

Telephone Numbers



Telephone numbers is a fun and accessible composition activity. This activity uses the digits in a phone number and assigns each digit withy the corresponding scale degrees to create a short phrase of music.

Students can join up different phone number compositions to create a longer piece.

Part 1

- 1. Students write down their phone number (or make up a phone number, find a phone number to use, etc).
- 2. Choose a key to work in. Each digit of the phone number is then assigned the associated scale degree, i.e. '1' is the tonic, etc. '0' becomes a rest.
- 3. Have student practice and perform their phone numbers, each note played an equal length. Ask the students for feedback about which phone numbers they enjoyed hearing back.

Part 2

- 1. Start to arrange the phone numbers without switching the order of the notes/ numbers. For example, add different rhythms, change the tempo, play it in a loop maybe your students have other ideas.
- 2. Team up with a partner and join your phone numbers together one plays after the other. Which order did the students choose? Why did they choose that order?
- 3. What other ways can these phone numbers be played and still not change the order of the numbers? Try students suggestions.

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Using something as tangible as a phone number is a great way to introduce a scaffolded and structured compositional activity. Some students' numbers will appear more unusual than others. Discuss this with your students.