

BBC
**TEN
PIECES**

'HAVEN' FROM SEAVAIGERS BY SALLY BEAMISH

PRIMARY CLASSROOM LESSON PLAN by Fran Hart

[WATCH THE FILM](#) | [LISTEN TO THE AUDIO](#)

For:

- National Curriculum in **ENGLAND** (KS2)
- **SCOTLAND** Curriculum for Excellence (Second Level)
- Curriculum for **WALES**: Expressive Arts (Progression Step 3)
- **NORTHERN IRELAND** Primary Curriculum (KS2)

Background

The composer: **SALLY BEAMISH**

- Sally Beamish has written music for a huge variety of instruments and ensembles including music for opera, theatre, concerti (pieces for solo instruments and an orchestra) and traditional folk instruments.
- As well as being a famous composer of classical music, Sally Beamish is also a viola player, and played in the Raphael Ensemble, Academy of St Martins and London Sinfonietta.
- She is largely self-taught as a composer and studied viola in Manchester. Sally then continued studying viola abroad in Germany. She had occasional composition mentoring from very famous classical music figures, including Lennox Berkeley, Oliver Knussen and Peter Maxwell Davies, amongst others.

The music: **'HAVEN' FROM SEAVAIGERS**

Pronounced: *SEE- vay - jers*

- Sally Beamish's piece is 'Haven' from the [concerto](#) *Seavaigers*. *Seavaigers* means 'Seafarers' in Scots. Seafarers are people who travel by sea and work on boats. Seavaigers refers particularly to the North Sea, which is off the East coast of Scotland and England.
- Travelling by sea is exciting and beautiful but it can be difficult. Seafarers must cope with rough seas, wild weather and navigation

across hundreds of miles of water! 'Haven' is about the long-awaited return to home after being at sea and the excitement of seeing land again.

- The solo instruments in *Seavaigers* are the Scottish harp, or 'clàrsach' (pronounced **KLAR-suhkh** (-ar as in **bar**, -kh as in **Scottish 'loch'** (not lock)) and the Shetland fiddle. These are played by Catriona McKay and Chris Stout who are from Dundee and Shetland. These are places in Scotland whose history is heavily connected to the North Sea.
- *Seavaigers* is an example of a composer bringing together traditional folk instruments and a classical string orchestra to create a musical fusion of sound.

Learning outcomes

Learners will:

- Listen and reflect on the music they hear
- Explore developing knowledge of musical components by composing music to create specific moods
- Use voices and instruments creatively
- Develop control of sounds to perform with more [expression](#)
- Develop [improvisation](#) through question and answer
- Develop understanding of [chords – concords and discords](#)
- Learn musical vocabulary

Resources required:

- [Pitched and unpitched](#) classroom instruments

Curriculum checklist

National Curriculum in ENGLAND (KS2)

- Listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory
- Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using their voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression
- [Improvise](#) and [compose](#) music for a range of purposes using the interrelated dimensions of music

SCOTLAND Curriculum for Excellence (Second Level)

- Performs on instruments, individually or as part of a group, to communicate the mood and character of a piece of music through, for example, the use of appropriate dynamics and expression
- Uses voice, instruments and technology to create music, experimenting with timbre, for example, uses tuned/untuned percussion instruments to create simple melodies and rhythms

Curriculum for WALES: Expressive Arts (Progression Step 3)

- I can explore and describe how artists and creative work communicate mood, feelings and ideas and the impact they have on an audience
- I can identify and respond creatively to challenges with resilience and flexibility
- I can apply knowledge and understanding of context, and make connections between my own creative work and creative work by other people and from other places and times

NORTHERN IRELAND Primary Curriculum (KS2)

- Discuss and make suggestions about their own and others' music-making
- Think and talk about the elements of music and how they are used in music from different styles and cultures
- Create stories and pictures through sound, for example, using voices, instruments and other sound sources

The lessons at a glance

This scheme of work is plotted out over four lessons. You may wish to adapt it to suit your children and the time/resources you have available.

[For guidance on notation, please see here.](#)

LESSON 1:

Activities:	Listen to the recording/watch the film & discuss what a haven is Explore instruments to develop understanding of concords and discords Use an agreed 8-beat pattern of concords and discords as the basis of a storm composition
Learning intention:	Listen and reflect on the music heard Develop an understanding of chords (concords/ triads and discords) Use chords in a composition representing a storm, using dynamics, tempo, texture, timbre etc. to create expression

LESSON 2:

Activities:	Understand what improvising is Using the notes of given chord notes, create an agreed question Improvise answers to the agreed questions using the given notes
Learning intention:	Develop control of sounds to play/sing with more expression Develop improvising skills in a question-and-answer format

LESSON 3:

Activities: Listen to the recording/watch the film and identify the arrival at the haven
Explore vocal sounds along with [dynamics, tempo, texture, timbre etc.](#) to create calm music as a class
Create music to reflect arriving at a safe place that uses a wide range of sounds and dynamics, tempo, texture, timbre etc.

