

## **Zadok the Priest by George Frideric Handel**

### 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:     George Frideric Handel (1685 - 1759)**

- German composer who studied in Italy and then became famous in England
- Wrote dramatic music for royalty, the church and the stage

**The music:         Zadok the Priest**

- Written in 1727 for the coronation of King George II
- Has been used at every coronation ever since
- Is the most famous of Handel's four coronation anthems and one of his most famous pieces

#### *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*

<b>Chant</b>	words spoken in rhythm to a pulse
<b>Coda</b>	another word for 'ending'
<b>Orchestrate</b>	choose instruments for different parts of the music
<b>Pitched percussion</b>	percussion instruments that can play different pitches – xylophones, glockenspiels, chime bars etc.
<b>Pulse</b>	the steady "beat" underneath much music made up of notes of the same length (like a ticking clock)
<b>Rest</b>	a measured moment of silence
<b>Tempo</b>	another word for speed
<b>Tune</b>	another word for a melody. A linear line of notes that makes a satisfying musical shape
<b>Unpitched percussion</b>	percussion instruments that can only make a limited number of sounds – drums, shakers woodblocks, tambourine etc.

### *Resources required*

- A large space
- Paper and writing materials
- 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 movement 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:	Learn a rhythmic pattern
Curriculum link:	Listen with attention to detail and recall sounds with increasing aural memory Play and perform in solo and ensemble contexts, using voices and playing musical instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression

### Lesson 3:

Activities:	Orchestrate a rhythmic pattern
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 lyrics and perform them to a pulse (thus creating a chant)
Curriculum link:	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:	Create a melody for the chant, thus creating a song, and sing it Use technical terminology
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 6:**

Activities:	Create a one word coda Structure musical ideas to tell a narrative 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

*Ideally you need a large, empty space like the hall for this task. If you can't get access to the hall, clear your classroom of tables and chairs.*

### 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 George Handel and watch the introductory film with Laura Mvula

### 2. Have a discussion

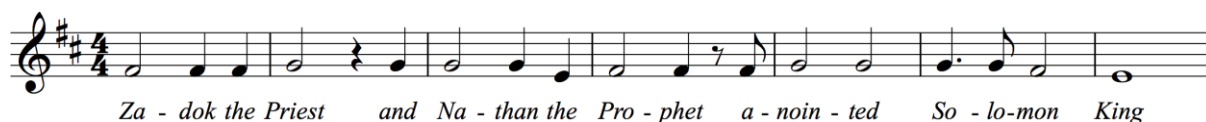
about what you have just seen and ask your children to imagine that someone really special is coming to visit the school.

### 3. Watch the full orchestral performance.

As you watch and listen ask the children to imagine their special visitor arriving, walking through the corridors and into the school hall to be met by you all singing 'Zadok the Priest!'

### 4. Teach the main theme to your children.

The music for it is below, or you can use the recording – the singing comes in at 2'06



### 5. Challenge

your children to change the words to fit their special guest and school. Add actions to the words to give the singing a bit more energy.

### 6. Listening task

Cast a small group of children as the special guests and their aides. Cast everyone else as the waiting crowd. Ask the 'crowd' to stand at one end of the room and the 'guests' at the other. As you listen again, the guests must slowly walk down the length of the room in time with the music so that they arrive with the 'crowd' in time for the singing. This takes 2 minutes so they must time their walking carefully. When they arrive the 'crowd' can sing loud and enthusiastically to them.

Try this several times, perhaps with children swapping between roles, until you have it timed perfectly. Stop the recording at 2'45

### 7. Listen to the next bit of the performance.

After 2'45 the music changes to 3 time and the words are all about rejoicing. Discuss this with the class and, working in small groups ask

them to create a dance for this short section – it only lasts 20 seconds and is made up of 10 counts of 3.

Encourage them to dance 'in character' – i.e. the 'crowd' can dance and rejoice but the 'guests' might react in a different way.

