

# CREATION

## Element C2b – Reflective Commentary

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## **1.0     Introduction**

“It is important to note that we cannot actually see that learning has occurred, we can see only the results of learning which can be termed the representation of learning” (Moon, 2001)

The objective for this essay is to demonstrate that I have learnt, applied, and critically reflected on my project, with the main goal of improving my level of music production. In this essay I will be answering the following questions I set myself at the beginning of this project:

Can I find reputable free resources on the Internet to help me create contemporary Drum and Bass (D&B)?

Can I manage writer’s block in a positive way?

Can I receive critical feedback from industry professionals and apply recommendations where required?

Can I improve my standard of music production?

Can I apply Project Management principles to manage my project through to completion?

I have used the CRAP test (Chaudhuri, n.d.) (as there is a lot of “crap” on the Internet) to assist me in identifying reputable resources. For reflection, I have used the 3 What’s (Boud, Keogh and Walker, 1985). Copies of these models can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B.

I have included elements of my Personal Development plan at the end of each section, and the full plan can be found in Appendix C.

For structure I have grouped my tracks according to the sessions that they were produced in.

## **2.0     Resource Review**

As discussed in my proposal, I have used the CRAP test to evaluate my information sources.

The first source is from the Learn Music and Audio Production iZotope Tips and Tutorials section for the iZotope website. The title of the article is “9 Ways to Overcome Write’s Block as a Musician” (Barra, 2018). The article was published on the website on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2018. The site was last updated in 2021. So, this passes the Currency part of the CRAP test.

The content of the source is primarily opinion, in that it suggests tips and tricks to overcome writer’s block. The author cites a book called “The Artists Way” by Julia Cameron. According to Julia Cameron’s website, she has been an active artist for more than thirty years and is the author of forty books (which have sold more than four million copies worldwide) (Cameron, 2021). Julia is also a novelist, playwright, songwriter and poet, and multiple credits in theatre, film, and television. I would say this is a good source to cite and so it passes the Reliability test.

The author of the article is Erin Barra, for which a Google search brings up her bio for the Berklee College of Music. Erin is an Associate Professor who specialises in composition, performance, and creative music technology application (Berklee College of Music, 2021). This makes Erin an authoritative figure for this subject. There is an advertisement for a free iZotope IOS app, and a sign-up box for subscribing to iZotopes' mailing list. I believe that these are non-intrusive and do not diminish the article in any way, and so it passes the Authority test.

The article uses a mixture of facts and opinions, and some of the tips and tricks worked for me, so I would say that the article passes the Purpose/Point of view test.

Another article I found online that discusses the same subject (Writers Block), is called "11 Essential Tips on how to beat writers block" (Ottewill, 2020). The article can be found on The Institute of Contemporary Music Performance's (ICMP) blog page. The article was published on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and the website was last updated in 2021. The content of the article is provided by tutors, students, and alumni from ICMP, and so the content is from the viewpoint of people experiencing the same issues I was facing (the students). The author is Jim Ottewill, who is also an author for Music Tech (MusicTech,2021), a well-known and highly regarded industry magazine, website, and blog. The author cites students (relevant to my current experience), tutors and alumni.

Regarding creativity, I found a Ted Talk given by director Taika Waititi, called "The Art of Creativity" (Waititi, 2010). The video was published to YouTube on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2010. The content is a brief creative history of the presenter. It is delivered by Taika Waititi, director of films such as JoJo Rabbit, Thor Ragnarök and What We Do in the Shadows. and is quite a light and comedic look at creativity.

The next two sources are from fan websites/forums dedicated to the D&B genre, so these might be difficult to pass the CRAP test. However, I thought it important to include some insight into the world of D&B forums and fan culture (particularly in reference to Section 6 – Discarded Tracks below).

The first source is from the D&B forum Dogs on Acid. Dogs on Acid was created in 2001 and was owned by D&B artists DJ Fresh, Grooverider, Adam F and Sacha. The site has been a part of online D&B history and is probably most famous for a post by then upcoming artists Noisia on how to make a Reese bass (Noisia, 2002).

Regarding the source I have used, the quote I have used was posted on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, and is a response to the question "What's with the "foghorn" everywhere?" (coolmrcroc, 2020) The content of the source is entirely opinion. I do not know who the author is (the name is cool mr croc), however a Google search of the name suggests they are a producer. There are no advertisements on the forum page. The purpose of the source is pure opinion. The reason I used this quote in my

essay was to highlight that the foghorn sound was used well in a track but has now been re-used and copied copiously over the past couple of years in the genre.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> source from a fan site I have used has been taken from the D&B subreddit on Reddit.com. The only date I can obtain from Reddit that the post was made was 2 years ago, and is a response to the question “Too many foghorns in the genre at the moment?” (mdgraller, 2019). The post is entirely opinion. The author of the post is someone called mdgraller, and I can only suggest that they are a D&B fan (judging from the language used in the post). There are no advertisements on the post. Their point of view is entirely opinion. The reason I chose to include this quote in my essay is that while half of the post is somewhat disparaging of the sound in question, they also go on to say that “the tracks are certified weapons” (slang in D&B for heavy/big/great tracks). I have used this quote to highlight whilst I was bored making the tracks (and so binned them for this project), the reason I started down that created path is that if done right, the tracks could “blow it up” (mdgraller, 2019), meaning to set the rave off/get the crowd going.

The next set of sources used include YouTube tutorials. I used these tutorials to get my sounds into the same ballpark of my reference tracks, and then adjusted parameters to taste. In my view there is no point in re-inventing the wheel, but there is a point in painting the wheel in different colours. Plus, the genre demands certain pastiches, references, and aesthetic.

The first YouTube source is an interview with Sub Focus regarding the Reese bass sound. The title of the video is Sub Focus – Reese basses – DnB Masterclass 2008 (Computer Music Magazine, 2013), and was posted on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2013. The content of the interview is purely technical, and whilst the music programme featured in the interview is not the latest version of a DAW, the principles remain the same. The author of the source is Sub Focus, who is major artist in the electronic music scene, having been signed to RAM Records and Virgin EMI. The publisher is Computer Music Magazine, a well-established industry publication (first published in 1998). The purpose of the interview is purely technical.

