

# A Level Music – Summer Preparation Work

## Component 1 - Performing

It is important that you keep playing your instrument(s) over the summer holiday. If you don't play them regularly then you will get rusty and it will take quite a while to get back to scratch.

Over the summer please ***prepare a piece*** to perform to me and the class in September (probably in the second week of term). It should be a minimum of Grade 6 standard. (See me, or e mail me, [cco@suttcold.bham.sch.uk](mailto:cco@suttcold.bham.sch.uk) if this is a problem).

## Component 2 – Composing (and Music Theory / Harmony)

There is quite a lot of music theory to cover in preparation for both Component 2 (Composing) and Component 3 (Written exam - Appraising). I need to be certain that you all are familiar with the following by September:

- Reading treble and bass clef fluently
- Recognising major and minor key signatures up to four sharps and flats
- Recognising intervals up to an octave and describe them in terms of major 3<sup>rd</sup>, perfect 5<sup>th</sup> etc.

If you are not confident with any of these please could you do a bit of extra preparation work over the summer. Suggestions; use the following website <http://www.musictheory.net/lessons> and the following sections in it:

- The Staff, Clefs and Ledger Lines
- Key Signatures, and Key Signature Calculation
- The section on intervals is very helpful

It is a very useful website, just be aware that they use some American terminology on it, e.g. *half step* rather than *semitone*, etc Additionally you might find it useful to get a Grade 5 theory and work through it.

***There will be a formal test in September to check your understanding of music theory.***

If any of this causes any problems contact me at school, or e mail me ([cco@suttcold.bham.sch.uk](mailto:cco@suttcold.bham.sch.uk))

## Harmonising a melody

Once you have refreshed your knowledge of the above, please harmonise melodies c, d, e and f below, using the primary chords (I, IV and V). If you feel confident, you can use iib instead of IV, V7 instead of V, and vi instead of I (although make sure

your cadences at the ends of the melodies make sense!!). **You only need to write the roman numeral and inversion letter under the melody** – we will look at creating a bassline in September. Step 1 – work out what key you are in. Step 2 – what is the cadence. Step 3 – fill in the rest of the chords!

This video will help you consider what chord to use when:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Vy8opl\\_J8s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Vy8opl_J8s)

The next couple of pages of this document also contain advice from the ABRSM Grade 6 Theory book about simple harmonisation, so please read on **before** completing this task.

(c) [Andante] Gluck (adapted)

(d) Allegretto Traditional German melody

(e) Allegro molto Beethoven

(f) Slow Hopkins

Detailed description of musical exercises: Exercise (c) is in 3/4 time, marked [Andante], by Gluck (adapted). It features a melody with an asterisk above the first note. Exercise (d) is in 4/4 time, marked Allegretto, titled 'Traditional German melody'. It features a melody with asterisks above several notes. Exercise (e) is in 2/4 time, marked Allegro molto, by Beethoven. It features a melody with dynamic markings *p* and *sf*. Exercise (f) is in 6/8 time, marked Slow, by Hopkins. It features a melody with a trill (*tr*) and asterisks above several notes.

A good harmonisation is one in which the melody is supported by appropriate chords set out so that they move smoothly from one to another. You have already discovered at Grade 5 how chords on the tonic, supertonic, subdominant and dominant can be used at cadence points, and you are familiar with the following cadential progressions:

- 1) V-I (the perfect cadence);
- 2) IV-I (the plagal cadence);
- 3) I-V, II-V and IV-V (imperfect cadences).

It should be emphasised that use of these progressions is not confined to cadences. The progression V-I, for example, can occur at the beginning or in the middle of a phrase, as can the progression I-V. The opening of the Hornpipe from Handel's *Water Music* Suite No.2 is based entirely on tonic and dominant chords:

EXAMPLE 13a

**Alla Hornpipe**

I Ib V I Ib V I Ib V Vb V I Ib V Vb V I Ib V

Although only two chords are used in this phrase, the harmony is never dull. This is partly because in the first three bars the pattern of change between tonic and dominant chords is varied (but notice that there is *always* a change from the last beat of one bar to the first beat of the next), and partly because the two notes marked with asterisks in bars 3 and 4 are treated as non-harmony notes.<sup>1</sup> Much of the interest, however, is due to the fact that Handel mixes root-position ( $\frac{5}{3}$ ) chords with chords in first inversion ( $\frac{6}{3}$ ). The mixture of  $\frac{5}{3}$  and  $\frac{6}{3}$  chords allows more variety of harmonic colour and at the same time makes it possible for the bass part to have a more interesting shape. If we re-harmonise the passage using only root-position chords, a great deal of interest is lost.

