

Meaningful Learning Experiences

Strategic Commitment	✓	Part of a large academy trust's curriculum strategy
Curriculum Provision	✓	Real project for Year 4 Music Composition
Employer Partnerships	✓	Part of an initiative to promote Allied Health Professions
Reflective Young People	✓	Encouraging creativity
Informed Career Choices	✓	Widening understanding of careers involving music

Music Therapist inspires Year 4 pupils to compose a song about life during lockdown

A project involving Year 4 pupils at Barton Hill Academy in Torquay helped to enrich learning about Music Composition and Creativity. The Trust's Primary Music Specialist suggested this could help address 'Children's lack of opportunities to create and compose music using either standard notation or other forms of notation.' He added that he wanted children to develop 'an understanding of the work and process that goes into composing a piece of music' and 'an understanding of musical careers.'

An approach to the British Association for Music Therapy resulted in involvement by the organisation's chair, who is a practicing Music Therapist. Initial discussions explored the idea of asking children to compose relaxing music for busy NHS workers and finally led to a brief to write a song 'about the things you have missed during lockdown'.

The Music Therapist created a set of short, informal video clips that were embedded within the classroom teaching resources:

Video 1: Hello, a bit about Music Therapy, set task.

Video 2: Hello again. Quick thought on music reminding us of a positive memory.

Video 3: Hello again. Another quick thought.

Video 4: Task check in - really looking forward to hearing some of them and giving feedback.

Much of the planning and delivery of this project was completed during the COVID health crisis, when the majority of children were learning from home.

Benefits for the Students

'We only did the project over four weeks but I know that the children enjoyed the topic and learning all about Music Therapy. They enjoyed the videos done by Jon and gained a good understanding of the role of a Music Therapist. I know that the children also enjoyed the practical music making activities (writing songs/raps and composing music accompaniment). However, teachers did reflect that they found it tricky to compose backing music. This is totally understandable as I wasn't in school. This is reflected in the students' work I have sent you. The majority focused on lyrics and there are some really nice lyrics!'

Benefits for the School

- 'A quick email to say that I did a hangout with Year 4 this afternoon and after just one lesson they had some fantastic ideas for songs. The lyrics were brilliant and a couple of girls even sang them to me! I think we're going to have some lovely songs by the end of term.'
- 'I think it was a successful project and certainly one worth repeating and sharing with other schools (with some tweaks to make it even better). It was a really nice way to share a career path in music that the majority of children would not have been aware of.'

Benefits for the Employer

- 'I am sure that even as a pilot this will bring to life a profession that they had probably never heard of before and hopefully even plant the seeds of a future career for some of the children.'
- 'Here is a link to download the videos. It was lots of fun making them and thinking slightly differently about the work that I do ... Looking forward to hearing the songs your young people put together and then hopefully working together to roll this out wider in the future.'

An experienced Music Therapist provided a series of enthusiastic and informal video clips to inspire Year 4 children about a Music Composition project that required them to work in pairs or small groups to create a song about 'things you have missed during lockdown'.

