

TEACHER INFORMATION SECONDARY UNIT

This unit provides a range of activities for junior secondary students (Yrs 8 – 10 or Levels 5 – 6). The pre-visit activities briefly explore the nature of folk music and place the repertoire in its cultural and historical context. This aspect could easily be expanded with a more detailed study of the history of folk music and a comparison with folk music from other countries in a similar period. The purpose and function of Aboriginal music could also be expanded. The composing task focuses on melody writing in simple or compound time, using treble and bass notation, and harmonises the written melody with primary and possibly secondary triads. It also focuses on structure and stylistic characteristics of folk melodies.

While at Jondaryan, students are encouraged to look for stimulus such as transcribed sounds and visual stimuli that evoke emotion which will form the basis of their program music composition. This composition (which is completed post-visit), could reflect a level five or six outcome, depending on the approach taken by the teacher. It could for example, include use of minor chords or tonalities, seventh chords, or be arranged for a suitable group of instruments. This task is intended to be flexible and the format would depend upon the resources of the school and capabilities of the students. It may for example be done in pairs or small groups and be performed, along with a description of the stimulus material, in front of the class.

The other post-visit activities include aural and visual analysis questions for students to respond to using their knowledge of the repertoire. These activities also reflect a level five and six outcome. The repertoire used is intended to come from the materials supplied by Jondaryan however many other examples from the folk song repertoire could be used. Some extension activities could be to research some more modern examples of folk music.

PRE VISIT ACTIVITIES

1. Exploring the nature of folk music

Using the instruments at hand in the school (keyboard, xylophone, recorder etc.) construct the melody of *Click Go The Shears* according to your recollections of how the melody goes. This may be done in small groups or individually, depending the resources of the school. Don't write the melody down, simply be able to perform your version of it. The key is C major and the melody begins on E.

Listen to a number of versions of the melody played by students in the class and discuss:

- What differences are there in the melodies ?
- How do you account for these differences ?
- How did the class remember this melody ?
- What conclusions can the class come to about how folk music is transmitted ?
- How might this method of transmission affect the melody and the lyric ?

Refer to [Link with English Unit for extension material on bush ballads and traditional songs.](#)

2. Characteristics of folk songs

Recording – The Bushwackers - And The Band Played Waltzing Matilda CD Track 6

Score – The Bushwackers Australian Song Book p. 46

Folk songs have many similar characteristics. Listen to a performance and study the score of *Waltzing Matilda* and note characteristics of the following :

Melody

- what sort of intervals are used in the melody ?
- what is the range of the melody (from lowest to highest notes) ?

Rhythm

- what type of rhythmic values are commonly used ?
- what type of rhythmic values or devices are not commonly used ?

Structure

- how is the song constructed ?
- do you notice any repetition in the phrases ?

Purpose

- what do you think the purpose of the song is ?
- who do you think would have sung the song and why ?

Characteristics of folk songs include:

- simple melody with use of repetition
- many notes from tonic and other primary triads
- limited range for amateur singers
- uses mostly only diatonic notes (notes from that key)
- simple modulations (if any) to related keys
- simple harmonic structure
- simple rhythmic values without syncopation or complex groupings
- easy to remember with some phrases repeated
- simple structure such as verse/chorus form or AABA
- lyrics which tell a story, or help with repetitive work
- can be sung without accompaniment or with limited accompaniment such as accordion, or with a bush band which may include singer, fiddle, bush bass (electric bass), lagerphone.

Research task :

Research the historical conditions which surrounded the writing of *Waltzing Matilda*. The lyrics were written by A. B. (Banjo) Paterson at a time of civil unrest in rural Australia when the shearers were in conflict with the squatters.

Use suitable internet sites if appropriate such as :

<http://waltzingmatilda.com/wmeightd.html>

The Jondaryan site also has research material which refers to this.

http://www.jondaryanwoolshed.net/03_the_woolshed/shearersunion.htm

The Ballad of 1891 (The Bushwackers, So Far...1974 – 1994, CD 2, Track 4) is a song which describes these times and may be useful in this research.

3. Historical context

Australian folk music originated largely from the folk tunes of England and Ireland. Convicts and settlers would fit new words to old melodies and sing these songs to help cope with their difficult surroundings. Over time, new melodies were written, and the repertoire of Australian folk music expanded.

Research tasks.

