



Teacher guidelines

Feelin' blue — performing

Year 9

The Arts — Music

Students work in small groups to rehearse and perform a blues song, then critically reflect on and evaluate their performance.

Time allocation 6–8 hours

Student roles Work in small groups to rehearse and perform a blues song.
Individually complete a rehearsal diary and critically reflect upon and evaluate their performance.

Context for assessment

Blues is a vocal and instrumental form of music that is based on the 12-bar blues chord progression and the blues scale. It emerged in African-American communities of the United States from spirituals, work songs, field hollers, shouts and chants and rhymed simple narrative ballads. The use of blues notes and prominence of call and response patterns in the music and lyrics are indicative of African influence. The blues influenced later American and Western popular music, as it became the roots of jazz, bluegrass, rhythm and blues, rock and roll, heavy metal, hip hop and other popular music forms.

Identify curriculum

Defining what students are expected to learn, and how they will demonstrate their achievement.

This assessment gathers evidence of learning for the following **Essential Learnings**:

The Arts	Essential Learnings by the end of Year 9
<p>Ways of working</p> <p>Students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make decisions about arts elements, languages and cultural protocols in relation to specific style, function, audience and purpose of arts works • create and shape arts works by manipulating arts elements to express meaning in different contexts • modify and refine genre-specific arts works, using interpretive and technical skills • present arts works to particular audiences for a specific purpose, style and function, using genre specific arts techniques, skills, processes and cultural protocols • reflect on learning, apply new understandings and justify future applications. 	<p>Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Music involves singing, playing instruments, listening, moving, improvising and composing by manipulating the music elements to express ideas, considering specific audiences and specific purposes, through sound.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duration, beat, time values and metre are used to create and vary rhythm. • Pitch, tonalities, scales and intervals are used to create and vary the horizontal arrangement of sound. • Tonalities and harmonies are used to organise music in different vertical arrangements. • Contemporary, traditional and genre-specific musical forms are used to structure music. • Interaction between the linear and the vertical arrangement of music is used to create the texture or density of sound. • Vocal, instrumental, electronic and computer-generated sound sources have characteristic sound qualities (tone colour) that can be altered through methods of production and manipulation. • Relative softness and loudness of sounds, and digital and electronic devices, are used to change dynamic levels and expression of music.
<p>Assessable elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding • Presenting • Responding • Reflecting 	

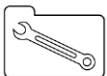
Source: Queensland Studies Authority 2007, *The Arts Essential Learnings by the end of Year 9*, QSA, Brisbane.

Sequence learning

Describing learning experiences and resources that will enable students to complete the assessment.

Listed here are suggested **learning experiences** for students before attempting this assessment.

- Explore and listen to a variety of blues songs.
- Place blues songs in a social and historical context.
- Learn about the blues genre.
- Gain a working knowledge of major scales and keys.
- Practise using and identifying the primary chords of I, IV and V.
- Gain a working knowledge of the relationship between lyrics and melody.
- Practise playing and performing blues compositions.
- Analyse the elements that combine to create a blues song (e.g. syncopation, blues scale, blues progression, phrasing and form, improvisation, call and response, and dynamics).
- Practise vocal and instrumental improvisation using the blues scale.
- Practise using written music notation.
- Practise performing syncopated rhythms.
- Reflect on and evaluate blues performances.
- Develop ensemble skills.
- Practise reflecting on their own work and that of others.
- Review how to give constructive and positive feedback to others.
- Practise using appropriate music language (see Appendix A: Glossary of music terms).



Teacher resources

Background information about Bessie Smith and many recordings of Bessie's songs which typify the blues genre can be found at: <www.redhotjazz.com/bessie.html>.

Background information about the blues genre and useful worksheets can be found at: <www.musicatschool.co.uk/year_9/blues_worksheets.htm>.

An excellent resource of the blues genre, including a "Blues classroom" with resources for teachers: <www.pbs.org/theblues/classroom.html>.

Jazz, a film by Ken Burns could be useful in showing students a blues performance. Available on DVD from the ABC shop at: <www.abcshop.com.au>.

Develop assessment

Gathering evidence that demonstrates how well students have achieved the curriculum expectations.

Preparing

Consider these points before implementing the assessment.

