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## Resource Pack

### Soundtrack composition workshop

### Add music to your animation!

by  
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#### **You'll need:**

1. A computer - PC or Mac.
2. A sound editing programme such as Audacity (free).
3. A microphone (e.g. in-built mic on your mobile phone).
4. Windows Movie Maker (PC) or iMovie (Mac), one of which probably came free with your computer, or animation/video editing software if you have it.
5. About 3 hours to create your soundtrack.



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# Soundtrack workshop – add music to your animation!

## Introduction

This is a soundtrack workshop that shows you how to add music to your animation as a way of telling your own stories. Music is a fun way of telling stories, and can add so much to your animation. (If you haven't made an animation, Binary Fable has written a ready-to-use animation workshop resource pack. You can download it from the Workshop Resources page on [www.thelostbook.net](http://www.thelostbook.net).)

If I say “Wallace and Gromit” I bet one of the first things to pop into your head is the very catchy theme tune! In fact, next time you watch the TV or a film, listen out for all the sound effects and the music that's playing, then turn the volume down. You'll be amazed at the difference!

## Story

So you've made your animation, now what? The first thing to go back to is the story that you've used for your animation because that's the starting point for writing the music...



Our composer for Episode One of The Lost Book, Alexis Bennett, will be helping us through this workshop:

When you start writing your music he suggests you have a few essential items on your desk:

- A copy of the film
- The screenplay (the script if you have one)
- The storyboard

## Getting the right mood...

At this stage, the important thing is to settle on a style or mood for the film. Is your story happy, sad, mysterious, jumpy, scary, exciting...? Alexis suggests you think of a few key words

For Episode One Alexis was given these key words:

**playful, witty, intriguing, warm, inviting**

**Task:** Think of 3 key words to describe your story

## Choose your instruments...

You can write your soundtrack using a computer programme like Garageband or Sibelius, or you could write for real instruments and record your friends playing your music! Whichever method you use, keep your words in your head when thinking about the instruments you're going to use.

Alexis had a few words, and one of the instruments he chose was the trumpet because he says: *"It can be cheeky and lyrical at the same time"*.

If you can, try out different instruments on your computer, play about with the different sounds they can make, and try and match your music and instrument with your key words.

## Timing

Over to Alexis for a few tips on timing...

One of the big things to get to grips with in writing music for moving images (film, animation, even games) is getting the timing right. You have to:

- Make sure that your music is the correct length for a given stretch of film
- Any changes in the music happen at the right moment to go with the on-screen action



Each composer works differently, but I like messing around on the piano or my viola, jotting down some ideas on paper, drinking some tea, writing some more, and then recording it on the computer.

Then I see if it goes with the film and I make some changes, or I go back to the beginning and start again. I try turning the tune inside out or putting it into a different key, or imagine what it might be like on a different instrument. Eventually something strikes me as a good direction to go in, and I try to develop it.

Ultimately, if the music gets in the way of the film, distracts the audience or has the opposite effect to the original intention, it is not right and you have to try again.

Some of the best film music is the stuff that you don't remember at all - because it was doing its job by supporting the film and not competing for the viewer's attention.

## Recording Your Soundtrack

Once you have written your music there are two easy ways to make a recording of your soundtrack:

- A. Use your music notation software to make a MIDI recording.
- B. Record live instruments playing your music.

### A. Using your music notation software

Most music notation programmes allow you to hear your music using MIDI. For example on Sibelius, this can be extracted as an audio file to be burned onto disc. Refer to your individual programme instructions to find out how to do this.

### B. Recording live instruments

Recording your soundtrack requires a sound editing programme. There are many software programmes available, both free and for purchase, and after some research we recommend Audacity. Audacity is free to download, very easy to use and will fulfil all your needs for recording a simple soundtrack. There are comprehensive instructions on the Audacity website (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/>); here are a few simple steps to help you on your way:

1. Download & install Audacity
2. Record your soundtrack
3. Edit your soundtrack
4. Export your soundtrack

#### 1. Download & install Audacity

Audacity can be downloaded from <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>. Follow the instructions on the website for installation.

