

Preparation for A-level Music

In order to help you make the best possible start to your studies, we have put together some bridging work that you will need to complete before September.

Performing:

1. Prepare for a solo performance in September. You will need to perform for at least 2-3-minute on your instrument that shows off your performance ability. The piece can be on any instrument, in any style, with or without a backing track. Please make sure you bring a copy of the music with you.
2. Record yourself performing a piece you are familiar with. Analyse it critically with what you did well and what you need to improve

Appraising:

3. Set works Keywords Checklist - Look at the keywords for each set work and decide how confident you feel about defining the keyword. For any words you rate R (not at all confident) or A (somewhat confident) look up the definition and write onto the sheet.
4. Create a Spotify or YouTube play list of all the set works. See below for details of all the set works.
5. Argue the following question: "What's the point of having music in a film?" Provide relevant musical examples of film music and come to some conclusion at the end of your writing. Aim to write a side of A4.
6. 'Popular music deserves more recognition and is equal to Classical music'. Discuss and provide relevant musical examples.

Composing:

7. Read the following blog: <https://manwaringmusic.blog/2020/04/02/composing-at-home-1/>
8. Compose a piece of music lasting at least two minutes in response to one of the briefs provided below. Please bring in a score and recording of your composition.

Reading List/Useful Websites

Music: A Very Short Introduction by Nicholas Cook

The Story of Music by Howard Goodall

A History of Western Music by Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca

ABRSM: The AB Guide to Music Theory, Part 1 or <https://www.musictheory.net/lessons>

Full performance of Mozart's 'The Magic Flute:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02u4Jf_aNPI

Ted talks on many different areas of music:

<https://www.ted.com/playlists/browse?topics=music>

BBC Radio 3

A variety of programmes and radio shows across numerous genres. Composer of the week is also useful.

Programmes: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/schedules/p00fzl8t>

Composer of the week: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02nrvd3/episodes/downloads>

San Francisco Symphony Orchestra

Podcasts and information on a variety of composers

<https://www.sfsymphony.org/Discover-the-Music/Listen-to-Podcasts/Program-Notes-Series>

Set Work Keywords Checklist

Rate your confidence on each of the following words.

R = I am not at all confident with this

G = I am completely confident with this

A = I am reasonably confident, but will need to revisit this

1. Bach	RAG	Definition of R and A
Anacrusis		
Cantus firmus		
Canon		
Continuo		
Countersubject		
Dominant 7 th chord		
Figured bass		
Fugal		
Fugal answer		
Fugal subject		

Functional harmony		
Harmonically charged		
Heterophony		
Homophony		
Imitative		
Melisma		
Melody dominated homophony		
Moto perpetuo		
Passing note		
Secondary 7 th		
Suspension		
Syllabic		
Transitory modulation		

2. Mozart	RAG	Definition of R and A
Aria		
Coloratura		
Conjunct		
Homorhythm		
Libretto		
Neapolitan 6 th		
Recitative		
Singspiel		
Sotto voce		
Triadic		
Turn		
Vernacular		

3. Vaughan Williams	RAG	Definition of R and A
Animando		
Con sordino		
Homorhythm		

Impressionism		
Lontano		
Melisma		
Modality		
Natural		
Pastoral style		
Piano quintet		
Pizzicato		
Song cycle		
Sul ponticello		
Syllabic		
Una corda		
Tenor clef		
Tre corde		
Tremolo		
Triple stopping		
Tutti		
Word painting		

4. Vivaldi	RAG	Definition of R and A
Answer		
Concerto Grosso		
Circle of Fifths		
Diminished Seventh		
Pedal		
Polyphony		
Real Answer		
Remote key		
Ripieno		
Sequence		
Siciliano		
Spiccato		
Subject		

Tasto Solo		
Tonal Answer		
Tutti		
Virtuoso		

5. Schumann	RAG	Definition of R and A
Bridge		
Chamber music		
Coda		
Codetta		
Development		
Discursive		
Disjunct		
Exposition		
Imitative		
Patron		
Piano Trio		
Plagal Cadence		
Recapitulation		
Salon		
Sonata form		
Verbatim		

6. Berlioz	RAG	Definition of R and A
Baguettes de bois		
Baguettes de d'éponge		
Canto espressivo		
Con sordino / senza sordino		
Cornet à pistons		
Cross rhythm		
Development		
Double corde		
Exposition		

Gesamtkunstwerk		
Idée fixe		
Motif / motive		
Moto perpetuo		
Ophicleides		
Portato		
Programme Music		
Punta d'arco		
Recapitulation		
Religiosamente		
Sonata form		
Symphony		

