allows the researcher to pick up and record aspects such as body language, manner, and attitude all of which could be used to illuminate the interviewee's answers to more direct questions.

There are a number of advantages to the semi-structured interview that make it particularly appropriate for this study. The nature of this enquiry requires a degree of depth into the ideas and experiences of music teachers. A semi-structured interview offers the interviewer opportunities to follow up matters that arise during the course of the interview whilst ensuring that all relevant issues are covered in sufficient detail. The greatest advantage of the interview is that it offers the researcher depth. It offers direct insights into the interviewee's thoughts and feelings, as well as the opportunity to apply direct questions. Therefore the semi-structures interview is the most advantageous method for data collection in an investigation of this nature. As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, the music curriculum is vast and it is anticipated that each teacher who takes part in the investigation may have very different experiences and ideas. Therefore the interviewer needs the opportunity to enquire further into particular responses. The interview situation also allows the interviewee and researcher to work at a speed appropriate and comfortable to both ensuring that questions are adequately understood and interpreted correctly, thus increasing the reliability and validity of the data.



### **3.3 The questionnaire as a research method**

The ideal questionnaire has many advantages. Cohen and Mannion (1995, p.92) describe the method as possessing "the same properties as good law" and they make reference to Davidson (1970) in describing the method as one that is easy for the respondent to understand if designed well. However, it is difficult to design the ideal questionnaire and a pilot will have to be designed and tested before the investigation can be carried out.

Whilst a reliable method for collecting facts and opinions, the questionnaire does not allow for the depth of detailed information that is necessary for this enquiry. In this project the interviewer is required, to some extent, to observe the feelings of the interviewee in order to form an impression of their views and feelings. This would not be possible using a questionnaire. The questionnaire does not allow scope for witnessing the behaviour of the respondent. The researcher requires the opportunity to investigate on an individual basis further matters that arise during investigation. This would only be possible if an interview were to take place after the analysis of questionnaire data. Whereas this would be a desirable method it would not be possible within the time constraints that are imposed upon this project. The questionnaire is therefore too limiting for this project. Also, the small scale of this project and the small number of informants does not warrant a questionnaire.

Other factors that limit the reliability and validity of the questionnaire include the risk of a small number of returns. This is particularly true of the informants participating in this project. Music teachers are one group that work long after school hours, training ensembles or rehearsing for end of term events. They are busy people and may not, quite justifiably, have the time, willingness or energy to complete a detailed questionnaire. There is also the risk that busy respondents will not take sufficient time to read questions which could then be misinterpreted or misunderstood. Such factors would severely affect the reliability and validity of retrieved data yet it is this particular group of teachers who are valuable to this enquiry as they represent the typical music teacher.

It was, therefore, decided that the questionnaire would not be a suitable method for this investigation.

### **3.4 The case study as a research method**

The case study offers the opportunity to witness, at first hand, children's progress in music. However, this investigation is concerned with the progress of children over a period of three years. It would not be feasible, because of the time limitations, to spend this amount of time investigating through case studies, despite the method's reliability. It is necessary that a moderate sized sample be drawn from different schools, the time consuming case study would severely restrict this. The case study of only one or two teachers may not reveal sufficient difference and may not represent the spread of music teaching, particularly composing.

### **3.5 In conclusion of the choice of method for this investigation**

The focus of this study requires a depth of response that could not be offered by the questionnaire alone. The time constraints on this project makes the case study impossible. The researcher appreciates the pressures upon busy music teachers and feels that the most enlightening respondents would be those who have been approached, in the first instance, to determine whether they have an interest in the project and therefore will have the time to offer and an interest in the investigation. Thus the interview is considered to be the most reliable method of data collection for this project.

### **3.6 The limitations of the semi-structured interview**

There are limitations that the researcher must bear in mind whilst conducting a semi-structured interview. The interview process is time consuming and this project has specific time constraints imposed upon it. Interviews need to be recorded in some form, in the first instance, either by video or audio equipment, and later transcribed before analysis. This takes a considerable amount of time. There is also the risk that the interview may over run the allocated time putting further pressure on the researcher.

Other limitations of the semi-structured interview are referred to by Cohen and Mannion (1995, p.275). These include the observation that either party may feel uncomfortable when placed in a one to one situation, particularly if either party feels uncomfortable with a particular characteristic of the other. Such a situation may add to a risk of bias in subsequent interpretation of the data. Other factors that are also drawn to our attention by Cohen and Mannion are some of the possible causes of bias, including discomfort with attitudes and opinions expressed by either party; the desire of the interviewer to seek particular opinions. A truly satisfied researcher would be the one whose hypothesis had been proved. The interviewer must therefore design a schedule with questions that do not mislead the interviewee or cause the interviewee to feel directly challenged. With careful construction of the schedule these limitations can be overcome.

### **3.7 Ethical issues**

A shrewd interviewer must take account of ethical dimensions that arise in the interview situation. Reliable and valid research for this project requires the interview sample to include teachers who may have much more experience of teaching music than the interviewer. It is necessary that a number of the questions in the schedule deal with the interviewees' beliefs, philosophies and feelings. It is important that the interviewer is careful not to appear to be questioning the interviewee's experience in a way that may challenge the interviewee's professional expertise. The questions should only be directly applied at times when the interviewee feels in control and unthreatened. For the same reasons it is essential that there is a point towards the end of the interview that the interviewees are given the opportunity to speak freely about how they perceive the situation, thus leaving the interviewees feeling in control. In discussing current issues a frank interviewee may wish to criticise or complain. It is important that their opinions are dealt with by the interviewer in the strictest confidence. Thus in this project the interviewees will be given pseudonyms in respect of their professional expertise.

There are also technical considerations to be borne in mind when collecting data by interview. It is an advantage to the interviewer to record the interviews on audio tape as a reliable method for collecting raw data. The interviewer should seek the permission of the interviewee to record the interview and ensure confidentiality as should the interviewee feel uncomfortable with this proposal there is a further risk of bias.

### **3.8 Current events and issues that are influential in this investigation**

This project is being designed at a time when the subject matter is highly topical in all subjects. Music teachers are currently being asked to focus on assessment of composing. This further enhances the quality of the data collected in that the issues discussed are a part of music teachers' everyday thinking and the teachers are, therefore, likely to give detailed response to questions and issues that are discussed in the interview.

### **3.9 The design of the semi-structured schedule**

The schedule comprises a list of topics that will be discussed. These topics are identified in chapters 1 and 2 as key issues central to the topic of teaching composing at Key

3. These topics are:

1. The priority given to composing within the whole curriculum.
2. Reasons for including composing in the music curriculum.
3. Methods of teaching composing.
4. Assessment.
5. Methods for teaching composing at G.C.S.E.
6. Training.
7. Material available to teachers.
8. Other issues.

The relevance of each of these issues is discussed in section 3.10.

For each issue a small number of open ended questions will be used as prompts. Some topics are more general, particularly at the beginning and ending of the schedule when the interviewee must feel comfortable and in control of the issues being dealt with. The topics in the middle of the schedule are more specific and where more direct questioning is likely to occur. A certain quality of response is desired for this project thus the response modes are 'unstructured'. This ensures that the interviewee is given the freedom to answer as fully as he/she chooses.

### **3.10 The relevance of the questions**

Section 2.6 suggests that there are a number of issues that make it more difficult for teachers to find an effective method for teaching composing to ensure progression. These issues were listed in the Summary of the Literature Review. It is vital that each of these issues are addressed in the interview. Each one is relevant thus:

#### **Issue 1: The priority given to composing within the music curriculum**

Kodaly introduced simple composing tasks as part of his method for developing the aural awareness of children. For Orff composing was the main vehicle for school music especially in his *Schulwerk* (1950-54). After the poor response to school music in the School Council's Enquiry I (1968), Paynter and Aston (1970) produced a publication that was to revolutionise classroom music in which composing became the backbone and the main focus of school music. Salaman (1983) included composing as only a part of his approach to school music as did Swanwick (1979). Composing was introduced to G.C.S.E. music as the syllabus comprises almost a third composing and the National Curriculum followed suit for music at Key Stage 3 comprises a third composing claiming it as vital as a part of the practice of all musicians. Paynter's publication *Sound and Structure* (1992) was another attempt by Paynter to emphasise the importance and vitality of focusing on composing.

After almost three decades of debate over the priority given to composing in the music curriculum different educators still have different opinions. It is important in this project to determine the priority that teachers give to composing within their curricula. It is also necessary, due to the influence of writers such as Salaman, Swanwick and the producers of the National Curriculum to determine how composing and other areas of the music curriculum interrelate. Therefore the following will be discussed:

- i. The value of performing, appraising or composing.
- ii. Time allocated to composing at Key Stage 3?
- iii. Ideal amount of time for composing.
- iv. The interrelation of composing, performing and appraising.

#### **Issue 2: Reasons for including composing in the music curriculum**

Kodaly included composing as a means to develop aural awareness. Orff used composing as a vehicle for appraisal. Music was criticised by Witkin (1975) for lagging behind the other arts that had already dealt with new approaches and made their subjects vehicles for 'creativity' and 'self expression'. These became increasingly fashionable terms for education during the 1970s and for Paynter and Aston (1970) composing was a means for creativity in music, something which was accessible to all. Others viewed composing as the vehicle for self expression. For Salaman (1983) composing was a means for musical appraisal. The National Curriculum justified the inclusion of composing as a vital part of the practice of all musicians. With so many possible reasons for the inclusion of composing it is important, in this project, to determine teachers' reasons for the inclusion of composing within their curricula. Therefore the following will be discussed:

- i. Do you regard composing as a vehicle for self expression, creativity, appraisal, analysis, or developing a specific technique?

### **Issue 3: methods of teaching composing**

Chapters 1 and 2 detailed various reasons of music educators for teaching composing. The methods of Kodaly and Orff were prescriptive. The emphasis of Paynter and Aston (1970) on sound and beginning a project from a generic cell was revolutionary in the teaching of music, despite its reflection of the avant garde. The avant garde influence has been misinterpreted to mean that in composing teachers need not be concerned with traditional conventions, rudiments or musical theory, and all that classroom music had been previously. Naturally music teachers felt insecure about implementing the revolutionary methods. This method was described as a "philosophy of instant results and gratification which must lead to nothing" (Salaman, 1975, T.E.S.). The National Curriculum (1994) drew upon the theories of the previous thirty years in music education in outlining a broad curriculum that suggested teachers use various methods for teaching composing. Thus teachers are still left to decide for themselves which methods to use.

The more conventional methods make it easy for teachers to judge progress. Things can be right or wrong and, like in mathematics, the more the pupils can get right the further they are progressing. The avant garde methods of Paynter and Aston (1970) focused upon breadth of experience being the means for progression. This was a new and sometimes difficult perception for teachers and it is important in this project to consider through which methods of teaching composing teachers feel they are ensuring progress. Therefore the interviewees will be asked to:

- i. Describe their methods for teaching composing.
- ii. Describe how/ whether they recognise achievement in composing.
- iii. Comment on the value of rudiments and theory, in particular notation.
- iv. Say whether they feel their methods are accessible to all pupils.

#### **Issue 4: Assessment**

Effective assessment of development should ensure progress takes place.

Very little guidance has been produced to support teachers in their assessment of progress in composing. The importance of assessment was emphasised by Paynter and Aston (1970) and again by Paynter in 1980 and 1992 but with no detail as to how successful assessment could be put into practice. Swanwick (1988) outlined a model for assessment, however it focused upon development over many years and not, as most teachers teach, one Key Stage at a time. The Draft Proposals for the National Curriculum (1991) presented ten levels where, with some degree of scrutiny, it was possible to see development. It was superficial and did not detail examples and was dropped from the Curriculum before implementation. In *Music Mind and Education* (Swanwick 1992), Swanwick presented end of Key Stage Statements that pupils should work towards and these are mirrored in the 1994 National Curriculum document. Yet the majority of music teachers teach within one Key Stage only which requires assessment of progression from term to term and at broadest from year to year.

The most recent guidance that teachers have received in assessment has been the *Consistency in teacher assessment, Exemplification of Standards*, (SCAA, 1996). Here, areas where children should progress are outlined. The Literature Review drew particular attention to the reliance of the assessment criteria presented in the document upon technical skills. These are the areas where assessment is relatively easy, yet they are the areas that were criticised for boring pupils and excluding pupils.

It is necessary, in this project, to discover how or whether teachers can assess progression in composing, whether it is an easy task for them, which areas of composing assessment is easy or difficult and what, if any, guidance teachers require. It is also important in dealing with this to try to identify teachers' perceptions as to the nature of progression.

Thus the interviewees will be asked:

- i. How does the interviewee measure progress?



- ii. Is it easy to measure progress and where do the difficulties lie?
- iii. How helpful have the National Curriculum or the SCAA documents been in assessing progress?
- iv. What, if anything, would teachers like to be made available to them in order to assess progress?

### **Issue 5: A comparison of the teaching methods and assessment methods in composing between Key Stage 3 and G.C.S.E**

Chapter 1 drew particular attention to the fact that composing at G.C.S.E. level seems to be relatively unproblematic. The G.C.S.E. syllabus does present clear guidelines for assessment of composing. Section 1.8 did point out that in order to determine why this was the case a specific research project would have to be carried out that would be far beyond the time constraints of this project. However it would be valuable to this project to determine what differences or similarities there are between methods for teaching and assessing between G.C.S.E. level and Key Stage 3. This may offer suggestions as to what in composing is teachable and assessable.

There was a great deal of provision for INSET training when the G.C.S.E. was implemented and it is important to investigate whether this has been the case for composing at Key Stage 3.

Interviewees will be asked to:

- i. Describe their methods for teaching composing at G.C.S.E. level.
- ii. Say how, if at all, these methods or the pupil differ from Key Stage 3.

### **Issue 6: Training**

The Literature Review drew attention to the fact that Kodaly, Orff, Paynter and Aston were, significantly, experienced and successful composers. It was only natural, therefore, that composing would be an important part of music education for them. Salaman, to a certain extent, represented those music teachers who had no training as composers, that were accomplished performers or musicologists, he himself a French Horn player. The Literature Review drew attention to the few university and college degree courses that

offered composing as an area for study up until very recently. It is valuable to this project to determine the level of training that teachers have experienced in composing in relation to how comfortable they are at teaching and assessing it.

Thus the interviewees will be asked:

- i. To describe any compositional background they have.
- ii. To evaluate how much of any compositional background is drawn upon in teaching composing at Key Stage 3.
- iii. To describe any major influences in teaching composing.

#### **Issue 7: Material available to teachers.**

The publications and training for teaching Orff's method of composing were demanding of time and commitment and thus inaccessible to many teachers. The Literature Review drew particular attention to the fact that between the publication of *Sound and Silence* (Paynter and Aston, 1970) and *Music in the Secondary School Curriculum* (Paynter, 1984) little material was available to teachers as guidance or ideas for teaching composing. Some later publications such as *Out of Bounds* (Ellis, 1987) and *Music Matters* (Hiscock and Metcalfe, 1992) focused on composing at Key Stage 3 yet the Literature Review drew to attention the possibility that the schemes of work presented in these publications may not effectively ensure progression or be suitable to all schools. It is important, therefore to determine whether any such publications are being used effectively. The interviewee will be asked to comment whether this is the case.

#### **Issue 8: Other issues**

Broader issues affecting the teaching of music in general were brought to light in the Literature Review. If teachers feel these are affecting music at Key Stage 3 then it follows that composing will be affected by such issues as lack of curriculum time awarded to music, poor equipment, large class sizes and any other issue the interviewees may like to comment on. Thus it is valuable to this project that the interviewee be given the chance to comment on any other factors that are detrimental or aid the effective teaching of composing in order to ensure progression.

### **3.11 The length of the schedule**

The number of issues is determined by the summary of evidence in Chapter 2 and cannot be decreased. Whilst each topic must be discussed in some depth it is important that topics are not discussed to such a length as to present the transcriber with problems due to the time constraints imposed upon the whole project. This would also present problems when coding if there is an abundance of data. Two methods of time limitation have been used to overcome this. In the first instance the prompts for each topic also act as a checklist to ensure all the key issues have been covered. Once these have been covered the interview can move on.

Secondly, each topic has been allocated a time limit that, where possible, the interviewer must round off each topic, ask any direct questions for key issues that have not been dealt with and then move on. It is anticipated that each topic be discussed for approximately three minutes. Effective use of time in this project is essential and in order to ensure this a framework for the recording progress has been sketched out. Taking each step of the framework into account the researcher can distribute time effectively. This also serves to emphasise the importance of time limitation in each interview.

### **3.12 The framework for the recording process**

Thompson (1995) suggests a framework for collecting and analysing qualitative data.

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>Stage 1</b> | <b>Raw Data: audio-taped recording.</b> |
| <b>Stage 2</b> | <b>Verbatim Transcripts.</b>            |
| <b>Stage 3</b> | <b>Coded Transcripts.</b>               |
| <b>Stage 4</b> | <b>Interpretation of Data.</b>          |
| <b>Stage 5</b> | <b>Presentation Results.</b>            |

These stages have been used as the framework for this study.

### **3.13 The transcripts**

The Raw Data will be transcribed in a three stage process. The Raw Data will immediately be transcribed verbatim. Field notes will be added in order to note other features of the interview such as the body language, mannerisms, enthusiasm, willingness and pace of the interviewee. The final stage involves coding. As trends, themes and ideas recur as the interviews progress each feature will be coded in accordance with a key that will be developed as the interviews progress.

### **3.14 Preparation**

Each of the interviewees was approached in the first instance by a letter sent directly to them outlining the purpose of the project, the nature of the interview and an indication of the issues that would make up the interview schedule. This was followed by a phone call to arrange a date and time for the interview. This also served to prompt late replies. Due to the restricted time scale of the whole project it was planned that all interviews should be carried out between February and April 1997. The Pilot took place in December 1997 which allowed time for modification and refinement of the schedule before the sample was interviewed.

### **3.15 The sample**

The nature of this project requires a sample of teachers of different ages and a range of professional training. It is important that, as far as possible, there are equal numbers of male and female interviewees, as different trends in music education have sometimes been seen to have had male or female leadership or support.

The target number for the sample was ten. The aim was that approximately three teachers would have trained and qualified during each of the three decades focused upon in chapters 1 and 2. The sample was selected. Music teachers from different ethnic backgrounds have not been approached. Whilst their ideas may suggest a positive way forward it was thought that many other issues would have to be dealt with that would

cloud the initial focus of the project. Another reason for this decision is that there are few music teachers who are from different ethnic backgrounds.

### **3.16 The pilot interview**

The Pilot Interview was undertaken to prove the relevance of the issues of the schedule and determine that the questions were reliable and valid. This project presented the researcher with her first encounter of interview as the method for the investigation. Thus it was necessary, as well as testing the issues of the schedule, for the researcher to treat the pilot as a means to practise interview technique. With these aims in mind the interviewee selected for the pilot was a close colleague. This meant that the pilot interview was easy to arrange. As the interviewee for the pilot was known to the interviewer as a good teacher he proved a good test of the interviewee's prompts. The interviewee, an experienced music teacher was also considered to be a suitable part of the whole sample.

### **3.17 Responses from the pilot interview with Mr. Ash**

1. Mr. Ash seems to be comfortable with the whole idea of composing at Key Stage 3 and has come to terms with the process-oriented approach. Mr. Ash values composing as an important part of the music curriculum and underlines its importance to him by describing it as "fundamental".
2. Mr. Ash values composing as a "creative act", and one that is accessible to all.
3. Mr. Ash's description of his method of teaching composing suggests that he is not too bothered by particular traditional skills in theory when he is dealing with this part of the music curriculum at Key Stage 3, however he is more reliant on these at Key Stage 4. They are there at Key Stage 3 for more practical reasons than academic. Mr. Ash suggests that there is room and a certain need for the development of traditional skills in other lessons (performing, analysing) but he does feel that each is interdependent and related. Mr. Ash seems happy with the idea of feeding in skills and knowledge

appropriate to the child as required rather than starting from a syllabus of rudiments and set skills to be learnt, even though this means individualised schemes.

4. Mr. Ash clearly has difficulties in devising a scheme for the assessment of pupil's progress in composing. His language at this point in the interview would suggest that it has been something of a particular bother to him.

5. Mr. Ash suggests that his teaching of composing at Key Stage 4 is more dependent on traditional techniques and skills. This has made assessment of progression easier at this level for him.

6. Mr. Ash has clearly benefited from being taught composition and other experience clearly influences his method of teaching composing.

7. Mr. Ash is critical of published material that is currently available to music teachers. The recent SCAA publication has been useful in that it provides some examples of pupils' work which helps define a level of achievement. Mr. Ash is clear in what he would like to be made available to him. A Pilot Study based on only one informant is limiting, however in such a small scale project it is adequate. The quality of the data from the pilot interview is considered to be valuable to this investigation and will be included along with the other data collected.