The second YouTube video is a tutorial called “How to make REESE BASSES like KOVE – BEARCLAW Serum Tutorial” (DNB Academy, 2021) and was posted to YouTube on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021. The content is entirely technical and is reliable as it is close to the sounds I wanted to recreate (however I did find some of the other content on this channel to be lacking, and not as good a standard as other artists I follow on YouTube such as Stranjah). The author of the video is the DNB Academy. This channel is the YouTube channel for a D&B educational “School”, and they have masterclasses from the likes of Kove and Molecular. The video is published by DNB Academy, and includes adverts for the various production courses they offer. The video is purely technical and references the track mentioned in the title.

The third YouTube video is a tutorial called “Making a Detuned Bass Like Shy FX, Break (Serum, Massive, Massive X, Operator) (Stranjah, 2020), and was posted to YouTube on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020. The content is entirely technical, and I believe is reliable as the sounds made are close to what I was

aiming for in the track I used this for. The author is an artist called Stranjah, who has had releases on Hospital Records, Metalheadz and 31 Records. The video is published by the artist, and there are some adverts for the artists products, such as T-Shirts and Caps. The video is purely technical, and the author reference's tracks by the artists mentioned in the title.

The fourth and final YouTube video is titled "4 WAYS to make your DRUMS FAT in Ableton (stock plugins only)" (Noize London, 2019). What drew me to this tutorial is that the tutor is using Ableton's stock plugins. This is something I prefer, as I am all for learning the stock plugins that Ableton has to offer rather than just reaching for a 3rd party plugin. The video was posted to YouTube on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019. The content is entirely technical, and again the sound techniques are what I was aiming for in my project. The author is Noize London, and a visit to their website shows they have worked for clients such as Ministry of Sound, Arsenal Football Club and Warner Music Group (Noize Music, 2021). The video is published by Noize London, and does include adverts for Mixing/Mastering services, Tuition and Studio Sessions. The video is purely technical and references several technical disciplines.

Regarding the learning resources I have used for this project, I probably could have spent more time researching and immersing myself in the world of synthesis. However, from experience, I have found the subject to be quite dry, and the way in which I make music (quickly) means that spending hours playing with oscillators is not really for me. I found that these tutorials allowed me to explore synthesis in a structured way, and to achieve the end results I desired for my tracks. Probably the most interesting tutorial for me was the Noize London drum tutorial. Whilst from an outside perspective this may seem a bit odd, considering bass is one half of D&B, I like and prefer the subtleties explored in this tutorial, and for me subtleties in production in general is what gets me excited about producing.

### **3.0 Writers Block**

The first two weeks of this project, I experienced the one major risk that I identified in my proposal. Writer's block. Every time I sat down to write, nothing would come out, or I was immensely dissatisfied with what I was writing. It got so bad that I stopped listening to music for about a week; nothing musical was interesting me.

I frantically researched ways to counter writers block, and one of my favourite articles I found on the subject was written by Erin Barra for iZotope. From "Taking Your Inner Artist Out on a Date" to "Stealing", (Barra, 2018) it is quite an interesting read. However, none of these seemed to work. Another interesting blog I found was one written for the Institute of Contemporary Music Performance. 3 of the headlines in the article grabbed my attention, "Avoid pushing yourself too hard to be creative" (Ottewill, 2020) and "Take a break and go outside or exercise" (Ottewill, 2020). I realised I was trying to force myself to write, and that I had not left my flat for several weeks (due to COVID and gaming). I was starting to panic quite a bit, so I decided to start exercising and going

for daily walks. The final headline of this blog however clamed me (to some extent), which simply stated “Songs will come ... eventually” (Ottewill, 2020). I have never tried to write D&B to a deadline. In the past, if I had writers block, I would leave it until I felt like writing again. Sometimes this would be weeks, months, or even years. A luxury I do not have for this project.

I was in a bit of a funk, when I realised, I should get out of my usual workspace and work somewhere else. I booked some solo sessions in the new Tileyard Underground Studio. This is where I had my creative breakthrough. I forgot how different it is to create in a studio with monitors (as I have been using headphones for several years now due to my living arrangements). I played about with synths in the studio, and just had fun chucking samples into Ableton and creating quick sketches. I forgot that creating music is supposed to be fun, and that I was putting too much pressure on myself.

Going forward, I think the major lesson I learnt from this experience is not to put too much pressure on myself. Creating music is supposed to be a fun experience. Film director Taika Waititi, whose work I admire, gives an excellent Ted Talk on this subject. Titled The Art of Creativity, He says “for him having fun is what being creative is all about” (Waititi, 2010), which I agree with. I have always said to myself along my musical journey that once it stops being fun, I will stop making music. I think this would apply even if I had a professional job within the music industry. I have found over the song writing camps that I cannot force an idea, and if I am not musically invested in the song, it just does not work.

#### **4.0     Disconnected & Double Trouble**

The first two tracks of my portfolio that I created are Disconnected and Double Trouble. These tracks are aimed at the Metalheadz label. I used the Drum and Bass artist Commix (who is on this label) as my reference. Commix is one of my favourite producers, and I tried to emulate their sound, (particularly with the drums). The reference track for Disconnected is Commix – I Have You, and the reference track for Double Trouble is Commix – Double Double. Links can be found to both reference tracks in the Musical References section.

#### **4.1     *Track Feedback***

I received track feedback from Ciaran Robinson and Sean Hargreaves. The feedback was positive, with Ciaran suggesting I mix up the structure a bit on Disconnected, as the structures for most of my tracks are the same. I did try this, however, was unhappy with the result. From my experience as a DJ, it is usually best practice to follow the generic structures of D&B. It is easier for DJs to anticipate what is coming up in a track, and they can then mix in/out other tracks accordingly. Another suggestion by Ciaran was that all the tracks in my portfolio sounded too polite for the genre, and that I should use parallel saturation to dirty them up a bit. This worked well, and it is the first time I have ever had a proper “bass-face” reaction (my own reaction) to my own tracks.

