Lesson 2 – Gustav Holst

Lesson 2: Gustav Holst : 'The Planets made him a star'

Knowledge Objective/goal	Task	Lesson Detail	Vocabulary
To know about the composition 'The Planet suite' by Gustav Holst. To listen and respond to the seven movements of 'The Planets.	Task: Ask the children to work in groups and match the character names to the planet while listening to each of the pieces of music. Children to share their ideas to the whole class and then listen to the music again revealing the answers and discuss why they were given their names.	Begin lesson listening to a sample of: 'The Sorcerers Apprentice' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4yH4B9deok written by Paul Dukas which is a similar piece of music from 20 years earlier that is similar to the style of the music Gustav wrote for the planet Uranus. How does the music make you feel and why? How many instruments are playing? What is the tempo? What is the general texture of the piece? **Prior Learning**: Link to geography and science with planet terminology. **Teach –** Written between 1914-1916 by British composer Gustav Holst, 'The Planets' represents all the known planets of the Solar System seen from Earth at the time, and their corresponding astrological character, including Jupiter and Mars. Gustav loved space and wanted to explore the planets so much that he went into space using purely his imagination. He gave the planets character names for example Mars is 'The bringer of war.' Explain to the children that we are going to have a look at the planets and the music Gustav wrote about them. (Please see information about the planets on the powerpoint slide.) **Task** – Show power point slide that shows pictures of the planets with their names and the character names in a separate box. The character names represent each of the planets. Ask the children to work in groups and match the character names to the planet while listening to each of the pieces of music. Children to share their ideas to the whole class and then listen to the music again revealing the answers and discuss why they were given their names. Plenary: Explain to the children that in the next few lesson we will be focusing on some of the planets and looking at them in more detail. Next lesson the focus planet will be 'Mars'.	Gustav Holst – British Composer, arranger and teacher. Composer – Author of music Inspiration - Something that stimulates you to feel or do something. Solar System – The bound system of the sun and the objects that orbit around it. Space – The expanse that exists beyond earth that includes the other planets. Relevant Musicians: Gustav Holst Paul Dukas

Suggested Resources:

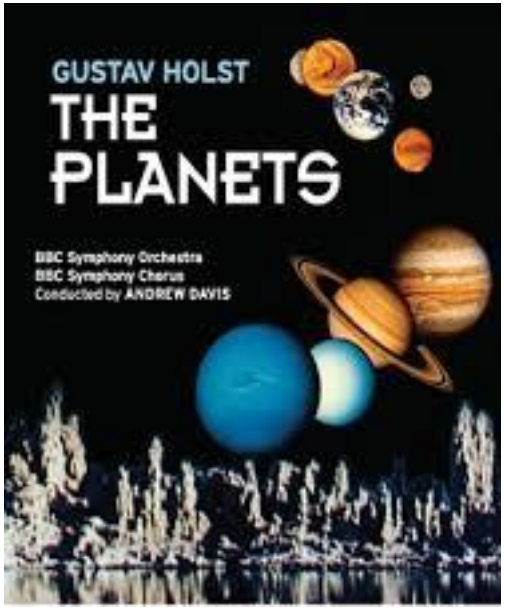
'The Sorcerers Apprentice' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4yH4B9deok Paul Dukas

https://www.lpo.org.uk/creative-classrooms-connect/holst-s-the-planets-for-key-stage-2.html - Samples of music for each planet.

Year 4
Spring 1
Lesson 2

Gustav Holst:
The Planets Made Him a Star







Let's Listen - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4yH4B9deok



What instrumental families can you hear in this piece of music?

Where do you think this piece might be played?

How does the music make you feel? Why?

What are the dynamics?

Were there lots of instruments playing or just one?

What is the tempo?

