TRANSFORMANCE
MUSIC GROUP

Teaching Music
with Garageband for iPad

2ND EDITION

Ben Sellers

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A Creative Curriculum for Ages 8-16

Preface to the second edition

I wrote the first edition of 'Teaching Music with Garageband for iPad' in 2014, when iPads were first making an impact in the classroom. I had no idea whether or not anyone else would be interested in it. Happily, the response was fantastic, and myself and the Transformance Music team are eternally chuffed that thousands of young people across the world are using the methods we have developed to create and share top quality compositions.

Three things motivate me to update that textbook with this one. Firstly, the new version of Garageband, with its new 'Live Loops' feature, has proved a game-changer in our classroom sessions, with pupils able to record arrangements in realtime and emulate the compositional process used by many professional producers.

Secondly, feedback from teachers highlighted a desire for more pupil-facing videos and individual lesson plans. The main feature of this new book, therefore, is a complete set of carefully crafted, high-quality videos that can be played on the classroom whiteboard and followed directly by pupils. These are accompanied by detailed lesson plans and, crucially, a new assessment framework that allows teachers to assess in a way that benefits the pupil *and* fulfills any need for quantative data.

Thirdly, the years since the first book came out have been hard on our young people and the education system that is so crucial to their, and our, future. Societies are becoming more atomised, engagement more passive, the future less and less certain. It is absolutely essential that our young people have a voice and creative outlet as we move forward, and that their culture - including the music they listen to - is valued and nurtured by the education system. I believe the resources on offer in this book offer some small way to facilitate this. Onwards!

Ben Sellers, January 2017

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Introduction

We live in a society that overflows with sound. From supermarket radio to video game soundtracks, young people are constantly exposed to music, yet there are often few opportunities outside school for them to participate in music-making, and even fewer forums in which they can create their own.

The 2014 National Curriculum for Music states that we, as teachers, should 'engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians'. However, unless pupils can relate the music they are taught in the classroom with the music they hear in the outside world, they may well conclude that 'proper' music must be played by professional adult musicians, with 'real' instruments, and will, as a consequence, underestimate the power of their own creative musical voice.

GarageBand on the iPad allows music lovers young and old to create music that, as one eight year-old pupil put it, 'sounds like it's off the radio'. It provides an interface that allows users to get the rhythms, melodies and lyrics that have accumulated in their body and mind out into the world, without the need for prior experience of playing a musical instrument or a theoretical understanding of music. The compositional process is intuitive and engaging, and the final product develops self- belief and a commitment to further music-making.

This book provides methods for all young people to compose high-quality, meaningful music in styles that are present in their daily lives. It develops their core musicianship and provides musical learning outcomes orientated around the UK National Curriculum.

We hope you and your pupils enjoy every minute of it.

You don't need to be a music teacher to teach music

We wanted this book to be **accessible to the non-musician** and technology-shy teacher, whilst remaining **engaging and exciting for specialists.** The solution to this balancing act? Make no compromises when it comes to musicianship and theoretical depth, and instead focus our attention on how we can simplify the planning and delivery of each lesson for teachers. So was born the 'pupil-facing video tutorial'**.** Teachers **prepare for the class by completing the sessions themselves using the tutorial video,** absorbing the relevant theory, vocabulary and learning outcomes. The same video can be played on the class whiteboard during the lesson, clearly demonstrating both the learning outcomes and the nitty-gritty of the compositional process. Each video contains clear breaks for pupils to 'Press pause and have a go!'. The bitesize tasks keep pupils engaged, allowing the teacher time to troubleshoot, listen to the pupils as they complete the tasks, and offer musical advice.

Navigating the book

The book is contains eight sections, plus an appendix:

1. **Introduction and Assessment Guide**

2. Our two **Core Songwriting Projects** sit at the heart of the book. If students are new to GarageBand, we recommend beginning with the 'Hello Garageband' project. Both projects contain lesson plans, video tutorials and an assessment criteria. Note: the walkthrough videos focus on the practical tasks, and do not include details of the warm-ups. Teachers should use the lesson plans as a guide to the overall structure of the lesson.

3. Two **Whole Class Compositions** focus on songwriting as a class.

4. The four **Core Group Performance Projects** are designed for groups of 2-10 pupils working together, but can also be completed alone. They are presented in the same format as the individual projects, complete with learning outcomes, but are more suited to after school clubs and other non-formal settings. A school 'iPad Orchestra' or 'iPad Rockband' performance can be very impressive!

