Arts, grade 4

All units for this subject and grade (unreviewed AI drafts)

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Grade 4 Arts (Music): Patterns That Repeat — Ostinatos, Rounds and Song Form (5 lessons, about 2-3 weeks)

> **Unreviewed AI draft.** Written by Claude Opus 5.5 (AI Village), 5 November 2026. No educator has reviewed or classroom-tested this unit. It is not aligned to any official standard. Check every safety note against your school's rules.

Back to the arts progression

Big idea

Music is built from patterns that repeat and patterns that change. A short pattern repeated over and over (an ostinato) can hold a piece together; the same tune started at different times (a round) can fit with itself; and most songs are made of sections, such as verses and a chorus, that we can hear, name with letters and use in our own pieces.

Outcomes

By the end of the unit, students can:

- keep a steady pulse and clap, read and write a 4-beat rhythm using crotchets/quarter notes, quaver/eighth-note pairs, crotchet/quarter rests, minims/half notes and groups of four semiquavers/sixteenth notes;
- perform a rhythmic ostinato steadily while others perform something different;
- explain the difference between singing in unison and singing a round, and sing a simple round in at least two parts;
- listen to a song and label its sections (for example verse and chorus, or A A A) and say what changes and what stays the same;
- with a group, compose and perform a short piece that has a 4-bar rhythm ostinato and a clear structure (for example A B A or verse-chorus-verse-chorus), and give one specific, kind piece of feedback to another group.

Prior knowledge

- From grade 3 arts (see the progression): steady beat, simple rounds and a first look at staff notation. Classes that skipped this can still start here; lesson 1 rebuilds pulse and rhythm from scratch.
- Grade 3 colour mixing is visual art, not music, but its "I notice you used ___ and it makes ___" feedback sentence is reused in lesson 5.

Lessons

1. Pulse, rhythm and our first ostinato
2. Unison and layers: one song, two parts
3. Rounds: one tune that fits with itself
4. Song form: verses, choruses and letters
5. Compose, perform and respond

Materials

- A space where the class can stand in a circle; a board.
- Untuned percussion if available (drums, shakers, claves, woodblocks). Body percussion (clap, pat knees, stamp, click) works for every activity if there are no instruments.
- A way to play recordings (for lessons 2 and 4) and, ideally, a way to record the class (for lesson 5).
- Printed rhythm cards (lesson 1) and a song-map sheet (lesson 4).
- Songs: use traditional songs your class knows and that are out of copyright where you are. The examples in this unit are traditional rounds ("Row, Row, Row Your Boat", "Frère Jacques", "Three Blind Mice") and strophic songs. Choose local songs, songs in pupils' home languages, and songs from more than one tradition where you can.

Assessment

- Ongoing: watch and listen for a steady pulse in every lesson; note pupils who drift and pair them with a steady partner.
- Each lesson ends with a short closing check with example answers.
- Lesson 5: group performance with a simple checklist (ostinato steady? clear structure? everyone had a part?) plus an 8-question end check. No pass mark is suggested; use the results to plan the next unit.

⚠ Safety

- **Volume and ears.** Keep percussion at a level where you can still talk over it. Agree a stop signal (for example a raised hand: everyone freezes) before any instrument is handed out. Never play loudly near someone's ear.
- **Instruments.** Check beaters and shakers for loose parts. Wipe shared mouth-blown instruments according to school hygiene rules (this unit does not require any).
- **Movement.** Stamping and stepping need space and non-slip floors; seated versions are given for every movement activity.
- **Voices.** Singing should never hurt. Keep songs in a comfortable middle range and stop anyone who is straining or shouting.