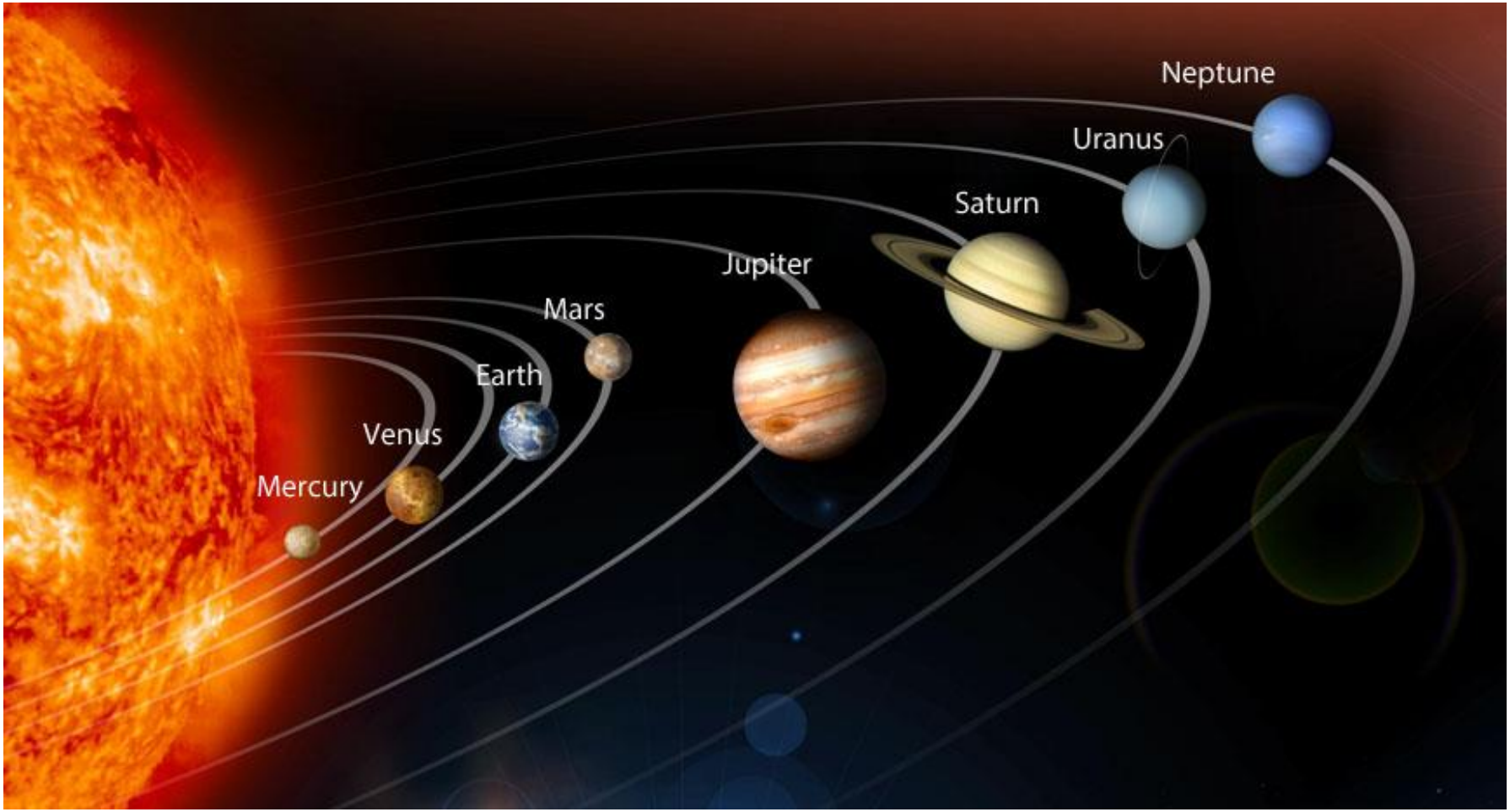
What style of music do you think this is?

What is the general texture of the piece?

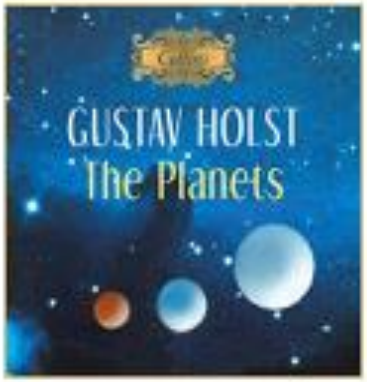
Have you heard it before?

