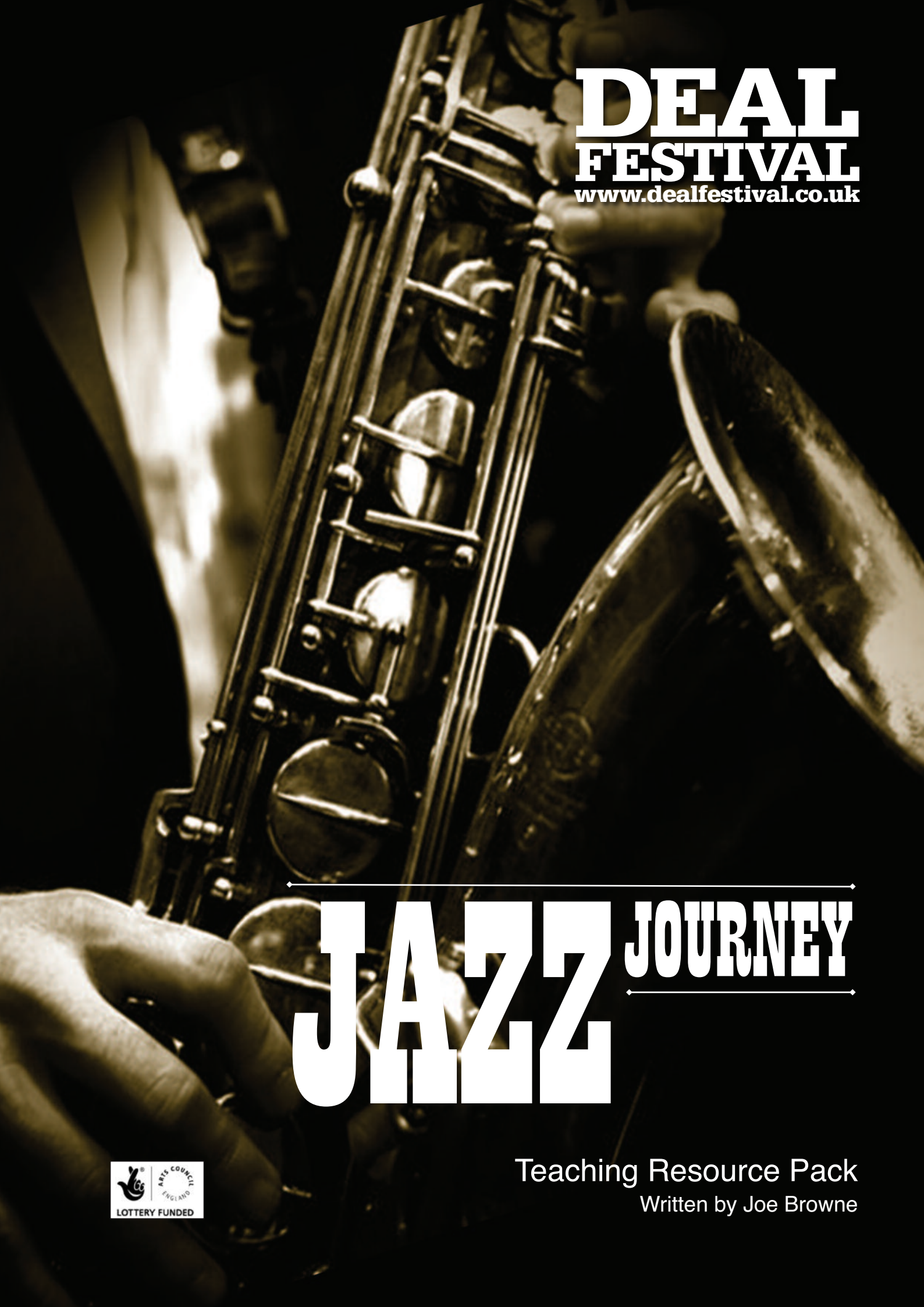

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JAZZ JOURNEY

Teaching Resource Pack

Written by Joe Browne

LOTTERY FUNDED
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INTRODUCTION

Jazz is a fascinating and complex music that originated among African American communities around the turn of the 20th century, and has since evolved to become a virtually global genre. It is broadly characterised by syncopated rhythms, intricate harmonies and improvisation. Jazz is, in its essence, a truly American music – indeed, Woody Allen once said that the United States' two greatest exports were jazz music and The Simpsons! And yet it has spread its influence throughout the world, changing and combining with other styles and traditions along the way. These days, one can walk into a tiny cellar bar in Reykjavik and hear a killing band playing the same tunes that were played by the great American jazz musicians in the 1940s, still finding ways to make them sound fresh. This is because the nature of improvisation is that every performance is unique; it is the creative outpouring of an individual or group of individuals at that precise moment in time. It is, truly, music of the moment.

