

**Friday Afternoons:**

# **Invention**

**Composition / Composer Resources**

**Written by Aga Serugo Lugo  
Featuring: Invention by Russell Hepplewhite and Michael Rosen**

## Teachers notes on these resources:

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- Adapt, adapt, adapt! These resources are designed in a very flexible way as no two classes are the same. You know your students best, so please do change the bits you need so your class can get the most out of them. And if you want to change the themes mentioned in the resources- please do to make them topic or project specific.
- These resources are simply starting points, feel free to extend in whatever way suits you and your class.
- The resources are written as if talking to the students, with questions that you can ask directly to your class. However, they are designed to be used in creative sessions facilitated by you, rather than printed out and given to the children as worksheets.
- Have fun! These are intriguing songs- listen as much as you can to them, and really explore them, just like you would a poem or a story. If this work takes you off on a tangent, that is great!

# What is a composer and what do they do?

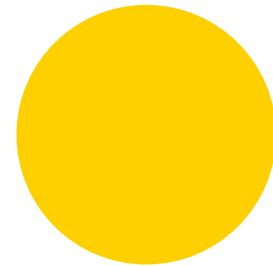


Composers are people who tell stories, convey emotions and paint pictures through the music they write.

A composer might be inspired by nature, paintings, poetry, politics, a life event, a shape... anything really! They take this inspiration and create melodies, harmonies and rhythmical patterns that then take audiences on a journey.

The composer can write for whatever instruments they like; it might be a solo instrument, a duo, a quartet, or even a huge symphony orchestra (which could be about 80 different musicians).

Many composers play an instrument too (although this isn't always the case) as it helps to know how all the instruments work, and the possibilities of all the different sounds.



# Russell Hepplewhite - The Composer & Michael Rosen – The Lyricist



Russell Hepplewhite is widely known as a composer of operatic, musical theatre and choral music. He loves writing opera for young audiences and performers.

Michael Rosen is an internationally acclaimed poet and author. He has been the Children's Poet Laureate and has written hundreds of poems and books that have helped encourage young people's love of language and reading.

Michael and Russell have collaborated to compose 2020's set of Friday Afternoons songs called 'Everything'

# Invention

“Necessity is the mother of invention, but it all depends on your intention”

Invention, by Russell Hepplewhite and Michael Rosen, is a wonderful piece looking at some of the things society needs and the creativity of the people who make them.

To celebrate the inventiveness of this inventive tune, we thought we would make some musical inventions ourselves!

# Musical Algorithms

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An algorithm is a set of rules to be followed.

First you have an input, then you follow the set of rules and it gives you an output.

Algorithms are usually used by computers, but they work just as well for musical ideas (motifs).

The great thing about musical ideas is that you can do

anything to them to them to make a phrase, for example:  
move up a note, move down a note, repeat a note.

This could look something like the following:

## Example Algorithm 1



## Example Algorithm 2

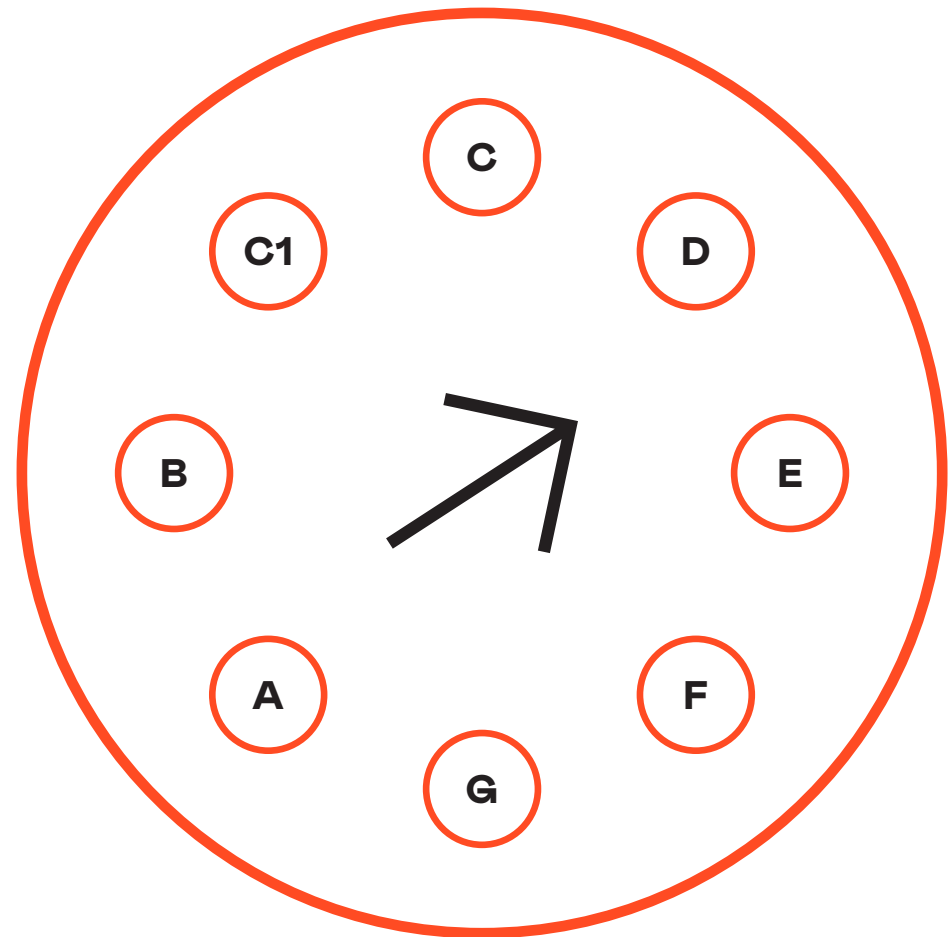


To add to the element of 'randomness' you could determine the start note of your algorithm by using playing Spin the Pitch Wheel.

Print out a Pitch Wheel from the resources section of the website [HERE](#)

You will need to print on card, cut out the Wheel and Arrow separately, and attach the Arrow to the Wheel using a butterfly pin.

**Spin The Pitch Wheel to choose a letter:**



If you put the letter D into the algorithm 1. You end up with this motif

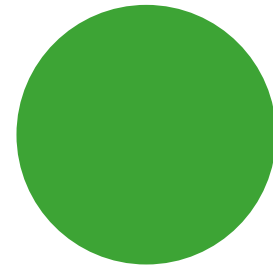


If you put in a G algorithm 2 you get this motif



You can create fun and interesting tunes by creating two or three simple algorithms and putting a couple of different letters into each one.

These can then be played in succession to create a longer piece of music, or why not try layering the patterns on top of one and other to create a multi textured piece?





# Body Percussion Algorithm



You can also create compositions using body percussion.

Body percussion is an excellent way of creating original pieces in a short space of time.

To make body percussion pieces you first need to establish a key representing each part of the body. This enables us to make a graphic score or algorithm.

## For example:

**Click** = X

**Stamp** = O

**Tap Thigh** = T

**Tap Chest** = C

Make your algorithm, creating rules just as you did for the tuned note patterns.

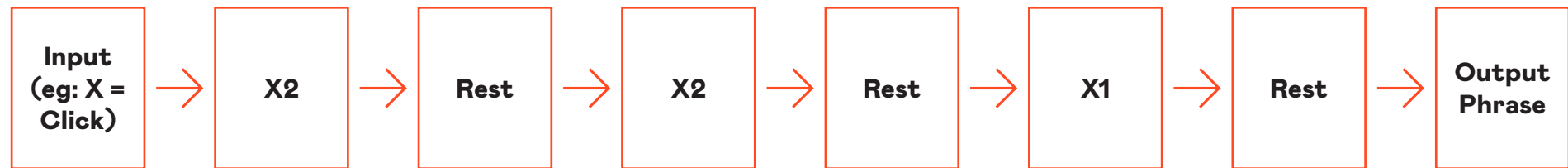
As we are not using tuned instruments, you don't need to mention pitch.

In these algorithm's you only need to work with numbers and rests, as well as deciding which 'input' you're going to start with eg: Click or stamp ( X or O)

# Example Body Percussion Algorithm

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## Example Algorithm 1



Create 4 phrases using 4 different 'Inputs' (Body percussion types) that can all be layered on top of each other.

To begin with aim to make each phrase 2 bars of 4/4 long (8 beats)

As you get more confident, try changing the time signature.

# Putting the piece together

Start chanting a steady pulse counting from 1 to 8.  
Ensure everyone in the group is able to chant together, establishing a shared sense of regular pulse.

With the group split into 4, ask group one to layer their body percussion over the steady pulse.

Only once they have settled should you add group 2, leaving group 1 to keep going.

Repeat the same principle adding groups 3 and 4, until eventually everyone will be doing their body percussion pattern and only you (the teacher) will be left chanting the pulse.

The chart below shows how a 4 pattern algorithm could be notated as a graphic score.

A blank box means a rest.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Group 1	X	X		X	X		X	
Group 2		T	T	T		T		T
Group 3	O		O	O	O		O	
Group 4	C		C			C		C

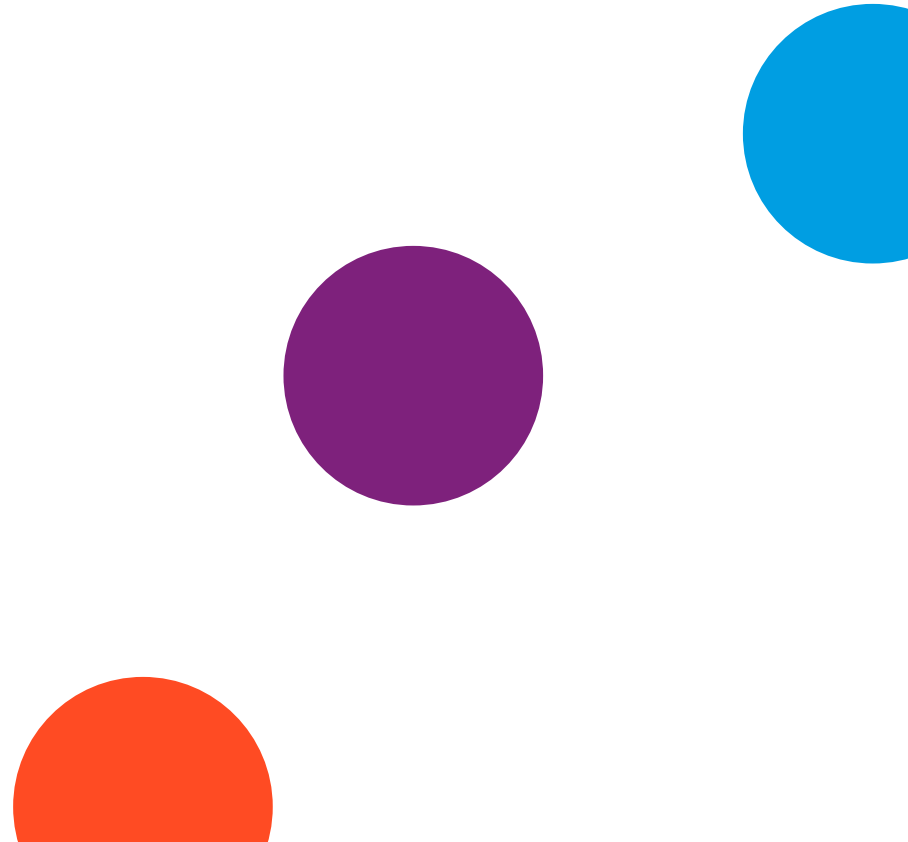
# Extention

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Why not have a go at combining the pitched patterns with the body percussion patterns?

Half of the group could work on an inventive melody using a few 'note input' algorithms, and half of the group can be working on a body percussion grid like the one above.

Then it's time to layer it all up, and the real fun begins!



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