

Key Stage 1: The place of folk music in the primary music curriculum

This document gives an indication of how folk and traditional music can help teachers enhance and deliver aspects of the National Curriculum for Music in England at Key Stage 1, and suggests a range of supporting resources created by folk artist-educators.

National Curriculum in England: Key Stage 1 Music

Key Stage 1 Music Subject Content	Links to folk music
Use their voices expressively and creatively by singing songs and speaking chants and rhymes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Folk songs can be simple, repetitive, and easily accessible for pupils, including rounds, call and response, and simple refrains and choruses. • Folk songs are usually taught and sung by ear, leaving space for creativity – words can be adapted to more relevant content, or simplified. • Folk songs often tell stories and voices can be used expressively to tell the story • Many nursery rhymes and singing games are traditional folk songs – with actions and movement to support learning and make it fun
Play tuned and untuned instruments musically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Folk music is played and passed on by ear, which helps musicians develop listening skills and musicality • Folk music can be played on all instruments • Many folk tunes can be accompanied by a single drone or chord, making it easy to support first access to tuned instruments • Folk tunes are dance tunes with a strong rhythmic pulse. Learning and playing for the accompanying dances can help musicians establish a stronger sense of pulse and rhythm
Listen with concentration and understanding to a range of high-quality live and recorded music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to and review recordings by contemporary folk artists • Invite a folk musician to perform live – they often combine singing with instrumental playing on more than one instrument • Compare sounds of traditional music and instruments from around the world

Experiment with, create, select and combine sounds using the inter-related dimensions of music.

- Learn a variety of folk tunes and songs by ear
- Explore a variety of folk rhythms (eg jigs 6/8, reels 2/4 or 4/4, waltzes 3/4) to establish pulse and rhythm. Learn the dances that the tunes accompany.
- Create new arrangements and compositions using simple tunes, rhythms, words and phrases of folk tunes and songs as a starting point.

Learning Resources

EFDSS' award-winning Resource Bank provides freely downloadable materials for using English traditional folk song, music, dance, drama and other arts in your teaching and learning. The following resources support aspects of the primary music curriculum at Key Stage 1:

- **A Sailor's Life: Key Stage 1:** <https://www.efdss.org/efdss-education/resource-bank/resources-and-teaching-tools/a-sailors-life-ks1>
- **Fun with Folk:** <https://www.efdss.org/efdss-education/resource-bank/beginners-guide/fun-with-folk#welcome-to-fun-with-folk>
- **An Acre of Land: Key Stage 1:** <https://www.efdss.org/efdss-education/resource-bank/resources-and-teaching-tools/an-acre-of-land-key-stages-1-and-2>

Visit www.efdss.org/resourcebank to browse more resources