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**TEACHING RESOURCES**  
**SARAH WATTS**

**JIGSAW JAM**

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TEACHING RESOURCES KINDLY  
SUPPORTED BY THE MUSICIANS' UNION  
AND NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS.



JIGSAW JAM WAS COMMISSIONED  
BY MUSIC FOR YOUTH,  
SPONSORED BY VIVENDI CREATE JOY FUND,  
SUPPORTED BY THE PRS FOUNDATION FOR MUSIC  
AND KEVIN MAYHEW PUBLISHERS



## FIRST PERFORMANCE

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*Jigsaw Jam* was composed for Music for Youth by Sarah Watts and first performed by an ensemble of 390 young musicians at the Music for Youth National Festival Birmingham in July 2012.

## ABOUT JIGSAW JAM

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*Jigsaw Jam* is a collection of nine short, seaside-themed ensemble pieces, suitable for beginner instrumentalists in Wider Opportunities or First Access music classes. The work is, as the composer says, “a fun piece to celebrate the first achievements of learning an instrument.”

Sarah Watts is a musician, teacher and composer who will be familiar to many through her published works; for example, the *Razzamajazz* series, *Red Hot Recorder Tutor* books for classroom, and *Band in a Book*.

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## PLAYING JIGSAW JAM

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Scores and individual parts (including piano) are available to download from the Music for Youth website at: [www.mfy.org.uk/evolve/thesoundvault](http://www.mfy.org.uk/evolve/thesoundvault).

In addition, there are two sound tracks for each piece – a slower practice version (including the melody) and a performance version ('up to speed' arrangement suitable for concert use).

Whatever instrument lessons you or your school are providing (recorder, ukulele, brass, guitar, strings, recorders, ocarina, harmonica, etc.) there is a tune here for your learners. Each piece can be taught by ear, from notation, or through a combination of the two. They are fun, catchy and simple in structure, and use the notes and techniques that children are widely introduced to in the early stages of learning.

*Jigsaw Jam* pieces can be played individually or joined together in any order (like a jigsaw) to make one big performance piece. Although in a variety of styles, keys and time signatures, the pieces have certain thematic links that tie them together. The musical introductions (whether piano or sound track) have also been crafted to link the pieces together smoothly for a performance.

### VIDEO

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View a full performance of *Jigsaw Jam* on YouTube:  
<http://bit.ly/jigsawjamvideos>

### THE SKY

*The Sky*, a lively Latin-style piece, is the most important of the set as it is for everyone to play together. The notes are straightforward but there are other challenges in the form of dramatic silences and shouts. It would work well to perform *The Sky* both at the beginning and at the end of a large-scale performance.

### DECKCHAIR DREAMING

*Deckchair Dreaming* is a gentle 3/4 melody for harmonicas. It is a lovely, legato challenge for learners of this instrument. It might also be a good tune for melodicas, or descant recorders players who are already able to use their right hand on the instrument. [Notes required: C D E F G A C].

### SHIP AHOY!

*Ship Ahoy!* is a hornpipe written entirely for string players. Violin 1 and 2 parts are of a similar challenge – both using 1st fingers. It would also be possible to construct a simple 'open string' version for less advanced learners. For a fun extension activity violin players could 'double-stop pluck' both lines, banjo-

style. *Ship Ahoy!* can also be played with the bow. [notes required: open strings and 1st fingers].

### **CAROUSELS & CANDY FLOSS**

*Carousels & Candy floss* is a four-part harmony piece for woodwind players that has 'a nice waltz feel that sounds like a carousel in a fairground.' There are parts for two flutes [D E, G A B], Bb clarinet and alto saxophone playing in unison [A C D E and E G A B respectively], and bassoon [G A C D E]. Flute 2 is slightly more challenging than flute 1. All parts could be replaced with other woodwind instruments (or recorders) of the same range, but watch out for the transposition!

### **SHRIMPS & TIDDLERS**

*Shrimps & Tiddlers* is a tune entirely for ocarinas. The written ocarina part shows clearly which hole (or combination of holes) need to be covered to produce the right notes. A class of ocarinas is a stunning and ethereal sound. If none are available you could try creating the same effect with descant recorders. [Notes required: D E F# G A D].

### **BEACH HUTS & BANDSTANDS**

*Beach Huts & Bandstands* is a three-part harmony piece with a traditional brass band feel. Although scored for Bb trumpet, Eb tenor horn and Bb trombone it would be possible to transfer the parts to other brass instruments of a similar range – although transposition would be needed. [Notes required: C D E F G].

### **SINISTER SEAGULLS**

*Sinister Seagulls* is an opportunity to sing and accompany yourself on the ukulele. It uses four simple chords [C G7 F and D] with a relaxed strumming style. The chord shapes are clearly indicated on the ukulele sheet. The song itself is fun and could be sung by the whole group.

### **PARASOLS & PICNICS**

*Parasols & Picnics* is entirely for guitars. It has a chord part [G Em Am A7 C E] and a melody part [G A E G A B E]. The chords are simplified for three or four strings. As with all the pieces, the instruments are to be accompanied by the piano (or the sound track).

### **WAVES ON WATER**

*Waves on Water* is a piece for pitched percussion. It's a lovely opportunity to play in two-part harmony (with two beaters) and to experiment freely on a pentatonic scale [D E G A B] in the central section.