Prior Learning

Do you know any planet names?



Our Knowledge Organiser



Written between 1914-1916
by British composer Gustav Holst

Within the music of the planets, planet Earth was not included because we live on planet earth and Gustav was focusing on planets that are in outer space. Pluto was not discovered until 1930 and so this was not included in the suite, however in 2000 the British composer Collin Matthews was asked to write a piece of music which is known as Pluto the Renewer.

Gustav Holst
21 September 1874 – 25 May 1934



Composer Gustav Holst who was born in 1874 in Cheltenham where his Father was a music teacher which was a big inspiration for Gustav. From a young boy Gustav was always interested in music and learnt to play the violin and piano but due to the family being so poor Gustav's Father had to borrow money to send him to the Royal College of London to study music. He eventually started to play the Trombone instead of the piano as due to cramp in his hands playing the piano was extremely painful. He practised the trombone while he walked through fields which scared the sheep!

Vocabulary

Composer – author of music

Inspiration - Something that stimulates you to feel or do something.

Solar System – The bound system of the sun and the objects that orbit around it.

Ascending – To rise/go up

Eerie – Strange, mysterious and frightening



Key Vocabulary



Gustav Holst – British Composer, arranger and teacher.

Composer – Author of music

Inspiration – Something that stimulates you to feel or do something.

Solar System – The bound system of the sun and the objects that orbit around it.

Space – The expanse that exists beyond earth that includes the other planets.

L.O: To listen and respond to the seven movements of 'The Planets.



Success Criteria:

- Use appropriate music vocabulary.
- Describe, compare and evaluate the composition.

Here are today's key words:

Gustav Holst

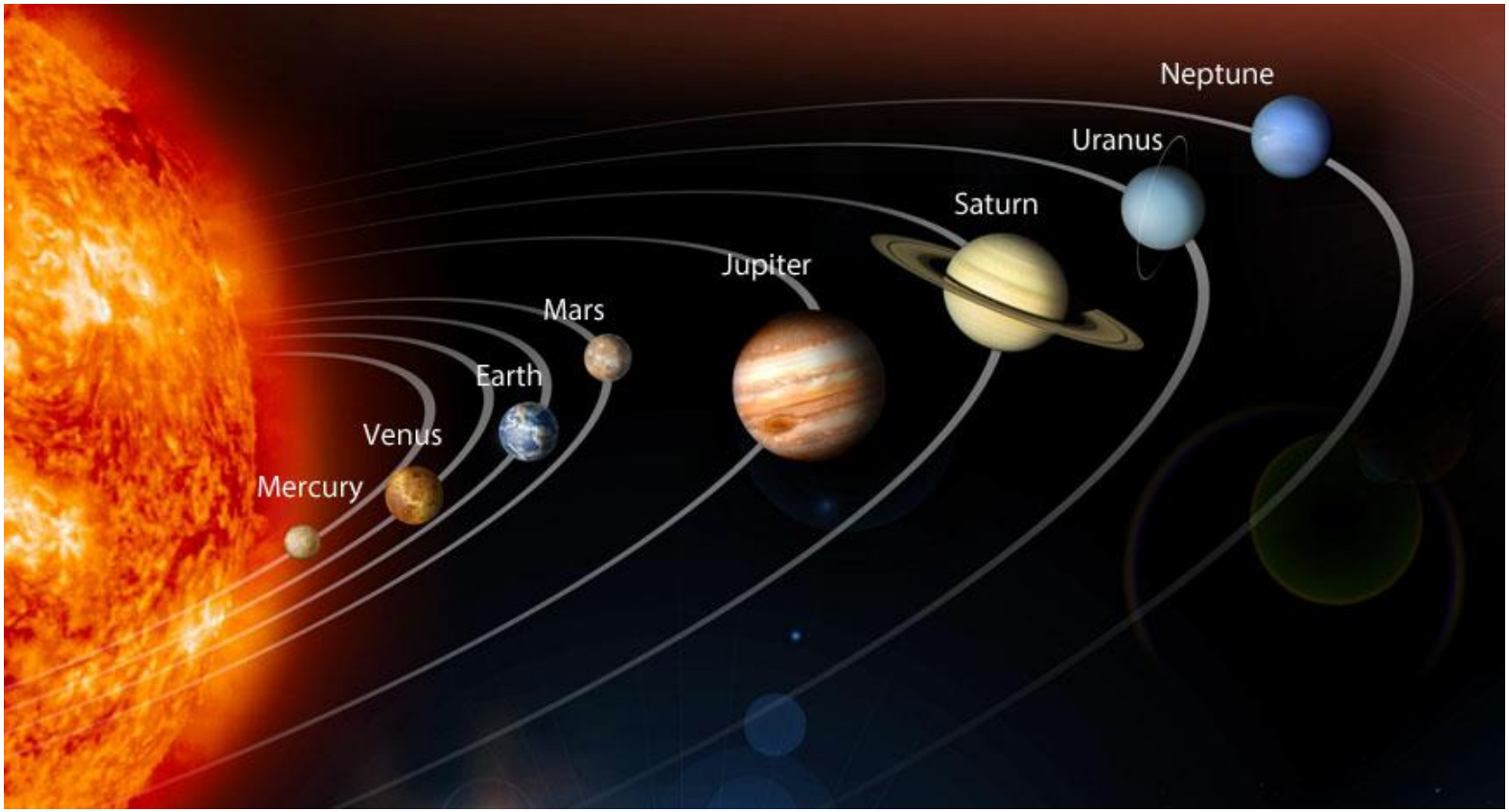
inspiration

Solar System

Space

Teach/Talk Task

Written between 1914-1916 by British composer Gustav Holst, 'The Planets' represents all the known planets of the Solar System seen from Earth at the time, and their corresponding astrological character, including Jupiter and Mars.



Teach/Talk Task

Gustav loved space and wanted to explore the planets so much that he went into space using purely his imagination. He gave the planets character names for example Mars is 'The bringer of war.'

