WJEC AoS4: Manic Street Preachers 'Everything Must Go'

KS4

Jane Werry

An elements-based, aural approach

In this resource, I don't intend to replicate the content of any of the excellent resources available on the WJEC website. Instead, the resource will suggest ways into tackling the song through practical work, together with some useful revision activities.

The questions on set works in the WJEC appraising paper require a very thorough knowledge of the song. This knowledge needs to be strongly linked to the musical elements: if a question asks about dynamics, then there's no use giving an answer about tempo. Setting up students' mental schema so that the musical elements are well embedded takes a surprising amount of reinforcement, even if you've been talking about it ever since Year 7.

We also need to plan for the most effective ways to approach the musical material of the song itself. We could start with the lead sheet or the classroom arrangement from the WJEC website, but an alternative would be to begin with the song itself, and unpick it aurally. This will level the playing field between students who have varying levels of confidence with notation, and ensure that they are engaging with the song in a directly musical way, which in turn will lead to deeper and more memorable learning.

As you work through the elements, students can make notes on the features of the song. You could even provide them with a guided notes sheet to support the organisation of their notes under elements headings. Not all elements will need the same amount of space: you could be guided by the layout of the knowledge organiser on the WJEC website.

You may well already use a mnemonic of some sort for the musical elements: MAD T SHIRT and DR T SMITH are two popular examples. It can be beneficial for students to have a system of colour-coding for these elements, as it very much helps with organising notes and remembering which features fall under each element heading. It doesn't matter what system they use: it doesn't even need to be the same for each student, as long as everyone is consistent in their colour use.

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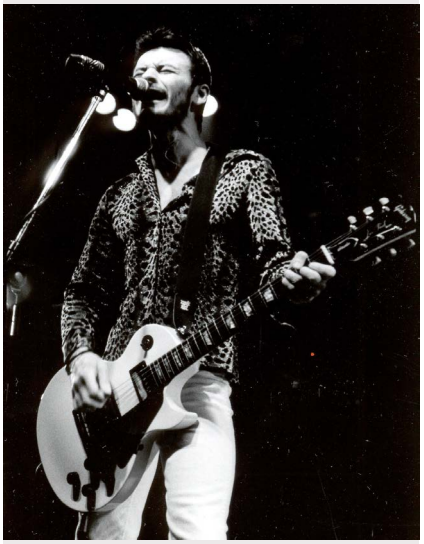

MASAO NAKAGAMI

James Dean Bradfield of the Manic Street Preachers in 1992

Where to start: metre, tempo and dynamics

Metre, tempo and dynamics are basic details that will be quick to identify aurally: the main thing here is to reinforce elements categorisation and ensure that students have the correct terminology.

Before listening to the song for the first time, ask students what time signature they would expect it to be in, based on their knowledge of pop music in the most general sense. Getting them into the habit of making intelligent guesses that can be confirmed through listening is an excellent skill for the appraising paper as a whole. Hopefully they will be able to identify that four beats in a bar is the most common metre for pop music. It might also be worth unpicking how we can work out the metre of a song aurally, depending on how much practice they've already had. Ask them to 'find the 1' and clap on it, and then work out how many beats are in between.

Once the basic quadruple metre has been worked out, we need to establish whether we are in simple or compound time. Ask them to subdivide the beat into twos and threes, either with body percussion or a repeated word. You can have a bit of fun identifying appropriate two- and three-syllable words to use: these need to have the stress on the first syllable ('doughnut' and 'elephant' are ideal, whereas 'today' and 'banana' are not). Keeping the pulse with a foot tap or clap, try saying 'doughnut, doughnut, doughnut, doughnut' and 'elephant, elephant, elephant, elephant' along with the song to find which one fits best with the prevailing rhythm. Hopefully students will be able to identify that the doughnuts win over the elephants, making each beat subdivide into two, and therefore the metre simple quadruple time or 4/4.

Next, we can focus on tempo. We need to have a beats per minute figure rather than an Italian tempo term. We could use the multiple choice options from the 2022 paper as a guide:

110bpm **135bpm** **160bpm** **185bpm**

A default tempo of 120bpm is a good place to start with our thinking when working out a bpm. This is the tempo that's usually set automatically on DAWs and score-writing programs, as it's a good middle-of-the-road starting point. It's also easy to work out with any kind of clock with an indication of seconds, as we simply have two beats per second. It can be helpful to identify well-known pieces of music that have a tempo of 120bpm to create an in-built sense with which to compare other tempos. 'Colonel Bogey' (**www.youtube.com/watch?v=QuVYS4uwoas**) works excellently for this, but of course it must be a piece that you know well enough to be able to audiate it (hear it in your head).