We are going to make an attempt to find out how jazz came into being, how it has become the phenomenon that it is today and look at some of the pioneers who have helped to accelerate its evolution over a relatively short period of time. We are also going to study some key jazz rhythms, examine the classic jazz ensemble, study a jazz solo and learn how we can implement some of the language and strategies in our own improvisations.

WHERE JAZZ COMES FROM AND HOW IT WORKS

It is very difficult to accurately define the birth of jazz, since it emerged from so many existing genres. We can loosely say that it was around the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, and that the African American population, many of whom had been brought to the United States as part of the slave trade, were crucial to its early development. It is also apparent that, although pockets of musicians were experimenting with similar combinations of sounds across the country, the most concentrated activity at this time can be located to the southern states of America, particularly the city of New Orleans and the surrounding areas.

New Orleans jazz

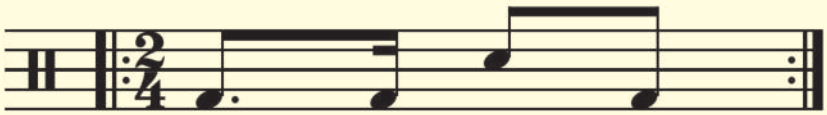
It could be said that jazz began as a confused music. New Orleans at that time was host to a fantastic diversity of ethnicities and cultures, each with its own musical traditions. 'The people of New Orleans were surrounded by music from many parts of the world, as well as the classical music of modern America and Europe. Through combinations of the rhythmical and improvisatory traditions of the practitioners' own African music with the Latin American and European sounds of New Orleans, a fantastically confused explosion of rhythm and harmony began to emerge.

Cuban music was hugely important to the early development of jazz, and to this day jazz has a very close relationship with the music of Latin America. The

"Habanera" – a slow dance in duple time –was enormously popular in the latter part of the 19th Century, not just in the United States but internationally. The people of New Orleans had a special access to it however, for musicians from Havana would travel there by ferry to perform on a daily basis.

The prevailing rhythm of the habanera is considered one of the primary inspirations behind two of jazz and popular music's most prominent rhythms: swing and the back beat.

Task - Clap and loop the habanera rhythm, placing particular emphasis on the third note. Where have you heard a similar beat?



The habanera rhythm can also be heard in much Ragtime. Ragtime was a chiefly piano music, performed by black entertainers in the bars, clubs and brothels to entertain the patrons. Many of jazz's characteristic syncopated rhythms and harmonies can be heard in ragtime music, the sound of which you will probably recognise, especially the compositions of ragtime's most celebrated pioneer, Scott Joplin. Here is a recording of Maple Leaf Rag, recorded on Pianola roll, performed by the composer himself.

A typical Pianola

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMAtL7n_-rc

This hotchpotch of music would continue to develop for several years before it came to be defined as a genre of its own right.The term was first used to describe "Dixieland Jazz" that developed in the 1910s. Dixieland emerged from the New Orleans dance bands that would play in the bars and brothels, and the marching bands that would play at funerals (which were colourful, celebratory and dynamic affairs - nothing like the funerals that we are familiar with!). The instrumentation of these bands comprised of whatever the musicians could get their hands on, but it became the instrumentation that we associate with much jazz music to this day: brass, various reed instruments, drums and double bass.

Louis Armstrong

The most famous musician to emerge from the Dixieland tradition was cornet and trumpet player, Louis Armstrong. Apart from his distinctive trumpet sound (and even more distinctive voice), his musical

invention and phrasing, Louis Armstrong is credited for taking Dixieland jazz away from collective improvising and placing more emphasis on a soloist with rhythmical accompaniment – a format that has remained predominant ever since. Here he is playing West End Blues. Although the recording is from 1928, many trumpet players still dream of achieving the dynamism and character of Louis's sound.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W232OsTAMo8

Jazz could have suffered from a set-back in the 1920s, but it in fact became more popular. From 1920-1933 the prohibition act saw the United States ban the sale of alcohol. What this did was create a culture of "speakeasies": illicit clubs where people could drink and dance...and listen to jazz music. Many of the musicians from the southern states had by this point followed the Mississippi river north to take their music to the big cities of New York and Chicago, and their infectiously danceable music was perfect for the adrenaline and alcohol-fuelled clientele of the speakeasies.

With the music forced underground, jazz developed a reputation as a music somewhat less than wholesome! The frenetic tempos, syncopation and high energy of the music, combined with the illegal consumption of alcohol, raised the spirits of America's youth – something that didn't go down too well with the older generation who considered jazz a threat to the traditional values of decent American folk. Naturally, this made it all the more popular with the young people!

But mass perceptions of jazz improved in the 1930s. Artists such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Benny Goodman formed large scale jazz orchestras ("big bands"), comprising up to 12 "horns" (various saxophones doubling on clarinet/flute, trumpets and trombones) plus a rhythm section of drums, bass, piano and/or guitar. The music borrowed the format of the smaller jazz groups, combining composed material with space for improvised solos, but the scale and textures made possible by the large ensemble yielded further complexities and densities of sound.


