

Year 5, Unit 4 Overview

How Does Music Teach Us About Our Community?

Introducing Chords

Introduction

In each unit, children are asked a question, intended as an entry point for exploring one of six broad **Social Themes**. These six themes are overlapping.

The exploration of each theme accompanies them on their musical journey throughout this Scheme, and hopefully beyond! As the learners grow, the questions and entry points for the Social Themes evolve. All the while, they are encouraged to be responsible and kind citizens of the world and constructive but critical thinkers. The unit question can be discussed throughout each unit up to and including the final unit performance.

Musically, students are constantly touching upon all key musical elements and skills, building upon these as they progress through each lesson, unit and year. As well as this, there is also a **Musical Spotlight** to each unit. This by no means indicates that there is only one musical aspect or concept being considered and developed – it just allows one chosen musical element, aspect or skill to come to the fore for contemplation, discussion and development, for the duration of that unit.

Unit 4 Social Theme:

In this unit, we ask **'How Does Music Teach Us About Our Community?'** as an entry point for the broad Social Theme of **'Music Is a Builder of Community and Guardian of Cultural Identity'**. Aside from culture and identity, this is relevant to learning topics such as community, nationality, where we come from, team building, sport and other topics, as you, the teacher, see fit.

More detail on this Social Theme and how it might be explored in the classroom can be found in the **Social Themes Overview** document, where you can find more description on:

- The ancient origins of music having arisen in ceremonies and stories (compare to its role in today's films and shows!), meaning it is intimately linked to how humans build community, friendship, kinship and peace, and to how we learn about and understand each other.
- The role of music and musicians as 'history book' guardians of historical and cultural heritage, all over the world and throughout the ages.

- How music is also very significant to collective and individual identity. What kind of music you listen to can really help people get to know you, and is a great topic to discuss. For those who create and perform music, it is often an intimate expression of their deepest feelings, at the core of their personal identity. Listening to and appreciating many different styles and artists, and listening to other people's music, can teach us a lot about respect and values.

Social Theme: Cross-Curricular Links and Further Exploration and Inquiry

The descriptions above – of how music relates to culture, traditions, identity and self-expression – are intended to give teachers some ideas and direction as to potential cross-curricular opportunities and avenues for further thematic exploration beyond the songs, music and content encountered in this unit. Just as music is all-pervasive in society and our daily lives, we hope you find ways to tie it into all your learning, beyond the purely musical education offered by our curriculum.

The six Social Themes of the Charanga curriculum are all overlapping, but Unit 4 might overlap particularly well with discussions and learning at other times in the year during **Unit 1: How Does Music Bring Us Together? (Music Is a Peacebuilder and Friendmaker)**, **Unit 2: How Does Music Connect Us with Our Past? (Music Is a Storyteller and Time Traveller)** and **Unit 5: What Songs Can We Sing to Help Us Through the Day? (Music as a Friend, Guide and Support)**.

Unit 4 Musical Spotlight:

In this unit, the Musical Spotlight is '**Introducing Chords**'. You will continue to learn about all the Foundational Elements of Music with a focus on **chords**, while working implicitly with all of the other elements of music as you go through the steps of the unit.

Every piece of popular music has a structure and is built around a set of chords. In this unit, the children will have the option to begin to create their own song as part of a 'Song Creator Series'. They will learn to use basic chords as a part of this. The supporting videos and documentation are signposted in the lesson plans.

What is a Chord?

A chord in music is when two (usually three) or more notes are played together.

A chord which is built up of the first, third and fifth notes of a scale is called a 'tonic triad'. If it is made from a major scale, it is a major chord. If it is made from a minor scale, it is a minor chord. However, any combination of notes played simultaneously is considered a chord.

Chords can be played on instruments such as piano, keyboard, organ, harp, guitar, harmonica, ukulele and xylophone. Chords with two notes can be played on string instruments by bowing two strings together. By bowing on two strings and then again quickly on the other two strings, a violinist can sound as if they are playing a four-part chord. Some players of wind instruments are able to make chords by playing two or more harmonics together.