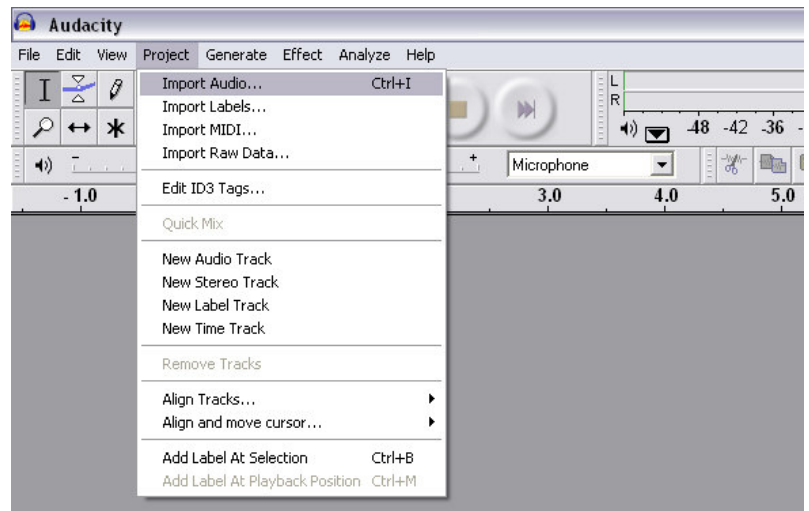
#### 2. Record your soundtrack

There are two options for how to record your soundtrack:

- Record your soundtrack with a digital recorder, such as a Zoom H4 or iRiver.
- Record it directly into Audacity using your computer's built-in microphone or plug in a microphone to the mic input on your computer.

## Recording soundtrack using a digital recorder

- Record your audio with your digital recorder.
- Transfer your files over to your computer via USB or FireWire. Your specific recorder instructions should detail how to do this.
- Double-click on the Audacity icon to open the programme.
- On the menu, click on PROJECT then IMPORT AUDIO.
- Find your recorded sounds using the BROWSE button.
- Choose a sound file to import and press OK.



## Recording a soundtrack using a microphone

- Double-click on the Audacity icon to open the programme.
- Locate your built-in microphone or plug in an external microphone.
- Click on the record button to begin recording.
- Click on the stop button to stop recording.

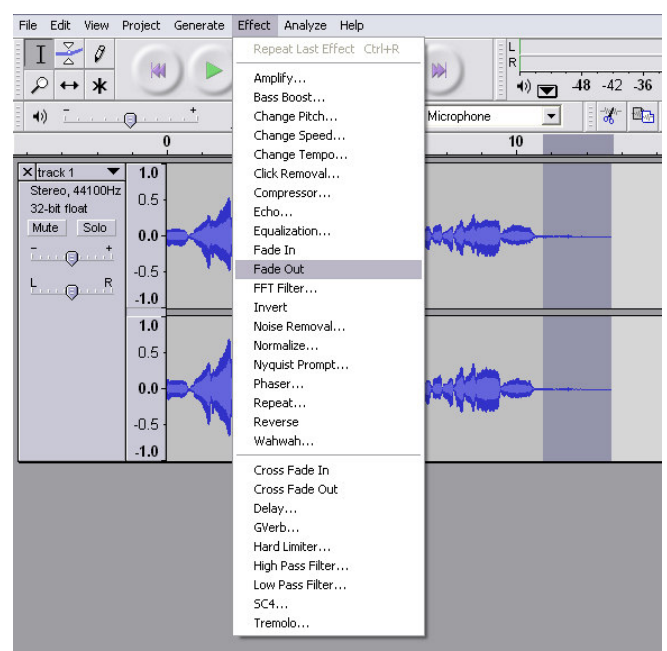


## 3. Editing your soundtrack

Audacity includes many effects that you can apply to any sound file, including; fade in, fade out, echo, change pitch, change speed and many more...

### Audacity Effects

- To apply any effect, select part or all of the tracks you want to modify.
- Select the effect from the EFFECTS menu.
- The Audacity Help Menu has more details on each individual effect.
- If the effect applied is not desirable upon listening press the UNDO icon in the toolbar.