Learning intention: Listen and reflect on the music they hear
Explore developing knowledge of dynamics, tempo, texture, timbre etc. by composing music to create a specific mood
Use voices creatively

LESSON 4:

Activities: Combine the compositions from Lessons 1 to 3 into a storm performance
[Structure](#) together the storm, the question-answer improvised section and the arrival at the haven
Rehearse and perform, developing control and expressive playing

Learning intention: Develop control of sounds to play/sing with more expression
Perform a structured composition in an ensemble

LESSON 1

Learning intention

- Listen and reflect on the music heard
- Develop understanding of chords (concorde/triads and discords)
- Use chords in a composition representing a storm, using dynamics, tempo, texture, timbre etc. to create expression

1. **STARTER**

[Watch](#) or [listen](#) to 'Haven'.

What is a haven? It is a safe place. This music is the last [movement](#) of *Seavaigers*, a composition by Sally Beamish that represents the treacherous journey between the North Sea island of Shetland and northerly mainland port of Dundee. The title means 'Seafarers' and refers to the seafaring people of the North Sea.

It is in 3 movements – *Storm*, *Lament* and *Haven*.

Split the class into pairs, getting pairs to discuss how the music creates the idea of a safe haven. Share as a class.

2. **MAIN TASK**

Next, the children will explore tuned instruments to create chords. The combination of 2 or more notes creates chords. If using glockenspiels and xylophones, for instance, ask children to play 2 notes at the same time and identify whether the sound is comfortable or not.

What is the rule for creating a discord? *Play notes next door to each other.*

What is the rule for creating concords? *Play notes apart.*

Year 5 & 6 – Develop this to understanding triads: 3 note chords, e.g. played on a keyboard, that are named major (happy sounding) or minor (sad sounding). If you have any, instrumentalists could share out the notes, e.g. root (the first note of the scale and the triad) and one other. For example, in C major, the notes of the C major triad are C, E, G. One student can play C (the root) and another student could alternate playing either E (the third) or G (the fifth). To try a minor chord, do the same with A minor where the triad is made up of A (root), C (third) and E (fifth).

As a class (**Year 3 & 4**) or in small groups (**Year 5 & 6**), create a sense of danger in an 8-beat long pattern of short notes, using a combination of concords and discords. Notate this pattern either writing letter names or using staff notation.

Use this pattern as an [ostinato](#) in a short composition to depict a storm, adding other sounds, e.g. untuned percussion to voices to create the idea of wind and crashing waves. There should be an awareness of dynamics, tempo, texture, timbre etc. to create the stormy, dangerous atmosphere.

3. PLENARY

Record the composition(s) so far as this will be needed in later lessons. Discuss how successful the group has been in creating a stormy atmosphere.

4. OPTIONAL QUIZ

What is a chord?	Two or more notes played at the same time
What is composing?	Creating or writing original music
Name a tuned classroom instrument	Glockenspiel, xylophone
What is the name of an uncomfortable chord?	Discord
What is an ostinato?	A pattern that keeps repeating
What are dynamics?	How loud or quiet the music is

LESSON 2

Learning intention

- Develop control of sounds to play/sing with more expression
- Develop improvising skills in a question-and-answer format

1. STARTER

[Watch](#) or [listen](#) to 'Haven' focusing on the solo fiddle and harp.

Discuss that some of the solo fiddle and harp player's music is not written in the music, but they are making it up; this means that every performance will be different. This is called improvising. Explain that the soloists are often improvising – the composer wanted them to add their own ideas to the piece.

Read the traditional nursery rhyme and do the following activity:

Rain on green grass

Rain on the trees

Rain on the roof tops

But not on me

STEP	NURSERY RHYME	AFTER NURSERY RHYME/AT THE END
STEP 1	Chant nursery rhyme whilst clapping a pulse	Count 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Repeat
STEP 2	Chant nursery rhyme	Clap 8 beats Repeat
STEP 3	Chant nursery rhyme	Children to 'think' 8 beats Repeat
STEP 4	Chant nursery rhyme	

		Model improvising a clapped rhythm in the 8-beat gap Repeat
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Continue chanting the rhyme and ask the pupils to improvise rhythms in the 8-beat rest, repeating it several times. As pupils gain confidence, half the group can try improvising, then to a quarter of the class, then gradually to individual pupils improvising between the class reciting the rhyme.

