

ESO

MUSIC I

# Final project



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# Final project

## «Our homeland's music»

We investigate our traditional music

### • WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

Throughout this course we are going to carry out an investigation that will let you know more deeply your homeland's traditional music, the music that accompanied the lives of people before music recording and playing systems and the modern media even existed.

This music was linked to their everyday activities, their work in the fields and different professions; but also to games, holidays and religious celebrations.

The study of traditional music can encompass many other areas, from clothing to gastronomy or popular legends; but we are going to focus our investigation on two fundamental aspects:

- The repertoire of songs.
- The musical instruments they used.

You will have to find information about older people that you know, your grandparents and neighbours; but you can also go to music organizations or groups related to folklore and traditional music.

In order to introduce you to the topic, it would be advisable that you took a peek to what we explain in section 3.1. which is dedicated to traditional music in Unit 8 in the book.

It will help you become aware of the significance and the richness of our music, and also to know its main characteristics and hallmarks.



We can distribute the task throughout the whole course in the following way:

- First term: repertoire of songs.
- Second term: traditional music instruments.
- Third term: exposition of the class works and conclusions.



## FIRST TERM

### • Step 1

You will start by gathering the song's lyrics. The idea is to join them all together at the end in order to create a complete and organized songbook.

Copy the text very carefully so that the lyrics and the music can be easily recognized by clearly differentiating the verses, the stanzas or the parts that act as chorus (if there are any of these).

Have you found different versions of the same song?

One of the most interesting and important phenomena of traditional music are the «versions». The oral transmission from generation to generation has created different versions of the same songs depending on the personal taste of the performers, their qualities as performers or on their memory.

Carry out a comparative study of the texts, melodies or complete songs that you think can share a common origin or belong to the same «family». Identify the changes or the possible mistakes in the transmission and dare to suggest your own version.

### • Step 2

Look for information about each of the songs in order to be able to indicate how and when they were performed. You will have to describe in detail if they are sung with instrumental accompaniment or without it, in solo or in a choir, male or female voices, together with a dance or not, etc. Most of the songs will answer to the following ways of performance:

- Melodies sung in a group.
- Solo melodies.
- Songs with instrumental accompaniment.

Last, indicate in what time of the year and in what occasions they were performed.

### • Step 3

Create a thematic classification of your songs by paying attention to the content of the text and to the information that you got about when it was performed.

Try to follow a general system that gathers the most important information:

- a) Classification according to the cycle of the year and life, that is, to the different periods of the year regarding the events that are inherent to our lives as humans: the cycles of Christmas, Carnival, Lent, May, the summer and autumn.

Keep in mind that there are songs that are usually performed throughout the entire year even though they can be more typical of a particular period.

- b) Classification according to the social uses and functions of music by distinguishing between: lullabies, children's songs, rounds, wedding songs, work songs (related to different activities in the fields or to the most common professions), narrative songs (in order to inform about events), religious songs and festive songs.



## SECOND TERM

### • Step 4

The first thing you have to do is to create a list (as broad as possible) of all the instruments that are used in your homeland's traditional music.

Keep in mind that in many occasions different objects or tools that don't strictly belong to the realm of music are used as musical instruments. Nevertheless, they are quite interesting regarding our study and they must be incorporated.

### • Step 5

Organize the instruments on your list in the different groups according to their vibrating element and pay attention to the universal classification of instruments that we studied in Unit 5: idiophones, membranophones, chordophones and aerophones. Also look at the way sound is produced in each instrument so that you can complete the classification inside each group, for example:

<b>Idiophones:</b>	– percussion	– concussion
	– shaken	– plucked
	– scraped	– friction
<b>Membranophones:</b>	– struck	
	– friction	
	– singing	
<b>Chordophones:</b>	– friction	
	– plucked	
	– struck	
<b>Aerophones:</b>	– non-free (fipple, reed or mouthpiece)	
	– free	

### • Step 6

Gather in a piece of paper or cardboard the most significant information about each instrument.

a) On the left side of the paper or cardboard you have to write:

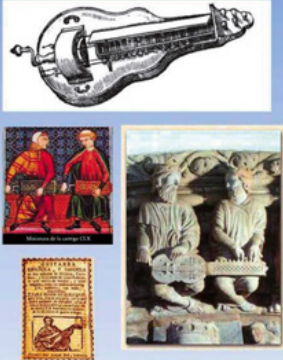
- A schematic drawing where the whole instrument appears with its different parts.
- A picture or drawing in which the instrument can be seen with the performer, and where its shape and size (in proportion to the human figure) as well as how it is performed, can be appreciated.

b) On the right side of the picture or cardboard you will have to write the most important information about:

- The instrument's performance technique.
- Its history and repertoire.

In this last part it is important to explain how far the instrument has spread because not all of them may be known in the same degree. Some of them are well known and they are used everywhere; however, others are less known and appear exclusively associated with specific areas.

Indicate also if the instrument is used to accompany songs or to perform dances.



### Hurdy-gurdy

**Origins**

The hurdy-gurdy is a stringed instrument that produces sound by a crank-turned, rosined wheel rubbing against the strings. The wheel functions much like a violin bow, and single notes played on the instrument sound similar to those of a violin. Melodies are played on a keyboard that presses tangents — small wedges, typically made of wood — against one or more of the strings to change their pitch. Like most other acoustic stringed instruments, it has a sound board to make the vibration of the strings audible.

**Terminology**

The pitches on the organistrum were set according to Pythagorean temperament and the instrument was primarily used in monastic and church settings to accompany choral music. Abbot Otto of Cluny (died 942) is supposed to have written a short description of the construction of the organistrum entitled *Quomodo organistrum construat* (How the Organistrum is Made) [415] known through a much later copy, but its authenticity is very doubtful. Another 10th century treatise thought to have mentioned an instrument like a hurdy-gurdy is an Arabic musical compendium written by Al Zrakali. One of the earliest visual depictions of the organistrum is from the thirteenth-century *Portico da Gloria* (Portal of Glory) on the cathedral at Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain: it has a carving of two musicians playing an organistrum [6] [4] [7] [3].

Later on, the organistrum was made smaller to let a single player both turn the crank and work the keys. The solo organistrum was known from Spain and France, but was largely replaced by the symphonia, a small box-shaped version of the hurdy-gurdy with three strings and a diatonic keyboard. At about the same time, a new form of key pressed from beneath was developed. These keys were much more practical for lute music and easier to handle; eventually they completely replaced keys pulled up from above. Medieval depictions of the symphonia show both types of keys.

Marina Lordado



## THIRD TERM

### • Step 7

Organize all the information that you have gathered about the repertoire of songs as well as the musical instruments.

Prepare your Songbook by organizing it with a short index according to the thematic classification that you carried out.

Try to include some simple scores of some of the songs in a final annex.

Organize also all the musical instruments according to their classification. You can assign a different color for each group, for example: idiophones in yellow, membranophones in orange, chordophones in green and aerophones in blue.

### • Step 8

Show your work in class.

Keep in mind that you have to organize your presentation correctly and always include:

- A **short introduction** addressing the class with the usual expressions of greeting and explaining generally the class work that you carried out.
- Presentation of both parts of the work: **the songbook and the musical instruments**. You can back your presentation by using recordings, illustrations or the audiovisual material that you consider.



- Do you dare to sing any of the songs that you gathered?
- What if you bring a musical instrument and play it in front of your classmates?

- Conclude by summarizing with a **personal opinion of your experience** and what you learnt in this activity.