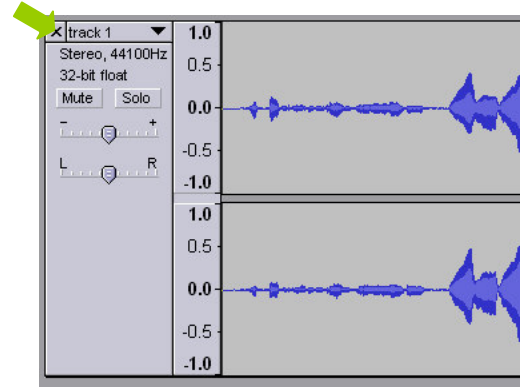
## Move a sound file

- Use the timeshift tool to move a sound file around.



## Deleting files

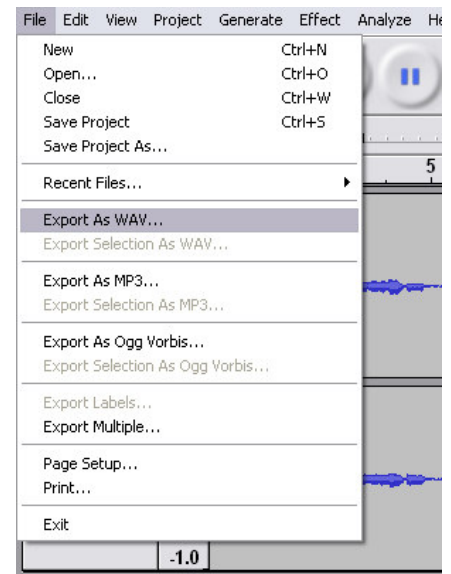
- To delete a sound file simply click on the X on the left of the file. This will delete the file from your Audacity session but not from its original folder.



## 4. Export your soundtrack

Once you have finished your soundtrack you will need to export the file in order to add it to the animation:

- Click on FILE, then EXPORT AS WAV...
- Choose a location to save it.
- This is now ready to be added to the animation.