### **3.18 Modifications to the interview schedule in light of the results of the pilot**

As a result of the interview with Mr Ash some modifications were made to the Interview Schedule. The modifications to the Interview Schedule were minor and mainly in the form of a few additions and some reorganisation. It was decided that it would be valuable for the purpose of this investigation to discuss the extent to which technical and traditional skills are a part of other areas of the music curriculum such as performing and analysing and how teachers perceive the interdependency of the different areas.

The difference in response in the discussion on assessment of progress at Key Stage 3 and at Key Stage 4 is great. Key Stage 4 has been made a separate topic on the schedule, the number of questions now amounts to nine.

It also became apparent from the Pilot Interview that the interviewer must be prepared for a slightly greater length of interview and be sure to remain aware of the time allocated for each topic during the interview.

### 3.19 The time table of the interviews

Interviews have been arranged, as illustrated in table 5, to coincide with the limited time scale.

February 1997	March 1997	April 1997
Mr. Cook	Miss Watts	Mr. Perry
Mrs North	Mrs Kidd	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Higgs		

**Table 5** The time table of interviews

### 3.20 The Final Sample

One of the informants decided prior to the interview that they felt they would not be able to help the researcher. This was late March 1997. Thus the size of the Sample was reduced to eight (including the Pilot Interview).

The spread of the Sample was still good with an even spread of informants, male and female, having qualified at different times during the past three decades and the present decade. Table 6 shows the spread of the sample.

1960's	1970's	1980's	1990's
Mrs North	Mr. Ash Mr. Taylor	Mrs Kidd Mr. Cook	Mr. Higgs Miss Watts Mr. Perry

**Table 6** The range of experience of the informants

### **3.21 Other considerations**

It became impossible for the interviewer to meet with one of the informants and an interview over the telephone had to be arranged. This posed some problems for the interviewer. During the interview no body language was observed. The raw data was collected by means of a short hand developed by the interviewer which reduced the pace of the interview thus extending its length. With the pace of the interview being reduced this allowed the interviewee more time to think and therefore there was a greater volume of response, a vicious circle that the interviewer had to work hard at combating.

### **3.22 Producing the verbatim transcript**

Each Verbatim Transcript took a two or three hours to produce. The text was set out so that field notes could be entered next to the text and sufficient space was left for coding.

### **3.23 Coding**

Each transcript was studied and relevant themes were highlighted. Relevant themes included those which were recurring throughout more than one interview or any issues of considerable interest. Issues that were not considered to be relevant were such that had a substance far removed from the original issue being discussed. There was the occasion where respondents may have made what the interviewer perceived as being too many complaints and much of this was dismissed also as this showed the respondent to be biasing the data.



The relevant themes were categorised in a table (Appendix XIV) where each row of the table represents a trend or theme. Recurring themes became apparent from this process. The coding process was time consuming. The investigator had to be aware that bias should not enter this part of the process by her choosing only the themes that she considered to be important.

### **3.24 Some reflections**

The interview and transcription processes took four months to complete in total. This was hard work as transcription became almost laborious and coding was not as simple as ranking or awarding points. Other problems, such as school concerts, OFSTED and general work load, hindered the investigation further. Yet despite these practical difficulties the interviews were completed and the rich data collected was considered to be worth the additional effort in data collection.

The interview situation was one where not only did the interviewee occasionally feel on the spot, but so too, and only naturally, did the interviewer. However, as the interviewer had anticipated many of these difficulties, determination on her part overcame most of them and the data collected are considered valuable to this investigation.

### **3.25 Presentation and discussion of the results**

The data collected, after being categorised, is presented in Chapter 4. It will then be discussed in Chapter 5.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **PRESENTATION OF IMPORTANT ISSUES THAT HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO ATTENTION IN THE DATA**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

The data collected is diverse and informing. Teachers' perceptions of progression in composing at Key stage 3 are affected by their own different beliefs, experiences, situations and influences. The presentation of the results will define the effect these beliefs have on how teachers and pupils can assess progression in composing at Key Stage 3.

#### **4.1 The main themes arising from the data collected**

Appendix XIV highlights themes which are considered valuable in qualifying the investigation into teachers' perceptions of assessing progression in composing at Key Stage 3:

1. The value of composing to teachers
2. The interrelation of performing, listening and composing
3. Reasons for composing
4. Methods of teaching composing
5. Technical Skills
6. Notation
7. Expectations
8. Different teaching styles at G.C.S.E
9. Different pupils at G.C.S.E
10. Guidance for teachers in the form of publications
11. Guidance for teachers in the form of INSET
12. Guidance for teachers at during training
13. Teachers' individual musical specialism

14. The abilities of pupils
15. The diverse nature of music
16. A mismatch between Key Stages

Each of the issues above will be discussed in the following chapter where it will be shown how each is a valuable factor in the investigation.

#### **4.2 The nature of progression**

Six of the eight informants had clear ideas as to the nature of progression. These became apparent at the point in the interview when the informant was asked to explain where progression could be assessed. However, although teachers had clear perceptions as to the nature of progression they were not able to define the level or rate of their pupils' progress in each case. It is useful at this point to recognise how each of the informants perceive the nature of progression in composing at Key Stage 3.

Mr. Ash, in interview 1, perceives progression in composing as the "development of someone's creativity" (line 117). Mr. Ash believes that progression can be defined as the degree of a child's exploration and development of ideas. However he finds it difficult to assess due to his subjective perception of its nature.

In interview 2 Mr. Cook had clear ideas that progression is made by a child encountering increasingly difficult or complex rudiments and dealing with them. Mr. Cook finds it easy to assess progress in his pupils' compositions by consideration of the success with which they deal with the technicalities of the work he sets.

In interview 3 Mrs North stated that assessment of progression is not possible in the more creative tasks that she and her pupils enjoy. However she is certain that progression can be assessed in the more rudimentary areas of composing which the National Curriculum requires her to teach. Her statement "what exactly do we mean by

progression?" (line 93) highlights an important area for consideration in this investigation.

Mr. Higgs, in interview 4, perceives progression as social development, a progression in which music lessons are only a contributing factor.

Along with Mr. Ash, Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, and Miss Watts in interview 5, perceive progression as subjective examination of the work they have produced and thus difficult to define.

In interview 7, Mr. Perry has clear ideas about progress. For him progression occurs when technical skills and knowledge are recalled and developed upon. As with Mr. Cook, in interview 2, Mr. Perry's perception is based upon technicalities and rudiments, where there can be mathematical right or wrong answers.

Mr. Taylor, in interview 8, feels that progression should be seen in the context of progression between Key Stages. He finds difficulties in measuring progression within Key Stage 3. He perceives progression as the development of creativity which he considers to be subjective and, therefore, more difficult to assess.

Whether the informants are able to assess their pupils' progress or not it is evident that their individual perceptions as to the value and nature of composing within composing at Key Stage 3 affects their perceptions of the nature of progression. The data shows that progression can be considered to occur in one or more of the following areas:

1. The technical and rudimentary aspects of composing.
2. The creative process involved in composing.
3. The social development that might occur as a result of the lessons.
4. The breadth of a child's musical experience or knowledge.

### **4.3 The interrelation of performing, listening and composing**

Performing and listening are considered vital, by all of the informants, as a means of enabling composing and, therefore, progression in composing at Key Stage 3. A number of informants believe that it is important for children to develop skills in performing and listening before they tackle composing. Others believe that composing is the point of discovery of music and that the search for new ideas for compositions parallels development of performing and listening skills.

Miss Watts, in interview 5, is an example of the first group. In her schemes of work the point of discovery of a new feature is through listening. Having listened to a particular genre of music as a stimulus her pupils spend time developing performing skills through playing music characteristic of the selected genre. Once performance skills have been developed her pupils are required to incorporate the music's features in a composition.

In interview 8 Mr. Taylor explained how he feels it is important for his pupils to learn performance skills before composing. Allowing the children to compose before sufficient performance skills are mastered, led Mr. Taylor to "wonder, just what, at that point, I was teaching them" (line 23). He believes that it is up to him to provide the children with the level of performance and listening skills necessary for them to achieve success at composing.

The compositions that are produced by Miss Watts and Mr. Taylors' pupils are a culmination of everything that their pupils have been informed of and discovered, skills they have developed and rudiments they will have learned. Mr. Taylor suggested (line 213) that giving children an expectation of what a composition is to consist of would make it easier to identify achievement. Achievement would be recognised by the inclusion of the teachers' expectations.

Mr. Cook , in interview 2, explained that progression is made by giving children something that is more "challenging" (line 66) each time a task is set. He spoke of how, in Year 9, his pupils are set tasks based on exploiting chords. Performing chords demands a higher level of skill on an instrument than performing a single line of melody alone and it opens up more harmonic, and therefore creative, possibilities for the composer. Thus by posing greater challenges to a child's performance skills a more complex and creative composition may be produced. Progression is achieved and can be assessed through the extent to which the children have grasped the concept of chords and exploited them.

According to this approach progression in composing can be made by a child developing his or her performing and listening skills in order to exploit their creative possibilities. The nature of progression demands children coming to terms with more technical and rudimentary aspects of the subject. It is easy to identify what is right and what is wrong and, therefore, a child's achievement can be easily assessed.

In interview 6 Mrs Kidd explained how developing her pupils' repertoire provides a stimulus for their own compositions and that this enhances their creativity. Assessment of progress is through recognising to what extent the children have referred to the ideas given to them. Once more it would appear that composing serves as proof that children have grasped certain knowledge.

A number of the informants spoke of when their pupils produce compositions performing and listening skills are continually drawn upon. A cycle can be recognised. Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, explained that her pupils recall performance skills in showing their compositions to the class and it is at that point that listening skills are recalled as the class appraise each others' compositions. Performing and listening skills are enabling skills for composing and then composing enables further performing and listening.

It is apparent, however, that the technical demands involved in performing may hinder children's achievement. In interview 4 Mr. Higgs pointed out that " a lot of the kids find it hard to perform their compositions to the class" (line 19). Miss Watts, in interview 6, pointed out the benefits of having a great number of instrumentalists in the school so that "most of them know what they are doing" (line 76) in composing. Mrs Kidd explained how the musical repertoire selected for the children to listen to should be selected carefully so that the children are not discouraged by thinking that they are expected to produce music of a similar calibre. She also suggested that perhaps Key Stage 3 should be spent developing performing and listening as enabling skills as she speculated that many famous musicians and composers would have done. Mr. Taylor strongly believes that despite problems with technicalities the creative process is one that is still accessible to all and he counters the problems of performance by having his pupils work in groups, each one consisting of at least one instrumentalist whose skills the others would manipulate.

Mr Ash, in interview 1, has a different philosophy on the interrelation of performing, listening and composing than the other informants. It is important to consider in particular the points that he raised in the interview.

"I've always put the creative act before the theory. I like to give the kids an idea for a starting point and get them to do something with it. The input from me in terms of theory is dictated by the needs of the pupil and their approach to the creative act will throw up various questions that they need to answer. It is at that point that I make the professional decision whether to give them appropriate background whether to help them explore the material" (line 36-49).

For Mr. Ash composing is the point of discovery and the performing and listening skills develop parallel to the child's creativity does. Thus each child develops only the technical skills that they require unlike the pupils of other informants who believe in delivering an amount of technical skill and background for the whole class. Thus each of his pupils may encounter different skills, knowledge or experience. Mr. Ash has a very different teaching style and view of his role as the teacher to other informants.

It is evident from the investigation that as children make progress in performing and listening they are able to progress in composing. For some performing and listening are the primary enabling factors or, like Mr. Ash in interview 1, the composing is the primary enabling skill. Either way the children are required to nurture some technical skills. Whereas technical skills are considered to be restricting by some (Mr. Higgs in section 4.3), they are essential if children are to achieve any form of progress.

#### **4.4 Reasons for including composing as part of the music curriculum**

From the data collected it is clear that teachers' reasons for including composing have an effect on the identification of progress.

Mr. Cook, in interview 2, stated that his reason for including composing was that

"it tends to be the culmination of all that the kids have learnt. If we've done a project on the ground bass then it's a test of whether they've understood what a ground bass is "(lines 35-40).

Here the reasons for including composing are technical, a test of a child's knowledge and skill, and progress can easily be assessed.

Others who perceive composing as a vehicle for self expression or as a tool for promoting social skills believe that progress can not be so easily assessed. They consider progress to be social and personal and a part of something that music contributes to. It is subjective. Mrs North, in interview 3, described how her schemes of work which are tailored towards self expression pose difficulties in measuring progress. Although the children enjoy the work and are satisfied with the outcome she feels that their progress is limited.



Mr. Ash, in interview 1, explained that in composing, as a vehicle for self expression, each child would achieve in a different way "the achievement is inherent in the process" (line 88). However he feels that its subjective nature makes it difficult to assess.

Mr. Taylor, in interview 8, explained the importance of nurturing children's creativity and that this was a reason to include composing at Key Stage 3. His belief as to the nature of progression was that it should be perceived as progression between Key Stages. To assess creativity the children must encounter vast experience. Although a child may not be awarded a score, grade, or level here, according to Mr. Taylor progress can be identified. Mr. Taylor also made the point that it was this aspect of composing that was accessible to all.

It is becoming apparent that the informants have very different reasons for including composing in their curriculum. Their teaching styles are different also and it is important to seek, reasons from the data, as to whether either of these issues affect each other.

A number of the informants stated that initially their reason for including composing was that it is a statutory requirement. Music teachers have to be prepared to encounter school inspectors who examine schemes of work. Thus music teachers have no choice but to teach composing. It was therefore interesting that Mr. Taylor should say;

" Because of the National Curriculum and that teachers are having to assess then composing is becoming assessable" (Interview 8, lines 252-255).

He explained how he has diverted from an emphasis on exploration and creativity and is in the process of moving to an emphasis on structure and form in music. He considered this to be moving back. However, it was highlighted in section 1.6 that Paynter (1984) considered this to be moving forward.

#### **4.5 Teachers' methods of teaching composing**

Consideration of the content of teachers' curricula has defined areas where progression in composing can be more easily recognised. It is clear that a vast amount of curriculum material is available to teachers, music of many genres, and that teachers have to be selective when designing their curricula. An examination of their methods of delivery highlights areas where progression in composing can be defined.

A number of the informants teach composing by giving the children a certain amount of knowledge before the composition task is set. They explain rules and boundaries, as if supplying a tool box of background knowledge which the children can draw upon when composing. Those who adopt this method for teaching composing include tasks that involve arrangement, pastiche, and variation forms. The children are enabled to understand the rudiments of the genre they are involved with. The nature of the composing task which follows is restricted by tight harmonic and structural rules.

According to Mr. Cook, in interview 2, progression occurs when the tasks set are "more challenging than the last thing" ( Lines 65-66). Teachers using this method of teaching composing have curricula which consist of creating canons, blues music, arrangements of simple chord progressions and the ground bass. Their teaching style is one where they have tight control over when new technical skills or knowledge are addressed.

Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, spoke of how her pupils will listen to a recording of Holst's *Planet Suite* before attempting to produce music with a similar program. Mrs Kidd explained that often this method of teaching music can be "boring" (line 42). The children are put off the project before the composing has begun. This is due to two reasons. The music they listen to is far from their own culture. Also they feel that they are expected to produce music which is a pastiche of that of Holst.

Mr. Higgs, in interview 4, spoke in some length about the content of his schemes of work and how the children's attitudes differed depending on the style of music they were encountering. In a scheme of work, during Year 9, where the children have to put music, effectively sound effects, to a video that is contemporary and popular the children work enthusiastically and produce good results.

There are differences between this scheme of work and the ones described by Mrs. Kidd. The genre of Mr. Higgs' scheme of work is a part of teenagers' culture. Mr. Kidd also speaks of how the children "love" the work set on Pachelbel's *Canon* and enjoy the Blues. It is acceptable to them. Thus it demands enthusiasm and determination to achieve.

The nature of the composing in Mr. Higgs' music to video scheme of work is that of selecting sound effects. There are no difficult harmonic, melodic, or rhythmic rules that have to be obeyed. Mr Higgs feel that his pupils achieve in this type of task although he believes it is not so easy to mark progress. This is due to his particular belief as to the nature of progression.

The method of teaching where the children are given technicalities to work with clearly presents problems. Mr. Higgs spoke of how, when he offered children the concept and rules of rhythm and tempo their compositions did little to reflect such an awareness. However by reducing the amount of technicalities further Mr. Higgs does get very positive results. When Mr. Higgs allows his pupils to use five notes only, five notes which are harmonically acceptable in any combination, the children have "less to worry about, they're not overloaded" (line 117). The expectation of what the children can manage is much lower and they manage it successfully.

Mr. Ash, in interview 1, gives the children only what they need to compose as they go along. Some children will only require a little knowledge. Some will demand much more. Similar to those of Mr. Higgs, Mr. Ash's expectations are reduced.

#### **4.6 Notation**

Some form of notation was considered important, if not fundamental by all but one of the informants. The practicality of students having a record of what they compose from one lesson to the next means that some form of notational skills are perceived as a necessity for students. Notational skills are considered to be enabling skills. Notation was defined, by the informants in three different types; conventional staff notation, graphic notation and notation of any form invented by the student. Each of the three types have their own role in the assessment of the progression of a child's work.

Conventional staff notation is valued by some of the informants. It is considered as an important criteria for assessment by two of the informants. Its mathematical nature enables teachers to identify right and wrong easily. Thus a child's use of staff notation can be a test of a child's application of theoretical knowledge. For Mr. Perry, in interview 7, a child writing a composition down correctly means that they have made the link between creativity and theory by applying notational rules correctly. Miss Watts relies upon her instrumentalists to produce high quality work and for them to draw upon the notational knowledge they have learned during instrumental studies when composing.

Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, used the term "real music" (line 88) when she spoke about notation, highlighting for her students, and herself, the value of staff notation.

Mr. Perry emphasised the difficulties that staff notation might cause for students. The precision of the nature of staff notation means that it can also be restricting. Mr. Perry, in interview 7, pointed out that a child may fail to notate their compositions correctly thus it is difficult for the teacher to know whether their compositions are successful as a whole. Mr. Taylor, in interview 8, pointed out that he believed the creative components of composing are accessible to all yet the rudiments and theory were restricting. He described writing staff notation as a "specialised skill" (line 165).

Mr. Higgs explained how his students struggle with the technical difficulties of staff notation and how little, therefore, of his schemes of work include emphasis on notation. He explained how working with the pentatonic scale, only five notes, was more manageable for his pupils.

It is for such reasons that others amongst the informants prefer alternative types of notation. Mrs North, in interview 3, spoke of the value of graphic notation for her. Her students decide for themselves the format of their written music. They are able to write down their compositions with ease. However when asked about progression in relation to notation Mrs North explained how it was difficult to identify assess progress in graphic notation. She explained that progress could only be made if graphic notation were developed into staff notation.

Some of the informants prefer to let the students design their own type of notation. Notation, to these informants, is not a criteria for assessment but something that purely enables the students' composing and it is other aspects that are assessed.

#### **4.7 Teacher and pupil expectations**

There are many criteria for which both teachers and pupils have expectations. Each of these expectations can be perceived as a factor that affects progression in composing.

Teachers' expectations are based on the calibre of the school's catchment, the pupils abilities, an appropriate curriculum and the methods through which it is delivered and the achievement of pupils.

Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, spoke of her pupils' low concentration span (line 70). She explains how the brighter pupils in the class may manage the work, but many will struggle.

Others amongst the informants told of how a small number of pupils who are less able struggle with much of the work. Specialist music teachers are trained musicians with a degree of talent. Mr Higgs, in interview 4, claimed;

"It is a real nightmare though sometimes when we're doing the four line melody thing as they come out with some outrageous things like twenty beats in a bar" (lines 125-131).

Mr. Perry, in interview 7, told of how his pupils' work doesn't meet his expectations. He explained that his pupils' compositions didn't often reflect the task that was originally set (line 60).

Teachers expect their pupils to accept and work within the curriculum, the content of which is made up from their choice or tastes. Mrs Kidd's pupils, interview 6, find some of her course "boring" (line 40).

Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, also explained how her pupils set their standards as those of their favourite pop idols and feel failures that they don't have the abilities for their own compositions to meet those standards. The pupils' expectations of what they should achieve is set much higher than their teachers'. Many of the informants spoke of how they felt the expectations of SCAA were above the capabilities of their pupils.

It is evident that pupils also have expectations of composing. Their expectations are affected by the purpose of the task in hand, the difficulty of the task in hand, whether what they are doing is within a context and their overall regard for the subject.

