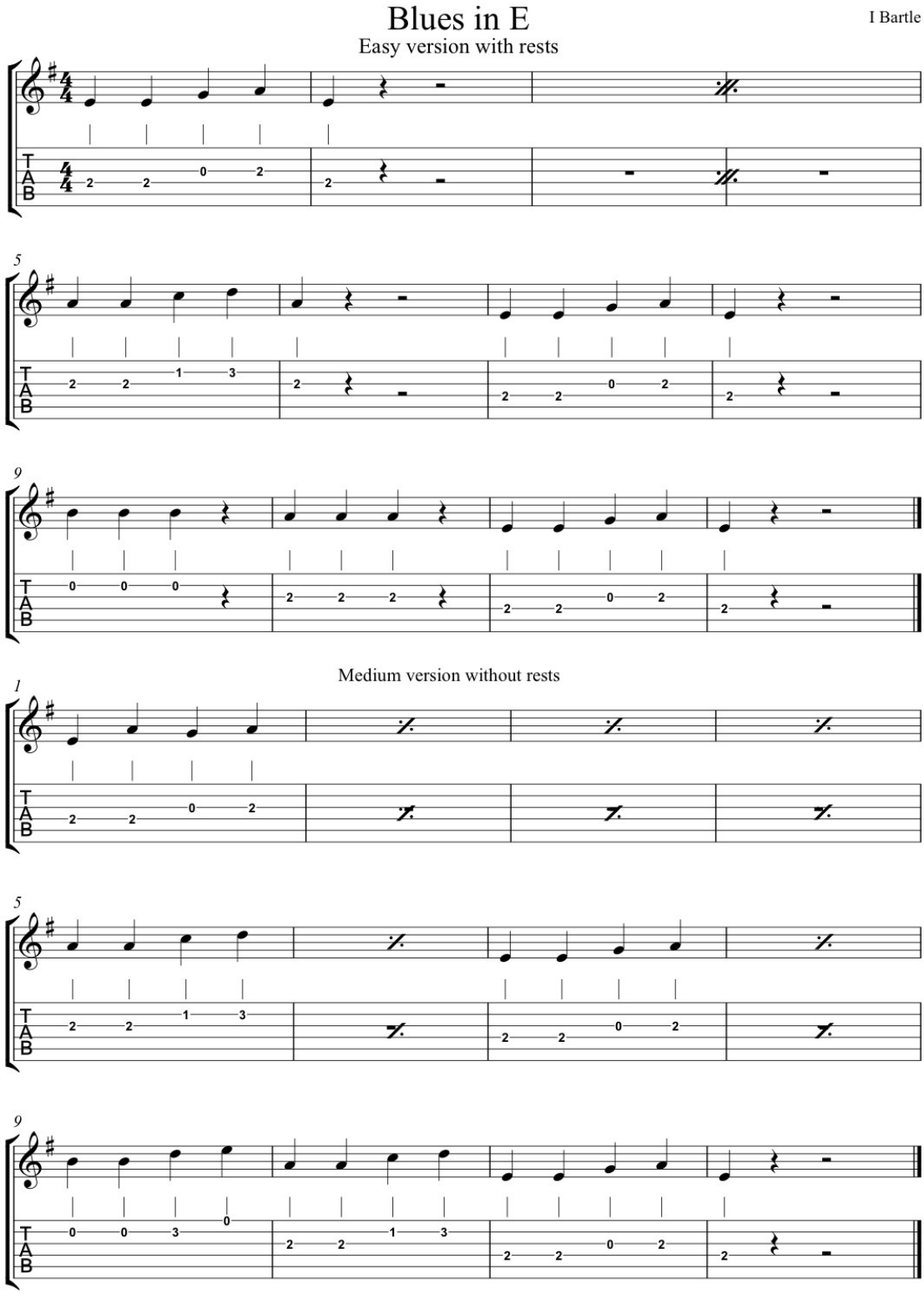
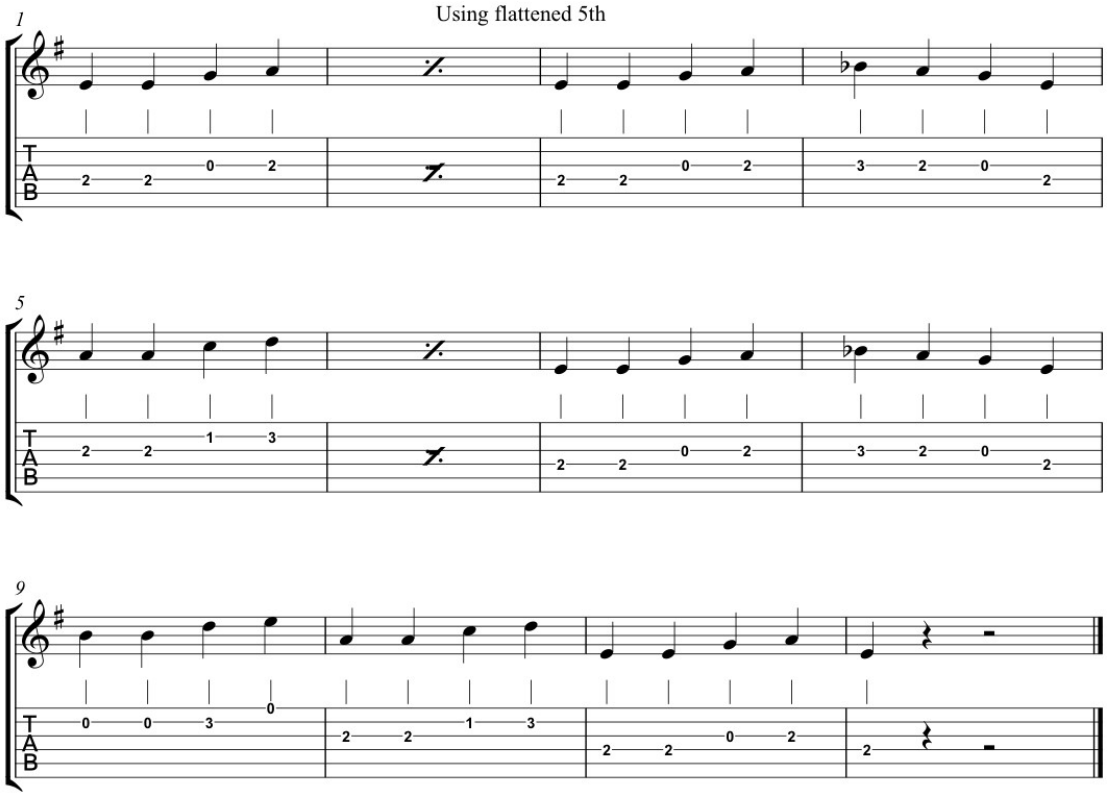
Title: ***What can we do with the 12 bar blues?***