EXAMPLE 13b

**Alla Hornpipe**

I V I V I V I V I V

First inversions are often used instead of root positions, especially when the melody note is the root or 5th of the chord. When the melody note is the 3rd of the triad, it is usually better for the supporting chord to be in root position, though the mediant note can sometimes be harmonised by chord Ib. The leading note, however, should *never* be harmonised by chord Vb, because it will result in consecutive octaves between the melody and bass parts.

EXAMPLE 14

Vb I

<sup>1</sup>Throughout Section B of this book asterisks are used in the music examples to indicate non-harmony notes. The various kinds of non-harmony note are described in *AB Guide*, Part II, 15/1-7.

## The primary triads

The tonic and dominant chords are the most important in tonal harmony because of the magnetic pull between them. The next chord in order of importance is the subdominant (chord IV), which is the third of the three primary triads. It can be used as an alternative to chord I to harmonise the tonic note, and it is the only primary triad which can be used to harmonise the 4th and 6th degrees of the diatonic scale.

Use of the three primary triads close together is a very strong way of stating the key at the beginning of a piece (see Ex.15) or at the beginning of a new section when there has been a change of key (see Ex.16).

EXAMPLE 15

Hymn tune: 'Horsley'

Chopin: Nocturne No.11  
in G minor (middle section)  
(Andante sostenuto)

I V I IV<sup>b</sup> I I<sup>b</sup> IV V

I IV IV I IV I V I

Composers sometimes write quite lengthy passages using only chords I, IV and V. A good example is the opening of the last movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. The symphony is in C minor, which is the main key of the first and third movements. The fourth and final movement is in C major, however, and to emphasise the new key Beethoven bases the first 34 bars of his finale entirely on the three primary triads, set out in root position or first inversion. Ex.17 shows the opening bars of this finale. Some instrumental parts have been left out to make the passage easier to play on the keyboard.

EXAMPLE 17

Allegro (♩ = 84)

I I I V<sup>7</sup> I V<sup>7</sup> I V<sup>7</sup> I I V V I

IV<sup>b</sup> IV I<sup>b</sup> I IV<sup>b</sup> IV I<sup>b</sup> I

You will notice that in this example non-harmony notes occur in the bass as well as in the melody. This makes the bass part more interesting in bars 8 and 10, where the quaver figure is an inversion of the melody in bars 7 and 9. Passing notes and auxiliary notes can be introduced into bass parts to keep the rhythm going when the melody is still, to make the bass more shapely, and (as here) to imitate fragments of the melody. Generally, however, bass parts have less movement than the melodies above them except in contrapuntal music.

Beethoven's use of chords I, IV and V in this passage makes the harmony very bold and solid. The key of C major is firmly established in the first six bars by the constant to-and-fro of tonic and dominant chords, and the magnetic pull of the tonic is made more compelling by the addition of the 7th to the dominant triads in bars 2 and 3. The introduction of the subdominant chord in bar 7 brings variety to the harmony and at the same time confirms C as the tonal centre. Play through this passage, and if possible listen to a recording of the work, in order to see how chords I, IV and V/V<sup>7</sup> work together to produce a strong sense of key.

A lot of traditional folk and pop music is based on the three primary triads.

EXAMPLE 18

Quick

Spiritual: 'When the saints go marching in'

This spiritual has become a standard jazz number. You will often hear it played with more sophisticated harmonies (jazz musicians frequently add extra notes to triads to make the chords more interesting, and even replace simple diatonic chords with more chromatic ones built on a different root), but the harmonic basis of the melody is as shown in Ex.18. Rests have been placed beneath the first three crotchet notes because it is not appropriate for this anacrusis to be harmonised.

## Deciding when to change chords

You will notice that in Ex.18 there are very few chord changes until the last three bars. The speed of this melody is quick, and if we were to harmonise every note the music would sound very cluttered. By contrast, every note but one of the hymn tune in Ex.15 is harmonised with a different chord. Most hymn tunes are harmonised in this way, with a change of chord on each of the main beats of the bar.

