

Inside the Music: A Midsummer Night's Dream Teacher's Resources

Part 1: Mendelssohn & The Music

Overview

- This section introduces the composer Felix Mendelssohn, and his link to William Shakespeare's work 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.
- Your students will learn a body percussion exercise, then play it one after another, using the skills of focusing and listening.

Before you start

- Watch the video yourself and practice the body percussion a few times so you're really confident on it.
- Make sure your students are ready to follow along; it may be useful to split them into two groups, based on the left and right sides of the classroom.

Exercise length: this exercise takes the length of the video

Activity set-up: whole class

Materials required: none

Musical learning: playing in canon or a round, where different groups play one after another; listening; focusing

During the Exercise

- Watch the class to see who has remembered the body percussion pattern. With younger classes it's possible you'll need to stop the video and go over sections again.
- In the canon, make sure the second group knows who they are, and that they don't start too soon.
- Listen out to see if the groups are in time (you can check if the 'I'm' and 'I' from each phrase are exactly together).
- You might like to switch the groups over, so each side gets a chance to start first.

Finishing the Session

- Recap what you have learned about Mendelssohn and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.
- Discuss what it's like to perform multiple parts at the same time: what skills are you using?

Extension Exercises

- You could split into three, or even four parts. Just make sure you leave a gap before each new group joins in.
- You could make up your own pattern, with other facts about Felix Mendelsson, or words about anything!
- You could use classroom percussion, finding different sounds on the instruments to represent the body percussion parts.
- Practise singing other rounds, like 'London's Burning' or 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat'.