

Title: *The Rhythm of Life*

A music-based Learning Unit derived from the Music Starter Template: What is the rhythm of my life?

Starting Point: Recording sounds

Generative topic:

If we attune our ears to our surroundings, we can become more aware of where we are, and where other people, plants, animals and environmental elements are, and how they can affect us in interesting and surprising ways.

Rewritten as a question:

What is the rhythm of life?

Overview:

Students will create their own sound-scapes and / or recordings comprising sounds obtained from their immediate environments.

Intended grades: K - 6

Standards: 1 / 2 / 3

Duration: 3-4 x 40 minute lessons

Connections with Cognitive, Personal and Social Development:

- Understands that there are different arts forms through which enjoyment is gained and meanings expressed and derived
- Understands how the basic elements of arts forms are used to communicate meanings in everyday life
- Understands the ways in which arts forms communicate for different purposes, audiences and contexts
- Understands how to use a variety of direct experiences and play to collect information about the natural and constructed world
- Understands how to use a variety of techniques to collect information and resources to answer questions
- Understands how to pose questions, actively investigates them, and evaluates the findings against the explanations and observations of others

Throughlines	Understanding goals
The natural and constructed world around us is made up of a wide variety of sound sources that occur both naturally and artificially in our daily lives.	1. Developing and encouraging deep listening skills.
	2. Recording and codifying sounds.
	3. To use the codified sounds to create visual representations of their aural observations, which they will then organise into a structured sound-scape.

This unit makes provision for:

- ✓ establishment and consolidation of prior learning
- ✓ whole class activity
- ✓ small group activity
- ✓ individual activity
- ✓ guided / scaffolded activity
- ✓ self-assessment
- ✓ peer-assessment
- ✓ independent student demonstration of understanding.

Development of understanding of these concepts:

Concept	Specific aspects
	Students can:
✓ Beat	identify beat sources
Rhythm	
Meter	
✓ Tempo	use fast and slow in composition
Melody	
Harmony	
Tonality	
✓ Dynamics	use volume as a compositional tool
Tone	
Colour	
✓ Texture	create layers of sound
✓ Structure	create a composition with form
✓ Style / Context	manipulate elements to convey a particular mood.

Development of these skills:

Skill	Specific aspects
	Students can:
Vocal	
✓ Instrumental	play through a simple arrangement
Movement	
✓ Reading Notation	read a simple score involving standard or graphic notation.
Writing Notation	write a simple score
Listening / Aural Discrimination	
Improvising	
Composing	
✓ Commenting	comment on the effectiveness of their own performances.

Warming Up / Tuning In: engaging students in the inquiry

UGs	Learning experiences	Ongoing Assessment and Feedback
1	Discuss the statement: We have two ears and only one mouth. Should we listen twice as much as we speak?	Observe and record student discussion.
1	Provide students with a piece of blank paper and a pencil. Ask students to sit VERY quietly for a LONG time.	Students listen carefully and record what they hear on paper. What do I hear around me today?
1	Share brainstorming e.g. How far away from yourself were you able to hear sounds? The people next to you? The same room as you? Just outside of the room?	Discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long / short sounds • high or low sounds • regular beats in the sounds. Create a class list on the board.
1	Go outside and find a space, alone, and sit quietly ... very quietly.	If students have a recording device this is where they can record the sounds they hear.
1	Listen to sounds that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • near to you • far away from you • down on the ground • up in the trees or on buildings etc. • natural sounds • sounds made by people. 	Students discuss questions such as: What causes the various sounds around me? How are they significant? What are the properties of the sounds I am listening to?

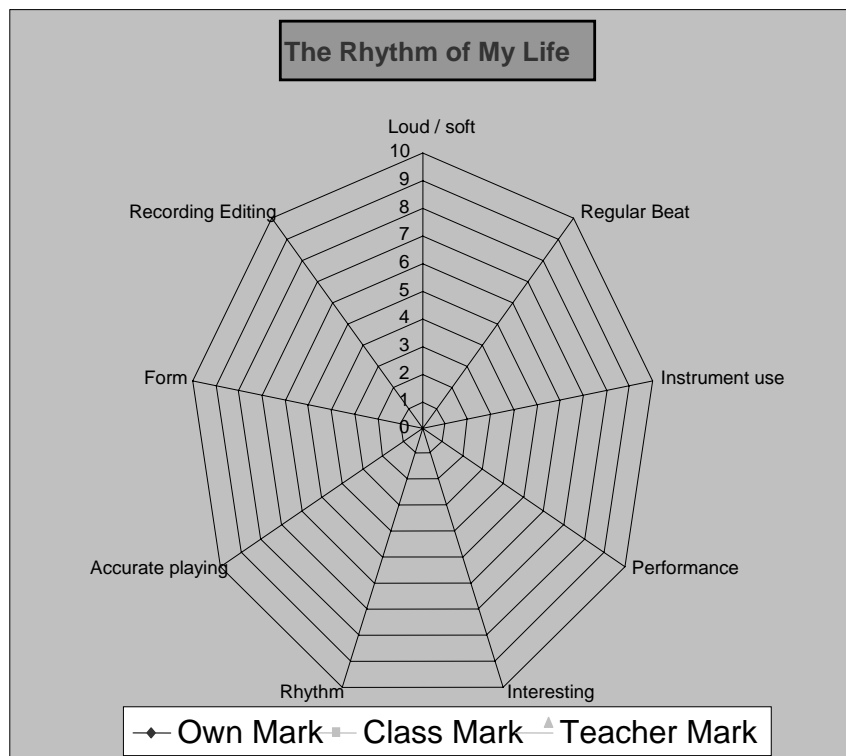
Guided / scaffolded inquiry: enabling students to acquire, process and represent information, to further develop understanding and challenge thinking