In interview 4 Mr. Higgs spoke of how his pupils enjoyed the more social aspects of the tasks he set (lines 90-100). Mr. Higgs perceives composing as a vehicle for his class to bond and is certain that they enjoy this.

Pupils have a ready expectation as to what music is. Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, spoke of "real music" (line 89). She explained how much her pupils are reliant on placing music in context, that "real music" for them is that of their favourite pop stars. This music is acceptable to them and they enjoy it. However Mrs Kidd also explained that her pupils set their standards by that "real music" which is composed and performed by accomplished musicians. This causes problems as her pupils don't expect that they will achieve anything so satisfying as the compositions of their idols. This, according to Mrs Kidd, discourages her pupils from trying to achieve something.

Miss Watts, in interview 5, spoke of her pupils being "de-mob happy" (line 66) as they approach the end of year nine. Pupils who are not continuing with music at Key Stage 4 are turned off and less likely to achieve.

#### **4.8 Continuity between key Stages 3 and 4**

The majority of the informants claimed that progression in composing was easier to assess at Key Stage 4. From the data collected it can be determined that this is the case for a number of reasons.

Mr. Ash, in interview 1, spoke of how his approach to teaching was different at Key Stage 4. Mr. Ash explained that he places a larger emphasis on "teacher direction" (line 96) at Key Stage 4. Once more there is evidence that teaching styles are an issue in this investigation.

Mr. Ash also spoke of the difference between his curriculum content at Key Stage 4 to that at Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4 Mr. Ash, like many other informants, has begun to adopt a more conventional curriculum. Mr. Ash, to a certain degree, regards G.C.S.E. music as a foundation for A Level music in which conventions are fundamental.

Mrs North, in interview 3, spoke of her emphasis on theory at Key Stage 4. Miss Watts, in interview 5, also spoke of how she put more of an emphasis on theory and rudiments at key Stage 4. This was the reason that both Mrs North and Miss Watts find it easier to assess progress in composing at this level. Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, explained that the ease at which her pupils grasp theory at Key Stage 4 makes it easier for her to assess progress.

Mr. Higgs, in interview 4, explained that progress and achievement in composing was easier to assess at Key Stage 4 as "they tell you how to do it" (line 245). The G.C.S.E. syllabus sets out clear criteria for assessing composing which is clearly beneficial to Mr. Higgs.

A number of the informants explained that the calibre of the G.C.S.E. music student was, to a large degree, different to those at Key Stage 3. This was for a number of reasons. Miss Watts, in interview 5, said that her pupils were more "willing to work" (line 180) at Key Stage 4.

Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, spoke of how the pupils who opted for music at Key Stage 4 in her school were often those with more natural musical talent.

#### **4.9 Guidance and training for teachers**

The informants have been offered guidance for teaching and assessing composing at Key Stage 3 in various forms, the National Curriculum, *Exemplification of standards in music* (SCAA, 1996), publications of schemes of work, publications from theorists. The informants explained to what extent any of these had helped to guide their teaching and assessing.



All of the informants felt that the National Curriculum and the SCAA documents had failed to offer any guidance. Mr. Cook, in interview 2, explained how the standards which had been set by SCAA were unrealistic in that they were way above the abilities of his pupils (lines 87-94).

Many of the informants have used *Music Matters* (Hiscock and Metcalfe, 1992) at some stage although they adapted it to suit the needs of their pupils.

Few of the informants spoke of influence from theorists. Mrs North, in interview 3, spoke of how Dennis and Orff had influenced her earlier on in her career. However this had only provided Mrs North with ideas and not with an effective method for assessment of progression.

A number of the informants spoke of how some of the ideas they were given during their teacher training courses had provided effective curriculum material. However this, again, has not provided an effective method of assessment.

Of the informants few were composers. Mr. Ash, interview 1, and Mr. Taylor, interview 8, were the two who felt very confident about including composing on the curriculum at Key Stage 3. Mr. Ash spoke of how he based his approach for teaching on the experiences that he has, himself had (line 153). Mr. Taylor explained that it was through his belief in composing that he could enthuse his pupils (lines 245-250).

#### **4.10 Broader educational issues**

Broader educational issues have an effect on the delivery of composing at Key Stage 3. Those which were mentioned by the informants included the nature and size of classes, resources and teaching time.

Mr. Higgs, in interview 4, and Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, spoke of how a number of their pupils of lower ability especially struggle with composing. Mrs Kidd explained that her pupils have a low concentration span (lines 69-71) and that they rarely achieve anything when composing.

Mr. Higgs also explained that often little was achieved in composing due to the poor behaviour of his pupils (interview 4, line 25).

In interview 8 Mr. Taylor explained that group size was a problem affecting composing lessons. He considered this to be more of a problem than the amount of time allocated to music,

"If I had an hour a week with smaller class sizes then I would be happier than with larger classes and more time"  
(interview 8, lines 49-53).

Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, spoke of how restricted classroom space means that her pupils have less access to resources. This means her pupils spend a limited amount of time composing. She feels that achievement is minimal.

The lack of time allocated for music lessons was a complaint made by a number of the informants. Mr. Cook, in interview 2, merely drew the interviewer's attention to the fact that time was a problem (line 20).

Mr. Higgs, interview 4, explained that a lesson of fifty minutes in length leaves his class little time to develop or finish their work (lines 42-44). A rolling P.S.E. program also means that pupils miss out on music lesson time. Miss Watts, interview 5, shares similar problems to Mr. Higgs as music only has forty five minutes lesson time per week at Key Stage 3.

#### **4.11 Summary**

It has become apparent from the data that there are areas for concern in composing at Key Stage 3. These relate to the diversity of perceptions of teachers as to the nature of composing and progression. These issues will be discussed in chapter 5.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUES THAT HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO ATTENTION IN THE DATA**

#### **5.0 The diversity in teachers' perceptions of reasons for including composing**

It is evident from the findings that the informants have diverse perceptions as to the reasons for including composing within the curriculum. Mr. Cook states that he includes composing as a means of testing his pupils' knowledge and technical skills (4.3).

Section 4.3 highlighted Mr. Taylor's reason for including composing, that it is a means of nurturing children's creativity.

Mr. Higgs, in interview 4, explained that his reason for including composing was that it promoted social development, while for Mr. Ash, composing is the point of discovering music (section 4.2). Others teach composing as a statutory requirement.

The informants' perceptions of the reasons for including composing means that their perceptions as to the nature of composing are equally diverse. For example, Mr. Cook's belief that composing is a test of knowledge means that his method of teaching is through more theoretical and technical skill based projects (section 4.2). Mr. Ash allows his pupils to explore for themselves in the first instance and he will give each child only the theoretical knowledge they require in order to progress further, they will discover what they need (section 4.2).

#### **5.1 The issue of teaching styles**

The informants' teaching styles depend upon their perception of the nature of composing. Those informants who perceive composing as a means of testing knowledge adopt theoretical and technically based teaching styles whereas those who believe in composing as a means for social development or creative development adopt a teaching style where the pupils are freer to explore for themselves and theory and technical skills are not considered to be fundamental.

This, in turn affects the informants' perceptions as to the nature of progression. Thus it is clear that what is being taught and assessed in composing in different schools is as diverse as the teachers perceptions of the subject.

## **5.2 The role of composing within the music curriculum**

It is clear from section 4.2 that the informants view composing to have one of two roles. It is brought to attention in the same section that some of the informants perceive the role of composing as either a means of testing childrens' knowledge of music or a vehicle for promoting creativity and social skills. Only one of the informants commented that he had moved between the two ideas (section 4.3) when Mr. Taylor commented that he was moving back to an emphasis on conventions. In order to identify areas where progress can be assessed in composing at Key Stage 3 it is important to consider the data associated with each of these ideas.

Those, like Mr. Cook, (section 5.0) who perceive the role of composing to be a means of testing the musical knowledge of their pupils find assessment of composing manageable, as their criteria for assessment is based upon theoretical and technical skills.

In section 4.2 there is extensive evidence that others amongst the informants share the same belief as Mr. Cook (section 5.0). The results presented there show that the relevant informants believe in giving their pupils a particular measure of knowledge before they begin composing. This knowledge is in the form of identifying characteristics of music that has been listened to, practising the performance of a particular feature, or learning new theoretical rules. The appropriate teaching style involved here is more teacher-led lessons. These informants know what each of their pupils have encountered and then put them to the test by setting them a compositional task. Composing is the means of assessment of knowledge and understanding gained.

The informants who adopt this teaching style claim that it is manageable to assess progress in composing. However what is being assessed is the pupils' knowledge, not their ability to compose.

The comment is made in section 4.2 that a cycle can be identified in one case, after the composing task has been completed and performed the pupils appraise each other's work. After composing has been used as a test it then becomes a vehicle for refinement, for further ideas. Composing then becomes the point of discovery, a place at which further exploration can begin. This was not recognised by the informant in interview 6, Mrs Kidd. Her composing tasks are crucial if progression is to take place. In this case progression is where pupils seek to refine their ideas or experiment and explore with new ones. Pupils' skills as composers are being developed.

Thus for teachers who perceive the role of composing as a means for testing knowledge, progression may be assessed in one of two ways. The prescriptive teaching style means that teachers are always able to identify what their pupils know or can do. Whereas it might be argued that this teaching style means that only theory and technical skills are assessed, if teachers take the opportunity and let their pupils appraise each other's compositions and then refine them their skills as composers are developed. Progress in composing is apparent and the criteria for assessment is the degree of refinement.

Others amongst the informants adopt a teaching style which is more *laissez faire*. Their lessons are not prescriptive, except that they may give an initial stimulus or idea. For these informants the emphasis is creative and social development.

It was brought to attention in section 4.2 that Mr. Ash allows his pupils to compose with a particular theme in mind and it is only at the point where they wish to develop their composition further that Mr. Ash gives them more technical or theoretical knowledge or suggestions.

In section 4.4 it is brought to attention that pupils can achieve in projects that are based on sound effects. This is satisfying for the pupils involved who feel, along with their teacher that they have achieved. Yet the teacher concerned, Mr. Higgs, does not feel that he can assess their progress in composing.

There are similarities between the teaching styles of Mr. Ash and Mr. Higgs. Firstly due to their personal beliefs in the role of composing their teaching style is one where their pupils explore for themselves. Occasionally, however, their pupils need more knowledge, technical skills or suggestions and this is given to suit the needs of the individual. This is necessary to enhance their composition. In effect the pupils are refining their compositions. This is progression.

Whether the informants' teaching style is based around theory and knowledge, or discovery pupils still need to refine their compositions. In seeking to refine their compositions pupils may add new ideas or new techniques. As well as discovering more technical skills and theory they are adding more to their compositions. They are progressing and progression in composing can be measured by the degree by which pupils enhance their compositions.

### **5.3 Expectations associated with composing**

It is evident from the presentation of the results that there are many expectations associated with composing at Key Stage 3. Expectations are made by the National Curriculum and SCAA, as well as teachers and pupils themselves. This section will identify the various expectations and show how they influence teaching styles and consequently progression.

It was brought to attention in section 4.8 that teachers feel they have had little guidance in teaching composing from the National Curriculum and SCAA. Section 2.4 discussed the expectations of these documents. The National Curriculum expects all teachers to teach composing but only serves as a list of suggestions as to what might be taught.

The National Curriculum and SCAA also expect pupils to have fulfilled the requirements that they set out at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Yet it is clear that this is not the case.

Section 1.5 pointed out the difficulties that may arise as few music teachers are trained composers. This was highlighted by the results from the investigation. Section 4.8 brought to attention the fact that only two out of the eight informants were composers or felt confident about teaching composing.

Section 4.8 also brought to attention that only two of the informants had sought guidance from composing theorists. Even then one of the informants had only been influenced indirectly and the other claimed that the information was useful only to a certain point. Similarly, the same section brought to attention the fact that published classroom material had been of little help to teachers. Yet despite this teachers are still expected by the National Curriculum to deliver a curriculum, at least, one third of which involves composing.

Thus teachers design their own curricula which have to allow for progression in composing. They are free to adopt a teaching style of their choice. It is only natural, therefore, that teachers' curricula are based around what they do know and what they have had experience of. Section 1.5 also highlighted that most teachers have been trained as performers or musicologists. Section 4.6 brought to attention the problems that one of the informants has whose teaching style is influenced by his own experience as a performer and musicologist. His pupils don't meet his expectations and fail to be seen to be making progress.



Section 4.6 also brought to attention the conflict of musical tastes between teachers and pupils. Mrs Kidd, in interview 6, spoke of how her expectation of what her pupils should manage leads to boredom and lack of motivation. It was also pointed out, in section 4.4, how the same informants' pupils were discouraged from composing by listening to a stimulus chosen by the teacher. They thought they would have to produce music of a similar, complex calibre. Again progress is not seen to be being made.

Thus lack of guidance and training for teachers has resulted in a mismatch of expectations in composing at Key Stage 3 within which progress does not appear to be present.

#### **5.4 Successful lesson material**

In view of these findings it is valuable to seek from the results any parts of the informants' curricula which are received well by the pupils, for it must be the pupils themselves who have the most realistic expectations of what they can achieve.

It is brought to attention in section 4.3 how Mrs North's pupils enjoy the work involving graphic score notation. Her teaching style in this case is one where the pupils explore for themselves and they are pleased with the outcome. Although Mrs North commented that she doesn't feel that her pupils are making progress if the conclusion of section 4.12 is applied there is no reason why the pupils should not develop their ideas further through refinement.

It was brought to attention in section 4.4 the enthusiasm of Mr. Higgs' pupils in tackling his schemes of work. As well as conforming to teenage preferences they are ones in which the pupils have to work within limits. It is further brought to attention in section 4.5 that pupils find it easier to work within the tight limits of the pentatonic scale. Thus pupils at Key Stage 3 can manage work which has tight restrictions and which limits what they have to cope with. This would be seen to be standard teaching practice, to

give pupils something to work with that is within their capabilities and limits and then gradually stretch them.

### **5.5 Summary**

The evidence from chapter 4 suggests that progression can be assessed in composing, the criteria of which is the extent to which a composition is refined. Also that the lack of guidance for teachers in designing their curricula and adopting teaching styles has led teachers, in certain cases, to design curricula where there is a mismatch of expectations between the teacher and pupil and progression does not appear to be made. These points will be included and discussed in the next chapter, the conclusion of this project.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **IN CONCLUSION OF THE EVIDENCE**

#### **6.0 Issues that have risen from the results**

Chapter 5 highlighted factors which affect the teaching and assessing of composing at Key Stage 3. Teaching styles and expectations largely influence what is being delivered in the classroom and how it is received. Broader issues also have an effect on the successful delivery of composing.

It was found that:

1. Composing is considered, by a number of teachers, to be a vital part of the music curriculum
2. Teachers find it difficult to assess progress in composing at Key Stage 3
3. There are diverse styles of teaching composing and, consequently, diverse curricula, resulting in a lack of continuity in the subject
4. There are diverse perceptions as to the nature of progression in composing at Key Stage 3
5. Broader educational issues affect the delivery and receipt of composing at Key Stage 3
6. There are areas of composing in which pupils can be seen to be making progress

#### **6.1 The significance of the issues**

##### **Issue 1: The role of composing**

Section 5.2 highlighted the fact that teachers perceive the nature of composing as either a means of developing theoretical knowledge and understanding or a means of promoting social development. Where composing was included for rudimentary reasons it was perceived as a means of measuring pupils' technical and theoretical knowledge and skills. Others perceived the role of composing as the point of discovery of music and, through an emphasis on creating music other aspects of the subject would be revealed to pupils. Either way composing plays a vital role in music education and is

valued by teachers. Therefore it is important that in this area of the music curriculum survives.

#### Issue 2: The importance of the assessment of progression

It was brought to attention (section 5.2) that a number of teachers are able to assess the progression of technical skills through composing, although some had perceived this as the assessment of progression in composing skills. Other teachers claimed that it was impossible to assess progress at all due to their perception of the nature of the subject area. If composing is to survive and flourish as a subject then an effective means of assessing progress needs to be designed and implemented in order for pupils to be encouraged and rewarded.

#### Issue 3: The lack of continuity in the music curriculum

Many music teachers are not trained composers and have little experience in this area (section 5.3), yet they are expected to design a curriculum which includes composing. Where as teachers believe composing to be valuable, lack of training and guidance from other sources has led to teachers adopting teaching styles and curricula which are most suited to themselves. This means that continuity in music education, to a large degree, does not exist. The National Curriculum was introduced to ensure continuity across schools in England and Wales. This failing to be the case in music.

The freedom of choice available to teachers has caused teachers to select music which occasionally conflicts with the tastes of pupils and discourages them in their work. Thus, progress won't be made.

#### Issue 4: The diversity of the nature of the music curriculum

Lack of guidance and training means that teachers adhere to their own perceptions as to the nature of progress. As with curriculum content, these are diverse, resulting in a lack of continuity between schools. Some perceive progress as emotional development others

perceive it as the understanding of more technical aspects of the subject. Few teachers fuse the two perceptions.

#### **Issue 5: The importance of the acceptance of the state of education**

There are factors beyond the music curriculum that affect the delivery of composing. For example the lack of funds has restricted resources, space and oversized classes. This is a common complaint amongst teachers. However current climate in education suggests that this is unlikely to change, at least in the short term. Teachers must look for a way of delivering music which takes this situation into account.

#### **Issue 6: Where progress can be recognised and measured**

Despite the claims of teachers, that progress can not be assessed in composing, unless it is in the assessment of technical skill, the results of the investigation show that progress can be seen to take place. The opportunities that are given to pupils to refine and develop their compositions show the pupils to be working and developing as composers.

### **6.2 The implications of the issues**

Findings of this study have highlighted issues which that need to be addressed if composing is to serve its purpose as a valuable area of the music curriculum. It is apparent that teachers who are not trained composers need guidance in designing and delivering a composing curriculum. The curriculum must be effective, ensuring continuity and progress. The curriculum must take into account the musical preferences of pupils and consider the lack of resources reported in most schools. Also, it must allow for the amount of allocated curriculum time, which was reported to be minimal. Above all it must be accessible to all. Guidance is also required in assessing progression in composing. This progression can be determined by the extent to which pupils refine and develop their compositions.



The next section of this chapter will present three schemes of work which address the issues of the conclusion and suggest a possible scheme of assessment for composing in view of the issues.

### **6.3 Schemes of work for teaching composing in a way which ensures the assessment of progression at Key Stage 3**

The schemes of work which are presented take in to account the expectations of SCAA (1996) and the National Curriculum (D.F.E, 1995). Although it was found that teachers find these documents to have little value, teachers are accountable to external agencies and, therefore must adhere to them. Thus the schemes of work address both attainment targets of the National Curriculum. Notation and aural perception are also addressed (section 2.4). The schemes of work are designed as a means of working towards the end of key stage description (section 2.4). The schemes of work are spread over one term to allow flexibility of lesson time.

The nature of the music involved is one which adolescents may relate to. The schemes of work require only basic resources and pupils may work in groups or as individuals to compensate for these.

Finally, whilst emphasising exploration and development of ideas which were considered important by a number of informants, there is an emphasis that these ideas take the form of structures, as expressed by others.

Each of the schemes is aimed at a different year group. Each step of the project is outlined in order to guide the music teacher who may not be an experienced composer. The expectations of each is relative to the age of the pupils. Pupils in Year 9 will be expected to work with more complex structures and more challenging technical skills than those in Years 7 and 8. Pupils will use their skills to express their ideas and create a piece of music which shows their understanding of the value of structure in music. Opportunities are provided for pupils to refine their work from which the teacher will be able to assess to what extent pupil's work has been developed and enhanced, reflecting their skills as composers.

Pupils will be given the opportunity to work in groups, to promote social development, or individually.

The first scheme of work, *Fanfares*, is aimed at pupils in year 7 and expects them to work with elementary performing and technical skills which will be developed throughout the project.

The second, *Jingles*, expects year 8 pupils to work with a higher level of technical skill which is developed towards the expectations of the scheme of work for year 9. At the end of the year 9 scheme of work, *Song Writing*, the criteria of the end of key stage statement will have been met.

The schemes of work are intended to be one of three during the year, the other two having the same expectation of the pupil's ability. The level of the schemes of work can easily be judged by the technical demands and, therefore, should be obvious to the teacher who is not a composer. However it is the extent to which the pupils refine and develop their compositions which has to be taken in to account when assessing progress in composing. Each of the schemes of work offer pupils more material to work with, to the extent that in the *Song Writing* project pupils can choose for themselves what material, genre and skills they use. The greater choice of material that pupils have will enable richer compositions. Progression will be seen in composing where a pupils produce a a composition which is richer in harmony, melody and rhythm than the previous piece and shows carefully crafted structures to produce an effective piece of music.

