

Version Excursion:

Live Ensemble Performance Tools for Ableton Live and Push

*The main purpose of these resources is to support live ensemble performance in schools. The technology is not designed to replace traditional instruments, but to coexist alongside them within the band playing a duet of supportive roles.*

# Live Ensemble Performance in Schools: Challenges

- Students attendance to rehearsals can be inconsistent.
- Members of the ensemble may be absent on the day of the performance.
- Mixed ability groups mean students are rehearsal ready at different times.
- Playing along with the original tracks as a learning tool can be problematic: no control over key, tempo, structure or the individual instrument/vocal layers.
- Sometimes school keyboard sounds are inauthentic to the original songs.
- Some SEND students struggle to master traditional instruments even on a basic level: lack of inclusion.



# The solution: Music Technology?



Why I Switched over to Ableton Live, after using Logic Pro for 15 years.

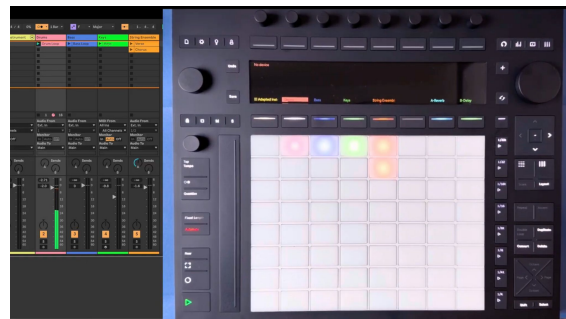
- Accessibility for students: runs on Mac and PC, and has student aimed version 'Intro' for £35 (free for schools).
- Ableton Live is commonly used as a live performance and playback solution on stages across the world.
- The integration with hardware devices: Push & Move means that the experience is as tactile as playing a traditional instrument.
- Support from Ableton and the wider community of users.

The Ableton logo, consisting of three vertical bars of varying heights followed by the word "Ableton" in a white, sans-serif font, all set against a black rectangular background.

# Band in a Box 'Session mode'

To support solo practice, live ensemble rehearsal and performance by:

- Launching clips that contain looped parts for each instrument in the band.
- Combining clips that contain instrumental loops.
- Stopping clips.
- Changing the tempo and/or key independently from each other.



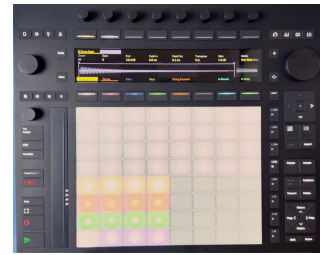
# An instantly flexible backing track.



There are multiple scenarios where this could be supportive:

- In the initial phase of solo practice or ensemble rehearsal it might be useful for less confident instrumentalists to play along with their part as a reference and confidence builder. This can be done at slower tempi, gradually increasing incrementally towards the target tempo.
- During solo practice sessions instrumentalists can practice their part along with the other instrumental parts building their confidence before a rehearsal. This can be achieved by launching all other clips except their part.
- When students are absent from a rehearsal or performance, Live can fill in the gaps providing a fuller sound and instilling confidence in the remaining band members.

# Adapted Sampler Instrument (drum rack)



A bank of instrumental samples organised into a playable instrument.

Designed to support SEND students, and/or students with very limited musical experience to be able to participate in a live ensemble rehearsal as confidently as other more able students in the group.

More able students have also enjoyed using this to play multiple parts, with the most able students creating a solo performance of all the instruments simultaneously.

# Demonstration on Move and Note



# Live Ensemble Rehearsal: Valerie

Time to play!

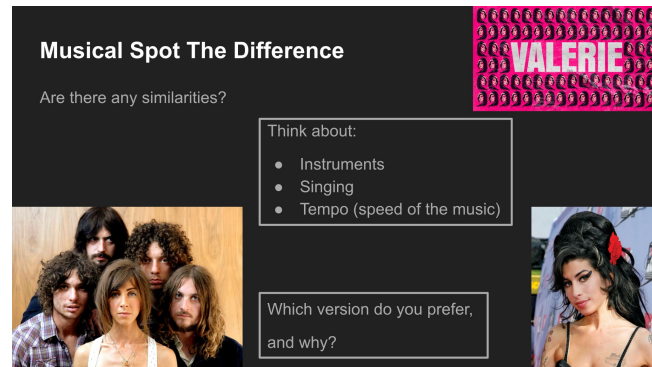


# Additional Resources to support the Unit

The package of resources is comprehensive and designed to extend and deepen the learning experience far beyond an ensemble rehearsal. However it is absolutely possible to dive straight into the live performance activity which is at the core of each session.

The project is based around 3 progressively challenging songs all with optional related lesson content:

- Live Sets for Live / Push, Move and Note.
- Lesson Content Slides: including key words/concepts and listening activities.
- Song Chord and lyrics sheets
- Exemplar lesson plan (for Session 3)
- Demonstration Videos for Push, Move and Note






**Musical Spot The Difference**

Are there any similarities?

Think about:

- Instruments
- Singing
- Tempo (speed of the music)

Which version do you prefer, and why?



# Sessions Overview

## 1: Flowers / Pain 'Mashup' - Sweet Female Attitude / Pink Pantheress.

Related Music in Context learning materials: Sampling and Mashups.

Song difficulty level: Very Easy - 2 chord sequence throughout.

## 2: Where is the Love - Black Eyed Peas.

Related Music in Context learning materials: Protest Songs, lyrical themes.

Song difficulty level: Easy - 4 chord sequence throughout.

## 3: Valerie - Mark Ronson / Amy Winehouse

Related Music in Context learning materials: The cover version - comparative analysis.

Song difficulty level: Moderate - A/B structure and extended chords.

### Learning Intentions

1. To understand what a 'cover version' is.
1. To consider what elements of a song can be changed to make it sound fresh, without it sounding unfamiliar.
1. To contribute to a rehearsal of a class cover version.



# Each Session structure

- Introduction of song and listening activity based on the 'Music in Context' theme.
- Individual learning/practice of parts with or without support of Ableton.
- The rehearsal (live performance workshop) with support from Ableton Performance tools (if required).
- Class Performance of work in progress, with optional video/audio recording for evaluation.
- Plenary relating back to the 'music in context' theme.

## Task Planner

1. Musical Spot the Difference.
2. Learning instrumental parts: Section A.
3. Ensemble rehearsal: Section A.
4. Learning instrumental parts: Section B.
5. Ensemble rehearsal: Section B.
6. Ensemble rehearsal: Section A and B combined.
7. Making our cover version unique.
8. Cover video evaluation.



# Time for Questions



[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xlbz-fLfUx\\_C57zUiUczS0qwbcsoesic?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xlbz-fLfUx_C57zUiUczS0qwbcsoesic?usp=drive_link)

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