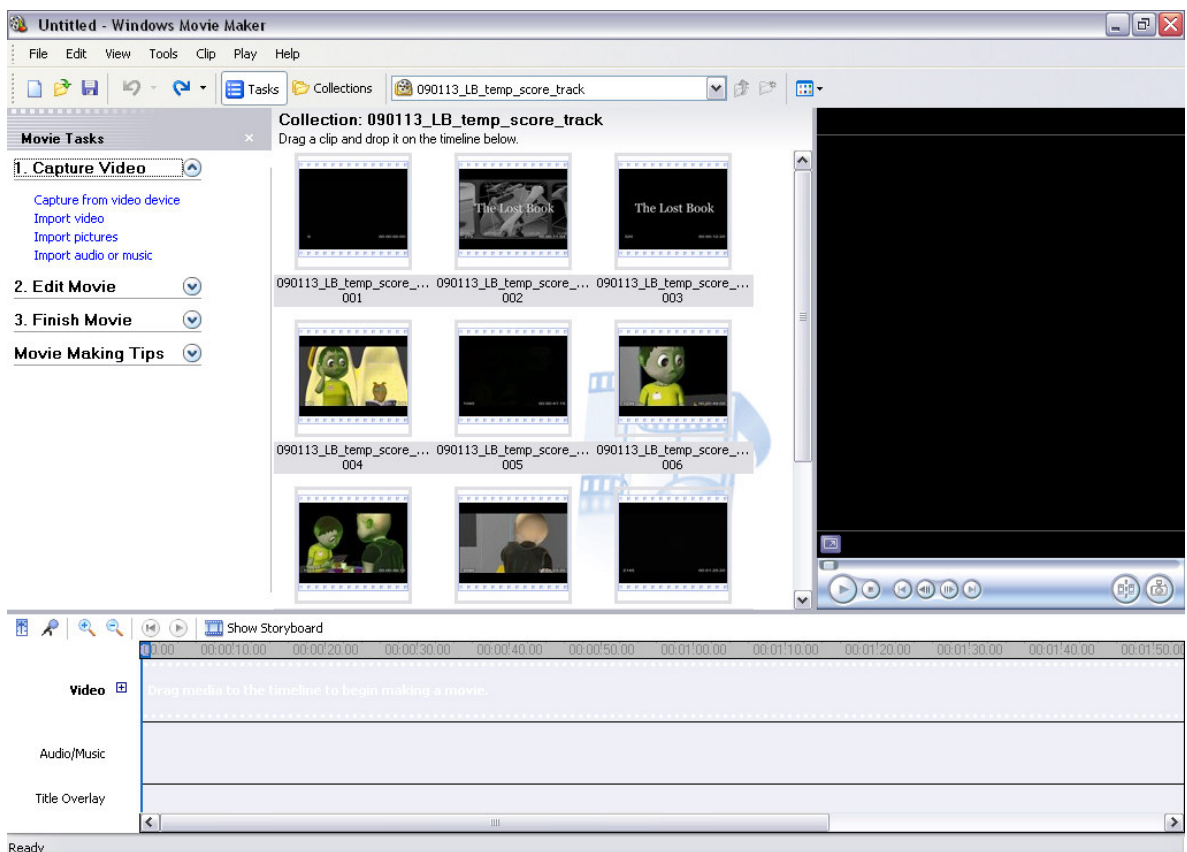
## Add your soundtrack to the animation

To complete the animation, we need to join the music and pictures together. This is easily done using Windows Movie Maker or iMovie.

### Windows Movie Maker (PC)

- Windows Movie Maker is found on most PCs under ACCESSORIES in the PROGRAMS menu.
- Click on FILE, NEW PROJECT to begin making your animation.
- Under MOVIE TASKS, click CAPTURE VIDEO.

- Click on **IMPORT VIDEO** and locate your file of the animation without sound.
- Click **IMPORT**.
- Click on **IMPORT AUDIO OR MUSIC** and locate your soundtrack file.
- Click **IMPORT**.
- Click on your animation file and **DRAG** it down to the **VIDEO** timeline at the bottom of the screen.
- Click on your sound file and **DRAG** it down to the **AUDIO/MUSIC** timeline at the bottom of the screen.
- Click the **PLAY** button to preview your completed animation.



## Finish Movie

You have now completed your animation; all we have to do now is save it onto your computer:

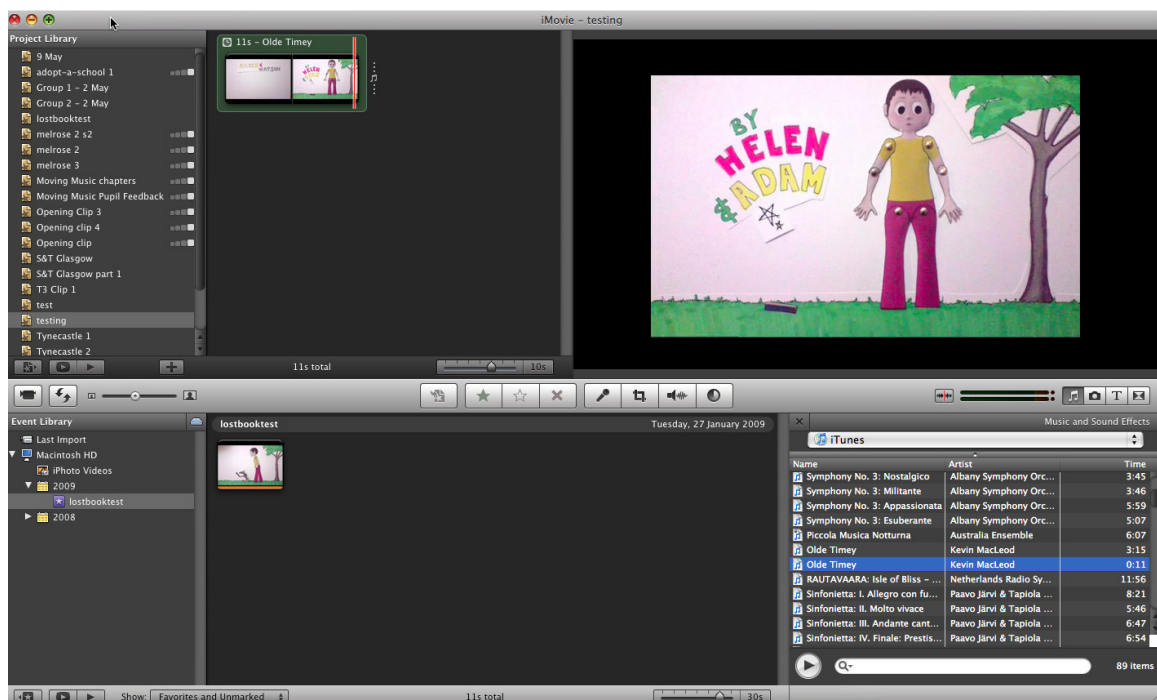
- Click on **FINISH MOVIE, SAVE TO MY COMPUTER**.
- Give your animation a title and choose where you would like to save it.
- Choose **BEST QUALITY FOR PLAYBACK ON MY COMPUTER**.

