THE DUSTON SCHOOL
Knowledge itself is power
4-19

Year 7 Music Knowledge Booklet

Topic 2 - Instruments of the Orchestra

Name:

Class:

Year 7 Music

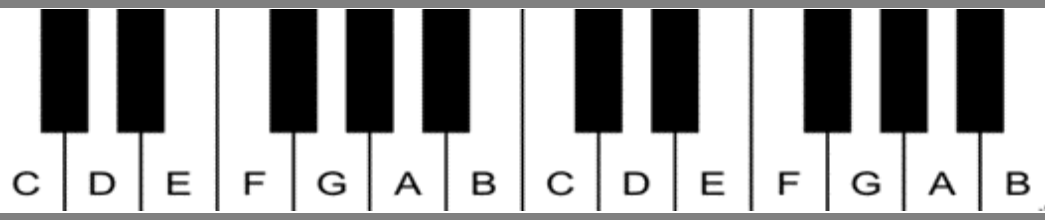
Instruments of the Orchestra

An Orchestra is a large instrumental ensemble typical of classical music, which mixes instruments from different families, including String instruments such as Violin, Viola, Cello and Double Bass, as well as Brass, Woodwind and Percussion instruments, each grouped in sections. Other instruments such as the Piano may sometimes appear in a fifth Keyboard section or may stand alone, as may the Harp and, for performances of some modern compositions, electronic instruments.

A full-size orchestra may sometimes be called a *symphony orchestra* or *philharmonic orchestra*. The actual number of musicians employed in a given performance may vary from seventy to over one hundred musicians, depending on the work being played and the size of the venue. The term *chamber orchestra* usually refers to smaller-sized ensembles of about fifty musicians or fewer.

Orchestras are usually led by a conductor who directs the performance with movements of the hands and arms, often made easier for the musicians to see by use of a conductor's baton. The conductor unifies the orchestra, sets the tempo and shapes the sound of the ensemble. The conductor also prepares the orchestra by leading rehearsals before the public concert, in which the conductor provides instructions to the musicians on their interpretation of the music being performed.

The Keyboard



Big Questions

1) Which instruments belong to which families?
2) How are String instruments used within the Orchestra?
3) Which instruments belong to the woodwind family?
4) What are the names of the instruments in the Brass family?
5) How do I practise effectively?
6) How are percussion instruments used within the Orchestra?

INSTRUMENTS

KNOWLEDGE BOOKLET

VOICE TYPES

Voices were the **first** instruments used to make music.

In order from **highest in pitch** to **lowest in pitch**:

Soprano	Female	High
Alto	Female	Low
Tenor	Male	High
Bass	Male	Low

One of the oldest forms of vocal music were **Chants**.

STRINGS

ORCHESTRAL string instruments from **highest in pitch** to **lowest in pitch**:

Violin	**Viola**	**Cello**	**Double Bass**

We studied an example of music for String Ensemble:
Pachelbel's Canon

This includes the **baroque** feature **Ground Bass**, which is a term to describe a bass part repeated throughout the piece.

WOODWIND

ORCHESTRAL woodwind instruments from **highest in pitch** to **lowest in pitch**:

Flute	**Oboe**	**Clarinet**	**Bassoon**

Other woodwind instruments include: Recorder, Saxophone, Piccolo, Cor Anglais but these are not always used in the orchestra.

These woodwind instruments all have different **timbres** and therefore in the **classical** era, composers were able add more variety to their music.

BRASS

ORCHESTRAL brass instruments from **highest in pitch** to **lowest in pitch**:

Trumpet	**French Horn**	**Trombone**	**Tuba**

Other brass instruments include: Cornet, Flugelhorn, Tenor Horn, Baritone and Euphonium but these are usually found in a **brass band**.

During the **romantic** era composers commonly wrote descriptive music.

PERCUSSION

Un-tuned percussion instruments cannot change in **pitch**.

