

Macmillan Academy

A Level Music

'Bridging Project'



Welcome to A level Music at Macmillan Academy Post 16. We are delighted to have you on board and hope that you will enjoy completing this subject when you join us. We would like you to complete as much of this project as you can and bring along this booklet when you start your new course with us.

At A level, you will study a range of different areas of music; eras from the Western Classical Era, Pop Music and Music for Media. The aim of this project is to give you a great head-start with your understanding and baseline knowledge in these areas as well as in some general knowledge that applies across any style of music.

It will be a huge help to you when you begin studying the set works for analysis if you have background knowledge of not only general musical language but also the historical context of the era and the composers. So, as you work through this booklet, you will be exploring:

- elements of music
- music theory
- musical style through history
- background of the composers

As you work through this booklet, we hope you will enjoy your learning. Work at your own pace and do what you can. We look forward to meeting you soon and getting stuck in to the A Level course. If you have any questions, please email one of us:

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Part 1: The Elements of Music

From all the way back in Y7 the music curriculum develops your understanding of the elements. We start simply, and with a smaller range, but the meanings and principles are still the same. When we get to GCSE, we expand this list further, and at A-Level we delve deeper into the ways they can be described or identified. They are the foundation blocks of musical understanding, so are really important at every level of musical study.

The first task will be split into 2 parts: firstly, to define each of the musical elements set out in the table on the next page and write down examples of technical language associated with that element; the second part will be to apply this language to a description of a short extract of music.

To begin with I'll recap the elements below and provide one system to recall the list as it's quite long:

Melody, Harmony, Tonality, Rhythm, Metre, Tempo, Texture, Instrumentation, Timbre/sonority, Structure, Articulation, Ornamentation, Dynamics, Silence, Genre

This is a comprehensive list of the elements based on how I teach it at GCSE. Some are similar or strongly linked so I've put them close together and colour-coded them in the list above. Another way to remember the list or check you have remembered them all is to use an acronym such as the one below:

MRS D.M. THATTIGOTS

This acronym contains all of the starting letters of the list of elements shown above, though not necessarily in the same order. If it helps, then use it – you can alternatively use your own acronym or other system to aid in your recall, as the important thing is being able to remember what you can talk about in music.

Task 1a: *Complete the table on the next page. You will need to define each element and suggest technical terminology related to that element.*

The Elements of Music – Definitions and Terms

Element	Definition	Technical term examples
<u>M</u> elody		
<u>R</u> hythm		
<u>S</u> tructure		
<u>D</u> ynamics		
<u>M</u> etre		
<u>T</u> exture		
<u>H</u> armony		
<u>A</u> rticulation		
<u>T</u> onality		
<u>T</u> empo		
<u>I</u> nstrumentation		
<u>G</u> enre		
<u>O</u> rnamentation		
<u>T</u> imbre/sonority		
<u>S</u> ilence		

Next comes the application of these words to your listening – identifying features and using technical terminology to explain what is going on. Below are some example short-answer questions from an A-Level Music paper that test your understanding of the elements:

1. *Apart from the modulations, identify two features of the harmony in the excerpt. [2 marks]*
2. *Identify two features of rhythm in the excerpt. [2 marks]*
3. *Which one of the following is a feature of the harmony heard in the excerpt? Underline your answer. [1 mark]*

appoggiaturas augmented triads false relations notes of anticipation

4. *What is the tempo of the excerpt? Underline your answer. [1 mark]*

64 bpm 74 bpm 84 bpm 94 bpm

In addition, you have to complete long-answer questions such as the following:

5. *The excerpt is taken from the song 'Face to Face' by Daft Punk, from their album Discovery (2001). Describe in detail the musical features of the excerpt, explaining what makes it typical of electronic dance music. [10 marks]*

So that you have an idea about this this type of question, for the second part of this task, I would like you to apply your understanding of the elements by answering the questions on the following page. You will need to listen to 'I Was Made to Love Her' by Stevie Wonder. Two alternate links are provided below:

<https://bit.ly/2Ts1dTu>

<http://shorturl.at/bFTU8>

I will provide answers to the short questions on the following page in addition to a copy of the mark scheme for longer questions.