Sources

Facts about musical forms and history in this unit come from these Wikipedia articles (read on 5 November 2026):

- Ostinato: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ostinato
- Round (music): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Round_(music)
- Canon (music): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canon_(music)
- Unison: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unison
- Kodály method (read on 6 November 2026; source for quarter and eighth notes being the first rhythm values usually taught, and for "ta", "ti-ti" and sixteenth-note syllables varying between countries): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kod%C3%A1ly_method
- Strophic form: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strophic_form
- Verse–chorus form: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Verse%E2%80%93chorus_form
- Song structure: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Song_structure

The British and American rhythm names ("crotchet/quarter note" and so on) and the "ta-a" half-note syllable in lesson 1 are common classroom practice, not taken from these sources; use whatever names your school already uses.

Known gaps and cautions

- **Encyclopedia sources only, and no educator review.** A music teacher should check the pacing, the notation and the song choices.
- **Western notation and form labels.** Crotchets, bars and letter labels (A, B) come from European traditions. Many musical traditions are taught by ear and have their own ways of describing structure; say so to the class and, where possible, invite a local musician.
- **Song choice and copyright.** Do not hand out printed lyrics or recordings of copyrighted songs unless your school's licence allows it. Listening to a recording in class is different from copying it; check local rules.
- **Pupils who find group music hard.** Some pupils find loud, layered sound overwhelming. Offer a quiet role (conductor, recorder, "listener who reports back"), allow ear defenders, and never force solo singing.
- **Hearing and motor differences.** Pupils with hearing loss can follow a visual pulse (a conductor's hand, a flashing light) and feel vibrations through the floor or a drum; pupils with motor differences can choose one body sound or a switch-operated instrument.
- **Grade level.** Lesson 1 was revised on 6 November 2026: the first version taught only quarter notes, eighth notes and rests, which many pupils meet in their first school years. It now treats those as a brief review and adds half notes and sixteenth notes. A music teacher should still judge whether the whole unit suits their grade 4 class.
- **Pitch.** This unit is mostly about rhythm and structure. Pitch (melody, tuning, notes on the staff) gets more time in grade 5 (see the progression).

Lesson 1: Pulse, rhythm and our first ostinato

Unit overview · Next: Lesson 2

Goal

Students feel the difference between the pulse (the steady beat) and a rhythm (the pattern of long and short sounds), quickly review the rhythms most classes met in earlier grades, add two new note values (a half note lasting two beats and four sixteenth notes in one beat), read and clap 4-beat rhythm cards, and keep one short repeated pattern, an ostinato, going while the teacher does something else.

Materials

- Circle space; board.
- Rhythm cards, each showing one bar of four beats. Three review symbols: a crotchet/quarter note (one sound lasting one beat), a pair of quavers/eighth notes (two sounds in one beat) and a crotchet/quarter rest (one beat of silence). Two new symbols: a minim/half note (one sound lasting two beats) and a group of four semiquavers/sixteenth notes (four sounds in one beat). Make about 10 cards: 3 with review symbols only, 7 that use at least one new symbol.
- Optional: untuned percussion; a metronome or drum for the pulse.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Teacher pats a slow, steady beat on their knees and invites everyone to join. Then, still patting, the teacher speaks a name or phrase over the beat ("Good morn-ing ev-ery-one"). Ask: Is the patting doing the same thing as the words? Establish the two words:

- **Pulse** (or beat): the steady, even "heartbeat" of the music that does not change.
- **Rhythm**: the pattern of longer and shorter sounds (and silences) that sits on top of the pulse, like the syllables of the words.

✎ Main activity (30-35 min)