Examples of which are:

Snare Drum	**Bass Drum**	**Tambourine**	**Triangle**

Tuned percussion instruments can either change in **pitch**, or have multiple parts at different **pitches**. Examples of which are:

Xylophone	**Glockenspiel**	**Timpani**

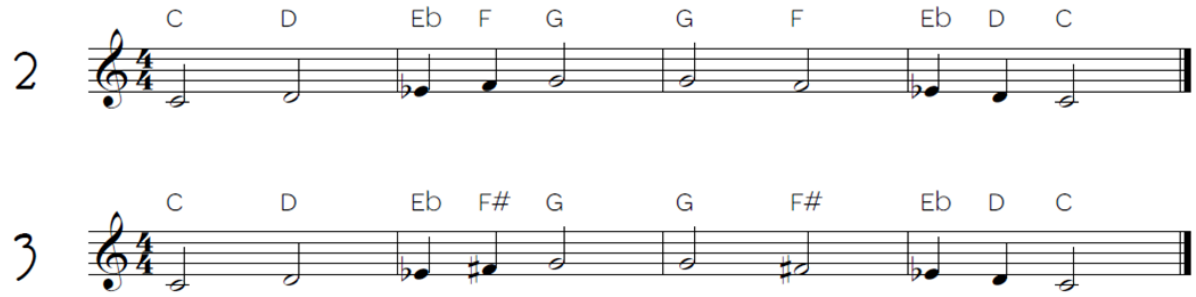
The set up of percussion in an orchestra depends on the piece of music.

Sample Assessment (Practical)

Assessment:

This will be a Keyboard performance assessment based on the exercises you have practised this half term. You will choose 2 exercises from the worksheet to perform to the teacher. They will assess how accurately you read the music, and use the correct fingers for each note.

Example:



Sample Assessment (Listening)

Assessment:

This will be a 'listening and appraising' assessment. You will hear a number of extracts from different orchestral pieces, and will need to answer the questions about them.

Examples:

Short Question: Write the **4** main **voice** types in order from **highest to lowest**.

Answer: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass

Long Question: Describe the dynamics throughout the extract and how the different families of instruments introduce the new dynamics.

Answer: The String family are heard at the beginning of the extract, playing ***mezzo piano***. The music ***crescendos*** as the Percussion and Woodwind join. The extract finishes ***fortissimo*** when the Brass join.