Connections Between the Musical Spotlight and the Social Theme

Thinking about our Social Theme for this Unit, we can think of families of people as mini-communities within a larger communal whole, working together to support each other and their society. In music, chords are groups of notes played at the same time, often to support the melody of a piece or song. So, chords are a bit like families: mini communities of notes, supporting the melodic goals of the broader musical whole.

Further Exploration

It seems that chords have not always existed in music: from the written records we have, chords evolved during a broader development of the musical element of harmony over the last few hundred years, at least in Europe.

A common use of chords in modern music is that of the typical guitarist-singer-songwriter. Guitars have six strings and so normally guitars can play up to six notes at the same time – this is achieved when the guitarist uses one hand to place their fingers on certain notes on the fretboard, and the other hand to strum (play) all six strings simultaneously. This means that a set of up to six notes are played together, and this creates a chord. Once the fretting hand changes its position, a new chord can be strummed by the picking hand.

In this way, the singer-songwriter creates a set of chords as a backdrop, or foundation, for the melody and words they will sing. Chords can be compared to background colours (for example, representing the blue sky and the green grass) upon which an artist then paints a (melodic) character in the foreground.

Chords can be used in many other ways than this, but thinking of them as a musical backdrop of colours for a melody can be a helpful starting point while learning to play, use and respond to them for the first time. They open a whole new world of possibilities for every musician!

Song-Centred Entry Points of Learning

The entry point for both the Musical Spotlight and Social Theme of each unit is a collection of new weekly songs. The songs are the heart of each lesson's learning. The Musical Spotlight is 'lived and breathed' through the musical resources and activities; the Social Theme is provoked by a question which teachers can use to venture into lively inquiry, discussion, debate and learning, and also to link to any cross-thematic or cross-curricular educational opportunities that might arise.

Lessons and Learning in a Spiral Curriculum

As lessons progress through the units and year groups, the key learning is repeated, musical skills are reinforced and the learning deepens. Children quickly become familiar with the musical activities, through which they acquire new, or reinforce previous, musical knowledge and understanding.

To support intense and rapid learning, the musical activities are designed in one of two ways:

1. The activities can be a repeat of the previous week, in order to embed and rehearse key musical skills.
2. The activities can be a repeat of previous musical skills but have different content, in order to strengthen and apply previous musical learning.

As the children move through the Scheme, they acquire new knowledge and skills and deepen their understanding and application of previous learning. This spiral approach leads to deeper, more secure learning and musical mastery.

Differentiation

Music education is extremely relevant to multiple aspects of differentiation for learning.

This Scheme is developed with the express intention of supporting each educator to cater for the variety of individual learner-types as they normally would like to, but through a music education lens.

Throughout the Units of Work, you will find that the guidance, supporting documentation and structure of the lessons in the Charanga resources take care of many of the more musical details, while empowering you to think about and adapt to the needs of the students you are teaching. In most cases, these will be students you probably already know very well from a holistic, learning perspective. Therefore, with these supporting materials and your existing teaching skills, you should be able to deliver any Charanga music lesson in a way that caters appropriately for the diversity in your classroom.

More detail and guidance on differentiation in music education and in our curricula can be found in the **Curriculum Overview** documents.

Teaching the Lessons of This Unit

This six-week Unit of Work is aligned with the official National Curriculum for Music and the non-statutory Model Music Curriculum Guidance published by the DfE in 2021. It is clearly sequenced with high musical expectations that give all children the opportunity to learn about, enjoy and explore music.

It meets all the required standards, skills and knowledge needed for a full, holistic music education.