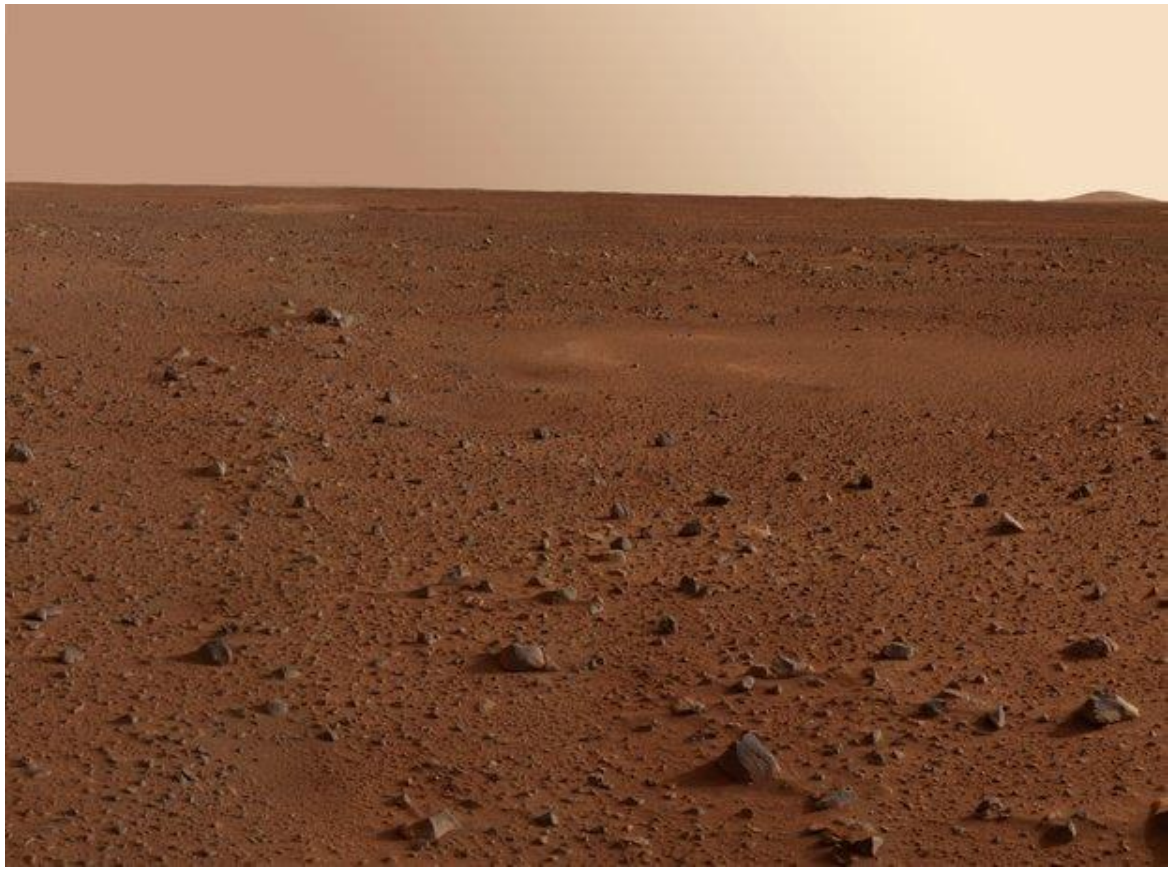




Teach/Talk Task

1. Mars

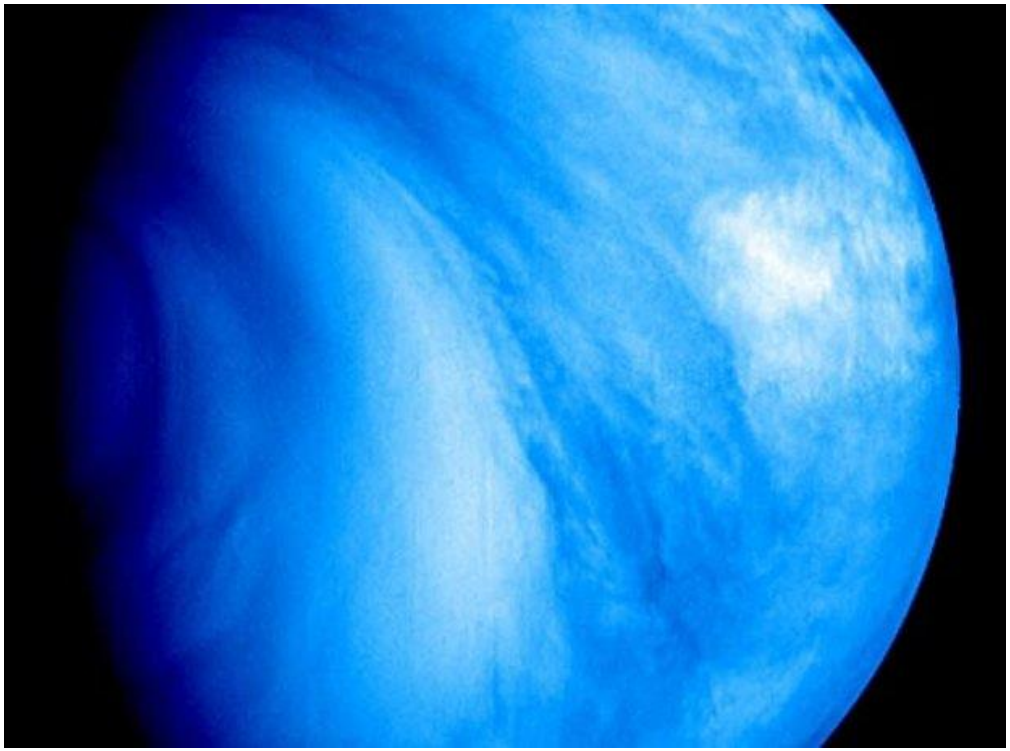
Angry and ominous, Holst's first movement represents the Roman god of war, Mars. The craggy rhythms and pulsing drum beats give the music a military feel.



Teach/Talk Task

2. Venus

The cool blue Venus follows angry red Mars. The music is slower and beautifully eerie, complete with relaxing tunes played on harps and flutes, shimmering strings, and ethereal solo violin passages to call to mind the Roman goddess.