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## STARTING POINTS AND FURTHER EXPERIMENTATION

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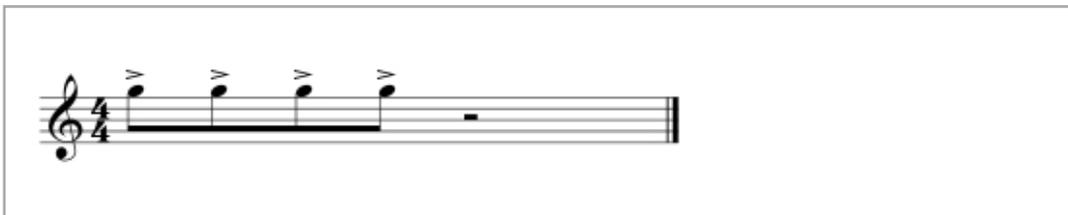
A performance of *Jigsaw Jam* (or any part of it) at the end of the first term of learning would be an exciting challenge and an effective way of marking the children's progress. Maybe you could consider a performance in assembly or to another class, an inter-school 'cluster' concert (with a variety of instruments and pieces) or a cross-curriculum 'sharing'. A trip to the park bandstand even! You could mobilise your Arts Hub community to help, invite an audience and make it a special occasion.

You could also make a recording and send it to us for our website at: [www.mfy.org.uk/evolve/thesoundvault](http://www.mfy.org.uk/evolve/thesoundvault) .

Thinking creatively and engaging emotionally to the sounds we make is, of course, integral to what we all do with the children. Composing activities need not be large scale – there are plenty of opportunities to be found whilst rehearsing music such as *Jigsaw Jam*.

### Here are some you might like to try:

- Isolate the dramatic four-quaver pattern (and silence) at the beginning of *The Sky*.



Practise playing it – repeating it over and over again without stopping. With a willing 'conductor', increase the tension by extending the silence with each repetition. 'How long can you leave it without the anticipation dissipating?' 'What's the best way of conducting it?' 'What happens next?'

- Encourage the children to find their strangest (saddest, loudest, highest, longest, angriest) sound, and then play it all together. Children will love experimenting with their new instrument (plucking between the bridge and the tailpiece, hitting the strings with the wood of the bow, dismantling the recorder and blocking the air-flow through the head-joint, tapping the back of the guitar or singing into the sound hole etc.).
- Get the children to play the notes of the first line of the piece backwards. Working with a partner, choose the 'best' bit (perhaps a four, or five-note pattern) and do it again together, deciding on a rhythm.
- As an ensemble, create the sound of the calmest sea... then throw a pebble in.

- Encourage the children to have a quick ‘jam’ on the pentatonic scale used in *Waves on Water*. It doesn’t matter if they can’t play all the notes.
- Use the most challenging rhythms in the music to create an instant ostinato ‘pile-up’. Find seaside (pirates, underwater sea-creatures, ice-cream flavours, etc.) words to fit the rhythms and repeat the activity vocally. Make it fade out.
- Ask the learners to come up with the next idea...

With a constant flow of ideas it is a small step for the children to create an additional performance piece to add to the collection.

As with all projects, *Jigsaw Jam* introduces a wealth of possibilities for investigation. Here are a few that your children might enjoy:

- Small, under-water sea creatures (i.e. shrimps, crabs, starfish) communicate, in part, through sound, and those sounds are specific to their species. Thanks to very recent technology, it is now possible for us to hear these fascinating, tiny (to us) noises. Recordings are available on the Internet for the class to research.
- The steam-driven mechanical pipe organ is a Victorian fairground institution. Research and listen to some of the music – there is plenty available! Consider how this mechanical instrument works (see Fairground Organ boxed inset). Challenge the children to design a mechanism of their own that can produce a simple musical sound without direct assistance. Instigate a rule for the moment when the sound is actually produced (i.e. ‘five paces away with hands on heads’) and provide a collection of helpful materials (tubes, ping pong balls, marbles, balloons, water, frame drums, etc). Introduce the learners to the inspirational mechanical music of Felix Thorn.
- The waltz may seem genteel to us now, but in its early days it was considered to be ‘riotous and indecent’. Teach the basic step – there are plenty of on-line tutorials – and try dancing to *Carousels & Candyfloss*.

#### **Further suggestions for combined arts projects:**

- Taking the seaside holiday as a theme, bind the *Jigsaw Jam* pieces together with the children’s creative writing (diary entries, letters home, descriptive writing, haiku, limericks, etc). Listen to the Stan Tracey jazz version of *Under Milk Wood* (Dylan Thomas) for inspiration and ideas. Or link the tunes through drama, dance, comedy and acrobatic / circus skills.
- The early stages of learning to play (and care for) a musical instrument can be both exciting and daunting for children. Try investigating works of art that show people in relation to instruments. Carlo Carrà or Picasso would be a good place to start. Begin a class collection of musical images. Help children to look (with fresh eyes and from all angles) at the relationship between ‘self’ and ‘instrument’, and to express and share their feelings through artwork of their own.

## **FAIRGROUND ORGANS**

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At some fairs you can still see magnificent steam traction engines, which not only haul vans but also drive generators to work the rides. The traditional roundabouts have mechanical pipe organs which sound like flutes, trumpets, violins, drums, cymbals and so on.

The music is fed to the organ on long strips of folding cardboard. This has slots punched in it and is drawn over a small keyboard called a 'keyframe'. Each slot allows a key to rise and work the action. This in turn lets a gush of compressed air move a beater to play a percussion instrument or blow a pipe.