

MUSIC GCSE VOCABULARY

ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

Key Term	Definition			
Melody				
Harmony				
Tonality				
Form and structure				
Dynamics				
Sonority				
Texture				
Tempo				
Rhythm				
Metre				

AOS 1: MUSICAL FORMS AND DEVICES

Anacrusis				
Imitation				
Sequence				
Ostinato				
Dotted rhythm				
Drone				
Pedal				
Conjunct				
Disjunct				
Ornamentation/decoration				
Arpeggio/broken chord				
Alberti bass				
Phrasing (regular/irregular)				

Motif				
Perfect cadence				
Imperfect cadence				
Plagal cadence				
Interrupted cadence				
Modulation				
Tonic				
Dominant				
Subdominant				
Relative minor/major				
Scalar				
Imitation				
Trill				
Binary				
Ternary				
Rondo				
Minuet and trio				
Theme and variations				
Coda				
Allegro/vivace				
Allegretto				
Moderato/andante				
Adagio/lento				
Accelerando				
Ritardando/rallentando				
Rubato				
Simple time				
Compound time				
Duple/triple/quadruple				

AOS 2: MUSIC FOR ENSEMBLES

Monophonic				
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Homophonic				
Polyphonic				
Unison				
Chordal				
Layered				
Round				
Canon				
Countermelody				
Rhythm section				
String quartet				
Basso continuo				
Sonata				
Pentatonic				
Blue notes				
Call and response				
Descant				
Walking bass				
Swing rhythms				
Off-beat				
Triplet				

A capella				
Humming				
Scat				
Vibrato				
Falsetto				
Belt				
Divisi				
Double stopping				
Tremolo				
Slurred				
Tongued/detached				

AOS 3: FILM MUSIC

Leitmotif				
Chromatic movement				
Thematic				
Dissonance				
Semibreve				
Minim				
Crotchet				
Quaver				
Semiquaver				

Regular/irregular metre				
Accent				
Pianissimo				
Piano				
Mezzo piano				
Mezzo forte				
Forte				
Fortissimo				
Crescendo				
Diminuendo				
Sforzando				

AOS 4: POPULAR MUSIC

Strophic				
Verse				
Chorus				
Middle 8				
Bridge				
Fill				
Break				
Instrumental break				
Intro/outro				

Improvisation				
Loop				
Sample				
Panning				
Phasing				
Syncopation				
Driving rhythms				
Balance				
Syllabic				
Melismatic				
Primary chords				
Secondary chords				
Riff				
Semitone				
Microtone				
Major tonality				
Minor tonality				
Inversion				
Diatonic				
Harmonic rhythm				

Power chords				
Stab chords				
Synthesized				
Reverb				
Echo				
Amplified				
Rap				
Sustained				
Accent				
Pizzicato				
Arco				
Distortion				
Plucked				
Hammer on				
Rim short				
Slap bass				
Drum roll				
Muted				
Glissando				
Sitar				

Sarangi				
Tumbi				
Tabla				
Dhol				
Chaal				
Associated rests				

HOW TO IDENTIFY GENRES OF MUSIC

Western classical tradition				
Baroque				
Classical				
Romantic				
Chamber music				
Jazz/blues				
Musical theatre				
Minimalism				
Film music				
Fanfare				
Rock				
Soul				
Hip-hop				
Reggae				
Ballad				

Pop				
Bhangra				
Fusion				

OTHER USEFUL KEY TERMS

Repetition/contrast, 12-bar Blues, 32-bar song form (AABA), high/low pitch, range, tone/major 2nd, major/minor 3rd, perfect 4th, augmented 4th/diminished 5th, perfect 5th, minor/major 6th, minor/major 7th, octave, pitch bend, lead vocals, backing vocals, backing track, chord progression