



Why we sing

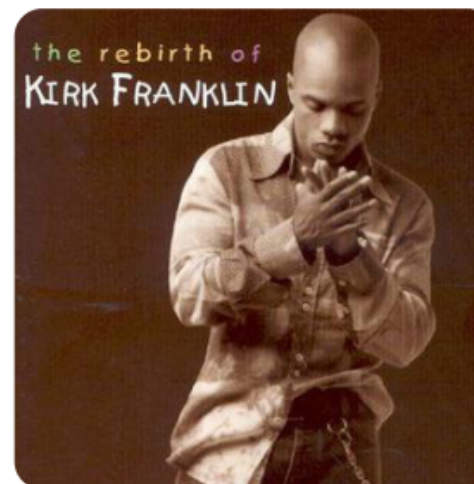
Spirituals and Gospel songs have similar origins in African American history and culture. They evolved as 2 distinct styles with different purposes.

Spirituals

- Developed by enslaved Africans in the USA to express their adopted Christian faith.
- They were also a secret way of communicating.
- Traditionally sung **unaccompanied** (**acappella**).

Gospel songs

- Developed after the American Civil War (1865).
- Church based music used for worship.
- Influenced by several African American styles, including Spirituals and Blues.
- Described as 'composed folk songs'.
- Almost always **accompanied**, and have **verses** and **choruses**.



Why we sing is a modern Gospel song written by Kirk Franklin in 1993.

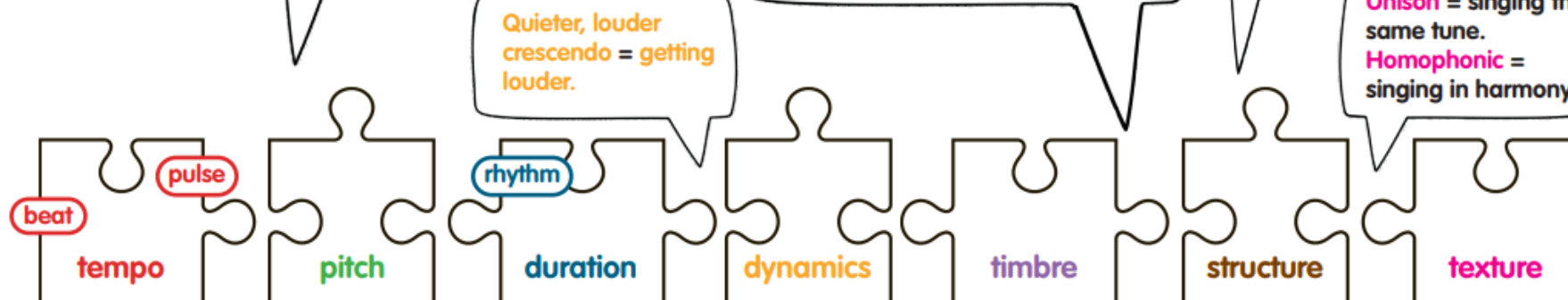
In the 'live' performance video the performers sing the '**call**' and the congregation sing the '**response**'.

Melody = the tune.
Harmony = notes to add to the tune.

Choir = group of singers.
Acappella = unaccompanied singing.
Congregation = people in church
Electric piano, bass guitar, drum kit.

Call-and-response
Verse/chorus
Spoken interlude
Phrase = a musical sentence.

Unison = singing the same tune.
Homophonic = singing in harmony.





Autumn Unit A: 3 week unit

Musical Learning

Focus: Gospel music, instruments, structure, texture, vocal decoration.

Objectives:

- Develop and practise techniques for singing and performing in a Gospel style.
- Recognise individual instruments and voices by ear.
- Listen to a selection of Gospel music and spirituals, and identify key elements that give the music its unique sound.
- Talk about music using appropriate music vocabulary (e.g. the ways the voices are used, the contrasting texture of solo voice and choir, singing in harmony, the lyrics etc.).

Key: **Improvise and Compose;** **Sing and Play;** **Listen and Appraise.**

Visual and Audio Materials

- Wade in the water (Sweet Honey in the Rock).
- Wade in the water (The Spirituals).
- Climbing higher mountains (Aretha Franklin).
- Why we sing (Kirk Franklin and the Family).
- What kind of man is this? (Ray Charles & the Voices of Jubilation Choir 2006).
- Shackles (Praise you) (Mary Mary).
- This little light of mine (Soweto Gospel Choir).
- Take your burden to the Lord (and leave it there) (Blind Boys of Alabama).
- The storm is passing over (The Clara Ward Singers).
- Jesus gave me water (Sam Cooke & The Soul Stirrers).
- Great is your mercy (Donnie McClurkin).
- Get away, Jordan (Take 6)

- Kirk Franklin an American songwriter, choir director and pianist.
- The most successful modern Gospel artist.
- Won 16 Grammy awards.
- Blends other styles of music like Hip Hop and Rock with the more traditional Gospel sound.

Instruments you might expect to find in a Gospel band - drum kit, piano, electric bass



Shackles (Praise You) was released by American singer-songwriters, Mary Mary in 2000.

Practise moves and actions to go with this song.

Mahalia Jackson
(1911 - 1972)

Ray Charles
(1930 - 2004)

Aretha Franklin
(1942 - 2018)



Gospel singers are expressive and use their voice and whole body when they sing.

How singers use their voices

- improvising - music created spontaneously.
- vocal bends - bending the pitch of a note up or down.
- vocal slides (glissando) - sliding up or down to other notes.
- vocal decoration - slides, bends, 'twiddles' etc.
- solo voice - one person singing.
- melody - singing the tune.
- harmony - other notes that sound good with the melody.
- legato - singing or playing smoothly.
- diction/ articulation - clear words and emphasis.

Timeline:

