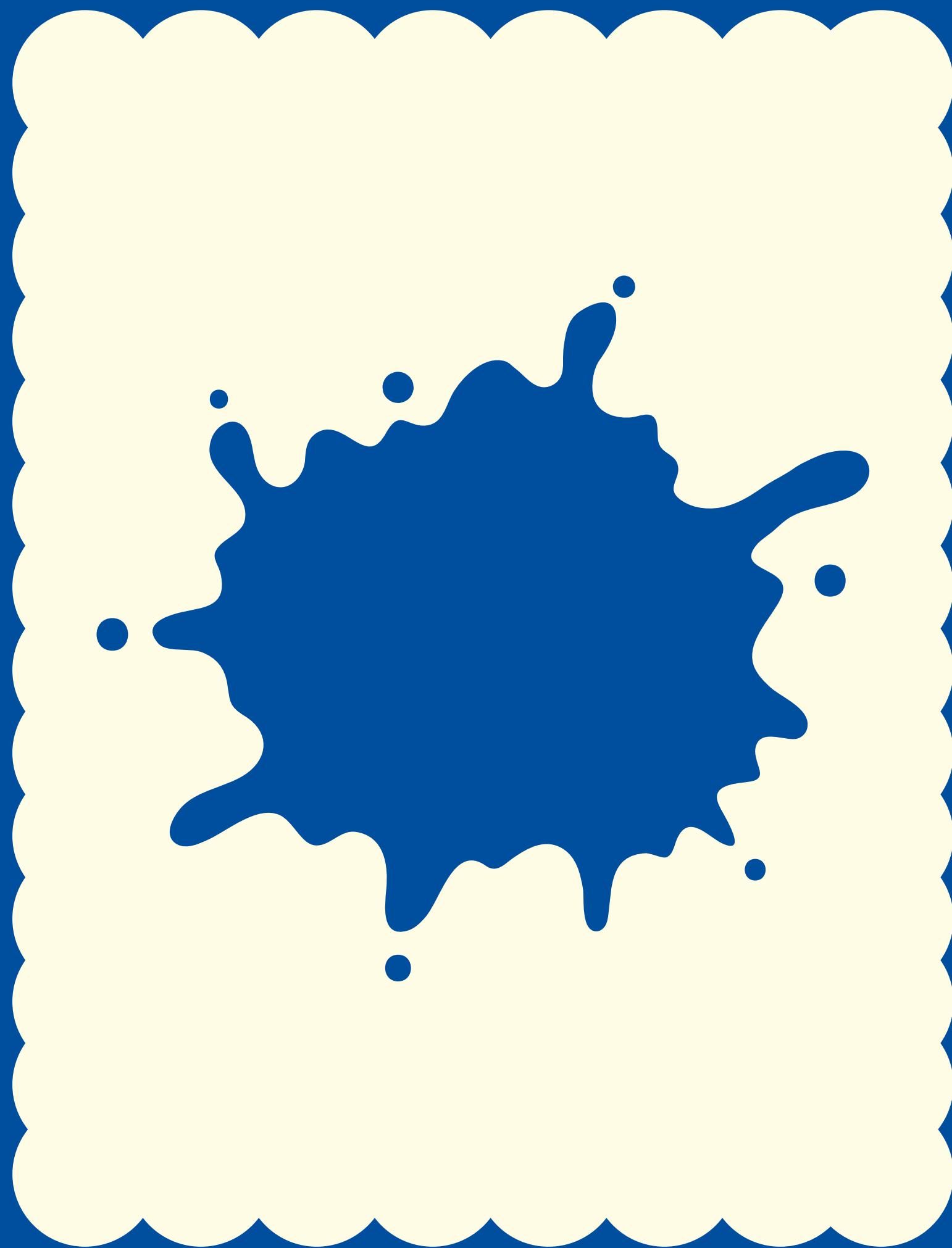


NYJO

**+YOU Sort
of Blue(s)**

Joe Browne



LEARNING RESOURCE

Using the +You Learning Resources!

NYJO +You learning resources are here to help you learn the +You pieces - they break down how to approach each piece and help you develop the musical skills you'll need for each tune.

