

VIDEO GAME MUSIC



AIMS AND OUTCOMES:



- To explore the role of a video game composer and how music is used in video games.
- To use the elements of music to describe aspects of video game music.
- To be able to perform some leitmotifs for different video game characters
- To compose a leitmotif for a video game character.



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HELPFUL LINKS

Creating Video Game Music

Use the link below to Anthem Gateway to explore resources.

[Composer for Video Games | Anthem Gateway](#)

Links to websites and videos exploring the composition process.



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What does a Video Game Composer do?

Brainstorm with a partner:

- What is the role of a video game composer?
- What skills do you need to be a video game composer?



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Listening Challenge

(Choose your own clips to suit your needs)



	Name the game this is taken from	Describe the tempo (try to use the Italian words to describe it)	Describe the timbres you can hear (Name the instruments that the sounds are copying)
1			
2			
3			
4			

Possible answers:

Slow = Largo
Walking Pace = Andante
Fast = Allegro
Getting faster = Accelerando
Getting slower = Rallentando

Possible answers: (there are others!)

STRINGS – Violins, Harp, Guitar
BRASS – Trumpet, Horns, Trombone
WOODWIND – Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone
PERCUSSION – Drum kit, Bass Drum
Triangle, Cymbals.



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Listening Challenge

Listening Challenge:

Listen to the following three pieces of music and try to describe what kind of video game they belong in and give a musical reason why.

ReelCrafter – Each clip has a description of the game it has been composed for to share when the task is completed.

Type of video game. (Action, adventure, sports, strategy)	Describe how the music in this piece fits with the genre you have chosen. (Use the elements of music to help you) Dynamics, Pitch, Rhythm, Tempo, Texture etc)

Texture
Monophonic – All doing the same thing
Homophonic – Music moving in blocks of sound
Polyphonic – Layers of music playing different things at the same time.

Timbre (Instruments)
STRINGS – Violins, Harp, Guitar
BRASS – Trumpet, Horns, Trombone
WOODWIND – Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone
PERCUSSION – Drum kit, Bass Drum Triangle, Cymbals.

Dynamics
Loud – Forte
Moderately Loud – Mezzo forte
Moderately Quiet – Mezzo Piano
Quiet – Piano
Gradually getting louder – Crescendo
Gradually getting quiet - Diminuendo



Harmony/ Tonality
Major – strong, positive, powerful
Minor - Dark, spooky, sinister
Diatonic – music fits well together
Dissonant – Sounds clash against each other

Tempo
Slow = Largo
Walking Pace = Andante
Fast = Allegro
Getting faster= Accelerando
Getting slower = Rallentando



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Becoming a Video Game Composer

Lots of video game music is built from motifs - Small musical ideas that can be repeated and developed throughout the game.

A Leitmotif is a motif that fits to a specific character.

Leitmotifs have been used in lots of different genres of music from opera, to musical, film and video games.

Can you think of film/ video game characters that have their own leitmotif?

Research Challenge: Go and listen to some different Leitmotifs for characters from video games and films.

Find out what features they have that make them successful Leitmotifs (Why do they work in a game or film?)



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Which one of these Leitmotifs would be for a hero/ villain/ Small Animal

Performance Challenge

The musical score consists of three staves, each with a 4/4 time signature. The first staff is in C major, the second in F major, and the third in G major. The notes are as follows:

Staff	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4
Staff 1 (C major)	C, G	C, C, C, G	G, E, F, E, C, G	C
Staff 2 (F major)	F, G, F, G, C	F, G, F, G, C	C, A, Bb, C, F	
Staff 3 (G major)	E, F#	G, F#, F, E	G, F#, F, E, G, F#, F, E	E

The bass line for the third staff is as follows:

Measure	Notes
1	B, G, E
2	B, G, E
3	E, G, B
4	B, G, E

The hand diagrams show the finger positions for the notes in the musical score. The left hand (LH) and right hand (RH) are shown with fingers numbered 1 to 5. The notes are as follows:

Hand	Finger	Note
LH	1	C
LH	2	D
LH	3	E
LH	4	F
LH	5	G
RH	1	F
RH	2	G
RH	3	A
RH	4	Bb
RH	5	C

The bottom right corner contains logos for Gwasanaeth Cerdd Cenedlaethol Cymru, National Music Service Wales, anthem GATEWAY, CANFOD! CYMRU, and DISCOVER! CYMRU.

Exploring the Leitmotifs

After playing the leitmotifs, talk with a partner and make a suggestion about what makes the leitmotifs successful.

How do they fit with the characters you've chosen?

USE THE ELEMENTS OF MUSIC TO HELP YOU ANSWER!

If you played it on a brass instrument, it would sound powerful.

The rhythms repeat, making it catchy and easy to remember.

The notes are all short, making it feel like a lively character.



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Composition Challenge

A video game company has asked you to create music for a new video game. They want a sample idea of a **LEITMOTIF** for one character.

You must plan and create the leitmotif and show how it sound in part of the game.

Think about what made the Leitmotifs you played successful!

Notes move more in step (conjunct) than in leaps (disjunct).

Major makes music sound more powerful and strong; minor is for dark and spooky.

The rhythms repeat, making it catchy and easy to remember.