Sean suggested I apply some glide to the synths in Double Trouble to add some fluidity. This worked well and lets the track rhythmically glide along.

## 5.0 **Run (Pour It Up Remix) & I Needed to Have It**

I was asked by Marissa McKinnon to remix her track Run (Pour It Up), which is a reggae track. The initial remix of this track was based on the Shy FX remix of DJ Fresh's Gold Dust (link in the Musical References section) and followed more of a conventional drum and bass structure. This version of the remix used the original vocal track, which I had sped up to 174bpm using Abletons warp function. Whilst this kind of worked, the vocal sounded a little bit "chipmunky", so we decided to re-record the vocals at Tileyard Studios at the faster bpm. I sent the track to Marissa who really liked it, however thought it was too wordy. The track was also sent to her mentor, Wisdom Layne, who gave some excellent feedback. This can be found in Appendix D.

Marissa sent me the reference track that she used, which is Rudimental & Major Lazer – Let Me Live (feat Anne Marie and Mr Eazi) (link can be found in the Musical References section). I used the tracks structure as a reference, so there is Verse 1, chorus (now placed in the drop build up), instrumental drop/chorus, verse 2, chorus, instrumental drop/chorus, middle 8, chorus, instrumental drop/chorus, chorus. I found this a remarkably interesting and fun way to mix up the standard drum and bass structure of a song. I really enjoyed working with Marissa and hope to continue working with her in the future.

I Needed to Have It is a song written by my friend Dale Garland. We were a production duo around 5 years ago and worked well together. Originally, the song was at 120bpm and was more of a sketch than a finished song. This version of the song is now the version of the song. Dale sent me his Ableton project file, which contained vocals, a basic drumbeat, and a melody. There was also some guitar that was affected, making it more of a pad. I took the midi and applied my own synths to it. I also created the bass from scratch. The beat I built around a drum break that I have in my sample collection.

We re-recorded the vocals at Tileyard Studios and settled on a bpm of 165 (See Appendix E). This is more in line with the original jungle tracks of the 90's, an aesthetic in which we both agreed on. The track is also heavily inspired by early dBridge tracks, particularly Inner Disbelief (link can be found in the Musical References section). I have always enjoyed working with Dale and know that he has several songs that are waiting to be produced. Hopefully more for the creative pipeline.

I think the inclusion of both tracks is a nice addition to my portfolio. In my proposal, I had originally planned to use two tracks written by Dale, however Marissa approached me at the start of this project with her track. I think it sounds good in my portfolio to showcase both a male and female vocal lead track.

## 5.1 ***Track Feedback***

I received track feedback from Ciaran Robinson and Sean Hargreaves. The feedback was positive. Ciaran advised me to reduce the prominent frequencies on the vocal for Run (Pour It Up) Remix.

When I went back into the project, I found that for some reason I had boosted these prominent frequencies, so I adjusted as advised. For I Needed to Have It, I had some issues with backing vocals being out of time that Ciaran had identified (which I have fixed). I had suggested to Ciaran that I was not too happy with the drum sounds across all my tracks, however I acknowledged that I have had these tracks on repeat for several weeks now, and that my ears may be tired of them. Ciaran advised I play with some ring modulation on the drum tracks. I did this and have applied different amounts of ring modulation to all the drum tracks (on the drum busses) across my portfolio, with different degrees of wet/dry as appropriate.

Sean really liked both Run (Pour It Up) Remix and I Needed to Have It. Sean suggested several things, including a variance on the vocal melody. However, I did not pursue this as I did not want it to be too removed from the original track. He also suggested some additional musical flair in the 2<sup>nd</sup> verse for the bass, which I implemented, and it works well. Whilst he did suggest several musical ideas for I Needed To Have It (and they were good ideas), I felt they were a bit too removed for the sound I was aiming at for this track. Notes from these feedback sessions for all tracks can be found in Appendix F.

## **6.0     Discarded Tracks**

These two tracks were quite far into production before I discarded them (for this project; I may yet still use them for other projects). One of the main reasons I removed them from this project is that I got bored making them. Every time I opened the sessions, it felt like a chore, and that I was making them for the sake of this project. The idea behind these tracks was to use the foghorn synth that is prevalent in quite a lot of contemporary “jump-up” D&B. However, I felt that I was not expressing myself thoroughly with these tracks, rather jumping on the foghorn bandwagon. These tracks were written during my studio sessions that I booked at Tileyard, so it would seem a shame to waste them.

The tracks contained vocal samples from the Amazon TV series “The Expanse”. One of these vocal samples, whilst conveying the dark and menacing tone I was aiming at with these tracks, also seems to glorify carrying a knife, something which I did not feel was appropriate due to knife crime in London. These tracks probably will see the light of day at some point, minus/including altered versions of these vocal samples.

The last reason I discarded these tracks is that I am conscious of fan fatigue. As Dogs On Acid user coolmrcroc states “Benny L did a thing, was a good thing, lots of people just want their tunes played so also did the thing.” (coolmrcroc, 2020)” Another DnB fan on the DnB subreddit states “I definitely would leave a night that was mostly that sound, but those are certified weapons and used sparingly would blow it up” (mdgraller, 2019). User mdgraller mentions certified weapons, these being tracks such as Kings of the Rollers – Burnt Ends (Hospital Records), and Rave Alarm (by the same artists).

Because this sound is so powerful, and to paraphrase the above Reddit post, can be used as a powerful weapon (DJ tool) in a live set. My take on the foghorn sound is not quite there yet and is

not bringing something different to the table (enough to justify submitting these tracks for this project).