2. LEARNING

Introduce the D minor chord notes – D F A. Minor chords are ‘sad’ sounding, whereas major chords are ‘happy’ sounding.



Then the G minor chord – G Bb D:



Children familiarise themselves with the notes in the chords on tuned instruments such as xylophones or glockenspiels.

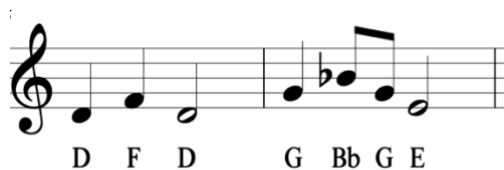
3. MAIN TASK

The class will be developing their improvising using ‘question and answer’. This is going to represent the call for help in the storm, with the improvising reflecting the unknown of the outcomes of the journey. Minor chords are being used to reflect sadness.

Teacher models creating a ‘question’ [melody](#) that is 2 bars long:

Bar 1	Bar 2
Dm - DFA	Gm - GBbD

E.g:



Note: the 'question' does not end on the root of the chord, so that it does not sound finished. This makes it a question.

Children should learn the tune as the example.

Introduce A minor – A C E



Children should familiarise themselves with the notes of A minor so that they can improvise the 'answer'. Chords for the 2-bar answer:

Bar 1	Bar 2
A Minor - ACE	D Minor - DFA

Teacher plays the 'question' and children improvise the 'answer' using the notes in the chord pattern above. When improvising the answer, the children should:

- End on D, so it sounds like an answer
- Think about rhythm – how can you make it interesting?
- Remember the 8-beat feel from the starter
- Think about musical shape
- Consider including passing notes to add interest. These are notes not in the chord.
- Focus on 1 or 2 notes to start with and play musically, e.g. AE – AD, then once confident, include other notes

Year 3 & 4 – As a class, use the question printed above or create a class question. Divide the class into two – half playing the 'question', half improvising the 'answer', then swap.

Gradually divide the class down into smaller groups playing the 'question' and 'answer'.

Rehearse performances of question-and-answer work, agreeing on who will play which part, how many times, at what tempo etc. Can the rest of the class play the chord sequence in the background? Ideally only one person will improvise at a time to avoid clashes.

Year 5 & 6 – in the same groups as Lesson 1, use the class ‘question’ (or create their own) to fit the chord sequence. The group need to consider how to organise their question-and-answer piece:

- Who will play the piece?
- Who will improvise the answer?
- Will everyone have the chance to improvise?
- Can the chords be added to support this?
- How many times will the question be asked?
- What tempo will the piece be played?

4. PLENARY

Share and record the question-and-answer pieces, reflecting the call for help in the storm. Make sure if a question has been composed, it is either notated or recorded for future lessons.

OPTIONAL QUIZ

Name the two types of concord	Major or minor
What is improvising?	Making up music on the spot
How many notes are in a triad?	Three
Does a minor chord sound happy or sad?	Sad

LESSON 3

Learning intention

- Listen and reflect on the music they hear
- Explore developing knowledge of musical components by composing music to create a specific mood
- Use voices creatively

1. STARTER

[Listen](#) to or [watch](#) 'Haven' again, asking the children to indicate when they hear the music change.

Ask the children to consider how the music changes. For example, bar 489 of 'Haven' ([see 5'10 in audio](#)) slows to Andante (walking pace) and is *pp* – pianissimo (very quiet). After 10 bars, it returns to the original tempo ([see 5'59 in audio](#)) and gradually increases in dynamic (crescendos) to the end.

What do they think this part of the music might represent? Could this be the boat finally arriving at the harbour and the relief of being safe?

Recap – so far ,the class has created storm-like music using concords and discords and then a question and improvised answer to represent calling for help in the storm. This lesson focuses on arriving at the haven.

2. LEARNING

Use vocal sounds to create calm music. Explore different vocal sounds such as ssh, sighs, humming, tapping cheeks (gently), whispering, whistling etc. Explore structuring the sounds, e.g. layering them gradually or starting together, and changing dynamics, tempo, texture, timbre etc. Discuss the impact.

3. MAIN TASK

Use these ideas to create a piece reflecting arriving at a safe place – a haven.

The piece should use:

- Vocal sounds
- Untuned instruments
- Tuned instruments
- Chords

Dynamics, tempo, texture, timbre etc. should be considered at all times, in order to create the emotions and atmospheres of arriving at the safe place. How will the composition start and end?

Year 3 & 4 – compose this as a class

Year 5 & 6 – compose this in the same groups as Lesson 1 and 2

4. PLENARY

Share and record compositions. Are there suggestions on how successful the composition is and what improvements can be made?