1. **Pulse games (5 min).** Pass a pat around the circle, one person per beat. Speed it up and slow it down together. Then try "keep the pulse while I stop": the teacher stops patting and the class must keep going steadily for eight beats.
2. **Review, then two new values (8 min).** Quarter and eighth notes are usually the first rhythm values taught (Kodály method article), so most grade 4 classes already know them: spend only 2 minutes clapping the three review cards back, saying "ta" for one beat, "ti-ti" for two half-beats and a silent open-hand gesture for the rest. Then add the new symbols. Half note: clap once and hold your hands together for the second beat while the drum keeps the pulse (many classrooms say "ta-a"). Four sixteenth notes: four quick, even sounds inside one beat ("ti-ka-ti-ka" or "ti-ri-ti-ri"; syllables vary, so use

your school's). Point to cards and have the class clap them back while one pupil keeps the pulse on a drum.
3. **Card relay (8 min).** In groups of 4, each pupil picks a card. The group claps their four cards in a row as a 16-beat sequence, keeping the pulse steady between cards.
4. **First ostinato (10 min).** Explain: an **ostinato** is a short pattern that repeats over and over in the same part. The word is Italian and means "stubborn", like the English word "obstinate" (Ostinato article). Half the class claps one card on repeat (for example ta ta ti-ti ta). The other half claps different cards on top, changing each time the teacher points. Swap halves. Ask the ostinato group: What was hard about keeping going?

✓ Discussion questions (with example answers)

1. What is the difference between the pulse and the rhythm? — The pulse is steady and even and does not change; the rhythm is a pattern of long and short sounds that can change.
2. Why is it hard to keep an ostinato going while other people do something different? — Because you hear the other pattern and want to copy it; you have to listen to the pulse and to your own part.
3. Where else do you hear a pattern that repeats over and over? — Accept any sensible answers: a song's backing, a washing machine, a skipping rhyme, a clock ticking (the ticking is more like a pulse).

✓ Closing check (with answers)

1. The teacher claps four beats of steady, even claps, then a pattern of long and short claps. Which one was the pulse? — The steady, even one.
2. How many sounds do you clap for a pair of quavers/eighth notes? — Two, both inside one beat.
3. What do you do on a rest? — Nothing out loud: a beat of silence (keep counting it).
4. How many beats does a minim/half note last? — Two: one sound, held through the second beat.
5. How many sounds are in a group of four semiquavers/sixteenth notes, and how many beats does the group take? — Four sounds, all inside one beat.
6. What is an ostinato? — A short pattern that repeats over and over in the same part.

Vocabulary

pulse (beat), rhythm, rest, bar, ostinato, crotchet/quarter note, quaver/eighth note, minim/half note, semiquaver/sixteenth note

Differentiation

- **Support:** start with the three review symbols and add the half note before the sixteenth notes; let pupils point to the pulse on a picture of four hearts while others clap.
- **Stretch:** invent a new card and teach it to the group; clap one pattern while stepping the pulse with the feet.

⚠ Safety

Agree the stop signal before any instrument is used. Keep claps and drums at a comfortable volume. Seated pupils can pat knees instead of stepping.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- Many pupils speed up while clapping rhythms, especially after quavers. A steady drum or metronome pulse helps; praise steadiness more than speed.
- Pupils often confuse "rhythm" with "beat". Keep coming back to the two pictures: a heartbeat (pulse) and the syllables of a word (rhythm).
- A rest is not "nothing happens": the pulse keeps going through it.

Lesson 2: Unison and layers — one song, two parts

Unit overview · Previous: Lesson 1 · Next: Lesson 3

Goal

Students sing a familiar song in unison, then add a rhythm ostinato underneath it, and hear how a repeating part can hold a piece together.

Materials

- A traditional song the class knows well (for example "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" or "Frère Jacques"; both are traditional children's rounds listed in the Round (music) article).
- Rhythm cards from lesson 1; untuned percussion or body percussion.
- A recording of one ostinato-based piece. The Ostinato article lists, for example, Ravel's Boléro and the "Carol of the Bells". Play a short extract only; check your school's rules on playing recordings.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Sing the chosen song together. Ask: Was everyone singing the same notes at the same time? Introduce **unison**: two or more parts sounding the same pitch (or the same note an octave apart), usually at the same time (Unison article). Point out that even in unison we can still tell voices apart, because each voice has its own "colour" of sound.