Work your way through each section, having a go at the various exercises outlined. Our Young Musician videos accompany these exercises with demonstrations from NYJO members, they also give some great tips and advice on how to approach the pieces too!

Click the  to watch each video.

The Young Musician videos are also saved in the video section of each piece's page on the +You website. Here you can also find videos from the +You composers themselves; these will give you a more in-depth explanation on how to learn the tunes.

Our learning resources contain a lot of information (it's all useful, we promise!) and for some of you, it might be hard to know where to start! To help you navigate all of the content, you will find these icons throughout:



Entry level



Feeling confident



Dive deeper

These will assist you in finding the information in the +You learning resources that is suitable for you, meeting you at your level. You'll hopefully find that as you work through each tune you will develop your musical understanding and therefore be able to progress from one colour to the next.

Remember, even if you are a slightly more experienced jazz player and familiar with music theory, it is always valuable to revisit the basics!

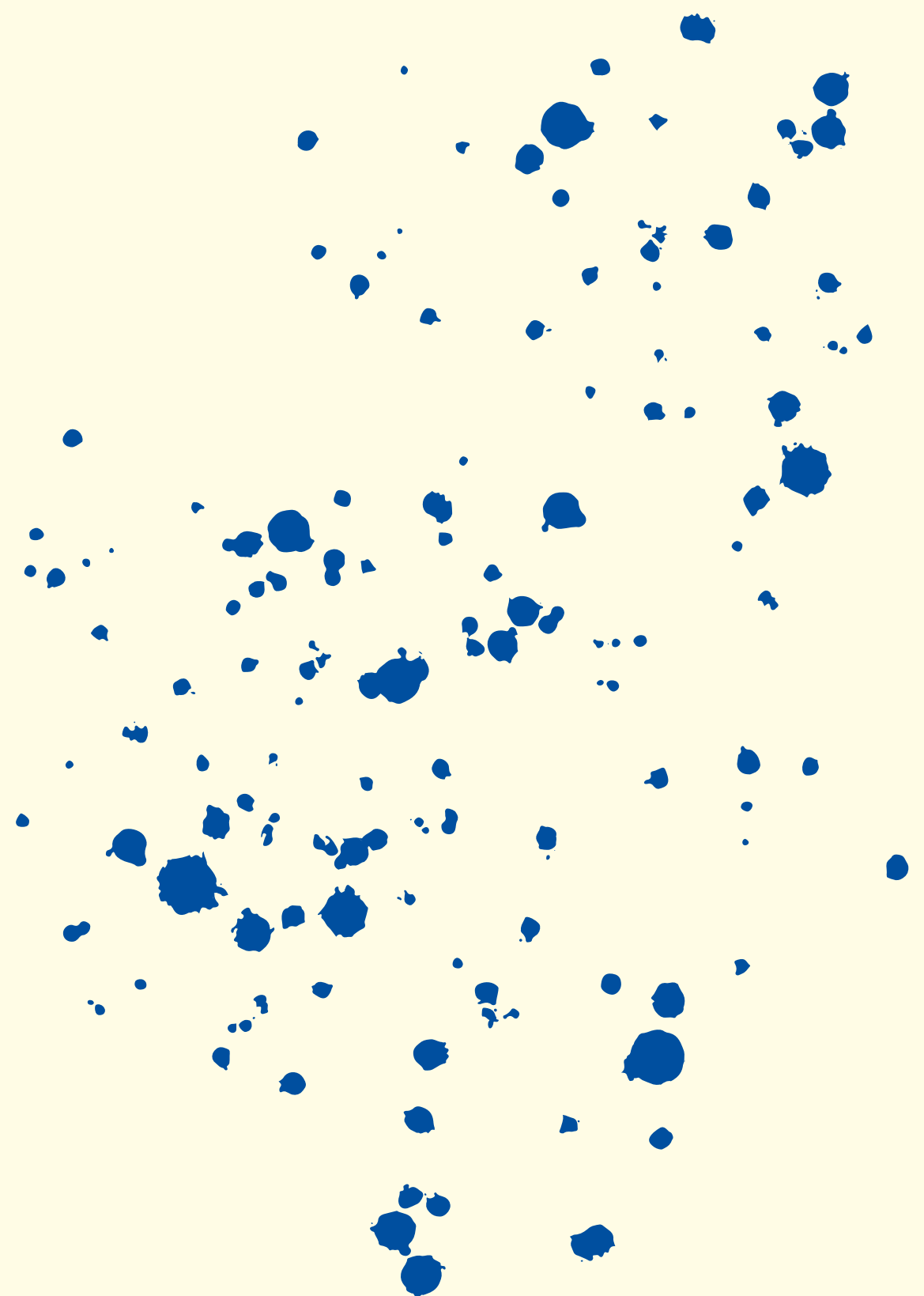
About Sort of Blue(s)

