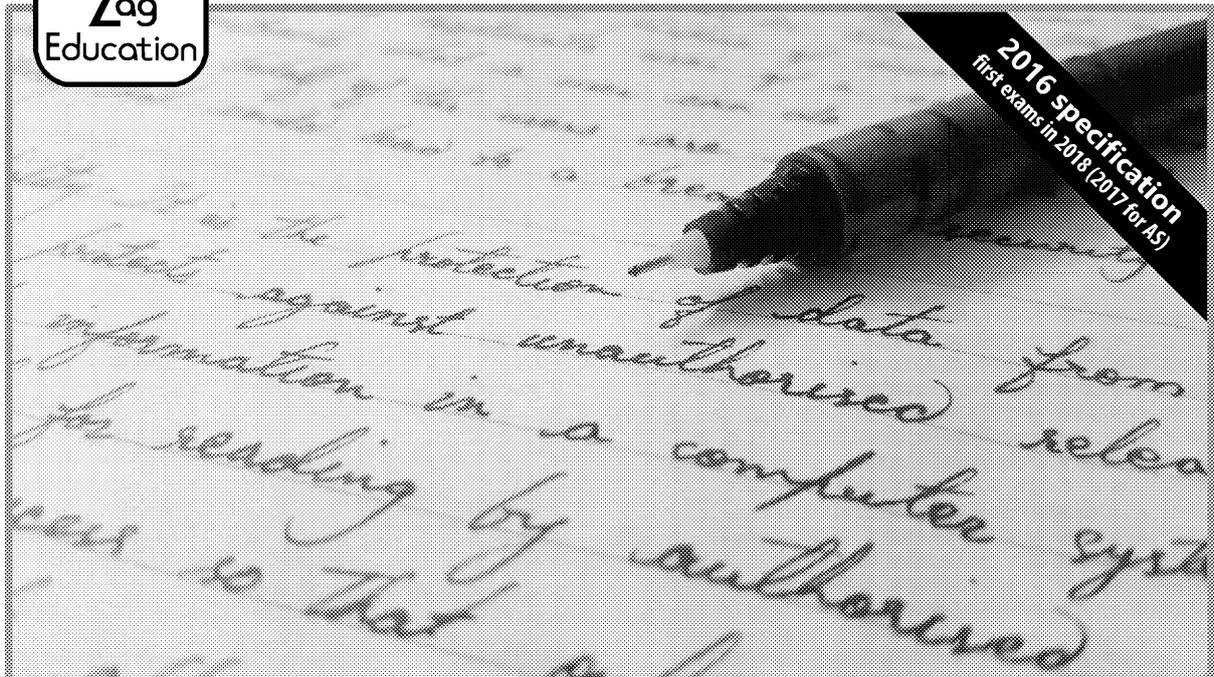




Music

AS and A Level | Edexcel | 8MU0/9MU0



2016 specification
first exams in 2018 (2017 for AS)

Essay Writing Skills

for AS and A Level Edexcel Music

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Teacher's Introduction

This resource will help students to write effective answers to AS / A Level Edexcel Question 5 (unfamiliar listening) and Question 6 (set work analysis). This pack focuses on the academic writing component of these questions: it teaches students how to write that will help them demonstrate their musical knowledge to its full advantage.

Following a brief students' introduction, the topics covered in this study pack are:

- **Information about the exam** – an introduction to the format of the exam, student-friendly explanations of the AOs, mark schemes and command words.

This is followed by a series of chapters that focus on writing skills:

- **Words and phrases** – including formal, academic register, and accurate use of vocabulary
- **Sentences** – including topic sentences, clear and succinct phrasing for musical adverbs/adverbials (e.g. however, in addition)
- **Paragraphs** – paragraph structure, using a variant of PEE, writing succinct introductory sentences
- **Essay structure** – point-by-point structure, with one paragraph for each musical element (e.g. tonality, etc.)

These chapters provide an essay structure which will enable students to answer questions cohesively. Clearly marked extension activities are provided for A/A* students, together with advice to essay writing in those students who have the potential to achieve it.

The last section of the resource provides students with a range of material to help them prepare for the exam:

- **Sample answers** – weak and strong essays, with activities to help students to improve their writing
- **Practice questions** – these could be used for revision or internal assessment
- **Essay writing framework** – a pro-forma to help students structure their ideas and arguments. They could put a copy of this in their folder or workbook for ease of reference.

Answers to the extension activities, and detailed, student-friendly marking guidance for the exam, are provided at the end of the resource.

How to use this resource

The study pack is suitable for use in the classroom. It can also be used independently by students during study leave.

The activities in this resource assume some prior knowledge of set works and will be best to introduce students to this resource towards the end of their AS / A Level course, or prior to the exam.

Spotify and YouTube links are provided throughout the resource where students are asked to listen to unfamiliar listening. To access the Spotify links, you will need to create a free account. Visit <https://www.spotify.com/us/signup/>

Always use the website to include specific assessment

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Students' Introduction

Your AS / A Level Appraising Music (listening and analysis) exam has two sections: answer some short questions about the set works that you have studied in class and a dictation/transcription task. In Section B, you will write two essays. For Question 5, you will write an essay on familiar music that you have heard before. For Question 6, you will write an essay on unfamiliar music that you have never heard before.

This study pack will help you to write good answers to essay questions 5 and 6. It tells you what you are expected to do in Section B of the exam. You will learn how to:

- understand the essay questions
- manage your time in the exam
- write answers that will get you marks from the examiner

This study guide will also help you to improve and develop your writing skills. You will learn how to:

- use musical **words** accurately
- write clear and succinct **sentences**
- construct effective **paragraphs**
- organise your **essay structure**

If you are already an A/A* student, look out for the extension sections at the end of each chapter and essay structure. These will help you to develop an original approach to essay writing.

The last few chapters of the resource provide opportunities for you to practise writing your own **example essays** and also write your own answers to **exam-style practice questions** using the **essay writing framework** provided in the appendix.

If you are working through this resource on your own / on your own / on your own, during study leave, look at the **answers** to the questions at the back of the resource to see how your knowledge and understanding of the music compares to the examiner's.

Good luck for your exam!

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Exam Guidance

This chapter is about the format of the exam. It includes advice for managing your time so that you can answer all the questions.

Exam Format

The AS and A Level Appraising Music exams have two sections. In Section A, you will answer questions about set works that you have studied in class. You will also answer a musical dictation question where you will have to listen to a short melody or chord sequence that you have never heard before, and then write it down.

Section B consists of two essay questions. Question 5 will ask you to write about a musical style that you have never heard of. Question 6 will ask you to write about a set work. There will be two questions for Question 6. However, there will be only one, compulsory, essay title that you need to be familiar with the full range of musical styles that you have studied. You could be tested on any one of them.

Time management

You need to manage your time effectively in the exam so that you are able to answer all the questions. The total number of marks for each question gives an indication of how long you should spend writing the answer: the more marks available, the more time you should spend.

With the extra marks for transcription questions in Section A, you might find it better to spend more time in Section B. However, the extra marks in Section A are much better than the extra marks for transcription questions in Section B (15–30 marks).

The exam

The AS Music exam is 90 minutes (1.5 hours) long and has 80 marks available in total. Of these, 35 marks are available for Section B. This means that you should aim to spend just under half of the time on Section B. This will be approximately 40–45 minutes.

At AS level, Question 5 is worth 15 marks and Question 6 is worth 20 marks. This means that you should spend slightly more time on Question 5 than on Question 6. You will have roughly 20–25 minutes to answer Question 5 and 20–25 minutes to answer Question 6.

| Time management for AS exam | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Total time for exam</i> | | |
| Total time for Section A | | |
| Total time for Section B | | |
| Time for each question | Q5: 15–20 minutes | Q6: 20–25 minutes |

The A Level Exam

The A Level Music exam is 120 minutes (2 hours) long. There are 100 marks available in total, 50 for Section A and 50 for Section B. This means that you can divide your time evenly between the two sections. You should aim to spend 60 minutes on each.

At A Level, Question 5 is worth 20 marks, and Question 6 is worth 30 marks. You should spend 20 minutes on Question 5, and 30 minutes on Question 6.

| Time management for A Level exam | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Total time for exam</i> | | |
| Total time for Section A | | |
| Total time for Section B | | |
| Time for each question | Q5: 25 minutes | Q6: 30 minutes |

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Student-friendly Mark Schemes

One of the best ways of learning what you are expected to do in the exam is to mark an essay as if you were the teacher or examiner. As you work your way through this resource, you will get several mark essays like a teacher/examiner. These might be sample essays, your own work or work from your classmates.

The information and tables below show you what to look for when you are marking an essay. This information is very similar to the information that will be given to the person who marks your answer. You can also refer to it if you need information about how to get a particular mark in the exam.

Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives are the criteria that you (and the examiner) will use to mark an essay. The following are the assessment objectives for the Appraising Music exam:

| Assessment objective number | Details | How to achieve |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| A03 | Demonstrate and apply musical knowledge. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make links between musical features and historical/cultural contexts. Identify musical features accurately. |
| A04 | Use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about music. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse musical features. Use musical terminology. Link your analysis to the question. Draw links between musical features and historical/cultural contexts. |

How many marks?

The key points that you (and the examiner) will look for when marking an essay are:

- the level of accuracy and detail given in the musical analysis
- the degree to which musical terminology is applied correctly
- the number, quality and relevance of links made to other pieces
- the degree to which the musical analysis is used to answer the essay question and to support your argument

As shown in the table on the next two pages, for each level (1–4 for AS and 1–5 for A Level), there are around 3–6 marks. You (and the examiner) decide how many marks to give based on how well the essay fits the description for a particular level. For instance, if an AS Question 5 has 6 marks and 3 bullet-pointed criteria for a level 3, but one of the bullet-pointed criteria for the level 4, you could give 4 or 11 marks).

For A Level Question 6 only, the assessment objectives (AO3, AO4) also have a bearing on the marks. The 30 marks are available for AO3 and 20 for AO4. This means that you (and the examiner) place significantly greater importance on how well the essay meets the descriptions for AO3 when deciding which level/mark to give.