Count Basie and Duke Ellington

Although jazz came from a variety of cultures, it had until this point been chiefly associated with African American musicians. Once the music arrived in the big cities, however, it quickly attracted the attention of white musicians. Clarinettist Benny Goodman's big band consisted of such curious American players, and the embracing of the music by the white musicians suddenly elevated its status among the American population in general. The USA was a nation still plagued by racism in the 1930s. Although there were no black musicians in his big band, Goodman employed the black pianist, arranger and band leader, Fletcher Henderson, to teach his own band how to play jazz. He would later go on to make further history by including black pianist Teddy Wilson in his small jazz ensemble – probably the first high profile example of

inter-racial music making in popular culture.

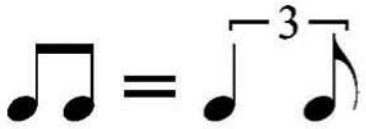
Here is a clip of the Benny Goodman Orchestra playing one of their biggest hits, Sing Sing Sing

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2S1I_ien6A

THE SWING RHYTHM

The Big Bands of the 30s were also known as swing bands, due to the predominance of a particular rhythm. Swing, influenced by the Cuban habanera that we heard earlier, is an alteration made to the quaver beat (or "eighth note", to use American terminology), that creates an uneven, lilting quality to the rhythm. Although the big bands of the 30s were associated with this style, jazz musicians had been swinging for years before Benny Goodman or Glen Miller, and swing remains a hugely important rhythmical device to this day. Although the swing rhythm is often generated most obviously by the drummer (we will learn more about this in a moment), all of the musicians in a jazz ensemble will swing the eighth notes if it has been agreed before they start the tune.

Swing is a mysterious and difficult concept to describe, let alone notate. Many text books and even pieces of sheet music will instruct you in the following way.



i.e., regular straight quavers are to be divided into triplet quavers, the first of which is double the length of the second. Try clapping this rhythm on repeat. If you find it tricky, try clapping three triplets, then imagine that the first two are tied together.

Other sources will suggest that the following interpretation of swung quavers is more accurate.

This example elongates the first quaver even more, exaggerating the uneven quality of the quavers far too much in my opinion. Try clapping this second rhythm, then clap the two rhythms one after the other. Can you hear the difference?

The truth is that the authentic swing sound is somewhere between these two rhythms! The distinction is so small, however, that it is impossible to notate with perfect accuracy.

Try it on your own. Who in the group thinks they can clap the perfect swing rhythm?!

Listen to the following clip, again of the Count Basie Orchestra. Pay particular attention to the drums. What exactly is he playing?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYLbrZAko7E

The main elements of the drum kit used in swing are the ride cymbal, the high hat and the snare drum. Let's recreate a jazz drum kit.

Firstly, the high hat is played on beats 2 and 4. To get used to this concept, try clicking your fingers on beats 2 and 4, while vocalising the word "one" on the first beat of the bar. It is important that we hear the exact placement of the high hat.

Now let's think about the ride cymbal. The ride cymbal is what plays the swing quavers that we learned about earlier. Some drummers teach their students how to play swing on the ride cymbal by imagining they have been asked the time at precisely 9.50am:

"Ten-to-ten, ten-to-ten, ten-to-ten, ten-to-ten!"

Try it.
Now replace the words "Ten-to-ten" with a sound that is a little more like a ride cymbal. Any suggestions?

If no-one suggests anything, encourage the participants to use the sound, "Tss-t-t-tss-t-t-tss…"

Finally, let's add the snare drum. The snare drum has no prescribed ostinato. Its role is to punctuate the rest of the drum pattern at intervals of the drummer's choice. When supporting or "comping" for a soloist, the choice of placement is often inspired by a rhythmical choice of the soloist, echoing or answering what he/she has just played. Otherwise, it is entirely up to the drummer him/herself.

- Work in pairs: player 1 click the high hat on beats 2 and 4. Player 2 punctuate the drum pattern with the occasional clap to represent the snare drum.

- Share the drum patterns with the rest of the group.

BEBOP AND MODERN JAZZ

The swing era not only provided a platform for master composers and arrangers to enjoy the limitless pallet of the big band jazz ensemble; it was also a chance for world class soloists to come to the fore. Brilliant improvisers such as saxophonist Lester Young from Count Basie's Orchestra would punctuate the full ensemble passages with blistering solos, and the emphasis was turning yet again towards improvisation.

Certain soloists were beginning to develop a harmonic language so sophisticated that they felt it demanded to be really listened to, rather than just an accompaniment for dancers.

During the 1940s there was an intentional movement to take jazz away from the mainstream and into the realm of high art. Artists such as alto saxophonist Charlie Parker, pianist Thelonious Monk and trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie developed an improvisation style that used more intricate harmonies and scales, more adventurous chord sequences, virtuosic playing and fast explosive drumming styles. Here is Charlie Parker (or "Bird" as he was often known) and Dizzy Gillespie, playing a typical bebop composition, Hot House. Listen to how seamlessly the musical "lines" connect one chord to another.

Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcTrx0hL1ag

One way in which we can get inside the bebop sound relatively easily is by playing the "bebop scale".

The bebop musicians would play much of their most expressive material over dominant 7th chords, which are extremely common in much of the jazz repertoire. One of the most common scale choices they would use over dominant chords is the bebop scale – a regular major scale with the chromatic addition of the flattened 7th. For example, in the key of C major, the dominant 7th would be a G7 chord, over which you could play the G bebop scale. The G bebop scale is a normal G major scale (therefore with an F#) but with the addition of an F natural (the flattened 7th). This gives us this distinctive chromatic passage at the top of the scale.

Try this scale on your instrument, up and down one octave.

For vocalists, you may have to play the scale on the piano and encourage them to sing it back. For less experienced instrumentalists who are unable to play the entire scale, try to get them playing the scale in descent, at least as far as the 5th. The important part for them to hear is the chromatic area between the root and the flattened 7th.

-Opportunity for development. With a capable group of instrumentalists, you could extend this exercise by expanding the chord sequence to resolve to the relevant major chord, e.g. G7 – Cmaj7.

Encourage the players to improvise using the G bebop scale over the dominant chord and the C major (Ionian) over the ensuing tonic chord.

Bebop has arguably been the most pertinent style throughout the history of jazz, informing virtually every movement that has developed since. The instrumentation and repertory customs of the bebop genre are still ubiquitous

across the jazz world, and much of the harmonic language of the bebop musicians' improvisations can be heard in the solos of contemporary players such as Winton Marsalis.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9OtZrIjQuwA

Let's look at a typical bebop (therefore jazz!) ensemble and the different roles within it. Remember that jazz musicians are constantly looking to push boundaries and subvert traditional forms, so the details outlined here are generalisations, imagining a typical jazz ensemble playing a typical piece of repertoire, e.g. a jazz standard!

Frontline player(s)
- Very often a "horn" player, typically saxophone, trumpet or trombone, but could be any instrument capable of playing a single line melody, e.g. violin, flute, clarinet etc. His/her role is to play the tune (the "head"), usually at the beginning of the song before the solo section (the "head in"), and again at the end (the "head out"). Usually one of the lead improvising soloists, taking a solo on the form of the tune – one or several "choruses".

Chord player(s)
- Instrument(s) capable of playing chords or harmonies, typically piano or guitar, but could be vibraphone, marimba, harp etc. The chord player's role is either to double the melody on the head, or else provide percussive harmonic accompaniment that compliments what the horn player and the rest of the rhythm section are playing. Outlines the chords of the song throughout. Also a prominent soloist, he/she may well take his/her own solo, and will typically "comp" (offer rhythmical and harmonic support") during the solos of other players in the ensemble.

Bass player
- Often upright acoustic double bass but could be electric. Provides the lower end, usually playing the "roots" of each chord. Will sometimes "walk" between the chord changes, linking one chord to the next via stepwise diatonic or chromatic movement, often at a consistent crotchet pulse and attempting to land on the root of each chord on the beat on which it falls. Will sometimes perform an improvised solo over the form. Continues to outline the chord changes during the solos of others.

Drummer
- Keeps time, ensuring that the pulse is consistent and true. The most important player in terms of generating the style of the song, be it swing, funk, Latin etc. Jazz drummers have more liberties than drummers in most other genres and use their kit as a palette of textures and effects. In the bebop genre, drummers are often quite dynamic and explosive, using a huge variety of syncopations to add rhythmical intrigue, may also take an improvised solo and, if so, is often the last soloist before the head returns. When supporting the solos of others, they may respond rhythmically to the soloist's material, echoing or answering a particular phrase.

COMPING TASK

Let's listen to a jazz group in action and see if we can understand this notion of "comping". Listen to the following clip from the start of Michael Becker's saxophone solo (13:54). The solo is killing as ever, but listen to how the other players support him. What, when and why are they playing? Pay particular attention to Herbie Hancock on piano. Listen to the placing of his chords and the articulation he uses. Also, what is it about the way that Brecker plays that makes the rhythm section's job easier?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGe0dPoJSuM

Let's do some soloing and comping ourselves.

- Pick a volunteer to be the soloist. The soloist's role in this exercise is to improvise freely, i.e. no tonal centre, so pulse, no metre etc. The only thing to consider is the length of phrases, which should be as varied as possible. Some long and drawn out, others just one or two notes. Think about developing some rhythmical patterns that might suddenly change. The rest of the group are trying to chart and respond to your phrases so think about how you might catch them out!

- The rest of the group has to listen intently to the soloist. Each time he/she pauses, even just for a split second, the entire group should perform a single "dot" of sound on their instrument, at any pitch. If the soloist is a horn player, these moments will occur naturally when he/she has to breathe, but they might also be more deliberate, artful pauses at the whim of the soloist.

