

Musicboard applications in the classroom

Uses with curriculum teaching.

G.C.S.E – Listening skills.

The student does not necessarily need to play an instrument to learn and understand the skill set for the listening skills under instruction with the music board.

Lessons topics covered and ideas on how to teach them:

Musical elements of: Pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure.

Identifying Musical and melodic devices

Identifying Rhythmic devices

Identifying Major, minor and modal differences

Musical elements of: Pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure.

Notes can be written on the musicboard and the **pitch** demonstrated by sounding the notes with the Orange wand. The students can be tested on this in the lesson by asking them to draw various notes on the board and predicting the pitch of the note, whether it is going to be higher or lower, and then using the Orange wand to sound the note to solidify the new information learnt and applied.

Notes can be written on the musicboard with differing **durations**. The students are asked to learn the names of the notes, namely Semi quavers, Quavers, Crotchets, dotted crotchets, Minims, dotted minims and a semibreve. The teacher demonstrates the **duration** of each note in relation to each other by sounding them with the Orange wand. The students are then asked to draw a note value of the teachers choice and then to sound it. For teaching 2 students at a time, a good demonstration is for 1 student to sound a 4 beat semibreve while the other student sounds 4 crotchets in the same space of time. As you can imagine there are many various games that can be done this way incorporating many students at the same time up at the board.

Using the built in Piano, **dynamics** can be demonstrated. A melody can be written on the board with various **dynamical** ranges added. The teacher demonstrates those **dynamical** ranges on the built in piano. The students are taught the names of Piano, mezzo piano, mezzo forte, forte, fortissimo and pianissimo. The teacher then rubs out the **dynamical** ranges under the set melody which has been written on the board and then plays the built in Piano with a new **dynamical** range. The students then have to write these ranges on the board around the written melody line. This teaches them to not only listen for **dynamical** changes but to learn how to follow a melody line of written music.

Please note that each one of these lessons not only shows the teacher that the student has been listening, but also shows them that the student understands the lesson by showing the teacher that they can apply the new information immediately.

The teacher activates the built in metronome at a desired **tempo** and asks the class to clap in time. The teacher shows the students how to clap in time as a crotchet beat and as a minim beat. They demonstrate their understanding by clapping back. Then a melody is written on the board using crotchets and minims, a student is encouraged to do this as much as possible. The teacher activates the built in metronome at a set **tempo** and each student takes it in turns using the Orange wand to sound the notes in time with the metronome. The metronome **tempo** is increased and decreased for different students and melody lines altered, again by the students.

Please note: Students are encouraged where possible to write notes and interact with the music board to get the full benefits of knowledge retention through application.

A student is asked to write a melody on the board and the teacher then demonstrates this melody using the in-built Piano. The teacher demonstrates the melody firstly on the Piano sound, then activates the other instrument sounds on the music board to demonstrate the same melody line with a different instrument. This teaches the students **timbre**. To demonstrate **timbre** further and to get students to identify important instrument sounds a variety of instruments can be plugged in to the music board and sounded through the built in speakers. So for instance a keyboard that is in the classroom which may have a large variety of sounds can be plugged into the music board and the students asked to do a test on all the sounds they hear. Another way is for the teacher to pair their Bluetooth device and play music from their device which will come out of the music board speakers.

There are a variety of ways to demonstrate **texture** on the music board, we have provided a simple example. Ask a student to write a melody line on the music board. Ask another student to copy the same melody on the stave below. Get both students to sound the notes of their melodies at the same time to demonstrate homophonic **texture**. You can combine this skill with note durations and tempo by activating the metronome so the melodies are played in time. The teacher can also add another instrument by plugging into the musicboard and providing an accompaniment to alter the **texture** again. The teacher can then start demonstrating and explaining **texture**. The students can then start to be asked to demonstrate differing **textures** via the musicboard.

The complete **structure** of a song, writing out the melody line on the music board, can be demonstrated and heard back by the students. This can also help students with song writing skills. **Structures** can also be demonstrated through pre-recorded music which is sent from the teachers or even students Bluetooth device and sent to the board for evaluating. If there is time a student can be asked to write a melody line for a complete song with the desired **structure** asked for by the teacher.

Identifying Musical and melodic devices

Musical and melodic devices can simply be demonstrated by writing ornamentation and pedal points around written melodies.

Identifying Rhythmic devices

To identify **rhythmic devices** such as **syncopation** which can be quite difficult for non-instrumental students to grasp, the teacher can write a melody on the 1st stave and then the **syncopated** melody on the second stave. The student would sound the **non-syncopated** melody with the Orange wand while the teacher sounds the **syncopated** melody with their Orange wand. The student and teacher can swap between melodies until the concept is grasped. Also, the metronome can be used and the students asked to clap written rhythms against the metronome tempo.

Identifying Major, minor and modal differences

To identify **Major, minor, modes and tonalities**, the teacher is able to easily change between **major** and **minor** keys on the music board. To demonstrate the difference in tonality between **Major** and **minor** chords for instance a teacher can set up the 1st stave in a major key e.g C Major and write all 7 chords of the scale. The pattern of **Major, minor and Diminished** chord sequences can be written and then the students ask to come up to the board to sound each one. It is a good idea to do this with 3 wands first, so three students at a time. The sequence is then rubbed out and chords written where the students have to identify whether the chord is **Major, minor or diminished**.

Major scales can also be demonstrated by the teacher and then the **relative minor** can be shown and sounded straight away by starting the scale 3 semitones lower. This will show the student the **Natural minor** scale and help them understand key signatures and their relativity.