Each of the schemes of work can promote differentiation by outcome. Whilst in each the outcomes can be increasingly demanding, the subject matter and techniques, in the first stage, is accessible to all. All pupils will then have the opportunity to encounter more demanding matter and the ability of the very able musician will not be restricted.



## **SCHEME OF WORK 1**

### **FANFARES**

**Year group: 7**

#### **Aims:**

- For pupils to encounter a specific genre of music.
- For pupils to develop skills in performing.
- For pupils to develop skills in listening and appraising.
- For pupils to develop skills in composing.
- For pupils to develop their understanding of word setting.
- For pupils to develop their understanding of rhythm, melody and harmony.
- For pupils to develop their understanding of musical structure

#### **Specific objectives:**

- For pupils to gain knowledge about the purpose of the fanfare.
- For pupils to gain knowledge of the musical structure of a fanfare.
- For pupils to create a fanfare in ternary form.
- For pupils to gain knowledge of harmony and triads.
- For pupils to discover the importance of contrast in music.

#### **Resources:**

- Classroom instruments (percussion/keyboards/their own).
- Recordings of fanfares.
- Recording of a pop song comprising verses and choruses.

### Stage 1

- Discussion of the purpose and role of a fanfare - i.e. important announcement convey a message.
- Listen to some examples of fanfares and discuss features - i.e. repeated melodies/ limited pitches/instrumentation.

### Stage 2

- Present the fanfares *Come to the cook house door...* and *Lights out...*
- Discuss features - i.e. limited notes/ word setting.
- Pupils write a "secret message" down and clap the rhythm of the phrase.

### Stage 3

- Pupils set the rhythm of their message to music using only the notes C,E,&G.
- Pupils notate this in some form (discussion of various forms may take place).
- Pupils perform to the class.

### Stage 4

- Pupils compose a second melody to their secret message using the same notes (but reordered).
- Pupils make a note of their new melody.
- Pupils perform the second melody to the class.

### Stage 5

- Pupils arrange their melodies. E.g. melody 1  
melody 2  
melody 1 & 2  
melody 2  
melody 1
- Pupils perform their arrangement to the class.
- Class appraise.

### **Stage 6**

Pupils given time to refine their composition so far.

### **Stage 7**

- Pupils listen to pop song and identify that there are different sections.
- Pupils write down the order of the sections.
- Pupils discuss the importance of the different sections - i.e. contrast.

### **Stage 8**

- Pupils make up new "secret message"
- Pupils set the new message to music using G,B,& D or F,A, &C.
- Discuss the significance of the groups of notes
- Pupils perform to the class.

### **Stage 9**

- Pupils create second melody using the new set of notes.
- Pupils arrange the new melodies.
- Pupils perform second section to the class.
- Class appraise.

### **Stage 10**

- Pupils take time to refine second section.

### **Stage 11**

- Pupils practice performing Section 1  
Section 2  
Section 1
- Discussion of this structure - i.e. how returning to section 1 makes the piece sound complete.
- Discussion of ternary form.

### **Stage 12**

- Pupils perform ternary form composition to the class.
- Class appraise.

### **Stage 13**

- Pupils take time to refine composition.

N.B. During stages 9-13 pupils may wish to develop the skills and knowledge they have encountered even further. E.g. Pupils may choose a triad of their own, add a drum beat, arrange triads into harmonies for an accompaniment.

## **SCHEME OF WORK 2**

### **JINGLES**

**Year Group: 8**

#### **Aims:**

- For pupils to encounter a specific genre of music.
- For pupils to develop skills in performing.
- For pupils to develop skills in listening and appraising.
- For pupils to develop skills in composing.
- For pupils to develop understanding of word setting.
- For pupils to develop understanding of rhythm, harmony and melody.
- For pupils to develop understanding of structure.

#### **Specific Objectives:**

- For pupils to gain knowledge about radio jingles.
- For pupils to gain knowledge of the musical feature of radio jingles.
- For pupils to compose a radio jingle - i.e. a small song.

#### **Resources:**

- Classroom instruments (keyboards/ percussion/ their own).
- Recordings of radio jingles.

### Stage 1

- Discussion of the purpose of jingles.
- Listen to some jingles.
- Discuss the features.

### Stage 2

- Pupils copy down the words to the *Betta Buys Jingle*;

**Betta Buys means better buys, Betta Buys is best,**

**Lots of bargains on the shelves, better than the rest,**

**Books and toys and games and clothes, better than there's been,**

**If you want to shop in style, go there to be seen.**

- Discuss rhythmic qualities of the words.
- Pupils compose a melody for line 1 of the words using only the notes C,D,E,F,&G.
- Pupils must begin on the note C and end on the note G.
- Pupils notate their melodies in some form.
- Pupils perform to the class.
- Class appraise.

### Stage 3

- Class repeat the melody from line 1 and use as line 2, however this time ending on C.
- Discuss the reasons for this - i.e. repeating music is a way of creating a catchy piece of music, ending on C, this time, makes the music sound finished.
- Students practice performing lines 1 & 2.
- Perform to the class.
- Class appraise.

### Stage 4

- Time allowed for refinement.

### **Stage 5**

- Pupils set line 3 to a contrasting melody, starting and ending on G.
- Discuss the significance of the choice of notes.
- Perform to the class.
- Class appraise.

### **Stage 6**

Time allowed for refinement.

N.B. refinement at this stage may take the form of adding dotted rhythms/ syncopations.

### **Stage 7**

- Pupils repeat the melody for line 2 in line 4.
- Discuss the significance of this.
- Pupils perform the whole piece to the class.
- Class appraise.

### **Stage 8**

- Time allowed for refinement.

### **Stage 9**

- Recall triads from year 7.
- Pupils to use these to accompany their jingles.
- Pupils set chords to jingles.
- Pupils perform to the class.
- Class appraise.

### **Stage 10**

- Pupils take time to refine.

N.B. refinement at this stage could be the addition of extra parts/ use of other chords

composing of  
a new section/ verse.

### **Stage 11**

- Pupils perform finished piece.



## **SCHEME OF WORK 3**

### **SONG WRITING**

**Year Group: 9**

#### **Aims:**

- To develop skills in performing.
- To develop skills in listening and appraising.
- To develop Skills in composing.
- To further enhance skills of word setting.
- To enhance expression through music.
- To enhance use of melody, harmony and rhythm through composing.

#### **Specific objectives:**

- To compose a song.
- To encounter the minor key.

#### **Resources:**

- Classroom instruments (keyboards/ percussion/ their own).

### **Stage 1**

- Recall word setting from year 8 and structuring a verse.
- Pupils write words for a verse and chorus.

### **Stage 2**

- Recall the use of chords and introduce to minor chords.
- Discuss the significance of the minor key.

### **Stage 3**

- Pupils compose melody for verse 1 using f C,D,E,F,&G.
- Pupils perform to the class.
- Class appraise.

### **Stage 4**

- Pupils refine verse 1.

### **Stage 5**

- Pupils harmonise verse 1 using major chords or minor chords depending on the mood of their words.
- Pupils perform to the class.
- Class appraise.

### **Stage 6**

- Pupils refine verse.

### **Stage 7**

- Pupils compose melody for chorus.
- Pupils perform to the class.
- Class appraise.

### **Stage 8**

- Pupils refine chorus.

### **Stage 9**

- Pupils harmonise chorus.
- Pupils perform to class.
- Class appraise.

### **Stage 10**

- Pupils refine whole piece.

N.B. refinement at this stage may be adding extra parts, using both the major and minor key, introducing a contrasting, bridge section.

### **Stage 11**

- Pupils perform whole piece.
- Class appraise whole piece.

### **Stage 12**

- Pupils refine whole piece.

#### **6.4 The scheme for assessing progression in composing at Key Stage 3**

Progression can already be seen in composing in the increasing expectations of the technical demands in the schemes of work in section 6.3.

Section 5.2 highlighted the importance in considering pupil's ability to enhance their compositions through refinement and development of ideas. Improvement could be seen on three levels;

- I. A composition which incorporates only the material which has been given by the teacher.
- II. A composition which has been enhanced through the addition of further harmonic, melodic, rhythmic or structural features.
- III. A composition with considerable change or addition of harmonic, melodic, rhythmic or structural features.

Thus, progression in composing at Key Stage 3 can be assessed through two different means, one between the three different years in the Key Stage and the other within each task.

#### **6.5 Possible outcomes from the schemes of work**

A score can be awarded to a pupil judged on the outcome of the composing task which has been set. The score includes two numbers. The first corresponds to the level of expectation of the task. There are three of these one for each of the three year groups. The second corresponds to the achievement of the pupil at the completion of every task. There are three of these, as indicated above.

Thus a pupil in year 7 who composes a ternary form piece which uses only the notes suggested by the teacher, with limited arrangement of ideas would score a I,i. Pupils who developed the suggestions of the teacher to include such features as additional harmonies, more complex rhythms or a backing beat may score a I,ii. Pupils who add accompaniment, additional melodies, increasingly complex rhythms, extended sections of arrangement would score I,iii.

A pupil in year 8 who composes a radio jingle using only the notes C,D,E,F,&G, the chords of C,F,&G and a simple rhythm would score II,ii. A pupil who enhanced this by including extra notes, syncopated rhythms or harmonies in the melody would score II,ii. A pupils who then added counter melodies, extra verses or even a chorus would score II,iii.

In year 9 pupils who produce a song using the prescribed notes and chords and a simple rhythm would score III,i. A pupil who added extra notes, syncopation or harmonies or more complex rhythms would score III,ii. A pupil who added a bridge section or counter melodies or developed further harmonies would score III,iii. This pupil would be meeting the criteria in composing which corresponds to the end of key stage description.

## **6.6 An evaluation of the investigation**

Despite the small size of the sample of informants this thesis has enabled the researcher to be made aware of the state of composing in music at Key Stage 3. It is significant that it is an area which is in considerable disarray and therefore the findings of this research are vital. The researcher has been able to devise part of a curriculum for music at Key Stage 3 and a scheme of assessment, based on the information given by the informants, which she considers to be effective in the assessment of progress. It is exactly this that the informants claimed they needed in order to develop a successful curriculum, and for those who are inexperienced as composers the schemes may be offered as a model.

Issues have been highlighted where further research is needed, such as continuity between Key Stages, effective training for teachers and case studies based upon the schemes of work and assessment designed in this thesis to prove their effectiveness.

APPENDIX I : An example of a Graphic Score used in *New Sounds in Class* (Self, G, 1967)

NEW SOUNDS IN CLASS  
Contemporary Percussion Music

No.1

George Self

No.2

No.3

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Printed in England

UE 15166 L

No.4

No.5

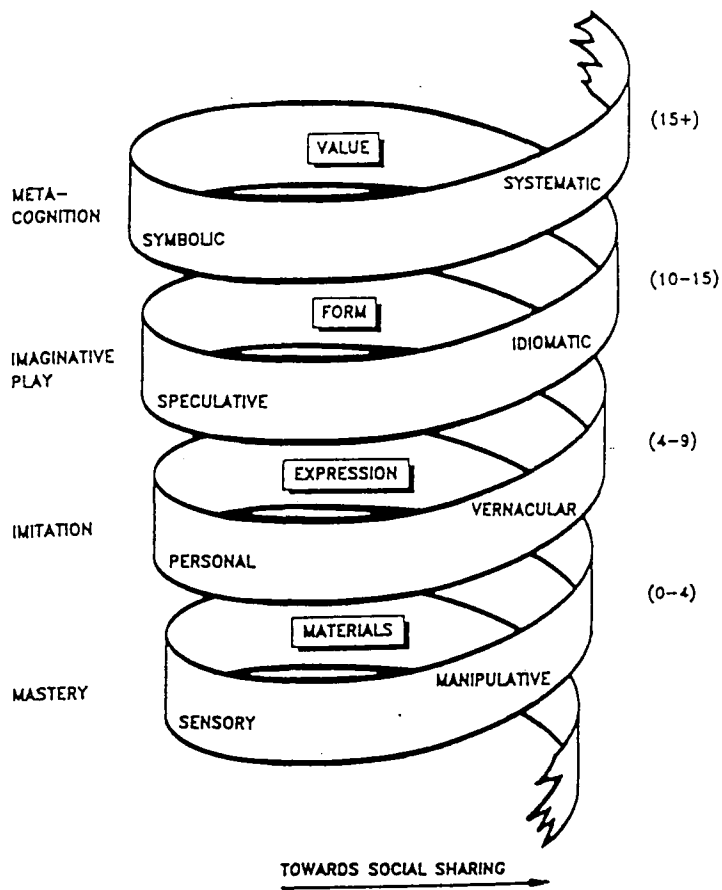
No.6

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## APPENDIX II: The spiral of musical development (Swanwick and Tillman, 1986)

### *Music, Mind, and Education*

Figure 4: The spiral of musical development (Swanwick and Tillman, 1986)





## APPENDIX III: Detailed provision for *Music for Ages 5-14* (DES, 1991)

### DETAILED PROVISIONS FOR KEY STAGES

7.16 Pupils should be taught how to:

- listen attentively to their own and others' music, in order to recognise and, using simple musical vocabulary, make broad distinctions within the main musical elements of
 

pitch	high/low	texture	one sound/several sounds
duration	pulse; rhythm;	dynamics	loud/quiet
pace	long/short sounds	structure	pattern; phrasing; repetition/contrast
timbre	fast/slow	silence;	
quality of sound			
- respond to the musical elements, character and mood of a piece of music by means of movement and other forms of expression, *eg dance; paint a picture;*
- use and understand simple signs and symbols for musical sounds, *eg explain the signs on a simple graphic score they have made;*
- communicate simple musical ideas, *eg teach another child a musical pattern or phrase;*
- memorise and internalise short musical patterns and simple songs, and imitate and recall simple rhythms and melodies, so as to be able to use these skills in their own performing and composing activities, *eg sing a familiar song, staying silent during a phrase within it;*
- sing a variety of simple unison songs with some control of breathing, dynamics and pitch;
- develop the technical skills needed to control the sounds of a range of tuned and untuned instruments, through playing simple instrumental pieces and accompaniments, *eg play drone, single chords or simple ostinatos; use two beaters correctly; hold violin/recorder correctly;*
- practise and rehearse, responding to direction;
- share their music-making with others, presenting their performances effectively to different audiences, for different purposes, and in various acoustic locations, *eg sing with clear diction; balance dynamics of vocal and instrumental parts; perform in the class to each other, in the hall for assembly, in the playground;*
- take part in simple vocal and instrumental improvisations, compositions and arrangements, *eg add a simple percussion part to a song;*
- create and organise sounds in response to different stimuli, so as to develop the early compositional skills of choosing and combining musical ideas, *eg add a simple percussion part to a song; create a piece in response to a musical idea, poetry, picture, story, personal mood or experience;*
- record their own compositions, *eg invent a repeated pattern and notate it, or use a cassette player to record it;*
- listen to, respond to and talk about live and recorded music of a variety of styles, times and cultures, including their own and others' compositions and improvisations;
- assess and evaluate their own and others' work.

7.17 Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- listen attentively to and identify sounds made by objects and living things in the everyday world, including those discovered by themselves;
- explore, select and use a range of sound sources including their voices, their bodies, sounds from the environment and appropriate instruments, tuned and untuned, and discuss their properties, *eg have access to a 'music corner'; explore the sounds the voice can make.*

7.18 Pupils should be encouraged to:

- relate their musical activities to other areas of learning, *eg learn songs as an aid to language development; use instruments made in a science or technology-based task to accompany a song;*
- make musical decisions independently of the teacher, *eg improvise through musical 'question and answer' games;*
- listen to music in their own time, and talk about it in school;
- take part in other musical activities in their own time;
- relate musical activities undertaken in their own time to work done in class, *eg talk about songs sung with parents and grandparents;*
- express preferences about music to which they have listened.

## DETAILED PROVISIONS FOR KEY STAGE 2

7.19 For pupils working towards the end of key stage statement for key stage 1, teachers should refer to the programme of study for key stage 1.

7.20 Pupils should be taught how to:

- develop an increased understanding of musical elements, use some appropriate vocabulary to describe them, and use some of the signs related to them:
  - pitch melody; chords;
  - duration pulse; metre and rhythm
  - pace gradations of speed
  - timbre tone quality of voice/instruments
  - texture melody; accompaniment, polyphony
  - dynamics gradations of volume; accents
  - structure repetition; contrast; simple forms;
- respond to music in more subtle and sophisticated ways, eg by creating a dance with sequences to match an ABA structure in a piece of music;
- memorise and internalise songs and musical ideas of increasing length and/or complexity; eg sing back a newly heard phrase played on an instrument;
- sing an expanding repertoire of songs (unison and simple two-part), and pieces requiring a variety of vocal techniques, with increasing understanding and control of pitch, duration, dynamics, diction and phrasing;
- sing and play a more demanding repertoire, including songs and pieces in two or more simple parts, and gain some awareness of its social, historical and cultural contexts, eg songs with descants, rounds, pieces of music which have bars of rests, music for festivals and celebrations;
- perform pieces/accompaniments on a widening range of more sophisticated instruments, with increasing manual dexterity, control of sound production and for different purposes;
- rehearse and direct in order to develop skills and improve techniques in all areas, eg work in a group to produce a performance for the rest of the class; learn the correct playing techniques for a range of percussion instruments;
- plan and present their own projects/performances, having regard to the need to communicate the music to different audiences, eg discuss and organise the most suitable positioning for each performer; plan and present a contribution to assembly, having regard to style and mood, and afterwards evaluate their achievement;
- choose specific sounds and combinations of sounds to create a complete musical shape from a chosen starting point to an appropriate conclusion, eg make up a melody to fit a given sequence of chords;

- develop musical ideas through improvising, composing and arranging, responding to a range of stimuli and using appropriate musical structures, eg create a piece in response to a rhythmic pattern, movement, drama, a series of pictures, others' compositions, first-hand experience ...; improvise a vocal 'verse' to alternate with a given chorus;
- communicate their ideas with increasing competence, and use a range of recording equipments, signs and symbols, or cues, eg explain to others how they produced a composition; use a cassette recorder as a means of storing work in progress; produce a practical working score;
- listen to music of a widening variety of styles, times and cultures, covering a wide range of moods and purposes, and acquire some basic knowledge and understanding of its social, historical and cultural background;

- begin to develop an understanding of styles and genres, eg invent modern 'street cries' after performing typical Victorian ones;
- describe, discuss and undertake simple analysis and evaluation of music heard in class, including their own compositions and performances, eg discuss how the mood of a piece was achieved, and the emotions felt during playing; recall how or where particular musical events occurred; group the instruments heard, for example into strings, wind, brass or percussion.

7.21 Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- use a widening range of sound sources, including those which they provide themselves, and including some more sophisticated instruments, eg recorders, keyboards, pitched instruments at varying compasses, computers and electronic equipment ...;
- use skills learnt in other subjects and/or in instrumental lessons;
- present performances to a variety of audiences, for different purposes, in various acoustic locations.

7.22 Pupils should be encouraged to:

- relate musical activities to other work done in school, eg plan and perform a concert/assembly/presentation of their own and others' music, writing and art work about environmental conservation; for a medieval history project, perform songs and accompanied dances of the period;
- listen to a range of music in their own time, and discuss and/or write about it in school;
- continue to take part in other musical activities in their own time;
- relate musical activities undertaken in their own time to their own compositions and performances;
- develop preferences and express reasoned opinions.

## DETAILED PROVISIONS FOR KEY STAGE 3

7.23 For pupils working towards the end of key stage statement for key stage 2, teachers should refer to relevant material in the programme of study for key stage 2.

