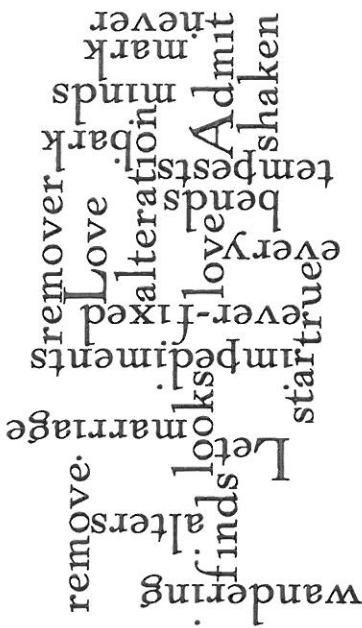


Music and drama



1. The language of music and drama

Music and drama teachers develop learners' ability to use language to understand, evaluate, create and perform their own and others' work. Work in class is frequently practical: watching and listening to performances, singing, playing instruments or acting. Demonstrations and the use of props help learners to follow spoken instructions and explanations: communication is both verbal and non-verbal. Music and drama are good subjects for learners who are new to CLIL, since new language is introduced in a clear context with visual support or physical reinforcement. An extra element of both music and drama is culture: learning about culturally specific musical and dramatic traditions. Both subjects give outstanding opportunities for learners to produce a wide variety of spoken language and to experiment with expressing emotions. CLIL drama teachers can also create plenty of opportunities for learners to read and write a range of texts as well as to develop linguistic creativity. However, CLIL music teachers need to create opportunities for learners to speak and write about as well as to play music. In music, work on reading, speaking and writing needs, therefore, to be consciously planned. As they develop their knowledge and skills in music and drama, CLIL learners can be taught how to think, talk and write like music and drama specialists.

Examples of input (spoken, written and visual information) in music and drama include the following:

- teacher explanations, instructions and demonstrations, such as role plays, playing music for the class, singing
- written texts: texts in magazines, newspapers or on the Internet, in CD in-lay notes, reviews about drama or musical performances, plays, short stories, poetry
- video or audio input: dialogues, plays, films, TV series poetry readings, CDs, songs, pieces of music
- objects and models: props, hats, furniture, musical instruments
- performances: plays, sketches, concerts
- hands-on work: performing music, role play, drama performances
- visuals: photographs of people or famous performances, drawings, musical notation.

The language of music and drama uses a variety of language functions, genres and text-types. For example:

- It recounts – i.e. retells events in chronological order in biographies and descriptions of musical or drama developments, plays, films and concerts: it uses all the past tenses (*Mozart had already been playing the piano for five years when he performed at the age of eight*), phrases to place an event in time (*in 1996*), words for periods of time (*in the 70s*), organising words for time (*next*).
- It describes and informs – i.e. describes characteristics of musical and dramatic works: it uses the simple present (*The base line for the guitar starts with a 4/4 beat*), numbering words (*There are four sections with eight bars*), the passive voice (*is often referred to as*), comparison and contrast (*Compared with an earlier symphony, this one is much more complex*).
- It instructs – for example, how to play an instrument or piece of music, act in a role play: it uses imperatives (*straighten your back*), modal verbs for requirements (*You should whisper*), action verbs (*stand, turn*), adverbs (*strongly*), qualifiers (*That's much better*), comparatives (*Sing as quietly as you can*) and linking words to number steps (*then*).
- It explains – for example, how or why musical and dramatic processes work: it uses present tenses and enabling verbs, verbs to show effect (*The bass creates a dramatic undertone*), linking words (*because, even though*), time phrases (*As the curtains open, the sound of a single drum echoes*), linking words for processes (*in the end*).
- It persuades – i.e. attempts to convince someone of a point of view about a piece: it uses emotive adjectives (*fascinating, thrilling*), linking words to support ideas (*I think the scenery at this point changes because*); numbers examples (*One example of this can be heard in the second movement*); describes mood and emotion with reflexive verbs (*it makes me feel*).
- It discusses – i.e. presents reasoned arguments about works and performances from different points of view: it evaluates, argues and gives opinions (*The lyrics in hip-hop appeal to teenagers because they use street language*); it uses conditionals (*If you lowered your voice, you would sound more manly*), linking words to show logical relationships – contrast (*on the one hand*), reinforcement (*indeed*) and effect (*therefore*), opinion verbs (*in my opinion*), verbs to show value judgements (*prefer*), linking words for conclusions or recommendations (*finally*).
- It includes body language (nodding, eye contact, facial expression).
- It uses different tones and kinds of expression (pace, intonation).
- It uses technical terms (*crotchet, quaver, semibreve, proscenium arch, agitprop*), slang, flowery and ungrammatical language (*I can't get no satisfaction*), Latin- and Greek-based words (*allegro, piano, forte, symphony, saxophone, xylophone*), everyday words in specialist ways (*note, bar, beat, conduct, key, blue*).