Sort of Blue(s) is a piece of music written by Joe Browne. Joe is a saxophone player who leads lots of projects for NYJO around the country. Joe has introduced young musicians to jazz in London, Cumbria, Lancashire, Hull, Kent – and now you!

Blues music developed in America in the 19th Century. It was particularly influenced by work songs and spirituals (religious vocal music) sung by enslaved African American workers living in the deep South. This music was typically characterised by call and response patterns which can still be heard in Blues music today. Blues music often carries a feeling of sadness and melancholy through its lyrics and melody. This piece uses a chord sequence that draws inspiration from a standard 12 Bar Blues, but with changes to the chord type and movement.

USING A MINUS ONE TRACK

Some of you might not have used a minus one track before, and that is totally okay! Watch our Young Musician video on how they would approach practicing with a minus one track.



What about the rhythm in Sort of Blue(s)?

Sort of Blue(s) uses what we call a 'straight eights' groove. This comes from the fact that it has an '8-beat' feel, combined with a Latin influence. Breaking down the beat into quavers shows you how to place this rhythm correctly.



EXERCISE 1: Straight Eights Groove



Have a go at the following exercise. Try clapping the bottom line and vocalising (saying aloud) the top line.



EXERCISE 2: Metric Modulation



Once you feel that you understand this, the next thing to do is to look at the metric modulation (change in the meter) from the 4/4 section into the 6/8 section. Here, the quaver stays at the same speed but the beat slows down. Try this exercise to feel how this change works. You can choose any vocalisation that feels comfortable.

Practice Tips

This section includes tips for focused sections of practice that you can do to help learn the melody for Sort of Blue(s).

Wind & Brass Players

The intervals in the wind & brass charts for this piece are predominantly **melodic intervals**. They are called this because the two notes are played one after the other. If you are measuring the interval of two notes that are played at the same time you would call this a harmonic interval instead.

TIP 1: Wide Intervals

When learning how to play the wide intervals in Sort of Blue(s), we'd recommend practising the first four bars of section A over and over until it starts to feel easy.



Then do the same with the next two bars (bars 9 and 10) and then again with bars 12 and 13.

Go as slow as you need to get these intervals right, but say the rhythm to yourself as you are practising to help remember what you are aiming for. The 6/8 section can also be practised in the same way.

Rhythm Section

TIP 1: Rhythm Section General Practice Tip

In the rhythm section, try **looping** the first two bars until the rhythms and notes feel comfortable to you. Look out for the 'push' onto beat 4 in the 4th bar of A.

TIP 2: Bass

In the bass, playing the last beat short at the end of the 2-bar riff (a pattern of notes that is repeated throughout a piece) will give the music some style and energy.

TIP 3: Drums

In the drums, start with practising the **ride cymbal pattern** before adding the **off-beat hi-hat** and then the **bass and snare**.

If the pattern feels too complex, a **solid 8-beat groove** would also work well here.

