

Night Ferry by Anna Clyne

PRIMARY CLASSROOM LESSON PLAN

For:

- Key Stage 2 in England and Wales
- Second Level, P5-P7 in Scotland
- Key Stage 1/Key Stage 2 in Northern Ireland

Written by Rachel Leach

Background

The composer: Anna Clyne (b. 1980)

- English composer who lives in America
- Studied in Scotland and then New York
- Has won many awards and even a Grammy nomination

The music: Night Ferry

- Written in 2012 for Chicago Symphony Orchestra
- Was inspired by poetry and art then in turn inspired a huge piece of art. Anna wrote the music and she made the art simultaneously
- The full piece lasts 20 minutes!

Learning outcomes

Learners will:

- listen and reflect on a piece of orchestral music
- invent their own musical motifs and structure them into a piece
- perform as an ensemble
- learn musical language appropriate to the task

Curriculum checklist

- play and perform in ensemble contexts, using voices and playing musical instruments
- improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the interrelated dimensions of music
- listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory

Glossary of music terms used

Graphic Score	a visual representation of music
Scale	a series of notes moving stepwise
Opera	a story told through singing, acting, music and movement
Stab	a loud, short sound played by many musicians at the same time

Resources required

- Art materials – very large paper
- A very large space (the school hall would be ideal)
- Classroom percussion instruments and any other instruments that your children might be learning

This scheme of work is plotted out over six lessons. Feel free to adapt it to suit your children and the resources you have available.

The six lessons at a glance

Lesson 1:

Activities:	Listen and describe a piece of music Watch the orchestral performance and discuss Create poetry and artwork inspired by the music
Curriculum link:	Listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory Appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality live and recorded music drawn from different traditions and from great composers and musicians

Lesson 2:

Activities:	Create a graphic score and perform it
Curriculum link:	Listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory Improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the interrelated dimensions of music Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression

Lesson 3:

Activities:	Create a graphic score and perform it
Curriculum link:	Listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory Improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the interrelated dimensions of music Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression

Lesson 4:

Activities:	Create a graphic score and perform it
Curriculum link:	Listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory Improvise and compose music for a range of purposes using the interrelated dimensions of music Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression

Lesson 5:

Activities: Structure sections of music into a bigger piece

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

Lesson 6:

Activities: Perform in front of an audience

Curriculum link: 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

LESSON 1

Watching and listening

1. Prepare your class

Explain to your class that you are going to begin a 6-week music project focusing on a fantastic piece of music by a composer called Anna Clyne and **watch the introductory film** with Doc Brown

2. Have a class discussion

about what you have just heard and seen. Explain that Anna's piece was inspired by the image of a wave that she saw during a dream but she was also inspired by poetry and words. She then mixed poetry, images and music together to create her piece.

3. Listening task

Give out paper and pens to your class. **Watch the full orchestral performance of Night Ferry.** Afterwards, ask your children to draw a huge wave on their page inspired by the music. Ask them to decide whether it is -

- smooth or jagged?
- big or small?
- tall or short?
- long and thin or compact and fat?

They should also decide carefully which colour/s to use

4. When this is achieved

- don't take too long on it - play the full orchestra performance again and this time your children must write the following list, perhaps on another sheet of paper -

- 1 colour
- 1 emotion
- 1 noun
- 1 adjective

Encourage them to use the music as inspiration. If they are stuck they should ask themselves 'what colour is the music?', 'how does it make me feel?' etc.

Feel free to adapt this list to compliment what you are studying in literacy or other subject areas

5. When this is achieved

listen to the full orchestral performance one more time and ask your class to write their words directly onto their wave picture, following the line of the wave and placing the words carefully – perhaps the most important word should be placed at the most important place on the wave etc.

6. Finally

encourage your children to use small words (connectives, conjunctions) to link their words together along the wave so that they create one line of poetry. Read some of these lines aloud to the class. You could even join several together on the board to make a bigger poem. Keep them safe for use during the following lessons.

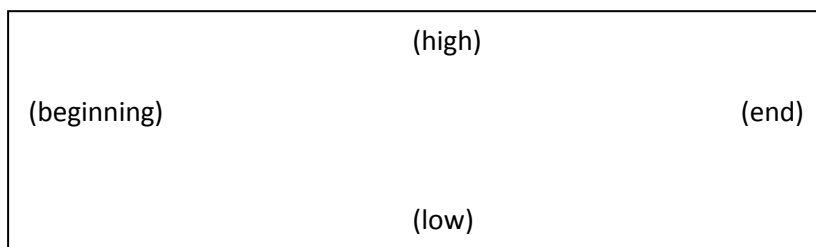
LESSON 2

Section 1

For this project your children will be working in small teams of 3 or 6 so choose these teams carefully. Each team needs several sheets of very large paper. The back of wallpaper or a roll of lining paper would be ideal.