Changing to a new chord or to a different position of the same chord has the effect of stressing the melody note because it introduces a new harmonic colour. When a composer wishes to emphasise every note of his melody, he harmonises each note with a different chord. This is often done to make the music sound solemn (as in Ex.16) or majestic (as in Ex.13a). There are passages in many different kinds of music, vocal and instrumental, in which there is a change of chord for every note, or almost every note, of the melody. Here are some more examples, though in these the harmony is not confined to the primary triads:

EXAMPLE 19a

Handel: 'Worthy is the Lamb' from *Messiah*  
(voice parts and basso continuo only)

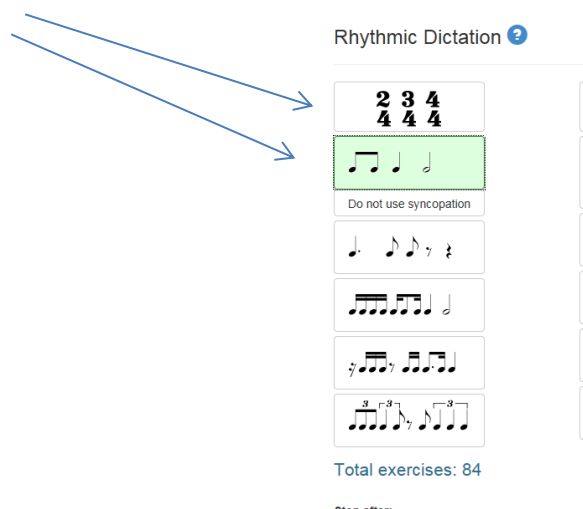
Largo *f*

## **Component 3 – Appraising**

Please make sure you have practised music dictation skills to help you notate a melody if it is played to you. The best way to do this is to use the exercises on [www.teoria.com](http://www.teoria.com) : (See instructions below):

### **Rhythmic Dictation**

1. Log onto <http://www.teoria.com>
2. Note – you can only access this through **Google Chrome** or **Safari**. If you are using the site in school click on the Widows Start Icon, then 'All Programs', then select Google Chrome.
3. Click on ear training / rhythmic dictation
4. Select



5. Click on the audio symbol and then have a go at working out the rhythm. Click on the correct note values.
6. Once you have finished click on check answer

### **Melody Dictation Practice**

1. Click on ear training / scales and melodies / melodic dictation
2. You can then select the level of difficulty you want to use. GCSE Music does not require anything particularly complicated, I would stick to 'Notes 1 to 3' or 'Notes 1 to 5' for GCSE Music to start with at least. Click on OK
3. You can listen to the piece as many times as you like, check answer at the end.

### **Historical understanding**

Pick one of the composers below, from the Classical era (c. 1750-1810). Produce two A4 sides about them (not copied and pasted), where you investigate who they

were and why they composed. Your essays in the appraising exam will ask you to consider composer's intent: where were they? Who paid them to compose (if at all)? Did they compose for personal reasons? What were their living conditions? What was their background and training? It is really important that you link the music you will study with the reality of being a composer/performer at the time the piece was written.

**CLASSICAL MUSIC**

Country	Composer	Birth	Death
Bohemia	J. STAMITZ	1717	1757
Germany	GLUCK	1714	1787
	C.P.E. BACH	1714	1788
	J.C. BACH	1735	1782
Austria	HAYDN	1732	1809
	MOZART	1756	1791
Germany	BEETHOVEN	1770	1827

'Classical' and 'classic' both come from the Latin word *classicus*, meaning a citizen (and, later on, a writer) of the highest class. And so we have come to use these words in connection with anything we consider to be top class, first rate, of lasting value. We count the plays of Shakespeare or the novels of Charles Dickens among the 'classics' of literature; and we describe the style of architecture of ancient Greece and Rome as 'classical' - meaning a style which places an importance on grace and simplicity, beauty of line and shape, balance and proportion, order and control.

As far as music is concerned, the word 'classical' may be used in two different ways. People sometimes speak in a very general way of 'classical music' when they think of all music as being divided into two very broad categories: 'classical' and 'pop'. To a musician, though, 'Classical' with a capital 'C' has a special, very much more precise, meaning. It refers specifically to music composed between 1750 and 1810 - a fairly brief period which includes the music of Haydn and Mozart, and the earlier compositions of Beethoven.

These two dates, 1750 and 1810, should not be applied too strictly however. Baroque style did not make an abrupt change to Classical style. There were signs of change as far back as the 1730s and so Classical style, in fact, began to grow up within the last years of the Baroque period. The Baroque trio sonata began to give way to the Classical sonata; and the Italian overture, found in many Baroque operas, grew into the Classical symphony. While Bach continued to compose in the mainly contrapuntal style of the late Baroque, his sons - though they held great respect for their father's music - favoured a lighter, more homophonic style in their own compositions.

As for a date fixing the close of the Classical period, some might suggest 1827 (the year of the death of Beethoven) while others would offer a much earlier date - for instance, 1800.

Have a nice summer!

Mr Collet