TIP 4: Guitar & Piano

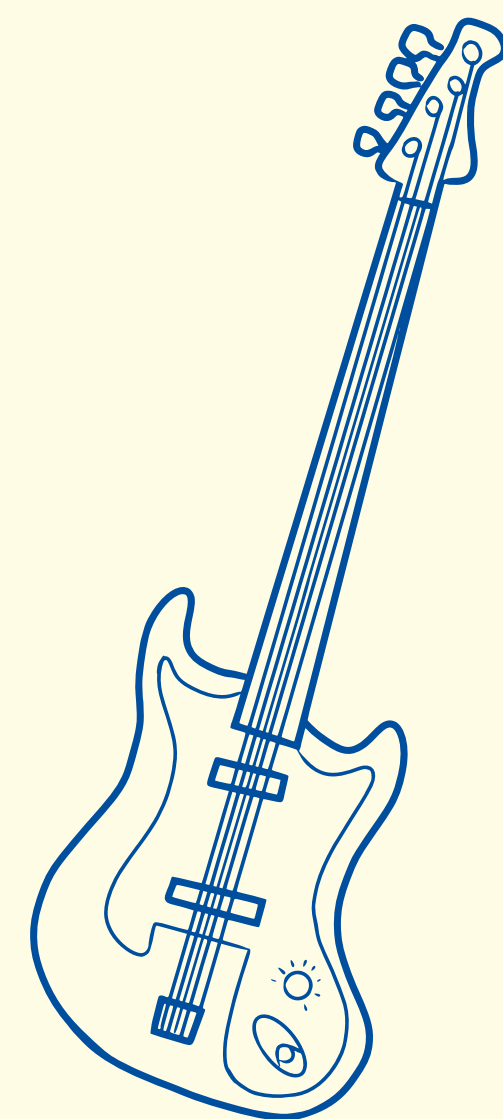
In the guitar and piano, notice how the **two chords in the second bar** of the riff are off the beat – take some care with the placement of these as they are working against the bass!

For pianists, in the **6/8 section** you can choose to either double the bass line or play the melody if you prefer.

Giving the bass some support would be a good way to help keep the riff solid until you reach the 4/4 section again.

INTERVAL RECAP

An interval is the distance in pitch (how high or low a note sounds) between any two notes. An interval of a semitone means that you are moving a half step from your starting note to your next highest or lowest note. For example, you could move down from E to E \flat or up from E to F. An interval of a tone, on the other hand, is a movement of one whole step (or two semitones). For example, you could move down a tone from A to G or up a tone from A to B.





Harmony

Dominant 7 Chords

The Blues mostly uses the **dominant 7 chord type**. If you've studied classical music before, you'll be familiar with major and minor keys. The dominant 7 appears there too but usually in the middle of a sequence before the harmony resolves, (or returns) to the major or minor 'home' chord. In Blues music the dominant 7 chord is the 'home' chord.

There are a number of ways to describe the function of this chord and what scale you can use to improvise over it. The simple answer is that it is the same as the **major arpeggio** you'll be familiar with but with an added note at the top, a whole tone below the tonic (or root). In the key of C, this would be a Bb.

Whenever you see the dominant 7 chord, written with a '7' (C7, F7, Bb7 etc) you'll play your familiar major triad (or you can call it a chord) plus this added note at the top, one tone below the root.

In the examples mentioned:

C7 will be the notes C, E, G + Bb.

F7 will be the notes F, A, C + Eb

Bb7 will be the notes Bb, D, F + Ab

C7 **F7** **Bb7**

HARMONY



Sus 4 Chords

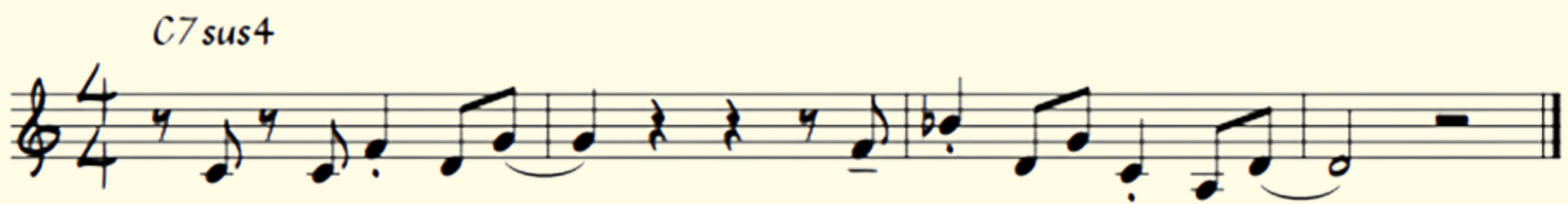
Sus4 is shorthand for **suspended 4th**. All this means is that the 3rd of the chord (in C7, this is the note 'E') is replaced with the 4th (F) - by emphasising the note F you create a more 'open' sound.