5. Our nifty **One Lesson Wonders** can be completed as standalone exercises or as part of a wider project. Each is designed to teach a specific concept, e.g. compound time, 3/4 time, the 1-5-6-4 progression.

6. **Science of Music** - The Sampler and Keyboard instruments allow us to demonstrate the physics behind sound creation and manipulation - frequency, sound waves, harmonics, reverb.

7. A short **Instrumental Teaching** section offers advice on creating backing tracks for scales and tunes, as well as using Garageband to develop improvisatory skills on pupils' own instruments.

8. The **Best practice in SEN/D contexts** section passes on our experiences around the practicalities of working with iPads in SEN/D contexts

9. The **Appendix** provides:

- **An equipment guide**, including amplification options and how to set up multiple iPad performances.

- A guide for setting up a class Soundcloud account.

- A **glossary** of terms.

- Various **Printable worksheets**

Planning your iPad journey

We strongly recommend completing the first 'Hello Garageband' project yourself (it will take around an hour to complete). This serves as an introduction to both the app and the videos tutorials. Ideally, the next step is to run an **after-school club with 10-12 pupils**. Not only does this allow a 'trial run' of the curricula, it also trains up a cohort of 'pupil iPad experts' that can help their peers in a whole-class setting. Don't worry about pupils repeating sessions: the projects are designed to be completed multiple times with increasingly accomplished results, and populating the after school club with less able pupils give them a headstart (as well as a great boost in confidence) in a whole-class setting.

Once the first project is completed, pupils will be ready to tackle the second core project, 'Theme & Variation', or move into one of the Group Composition projects (working alone or in groups). Alternatively, you may wish to move to one of the 'whole class projects' or work some of the 'one lesson wonders' into a non-ipad based unit. Either way, there is around five terms' worth of material in this book - plenty to get your teeth into!

Our approach to composition

There is of course no single compositional process, and the projects are designed to provide a strong framework within which students have the maximum freedom to follow the flow of their creativity. What nearly all compositions do have in common is the presence of some element of rhythm, harmony and melody. We use these interrelated concepts as our creative building blocks, and provide several methods to generate each one, allowing students to build songs according to their ability and taste.

As the projects progress, the methods of generating material become more complex, but offer more control over the resulting music. We demonstrate the benefits of control over the compositional process, and the value of music theory for bringing instruments together in accomplished ways. Acoustic instruments offer the most control - over timbre, articulation and volume - and thus students come to see the rewards of dedicating themselves to mastering an acoustic instrument.

Teaching Tip

Someone one said, in relation to the speed of composition, that Bob Dylan 'moulded songs out of clay' whilst Leonard Cohen 'chiseled songs out of marble'. Similarly, pupils compose at variable speeds, which can be hard to manage with the bitesize nature of the video tutorials. We have tried to mitigate this by providing extension exercises to each composition, but slower pupils shouldn't worry if they don't complete all the tasks in a lesson. Less can most certainly be more.

Publishing

Songs often share ideas and emotions that are difficult to communicate using words alone, and can create a big impact when shared with parents, families, friends, and the world at large. We have chosen to use Soundcloud as our publishing platform as it allows students to join thousands of other musicians - both amateur and professional - who use the website to share their work and communicate with each other. Students can use Soundcloud to explore new genres and artists, and develop their own musical identity. Soundcloud is also very straightforward to use, shares minimal personal details, allows students to add artwork to their songs, and allows direct uploading from GarageBand. A guide for setting up a class Soundcloud profile is in the appendix.

> ## Teaching Tip – Wavey Hands
> Finding it hard to get pupils' attention when everyone has their headphones on? A system of 'wavey hands' does the job, without you having to raise your voice. As pupils see you waving your hands, they take their headphones off and join in, mexican wave style, until you have the attention of the whole class

Equipment

We find working in pairs to be the most productive when composing: Two (or three) pupils sharing an ipad. **Headphones** are essential when working in a classroom environment, and we also recommend using **headphone splitters**, allowing you to use two sets or more of headphones with one iPad. See page 135 for a full guide to equipment.

Pupils with Additional Support Needs

A guide for using iPads in SEN/D contexts in on page 130

Composing in GarageBand minimises the need for physical dexterity and knowledge of music theory when compared to, say, composing using a piano or guitar. As such, the iPad is a great tool for empowering students with additional physical and learning needs to use critical listening, musical risk-taking and their creative voice to develop compositions at the same high standard as their peers. With thought and a little creative planning all of the exercises in this book can be made accessible.

