

teach through music

VOICE WORKS: GETTING EVERYONE SINGING

Led by Sound Connections

The focus of this short course was engaging everyone in singing at KS3, and how to maintain pupils' interest in singing throughout KS3 and beyond. The course provided teachers the tools to support pupils in singing, learning more about changing voices, using voices healthily and most importantly choosing vocal repertoire that works well for your pupils.

Course Leaders: Jane Wheeler and Randolph Matthews.

Session 1: With Randolph Matthews & Jane Wheeler

This session explored practical exercises to involve children in the experience of singing and beatboxing/rhythm making – working on the idea that to learn you must do. Addressing visual, kinaesthetic and aural learners in one experience.

Addressing all learning styles, eg: Kinaesthetic, visual & aural learners: gesture, actions, chanting e.g. 'rice cakes, coffee, cold chips and vindaloo' – involve children in the gesture decisions for each word. Gradually removing vowels and vocal tone to make a percussive vocal loop 'r ck c-f c-c vid-la'

Visual learners: basic graphic scores
e.g. Peace Chant (Jane Wheeler)

1 2 3 4 Peace, takes	2 2 3 4 cour-age,	3 2 3 4 try- ing hard to	4 2 3 4 lis-ten, to
5 2 3 4 diff- rent points of	6 2 3 4 view. It's not	7 2 3 4 ea -sy,	8 2 3 4 some-times,
9 2 3 4 hold on	10 2 3 4 tight to what you	11 2 3 4 know is	12 2 3 4 true,
13 2 3 4 What goes round	14 2 3 4 comes a round to	15 2 3 4 you, to	16 2 3 4 you.

Randolph Matthews brought his looper along, and the group had a go at looping up rhythms and exploring what could work in the classroom.

- o How to beatbox video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8fHwMbdI90>
- o Incredibox musical beatbox app <http://www.incredibox.com>
- o Helicon voice Jam app or phone and tablet <http://www.tc-helicon.com/products/voicejam/#videos>
- o Loop sampler app <http://www.loopyapp.com>

Here's a basic key for beginner Beat box sounds:

Bass:

- B = Strong bass drum (Buh)
- b = Soft bass drum
- X = Sweeping bass drum

Snare:

- K = Back of tongue snare (without lungs)
- C = Back of tongue snare (with lungs)
- P = Pff or lip snare

Hi-Hat:

- T = "Ts" closed snare
- S = "Tssss" open snare
- t = front part of successive hi-hats

Other:

- Kkkk = Click Roll

Basic Beat score:

All beginners should start here and work their way up.

S |---- |K---|----|K--- |----|K---|----|K--- |
 H|--T-|--T-|--T-|--TT|--T-|--T-|--T-|----|
 B|B---|---- |B---|---- |B---|----|B---|---- |

"Drum kit" (slow tempo: 80bpm)

Each sound must fit into one beat. There are 4 beats in each box shown by a dash

Symbols	- - - -	- Kshh - -	- - - -	- - - -
Hi Hat	- - - -	- - - -	- - - -	- - tika tika
Snare	- - Bap -	- - - -	- - Bap Bap	- - - -
Bass	Goom - - -	Goom - - Goom	Goom - - -	Goom - - -

Other helpful resources:

Wikihow has an extensive article on beatbox for beginners, including a more complex key to start building your own scores: <http://www.wikihow.com/Beatbox>

Session 2: With Jane Wheeler

Looking at suitable arrangements of repertoire, and getting the compass of the song (lowest to highest note) in a comfortable place for all the children you are working with – addressing changing voices and the skill level of all the singers in the room.

Using games to explore vocal range and timbre

e.g: 'I say 3, you say 'huh' (lowest part of voice with action)' 'I say 5, you say Zing (high siren with action)' etc...

Thinking about the healthy voice: it is as much about healthy vocal fold connection as it is about breathing and posture. Always be listening for a healthy, clear, unforced tone.

Being informed about ranges

See <http://vocalsheetmusic.net/ranges/>

Compare famous singer ranges: <http://time.com/105319/compare-vocal-ranges-of-worlds-greatest-singers/>

Changing male voice <http://www.leedberg.com/voice/pages/male.html>

An example of how you might arrange a round or canon to suit your pupils, taking riff based songs from the [Mama Lisa website](#).

e.g. **Belle Mama:** this could be applied to any key, and uses only a 6 note compass. For e.g. year 7's with boys with changing voices you might go as high as F major and allow them to sing it down. Have a dialogue about what is comfortable and what they can hear is most resonant. <http://www.mamalisa.com/index.html>

Other helpful resources:

Mixed Voice vocal warm up accompaniment:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hOKbYDN8Wu8>

Session 3: With Jane Wheeler

Forming vocal groups and ensuring a child's continued interest in singing.

Importance lies in choosing repertoire within the children's skill level that also offers appropriate challenge so that they can both experience success and feel engaged in learning.

Pacing rehearsals, engaging students and using time efficiently:

- Know the music!
- Chanting
- Movement
- Clapping

- Pitch work: freezing, isolating, taking out of context and putting back,
- Gesturing: conducting, drawing in the air, physicalizing
- Drawing
- Modelling
- Call and response

NB, remember with any examples you use, to play around with the key, tempo, timbre, entrances etc.

Further helpful resources:

- Sing For Pleasure Series:
<https://www.singforpleasure.org.uk/shop/index.php?cPath=21>
 - CME <http://choralmusicexperience.com/joomla/>
 - Association of British Choral Directors <https://www.abcd.org.uk>
 - Sound Connections <http://www.sound-connections.org.uk>
 - World Voice song book, British Council
<https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/world-voice/world-songbook>
 - Jane Wheeler www.livingsong.co.uk
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Session 4: With Jane Wheeler

Focus on application of skills acquired, discussion of use and how to link in with local organisations for outward looking experiences for your pupils.

London Organisations to get involved with:

- [Voice Lab](#) (Southbank Centre)
- [Wired4Music](#) (Sound Connections) | <https://twitter.com/Wired4Music>
- [Barbican Centre – Creative Learning](#) | <https://twitter.com/BarbicanCentre>
- [Roundhouse](#) | <https://twitter.com/RoundhouseLDN>
- [Stratford Circus](#) | <https://twitter.com/StratfordCircus>
- [London Curriculum](#)
- [BBC Proms](#) Extra Sings (*nb – these will be announced after the Launch mid-April each year*)
- [ABCD Choral Society](#) | <https://twitter.com/abcdtweets>

Other Helpful Websites:

- <http://www.singup.org> (songs and backing tracks, note: annual payment)
- British Kodaly Academy <http://www.britishkodalyacademy.org>
- Music Mark <http://www.musicmark.org.uk>
- <http://www.musicroom.com> Sheet music, including accessible popular songs