- It would be beneficial for students to complete the Feelin' blue — analysing assessment and/or the Feelin' blue — composing assessment located on the Assessment Bank website, or experience similar learning before undertaking this assessment. This would allow students to perform their own composition. However, the teacher will need to ensure that the chosen song allows each individual to participate to the best of their ability, and a student composition may not allow for this.
- Depending on your student cohort it may be necessary for teachers to arrange a blues song so that it can be performed on classroom tuned percussion. Appendix B: Sample score provides one possible arrangement that students could perform.
- Teachers may need to prepare music for transposing instruments (e.g. saxophone in E=). As the sample score in Appendix B is provided in *Scorch*, transposition can be done using the transposition icon on the toolbar. Appendix C: Transposing music for different instruments includes an easy guide to transposition.
- Consider where students will perform their blues songs. Possible audience settings include peers in the classroom; school assemblies; other classes; lunchtime concerts; or visits to local retirement or nursing homes.

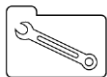
Possible extension activities

- Students improvise their own instrumental fillers.
- Students arrange the blues song so that each individual swaps between the key roles (e.g. each verse affords the opportunity for a different students to improvise instrumental fillers).

Sample implementation plan

This table shows one way that this assessment can be implemented. It is a guide only — you may choose to use all, part, or none of the table. You may customise the table to suit your students and their school environment.

Suggested time	Student activity	Teacher role
Setting the scene		
1 lesson	<p>Watch a blues performance and determine the key musical elements of a successful blues performance.</p> <p>Form small groups of 3–4, choose a blues song to perform, decide which instrument each student will play and what role each student will have (e.g. bass line, chords, melody).</p>	<p>Play a blues recording and guide students' listening to determine the essential musical elements used in a blues performance.</p> <p>Guide student groupings ensuring that each group will be able to produce a balanced performance incorporating bass line, chords, melody and instrumental fillers.</p> <p>Consider how more experienced performers can be challenged.</p> <p>Clarify performance goals.</p>
Section 1: Rehearsal reflection		
3–4 lessons (May vary depending on students and the difficulty of the performance pieces.)	<p>Revise performance goals in the <i>Student booklet</i>.</p> <p>Set clear group goals, rehearse individual parts and gradually layer them together.</p> <p>Improvise and experiment with different combinations of musical elements that ensure the song has a distinctly blues flavour.</p>	<p>Ensure students know the meaning of all musical terms and encourage them to use these terms when writing in their rehearsal diary.</p> <p>Assist students in setting clear rehearsal goals.</p> <p>Supervise students' use of instruments and group participation.</p> <p>Encourage students to experiment with improvisation as well as musical elements (e.g. dynamics and phrasing).</p> <p>Give regular feedback.</p>
Section 2: On stage		
Dependent on number of groups	Perform their rehearsed songs for an audience.	<p>Remind students of performance and audience etiquette.</p> <p>Encourage confident participation.</p>
Section 3: Performance reflection		
1 lesson (Could be completed as out of class work)	Evaluate and reflect on their performance after watching or listening to a recording of their group's performance.	Encourage students to use music language in writing their reflections.



Resources for the assessment

Appendix A Glossary of musical terms

Students should be encouraged to use music specific language in discussing their performances.

Appendix B Sample score

Appendix C Transposing music for different instruments

To open the sample score you will need to download *Scorch*— a free plug-in which enables you to view, play, customise and print Sibelius scores on the internet. This free download can be accessed at: <www.sibelius.com/scorch>.

- DVD of blues performances (e.g. *Jazz* by Ken Burns — see teacher resources for details).
- Blues scores appropriate for students — may include students' own compositions.
- Instruments — students may need access to school tuned percussion instruments or keyboards.
- Video camera or audio equipment to record student performances.

If teachers don't have access to a video camera to record student performances, it would be useful to make an audio recording of the performance.

- Audio visual equipment to view or listen to performances.

Make judgments

Making standards-referenced, consistent judgments.

During the learning process, you and your students should have developed a shared understanding of the curriculum expectations identified as part of the planning process.

After students have completed the assessment, identify, gather and interpret the information provided in student responses. Use only the evidence in student responses to make your judgment about the quality of the student learning. Refer to the following documents to assist you in making standards-referenced judgments:

- *Guide to making judgments*
- *Indicative A response*
- *Sample responses* (where available).

Making judgments about this assessment

Although students are working in groups their performance will be judged individually. It would be feasible for two students in the same group to receive completely different grades.

Students' knowledge and understanding is assessed through two task-specific assessable elements — Presenting (performance) and Responding and Reflecting. These areas may be assessed separately without an on balance judgment being made.



For further information, refer to the resource *Using a Guide to making judgments*, available in the Resources section of the Assessment Bank website.

