# Lesson Element

# Film Music

## Instructions and answers for teachers

These instructions cover the student activity section which can be found on [page 6](#_Worksheet_1_–). This Lesson Element supports OCR GCSE (9-1) Music.

**When distributing the activity section to the students either as a printed copy or as a Word file you will need to remove the teacher instructions section.**

### Introd­­uction to the task

#### Summary and background

Music plays such an important role in films. Learners should be made aware that composers of film scores create music to support and enhance the story, action, characters or emotion of the film. An appreciation of its importance can promote cultural development and a lifelong love of film music.

Classroom activities must encompass the key three areas within music teaching of **Listening**, **Composing** and **Performing**. It is also important that learners have the opportunity to appraise their work and that of others, developing and demonstrating an understanding of the musical elements that are used within the film score.

Learners will have the opportunity to **listen** to music that has been specifically composed for a selection of film genres and to begin to understand how the music supports the action taking place. Following on from that, learners will have the opportunity to **compose** music for a given film clip or one of their choosing. Finally, learners will **perform** their compositions and appraise their work and that of other learners.

#### Learner misconceptions

Learners should be clear of the difference between music that has been specifically composed for a film as opposed to using a piece of music IN a film.

**EXAMPLE**: Samuel Barber’s ‘Adagio for Strings’ which has been used in ‘The Elephant Man’ and ‘Platoon’.

**EXAMPLE**: Albinoni’s ‘Adagio for Strings’ which has been used in the film ‘Gallipoli’ (a good example of music that does NOT fit the action).

# Teacher instructions

### The activity

The aim of this lesson is to provide an activity that will introduce learners to:

1. **A variety of composers of film music.**
2. **Develop an understanding of how music can create ‘pictures’.**
3. **How composers use music dramatically and expressively to convey action and emotion on the screen.**

(The material within this activity could be used for three to four consecutive lessons on film music.)

### Listening activity

*(Use Learner Worksheet 1)*

Four extracts of music that have been specifically composed for a film are played.

1. **Battle at Aslan’s How – by Harry Gregson-Williams. The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian (Original Soundtrack) TIME: 0:56-1:20**
2. **Yes! – by Dario Marianelli. Jane Eyre (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack) TIME: 0:00-1:20**
3. **Jaws – by John Williams. Main title and first victim (The Collector’s Edition Soundtrack) TIME: 1:10-2:21**
4. **Concerning Hobbits – by Howard Shore. The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Rings (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack) TIME: 0:00-1:02**

Discussion of the extracts can then take place, followed by showing the actual film clips and comparing learner’s answers. (**Film clip details are given in Resource preparation below**.)

### Composing activity

Learners are then put into groups to begin working on a soundtrack to a given film clip (**King Kong 2005 - details given in resource preparation**). Alternatively, learners may choose their own film clip lasting approximately two minutes.

Learners use **Learner Worksheet 2** for ideas and details of their composition.

### Performing activity

Learners perform their compositions in groups to each other. Details of their compositions are recorded on **Learner Worksheet 2 part 1**.

Discussion can follow on each group’s piece and **Learner Worksheet 2 part 2** can be completed to appraise each piece of work.

At the end of the activity, the original soundtrack to the King Kong clip can be played with the film clip (**details are given in Resource preparation**).

### Resource preparation

Teachers need to be aware and sensitive to the fact that some learners may have little experience of films and especially of the music that supports them. There is a wealth of film/video game music of really high quality available now. Opportunities to experience film music concerts as part of cultural development are to be recommended for learners.

Teachers need to have one Learner Worksheet 1 for every learner and one Learner Worksheet 2 Part 1 per group. Learner Worksheet 2 Part 2 could be per group or individual, at the teacher’s discretion.

The four clips of music for the listening activity can be accessed on ITunes and downloaded onto a device. The film clips are detailed below with links to YouTube.

### Film clip details

1. Aslan’s How Battle part 3: ‘Charge!’ - TIME: 0:00-0:24 ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKWBylmmpmY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKWBylmmpmY))
2. Jane Eyre 2011-Best scene proposal-Emre Yildiz - TIME: 1:40-3:06

(<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=jSF9iO0V8TU>)

1. Chrissie’s last swim-Jaws (1/10) MOVIE CLIP (1975) HD-MOVIECLIPS – TIME: 1:09-2:20

(<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=yrEvK-tv5OI>)

1. The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring – Howard Shore-Concerning Hobbits   
   (The Shire)  
   (<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=sAb-fqBrUsY>)

The given film clips are for guidance. Teachers can choose other clips and reduce the number of film clips if necessary, depending on the learners.

