

Year: 4

Subject: Music

Unit of Study: Rhythm — Trains

Linked Literature: Orchestra by Avalon Nuova and David Doran

Water—Performance

Sea Shanties— pulse  
And rhythm

Performance — singing with expression  
as part of a group

**Rhythm—Trains**

Chronology – Vaughn Williams  
and John Pitts

**Vocabulary**

pulse	A regular beat which you feel but do not hear.
Ostinato	A repeated rhythmic pattern.
Rhythm	A pattern made of beats of different lengths.
Chorus	A part of a song that is repeated and usually sung by a group of people.
Acapella	Music without instruments.
Improvise	Make something up on the spot.
Pitch	How high or low a sound is.
Texture	Different sounds layered on top of each other.
Quaver	One eighth of a whole note.
Dynamics	The difference between loudness in notes.
Timbre	The quality of the sound
Crescendo	Gradually getting louder
Diminuendo	gradually getting quieter

**I need to know:**

This topic is based around rhythm and we will be exploring train rhythms.

We will focus on some famous pieces of music. In *Bolero* (by Ravel) we will notice the repetitive rhythm played on the snare drum throughout (this is known as a rhythmic ostinato). We will learn how to maintain a complex rhythmic ostinato.

We will study Honneger's *Pacific 231* which is a composition called a tone poem. We will see how he cleverly makes parts of the poem sound like a train — moving mechanical parts, power of engine reflected in the sounds of the orchestra, criss-crossing of tracks, dynamics/volume.

We will see how Pierre Schaeffer recordings from a steam and pieced them together to create *Etude Aux Chemins*. Listening carefully we will hear the pitch shifting, stretching and sounds looping to create the piece of music.

We will be composing our own music to represent aspects of the trains journey including:

- Hissing of steam from the engine as it stands at rest
- The engine gradually moving off
- A massive locomotive gathering momentum
- The sense of rhythmic swaying as the train speeds along
- Rhythm suggesting the moving mechanical parts of the train
- Brakes applied
- Slowing of the engine, coming to rest.

**I need to do:**

- listen and identify different parts of a song.
- understand the difference between pulse and rhythm
- be able to identify ostinato
- add an ostinato part to a song so that it can be performed in two parts
- compose a soundscape for a train journey thinking about suitable timbres to use and also dynamics;
- perform, as a group, the journey of a train and evaluate the performance



quaver



eighth note - half beat

semiquaver



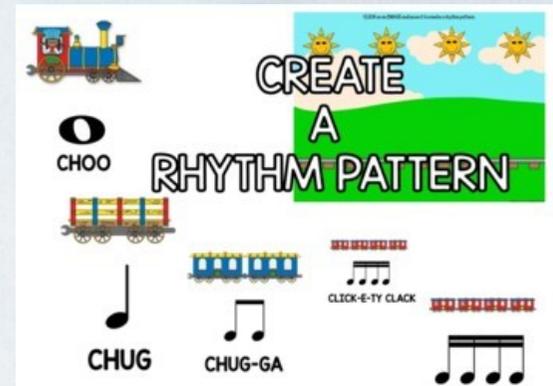
sixteenth note - quarter beat

**Prior knowledge:**

- You will already know many things .
- That music can be produced using a range of instruments or every day sounds.
- That some percussion instruments can represent every day sounds better than other percussion instruments .
- That music can be played quietly (piano) or loudly (forte) to represent the atmosphere you want to create.
- That the structure of music is like a conversation—we listen /we speak. The structure allows us to know when to play and when to pause.
- That musical notation can be recorded as appropriate symbols or pictures .

**pulse**

The underlying steady beat of music. This is what we may tap our foot or clap along with.



Pulse and ostinato.

Maintaining Ostinato.

Adding lyrics to match the rhythm.

Reading and performing rhythm.

Composing a train journey.

Performing ostinato in an ensemble.