Year 4 : Assessment

This guide outlines our approach to music assessment. It explains assessment as a process that supports a continuous, holistic journey and does not involve high-stakes testing. The Creative Curriculum balances technical proficiency with creative expression and ensures that every pupil's musical development occurs through deliberate, incremental steps.

Our Assessment Framework

Our framework transforms broad aspirations into a measurable "technical how-to." We believe music education is most effective when it is a deliberate design rather than a series of disconnected activities. To achieve this, we focus on the musical cognitive "building blocks" of a child's development, ensuring that no child's progress is left to chance.

The Framework in Practice

Use the following components as your roadmap for tracking and supporting student growth throughout each unit:

- Unit Objectives: These define the "precise end points." Use these to confirm that students have grasped the core musical concepts (e.g., understanding syncopation or identifying ternary form).
- "I Can" Statements: These are your primary benchmarks for observable behaviours. They provide clear evidence of what a student can physically or intellectually perform.
- Support Questions: Move beyond the surface level by using targeted questions to probe for deeper understanding. This ensures students understand the *why* behind the music, not just the *how*.

Reflecting on Collective Progress

Assessment is most powerful when it informs future teaching. At the end of a unit, take a "summative moment" to reflect on the class as a whole:

1. Analyse the Outcomes: Did most pupils meet the objectives? Identify specific moments in performances or compositions where the group excelled or struggled.
2. Evaluate the "Why": Consider why certain activities were successful and why others proved challenging. Was it a technical hurdle or a conceptual gap?
3. Close the Loop: Use these insights to address progression issues immediately.

Looking Forward: Sequencing Success

The final stage of our assessment process is forward-facing. By identifying today's struggles, you can adjust upcoming lesson plans to provide specific opportunities for revisit and mastery. This iterative approach ensures the curriculum is coherently sequenced, turning temporary challenges into long-term musical milestones.

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Year 4 Unit 1	Objectives	Assessment Support	I Can's
Create And Notate (featuring You Can See It Through)	1. Copy and improvise short melodic phrases. 2. Compose short structured piece using Music Explorer.	Does the composition have a clear, structured form? Look for repetition or a clear beginning, middle, and end that suggest a planned musical journey rather than random notes. To what degree did the pupil show confidence when creating melodic phrases on the spot? Assess their ability to maintain a steady rhythm and "conversation" between phrases during the improvisation tasks. How independently did the pupil use Music Explorer to modify pitch and arrange their composition? Note their ability to navigate the tool to refine their ideas before the final performance. During the final performance, how successfully did the pupil combine their digital composition with live vocal parts? Observe their ability to stay in time and manage both elements simultaneously. Based on their "one new thing learned" and their peer feedback, how well can the pupil identify their own strengths? Evaluate their ability to ask a relevant question about composition that shows a desire to improve their technical skills.	I can create and play short musical phrases using five notes of a pentatonic scale. I can use Music Explorer to create a composition with a structure. I can make decisions about the overall structure of my improvisations/ compositions, using techniques such as repetition.
Comments			

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Year 4 Unit 2	Objectives	Assessment Support	I Can's
Singing And Traditions (featuring The King Of All Polar Bears and Five Gold Rings)	1. Sing 2-part songs as duets or melody and accompaniment with accurate pitching. 2. Understand contrasting traditions and stories.	How accurately do children maintain their part in a **2-part song or duet**? Do they stay in tune most of the time? All of the time or not at all when singing against a contrasting melody or accompaniment? Can children adjust their vocal volume and tone to **blend** with the group? Can the pupil identify and describe the **musical traditions** or stories behind the songs? Are the children singing with clear **diction** and appropriate **posture**? Do they sing with expressions and communicate the emotional impact of the lyrics? Can the children reflect and identify specific improvements in their vocal technique or their understanding of the song's emotional impact?	I can sing a 2-part song with accurate pitch and timing. I can perform a melody or duet with clear accompaniment. I can listen carefully and adjust my voice to blend with others. I can identify and describe contrasting musical traditions and stories. I can reflect on how different songs express culture and meaning.
Comments			