Starting Point:



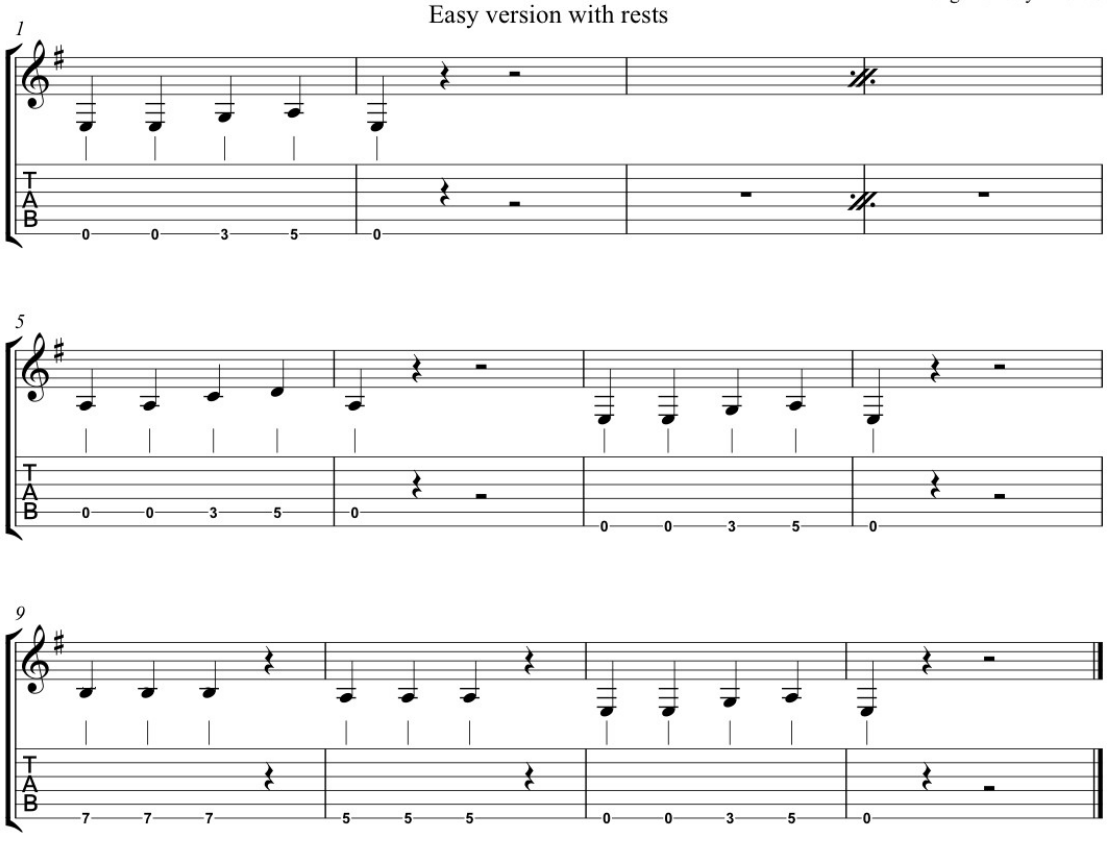
Using flattened 5th



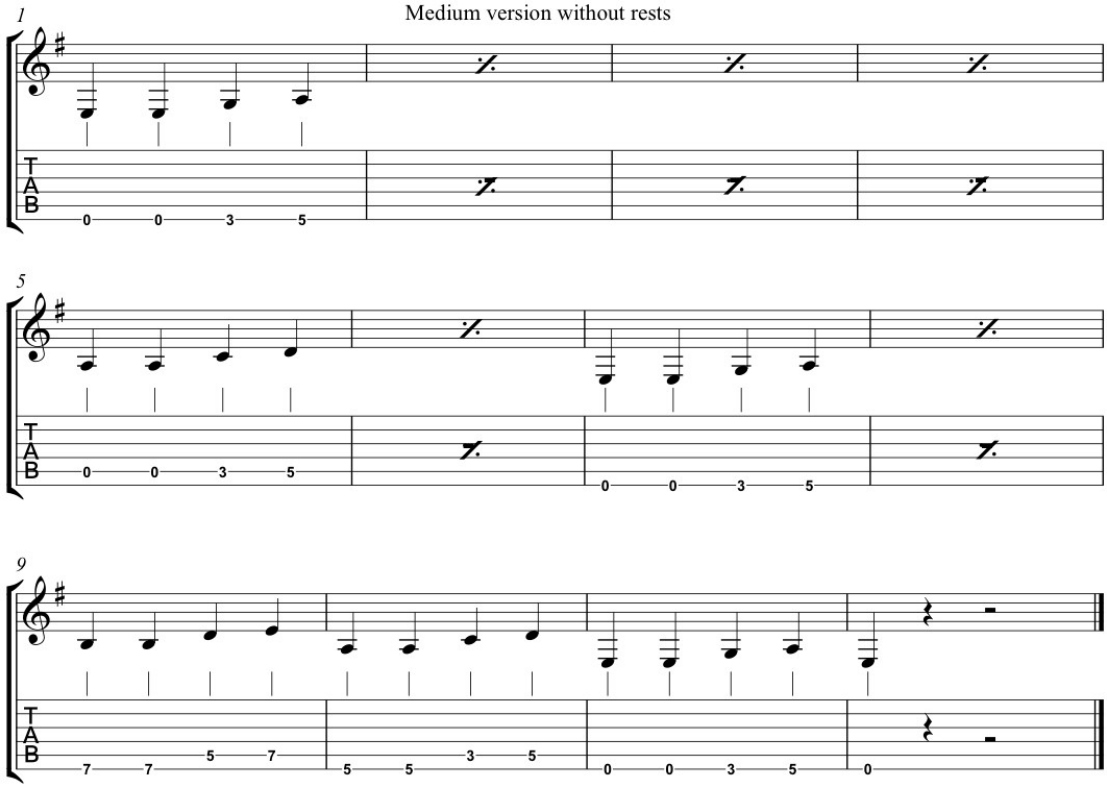
Blues in E

Easy version with rests

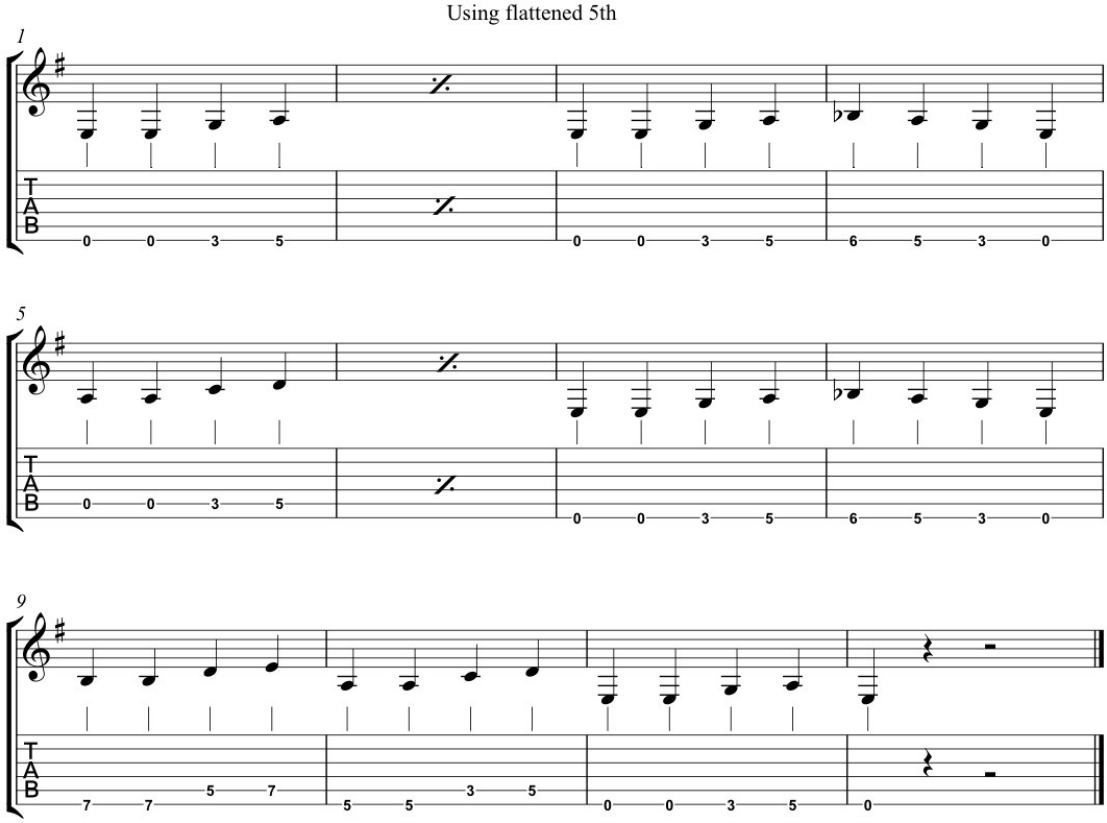
Arrangement by I Bartle



Medium version without rests



Using flattened 5th



Generative topic:
Building a 12 bar blues piece for players and dancers

Rewritten as a question:
How do we create a 12 bar blues?

