

# Medium Term Plan: Exploring Musical Contrasts

Year 4 · Unit 4

## Learning Objectives

1. Develop instrumental and ensemble skills by performing vocal and instrumental parts with control of pitch, rhythm, dynamics, and contrasts such as staccato/legato and crescendo/decrescendo.
2. Compose and interpret musical ideas by improvising and layering parts that convey emotion and maintain ensemble cohesion.

	Summary of Lesson	Key Learning
<b>Weeks 1 &amp; 2</b>	<p><b>Learning the Song and Pulse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen carefully to <b>“Let Your Spirit Fly”</b>, identifying its pulse, tempo, dynamics, and articulation.</li> <li>• Begin learning the main verse, practise humming and singing with expressive variation in tone and volume.</li> <li>• Introduce simple drone accompaniments using C notes; experiment with playing loudly and softly to explore contrast.</li> <li>• Begin exploring ensemble awareness by listening to others while performing to check that everyone is playing the same thing at the same time.</li> </ul> <p><b>Second Vocal and Instrumental Drone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add the second vocal line, alternating with the main melody, to practise singing in harmony.</li> <li>• Extend instrumental drone work by alternating between C and A notes, experimenting with dynamics and timing.</li> <li>• Develop listening skills to ensure accuracy and blend in small group performances.</li> <li>• Encourage reflection on how dynamics and layering affect the overall sound.</li> </ul>	<p>Children develop an understanding of pulse, tempo, and mood while learning the main verse and adding the second vocal line.</p> <p>They practise humming, singing, and expressive articulation, experimenting with dynamics to convey emotion.</p> <p>Simple drones on C and A notes support ensemble awareness, while small-group rehearsals enhance listening, timing, and balance.</p> <p>Discussions focus on musical terminology and the impact of layering voices and instruments, fostering attentive listening, comprehension, and collaborative skills.</p>

**Weeks  
3 & 4**

**Warm-Up Games and Chorus**

- Warm up body, voice, and instruments to prepare for performance.
- Learn and memorise the chorus, focusing on phrasing, articulation, and expressive delivery.
- Introduce easy instrumental parts, paying attention to rhythm, repetition, and note placement.
- Practise ensemble coordination by dividing the class into groups to play and sing together.

**Medium Instrumental Parts and Improvisation**

- Introduce medium difficulty instrumental parts (C, B, A, G, F, E) to extend musical learning.
- Experiment with musical contrasts: staccato and legato, crescendo and decrescendo, high and low pitch variations.
- Encourage improvisation over the backing track, building confidence in creating melodic or rhythmic ideas.
- Perform short improvisations to the class, reflecting on expressive choices and contrasts.

Children expand their repertoire with the chorus and easy-to-medium instrumental parts, building confidence in reading and performing.

They explore musical contrasts, including staccato, legato, crescendo, and decrescendo, and experiment with pitch variation.

Improvisation and group practice develop rhythmic accuracy, melodic awareness, and expressive interpretation.

Performances focus on texture, layering, and ensemble coordination, reinforcing teamwork and creative musical decision-making.

**Weeks  
5 & 6**

**Rehearsal and Composition**

- Combine vocal and instrumental parts into full sections of the song.
- Focus on timing, cohesion, and musical expression, refining dynamics, articulation, and balance.
- Incorporate peer feedback to improve ensemble coordination and clarity.
- Experiment with layering drones, melody, and second vocal lines to enhance texture and musical interest.

**Performance and Reflection**

- Perform the complete song, integrating vocals, instrumental parts, drones, and contrasts confidently.
- Record the performance for reflection, encouraging self- and peer-assessment of rhythm, pitch, dynamics, and expression.
- Discuss and evaluate expressive techniques, ensemble awareness, and musical contrasts.
- Celebrate achievements and the overall creative journey, highlighting collaboration, skill development, and musical understanding.

Children integrate all vocal and instrumental parts, rehearsing for cohesive and confident performances.

Emphasis is placed on timing, balance, dynamics, and expressive delivery.

Peer feedback and self-assessment encourage refinement and critical listening.

The final performance showcases ensemble skills, musical contrasts, and creative interpretation.

Reflection and discussion consolidate learning, celebrating achievement, confidence, collaboration, and a deeper understanding of musical expression.