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Year 4 Unit 3	Objectives	Assessment Support	I Can's
Recycling Songs (featuring Plastic)	1. Compose and perform an original song about plastic pollution using researched facts, with clear lyrics, rhythm, and expressive dynamics. 2. Collaborate in groups to create a structured song and confidently record and present the performance using digital tools.	How effectively did the pupil integrate researched facts about plastic pollution into their lyrics? Evaluate whether the song communicates a meaningful message with clear, rhyming couplets that align with the theme. To what degree did the pupil contribute to the group's song structure? Assess how the group planned and connected different musical sections, such as the transition from a verse to a clear, catchy chorus. How consistently did the pupil maintain a steady pulse while singing or rapping? Note their ability to deliver lyrics with clear **phrasing** and rhythmic precision, ensuring the message is easy for the audience to follow. Did the pupil use **dynamics** (volume changes) to emphasise the urgency of the plastic pollution message? Look for intentional contrasts between quiet, reflective verses and powerful, expressive choruses. How confidently did the pupil use digital tools to record and share their work? Evaluate the clarity of the vocal tracks and the pupil's ability to review video or audio evidence to identify areas for technical improvement. Based on their final performance and peer feedback, how effectively did the pupil communicate within their group? Assess their ability to identify what they did well and one specific area (e.g., pitch, timing, or clarity) they would improve next time.	I can research a topic and summarise key facts for a song. I can compose lyrics that communicate a meaningful message. I can perform a song with expression and dynamics. I can collaborate in a group to create musical sections. I can confidently record and share my creative work.
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Year 4 Unit 4	Objectives	Assessment Support	I Can's
Exploring Musical Contrasts (featuring Let Your Spirit Fly)	1. Develop instrumental and ensemble skills by performing vocal and instrumental parts with control of pitch, rhythm, dynamics, and contrasts such as staccato/legato and crescendo/decrescendo. 2. Compose and interpret musical ideas by improvising and layering parts that convey emotion and maintain ensemble cohesion.	Are the children keeping a steady pulse using movement or body percussion? Are children accurate when singing or humming back melodic phrases? Do they sing and play in time? Can children identify musical contrasts? Do the parts blend and balance in paired or group drone work? Use quick reflection prompts: "How did you change your sound today?" and "What helped you stay in time?" Are they developing peer feedback? Use video/audio recordings for reflection.	I know that forte means loud, piano means quiet, staccato means short, and legato means smooth. I can play instruments confidently, using tuned and untuned parts. I can identify and perform musical contrasts in pitch, dynamics, and articulation. I can sing the main and second vocal parts accurately and with expression. I can keep my own line whilst others play different parts. I can play or sing a whole song with my group, making sure we all start and stop together, listen so no one is too loud, and play the loud (forte) and quiet (piano) parts at the right time.
Comments			

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Year 4 Unit 5	Objectives	Assessment Support	I Can's
FX Sound Effects (featuring YuStudio Underwater Project)	1. Use sound effects to add drama and realism to a film clip. 2. Begin to make compositional decisions, considering mood, timing, and narrative impact.	Can children successfully match sound to action? Develop probing questions **such as** • "What happens if we remove this sound?" Develop **Peer Feedback** starters "I liked this sound because…" • "It felt more dramatic when…" • "I think it would be better if…" Link to the I Can Statements. Does the project include purposeful layering, clear timing, balanced sound levels, thoughtful refinement decisions. Can the children discuss "What decision made the most significant difference?"	I can choose and perform sound effects to enhance a video scene. I can record natural or digital sounds and layer them to create a dramatic effect. I can experiment with timing, volume, and texture to match actions on screen. I can collaborate with others to create a cohesive soundscape. I can evaluate my sound effects and make adjustments to improve mood and realism.
Comments			

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Year 4 Unit 6	Objectives	Assessment Support	I Can's
Round And Round (featuring Frere Jacques and Row Row Row)	1. Develop ensemble and vocal skills by performing rounds and songs with accurate pitch, rhythm, and expressive dynamics. 2. Perform songs confidently in a school assembly, demonstrating their ability to work together as a class and to perform musically through effective performance techniques.	Don't let children plug their ears to avoid hearing another part singing something different from their part. It's important to learn to sing a part whilst hearing how it sounds within the whole ensemble mix. Can children recognise and copy **stepwise movement** in melodies? Are children confident to sing **in unison** before attempting rounds? Can children start on the right notes? Can children maintain their own part while singing against another group? Who can explain some performing and musical decisions, e.g. where to stand?	I can sing songs and rounds with small and large pitch leaps. I can maintain accurate pitch and rhythm and use dynamics when performing with others. I can listen to my classmates and adjust my singing to blend in an ensemble. I can perform songs confidently to an audience. I can reflect on my performance and suggest ways to improve.
Comments			

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