Discussion must focus on the elements of music and how composers convey drama and expression through for example, the timbre or pitch of the instruments. Teachers may need to explain musical terminology such as timbre, tempo, ostinato.

Here are some initial ideas:

**Music extract 1: (Aslan’s Battle)** – repetition in the strings, pitch, metal percussion, snare drum, bass instruments, brass. Charging horses, smashing bricks, sudden stop as the earth collapses beneath.

**Music extract 2: (Jane Eyre)** – begins at a low pitch, harp, few instruments to start, increase in pitch, remains then at a higher pitch. It reflects Jane’s heart with leaping, swooping phrases. Minor key.

**Music extract 3: (Jaws)** – very low pitched instruments, slow to start, repeated low notes, tension created, dissonant strings. Percussion interjections. Shark approaching, fear is created.

**Music extract 4: (The Lord of the Rings)** – the recorder has the main theme to begin with, then the violin takes it over. There is a ‘folk’ quality to the music. Depicts ‘rural’ life with a simple lifestyle.

The chosen film clip for learners to work on is from:

**King Kong (Original Motion Picture) 2005. Central Park scene. the3freeman**

**TIME: 3:20-5:02**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v?=ov0MqFj\_X5I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v?=ov0MqFj_X5I) – music by James Newton Howard.

Teachers may prefer to choose their own film clip or to encourage learners to choose one themselves. Learners will need access to film clips on YouTube.

If the project lasted for three to four lessons, learners could begin to consider film clips in groups of four or five and continue to work on their compositions over three or four weeks. Learners can use technology and /or class instruments. Learners need to complete the Learner Worksheet Part 1 in their groups as they work on their pieces.

Learners will then perform their compositions to each other while the film clip is playing. Alternatively, learners may prefer to ask fellow learners to guess if the King Kong clip has been chosen or an alternate one.

As learners listen to each other, Learner Worksheet Part 2 must be completed.

An idea is to then play the original soundtrack to the King Kong clip and to get feedback.

### Further activity ideas

Look at silent films and how soundtracks are used. One example is ‘The Artist’ (2011).

Video game music. This is a growing area of popularity. There are concerts now of solely video game music.

Learners can research composers of film music. Some examples are:

James Horner – Titanic, Avatar, A Beautiful Mind, Braveheart

Thomas Newman – Road to Perdition, Shawshank Redemption, Finding Nemo

Hans Zimmer – Gladiator, The Lion King, The Dark Knight, Pirates of the Caribbean

Michael Giacchino – UP, Cars, The Incredibles, Ratatouille, Star Trek Into Darkness

John Williams – Jaws, Star Wars, Superman, Jurassic Park, ET, Schindler’s List, Indiana Jones

Dario Marianelli – Jane Eyre, Pride and Prejudice, Atonement, Anna Karenina

Other names: A.R.Rahman, David Arnold, Danny Elfman, John Powell

### Video games:

Jesper Jakobson Kyd – Assassin’s Creed

Tommy Tallerico and Emmanuel Fratianni – Advent Rising

Koji Kondo and Hajime Wakai – Legend of Zelda

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# Music imageLesson Element

# Film Music

## Student Activity

# Worksheet 1 – Listening Activity

You will hear four short extracts of music that have been specifically composed for a film.

What ‘picture’ does the music create in your mind?

Think about:

1. the instruments that are used
2. the pitch of the music
3. the rhythms
4. the tempo.

Write down any thoughts as you listen. What genre of film is the music trying to express?

### Extract 1

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### Music imageExtract 2

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### Extract 3

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### Extract 4

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# Music imageWorksheet 2 – Composing Activity

### Part 1

### **Part** 2

Instruments/technology used:

Film clip used:

Names in group:

Describe your ideas and how you think your soundtrack supports the film.

Listen to the compositions of the other groups.

1. Does the music/soundtrack fit the film clip?

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| --- |

1. In what ways?

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| --- |

1. If not, why not?

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