7. Elfman	RAG	Definition of R and A
Cluster chord		
Con sordino		
Counter melody		
Cross-rhythm		
Cross time signature		
Cue		
Diminished 7 th chord		
Diminution		
Dissonance		
Glissando		
Leitmotif		
Motif		
Non-functional harmony		
Open chord		
Ostinato		
Rhythmic augmentation		
Rhythmic displacement		
Sextuplet		
Stopping		

Tremolo		
Underscore		

8. Portman	RAG	Definition of R and A
Auxiliary note		
Diatonic		
Dorian mode		
Mixolydian mode		
Modal		
Pastiche		
6/4 chord		

9. Herrmann	RAG	Definition of R and A
Adagio e mesto		
Allegro feroce		
Allegro molto agitato		
Anacrusis		
Arco		
Atonality		
Chromaticism		
Cluster chord		
Con sordino		
Countersubject		
Cross-rhythm		
Cue		
Diminished 7 th chord		
Dissonance		
Divisi		
Double stop		
Fugal		
Fugal subject		
Glissando		
Half-diminished chord		
Inverted interval		

Leitmotif		
Lento assai		
Lento molto sostenuto		
Melodic inversion		
Molto forzando e feroce		
Motif		
Moto perpetuo		
Non divisi		
Non-functional harmony		
Ostinato		
Pedal note		
Pizzicato		
Polyrhythm		
Retrograde		
Rhythmic augmentation		
Senza sordini		
Senza tremolando		
Sffz		
Subject		
Sul ponticello		
Transpose		
Tremolo		
Tutti		
Underscore		
Verticalisation		

10. Bush	RAG	Definition of R and A
Added note chord		
Ballad		
Concept album		
Extended chords		
Harmonic rhythm		
Harmonics		

Multiphonic		
Overtone singing		
Pentatonic scale		
Sample		
Slash chords		
Sus chords		
Synth pad		
Word-painting		

11. Pine	RAG	Definition of R and A
Bebop		
Bend		
Dorian mode		
Enharmonic		
Hip-Hop		
Horn section		
Multiphonic		

12. Beatles	RAG	Definition of R and A
Aeolian Mode		
Artificial double tracking		
Cross rhythm		
Distortion		
Divisi		
Done		
Dorian Mode		
Fade in / Fade out		
Free rhythm		
Hard rock		
Harmonic rhythm		
Intro/Outro		
Leslie Cabinet		

Lombardic rhythm		
Melisma		
Mixolydian Mode		
Musique concrete		
Psychedelic rock		
Refrain		
Rock		
String Quartet		
Strophic		
Tambura		
Tape Loops		

13. Debussy	RAG	Definition of R and A
Acciaccatura		
Cross Hands		
Demisemiquavers		
Dissonance		
Gamelan		
Habanera		
Impressionist		
Open Fifths		
Ostinato		
Preludes		
Rubato		
Sustaining Pedal		
Ternary		
Whole Tone		

14. Familia	RAG	Definition of R and A
Anticipation Bass		
Bolero		

Call And Response		
Cross Rhythms		
Diminished 7th		
Refrain		
Riff		

15. Shankar	RAG	Definition of R and A
Added note		
Alankara		
Alap		
Andolan		
Conjunct		
Dialogue		
Diatonic		
Drone		
Extension chords		
Gamak		
Kan		
Mandra saphak		
Manjira		
Meend		
Melismatic		
Mixolydian mode		
Ostinato		

Pandiatonicism		
Raga		
Sarangi		
Sitar		
Slash chords		
Sus chords		
Syllabic		
Synth pad		
Tabla		
Tar saphak		

16. Cage	RAG	Definition of R and A
Avant-Garde		
Dampers		
Gamelan		
Metrical Shift		
Moto Perpetuo		
Note Addition/Subtraction		
Ostinato		
Percussive		
Polyrhythm		
Prepared Piano		
Tala		
Una Corda		

17. Saariaho	RAG	Definition of R and A
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Atonal		
Dectuplets		
Dyad		
Fundamental		
Quarter-Tone		
Retrograde		
Reverberation		
Sequentially		
Spectralism		

18. Stravinsky	RAG	Definition of R and A
Acciaccatura		
Ad lib		
Additive rhythms		
Atonality		
Bitonality		
Chromaticism		
Chromatic scale		
Colla parte		
Col legno		
Concert pitch		
Con sordino		
Cross rhythm		
Diatonic		
Dissonance		
Double-stopping		

Doubling		
Down bow		
Flutter tonguing		
Homorhythm		
Guiro		
Mixolydian mode		
Modernism		
Monophony		
Polyphony		
Polyrhythm		
Tenor clef		
Transposing score		