Task 1b: *Complete the exam-style questions on the next page.*



Interested in finding out more about the elements and theory for A-Level? Watch some specifically created revision videos by the London Symphony Orchestra: <https://bit.ly/2A0PDYB>

or

<http://shorturl.at/dipRU>

EXAM STYLE QUESTIONS FOR 'I WAS MADE TO LOVE HER' BY STEVIE WONDER

1. What is the technical term for the melodic idea heard at the very start of the song?

_[1 mark]

2. State the tonality of the extract.

_[1 mark]

3. What best describes the tempo of the excerpt? Underline your answer. [1 mark]

Lento Andante Moderato Allegro

4. Describe in detail the musical features of the extract, explaining how Stevie Wonder creates contrast throughout the song.

0 marks]

[1

Answers

1. What is the technical term for the melodic idea heard at the very start of the song?

Riff _____ [1 mark]

2. State the tonality of the extract.

Major _____ [1 mark]

3. What is the tempo of the excerpt? Underline your answer. [1 mark]

Lento Andante Moderato Allegro

4. Describe in detail the musical features of the excerpt, explaining how Stevie Wonder creates contrast throughout the song.

Answers are marked semi-subjectively according to the following bandings, comparing your points with the marker's thoughts and with suggestions for the marker as to the type of feature you can hear. I will write some example features below, but we will discuss this in more detail when you join us in September.

Award marks according to the following band descriptions:

9–10 A comprehensive and authoritative response which is consistently coherent and logically structured

7–8 A wide-ranging and confident response which is mostly coherent and well structured

5–6 A relevant response despite some inaccuracy/omission and weaknesses in terms of coherency and structure

3–4 A limited response with some significant inaccuracy/omission and a lack of clarity

1–2 A rudimentary response

0 No work submitted or worthy of credit.

- A riff begins the song on bass and guitar, with snare drum playing beats 2 & 4, before being joined by strings on the repeat. This riff is also repeated at the end of each verse.
- A snare fill (into full kit playing, accenting each beat) joins at the same time as the harmonica solo. Organ and backing vocals join during the solo.
- Verse instrumentation is bass, guitar, drums and organ (plus voice), with backing vocals joining during 'hey, hey, hey' of chorus for emphasis.
- Use of chromatic chords/substitutions matches the soul style and creates an ambiguous mood that then resolves more pleasingly to the tonic (*etc.*)

Part 2: Music Theory

Below is an example of some notated music:



1. Define what a time signature is and explain what this example shows (circled blue).

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2. The key signature of this melody has 2 sharps (circled red). In the box below, write down a set of tips to help someone figure out which key it is in, and then write which key you think it is on the dotted lines below the box.

Write your choice of key here:

.....
.....

3. Here are a few more bars from a similar melody, with some notes missing. Draw in the notes/letters shown using appropriate note values to complete each bar correctly.

G# B

EXAM STYLE ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

Task 2: Complete the questions below based on the score from page 10, then annotate the blank score on page 11 using your answers.

1. a. Name the 3 notes, from top to bottom.

- b. Name the chord this creates (Root letter, maj/min/dim/aug).

2. Name the instrument performing this part.

3. a. Describe the interval between the second and first violin.

- b. Describe the interval between the second and first violin.

4. a. Name the 3 notes, from top to bottom.

- b. Name the chord this creates (Root letter, maj/min/dim/aug).

- c. State the inversion of the chord.

5. a. is a form of E major chord, while b. is an A major chord. If we are in the key of A, what type of cadence does this create?

6. Name and highlight the instrument that only plays 2 notes.

7. Which sections of the orchestra are missing from this score? Point to where they would fit.

1a. &
1b.

3a

3b.

2

The image displays a musical score for measures 60 through 65. The score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 60-64) features woodwinds (Ob., V.I., V.II., Va.) and strings (Vi. e B.). Dynamics are marked as *fp* (fortissimo piano) for most parts. The second system (measures 65) features woodwinds (Fl., Ob., Fag.) and strings (Vi. e B.). Dynamics are marked as *p* (piano) for most parts. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs.



