

Leaving Certificate

Music

Musical characteristics, Melody and Harmony

Please see *Teachers' Notes* for explanations, additional activities, and tips and suggestions.

Levels	Students' English language skills should be developed to Level B1 during funded Language Support. Mainstream subject learning will require the development of skills at Level B2 if students are to cope with public examinations.	
Language focus	Key vocabulary, word identification, sentence structure, extracting information from text, writing text, grammar.	
Learning focus	Using Music textbooks and accessing curriculum content and learning activities.	
Acknowledgement	The <i>English Language Support Programme</i> gratefully acknowledges the permission of Gill and Macmillan to reproduce excerpts from <i>Less Stress More Success, Music revision for Leaving Certificate</i> by Andrew Purcell.	
Contents of this Unit		Page
	Keywords	3,4
	Vocabulary file	5, 6
	Activating students' knowledge	7
	Focus on vocabulary	8
	Focus on grammar (<i>verbs and adverbs</i>)	9
	Focus on reading	10,11
	Focus on writing (<i>re-writing sentences</i>)	12
	Answer Key	13,14

Using this unit

Language support and mainstream subject class

The sections *Activating students' knowledge*, *Focus on vocabulary*, and *Focus on grammar* have been designed, in particular, for Language Support classes.

Focus on reading and *Focus on writing* are suitable for use in either Language Support or subject classes.

Answer Key

Answers are provided at the end of the unit for all activities except those based on free writing.

Textbooks

This unit focuses on the *Understanding Musical Characteristics, Melody and Harmony* sections of the Leaving Certificate Music curriculum. Students will need to use their textbooks if they are to gain the most benefit from the activities.

Learning Record

The Learning Record is intended to help students monitor their progress. This can be downloaded or printed from the website in the section *Advising Students and Record of Learning for the Leaving Certificate*. A copy of the Learning Record should be distributed to each student for each unit studied.

Students should:

1. Write the subject and topic on the record.
2. Tick off/date the different statements as they complete activities.
3. Keep the record in their files along with the work produced for this unit.
4. Use this material to support mainstream subject learning.

Symbols

Symbols are used throughout the unit to encourage students to develop their own learning and support materials.



prompts students to file the sheet when they have completed the activity. This is used for activities which can be used as a reference in the future e.g. for subject classroom, revision, homework etc.



prompts students to add vocabulary, definitions, or examples of vocabulary in use to their own personal glossary for the topic. A personal glossary makes study and revision more efficient.

Keywords

accent	device	major
accidental	dim	marking
accidentals	diminished	marks
accompaniment	diminuendo	material
allegro	dissonance	melodic
alto	dissonant	melodies
anacrusis	dominant	melody
andante	double	metre
answering	doubling	minor
arpeggio	drum	modulate
articulation	dynamic	modulating
ascending	end	modulation
augmented	ending	modulations
aware	ensemble	monophonic
bar	fast	monophony
baroque	fifth	motif
bass	final	motion
basses	first	music
bassoons	flats	musical
beat	flutes	musically
cadence	fourth	names
canon	given	note
careful	grade	numerals
celli	gradually	oboes
characterised	harmonic	octave
chord	harmonies	opening
chromatic	harmony	opera
clarinets	homophonic	orchestra
clef	idea	orchestral
climax	imperfect	ornamentation
coda	inaccurate	parts
compose	inconsistent	pattern
composers	indicated	pedal
composition	insert	percussion
compositional	instrument	perfect
concerto	instrumental	performed
consonance	interval	performer
contrapuntal	inversion	phrase
countermelody	jazz	phrasing
counterpoint	key	piano
crescendo	largo	piece
crotchet	leaps	pitch
decrescendo	legato	pitches
degree	line	played
descant	loud	points
descending	louder	polyphonic
	lowest	position

NAME: _____ DATE: _____
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progression	snare	tempo
quavers	softer	tenor
question	solo	term
raised	sonata	texture
range	soprano	textures
relative	sound	third
repeated	sounding	timbre
rhythm	staccato	timbres
rhythmic	start	time
rhythmically	stave	tonal
root	string	tonality
same	strong	tones
scale	structural	tonic
second	structure	treble
section	style	triad
secular	stylistically	tune
semitone	subdominant	upbeat
sequence	sung	violas
seventh	syllables	vocal
sharp	symbol	voices
signature	symphony	written
sixth	syncopation	
slow	synonymous	
slur	technique	