Use feedback

Using feedback to enrich teaching and learning.

Evaluate the information gathered from the assessment to inform teaching and learning strategies.

Involve students in the feedback process. Give students opportunities to ask follow-up questions and share their learning observations or experiences.

Focus feedback on the student's personal progress. Emphasise continuous progress relative to their previous achievement and to the learning expectations — avoid comparing a student with their classmates.

Giving feedback about this assessment

Have students give each other feedback during the rehearsal phase. Ensure that this feedback is positive and constructive and avoids negative statements or comparison.

Give students regular feedback about how they can enhance their rehearsal process.

Teacher guidelines



For further information, refer to the resource *Using feedback*, available in the Resources section of the Assessment Bank website.

Glossary of music terms

Music, like any subject, has its own terminology. The following are key terms that need to be understood to complete this assessment.

Accompaniment Vocal or instrumental parts that accompany a melody.

Articulation The manner in which notes are performed, such as staccato (short) or legato (smoothly).

Beat Unit of measure of rhythmic time. A steady pulse.

Blues scale The arrangement of notes in the following order — 1; b3; 4; b5; 5; b7; 1 — in reference to equivalent major scale.

Balance When playing in an ensemble, instruments listen to each other to ensure that there is a good balance. That is, all parts can be heard and the melody is clear.

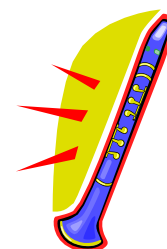
Chord Three or more tones sounded simultaneously.

Clef (bass or treble) A symbol written at the beginning of a musical staff indicating which notes are represented by which lines and spaces.

Composition Creation of original music by organising sound. Usually written for others to perform.

Diatonic scale The notes found within a major or minor scale.

Dynamics Varying degrees of volume in the performance of music.



Dynamic markings

The symbols indicating the varying degrees of volume — *pp* pianissimo, very soft; *p* piano, soft; *mp* mezzo piano, medium soft; *mf* mezzo forte, medium loud; *f* forte, loud; and *ff* fortissimo, very loud.

Elements of music

Melody, harmony, rhythm and form, and the expressive elements of dynamics, tempo, and timbre (tone colour).

Embellishments

Notes added to ornament a melody or rhythmic pattern.

Form

The organisation and structure of a composition and the interrelationships of musical events within the overall structure.

Genre

Type or kind of musical work (e.g. opera, jazz, mariachi).

Harmonic progression

A succession of individual chords or harmonies that form larger units of phrases, sections or compositions.

Harmony

The simultaneous sounding of two or more tones.

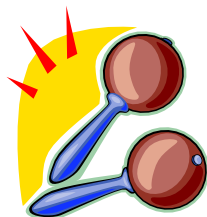
Instrumental filler

An improvised melodic and rhythmic pattern. In blues music, an instrumental filler follows as a response to each phrase that the singer sings.

Improvisation

Spontaneous creation of music.

Glossary of music terms (continued)



Interval	The distance in pitch between two tones.
Lyrics	The words of a song.
Major key	Tonally, a key based on a major scale; a scale that contains the following step pattern: whole, whole, half, whole, whole, whole, half; or uses the solfa tones of <i>do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti, do</i> .
Melody	An organised sequence of single notes.
Metre	The grouping of beats by which a piece of music is measured.
Notation	Written music indicating pitch and rhythm for performance.
Ostinato	A rhythmic or melodic accompaniment figure repeated continuously.
Phrase	A musical idea comparable to a sentence or a clause in language.
Pitch	The location of a note related to its highness or lowness.
Rhythm	The combinations of long and short, even or uneven sounds that convey a sense of movement in time.
Scale	The arrangement of notes in a specific order of whole and half steps.

Score The organised notation of all of the instrumental and/or vocal parts of a composition.

Sliding A technique used in the blues genre that involves sliding between two notes.

Staff (staves) The horizontal lines on and between which notes are written.

Syncopation The placement of rhythmic accents on weak beats or weak portions of beats.

Tempo The pace at which music moves according to the speed of the underlying beat.

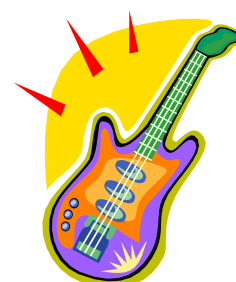
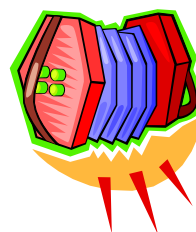
Texture The character of the different layers of horizontal and vertical sounds.