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AS Question 5

AO weighting: AO4: 15 marks

| Level | Marks | Description |
|-------|-------|---|
| | 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant answer given. |
| 1 | 1–3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some features of the unfamiliar extract are identified, though some are left out. Few attempts to make links to other pieces. Some use of musical terms, but with mistakes. Little exploration of the composer's intentions / the effect of the music. |
| 2 | 4–7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features of the unfamiliar extract are identified. Links made to other pieces, but with some mistakes. Uses musical terms, but makes some mistakes. Simple musical explanations given in connection with the context of the music. |
| 3 | 8–11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features of the unfamiliar extract are described. Links made to other pieces to support basic points/arguments. The use of musical terms is adequate. Inconsistent explanation of the connection between musical elements and the composer's intention / the effect of the music. |
| 4 | 12–15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The features of the unfamiliar extract are explained and related to other pieces. Links are made to other, relevant pieces in connection with the points made. The use of musical terms is competent. The explanation of the composer's intentions / the effect of the music is supported by musical analysis. |

AS Question 6

AO weighting: AO3: 10 marks AO4: 10 marks

| Level | Marks | Description |
|-------|-------|--|
| | 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant answer given. |
| 1 | 1–5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little or no reference to the historical and social context of the music. Little or no relevant musical analysis given. (AO3) Poorly organised writing with limited relevance to the question. Few links to other pieces. (AO4) |
| 2 | 6–10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some rather general references to the historical and social context. Some rather generalised musical analysis. (AO3) Some rather generalised comments on the effects of musical elements in relation to the historical and social context. (AO4) Some inaccuracies in the use of musical terms. (AO4) References to other pieces contain errors. (AO4) |
| 3 | 11–15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant connections between the music and its historical and social context. Clear, relevant analysis of the piece. (AO3) Good discussion of musical elements in relation to the essay question. The use of musical terms is adequate. (AO4) Basic links to other, relevant pieces. (AO4) |
| 4 | 16–20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed connections between the music and its historical and social context. Communicates a clear and convincing argument. (AO3) Fluent support of the argument with musical examples and correct use of musical terms. (AO4) The discussion is supported with references to other, relevant pieces. (AO4) |

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A Level Question 5

AO weighting: AO4: 20 marks

| Level | Marks | Description |
|-------|-------|--|
| | 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant answer given. |
| 1 | 1–4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some features of the unfamiliar extract are identified, though some are incorrect. Few attempts to make links to other pieces. Some use of musical terms, but with mistakes. Little exploration of the composer's intentions / the effect of the music. |
| 2 | 5–8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features of the unfamiliar extract are identified. Links to other pieces, but with some mistakes. Some use of musical terms, but makes some mistakes. Simple musical explanations given in connection with the composer's intentions / the effect of the music. |
| 3 | 9–12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features of the unfamiliar extract are described. Links made to other pieces to support basic points/arguments. The use of musical terms is adequate. Inconsistent explanation of the connection between musical elements and the composer's intentions / the effect of the music. |
| 4 | 13–16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The features of the unfamiliar extract are explained and related to other pieces. Links are made to other, relevant pieces in connection with the composer's intentions / the effect of the music. The use of musical terms is competent. The explanation of the composer's intentions / the effect of the music is supported by musical analysis. |
| 5 | 17–20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of musical features in the unfamiliar extract are explained and related to other pieces in the essay question. Links are made to relevant pieces in connection with a strong argument. The use of musical terms is excellent. Detailed and specific musical analysis is used to support a thorough explanation of the composer's intentions / the effect of the music. |

A Level Question 6

AO weighting: AO3: 10 marks AO4: 20 marks

| Level | Marks | Description |
|-------|-------|--|
| | 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relevant answer given. |
| 1 | 1–6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little reference to the historical and social context of the music. Little relevant musical analysis given. (AO4) Poorly organised writing with limited relevance to the question. Few links to other pieces. (AO4) |
| 2 | 7–12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some rather general references to the historical and social context. Some rather generalised musical analysis. (AO4) Some rather generalised comments on the effects of musical elements. Some inaccuracies in the use of musical terms. (AO4) References to other pieces contain errors. (AO4) |
| 3 | 13–18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant connections between the music and its historical and social context. Clear, relevant analysis of the piece. (AO4) The use of musical terms is adequate. (AO4) Basic links to other, relevant pieces. (AO4) |
| 4 | 19–24 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed connections between the music and its historical and social context. Communicative, clear and controlled argument. (AO4) Fluent and coherent argument with musical examples and comments. The discussion is supported with references to other, relevant pieces. |
| 5 | 25–30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sophisticated connections between the music and its historical and social context. Presents a strong, sophisticated argument. (AO4) Excellent quality of musical analysis. (AO4) Musical terminology is used throughout to support the argument. The key points of the argument are justified using relevant musical analysis. |

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Essay Questions

Keywords

This page shows you the words that are commonly used in essay questions, and the answer you will need to give for each type of question. You could print out a copy of this page and put it in a folder / on the wall by your desk so that you can refer to it as you revise.

Discuss

'Discuss' is usually used in Question 5

Example:

Discuss how the unfamiliar extract is typical of popular music more widely. You should refer to other pieces in your answer, such as set works or wider listening.

To answer questions that use the word 'discuss', you will need to:

- give a thorough musical analysis of the unfamiliar piece
- make links to other, relevant pieces of music, such as set works or wider listening
- present a strong argument that investigates all aspects of the essay question
- explore musical elements in relation to historical/social context and/or the listener

Evaluate

'Evaluate' is usually used in Question 6.

Example:

Evaluate the use of melody and sonority in *The Duchess*. You should refer to other, relevant pieces in your answer, such as set works or wider listening.

To answer questions that use the word 'evaluate', you will need to:

- give a thorough musical analysis of the piece
- make critical judgements about the music, and present a strong argument
- make links to other, relevant pieces of music, such as set works or wider listening

The argument

Throughout your essay, you should present an argument that gives your opinion on the question. You will usually explore one or more of the following:

- the degree to which an unfamiliar extract is typical of a style/context (e.g. Baroque music, jazz)
- the relationship between the music and its context and purpose (e.g. as part of a film score)
- the relationship between the music and a text or dramatic scenario, such as the programme of a symphony or the plot of a film
- the connection between the use of musical elements and their effect on the listener (e.g. creates a particular mood or evokes a particular scene)

Some questions for AS / A Level are open-ended. This means that you can choose to discuss – the point or points you choose will depend on the style and context of the music.

Evaluate the use of melody and sonority in *The Duchess*. You should refer to other, relevant pieces in your answer, such as set works or wider listening.

For this question, you will probably link the music to the genre (film music) as well as the film (the action that takes place in the plot; for example, when the Duchess is forced to dance). You may also examine how the composer uses musical elements to create specific effects (e.g. to create a sense of historical period).

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On the other hand, the essay question often tells you what your argument should be about. This question:

Discuss how this unfamiliar extract is typical of popular music more widely. You should refer to other pieces in your answer, such as set works or wider listening.

In this question, you are asked to explore the degree to which the unfamiliar extract is typical of popular music more widely. Your conclusion (and the last sentence of each paragraph) should, therefore, state whether the unfamiliar extract is typical / partly typical / not typical of popular music more widely.

Activity

For each of the following questions 2–4 below, underline the keywords that tell you what your argument should be about. Then, explain the argument in your own words. Question 1 has been completed for you as an example.

1. The composer wrote the unfamiliar extract as part of a requiem written to commemorate the dead. Discuss how the composer uses musical features in relation to this intention. Relate your discussion to other pieces, such as set works or wider listening.

Explanation: This essay will discuss how the composer uses musical devices to express grief or mourning...

2. Evaluate the use of melody, harmony and tonality in *Ein feste Burg ist unsere Festung* in relation to the historical context of the work. Relate your discussion to other, relevant pieces such as set works, or wider listening.

Explanation: ...

3. The unfamiliar extract is from an orchestral piece called *An Alpine Symphony* (written by Richard Strauss in Europe.) Discuss the connection between the music and the title of the work. Refer to other pieces of **Romantic music** in your answer.

Explanation: ...

4. Evaluate how the use of texture, structure and sonority in *Caña Quema* creates a sense of drama. Refer to other, relevant pieces in your answer.

Explanation: ...

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Writing Skills

Words and Phrases

This chapter gives some information and activities about how to choose the correct words when writing your AS / A Level Music essays. It covers formal register (tone) and accurate musical terminology.

Register

Register refers to the tone or style of language and its suitability for a particular purpose or function. You should use a formal, academic register for your Music essays. This will help to show the examiner that you have good essay writing skills. It will also help you to present your knowledge clearly so that the examiner can award you marks for the points you make.

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So what then, exactly, is meant by formal, academic register? This subject is quite new, so we have discussed it at some length in your GCSE English classes. However, some general rules apply:

- **Use precise, formal language**, e.g. write 'discuss' rather than 'talk about', 'performed' rather than 'was first performed'.
- **Avoid contractions**, where two or more words are made into a single word with an apostrophe ('). Write 'do not' rather than 'don't' and 'I am' rather than 'I'm'.
- **Avoid abbreviations**, where a word or phrase is made shorter by leaving out letters. These include standard musical abbreviations (e.g. EQ, $\frac{6}{4}$ chord) and certain words from Latin (e.g., i.e.).

Activity 1

Read the following pairs of sentences. In each case, choose the sentence that would be most appropriate in a Music essay. Consider the register of the language.

- a. In my essay, I'm gonna talk about the melody, harmony and tonality in Hounds of Baskerville.

b. This essay will discuss melody, harmony and tonality in Hounds of Baskerville.
- a. Berlioz composed *Symphonie fantastique* in 1830.

b. Berlioz wrote *Symphony fantastique* in the 1800s.
- a. In modern times, musicians like John Cage wrote music with weird and wonderful sonorities.

b. Many contemporary Western art music composers, such as John Cage, have used unusual sonorities.

Check your answers with your teacher (or using the answers section at the back of the book).

In the **incorrect** sentences above, underline all the words or phrases that are too informal.

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Use of musical vocabulary

Your overall mark for each essay will depend partly on your ability to use the correct musical terminology in your analysis. There are too many musical terms to list here – you will need to use your own knowledge. However, some examples of musical terms are:

- ♪ **Melody** – conjunct, disjunct, phrase, etc.
- ♪ **Harmony** – perfect cadence, Neapolitan 6th, major 7th chord, etc.
- ♪ **Tonality** – atonal, modal, tonal, etc.
- ♪ **Structure** – binary form, sonata form, 3/4 time signature, etc.
- ♪ **Texture** – monophonic, melodic, homophonic, accompaniment, etc.
- ♪ **Sonority** – flutter-tonguing, multitrack recording, etc.
- ♪ **Tempo** – ad libitum, **Rhythm** – syncopation, polyrhythm, etc.
- ♪ **Dynamics** – **articulation** – *crescendo*, *stacatissimo*, etc.