More help and tutorials are available on the Microsoft website:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/moviemaker/create/default.mspx>

## iMovie (Mac)

- iMovie is usually found in your applications dock on your computer.
- Start a new project by clicking on FILE/NEW PROJECT.
- Give your project a title and click CREATE.
- Import your movie, click FILE/IMPORT MOVIES...
- Find your movie file on your computer, click IMPORT.
- Your movie will appear in the source video window.
- Select the section of video you would like to use in your film and drag it into the project section.
- Add music by clicking on the music icon.
- Select your music file and drag it onto your movie.



## Finish your Movie

You have now completed your animation; all we have to do now is save it onto your computer:

- To export your finished movie click SHARE/EXPORT USING QUICKTIME.
- Name your movie and choose where to save it.
- Click SAVE.

Apple has very helpful tutorials on using iMovie on their website:

<http://www.apple.com/uk/support/imovie/>

## Watch and share

Congratulations! You've told a story by adding music to your animated short film. Sit back and admire it! And, share it with others (and with us!). Why not put your film onto your mobile phone so that you can carry it around? And, upload it to a video hosting site such as [www.blip.tv](http://www.blip.tv) so that everyone can watch it.

If you do upload your film to [www.blip.tv](http://www.blip.tv), please tell us about it! Leave a comment on the Workshop Resources page of The Lost Book ([www.thelostbook.net](http://www.thelostbook.net)) giving us the web address of your film. That way we can watch it, and you'll inspire others who are thinking of making an animation.

# The End

## More information

If you've been inspired by this workshop, you could think about adding sound effects to your soundtrack. The Lost Book has its own Sound Designer called Stephen Gilmour, and here are his Top Tips for creating your very own sound design:

- **Record as many sounds as you can.**  
You'll never know when you'll need the sound of a bee buzzing against a window.
- **Always have a fluffy cover for your microphone when recording in the wind...**  
Microphones are very sensitive to wind pressure and often the slightest gust can ruin a recording.
- **Close your eyes and open your ears**  
Whilst sitting in your bedroom, close your eyes and jot down all the sounds you can hear around you. You'll be amazed at just how many there are.
- **Try pointing the microphone at what you're recording from many different angles**  
The variety of sounds you can achieve can be staggering.
- **Sounds can be deceiving**  
Try combining sounds you've recorded and see if you can come up with a sound that is altogether different.



So get recording and remember, take good care of your ears and they'll last you a lifetime...

## Links

If you've been inspired to write more music for moving image here are a few links that might help you on your way...

**Scottish Screen**  
**Film Music Institute**  
**Music for the Media**  
**Kingston Uni**  
**Bristol Uni**

[www.scottishscreen.com](http://www.scottishscreen.com)

[www.filmmusicinstitute.com](http://www.filmmusicinstitute.com)

[www.musicforthemedia.co.uk](http://www.musicforthemedia.co.uk)

[www.kingston.ac.uk/pgcomposetv/](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/pgcomposetv/)

[www.bris.ac.uk/music/prospective/prospg/maftv.html](http://www.bris.ac.uk/music/prospective/prospg/maftv.html)

**Brunel Uni**

[www.brunel.ac.uk/courses/ug/cdata/f/filmandtelevisionstudiesandmusicba](http://www.brunel.ac.uk/courses/ug/cdata/f/filmandtelevisionstudiesandmusicba)