8. Listen to the last minute of the recording and ask your children what they would like to do next. Here are some options –
  - a) Create a new dance (the music is now back in 4 time)
  - b) Have the 'guests' walk amongst the 'crowd'
  - c) Stop the recording and add a new ending. You've just stopped after 'and all the people rejoiced and said....'. What did they say? Ask your children for one word to shout at this point as an ending
  
9. Finish the lesson with a full performance of your version of the anthem. You should have the following sections -
  - 'Special guests' walking through the hall
  - 'Crowd' sing to them
  - Short dance in 3
  - Ending

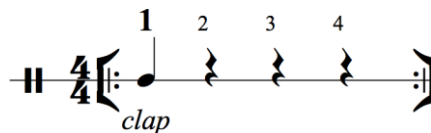
# LESSON 2

## Introduction 1

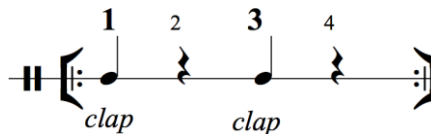
- Warm-up.** Begin with your class sitting in a large circle. Pass a clap around the circle and then try out some other sounds and rhythms. End with everyone clapping a steady pulse together.
- Remind** your class of the work they did last lesson and their exploration of Handel's music. Explain that you are now going to work towards making your own coronation anthem using music, movement and singing. Today, you are going to begin with the **introduction**.

### 3. Play this counting game –

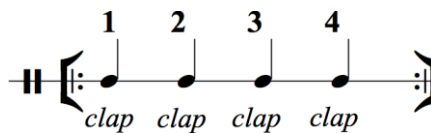
- Count to 4 over and over out loud and ask your children to join in
- Continue counting and clap on the 1st beat of each four, like this –



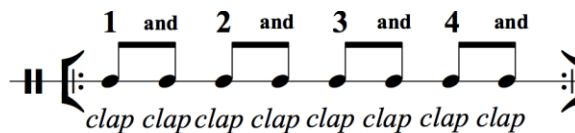
- Now clap on beats 1 and 3 like this –



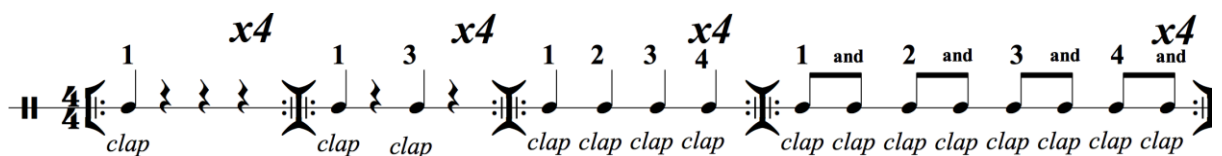
- Now all four beats –



- Finally clap eight quicker beats over the four like this –



When your children have mastered this, challenge them to perform each pattern 4 times before moving on to the next, like this.-



Point out that as you move through these patterns, the music seems to speed up but actually the speed of the music (the tempo) stays the same. The music feels more exciting because there are less gaps (or rests) between claps.

4. **Split your class into four groups** and challenge each group to create a new version of this pattern that moves from just clapping onto other body percussion sounds. Can they choose their sounds carefully to match the growing sense of excitement?
  
5. **Finally**, bring the class back together, hear each group and then ask your children to put their body percussion pieces into an order so that they match Handel's growing sense of excitement. Can they perform without leaving a gap between groups?



## LESSON 3

### Introduction 2

- Warm up.** Begin in a circle again and recap the body percussion piece you made at the end of the last lesson.
- Explain** that you are now going to **'orchestrate'** this piece – i.e. choose instruments to replace the body percussion sounds. Ask volunteers to come forward and try some of the patterns on percussion instruments. After each attempt, discuss how effective it was, pay particular attention to how 'neat' the rhythms were.

*This is an opportunity to encourage proper playing technique and explore which instruments create long, resonant sounds and which are better at short sounds. For example, cymbals will sound great playing just on beat 1 but messy if playing all 8 short beats. Tambourines need to be held horizontally and tapped rather than shook to get the neatest sound*

- Split back into your four groups** and ask each group to recreate their piece from last lesson on instruments. Ideally they should choose a different instrument for each different pattern. If they want to use pitched instruments encourage them to only use the white notes and challenge players to move from C to G over the course of the pattern.

So they might end up with something like this –

- Bring the class back together** and hear what they have done. Again, challenge them to put their pieces together to make one big introduction that grows in excitement just as Handel's does.
- Finally,** end with a performance of your introduction and write down what you've done.