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To gain marks for your use of musical terminology in the exam, you will need to use musical terms accurately and precisely. Some key points to remember are:

- Make sure that you are familiar with **all** the musical features required for the selected for Question 5 could contain any of them. Your teacher will be able to help you learn the correct words to learn.
- Be careful when revising terms that are similar. For example, make sure you know the difference between a sonata (a multimovement composition for instrumental soloist) and sonata form (exposition, development and recapitulation). Similarly, make sure you know the difference between a bar (the number and type of beats in a bar) and rhythm (the pattern created by the notes).
- Demonstrate your knowledge of musical terms in your essay by writing about them. For example, write the word 'sequence' rather than the vague phrase 'repeated at a higher pitch' and 'it has no key' rather than the vague phrase 'it has no key'.

Activity 2

Each of these sentences contains one word or phrase that describes the music in the sentence. Underline the word/phrase in each sentence, then write the correct term.

1. The first section of *Batman Returns*, 'Birth of a Penguin', Part 1, is in 3/4 time, has a key signature of one flat and a slow tempo ($\text{♩} = 60$).

Correct word/phrase: ...

2. Bach's cantata *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* contains a German hymn tune.

Correct word/phrase: ...

3. *Se quema la chumbamba* is in G minor throughout the piece. The key does not change.

Correct word/phrase: ...

4. Saariaho's *Peccati* uses electric equipment.

Correct word/phrase: ...

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Sentences

Transitional words/phrases

Transitional words/phrases are used to connect the paragraphs of an essay, or to show the relationship between sentences in a paragraph. Transitional words/phrases are often used at the beginning of sentences, and they typically come near or at the beginning of a sentence.

There are a number of different types of transitional words/phrases. The transitional words/phrases to your Music essays are shown in the table below.

| Type of transition | Use | Common words/phrases | Example |
|--|--|--|--|
|  Illustration/ Exemplification | To give examples of musical features or wider listening pieces | For example, such as, for instance Own ideas: ... | Modal tonal impressions in the first section of the <i>Les Matins de Grenade</i> mode at bar 10. |
| Addition/ Similarity/ Comparison | To compare or connect two similar ideas or types of musical evidence together | Also, additionally, moreover, furthermore Own ideas: ... | The harmonic language of the first section of the <i>Les Matins de Grenade</i> is typical of the 19th century. The use of the minor mode is typical of those at the beginning of the section of the first primary triad and the suspensions. |
| Opposition/ Limitation/ Contrast | To highlight the difference between two ideas, musical features or pieces | On the other hand, in contrast, however, conversely Own ideas: ... | The unfamiliarity of the <i>Les Matins de Grenade</i> is contrasted with the familiarity of the <i>Clou de la messe</i> such as 'Clou de la messe'. |
|  Effect/ Consequence/ Result | To draw conclusions from musical evidence; for example, by linking the analysis to the historical context or to the essay question | Thus, therefore, then Own ideas: ... | Cage's <i>Dance</i> is a percussive piece. Extended intervals are common in the piece and more widely used in <i>for a Mad King</i> . It is clear, therefore, that <i>No. 1</i> is typical of more widely used intervals. |
| Time/ Sequence/ Transition | To emphasise the separation between paragraphs or different ideas within paragraphs, or to organise ideas into paragraphs | Firstly, secondly, thirdly, next, finally Own ideas: ... | Firstly , I will discuss the text and extract. |
|  Conclusion/ Summary | To signal the start of the concluding paragraph of the essay | In conclusion, in summary, to sum up Own ideas: ... | In conclusion , the tonality of the piece is typical of Baroque music. |

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Activity 1

For this activity, you will need to have access to essay(s) that you have written in your folder now, before you start.

1. Look at the third column of the transitional words table on the previous page. Examples of each type of transition phrase are given. Can you add some more? Look at your friends' essays for ideas. You could also look at www.zzed.uk/9174-skills if you get stuck.
2. Reread an essay that you wrote recently for music. Look particularly at the places where you moved from one idea or example to another. Are there any places where you have clearly added in transitional phrases? Conversely, are there some places where you have used transitional phrases that are unnecessary? If you start most sentences with a transitional phrase, it can be rather distracting and is probably too much.

Write in the necessary transitional phrases, or cross out the unnecessary ones.

Topic sentences

Topic sentences tell the reader (the examiner) what a paragraph is going to be about. A topic sentence is the first sentence at the start of every paragraph in the main body of your essay. Sometimes you don't need topic sentences. However, it is unlikely that you will need a topic sentence for the main body of your music essay.

The topic sentences for your music essay should be clear, brief and to the point.

- start with a transitional word/phrase (firstly, secondly, in conclusion, etc.)
- name the musical element (melody, harmony, tonality, structure, texture, sound, rhythm, dynamics and articulation) that you are going to discuss in that paragraph
- link to the essay question; wherever possible giving your opinion about the music

The example below shows the start of a paragraph with a **topic sentence** that connects the paragraph to the essay question.

Essay Question

Evaluate the structure, melody, and tonality of *The Magic Flute*: Act 1, Nos. 4 and 5 in the context of the opera's libretto (text).

Make links to other pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples.

Transition Musical element Reference to essay question with opinion

Firstly, the structure of the music is closely linked to that of the libretto. The structure of 'O zittre nicht' closely mirrors the two-part structure of the libretto. The link between Queen of the Night's interior reflection and her decision to take a more active role is reflected in the music.

Activity 2

Write topic sentences for the second and third paragraphs of this essay. The second paragraph should be about melody, and the third should be about tonality. For paragraph 2, the phrases in brackets are given. For paragraph 3, you have to write in each space.

Topic sentence for paragraph 2 (melody)
 ... (transitional word/phrase) ... (musical element) of *The Magic Flute* is ... (reference to essay question) ...
 ... (your own opinion about how closely the musical element and libretto are related) ...

Topic sentence for paragraph 3 (tonality)
 ...

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Listing musical information

In the exam, you have a very limited amount of time to answer the essay question and to demonstrate your musical knowledge. You therefore need to write sentences that are very concise and to the point. One way of writing succinctly is to group similar information into a single sentence.

Vivaldi's Concerto in D minor: movement I modulates through a range of related keys (bars 16–20, bars 27–32), G minor (bars 4–45) and F major (bars 51–54).

As you can see, the end of this sentence is essentially a list, written using parallel phrases with the same structure. In this case the key signature is named, followed by bar references.

Activity



For each of the questions 2–4, convert the given information into a list. Where particular parts of the piece are present, put these in parentheses. Question 1 has an example.

1. Polyphony – opening of extract Homophony – middle of the extract
 Monophony – at the end of the extract

The unfamiliar extract contains a range of contrasting textures. These include polyphony (at the opening of the extract), homophony (in the middle of the extract) and monophony (at the end of the extract).

2. Modes Pentatonic scale
 Whole-tone scale Octatonic scale

The unfamiliar extract uses a range of expressive tonalities. These include modes, pentatonic and octatonic scales.

3. Parallel 7th chords, e.g. bar 17 Whole-tone harmony
 Fretted strings, e.g. bar 33, Open 5th chords
 Chords based on 4ths and 5ths, e.g. bar 38

'La soirée dans Grenade' contains a range of Impressionistic harmonies.

4. Tremolo strings – 'Birth of a Penguin Part 1', bars 11–12 Wide oboe vibrato – 'Birth of a Penguin Part 1', bars 57–8
 Harp glissandi – 'Birth of a Penguin Part 1', bar 25 Pizzicato strings – 'Birth of a Penguin Part 1', bar 14, 'Rise and Fall of the Titanic', bar 14
 Tam-tam roll – 'Birth of a Penguin Part 1', bar 6 Muted brass – 'Birth of a Penguin Part 1', bar 6
 Stopped horn notes – 'Birth of a Penguin Part 2', bar 13, 'Batman vs the Circus', bar 15 Cymbal roll – 'Birth of a Penguin Part 2', bar 13
 Flutter-tongued flute – 'Birth of a Penguin', Part 2, bar 101 Trumpet lip trills – 'Birth of a Penguin', Part 2, bar 101
 Violin glissandi – 'Batman vs the Circus' (Part 2), bar 71

'Batman Returns' contains a wide range of performing techniques. These include tremolo strings, harp glissandi, tam-tam rolls, stopped horn notes, flutter-tongued flute, violin glissandi, wide oboe vibrato, pizzicato strings, cymbal rolls, muted brass, and trumpet lip trills.

5. This list is unclear and ungrammatical because it lacks parallel structure. Each phrase in the list has the same structure.

'Cloudbusting' contains several interesting rhythmic features. There is a steady backbeat from bar 11, at some places (e.g. bar 18) the backbeat is audible. There are quavers in the balalaika, the crotchet pulse stops suddenly (e.g. bar 17).

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Paragraphs

This chapter gives you some information about how to structure paragraphs in your essay. The first section shows you a structure that you can use to organise the paragraph in your essay. The second section gives information and tips about writing effective introductory paragraphs.

The main body of the essay

Most essay questions at AS / A Level ask you to comment on specific musical elements. The musical elements that you are likely to be asked about are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ♪ Melody | ♪ Harmony |
| ♪ Tonality | ♪ Structure |
| ♪ Texture | ♪ Sonority |
| ♪ Tempo, metre and rhythm | ♪ Dynamics and articulation |

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One of the best ways of structuring the main body of your essay is to have one paragraph about each musical element listed in the essay question. For instance, if the essay question tells you to 'Discuss the use of melody, sonority and rhythm in *Back in the Day*', you would have one paragraph about melody, one paragraph about sonority and one paragraph about rhythm.

Paragraph structure

You will probably already be familiar with the Point, Evidence, Explain (PEE) model for writing paragraphs in response to questions at Key Stage 3 / GCSE level. However, Music questions at A Level are slightly different because they require that you make links between the set work and a range of pieces, such as wider listening examples. As a result, you will need to use a more complex structure in each paragraph. This structure can be summarised as follows:

- **Point:** The topic sentence of your paragraph. This will usually refer to a specific musical element (e.g. harmony, tonality, etc.) mentioned in the essay question.
- **Evidence:** Musical analysis – information about chords, keys, textures, etc.
- **Link:** References to other pieces with similar or contrasting features to the one mentioned in the essay.
- **Explain:** Critical evaluation/judgement of the musical features analysed above. This needs to refer back to the essay question.

An example of how to use this paragraph structure is given on the next page.

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Example:

Discuss how characteristic the sonority and tonality in 'Inner State (Of Mind)' styles more widely.

Relate your answers to other pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples.

