



Be the best that we can be.



EBJ Knowledge Organiser Music Year 5

Spring 1
South & West Africa



Overview

In this unit, pupils explore the rich musical traditions of South and West Africa through singing, percussion, ensemble performance and improvisation. They will learn traditional songs such as Shosholozza and discover how music is often performed collaboratively, using layered rhythms and call-and-response patterns. Pupils develop confidence singing in different languages, including recognising unfamiliar sounds such as the click consonants found in Xhosa.

Throughout the unit, children build their understanding of chords, rhythm, pulse and structure while performing as part of a group. They will explore poly-rhythms (many rhythms played at once), create their own eight-beat breaks, and use tuned and untuned percussion to perform with accuracy and expression. The unit develops listening skills, musical vocabulary, and confidence in ensemble performance.

Tips for improving your performance (FACE) and Instruments

Tips for improving your performance - FACE

- Fluency** - Being able to play without hesitancy.
- Accuracy** - Getting the melody and the words correct.
- Control** - Controlling the sound and music being created or sung.
- Expression** - Giving a personal response to the music.

Instruments

Percussion instruments

Instruments which are played by shaking, tapping or scraping with your hand or a beater.



Key Knowledge

Some African languages, such as Xhosa, include click sounds that may be unfamiliar to English speakers.

The Click Song is a traditional Xhosa song believed to bring good luck at weddings.

Major chords sound bright and happy.

Poly-rhythms mean “many rhythms at once.”

African music is often learned through listening and participation rather than written notation.



Vocabulary

- Chord** - Two or more notes that are played at the same time and work in harmony.
- Chord progression** - A group of chords played in a particular order.
- Major chords** - A chord made up of three notes. Major chords are often described as happy chords.
- Minor chords** - A chord made up of three notes. Minor chords are often described as sad chords.
- Break** - When some instruments stop playing and others change the rhythm.
- Call and response** - A musical technique that is similar to a conversation. One phrase of music acts as the 'call' and is 'answered' by a different phrase.
- A capella** - Singing without any musical accompaniment.
- Soloist** - A musician or singer who performs on their own, known as performing a solo.
- Duo** - Two musicians or singers who perform together, known as performing a duet.
- Ostinato** - A repeated pattern or phrase.
- Polyrhythms** - Many rhythms played at once.
- Syncopation** - Playing on the off-beat.
- Rest** - The silences in music.
- Metronome** - A device that can be set to create a steady sound (beat) to help musicians play rhythms accurately.