Tools for Assessment

Radar Diagrams

Pupils can be assessed over the course of the project by combining the learning outcomes of each lesson with the radar diagram below* (a printable copy is available in the appendix).

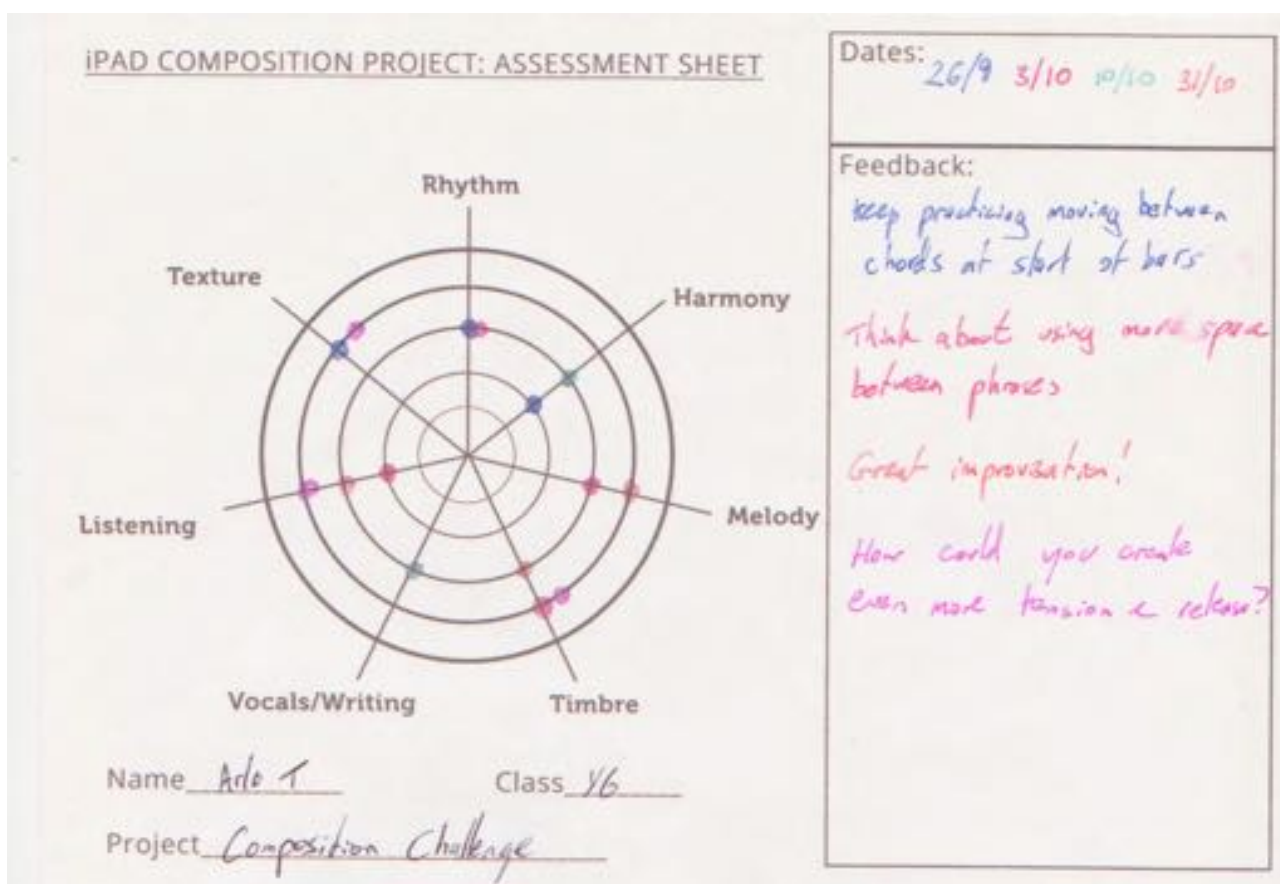iPAD COMPOSITION PROJECT: ASSESSMENT SHEET
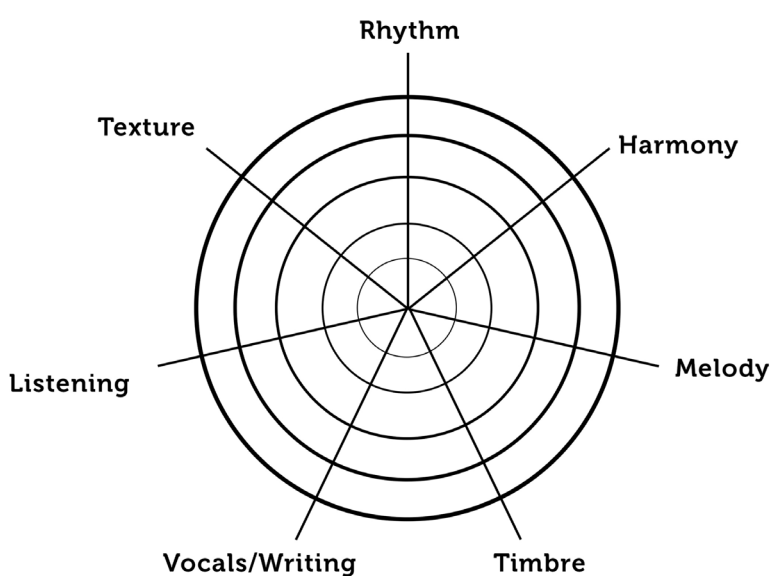
Name_____   Class_____