Point: topic sentence

Firstly, the sonority of the extract draws on jazz styles through its use of vocals (e.g. bars 10-21), the improvisation (e.g. bars 15), the improvised soprano saxophone typical features of jazz. The electronic drum beats and opening scratching samples are more typical of a keyboard, and refined studio techniques such as the opening two bars of the notated score are of commercial popular music genres. Many contemporary composers combine sonorities from several different styles. For instance, Alicia Keys' 'If I Ain't Got You' is typical of soul music with extensive production techniques (e.g. overdubbing, multitracking) typical of commercial music. 'Inner State (Of Mind)' is typical of jazz / pop.

Evidence: musical analysis



Link: reference to another piece

Explain: connect the evidence and link it to the essay question

Activity 1

In this activity, you are going to write the second paragraph of this essay.

Discuss how characteristic the sonority and tonality in 'Inner State (Of Mind)' styles more widely.

Relate your answers to other pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples.

- Using the notes below about the tonality of 'Inner State (Of Mind)' and jazz / pop music, create a structure for your paragraph by copying the bullet points and relevant headings.
- When you have completed step 1, write the paragraph in full sentences.

- ♪ 'Inner State (Of Mind)' → blue notes e.g. vocal part
- ♪ 'Ornithology', Charlie Parker → uses a range of scales: major, melodic minor
- ♪ 'Inner State (Of Mind)' → pentatonic scale e.g. vocals, bass
- ♪ 'Inner State (Of Mind)' → use of various tonalities is typical of pop
- ♪ 'Inner State (Of Mind)' → C Dorian mode
- ♪ 'Inner State (Of Mind)' → uses a range of tonalities within a C tonality

Point:

Evidence:

Link:

Explain:

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Extension Activities (for A/A* students only)

Activity 1

All paragraphs in the body of your essay will need to include the following:

1. Detailed musical analysis of the unfamiliar extract (Q15) or set work (Q16)
2. Reference(s) to other pieces, styles or wider listening examples
3. Sentences that link the musical analysis to the essay question and your argument presented in the essay

If you are already consistently achieving high marks in your Music essays, you may be inclined to write your paragraphs using a different structure from the Point-Evidence-Link-Explain model discussed earlier in this chapter. Provided that your paragraphs contain the required information, your structure is absolutely fine, and it is a sign that you are developing a strong writing style.

Because you are already developing a good writing style, it is a good idea to experiment with different structures that you use on a regular basis, so that you can reproduce and adapt them consciously to different essay questions / musical evidence. The activity below is designed to help you do this.

Activity 2

The paragraph below is an alternative answer to Activity 1, Question 2 about 'Inner State (Of Mind)'.

Alternative answer

'Inner State (Of Mind)' uses a variety of different tonalities. It is in large part influenced by the use of modal jazz pieces such as Miles Davis' 'So What'. It also uses a feature seen in many jazz and blues pieces, such as the 'blues' scale, used by W. C. Handy. Additionally, it employs the pentatonic scale in several places, including the vocal melody at bar 1 and the guitar fill at bars 104-105. Although the pentatonic scale is commonly found in jazz, its use here may reflect the influence of pop music pieces, such as 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' by Coldplay, where it is used in the vocal melody. In this way, 'Inner State (Of Mind)' uses tonalities that are typical of a range of popular genres.

1. Compare this to the paragraph (Activity 1, Question 2) that you wrote using the Point-Evidence-Link, Explain (PELE) model given on p. 14. (If you haven't done this yet, compare it with your answer, look at the model provided in the answers section of this chapter.) What differences can you see between the structure of the PELE paragraph given above?
2. What are the advantages of using the structure given in the alternative answer?
3. Now take one of your previous essays that you have written so far for Music. Identify the paragraphs in which you use elements 1-3 in each paragraph.
 - a) Do you use the Point-Evidence-Link-Explain structure?
 - b) If not, how are your paragraphs different?
 - c) Do you use the same structure in each of your paragraphs or do different paragraphs differ from one another?
 - d) Are there any paragraphs in which you could improve the way you use the structure? How could you do this?

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Introductions and conclusions

Introductions and conclusions are important because they summarise the key points and help to emphasise how these relate to the question.

Your introductions and conclusions should be brief and to the point. Aim to write 2-3 sentences. Time is limited in the exam, and most of the marks will be awarded for argument in the main body of the essay.

A quick and easy way of writing an introduction is to convert the essay question into what the essay will be about. You can use many of the words and phrases from the question to include the following information from the essay question in your introduction:

- a brief reference to the paragraphs that will feature in the main body of your essay
- musical elements listed in the essay question (melody, harmony, rhythm, etc.)
- a brief phrase or sentence to connect these paragraphs to the essay question

Example introduction

Essay question:

Evaluate the use of sonority, rhythm and metre, and melody in *Se quema la chumba* and discuss how the fusion music genre more widely.
Make links to other, relevant pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples.

This essay will evaluate the sonority, rhythm and metre of *Se quema la chumba* and discuss how the fusion genre more widely.

Refer to the essay question. You can use the command word, e.g. 'discuss', 'evaluate' or other phrases from the exam question.

List the topic of each paragraph.

The key points that should feature in your conclusion are:

- a brief (verb) phrase that signals to the examiner that this is the start of a conclusion, 'To sum up'
- a phrase or sentence that summarises your opinion of the piece in relation to the question
- a **brief** reference to the key musical features that support this opinion. These should be the features you have discussed in the main body of your essay, rather than new information.

Example conclusion

In conclusion, the sonority, rhythm and metre of *Se quema la chumba* are important because they combine elements of two musical styles. The ensemble includes Cuban instruments, and the rhythm and metre combine Cuban and Spanish metrical patterns.

Start the paragraph with a phrase that signals to the examiner that this is the start of a conclusion. Refer back to the topic of each paragraph.

Summarise your main opinion/argument. This argument must relate to the essay question.

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Activity 3

Introductions

- Write an introduction to an essay that answers the following question

Listen to the recording:

[zzed.uk/9174-discuss](https://www.zigzagged.uk/9174-discuss)

(0:00–1:40)

Discuss the structure, harmony and tonality of this extract in relation to popular music. Give musical details in your answer. Make links to other pieces, such as set work.

Remember you can use similar words to the essay question in your introduction.

Conclusions

- Create a list of four or five phrases that you could use at the start of a 'conclusion', 'to sum up'.
- Below are two possible conclusions that could be used at the end of the essay about pop/jazz given above. Which one is better? Give reasons for your choice.
 - In conclusion, the verse-chorus structure, extended, added and chromatic major/pentatonic tonality in the unfamiliar extract are features common to jazz more widely.
 - The unfamiliar extract has a verse chorus structure, extended, added and a major/pentatonic tonality.



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Essay Structure

This chapter gives you some tips about essay planning and provides a framework for putting paragraphs into an essay.

Planning

You should spend most of your planning stage focusing on the main body of your essay. You need to plan the introduction and conclusion because these will reflect the essay question given in the body of the essay.

At the planning stage, you will need to decide how many paragraphs to use in the main body and which information to put in each paragraph. Often, the essay question gives you a clue about your essay:

Evaluate the use of melody, harmony and sonority in *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*: first movement. Make links to other, relevant pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples.

This question lists three musical elements: melody, harmony and sonority. In your essay, each element should be discussed in its own paragraph. This body of this essay would consist of three paragraphs: one about melody, one about structure and one about sonority.

It is also a good idea at the planning stage to decide on the order in which information you put in each paragraph. You should apply the Point-Evidence-Link-Explain model that you saw in the previous chapter to help with this. Remember to think about set works / wider listening examples at the planning stage.

Activity 1

You are now going to use your knowledge of *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*: first movement and other relevant works to write a plan for an answer to the question above.

Please photocopy the essay writing framework provided in the appendix of this resource and use it to write your answers directly on to the photocopied sheet.

Remember that in the exam, you will only have about five minutes to write your plan. To save time, write your plan using bullet points, key words/phrases or notes. You might need to practise writing essay plans in order to be able to do it quickly. Use the example essay questions that feature throughout this resource as a basis for your practice.

Questions without musical elements

Some AS / A Level essay questions do not tell you which musical elements (melody, harmony, texture, rhythm) to comment on. This is particularly true of unfamiliar listening Question 5. For instance:

Listen to the recording:
zzed.uk/9174-varese
 (*Ionisation*, Varèse, 0:00–0:30)

Discuss how the musical organisation of the above extract is typical of twentieth-century music. Refer to other pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples, in your answer.

You can still answer this type of question using the paragraph and essay structure. You will need to decide which musical elements are most important in relation to the piece as a whole. For example, because the extract above is for unpitched percussion, you should focus on the sonority, texture and rhythm of the extract. Indeed, much twentieth-century music is based on unusual sonorities and rhythms, so this decision is relevant to the essay question.

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However, there is one important point to be aware of when you are narrowing your marks for a thorough analysis of the piece that doesn't leave out any important points without making your essay too long and detailed to write under exam conditions. The key elements in passing. For example, in the introduction to an essay which answers the question, you might write:

Like a number of other twentieth-century pieces (for instance, Cage's *Prepared Pianos*), this piece has few recognisable pitches, harmonies, or melodies. For this reason, this essay will focus specifically on how the sonority and texture of the unfamiliar extracts are typical of twentieth-century music more widely.

For more examples and activities relating to these types of open-ended question, see the answers for Question 5 and A Level Question 5.

Activity 2

In this activity, you are going to brainstorm a plan for an essay question. Allow yourself five minutes on this task.

Listen to the recording:
zzed.uk/9174-chopin
 (1:51–2:47)

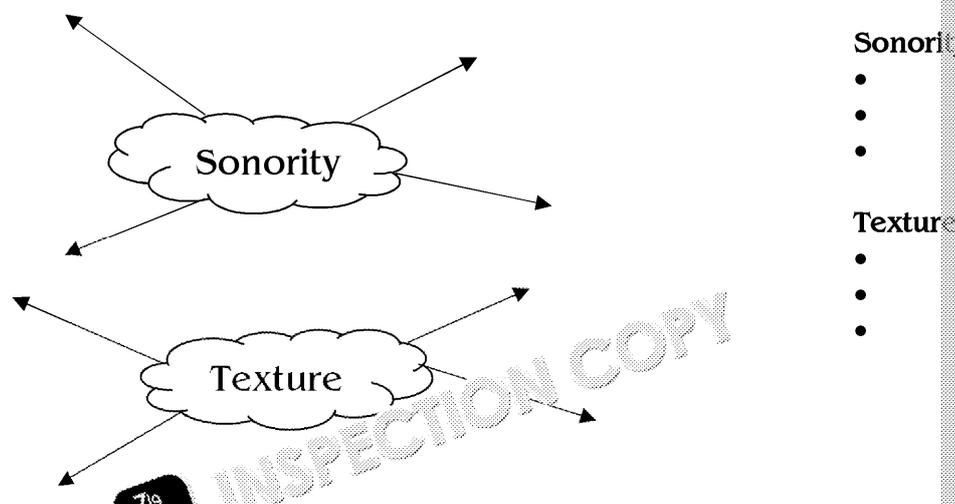
Evaluate how this extract is typical of the Romantic style.