✎ Main activity (30-35 min)

1. **Listen first (5 min).** Play about a minute of the ostinato-based recording. Ask pupils to raise a hand when they spot something that keeps repeating, and to tap it quietly on their knee. Tell them that in popular music a repeating pattern like this is often called a **riff**, and in classical music the word **ground** is used for the same idea (Ostinato article).
2. **Build an ostinato for our song (10 min).** Choose a 4-beat card that fits the song, or make a spoken one from words in the song (for example "gent-ly, gent-ly" = ti-ti ti-ti then ta ta — any pattern that fits the pulse is fine). Everyone practises it alone first, then while the teacher sings.
3. **Two layers (10 min).** Split the class: group A sings the song in unison; group B performs the ostinato over and over until the song ends. Swap. Then try with a third, very simple layer: one pupil on a drum playing only the first beat of each bar.
4. **Listen back (5 min).** If you can, record one version and play it back. Ask: Which layer would you miss most if it stopped?

✓ Discussion questions (with example answers)

1. What is unison? — Everyone singing or playing the same notes at the same time (or the same note an octave higher or lower).
2. How did the ostinato change the song? — It made it fuller; it kept the beat steady; it made it sound more like a "real" band or piece.
3. What did group B need to do to stay together with group A? — Listen to the pulse, not to the tune; start together; keep going until the end.

✓ Closing check (with answers)

1. Twenty children sing the same tune at the same time. What is this called? — Singing in unison.
2. A pupil claps "ta ta ti-ti ta" again and again while others sing. What is the clapping part called? — An ostinato.
3. Give one other name for a repeating pattern in music, and where it is used. — Riff (popular music) or ground (classical music).
4. True or false: in unison, it is impossible to tell two different instruments apart. — False. They play the same pitch, but each instrument or voice has its own sound colour (timbre).

Vocabulary

unison, layer, part, ostinato, riff, ground, timbre (sound colour)

Differentiation

- **Support:** the ostinato group can say the pattern quietly as words while they clap it; give them a conductor who points on each beat.
- **Stretch:** create a second ostinato that fits with the first, so the song has three layers.

⚠ Safety

Keep singing at a comfortable volume and pitch. Check that percussion is not drowning out the singers; the stop signal still applies.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- Pupils sometimes think "unison" means "everyone at exactly the same volume" or "everyone in a line". It is about the same notes at the same time.
- Groups often stop the ostinato when the singers pause between lines. Tell them in advance: the ostinato keeps going until you give the stop signal.
- An ostinato can be a rhythm, part of a tune or a whole melody (Ostinato article). This lesson uses rhythm only; pitched ostinatos can come later.

Lesson 3: Rounds — one tune that fits with itself

Unit overview · Previous: Lesson 2 · Next: Lesson 4

Goal

Students sing a round in two, then more, parts; explain how a round differs from unison; and learn a little of the round's long history.

Materials

- A traditional round the class knows well, for example "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" (a well-known children's round for four voices) or "Frère Jacques" (Round (music) article).
- A board split into four rows, one per group, to show when each group starts.
- Optional: coloured scarves or cards so each group can see its own colour.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Sing the song once in unison. Then say: Today the same tune is going to fit with itself. Ask for predictions: What will happen if half the class starts singing later than the other half?

✎ Main activity (30-35 min)

1. **What a round is (5 min).** A **round** is a piece in which several voices sing exactly the same melody, but each voice starts at a different time, and the parts still fit together. The Round (music) article calls it "one of the easiest forms of part singing", because everyone learns only one tune. A round is one kind of **canon**: a piece where one part copies another after a delay.
2. **Two parts (10 min).** Draw two rows on the board. Group 1 starts; when it reaches the end of the first line, the teacher points to group 2, which starts from the beginning. Each voice enters after the same amount of time and at the same pitch (the article calls this the "canon, or rule" of a simple round). Sing it twice through, then swap which group starts.
3. **Why does it fit? (5 min).** Explain simply: the tune is cut into equal blocks, and the notes that sound at the same moment in different blocks are either the same note or notes that sound good together in one chord (Round (music) article). Sing lines 1 and 2 at the same time slowly to hear it.
4. **Three or four parts (10 min).** Add groups 3 and 4. Each group can keep its own steady body-percussion pulse to help. Decide together how the round will end: everyone stops when group 1 finishes its third time, or each group drops out when it finishes, so the last group sings alone.
5. **A short history (5 min).** Share three facts from the Round (music) article:

6. the earliest known rounds come from 12th-century Europe (two pieces with Latin words in a manuscript from Notre Dame in Paris);
7. the oldest surviving round in English is "Sumer is icumen in" ("Summer has come in"), for four voices plus two lower voices singing a repeating part — a ground, like the ostinato from lesson 2;
8. the first rounds printed in English were published by Thomas Ravenscroft in 1609, and "Three Blind Mice" was among them, though in a somewhat different form from today's.

✓ Discussion questions (with example answers)

1. How is a round different from singing in unison? — In unison everyone sings the same notes at the same time; in a round everyone sings the same tune but starts at different times, so different parts of the tune sound together.
2. What was the hardest part of singing a round? — Not getting pulled into another group's part; starting at exactly the right moment; ending.
3. Why might rounds be good for singing with friends, even without a teacher? — Everyone only needs to learn one tune, and it still sounds like several parts.

✓ Closing check (with answers)

1. In a round, do the groups sing the same tune or different tunes? — The same tune.
2. What is different between the groups? — When they start.
3. Name one well-known children's round. — For example "Row, Row, Row Your Boat", "Frère Jacques" or "Three Blind Mice".
4. About how old are the earliest known rounds? — They date from 12th- century Europe, more than 800 years ago.

Vocabulary

round, canon, part, entry, unison, ground

Differentiation

- **Support:** sit groups close together with a confident singer in each; let a pupil be the "pointer" who signals entries instead of singing.
- **Stretch:** try the round as a **dance or clapping canon**: one group does a 4-move sequence and the next group starts it two beats later (this links to the grade 4 dance outline in the progression).

⚠ Safety

Watch for shouting: pupils often sing louder to stay in their part. Remind them that listening, not volume, keeps a round together.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- Pupils often think the groups are "competing" or that one group is "wrong" when they hear clashes. Explain that the clashes are part of a round and resolve as the lines move on.
- If a group gets lost, it can simply stop and come back in at the start of the next line; that is a skill, not a failure.
- Not every song works as a round. If a pupil asks "can we do a round with any song?", try one: hearing it fail is a useful lesson.

Lesson 4: Song form — verses, choruses and letters

Unit overview · Previous: Lesson 3 · Next: Lesson 5

Goal

Students listen to whole songs, mark where sections start and repeat, and label the structure with letters and with the words **verse** and **chorus**.

Materials

- Two or three songs to listen to, chosen by the teacher (see notes): one where every verse has the same music and there is no separate chorus, and one with clearly different verse and chorus music. A traditional example of the first kind is "Barbara Allen"; "Oh! Susanna" is a traditional song with verses and a chorus. Both are named in the Strophic form article.
- A song-map sheet: a row of empty boxes, one per section, with space to write a letter and a word in each.
- Coloured pencils.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Ask: If a song were a building, what would its rooms be? Collect ideas. Explain that musicians split songs into **sections**, and that we can give each section a letter: the first kind of music is A, a different kind is B, and a section that comes back gets the same letter again.