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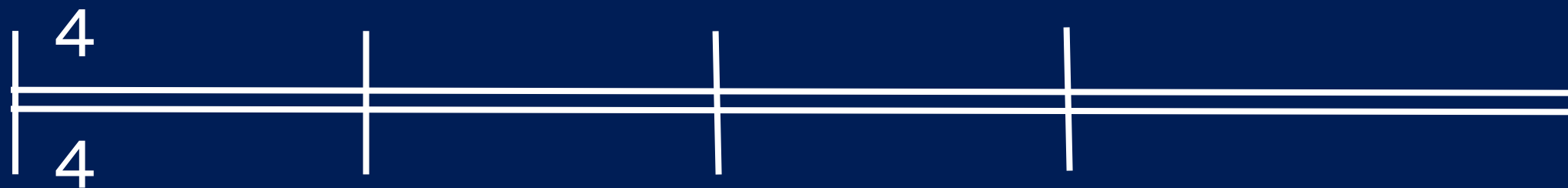
Rhythm Planning

Step 1 – Create interesting rhythms to fit with your chosen character.

REMEMBER –

- There needs to be 4 beats in each bar.
- The rhythms need to be a mixture of note values to make it interesting.

My Hero/ Villain
is _____



Step 2 – Add pitch to your piece using your chosen scale.

NOTE TYPE	NAME OF NOTE	TIME VALUE	RESTS
	Semi-breve	4 Beats	Hangs off the 4 th line
	Dotted Minim	3 Beats	
	Minim	2 Beats	Sits on the 3 rd line
	Crotchet	1 Beat	
	Quaver	½ Beat	
	Semi-quaver	¼ Beat	
		$\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} = 1$	
		$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} = 1$	
		$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = 1$	

My Scale is _____



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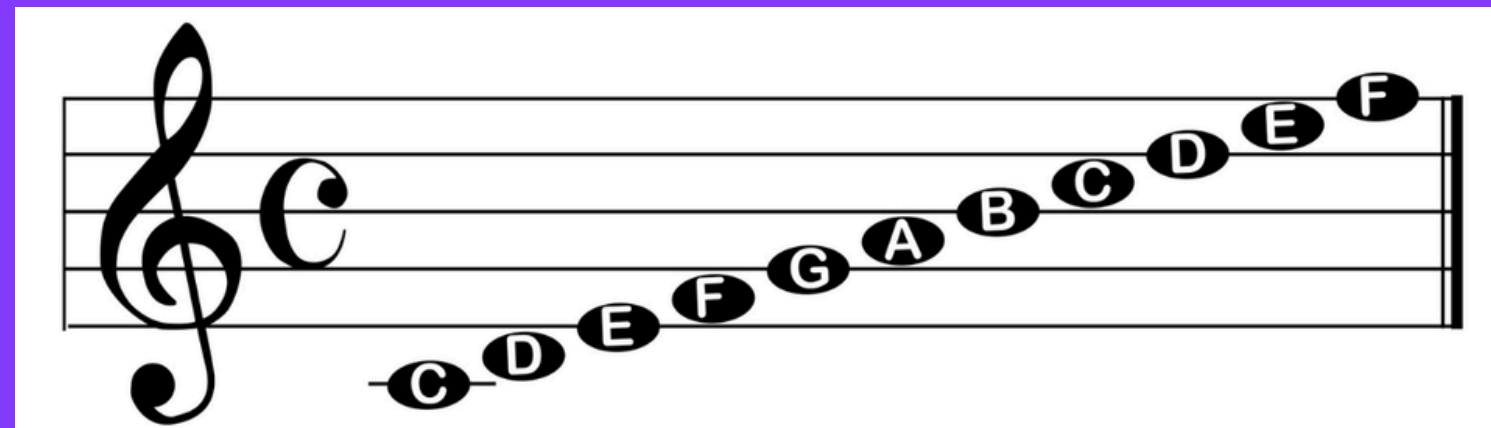
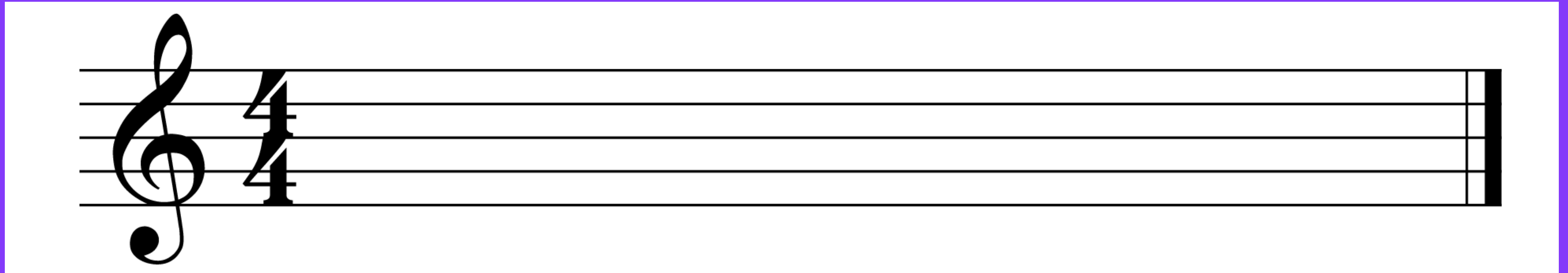


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Planning Pitch

Turning your idea into music – Writing it on the stave.



Extension Challenges:

- Put your idea into music software. Choose an appropriate instrument for your character.
- Can you add other layers? (e.g. drum part/ chords)
- Can you extend your ideas?

Turn it backward
(retrograde)

Repeat it all or just
part of it.

Play it in another instrument
(Imitation)



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