## **7.0 Siren and Closer**

Due to discarding the 2 tracks, and a looming deadline (2<sup>nd</sup> meeting with Sean Hargreaves and a feedback session booked with Ciaran Robinson), I had to come up with two tracks very quickly. Both these tracks were written in a day (so Siren was written on the Thursday and Closer written on a Friday). I bit the bullet and purchased a Splice Sounds subscription (something I have held off for several years) and was pleasantly surprised with what was available on that platform. I managed to find two good samples to base the two tracks around, and the tracks pretty much wrote themselves.

The reference/inspiration track for Siren is a track by ALB called Problematic. The reference track/inspiration track for Closer is Solstice by ALB, links can be found in the Music Reference section.

## **7.1 *Track Feedback***

I am really pleased the way these tracks have come out and believe that a little bit of pressure (like a looming deadline) does wonders for creativity. I had really good feedback from both Ciaran and Sean regarding these tracks. Ciaran advised that I check some of the rhythmic elements in both tracks as they were a bit too counterpoint. Sean advised that I adjust the level of the bass in Siren, as it was a bit quiet.

## **8.0 Other Feedback**

After the feedback sessions with Ciaran and Sean, I sent the tracks to a couple of fellow students for additional feedback. All the feedback was positive, and I was able to use some of it to enhance the tracks. The feedback can be found in Appendix G.

I have always struggled with asking for feedback on tracks. I have found over the years that the Internet forums are not necessarily the best place to ask for feedback (especially if a track is still work in progress). I have learnt over the master's course that getting someone else's to listen to a track is invaluable, whereas in the past I always avoided it. Going forward, I will select individuals that I know will give good constructive feedback, as there is nothing worse than getting negative feedback from some random forum user.

## **9.0     Production Development**

I have been making D&B for around 10 years now, however I felt that I my production was stagnating, and the tracks were lacking a commercial edge. Through the master's course, and collaborating with other people, I have learnt a lot regarding song writing, song structure, music theory and production. This section discusses and reflects on what I have learnt over this project that I feel has enhanced my production skills.

### **9.1     *Bass synthesis***

My previous D&B productions relied heavily on re-sampling bass that I had obtained through sample packs. Whilst it worked for me for a while, I disliked not having made bass from scratch, and not having as much control over the sounds (as they were pre-recorded samples).

For this project, all the bass synths for all the tracks were made using Xfer's Serum. All the tracks, apart from I Needed to Have It and Run (Pour It Up) Remix use the Reese bass as the main synth, underpinned with a straight Sine bass for the low-end sub. Whilst researching bass for this project, I came across a YouTube interview with the artist Sub Focus. Sub Focus is discussing using a Sine bass for the low-end sub, as the Reese, by its nature, is unstable and is not good for creating a foundation for the track. (Computer Music Magazine, 2013)

To make the Reese and Sub basses for these tracks, I found some particularly good tutorials online from reputable artists (highlighted in the Resource Review).

For the Reese bass I followed DNB Academy's "How to make REESE BASSES like KOVE – BEARCLAW" (DNB Academy, 2021). I would follow these tutorials; however, I would make changes so that it is still my sound. I would change parameters such as Attack, Hold, Decay, Sustain and Release on the Envelopes, and the shape of the LFO's. I would also use my ear for items such as Reverb, Compression, and Distortion, rather than just following the tutorial.

The reason I chose to use the Reese bass is that to me, it is the quintessential D&B sound. For tracks without vocal toplines, I find that this sound fills out the track and is the focus, due to its sound. I was incredibly pleased with how these sounds came out.

For I Needed to Have It, I decided to use an 808 bass sound, which I found Serum emulates quite well. The reason I chose this bass was to keep it low and out of the way of the vocal. For Run (Pour It Up) Remix, I decided to go with the reggae/Bristol sound (the technical term for this bass is Detuned Bass) and wanted to emulate the bass of artists such as Shy FX and Break. I found Stranjahs tutorial to be extremely good at recreating this sound. (Stranjah, 2020)

Through this exercise of using tutorials, I now have a better understanding of how to use Serum. I have also saved these patches as pre-sets for further projects (however I do not like making the same thing twice. Even though there are 6 tracks within this portfolio I view them as one creative piece of work/time. Future projects that I undertake will use different techniques to keep the tracks interesting and so that I do not fall into the habit of just dumping a pre-set bass into a track).

## **9.2     *Drums***

One area that I wanted to improve in and feel that I have done so is my drum processing. In my older productions, my drums failed to punch, and I feel that I have achieved this during this project. I found a good tutorial (again on YouTube) from a channel called Noize London (See Resource Review). This tutorial has taught me about soft clipping, correct application of a drum buss, gain staging compression and a different way to parallel compress.

I have used the same techniques on my drum buss for all my tracks in this project, however the techniques have been tailored to each track.

I found that by using and learning from these tutorials, I was able to create sounds that are genre specific and are also competitive. The tracks must get people's attention (particularly A&R teams at the labels I will be sending these to). I believe I have somewhat achieved this (or at least have got a lot closer than what I was making a year ago). The combination of things learnt on the master's course, feedback from industry professionals, and these tutorials has helped me to progress in my production and mixing techniques.

## **10     Project Management**

For my proposal, I created a project plan for this project, with the intention of implementing some of the tools found in the Agile project management discipline. I found that whilst working through my project, the target dates that I had set in the plan were helpful. However, on a day by day or week by week basis, I struggled to work to these dates. With my writer's block which threw the plan out by two weeks at the start of the project, I was struggling to get myself motivated. However, I had built extra time into the plan, and did not include weekends, which allowed me some flexibility. A copy of the plan can be found in Appendix H.

Going forward, I think I will use this method of project management for my projects, otherwise I will fall into the trap of not finishing tracks. This will be especially helpful when working with other people (e.g., recording in a studio). The plan would be flexible and would allow for problems such as writer's block.

## **11      Conclusion**

In conclusion, I have found that there is a wealth of information and resources available on the internet to create electronic music. I had to apply certain filters to this information, for example I would check whether the tutorial I was watching was recreating/creating the sound I wanted. Another part of this filtering process was whether these sounds were contemporary to the genre, and whether the author of these tutorials is reputable. I believe through my own research I have answered this question.