NAME: _____ DATE: _____
LC MUSIC: Musical characteristics, Melody and Harmony

Vocabulary file (1) for the topic
Musical characteristics, Melody and Harmony

Word	Meaning	Page(s) in my textbook	Note
performance			
composition			
historical period			
movement			
technique			
extract			
musical terminology			
cadence			



NAME: _____ DATE: _____
LC MUSIC: Musical characteristics, Melody and Harmony

Vocabulary file (2) for the topic
Musical characteristics, Melody and Harmony

Word	Meaning	Page(s) in my textbook	Note
consonance			
dissonance			
time signature			
metre			
scale			
chords			
hierarchy			
analysis			
accompaniment			



Introduction

Activating students' existing knowledge

Use a spidergram to activate students' ideas and knowledge on the key points in this chapter. See **Teachers' Notes** for suggestions.

Possible key terms for the spidergram:

Singing

Favourite musical instruments

Orchestras

- Invite students to provide key words in their own languages.
- Encourage dictionary use.
- Encourage students to organise their vocabulary into relevant categories (e.g. meaning, nouns, keywords, verbs etc.).



Students should record vocabulary and terms from the spidergram in their personal dictionaries.

Level: B1 Individual / pair

Focus on vocabulary

1. Matching

Match each expression in Column A with a definition in Column B. Draw a line between the matching expressions.

Column A	Column B
dynamics	a series of notes, one after the other
style	the relationship of any notes that happen at the same time
articulation	the loudness or quietness of a sound
tempo	the speed at which music is played
melody	how one sings or plays the notes of a piece
harmony	the characteristic way composers of different eras compose a piece of music

2. Using key terms

Check your understanding of the key terms in exercise 1, by fitting them into the sentences below.

- Write your _____ – it must be musically and stylistically sound and interesting.
- When studying music, it is important to listen to as many musical _____ as possible.
- A lot of music has little or no _____ marking and it is up to the performer to interpret the music in a correct stylistic manner.
- _____ instructions are usually given in Italian.
- If the composer wants the change from one _____ level to another to be gradual, different markings are added.
- Parallel _____ occurs when different lines in the music go up or down together.

Level: B1
Individual / pair

Focus on grammar

3. Verbs

Use verbs from the box below to complete this text.

Careful – in one example, you must change the form of the verb.

Exam Technique

Before the exam

- _____ your time effectively.
- Systematically _____ through your complete Set Work and Irish Music notes
- Use your workbook and CD extracts fully.
- _____ composition questions from past papers, now available on www.examinations.ie
- _____ yourself with the question types and allocation of marks per question.

In the exam

- _____ all instructions on the exam paper.
- _____ the correct number of questions.
- _____ each question more than once and study the given melody and harmony bars.
- _____ the key words in the question and note the command word, e.g. explain, find, suggest, list.
- _____ your time carefully in the Composition Paper.
- All musical notations that you have _____ should be correct and as neat as possible. Use a sharp B pencil when composing.

attempt	familiarise	allocate	write	practise	use
	follow	read	work	highlight	

4. Adverbs

(*adverb: a word that describes or gives more information about a verb, for example he ate quickly, she walked slowly*)

List the four adverbs in the extract above:

Level: B1 / B2
Individual / pair

Focus on reading

5. Reading and summarising the main points

For this exercise to work best, you need to work in pairs - Student A and Student B. You will each read a different extract from your text book. You must then summarise what you have read for one another. First decide who is Student A and who is Student B, and then follow the instructions on this and on the next page.

Student A:

Read the extract on Articulation. Do not show it to Student B. Explain and summarise the extract in about 3 sentences (speaking). Answer any questions Student B might have.

Listen to Student B's explanation of his/her extract and ask some questions about it.

Articulation

Articulation is how one sings or plays the notes of a piece. Exactly how each articulation should be played depends on the instrument playing it, as well as on the style and period of the music.

