Assessment 2b
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Introduction

This sequence of lessons has been designed for Year 8 Music students and is aligned to both the NSW Stage 4 Music Syllabus, as well as the learning goals of an end-of-term assessment focused on composing, rehearsing, notating, and performing a short percussion piece that will demonstrate rhythmic layering and polyrhythm.

The purpose of this sequence of lessons is to develop both the conceptual understanding and the practical skills in rhythm. They have been designed to progressively build up from foundational concepts (such as pulse and rhythm) to more complex textures (such as layering and polyrhythm) and culminating in the composition and notation of a group performance piece. The sequence of lessons meets the syllabus outcomes 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, and 4.5, and provides students with opportunities to engage in performing, composing and listening, and to reflect on the use of musical concepts

To meet the graduate teaching standards, I have:

- Used a variety of teaching strategies in each of the lessons (GTS 3.3), that includes body percussion, collaborative composition, ICT-based rhythm modelling, guided group work, call-and-response, and structured class discussion.
- Chosen strategies aimed a level of appropriateness for the targeted learning outcomes and for engaging learners who may be at different levels of aptitude (GTS 3.2).
- Created differentiated content to ensure inclusive participation and cater for students who may have diverse learning needs (GTS 4.1).
- Integrated an ICT component to Lesson 2 to scaffold an understanding of polyrhythm through multimedia resources and slowed-down video playback (GTS 3.4), and a composition/sequencer style planning grid is used to support student visual learning (GTS 3.4).
- Included (in lesson 3) a structured class discussion on the concept of musical structure and layering, incorporating Bloom's Taxonomy style questions and responsive follow-ups that break traditional Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) sequence, to foster critical thinking and classroom dialogue (GTS 3.5).

I have tried to prioritise active music-making, ensemble collaboration, verbal and visual thinking, as well provide opportunities for creative problem-solving, to allowing students to engage deeply with rhythm as a fundamental musical concept. Students will be able to develop both technical performance skills and conceptual understanding through differentiated, scaffolded tasks that can prepare them for the final group assessment.

Lesson 1 - Understanding Rhythm and Layering

Stage/Year: 4/8	Term/Week: 2
Lesson Duration:	1 hour

Learning Goal
Students will understand the difference between pulse and rhythm and explore how layering multiple rhythms can create musical texture.

Students learn about: Students will learn the basic musical concepts of pulse and rhythm. They will find out how layering different rhythmic parts together creates texture and complexity in music. They will explore how steady beats and contrasting rhythms combine to form a rich ensemble sound.	**Students learn to**: Students will develop their skills in listening carefully and performing body percussion or clapped rhythms in small groups. They will practice maintaining their individual rhythmic layer while coordinating with others to create a cohesive and in tempo performance.

Curriculum Links (Cross-curriculum and General Capabilities):

Cross-curriculum Priorities:

- **Sustainability:** This lesson will let students consider how body percussion and found percussion instruments can reduce waste.

General Capabilities:

- **Critical and Creative Thinking:** Students will analyse and create layered rhythmic patterns.
- **Personal and Social Capability:** Students will collaborate effectively in groups, listen actively, and respect all contributions.
- **Literacy:** Students will use music terminology to describe pulse, rhythm, and layering.

Syllabus Outcomes This lesson will address NSW Music syllabus outcomes 4.1 and 4.4 by engaging students in performing rhythmic patterns and demonstrating an understanding of musical concepts (pulse and layering). It will support skills in ensemble performance and aural awareness.	**Life skills outcomes:** Students develop important life skills including collaboration, active listening, and self-regulation. These skills can support effective teamwork, allow for focused practice, and provide them with the ability to work respectfully and attentively with others.

Success Criteria:

- Students must be able to demonstrate an understanding between pulse and rhythm.
- Students must be able to accurately perform a steady pulse or contrasting rhythm; support will be provided through rhythm cards or verbal cues for those who need it.
- Students must be able to maintain their individual part while coordinating with others in a layered rhythm performance; advanced students may add an additional rhythmic layer or perform in canon.
- Students must be able to explain how layering affects the overall sound, using simple language or sentence starters as needed.