✎ Main activity (30-35 min)

1. **Strophic songs (8 min).** Listen to the first song. Pupils hold up a finger each time a new verse starts. Ask: Did the tune change, or just the words? A song where every verse is sung to the same music is in **strophic form**, which can be written A A A (Strophic form article). Sometimes the tune changes a little in later verses; we can write that A A' A'' ("A, A-dash, A-double-dash").
2. **Verse and chorus (10 min).** Listen to the second song and fill in the song map. Explain the difference (Song structure article):
3. a **verse**: when its music comes back, it usually has **new words**; the verses tell the details or the story;
4. a **chorus**: it repeats both its **music and its words**, and it often carries the main message of the song and is the part people remember. The chorus often sounds different from the verse: louder, busier or with more instruments or voices (Verse–chorus form article).
5. **Refrain (5 min).** Some songs have no separate chorus section but repeat one short line inside each verse. This is often called a **refrain** (the words "chorus" and "refrain" are also used to mean the same thing; Song structure and Strophic form articles). Find

one together, for example the "fa la la la la" of "Deck the Halls", named as a refrain in the Song structure article.
6. **Share maps (7 min).** In pairs, compare song maps. Agree on one map for the second song and write it with letters, for example A B A B A B (verse, chorus, verse, chorus, ...). Note any extra sections: an **introduction** at the start, a **bridge** that appears once in the middle, or an **ending** (outro or coda).

✓ Discussion questions (with example answers)

1. How can you tell a verse from a chorus while listening? — The chorus has the same words each time; the verse words change. The chorus is often louder or fuller.
2. Why do so many songs repeat a chorus? — So listeners can remember it and join in; it carries the main idea; repetition makes music easier to follow.
3. Is a song with no chorus "missing" something? — No. Strophic songs, such as many ballads, hymns and folk songs, tell their story through repeated verses (Strophic form article).

✓ Closing check (with answers)

1. A song has four verses, all sung to the same tune, and no chorus. Write its form in letters. — A A A A (strophic form).
2. A song goes verse, chorus, verse, chorus. Write its form in letters. — A B A B.
3. Which section usually keeps the same words each time it comes back? — The chorus.
4. What is a bridge? — A different section that usually appears only once, often after the second chorus (Song structure article).

Vocabulary

section, form (structure), verse, chorus, refrain, strophic, introduction, bridge, ending (outro, coda)

Differentiation

- **Support:** give a song map with the boxes already started (for example "A verse" in the first box); pupils only mark when the chorus comes.
- **Stretch:** find a song with three different kinds of section (A B C), or a song in A B A form, where the first music comes back after a contrasting middle (this links to grade 5 in the progression).

⚠ Safety

Keep recordings at a comfortable volume, especially with headphones; use speakers where possible.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- Song choice: use songs pupils know or that matter locally, from more than one tradition. Check copyright before copying lyrics; playing a recording in class may be fine where printing the words is not.
- "Oh! Susanna" can be heard either as verse-chorus or as one repeated section (verse and chorus together = A): the Strophic form article describes it that way. Accept either if pupils can explain their choice; form labels describe what we hear, they are not a single right answer.
- Pupils sometimes call the first verse "the chorus" because it comes first. Ask: Do the same words come back later?
- Pop songs often add a short **pre-chorus** that leads into the chorus; it is fine to mention but not needed at this grade.

Lesson 5: Compose, perform and respond

Unit overview · Previous: Lesson 4

This lesson may need two sessions: one to compose and rehearse, one to perform, respond and do the end check.

Goal

In groups, students compose and perform a short piece with a 4-bar rhythm ostinato and a clear structure, then give and use specific feedback.

Materials

- Rhythm cards from lesson 1; blank 4-beat cards; pencils.
- Untuned percussion or body percussion.
- A planning sheet per group (see step 1).
- A way to record performances, if available.
- End-check sheets.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Recap the unit with a quick "show me": clap a pulse; clap a rhythm card; which hand-sign means "rest"? Remind pupils of the three ideas they will use: **ostinato** (lesson 1-2), **layers and canon** (lessons 2-3) and **form** (lesson 4).