Project_____

Dates:

Feedback:

The seven spokes on the diagram can be understood as 'themes' of learning, and; each learning outcomes addresses one or more spokes, and over the course of the project each spoke is covered multiple times, allowing opportunities for progression.

*I am very much indebted to blog posts from Jane Werry and John Kelleher for the concept of radar diagrams, and how they can best be used. This post from Jane offers invaluable information on how to maximise their function as a tool for pupil improvement whilst minimising additional time needed for summative assessment.

iPAD COMPOSITION PROJECT: ASSESSMENT SHEET

Dates: 26/9 3/10 10/10 31/10

Feedback:
keep practising moving between chords at start of bars

Think about using more space between phrases

Great improvisation!

How could you create even more tension & release?

Name Ade T   Class Y6
Project Composition Challenge

As shown above, the teacher can add 'dots' to each spoke to indicate the level of the pupil for each criteria (1 is low, 5 is high) and add comments. Different colours denote different lessons, offering a clear indication of improvement. They can be used for self-directed learning, as well as a basis for conversations with the teacher about how higher levels can be achieved.

Tip Box

The appropriate spoke for each learning outcome is noted on the lesson plans using the following abbreviations:

Tex –texture, **Tim** – timbre, **Rhy** - rhythm, **Mel** - melody, **Har** - harmony,

Lis - listening, **Vox** - vocals/writing

Assessment examples

A) *Learning Outcome: Create an arrangement of four loops (Tex).*

Score for radar diagram	Reason for score
0	Did not attempt
1	All loops playing together - no contrasting textures
3	Two contrasting sections, with carefully chosen samples.
5	Clear beginning, middle and end with high and low melodies positioned to add contrast and interest.

B) *Learning Outcome- Use effects to create tension and release (Tim)*

Score for radar diagram	Reason for score
0	Did not attempt
1	Use of effects sounds random; pupil unable to explain musical decisions.
3	Individual effects used to emphasise downbeat.
5	Combinations of effects used to create tension before final bass entry.

If summative assessment is necessary, the highest point scores from each spoke can be added up to create an overall mark out of 35 and graded as follows:

0-10	11-18	19-27	27-35
Eurovision Entrant	Bedroom studio	Talent show	School Video Prospectus

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Peer evaluation: The best type of formative assessment?

There is no such thing as an objectively 'good' or 'bad' composition. There are, however, compositions that have been created with thought and intent, that are refined and balanced and make musical sense. We find a system of peer evaluation and feedback focuses minds and gets the best results from pupils. Before presenting their compositions to the teacher/class, pupils seek feedback from their peers and if necessary change their composition in response. It is crucial that this is done in a supportive, non-competitive atmosphere.

The UK National Curriculum

Whilst this book's focus is on the key area of composition/songwriting, it neverthe-less **contains material that addresses most of the core aims of the UK curriculum for Key Stages 2-3** (Ages 7-14):

> "The national curriculum for music aims to ensure that all pupils:
>
> Perform, listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions.
>
> Learn to sing and to use their voices, to create and compose music on their own and with others, have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, use technology appropriately and have the opportunity to progress to the next level of musical excellence.
>
> Increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement.
>
> Understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the inter-related dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations." - *Department for Education, 2013*

We introduce all of the NC's 'inter-related dimensions' of music over the course of the two Core Songwriting Projects.