

Guildford County School Specialist Music College

GCSE Music



RevisionBooklet

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The following have been used in lots of questions on all papers . You are bound to be asked about these so you **MUST** understand them. This booklet is **not** a replacement for your folder. In your folder you have a wealth of musical examples that you can revise, listen to and apply these terms. This booklet is the bare minimum that you require so use this to reassure yourself that you have a good, solid, basic understanding.

You will be gathering end of unit terms - a bank of terms that are applied to each AOS they are taken directly from the AQA revision guide and must be learnt.

Your paper is in Two sections:

Section A : Questions relating to all AOS - mostly short questions with some 3,4,or5 mark :effect and Impact” questions or context to a specific genre question.

Section B : Questions relating to your set works.

Section A Examples :

Name the Instrument

You WILL be asked to name an instrument playing something. If you don't play in a band or orchestra this is difficult. The best way to learn is to go to www.dsokids.com and here you can listen to all the different orchestral instruments and learn what they sound like. There will also be pop and instruments from around the world relating to India, Africa and the Caribbean.

Describing Musical sounds

In several questions you will be asked to describe things that you hear in the music. The most obvious examples being questions relating to film, computer game and pop music. This is where we see that music can express much more than words. You must try to be very specific in your answer and describe in detail what you hear. For example *“drum plays” will never be enough, however “Snare drum plays a repeated pattern on every beat” is good.*

*Always remember: P= Point (or term e.g. Tempo) E = example (elaborate e.g. Fast/ Allegro)
Explain & Locate (e.g. fast has an impact of and happens in the introduction)*

Melodic Movement

You will be asked to describe this and it just means describe the way the melody moves. Direction (up, down or the same) and shape or contour (step or leap) EBI Scalic, triadic etc

Musical Devices

You will be asked to name a musical device being used at a given point in the music. *A musical device is not an instrument e.g. a piano; drum kit or guitar.* They mean things that are happening in the music, such as **SEQUENCE, PEDAL, IMITATION** (See the Glossary in your folders for definitions).

Texture

You will be asked to describe the texture at a given point in the music. Texture means the ways that sounds are *combined together*.

MONOPHONIC means 1 single sound; it could be a voice or an instrument.

HOMOPHONIC has 2 applications :

- 1) It can mean a single melody with a background accompaniment. This is the most common texture. *It is most likely to occur in Classical period pieces and pop songs.*
- 2) Chordal - where by you will have a clear melody but the parts will move together (homorhythmically -) like a hymn.

In the exam state Homophonic Chordal or Melody and Accompaniment.

- 3) **POLYPHONIC** means lots of different melodies playing at once. It sounds like lots of people talking at the same time. It will sound busy and complex and is *most likely to occur in the Baroque period or in Opera / / Musicals*

.MUSICAL FORMS.

Structure and Form

The FORM of a piece of music is the way the different sections are put together. The first thing you hear is called section A. When you hear something new this is section B and so on. The most common forms are –

BINARY FORM – is in 2 sections. Section A followed by section B. Both are usually repeated. All dances from the BAROQUE SUITE are in BINARY FORM.

TERNARY FORM – 3 sections A, B and A.

RONDO FORM – in RONDO FORM, section A comes back after each new section. Like this, A – B – A – C – A. It could go on longer.

VARIATION FORM – each new section is based on the original section A, and so it is a variation of it. (sometime Jazz uses and equivalent a bit like this and is called a Head Arrangement)

It can mean a single melody with a background accompaniment. This is the most common texture.

VERSE / CHORUS Form - don't forget the intro and outro. The paper often asks you to say how many bars intro occurs before the first verse. *Something to practice!*

Cadences You will be asked to name or describe a cadence at a given point. These always involve two chords. Cadences are musical punctuation, you can think of them as commas and full stops. There are several kinds but you really need to identify 4.

- 1) **PERFECT CADENCE V - I** is a musical full stop.
- 2) **IMPERFECT CADENCE I - V** is a musical comma.
- 3) **INTERRUPTED CADENCE V - vi** is a "surprise" and, if in a major key will sound major - minor.
- 4) **PLAGAL IV - I** a gentle, final ending much like the ending "Amen" of a hymn

If you honestly freeze in the exam ask yourself, "does this sound finished?" and write Perfect. Or "Does this sound incomplete" and write imperfect.

Tonality

You will be asked to name the tonality of a piece of music. Tonality just means the kind of key that the music is in.

MAJOR sounds happy. **MINOR** sounds sad or can be powerfully dramatic.

ATONAL means no key and is usually clashing and unpleasant but not always, it can just sound aimless. *This could be associated with your AOS Western Classical music from 1910 onwards.*

PENTATONIC uses a scale with gaps in it and so it can sound "airy" most often it sounds oriental. Literally a 5 note scale. It is also used in Jazz and folk music.

Intervals

You will be asked to name the interval between **two** different voices, parts or notes.

This means you have to recognise the different sounds that this makes.

There are **6** intervals.