Interested in finding out more about theory for A-Level? Read through some lessons covering a range of topics with notated examples:

<https://www.musictheory.net/lessons>

or

<https://www.teoria.com/en/tutorials/>

Part 3: Musical style through history

Because you will be studying music from varying genres and eras, it is important to gradually build up knowledge of features you would expect to see or hear in each area of study. The knowledge is not only applicable to your discussion of your listening and analysis, but also allows you to have ideas of what to expect before you have even heard a piece. The tasks below will explore some examples of features from different eras or genres.

1. Baroque or Classical?

These two eras fall consecutively within music history and while distinct, students unfamiliar with 'Classical Music' in general find it challenging to tell these eras apart. Find out what you can about the two eras and then put the following features into the correct box in the table below:

- mainly **homophonic textures** (melody plus accompaniment) but with some use of counterpoint (where two or more melodic lines are combined)
- short well-balanced melodies and clear-cut question and answer phrases
- use of contrasting moods within a piece rather than contrasting movements
- a **contrapuntal** texture where two or more melodic lines are combined
- **terraced dynamics** - sudden changes in the volume level, sometimes creating an echo effect
- long flowing melodic lines often using ornamentation (decorative notes such as **trills** and **turns**)
- **contrast** between loud and soft, solo and ensemble
- the use of **harpsichord continuo**
- an emphasis on **elegance and balance**
- mainly simple **diatonic harmony**

Baroque Features	Classical Features

2. Thinking about features through the elements.

When beginning to analyse music, it is useful to break it down and focus on one aspect at a time: the elements provide us with a useful structure to do this. You do not have to cover every element, and some are closely linked or can be grouped together as there's not much to say about them. Take the examples about the classical and baroque eras above. Here is the same list, but instead organised by element:

Element	Key Features
Timbre/Instrumentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the use of harpsichord continuo
Texture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mainly homophonic textures (melody plus accompaniment) but with some use of counterpoint (where two or more melodic lines are combined) a contrapuntal texture where two or more melodic lines are combined
Harmony & Tonality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mainly simple diatonic harmony
Melody	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> long flowing melodic lines often using ornamentation (decorative notes such as trills and turns) short well-balanced melodies and clear-cut question and answer phrases
Rhythm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a
Structure/Other (e.g. character/mood/style)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of contrasting moods within a piece rather than contrasting movements contrast between loud and soft, solo and ensemble an emphasis on elegance and balance
Ornamentation & Articulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> long flowing melodic lines often using ornamentation (decorative notes such as trills and turns)
Dynamics & Tempo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> terraced dynamics - sudden changes in the volume level, sometimes creating an echo effect contrast between loud and soft, solo and ensemble

Task 3: Read through the following list of features (page 14) and label them/categorise them by element. Once you are happy with this, use them to fill in the table on page 15 to show some of the key features of the Baroque Era.

Baroque Music Features

- Polyphonic writing was quite common, even though a lot of writing was homophonic. Specifically, there was a development in contrapuntal writing for instruments, and the longer melody lines would inter-weave and interact with each other, creating dissonance that could be resolved (see harmony below).
- Development of melodic content occurred and contrast was provided through use of motivic aspects being repeated, recontextualised and adapted after the initial melodic statements. Changes such as inversion, diminution, augmentation and transposition (e.g. sequences) helped with the development of motives.
- Keyboards in use were harpsichord and organ, fortepiano was developed later and only used rarely. Harpsichord normally linked with instrumental music, and organ with choral music.
- Harmony was indicated through figured bass in addition to the bass notes.
- Tempi again were not usually indicated, instead being implied by the music itself. Some pieces would instruct a specific tempo, but the range was usually very limited (adagio, allegro, etc.) and most often not extreme.
- In concerti, the 'ripieno' often consisted of upper strings and basso continuo consisting of harpsichord and cello. Sometimes double bass or lute could be used for the continuo.
- Larger structures such as within concerti often utilised ritornello form.
- Ornamentation was common, especially trills at cadence points.
- Strings in the violin family were the dominant instrument in most instrumental music.
- Major and minor scales and their associated chords were in more prevalent use, rather than medieval modes. This led to clear tonality and importance placed in tonic and dominant, plus the relative minor.
- Melodies were often long, unbroken and highly embellished, not necessarily following a regular phrase structure.
- Repetitive rhythms that helped drive the piece on was known as 'motor rhythm', and is exceptionally prevalent within baroque music. Semiquavers are common, but the effect can be achieved with quavers, tempo dependant.
- Triplets were often seen as more fluid in slower movements, and dance-like in faster movements.
- Simple structures such as binary and ternary are common in smaller pieces.
- Dynamics were very rarely indicated in the music.
- When indicated or performed, were terraced, so no specific markings of crescendo or diminuendo.

