

# **Recorder**

## **Year 3**

### **Summer 1**

## **Unit Overview**

### **Lesson One - An Introduction to the Recorder**

- In this scheme the children will learn how to play the basic notes on a recorder and will rehearse and perform a number of different pieces of music. They will also learn how to improvise and compose their own short pieces of recorder music.
- Firstly, hand out recorders to the class. If you have enough recorders for every child, make sure each child has one, but ask the children to perform a group at a time at first. So, when it comes to playing, ask one table to play at any given time. This will make it easier for the teacher to assess where any difficulties are in terms of children struggling with technique, holding, finger placement etc. It also makes it much more manageable when the children are starting out! As the class gets more accustomed to the recorders you can be a bit more adventurous and let more children play at once.
- Play the 'Introduction' video. This explores the basics and holding and blowing into the recorder. The children will learn the note B. Let each table have a go at playing along with the final part of this first video. Make sure to acknowledge those children who are playing particularly well. Maybe they could show the class their work at the front.
- When the children feel comfortable with 'B', move onto the second video, exploring 'A'. Again, allow each table the opportunity to play their 'A' note along with the video.
- Once the notes 'A' and 'B' are complete, the children can try the third video, where I change between the two notes. When every table has tried this exercise pick some performance groups to come to the front of the class and show their work.

### **Lesson Two – Playing 'B', 'A' and 'G'**

- Recap the work the children explored on the recorder in the last lesson. How do we sit when we play? How do we blow into the recorder? What notes did we learn and how do we play them? Ask children to come to the front of the class to show how to play 'B' and 'A'.
- Today the children will learn a third note, the note 'G'. Play the 'Recorder Learning G' video. This explores how to play 'G' on the recorder and also allows the children the opportunity to try out all of the notes they have learned so far. Again, like in the last lesson, let the children have a go one table at a time. Allow children who are playing with strong technique the opportunity to show their work to help the rest of the class.
- Mary Had A Little Lamb. Let the children listen to the song and then discuss how they follow the music. The yellow bar keeps the children in time and the pictures remind the children of where their fingers should be for each note. It is best to let the children practice one page at a time. So let them rehearse the first section a few times with the video paused before moving onto page two. Repeat by pausing the video so that all of the children have practiced each page, one table at a time.
- When the children feel confident allow each table to have a go at playing the piece without stopping. Can they change finger placements in time with the music? Do they need a little more practice? If they are struggling with moving from one note to another quickly, allow them time to perfect this technique. That is what learning a musical instrument is all about, after all!

### **Lesson Three – Au Clair De La Lune and Eye of the Tiger**

- Today the children will learn two more songs to increase their recorder repertoire, 'Au Clair De La Lune' and 'The Eye of the Tiger'.

- Firstly, let's recap the work we have done so far on 'B', 'A' and 'G'. Allow the children time to practice the notes. Play the 'Recorder Learning G' video to warm up.
- Let the children play through 'Mary Had A Little Lamb'. If the class are feeling more confident you can ask more children to play at once.
- Next, play the 'Au Clair De La Lune' video for the children to hear. As in the previous lesson, allow the children to learn the piece one page at a time so they can become familiar with the fingering changes and timing. Using the yellow bar and images to help.
- When the children are confident play through the song in its entirety and let the children try the whole piece.
- Repeat this exercise with 'The Eye of the Tiger'. With this song, the children can play the intro sequence and sing along with the main part of the song.
- To finish the lesson, let the children play all of the pieces they have learned so far.

#### **Lesson Four – High C and High D**

- In this lesson the children will learn the notes 'High C' and 'High D'.
- As in the previous lessons, use the following videos to learn the notes and then play the following songs:
  - We Will Rock You – Slow
  - We Will Rock You
  - Space

Let children have time to practice each piece and become familiar with our two new notes, C and D.

The children should be getting more confident with their general playing and you could invite groups to pick a song from the collection and play to the class.

#### **Lesson Five – Low E and F, Low C and D**

- These are the final notes the children will learn in this scheme, covering most of the basic notes for beginner recorder.
- Play the 'E and F' video. Allow the children time to practice the new notes. Play the C and D video and do the same. When they are confident, let the children explore some of the other pieces further down the webpage.

#### **Lesson Six – Improvisation and Composition**

- Now the children have learned a solid collection of notes, they can start to develop an understanding of improvising and composing short pieces.
- Ask the children to spend a little time working on going up and down in steps on the recorder. For example, they could start on G and work up to D (G – A – B – C – D). Then go back down. Explain to the children that they are improvising (making up ideas on the spot) and trying variations on this 'step' technique.
- Invite some children to the front of the class so show their ideas.
- To turn this 'step improvisation' technique into composition, they need to write their idea down. This can be done in a variety of ways. They can simply write down the letters they are playing in order., making sure not to make the phrase too long. Or they could draw a simple version of the recorder for each note and show which holes they are covering. Or, for the children of higher ability, they could write their notation on score, using western notation. For an example of this please check my 'Music Notation' section on the website. They would simply need a blank sheet of music paper, with a staff of 5 lines.
- Children who have completed the 'step' work, could then develop their composition idea into leaps and steps. So they could look at jumping from Low E to B or from Low D to High C or D.