

Key Stage 3 Music Listening Exam Topic Lists

Musical Elements

Texture – How many sounds/instruments playing at once. Thick/Thin

Pitch – How high the notes are. High/Low. Going up/down. Stays the same

Duration/Rhythm – Length of notes Short/Long

Tempo – Speed – Fast/Slow. Does it change?

Melody – The tune

Dynamics – Volume – Loud/Quiet. Does it change?

Timbre – The sounds used. Instrument families.

Structure – The sections. ABA. Intro Verse Chorus

Instruments & Families

Strings (Have strings on them) – Violin, Guitar, Cello, Harp etc.

Woodwind (Use wind from your lungs to play) – Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Saxophone, recorder etc.

Brass (Brass coloured) – Trumpet, Trombone Tuba, Horn etc.

Percussion (Hit, shaken or scraped) – Drum kit, maracas, steel pans, xylophone, glockenspiel etc.

Listen to examples of instruments on YouTube

Musical Periods

Concerto through time:

Baroque – 1600 – 1750 – Small orchestra used harpsichord and has sudden dynamics. Bach and Handel were famous composers.

Classical – Bigger orchestra, very even music and gradual dynamics. Mozart and Beethoven were famous composers.

Romantic – Expressive and pushes the boundaries. Large orchestra. Liszt and Shubert were famous composers.

Listen to examples on YouTube by searching: Baroque Concerto or Classical Concerto or Romantic Concerto

Score Question

You use a pencil to draw in the missing notes on a musical score. You are given the notes which show you how long they are. You just need to work out the pitch and shape of the melody.

You start with this:

The image shows a musical score for two parts: Flute and Fl. (Flute). The key signature is D major (one sharp) and the time signature is 3/4. The Flute part begins with a vertical line at the start of the first measure. The Fl. part begins with a measure rest of 7 measures. Both parts contain triplets and slurs.

Then write in the correct notes like below:

The image shows the same musical score as above, but with red notes and a vertical line drawn in the fourth measure of the Fl. part. The red notes are: a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on C5, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on A4, and a quarter note on G4. The vertical line is drawn at the beginning of the fourth measure.

Essay Question

There will be a question where you have to say how a piece of music describes something. The music can describe a person, place, story, event etc.

The music may be called something like “Sunrise” or “A Train”.

You could write things like “The tempo gets quicker to show the train is speeding up. The brass instruments sound like the horn on the train.”