- It is imperative in this exercise that the roles of both the soloist and the "compists" are taken seriously. Like a professional jazz ensemble, the soloist should be deliberately leaving space for the rhythm section to interject, and the rhythm section should be listening with enough intent to identify and seize these moments.

Since the bebop movement, the evolution of jazz has continued to accelerate. Coming from the bebop tradition himself, one of the most important artists of all time – arguably unrivalled in any art form for his unprecedented record of pioneering every major new movement throughout his lifetime – is Miles Davis. Out of the frenetic, mathematical, harmony-driven musical tumult of bebop, (of which he himself was a leading exponent), Miles decided to adopt an altogether different approach. In 1959, with his celebrated sextet of jazz legends in their own right - Cannonball Adderley on alto saxophone, John Coltrane on tenor saxophone, Bill Evans on piano, Jimmy Cobb on drums and Paul Chambers on bass - Miles released Kind of Blue. The album is one of the first and certainly the most famous example of modal jazz. Instead of a heady progression of chord changes and modulations, the tunes are typically stripped down to just two or three chords, each of which is expressed for several bars on end, allowing the soloist to concentrate less on the task of outlining the harmony and more on the different tonal worlds of the scales or "modes" associated with each chord. In other words, he moves the emphasis away from the vertical (harmony) and more on the horizontal or linear (scales). Here is a clip of Miles playing the

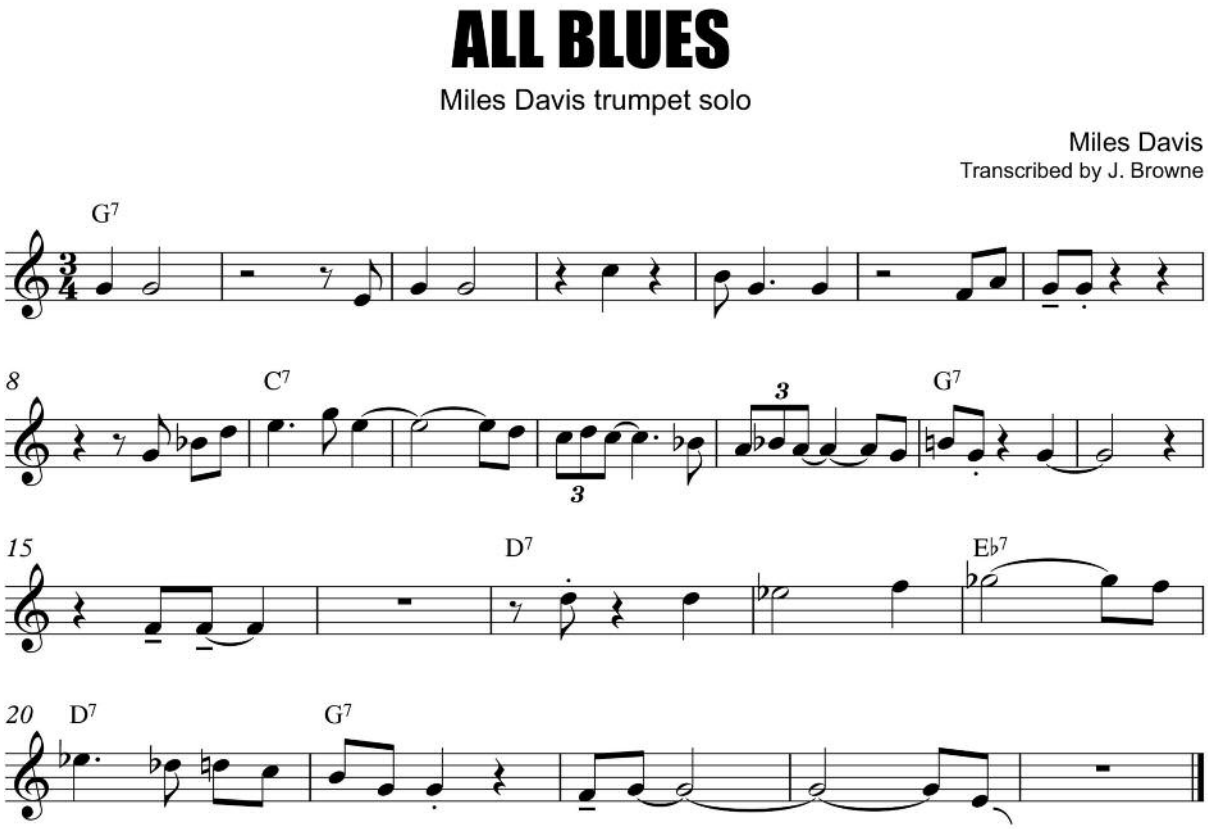
opening track from the album, So What. It also features the tenor saxophonist from the record (and another giant of jazz), John Coltrane. The tune has only two chords, Dm7 and Ebm7, over which Miles mainly plays the two corresponding Dorian Scales. We will look at how Miles Davis approaches an improvised solo later.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=NzyV8kb2_2Y

AFTERNOON SESSION:

ANALYSIS AND PUTTING THE THEORY INTO PRACTICE/PERFORMANCE

Miles Davis Solo on All Blues (First Chorus)



Task - Before we even consider the notes that Miles uses, get into groups and discuss the immediate things you notice about the visual appearance of the solo.