Once a sense of 120bpm has been established, the next question is whether 'Everything Must Go' is faster or slower than this. In our choice of tempi from the exam paper, we have one that's slightly slower and three that are faster. Students may be able to work this out for themselves, or might need to have a metronome set to 120bpm playing alongside the song. Once they've worked out that the song is faster than 120bpm, they need to decide whether it is a little faster, or quite a bit faster. If it is not immediately apparent that 135bpm is the correct tempo, the metronome could be set to each tempo to see which one fits.

You may want to preface your focus on dynamics by doing a little basic revision of dynamics terminology. Then listen to the song and consider whether there are any particular contrasts of dynamics. The song is fairly consistent in its dynamic level, so then the question is merely how we would describe the overall dynamic of the song. With a song as bombastic as this one, anything less than mezzoforte would not seem right at all, and probably forte is more appropriate.

Once these basic details are sorted, students can add them to their notes and we can delve into the more interesting aspects of the song.

Melody, harmony and tonality

Students will all need a pitched instrument for this part of the analysis, preferably a non-transposing instrument.

Put on the recording of the song and allow students to play around on their instrument. Ask them to see if they can find a note, a chord – anything that fits. Depending on their responses, ask them to work out which pitch out of all the ones they've identified feels like the tonic or 'home'. Once this has been identified as E, the next question is whether the tonality is major or minor. This is an interesting feature of this song, as the frequent juxtaposition of G naturals and G sharps in the melody gives a nice hint of ambiguity. If students can identify this and are therefore unsure about major and minor, ask them to work out where there's anywhere in the song that either an E major or E minor chord would fit.

Once an E major tonality has been identified, it would be useful to do a little bit of exploration with notes and chords within this key before going on to identify the actual harmony of the song. What chords are there in the key of E major? Which ones would we expect to be used most frequently? If students have been well trained in their classical areas of study or have played 12-bar blues, they may rightly suggest I, IV and V. Work out what these chords are in E major, and keep them ready as options.

The chorus is the simplest place to start with working out the chords, as here the chords are in root position, without added notes, and with a slow harmonic pace. It's also good that the progression begins on E, which is predictable, especially in the light of the other chords being more unexpected. Depending on the aural aptitude of your students, you may want to get them to focus on root notes first, or adopt a more free-form approach to just trying out chords and seeing what fits.

It's of course interesting that the version of chord IV that we have here is not A major, but A minor. The inclusion of a minor iv is one of the distinctive features of the song, and a tried and tested songwriting device to create a sense of melancholy or romance. You can find some very good information about minor iv in this blog post (**https://altesterman.medium.com/the-power-of-minor-iv-49692ef38896**) and you may want to show your students this video by David Bennett (**www.youtube.com/watch?v=tStINGVUbWo**).

The other interesting chord that we have in the chorus is D major. D natural of course does not feature in the scale of E major, and the chord comes where we might, in more classical tonal harmony, expect the dominant chord to be. However, the subtonic or flat VII chord is used so commonly in rock and pop that it is a good example of the way in which pop harmony diverges from 'classical' common practice. There is more excellent explanation from David Bennett in this video (**www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PiiTl7htzM**). You could even make links between the chord progression in the chorus of 'Everything Must Go' to the backdoor progression (**https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Backdoor_progression**) which is common in jazz.

Having worked out the chord progression for the chorus, we can tackle the intro and verse. First, how many different chords are there? Once the fact that there are two has been identified, you could give the clue that both chords are used in the chorus, but that there are a couple of differences. Point out that students should listen out for the bass, and work out which chord note is being kept static at the bottom of the texture. The A minor chord is being used in second inversion to create a tonic pedal. The other difference is that the E major chord has an added major 7th here, which adds a little spice to the harmony. The added note is quite prominent in the recording, so students may well be able to find it using their instruments.

In the pre-chorus, there is a new chord to find: C#m7, before the harmony returns to the familiar A minor chord. Both these chords being minor gives a darker feeling to the pre-chorus that enables the drop into the chorus with the tonic chord to feel more joyfully dramatic.

It's noticeable how much of the time the harmony spends on either an E or A minor chord throughout the song, and also how chord V (B major) is avoided entirely. In thinking about how to describe the harmony in general terms, it's mostly diatonic. The C natural in the A minor chord and the D major chord are chromatic alterations.