3rd's and 6th's are pleasant sounding intervals and are the most likely in "popular" music such as pop songs and light classical music like the waltz for example. The theme to Rugrats uses 3rd's, if the notes sound a long way apart they are obviously 6th's.

4th's and 5th's sound hollow or they could sound powerful (a power chord in rock is a 5th). Some Gospel BVOX and Soul use 4ths

2nd's and 7th's sound horrible and clashing and are likely to come up in Western Classical Music since 1910 or in Film Music.

For the educated "guess", if it sounds "sweet" go for 3rd if not go for 5th.

Beware! The examiners also love to try to catch you out by using the Octave. Practice recognising the difference between the 5th and the 8ve.

ELECTRONIC EFFECTS. Or FX

You will be asked to name an effect used in a piece of popular music. They mean an electric effect which has been used to alter the sound. Do not confuse this with a playing effect (or articulation) like strumming a guitar for example.

The most usual electronic effects are :

REVERB – this makes it sound like singing or playing in a very large room, think of it is an after sound.

DELAY – you can hear a really distinct "after " sound. Sometimes create "ambient " washes of sound especially for film music & some pop music.

ECHO - will repeat and fade - its a time lapse effect (you could argue echo and delay are connected but for GCSE you don't need this!)

VOCODER – is a speech synthesiser and compresses the sound. Think Daleks from Doctor Who. Or listen to Herbie Hancock!

LOOPING – when a short bit of the music is recorded and the repeated over and over or looped

DRUM MACHINE – not really an effect this is an electric gadget to play drum parts. They sound very mechanical and were used a lot in cheesy 80's music.

SAMPLE - either including a non musical sound in the mix e.g. bird song, car horn , thunder etc or it is where you take a section, or portion of one sound recording and reuse it in a different piece.

CHORUS - think Ed Sheeran and his pedal board ! it is an effect used to create a richer, thicker sound.

Fusion

If you think about it, when you are asked to name the 2 cultures, which have been combined, x1 must be "western and often, Western pop".

All you have to do is then identify which area of the world supplied the other one.

Then you must identify which things come from Western pop music e.g. instruments - drum KIT (must be kit) and ELECTRIC guitars (must be electric and specify led, rhythm , bass etc) are probably the most obvious as well as the structure of the song and a clear diatonic key and chord progressions.

Then list which things come from the foreign culture. Listen for foreign instruments, for example if it's the Caribbean you could hear steel drums an emphasis on the back beat - 2 & 4 and a bass riff as well as foreign languages, unusual ways of playing and singing. You should still get credit for naming the foreign elements even if you get the culture wrong.

You need to know India, Caribbean and Africa

Example Exam Style Questions

Western Classical Music Since 1910

Identify **five** features of rhythm, melody and use of instruments/instrumentation used in this excerpt typical of 20th century orchestral music.

..... [5 marks]

General questions will also relate to:

- * How many times do you hear the opening idea
- * Describe the tempo
- * What is the tonality ?
- * Identify 2 - 3 terms that best describes the music
- * Identify cadences
- * Identify specific instruments

Revision Tips!

These types of questions relate to *any* Area of Study, so practice these at home by listening to a *wide* range of pop and classical music. Use the class listening examples from your folder.

Create a chart of all the genres we study and simply answer the *same questions* for each style / genre.

Section B

I have reissued all the exam style questions again below. Work through them. Make sure you hand in extra to your teacher if you are unsure. The last question for each set work will be an 8 mark question. This is a **BIG MARK** so you have to know the context, background and impact of each set work thoroughly.

You will have short answer questions followed by an 8 mark question.

There will be *two sets of questions*:

- 1) It is **compulsory** for us to complete the Haydn.
- 2) We have chosen to also study the Beatles pieces. In the exam, you must make sure you **select** the Beatles.

Haydn: Makes sure you know the background/ context. E.g.

- * How many symphonies did he write ?
- * What is the Classical period ? Dates ?
- * What are the London Symphonies ?
- * Why is it nick named the “clock”?
- * Haydn was a court musician - what does that mean and who employed him ?
- * Make sure you thoroughly understand the structure including where the silence is !

Examples of short questions for our set works:

1. Describe the opening melodic movement
2. Describe the opening melody
3. What is often used to precede the start of the main theme ?
4. Anything to do with the “tick tock” clock reference - instruments; rhythm; intervals etc
5. What is the overall Texture?
6. What plays the melody
7. What accompanies the main theme ?
8. Describe the accompaniment.
9. What doubles the violins ?
10. What is added in the second section ?
11. What changes in the return of the opening theme?
12. Where are the timpani first heard ?
13. Describe two differences in the middle section.
14. What impact does the timpani have?
15. What is the transposition of the Clarinet ?
16. What is the transposition of the French horns?

17. When the melody / theme returns in bar 63, how does Haydn demonstrate development?
18. Describe the techniques used by the violins in the middle section
19. What is the dynamic at the start ?
20. How do the dynamics change in the second half of the melody ?
21. What are the dynamics when the theme returns?
22. How do the dynamics change in the middle section ?
23. Describe the tonality.
24. Give 2 rhythmic characteristics of this piece.
25. Name the ornaments used.
26. How does the rhythm develop when the main theme returns ?
27. Describe an important rhythmical feature of the dramatic middle section.
28. What rhythm is used to give extra motion to the main theme, when it returns in the later part of the movement?
29. Which instruments took over the role of filling in the harmony during the Classical period?

