

Ukulele Lesson Four for Stages Two and Three

Objectives - students will:

- Play the Am and the G chords with clarity, in time with a steady beat
- Accompany class singing of single chord songs
- Review rhythms from lesson three, applying these to new single chord songs
- With the support of slow tempos, modelling and rests, play chord changes between four different chords - C, F, G and Am - in line with a given beat

Reference Curriculum Outcomes: Performing, Listening

MUS2.1 Sings, plays and moves to a range of music, demonstrating a basic knowledge of musical concepts.

- *plays music using body percussion, percussion instruments and other sound sources to explore and demonstrate the concepts of duration, tone colour, pitch, dynamics and structure*

MUS3.1 Sings, plays and moves to a range of music, individually and in groups, demonstrating a knowledge of musical concepts.

- *plays a variety of music, individually and in groups, using a range of vocal and instrumental sound sources to explore musical concepts*
- *explores aspects of musical concepts in singing, playing and moving activities to heighten musical understanding and perform music with a greater sense of style.*

MUS2.4 Identifies the use of musical concepts and musical symbols in a range of repertoire.

- *identifies basic musical features of the music that is performed and listened to, eg rhythm, tempo, pitch, structure, dynamics, tone colour*

MUS3.4 Identifies the use of musical concepts and symbols in a range of musical styles.

- *identifies the use of musical concepts and changes that occur in relation to music that they perform, compose and listen to, eg rhythm, tempo, pitch, structure, dynamics, tone colour and the changes that occur within the music*

Resources – ukuleles (pre-tuned), School Ukulele Orchestra (S.U.O.) Tuition Books or PDF presentation slides. Video archives for lesson four. (See the class lesson section of www.school-ukulele-orchestra.net)

Time Allocation

As with previous lessons, aim for 15 to 20 minutes of playing time. Judge whether this can be extended by observing your students' participation and enthusiasm. It is better to leave students wanting more than to finish with sore hands.

Teaching and Learning Activities

- Briefly review Positive Behaviour for Music Learning expectations that you have established for your class. (See downloadable PBL suggestions in the class lesson section of www.school-ukulele-orchestra.net)
- Singing together – *Start with singing a familiar song from your class repertoire. Perhaps students can request a song.*

Ukulele

- Use the Ukulele Tuning Check video (or lesson slide directions) as an activity for students while ukuleles are distributed.
- Play and sing Bumble Bee (*book page 18, slide, video P18 Bumble Bee*)
- Introduce Am chord, a single finger chord (your “very polite” middle, or second, finger ☺). Press the fourth string at the second fret (using one of the yellow stickers, if present) and strum all the strings. *Illustrations on the slides, book page 24 or video P24 A Minor Chord with diagram.*
- Apply the Am chord to the English Folk song, “Ah Poor Bird”. Sing this song with students. (*Book page 24, slides, video P24 Ah Poor Bird.*) Once familiar, this song could be sung as a round.
- Am is a relatively simple chord to play, so this song is a good opportunity to review the rhythm patterns introduced in the last lesson. Try playing and singing “Ah Poor Bird” with some or all of these accompaniment rhythms:
 - Down, down, down, down
 - Down up down up down up down up
 - Down up down, down up down
 - Down up down up down, down
 - Down up down up, up down
 - Down up mute up down up mute up (percussive strum)
- Changing chords - C, Am, F C. The changes between these chords are relatively simple but providing a rest for changes is still important for many students. It allows them to move to the next chord while maintaining the beat, or the pulse, of the music. Play the chords slowly, using

the fourth beat rest to move fingers ready for the next chord. Let students know that if they lose their place, rather than trying to catch up, they should wait for the pattern to start again so they can play in time with others. (*slide, book page 25, video P25 Changing Chords C Am F C*)

- Introduce the G chord. This is a three-finger chord and is the most challenging attempted so far. The fingering position recommended will work best in time and makes chord changes simpler than any alternative fingering option. Use the slides, the book page 26 and/or the video P26 G Major Chord with diagram, along with your own demonstrations, to teach this chord.
- Apply the G chord to singing the song “Ten in the Bed”. If students are playing the chord clearly, this song can also be used to practise different strumming rhythms.
- Changing chords - C, G Am, F. These chord changes sometimes involve moving all of the fingers into new positions. Taking the exercise very slowly will help student with this activity. Play the chords slowly, using the fourth beat rest to move fingers ready for the next chord. Let students know that if they lose their place, rather than trying to catch up, they should wait for the pattern to start again so they can play in time with others. (*Slides, book page 27, video P27 Changing Chords C G Am F*)
- An alternate approach to the C G Am F exercise, one that can assist students who are yet to master all the chords, and one that encourages cooperative musical skills and listening, is to play it as groups. Divide the class up into 4 groups, one for each chord. (You may wish to group according to your observations of students’ progress with the chords.) Following the teacher’s lead or the video example, students play their allocated chords in turn. When played this way, students do not have to change their fingering. They do need to listen carefully and work with both their own group and with the rest of the class.
- Have ukuleles returned or collected and seek feedback from students about what worked well with the turn taking exercise. Did students work well with their own groups? Did people play in time with the underlying count? Did people wait for the other groups and find the right place in the music to play their chords?

Evaluation Points

Reflect on how the students performed in relation to the objectives:

- playing the Am and the G chords with clarity, in time with a steady beat
- accompanying class singing of single chord songs
- reviewing rhythms from lesson three, applying these to new single chord songs
- playing chord changes between four different chords - C, F, G and Am - in line with a given beat

For those students who are yet to master the ukulele skills: how are these students demonstrating curriculum outcomes, which emphasise exploring and demonstrating musical concepts rather than mastering specific instrumental skills? How have turn-taking, waiting and listening, verbal feedback and perseverance demonstrated student learning and progress?