UGs	Learning experiences	Ongoing Assessment and Feedback
2	Students discuss questions such as: How can you draw sounds? How can I keep a record of the sounds I hear around me? How else can I show others what I hear?	Provide some visual examples for the students.
2	Give students five minutes to select any instrument they would like to use to practise playing some of the sounds. After students have practised the sounds, ask them to draw their shapes on the board and play them.	Observe the appropriateness of the symbols used by the students.
2	The next performer will draw their shapes alongside, until there is a complete sound-scape on the board. The teacher points to different sections of the sound-scape, and the students play when their part is pointed out.	Advanced students may use dynamic markings or musical notation.

Culminating performances: enabling students to demonstrate insights and demonstrate their understanding

UGs	Learning experiences	Ongoing Assessment and Feedback
3	Students plan a sound-scape that incorporates some of the sounds they have collected to perform to an audience.	The sound-scape should 'tell a story', as almost every song does. Students need to contemplate what it is they would like to convey through their sound-scape.
	<p>Pose a set of questions appropriate to the students' capacity.</p> <p>Standard 1</p> <p>What kind of noises are the sounds I am listening to? Are the sounds one long sound or do they start and stop? How can I put all these sounds together to make a song that is interesting, using loud, soft sounds? Can I correctly read the pictures / symbols I have used when I play my song to my group and others?</p> <p>Standard 2</p> <p>What kind of noises are the sounds I am listening to? Which are higher or lower and which will 'match' other sounds? Are the sounds one long sound or do they start and stop? Are the starts and stops regular? How fast or slow are the beats? How can I put all these sounds together to make a song that is interesting, using loud, soft; more, less and high, low sounds? Do I need to have a structure for my song? Can I correctly read the pictures / symbols I have used when I play my song to my group and others? Did I play accurately, and can I repeat it again if asked?</p> <p>Standard 3</p> <p>What are the qualities of the sounds I am</p>	<p>Discuss: How can I fit the sounds I have collected into a song that is interesting?</p> <p>Record the sounds in a manner that is suitable to your school situation.</p>

	<p>listening to? Which are higher or lower sounds and which will 'match' other sounds? Are the sounds one long sound or do they start and stop? Are the starts and stops regular? How fast or slow are the beats? What kinds of rhythms, tempos am I able to hear? How can I put all these sounds together to make a song that is interesting, using loud, soft; more, less; high, low sounds? How can I use texture, verse, chorus, bridge, intro and outro? Can I correctly read the pictures / symbols I have used when I play my song to my group and others? Did I play accurately, and can I repeat it again if asked? Did I use dynamics and articulations accurately?</p>	
1,2,3	Use the rhythm of life web to assign three marks by the student, the class and the teacher.	<p>Questions for discussion: What was the quality of my performance? Is the mark I gave myself similar to that which the class and the teacher gave me? Can I justify my self evaluation mark?</p>



Tips for teachers

Students begin to develop skills in recording diagrammatically the sounds they hear. Specific symbols, of the teacher's and students' choosing or invention, will be used to represent sounds and their characteristics.

Students have differing levels of understanding of the qualities of the sounds they have listened to, and recorded. The key elements of sounds (dynamics, timbre, rhythm and tempo) can be used to construct a meaningful sound-scape. This can be demonstrated in the students' use of these elements.

Feedback from the audience and teacher is also useful. It is unwise to allow performers to enter into debates about aspects of the performance they may wish to contest. Ongoing assessment should take place in a safe environment.

Resources

The following resources are required for this unit of work

1. A room that does not need to be quiet. However, there should be no distracting elements that may break the concentration of the students during their focused listening time.
2. An outside area, where students may sit quietly and observe (by listening) what is occurring around them.
3. Pencils, paper, crayons – whatever they need to record (write down) what they hear in a creative manner. Colour may play a significant part of recording sound properties.
4. Whiteboard and markers – draw the sound shapes you hear as an example to the class.

Optional

Audio recording software (optional component) available at

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/>

There are also many free tutorials on this program available at

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/>

Additional components for the program (plug-ins) are available at

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/plugins>

If all that is not enough, then a good place to start for other programs is at

<http://www.pcmus.com/Free-Software.htm>,

Computer, Microphone and mixer (optional component)