



You will...

All six ILCs in music require you to produce a recording of a musical idea (or ideas) that you have come up with by exploring sounds. You should take a look at the videos here (in order) if you do not know how to begin:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLitPDd7cYmCuF6CbCkqv_RyQV0GJcAOBc

It is important that you do not worry about the quantity of music you produce in the time you have as worry destroys creativity! If you are unsure about anything, come and speak to me nice and early!

How long to spend?

It is intended that you will spend about half an hour a week on this homework. The sort of distress that comes from an ignoring your work until the last minute will destroy the creative expression and potential pleasure this challenge offers, so please do NOT leave your ILC to the last week or two.

Assessment.

As this is a creative task, involving a journey into the unknown, I expect to see many different outcomes, each having unique strengths. I cannot tell you what your music will sound like at the end of the four hours. Nor should you try to anticipate how much music you are likely to produce. It could be an entire piece but, equally likely, you may come up with just a few bars of music – and that's fine! What matters is that you use your time to explore how sounds can be combined to create satisfying emotional experiences!

This will be really challenging for many of you! However, I can promise that if you put in the suggested time, you will create something of value that I can use to guide you in your next attempt.

You will get credit for sensitive use of musical elements* (See video 3). Likewise, credit will be awarded to students who are able to use specific compositional techniques introduced in class. However, this is NOT required nor expected. It is quite possible, with effort, to create really effective music without any technical understanding!

* The 8 musical elements are: **Dynamics**, **Texture**, **Timbre**, **Pitch** (including Register), **Duration** (Rhythm and Articulation), **Tempo**, **Structure** and last, but not least ... **Silence** (Don't fill up your piece with notes – Silences are just as important!). I suggest you make small changes to each of these elements whenever your music repeats an idea.

Time scale

Approximately 4 hours.

Start Date

Week Commencing
24th April

Submission Date

Week Commencing
12th June

INDEPENDENT LEARNING CHALLENGES

Suggested Time

There are 4 parts to this challenge;



Once Complete

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) *Although I have given a proposed step by step approach below, you should know that I prefer for you to discover your own process through exploration. The steps I have provided are simply ONE approach that you can certainly follow IF it helps you to have steps to follow.*
- 2) *A video (Video 2) showing these steps can be found in the KS3 composing playlist referenced above.*

TASK 1: Find some words.

Find some words online. These could be a poem, for example, or lyrics to a song you have not heard.

30 minutes

TASK 2: Experiment with various word-rhythms.

Tap a beat with your foot. How fast is the tempo? How many beats do you want in each bar (3 or 4)?

Read through your words in as many ways as you can whilst tapping the beat.

Once you have a nice rhythm, RECORD IT so that you don't forget it!

30 minutes

TASK 3: Developing your song.

Add some PITCH content to your words – so that you are now singing rather than speaking (or rapping) the words. Does it feel right to go up in pitch or down?

IF you have time, look for a drum kit rhythm using the department keyboards.

90 minutes

TASK 4: Record and Submit your song.

I suggest you use your phone to record live music. You could also use multi-tracking software such as Reaper (PC or Mac) or GarageBand (Mac, iPad) or one of the free apps available for modern phones. Please put the recording either on the student access drive at school OR on a file server such as www.dropbox.com and email me a link to it. Submit your work using www.themusiciansapprentice.com.

90 minutes

EXTENDED INDEPENDENT LEARNING CHALLENGE

EXTENSION TASK

If you are enjoying music lessons, you might like to explore some of the techniques we've heard in class. Here are some of the techniques we've learned about recently...

- Melodies: Melodic Sequences, Melodic Ornamentation, Melodic Ostinati, Singing in thirds.
- Chord Progressions: Creating melodies from chord templates. Using chord inversions for good voice leading.
- Rhythm: Drum Patterns, Rhythmic Ostinati & Syncopation.
- Multi-tracking with Reaper.

PRESENTATION

Choose how to present your work.

No matter how you choose to record your ideas, send your recording to your teacher either by placing your work on student access or uploading phone recordings straight to www.dropbox.com and emailing your teacher a link to your work.

Submit your work using www.themusiciansapprentice.com

If you use a piece of multi-tracking software to create your music (such as Reaper), you should export it as a single sound file which can then be sent to your teacher for marking, rather than sending me the whole project (which I cannot open).

Other free cloud storage services include google cloud.