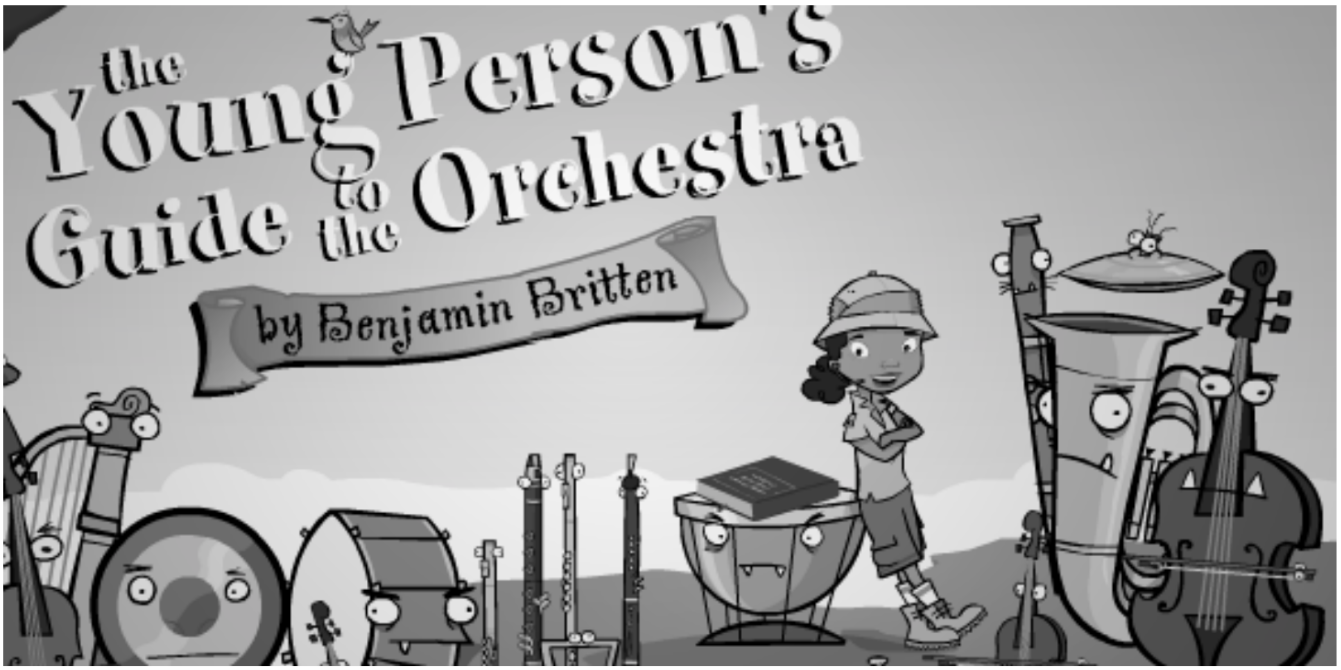
Homework Tasks

1) Watch the video of 'Young Persons Guide to the Orchestra' and complete the worksheet.

Due Date: _____

2) Pick a film of your choice. Listen to the soundtrack and answer the questions on the 'Homework Task 2' sheet.

Due Date: _____



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HhTMJ2bek0 - Use this YouTube link

Watch and listen to the video on Benjamin Britten's 'Young Persons Guide to the Orchestra'. Answer the following questions. You may need to do some research to complete all of the answers.

Why did the composer compose this piece?

What are the instruments of the Woodwind family?

What are the instruments of the Brass family?

What are the instruments of the String family?

What are the instruments of the Percussion family?

What are the low sounding instruments of the Brass family?

Describe the sound of the Double Bass:

What are Flutes made of?

Who composed the music you are listening to?

When was this piece of music written?

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions in this section. It is all about your opinion and how you interpret the music. Try to be as descriptive as possible with your answers.

Write a paragraph to explain your thoughts an opinions on this piece of music. Use musical vocabulary if you can. Think back to last term when we learned about Tempo and Dynamics:

Imagine what the music might be trying to tell you. Write down your thoughts below:

Homework Task 2

Due in: …….. Name: ……..

Last lesson we listened to, and watched the video of the 'Main Theme' from Star Wars.

For your homework, you need to pick a film of your choice and listen to the soundtrack. You should easily be able to find the main theme from your chosen film on YouTube, but you may also choose one of the other pieces of music from the film. For example, from Star Wars we could have also listened to 'Darth Vader's Theme'. Please answer the following questions, giving as much detail and using musical vocabulary where appropriate.

1) Title of the Film_____

2) Title of the piece of music chosen _____

3) What is happening in the film when this piece of music is heard?

_____

_____

_____

4) How does the mood of the music represent what is happening in the story?

_____

_____

_____

5) Which family of instruments plays the main melody? _____

6) How would you describe the Dynamics in this piece?

_____

_____

7) How would you describe the Tempo in this piece?

_____

_____

8) Do you hear any instruments in this soundtrack that aren't usually found in an Orchestra? If so, what do you hear? _____

9) In which year was this piece of music written? _____

10) Explain the reasons you chose this piece of music. What features of the music do you like/dislike?

_____

_____

_____

Further Understanding

WIDER LISTENING

⇒ 1. ‘Obliviate’ by Alexandre Desplat from Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

⇒ 2. 'Set Fire To The Rain' for Orchestra by Adele

⇒ 3. ‘Spring’ by Antonio Vivaldi from the Four Seasons

WIDER WATCHING

⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBatxZ90wag

Main Theme from ‘Superman’.

⇒ https://www.bbc.com/teach/ten-pieces/KS2-3/zrsf3k7

Beethoven’s 5th Symphony.

⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sr-l2m8twX0

Introduction to the instruments of the Orchestra.