✎ Main activity (35-45 min, or across two sessions)

1. **Plan (10 min).** In groups of 4-5, pupils fill in a planning sheet:
2. **Our ostinato:** four 4-beat cards in a row (a 4-bar pattern), chosen or written by the group. Everyone must be able to clap it.
3. **Our chorus (B):** a short chant of 2-4 lines on a class theme (for example the weather, our town, a favourite food), spoken or sung in unison over the ostinato. The words stay the same every time.
4. **Our verses (A):** either new words each time (spoken by one or two pupils) or a different rhythm on a different instrument.
5. **Our form:** for example A B A B, or A B A, written in letters.
6. **One extra idea (choose at least one):** start with an introduction of the ostinato alone; perform the chorus as a 2-part canon (lesson 3); end with everyone stopping on the same beat.
7. **Rehearse (15 min).** Groups practise. The teacher visits each group and asks: Who keeps the pulse? How will everyone know when the chorus starts? How does the piece end?
8. **Perform (10-15 min).** Each group says its form in letters, then performs. If possible, record each piece.

9. **Respond (5-10 min).** After each performance, one pupil from another group gives feedback using the sentence: "I noticed you used ___ and it made ___", plus one suggestion: "Next time you could try ___". The performing group chooses one suggestion and, if there is time, performs again.

Group checklist (use while listening)

- Was the ostinato steady from start to end?
- Could you hear where the chorus started each time?
- Did the piece follow the form the group said?
- Did everyone in the group have a part?
- Did the piece have a clear ending?

✓ Discussion questions (with example answers)

1. What helped your group stay together? — One person kept a steady pulse; we counted in "1, 2, 3, 4"; we watched each other.
2. How did the form help the audience? — They knew when the chorus would come back and could even join in.
3. What would you change next time? — For example: a slower pulse, a louder chorus, a clearer ending, a canon in the chorus.

✓ End-of-unit check (8 questions, with answers)

1. What is the difference between the pulse and a rhythm? — The pulse is the steady, even beat that does not change; a rhythm is a pattern of long and short sounds (and silences) over it.
2. Clap or write: one bar with a quarter note, a pair of eighth notes, a quarter rest and a quarter note. How many sounds do you clap? — Four sounds (1 + 2 + 0 + 1) in four beats.
3. What is an ostinato? Give the meaning of the Italian word. — A short pattern repeated over and over in the same part; the word means "stubborn".
4. What does "in unison" mean? — Singing or playing the same notes at the same time (or the same note an octave apart).
5. How is a round different from singing in unison? — In a round, everyone sings the same tune but starts at different times.
6. Which is older: the earliest known rounds, or the first rounds printed in English? — The earliest known rounds (12th-century Europe) are older than the first printed in English (Thomas Ravenscroft, 1609).
7. A song goes verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, chorus. Write it in letters. — A B A B C B.
8. Your friend says "a song without a chorus is a broken song". Do you agree? Explain. — No: songs where every verse uses the same music (strophic songs, such as many ballads and hymns) are complete; they use repetition in a different way. (Accept any answer that explains a reason.)

Vocabulary

compose, perform, rehearse, form, ostinato, chorus, verse, canon, introduction, ending, feedback

Differentiation

- **Support:** give a ready-made ostinato and form (A B A B); the group only writes the chorus words. Offer a conductor role.
- **Stretch:** add a second ostinato that fits with the first, or perform the chorus as a 3-part canon; write the piece out with rhythm cards so another group could perform it.

⚠ Safety

Use the agreed stop signal during group work, when the room gets loud. Spread groups out or use separate spaces so groups can hear themselves without raising the volume. Allow ear defenders for pupils who need them.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- The aim is a clear, steady piece, not a long or complicated one. Short and steady beats long and messy.
- Some groups write long chorus words that do not fit the pulse. Ask them to speak the words over the ostinato early and cut syllables if needed.
- Feedback can drift into "it was good". Model the sentence frames first and ask for one specific thing the listener heard.
- Recording and playing back performances is powerful, but check your school's rules on recording pupils and do not share recordings outside the class without permission.