

The National C of E Junior School- Knowledge Organiser

Music

Gustav Holst (1874 - 1934) Gustav Holst

Year 5

Spring 1 & 2

Prior Learning – Musical Elements
Tempo, Texture, Timbre, Pitch, Duration, Structure, Dynamics

What? (Key Words and Definitions)

Coda	another word for 'ending'
Crescendo -	gradually getting louder.
Motif	a small musical idea.
Diminuendo	gradually getting quieter.
Ostinato	a repeating pattern.
Pulse	the steady "beat" underneath much music made up of notes of the same length (like a ticking clock or steady footsteps).
Pitched percussion	. percussion instruments that can play different pitches – xylophones, glockenspiels, chime bars etc.
Unpitched percussion	percussion instruments that can only make a limited number of sounds – drums, shakers woodblocks, tambourine etc.



What? (Key information)

Listening/ Composing

'Mars, the Bringer of War' from The Planets Suite

'Mars, the Bringer of War' from The Planets Suite Mars, Bringer of War' is one movement from The Planets, written by Gustav Holst, between the years 1914-16, at the start of World War One. It was first performed immediately following the war, in 1918. The music is written for a big orchestra, and Holst chose to include a very large percussion section! There are seven movements in The Planets, and each of these musically describes the mood of 7 planets (not Earth). Holst's love of astrology inspired him to write this work. Holst was particularly interested in the 'character' of each planet rather than its science.

The music is written about the planet, Mars, but also about Mars, the Roman God of War. It has a five-beat ostinato pattern. The thumping drums and the sound of the strings suggest evil, aggression and angst. The planet Mars reflects these characteristics, and its two moons have war-like names (Phobos: meaning 'fear'; and Deimos: meaning 'terror'). The heavy use of brass and percussion instruments, commonly associated with the military, suggests an army marching to war.