Teach/Talk Task

3. Mercury

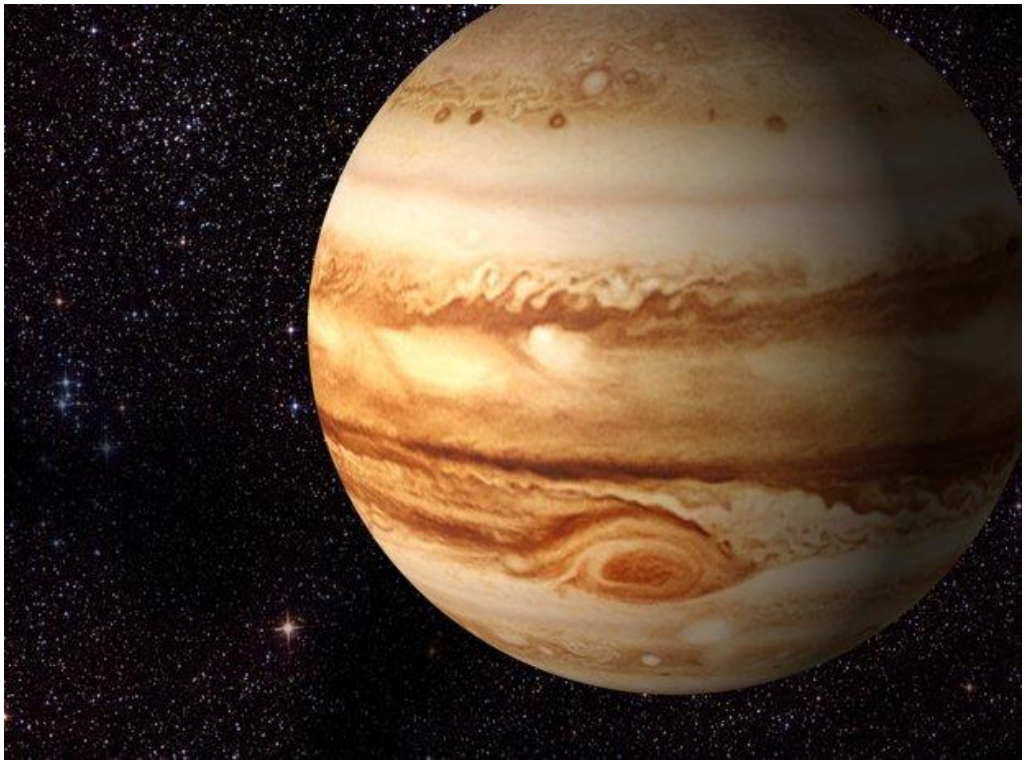
Flighty and fast, the lively Mercury is quick and powerful in equal measure. The high-pitched harp, flute, and glockenspiel tunes hop, skip, and jump throughout the suite's short duration – usually just over four minutes.



Teach/Talk Task

4. Jupiter

As the round-faced cheery uncle of all the planets, and king of the gods, Jupiter is impressive and majestic. The swelling brass and slow waltzing strings are met with moments of poignant beauty in the glorious tune now known as 'I Vow to Thee My Country'.