In Reaper (available on the school music computers), choose File: Render. You can render your music as a wav file (MP3 will not work on the school computers)

USEFUL RESOURCES, WEBSITES, BOOKS

There are three particularly helpful videos in a playlist at:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLitPDd7cYmCuF6CbCkby_RyQV0GJcAOBc

THE PERSONAL LEARNING AND THINKING SKILLS USED IN THIS CHALLENGE ARE:



LITERACY SKILLS USED IN THIS ILC IS:

NUMERACY SKILLS USED IN THIS ILC ARE:

FURTHER SUPPORT CONTACT DETAILS

Contact your teacher if you have any questions or if you are worried about any aspect of this challenge...

amungall@bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk
slant@bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk

CHECKLIST

FAQ

“Why do we have to do music homework?”

Music making is strongly associated with success and well-being in many other areas of life and every child in Britain MUST be given an opportunity to learn music. The discipline needed to be successful in this area is also well known to be great for developing self-esteem. At key stage 3, therefore, music is on the timetable for all students.

That said, there is not enough time during the school day to explore a sufficiently wide aspect of music. Like other subjects, therefore, it is expected that some of one's school work is also done independently at home.

Whilst music making is fun for many, it is not fun for all as success in music requires a lot of commitment! Commitment is one of many “soft skills” that make motivated music students a strong value proposition for employers in many areas.

“I don't know how to start!”

This is often the hardest part! Make your life easier by thinking about the following questions...

Q. What sort of mood do you want your music to have?

Q. Where can you imagine your music being heard – as a background to a film, for example, or at a rock concert?

Q. Do you want your music to have words (a song, for example), or will it be entirely instrumental?

Q. Are there any particular groups or artists or even styles that you love? Would you like your piece to be in a specific style?

By thinking about these questions, you will already have made a good start. It may now be much easier to make more specific musical decisions like which instruments you will use.

“I came up with something good, but it sounds too much like another piece of music”

This happens a LOT! My advice ... Keep going. Never scrap a good idea, even if it is very like an existing piece of music by someone else! Instead, what could you change about it to make it less like the piece? Think about the 8 elements of music, each of which can be varied to make your idea different. Remember, the 8 elements of music are: Texture (how busy the music is – how much is going on), Structure, Timbre (the instrument or sound), Dynamics (how strongly or softly you play), Duration (change the meter or rhythm), Pitch (change the notes or register), Tempo (the “speed of the beat”), and Silence (miss some notes out sometimes!).

“How will I know if it's good enough?”

If you spend 4 or 5 hours on this work and stick with your ideas, it will be good enough. The most important question, though, is, “Do YOU like your idea?”... Have you managed to create a sound that pleases you? You are the final judge. I will give extra credit for use of advanced techniques – But please remember, this is a creative task. You don't need to have advanced technical skills to create a satisfying piece.

“I don’t have access to a musical instrument”

Here are some approaches you can use ...

- 1) **Voice, Percussion and Phone.** If you have a phone or computer at home, download a free multi-tracking app. These apps let you record your ideas layer by layer.
- 2) **Keyboard during the school day.** Book out one of the practice spaces during the school day. Our school keyboards are very powerful – They let you choose between hundreds of sounds and drum beats and even combine sounds. They also allow you to record some of your ideas, freeing you up to record more ideas “over the top”.
- 3) **More than one person / voice:** Feel free to ask your friends to help you record your musical ideas. Remember that voices can be used for beat boxing and rapping in addition to more traditional singing. Of course, if you choose to record your music live like this, you’ll need to arrange a time to practice with your friends.
- 4) **Music Homework Club** runs every Tuesday from 3:15 – 4:15 in the music block. MU2 has a number of computers, each with music software that you can use whilst all of the other practice room areas are also available at this time and I am available to offer support. But ... Always try to do something yourself first, THEN you can ask me specific questions rather than asking me to do your work!

“I can’t get my work to you”

When you have recorded your music (you can get a friend to do this if you do not have access to a mobile phone), I recommend you upload your work to a cloud service like www.dropbox.com, or google docs. You can then email me a link to your work at amungall@bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk.

Once you’ve done that, submit your work formally at www.themusiciansapprentice.com. You should have written down your username and password in your planner – BUT ... If you need me to reset your password, email me.

It is important that you tell me about such difficulties BEFORE the deadline. I suggest you try to finish your work a week before the date I give you just in case you encounter problems like this!

“I can’t play a musical instrument well enough”

The simplest ideas are often the best. Do NOT try to create something really sophisticated! A really good way to create an interesting musical idea is to build it up layer by layer. Use multi-track apps on your phone or computer.

“I need help!”