7.24 Pupils should be taught how to:

- listen to music of increasing complexity with perception and attention to detail, and recognise, identify and discriminate between complex musical elements in a wide range of musical styles:
  - pitch melodic shape; characteristics of melodic and harmonic intervals; various scales and modes, harmonic combinations, eg ragas, note clusters, triads;
  - duration pulse, metre and rhythm, eg time signatures, syncopation, unmeasured speech rhythm;
  - pace speed of pulse; rapidity of change, eg of harmony, instrumentation, dynamics;
  - timbre voices, instruments, and different ways of producing sounds with them, eg contrasts between instruments, within instruments and within single notes sung and played in a variety of ways;
  - texture solo, melody, accompaniment, polyphony, density of instrumentation;
  - dynamics loud; quiet; gradations of volume; articulation;
  - structure phrases; repetition/contrast; variation and development; simple forms, eg ternary, verse-chorus, rondo, variations; features such as ostinato, sequence;
- internalise, memorise, imitate and recall increasingly complex sections of music, eg listen to a song and prepare a performance, initiating the style and presentation of the performance heard;
- use and understand increasingly complex and sophisticated signs, symbols and cues, including conventional and graphic notation, as suited to the style of the music, eg follow a simple score while listening to music, and perceive the relationship between sound and symbol;
- sing and play with improved accuracy by ear and from various forms of notation, an increasingly wide and demanding repertoire, including pieces requiring a wide range of vocal techniques, eg perform from a graphic score representing vocal sounds; play guitar chords by ear in ensemble work, choosing appropriate rhythm and style;
- respond sensitively to direction and to aural and visual cues, when performing both individually and in a group;
- rehearse and direct other pupils in group performance, eg rehearse with dance/drama group to fit music to action;
- take an active and responsible role in planning, presenting and evaluating their performances, including their own and others' compositions, in a wide variety of contexts, showing an increasing awareness of audience and purpose;
- improvise, vocally and instrumentally, in a variety of styles, with increasing technical skill and control, eg improvise over a 12-bar blues framework, using vocal sounds only, create a musical mood as a group;
- develop musical ideas effectively within a variety of formal structures, so as to produce a variety of individual and group compositions and arrangements, with growing fluency of expression, eg working as a group, make a simple instrumental arrangement of a piece, using a limited chord structure;
- bring a diversity of musical experiences to the task of developing their own ideas, eg before/after composing a piece based on an ostinato, listen to and discuss examples of this structure as used by other composers;

- revise and refine their work to produce complete compositions;
- communicate more complex ideas with increasing accuracy and competence, using a widening range of cues, signs and symbols, and recording equipment, eg use a computer program to alter, store and re-play a composition and print the score; write out a piece for an instrumental teacher to perform; note a group composition graphically for another group to perform;
- listen to and identify music of a broad range of styles, genres, forms and moods, composed for different media and for various purposes, eg baroque concerto movement, romantic operatic aria, folk song, song and dance from a musical, African drumming, jazz composition, song currently in the charts ...;
- analyse music critically, using appropriate vocabulary and showing an understanding of style, an ability to relate it to its social, historical and cultural background;
- evaluate compositions and performances heard in class, including those by other pupils.

7.25 Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- use and control a wide range of sound sources, provided by the teacher and/or themselves, with increasing use of more sophisticated instruments, and to use information technology;
- use skills learnt in other subjects, eg use familiarity with a foreign language to sing a song in that language expressively;
- where appropriate, use skills and repertoire learnt in instrumental lessons;
- plan and carry out tasks, individually and in groups of varying size, in which each pupil is able to make a valid contribution, eg compose in a group; improvise with a partner; perform an instrumental solo;
- perform individually and/or perform an independent part within a group, eg sing an unaccompanied folk song; improvise a solo on a xylophone in a class ensemble; play in a brass quartet;
- give unprepared performances so as to develop confidence and accuracy in so doing;
- take part in group performances (vocal, instrumental or mixed), so as to develop an increasing awareness of musical characteristics, style and a sense of ensemble, and the ability to respond sensitively to direction and to aural or visual cues given by the teacher or other pupils, eg prepare a group performance using a variety of instruments and solve problems of balance and ensemble;
- choose, from a wide variety of vocal, instrumental, environmental and electronic sounds, the most suitable for each composition, eg use a computer to produce a composition displaying variety of timbre; choose suitable combinations of vocal and instrumental sounds to create a specific musical atmosphere;
- create music in response to a wide range of stimuli (both musical and extra-musical), including the provision of music for collaboration with other areas of the curriculum or for special occasions, eg compose a piece on an environmental or festive theme; improvise in a given mode; compose music for dance; arrange music for a film/video/drama presentation;
- express opinions and preferences about music and be able to justify these while listening to and respecting the opinions of others, eg listen to two interpretations of the same piece, and discuss their individual merits, expressing personal preferences.

7.26 Pupils should be encouraged to:

- listen to a wide variety of music in their own time and to discuss and write about it;
- develop their own musical interests;
- take part in musical activities in their own time – both in school and in the community;
- continue to relate musical activities undertaken in their own time to their work in class.

# APPENDIX IV: Levels of attainment and statements of attainment for composing in *Music for ages 5-14* (DES, 1991)

## LEVEL

## STATEMENTS OF ATTAINMENT

## EXAMPLE

Pupils should be able to:

- explore, select, sort and begin to control sounds from a variety of sources, and include silence.
- devise simple means to store and communicate their musical ideas.

Investigate the sound sources on the sound table and in the environment.  
Sort sound makers into sets.  
Create a sound picture using voices.  
Choose an object to represent a sound.  
Tape record and talk about their chosen sounds.

## 2

- investigate, choose and combine sounds made by voices, bodies and instruments, to produce simple compositions.
- store their musical ideas and communicate them to others, using appropriate means.

Play musical games to compare sounds and silence, longer/shorter, louder/quieter.  
Play musical question and answer games incorporating pitch and rhythm.  
Create a music pattern to match a movement pattern.  
Represent sound patterns using three-dimensional objects, or graphically.

## 3

- explore, select, order and control sounds to compose a piece which has a perceivable musical shape.
- compose and store music for subsequent recall, using appropriate signs, symbols, cues or other means.

Compose a piece which has a beginning, a middle and an end.  
Compose a piece which begins fast and quietly and ends slowly and loudly.  
Use a cassette recorder to listen to and evaluate work in progress.  
Use a staff to represent specific pitches.

## 4

- devise and develop musical ideas within a simple structure, including repetition and contrast.
- create and store compositions, demonstrating a greater understanding of signs, symbols and cues.

Compose a verse and chorus within a given mode or scale.  
Make a graphic score of a composition and give it to another group to re-create.

## 5

- develop and combine an extended range of sounds, and select those suitable for use in compositions exploring a specific technique.
- compose a variety of pieces, and notate with increasing accuracy for subsequent performance, using appropriate signs, symbols and cues.

Compose a piece combining various melodic and rhythmic ostinati.  
Compose an accompanied rap.  
Use conventional or unconventional ways of notating a melodic ostinato in order to recall it accurately.

## 6

- improvise, compose and arrange in a variety of forms, demonstrating an understanding of simple harmony and polyphony.
- evaluate and revise their work to produce completed compositions which are coherent and convincing.

Improvise within a 12-bar blues structure.  
Compose a piece to accompany an historical play set in the Elizabethan period.  
Use a computer with an appropriate software package to compose, edit, store and finally produce a performance of a piece.

## 7

- create, evaluate and revise compositions, which sustain and develop musical ideas, and demonstrate variety, unity and coherence.

Compose a set of variations on a given theme.  
Use electronic systems including a computer to create a live performance, using sound processing equipment to alter the nature of instrumental and vocal sound.

## 8

- produce compositions which demonstrate technical skills, control of the medium used, and a more sophisticated development of musical ideas.

Compose a piece demonstrating knowledge of a particular solo instrument or voice.  
Develop a serial composition.  
Improvise a piece using minimalist techniques.

## 9

- produce compositions which demonstrate a high level of technical skills, control of the medium used, a sustained and coherent development of musical ideas, and a sense of style.

Compose an instrumental piece, using gamelan modes and structures.  
Select and arrange instrumental music for a class or school production.  
Compose a part song.

## 10

- produce compositions which demonstrate a degree of individuality, a clear sense of structure, and a technical command of musical material.

Compose an effective movement or piece in a sophisticated musical form, and produce, by hand or electronically, performance material of a high standard of accuracy and presentation.

## End of key stage statements

### Attainment target 2: Composing

Pupils should develop the skills and competences needed to devise musical compositions and arrangements and to improvise. They should be able to record their ideas (work in progress, as well as finished compositions) by appropriate means. In the statements which follow, the activity of composing is intended to include improvising and arranging.

It is expected that pupils will meet the requirements of the statements for attainment target 2 at key stages 1 and 2 by composing in a group or individually. At key stages 3 and 4, they will be expected to compose both individually and in a group.

#### Key Stage 1

Pupils should be able to:

- investigate, choose and combine sounds to produce simple compositions;
- store their music for subsequent recall, using appropriate means to communicate it to others.

#### Key Stage 2

- devise and develop musical ideas within a simple structure;
- create and store compositions, demonstrating an understanding of signs, symbols and cues.

#### Key Stage 3

- in a group and individually, improvise, compose and arrange in a variety of forms, demonstrating an understanding of simple harmony and polyphony;
- evaluate and revise their compositions, and notate them appropriately for subsequent performance.

# Attainment target 1: Performing and composing

Key stage 1

The development of the ability to perform and compose music with understanding.

Programme of study (relating to attainment target 1).

## END OF KEY STAGE STATEMENTS

By the end of key stage 1, pupils should be able to:

- c) investigate, choose and combine sounds to produce simple compositions.
- d) record their own compositions and communicate them to others.

## PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Pupils should:

- viii) explore and use a range of sound sources including their voices, bodies, sounds from the environment and instruments, tuned and untuned.
- ix) create, select and organise sounds in response to different stimuli.
- x) communicate simple musical ideas.
- xi) use and understand simple signs and symbols for musical sounds when composing.
- xii) record their own compositions.

## EXAMPLES

Pupils could:

- explore sounds made by classroom instruments and discover how many different quiet sounds each can make.
- explore the sounds the voice can make.
- tell a story in sound with different groups describing different episodes.
- create a piece in response to poetry, a picture, a story, a mood or personal experience.
- create a musical pattern to match a movement pattern and teach it to another child.
- write a simple graphic score for a piece they have composed.
- invent a repeated pattern and notate it, or use a cassette player to record it.

# Attainment target 1: Performing and composing

## Key stage 2

The development of the ability to perform and compose music with understanding.

Programme of study (relating to attainment target 1).

### END OF KEY STAGE STATEMENTS

By the end of key stage 2, pupils should be able to:

- d) devise and develop musical ideas within simple structures.
- e) communicate musical ideas to others and record compositions through the use of notations.

### PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Pupils should:

- viii) plan and present their own projects/performances, being aware of the need to communicate to different audiences.
- ix) explore and use a widening range of sound sources.
- x) choose specific sounds and combinations of sounds to create a complete musical shape.
- xi) develop musical ideas through improvising.
- xii) create music in response to a range of stimuli, using appropriate musical structures.
- xiii) record and communicate musical ideas through notations which define timbre, dynamics, duration and, where appropriate, pitch.

### EXAMPLES

Pupils could:

- discuss and organise the most suitable position for each performer.*
- plan and present a contribution to a school assembly.*
- use recorders, keyboards, computers and electronic equipment when composing.*
- discuss descriptive sounds for a composition based on a poem before experimenting with instruments.*
- improvise a solo section in a class piece based on a rondo form (ABACADA) or a vocal 'verse' alternating with a given 'chorus'.*
- create a piece in response to a rhythmic pattern, movement, a series of pictures, or first hand experience such as a visit to a nature trail.*
- make a graphic score of a composition.*
- work in a group to devise a piece before teaching it to another group.*

# Attainment target 1: Performing and composing

## Key stage 3

The development of the ability to perform and compose music with understanding.

Programme of study (relating to attainment target 1).

### END OF KEY STAGE STATEMENTS

By the end of key stage 3, pupils should be able to:

- d) compose, arrange and improvise music, developing ideas within musical structures.
- e) revise their compositions and notate them appropriately for subsequent performance.

### PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Pupils should:

- xi) compose music in response to a wide range of stimuli, including the composition of music for special occasions.
- xii) develop musical ideas within structures to produce individual and group compositions and arrangements.
- xiii) control a wide range of sound sources and make increasing use of more sophisticated instruments.
- xiv) improvise vocally and instrumentally in a variety of styles.
- xv) refine their work to produce complete compositions.
- xvi) use and understand increasingly complex signs, symbols and instructions including conventional and graphic notations.
- xvii) communicate more complex ideas using a widening range of cues, signs and symbols and recording equipment.

### EXAMPLES

Pupils could:

- compose a piece on an environmental theme.*
- compose music to accompany a dramatic presentation set in medieval Britain.*
- compose a sound track to an advertisement.*
- compose a piece by experimenting with different combinations of melodic and rhythmic ostinato for a dance performance.*
- compose an instrumental piece using gameplan modes and structures.*
- synthesise sounds on an electronic keyboard.*
- improvise a solo part over a 12 bar blues sequence, performing without a conductor.*
- perform a group piece to the class and, taking account of the comments made, develop the ideas before notating the final composition.*
- notate a complex piece using graphic and/or conventional notation.*
- use a computer program to store, alter and replay a composition and print the score.*
- notate a song for others to sing with the accompaniment defined by chord symbols.*



**APPENDIX VII: End of Key Stage Descriptions in *Music in the National Curriculum* (DES, 1995)**

**Key Stage 1**

**■ Attainment Target 1: Performing and Composing**

Pupils sing a variety of songs and play simple pieces and accompaniments with confidence and awareness of pulse. They explore, select and order sounds, making compositions that have a simple structure and make expressive use of some of the musical elements including dynamics and timbre.

**■ Attainment Target 2: Listening and Appraising**

Pupils respond to short pieces of music, recognising repetition and changes within the musical elements. They listen attentively and describe and compare sounds and pieces of music using simple terms.

**Key Stage 2**

**■ Attainment Target 1: Performing and Composing**

Pupils perform accurately and confidently, making expressive use of the musical elements and showing awareness of phrase. They sing songs and rounds that have two parts, and maintain independent instrumental lines with awareness of the other performers. They select and combine appropriate resources, use musical structures, make expressive use of musical elements and achieve a planned effect. They use symbols when performing and communicating musical ideas.

**■ Attainment Target 2: Listening and Appraising**

Pupils respond to music, identifying changes in character and mood, and recognise how musical elements and resources are used to communicate moods and ideas. They evaluate their own work, identifying ways in which it can be improved. They begin to recognise how music is affected by time and place, including, where appropriate, the intentions of the composer(s) and performer(s). They listen with attention to detail and describe and compare music from different traditions, using a musical vocabulary.

**Key Stage 3**

**■ Attainment Target 1: Performing and Composing**

Pupils perform an individual part with confidence and control, and interpret the mood or effect of the music. They show awareness of other performers and fit their own part within the whole. They develop musical ideas within structures, using different textures, including harmony, and exploit the musical elements and a variety of resources. They compose music for specific purposes and use notation(s) and, where appropriate, information technology, to explore, develop and revise musical ideas.

**■ Attainment Target 2: Listening and Appraising**

Pupils respond to music, identifying conventions used within different styles and traditions. They analyse changes in character and mood, and evaluate the effect of the music. They critically appraise their own work, taking account of their intentions and the comments of others. They compare music across time and place recognising those characteristics that stay the same and those that change. They use a musical vocabulary appropriately.

**APPENDIX VIII: Programmes of Study in *Music in the National Curriculum* (DES, 1995)**

**KEY STAGE 4 PROGRAMME OF STUDY**

**Performing and Composing**

- 4. Pupils should be given opportunities to:
  - a control sounds made by the voice and a range of tuned and untuned instruments;
  - b perform with others, and develop awareness of audience, venue and occasion;
  - c compose in response to a variety of stimuli, and explore a range of resources, *eg voices, instruments, sounds from the environment*;
  - d communicate musical ideas to others;
- 5. Pupils should be taught to:
  - a sing songs from memory, developing control of breathing, dynamics, rhythm and pitch;
  - b play simple pieces and accompaniments, and perform short musical patterns by ear and from symbols;
  - c sing unison songs and play pieces, developing awareness of other performers;
  - d rehearse and share their music making;
  - e improvise musical patterns, *eg invent and change patterns whilst playing and singing*;
  - f explore, create, select and organise sounds in simple structures;
  - g use sounds to create musical effects, *eg to suggest a machine or a walk through a forest*;
  - h record their compositions using symbols, where appropriate.

**Performing and Composing**

- 4. Pupils should be given opportunities to:
  - a control sounds made by the voice and a range of tuned and untuned instruments;
  - b perform with others, and develop awareness of audience, venue and occasion;
  - c compose in response to a variety of stimuli, and explore a range of resources, *eg voices, instruments, sounds from the environment*;
  - d communicate musical ideas to others;
- 5. Pupils should be taught to:
  - a sing songs, developing control of diction and musical elements, particularly phrasing, *eg giving shape to a song by breathing at the end of a phrase*;
  - b play pieces and accompaniments and perform musical patterns by ear and from notations, *eg symbols which define musical elements*, with increasing dexterity and control;
  - c sing songs, including songs and rounds in two parts, and play pieces which have several parts, developing the ability to listen to the other performers;
  - d rehearse and present their own projects/performances;
  - e improvise rhythmic and melodic ideas, *eg add a .. percussion part to a song*;
  - f explore, create, select, combine and organise sounds in musical structures, *eg using repeated sections or verse and chorus*;
  - g use sounds and structures to achieve an intended effect, *eg to create a particular atmosphere*;
  - h refine and record their compositions using notation(s), where appropriate.

## Performing and Composing

■ 4. Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- a control sounds made by the voice and a range of tuned and untuned instruments;
- b perform with others, and develop awareness of audience, venue and occasion;
- c compose in response to a variety of stimuli, and explore a range of resources, *eg voices, instruments, sounds from the environment*;
- d communicate musical ideas to others;

■ 5. Pupils should be taught to:

- a sing and play a variety of music, developing control of subtle changes within all elements and the ability to interpret the intended effect;
- b sing and play music by ear, from memory and from various forms of notation, including conventional staff notation and chord symbols;
- c take part in group performances (vocal, instrumental and mixed), developing an awareness of style and a sense of ensemble;
- d plan, rehearse, direct and present performances;
- e improvise and arrange in a variety of styles;
- f select and combine resources and develop musical ideas within musical structures;
- g use sounds and conventions to achieve a variety of styles and/or an intended effect, *eg compose music for a special occasion*;
- h refine and complete compositions using notation(s), including conventional staff notation and recording equipment, where appropriate.

## *Patterns*

*Aims* To generate musical ideas from various types of pattern and also explore the connection between sound and various types of symbol.

*Equipment* Access to art department equipment (sugar paper, coloured pens, pencils, etc). Classroom percussion instruments, cassette tape-recorders and (at least) one three-speed tape-recorder.

*Structure* This course is ideal for first-year pupils during either the first or the second term. It lasts for one complete term and is in two sections, so that with careful planning the half-term holiday will form a natural break.

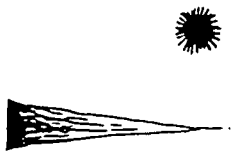
### KEY LESSON 1 *Bells and Morse Code*

*Bells* The worksheet should be distributed (see pages 15-16) and an explanation of the first two sections, 'Bells' and 'Morse Code', then occupies the lesson. The next few weeks' work will be based on these two subjects, the rest of the worksheet being dealt with in the second Key lesson. It is worth reading the text of the worksheet aloud to the class, even though they will all have a copy! Then the sequence of events for 'Bells' can be explored in more detail, as follows:

#### *Practical work*

- a Divide the whole class into four groups and place these towards the four corners of the music room. Each group should have a number: 1, 2, 3, 4. Starting with the first column of numbers on the worksheet, each group chants its number out loud in the printed sequence. It is helpful at this stage to point to the group whose turn it is to say its number. Initially this will be quite slow, but gradually greater speed can be attained, and it might eventually be possible to stop 'conducting' the exercise.
- b When the class can manage the first stage reasonably well each group should decide on one vocal sound to make in place of saying its number. If such sounds are comical, so much the better. An accurate, fairly quick performance of one of the printed columns from the worksheet should then be worked at—this may take some time!

- c Have a selection of different classroom percussion instruments available. Make one sound on each and get, through discussion, ideas from the class as to how it can be represented as a shape and a colour. For example, a fairly loud bang on a bass drum is a dark and heavy sound. To represent this on paper a dark colour—brown or black perhaps—can be used, perhaps in a raggedly circular shape.



A triangle, however, is a bright sound, much more delicate and quiet. A triangular shape indicating the natural decay of the sound and a bright but delicate colour, yellow or pink perhaps, can be used to represent this sound.

Glockenspiels, xylophones, claves, maracas, recorders, melodicas, tambourines, etc., can be similarly discussed and some examples shown to the whole class. This is particularly effective if shapes are drawn in colour using an overhead projector. Following this, groups can draw quite interesting 'sound scores' which can be played using the instruments specified. These can also serve as colourful decoration for the music-room walls (as on page 14).

- d Groups wishing to work at this area of the worksheet for the next few weeks would then:
  - 1 Make up their own sequence of numbers (having used that on the worksheet for practice purposes) or find a sequence used by bell-ringers. It is worth stressing that a sequence using more than numbers 1-6 can become too complex for pupils of this age to handle.
  - 2 Having practised their own number sequence, each person in the group saying the correct number in turn, instruments should then be chosen, one for each number in the sequence. The group should then practise performing their number sequence until an accurate performance can be given.
  - 3 An accurate score should then be prepared by the group on large paper—sugar paper and felt-tip pens are ideal for this. As each number has become an instrumental sound, and each instrumental sound can be represented as a shape with its own colour, very attractive and decorative scores can be produced.