Next, we can turn our attention to the vocal melody. Students will need to know the range of the melody, and be able to describe the way it moves. Challenge them to use their instruments to 'find' the highest and lowest notes of the melody. The top and bottom Bs occur multiple times so this should be straightforward, and the octave range is easy to remember. You could go into more detail and identify that the range of the first verse and pre-chorus is only a perfect 5th, giving another reason for the chorus to feel more expansive as the range opens up.

Students could work out chunks of the melody by ear to investigate how it moves. There's a mixture of conjunct and disjunct movement, but it's noticeable that the step-wise, and sometimes chromatic movement occurs mostly at the top of the range, with the leaps down to or up from the lower notes. The melody spends a lot of its time at the top end of the range, giving it a high tessitura (providing a useful example to teach students the difference between range and tessitura). The word-setting also needs to be considered, and the terms syllabic and melismatic taught. There is very little melisma in this song: task students with finding the word that has one.

Instrumentation, texture and rhythm

Students need to know what instruments are involved in the song, but, more importantly, they also need to be able to describe accurately what those instruments are doing. While it may seem odd to consider instrumentation, texture and rhythm together, it does actually make sense when we think about the role of each layer.

The dramatic, epic feel of this song is created by subtle manipulation of textural layers, together with the strings that sound like something from a Bond movie, and the huge sound created by the long reverb applied to the drums.

Students are at the point with working out chords and melodies where they can now drill down into the accompaniment and work out what's going on, playing whichever parts they can. The string countermelodies are a good thing to focus on, as they are so melodically distinctive. While the overall texture can be described as melody-and-accompaniment, there's a lot going on. For example, there are several textural devices that help the chorus feel bigger than the pre-chorus. Challenge students to work out what these are. They might come up with ideas such as these:

- The thinning of the texture in the bar immediately preceding the chorus.
- The addition of the tambourine semiquavers.
- The bass guitar now has a busier rhythm.
- The strings are now playing in octaves to provide a fuller 'fill-in' between the vocal phrases.
- There are now backing singers singing in harmony.

Structure, and putting the whole performance together

We're now approaching the end of the process of recreating the song aurally. The final part of the jigsaw is to analyse the structure. This should be a straightforward process now that students have such a detailed understanding of the verse, pre-chorus and chorus characteristics. They could create charts to show exactly how the structure works, adding any important details about layers and perhaps even adding the chords and lyrics so they can perform from their own sheet. These could be colour-coded in whatever way they choose.

Help your class to assign different musical roles as appropriate to the resources and abilities present. If not everything can be covered, negotiate what's important in recreating the feel of the original. Be creative in substituting instruments: the string parts, for example, could be taken by any melodic instrument. Use a DAW to lay down tracks if you like – this would enable you to add some reverb to help it sound more dramatic, as well as enabling students to play or sing more than one part.

Revision activities

The WJEC appraising exam requires students to be able to identify specific features in each section of the song, including the chord progressions. It's essential that students have a firm grasp of the musical terminology required for this, together with a very clear structural knowledge.

For the chord sequences, one of the best ways of learning these is to play them from memory. This could be a starter activity, with a different section each lesson until you can start joining them up and playing bigger portions of the song.

For those with a visual memory, a card sort might be useful. Here's a printable set of chord symbols that cover the intro, verse, pre-chorus and chorus. Some chords appear multiple times, so have a card for each appearance.

Am/E	E^{maj7}	Am/E	E^{maj7}
Am/E	E^{maj7}	C#m7	Am
E	Am	D	E
E	Am	D	E

Print, laminate and slice up. It helps to use different coloured paper for each set to save confusion if the sets get mixed up. Keep these in envelopes ready to give out to students. You could make this competitive by making it a time challenge with penalties for errors, perhaps with a leaderboard. In the initial stages of using the card sort, students could arrange the chord cards and then check them with their ears by playing their chosen order and working out which ones are incorrect.

Musical terminology card sort

Students need to know which features happen in which sections of the song, and also which features come under each musical element heading. Therefore a big set of cards with all the relevant musical features can have multiple uses.

f	'Slash' chords/inversions	Intro	Interlude 1
mf	7th chords	Verse 1	Bass guitar dotted rhythm
4 4	Backing vocals	Chorus 1	Pre-chorus 1
Melody & accompaniment	Homophonic	Verse 2	Strings in octaves
Thicker	E major	Chorus 2	Tambourine semiquavers
Mostly diatonic	Pre-chorus 2	Syncopation	Guitar riff
Root position chords	Syllabic	Melisma	Vocal range perfect 5th
Vocal range octave	High tessitura	Range of an octave	Conjunct
Disjunct	Interlude 2	Pre-chorus 3	Clean guitar sound
Chorus 3	Chorus 4	Outro	Tonic pedal
135bpm	Sustained keyboard chords	Balanced phrases	Reverb
Anacrusis	Hook	Homorhythmic	Descending pentatonic riff
Chromatic melody	Triplets	Arco	

The cards can be organised by musical element or by song section. You could even integrate the chord cards to create an overall chart of the song.