Timbre Tone colour or quality of sound heard.

Tonality (key) The tonal centre of a composition.

Triad A three-note chord consisting of root, third and fifth.

12-bar blues A chord pattern often used in blues music based on the I, IV and V chords and the blues scale in specific order within 12 bars.



Sample score

School Day Blues

N. Watson

Musical score for "School Day Blues" by N. Watson. The score is in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 120 beats per minute. The key signature is C major. The score is divided into three systems, each featuring Voice, Glockenspiel, and Piano parts.

System 1: The Voice part begins with a melodic line in C major, marked *f* (forte). The lyrics are "I lost my home-work, got the school day blues". The Glockenspiel part is silent. The Piano part provides harmonic support with chords and a bass line, marked *mp* (mezzo-piano).

System 2: The Voice part continues with a melodic line, marked *mp*. The lyrics are "lost my home-work, got the school day blues". The Glockenspiel part features a triplet melody, marked *mf* (mezzo-forte). The Piano part continues with harmonic support, marked *mf*.

System 3: The Voice part concludes with a melodic line, marked *f*. The lyrics are "lost my home-work, got the school day blues". The Glockenspiel part is silent. The Piano part provides harmonic support with chords and a bass line, marked *p* (piano).

Use and copy freely for educational purposes

The musical score is divided into three systems, each with three staves: Vocal (V.), Glockenspiel (Glock.), and Piano (Pno.).

System 1 (Measures 7-8): The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 7 is marked with a 'C' (C major) and a '7' above the staff. The vocal part has a whole rest. The glockenspiel part has a triplet of eighth notes (B-flat, A-flat, G) followed by a quarter note (F) and a half note (E-flat). The piano part has a half note (B-flat) in the right hand and a half note (B-flat) in the left hand. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *f* (forte).

System 2 (Measures 9-10): Measure 9 is marked with a 'G' (G major) and a '9' above the staff. The vocal part has a half note (G) followed by a half note (F) and a half note (E-flat). The glockenspiel part has a whole rest. The piano part has a half note (B-flat) in the right hand and a half note (B-flat) in the left hand. Dynamics include *f* (forte).

System 3 (Measures 11-12): Measure 11 is marked with a 'C' (C major) and an '11' above the staff. The vocal part has a whole rest. The glockenspiel part has a triplet of eighth notes (B-flat, A-flat, G) followed by a quarter note (F) and a half note (E-flat). The piano part has a half note (B-flat) in the right hand and a half note (B-flat) in the left hand. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *ff* (fortissimo).

Lyrics: My lunch - time tak - en with de - ten - tion blues.

Transposing music for different instruments

School Day Blues is a simple blues song for voice, piano and glockenspiel that has been written for teachers to manipulate and copy freely for educational purposes. These instruments can be easily adjusted and changed using *Scorch*.

For example, an alternative arrangement for students who play classroom tuned percussion, violin and guitar may be:

- Vocal part — played on xylophone
- Glockenspiel — played on violin
- Piano part — split, with treble part played on 1–2 alto xylophones and the bass part played on a bass xylophone.
- A guitarist could play the chords that are provided.

If you need to provide music for transposing instruments this can be easily done by opening the song with *Scorch* and using the transposing toggle on the tool bar. It can be downloaded at: www.sibelius.com/scorch.

This will allow you to change instruments and transpose up or down by interval. The following table is a handy guide when transposing parts.

Common transposing instruments	Transposition
B= Instruments — clarinet in B=, trumpet in B=, cornet in B=, soprano saxophone and tenor saxophone	These instruments sound a major second lower than written, so their parts will need to be transposed up a major second . Please note that tenor saxophone music is written and octave higher than it sounds and is transposed up an octave and a Major 2nd (9th) .
E= Instruments — alto and baritone saxophone	Parts for an alto saxophone are transposed up a Major 6th . The baritone saxophone is transposed up an octave and a Major 6th .
F instruments — French horn and English horn	Parts for these instruments need to be transposed up a Major 5th .
Piccolo parts are written one octave lower than they sound. Guitar parts are written one octave higher than they sound.	

School Day Blues — Sibelius Scorch files

Please see the music files that accompany this package:

- SchoolDayBlues-Score.htm
- SchoolDayBlues-Voice.htm
- SchoolDayBlues-Glockenspiel.htm
- SchoolDayBlues-Piano.htm.