

## 6 week course Teacher's Notes

### Background Information:

Year 5 students (recommended year group) will learn to play the D penny/tin whistle using mainly musical repertoire from the Isle of Man. As well as being an accessible instrument for beginners, the whistle is also an important part of Manx traditional music and so this course serves to introduce students to their own Celtic culture and to the Manx Gaelic language. At the end of the six week course, the class will be ready to perform as an ensemble. There will be opportunities to sing, play, improvise and compose and to watch and listen to performances on the whistle.

### Frequency and Duration of Lessons:

Groups will have six weekly classes will be 30 minutes long.

### Resources:

- Each student and teacher will have a numbered D penny whistle to be kept in the classroom between lessons, plus Milton sterilizing wipes
- *Feddan - Manx Tunes for Whistle* book for each student
- Video and audio clips of Manx tunes being played on the whistle
- Online downloadable backing tracks for the tunes
- Links to: *Gow Ayrn* Manx music pack & CD – further listening examples and repertoire.

### Objectives

Students will:

- learn to play the basic notes of the penny whistle using simple melodies from the Manx repertoire
- clap rhythms and sing
- listen to music performed on the whistle
- read various forms of musical notation
- improvise and compose with rhythms and pitch
- perform on their own and as an ensemble
- perform in two parts/harmony
- self-assess their progress

### Intended Learning Outcomes

**All students** – will be able to produce the basic notes of the whistle, play a tune as an ensemble, self-assess and fill in their progress chart and use some Manx Gaelic words

**Most students** – will produce a clear tone on the whistle, clap and/or sing the rhythms in time, be able to play at least one melody on the whistle, play along to backing track, play as part of a round, understand some form of notation

**Some students** – will be able to try more Manx melodies, play in harmony with the others by using the counter-melodies, use dynamics (louds and softs), slur some notes, compose their own melody and notate it in one of various forms.

### Key Vocabulary

Duration – long, short, rest

Dynamics – *p* soft (quiet), *f* loud, getting softer, getting louder

Pitch – note, high, low, tune, melody, scale, harmony

Tempo – fast, slow, steady, beat, pulse, lullaby

Structure – introduction, phrase, repeat, round, improvise

Performance – tongue, slur, solo, duet, accompaniment, internalize

## LESSON ONE

### Background of whistle

- About the whistle and other woodwind instruments. Context of whistle in Manx music.
- **Watch video/s** – demonstrations of Manx tunes – discuss tempo (fast or slow), breathing, etc.
- Manx word for whistle is 'feddan' *pronounced FEthan*

### Getting Started

- **Warm-up game** – Clap copycat rhythms e.g. 'Don't clap this one back' game
- Establish '**rest position**' with whistle across knee or on desk with folded arms.
- **Practice 'time out signal'** for when the class gets too noisy – teacher puts one arm up and students follow by putting whistles into the 'rest position' and putting their arm up too. They stay silent until last person joins them.
- **Give out the whistles** Appoint 2 monitors to collect and distribute named or numbered whistles at the start and end of each class – clean mouthpieces each week with hygiene wipes
- Let students have a 5-10 second blow – only opportunity during course!
- Choose two monitors who will give out and collect whistles each week and clean mouthpieces

### First note

- How to hold the whistle – **left** hand at top, **right** hand at bottom \* point out importance of left hand at top as it is the same as other instruments e.g. flute, clarinet, recorder
- Correct positioning of fingers – cover holes fully with soft part of finger (pads) – should leave an indented circle on finger pad!
- Play B or 1 (one finger) with thumb behind whistle and right hand supporting lower part of the whistle without covering holes
- produce a clear note with an even tone quality – blow firmly but gently
- To avoid squeaks and poor tone don't allow air to escape from under the finger/s

### Games

- Take turns to play B (1) – Pass individually around class or one table at a time
- Copycat rhythms on one note – play then invite students to reply on whistle  
e.g.        1 1 1 (teacher then student)        1 11 1        11 11 1 1
- Play contrasting long and short notes – 't' to produce short *tongued* notes
- *Improvise* – call & response rhythms where student changes the response

### Plenary – recap

Monitors collect and clean whistles

#### Practice task

- play note B (1) with an even and clear tone – try playing the rhythms of well known tunes e.g. *Jingle Bells*, *Pop goes the Weasel* or *Old MacDonald had a Farm*

## LESSON TWO

### Recap B (1) & learn to play A

(2 fingers covering top 2 holes of whistle – don't let go of 1!)

- Warm-up - Copycat game using 2 notes – alternating long and short sounds  
e.g.  
1 2    112    121    2 11    121    2122    2212

### Learn to play G

(3 fingers covering top 3 holes of whistle – don't let go of 1 & 2!)

- Warm-up - Copycat game using 3 notes – alternating long and short sounds  
e.g.  
2 3    223    3 2    332    123    321    1232    2123

### **Mary had a Little Lamb**

- Sing *Mary had a little lamb* – learn *phrase* by phrase
- Sing whole song - give start note B (1) and count 4 beats in...
- *Internalize* the song (sing silently in your head) but clap rhythms out loud
- Learn to play the tune by ear in one bar phrases
- Look at tune book (p.2) and follow finger numbers written below words:

<i>Mary had a</i>	<i>little lamb,</i>	<i>little lamb,</i>	<i>little lamb.</i>
1 2 3 2	1 1 1	2 2 2	1 1 1
<i>Mary had a</i>	<i>little lamb, his</i>	<i>fleece was</i>	<i>white as snow</i>
1 2 3 2	1 1 1 1	2 2	1 2 3

- Discuss introduction and accompaniment
- Tables or groups take turns to play the tune together, while others listen and assess – positive and negatives points

**Give out *Feddan – Manx Whistle Book* – put own name, school, class and whistle number in each copy**

Plenary - recap

*Self-assessment – fill in chart at back of whistle tune book*

**Lesson One** – I know how to play my whistle; I can play note B (1) with a clear tone; I can copy rhythms using note B (1)

**Lesson Two** – I can play notes BAG (123); I can sing and play *Mary had a Little Lamb*; I can play *Mary had a Little Lamb* on the whistle

Monitors collect and clean whistles

#### **Practice task**

- *Mary had a Little Lamb*

### LESSON THREE

#### Recap of notes B A G (1 2 3)

- Warm-up - Copycat game with notes BAG using short and long sounds
- Recap playing *Mary Had a Little Lamb* using finger numbers under lyrics (tune book p.2)
- Breath at end of phrases like when singing
- Soloists could play to accompaniment – midi backing track
- Discuss the meanings of playing to an *accompaniment* with an *introduction*

#### Introduce *Bee dty Host (Hush)* p. 4

- Discuss function of a *lullaby*
- Sing song first – children copy the teacher phrase by phrase. Give start note G (3) and count 3 beats in...
- Try singing the finger numbers written below words! (tune book p.3)  
i.e. 3 2 1 1 232 1
- Play the tune on the whistle using finger numbers written below words (tune book p.3)

<i>Hush thee,</i>	<i>hush thee,</i>	<i>lovely boy.</i>	<i>Vabban veg, vac</i>	<i>Yee</i>
3 2	1 1	2 3 2 1	2 2 3 1	2 - (hold on for 6 beats)
<i>Sleep, O</i>	<i>sleep my</i>	<i>little one.</i>	<i>Caddil oo, my</i>	<i>chree!</i>
3 2	1 1	2 3 2 1	2 2 1 2	3 -

- Divide into four groups, who play a phrase each
- Some play, some sing then swap roles
- Volunteer soloists could play to accompaniment – midi backing track

*NB. Bee dty Host – Hush thee [pronounce Bee the hosst]*

*Vabban veg, vac Yee – Little baby, son of God*

*Caddil oo, my chree – Sleep, my dear (heart) [pronounce – cree]*

Plenary – recap

*Self-assessment – fill in chart at back of whistle tune book*

**Lesson Three** – I can wait for an introduction & play to an accompaniment; I can sing the lullaby *Bee dty Host*; I can play the lullaby *Bee dty Host*.

Monitors collect and clean whistles

**Practice task**  
- *Bee dty Host*

## LESSON FOUR

### Recap of B A G (1 2 3)

- Warm-up - Copycat game using B A G
- Play *Mary Had a Little Lamb* (p. 2) and *Bee dty Host* (p. 3)

### Learn notes F# E D (4 5 6)

- Play copycat game varying the duration of notes (long and short) e.g.  
4 4 4 5 5 5 4 5 4 5 4 5 6 6 6 6 5 6 5 6 5 4 5 6 4 5 6 5 6 5 4 4
- Improvise using the notes given so far – pass improvisation around group e.g. 4 beats each
- Try playing *Mary had a Little Lamb* by ear using 4565 444...
- Try jumps between the notes learnt so far e.g.  
3 4 3 3 3 4 1 3 2 1 3 1 3 3 1 1 2 3 4 3 6 3 6 4 5 6 5 5 5 4 5
- Improvise with the notes learnt so far

### Learn *Bee dty Host duet part (counter-melody)* p. 5 using G F# E

- Discuss the meaning of *duet* – making *harmonies* by playing different notes together
- Sing tune first – copy teacher phrase by phrase. Give start note G 3 and count 3 beats in...

<i>Hush thee,</i>	<i>hush thee,</i>	<i>lovely boy.</i>	<i>Vabban veg,</i>	<i>vac</i>	<i>Yee.</i>
3	4	3 3	4 5 4 3	4 4 5 3	4 -
<i>Sleep, O</i>	<i>sleep my</i>	<i>little one.</i>	<i>Caddil oo,</i>	<i>my</i>	<i>chree!</i>
3	4	3 3	4 5 4 3	4 4 3 4	3 -

- Play *Bee dty Host counter-melody* either with numbers or musical notation (p.4) – this could be in 4 groups playing one phrase each
- Some play, some sing
- Play along to backing track
- Divide into two groups - play both parts as duet/ensemble (pp. 3&4)
- All play the main tune first, followed by the duet part, then return to the tune (i.e. ABA or ternary form)

### Talk briefly about musical notation using one of the tunes learnt so far

Plenary - recap

*Self-assessment – fill in chart at back of whistle tune book*

**Lesson Four** – I can play notes BAGF#ED (123456); I can improvise with notes BAGF#ED; I can play the duet part of *Bee dty Host*.

Monitors collect and clean whistles

#### Practice task

- Practice both parts of *Bee dty Host*, then try playing it as a duet in pairs

## LESSON FIVE

### Recap of B A G F# E D (1 2 3 4 5 6)

- Warm-up - Copycat game using B A G then F# E D
- Improvise with the notes learnt so far
- Two individuals/groups/tables play different notes at same time to make harmony

e.g.

Gp 1: 1 1 1 + Gp 2: 3 3 3

Gp 1: 1 3 1 + GP 2: 3 5 3

Gp 1: 3 2 1 + Gp 2: 3 4 3

Gp 1: 2 3 2 + GP 2: 4 5 4

### Play *Bee dty Host* melody p. 4

### Play *Bee dty Host* duet p. 5

Discuss making an arrangement of the song/tune – what could make an interesting performance?

e.g.

V.1 Half sing melody, half play;

V.2 Play melody

V.3 Play duet part (counter-melody) only

OR

V.1 Play melody

V.3 Play duet part (counter-melody) only

V.2 Play melody and duet part together

### Learn tune *The Cormorant* p. 6

- Copy phrase by phrase by ear or by following numbers under music

2 2 2 2      1 2 3 4      3 3 3 1      2 3 4 5

6 6 5 5      4 4 3 -      6 6 5 5      4 5 6 - (hold on for 2 beats)

- try *slurring* different notes – in pairs first, then by slurring three or more notes
- Learn and play duet part (easier long notes)
- Divide into two groups to play both parts of *The Cormorant* together
- If time at the end of the lesson, introduce notes C# & D' (0 & 6')

### Plenary - recap

*Self-assessment – fill in chart at back of whistle tune book*

**Lesson Five** – I can play *Bee dty Host* as a duet; I can play *The Cormorant* and/or duet part; I can slur notes together

Monitors collect and clean whistles

*Teacher – fill out the certificates before final lesson 6*

### Practice task

- Practice *The Cormorant*

## LESSON SIX – using the D major scale

### Recap scale so far B A G F# E D (1 2 3 4 5 6)

- Warm-up - Copycat game using B A G then F# E D
- Play *The Cormorant* with option for some students to play duet part

### Learn new notes C#D' (0 & high 6') to complete D major Scale

**NB. C#** - don't let go of the whistle! Support with thumbs and right-hand little finger at bottom

- Try playing *Mary had a Little Lamb* by ear (no music!) using 0121 000...
- Copycat game varying the duration of notes (long and short) e.g.  
0 0 6' 6'      0 6' 0 6'      6'0 1 2      2 1 0 6'      3 4 5 6
- Practice playing low D 6 and high D 6' – blow a little harder to get the higher note

6    6'    6    6'    6 6    6' 6'      6    6'

- Practice these exercises, jumps between notes and try ASCENDING & DESCENDING scale

6 5 4 3                      2 3 4 5                      4 6 4 6                      2 6' 2 6'                      6' 4 5 4  
6 6 3 6                      6 6 2 6                      6 5 4 3 2 1 0 6'                      6' 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

### Learn *Smuggler's Lullaby* p. 7 (ref. song in *Gow Ayrn* p. 6/7 with CD demo)

- Play the tune bar by bar by following the music/numbers  
6 5 4 3 2 2 3 3 4 6                      6 5 4 3 2 2 6' 2  
6 5 4 3 2 2 3 3 4 6                      6 5 4 3 2 6 5 6  
6' 4 5 5 4                      6 5 4 3 2 6 5 6
- Add the 'dynamics' – *f* (loud) and *p* (soft) and slur some groups of different notes together (e.g. 6 5 4 3 2 )

- Try the duet part

6    6    3    6    6    6    3    2    6    6    3    6  
6    6    2    6    6    6    2    6    6    6    2    6

- Divide up the class and play the parts together as an arrangement.

### Plenary - recap

*Self-assessment – fill in chart at back of whistle tune book*

**Lesson Six** – I can play notes D'C#BAGF#ED (6'10123456); I can play *Smuggler's Lullaby* and/or duet part; I can play *f* (loud) and *p* (soft).

Monitors collect and clean whistles

**PRESENT THE CERTIFICATES!!**

### Practice task

Prepare a short programme of tunes to perform in the school assembly or concert

### Extension ideas

Try the other tunes in the *Feddan* Manx whistle tune book and *Feddan 2*

Students could compose their own melody using the scale (see. p. 11)

Record the class playing and students self-assess the performance.