

## Learning Intentions:

- To explore the history and style of the Blues
- To understand the meaning of Blues, chords, lyrics and improvisation.
- To learn to sing a Blues song

## Remember to:

Sing in a bluesy (rough, chesty) style, not school choir style.

## Success Criteria:

- I can sing in a blues style.
- I know the meaning of the words Blues, chords, lyrics and improvisation

## Part 1: Arriving

1.1 [Play video of John Lee Hooker playing 'Hobo Blues'.](#)

1.2 **Questions for the class:**

- Where do you think this music is from?
- How is the singer feeling, how are you feeling?
- What do you think a hobo is?
- Does anyone know what type of music this is?

## Part 2: Starter

2.1 [Play presentation 1](#)

2.2 [Play Ella Jenkins 'Freight Train' video](#)

2.3 **Questions for the class:**

- What does the word 'Blues' mean? (*sad, melancholy, depressed*)
- What are chords? (*two or more notes played together*)
- What was the word used for 'making it up as you go along'? (*improvisation*)

## Part 3: Main Teaching

3.1 [Play 'Rooting Ground Hog' Audio](#) and ask the class to listen to the structure of the song. (*NB. Good idea to check class understand the meaning of 'structure' in a musical context, i.e. the a pop/rock song might be; Introduction, verse 1, chorus, verse 2, chorus, guitar solo, chorus, ending*).

3.2 **Questions for the class:**

- How many lines in each verse? (*4 - 3 lines plus the first line repeated*)
- The singing and instrumental improvisation playing alternates, how many beats of singing and how many improvisation? (*8 of each*)
- How many bars of each? (*2*)
- How many beats in a bar? (*4*)



- 3.3 **Play ‘Got my mojo working’ video, which is also in the Mississippi Blues Style, has a similar structure but has a faster tempo.**  
Can the children work out how many beats of alternating singing and improvisation this time? (8 again!)

Ask children to identify the instruments they can see/hear.  
(*Harmonica, Piano, Guitar, Bass Guitar, Voices*)

- 3.4 **Play - Sometimes it’s hard, just being a kid (sung by Kim with backing vocals)**

Ask the class to listen first time through and:

- tap the 8 beats of singing on their knees, then show the 8 beats of improvisation by clicking their fingers.
- notice the structure of the lyrics (First two lines repeated in each verse, third line different)

- 3.5 **Play – Sometimes it’s hard, just being a kid (1 line at a time – sung by Kim)** and learn the first verse.

- 3.6 **Play – Sometimes it’s hard, just being a kid (sung by Kim)** learn by singing along. When the class are confident, move on to:

- 3.7 **Play - ‘Sometimes it’s hard, just being a kid (for you to sing)** and perform.

Look to see that all children are participating and singing with emotion

## **Part 4: Review**

- 4.1 **Blues lesson one glossary review** - What do the following words mean?

- Blues
- Chords
- Lyrics
- Improvisation
- Structure

- 4.2 **Questions for the class:**

MA/LA: Where and when did Blues music begin?

HA: Can anyone describe the structure of the Blues music examples we’ve heard today? – *3 lines, first line repeated, 8 beats of singing, then 8 beats of improvisation*)

- 4.3 **Where next?** – Next time we will be exploring blues chords.