



## KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER: KEY COMPOSER 4

**JOHN  
WILLIAMS**  
1932—present



John Williams wrote the music scores for...

Star Wars

Schindler's List

Encounters of the Third Kind

Superman

ET

Indiana Jones

Home Alone

Jaws

Jurassic Park

Hook

Harry Potter

Saving Private Ryan

The Book Thief

The Colour Purple

The BFG

...to name a few

- Williams is an American composer, conductor and pianist
- His career spans 60 years!
- Williams' dad worked on the radio and was a jazz percussionist in the 50s
- Williams has three children. His son was the lead vocalist of the band Toto who had a hit with 'Africa.'
- His wife was an actress who played Carrie Pipperidge in the film, Carousel
- Williams has composed some of the most popular, recognisable film scores in history
- Williams has 25 Grammy Awards (these recognise achievements in the music industry)
- Williams has 7 BAFTAs (these recognise best contribution to film and are a British Award)
- Williams has 5 Academy Awards better known as an Oscar (these recognise best contribution to film and are an American Award)
- Williams has been nominated 52 times for an Academy Award!
- Star Wars has been voted as the best film score of all time



Composer	A person who creates music, especially as a job to make money
Film score	Music written to accompany a film. It helps to describe the story and helps the audience to feel particular emotions while watching the film
Conductor	A person who directs the performance of an orchestra or choir
Leitmotif	A recurring musical phrase that relates to a character, object or
Celeste	An instrument that looks like a piano

### John Williams' Music

\*Williams uses a celeste in the opening of Hedwig's Theme from Harry Potter. Tchaikovsky used a celeste in Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy (see Key Pieces 1)

\*Williams makes extensive use of a musical leitmotif in his films. The Jaws leitmotif is now an iconic musical phrase

\*Williams takes inspiration from other composers and Classical music:

-The Star Wars theme can be likened to Mars from The Planet Suite (see English Composer 1)

-The theme from Jaws can be heard in Stravinsky's Rite of Spring (see Key Composer 6)