Make links to other pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples.

- As you listen to the extract, make notes about those elements of the music that are typical of Romantic music more widely.

Organise your notes according to musical element (melody, harmony, sonority, metre and rhythm, dynamics and articulation).
 Hint: not all musical elements will support your argument – leave out the ones that don't.

You could organise your notes as a mindmap... or as a list.



- From your mindmap, pick around three musical elements that will support your argument. For each of these elements, you should have identified musical features that are typical of the Romantic style.

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3. Now think of some other Romantic pieces that use musical elements in an unfamiliar extract. Add the title of each piece to your bullet points / mind map. For each piece, identify a correct musical element, with a **brief** note about its relationship to the use of the element.

Texture:

- C Schumann Op. 17 - also has melody and accompaniment textures.

4. If you were to write this essay, the three musical elements you have picked out would be the focus of one of your main paragraphs. You could also include any other important information about the musical elements in passing, for example, in the introduction or in the conclusion.

For more ideas and sample answers, see the activities relating to these types of open-ended questions in the sample answers for AS Question 5 and A Level Question 5.

You may wish to write this essay after you have looked at these model answers.

Extension Activities (for A/A students only)*

The structure discussed in this chapter and the previous one ('Essay Structure' and referred to as 'point-by-point organisation'. In this structure, each musical element is discussed in a separate paragraph. This structure will work well for most of your Music essays. However, you may sometimes be asked to write an essay in a different structure. If you already have good essay writing skills, you may sometimes be asked to write an essay in a structure that differs from that explained earlier in the chapter. This is absolutely fine provided you can clearly state your underlying argument/opinions.

Activity 1

1. Look at a Music essay that you have written recently. How is it structured? Is it point-by-point organisation, block organisation or another structure?
2. How well does the structure of your essay support your argument? How strong is the connection between your structure and argument?

If you would like to strengthen the connection between the structure and argument, use the information and activity that follow to help you.

One structure that you might find particularly helpful is often referred to as 'block organisation'. In this structure, the main focus of each paragraph in the body of your essay is an opinion or aspect of the music. Each paragraph may refer to several musical elements – the analysis and musical examples are used to support the opinion/argument discussed in each paragraph.

For an example of how this works, look at the essay plan below and complete it by adding your own ideas. In this plan, points 1 and 2 each represent the content that would constitute a paragraph.

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Activity 2

Evaluate the use of structure, harmony and sonority in *The Magic Flute*: Act 1. Make links to other pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples.

Some musical elements used relate closely to the text, e.g.

- No. 4 - use of Neapolitan 6th chord progressing to a diminished 7th to highlight the expression 'tief betrübt' (tief betrübte)
- No. 5 - humming used to signal to the audience that Papageno's mouth is closed
- ...

Many aspects of the music are related partly to the text and partly to conventions of the Classical era, e.g.

- No. 4 - two-tempo aria-recitative pairing (a conventional Classical device to demarcate the reflective and proactive sections of the text)
- Use of homophony among the voices at bars 54-64 of No. 5 (a conventional texture, used here to indicate that the characters all agree with the text)
- ...

1. Look at the skeleton plan for the question about *The Magic Flute* above and the bullet points so that you have enough information to write an essay. Make links to other pieces.

2. Now write the essay. Remember to include:

- an introduction and a conclusion
- links to other pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples. Add notes about these to the essay plan at this point.

3. When you have finished, please refer to the annotated model in the resource. How does your essay compare to the model answer? What

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Sample Essays

Sample Answers

This chapter provides a sample answer for each Edexcel Music essay question: AS Question 6, A Level Question 5, A Level Question 6.

Some of the answers are better than others. The activities that follow each sample show what makes a good answer so that you can apply this knowledge to your own essays.

AS Question 5

New directions

Listen to the recording here:

[zzed.uk](https://www.zigzageducation.com/recordings/cage-spontaneous-earth-000-116)

(Cage, *Spontaneous Earth*, 0:00–1:16)

Discuss how this extract is typical of twentieth-century art music.

Give specific musical examples, and refer to other pieces, such as set works or your answer.

In this essay, I will analyse the unfamiliar extract in relation to the twentieth-century music. I will comment on the harmony and tonality, sonority, metre and rhythm of the extract.

In the twentieth century, many pieces did not have a clear sense of tonality. Twentieth-century music was atonal or very chromatic. An example would be *Quartet for violin, clarinet, piano and saxophone*. This is also the case with *Spontaneous Earth*. The sounds are very percussive so it is hard to detect particular pitches, chords or keys. A similar piece with percussive sounds is John Cage's *Dances for Two Prepared Pianos*.

This brings me on to my next point, which is that the unfamiliar extract is a prepared piano. The prepared piano was invented by John Cage. Cage was born in Los Angeles. A prepared piano involves putting things like bolts inside the piano to change the sound of the strings. Another piece for prepared piano is *Dances for Two Prepared Pianos*.

The rhythm and metre of the extract are also typical of twentieth-century music. It is in a regular simple quadruple metre, but there is a lot of syncopation, and some cross-rhythm. These are typical features of twentieth-century music and are also found in *No. 1* by John Cage.

In conclusion, the use of unclear harmony and tonality, prepared piano, syncopation and cross-rhythm in the unfamiliar extract are typical of twentieth-century music more widely.

Activity 1

Read through the essay and think about the strengths and weaknesses of the answer.

- Write some notes about the strengths of the answer. Make sure that you cover:
 - The writing style
 - The structure
 - The musical examples
 - The links to other pieces
 - The conclusion/discussion
- Now think about how the essay could be improved. Write some notes about the weaknesses of the answer given above.
- Now, using the mark scheme given at the front of this study guide, give the answer a mark out of 15.

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AS Question 6

Instrumental music

Evaluate the melody and texture of Clara Schumann's Piano Trio in G minor,

Refer to specific features of the music in your answer. Relate the discussion to works or wider listening excerpts, in your answer.

In this essay, I will evaluate the melody and texture of Clara Schumann's Op. 17: first movement in relation to other instrumental works.

Firstly, I will evaluate the melody of the movement. There are two main distinct characters. The first subject (bars 1-21) has a range of a compound contains a mixture of conjunct intervals, stepwise movement, and disjunct octave. It uses a range of rhythmic values, including quavers, crotchets, and rhythms. After the motivic bridge passage at bars 22-45, the second begins with a contrasting, syncopated minim rhythm (bars 45²-46), followed by a quaver figure (first heard at bars 47³-49). Towards the end of the section rather fragmentary material, such as the scalar quaver runs at bars 73-76. The development (bars 91-164) explores the material from the first and second of musical devices. These include fragmentation (for example, of the start at bars 104-113) and sequence (e.g. bars 98-111). The two subjects return at bars 165-249. The use of two contrasting subjects, which are developed and then recapitulated, is a common procedure in sonata form. It is thus typical of Classical and Romantic works, such as the Mozart Piano Sonata in B-flat and Beethoven's Death and the Maiden quartet. In this way, the melody of Op. 17: first movement is described as typical of Classical and Romantic sonata forms more widely.

Secondly, I will evaluate the texture of Clara Schumann's Op. 17: first movement. The texture of the movement is varied. The piano plays an accompaniment to the stringed instruments and the texture is frequently varied. The accompaniment uses a variety of figurations, including sixteenth notes (e.g. bars 1-4), block chords (e.g. bars 91-106) and a syncopated chordal configuration. Moreover, the piano sometimes has a strongly melodic function (e.g. bars 21-24) and the stringed instruments sometimes take on more of an accompanying, harmonic role (e.g. bars 37-40). There are also a wide range of elaborations to the melody and accompaniment textures (e.g. violin and cello in octaves at bars 47-53) and use of pedals (e.g. piano at bars 37-40²). There are also some passages of counterpoint (e.g. violin, cello and piano at bars 37-40²) and imitation (violin and cello, bars 104-109). A similar variety of accompaniment and contrapuntal textures features strongly in other early Romantic works, such as Schubert's Trout Quintet: first movement and Robert Schumann's Piano Trio in G minor: third movement. In this way, the texture of Clara Schumann's Op. 17: first movement is typical of early Romantic chamber music more widely.

In conclusion, the use of two contrasting melodic subjects which are developed and then recapitulated is typical of Classical and Romantic sonata forms. The varied melodic and accompaniment textures is typical of early Romantic chamber music more widely.

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Activity 2

Read the essay on the previous page and think about how effective this response is.

- Use the grid below to help you mark the essay as if you were a teacher. In the left-hand column, give a mark out of 5 by putting a cross in the relevant box.
- When you are finished, add the total number of crosses together. Using the scale of this study guide, work out which level (1-5) this mark corresponds to at the bottom of the grid.

| | Strongly disagree | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | | | | | |
| The essay makes detailed connections between the music and its historical and social context. | | | | | | | |
| The essay communicates a clear and controlled argument. | | | | | | | |
| The essay identifies a wide range of musical elements accurately, using the correct terminology. | | | | | | | |
| The discussion is supported with reference to other, relevant pieces. | | | | | | | |
| Total marks: | | | | | | | |
| Level: | | | | | | | |

- If you were a teacher or examiner, what sort of comments would you give on this essay? Write two paragraphs. The first should discuss the things you liked about the essay. The second should give your suggestions about how to improve the essay.

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A Level Question 5

Vocal music

Listen to the recording here:

zzed.uk/9174-purcell

zzed.uk/9174-purcell2

(2:28–4:16)

The text of this extract is given below:

Ah! 'tis all in vain
Death and despair must end the fatal pain.
Cold pain disguis'd like snow and rain falls on my breast.
Blow winds in tempest blow
My veins all shiver, and my fingers glow.
My pulse beats a dead march for lost repose
And to a solid lump of ice, my poor heart is froze.

Discuss how the composer uses musical elements in relation to this text.

Give specific musical examples, and refer to other pieces, such as set works or your answer.

In this essay I will discuss the connection between this sad text and the extract. My discussion will emphasise the harmony, tonality and melody, these are the features most closely associated with the text, though I will also mention other features, such as texture, sonority, tempo and rhythm, where relevant.

