



Year 6

The Blues



Blues music originated in the USA. Blues incorporated spirituals, work songs, field hollers, shouts, chants, and rhymed simple narrative ballads.

The main features of blues include: specific chord progressions, a walking bass, call and response, dissonant harmonies, syncopation, melisma and flattened 'blue' notes.

The instruments that were used by early Blues musicians included the double bass, trumpet, clarinet, banjo, piano and drums. Eventually the saxophone became one of the main instruments associated with the Blues.



Famous Music

Louis Armstrong was a famous trumpeter, singer and actor who helped to develop the style of trumpet playing that can still be heard in Blues music today. He sang 'What a wonderful world'.

Billie Holiday was a famous singer who recorded many songs. She sang 'God bless the child' and 'Blue Moon'.

Vocabulary

- Bass line - The lowest line of pitch in a piece of music
- Chords - a blend of three notes
- Improvisation - making up a rhythm or melodic line
- Blues notes - the flattened 3rd and 7th notes of a scale
- Scat- a style of singing that is improvised and imitates the sound of an instrument
- Riff- a short repeated pattern