

EARLY YEARS & KEY STAGE 1

A typical primary workshop takes the form of a mini recital, incorporating games and activities to illustrate the various musical elements. This is by no means an exhaustive list but examples include:

Dynamics	Pupils conduct Maskerade and choose appropriate signals for loud and quiet. Alternatively they perform some other action, eg stand for loud, sit for quiet.
Tempo	Pupils move to fast and slow music and are asked to describe how it makes them feel.
Pitch	Pupils listen (with eyes closed!) to Eb, Bb, basset horn and bass clarinets and put them in order from lowest to highest or vice versa.
Rhythm	Pupils play percussion instruments, counting carefully to ensure they play only on agreed beat(s) of the bar. Pupils may also be asked to create their own rhythm patterns.
Timbre	Pupils distinguish between the different sounds of clarinet and saxophone, and for more discerning ears, may also be asked which type of clarinet was playing a particular theme.
Texture	Pupils listen to solo, duo, trio and quartet formations, describe how many layers of sound they can hear at once and discover what effect this has on the music.
Structure	Pupils hear pieces in binary, ternary or rondo form and count the sections. They may also hear some programme music and be asked what they think the story could be.

We also give a full demonstration on how the clarinet works and for some children there will be an opportunity to 'have a go'.

Our primary workshops can be tailored to meet your specific requirements. For example, in an hour long session we can play to the whole school for the whole period or give two shorter presentations to different age groups. All of the above activities can be adapted to suit different ability ranges from early years through to year 6; if your children are currently studying a specific topic, whether in music, or another subject we will do our best to incorporate it - music is excellent for cross curricular work!

KEY STAGES 3 & 4

Below is an outline of a typical workshop for GCSE music students working towards completion of their composition portfolios. At your request, this basic plan can be adapted for any age range and focus on any area of the National Curriculum.

- 1) Maskerade first demonstrate one or more musical elements by playing extracts from the clarinet quartet repertoire and using them as the basis for group discussion. A good example of this is *texture*, where the following can be explored individually: *monophonic, homophonic, polyphonic, melody with accompaniment, antiphonal* and *ostinato*. The discussion inevitably links in with the idea of *period/style* whilst incorporating some information about the peculiarities and capabilities of the clarinet, i.e. what to consider when writing for this instrument as opposed to say, strings, keyboard or voice, e.g. *range, timbre, breathing, special effects* and *transposition*.
- 2) Students are asked to bring their instruments to the workshop as the second part of the session involves them playing some short ensemble pieces. This practical work enables the students to experience at first hand the techniques heard and discussed at the beginning of the workshop (e.g. different textures) whilst also developing their sight-reading skills! We always liaise with schools in advance to enable us to select pieces of a suitable standard for their students.
- 3) A second demonstration by Maskerade, this one of a more general nature, involving *other options* to consider when composing: *tempo, articulation, tonality, phrase lengths, structure, character* and *instrumentation*. This time, extracts are taken from a single work and each discussed briefly before performing the work in its entirety.
- 4) Students then split into small groups (ideally four groups – one for each member of Maskerade to coach) and begin to work on an eight bar variation on a given theme. Each group is given one specific feature from each category – *texture* and *other options*, so for example, while one group might work on a variation to include homophonic texture using different forms of articulation, another group could utilise antiphonal effects whilst juxtaposing major and minor tonalities - the possibilities are endless! Each group's composition needs to be written out on manuscript if possible (Maskerade team leaders will supervise this).
- 5) Finally, Maskerade will perform the theme followed by each group's variation (at whatever stage it may have reached). Groups may try to guess what styles and techniques their peers have used – do they match the instructions they were given? (*There is plenty of scope for extension work following one of our Lecture Recitals and hopefully students will be inspired to continue their variations afterwards! If you wish, we can arrange a follow up visit to perform and/or record compositions for student portfolios.*)