

# 6-1 Music – Introduction Lesson 1

*Mrs Chambers*

## Welcome to A-Level Music!!!!



# The A-Level Units Explained...

**There are 3 units to complete in AS Music:**

## **Component 1: Performing (30%)**

You are required to give a performance that lasts for a minimum of 8 minutes.

This can be made up of a single piece or a group of short pieces, but they must all be performed in a single continuous session or recital. Performances must be recorded after 1 March in the year of certification.

The standard level of difficulty at A-level is Grade 7, so the difficulty levels are:

- up to Grade 6 – less difficult
- Grade 7 – standard
- Grade 8 and above – more difficult.

## **Component 2: Composing (30%)**

For this unit you need to create two compositions; one will be a technical study from a brief set by Edexcel (20 marks), and the other can be a free composition or from a different brief (40 marks). Both compositions must total a minimum of 6 minutes. This will be completed within supervised time.

## **Component 3: Developing Musical Understanding... (40%)**

# Component 3: Content overview

- Knowledge and understanding of musical elements, contexts and language.
- Application of knowledge through the context of six areas of study, each with two set works.
  - Vocal Music
  - Instrumental Music
  - Music for Film
  - Popular Music and Jazz
  - Fusions
  - New Directions.
- Application of knowledge to unfamiliar works.

# Exam Outline for Unit 3

## Section A: Areas of study and dictation (50 marks)

- Three questions related to the set works (audio and skeleton score provided). (14 marks each = 42 marks)
- One short melodic dictation exercise (8 marks)

## Section B: Extended response (50 marks)

- Two essay questions:
- **Essay one (20 marks)** asks students to draw links from their study of the set works to the music heard as an unfamiliar extract.
- **Essay two (30 marks)** gives a choice of three questions that ask students to evaluate the musical elements, context and language of one set work. Each option will be from a different area of study.

# Aural Analysis

Listen to the following extract of music and write down anything you can tell me about the piece in the space provided.

What are you listening for?

P.S. There are no wrong answers as long as you can justify them...



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMkmQlfOJDk>



# Musical Language

When you wrote about the piece of music you heard, did you use technical language in your response? How sophisticated is your musical language?

Did you describe any of the **musical elements** in your answer? Which ones?

Are there any musical elements that did not get mentioned? Why is this?

The Elements of Music are the most basic and most crucial aspect of describing music effectively. In order to describe a piece of music fully, we should always aim to discuss features under each of the elements...

Try the exercise again, but this time try to write at least one thing under each of these headings:

Style/Context

Structure

Performing Forces

Melody

Texture

Harmony

Tonality

Rhythm/Metre

# Listening

- Listen to the following tracks. For each extract, try to name the musical style/period it was composed in and name a possible composer for the piece.



Extract 1

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQL3OWs\\_zNU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQL3OWs_zNU)



Extract 2

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFIE7xuJ\\_Ak](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFIE7xuJ_Ak)



Extract 3

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpeQKGoV8cw>



Extract 4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=No-y8oNDLgU>

**Give reasons for your answers!**

# Listening

- Listen to the following tracks. For each extract, try to name the musical period it was composed in and name a possible composer for the piece.



Extract 1

Romantic – Debussy



Extract 2

Baroque – Bach



Extract 3

Classical – Haydn



Extract 4

20th - Cage

# Periods of Music from c.1450-C20th

For each stylistic period of music, you should know:

- The approximate dates
- Some of the more prominent composers working in that style
- The key features of the music produced in that style
- The instruments (or types of ensemble) commonly used

See if you can come up with this key information for each of the following musical periods:

Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, C20th – write your ideas down before you look at the following slides.

If this is an area you are not very strong in, please revise the different musical periods over the Summer – you need to know this!

# The Renaissance Period



- C.1450-1600
- Josquin, Tallis, Byrd, Dowland, Monteverdi
- Predominantly vocal music. Instruments used mainly as accompaniment or for dancing.
- Modal
- Often religious
- Rich, full texture
- Voices (4 part texture), Lute, Viols, Sackbutt, Crumhorn, Early trumpet.

# The Baroque Period



- 1600-1750
- Corelli, Scarlatti, Vivaldi, Bach, Handel, Purcell...
- Figured Bass
- Lighter, homophonic texture, later polyphonic
- Major/minor key system
- Often energetic, lots of ornaments
- String family formed basis for Baroque orchestra with keyboard continuo
- Oboes, bassoon, trumpets

# The Classical Period



- 1750-1820
- Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven...
- Formal structures, less complicated textures
- Emphasis on melody and form, proportion and balance
- More variety and contrast within pieces
- Large scale works
- Piano replaces harpsichord! More strings. Self-contained woodwind section. Horns.

# The Romantic Period



- 1820-1900
- Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, Liszt, Wagner, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Elgar, Strauss...
- More freedom of form and expression – intense and personal.
- Use of discords and chromaticism
- Bold, dramatic contrasts, dynamics and colour
- Greater use of the piano – exploring full range and varied textures
- Much larger orchestra. Brass section established, more wind instruments added (piccolo + cor anglais). More use of percussion. Variety of ensembles used.

# The Modern period/ C20th



- 1900...
- Debussy, Sibelius, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Cage, Britten
- Deliberate reaction to/movement away from Romanticism
- Spiky melodies, extreme dissonance, vigorous rhythms, greater concerns with timbres and effects
- Extreme techniques.
- Huge orchestras used. Percussion used widely. Experimental sounds. Electronic sounds.