

Before we had modern scales most songs were set in modes. These were like scales but with no standard intervals so each sounded different to the others.

Each mode had a Greek name.

Dorian from D to D'



Phrygian from E to E'



Lydian from F to F'



Mixolydian from G to G'



In 1547 it was suggested that you could also have modes based on C and A. These, of course give us our major and natural minor scales.

Ionian from C to C'



Aeolian from A to A'



You can play these easily on a keyboard by simply avoiding all black keys. Just play on the white keys and there you have it.

Tasks:-

1. Try composing a really sad tune in the Phrygian mode. Remember to avoid finishing it on A which brings it into A minor.
2. Using the Dorian mode compose a 16 bar piece based on the idea of water.
3. Explore the other modes. What moods or feelings do they suggest?