This unit sets out sequences of learning around a song in key musical areas which, over time, all contribute towards the steadily increasing development of musicianship:

- Listening
- Singing
- Playing
- Improvising and Composing
- Performing

Supporting Documentation for This Unit

Lesson Documentation:

1. A full lesson plan including:
 - The musical features to be learnt
 - A summary of each activity
 - A learning focus for each activity
 - Knowledge and skills for each activity

A brief lesson plan including:

- The lesson structure
- A learning focus for each activity

2. A Listen and Respond Guide for each lesson

Unit Documentation:

1. An Understanding Music Guide
2. Assessment documentation including:
 - Teacher Assessment
 - Knowledge Organisers
 - Music Passports

Year Documentation:

1. A Key Stage 2 Guide
2. Year 5 Musical Progression
3. Year 5 Theory Guide
4. Style Indicators
5. Glossary

The Unit Structure

Activity 1: Musicianship Options

Activity 2: Listening

Activity 3: Singing

Activity 4: Playing

Activity 5: Composing and Improvising

Activity 6: Performing

The Unit Structure Explained

- Steps 1–6 feature three different songs with connected musical activities.
- Steps 1, 3 and 5 include a Listen and Respond activity related to the song being learnt.
- Steps 2 and 4 include a different Listen and Respond activity for enrichment.
- Step 6 repeats one of the Listen and Respond activities for assessment purposes.
- Step 6 is an ‘Assessment Checkpoint’ week. Teachers have the option of delivering a standard music lesson or having the children complete some, or all, of the assessment tasks. Please refer to the **Assessment** documentation provided.

Activity Descriptions

Activity 1: Musicianship Options

As a class, complete the Understanding Music activity in each step. The musical learning in Understanding Music is central to each unit, so please use Improvise Together as an optional activity for variation and enrichment.

Understanding Music

In KS2, this activity supports the children in their understanding of duration, pulse, rhythm and pitch. Over time, this activity introduces a range of notation, time signatures and key signatures. It is designed to bring everyone together at the beginning of the lesson to learn, embed or revisit the music theory required for the year. This activity is essential to the development of children's knowledge, but feel free to sometimes use the *Improvise Together* activity.

The musical content and progression of each Understanding Music activity can also be viewed in your **Understanding Music Guide**.

The Musical Features in the Understanding Music Activity for This Unit:

Tempo: 180 bpm (beats per minute = tempo)

Time signature: 6/8 (six quaver beats in every bar)

Key signature: C major

Rhythmic patterns using: Dotted crotchets, triplet quavers and quavers

Melodic patterns using: C, D, E, F, G, A, B

Improvise Together

This activity gives the children an opportunity to practise improvising together. There isn't an improvise activity connected to every song, so this can be used as an option. Here, they can practise their ideas together over a backing track. You can take it in turns to play when looping the track.

Time signature: 2/4 (two crotchet beats in every bar)

Key signature: F major

The children can use the notes: F, G, A, B \flat and C or F, G, A, B \flat , C, D and E

Activity 2: Listening

Listen and Respond

In this Unit, the children will listen and respond to the following:

Step 1: Erie Canal by Thomas Allen

Step 2: Dances In The Canebreaks No. 2, Tropical Moon by Florence Price

Step 3: Heroes by Joanna Mangona and Pete Readman

Step 4: Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope by John Williams

Step 5: Happy To Be Me by Joanna Mangona and Pete Readman

This content-rich, interactive activity explores the impact that music can have on us, its design and cultural place; contextualising the music your students will listen to. Accompanying each lesson plan is a **Listen and Respond Guide**, with all the research and information that is needed for the children to complete the tasks and activities you and they will see on-screen.

Each subsequent musical activity that follows Listen and Respond reinforces the learning for musical knowledge and skills that culminate in a performance.

The Listen and Respond activity has four on-screen interactive tabs to work through:

1. Listen

Listen to the music together. Remember this is the first time the children will hear the music that is central to their learning for each lesson. Use the on-screen questions as a focus and discuss them together as a class before and after listening. This activity has been designed to explore the children's initial response to the music, how they might move, feelings and first impressions. As the children get older, this becomes an opportunity to consolidate previous learning, eg is it a style they have heard before, or is it an unusual time signature or groove?

