

Date _____

Class _____

Name _____



COMPOSITION SKILLS

Blues Improvisation



In this unit you will revisit the features of blues and jazz music, revising the concepts of riff and improvisation and creating your own riff based improvisation.



RIFFS

Many blues **improvisations** are based around **riffs**.

What is a riff? Tick the box that applies:

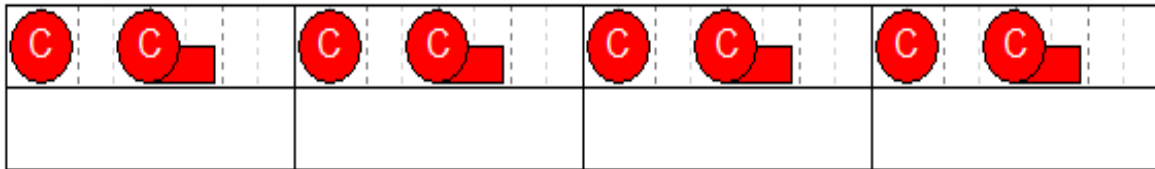
- A repeated pattern of notes
- A pattern that is repeated at a higher or lower pitch
- Where the music gets louder
- Music played on a guitar

What is improvisation? Tick the box that applies:

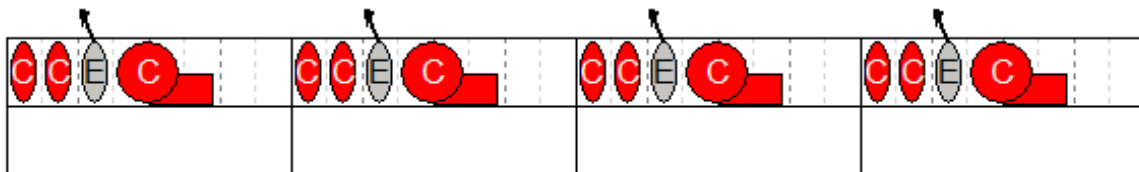
- Playing very loudly
- Making up music “on the spot”
- Singing very quietly
- A repeated pattern of notes

Many blues improvisations combine the use of riffs with free improvisation, where musicians choose notes from a special series of notes called the **blues scale**.

Try playing this riff along with a 12 bar blues backing track.



Now try playing the following two riffs along with a 12 bar blues backing track.

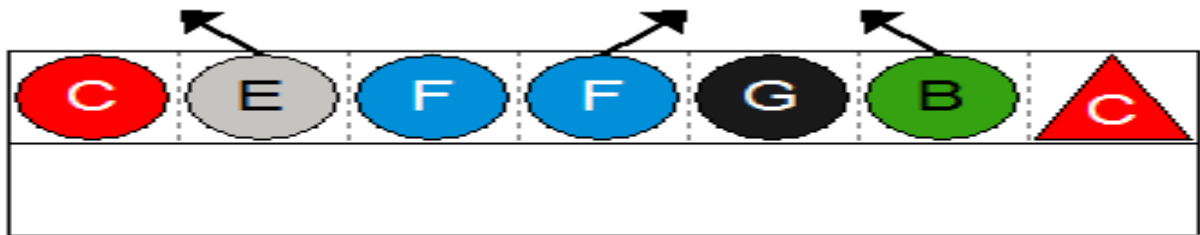




BLUES SCALE



Many blues improvisations sound “bluesy” because they use the blues scale. This is a special series of notes that are used in jazz and blues that give it a recognisable sound.

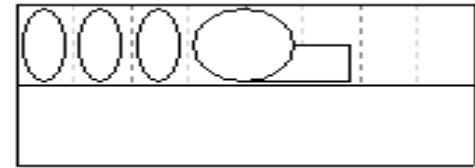
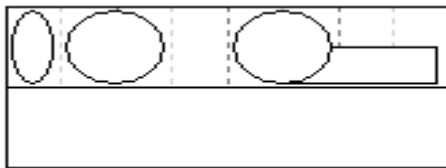
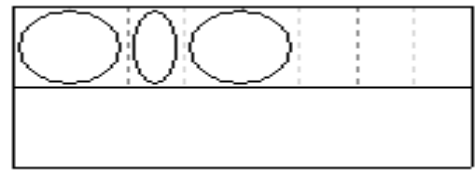
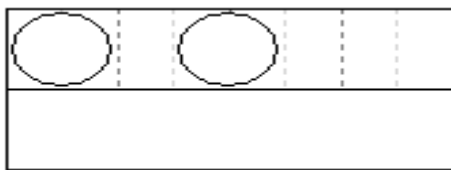


Activity 1 (creating a free improvisation):

- (i) Choose one note and improvise with this along with a backing track. My note is ___.
- (ii) Choose 3 notes and improvise with this along with a backing track. My 3 notes are _____, _____ and _____.
- (iii) Use all notes in the blues scale for your improvisation.

Activity 2 (creating a blues riff):

- (i) Using up to **3** different notes from the blues scale, compose **1** riff that you can repeat along with a backing track. Use one of the following rhythms. My notes are _____, _____ and _____. Write your notes directly into the riff you choose in an order of your choice.



Activity 3:

Final Composition - create a 3 section improvisation

A section (using a riff)

B section (free improvisation using notes from the Blues Scale). This is the same as activity 1.

A section (using a riff again)

Name	
Class	
Date	
Composition Unit	
Piece Title	
My music - how I developed my ideas	
Concepts used:	
Choices made:	
The best thing about my music is:	