I found that I managed writers block in a positive way and received critical feedback regarding my tunes positively. Compared to older tracks of mine, I can hear a drastic improvement in my level of production. However, there is always room for more learning, development, and growth.

Regarding project management, I found this to be a difficult challenge. I was overly concerned that I would be late due to the delayed start, however at the time of writing this my tracks were completed with a week to spare. This has meant that I have had a less stressful experience and allowed me time to work on a mix for another student for one of their projects. However, I cannot discount the fear of a looming deadline in regards creativity, something which cannot be planned for. Or maybe it can, the plan is to start two days before the deadline. Either way I think it is good practice to at least plan some milestones for a project to keep it on track.

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Commix – Double Double -  
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[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L08uxunfLi4&ab\\_channel=Rudimental](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L08uxunfLi4&ab_channel=Rudimental)

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## Appendix A – CRAP Test

CSU Los Angeles / LibGuides / JPLUS / CRAP Test

JPLUS

Search this Guide

Search

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Primary & Secondary Sources

Evaluating Sources

**CRAP Test**

Finding Articles

Literature Reviews

Google Scholar

Library Exercise

Contact Info.

Etextbook thorough AL\$

### CRAP Test

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Currency</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How recent is the information?</li><li>• How recently has the website been updated?</li><li>• Is it current enough for your topic?</li></ul>                                                                            |
| <b>Reliability</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What kind of information is included in the resource?</li><li>• Is content of the resource primarily opinion? Is it balance?</li><li>• Does the creator provide references or sources for data or quotations?</li></ul> |
| <b>Authority</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who is the creator or author?</li><li>• What are the credentials?</li><li>• Who is the publisher or sponsor?</li><li>• Are they reputable?</li><li>• What is the publisher's interest in this information?</li></ul>    |
| <b>Purpose/Point of View</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is this fact or opinion?</li><li>• Is it biased?</li><li>• Is the creator/author trying to sell you something?</li></ul>                                                                                                |

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## Appendix B – Boud Model

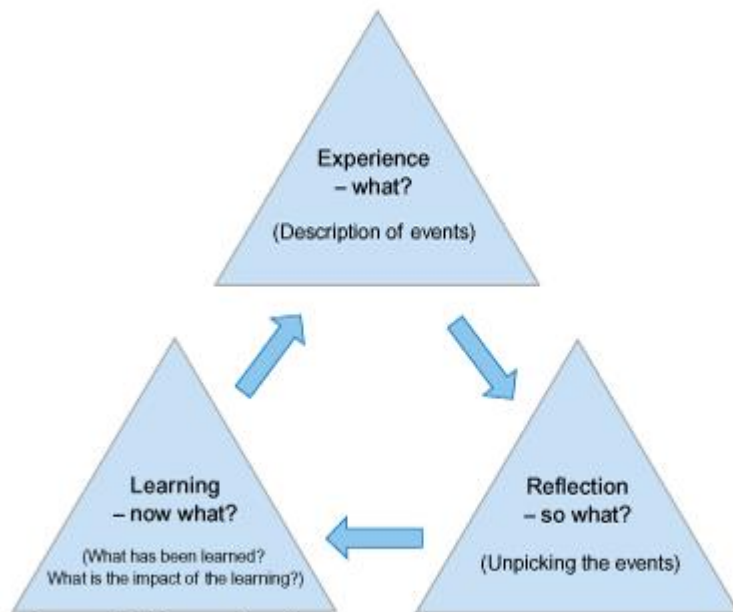
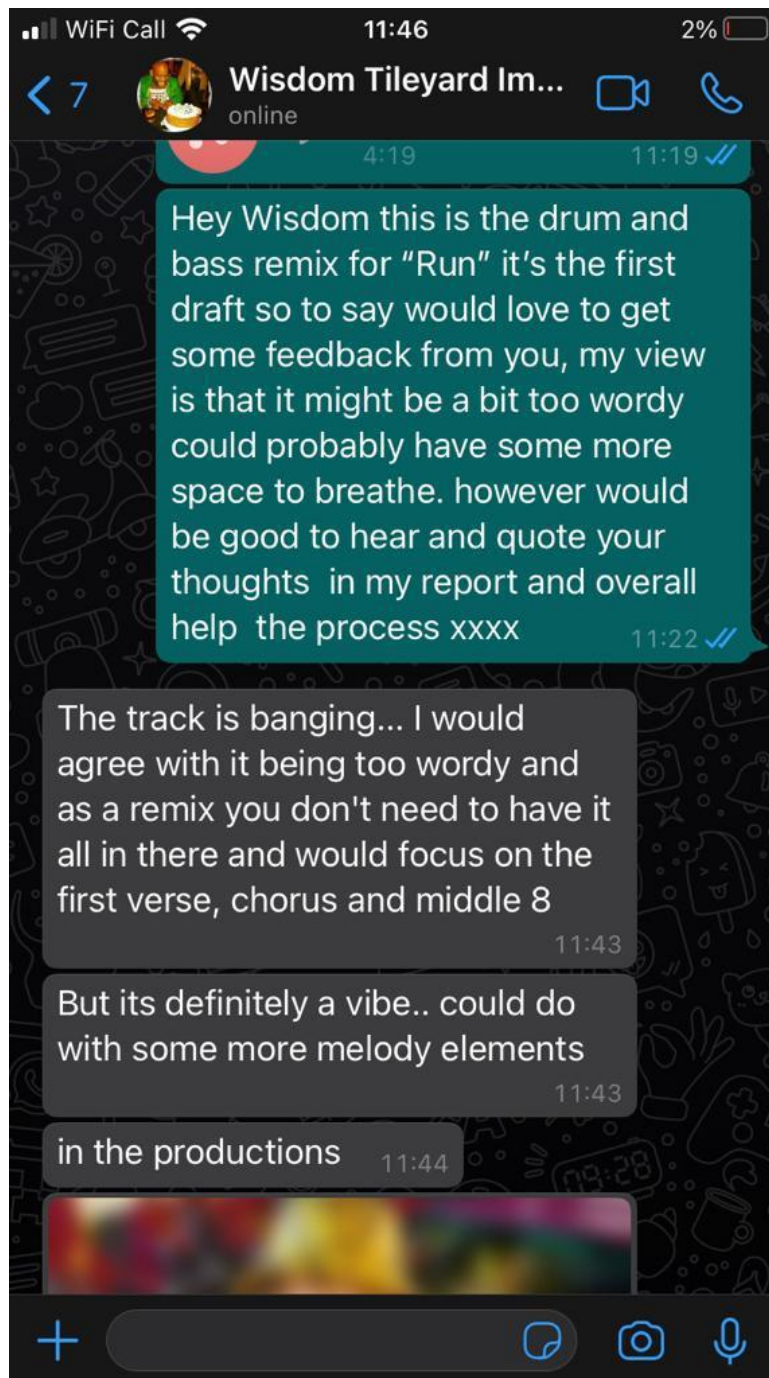