Firstly, the harmony and tonality of the music reflect the despairing mood of the text. The piece is in a minor key, and contains many chromatic harmonies, particularly in the bass line. There is also an emphasis on dissonance. There are frequent suspensions of the dominant chord, and words 'vain' and 'dead' are emphasised by some subtle suspensions at some of the dominant chord positions, although acceptable to the modern ear, would have sounded harsh in Baroque and Classical music. The use of chromaticism, is also repeatedly emphasised, especially at the beginning of the extract. A similar use of tonality is found in other Baroque vocal pieces such as 'Music for a While' and 'Dido's Lament' by Purcell both of which have a melancholic mood. 'Music for a While' and 'Dido's Lament' by Purcell both use chromaticism, and dissonances such as suspensions and appoggiaturas. The use of chromaticism and harmony in the unfamiliar extract are connected to the text via styles associated in the Baroque era with sadness.

The melody of the extract is also closely linked to the text. The melody is the focal point of the music. Due to the melody and accompaniment texture, the detached harpsichord accompaniment, the soprano vocal line dominates the texture of the extract. It is probably for this reason that most of the word painting is done in the vocal part. One very strong example of this is the use of a descending scale, broken by the word 'falls', to imitate the dripping fall of rain. A second example is the use of melismas, emphasised by an increase in tempo, on the word 'blow', to reflect the howling 'tempest' referred to in the text. Word painting of this type is common in Baroque music, particularly that of the Baroque era. The fragmented scale on 'falls' is a similar passage in 'Music for a While', where the sound of snakes falling is reflected by the fragmented scale interspersed with quaver rests.

In conclusion, the music reflects the text in a manner that is very typical of the Baroque era. The use of a minor key, chromaticism and dissonance are used to portray the despairing mood of the text. Melodic word painting is used to emphasise some key ideas in the text, such as the cold rain and the windy tempest, in a literal fashion.

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Activity 3

1. Use the mark scheme at the front of this study guide to give this essay
2. Now think about your reasons for giving this mark. Consider the following:
 - The structure
 - The musical analysis
 - The links to other pieces
 - The argument/discussion
3. Think about the strengths and weaknesses of the essay in relation to the ideas available below.

| | Strengths | Weaknesses |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Structure | | |
| Musical analysis | | |
| Links to other pieces | | |
| Argument/discussion | | |

A Level Question

Music

Evaluate the use of melody, tonality and structure in 'Prelude' to *Psycho* by Bernard Herrmann. Relate your answer to other pieces of film music, such as set works, wider lists or recordings.

In this essay, I am going to write about the melody, tonality and structure of 'Prelude' to *Psycho* by Bernard Herrmann.

The piece is based around four melodies. Three of these are short (two of which are played by the violins). These melodies are used to structure the piece. They are varied and exciting, especially because they are played using a fast tempo with the film, which is a horror movie. 'The Cell' from *Psycho* also has exciting melodies.

The key of the piece is E major. We know this because it starts and ends on E notes. The piece also contains notes that do not belong to the key of the piece - for example, the B-flat note at bar 91. B-flat notes are also used in other pieces of music, like in Piano

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Activity 4

Read the essay on the previous page and answer the questions below.

1. Use the mark scheme at the front of this study guide to give this essay a mark.
2. Think about how this essay could be improved. Consider the following:
 - a) The structure of the essay
 - b) The way that the essay makes connections between the music and the lyrics
 - c) The way that the music is described (melody, tonality and structure)
 - d) The accuracy and consistency with which musical terms used in the essay
 - e) The way that the essay makes links between the music and its style
 - f) The links that are made to other pieces, and their relevance to the discussion in the essay
3. Write some notes for each of the points a–f above.
4. When you have finished, check your answers. If you are at school, you can do this in a class and with the teacher. If you are at home / on study leave, you can check your answers with the study guide.
5. When you check your answers, write down any points that you missed. When you apply these points to the next essay that you write.



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Practice Exam Questions: AS

This section provides a set of practice exam questions for AS. Try to complete them during a quiet time, when you know you will not be disturbed. Give yourself a time limit.

5. Vocal music

Listen to the recording: [zzed.uk/9174-mozart](https://www.zzed.uk/9174-mozart)

Discuss how this extract is typical of music from the Classical era more widely. Make links to other pieces such as set works or wider listening examples.

6. Answer either Question 6a, OR 6b OR 6c.

Either

a) Music for film

Evaluate the use of tonality, and tempo, metre and rhythm, in *The Duchess* 'Mistake of Your Life', 'Six Years Later', 'Never See Your Children Again'.

Make links to other pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples.

Or

b) Fusions

Evaluate the use of harmony and tonality in Debussy's *Estampes*, 'Pagodes'.

Relate your discussion to other relevant pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples.

Or

c) New directions

Evaluate the use of musical elements in Scriabin's *Petals*.

Make links to other relevant twentieth-century art music. These could include set works or wider listening examples.

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Practice Exam Questions: A Level

This section provides a set of practice exam questions for A Level. Try to complete them in 45 minutes. Pick a quiet time, when you know you will not be disturbed. Give yourself a time limit.

5. Instrumental music

Listen to the recording: [zzed.uk/9174-symphonicpoc](https://www.zzed.uk/9174-symphonicpoc)
(0:00–0:56)

This extract is from the opening of a symphonic poem that was written to illustrate its origin as two small streams that develop into a broad watercourse.

Discuss the composer's use of musical elements in relation to this programme.

Make links to other pieces of music from the first half of the twentieth century or wider listening examples.

6. Answer either Question 6a, OR 6b OR 6c.

Either

a) Vocal music

Evaluate the use of melody, tonality and sonority in *On Wenlock Edge*: Note the song texts.

Make links to pieces of instrumental music from the Romantic era.

Or

b) Fusions

Evaluate how the use of sonority, structure and harmony in *Breathing Under Water* 'Burn', 'Fusion', 'Under Water' and 'Easy' create fusion music.

Make links to other relevant works, such as set works or wider listening examples.

Or

c) Popular music and jazz

Evaluate the use of tonality, sonority and tempo, and metre and rhythm in 'Here, There and Everywhere', 'I Want to Tell You' and 'Tomorrow Never Comes' more widely.

Make links to other relevant works, such as set works or wider listening examples.

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Indicative Content

Essay Questions

1. Answer given as example.
2. Evaluate the use of melody, harmony and tonality in *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* movements in relation to the historical context of the work.
Relate your discussion to other relevant pieces such as set works or wider list.

Explanation: This essay will explore how the melody, harmony and tonality of the music more widely.

3. The underlined extract is from an orchestral piece called *An Alpine Symphony*. Discuss the connection between the music and the title of the work. Refer to other pieces of **Romantic music** in your answer.

Explanation: This essay will explore how the composer uses musical devices of the Alps (a mountain range in Europe).

4. Evaluate how the use of texture, structure and sonority in *Caña Quemada* creates. Refer to other, relevant, pieces in your answer.

Explanation: This essay will discuss how the texture, structure and sonority are typical of the fusion music genre.

Writing Skills

Words and Phrases

Activity 1

1. b
2. a
3. b

In this essay, I'm gonna talk about the melody, harmony and tonality in *Hounds of the Sea*.
Berlioz wrote *Symphonie fantastique* in the 1800s.

In modern times, musicians like John Cage write music with weird sonorities.

Activity 2

1. The first **section** of *Batman Returns*, 'Birth of a Penguin', Part 1, has a $\frac{3}{2}$ time signature.
Correct word/phrase: **cue**
2. Bach's cantata *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* contains a **Gerr** an hymn tune.
Correct word/phrase: **chorale melody**
3. *Se quemá la chumbamba* is in G major (with a flat) throughout – **the key does not change**.
Correct word/phrase: **it does not modulate**
4. Saariaho's *Das Salz* uses **electric equipment**.
Correct word/phrase: **an optional digital reverberation unit and harmoniser**

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Sentences

Activity 1

- Answers will vary. For extra support/ideas, look here: zzed.uk/9174-skills
- Answers will vary. If this activity is being done in the classroom / in a revision swap answers and discuss whether and how the transition phrases have improved.

Activity 2

Answers and opinions may vary. However, all answers should include a transition element and a link to the essay question.

Topic sentence for paragraph 2 (melody)

Secondly, (the transition), the melody (musical element) of *The Magic Flute* is to some extent (reference to the essay question, with own opinion about how closely the musical element is related to the question).

Topic sentence for paragraph 3 (tonality)

Transition Musical element Link to question with opinion

Thirdly, the structure of the *The Magic Flute* is closely related to the libretto.

Activity 3

- Answer given as example.
- These include the pentatonic scale, the whole-tone scale and the octatonic scale.
- 'La soirée dans Grenade' contains a range of impressionistic harmonies, including bar 17) whole-tone harmonies (e.g. bar 23), false relations (e.g. bar 33), open 5ths based on 4^{ths} and 5^{ths} (e.g. bar 38).
- These include tremolo strings ('Penguin', Part 1, bars 11–12), pizzicato ('Fall from Clouds', Part 1, bar 14), harp glissandi ('Birth of a Penguin', Part 1, bars 15–16), trumpets, bar 21), a tam-tam roll ('Birth of a Penguin', Part 1, bars 13 and 25), flutter-tongued flute ('Birth of a Penguin', Part 1, bars 13 and 25), a trumpet lip trill ('Batman vs the Circus', bars 57–8).
- These include a steady, reinforcing drum beat (from bar 11), an audible backbeat in the balalaika (bar 8), and sudden gaps in the crotchet pulse (e.g. bar 17, bar 21).

Paragraphs

Activity 1

- Point: 'Inner State (Of Mind)' – uses a range of tonalities
Evidence: 'Inner State (Of Mind)' – C Dorian mode.
'Inner State (Of Mind)' – blue notes, e.g. vocal part, bars 46–7
'Inner State (Of Mind)' – pentatonic scale, e.g. vocals, bar 1, guitar
Link: 'Ornithology', Charlie Parker – uses a range of scales: major, melodic minor, Dorian, Aeolian
Explain: 'Inner State (Of Mind)' – use of various tonalities is typical of popular/jazz music.
- Answers will vary, slightly, but are likely to be similar to:
'Inner State (Of Mind)' uses a range of different tonalities. It is typical of jazz/pop music. However, jazz/pop music often features – a particularly good example is the vocal part in 'Inner State (Of Mind)' bars 46–47. Moreover, there are some passages which, for example, the vocals at bar 1, and the guitar fill at bars 104–105. Jazz/pop also use a range of tonalities. An example is 'Ornithology' which draws on the major, minor, Aeolian and Dorian scales. In this way the 'Inner State (Of Mind)' is typical of many popular/jazz pieces.

