

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

Part 7: Music and Words

Overview

- This section is all about linking music and words - this could have a link with English literature and whatever poetry you're studying.
- Your students will write a poem and then set it to music, over an ostinato.

TIP: This has links with creative writing and reading aloud - an important skill for Drama.

Before you start

- Decide whether your students will attempt dramatic speaking, speaking in time, or singing the words: you can repeat this multiple times, building as you go.
- You could look at spoken word performances, or discuss a production or show they might have seen.

Exercise length: 45 minutes OR split over multiple sessions

Activity set-up: individual work

Materials required: pen and paper

Musical learning: improvising; composing

During the Exercise

Break this exercise into stages:

1. First ensure everyone has written a poem, this could be done individually or in small groups.
2. Once the poems are written, play the accompaniment provided on the [website](#): the riff is looped for 10 minutes, but if pupils need longer you can always play it again.
3. While the accompaniment is playing, allow your students to start experimenting with fitting their poems to music.
4. Let them rehearse their poems multiple times, until they arrive on something that is fixed.

Focus on the stages of creation: ideas, editing and then practice. Give suggestions of where they should be in this process depending on how long they have left.

TIP: Use this time to teach your students about ostinato - a repeated pattern in music. The cello accompaniment you are using is one!

Finishing the Session

- Allow the pupils to perform to each other, and encourage a supportive audience.
- Invite open questioning and constructive feedback.

Extension Exercises

- Choose one performance, and teach it to the rest of the class to create a performance.
- Take Shakespeare's words and set them as a class, making one version to perform together.
- Allow the pupils to choose or create their own musical accompaniment to suit their words: using instrumentals from YouTube, playing instruments, or singing!

Don't forget!

You can share your poems and performances with us by sending them through to info@asmf.org, using 'Inside the Music' as the subject!