

ACTIVITY THREE: COMPOSE A CREATIVE RESPONSE TO A PIECE OF FIRST WORLD WAR ART.

LINK TO ART ACTIVITY I

Learning Objectives

- To learn about Programme Music;
- To discover how music can be used to transform pieces of art;
- To create a composition for performance to the rest of the class.

Resources

- Selection of instruments (untuned or tuned percussion, any instruments)
- Paper and pencils

Prior Learning

Whilst it isn't essential, it would be useful to have already completed Art Activity One, so that students have already analysed a work of art. If you have already done this, you can miss out the research section (point 2).

Introduction

The term 'Programme Music' was coined by the composer Liszt as a method of describing music, which expresses a specific non-musical idea such as mood, narrative or a pictorial image. Programme music is purely instrumental. It does not accompany a film or script; therefore it relies purely on the music to tell the story.

MAIN TASKS

1. Discuss what Programme Music is. Explain that there has been a long history of musicians and artists finding inspiration from each other. A famous example of this would be Mussorgsky's [Pictures at an Exhibition](#).

Research

2. Look at the Art included in the [Historical Context 21. Creative Responses to the War](#) section of the website. In groups choose a work of art. Think about these following questions:
 - a. What is the artist trying to say about the war?
 - b. What details help put the message across?
 - c. What is the title?
 - d. What impact/effect has war had on the soldiers/people depicted?
 - e. Is the painting descriptive or more impressionistic?

Creative Response

3. Using the information you have gained from looking at the painting, in groups discuss what story you would like to tell with your composition. Don't forget to write it down. Think about the following questions to help you map out their piece of music:

- a. Will the characters in the piece need specific themes? Or is a more general pastoral atmosphere required? (Why not listen to Vaughan Williams' Pastoral Symphony which can be found in the [Historical Context 21, Creative Responses to the War](#) for inspiration).
 - b. What sort of mood is the piece? Is it energising, reflective, action based, depressing?
4. Choose the instruments and start improvising!
 5. Make sure you write down what you have been doing; it doesn't have to be notated traditionally! Just writing a series of reminders is fine.
 6. In groups perform the piece to each other explaining why you chose that piece of art and what they were trying to achieve

Review

What did each group do well? Is there anything they could do better? Did any group choose the same picture? How did their interpretation differ?