2. Sample text and comments for music and drama

The main purpose of this text is to explain what chords are and what they consist of. It also explains how important the rhythm and bass are in a steel band.

Time phrases: Most of the time, when

Superlatives: simplest

Number words: third, fifth, double, triple

Chord of C major: C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D

Assignment 35: Imperatives for instructions: play, try, remember

Everyday words used in specialist way: note, major, minor

Specialist vocabulary: cello, keyboard, piano, xylophone

Specialist vocabulary: triad, accompaniment, root

Present tense to describe characteristics: consists of, Alt. is, takes

Adjectives: successful, distinctive, simple

Future tense to predict: will ... appear as, will give

Multimodal input: musical notation, illustration

Now (try) these: A minor - A C E, D minor - D F A, E major - E G B, F major - F C A, Bb minor - Bb D F, Eb major - Eb G Bb

Remember that when playing pans with note letters written on them: CH (w), PH, and DH as CH, etc.

A good combination of bass and chord rhythm pans is very important to the successful sound of any steel band. In small bands, with no double alto or triple cello pans, the bass and rhythm forms the entire accompaniment to the soprano melody and so give the band its distinctive style. Here is a simple example of a bass and chord rhythm combination, which would fit most Caribbean folk-style tunes:

Cello & Alto: 4/4

Bass: 4/4

25

3. Sample language and content aims for music and drama

Speaking

Learners' CEFR level

Sample aim

- A1 Learners can name key musical or dramatic techniques in a class game.
- A2 Learners can give reasons why they prefer one musical or dramatic piece above another in a class discussion in small groups.
- B1 Learners can give a short presentation for a music station or TV programme explaining the key musical or dramatic features of a song or scene.
- B2 Learners can compare and contrast dramatic or musical techniques in two pieces in a presentation for the director of a concert or a theatre producer.

Writing

Learners' CEFR level

Sample aim

- A1 Learners can label CDs or DVDs with appropriate genre titles.
- A2 Learners can write a short description of a piece of music or drama for an advertising leaflet.
- B1 Learners can write a review of a concert or performance for a school magazine.
- B2 Learners can write an obituary in a newspaper for a musician or performer, critically appraising their contribution to music or drama.

Grammar

Learners understand how the present simple and continuous tenses are used in a spoken commentary on a piece of music (*the drums keep a steady beat, the violins are playing quietly*). Learners can form questions using who, what, where, why in the present and past tense when performing an interview in a role play. Learners can use comparatives and superlatives when writing a review of two pieces of music.

Vocabulary

Learners know the meaning, pronunciation and spelling of the following words: *percussion, bass drum, bongos, castanets, celeste, cowbell, cymbals, glockenspiel, gong, kettledrum, maracas, marimba, snare drum, timpani, triangle, vibraphone, xylophone*. Learners can use several of the following words in a music review to describe tone colour: *metallic, jangling, reverberant, vibrant, piercing, hollow, booming, rattling, brittle, rasping, shimmering, tinkling, shattering, silvery*.