2. Respond

It is important that the children respond in any way they feel comfortable. All responses are valid – musical and non-musical. The on-screen resource will focus on what is needed for that particular year.

Remember: each question has its own tile, don't click on the answer until the children have discussed the question. Use the discussion and the information from the tiles to learn about the particular features of the style of the song and its design.

3. Understand

This provides an opportunity for a class discussion about why the song was written and how the song connects to its social and cultural context. Use the discussion and the information from the tiles to learn about the background of the music or song. The 'Understand' tiles always have a key fact that is historical, a key fact that is cultural and a key fact that is cross-curricular. The 'Understand' tab facts will help the children connect the song to its cultural, historical and social context as appropriate.

4. Connect

The children will learn the style indicators of the song or music. Looking at the interactive musical timeline 'Connections: A Selection of Musical Styles and Their Origins' will help them to highlight the connections of the song/music to other styles and place it in time.

Activity 3: Singing

Learn to Sing the Song

You will have warmed up your voices in Understanding Music.

On the screen, you will have the option to break the song down into manageable learning sections. Add clapping and movement in the relevant sections and have fun!

There is an option to follow the score if you wish to see the notated version.

Unit 4 Songs to Be Learnt:

- **Song 1** – Erie Canal by Thomas Allen
- **Song 2** – Heroes by Joanna Mangona and Pete Readman
- **Song 3** – Happy To Be Me by Joanna Mangona and Pete Readman

Activity 4: Playing

Play Your Instruments with the Song

Use the **Musical Progression** document for further guidance.

On the screen, you will see animated glockenspiels and recorders playing four differentiated parts. You decide with the children which parts are the most suitable for them. The sheet music is available, too. Some of these instrumental parts are challenging, but have been written so that every child has an opportunity to play. Their skills will build over time, so the children will probably swap between parts regularly.

Previously (in KS1), there has been a ‘sound before symbol’ approach. This approach is still an option, but show the children the notated parts as part of their learning. The **Music Theory Guide** and videos will support learning notation.

There are also four differentiated parts available for each band instrument; Part 1 is the harder part.

Instrumental parts are available for the following songs in this unit:

- **Step 1** – Erie Canal by Thomas Allen

These are the notes you will be using on glockenspiel or recorder. There are four differentiated parts; Part 1 is the hardest (this colour denotes deeper learning):

Songs	Instrumental Notes			
	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4
Erie Canal (Glockenspiel) 4/4, D minor, 120 bpm	D, E, F, G, A (Dotted, crotchets, crotchets, quavers)	D, E, F, G, A (Minims, crotchets, quavers)	D, E, F, G, A (Minims)	D (Minims)
(Recorder)	D, E, F, G, A (Dotted, crotchets, crotchets, quavers)	F, G, A (Minims, crotchets, quavers)	F, G, A (Crotchets)	F, G, A (Crotchets)

Activity 5: Composing and Improvising

Use the **Musical Progression** document for guidance.

Think about the differences between improvising and composing.

As you know, when someone improvises, they make up their own tune that has never been heard before. It is not written down and therefore will never be heard again. If you write your improvisation down in any way, it becomes a composition and you can play it again with your friends. The music comes from inside the performer and belongs to them; it's not a question of doing it 'right' or 'wrong'. If the activity is set up properly within correct musical boundaries, children can only succeed.

There is one song in this unit to improvise with, plus additional opportunities for improvisation and composition in the Improve Together, Create a Graphic Score, Compose with a Theme and Music Notepad apps.

Improvisation

In every unit, there is an opportunity for improvisation and for the children to express themselves. Each week, there is an option within 'Musicianship' to Improve Together (see above), and with some songs, the children will also improvise with the Song.

You can improvise all together, in groups or as a solo – you decide. As in KS1, the children can use their voices or clap (rhythmic improvisation) if they are unsure. Then, they can use one note and progress to two, three and five notes only when they are ready. Always start the improvisation with note one of the given sequence.