- Find an example of a song which was sung by sailors. Quite often these songs were sung while sailors did a particular task on the ship. What task did this song relate to ?
- Find an example of a song which has an English or Irish tune with Australian words.
- Australian folk music has a very different sound to traditional Aboriginal music. If you were a new settler or convict and you heard some traditional Aboriginal music, what differences do you think would be most obvious ?

4. Composing task : Writing a 12 – 16 bar folk melody.

Step 1. Choose a suitable key. It may help if the tonic and the dominant above and below will be in a suitable range. F or G major would be a good start.

Step 2. Begin by writing an opening phrase (two bars) which ends on a note from the tonic chord. Make sure you have a simple melody which may have some notes for the tonic triad. Your phrase should not have too great a range and have some stepwise movement in it. Rhythmic values should also be simple, without syncopation and difficult groupings.

Step 3. Write an answering phrase, however this time finish with a note from chord V.

Step 4. Repeat the opening phrase.

Step 5. Write an answering phrase similar to step 3, however this time finish on chord I.

At this point there are several options to extend and finish your song. You could write a short chorus and finish off the song or choose to extend the song to 16 bars.

Option 1 – Short chorus and finish (12 bars)

Choose some new material (two bars) with some new ideas and finish with an idea (also two bars) which recalls the first phrase in step 1. Make sure you finish on the tonic note.

Option 2 – Extend to 16 bars

Write a four bar phrase which explores different ideas. This new material could perhaps have some similar rhythmic patterns. Try to finish on a note from chord V. Finish off using a phrase similar to the one composed for step 5.

Adding the finishing touches:

- add a tempo marking at the beginning above the first bar
- add an opening dynamic which goes under the first note of the melody
- think about any dynamic changes, such as crescendo or decrescendos, which are added under the melody at the appropriate place
- add phrase marks

Extension work

Adding a piano accompaniment

- write a chord outline above the melody you have composed
- use primary triads mostly and secondary triads if you have to
- rewrite your melody, however this time set it in a piano stave with the melody as the right hand using a treble clef
- in the left hand, using the bass clef, write the chords for the accompaniment you planned in the first step.

ACTIVITIES AT JONDARYAN

1. Collection of stimulus material at Jondaryan for a programmatic composition.

While at Jondaryan students are to collect material which will become the basis of a composition.

This material may be of a variety of sources, for example :

- Literally transcribed sounds from the environment such as notes of birdsong.
- Visual stimuli to evoke emotion such as the sense of isolation, peace, solitude.
- Sounds (either real or imaginary) of the immediate environment such as machinery, noise from animals etc.
- Creating a story (either real or imaginary) from an exhibit and depicting that story in music.

It is also possible to access the Jondaryan website and view the photo gallery

(http://www.jondaryanwoolshed.com/04_education/resources.htm) to gather some stimulus suitable for composing.

ACTIVITIES POST JONDARYAN

1. Visual Analysis *Click Go the Shears*.

Score : *The Essential Aussie Song Book*, p. 8

Study the score of *Click Go The Shears* and answer the following questions

1. Identify the phrases in the song.
2. Using letters (A,B,C etc.) for each different or similar four bar phrase, describe the structure of the song.
3. What key is this song in? On a piece of manuscript, write the primary triads for the key.
4. Using only these triads, suggest a chord outline for the song and write the letter names above the melody line.
5. Describe the contour of the melody in each of the phrase. Use words such as steps, leaps, scalar, triadic, smooth, angular etc.
6. List which general characteristics of folk music you can see in this example. Describe how they have been used.
7. Give some words to describe the mood of the song.
8. Describe some ways the composer achieves this mood.
10. What is the range of the melody from the lowest to highest note ?

2. Aural Analysis *And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda*

Score : The Bushwackers Australian Song Book p. 48

Recording : The Bushwackers Band - And The Band Played Waltzing Matilda, Track 5

This song was written by Eric Bogle who is a popular composer and performer in a folk song style. The lyrics reflect the ANZAC assault in Gallipoli during World War I and is often sung to protest against the futility of war.