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Extension Activities (for A/A* students only)

Activity 2:

1. The evidence (musical analysis) and links to other pieces are repeatedly alternated.
2. This alternation of evidence and links allows a larger number of wider listening examples to be included in the PELE paragraph.

The alternation of evidence and links creates a clear connection between the wider listening examples and the specific musical features identified in 'Music for a While (Of Mind)'.

3. This is a self-evaluation task. Answers will vary.

Activity 3:

1. Answers will vary, but are likely to be similar to:
This essay will discuss the structure, harmony and tonality of this music and jazz more widely.
2. In summary, all in all, in closing, to conclude, etc.
3. Conclusion a) is better. It starts with a phrase to signal the start of the conclusion. Conclusion a) links back to the essay question, whereas conclusion b) just sums up the essay.

Essay structure

Activity 1

1. Evaluate the use of melody, harmony and sonority in *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*: (first movement). Make links to other, relevant pieces, such as set works or wider listening examples.

Introduction: Evaluate melody, harmony and sonority – *Ein feste Burg*

Paragraph 1: Name of musical element melody

Point: Evaluate melody (in relation to other Baroque music)

Evidence: Melody – conjunct with some repeated notes and leaps

Link: Adaptations of chorale: imitation (mvt 1), ornamentation/melisma
'Music for a While' – Purcell – melismas, ornaments, chromaticism

Explain: Melody is typical of Baroque era

Paragraph 2: Name of musical element harmony

Point: Evaluate harmony (in relation to other Baroque music)

Evidence: Functional, diatonic, emphasis on chords I and V, root position
Non-harmony notes – suspensions (e.g. start of mvt 8), passing notes

Link: Handel 'Amen' from the *Messiah* – suspensions, diatonic, functional

Explain: Harmony is typical of Baroque era

Paragraph 3: Name of musical element sonority

Point: Evaluate sonority (in relation to other Baroque music)

Evidence: SATB choir + vocal soloists
Continuo, strings, 3 oboes, oboe d'Amore, soprano (mvt 2)

Link: *Messiah* – Handel – SATB choir and soloists, strings, continuo

Explain: Sonority is typical of Baroque era

Conclusion: Melody, harmony and sonority typical of Baroque era

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Activity 2

- Answers will vary but may include:

Sonority:

- Use of sustain pedal
- Low, dark register of the piano

Texture:

- Inverted dominant pedal (in a low register)
- Melody in the left hand
- Melody is doubled – includes use of bare 4^{ths} and 5^{ths}, and later in octaves

Dynamics and articulation:

- Accented notes
- Legato phrasing
- Long, ominous *crescendos*, from *piano* to *fortissimo*

Tonality:

- Dark, stormy minor key

Tempo, metre and rhythm:

- Use of *rubato*

General:

- You should notice at this stage that many of these musical features create a stormy mood.

- You will probably choose to focus mainly on the sonority, texture, and dynamics.
- Answers are likely to include:
 - Other Romantic pieces that use pedals and a melody and accompaniment texture (e.g. Chopin's Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17)
 - Pieces that use dynamics and articulation and register to create emotional effects (e.g. Liszt's No. 2 in F major)
- If you choose to write this essay, use the suggestions given in answers 1–3 above to mark scheme at the front of this study guide, to mark the answers.

Extension Activities for A/A* Students

Activity 1

Answers will vary. This is an opportunity for self-evaluation.

Activity 2

- Answers will vary. Some suggestions are:

Musical features that relate closely to the text:

- Use of repeated secondary dominant cadences to underscore Tamino's inner conflict in bar 203. (It sounds as though the piece is rushing to a finish in the 'wrong' key.)
- Use of through-composed form for 'Hm! Hm! Hm!' – this structure emphasizes the text, where Papageno is 'trapped' and then sent off with Tamino on his quest.

Musical features that relate partly to the text, and partly to the historical context:

- Use of a soprano for the role of the Queen of the Night's wild character.

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2. Model answer

The introduction states main argument/opinion.

This essay will show how many aspects and sonority of *The Magic Flute*, Act I closely related to the libretto. It will also explore connections between the text and musical conventions of the Classical style.

The topic sentences state the aspect of the opinion that is being discussed in each paragraph.

Firstly, the features of the aria are those features of the Classical style related to the text. Papageno's humming 'Hm! Hm! Hm!' is a literal representation of his mouth being padlocked shut. In the same manner, the composed structure reflects a progression from a pathetic to a heroic quest. Chromatic harmonies are used to reflect the Queen's anguish. In 'Hm! Hm! Hm!', Papageno's 'Wie mann die Burg wohl finden' concludes with a cadence in the 'wrong' key (F major) highlighting his buffoonish impatience.

This leaves plenty of time for you to discuss in detail musical examples.

On the other hand, some features of the aria are influenced by the libretto, and by the Classical style. The two-tempo recitative-aria form effectively demarcates a transition in the Queen's reflection (recitative) to a decision to act (aria). The two-tempo form is also a Classical convention. The aria 'Dove sono' from *The Marriage of Figaro* features a coloratura soprano for this number. The Queen's wild and passionate character. In operatic roles require a similarly flexible vocal range. The role of Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* is used to reflect the text. In 'Hm! Hm! Hm!' between the voices (e.g. Papageno and the Queen) indicates tension and contrast between the voices. (e.g. bars 51-64) indicates agreement. These are common features of Classical vocal writing. For instance, in 'Ich in der Anmut steh'n' from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*.

The conclusion reinforces the argument.

In conclusion, the structure, harmony and melody of Act I: Nos. 4 and 5 are closely related to the text. However, some features, such as the use of coloratura voice, and contrasts between the voices, seem to have been influenced not only by the libretto but also by the conventions of Classical opera more widely.

3. This is an opportunity for reflection/self-evaluation. Answers will vary.

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Sample Answers

Activity 1: AS Q5

1.
 - a) The register of the writing is suitably academic. The writing uses some musical terms, e.g. 'prepared piano' and 'syncopation'.
 - b) The essay is clearly structured with an introduction, a conclusion, and three paragraphs. Each paragraph is focused on a specific musical element or elements (e.g. sonority, rhythm and metre).
 - c) Some relevant and accurate analysis is given, e.g. the identification of prepared piano and syncopation.
 - d) A piece from the correct period has been identified. This piece has similarities to the work of Cage.
 - e) Most of the explanation links back to the question – the musical features mentioned are all typical of twentieth-century pieces.

2.
 - a) Some vague phrases suggest that the student is not certain that their analysis is correct, e.g. paragraph 4 'some passages sound like cross-rhythm.'
 - b) The paragraph about sonority should probably have come before the paragraph about rhythm. This is because the percussive sonorities are the cause of the lack of tonality. The topic sentences of the second and third paragraphs could be clearer. The topic sentences of the second and third paragraphs could be clearer. The unfamiliar extract is also typical of twentieth-century music more widely. It would be a good idea to give an 'explanation' sentence at the end of each paragraph, e.g. 'The experimental, percussive sonority of the work is typical of twentieth-century music more widely.'
 - c) Ideally, more detail should be included in the musical analysis. This includes mentioning the sonority and metre/rhythm of the extract; for example, the dull, percussive sonority. The essay should also have referred to other musical elements beyond the extract. For example, the structure should have been mentioned; for instance, the structure of the passage at the end of the extract, and the use of prepared piano. This could have been mentioned in paragraph 4.
 - d) The essay relies too heavily on one set work for the majority of the links. Including wider listening, would have made a greater awareness of twentieth-century music. Some of the information is not relevant, e.g. the fact that a lot of twentieth-century music is from America (paragraph 3). A more detailed analysis of the unfamiliar extract would have been helpful. Some links need to be made between the musical analysis and the question. Some links need to be made between the musical analysis and the question. Some links need to be made between the musical analysis and the question.

3. The essay is likely to achieve a level 2 (6–7 marks).

Activity 2: AS Q6

Instrumental music

Evaluate the melody and texture of Clara Schumann's Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 108.

Refer to specific features of the music in your answer.

Relate the discussion to other, relevant pieces, such as set works or wider listening.

Questions 1 and 2:

Answers may vary slightly, within the range of a few marks.

| |
|--|
| The essay makes detailed connections between the music and its historical and social context. |
| The essay communicates a clear and controlled argument. |
| The essay identifies a wide range of musical elements accurately, using the correct terminology. |
| The discussion is supported with reference to other, relevant pieces. |

Total

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3. This answer should be written in two full paragraphs. Comments should include:

Good aspects of the essay:

- All musical analysis is linked to the historical context of the work.
- The essay communicates a strong argument that relates to the essay question.
- The essay gives a wide range of relevant and detailed musical examples.
- An excellent range of wider listening examples is referenced, demonstrating knowledge beyond what would be expected of most AS students.

Areas for improvement:

- The discussion of melody rather than structure. Ideally, focus on the use of specific features, such as intervals, articulation and phrasing to form structure of the movement.
- More could be made of how features of the melody and contrasts in texture style the piece by making it emotionally expressive/intense.

Activity 3: A Level Q5

1. This essay is likely to get a level 5 (around 16–18 marks)

2.

| | Strengths | |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| Structure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief introduction and conclusion • Paragraphs organised according to point, evidence, link to other works, explain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body of the paragraph for more marks |
| Musical analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific and accurate • Accurate use of musical terminology • A breadth of musical elements referred to in passing e.g. texture and sonority, phrasing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some relevant e.g. melodic contour, dynamics and tempo |
| Links to other pieces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pieces are relevant – from the same period/era • Wider listening pieces used – this shows a breadth of knowledge beyond the set works | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only two pieces have been mentioned for greater breadth |
| Argument discussion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very strong and clear argument, which connects the unfamiliar extract with other pieces via historical context | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of wider listening given the context |

Activity a: A Level Q6

1. This is a very weak answer. An examiner would give it a level 1 or low level

2. a)
- The discussion of structure should be in a different paragraph from the analysis.
 - Paragraphs need to be structured more consistently, e.g. with topic sentences and a question at the end of the paragraph.
 - A conclusion needs to be added at the end of the essay.
- b)
- More links need to be made to the context of the work – ideally at least one link to the historical context (via the emotional content of the music). More connection needs to be made (via the emotional content of the music). More features are needed in the text (e.g. sentences such as 'The melodic chromaticism of the motif create a mood of fearful suspense that prepares us for the dramatic events that follow'.)
- c)
- Many more musical details are needed. These could include the identification of the section of the music, and more information about the way that the harmonic language (e.g. leading, chromatic pedal notes and unresolved dissonances) extend the

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- d) The essay needs to use musical terms more frequently and to refer to a wider range of pieces. There are some places where general descriptors could be replaced by more specific ones, e.g. first paragraph 'short melodies' = motifs; 'played smoothly' = legato.
- e) More connections need to be made between the music and its effect – identify the mood.
- f) The comment that is made in the first paragraph about the piece being 'exciting' needs to be supported with specific and relevant details, e.g. analysis of the features of the music. There is also greater consideration of the context of the work – because the excerpt is intended to be tense and frightening, as well as exciting.
- g) Ideally, links should be made to other pieces of music, both listening pieces as well as to set works that you have studied. The link to the Trio by C Schumann should be replaced by a link to a more specific work, perhaps a programmatic work with a frightening theme. Links should generally be used to support an argument about the music. This is not the case with the reference to the Trio.