Lesson 1 Teaching and Learning Sequence

Phase	Sequence of Activities	Performing	Composing	Listening
1. Where to and why	Teacher will introduce the unit and explain the final assessment. Discuss how rhythm and layering are foundational to ensemble playing and composition. *Discussion Question:*	☐	☐	✅

Phase	Sequence of Activities	Performing	Composing	Listening
	Where have you heard layered rhythms before - maybe in popular music or traditional music?			
2. Hook and Hold	Watch a *STOMP* body percussion video and have students describe what's happening. What rhythms are layered? What stands out? *Discussion Questions:* "What are the performers using to make rhythm?" "How many layers can you hear?"	✅	☐	✅
3. Explore, experience, enable, extend, equip	Teacher will define the difference between pulse vs rhythm. Body percussion warm-up where students echo teacher rhythms. Teacher will demonstrate layered rhythm using three student volunteers. Students form groups to experiment with layering three contrasting rhythms.	✅	✅	✅
4. Reflect, rethink, wrap-up, revise	Groups will perform their rhythm layers. Whole class identifies which rhythm is the pulse, which is syncopated, etc. Student write a brief paragraph describing what part the played, how it fit with other parts, and what could have been better.	✅	☐	✅
5. Differentiate – extension & remediation	Extension: Students create a 4th layer or perform rhythms in canon. Remediation: Use rhythm cards and clapping aids to simplify rhythm patterns.	✅	✅	✅
6. Resources	*YouTube Resource:* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZH89VCmz1ts *Rhythm Card Resource:* https://www.michaeldriscollconductor.com/rhythm	✅	✅	✅

Lesson 2 - Performing Polyrhythms

Stage/Year: 4/8	Term/Week: 2
Lesson Duration:	1 hour

Learning Goal Students will learn how to perform simple polyrhythms (e.g., 2:3) and understand how they create rhythmic complexity within an ensemble.	
Students learn about: Students will explore the concept of polyrhythm,	**Students learn to**: Students learn to count and perform polyrhythms

understanding how two or more rhythms with different beat groupings (such as 2 against 3) can occur simultaneously to add complexity and interest to music	accurately using voice, clapping, and percussion instruments. They practice maintaining their rhythmic part within an ensemble, developing precise timing and active listening skills.

Curriculum Links (Cross-curriculum and General Capabilities):

Cross-curriculum Priorities:

- **Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia:** Introduce polyrhythms common in Indonesian Gamelan or West African drumming traditions.
- **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Capability:** Use digital tools (e.g., Kacper Ozieblowski Polyrhythm) to plan and notate rhythms.

General Capabilities:

- **Numeracy:** Students will be able to understand and apply counting in polyrhythms (ratios like 2:3).
- **Critical and Creative Thinking:** Students will explore complex rhythmic relationships and experiment with polyrhythms.
- **Personal and Social Capability:** Students will develop ensemble skills including timing, cooperation, and communication.
- **Ethical Understanding:** Students will learn about respect cultural origins of rhythmic styles.

Syllabus Outcomes	Life skills outcomes:
This lesson aligns with syllabus outcomes 4.1 and 4.4, focusing on the performance and aural recognition of polyrhythms. It encourages students to develop rhythmic accuracy and ensemble coordination.	Students enhance numeracy skills through understanding rhythmic ratios and timing. They also build perseverance, communication, and adaptability within group settings—qualities essential for managing challenges in both musical and everyday contexts.

Success Criteria:

- Students must be able to explain the concept of polyrhythm, including examples such as 2 against 3, with scaffolds like mnemonic phrases (i.e. 'apple:pineapple' or visual aids as necessary.
- Students must be able to count and perform simple polyrhythms with their peers using voice, clapping, or percussion instruments; additional support includes slow tempo practice.
- Students must be able to keep their part steady while others perform different rhythms; advanced students may experiment with more complex polyrhythms like 3:4 or add improvised rhythms.
- Students must be able to actively listen and adjust timing to stay in sync within the ensemble.

Lesson 2 - Teaching and Learning Sequence

Phase	Sequence of Activities	Performing	Composing	Listening
1. Where to and why	Teacher recap Lesson 1 and introduce today's focus: **polyrhythm** (e.g. 2:3). Teacher will explain how mastering polyrhythms helps students create more rhythmically interesting	☐	☐	✅

Phase	Sequence of Activities	Performing	Composing	Listening
	compositions and ensemble pieces. YouTube clip will introduce concept linking it to African drumming *Discussion Question:* "Why do you think musicians use polyrhythms?"			
2. Hook and Hold	Teacher demonstrates 2:3 polyrhythm live using clapping or percussion. Teacher will demonstrate polyrhythm using online resource and discuss how rhythms interact.	✅	☐	✅
3. Explore, experience, enable, extend, equip	Teacher will teach polyrhythm using mnemonics ("Apple" vs "Pineapple", "Not-diff-i-cult"). Students practice polyrhythms in pairs using clapping or simple instruments. Use metronome and online resource for support.	✅	☐	✅
4. Reflect, rethink, wrap-up, revise	Students discuss what helped them stay in time and what strategies were hardest. *Discussion Questions:* "How do you stay in time when someone else is doing something different?" "What helped you lock into your part?" Students write a paragraph: "What is a polyrhythm, and how did you perform it today?"	✅	☐	✅
5. Differentiate – extension & remediation	Extension: Perform 3:4 polyrhythm or add pulse underneath. Remediation: Use slower tempo, or count-aloud support for 2:3, or playing along with online polyrhythm generator.	✅	☐	✅
6. Resources	YouTube short resource: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iti8WmLTOAQ Online Polyrhythm Generator: https://poly.ozieblowski.dev/	✅	☐	✅

Lesson 3 - Planning and Notating Group Composition

Stage/Year: 4/8	Term/Week: 2
Lesson Duration:	1 hour
Learning Goal Students will collaborate to plan, structure, and notate a short rhythmic composition using either traditional or graphic notation, and explain how layering and polyrhythm are used in their piece.	