Teach/Talk Task

5. Saturn

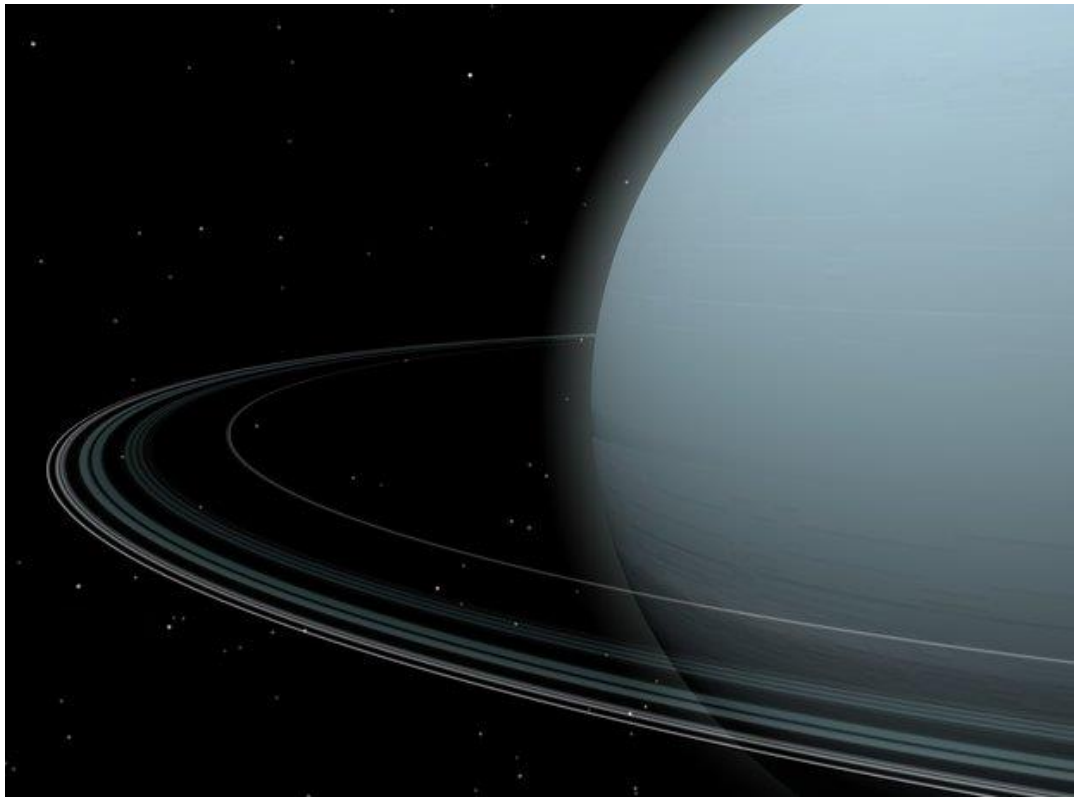
A favourite movement of Holst's, Saturn is quite a shift from the positive music heard in Jupiter. The opening is slow and almost unsettling, until the music expands into a heavy march.



Teach/Talk Task

6. Uranus

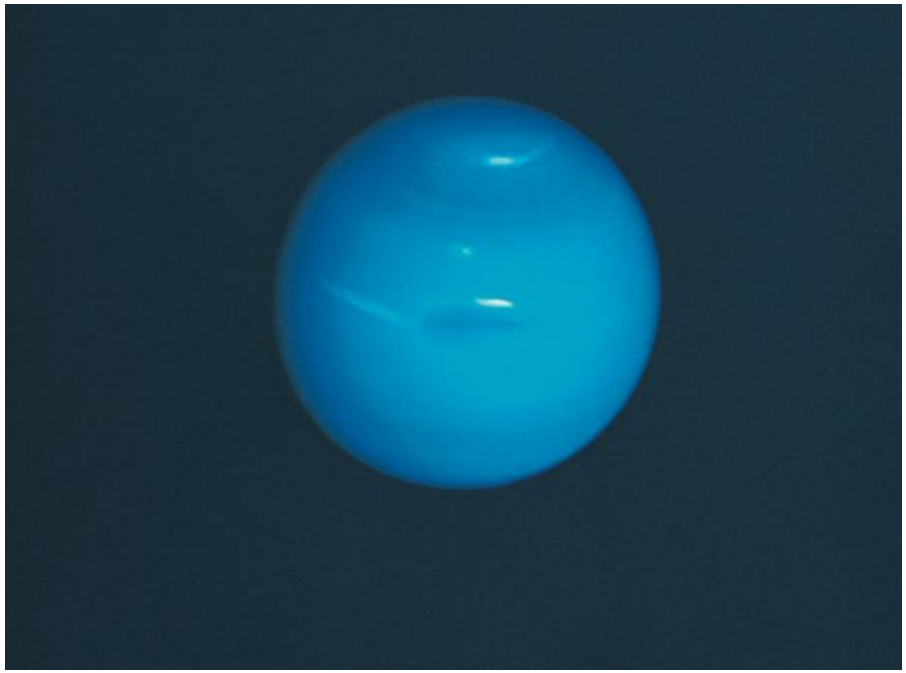
Starting with four brassy notes, Uranus shifts from heavy timpani blows to a boisterous gallop. The full orchestra shows the impressive power of this icy planet, represented in Greek mythology as the god of the sky.



Teach/Talk Task

7. Neptune

When Holst scored this work as a piece for piano duet, he used an organ to represent this planet – the piano, he thought, couldn't portray a planet as mysterious as Neptune. Beautiful harp and string melodies slide over each other, until Holst brings out the crowning glory: a mystical choir, which gives the music an other-worldly quality.



Task - https://www.lpo.org.uk/creative-classrooms-connect/holst-s-the-planets-for-key-stage-2.html (clips of each planet) – freeze powerpoint screen and play clips for task.



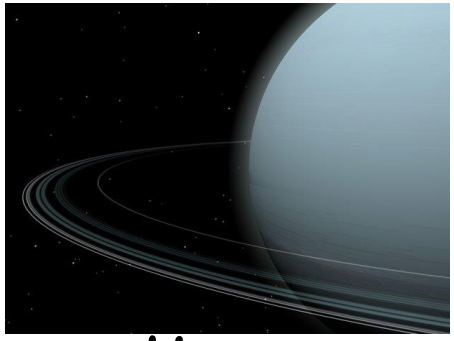
Mercury



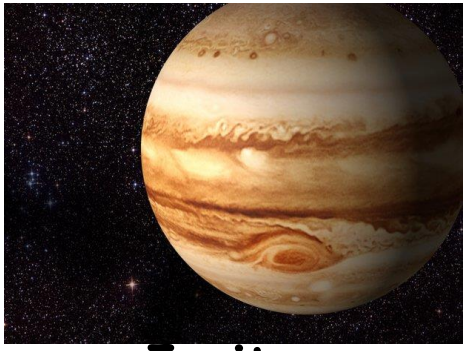
Saturn

What can you hear?
Write it down…

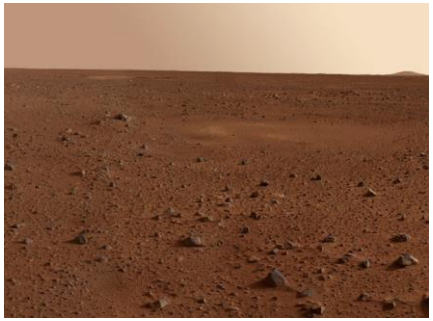
The Bringer of War
The Bringer of Peace
The Winged Messenger
The Bringer of Jollity
The Bringer of Old Age
The Magician
The Mystic



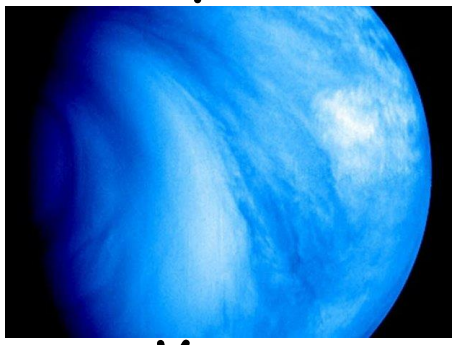
Uranus



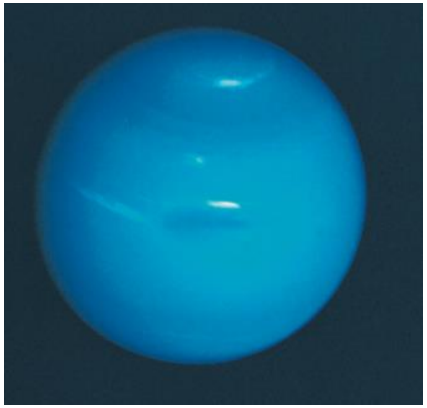
Jupiter



Mars



Venus



Neptune

And finally…

Step for depth.

Add musical terms to describe each piece.
For example, dynamics Mars – begins piano, builds to forte. Or tempo – slow/fast/moderate.

What have you discovered?

Mars, the Bringer of War
Venus, the Bringer of Peace
Mercury, the Winged Messenger
Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity
Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age
Uranus, the Magician
Neptune, the Mystic