- Where are the main passages of activity? How does Miles contrast the use of space with melodic activity?
- Chart the contour or "melodic shape" of the solo – where in the structure does he use lower notes and where does he use higher notes?
- Look at the visual structure of the solo. Does it appear randomly constructed or is there a general sense of shape to it?
- Do you notice any rhythmical patterns straight away?

Discuss your findings with the whole group

Melody
Now let's look together at the notes.

First of all, there aren't actually that many! Certainly when compared to a typical bebop solo from the era that preceded and indeed overlapped with the creation of this record.It is a masterful solo that perfectly demonstrates how an enormous amount of interest can be crafted using simple melodic ideas, space, timing and variety of phrasing, without the need for lots of notes.

Miles begins the solo with the simplest of statements. The tune is in the key of G (concert pitch), so how does he declare this in the most direct way possible?

The note G continues to be the main focus for the first 8 bars. Can you count how many times he returns to this note?

For the rest of the opening passage, he keeps the melody very simple – most of the notes are based around the "chord tones" of the G7 chord: the root (G); the 3rd (B); the 5th (D) and the flattened 7th (F). Whenever he deviates from the chord tones it is only fleetingly and always to another diatonic tone within the key. Why do you think he would start his solo so simply?

What do you notice about the melodic material in bars 9-16? The chord tones of a C7 chord are C, E, G and Bb. As with the opening phrases, Miles sticks mainly to these notes, with the exception of bar 12, in which the note A is the main focus. Which degree of a C scale is represented by the note A?

When the chord changes back to G7 in bar 13, Miles highlights this with two quavers on the notes B and G – the 3rd and the tonic, followed by yet another statement of the tonic, G, to end the phrase. Again, he is declaring the chord change in the simplest and most effective of ways.

In the final 8 bars Miles finally opens out melodically by playing some fruitier notes. In bar 18 he plays a sustained Eb over a D7 chord. This is a non-diatonic tone (it is not within the D7 chord scale).

Somebody play a D and hold it…

Now somebody else play an Eb over the top…

That is the sound of dissonance! Dissonance is used in jazz to create tension, which not only creates melodic contrast for the listener but also makes the passages of consonance all the more satisfying! Tension and resolution are critical elements in almost any great jazz solo.

But by playing the Eb over the D7 chord, Miles is also anticipating the harmony, for what is the following chord in the sequence? His approach here is a little like that of a chess player, thinking one move ahead!

Not content that he has contorted the listener's ear quite enough though, he plays the Eb again over the next D7 chord in bar 20, before once again resolving on the G7 chord with the ultra-harmonious B and G (the 3rd and the tonic), exactly as he did earlier. Repetition. Tension and resolution.

Miles Davis

Rhythm
Miles uses an enormous variety of rhythms in the first chorus of his solo. What is the shortest note value he uses? What is the longest?

Rhythmically, the opening bars of the solo are as simple as they are melodically. We have learnt that a popular rhythmical feature of jazz music is syncopation (playing "off-the-beat"), but where does Miles place all of his notes in the first 7 bars?

In bars 8-16 Miles pulls out all the stops, using a mixture of long notes and short notes, syncopation, dotted rhythms and triplets. This is rhythmically the busiest and most adventurous part of the solo.

For the final 8 bars, while retaining some syncopation, he largely reverts to less complex melodic material. Quite often a jazz solo will begin very simply, with fewer notes and more limited rhythmical vocabulary, become much more complicated in the middle section and then return to simpler material for the latter part. Can you think of any other art forms that use a similar three-part approach?

Phrasing
A phrase is a passage of music within a larger work (in this case a jazz solo) that has its own clearly defined beginning and end. Miles Davis varies the length and structure of his phrases magnificently in the opening chorus of his solo on All Blues.

Let's listen again to the solo. Can you identify and distinguish the different phrases?

Firstly, let's look at how he starts each phrase.
The first phrase, as we've already addressed, begins bang on the first beat of the sequence.

The second phrase would be identical to the first, were it not for a quaver that precedes it on the "and" of beat 4 in the second bar.

It could be argued that the third phrase comprises a single note – an isolated crotchet C on the second beat of bar 4. Is this the shortest phrase in the whole sequence?

The next phrase (bar 5) begins on beat 1, then he kicks off again on the third beat of bar 6. The next phrase begins on the "and" of beat 2.

The phrase in bar 15 starts once again on beat 2; then the final long phrase, beginning in bar 17, is launched on the "and" of beat 1.

In short, in just one chorus, Miles initiates a new phrase on every possible half-beat of the bar!

Now look at the lengths of the phrases. What do you notice? Where are the phrases longest and where are they shortest? Is there a pattern in terms of phrase lengths that develops as the solo progresses?

