

# Songs of Nature

In this lesson, the children will hear a selection of classical music inspired by nature, developing their creativity in sourcing avenues of inspiration, their knowledge of common classical composers and their understanding of the important role nature has played throughout history. They will compose a piece inspired from nature, so will develop their aural skills to identify and differentiate the sounds of nature in music. Performing their compositions back to the rest of the class will encourage self-confidence, and allow a sense of achievement.

**KS2 Music Lesson Plan**  **1 hour**

You might want to take the children outside to listen to the sounds of nature.

## Equipment

- AV facilities
- A variety of musical instruments
- Manuscript paper

## Key learning outcomes

- Developed creative skills
- Developed understanding of composers
- Developed understanding of musical history
- Public speaking and performance
- Aural memory and listening skills

Time	Activity
5 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Play Rimsky-Korsakov's <i>Flight of the Bumblebee</i> to the children and lead a discussion about the music. How does the music reflect the bumblebee? The beating of the bee's wings is echoed in the lower strings, and the frequent rising and falling melody mimic a bumbling bee's flight.</li> </ul>
5 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Play an excerpt from Chopin's <i>Prelude No. 15 in D♭ Major</i>. The piece is informally called Raindrop but before you reveal this, discuss with the children what they think it represents. Raindrops are shown through the repetition of A♭, lying underneath the melody. The pleasant Major tones suggest a gentle downpour, but the change to E Minor gives the melody a sinister tenor, and soon the full force of a dramatic storm breaks out.</li> </ul>
5 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Listen to an excerpt from Einaudi's <i>Le Onde (The Waves)</i>: this is a modern piece of music. Can any children guess what the piece is about before you reveal its name? How does the music represent its namesake? The constant ebb and flow of waves gently breaking on a beach is shown in the piece by a steady note on every beat. The swells in the music are followed by gentle rounds, or augmented by runs, suggesting ripples or a disturbance in the water.</li> </ul>
30 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Split the class into groups and ask them to compose an original piece of music about nature lasting 1 minute. They can use any part of nature as inspiration and any instruments, including their voice, to hand. Audio samples may also be used, for example: bird call, or running water.</li> </ul>
15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The groups are to play their compositions to the rest of the class.</li> <li>■ If you have time, an extra exercise to be completed is to ask the other children to identify the source of inspiration for the compositions.</li> </ul>

**Homework** The children are to write out their composition on manuscript paper.