1. **Explain to your class** that they are going to create their own version of the Night Ferry using the exact same method as Anna Clyne. To do this they are going to work in small teams and create art, music and words together.
2. **Split your class into their teams** and give each team a large sheet of paper (see above). Your children are going to make a huge graphic score of Clyne's piece. Her music breaks down to three sections and each section has three important ideas within it. Explain this to your class.
3. **Ask each team to select three colours** as they listen to the beginning of the full orchestral performance again (0'00 – 1'48). The colours will represent –
 - a) The pounding rhythm played on low bass instruments
 - b) The long notes
 - c) Bursts of short fast notes
4. **Demonstrate the following rules –**
 - The left edge of the page is the beginning of the piece
 - The right edge is the end of this section
 - The top is for the highest sounds
 - The bottom is for the lowest sounds

For example –



Make sure your children understand this and that they have their three chosen colours.

5. **Listen to the beginning of the performance again** (0'00 – 1'48). As they listen each team must 'draw' the music plotting onto the page when the three above ideas occur and making shapes and symbols to represent them. So, they might draw a long jerky line at the bottom

of the page for the basses in black, thick, horizontal lines in red for the long notes, and blue scribbles for the fast flourishes.

6. **When this is achieved**, explain that they have made a 'graphic score'. Their next job is to choose instruments from whatever you have available and **turn their score back into music**. This doesn't have to sound anything like Anna Clyne's piece at all - it is a new piece inspired by the marks on their page. Keep their art for future lessons and ask the children to write carefully down what they have created musically

LESSON 3

Section 2

1. **Split back into your groups and give out fresh paper.** Ask your children to place it as they did during the last lesson and remember where the high and low notes go and where the start and finish is (just like last lesson)
2. **Play the next section of Night Ferry (1'48 – 3'13).** This section features three new ideas –
 - Mad scales rushing up and down (a scale is just a series of notes moving stepwise)
 - Stabs (unexpected chords played by many musicians at the same time)
 - Shimmers and rumbles
3. **Again,** your children must choose a colour for each idea and as you play the section again, draw it on their page thus creating a new graphic score
4. **When this is achieved,** ask each group to reinterpret their new score on instruments just as they did in the previous lesson. Remember to keep their art safe for use later and 'notate' their musical ideas somehow (a simple list of events is the easiest method)

LESSON 4

Section 3

1. **Repeat the activities in lesson 3** with a new page and the final section of music (3'13 – end).
2. **Explain first** that this section uses ideas we have already encountered. It's a repeat of the opening section but more fragmented (it starts and stops unpredictably). You can warn your children of this and ask them to get their lesson 2 colours ready or let them discover it for themselves.
3. **At the end of this lesson**, your groups will have created three large graphic scores and three corresponding pieces of music

LESSON 5

Structure

1. **Begin this lesson by reminding** your children of everything they have created so far. Give out all of their art and the 'wave-poems' from lesson 1 and ask each group to get the instruments they need for each section of music.
2. **Ask each group to put their three sections of music back together** and find an order for them. They can stick with the order inspired by Night Ferry or choose something different. Once this order is decided, they may stick their three scores together to make one big score and practise their music until it runs seamlessly from one section to the next. If they make any changes to the music, they must amend the 'score' and vice versa - just as Anna Clyne did
3. **Finally, remind them of their wave-poems** from lesson 1. **Ask each team to read their poetry lines to each other and create one big poem** inspired by their art and music piece. To do this they may edit the words however they like. Challenge them to add words onto their huge graphic score at appropriate places. Does this affect their music? Should the words be performed too?

By the end of this lesson make sure each group has a finished piece of music, a finished poem and a finished score.

LESSON 6

Performance time and further inspiration

1. **Begin with a quick focusing game** and then ask each group to get out their art and instruments and spend five minutes putting their piece back together. Each group is going to perform to each other so ask them to find a space in the hall where every group member can be seen and their graphic score displayed as well. (I.e. they might want to form a semi-circle with the score on the floor in front of them)
2. Create a performance with each group performing to each other. The audience can move around the space to each 'orchestra' rather than having to move the musicians each time.
3. **If you have time**, ask each child to choose their favourite piece. Give out A4 paper and pencils and as you hear the pieces again, ask each child to make a new graphic score inspired by their favourite piece as it is performed for the second time. This will be a much smaller, simpler score but it should still obey the rules established earlier (i.e. high notes at the top etc.)
4. **Finish the lesson**, and project, with a discussion. Ask the following questions –
 - Did you like this process?
 - Did you like the resulting artwork?
 - Did you like the music?
 - What was your favourite part - art or music?

TAKING IT FURTHER

Cross-curricular activities

- **LITERACY:** Write a story based on Anna Clyne's piece. What is it actually describing?
- **LISTENING:** Many composers have used graphic score notation and many are available online. Some of the best are: Luciano Berio: Sequenza III (for voice), John Cage Aria, Gyorgy Ligeti Artikulation, Cathy Berberian: Stripsody

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