Miles uses variety of phrase lengths and entry points as yet another device for generating a strong sense of flow, shape and narrative to the opening chorus of his solo. Without the use of lots of notes or even particularly sophisticated harmonic language, he conveys an extremely well crafted, cogent and creative story in these opening exchanges.

Now it's your turn
We're going to have a go at playing our own jazz solos, using the same simple techniques that Miles Davis does.

Let's just take the first chord of All Blues for now: G7.

Remember, the "chord tones" for this chord are the root (G), the 3rd (B), the 5th (D) and the flattened 7th (F). Let's play through this arpeggio together, slowly, up and down.

NB: you will probably have to help the Bb and Eb instrumentalists with the transpositions

Task - Improvise a one-pitch solo

- *Get the rhythm section to set up a swing groove on G7, preferably in ¾ time like All Blues, but 4/4 is fine if this proves too tricky. Keep the form completely open. Advise the bass player on how to provide a walking bass line, even if it's a simple 1 or 2-bar repeated ostinato. Chord players comp.*

- *Teach the melody players (or even better get one of the students to suggest) a simple, repeated 1-bar ostinato on just one or two notes, possibly harmonised in sections. This can be cued in or out at preferred points throughout the exercise/performance.*

- *Take it in turns to perform a ONE-PITCH SOLO, on the tonic (G), over the rhythm section groove. Remember, Miles Davis places much of the emphasis of the first 8 bars on just one note. With only one pitch at our disposal, how else can we make the solo interesting? Think of how Miles does it. Are there any musical devices we can use that we haven't yet discussed?*

- *Encourage everyone (including the players in the rhythm section) to take a solo. This exercise is based on just one pitch, so the drummer's considerations and strategies for improvisation are the same as everyone else's.*

NB. The form is open so the solos can be as long or short as the soloist prefers, within reason! The less confident improvisers need only solo for a few bars; the more confident improvisers can solo for longer but may need to be encouraged to pass the solo over if it starts to go on too long! Reassure the students that it is impossible to play a wrong note!

Tip #1: keep cueing the "horn line" (the devised melodic ostinato from earlier) underneath the occasional solo, in order to keep everyone engaged.

Tip #2: before you start the exercise, encourage all of the players to remember one rhythmical phrase employed by someone else in the group. At the end of the exercise, see if anyone can remember and repeat someone else's phrase ("lick"). Maybe even get the whole group to then learn the phrase. This not only encourages the students to listen to each other's improvisations but also introduces the concept of transcription.

Great – just like Miles Davis, we've mastered the one-pitch solo! What he does next in his improvisation is he moves the emphasis away from just the tonic and introduces more pitches, still confining himself mainly to the chord tones of G7.

We're going to set up the same groove and apply exactly the same strategies in terms of phrasing, rhythm, articulation, dynamics etc. as we did before. The only difference is that this time we have more notes to play with.

- *Set up the same groove in the rhythm section, or perhaps try it in ¾ if it was in 4/4 last time.*

- *You have options here. If you have plenty of time and a smallish group of participants, it can be beneficial to introduce the additional chord tones one at a time, i.e. now they have to perform a solo using just the tonic and the 3rd, then add the 5th on the next solo, then finally the 7th. If time is shorter or the numbers larger, you can encourage them to use all four chord tones from the offset OR get them to gradually introduce the new chord tones ONE-AT-A-TIME during the course of a single solo.*

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OR TURNING INTO A PERFORMANCE PIECE

- If working with able students or quick learners, you could next introduce the concept of extensions. By extending the chord tones "vertically", you can systematically build in the remaining notes for the mode or chord scale, simply by continuing to apply the "miss a note out each time" approach.

Use a piano if available to illustrate.

The chord tones of G7 are ***the root (G)****…miss out the next note [on the piano]…****the 3rd (B)****…miss out the next note…****the 5th (D)****…miss out the next note…****the 7th (F)****. What happens if we keep going?*

*…miss out the next note…****the 9th (A)****…miss out the next note…****the 11th (C)****… miss out the next note…****the 13th (E).***

The piano is an unparalleled tool for illustrating jazz theory as the entire harmonic system is mapped out in such an instantly visual and comprehensible way.

Once the students have grasped this concept, the previous exercise can be developed by gradually adding extensions to their improvisatory repertoire. Before they know it, even the least theoretically experienced students will be improvising in the mixolydian mode!

- Another way to develop the exercise with able students is to teach them the chord tones for the remaining chords in the All Blues sequence (C7, D7 and Eb7), ultimately getting them to improvise on the entire sequence. The very simple All Blues "head" can also be learned quite quickly, either by ear, dictation or using notation.

- With less able students or slower learners the chord tones for G7 can be built upon to include the "blue notes". It is a blues composition, after all, and the close relationship between jazz and the blues has already been discussed. The blues scale was developed through the deliberate ambiguity that blues singers would impose on certain pitches – an ambiguity that is made possible by the sliding or "bending" capabilities of the human voice. When we sing the major 3rd, we can bend the pitch downwards with our voice to give us (crudely speaking) something like the minor 3rd. In the key of G, this is Bb. Let's add this note to our vocabulary on the G7 chord.