The final stage is a performance of the piece to the rest of the class, complete with an accurate score.

Bells

Bells

1 = Drum.

2 = Cymbal/Cymbal.

3 = China Bars.

4 = Triangle.

5 = Xylophone.

6 = Blocks.

7 = Tambourine.

*Morse code*

The other piece which can be worked is based on morse code. It is likely that the 'Bells' explanation will take at least one full lesson, so that 'Morse Code' may well have to be explained in the following lesson.

*Practical work*

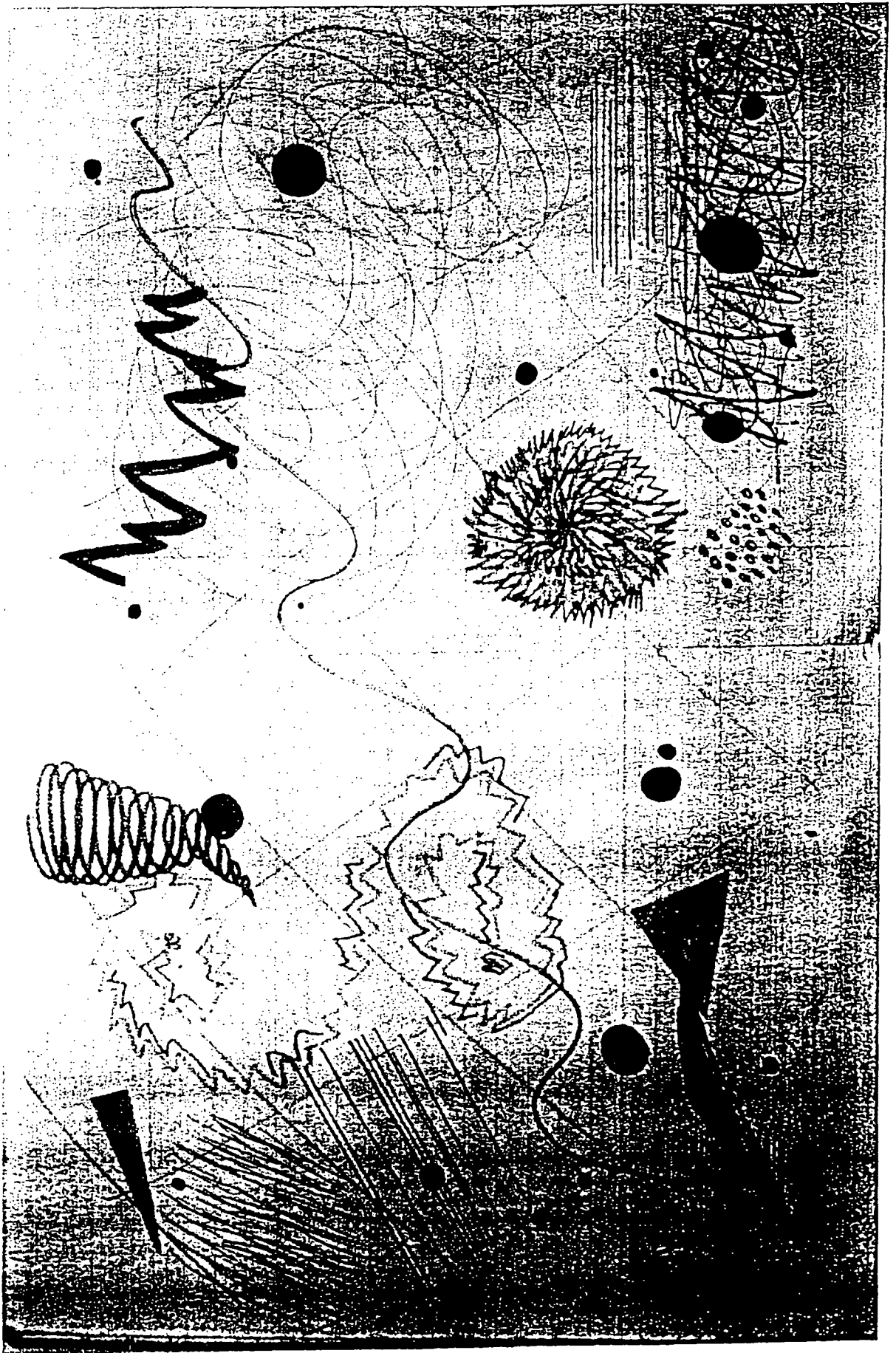
It is, again, worth reading the text of this section of the worksheet to the whole class first. Having done this, the explanation can take the following form:

- a Explain that a dot is a short sound and a dash a long sound. (This may seem obvious, but it is surprising how necessary such explanations seem to be!) It is then worth demonstrating how to make short sounds on naturally sustaining percussion instruments like glockenspiels, cymbals, triangles, etc., and also how to make non-sustaining percussion instruments like drums, xylophones, claves, etc., produce continuous sounds by means of tremolo.
- b Only two symbols are used in morse code: a dot (·) and a dash (-). Therefore, any group attempting this starting point should choose up to four different instruments and decide on four different colours. (This exercise tends to be too complex if more than four are used.)
- c A *short* phrase should be chosen and converted into morse code. Again it is worth doing this on an overhead projector so that the class can see how it is done. It is then possible, using different colours, to show how simple canons are possible; how to write retrograde versions; how to split the parts up between the sequence of dots and dashes; and so on. If two or three different parts are written up fairly quickly the class can be divided into the appropriate number of groups and some attempts at performance made. If the 'text' is amusing—'I hate school' is quite a popular choice!—a useful enthusiasm for accurate performance can be created.

Having had both 'Bells' and 'Morse Code' carefully explained to them, each group will be in a position to choose which of these areas they will work. Whichever area they choose, each group, at the time of performance, will play their piece and also have an accurate score. If performances are timed for half-term the second key lesson can provide the first lesson after the holiday.

The Lazy Dog

KEY





# Patterns Worksheet

## Bells

Bell-ringers use patterns of numbers when ringing quite complicated changes. Here is a simple pattern using only four numbers:

1234	1324	4321
2341	4132	1432
3412	2413	2143
4123	3241	3214
1432	1423	4123
4321	4231	3412
3214	2413	2341
2143	3142	1234

By substituting a musical sound for each number quite interesting patterns can be constructed. Make up a number pattern of your own, or find a sequence used by bell-ringers. Construct a piece of music based on your pattern and then write this down again using appropriate shapes and colours instead of numbers to show which instruments are playing.

## Morse code

Morse code was invented by S. F. D. Morse (1791-1872) and is a system of signalling by a code in which each letter of the alphabet is represented by a combination of dots and dashes. See if you can use this system to invent interesting patterns (messages) and perform them as pieces of music. Write down your piece using colour to distinguish between the different instruments you use.

A	..	J	..---	S	... ..	full stop	.....	7	-----
B	....	K	-.---	T	-	comma	-----	8	-----
C	....	L	....	U	..-	1	-----	9	-----
D	... .	M	--	V	....-	2	....-	0	-----
E	.	N	-. .	W	--- .	3	....-		
F	....	O	---	X	....-	4	....-		
G	---	P	....	Y	-.---	5	.....		
H	....	Q	----	Z	-----	6	.....		
I	..	R	... .						

## Constellations

For centuries man has recognized patterns of stars in the sky. Some of these star patterns are better known than others, the signs of the zodiac being perhaps the most familiar:

*Cancer* (the crab)  
*Leo* (the lion)  
*Virgo* (the virgin)  
*Libra* (the scales)  
*Scorpio* (the scorpion)  
*Sagittarius* (the archer)  
*Capricornus* (the goat)  
*Aquarius* (the water-carrier)  
*Pisces* (the fish)  
*Aries* (the ram)  
*Gemini* (the twins)  
*Taurus* (the bull)

Other well-known constellations include the Plough, Pegasus, Orion and Hercules.

Choose at least one constellation and find out as much as you can about it. Draw the shape of the stars and the animal or other being associated with it.

## Clocks

Alarm; church; grandfather; Big Ben; chimes; pendulum . . .

Clocks make regular patterns of sound, move in regular ways at constant speeds . . .

Take the idea of CLOCKS and use it in any way you can to produce a piece of music (and mime if you wish).

## Machines

Take a cassette tape-recorder and record as many mechanical sounds as you can from the environment: cars, lorries, cement-mixers, clocks, typewriters, washing machines, lathes, drills, and so on.

Having recorded many different patterns of sound, construct a piece of music on tape using different speeds to make different effects.

## Games

Bring in a pack of playing-cards. Select a suitable number of cards from the pack. Decide what each suit is to mean, and also what the numbers represent. (Hearts could be xylophone, spades drums; high numbers could mean loud sounds, low numbers soft; the number could mean how many sounds are to be made, or whereabouts in the room sounds should be made; etc.)

Experiment with different ideas and try to make up a game which can be played with about four people using four different instruments.

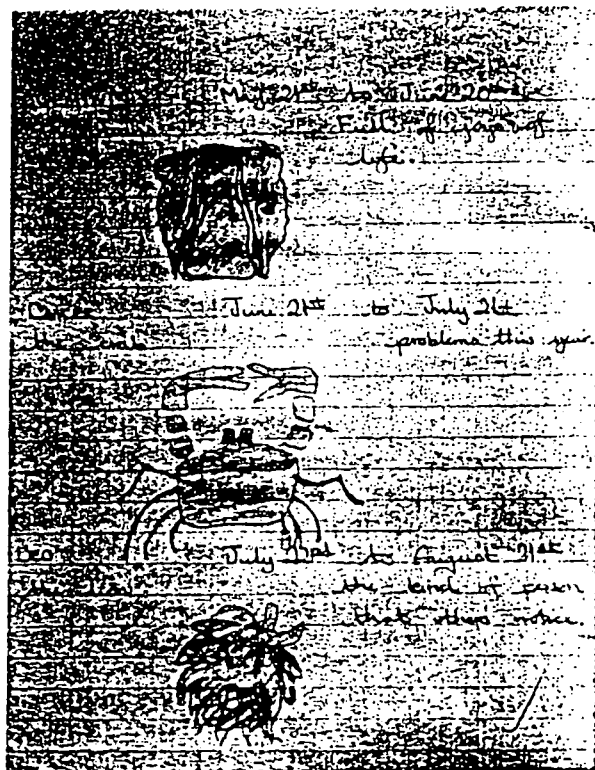
Invent a musical game of your own. This could consist of designing a pack of 'musical' cards with rules, or you may invent a 'board' game using snakes and ladders, ludo, etc., as a model. Design and make your game. Write out the rules so that others can play too.

## KEY LESSON 2 *Constellations, clocks, machines and games*

The second part of this course allows far greater freedom of choice, and this Key lesson is taken up with a description of how the remaining starting-points from the worksheet can be used.

### *Constellations*

Many pupils will be familiar with their own star signs as a large proportion will regularly read their horoscope in magazines or newspapers. The school library will have books which contain the pattern of stars which represents each star sign, and some discussion of the supposed characteristics of people with a certain star sign can be useful.



### *Practical work*

There are several ways of using this information to generate musical ideas:

- a A score can be produced consisting of a number of star patterns drawn on paper in different colours. Each colour represents a different instrument. The group has to make decisions concerning speed, dynamics, pitch, etc., in order to devise the most effective performance.
- b The different characteristics of various people born under different star signs—thoughtful, lively, unstable, etc.—can become a feature of the music. A group could thus produce a small suite of movements representing their own star signs.
- c The animals or other beings with which the star signs are associated can act as a focus for different pieces. Thus music for LEO would be strong and majestic, whereas that for PISCES would be more gentle and wavy.

Music-theatre can become an extra form of expression, particularly in (b) and (c), with groups making costumes to personify the characteristics being explored in the music. Mimes and dance can thus be developed to accompany the music.

*Clocks* Regular rhythms and ostinato figures tend to feature strongly in pieces constructed on this theme. Many imitations of musical clocks—different chimes for the quarter, half, three-quarter, and hour—are possible, some using percussion instruments, others using voices. Pupils can usefully be directed to think about structure in this piece, rondo being a suitable form for the repetition which is present in chiming clocks. The 'Viennese Musical Clock' from Kodály's *Háry János* is a clear example of such a structure. Groups working the theme using only voices may find part of Patterson's *Time Piece* quite stimulating.

#### *Practical work*

This particular area is excellent for some sort of music-theatre. Because of the mechanical regularity of clocks very successful mimes can be constructed to accompany such work. Some groups using only voices may perform the piece in music and movement, the different members of the group becoming different parts of the clock. The piece may start with the clock being wound up, running for a while and chiming occasionally, then gradually running down and grinding to a halt. This gives a most effective structure to the music, resembling an arch form.

Some groups who use instruments for their music may care to make a tape of their performance and produce a mime to go with the tape, or to combine some additional sounds performed live with the tape. Such pieces often begin as above, with the clock being wound up, running and chiming normally for a time, but gradually going wrong and ending with a violent explosion and the different parts of the clock being scattered far and wide. Again, this provides a very satisfactory structure in purely musical terms.

#### *Machines* *Practical work*

This is technically the most complex of all the pieces of the PATTERNS course and it demands a great deal of time and commitment from any group which chooses to work it. They have to be willing to put in extra work, outside class time, in order to complete it (generally), and so I tended to limit this piece to one group in any class. The piece is in three stages:

- a Using a portable cassette recorder (with batteries and built-in microphone), the group visits various locations around the school and records mechanical sounds—woodwork/metalwork areas, typing room, domestic science, etc. If possible, a visit to a nearby railway station or bus park can also be fruitful. These sounds are then transferred to reel-to-reel tape, being recorded at the 'middle' speed. ('Slow', 'middle', and 'fast' in this context refer to tape speeds 4.8, 9.5, and 19 cms per second, respectively.)

- b Three columns are drawn on paper. These are labelled either 'slow', 'middle', or 'fast'. With the tape counter set at zero, the tape is first of all played back at the middle speed. In the column labelled 'middle' each sound should be listed, together with its position on tape—i.e. the number on the tape counter when the sound begins. Having worked the complete tape in this way it should then be rewound and the procedure repeated for the other two speeds. When playing back the tape at 'slow' or 'fast', the effect of the speed change should be noted: some will be very interesting; others less so.
- c A selection of all the available sounds has to be made. Some will no doubt be at the original speed, but many will be at either the 'slow' or the 'fast' speed. Having chosen the most interesting and effective sounds, these have then to be placed in a satisfactory order. (Contrasts of speed, pitch, dynamic, etc., are important considerations at this stage.)

Once an order is decided, the relevant sounds may be re-recorded on to another cassette. The cassette can be stopped after each sound while the next sound is found and the appropriate speed selected. Interesting results can be achieved when the final cassette is replayed. Although the quality will not be of a high standard, it represents a considerable achievement for first-year pupils who are unlikely to have used such equipment in this way before. Groups who have completed this piece may be interested in hearing some 'electronic' music. Part of Subotnik's *Silver Apples of the Moon* is very accessible to pupils of this age, particularly the first few minutes of side two.

### Games Practical work

This section is in two parts:

The instructions on the worksheet should be clear enough for groups to proceed. The use of playing cards is only to give groups an idea of some of the possibilities, and it is best to spend only a short time trying out ideas in this section.

Ideas for board games can be taken from snakes and ladders, ludo, cluedo, etc. From them, quite complex musical games can be devised. Groups have to produce their own board, any cards and counters which may be necessary, and also a set of rules. This area in particular seems to capture the interest, and usually many very interesting games are produced.



A follow-up to this assignment could be the introduction of David Bedford's two 'game' pieces, either for the group to try out, or for the whole class to use—after the completion of the course. These are *An Exciting Game for Children of All Ages* and *Fun for All the Family*. Occasionally a group will devise a game piece which the whole class can play, and this can be a most successful way of ending the term!

### *Other starting points*

The list of possible starting points on the worksheet can easily be extended, and some groups may have other ideas for developing pieces out of the idea of PATTERNS (using patterned material or wallpaper as musical scores and then designing their own wallpaper for decorative and performance purposes, for example). However, the second Key lesson should give enough variety of starting points for every group to be able to find something of interest to work at for the remainder of the term.

### *Results*

It is unlikely that any group would complete more than one piece in the second half of the term, but at the end of this course each group should have produced two pieces, each with an accurate accompanying score (apart from the 'Machines' group), and such pieces can of course be performed by other classes and groups.

### *Resources*

Kodály: *Háry János*

Patterson: *Time Piece*

Subotnik: *Silver Apples of the Moon*

### *Other music for performance*

Bedford: *An Exciting Game for Children of All Ages* Universal Edition

Bedford: *Fun for All the Family* Universal Edition

## **APPENDIX X: The levels of achievement in *Exemplification of Standards. Music: Key Stage 3* (SCAA, 1996)**

The following descriptions describe the types and range of performance that the majority of pupils should characteristically demonstrate by the end of the key stage, having been taught the relevant programme of study. The descriptions are designed to help teachers judge the extent to which their pupils' attainment relates to this expectation. The expectations match the level of demand in other subjects and are broadly equivalent to Level 2 at Key Stage 1, Level 4 at Key Stage 2 and Levels 5/6 at Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 3, additional descriptions are provided to help teachers differentiate exceptional performance.

### **Key Stage 3**

#### **■ Attainment Target 1: Performing and Composing**

Pupils perform an individual part with confidence and control, and interpret the mood or effect of the music. They show awareness of other performers and fit their own part within the whole. They develop musical ideas within structures, using different textures, including harmony, and exploit the musical elements and a variety of resources. They compose music for specific purposes and use notation(s) and, where appropriate, information technology, to explore, develop and revise musical ideas.

#### **■ Attainment Target 2: Listening and Appraising**

Pupils respond to music, identifying conventions used within different styles and traditions. They analyse changes in character and mood, and evaluate the effect of the music. They critically appraise their own work, taking account of their intentions and the comments of others. They compare music across time and place recognising those characteristics that stay the same and those that change. They use a musical vocabulary appropriately.

### **Exceptional Performance**

#### **■ Attainment Target 1: Performing and Composing**

Pupils perform with confidence, control and an awareness of style, making expressive use of phrasing and subtle changes within the musical elements. They direct others in group performances and perform a solo part in a group, demonstrating a sense of ensemble and recognising when to take the lead and when to support others. They develop musical ideas, exploring structures and exploiting a range of resources and conventions. They refine and complete compositions using appropriate notations, and define and fulfil their intentions.

#### **■ Attainment Target 2: Listening and Appraising**

Pupils identify resources and conventions used in different times and places. They evaluate different interpretations and versions of musical works and critically appraise and improve their own work. They identify continuity and change within a range of musical traditions from different times and cultures, making connections between the music and its historical, social and cultural context. They use an accurate and extensive musical vocabulary.

## Appendix XI: The Schedule for the interview

### **TOPIC: The priority given to composing within the music curriculum**

1. Is either one of performing, appraising or composing of more value than the other?
2. How much time do you allocate to composing throughout Key Stage 3?
3. Is there enough time for composing?
4. How do the three areas, composing listening and performing interrelate?

### **TOPIC: Reasons for including composing**

1. Others have said that composing is a vehicle for self expression, creativity, appraisal, analysis, developing a technique, which of these are important to you?

### **TOPIC: Methods of teaching composing**

1. What are the important methods?
2. Are pupils given freedom to "explore" from a generic cell or a "stimulus" as suggested by the National Curriculum?  
Do the children compose by means of arrangement?  
Is the mastering of some form of notational skill important?  
Is proficiency on an instrument important?
3. Which of the above are teachable?
4. How do you recognise achievement in your own lessons/ in the above? (refer to NC/P&A)

### **TOPIC: Evidence of progression that arises from the method/s?**

1. Is it easy to measure progress?
2. How do you measure progress?
3. How helpful is the National Curriculum or the SCAA *Exemplification of Standards in music* for guidance for assessing composition?
4. Is there any thing else that you would like to be made available to you for guidance?

### **TOPIC: G.C.S.E.**

1. Through what methods do you teach composing at G.C.S.E?
2. Is it easier to assess progression at G.C.S.E?

### **TOPIC: Influences**

1. Do you borrow from your own school/ university experiences?
2. Have any theorists such as Paynter, Swanwick, Salaman influenced you?
3. What background do you have as a composer?

### **TOPIC: Material available to teachers**

1. Do you draw upon published material such as *Music matters*, *Out of Bounds*?



2. Is it successful?
3. What would you like to be made available to you for curriculum guidance?

**TOPIC:** Other

## Appendix XII: The transcripts from the interviews

### Interview 1. Pilot interview with Mr. Ash

CB: Tell me about the priority that you give to composing.

Ash: Well it's fundamental, it's written in the National Curriculum as being of equal importance to listening and performing. I myself *composing* tend to rate it as high as anything *important* else, if not more so.

CB: Does that mean that you award more time to composing?