In this piece, we could also take an interval and play around with that. The opening two notes are a 4th apart - C = 1, D = 2, E = 3, F = 4

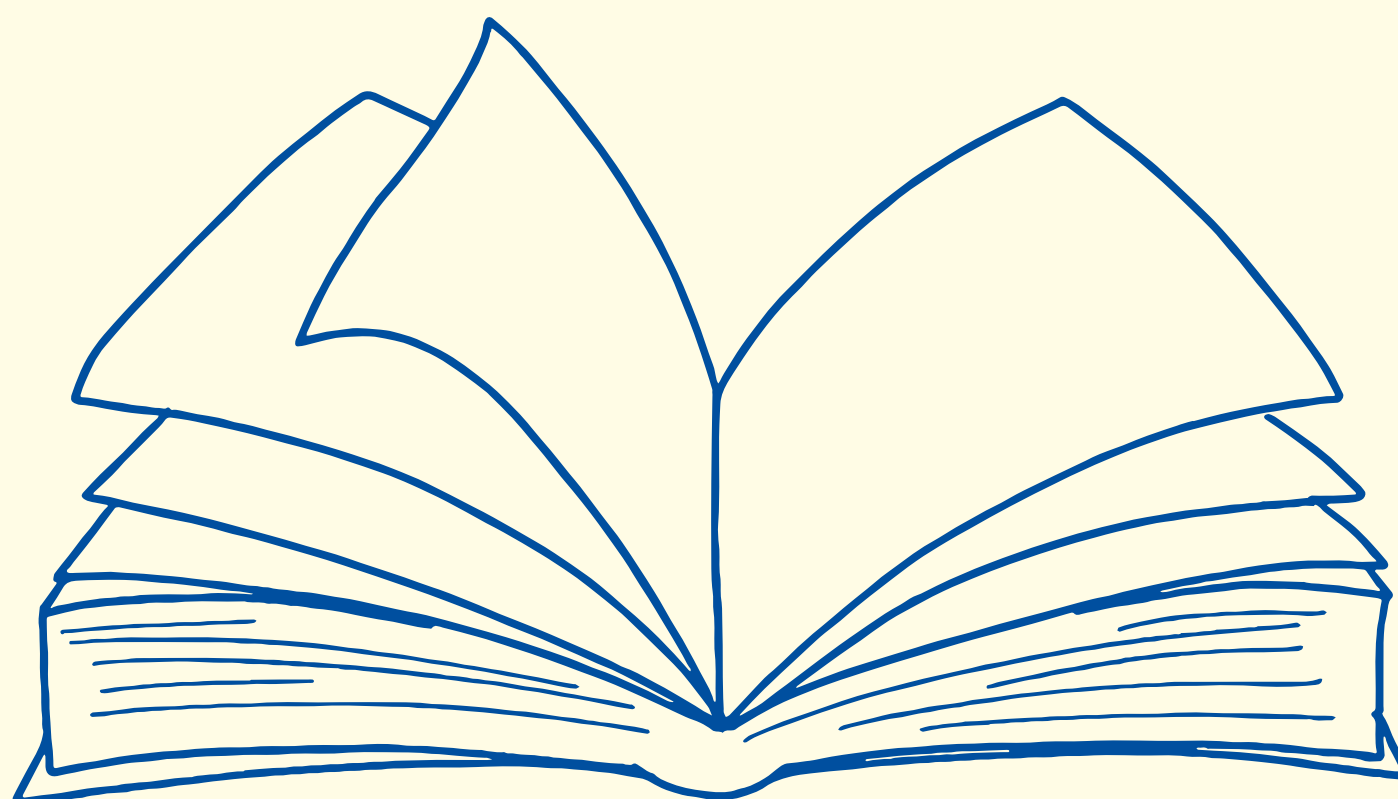


Here are two examples of a 4th interval. There are four more in the excerpt above - see if you can find them!

The next musical example explores improvising with 4ths:



You will notice that the solo examples here have quite a few rests where you don't play. Rests allow you to collect your thoughts and follow what you've just played with something meaningful. They also make space for the other musicians you're playing with to react to your soloing. Always try to think about the 'shape' of your solo - try to have a beginning, middle and end just like a good story!



