



Tasks using ICT that could be integrated into a unit of work on the genre of Variations. In these tasks ICT can be used to give pupils opportunity to experiment with fairly sophisticated musical material without being limited by their ability to perform that material in order to work with it. It is expected that pupils will already have been made familiar with the concept of variations through prior listening/performing tasks. Each of these tasks should take one lesson to complete.

### Task 1 - Varying a simple melody

The teacher should pre-record a melody on a sequencer such as Cakewalk Home Studio. This can either be an original melody, or one taken from the classical, folk or popular music repertoires.

**Task 1 covers the following National Curriculum targets from the Key Stage 3 programme of study:**

- 2b) develop musical ideas within musical structures
- 3a) analyse, evaluate and compare pieces of music
- 3b) communicate ideas using musical vocabulary
- 5b) respond to musical starting point
- 5c) working in pairs or groups
- 5d) use ICT to manipulate sounds

### Teaching Activities:

- The teacher reminds the class of the ways in which a melody can be varied.
- Pupils listen to the original melody.
- In pairs or in groups, pupils manipulate the original melody on-screen to create at least three variations, e.g. by altering notes or rhythm, playing it in inversion or retrograde, changing to a different key/mode etc.
- Pupils listen to the different variations created by the class and discuss how the original melody has been altered in each case.



#### Task 2 - Creating a variation using a skeleton theme

Where possible, pupils should carry out the composition element of this task individually. The teacher may need to prepare alternative activities for members of the class waiting to use the computers. In preparation for the task, the teacher should record a simple melody on a sequencer such as Cakewalk Home Studio and an appropriate chord sequence to accompany it.

**Task 2 covers the following National Curriculum targets from the Key Stage 3 programme of study:**

- 2b) develop musical ideas within musical structures
- 5b) respond to musical starting point
- 5d) use ICT to manipulate sounds

#### Teaching Activities:

- With the chord sequence muted, pupils listen to the original melody.
- In groups or as a teacher-directed class activity, pupils work at reducing the melody to its most basic notes, i.e. they create a skeleton melody. This skeleton melody should be recorded on the sequencer or entered using the note entry function.
- Pupils use this skeleton melody as a basis for composing their own variation on the original melody by adding notes around the skeleton using a rhythm of their choice.
- Pupils playback the original and the new melodies with the chord sequence un-muted and notice how the chordal accompaniment fits both the original and their new variation.



### Task 3 - Varying the mood through altering the accompaniment

Pupils should have completed task two before attempting task 3. It is also expected that they will have previously listened to several examples of variations and identified ways of creating variations and how different moods are created. Where possible, pupils should work individually on this task, so the teacher may have to prepare alternative activities for those pupils waiting for the computers.

#### **Task 3 covers the following National Curriculum targets from the Key Stage 3 programme of study:**

- 2b) produce, develop and extend musical ideas, selecting and combining resources within the structure of variations.
- 3a) analyse and evaluate pieces of music
- 3b) communicate ideas and feelings using expressive language and musical vocabulary
- 3c) adapt music ideas and refine and improve their work
- 4b) identify the expressive use of musical elements, devices, tonalities and structures
- 5b) respond to a musical starting point
- 5c) work on their own
- 5d) use ICT to create, manipulate and refine sounds

#### **Teaching Activities:**

- Revise concepts of variation and discuss how different moods have been created in the music the pupils have listened to.
- Pupils use their variation based on a skeleton melody from task two, to create two or three variations where the accompaniment and musical elements are varied to create different moods. The melody should not be altered.
- Pupils write an evaluation of their composition, identifying the mood of each variation, and explaining how they used the elements of music to create this mood.