Ash: I would try, but truthfully *time problem* speaking it's not always possible.

CB: Do the three areas interrelate?

Ash: The curriculum that I use tends *interrelation* to integrate the

various elements performing,  
listening and composing.

CB: Tell me about your  
reasons for including  
composing.

Ash: It's the ultimate creative *creativity*  
act in music, the starting point  
of everything. The benefits of  
composing far outweigh  
anything else. You don't have  
to be technically and classically  
trained to compose. It's the  
same parallel in art. You don't *technique not*  
have to be a trained painter in *important*  
order to paint. I believe it's  
exactly the same in composing.

CB: Tell me about you  
methods for teaching  
composing.

Ash: I've always put the  
creative act before the theory.  
**Composing is**

**the starting point and the starting point in terms of theory is dictated by the needs of the pupil and their approach to the creative act will throw up various questions that they need to answer. It is at that point that I make the professional decision whether to give them the appropriate background to help them explore the material.**

CB: Is the mastery of some form of notational skill important?

Ash: There is a certain amount of importance. From a practical point of view they've got to be able to remember what they've done from lesson to lesson. If we're talking about traditional *notation important*  
*traditional notation*  
*unimportant*

notation I don't see it as that important. In fact I don't see it as being fundamental.

CB: What about other forms of notation?

Ash: I think the children have got to recognise for themselves that their creative acts have got to be recorded and if they want someone else to participate in the performance there's got to be some way of transmitting their ideas to other people. But I think They've got to come to that themselves and, therefore, it comes down to the fact of how I introduce the various forms. I'm not one of these that believes "let's discover some way of transmitting ideas" is the answer to everything. But it is all about self awareness and communication.

*impersonates a hippie*

CB: How do you recognise  
achievement?

Ash: The fifty six million dollar *achievement*  
question. It has to be in the process *difficult to*  
of problem solving and coming to *recognise*  
solutions to problems, of exploring  
and developing ideas. Then there's  
got to be a certain end product. I  
**tend to lean more on the**  
**achievements inherent in the**  
**process** which for everybody is *subjectivity*  
going to be different.

CB: Describe the methods through  
which you teach composing at  
GCSE.

Ash: The ways in which I teach  
composing at GCSE are changing. I  
don't think so far I've found an  
effective way. **The new syllabus**  
**has moved towards teacher**  
**direction**, so yeas I teach  
composing differently at Key Stage  
4. The new GCSE syllabus talks  
about briefs and it's much more

focused now so I think that my teaching is going to have to be more focused. More of a grip on conventions. I think, also, if we're preparing pupils for A level then we've got to handle this idea of conventions. It's a balancing act. I wouldn't want to go back to pencil and paper exercises. Again it's a question of making a professional judgement of what information to feed them and when. Unfortunately this means that each pupil is going to have to have a tutorial session.

*conventions at*

*GCSE*

**CB: DO you find it easy to measure progression at Key Stage 3?**

**Ash: It's difficult because what you're trying to measure is the development of someone's creativity. You can look at a child in year 7 and again in Year 8 and nine and see that their compositions are more sophisticated. They should be drawing upon past experiences**

*progression is in*

*creativity*

*difficult to assess*

all the while. But I find the actual progression difficult to define.

CB: Is it easier to assess progression at GCSE?

Ash: It's no easier only in the sense that the type of pupils that you have at GCSE have probably got more inherent skills by then, as they've chosen the subject and then their compositions will have more sophistication and I suppose it's easier to see that develop. You're dealing with things at a more advanced level. *different calibre of student at GCSE*

CB: How helpful is SCAA or the National Curriculum?

Ash: I'm not convinced that SCAA have got it right. But that's because of the subjectivity involved in composing. *SCAA of little use*

CB: Is there anything that you would like to be made available to you for guidance?

Ash: More recordings of pupils' work where you can see how each



child has progressed.

CB: Do you borrow from your own experiences?

Ash: Yes, or I wouldn't be able to teach it. I was very fortunate to go to a university where they've got quite a modern view on

*composer*

composition. Also my first boss was a Paynter man.

CB: Have you used any published material as a curriculum aid?

Ash: Music Matters, some of which is o.k. but other bits are rubbish.

CB: Is there anything else that you would like to be made available to you?

Ash: Everything has to be tailored towards your pupils' needs so the stuff coming from university lecturers in their nice cosy offices is no good.

CB: Is there anything else you would like to comment on in composing?

Ash: No.

## Interview 2 with Mr. Cook

CB: Tell me about the priority that you give to composing within your curriculum.

*Important*

Cook: Every unit that I teach at Key Stage 3 has a composing task as part of it. It's very important.

CB: How do you divide the time between composing, listening and performing?

Cook: I tend to do more composing. The listening comes at the beginning of the project and then the main aim is to compose a piece of music based upon the original stimulus, so most of the project is the composing part.

CB: Do you have enough time for your composing tasks?

Cook: Mostly. It's sometimes a struggle with the less able pupils who very often don't finish.

CB: Do composing, performing and listening interrelate?

*Time is a problem*

Cook: **Yes, although time is a problem.** The listening bit is usually just at the beginning and the end, when they listen to each other.

For performing obviously they perform their compositions.

CB: Do you ever isolate the three areas?

Cook: Not usually. Most kids can find their way around the keyboard and shake or hit something. I do make sure that they understand how to read or write a score.

*Notation issue*

CB: Tell me your reasons for including composing.

*Sigh, pause of some length*

Cook: I've not actually thought about that, except I don't see any reason why not, apart from the fact we have to do it.

*Pause*

**In my curriculum it tends to be the culmination of all that the kids have learnt about the particular style of music. If we've done a project on the ground bass then it's a test of whether they've understood what a ground bass is. It's a craft I suppose.**

*Composing is a test of knowledge*

CB: Tell me about your methods for teaching composing.

Cook: I use a variety. In year seven it's mostly based around using sounds. By the end of year seven the kids should be able to understand staff notation and what a scale is so they can compose a melody using that scale. In years eight and nine they're doing blues or ostinatos and chord sequences.

*Pause*

CB: So would you say that in years 8 and 9 the compositional tasks are more arrangement based?

Cook: Yes I suppose they are.

CB: Is it easy to recognise achievement in composing.

Cook: I think so.

CB: How do you recognise achievement in composing?

Cook: I consider whether they've written the composition down correctly and how well they've performed it and whether they're pleased with it.

*Assessment through rudiments*

CB: How do you recognise progress in composing?

Cook: **I suppose it's whether what I'm giving them to do is more challenging than the last thing.**

CB: How do you make them more challenging?

Cook: Emmm. Like in year nine we use chords which they haven't come across before and things like that. Composing a canon they've got to think about harmonies that go together.

CB: How do you make them more challenging in year seven.

Cook: I don't suppose the year seven stuff is very challenging, it's a way of giving them things to think about...the elements of music and so on.

CB: Does the National Curriculum provide any guidance for you in assessing progress?

Cook: None whatever.

*NC no use*

CB: How about the SCAA exemplification of Standards?

Cook: **Very interesting to look at but I think the examples are all taken from very middle class kids who are all musical geniuses and dead easy to teach. It's all too hard for our kids. I'd like to see what goes on in a school like ours and how well the kids are doing their.**

*SCAA little use*

CB: Tell me about your methods for teaching composing at GCSE.

Cook: They're the same really except

some compose quite classical pieces and others prefer Oasis pastiche!

CB: How do you recognise achievement in composing during the GCSE course?

Cook: I have to look at harmony structure and technical difficulty...whether a piece of music makes sense.

*Rudiments at GCSE*

CB: How do they progress?

Cook: Again I think it's how difficult the things are that I ask them to do, a theme and variations take longer and requires more knowledge than a short piece in binary form does.

CB: Tell me about anything that influences your ideas for teaching composing.

Cook: Not very much. It's all mostly my own ideas. I specialised in composing at university but a teacher training college I didn't think much at all of what the tutor was telling us to do.

*Composer*

CB: What was that?

Cook: Oh, messing about on xylophones using thirds and sixths and stuff like that.

CB: Do you use any published material at all for teaching composing?

Cook: I use *Music Matters* alot, but adapt it.

CB: Is there anything else that you'd like to be made available to you for lesson ideas.

Cook: No.

CB: Is there anything else you could tell me about composing at Key Stage 3?

Cook: What did surprise me when I went on a course a while back was how many different ideas and things you could get the kids to do. It's a really diverse subject.

*Diversity of music*

### Interview 3 with Mrs North

CB: Tell me about the priority you give to composing in your curriculum.

*Important*

North: It's very important because it's creative and the mind is developed through creativity and music. In my opinion it has lagged behind very much when you think of the other arts, painting, English composition, nobody until recently actually thought about composing in schools and I don't think that people outside of school are encouraged to compose, therefore it's a means of learning about a subject but we're also there to use that subject to develop it in our own way.

*Value of creativity*

CB: To what extent does it interrelate with performing and listening?

*Long pause*

North: It's a difficult one that because it needs to link and it's got to be balanced. It's got to take a third of the time.

*One third of time*

CB: Do you think it's important that children have some instrumental ability in order to compose?

*Instrumental proficiency*

North: Yes definitely.

CB: You mentioned before that composing was a vehicle for creativity, others had said it's a means for self expression, analysis, developing a craft, are any of these important to you?

North: I think self expression is very important and developing a craft. Above all it's a means of personal communication and in any of the arts I think that's very important. There never used to be enough of that in music years ago. Yes... I think it's about developing a craft to communicate.

*Self expression  
important*

CB: Tell me about your methods for teaching composing.

North: I think in the first instance theoretically based. You've got to have something before you start. I haven't always agreed with "the sound before the sign", well I agree with the philosophy but I don't always think it's possible. I've taught in three different schools. In the first two schools I used to let the pupils compose at their own free will. I explained how to use chords on the guitar and some of them came up with their own pop songs. At my third school, where I teach now there had been a lot of composing going on before I got there mostly in the sixth form. I wanted to excite the pupils about it lower down the school. I get the pupils to use chords, improvise from them and write them down. I give them the chord progression in the first place.

*Theoretical  
knowledge  
important*

I use a lot of graphic notation as well. I was greatly influenced by a superb book that came out in the seventies by a man named Brian Dennis. I adapted a lot of the ideas in the book and still use some of them now. I start with graphic notation and then develop it through to staff notation.

*Use of Graphic notation*

CB: Tell me a little bit more about your schemes of work that use graphic notation.

North: I work with sounds. First of all they record sounds and eventually they make their own sounds up. You have to let the children explore for themselves, they've got to be told a certain amount but you have to let them be free to discover for themselves.

CB: How do you measure progression with this type of task?

*Pause*

North: I find that difficult really because there's a lot of argument saying that graphic notation, it's great, it's wizz, but it comes to a stop. Also if children want to continue with music after school then they need to know more than graphic notation, they need to understand staff notation.

*Progress difficult to assess*

I find it so difficult, and I haven't really thought about it, although I should. It's got to be a mixture of using graphic notation and staff notation and using a greater complexity of sounds but to make sure that it's not something that's more difficult for its own sake. The determining of what is good and what isn't good is rather difficult and **what exactly do we mean by progression?**

Are you learning more? I know what the National Curriculum says, but I'm not so sure it applies. Years ago you just did the lessons and didn't think about it, no one was accountable and you just enjoyed composing.

*Music important  
for social*

CB: Where could you measure progression?

*development*

North: I think you can measure it in theoretical aspects. I think we should go back to that really. You have to do it at G.C.S.E anyway. We could be doing more of the work of Orff. I know this went out of fashion, but only because it cost so much to send people on all the training courses.

CB: Do you think that going back to the technicalities would make it accessible to all?

North: It might well make it more difficult for the less able. But in other technical subjects they are streamed.



It has put people off music. In my schemes of work I do think a lot about what put me off at school. I haven't had any real training as a composer which is why I felt it was a breath of fresh air when it was introduced into the classroom. I did find things like *Tonic Sol Fah* really boring at school.

There has to be a balance between the two I think. Graphic scores is a way of capturing their imaginations and making it fun.

CB: Has anything else influenced you other than Dennis and Orff?

North: No not really. I've been on some Inset training days but most of what we were informed about had come from the Dennis book in some form or other.

CB: Is there anything else you can tell me about?

North: There's an interesting book about the composer Faure and it has a section about a piece that Faure wrote for the violin and it has a picture of the score, it's a graphic score. You can't say the Faure didn't progress.

#### Interview 4 with Mr. Higgs

CB: Tell me about the priority that you give composing at Key Stage 3.

Higgs: I suppose I give it a high level of priority. It's dead *composing important* important that the kids do it.

CB: How would you rank it's importance against performing and listening?

Higgs: Probably equally although I'd like to give it more time so that thing get finished off. Sometimes the real drongos in the class don't get any where near finished.

CB: How do the three components interrelate?

*Pause*

Higgs: Well the performing and composing go together really as **we ask the kids to perform their compositions to the class**. I'll tell you what I do find though, and that's that a lot of the kids find it dead hard to perform sometimes. **You know, I've got some of the most difficult kids in the school** who haven't got a clue so their rubbish when it comes to performing in front of the class.

*Anxious here*

CB: Do you think that it's important for the pupils to be able to play an instrument in order for them to use it to compose?

Higgs: Yes it is but there's not enough time so they just have to make do with what they can do. You know it's really difficult that after having two fifty minute lessons in year seven a week they then go on to one fifty minute lesson a week in year eight.

*lack of time*

**There's just not enough time.** By the time you've got stuff out and shouted a few times it's time to pack away. Also we have a rolling PSE program so that takes time off the subject as well as things like closures for INSET Days and things. I feel like I'm going backwards sometimes.

*Gestures with arms*

CB: Why is it important to include composing?

Higgs: It's an important that kids create things. I mean it's good for them to have new ideas and share others ideas. You know, it's part of growing up that they discover more things.

*creativity*

*Pause*

Also it's important that they develop musically and develop ideas and styles. It's really interesting the different styles they have you know that some write almost like pop ballads and a lot just want to thump the drums... I suppose that's their age.

CB: Would you say it's a vehicle for self expression?

Higgs: Yes it's important that they put their thoughts into music, it's all a part of growing up. A lot depends on what mood they're in as well. If their in a bad mood then *social development* they often make really loud thumpy music. I've found that some of the real good musicians can put their character into their music as well, it's the clever dream pupils that compose the pop ballads.

CB: What about composing as a means of appraisal or analysis?

Higgs: I haven't really thought of that. But we always discuss each others at the end of a project.

CB: Tell me about you methods for teaching composing.

Higgs: Well in year seven we start off with the elements of music and looking at what they are and how they can be used. **We do a lot of listening then and some playing about on instruments like xylophones and things. They really enjoy that and it's a way for the whole class, who are new, to get to know each other.** I get them to compose music based on creating atmosphere. I do give them a structure though, it has to be ABA in this instance. We also talk about how they organise themselves and a piece of music. It's really experimental here. We then go on to ostinato and more structure... we come back to binary form and ternary form a lot in year 7. We do a lot of rhythm work as well as I find it dead infuriating when they're not used to playing in time so we do some rhythm games and things. *rudiments*

We then move on to staff notation later on in the year and use it in a project based on the pentatonic scale. I think that by bringing this in

here then **they've only got five notes to worry about**, they're not overloaded. Then we go on to do ritornello and developing a four line melody. We do some improvising around the pentatonic scale you know so that they can get to understand the length of phrases and what a minim and a crotchet is. So I suppose we do structures. **It is a real nightmare though sometimes when we're doing the four line melody thing as they come out with some outrageous things like twenty beats in a bar.** A lot of them

*less able struggle*

struggle with this although they do improve slightly as they get older. They can't always play the tunes that they compose either.

CB: What about the top end of the group?

Higgs: They'll often go on to using chords or performing to a beat on the keyboard. There's not enough time though.

CB: Tell me about Year 8.

Higgs: We start of with the blues.

They really enjoy this.

We talk about the blues scale and they work in pairs and we do the walking bass. Then we go on to African music and polyrhythms and singing, discussing the concepts of pitch and so on. Then we do the Baroque era. Now they find this quite difficult. We do some pastiche using sequences and repetition but they don't like it much. They do better at the free composition.

With Year 9 I'm still experimenting. I'm not sure what to do. We do the ground bass. They do love that most of them know the Pachelbel anyway so they like that. This leads on to them composing their own if they do GCSE. I like to get them to compose a ballad at the end of the year. I tell them about chords. Most of them find this difficult at first. Some write words. It's quite a simple project but a lot of them get really worried about this one at first.

CB: Do they tend to sort out their worries?

*Reluctant to say so.*

Higgs: Yes I suppose so. Most of them come up with something.

CB: What are the reasons, do you think, for some not completing?

Higgs: I don't know... I suppose it's just beyond them.

We also do things like Reggae and off beat rhythms, they like that. The best thing that we do though is video music. I show them some *Wallace and Gromitt* and they have to make up the music for the action. They like that as they can make up lots of clashing chords and stuff. They do get de-mob happy at the end of the year though.

CB: How important is it, do you think, that they have some form of notational skills?

Higgs: I don't like it and neither do they. They've got to do it for GCSE *notation issue* but in years 7 to 9 they do a lot from memory. It's not easy for them. I've got a lot of strugglers and there's not the time for them to grasp it. They should be set really. You know I've got this real problem with one of the kids and the Head of Maths said "Just move him down a set" but they're not set for music. It's alright for him.

*Gets quite heated*



CB: Do you think it would help if they were set for music?

Higgs: I don't know. It would give you some really nice lessons with the clever ones but it would be hell having the bottom sets. You see music is a social subject and I think that they should all work with each other and that it should develop them socially. You know each class is different and that's the brilliant thing that you get some good surprises. It is tough going though as differentiation is a huge problem in music. I mean you either can or can't do it.

CB: Is it easy to measure progress in composing?

Higgs: No. There's not much progress. It's social. The practical *social development* things are more important. I've had the stuff from SCAA and I can't make head or tail of it. I don't think that work will benefit the class.

CB: Is there anything that you would like to be made available to you for ideas in progression?

Higgs: Yes, more INSET. Although I don't know because sometimes they're a load of rubbish.

One woman wanted us to go round with a tape recorder and analyse every single bit of what the kids were doing and saying. I nearly lost my rag with her. I don't think it's necessary to assess progression. Anyway it's not realistic on one lesson a week. It's a social subject.

*lack of time*

CB: Is it easier to assess progression at GCSE?

Higgs: Yes loads. **They tell you how to do it** and I did the exam myself so I can remember a lot about what I did.

CB: Do you borrow from any of your own experiences such as school or university?

Higgs: Not much from school as it's so different now. It's mostly my own ideas as teacher training was so idealistic, I have discipline to cope with.

CB: Do you use any published material for guidance?

Higgs: Some *Music Matters* but the worksheets are too long.

I like to use my own ideas.

CB: What would you like to be made available to you?

Higgs: I'm not sure.

CB: Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about that's an important issue to you in composing?

Higgs: I don't think so. I just think that progress shouldn't matter. It's not maths. It's social. I was criticised by a colleague for getting the kids to clap at the end of performances. But I think that it's important for them to behave like musical audiences. they have to listen to each other. that's it I think.

**Interview 5 with Miss Watts.**

CB: Tell me about the priority that you give to composing.

Watts: It's a struggle. I try to do as much composing as I can but there's only forty five minutes given to music at Key Stage 3 a week so there's little time to do any formal composition. More would be an advantage.

*lack of time*

CB: Is either one of performing, listening and composing more valuable to you than the other?

Watts: I don't know, I just do it. I don't really think about why I'm doing what I am... but I do all three.

*not sure why  
teaching composing*

CB: Do you treat the three areas as interrelated?

Watts: Yeah, for example in year eight we base a scheme of work around triads, they Listen to them and find out what they sound like then perform tunes that are accompanied by them and them make a tune up based on them themselves.

*performing and  
listening enable  
composing*

CB: What are your reasons for including composing?

Watts: It's creative, it's something new. You always get twenty five different results. I think that it should be a less formal type of lesson, more social but you still get a product. So that's why it's important.

*creativity*

CB: What do you mean by less formal?

Watts: Like we rarely notate, it's not academic. Sometimes I get the kids to produce a graphic score but that's about it.

CB: Others have said that composing is a vehicle for self expression, appraisal or analysis. Have any of these a value to you.

Watts: Self expression. But they mostly work in groups so that's quite limited.

*self expression*

CB: Any of the others?

Watts: No.

CB: Tell me about your methods for teaching composing.

