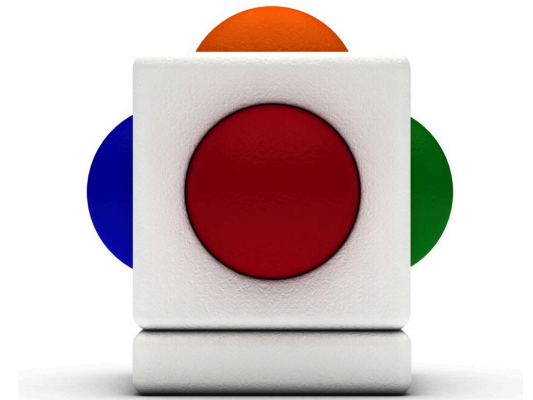# Lesson Morse Code

Lesson time - 40 minutes for 1 or more Skoogs

In this lesson

- The role of Morse Code in the Second World War and the advancement in technology since

- Focus on and control over accuracy of rhythm

- Improvising with pitch with a given rhythm

- Listening to and evaluating each others' performance

- Music and music notation as a form of communication

Learning Outcomes

Reference with Music Curriculum for Excellence:

- EARLY (EXA 0-17a) I have the freedom to use my voice, musical instruments and music technology to discover and enjoy playing with sound and rhythm.

- FIRST (EXA 1-17a) I can use my voice, musical instruments and music technology to discover and enjoy playing with sound, rhythm, pitch and dynamics.

- FIRST (EXA 1-16a) I can sing and play music from other styles and cultures, showing growing confidence and skill while learning about musical notation and performance directions.

Reference with Technological Developments in Society Curriculum for Excellence:

- EARLY (TCH 0-01a) I enjoy playing with and exploring technologies to discover what they can do and how they can help us.

Reference with Social Studies Curriculum for Excellence:

- EARLY (SOC 0-01a) I am aware that different types of evidence can help me to find out about the past.

Support Materials

For this lesson you will need:

- Print-outs of the Morse Code alphabet chart on the next page - one for each of your pupils

- The Skore Notation Pack, which is attached to this lesson plan, or can be downloaded at: www.skoogmusic.com/sites/default/files/downloads/SkoreNotationPack.zip

Lesson with progression and or differentiation.

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International Morse Code Alphabets

A	• —
B	— • • •
C	— • — •
D	— • •
E	•
F	• • — •
G	— — •
H	• • • •
I	• •
J	• — — —
K	— • —
L	• — • •
M	— —

N	— •
O	— — —
P	• — — •
Q	— — • —
R	• — •
S	• • •
T	—
U	• • —
V	• • • —
W	• — —
X	— • • —
Y	— • — —
Z	— — • •

This lesson can be done as part of a topic around World War II, during which the pupils will write a short piece of music each using the rhythm of the morse code of a message/word chosen by themselves.

Through each step of this lesson, pupils will learn that Morse Code works in a similar way to music notation. They will also learn to appreciate technology through the ages - a Morse Code transmitter was an older but very important piece of technology that helped us during the war, just as the Skoog is a modern piece of technology which we use to help us today.

This lesson also emphasises to the pupils the many different ways in which people can communicate to each other.

1. All about Morse Code

First of all we will learn all about Morse Code - explain to the class what it is, and its role during the Second World War. Also talk about the devices that were used to translate and transmit the code.

Hand out the Morse Code Chart on the previous page, and go through the code for each letter with your pupils.

2. Select a scale

Get pupils to decide whether they would like to compose their Morse Code tune using a major or minor pentatonic scale.

Once they have decided, to assign a Skoog to that scale:

1. Go to the Notes Tab
2. In the Scale menu underneath the keyboard, select either Major or Minor Pentatonic.
3. In the Tonic box on the Notes Tab, select the name for the key that you want. The choice of this does not matter much in this lesson; so just go ahead and pick one that your pupil fancies!

3. Select an instrument

Get your pupils to select something that they would like to play - they might want to select something that can produce short and crisp sounds as well as a long sustained sounds - such as the flute, or the clarinet.

1. Go to the Instruments Tab .

2. Click on one of the 12 instruments.

4. Play around with your 'Morse Code Machine'!

Now that your pupils have set up the Skoog as their very own Morse Code Machine, play around with it and experiment with the dot-dash rhythm of the Morse Code alphabets, thus creating little melodies. You can just stick to one pitch all the time, or experiment with using other pitches too.

Once your pupils have become more familiar to the Skoog and the Morse Code alphabets, get each of them to play a letter and get the rest of the class to work out what it is. Develop and expand this to 2 or 3 letter words.

5. Play in pairs

If you have a second Skoog, set it up as in Step 3, and get your pupils to work in pairs. The first activity you can now try is to get your pupils to echo their partner - see if they can copy the rhythm, or even the pitch, correctly. Bonus points to those who can also work out what word their partner has encoded!

Another fun activity is a question and answer game, in which your pupils can exchange short phrases with their partner using Morse Code.

6. Create a Morse Code melody

Using the ideas that they come up with during the activities, eah pupil create their own Morse Code melody and perform it to the rest of the class, with the more able pupils encouraged to write/play a full sentence. Get everyone to listen very carefully, and discuss with the class the accuracy of everyone's performance.

Finally write out the pupils' melodies as Skores (with the attached Skoog Notation Pack) or in traditional music notation to show that music notation is just another form of communication; just as language and Morse Code.

For more information

For more ideas on creating music with the Skoog, see Chapter 6 of the Skoogmusic User's Guide.