You will be improvising with three or five notes (see the relevant **Musical Progression** documents) ([this colour denotes deeper learning](#)):

Songs	Improvising	
	3 notes	5 notes
Erie Canal 4/4, D minor, 120 bpm	D, E, F	D, E, F, G, A

Composition

In every unit, there is an opportunity for composing and communicating the children's musical ideas and feelings.

- The composition could be a class task or an individual task.
- The composition could be presented on its own or as part of the performance of a unit song.

There is support in the **full lesson plans** as to how to approach these activities and you can watch an **accompanying video**.

There are three different composition options:

Option 1: Create a Graphic Score

Create Your Own Graphic Score:

What Is a Graphic Score?

A graphic score is an exciting and creative way to write a musical composition. It involves using shapes, squiggles, letters, pictures and in fact, anything you would like to include that represents the music you are creating. With a graphic score, you can make up your own rules. You can be as imaginative as you like. Many composers from the 20th and 21st centuries used graphic scores instead of traditional Western European music notation to describe and record their musical ideas.

In this unit, the children will be given the option to create their own graphic scores with the title **Superheroes**. They will use their imaginations to decide what will happen in the story and how they will tell it with sounds and instruments.

The children can create their graphic score/s as a class, in groups or individually using the 'Create a Graphic Score' app.

In this app, you have the ability to drag and drop a variety of shapes, instruments, musical symbols and text onto the page, as well as being able to draw your own designs. A graphic score gives you the freedom to assign any sound or action to a specific symbol, so when the music is played, you can follow your score and perform these sounds and actions along to the track.

Composing is all about experimenting and finding out what works and what doesn't. Work together, let ideas flow over the backing tracks. Create music freely, in a safe environment with no boundaries. Have fun!

The full lesson plan will guide you through this activity in depth.

How to Use the Graphic Score App

With the given theme or topic for each unit, the children can create their graphic score/s as a class, in groups or individually. Their graphic score/s will represent the music they create.

There is an option to add the following to the score:

- A variety of pre-designed shapes
- A selection of instrumental graphics
- Musical symbols and even notes
- Their own text
- Their own designs and images
- Colour

The score can represent anything at all, including pitch, dynamics, timbre, tempo, texture or even silence, as well as actions and movement to allow further creativity. Once the score is complete, press 'play' and it will scroll along in time with the backing track provided.

How Do I Set Up My Graphic Score Using the App?

- Press 'settings' and choose how you want your score to look. You can:
 - Choose a background
 - Decide if you want to see the barlines and beat divisions

How Do I Zoom in on Specific Areas of My Score?

- In the bottom right-hand corner of the app, there are + and - symbols which allow you to zoom in on specific areas of your score. If you press 'fit', it will display the entire score.

You Can:

- Use 'Line' drawings/shapes in your graphic score
- Use 'Block' shapes in your graphic score
- Use pictures of real instruments in your graphic score
- Use notation in your graphic score
- Write and add text into your graphic score

For the above, select the relevant tab and scroll through using the up and down arrows. Change colour by selecting the coloured circle. Place onto the score by dragging and dropping. Once on the score, click to enlarge/shrink/rotate, duplicate, move around or delete. Use the SHIFT key to drag in straight lines.

To Create Your Own Drawings in Your Graphic Score:

- Create your own drawings by selecting any of the three pen options to the right of the tabs. There is an option to use a fineliner, a thicker pen and a highlighter. Change the colour of all of them by selecting the pen you want to use and then clicking on the coloured circle above.

To Save and Print Your Graphic Score:

- Use the file menu to save and print your graphic score.

Option 2: Compose with a Theme

In this activity, the children will create a melody inspired by a theme: **Superheroes**. It uses a backing track that describes the theme and that will inspire the composition. Choose the Compose with a Theme app in the lesson viewer and the notes provided to create a simple melody that will fit with the song. Choose from the differentiated note sets and as a whole class or in groups, compose a new, simple melody that can be played to the class.