**Figure 3** Key reflective questions

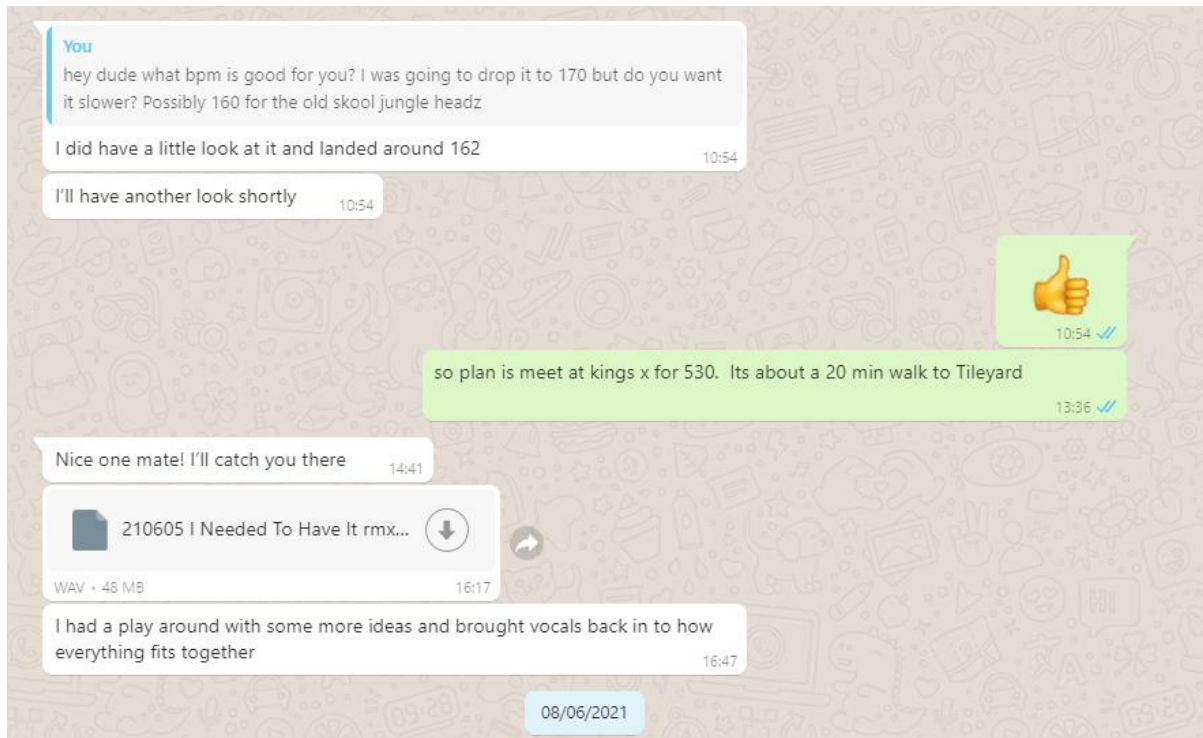
## Appendix C – Personal Development Plan

| Objectives                                                                                            | Success Criteria                                                                                                                         | Actions                                                                                                                    | Implementation                                                                               | Further comments                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What do I want to be able to do or do better?                                                         | How will I recognise success?<br>How will I review and measure my improvement                                                            | What methods will I use to achieve my learning objectives                                                                  | How will I practise and apply what I learn                                                   | Resource requirements, Additional notes                                          |
| Find reliable/reputable sources for Drum and Bass music production                                    | I will have found reputable sources of information. Measurement will be made by evaluating the sounds and techniques used in the source  | Read Dr Lindsay Davies and other scholarly articles regarding research, sources, and skills                                | Apply the CRAP test to the source                                                            | Dr Lindsay Davies slides on Research Sources and Skills<br>Google<br>Forums      |
| Manage writer's block in a positive way                                                               | I will have found/researched ways in which to manage writers block. Measurement will be whether I am able to complete my project on time | Research current thinking and other artists responses/management tricks and tips to writer's block                         | Apply techniques/tricks researched                                                           | Google                                                                           |
| Receive critical feedback from industry professionals during the work in progress stage of the tracks | Submitting the tracks in good time to allow for the industry professionals to listen and prepare feedback                                | Book sessions in with the relevant professionals (Ciaran Robinson and Sean Hargreaves).                                    | Take notes during the sessions<br>Critically evaluate the feedback and apply where necessary | Microsoft Outlook<br>Project Plan created for my proposal document<br>WeTransfer |
| Improve my standard of music production in the genre of Drum and Bass                                 | On feedback received from critical feedback sessions<br>Compare against reference tracks                                                 | Draw on my 10+ years production experience, methods learnt on the master's course, and methods researched for this project | Apply known and researched music production techniques                                       | Ableton<br>Music theory resources<br>Tilleyard Studios                           |
| Apply a project management method to my creative project                                              | Project is delivered on time and to a "high standard"                                                                                    | Draw on my previous professional experience of using Prince 2 and Agile                                                    | Create and adhere to project plan                                                            | Project plan<br>Excel                                                            |
| Critically reflect on my project                                                                      | Deliver an essay that critically reflects on my project                                                                                  | Research critical reflection techniques                                                                                    | Apply the 3 What's to my writing                                                             | MS Word<br>Academic articles on critical reflection                              |