8 Marks Questions:

It is likely that this could be :

- 1) A context question relating to the Classical period
- 2) Relating to the title of the Symphony "The Clock".
- 3) A question asking you to compare the opening section with the last section
- 4) A question asking you to discuss contrasts
- 5) A question asking you to discuss continuity.

For a question such as no 3,4 or 5 - it is important that you mention all areas of the piece - instrumentation, tonality . harmony . melody . rhythm etc. These are all interlinked.

The Beatles

Makes sure you know the background/ context. E.g.

- * 1950's saw a fusion of styles - Jazz, Blues and Country coming together to form rock and roll artists such as Buddy Holly and Elvis Presley *influenced* the Beatles.
- * Most successful and innovative band of 1960's.
- * Interested in producing artistic work.
- * They became disillusioned with performing live and with touring so decided to only work in the studio
- * Sgt Pepper - broke new ground in both compositional techniques and recording techniques.
- * Abbey Road studios and their producer George Martin helped the band interpret their songs using a wide range of electronic techniques. They also used instruments beyond the standard rock and pop line up.
- * Techniques included:

-Recorded on a 4 track tape machine

-More layers created by reduction mixing: 4 tracks recorded then dubbed down (copied over) to a master 4 track thus freeing up space on the original machine for more takes.

- Cutting up tape and splicing it together or reversing it to create new material.
- Speeding up and slowing down tapes during the recording.
- tape delay
- double tracking

Concept Band:

- Connecting theme of an Edwardian band - alter egos.
- The reprise of the main title song as the penultimate track
- Its LP cover art.

With A Little Help From My Friends

- 1) What is unusual about the introduction?
- 2) Describe the melody?
- 3) Who was this composed for and why ?
- 4) How many melodies are in the verse ?
- 5) Describe the chorus
- 6) How is the second chorus different ?
- 7) What is a fill? Which instrument plays this and where in the song ?
- 8) What features in the middle 8 ?
- 9) What does the term *dal segno* mean and where is it ?
- 10) What is the last note of the coda ?
- 11) Name the chords used throughout the song
- 12) Why does the first chord of the Middle 8 begin on chord iv?
- 13) Describe the features of the last cadence in the coda.
- 14) Describe the accompaniment in the first verse
- 15) Describe the bass writing
- 16) What is the texture ?

Within You , Without You

- 1) Describe the metres used
- 2) Describe the melody
- 3) Name the 2 instruments used in the intro.
- 4) How long is the opening melody ?
- 5) What interval is outlined in the first phrase of the opening melody ?
- 6) What interval features in the second half of this melody?
- 7) Describe the harmony.
- 8) What note is the drone based on ?
- 9) This is modal. which mode is used ?
- 10) Name the 5 different Indian instruments used and what their musical functions are.

Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds

- 1) Is the opening word setting, melismatic or syllabic ?
- 2) Describe the vocal melody
- 3) How long is the first section ?

- 4) How many phrases are in the Chorus?
- 5) Where is a *dal segno* used ? (be able to draw this sign)
- 6) How is the coda linked to the rest of the piece?
- 7) How do you know that this was recorded in the studio?
- 8) Describe the metres used.
- 9) Describe the rhythmic characteristics of the verse / pre chorus / chorus
- 10) Describe the dynamics.
- 11) What is the key ?
- 12) What other keys are used and where ?
- 13) Which instrument plays the opening Ostinato ?
- 14) Describe the bass line during the verse.
- 15) Where is a slide guitar added?
- 16) Describe the kit part
- 17) Describe the relationship between the vocals and the bass

General:

- * How was the vocal line made easy for Ringo to sing in “With a Little Help from My Friends “?
- * Name the Beatles 6th studio album
- * What percussion instrument provides the main rhythm in “Within You, Without You”?
- * How is technology used to create a “ dream like “ mood in “Lucy in the Sky” ?

8 Mark Questions:

- * Consider *why* the songs were written ..e.g. WALHFMMF = narrative about ? Simple structure, melody line and harmony because ?
- * WYWY: Eastern influences
- * LITSWD: Dream like, psychedelic sound
- * Contrasts, coherence within each song and possibly between them.

FINALLY

Know your theoretical terms:

- * Metres / Time Signatures
- * Dynamic terms
- * Signs and symbols for ornaments; articulation; phrasing; repeats, pauses etc
- * Key Signatures - up to 4 Sharps and 4 flats - major and minor
- * Chords and chord progressions I IV V and vi - along with Cadences
- * Intervals
- * Rhythmic and melodic dictation.

Additional helpful links that have already been emailed to you:

gcse-music.co.uk - for aural and other gcse listening questions

Youtube - GCSE revision - Practice Listening Questions - although generic they are still useful.

www.dsokids.com

GCSE Bite Size - not AQA specific but still useful

Mrs Gale