A fun and very silly variant on the card sort is a 'board slap'. Have some or all of the terms from the cards on the board, spaced out randomly. Students are in two teams, lined up in front of the board. Equip each team with a plastic fly-swat or similar (you may need to freeze your board to avoid it being jogged on to the next slide). You, or a designated student, ask a question that can be answered with one of the terms on the board. The front member of each team runs up to the board and slaps their chosen answer with their fly swat, with the first to swat the right answer gaining a point.

Once students are used to the card sort, they could do some blank page work. You could provide a template for the song structure, that might look something like this:

Intro	Verse 1	Pre-chorus 1	Chorus 1
Interlude 1	Verse 2	Pre-chorus 2	Chorus 2
Instrumental & vocal interlude	Pre-chorus 3	Chorus 3	Chorus 4
Outro			

Students can write in what they remember, including element colour-coding, and then refer back to their original notes or knowledge organiser to fill in any gaps. This identification of the gaps is essential in the metacognitive recognition of what has been learnt and what has yet to be learnt. Highlight the 'yet to be learnt' features, spend some time committing them to memory, and then repeat the empty grid challenge, either immediately or the next day or next lesson.

Copies of the lead sheet from the WJEC website can also be used for structured 'blank page' retrieval, with students writing in the sections and labelling features on an unannotated copy. You could also use lead sheet or audio extracts to create 'identify the sections' quizzes, with students using their knowledge of the music to identify which section they are looking at or listening to, justifying their answers by describing the distinctive features.

The Loop of Fury

This consists of a set of questions and answers printed out on separate laminated cards as follows:

A: Triplets Q: What year was 'Everything Must Go' released?
A: 1996 Q: What is the tempo of 'Everything Must Go'?
A: 135 bpm Q: What harmonic features come in the intro and verse 1?
A: Inversion/'slash' chords, tonic pedal Q: Describe the texture of the song.
A: Melody plus accompaniment Q: What is the metre of the song?
A: Simple quadruple time: time signature is 4/4. Q: What effect is used on the drums, guitar, and strings?
A: Reverb Q: Describe the way that the words fit with the melody, most of the time.
A: Syllabic. Q: What is the range of the vocal melody?
A: An octave Q: What is the key of 'Everything Must Go'?
A: E major Q: How often do the chords change in 'Everything Must Go'?
A: Every two bars. Q: How are the violins and violas played?
A: Arco Q: What instrument is added in the chorus?
A: Tambourine Q: What rhythmic feature is distinctive in melody of the pre-chorus?

You could, of course, add as many answer/question pairs as you like to this list. It's important that the last question matches up with the first answer.

This is how it works:

1. Shuffle the cards.
2. Distribute them randomly among the class. If you have more cards than students, decide who will have two or three cards to look after (this increases the level of challenge).
3. Choose a student at random to start. This student will also be the end of the activity, when the loop is closed.
4. Start a timer.
5. The first student reads out the question on the bottom of their card. Everyone else looks to see whether they have the answer on their card. If they do, they shout it out.
6. The giver of the correct answer then reads out the question on their card.
7. Continue until the answer at the top of the first card is reached.
8. Stop the timer.

If you keep a record of the class's times, you can repeat the activity periodically, challenging them to get faster.

Student-generated questions

It can be an excellent tactic to get students to think up sets of questions that can then be used with the class. You could give pairs or individual students a section of audio or of the score to devise questions on, writing a mark scheme and thinking about how marks should be allocated.

Devising multiple-choice questions (MCQs) can be a particularly valuable learning experience, as long as students understand what a plausible distractor is, and why it's important. For example, if the question is 'What is the texture of the verse of "Everything Must Go"?', plausible distractors would be 'polyphonic' (which is a texture, but not the correct one), 'syncopation' (which is a correct musical feature of the verse, but not a texture word), but not 'skateboard' (which is clearly irrelevant). Thinking of good plausible distractors engages students with deep metacognition: what wrong answers might someone give, and why might they have that particular misconception? Once sets of decent MCQs have been devised, they can be used in lots of different ways – on paper, as game-show style questions for team activities, or as self-marking quizzes on Google Forms, Microsoft Forms, Satchel One and other digital platforms.