That’s fine too ... The music department runs a homework club on Tuesday evenings – See Mr Mungall for details.

If you use the Oasis Centre, they have a keyboard for just this purpose and they have access to this information so that they can help you create your masterpiece!

“But we haven’t studied any compositional techniques in class?!”

That’s true to some extent. In class, I point out techniques that are used in the pieces we listen to and those we are learning to perform, as a way of explaining why music sounds the way it does. But, it is rare that you are given time to explore these techniques for yourself as we focus on performance in class. We do this more at GCSE level – But now is your chance to get a head start – IF YOU WANT TO. I have created a series of videos demonstrating how you might go about using specific techniques in your compositions on my YouTube channel here ... <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxNoDYWkedJIQ5muF2r5Yow>

Notes for parents / carers / helpers

If you are reading this in order to support your child - Thank You. This should hopefully get you up to speed regarding what we've done in class - and my expectations and sources of support.

Why Music Homework?

Conscientious work in this subject will develop your child's brain in ways that other school subjects will not. Music is fundamentally different to other subjects. It is for this reason that it has been an integral part of a comprehensive education for several thousand years.

At KS3, the most important thing is that your child has an opportunity to explore music making in order to discover whether music making is something that they would enjoy doing at a more advanced and specialised level.

Our focus in class is performance. Students get to experience music making in groups whilst still being able to demonstrate your individual contribution.

Since composing is a skill that should be experienced at least to some extent by beginning aspiring musicians, and since composition is therefore an integral part of GCSE music making, your ILC allows you to explore composing – and allows your teacher to establish whether you are sufficiently motivated to do it.

My child is really struggling with this work... What can I do to help him / her?

Students may find most school subjects easy and yet really struggle with the unique expectations of a music education. Conversely, there are those of you who find school generally difficult but have the personal strengths that are needed to succeed with music.

Irrespective of where your child sits on this spectrum, they are expected to try hard, to plan their time and to seek help BEFORE it's too late.

As a teacher, I want to challenge all of my students without causing undue distress. This is not always easy, but I want to highlight those reasons that students have become distressed in the past:

Cause	Solution
Work left to last minute.	If your child finds themselves in this situation, tell them to only do 30 minutes work per week rather than trying to do 4 hours in the last week! Something is better than nothing. With any luck, taking off the pressure will lead them to find enjoyment in it and they will be motivated to start early next time.
Teacher not approached early with concerns.	Whilst, at secondary school, students are expected to seek help when needed, this is something that must be learned through experience. Tell your child they don't need to be distressed ... They will know next time the importance of seeking help early.
My child doesn't know how to start.	They have two alternatives. They can either "experiment" with an instrument in order to generate musical ideas (as illustrated in video 1) OR they may follow the steps in the worksheet above (as illustrated in video 3)
My child needs help, but I don't know how to help.	Your support at home is much appreciated. Hopefully the videos I've created will help get you up to speed with what your child has been doing in class. https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLitPDd7cYmCuF6CbCkbv_RyQV0GJcAOBc Video 1: Exploring Sounds Video 2: One Approach Video 3: Using the 8 Musical Elements

My child is very anxious – and does not understand what you are looking for.

This is a normal reaction for those not used to creative work. Tell them, “Rather than giving up, simply TRY to come up with some ideas. Don’t be a perfectionist. Your teacher can find strengths in ANY work they receive – and they will give you next steps advice so that you get better each time you attempt this challenge”.

How should my child get their work to you?

There are two recommended approaches. The first is to place the recording on the *Student Access* area of the school network. To do this, they should bring in their work on a USB drive and copy it across from any of the student computers.

An alternative approach is to upload work to a free storage service like dropbox (www.dropbox.com). * Please try to avoid emailing student work directly as the files (audio or video) are often too large to send via email. Emailing a link is better.

All students have been given username and password access to www.themusiciansapprentice.com and told how to submit their work for marking.

How does my child get their mark?

We do not give a separate mark for their homework. Rather, the overall grade (received three times a year in music) includes an appraisal of their motivation for composing.

Each student DOES, however, get individual feedback on their work via email (and included in their transcript found at www.themusiciansapprentice.com). It is extremely important to me to give students freedom to show me what they are good at. It is also important that students are given an opportunity to discover whether they enjoy the creative music-making process. Strict assessment constraints in music at KS3 tend to work against this goal.

Extension Work

Below is a list of compositional techniques that we have reviewed during the course of KS3 study. Students are unlikely to become proficient at many of these, but they might like to use this homework as an opportunity to develop skills in one or two of these areas. However, the extension task is absolutely not required nor expected.