## Appendix D – Wisdom Feedback



## Appendix E – I Needed to Have It BPM Discussion



## **Appendix F – Industry Professionals Feedback**

Ciaran Robinson – 29 June 2021

Number in front of each track

Siren - clashing of rhythmic elements

A bit clean - distortion - saturation - parallel - double - roll of low end

Run - scoop out presence freq for vocals

I Needed It - re-time bvs

Double Trouble – no feedback, but track could be used for sync

Disconnected - arrangement -

Screw with drums - ring modulation

Record snares possibilities - for later projects

Essay - reference tracks

Sean Hargreaves

29/06/21

Run - vocals tiny bit quiet - a couple of db

Try new melody on vocals on pre drop - tuner

Half speed bass line? Bass line hook

Bass line on 2nd verse more reggae

Chops too long and soggy - over compressed and shitty piano sound for chops

Rhodes melody high up - on pre chorus

Hammond keys - speak to Alex

I Needed to Have It

Drums later on intro - filter out -

Drums later - just bass on first verse

Bass line could follow vocal melody closer

Broken drum beat roll the drums - dubby rolls

couple of bars on amen

Reverse piano in gaps?

Reverse Effect colliding with vocal

More bvs track up and down

Lo-fi

Double Trouble

Intro synth - phaser and stereo field

Vocal synth more sparse

Synth glide - glide up fast and slow down slightly detuned

Disconnected

Amen break vocal not on loop

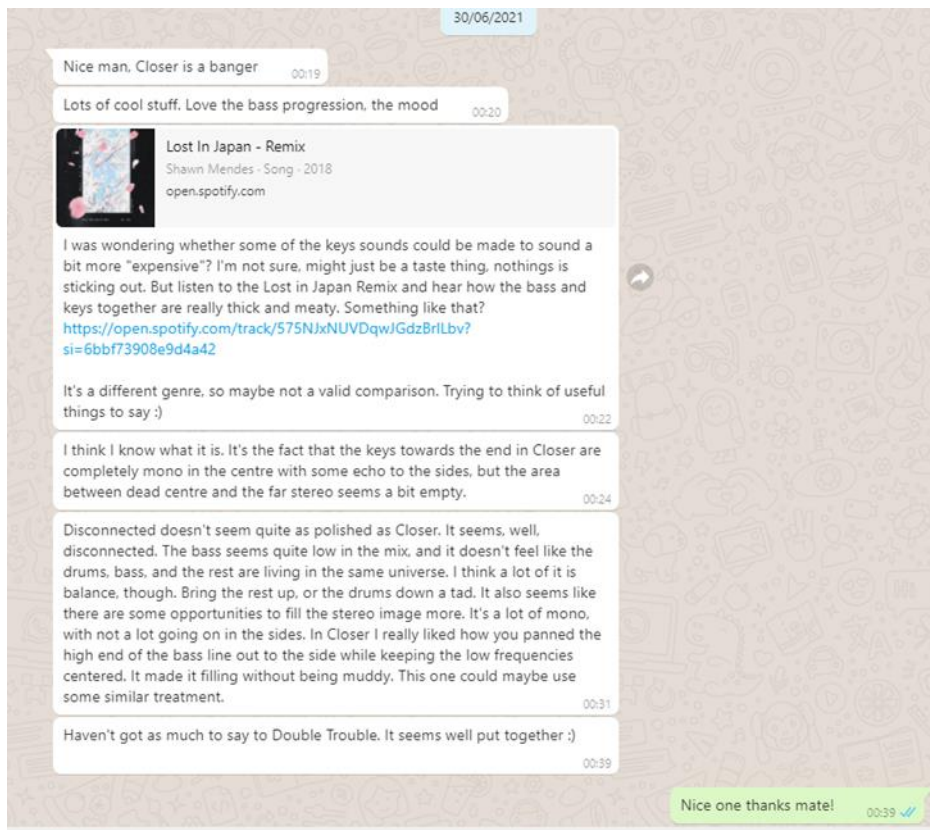
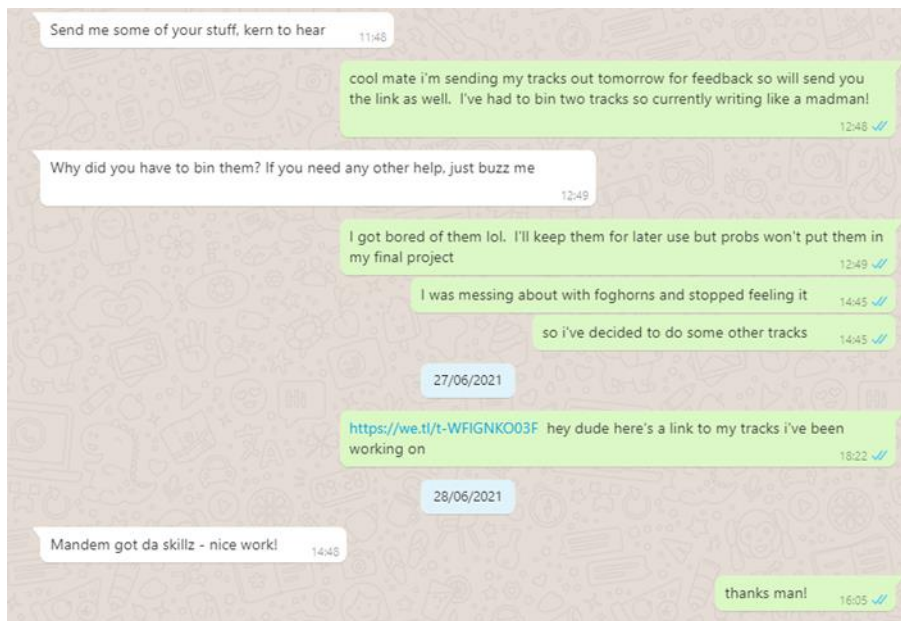
Old skool vocal in the intro - saying the word disconnected

