



# YEAR 8

Spring term 1 Blended  
learning booklet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Form: \_\_\_\_\_

For all lessons go to [Oak national academy\\_lessons\\_subjects\\_ks3\\_music\\_Band musicianship2: the blues\\_start](#) at lesson 5

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# SAL — ASSESSMENT LADDER

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Knowledge</u>	<u>Skill</u>
<u>Yellow Plus 8-9</u>	<p>Understands all the below grades plus:</p> <p>Understands how blues singers communicate emotion, and how blues lyrics are structured.</p>	<p>Can do all the below plus:</p> <p>Can play in a 'swung' style.</p> <p>Can write lyrics in a blues style.</p> <p>Is a confident and expressive performer and solo improviser.</p> <p>Extension can write a blues melody using the blues scale.</p>
<u>Yellow 6-7</u>	<p>Understands what makes a good blues improvisation and how to improvise for longer phrases.</p> <p>Know blues scale in G Major.</p>	<p>Can play all the chords for the 12- bar blues fluently.</p> <p>Can improvise confidently with all the correct notes of the blues scale.</p> <p>Can transpose a blues baseline.</p> <p>Can play in a 'swung' style.</p>
<u>Blue 4-5</u>	<p>Understands tonality of the blues, flattened 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of the scale.</p> <p>Understand chords I, IV and V make up the 12-bar blues structure. .</p>	<p>Can play and transpose a baseline into a different key.</p> <p>Can play blues chords fluently.</p>
<u>Green 2-3</u>	<p>Understands the concept of improvisation and why performers improvise.</p> <p>Understands the cultural context of the blues.</p>	<p>Can write lyrics in a blues scale.</p> <p>Can play a blues baseline.</p>
<u>White 0-1</u>	<p>Understands the 12-bar blues chord sequence.</p>	<p>Can play the notes of the blues scale in G Major.</p>

# KO- KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

**Lesson 1.** Learn how a blues scale is constructed and what pitches the notes are. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of the scale are lowered.

Learn about a 'head' in blues music; how it is a repeated theme that continues through the piece. Perform a famous 'head'.

Learn about swung rhythms in blues music, perform a swung rhythm.

Learn about key themes; repeated patterns, repeated pitches and create a melody for yourself

**Lesson 2.** Learn about baselines and walking baselines in Blues music.

Learn about transposing keys and transpose a baseline to a different key for yourself.

Perform a walking baseline. Learn the structure of the 12-bar blues and perform it.

**Lesson 3.** Learn about improvising and how to improvise your own baseline.

Learn about swung rhythms and perform a baseline with improvisation and swung rhythms.

**Lesson 4.** Learn why there is improvisation in the blues, aural tradition (learnt by ear).

Learn to improvise whole phrases.

Learn what it is to be a good blues performer.

Improvise a whole 12- bar blues arrangement.

**Lesson 5.** Learn about blues singers and why and how they can sing with emotion.

Learn stylistic features of the blues like sliding, repetition of melody, repetition of rhythm, repetition of lyrics, call and response.

Learn what instruments are most commonly used in blues music.

Learn about the structure of blues lyrics.

# LESSON 1- LI TO EXPLORE A BLUES SCALE THROUGH IMPROVISATION

## CONNECT

To access this lesson please follow the video lesson link:

[To explore a blues scale through improvisation \(thenational.academy\)](https://www.thenational.academy/lessons/music-band-musicianship-2-the-blues-to-explore-a-blues-scale-through-improvisation)

Or go to: oak national academy\_lessons\_music\_bandmusicianship2:The blues to explore a blues scale through improvisation.

In this lesson you will need:



Lesson Structure:



Understand how music can convey moods

Learning the pitches in a blues scale

Improvising a short phrase in "Bags' Groove"

-Warm up! Sing the G Major scale with Miss Friar

# ACTIVATE

## “Bags’ Groove” - Miles Davis

Write 5 sentences about why you think “Bags’ Groove” sounds relaxing.

Think about:

- Tempo
- Sonority (the instruments and how they are played)
- Melody
- Rhythm – lengths of notes and rests
- Any musical features that you've learnt about

Write your response here:



Now have a look at the answers and make any notes on new information you have learnt!

## Answers - “Bags’ Groove” - Miles Davis

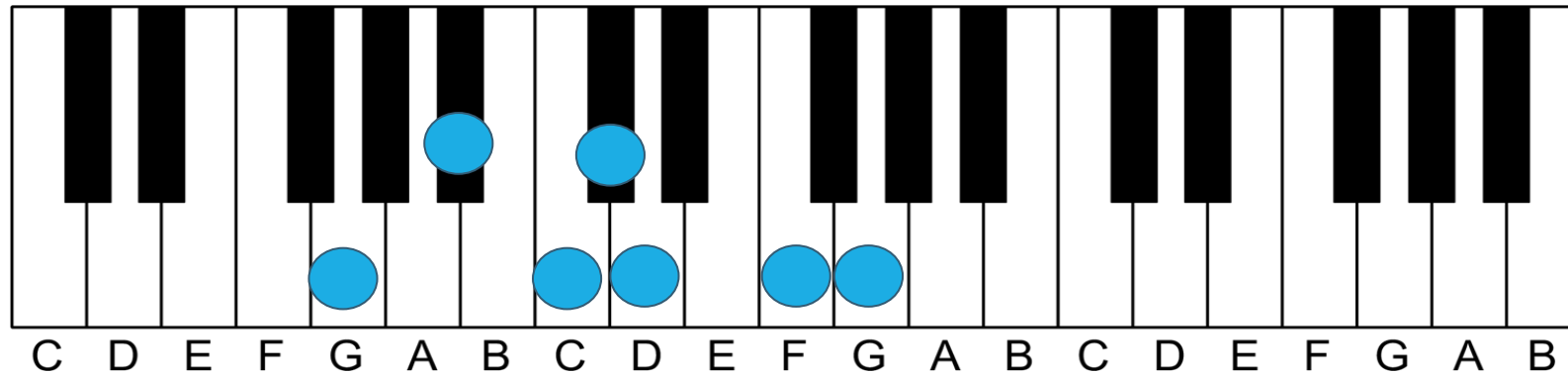
- The tempo is steady so it creates a calming mood.
- The drums are playing a simple shuffle swung repeated rhythm with brush sticks so the dynamics aren't too loud.
- The tone of the trumpet is really smooth.
- The melody is fairly stepwise, pitches are returned to; it is lyrical.
- The vibraphone has a soothing tone and is playing the same as the head but harmonising.



# DEMONSTRATE

# PLAY YOUR BLUES SCALE IN G MAJOR

Use your instrument to try your blues scale. If you don't have an instrument you can sing or access a virtual instrument with this link: [Virtual Piano - Online Piano Keyboard | OnlinePianist](#)



Play the notes with the blues dots on them.

Too Easy? – Try some different rhythms when you play the G Major Blues scale.

Keep watching the video to learn about question and answer in Blues music

# DEMONSTRATE- NOW IMPROVISE YOUR BLUES SCALE

## IN G MAJOR

YOU CAN USE YOUR VOICE OR VIRTUAL PIANO IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN INSTRUMENT:  
[VIRTUAL PIANO - ONLINE PIANO KEYBOARD](#) | [ONLINEPIANIST](#)

### Structuring your improvisations

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>C</b>
Head	Improvisation	Head	Improvisation
Player A	Player B	Player B	Player A
Head	Improvisation	Head	Improvisation



Your improvisation should last 7 beats!

Head		Improvisation	
G	G	G	G
C	C	G	G
D	C	G	G / D

This is the chord structure for the 12-bar blues

This is how 'the head' (repeated theme) looks in notation, you will hear it played on the video



# CONSOLIDATE

## NOW SELF ASSESS YOU PERFORMANCE

What went well.....

Use this space to put the answers for the quiz and log your score here:

Even better if.....

Now take the quiz

### Final Quiz

This quiz is a great way for you to test your learning from this lesson.

If you would like to re-cap any of the lesson, or repeat any exercise, click 'Back' below.

Start Quiz



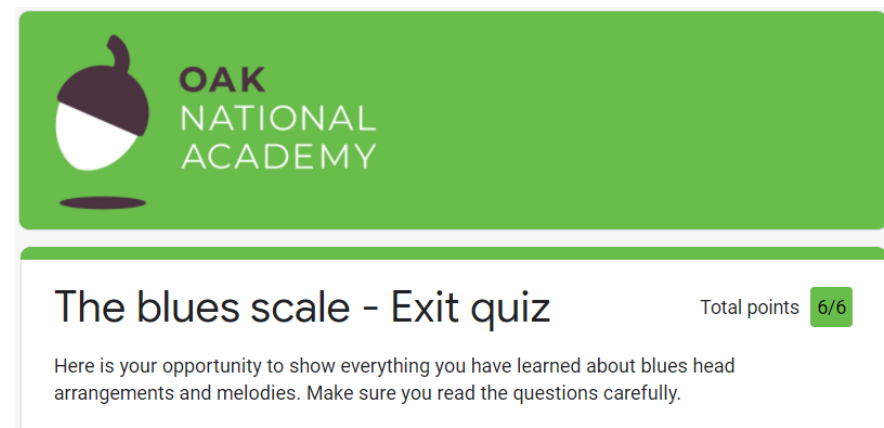
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### The blues scale - Exit quiz

Here is your opportunity to show everything you have learned about blues head arrangements and melodies. Make sure you read the questions carefully.

\* Required

Where is this famous blues artist from? \*



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### The blues scale - Exit quiz

Total points **6/6**

Here is your opportunity to show everything you have learned about blues head arrangements and melodies. Make sure you read the questions carefully.

# LESSON 2- LI-TO REVIEW THE STRUCTURE AND TONALITY OF SOME BLUES

## CONNECT

WATCH VIDEO NUMBER 6 WITH THIS LINK: [TO REVIEW THE STRUCTURE AND TONALITY OF SOME BLUES \(THENATIONAL.ACADEMY\)](#) WATCH UP UNTIL 18 MINUTES 12 SECONDS

### WARM UP!

Listen to Miss Friar play some examples and match up with the terminology here:

### Match the musical idea with what you hear:

Blues scale

Head

Swung quavers

Chords

Walking bass

Trill

Your answers:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Keep watching the video to find out the answers!

Tools needed for the lesson,  
if you don't have an instrument please go to:  
[Virtual Piano - Online Piano Keyboard | OnlinePianist](#)



Lesson structure, in this lesson you will learn:

**The 12-bar blues bassline and chords**

# ACTIVATE

Play a Blues baseline with Miss Friar using a virtual piano if you don't have an instrument at home.

## Structure of the 12 bar blues

The diagram illustrates the structure of the 12 bar blues. It includes a piano keyboard showing the root notes C, F, and G, a guitar fretboard showing the corresponding chords (C, F, G) at the 3rd fret, and a table of root notes for the 12 bars.

C	C	C	C
F	F	C	C
G	F	C	C

Created by Alone forever from Noun Project

To play the baseline you need to play the root note of the chord. The root note is the first note the chord starts on, for example; C Major has notes C, E, G – the root note is C so you just play C! All the root notes are shown in the table here

Now practise on your own!

If you would like to try with a bass guitar or other virtual instruments try this free app/site:

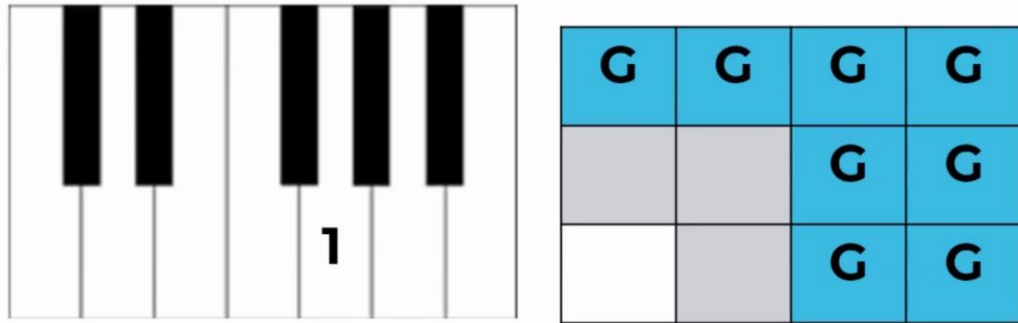
[Virtual bass guitar](#) | [Musicca](#)

# DEMONSTRATE

Transpose your baseline into the key of G Major!

If G is now chord 1 what will be chord 4 and 5 – a clue- chord 2 is A- just count up the scale!

Transposing the 12 bar blues bass line



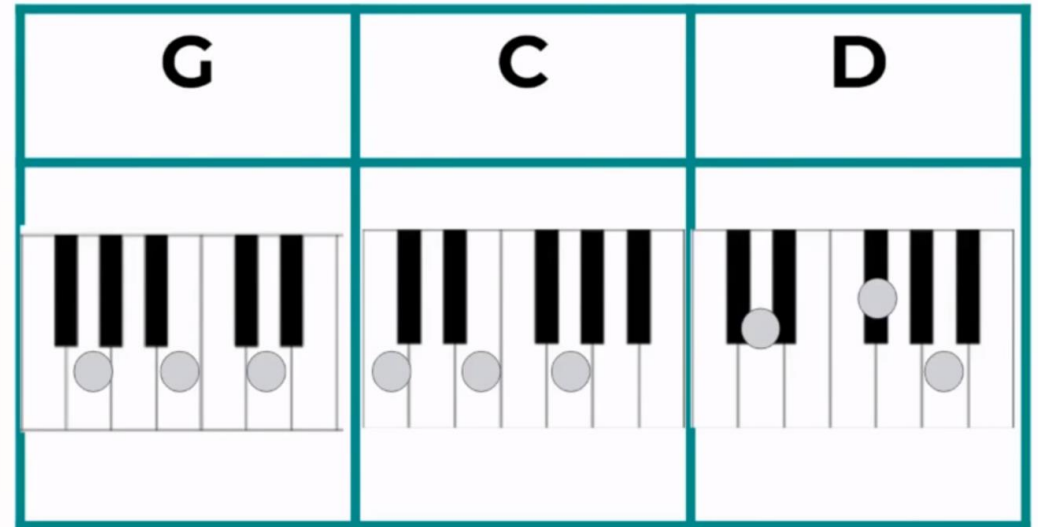
If G is number 1 (on the keyboard/scale), what pitches are 4 and 5?

Practise your baseline

Too easy? Can you play the baseline and the chords together?  
Practise the baseline and chords separately first then try to play together

Piano Chords

Chords in G Major



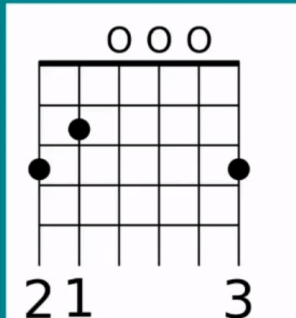
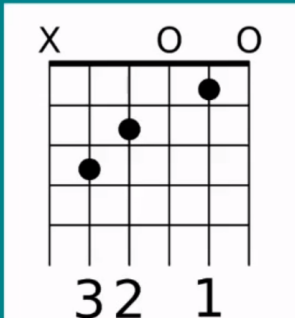
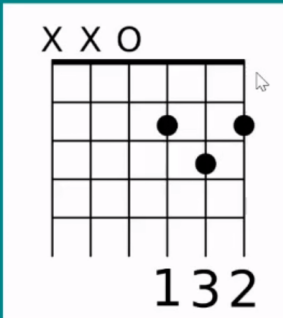
# DEMONSTRATE-

## STRUCTURE AND CHORDS FOR YOUR 12-BAR BLUES

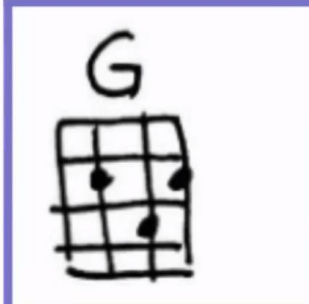
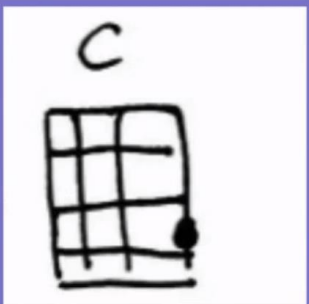
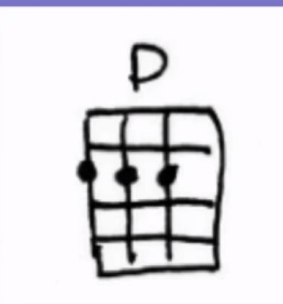
### 12 bar blues chord progression

<b>G</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>G</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>G</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>G/D</b>

### Guitar Chords

<b>G</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
 <p>0 0 0 2 1 3</p>	 <p>X 0 0 3 2 1</p>	 <p>X X 0 1 3 2</p>

### Ukulele Chords

 <p>G</p>	 <p>C</p>	 <p>D</p>
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# CONSOLIDATE- STOP THE VIDEO AT 18 MINS 12 SEC

Find a member of your household and perform to them. Ask them to give feedback on your performance. Remember you can sing, play any instrument you have at home or use the virtual app site suggested!

Here are some prompts to help (but feel free to use your own):

Did the performer play in time? How do you know?

Was the performer confident? How do you know?

Did the performer play the correct notes and in the correct order?

What did you love about the performance?

What piece of advice would you give to make it even better for next time?

# LESSON 3- LI- TO PLAY AND IMPROVISE A BLUES BASELINE IN A SWUNG RHYTHM

## CONNECT - PLAY THE VIDEO FROM 18 MINS 12 SEC: [TO REVIEW THE STRUCTURE AND TONALITY OF SOME BLUES \(THENATIONAL.ACADEMY\)](#)

Lesson Structure:

How rhythm shows us it's the blues

Improvising using the blues scale

Answer:

Can you spot the difference between the walking bass line and the chords above it?

**The walking bass line is the notes of the chord but 'broken', played one at a time.**

But that is only three notes...where is the fourth note from?

**You play the second note of the chord again.**

See if you can answer the questions below while watching the video:

The walking bassline



Can you spot the difference between the walking bass line and the chords above it?

But that is only three notes...where is the fourth note from?

Blues rhythms

Blues music has a 'swing feel'.

Keep watching the video to clap back a swung rhythm to Miss Friar.



# ACTIVATE

Play through your baseline with a 'swung' feel, using the chart below for reference.

You will need an instrument or virtual one, look back to lesson 1 and 2 for links.

