

## Bluff King Hal Activity Ideas

### Where the Unit Fits In

**Prior Learning** – The children have explored the idea of folk music and the dulcimer

Topic Focus	Vocabulary	Learning Outcomes
Introduce, recognise and understand the different sections of Rondo form.	Rondo form	Understand - the structure of a Rondo - the importance of keeping a steady pulse when playing in an ensemble
Practice, rehearse and perform as a group.	Tempo	
Compose a 4 bar rhythmic pattern to accompany one part of the Rondo.	Rhythm	- rhythmic notation to make 4 beats in a bar
Compose a 4 bar melodic pattern which can then become part of a class piece in Rondo form.	Ensemble	- read some notes from the treble clef
Listen to and appraise the work of other children and composers.	Dynamics – <i>ff, f, p, pp</i>	- some Italian terms for dynamics - how dynamics can improve the performance of a piece
		Play a part in an ensemble

## Expectations

### By the end of the unit most children will have:

- Identified the repetitive nature of Rondo form in *Bluff King Hal*
- Composed and notated a 4 bar rhythm and melody
- Played a selected part of the classroom arrangement
- Produced some ideas for a component of the classroom Rondo
- Listened to and begun to appraise the work of other groups
- Understood and followed some dynamic markings

### Some children will be able to:

- Understand the Rondo form and identify the various sections and repetitions in *Bluff King Hal*
- Compose and notate at least one four bar rhythm which will contribute to the class composition
- Play a part of the classroom arrangement
- Suggest with reasons the dynamic marking they give to each section of the piece
- Appraise the work of other groups and composers.

## A few children will be able to:

- Identify at least the repeated tune in the *Bluff King Hal*
- Produce and write out in their own way some ideas for the rhythmic pattern and melody
- Play a simple part on a chime bar or similar instrument from the classroom arrangement using the letter names as a prompt
- Listen to the work of other groups and give an indication of why they liked it.

## Introduction

Watch the films of *Bluff King Hal* with clog dancers and/or the film from the Dulcimer World Congress (see links on Dulcimer Music page of Dulcimer Education Resource website) and ask the children to write down things they notice about the music or the dance.

Some answers may include-

- repetitive tune
- possibly AABBAACCAA form of the tune
- bells on dancer's wrists
- tambourines
- accordions
- instrumentalists dressed in costumes

## Form

In *Bluff King Hal* there are different sections which are repeated and combined to make the whole piece. Listen again and see if the children can identify how many different tunes there are which make up the piece. (Some children will be able to identify the change of motif by raising their hand when they hear the different sections.)

They should identify three sections to be named A, B and C. Play the tunes again either on the piano or using the video and get the children to work out the order of the sections. - ABACA or AABBAACCAA as each 4 bar section is repeated. (The video continues with further repeats). This is Rondo form.

## Adding a Rhythm to the Tune

Divide the class into small groups or pairs to work out a four bar rhythm using two untuned percussion instruments. Write the rhythm down either by using rhythmic notation or a method that can be understood in weeks to come. Each group should have a selection of instruments such as tambourines, claves, bells, castanets. After a given amount of time, ask each group to perform their rhythm and ask the rest of the class to comment on whether or not the rhythm is the correct length (16 beats), if they are playing in time, etc. Look at the notation of each group and check that it can be read by other groups.

If time permits, the class should decide on the order of the groups for the performance and then play it along with the recording. Any changes required by the class? E.g. order of performances, improved ending by using a louder instrument such as a cymbal.

## Classroom Arrangement

This arrangement is intended for a class that includes some children who can play instruments as well as for the rest of the class who have no previous experience outside class of lessons.

**Part 1** is suitable for descant recorder, flute or other instruments playing in C.

**Part 1a** is the same as above but with letter names written under the notes.

**Part 2** only uses the notes B and A and can be played on glockenspiels, xylophones, chime bars or similar instruments.

**Part 3** only uses the note D and can be played on glockenspiels, xylophones, chime bars or similar instruments.

**Part 4** uses the notes G, B and D and can be played on glockenspiels, xylophones, chime bars or similar instruments.

**Part 5** is suitable for violin players using open strings and only two bars of B.

**Part 6** is a tambourine part only using crotchets and quavers.

**Part 7** is a part for claves also using crotchets and quavers.

**Parts 6 & 7** can easily be played together by a class as the parts don't play at the same time instead, one part takes over from the other. A part is included here showing both parts for teaching purposes where the students can see how the two parts work together.

**Part 8** is a repetitive piano part suitable for a pupil to play if they can keep a steady pulse.

## Dynamics

These parts do not include any dynamic markings as it is hoped that the children will be able to suggest dynamics once they are familiar with the piece. These can include-

Very loud	<i>ff</i>	<i>fortissimo</i>
Loud	<i>f</i>	<i>forte</i>
Quiet	<i>p</i>	<i>piano</i>
Very quietly	<i>pp</i>	<i>pianissimo</i>

Discuss the performance and suggested dynamic markings as a class and any other observations made.

## Composition Idea

Having mastered *Bluff King Hal* the children can go on to compose a 4 bar tune following the notes below to fit with one section of the accompaniment/classroom arrangement. Encourage them to use simple rhythm to begin with. Some may be able to write their tune to be played on their own instruments and the notes they know. Some may be able to add passing notes to improve their melody.

To ensure the compositions fit with the class accompaniment or the piano recording the children will need to write their compositions using the following pattern of notes.

### Composition to fit with Bluff King Hal A section (sections 1. 3 and 5)

<b>Bar 1</b> G, B and D	<b>Bar 2</b> D, F# and A	<b>Bar 3</b> D, F# and A	<b>Bar 4</b> first 2 beats D, F# and A last 2 beats G, B and D

### Composition to fit with Bluff King Hal B section (section 2)

<b>Bar 1</b> G, B and D	<b>Bar 2</b> first 2 beats D, F# and A last 2 beats G, B and D	<b>Bar 3</b> G, B and D	<b>Bar 4</b> first 2 beats D, F# and A last 2 beats G, B and D

### Composition to fit with Bluff King Hal C section (section 4)

<b>Bar 1</b> B, D and F#	<b>Bar 2</b> G, B and D	<b>Bar 3</b> G, B and D	<b>Bar 4</b> first 2 beats D, F# and A last 2 beats G, B and D

At the conclusion of the composition period these different sections can be listened to and appraised by the class either as an individual composition or as a class.