

KS3 Music Lesson Plan



How does copyright protect musicians' ownership of their songs?

Learning objectives

- Learning why copyright is essential for musicians to be able to make money from their profession.
- Learning how it protects musicians from having their music exploited.

Study skills

- Listen to and evaluate music.
- Develop an understanding of song structure.

Learning outcomes

- All students will have a basic understanding of how copyright law applies to music and how it protects musicians.
- Some students will be able to express in musical terms why copyright has been infringed in legal plagiarism cases.

Resources required

- Lesson Presentation
- Examining Music Plagiarism Cases handout

Introduction

Introduce the lesson and the learning objectives. Ask students to 'think, pair, share': *How do musicians make their money?* Then bring up the list on slide 3, and students can see which ones they missed out. Link these types of income to copyright with the information on Slide 4.

Look at the three examples of different ways that copyright protects musicians' earning ability: Music played in public places; Music played in adverts or films; and Protection from Plagiarism. Students discuss the questions on these slides.

Main activities

Discuss the way that plagiarism is determined in legal cases using the information on slide 9.

Then give students the handout and introduce the main task: they will be listening to pairs of songs that have been involved in plagiarism cases and analysing musical similarities and differences. They should look to use terms related to song structure, aided by the terms (and definitions) at the top of the worksheet.

For this activity, students will need to be played parts of the following songs:

- 'Under Pressure' by Queen & David Bowie and 'Ice Ice Baby' by Vanilla Ice (the intro bass riffs from each song).
- Sami Switch 'Oh Why' and Ed Sheeran 'Shape of You' (the choruses of each song).
- New Seekers 'I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing' and Oasis 'Shakermaker' (the verses of each song).
- Paramore 'Misery Business' and Olivia Rodrigo 'Good 4 U' (the choruses of each song).

After each pair, students discuss their answers with each other and feedback to the class. Then, using the questions on slide 15, students analyse: which of the pairs were the clearer examples of copyright infringement; their views on the verdicts; and how they would explain music plagiarism based on these cases.

Plenary

Give students the question from the beginning of the lesson: *How does copyright protect musicians' ownership of their songs?* They must write 3-5 bullet points in answer to this, based on what they have learnt in the lesson.

Useful resources

You may also wish to share the CLA videos with students:

[What Does IP Mean to You?](#)

[Plagiarism](#)

Extension activities / home learning

For a further task to engage students, you could facilitate some discussions and debates using the following prompts:

- If offered the opportunity to download songs for free, would you take it? Why/ why not?
- If musicians missed out on being paid for their music, how might this impact the wider music industry?
- Why might some musicians not want their music to be used in certain adverts? Can you think of any examples of advertising that some musicians may not want to be associated with?
- How do you distinguish between being inspired by a song and plagiarising a song?
- Are successful musicians more at risk of being sued for copyright infringement than less successful ones? If so, is it right that this is the case?
- Do you think that people should be able to use any music for free as part of videos they post on social media?