Soloing

Another way to describe soloing is 'making it up as you go along'. Just like talking, music also has a kind of language made up of riffs, licks or phrases that you've either learnt or made up on the spot from the notes of a scale.

Sometimes people can feel a bit worried about soloing for the first time, and that's okay! Playing a solo is really all about experimenting and having fun though! Give it a go, using some of these suggestions as a starting point, and don't be afraid to try new things or to make mistakes.

Hear some of NYJO's young people talk about how they felt when they started soloing in the Young Musicians video. 

The solo section in this piece has scales included on the charts. Please don't be overwhelmed by this – it's the same scale but transposed (changed in pitch) each time to fit each chord.

People who are experienced at soloing often take very simple ideas, sometimes just two notes, an interval or a rhythm, and experiment or develop it. To improvise over a C7 chord you can use the notes C, E, G + Bb plus the notes in between (D, F + A).

What about using the Mixolydian mode?

Modes can often sound much more complicated than they actually are. If you sit down with a piano, you can start to play the modes really easily. If you play all the white keys from G to G on a piano, you'll have played the G Mixolydian mode without even thinking about it!

The Mixolydian mode uses the following pattern. Starting from your first note, you then move by a:

TONE - TONE - SEMITONE - TONE - TONE - SEMITONE - TONE

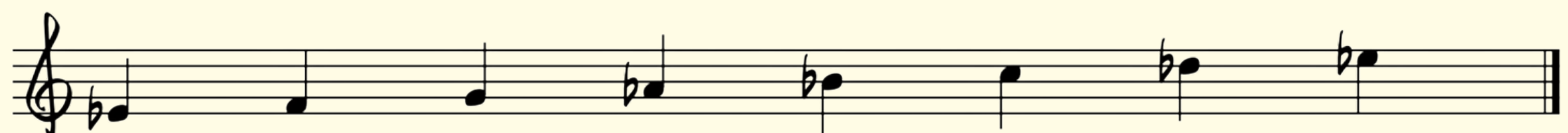
The key to the Mixolydian mode is this 'flattened seventh' that you can see above. Here it is in the key of C:



Sort of Blue(s) also references it in A b:



In E b:



And in F:



EXERCISE 1: Internalise the Mixolydian Modes

Practice playing the four scales above a few times to get really comfortable with using them.



EXERCISE 2: Mixolydian Motives

Here are some motives (short melodic ideas) using the notes in these scales that you can experiment with during your solo. You can fit these together to create longer phrases and have a go at transposing them yourself.

CELL 1... CELL 1 TRANSPOSED...

Musical notation for Cell 1 and its transposition. Cell 1 is in 4/4 time, starting on C4, with notes C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The bass line has notes C4, F4, C4, F4, C4, F4, C4, F4. Chords are C7(SUS4). Cell 1 Transposed is in 4/4 time, starting on Ab4, with notes Ab4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, D5, C5, Bb4. The bass line has notes Ab4, C5, Ab4, C5, Ab4, C5, Ab4, C5. Chords are Ab7(SUS4).

CELL 2... CELL 2 TRANSPOSED...

Musical notation for Cell 2 and its transposition. Cell 2 is in 4/4 time, starting on C4, with notes C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The bass line has notes C4, F4, C4, F4, C4, F4, C4, F4. Chords are C7(SUS4). Cell 2 Transposed is in 4/4 time, starting on F4, with notes F4, G4, A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. The bass line has notes F4, C5, F4, C5, F4, C5, F4, C5. Chords are F7(SUS4).

CELL 3... CELL 3 TRANSPOSED...

Musical notation for Cell 3 and its transposition. Cell 3 is in 4/4 time, starting on C4, with notes C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The bass line has notes C4, F4, C4, F4, C4, F4, C4, F4. Chords are C7(SUS4). Cell 3 Transposed is in 4/4 time, starting on Eb4, with notes Eb4, F4, G4, Ab4, Bb4, Ab4, G4, F4. The bass line has notes Eb4, Ab4, Eb4, Ab4, Eb4, Ab4, Eb4, Ab4. Chords are Eb9.