Option 3: Music Notepad

Using the Music Notepad app, create your own compositions as a class or in differentiated groups. The lesson plans will give you the information you need for your class to complete this activity, if chosen.

The home screen of the app allows you to tailor the settings of your composition by selecting the time and key signatures, clef and number of bars. Once these have been selected, you are able to notate your own composition.

Activity 6: Performing

Perform with the Song

Perform and share the learning that has taken place in each lesson and at the end of the unit.

Here, you have the opportunity to share the fun you had in the lesson. You can sing and add any of the musical activities you have practised with the song/s. Create and present a holistic performance. This will be a short performance for sharing at the end of the lesson. As a class, you can perform at any time to an audience. You might decide to organise a special concert at a different time. Talk together with the children about each element of the lesson/s and what they would like to perform. Share thoughts and feelings.

All aspects of the musical learning in these units are connected. The children don't just sing a song, they learn all aspects of it – its historical connections, its narrative, theory, cultural context and style. They then learn and perform the song, with options for improvising, composing, playing their instruments and, of course, movement. Being part of a performance can mean organising, presenting and recording it. If possible, record the performance; children can watch it and use it as a basis for assessment. Children will learn to revisit a performance and reflect on it in greater depth. They will discuss, contextualise and refine their ideas, and look back on the progress they have made. Consider how the children might improve the performance and how they might react to feedback.

Recording your 'end of lesson' sharing can be part of the **formative assessment** process. You will have the option to revisit and perform a song/s of your choice in Step 6 as part of the **summative assessment** process. Talk about the progress that has been made.

Performing is and should be a wonderful and joyful experience for everyone. It is important for children to learn how to behave when performing and when they are part of an audience. Both are important and both have a history of custom and practice in different venues and for different occasions. For some, performing music will become a key part of musicianship. For everyone, regular performance experience and attention to basic performing etiquette enable children to become happy, confident performers, who also feel at ease participating as part of an audience for other performers.

Activity 7: Quiz (Step 6)

Theory Quiz (Step 6 only, end of each unit)

This theory quiz summarises all of the musical learning that has taken place in the unit. There is also a more summative, general quiz for the entire year at the end of Unit 6. Each quiz has a different number of questions and can be used to suit lesson pacing and scheduling appropriately. Each question is multiple-choice and allows you to select the correct answer before moving on.

Unit Summary

Step	Activity 1: Musicianship Options	Activity 2: Listen and Respond	Activity 3: Singing	Activity 4: Playing	Activity 5: Improvising and Composing	Activity 6: Performing
1	Option 1 Understanding Music Option 2 Improvise Together	Erie Canal	Erie Canal	Play instrumental parts	N/A	Perform and share what has taken place in the lesson
2	Option 1 Understanding Music Option 2 Improvise Together	Dances In The Canebrakes No. 2, Tropical Moon	Erie Canal	N/A	Options: - Improvise Together - Improvise with the Song	Perform and share what has taken place in the lesson
3	Option 1 Understanding Music Option 2 Improvise Together	Heroes	Heroes	N/A	Options: - Create a Graphic Score: Superheroes - Compose with a Theme: Superheroes - Music Notepad	Perform and share what has taken place in the lesson
4	Option 1 Understanding Music Option 2 Improvise Together	Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope	Options: - Heroes - Erie Canal	N/A	Options: - Improvise Together - Improvise with the Song	Perform and share what has taken place in the lesson
5	Option 1 Understanding Music Option 2 Improvise Together	Happy To Be Me	Happy To Be Me	N/A	N/A	Perform and share what has taken place in the lesson
6	Option 1 Understanding Music Option 2 Improvise Together Option 3 Theory Quiz	Dances In The Canebrakes No. 2, Tropical Moon	Revisit a song of your choice	Play instrumental parts with your chosen song, if available	Option to revisit Improvise and Compose activities	Perform and share what has taken place in the lesson and prepare for a concert