Get In Touch

If we haven’t addressed your concerns here, please do get in touch ... We always appreciate constructive criticism. amungall@bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk

Elements

Technique Number	Description
7AU1	Elements I: Dynamic Contrast
7AU1	Elements I: Registral Contrast
7AU1	Elements II: Textural Contrast
7AU1	Elements II: Timbral Contrast
7AU1	Elements II: Antiphony
7AU1	Elements II: Hocketing
7AU1	Elements III: Graphic Score
7AU1	Elements IV: Articulative Contrast
7SP1	Elements V: Sensitive Use of Elements
7SP1	Elements VI: Orchestral Unison / Blending Timbres
7SU2	Elements VII: Performance Devices / Extended Techniques
8AU2	Elements VIII: Broken Chords and Arpeggios

Melodic Techniques

7AU2	Melody I: Question and Answer
7AU2	Melody I: Melodic Contrast (wide-narrow, conjunct-disjunct)
7AU2	Melody II: Melodic Dictation
7SP1	Melody III: More Advanced Phrasing (Anacrusis)
7SP1	Melody III: More Advanced Phrasing (Irregular Phrasing)
7SP2	Melody IV: Melodic Sequences
7SP2	Melody IV: Melodic Ornamentation
7SP2	Melody V: Melodies from Chord Templates / Passing & Auxilliary Notes
	Melody VI: Melodic Ostinati
7SU2	Melody VII: Melodic Improvisation
7SU2	Melody VIII: Imitation
8SP2	Melody IX: Unusual Scales

Harmonic Techniques

7AU1	Harmony I: Intervals
7AU2	Harmony II: White note triads
7SP2	Harmony III: Chord Inversions
7SP2	Harmony IV: Parallel Singing / Voicings
7SP2	Harmony V: Voice Leading

7SU2	Harmony VI: Open Triad Voicings
7SU2	Harmony VII: Walking Bass Lines
7SU2	Harmony VII: Stride Piano Technique
8AU1	Harmony VIII: Primary Chords
8AU2	Harmony IX: Polyphony / Counterpoint
8AU2	Harmony X: 4 chord Songs / Song from a Template
8AU2	Harmony XI: Harmonising Cadences
8SP1	Harmony XII: Suspensions

Rhythm Techniques

7AU2	Rhythm II: Rhythm Dictation
7SU1	Rhythm III: Drum Patterns
7SU1	Rhythm IV: Rhythmic Ostinati / Loops
7SU1	Rhythm V: Syncopation
7SU2	Rhythm VI: Rhythmic Contrast: Back Beat Emphasis
7SU2	Rhythm VI: Rhythmic Contrast: Off-Beat Emphasis
8AU1	Rhythm VII: Development Using Polyrythms
8AU1	Rhythm VIII: Augmentation and Diminution
8AU2	Rhythm IX: More Complex Meters
8AU2	Rhythm IX: Metric Modulation
8SP1	Rhythm X: Rhythmic Contrast: More stylistic rhythms and meters (Swing, Reverse Swing & Latin Feels)

Tonality Techniques

7AU2	Tonality I: Drones and Pedals
7AU2	Tonality II: Modal Contrast / Pieces in Minor Key
7SP1	Tonality III: Chromaticism / Blue Notes
8AU1	Tonality IV & V: Keys with black notes!
8AU1	Tonality V: Melody by Ear
8AU2	Tonality VI: Playing chords in ANY key
8SP2	Tonality VII: Serialism & 12-tone technique
8SP2	Tonality VIII & IX: Modulation (Simple and Advanced)

Creative Music Technology

7SU1	CMT I: Multi-tracking
7SU1	CMT V: Samples and Sampling
8AU1	CMT VI: Sibelius
8SP1	CMT VII: DSP for FX
8SP1	CMT VIII: Mix and Master a Track

Form

7SU2	Form I: 12 bar blues
7SU2	Form I: Seven Chords
7SU2	Form II: Fills
8SP1	Form III: Simple Forms (Binary, Ternary, Rondo)
8SP1	Form IV: Melodic Development Using Rhythmic Displacement
8SP2	Form V: Motivic Development and 12-Tone Technique (Fragmentation)
8SP2	Form V: Motivic Development and 12-Tone Technique (Inversion)
8SP2	Form V: Motivic Development and 12-Tone Technique (Retrograde)
8SP2	Form VI: Stretto
8SP2	Form VII: Canon and Round