Similarly, we can bend the 5th downwards to give us the flattened 5th (or sharpened 4th). In the key of G, this gives us C#. Let's add this to our list of available notes with which to improvise over G7.

Now we have a scale that looks like this: G Bb B C# D F. This is the G blues scale with the addition of the major 3rd. The students can improvise over the All Blues groove using this adapted version of the original chord tones. Although many students will be familiar with the sound of the blues scale, the simple presence of the major 3rd will provide a different colour that will enrich their improvisations, embedding them more within the jazz idiom.

CONCLUSION

AND SOME ADVICE FOR THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO LEARN JAZZ FURTHER

A Great Day in Harlem. 57 of the greatest jazz musicians of all time all gathered in one spot for this iconic photograph by Art Kane.

Although jazz is an incredibly deep art form that takes years to master, hopefully the tasks and exercises we have performed today go some way to proving that at its essence is a process that comes very naturally to human beings. Anyone can improvise. We do it all the time, whether it is in general conversation (none of us speak from a script – we speak the words as they come into our heads); on the football field - we react to the events around us in no more than an instant; even as we're walking down the street, we do everything in the moment. We improvise. Jazz is a language and the only difference between the great jazz musicians and the rest of us is that they have learned a wider vocabulary with which to express themselves. But anyone can do it.

I have spent years trying to develop a vocabulary of my own. Although it can be a maddening process, and even when I am feeling at my most positive about my playing it seems like I have only scratched the surface, there is nothing more satisfying than finally hearing an idea you have been working on emerging naturally in your playing.

The process of learning jazz is very much one of master/apprentice, and the only real way to learn the music is to listen to those who can really play it. If you are interested in getting "inside" this brilliant music then I suggest you do just that. Listen to the records, transcribe the solos (it needn't even be entire solos, just one chorus or even a couple of phrases that you like), repeat them again and again on your instrument. Try to recognise the intervals and transpose them into different keys. Take one really short phrase and experiment with it as much as you can. How does it sound if you play it at a different register? What if you

turn it upside down? What if you double the duration of each note? When you start getting more into chord changes, try taking one phrase and playing it over an entire chorus of a tune, altering the pitches to match the harmonic sequence. But above all, listen. Listen to Charlie Parker, to Miles Davis, to John Coltrane. How does he get that sound? What is that pattern he's playing? What was that strange effect he did at the end of the note?

For those of you who do want to get more into this music, I have compiled a list, below, of what I consider to be great jazz albums. Give them a listen, discard those that you think are rubbish, but persevere with anything that does catch your interest, even if it's only one track. I've also provided some links to some useful jazz resource websites, including a glossary for any of the terms that have had you furrowing your brows!

Good luck! **Joe Browne**

Recommended Jazz Albums

John Coltrane – *Blue Train: 1957, Blue Note*
Sonny Rollins – *Saxophone Colossus: 1957, Prestige*
Art Pepper – *Art Pepper Meets the Rhythm Section: 1957, Contemporary/OJC*
Dexter Gordon – *Go: 1962, Blue Note*
Bill Evans and Jim Hall – *Undercurrent: 1962, United Artists*
Hank Mobley – *No Room for Squares: 1963, Blue Note*
Miles Davis – *E.S.P.: 1965, Columbia*
Herbie Hancock – *Head Hunters: 1973, Columbia*
Keith Jarrett European Quartet – *Belonging: 1974, ECM*
John Scofield with Medeski, Martin and Wood – *A Go Go: 1997, Verve*
Michael Brecker – *Two Blocks from the Edge: 1998, Impulse*
Esbjorn Svensson Trio – *Strange Place for Snow: 2002, Sony*
Polar Bear – *Held on the Tips of Fingers: 2005, Rub Recordings*
Chris Potter – *Follow the Red Line: 2007, Sunnyside*

Useful websites/links

Glossary of terms: www.apassion4jazz.net/glossary.html
Info on jazz artists, albums etc.: http://www.allaboutjazz.com/
Transcriptions (do your own too though!)
http://www.jazztranscriptions.co.uk/
A link to my most treasured app – brilliant for chord charts:
http://irealpro.com/
A link to my second most treasured app (amazing jazz play-alongs with real musicians. You can program in your own chords):
http://www.sessionbandapp.com/SessionBand_Jazz_Edition.html
http://twitjazz.net/

DEAL FESTIVAL

www.dealfestival.co.uk

This Teaching Resource Pack has been written to accompany Deal Festival's 'Jazz Journey' music education programme and is intended for use at secondary school music level.

To find out more information about the Deal Festival education programme, see our website **http://www.dealfestival.co.uk/ dealfest_education.htm** or contact our Education Director, Laura Callaghan Grooms, on **laura@handonheartarts.com**