3. This is a personal/group reflection task. Answers will vary.

4. This is a personal/group reflection task. Answers will vary.

Practice Exam Questions

AS Q5

Responses could include (AO4):

- Melody and accompaniment texture
- Harmony is largely diatonic and functional, relying on primary triads
- Occasional chromaticism used for colour
- Modulation from a major tonic to its dominant
- Orchestra dominated by (pizzicato) strings and winds
- Lyrical melody
- Contrasts between legato and staccato articulation

Links should be made to other pieces from the Classical era (for instance, other vocal pieces).
You will be rewarded for all relevant answers, regardless of whether they are on

AS Q6a

Responses could include:

Tonality:

- A sense of antiquity suitable for a period drama is created (AO4); for example
 - through the use of modes (e.g. D mixolydian in 'The Duchess Opening' (AO3))
 - the use of major and minor keys (as opposed to more modern alternatives)
- Tonality used to reinforce the dramatic mood of the film (AO4)
 - e.g. G minor for 'Mistake of Your Life' (AO3)

Tempo, metre and rhythm:

- Rhythms used to evoke the eighteenth-century setting (AO4)
 - e.g. 'waltz-like theme' in 'Six Years' (AO3)
- Tempo and rhythm used to evoke the dramatic mood of the film (AO4)
 - e.g. 'Never See You Again', with slow tempo ($\text{♩} = 66$) and sustained notes
 - e.g. 'Mistake of Your Life' ($\text{♩} = 69$), and ominous sustained pedal at the start of 'Mistake of Your Life'

Links should be made to other pieces. Interesting comparisons could be made to other pieces of music. Contrasts could be made with films with a more contemporary feel, e.g. *Skyfall*, *Pride and Prejudice*.

You will be rewarded for all relevant answers, regardless of whether they are on

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AS Q6b

Responses could include:

Harmony:

- Pentatonic harmonisation (e.g. from bar 37 of 'Pagodes'). (AO3)
- Chromatic and added note chords (e.g. B maj chord with added 6th and flattened 9th) (AO3)
- Parallel chords (e.g. parallel 7^{ths} 'Soirée', bar 17) (AO3)
- Whole-tone harmonies (e.g. 'Soirée', bar 23) (AO3)
- Open 5^{ths} (e.g. 'Soirée', bar 38) (AO3)
- False relations (e.g. 'Soirée', bar 33) (AO3)
- Chords built on 4^{ths} and 5^{ths} (e.g. 'Soirée', bar 38) (AO3)

Tonality:

- Use of major and minor keys, e.g. 'Pagodes' mostly in B major (AO3)
- Pentatonic scale – especially 'Pagodes' (AO3)
- Use of pedals to create tonal centres in the absence of clear-cut keys (e.g. 'Soirée', bar 17) (AO3)
- Modes (e.g. C Mixolydian, 'Soirée', bars 109–112) (AO3)
- Style of the harmony is impressionistic (AO4)
- Tonality is often ambiguous (AO4)
- Harmony and tonality have a hazy, dream-like quality that reflects the idea of a 'water world' (AO4)

You should make links to other pieces.

Suggestions include:

- Other impressionist works (e.g. by Debussy and Ravel) (AO4)
- Compositions with complex harmonies and extended tonality (e.g. by Bartók)
- Music that reflects a sense of place, such as other fusions pieces (AO4)

You will be rewarded for all relevant answers, regardless of whether they are on the list.

AS Q6c

Responses could include:

- Texture is largely monophonic (AO3)
- Wide range of sonorities exploited (e.g. natural live electronics, harmonics, glissando)
- Structure based on alternating slower (e.g. staves 1–3, 8–9) and faster (e.g. staves 4–7) sections
- Tempo, metre and time signature – contrasts between lento sections and sections with rhythmic patterns tend to accompany the slower tempo, and shorter durations tend to accompany the faster tempo (AO3)
- Little sense of a recognisable key or harmonies (AO3)
- Melody – few recognisable themes (AO3)
- Many features are typical of twentieth-century music, e.g. emphasis on sonority, experimental use of structure, lack of conventional harmonies / tonal centres
- Contrasts of mood are created through the alternation of the slow and fast movements
- You should make links to other pieces of twentieth-century experimental music, such as Cage's *Dance No. 1*, as well as other relevant wider listening pieces (AO4).

You will be rewarded for all relevant answers, regardless of whether they are on the list.

A Level Q5

Responses could include:

These musical features reflect the sound of running water:

- Use of flutes at the opening (silvery sound) (AO4)
- Repetitive, stepwise semiquaver figuration (AO4)
- Fast tempo – sense of forward motion (AO4)
- Pizzicato strings – (sounds like a plucked string) (AO4)
- Subtly ebbing and flowing dynamics (crescendos and diminuendos) (AO4)
- Legato/long notes in the woodwind parts

These musical features represent the development of the river, as it becomes bigger and more powerful:

- Counterpoint between the clarinets and flutes suggest the two springs merging
- Gradual increase in the texture as more instruments and parts are added suggest

You should make links to other pieces of Romantic music. These are most likely to be those intended to reflect the sound of water (e.g. Schubert, *Trout Quintet*; Wagner, *Tristan and Isolde*).

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A Level Q6a

Responses could include:

Melody:

- Setting is largely syllabic (AO3). This enables clear and direct communication.
- Leaps larger than a perfect fifth (AO3) are used to create drama, e.g. for the section 'Ploughing', which is about death (AO4)
- Some cantabile (AO3), folk-like sections, which reflect the rustic themes of the 'On Wenlock Edge'

Harmony:

- Harmonies are sometimes used for word painting (AO4), e.g. pentatonic parallel motion in 'Bredon Hill', bars 2–5 (AO3) represent the ringing bells (AO4)
- use of the traditional Romantic harmonies (AO3) to portray the character of the 'Ploughing', bars 11–15 (AO4)
- Harmonies often as closely linked to the twentieth-century style as to the text. Twentieth-century harmonies include parallel chords, (e.g. 'On Wenlock Edge', bars 3–10), superimposed 7th chords ('Bredon Hill', opening bars)

Sonority:

Often used for word painting / to evoke the mood of the text (AO4), for example:

- String trills and tremolo for the storm in 'On Wenlock Edge' (AO3)
- Muted strings (AO3) for the ideas of ghosts/death (AO4) in 'Is My Team Ploughing'
- Natural harmonics (AO3) – 'On Bredon Hill', bars 144–145 – creates a ghostly atmosphere of death and memory in the text (AO4)

You should make connections to other pieces of music from the early twentieth century:

- compositions by Debussy (who inspired Vaughan Williams' harmony). An example is 'Clair de Lune' from the first and second movements.
- other pieces where there is a close connection between the text and music, such as 'The Swan' from other twentieth-century British composers.

You will be rewarded for relevant answers, regardless of whether they are on the list.

A Level Q6b

Responses could include:

Sonority:

The use of a variety of musical instruments from a variety of different musical traditions and cultures. These instruments include (AO3):

- Indian classical instruments: sitar, sarangi (in 'Burn'), manjira ('Burn' and 'Easy')
- Bollywood strings (in 'Burn' and 'Breathing Under Water')
- Western pop/rock instruments, e.g. guitar, synthesiser, drum kit and drum parts

Structure:

The album contains structures that reference different musical traditions and cultures. Examples of sound (AO4).

- 'Burn' uses verse-chorus structure (AO3). This structure is common in pop songs.
- 'Easy' uses AABA song form (AO3). This was very common in Western popular music of the twentieth century.
- The repetition and variation structure used in 'Breathing Under Water' (AO3) is based on the raga in Indian classical music.

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Harmony:

Many of the harmonies are fairly typical of rock/pop music (AO4). These chords include:

- root position triads (e.g. 'Burn' bars 1–2)
- slash chords (e.g. 'Breathing Under Water', bar 10)
- suspended chords (e.g. 'Burn' bar 12)
- added note chords (e.g. 'Burn', bar 3, added 4 chord)

The use of these harmonies in the context of a piece that includes Indian instruments creates a fusion sound (AO4).

You should make links to other pieces of fusion music in your answer. It is likely a fact that these other examples, such as *Breathing Under Water*, combine different musical styles.

You will be awarded marks for all relevant answers, regardless of whether they are original.

**A Level Q6c**

Responses could include:

Tonality:

The album experiments with a variety of different tonalities:

- static tonality with little hint of modulation, e.g. 'I Want to Tell You' is almost entirely in G major
- remote key modulations (e.g. to B \flat from G in 'Here, There and Everywhere')
- modal inflections, e.g. the Dorian/Aeolian melody of 'Eleanor Rigby'
- tonal centres that are not supported by functional chord progressions, e.g. 'Tomorrow Never Knows' is in a modally inflected C but uses only two chords B \flat and C

Sonority:

The sonority is progressive and experimental (AO4). Notable features include (AO4):

- automatic double-tracking
- variable tape speeds
- tape loops
- backmasking
- overdubbing
- use of multiple instruments (doubled string quartet in 'Eleanor Rigby')
- use of Indian instruments (sitar in 'Tomorrow Never Knows')

Structure:

The album often modifies conventional pop music structures (AO4); for example:

- use of five-bar phrases in strophic form ('Eleanor Rigby')
- irregular phrase lengths in a verse-chorus form ('I Want to Tell You')

You should make links to other pieces. Particularly strong links could be made to the 1960s (e.g. psychedelic/progressive rock), in which a variety of musical styles were explored.



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Appendix: Essay Writing Framework

Introduction (one or two sentences)

Paragraph 1: name of musical element

Point:

Evidence:



Link:

Explain:

Paragraph 2: name of musical element

Point:

Evidence:

Link:

Explain:



(If required)

Paragraph 3: name of musical element

Point:

Evidence:

Link:

Explain:

Conclusion (one or two sentences)



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