Watts: In Year Seven we do a lot based around sounds, creating sounds, drawing pictures of sounds and eventually this leads onto staff notation, but you know, much later on. I don't think that notation's that important. In Year Eight we do more conventional stuff. We do some score reading so I suppose that helps with composing. We introduce tempo and dynamics here, more theoretical stuff. **Then in Year Nine it's freer as they're getting demob happy.** I try to do things that interest them though so they don't get bored but I hardly do any formal notation which causes big problems at GCSE. If they want to write things down then they can do, but I leave it up to them. We are lucky in that we've over two hundred and fifty kids learning instruments in the school so **most of them know what they're doing.** That's mostly the upper sets so I use a lot of conventions with them.

*rudiments/ notation*

CB: Do you differentiate your schemes of work?

Watts: Yes I try my best as I think that music is something that all kids should do. But I do find that my lower streams rarely finish a composition.

*less able struggle*

CB: Why do you think this is?

Watts: I don't know I think it's because of lack of time. I have to spend more time giving instruction and so there's even less time to do things.

CB: Do you think composing is something that's accessible to all then?

Watts: Oh yes. But there's just a minority that mess about that I have a problem with and that have a problem with composing.

CB: How do you recognise achievement in composing?

Watts: I don't know. I suppose if they finish and they're happy with what they've got.

*achievement is subjective*

CB: How do you measure progress?

Watts: I find marking really tricky. Who are we to say whether something is good or not? They might think something is good and we don't. I find it really difficult to justify why I've given anyone a mark. I suppose I look at whether the piece has a beginning, a middle and an end and then see what other detail is there.

CB: What guidance do you give for structuring a composition?

Watts: I don't do a lot of conventions. We do rondo in Year Nine but that's about it. I'm not sure. You see at school I never did the conventions. I see conventions as limitations. Each piece has to be individual. I never give any thought to a kid's earlier compositions in marking the next one.

They get quite turned off as well sometimes in composing so I don't like to use it to judge them.

*negative expectation*

CB: How helpful is the National Curriculum for offering guidance in assessing progress.

Watts: None what ever.

CB: What about the SCAA Exemplification of standards and tests.

*Pause, sigh*

Watts: If I'm honest I haven't even looked at them. There just isn't time when I'm having to run this choir, that band and so on. There are so many kids playing instruments that I like to do as much as I can for them in running orchestras and choirs that I'm exhausted. I was actually criticised by OFSTED for not teaching enough composing. I'm really angry about that as the lessons that they saw were ones that were based around listening so of course they didn't see enough composing. But Ninety percent of my last years Year eleven got above a C at GCSE so I must be doing something right. I actually got a prize, a bottle of wine, for being the most inspected teachers in OFSTED.

CB: Is there anything that you would like to be made available to you for guidance in assessing composing?

Watts: I don't know. More specific ideas for lessons. Some guidance as to what to look for. Something like you have at GCSE, you know the criteria.

*needs guidance*

CB: Is it easier to assess progress at GCSE then?

Watts: Yes, much easier. It's more formal. there's more rudiments and theory. It's not essential to notate but they must have a clear idea of form. A lot use the computer.

They're more willing to work at GCSE as well. and there's more one to one.

CB: How big's your group?

Watts: There's thirty one but the other music teacher teaches in the lesson with me. So it's only really fifteen to one.

CB: Do you borrow any ideas from your own experience at school or university.

Watts: Only some stuff from colleagues from teacher training. We swapped ideas. Most of the stuff I do though is based on my own ideas.

CB: What's your compositional background?

Watts: None what ever !

CB: Have any theorists influenced you?

Watts: Yes, I read *Sound and Silence* and so I do some stuff out of that.

CB: What about other publications available?

Watts: Nothing really. I do use some stuff for singing though.

CB: Would you like there to be something available to you?

Watts: Yes I suppose.

CB: What?

Watts: I don't know.

CB: Is there anything else you'd like to say about composing at Key Stage 3?

Watts: No.

*Laughs*



### **Interview 6 with Mrs Kidd**

CB: Tell me about the priority that you give to composing within your curriculum.

Kidd: It's an important part of what we do, in fact quite a lot, if not most of our stuff is based around composing.

*composing of value*

CB: How much time do you allocate to it?

Kidd: I suppose about half really.

CB: Is that enough time?

Kidd: Not really. We do have a problem with space. My classroom is in the mobile hut and, of course, all the equipment is in the room in the main building. So we have to teach on a rota basis. That's why only half of the time is allocated to composing.

*lack of space*

CB: How long is a lesson?

Kidd: The kids have an hour a week. So I suppose that's only six lessons a term composing. That's not much is it?

*time shortage*

CB: Do the different areas composing, performing and listening interrelate?

Kidd: They're reliant on each other.  
We listen to each other's  
compositions and the kids perform  
their compositions. So I suppose  
the other areas support composing.  
Because of the classroom situation  
though we do have to have separate  
listening lessons when in the  
mobile.

*interrelation of  
composing, listening  
and performing*

CB: Are these lessons more  
rudimentary?

Kidd: Yes. **It's a bit boring** but  
they manage. What we do is try to  
do some listening based on the type  
of work we're doing. Like if we're  
doing the ground bass in Year 9  
then we'll have a lesson based on  
Pachelbel's *Canon*. Or we'll listen  
to *The Planets* when we do space  
music. This type of lesson can be a  
pain though as the kids  
automatically decide that they can't  
produce work as good as that. So  
sometimes they're put off before  
they begin and not enough done at  
Key Stage 2 doesn't help.

*negative expectations*

*lack of continuity*

CB: Why is important to teach  
composing?

Kidd: Well it's in the National  
Curriculum.

*Laughs*

CB: Why do you think it's important?

Kidd: It give the kids a chance to express they're musicality. It's difficult for me to answer this question as I'm not a composer.

I've had no training in composing and I'm only doing it because it's in the National Curriculum. **Our**

*less able struggle*

**kids have got quite a low concentration span.** The

brighter kids seem to manage but I don't think it's something that all kids should have to do. It's too hard.

CB: Tell me about your methods for teaching composing.

Kidd: We do pieces based around rhythm, notation, melody, we use the pentatonic scale to build up ideas. They work either as pairs or a team and do stuff with ostinatos, drones or arrangements.

CB: It's all quite rudimentary

*rudiments*

stuff, is it meant to be?

Kidd: Yes, that's what music is made up of - **real music**.

CB: What do you mean by "real music"?

Kidd: None of this "let's be the sea" rubbish. The kids know that that's not what music's about.

CB: How do you recognise achievement?

Kidd: I suppose the weakest kids make the biggest achievement if they finish. But so many of them are disappointed with their work even if I think they've done well. They set their standards as those of their favourite pop stars. That's proper music and proper composing to them.

CB: Is composing something that you would consider to be accessible to all pupils?

Kidd: No. Weak kids need a lot more than just "here's the task, get on with it." They need spoon feeding. There's not the time for this.

CB: How do you measure progression?

Kidd: I hate this question. I don't know. I suppose that by the end of Key Stage 3 they should be able to go away and compose something that they're pleased with and that it

*struggles with*

*assessing*

*progression*

draws upon the things that they've learnt. But I've no idea how to get there. Progressions really hard to assess. It's subjective and sometimes *subjectivity* even if I think the kids have done well at something, they don't.

CB: Have the National Curriculum or the SCAA documents been of any use for assessing progress?

Kidd: None at all.

CB: What would you like to be made available to you?

Kidd: Something that tells you what *needs guidance* to teach them, how to do it and how to assess as well.

CB: Is it easier at GCSE?

Kidd: Yes.

CB: Why?

Kidd: You know that you've got to aim towards a portfolio. I'll be honest, it's mostly the musical kids that do it so they can grasp the theory a lot easier.

CB: Do you use any published material at all?

Kid: We use some of *Music Matters*. It's sometimes effective but it really has to be adapted as it's a bit vague.

It's mostly our own stuff  
though.

CB: Is there anything else you  
could tell me about composing?

Kidd: I think that kids can't  
progress. Perhaps it's something  
that you could give the kids a  
taster of but to continually have  
them feel failures is not fair to  
them.

We'd be better off just doing  
music for enjoyments sake. *social development*

Listening, singing, all stuff that  
the kids are familiar with.

When you think about it, all  
these kids pop idols probably  
didn't start composing until they  
were good enough on their  
instruments and that was  
probably way after the age of  
thirteen.

### Interview 7 with Mr. Perry

CB: Tell me about the priority that you give to composing within your curriculum.

*Hesitation*

Perry: It's fairly important.

CB: How much time do you allocate to it?

*important*

Perry: Probably more than some things, but it does balance pretty well with performance although I do think that the performance is more important...so perhaps a little more performance than composing?.

*more emphasis  
on  
performance*

CB: Do you think that the time allocated to performance aids composing?

Perry: Yes. They've got to know what they're trying to do. They've got to understand the rules of the game if you like.

CB: So, do you mean that you think that the theory and rudiments are particularly important?

Perry: Not so much theory but certainly...if they're trying to complete something in a certain style they need to know what they're doing.

CB: Why do you teach composing?

Perry: Because we have to.

I suppose that it's a part of music as well.

CB: Can you tell me about some of the things that you do at Key Stage 3.

Perry: I like the kids to compose something with a particular structure, so it's very *structure* guided. I often give them the notes to use. I like them to write it down when they've finished on a stave. It's been pretty successful thus far.

CB: When you've given them the task to do and they've completed it and written it down, as you've said, how would you tell if that child had achieved something?

Perry: With *achievement* great difficulty if *identified through* they've got the notation wrong *rudiments* then they haven't achieved anything. I suppose with some of mine certainly to get the thing finished is a great achievement but that's not necessarily what I would consider to be an achievement.



Ideally they've got to come up with something, finish it and like the finished product. It also should reflect the task that was originally set. But it doesn't often happen with the kids that we've got. I don't know, we'll get there some day.

CB: Do you think that composing is something that is accessible to all pupils then?

Perry: No. There's some that *less able struggle* just can't do it.

CB: Do some struggle with the performing and listening?

Perry: Yes.

CB: Is it possible to assess progress across Key Stage 3?

Perry: Yes. Progress for an individual might be that they can do something and then they can do it again. Or they might finish the work perhaps. Or getting more complex work.

*Thinks*

CB: Have any of your ideas for assessing progress come from the National Curriculum?

Perry: Not really because I think I've ignored it.

CB: What about the SCAA documents?

Perry: Oh what was all that piffle about? There was the Exemplification of standards and that wasn't very useful as the stuff in it was just too hard.

Then they put out those projects and I thought "Yeah what a great idea," and then as soon as I looked at it I thought well there's just no way that my lot could or would do any of that. A lot of it would just be way above their heads.

CB: What would you like to have?

Perry: Clear guideline on what *needs guidance* was expected. Some examples. Some guidelines as to what works and what doesn't.

CB: Is it any easier to measure

achievement at GCSE?

Perry: No.

CB: Why?

Perry: Because it's still  
difficult to get them to  
compose and they don't know  
how to make things better.

CB: Did you have any  
experience at school or college  
with composing?

Perry: Not really. I basically  
did the nuts and bolts, you *not a composer*  
know history and analysis.

CB: Has any published  
material helped you?

Perry: No not really. There  
isn't any in school anyway.

CB: Is there anything else  
you'd like to tell me about your  
experience of teaching  
composing at Key Stage 3?

Perry: No

### Interview 8 with Mr. Taylor

CB: Tell me about the priority that you give to composing at Key Stage 3.

Taylor: Each unit ends with an original group composition. So that each unit will involve something taught, something learned and something put back through the creative process.

*Composing is valuable*

CB: Tell me about the role of listening and appraising.

Taylor: Listening varies. It's part of the process as they listen to each other's compositions and there are separate tasks as a part of each whole unit. I set small tasks for performance of pieces to my specification and the children then use the skills that they have learned to perform their own compositions.

*Interrelation of P, C & L*

I did allow at one point for the students to simply create but I **wondered just what at that point I was teaching them.** If I'm teaching them to create, which is in a sense what I have to do, then I have to make a decision as to what I want them to know.

*Struggled with his interpretation of "creativity"*

I give them enabling skills.

CB: What portion of the time do you allow to composing?

Taylor: There's roughly one unit per term averaging out at about ten weeks and the last two or three weeks is taken up by the students doing group compositions. It does vary from class to class.

CB: How much time do you have a week for music?

Taylor: An hour a week.

CB: Is it enough?

Taylor: We used to have an hour and ten minutes a week, then we went to **an hour a week which is not enough time. The group size restriction is more of a problem though. If I had an hour a week with smaller class sizes then I would be happier than with large classes and more time.** I remember when I was training and we had them in half groups of about fifteen.

CB: What about space?

*Class size  
problem*

Taylor: It's always a problem when it comes to group composition. Normally I will split my class into four or five groups of about six and you need four rooms to put them in. You need to be able to trust them to go into those rooms. If you can't trust them or they're not mature enough then the work is not as effective.

CB: Why is it important to do composing?

Taylor: Two reasons. One because the National Curriculum says so and two because it's an integral part of the musical process. I grew up with music being essentially a recreative skills based. I can remember composing a piece of music at school and having no where to put it, there was no place for that in my music studies. I couldn't be a composer at that age. All I could do was study my set work and learn my instrument. That's what music was then.

*Composing  
important in order  
to develop  
musicianship*

The creative process has to be nurtured and taught just like any other process.

*Value of  
creativity*

CB: Can you just tell me a little more about what you do at Key Stage 3?

Taylor: Each year is split into three units. The first year has an emphasis on rhythm and melody. We do work with voices, rhythm melody and harmony, the main components of music as I think they'll be understood by the students in the school. In Year 8 we move to musical styles, popular music and Jazz and then in Year nine we bring everything together.

CB: How important is it for you to introduce notational skills to the pupils?

Taylor: I've just been looking at that. I don't introduce any formal notational skills until Year 9. I've been looking at the new SCAA document and I've decided to bring them in at Year 8.

*Little emphasis  
on staff notation*

If I have a student who is a Grade 5 flautist in Year 7 then obviously they use it. Music is moving away from the Paynter style creativity and self expression and is moving to much more rigorously skills based. In a sense it's come a full circle. I cling on to the creative process coming first and then not getting too bogged down with the notational aspect but it's important for students to have notational skills up to a certain level I suppose.

CB: So in Year 7 how would they write their compositions down?

Taylor: They may not write them down at all. Or they may just use a scrappy piece of paper. From one week to the next they need to keep a note of what they've done so they'll write it down any way they can.



CB: What about proficiency on an instrument?

Taylor: I have found that teaching students instrumental skills in the classroom has to have a place but it can not take too high a profile. The link between technical skill and compositional ability is quite an interesting one. How can you compose if you haven't got a technical skill? What students are doing in groups is putting things together at a very basic level. It depends on the characteristics of the group. You may have someone who is very compositionally motivated. Most students seldom have the proficiency on an instrument to start writing music, even students who can read it well. **That's a very specialised skill to write music that you have composed.**

CB: How do you recognise achievement?

Taylor: In Year 7 we have no formal assessment. How we recognise achievement is by all the compositions being performed and all recorded. Then we have an informal competition to see who's is the best.

*Informal scheme  
of assessing  
achievement*

CB: How do you find who's is the best?

Taylor: How do you find who's is the best full stop? G.C.S.E. marks are given by impression, it says so in the syllabus. It's quite interesting the links between key stage 3 composition and Key Stage 4 composition. You're sometimes forced to give a good mark to a G.C.S.E. composition which has less instinctive musicianship but it has all the correct notational aspects. The same is true in Key Stage 3. You have to simply go along with your impression. My criteria for formal assessing in year seven relates to what they are to put in to their compositions. I find it difficult to give each student at that stage a formal assessment.

CB: What about the whole issue of progress?

Taylor: I feel that progress in composition at Key Stage 3 needs to be seen in the context of progression between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage

4. I feel that there's only a limited amount of progression that can be

achieved at group work level. In order to show an individual's progression I would have to show you an individual's compositions but

they work in groups and as the groups change I can't give you an answer. **I do sometimes have to**

**give an expectation, perhaps I should do this more.** I'm actually giving myself an idea here.

CB: How do you feel about the SCAA guidelines for progression?

Taylor: I haven't incorporated what they've said in to my schemes of work yet. I was reading recently that teaching of music at Key Stage 3 was worse than in any other subject

~~but Key Stage 4 is better.~~

CB: Is assessing progress any different for you at Key Stage 4.

Taylor: The ratio of resources to students is more manageable as there's less numbers. The students therefore become manageable and students are making progress against a set of established criteria.

CB: Would established criteria at Key Stage 3 be useful?

Taylor: It would be ideal as long as I could allow students individual access to a composition. It's a bit like saying here's five pens and you've five minutes to paint. No one would dream of doing that in art would they?

*Lack of resources  
not always the  
root of the  
problem*

CB: Do feel that composition is accessible to all then?

Taylor: The creative compositional process is. But not for all.

CB: Are you a composer?

*Creativity is*

Taylor: Yes, **I strongly believe in it.** I think that because music is a selective subject it's important to teach what you believe in. Then you can demonstrate and influence.

*accessible to all*

*Diversity of*

CB; Is there anything else you can tell me?

*music*

Taylor: **Because of the National Curriculum and that teachers are having to asses then composing is becoming more assessible.**

## **Appendix XIII: The preliminary letter to informants**

Stable view  
School House Drive  
Scarborough  
YO12 4PP

(01723) 862585

Dear

I am currently investigating the nature of progression in composing at Key stage 3 for the qualification of M.A. at the university of Durham. I have come to be aware that a number of music teachers feel that they are not able to assess composing effectively and I wish to find out the reasons why.

The nature of the data that I intend to collect is qualitative and, therefore I intend to interview a number of music teachers between January and March 1997.

The interviews will take approximately half an hour and I am willing to travel to you at a time that is convenient.

If you feel that you could contribute to my investigation please telephone me or write to me at the address above some time over the next two weeks.

Yours sincerely,

**Christine Bates**

## Appendix XIV: The table categorising the themes and trends from the data

Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8
C is fundamental More important than L and P	C is important	C is important Equally important as L and P	C has a high priority More important than L and P	C is significant	C is important More important than L and P	C is fairly important C is less important than L and P	C is important Culmination of L and P
Shortage of time L and P enable C	Shortage of time L and P enable C	L and P enable Self expression/ communication	Shortage of time Creativity	Shortage of time P and L enable Creative/ to create a product	Time/ space/equip P and L enable Express musicality	Equip/ time shortage P enables C develops musicality	Class size problem P and L enable Integral part of musical process/ creative
Creativity/ communication/ self expression Exploration	Culmination of knowledge/ craft Arrangement	Improvisation/ arrangement/discovery Theory is important	Creativity Creativity/ discovery/ musical development/ self expression Some structure/ conventions necessary improvising and arranging	Experimentation/ create a product Conventions	Express musicality Rudiments Conventions		
No technical skills necessary	Rudiments are significant	Theory is important	Creativity/ discovery/ musical development/ self expression Some structure/ conventions necessary improvising and arranging	Conventions	Rudiments Conventions	Structures	
No staff notation	Staff notation important	Graphic notation fun but no progression	Staff notation important later on Negative attitudes	No staff notation/ Graphic notation used Negative attitudes		Staff notation important	No staff notation/ notate any how
Difficult to recognise achievement	Achievement easy to recognise			Achievement is finishing Theory at GCSE/ Staff notation used here	Negative attitudes Difficult to recognise achievement Rudiments at GCSE	Clear ideals on achievement	Recognises achievement Impression marking
Use of conventions at GCSE:	Use of conventions at GCSE						
GCSE: pupils higher musical ability				Pupils at GCSE more positive minded Assessing Progression is difficult			
Struggles to identify progression	Can't progress through exploration	Doesn't know where to assess progression	Can't measure progression in social behaviour	Assessing Progression is difficult	Struggles to identify Progression	Clear ideals on progression	Clear ideas on progression
Assessing progression is subjective	Can assess progress by rudimentary knowledge	Assess progression in theory			Progression is subjective/ breadth of experience SCAA and NC of no use	Achievement difficult to assess at GCSE Clear ideals on progression	Progression between Key Stages more realistic
SCAA and NC of little use	SCAA and NC of no use		SCAA and NC of no use	SCAA and NC of no use	SCAA and NC of no use	SCAA and NC of no use	
Would like details of criteria for progression			Would like some guidance	Needs ideas for lessons	Needs ideas for teaching and assessing	Needs guidance on what's accessible to all	Established criteria desirable
Publications of some use	Influenced by theorists and composers		Publications of some use	Publications of some use	Publications of some use	No use of publications	
Trained composer	Trained composer		Experienced composer	Not a composer	Not a composer	Not a composer	
C accessible to all	Less able struggle Music is diverse	Less able struggle	Less able struggle	Less able struggle	Less able struggle	Less able struggle	Some aspects accessible
		Streaming Composing for fun!	Setting Social development Not enough time for assessment				
				Why teach C? Pressure on T's time	Music is social		What you believe in

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