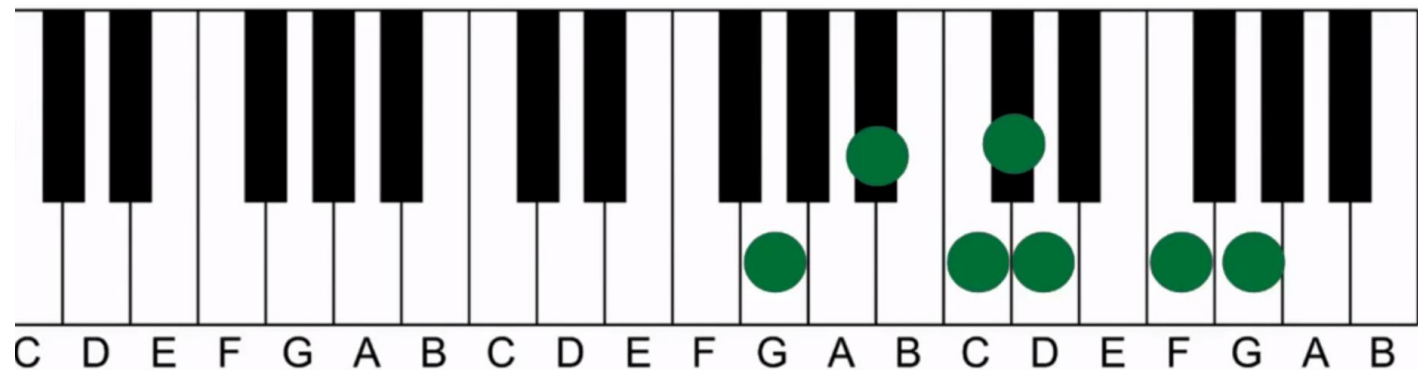
Miss Friar gives an example if you get stuck.

Remember you use the notes of the chord to play the 'broken' chords for the baseline, if it's chord G, you play notes G,B,D,B one after another to get the baseline.

## 12 bar blues chord progression

G	G	G	G
C	C	G	G
D	C	G	G/D

Now play the Blues scale in G Major with a 'swung' rhythm!





# DEMONSTRATE

Now practise your Blues improvisation in G Major, play along with Miss Friar once you are ready!

## “Bags’ Groove” - Structure for improvisation

Head		Improvisation	
G	G	G	G
C	C	G	G
D	C	G	G / D

Record yourself and see how it sounds when you play it back. Would you make any adjustments? Write here anything you would change or focus on for your next practice:

# CONSOLIDATE

## Take the exit quiz

Go through and answer the multiple choice questions, you may need to press next twice after the video.

Use this space to put the answers for the quiz and log your score here:

## Final Quiz

This quiz is a great way for you to test your learning from this lesson.

If you would like to re-cap any of the lesson, or repeat any exercise, click 'Back' below.

Start Quiz



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Are you feeling blues? Exit quiz Total points 8/8

Here is your opportunity to show my everything we have recapped in this lesson for the blues unit. Make sure you read questions carefully.



OAK  
NATIONAL  
ACADEMY

Are you feeling blues? Exit quiz

Here is your opportunity to show my everything we have recapped in this lesson for the blues unit. Make sure you read questions carefully.

\* Required

If you are playing a 12 bar blues in G, what would the I, IV, and V chords be? 1 point  
\*

- G, C and D
- C, E and G
- G, F and A

# LESSON 4- LI- TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO IMPROVISE PHRASES

FOLLOW THE LINK TO THE VIDEO: [TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO IMPROVISE LONGER PHRASES \(THENATIONAL.ACADEMY\)](#) OR GO TO OAK NATIONAL ACADEMY\_ KS3\_-SUBJECT-MUSIC-BANDMUSCIANSHIP2: THE BLUES- TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO IMPROVISE LONGER PHRASES – **WATCH THE FULL VIDEO**

## CONNECT

In this lesson, we will understand why improvisation in blues music is so important. You will learn how to improvise confidently in longer musical phrases

You will need the tools in the box and an instrument or an app: [Virtual Piano - Online Piano Keyboard](#) | [OnlinePianist](#) / [www.online pianist.com](#)

First remind yourself of last lesson by taking the intro quiz.

### Introductory Quiz

This quiz will help you to check any previous learning on this topic, and recap anything you may have forgotten. Once you have completed this, click 'Close Quiz' and then 'Next' below.

Start Quiz

### Lesson structure

Why is there improvisation in blues?

What makes a good improvisation?

Recapping the blues scale

Learning how to improvise for longer



Clap along with Miss Friar to warm up!  
It is an exercise of call and response,  
so don't clap exactly the same as Miss Friar

# ACTIVATE

See if you can answer the questions underneath:

## Why is there improvisation in blues?

From the beginning, the blues has been a largely improvised music. After the abolition of slavery, poor African American farmers would often gather together on each other's porches and in churches and homes to 'jam' for hours.