Accents are markings that are used to indicate especially strong-sounding notes with a definite attack. Some accents may even be played by making the note longer or more separate from the other note, rather than just louder. The exact performance of each type of accent depends on the instrument and the style and period of the music, but the *sforzando* (*sfz*) and *fortepiano* (*fp*)-type accents are usually louder and longer, and more likely to be used in a long note that starts loudly and then suddenly gets much softer.

- **Staccato** – short, detached notes. Dot under or over note only.
- **Marcato** – stressed, accented notes.
- **Legato** – the opposite of staccato. Smooth, connected series of notes (carries in string or wind playing).
- **Slur** – only the first note of a set of slurred notes has a definite articulation. All other notes under the slur are played legato.
- **No articulation marking** – Much music has little or no articulation marking. Notes can be played separated or, more commonly, it is up to the performer to interpret the music in a correct stylistic manner.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____
LC MUSIC: Musical characteristics, Melody and Harmony

Level: B1 / B2
Individual / pair

Focus on reading continued

Student B:

Read the extract on Common errors (in the exam). Do not show it to Student A. Explain and summarise the extract in about 3 sentences (speaking). Answer any questions Student A might have.

Listen to Student A's explanation of his/her extract and ask some questions about it.

Common Errors

- In Questions 4 and 6 no marks will be awarded for exact repetition of given material or material that is much too similar in rhythm or melody notes written. Develop the melody and/or decant in the given style.
- Incorrect chords at cadence points lose valuable marks.
- Poor layout and messy notation will not help you gain marks.
- Inaccurate bass clef notation is common.
- Inaccurate bass clef (lower part) rhythms are common.
- Boring, long-value bass clef notes (semibreves, minims) throughout Questions 5 and 6 lose marks if not in the given style of the opening few bars. Don't be too adventurous though!

Level: B1 / B2
Individual / pair

Focus on writing

6. Re-writing sentences

The following sentences are taken from your textbooks and are all about musical characteristics. Unjumble them to make correct sentences. We have done the first one for you.

a) the characteristic way/ style/ describes/ of different eras/ composers/compose a piece of music/

Style describes the characteristic way composers of different eras compose a piece of music.

b) has one/ monophonic music /melodic/ only/ line

c) can/ be called/ counterpoint / polyphonic music /or contrapuntal music/ also

d) is a place/ a stopping or resting point/ that feels like/ in a piece of music/ a cadence

e) between/ is the distance/ two pitches /an interval

f) are called consonant /notes / when played / that sound good together /at the same time

Answer key

1. Matching

Column A	Column B
dynamics	The loudness or quietness of a sound.
style	The characteristic way composers of different eras compose a piece of music.
articulation	How one sings or plays the notes of a piece.
tempo	The speed at which music is played.
melody	A series of notes, one after the other.
harmony	The relationship of any notes that happen at the same time.

2. Using key terms

- If the composer wants the change from one dynamic level to another to be gradual, different markings are added.
- When studying music, it is important to listen to as many musical styles as possible.
- A lot of music has little or no articulation marking and it is up to the performer to interpret the music in a correct stylistic manner.
- Tempo instructions are usually given in Italian.
- Write your melody – it must be musically and stylistically sound and interesting.
- Parallel harmony occurs when different lines in the music go up or down together.

3. Grammar - verbs

- Use your time effectively
- Systematically work through your complete Set Work and Irish Music notes
- Use your workbook and CD extracts fully.
- Practise composition questions from past papers, now available on www.examinations.ie

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____
LC MUSIC: Musical characteristics, Melody and Harmony

- Familiarise yourself with the question types and allocation of marks per question.

In the exam

- Follow all instructions on the exam paper
- Attempt the correct number of questions
- Read each question more than once and study the given melody and harmony bars
- Highlight the key words in the question and note the command word, e.g. explain, find, suggest, list
- Allocate your time carefully in the Composition Paper
- All musical notations that you have written should be correct and as neat as possible. Use a sharp B pencil when composing.

4. Adverbs

Effectively, systematically, fully, carefully

6. Re-writing sentences

- a) Style describes the characteristic way composers of different eras compose a piece of music.
- b) Monophonic music has only one melodic line.
- c) Polyphonic music can also be called counterpoint or contrapuntal music.
- d) A cadence is a place in a piece of music that feels like a stopping or resting point.
- e) An interval is the distance between two pitches.
- f) Notes that sound good together when played at the same time are called consonant.