

Together, We Flourish

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Year 4 Spring / Term 2 - Music Medium-Term Plan: Musical Contrasts

Enquiry question: How can musicians create contrast and structure in music?

End-of-unit musical outcome: A short composition using contrasting timbre, tonality, articulation or dynamics within an AB or rondo structure.

Schema focus: Main: Listening & Understanding + Creating;
Supporting: Performing



What we already know, remember and can do:

Children can perform rhythmic layers, recognise common note values and rests, follow and lead musical directions and use rhythmic frameworks to compose.

Topic overview / rationale

Children broaden their listening and composing vocabulary by exploring instrumental families, timbre, major and minor tonality, articulation, dynamics and tempo. They learn how contrasting musical ideas can be organised using structures such as AB and rondo, and how motifs create identity within a piece. Listening, practical exploration and composition lead to a structured contrast piece that is rehearsed and refined.

Key vocabulary for this topic

timbre, strings, woodwind, brass, percussion, orchestra, major, minor, tonality, articulation, staccato, legato, dynamics, tempo, AB, rondo, motif, contrast

Christ Church values and spirituality links

Values: Curiosity, Respect, Kindness, Community.

Spirituality: Children wonder at how music in musical contrasts can communicate ideas, feelings and shared experiences. They reflect on how careful listening, practice and creative choices shape music, and respond by valuing one another's contributions.

Wonder: What makes us curious? Reflection: What do our musical choices communicate? Response: How can we make music together so everyone can flourish?

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Inclusion and adaptive teaching

Suggested inclusive practice: pre-teach key vocabulary and model musical examples aurally and visually. Break complex rhythms, melodies or ensemble parts into short chunks; slow the tempo; use enlarged or colour-coded notation, recorded models and clearly defined roles. Adapt instruments, seating and mallets where needed and provide body-percussion/vocal alternatives. Extend pupils by maintaining an independent part, leading rehearsal, refining notation or evaluating musical decisions with precise vocabulary.

Lesson	Learning Intention / Activity	What will be known and remembered	Revisited vocabulary	New vocabulary	Adaptations / Inclusion	Deeper thinking
1	Instrument Families LI: To recognise the four main orchestral families; describe contrasting instrumental timbres. Activity: Listen to contrasting examples and identify the focus feature using agreed vocabulary. Recreate a short idea through singing or instruments, then discuss context, style and musical effect.	✓ I know how to recognise the four main orchestral families. ✓ I know how to describe contrasting instrumental timbres.	pulse, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, tempo	timbre, strings, woodwind	✓ Model the musical idea first, chunk complex parts and rehearse at a slower tempo. Use enlarged/colour-coded notation, recorded models and clear role cards; simplify the number of notes or layers where needed. ✓ Provide adapted instruments or alternative body/vocal parts and supportive pairing. Extend by leading, maintaining an independent part, notating more precisely or justifying refinements.	What do you notice, and what musical evidence supports your answer?
2	Major or Minor? LI: To recognise a simple major/minor contrast; describe how tonality can change musical mood. Activity: Listen to contrasting examples and identify the focus feature using agreed vocabulary. Recreate a short idea through singing or instruments, then discuss context, style and musical effect.	✓ I know how to recognise a simple major/minor contrast. ✓ I know how tonality can change musical mood.	timbre, strings, woodwind	brass, percussion, orchestra	✓ Model the musical idea first, chunk complex parts and rehearse at a slower tempo. Use enlarged/colour-coded notation, recorded models and clear role cards; simplify the number of notes or layers where needed. ✓ Provide adapted instruments or alternative body/vocal parts and supportive pairing. Extend by leading, maintaining an independent part, notating more precisely or justifying refinements.	How does this musical choice change what a listener hears or feels?

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Lesson	Learning Intention / Activity	What will be known and remembered	Revisited vocabulary	New vocabulary	Adaptations / Inclusion	Deeper thinking
3	Lead and Follow LI: To follow and lead performance directions; control dynamics, tempo and articulation when playing. Activity: Rehearse in manageable sections, agree roles and performance cues, and practise transitions. Share the piece with an audience, use musical vocabulary for feedback and refine where appropriate.	✓ I know how to follow and lead performance directions. ✓ I know how to control dynamics, tempo and articulation when playing.	strings, woodwind, brass, percussion, orchestra	major, minor, tonality	✓ Model the musical idea first, chunk complex parts and rehearse at a slower tempo. Use enlarged/colour-coded notation, recorded models and clear role cards; simplify the number of notes or layers where needed. ✓ Provide adapted instruments or alternative body/vocal parts and supportive pairing. Extend by leading, maintaining an independent part, notating more precisely or justifying refinements.	Which musical element has the greatest effect here, and why?
4	AB Structure LI: To create two clearly contrasting musical sections; organise them into an AB structure. Activity: Develop ideas in pairs or small groups using a clear musical framework. Rehearse, record or notate the idea, receive feedback and refine one musical choice before sharing.	✓ I know how to create two clearly contrasting musical sections. ✓ I know how to organise them into an AB structure.	percussion, orchestra, major, minor, tonality	articulation, staccato, legato	✓ Model the musical idea first, chunk complex parts and rehearse at a slower tempo. Use enlarged/colour-coded notation, recorded models and clear role cards; simplify the number of notes or layers where needed. ✓ Provide adapted instruments or alternative body/vocal parts and supportive pairing. Extend by leading, maintaining an independent part, notating more precisely or justifying refinements.	How could you change one musical element while keeping the rest the same?

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Lesson	Learning Intention / Activity	What will be known and remembered	Revisited vocabulary	New vocabulary	Adaptations / Inclusion	Deeper thinking
5	Rondo and Motifs LI: To recognise a recurring motif; use a repeated musical idea within a simple rondo structure. Activity: Develop ideas in pairs or small groups using a clear musical framework. Rehearse, record or notate the idea, receive feedback and refine one musical choice before sharing.	✓ I know how to recognise a recurring motif. ✓ I know how to use a repeated musical idea within a simple rondo structure.	minor, tonality, articulation, staccato, legato	dynamics, tempo, AB	✓ Model the musical idea first, chunk complex parts and rehearse at a slower tempo. Use enlarged/colour-coded notation, recorded models and clear role cards; simplify the number of notes or layers where needed. ✓ Provide adapted instruments or alternative body/vocal parts and supportive pairing. Extend by leading, maintaining an independent part, notating more precisely or justifying refinements.	What would you refine to make this music clearer, more accurate or more expressive?
6	Contrast Composition LI: To rehearse and perform a structured contrast piece; evaluate which musical choices were most effective. Activity: Develop ideas in pairs or small groups using a clear musical framework. Rehearse, record or notate the idea, receive feedback and refine one musical choice before sharing.	✓ I know how to rehearse and perform a structured contrast piece. ✓ I know how to evaluate which musical choices were most effective.	staccato, legato, dynamics, tempo, AB	rondo, motif, contrast	✓ Model the musical idea first, chunk complex parts and rehearse at a slower tempo. Use enlarged/colour-coded notation, recorded models and clear role cards; simplify the number of notes or layers where needed. ✓ Provide adapted instruments or alternative body/vocal parts and supportive pairing. Extend by leading, maintaining an independent part, notating more precisely or justifying refinements.	What is your strongest musical answer to the unit enquiry: How can musicians create contrast and structure in music?