What is 'jamming'?

At the time they didn't have printed scores, so how do you think they played music together?



Now have a look at the answers underneath, did anything surprise you?

## Why is there improvisation in blues?

From the beginning, the blues has been a largely improvised music. After the abolition of slavery, poor African American farmers would often gather together on each other's porches and in churches and homes to 'jam' for hours.

What is 'jamming'?

Where musicians would get together and spontaneously play music, more of a social gathering.

At the time they didn't have printed scores, so how do you think they played music together?

They would make up tunes and lyrics on the spot. Early blues musicians couldn't always read and write music, so they developed amazing listening skills by learning traditional songs from other musicians.



Watch the video of performers improvising and write down your thoughts on the performance

## What makes a good improvisation?



Watch and listen to the second trumpet improvisation:

1. What do you think was successful about his improvisation?
2. How could he have improved his solo?

*Try to think of key blues musical features.*

Keep watching to see what Miss Friar thought of the performance, did you write down anything similar?

# DEMONSTRATE- PRACTISE YOUR IMPROVISATIONS

First Practise your Blues scale in G Major from last lesson-

Take 10 minutes. The notes of the scale are in Lesson 3.

Now practise your improvisation.

Use these helpful hints to help you!

## Improvising for longer

1. **Use the notes of the blues scale** - run up and down if you are unsure.
2. **Use swung notes and triplets** - like the drum shuffle we learned.
3. **Build it up** - start with 2 bars, then 4 bars, then 8 bars.
4. **Repeat ideas** - it is ok to repeat but just not all the way through.
5. **Mirror phrases** - create call and response.
6. **Take it - slow** - turn the tempo down so you have the time to think about it and then increase the tempo when you are ready.



Created by priyanka from Noun Project

G Maj Hexatonic Blues	G		Bb	C	Db	D	F	G
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Now try as part of a band, if you have someone in your household to team up with, they could play a baseline, drum part or chords. Remember you can also sing these parts if you have trouble with virtual instruments.

If you have no-one to partner with follow the link below to a backing track or type 'blues backing track in G major' into youtube.:

## Improvising within the 12 bar blues arrangement in G

**Longer Improv WITH**  
- Shuffle drum  
- Walking bass line  
- Chord progression

1. Pair or group performance.
2. You play live with a recorded part.



**Resume once you're finished**

# CONSOLIDATE

## Final Quiz

This quiz is a great way for you to test your learning from this lesson.

If you would like to re-cap any of the lesson, or repeat any exercise, click 'Back' below.

Start Quiz

Take the exit quiz!

Use this space to put the answers for the quiz and log your score here:



### How can you keep going in a long improvisation?- Exit quiz

Here is your opportunity to show everything you have learned about blues improvising and techniques to keep going for long periods of music. Make sure you read the questions carefully.

\* Required

What is 'jamming' in music? \*

1 point

- Where musicians would get together and spontaneously play music; more of a social gathering.
- When people would make jam in a factory.



### How can you keep going in a long improvisation?- Exit quiz

Total points **5/5**

Here is your opportunity to show everything you have learned about blues improvising and techniques to keep going for long periods of music. Make sure you read the questions carefully.

✓ What is 'jamming' in music? \*

1/1




# LESSON 5- LI-TO UNDERSTAND HOW BLUES SINGERS COMMUNICATE EMOTION, AND HOW BLUES LYRICS ARE STRUCTURED

**CONNECT**- PLEASE VISIT OAK NATIONAL ACADEMY- SUBJECTS-MUSIC-KS3-BANDMUSICIANSHP2:THE BLUES-TO UNDERSTAND HOW BLUES SINGERS COMMUNICATE EMOTION AND HOW BLUES LYRICS ARE CONSTRUCTED OR USE THE LINK BELOW:

[TO UNDERSTAND HOW BLUES SINGERS COMMUNICATE EMOTION, AND HOW BLUES LYRICS ARE STRUCTURED \(THE NATIONAL.ACADEMY\)](#)

Watch video up to 19 minutes 20 seconds

Please take the intro quiz online to remind yourself of last lesson.



