



Introduce pupils to the concept of a round using music technology

This project will take two to three lessons and can be easily adapted to work as a whole class activity if only one computer is available (the teacher uses the software while the children make the musical decisions about timbre etc.).

This project (without the canon extension) covers the following National Curriculum targets from the Key Stage 2 programme of study:

- 1a) sing songs in two parts
- 1b) play tuned instruments with control and accuracy (if pupils record the Frere Jacques melody themselves)
- 2b) explore, choose, combine and organise musical ideas within musical structures
- 3a) analyse and compare sounds
- 4b) explore the use of the elements of pitch and timbre to communicate effects
- 5a) integrate performing, composing and appraising
- 5b) responding to a musical starting point
- 5c) working in groups and as a class
- 5d) using ICT to capture, change and combine sounds

Teaching Activities

- Teach the whole class Frere Jacques (or other appropriate round) and prepare a performance of the basic melody (not sung as a round). Record the melody onto Cakewalk Home Studio as an audio track.
- Demonstrate how a two-part round is constructed by playing the audio track and then copying it onto track 2, delaying entry by two bars. Play this to the children. They can hear themselves singing Frere Jacques as a round. Use the same technique to create a round in three and four parts on the screen. Experiment with the entry time of the different parts and monitor the children's responses.
- Prepare a performance of the whole class singing Frere Jacques as a round in two parts (or more if appropriate).
- Pupils then move on to consider how an instrumental performance of Frere Jacques may alter the effect of the round. The teacher pre-records the Frere Jacques melody onto the sequencer as a MIDI track, or more able pupils may be able to record the melody themselves using either a MIDI keyboard, or Cakewalk Home Studio's note entry facility.
- Pupils use the copy and paste technique to create a four-part instrumental Frere Jacques round. They should notice that using the same instrument sounds on all the parts lessens the impact of the round.
- Pupils further enhance their work by altering the instrument sounds of the various parts. They should be encouraged to consider the effects of timbre and pitch on the overall sound of their round (i.e. how the effect of the round is enhanced if each part has a different timbre, or if parts are transposed to different octaves etc.)

This topic could be extended to cover canons by use of related listening activities and discussion and experimentation aimed at altering the Frere Jacques round on Cakewalk Home Studio so that all parts end at the same time in a musically satisfying way.