Overview:
Students learn a riff with three levels of difficulty that form a 12 bar blues piece. The riffs can be combined to form a multi-layered piece or played in sequence to create a piece with developing structure.

Intended grades: 5/6
Standard: 2
Duration: 6 x 30 min lessons

Connections with Cognitive, Personal and Social Development:

- Understands how the basic elements of arts forms are used to communicate meanings in everyday life
- Understands the need for constructive personal and social relationships

Throughlines	**Understanding goals**
Chord patterns can be used to create order in a piece.	1. Music is created by pattern.

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
- ✓ small group demonstration of understanding.

Development of understanding of these concepts:

Concept	**Specific aspects**
	Students can:
Beat	
✓ Rhythm	develop a swing feel
Meter	
Tempo	
✓ Melody	learn to play riffs and develop answering phrases
✓ Harmony	change chords in the correct place for 12 bar blues
✓ Tonality	identify major / minor tonalities, pentatonic scale and I, V, IV chords
Dynamics	
Tone Colour	
✓ Texture	layer different riffs and responses
✓ Structure	identify patterns in riffs
✓ Style / Context	explore the blues genre.

Development of these skills:

Skill	Specific aspects
	Students can:
✓ Vocal	sing blues songs
✓ Instrumental	play riffs and chords
✓ Movement	perform simple dance steps and actions to match chords I IV V
✓ Reading Notation	follow guitar tablature notation
Writing Notation	
✓ Listening / Aural Discrimination	listen to chord changes listen to the blues style
✓ Improvising	use chords and riffs to improvise further melodies
Composing	
✓ Arranging / Transcribing	work in small groups to perform a blues piece.
Commenting	

Warming up / Tuning in: engaging the students in the inquiry

UGs	Learning experiences	Ongoing assessment and feedback
	Students sing a 12 bar blues song e.g. *Mary had a little Blues.*	Discuss the similarities and differences of *Mary had a little Blues* with the well-known nursery rhyme.
	Students listen to the lyrics of other blues songs.	Provide students with a template for lyrics and ask them to complete a cloze activity, writing their own lyrics.
	Students follow a dance pattern that shows the 12 bar pattern with different actions for the chord changes (1=clapping 4=stamping, 5=nodding).	Discuss the patterns that make up a 12 bar blues.

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
	Students play allocated parts according to their individual ability.	Students play one line each and refine their performance.
	Add other instrumentation to the melodic line e.g. percussion to add a triangle on chord changes, drum to add straight eight or swing feel on cymbal.	Observe students' ability to maintain part and beat integrity.
	Encourage students to improvise with different rhythm patterns over the chord changes.	
	Students write lyrics to the blues pattern and perform the arrangement.	

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

UGs	Learning experiences	Ongoing assessment and feedback
	Students perform a 12 bar blues with tutti sections (all playing together), solo sections, (reflecting the appropriate level of skills) and lyrics.	Students watch a playback of a videoed performance to assess their performance according to a class developed rubric.

Tips for teachers

This is an open-ended activity that enables students to perform at a level suited to their ability, from the easiest bass riff to improvising and song writing.
When students are starting on improvising, encourage them to use the same pitch but alter the rhythm.
When they are comfortable with this they can change the pitch.

Resources and references

Blue Suede Shoes ***ABC Sing 1991,*** song 34, page 74
Cut Lunch Blues ***ABC Sing 1991,*** song 24, page 50
Monday Morning Blues ***ABC Sing,*** song 47, page 66
Mary Had a Little Lamb ***ABC Sing 2001,*** song 18, page 32
Daddy Cool ***ABC Sing 2004,*** song 49, page 87
Birthday ***The White Album*** The Beatles
Fun, fun, fun Beach boys
Turn up your Radio Master's Apprentices
Backyard Blues Susie Davies-Splitter