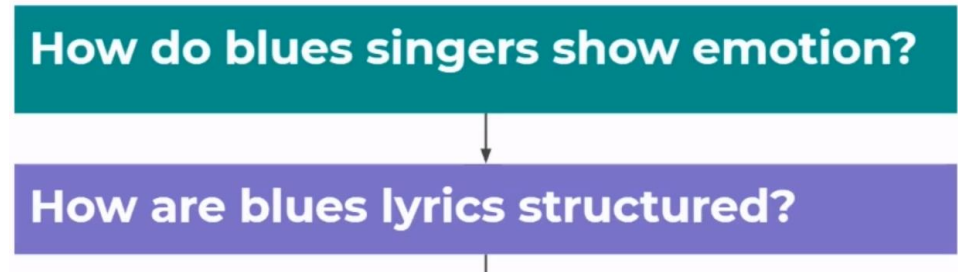
**OAK NATIONAL ACADEMY**

### How can you keep going in a long improvisation?- Intro Quiz

Here is your opportunity to show everything you have learned about blues improvising and techniques to keep going for long periods of music. Make sure you read the questions carefully.

In this lesson, we will look at wonderful blues singing and how the artist can show the emotion of the lyrics through the way they sing. You will also have the opportunity to write your own blues verse.

Lesson structure:



Warm up! Take part in call and response with Miss Friar, you will just need your voice!

# ACTIVATE

Keep watching the video and answer the questions whilst listening to 'Thinking Blues'

## "Thinking Blues" - Bessie Smith



1. Name two instruments you can hear.
2. Describe Bessie Smith's style of singing. What can you hear?
3. There is call and response between which instruments?
4. The pattern of the lyrics is AAB. What do you think this means?

Now compare your answers to the ones on the video. Was there anything you missed? Make a note of it here:

## Answers - "Thinking Blues" - Bessie Smith



1. Name two instruments you can hear.  
Trumpet, vocals, piano, drums and trombone.
2. Describe Bessie Smith's style of singing. What can you hear?  
Freely sung, slides (portamento) between notes shows emotion and attitude.
3. There is call and response between which instruments?  
Vocals / trumpet and trombone in turns.
4. The pattern of the lyrics is AAB. What do you think this means?  
First two lines of the verse are the same and the third is different.



# DEMONSTRATE- WATCH THE VIDEO UP UNTIL 19 MINUTES 20 SECONDS THEN PAUSE

You will be looking at Blues lyrics in more detail,  
Practise singing call and response with Miss Friar first.  
Then practise on you own!

## Structuring blues lyrics

Did you ever sit thinking with a thousand things on your mind?

Did you ever sit thinking with a thousand things on your mind?

Thinking about someone who has treated you so nice and kind.

**You'll get an old letter and you begin to read.**

**You'll get an old letter and you begin to read.**

**Got the blues so bad tell that man of mine I wanna be.**



**Here are two verses of "Thinking Blues"**

1. What structure have they been written in?
2. Do just the lyrics repeat or the pitches as well?
3. Which phrases rhyme?
4. How do the lines of the lyrics connect to one another?

After you have practised singing your blues answer the questions in the blue box, write you answers under here:

Check your answers and continue to watch the video for an explanation

1. **Floating verses in AAB structure.**
2. **Some of the pitches are repeated - end of the lines/phrases.**
3. **The end phrases on each line.**
4. **A - is a question or represents an issue. B - is the answer or conclusion.**

# CONSOLIDATE

Think about the lyrics you have heard today and what themes they are.

Now think about what themes you would like to sing.

Add some ideas to the thought cloud on the right and have a go at making your own one line melody. Try to create some lyrics with the melody where possible. If you have a device that records, record your one line melody and lyrics!



Congratulations! You have now completed Spring term 1 Booklet!