A-level Music Set Works

Area of Study	Set Works
Vocal Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> J. S. Bach, <i>Cantata, Ein feste Burg, BWV 80</i>: Movements 1, 2 and 8 Mozart, <i>The Magic Flute</i> (Die Zauberflöte): Excerpts from Act 1, Nos. 4 (The Queen of Night) and 5 (Quintet) Vaughan Williams, <i>On Wenlock Edge</i>: Nos. 1, 3 and 5 ('On Wenlock Edge', 'Is my team ploughing?' and 'Bredon Hill')
Instrumental Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vivaldi, <i>Concerto in D minor, Op. 3 No. 11</i> Clara Schumann, <i>Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17</i>: Movement 1 Berlioz, <i>Symphonie Fantastique</i>: Movement 1
Music for Film	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Danny Elfman, <i>Batman Returns</i>: Main theme (Birth of a Penguin Part II), Birth of a Penguin Part I, Rise and fall from grace, Batman vs the Circus Rachel Portman, <i>The Duchess</i>: The Duchess and End titles, Mistake of your life, Six years later, Never see your children again Bernard Herrmann, <i>Psycho</i>: Prelude, The City, Marion, The Murder (Shower Scene), The Toys, The Cellar, Discovery, Finale
Popular Music and Jazz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kate Bush, <i>Hounds of Love</i>: Cloudbusting, And dream of sheep, Under Ice Courtney Pine, <i>Back in the Day</i>: Inner state (of mind), Lady Day and (John Coltrane), Love and affection

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beatles, <i>Revolver</i>: Here, there and everywhere, I want to tell you, Tomorrow never knows
Fusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debussy, 'Estampes': Nos. 1 and 2 ('Pagodes' and 'La soirée dans Grenade') • Familia Valera Miranda, <i>Caña Quema</i>: 'Allà va candela, Se quema la chumbambà • Anoushka Shankar, <i>Breathing Under Water</i>: Burn, Breathing Under Water, Easy
New Directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cage, <i>Three Dances for two prepared pianos</i>: No. 1 • Kaija Saariaho, <i>Petals for Violoncello and Live Electronics</i> • Stravinsky, <i>The Rite of Spring</i>: Introduction, The Augurs of Spring, Ritual of Abduction

Composition Briefs

Brief 1 – Vocal Music

- Compose a piece in celebration of the life of a prominent person to be performed at a school speech day. The piece should be for solo and/or ensemble voices, with accompaniment or backing, and must include contrasting sections, for example a chorus or an interlude. Use a text or poem of your choice. The setting of the words should reflect the meaning of the text. You may re-order the words.
- Compose a Recitative and Aria for an opera or for a piece of musical theatre. Your piece must feature at least one voice and instrumental accompaniment.
- Compose a song using a poem of your choice for use as opening music for a conference about the protection of the environment. The setting of the song should reflect the meaning of the text. You may re-order the words.

Brief 2 – Instrumental Music

- Compose a concerto movement for a solo instrument and string orchestra using ternary form. The piece should be suitable for use in a young performers' competition.
- *Compose a theme and variations that would be suitable for a solo instrumentalist accompanied by piano. The composition would be played as part of a recital of Western classical music.*
- *Compose a piece over a ground bass for solo instrument and accompaniment to be performed as part of a recital. You must compose your own ground bass.*

Brief 3 – Music for Film

- Compose a piece for a spy thriller set in exotic locations. The music must depict at least three contrasted scenes, which should be indicated on the score.
- Compose the title music for a science fiction action film. Choose instrumental timbres and textures to create a suitable atmosphere. Musical elements such as harmony, melody and rhythm should reflect the action.
- *Compose an overture for a 15-rated romantic comedy film. The overture should be based around leitmotifs representing the two main characters.*

Brief 4 – Fusions

- Compose a piece for a string quartet that is based around an east European folk melody. The piece will be played alongside a programme of Western classical pieces.
- *Compose a piece of music for a performance at a world music festival. The music must contain stylistic features of African drumming fused with British pop style.*
- *Compose a piece of music for performance at a carnival. The music must contain stylistic features of reggae fused with samba.*

Brief 5 – Popular Music and Jazz

- Compose an instrumental piece in a heavy rock style, using suitable forces, to be heard as the backing to the launch of a new sports car.
- Compose a piece of music for a jazz musician to play at a live concert as an encore. The solo part must be accompanied by at least 3 instruments.
- *Compose an instrumental overture for a rock musical based on Romeo and Juliet.*

Brief 6 – New Directions

- Compose a piece to form part of a ballet score depicting a creation narrative. The music should have at least three contrasting sections and should explore twentieth-century harmonic techniques.
- Compose a piece of electronic music to open an electroacoustic music concert. Your composition should explore the combination of human voice and natural sounds.
- *Compose a musical installation for an exhibition of contemporary paintings which exploits the timbres of a solo instrument through electronic means.*