5. OPTIONAL QUIZ

Name two vocal sounds	Whispering, ssh, humming, sighing
What is structure?	The way the music is mapped out
Name the term for 2 or more notes played together	Chord
What does 'andante' mean?	Walking pace
What dynamic is PP – pianissimo?	Very quiet

LESSON 4

Learning intention

- Develop control of sounds to play/sing with more expression
- Perform a structured composition in an ensemble

1. STARTER

[Listen](#) or [watch](#) 'Haven' again.

Recap – so far the class has created:

- A storm-like music using concords and discords
- A question and improvised answer to represent calling for help in the storm
- Music representing arriving at a haven, using vocal sounds, untuned and tuned sounds and chords

2. MAIN TASK

Using the compositions from the previous lessons, create a 3-section piece:

- Storm
- Calls for help
- Arriving at haven

Rehearse each section (listening to the recordings where needed and prepare a performance).

Year 3 & 4 – the whole class should revise each section and then rehearse as one complete piece. Map out the structure on a board as a visual reminder, and include notes/notation where needed. Revise how the players should control their sounds to create the different moods of each section.

Year 5 & 6 - groups should revise each section. They should have notes/notation written, with any reminders of what needs to be played when, including changing instruments and changing dynamics, tempo, texture, timbre etc.

Questions to ask:

- Are all the players clear when they play?
- Does everyone have the instrument they need for the different sections?
- Does everyone know which instrument to use in each section?
- Is a conductor or leader needed to point to groups or something displayed to help?

- How will the piece move between the sections? Will there be silence, or could a linking sound/melody/chord be used?
- Are any improvements needed before the final performance?
- Is everyone remembering how to control the sounds to make the music expressive?

3. PLENARY

Perform the compositions and record.

4. EVALUATE

- How expressive was the music?
- How successfully were the different atmospheres created?
- Did the composition feel like one, flowing piece?
- What could be improved further?
- What have we learnt?

5. OPTIONAL QUIZ

What is a performance?	Sharing work to an audience
What is expression?	Atmosphere, mood, emotions
What is a conductor?	Someone who controls the music
What is notation?	Sounds represented as symbols
What is a discord?	Uncomfortable sounding chord

TAKING IT FURTHER

Cross-curricular activities

- **MUSIC:** Listen to storm music by other composers and compare e.g. [Britten's Storm Interlude](#) from his opera *Peter Grimes*, Richard Strauss *Eine Alpensinfonie – Gewitter und Sturm*, [Storm by Judith Weir](#), or Tchaikovsky's *The Tempest*. Listen to examples of traditional Scottish music and compare the sounds heard in 'Haven'. Listen to *Storm and Lament* from Seavaigers and identify how the movements link.
- **ENGLISH:** Research poems about havens. Use as in inspiration for children to write a poem about a haven. **Year 3 & 4** – use as a choral poem, **Year 5 & 6** – perform individual poems. These could be included in a performance or assembly, accompanied by the music composed in the lessons.
- **GEOGRAPHY:** Find out more about the Scottish islands, focussing on the Shetland Isles. Investigate the habitats, the weather and the geology forming the islands.

GLOSSARY OF MUSICAL TERMS USED

TERM	DEFINITION
Chords	Two or more notes played at the same time
Compose	Create original music
Concerto	A piece of classical music that features one or more soloists accompanied by an orchestra or ensemble
Concords	Comfortable-sounding chords (can be major or minor)
Discords	Uncomfortable-sounding chords, clashes
Dynamics	How loudly or quietly a piece of music should be played
Expression	The mood, feeling, emotion or atmosphere created by the music
Improvising	Creating music without preparation
Melody	The tune, made up of a mixture of high and low pitch sounds played one after the other (it's the part of the music that you often find yourself singing along to or remembering)
Movement	A structure used to divide up a longer musical composition e.g. a symphony may be made up of three or four movements
Ostinato	Rhythm or melody that constantly repeats
Tuned instruments	Instruments that have different pitches and can be used to play a melody or tune e.g. glockenspiel
Rhythm	The pattern that goes over a beat. The rhythm is the pattern of the words in songs
Staccato	Short, detached sounds
Structure	The order of the different sections that make up a piece of music e.g. intro, verse, chorus, outro
Tempo	Speed of the music

Texture	How we combine, mix and layer sounds (how 'thick' or 'thin' the music is, e.g. how many instruments are playing, how they are being played etc.)
Timbre	The particular sound quality of a musical instrument (e.g. your voice will have a different timbre to a flute)
Triad	Three-note named chords, e.g. C major
Untuned instruments	Instruments that do not have different pitched sounds and cannot be used to play a melody e.g. a triangle