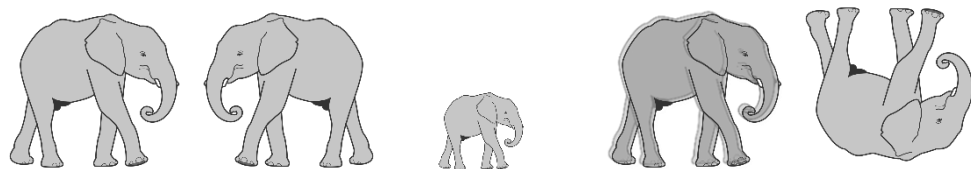


# Y8 C1 KO - VARIATIONS *Exploring ways to develop musical ideas*

## Theme and Variations Key Words

**MELODY** – A tune or succession of notes, varying in pitch, that have an organised and recognizable shape. Often called the main **TUNE** or **THEME** of a piece of music or song and easily remembered.

**VARIATION** – Where a **THEME** is altered or changed musically, while retaining some of the primary elements, notes and structure of the original. **VARIATION FORM:**



A (Theme) A1 (Variation) A2 (Variation) A3 (Variation) A4 (Variation)

## Bass Clef Notation

**BASS CLEF** is a symbol used to show **low**-pitched notes on the staff

It is often used by low instruments that play the **BASS LINE**

**STAVE** - five lines where musical notes are written.

The position of notes on the staff shows their **PITCH** (how high or low a note is).

The staff or stave is made up of 5 **LINE**s and 4 **SPACE**s.



Notes on the **LINE**s of the **BASS CLEF**

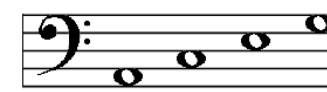
Green Buses Drive Fast Always



G B D F A

Notes in the **SPACE**s of the **BASS CLEF**:

All Cows Eat Grass



A C E G

## Variation Techniques – How to Vary a Melody

|                                                                                                                                               |                                                                          |                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                 |
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| <b>PITCH</b> – Change the highness or lowness of the theme – play the same notes, but at different pitches e.g. in different <b>OCTAVES</b> . | <b>TEMPO</b> – Change the speed of the theme – play it faster or slower. | <b>DYNAMICS</b> – Change the volume of the theme – play it louder or softer. | <b>TEXTURE</b> – Change the amount of sound we hear – play as a <b>SOLO</b> , add an <b>ACCOMPANIMENT</b> or <b>CHORDS</b> , add a <b>COUNTER-MELODY</b> (an ‘extra’ melody that is played or sung at the same time as the main melody, often higher in pitch and sometimes called a <b>DESCANT</b> ). | <b>TIMBRE AND SONORITY</b> – Change the <b>SOUND</b> of the theme – play it on a different instrument. | <b>ARTICULATION</b> – Change the way the theme is played – smoothly ( <b>LEGATO</b> – shown by a <b>SLUR</b> ) or short, detached and spiky ( <b>STACCATO</b> – shown by a dot). | <b>PEDAL</b> – A long (often very long!) note in the bass line of the music over which other parts, including the theme or a variation of the theme can be played. Also called a <b>PEDAL NOTE</b> or <b>PEDAL POINT</b> and often the <b>TONIC</b> note (but can be the <b>DOMINANT</b> or other notes). | <b>DRONE</b> – A long or series of repeated (often long) notes using the <b>TONIC</b> and <b>DOMINANT</b> notes together (a <b>FIFTH</b> ). | <b>MELODIC DECORATION</b> – Adding extra notes or embellishments to the theme such as trills, turns, mordents ( <b>ORNAMENTS</b> ) or <b>PASSING NOTES</b> (extra notes between the main melody notes). | <b>OSTINATO</b> – Adding a repeated musical pattern (rhythmic or melodic) to the main theme as a form of variation. | <b>CANON/ROUND</b> – A song or piece of music in which different performers sing or perform the same <b>THEME</b> starting one after the other. | <b>GROUND BASS</b> – A repeated musical pattern in the bass part upon which chords, and melodies can be performed and varied “over the top” of. |
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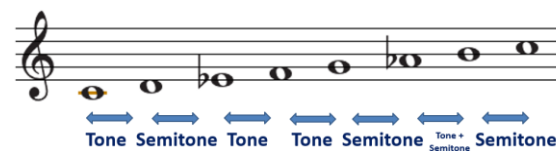
## Tonality – Major and Minor



**TONALITY** refers to whether a **THEME** or **MELODY** is in a **MAJOR** or **MINOR** key. Changing the tonality from major to minor or minor to major is one way of providing a variation on the theme of melody. Major and minor scales follow a certain pattern of tones and semitones:



MAJOR SCALE



MINOR SCALE

## Inversion and Retrograde

**INVERSION** – Changing the **INTERVALS** between the notes of a theme so that they are upside down from the original.

**RETROGRADE** – A variation technique created by arranging the main theme backwards.

