



Project OspreyTrack

A project of the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center funded by:
3M Eco Grant, Eversource, and Jane B. Cook 1983 Charitable Trust

E6 – Musical Ospreys

Teacher Notes

Aims & Objectives:

1. Inspire pupils to use something from the natural world to influence their music – in this case the Osprey.
2. Motivate pupils to write their own song and set it to an existing tune.
3. Practice using a keyboard to produce a tune as they experiment with phrases for their song.
4. IT research to explore the field of birds in music.
5. Practice video and music skills to produce a video of their Osprey song.
6. Opportunity to share their music video with other schools via Skype.

Introduction:

A group of children in the Basque Country and their teacher were so inspired by the Ospreys that they saw migrating over their homes that they wrote a song. They performed it live on a 4 way Skype call held at the end of World Osprey Week (WOW) in 2014.

Schools in Italy, Spain, UK and the USA were all part of this Skype call and all who heard the song loved it!

You can see a film of the song at <http://www.ospreys.org.uk/arrano-arrantzalearen-kanta-theosprey-song/> there is also an English translation of the words.

Lesson Plan

1. Show your pupils the video of the Basque children for inspiration.
2. Show them some of the photos and videos of Ospreys available on the website at www.ospreys.org.uk
3. Set them the task of writing lyrics for their own Osprey inspired song which can be set to music or a song that they already know.
4. Sing the songs using a Karaoke machine or keyboard or other musical instrument accompaniment. (Depends on student experience and ability)



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Extension Ideas:

1. Film your song and produce a music video, possibly including some Osprey inspired dance. Make it part of the next World Osprey Week (WOW)!
2. Research how other birds have been used in music or songs.
 - Which birds have been used?
 - Did the composer take their inspiration from a real bird name or was it just a name that fitted the music of the song?
 - Did the composer study the bird and accurately portray it in the music?
 - Did the composer just use a birds name and make up the rest?
 - Did the composer use a mythical rather than a real bird?

For Example:

1. **A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square.**

The composer knows nothing about nightingales, except that they sometimes sing at night. In fact they are most unlikely to be anywhere near a city, if there was a bird singing at night in Berkley Square (which is in London, UK) it was almost certainly a European Robin (not the same species as our American Robins). European Robins are very common in cities, often sing at night and sound a bit like nightingales.

2. **Blackbird by the Beatles.**

This beautiful song is about the European Blackbird (not any of our North American blackbirds, like the Red-winged Blackbird). The European Blackbird often sings very early in the morning when it is still dark hense “Blackbird sings in the dead of night . . .”

3. **Rockin’ Robin by Bobby Day or the Jackson Five**

This song IS about our American Robin, although we’re not sure where the “rockin” part comes from.