Students learn about:	**Students learn to**:
Students learn different ways to notate rhythm, including traditional rhythmic notation and graphic notation. They also deepen their understanding of musical structure and how layering and polyrhythm contribute to composition.	Students work collaboratively to plan, notate, and rehearse a short rhythmic composition. They engage in critical discussion about their musical choices and how their parts fit together in the ensemble's overall sound and structure.

Curriculum Links (Cross-curriculum and General Capabilities):

Cross-curriculum Priorities:

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures:** Explore graphic notation inspired by Indigenous art patterns.

General Capabilities:

- **Literacy:** Students symbolic language to notate rhythms accurately.
- **Critical and Creative Thinking:** Students will plan, evaluate, and refine compositional ideas.
- **Personal and Social Capability:** Students will collaborate respectfully to achieve group goals.
- **ICT Capability:** Students will employ digital resources for music composition and sharing.
- **Intercultural Understanding:** Students will recognise diverse notation styles and their cultural contexts.

Syllabus Outcomes	**Life skills outcomes:**
This lesson targets syllabus outcomes 4.2, 4.4, and 4.5 by developing students' abilities to compose, notate, and critically reflect on rhythmic compositions, demonstrating musical understanding in context.	Students will cultivate creative thinking, effective collaboration, and digital literacy by using ICT tools for notation and planning. These skills foster problem-solving, teamwork, and technology use, preparing students for diverse learning and working environments.

Success Criteria:

- Students must be able to contribute ideas effectively to their group's rhythmic composition; sentence stems and graphic organisers provided for students who need language support.
- Students must be able to use traditional or graphic notation to represent rhythmic patterns; graphic notation options support students with limited music literacy, while advanced students may add dynamics and time signatures.
- Students must be able to explain how their part incorporates layering and/or polyrhythm in the composition, using guided reflection prompts as needed.
- Students must be able to collaborate in rehearsing and performing their group piece, with roles assigned according to skill levels to ensure active participation for all.

Lesson 3 - Teaching and Learning Sequence

Phase	Sequence of Activities	Performing	Composing	Listening
1. Where to and why	Teacher will revisit the assessment task to explain how today's lesson can support the planning and notation phase of their group composition. Teacher will emphasise the importance of structure and clear communication in music.	☐	✅	✅
2. Hook and Hold	Teacher to display and play an example of a short rhythmic composition using both traditional and graphic notation. Discussion Questions: "Which is easier to read?" "How does this show layering and polyrhythm?"	☐	✅	✅
3. Explore, experience, enable, extend, equip	A Composition Planning Grid will be used (original resource) to break a piece into pulse, contrasting rhythm, and polyrhythm. Students work in groups to begin planning and notating their composition using chosen notation style. This will be preparation for the assessment and if time permits, some groups may perform their piece.	✅	✅	✅
4. Reflect, rethink, wrap-up, revise	Once the pieces have been composed, undertake a structured Class Discussion: *Lower-order (Remembering & Understanding):* 1. What is the difference between pulse, rhythm, and polyrhythm? 2. What do we mean by graphic notation? How does it differ from traditional notation? *Middle-order (Applying & Analysing):* 3. How have you shown layering in your composition? 4. Where is the polyrhythm in your group's piece? How can you make it clearer? 5. What strategies did your group use to decide who plays which rhythm? *Higher-order (Evaluating & Creating):* 6. How does your rhythmic structure help shape the overall feel of your piece? 7. If you changed one part of your piece, what would it be and why? 8. What are the pros and cons of using graphic notation in your composition?	✅	✅	✅
5. Differentiate – extension & remediation	Extension: Include dynamics or structure (e.g. intro, middle, ending) Remediation: Use graphic notation with simplified symbols; assign individual roles in group (e.g. timekeeper, notator).	✅	✅	✅

Phase	Sequence of Activities	Performing	Composing	Listening
6. Resources	Original Composition Planning Grid (see below)	✅	✅	✅

Polyrhythm

Contrasting Rhythm

Pulse

Polyrhythm

Contrasting Rhythm

Pulse

Polyrhythm

Contrasting Rhythm

Pulse

Polyrhythm

Contrasting Rhythm

Pulse

Polyrhythm

Contrasting Rhythm

Pulse