# LESSON 4

## Lyrics

*This lesson is about writing words for a song you will create later on in the project so you will need paper and pens and just four unpitched percussion instruments*

1. **Begin** with your children sat in a circle and have a chat about what they have done so far. Remind them of the 'special' guests' they thought of during lesson 1 and explain that you are now going to begin working on a song to welcome these guests.

*It might be fun to not keep the identity of the 'special guests' a secret – the groups can decide who they are talking about but each group could be talking about someone different!*

2. **Split back into your four working groups** and ask each group to write one or two lines of text to describe–
  - Group 1: The arrival of the guest
  - Group 2: What they look like
  - Group 3: How everyone feels
  - Group 4: How people celebrate

Give each group a big sheet of paper and pen so they can write down their ideas big and clear.

3. **Bring the groups back together** and ask each team to say their words to the class. Encourage the other groups to make tweaks and suggestions to make the words even better (i.e. you may want to take out any long or difficult words or anything that your children trip over or mumble – remember you are heading towards singing so if they can't speak the words clearly they probably won't be able to sing them clearly either!)
4. **Split back into groups** and give each group an unpitched percussion instrument. The next task is to say the words to a steady pulse. Everyone must speak the words at the same time.
5. **Again, bring the groups back together** and hear their efforts. Ask the children to come up with an order for their pieces so that you have one big 'chant' rather than four little chants. Arrange the text so that everyone can see it and practise performing the words over and over. Gradually encourage everyone to join in with everything.
6. **Finally**, add some simple gestures to your finished 'chant'. This will make remembering the rhythms easier for next lesson

# LESSON 5

## Song

1. **Warm up** - Sitting in a circle again, remind your children of everything they have worked on so far and put last lesson's chant back together with everyone speaking the words to an unpitched pulse. You are going to do some singing during this lesson so perhaps lead your favourite vocal warm-up or encourage the class to sing through their favourite song.
2. **Get the instruments out** and split back in your working groups. Ask each group to put their group chant back together from last lesson before putting the whole chant back in order
3. **Split back into your four groups** and give each group three chime bars – C, E, G (or if you have children learning instruments, choose three notes they can play confidently). **Challenge** each group to use these pitches to turn their section of the chant into a melody that can be sung - they are using the same words, rhythms and even gestures as last lesson but now they are singing them too.
4. **Bring the class back together** and hear their efforts. Make any tweaks that are needed to ensure everyone in each group knows what they are doing and then practise cycling through the groups until everyone can sing the whole song.

Don't forget your gestures at this point, they will really help with energy, memory and enthusiasm!

5. **Finally**, if you have time, create a simple accompaniment for your song using the chimes and unpitched pulse. Write down (or better, record) what you have done.

# LESSON 6

## A-men, Alleluja!

- 1. Warm up.** Begin the lesson with a quick focusing warm-up like pass the clap and then talk through everything you have made so far. Here's a list of what you should have –
  - **Introduction** with 4 patterns (perhaps moving from C to G)
  - **Song** with C pulse
- 2. Get the instruments out** and put your two pieces back together. Challenge the class to play the **introduction** followed by **the song** without too much fuff in between
- 3. Remind** your class that Handel's piece ends with 'Alleluja!' and 'Amen!' over and over. These words probably feel a bit weird after your children's new lyrics so ask your children to suggest a new fabulous, amazing word to sum up their feelings of excitement at the arrival of their guest.
- 4. When your word is decided**, working as a full class, create a short 'coda' (coda just means ending) using this word, your instruments and the notes C, E, G.
- 5. Add your new coda** on to the end of your piece, so you have this –
  - Introduction
  - Song
  - Coda

.... and practice this full piece until it is neat and ready for an audience
- 6. Finally**, invite another class in to be your audience and perform your new 'anthem' to them. You could even cast a few 'special guests' to 'arrive' during your introduction just as you did in lesson 1 to Handel's piece

# TAKING IT FURTHER

## Cross-curricular activities

- **ARTWORK:** Create artwork inspired by Handel's music. Can you match the sense of grandeur and occasion in your pictures? Perhaps you could draw the coronations that the music accompanied.
- **RESEARCH:** Handel's Coronation Anthems were used at every coronation between 1727 and 1953. Research what else happened as all these monarchs were crowned
- **LITERACY:** Create an invite for this special visit. Who's coming, what's the venue, time place? What should people expect to see? What should they bring and wear etc?

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