

Create with YuStudio: A 'Spooky Story'

Project Overview

Music technology offers students new routes into music, helping to expand their musical tastes, experiences and knowledge while unlocking their creativity – which is why we've added YuStudio, a full-featured digital audio workstation (DAW), to the Musical School programme.

Your students can access YuStudio via Yumu, our online learning space. Visit My Workspace and create a Student Group to share it with them.

Create with YuStudio's 'Spooky Story' Project is one of a series of music projects introducing students to the creative possibilities of our DAW. It is a flexible four-lesson music technology project in the form of an instructional video series that will guide learners through the process of creating their own Spooky Story composition from start to finish. They will be taught and mentored by leading artists and practitioners.

In each lesson, the videos will demonstrate and teach the activities needed, including elements of storytelling within composition. Students will then have the opportunity to experiment with YuStudio and create original compositions.

At the end of the project, there is an opportunity for students to reflect on their journey and learning. They will have created a complete 'Spooky Story' which will include creating drum beats, melodies and basslines. They will learn how to underscore their original stories which will prepare them for further exploration in story-writing, composition and production.

Students are also encouraged to consider ideas for a performance – either as a class or individually – or even *plan* a performance, allowing them the full opportunity to showcase their potential and efforts.

Learning Focus and Outcomes

By the end of this series, students will have learnt invaluable skills in music production that will enrich and enhance their musical journey and inspire their creativity, inside and outside the classroom.

The Learning in This Project

When planning and writing their storylines and music the students will:

- Learn to arrange and mix their own composition in a 'Spooky Story' style using YuStudio
- Have complete creative control and make musical decisions

- Learn about the purpose of a synthesizer and how it can be used to create an original bassline or melody
- Brainstorm as a group or as individuals
- Consider the various elements that make up spooky stories
- Create a hero character, considering their personal heroes, interests and role models
- Create an imaginary treasure item, such as a magical key
- Think of a spooky setting for the story
- Create a villain/scary character
- Build a storyline based on the elements above
- Write out stories ready for recording

YuStudio – Production Knowledge and Skills

The students will learn to:

- Create a new track (SoundBank, Drum, Subtrakt)
- Choose an instrument for the SoundBank and Subtrakt tracks, which fits with the ‘Spooky Story’ style
- Choose a musical key, considering the ‘Spooky Story’ style
- Begin to understand the difference between major and minor sounds and what notes to use
- Add a note clip and input notes (kick drum, click, percussion)
- Experiment with the timing and duration of notes
- Refer to the piano roll for note and octave guidance
- Understand and use the loop feature (extend/shorten) as the track progresses
- Add sound effects (eg reverb) to the melody instrument
- Experiment with sound effects eg the level of decay within the reverb feature
- Record their stories to put onto their tracks

The Project Structure and a Summary of Lesson Activities

How is This Project Organised?

Each section of the lesson is a whole-class activity led by the artist/practitioner through the instructional video on the screen.

Each lesson has three sections:

1. Introduction: Creative Learning Focus
2. Create
3. Share and Evaluate

At the end of the project, plan to perform your tracks.

A Suggested Lesson Structure Based on Working as a Whole Class

Lesson	1. Introduction	2. Create Using YuStudio	3. Share and Evaluate
1.	Video 1 – Artist Introduction The Artist Introduction video by Max Wheeler aims to contextualise the project and provide inspiration.	Video 2 – Melody Activity 1: Create original melodies in a ‘Spooky Story’ style. Video 3 – Drums and Bass Activity 2: Create drumbeats and add basslines to tracks which will later underscore their stories.	Share and discuss work, and eventually perform.
2.	Revisit Video 1 – Artist Introduction	Video 4 – Writing the Story Activity 3: Students will be guided through the process of writing an original story.	Share and discuss progress, and eventually perform.
3.	Option: Revisit Video 1 – Artist Introduction	Video 5 – Recording the Story, Mix and FX Activity 4: Record stories and add sound effects to enhance the spooky atmosphere of their tracks.	Share and discuss progress, and eventually perform.
4.	Option: Revisit Video 1 – Artist Introduction	Continue/complete projects.	Video 6 – Artist Evaluation with Max Wheeler Share reflections and evaluations with the class.
Perform Perform your creations to an audience.			

Individual Video Summaries

Video 1 – Project Introduction

The Artist Introduction video by Max Wheeler aims to contextualise the project and provide inspiration.

Video 2 – Melody

Create original melodies in a ‘Spooky Story’ style.

Video 3 – Drums and Bass

Create drumbeats and add basslines to tracks, which will later underscore their stories.

Video 4 – Writing the Story

Students will be guided through the process of writing an original story.

Video 5 – Recording the Story, Mix and FX

Record stories and add sound effects to enhance the spooky atmosphere of their tracks.

Video 6 – Project Evaluation

The Project Evaluation video provides an opportunity for children to reflect on their progress and learning over the course of the unit of work, as well as any areas where they feel they might do things differently in the future. Children are encouraged to share their reflections and evaluations with the class via group discussion.

Musical Terminology Used in This Project

- Bar – a segment of time in music, which is divided into a specific number of beats
- Tempo – how fast or slow the music goes
- Octave – the distance between two musical notes that have the same letter name
- Structure – the shape of a piece of music; how it is put together
- Articulation – the way notes are played eg spiky, flowing, constant or swelling. We can describe articulation using words such as staccato (detached) or legato (smooth)
- Timbre – the character or colour of a particular instrument or sound
- Pitch – how high or low a note is