1. Suggest a time signature for the song.
2. Give some words to describe the mood of the song.
3. Describe some of the ways the composer has achieved this mood. In your answer, mention some of the following: dynamics, tempo, tonality of chords, time signature, tone colour of the voice and piano.
4. Compare the mood of this song with the mood of the original *Waltzing Matilda*.
5. At the conclusion of the song is an excerpt of an arrangement of the original *Waltzing Matilda*. How does the tone colour of this excerpt differ to that of the first part of the song?
6. How does the rendition of this excerpt of the original *Waltzing Matilda* connect with the sentiment of the song?
7. What common characteristics of folk music are found in this song?

3. Research task:

Another song of similar sentiment yet very different in style is *I Was Only Nineteen* performed by the band Redgum. This song also explores the issues of war, however it is set in the days of the Vietnam war during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Compare the instrumentation, tone colour, lyrics, vocabulary, dynamics etc. of these two songs.

4. Composition using stimulus material gathered at Jondaryan

Use the material collected to create a programmatic composition.

- Start with a simple structure such as binary (AB) or ternary form (ABA).
- Compose a short theme for each section based around an aspect of the material that was collected (approximately 8 bars).
- Make sure there is some element of contrast in the A and B themes, such the use of contrasting keys, tonalities, or instrumentation.
- Compose some accompaniment for the themes if required.

Extension work: Notate a section of the composition with/without accompaniment.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

SECONDARY UNIT

PRE VISIT ACTIVITIES

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Extension work: Notate a section of the composition with/without accompaniment.

Resources

- It is envisaged that there will be TWO complete sets of resources purchased by Jondaryan. One set will be available for loan to schools while the second set will stay at Jondaryan for use while school groups are visiting.
- There should also be a portable CD player available so if possible, school groups could stage a short bush dance they had devised as a pre-visit activity.

Scores:

1. The Essential Aussie Songbook

Wise Publications

2. The Bushwackers Australian Song Book

Sandstone Press

CDs

1. The Bushwackers, So Far...1974 – 1994)

ABC Country

2. The BushWackers Band – And The Band Played Waltzing Matilda

EMI

Resource kits

Kit 1 (To be housed at Jondaryan)

Books/Scores

- *The Bushwackers Australian Songbook* (Note: this book is now out of print. The copy enclosed was found in a specialist bookshop and cannot be replaced. I suggest you copy the book and archive the original).
- *The Essential Aussie Songbook*

CDs

- *And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda* - The Bushwackers
- *The Bushwackers So far 1974 – 1994*
- *The Bushwackers Dance Album*

Other

- Portable CD player if necessary (to be purchased)

Kit 2 (Available for loan from Jondaryan)

Books/Scores

- *The Bushwackers Australian Songbook* (Photocopy only)
- *The Essential Aussie Songbook*

CDs

- *And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda* - The Bushwackers
- *The Bushwackers So far 1974 – 1994*

Notes for volunteers

The primary role of the volunteers in the Music unit is to store and retrieve the resources when required. There are CDs, songbooks and a portable CD player which are available for accompanying bush dances at Jondaryan, as well as a similar collection of resources which are available for loan from Jondaryan to accompany the unit of study.

Students should be familiar with the bush dance which is described in the unit of study (The Heel and Toe Polka, p.120 – 121, *The Bushwackers Australian Songbook*) however they may need assistance in organising a dance and some knowledge of the dance and familiarity with the CD are therefore desirable.

Students in the secondary unit may also be attempting the music composition based on stimulus material gathered at Jondaryan. This material may take the form of literally transcribed sounds from the environment such as the notes of birdsong or other stimuli as described in the unit. Volunteers may be able to direct students to areas of the site where suitable sounds and images may be found.

Folk music websites

Australian Bush Music and Dance

<http://www.wongawillicolonialdance.org.au>

History of Waltzing Matilda

<http://waltzingmatilda.com/wmeightd.html>

General Links and links to the National Library folklore collection

http://folk.mountaintracks.com.au/Folk_Australia/

Bush Dance instructions

<http://www.users.bigpond.com/mckelson/bushdance/>

General info and links

<http://www.users.bigpond.net.au/vfmc/Index.htm>

General info with links

<http://www.folkfestival.asn.au/Pages/links.html>

A ballad written in the 1950s which describes the Shearers' Strike of 1891.

<http://crica.com/muse/unionsong/u114.html>

A collection of folk songs with MIDI files, lead lines, lyrics and notes.

<http://crica.com/muse/songnet/040.html>

Jondaryan's involvement in the Great Shearers Strike of 1891

http://www.jondaryanwoolshed.net/03_the_woolshed/shearersunion.htm