Element	Key Features
Timbre/Instrumentation	
Texture	
Harmony & Tonality	
Melody	
Rhythm	
Structure	
Ornamentation & Articulation	
Dynamics & Tempo	

Baroque Music Features



Interested in exploring this further? Try making a list of features for one of the AOS2 artists. Below is a table summarising their primary stylistic influences.

Stevie Wonder	Soul, funk, pop
Joni Mitchell	Folk, rock, jazz, pop
Muse	Alternative/ progressive rock
Daft Punk	Electronica, dance, French house
Beyoncé	Contemporary R&B
Labrinth	Contemporary R&B, hip hop

Part 4: Named Composers

Having a good background knowledge of features associated with the different styles you will encounter is very helpful for analysis and pre-empting answers to listening questions. Equally, knowing about the historical context of different composers can help give you an idea about what it was like to write music when they were active, and whether anything in their background might have influenced them in terms of their compositional style. Below is a list of the different composers/artists that you will encounter as part of this course, split according to area of study:

AOS 1: Western Classical Tradition			AOS 2	AOS 3
Baroque Concerto	Classical Opera	Romantic Piano	Pop Music	Music for Media
J.S. Bach	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Johannes Brahms	Stevie Wonder	Bernard Hermann
Henry Purcell		Frederic Chopin	Joni Mitchell	Hans Zimmer
Antonio Vivaldi		Edvard Grieg	Muse	Thomas Newman
			Daft Punk	Michael Giacchino
			Beyonce	Nobuo Uematsu
			Labrinth	

Task 4: For this final task, you need to create a profile of 3 of the named composers – one from each area of study. In each profile you need to include the following information:

- Dates such as birth, death or years active as a composer/artist.
- Country of origin. For pop artists, include the region they are from or studied in (this may have influenced their style).
- A summary of their background as a musician, specifically focussing on their employment background and their general inspiration/formative experiences.
- A short list of similar artists or composers.
- Examples of their famous works such as compositions, albums, films, etc. If you can specify who they were working for (e.g. employer, patron, record label, director/producer).
- A musical description of a short part of one of their pieces (between 30 seconds and 1 minute long), focussing on describing it in terms of features/the elements. You need to include information about which piece and section you chose so that your teacher can listen to it.



Interested in exploring this further? Watch interviews with some of the modern composers/artists about their life, process and inspiration. Here is an example featuring film composer Michael Giacchino (known for The Incredibles and the new Star Trek films): <http://shorturl.at/jpvx5>

Composer/Artist 1: _____

Dates alive/active: _____

Country/region of origin: _____

Background: _____

List of similar artists/composers: _____

Examples of pieces: _____

Chosen piece description: _____

Composer/Artist 2: _____

Dates alive/active: _____

Country/region of origin: _____

Background: _____

List of similar artists/composers: _____

Examples of pieces: _____

Chosen piece description: _____

Composer/Artist 3: _____

Dates alive/active: _____

Country/region of origin: _____

Background: _____

List of similar artists/composers: _____

Examples of pieces: _____

Chosen piece description: _____



Thank you for completing this Bridging Project. Please bring it with you when you join us in our A Level Music classroom. We look forward to seeing how you got on and discussing this work and how you feel about each area of study. Feel free to get a head start with your listening by exploring one of the set works for the composer you chose from AOS1:

Vivaldi Concerto for Flute in D 'Il Gardellino'

Purcell Sonata for Trumpet and Strings in D

Bach Violin Concerto in A minor

Mozart's 'The Marriage of Figaro' – movements 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and Sinfonia

Brahms Intermezzo in A *and* Ballade in G minor (both op. 118)

Chopin Nocturne in E minor op. 72 *and* Ballade no. 2 in F major

Grieg Norwegian March in C *and* Notturmo in A minor (both op. 54)