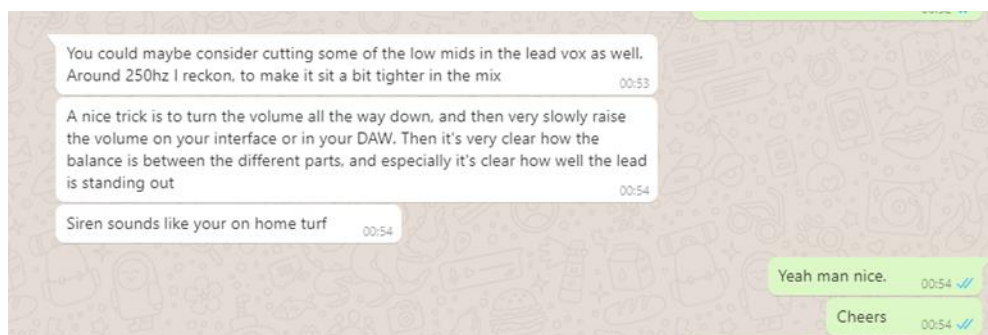
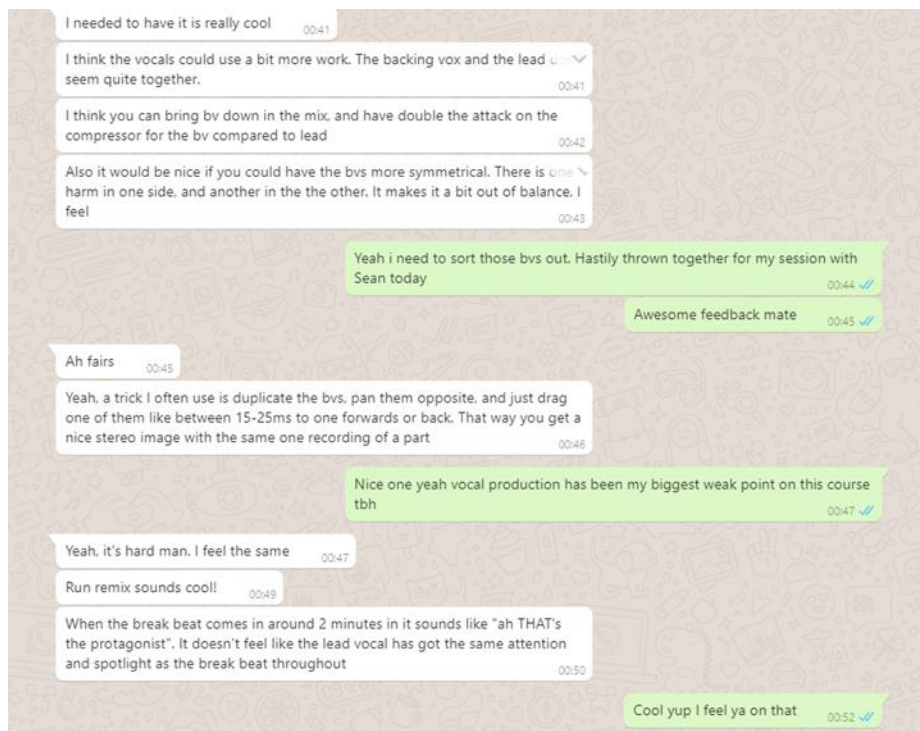
Siren

Vocal needs filtering

Bass louder

## Appendix G – Student Feedback





Task in Progress

Task Completed

|    | May-7 | May-14 | May-21 | May-28 | Jun-4 | Jun-11 | Jun-18 | Jun-25 | Jul-2 | Jul-9 | Jul-16 | Jul-23 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 3  | 4     | 5      | 6      | 7      | 10    | 11     | 12     | 13     | 14    | 17    | 18     | 19     | 20 | 21 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| 4  | 5     | 6      | 7      | 10     | 11    | 12     | 13     | 14     | 17    | 18    | 19     | 20     | 21 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |
| 5  | 6     | 7      | 10     | 11     | 12    | 13     | 14     | 17     | 18    | 19    | 20     | 21     | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3 | 4 | 7 | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |
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| 37 | 10    | 11     | 12     | 13     | 14    | 17     | 18     | 19     | 20    | 21    | 24     | 25     | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |
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| 39 | 10    | 11     | 12     | 13     | 14    | 17     | 18     | 19     | 20    | 21    | 24     | 25     | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |
| 40 | 10    | 11     | 12     | 13     | 14    | 17     | 18     | 19     | 20    | 21    | 24     | 25     | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |
| 41 | 10    | 11     | 12     | 13     | 14    | 17     | 18     | 19     | 20    | 21    | 24     | 25     | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |
| 42 | 10    | 11     | 12     | 13     | 14    | 17     | 18     | 19     | 20    | 21    | 24     | 25     | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |
| 43 | 10    | 11     | 12     | 13     | 14    | 17     | 18     | 19     | 20    | 21    | 24     | 25     | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |
| 44 | 10    | 11     | 12     | 13     | 14    | 17     | 18     | 19     | 20    | 21    | 24     | 25     | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |
| 45 | 10    | 11     | 12     | 13     | 14    | 17     | 18     | 19     | 20    | 21    | 24     | 25     | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |
| 46 | 10    | 11     | 12     | 13     | 14    | 17     | 18     | 19     | 20    | 21    | 24     | 25     | 26 | 27 | 28 | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |
| 47 | 10    | 11     | 12     |        |       |        |        |        |       |       |        |        |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |