MUS 1P DEFINITIONS

HARMONY

Harmony. The simultaneous combination of notes and the ensuing relationships of intervals and chords; the vertical relationship of combined notes. Not all musics of the world rely on harmony for interest, but it is central to most Western music.

Chord. Simultaneous combination of tones (typically three or more) that constitute a single block of harmony.

Scale. A series of tones or pitches in ascending or descending order. Scale tones are often assigned numbers (1-8) or syllables (do-re-mi-fa-sol-la-ti-do).

Dissonance. A combination of tones that sounds discordant and unstable, in need of resolution.

Consonance. A concordant, harmonious combination of tones that provides a sense of relaxation and stability in music.

Triad. A common chord type consisting of three pitches built on alternate tones of a major scale or minor scale (1-3-5).

Tonic. In tonality, the first note of a scale (the tonic, or keynote "do") serves as the home base around which the others revolve.

Tonality. The principal of organizing a work around a central tonic, or home pitch, based on a major or minor scale.

Major scale. A collection of seven different pitches ordered in the specific pattern of whole (W) steps and half (H) steps: W-W-H-W-W-H.

Minor scale. A collection of seven different pitches ordered in the specific pattern of whole (W) steps and half (H) steps: W-H-W-W-H-W.

Diatonic. Melody or harmony built solely from the seven tones of a major or minor scale.

Chromatic. Melody or harmony built from many, if not all, of the twelve semitones (half steps) of the octave.

TEXTURE

Texture. The interweaving of melodic (horizontal) and harmonic (vertical) elements in the musical fabric. Texture is generally described as monophonic (single line), heterophonic (elaboration on a single line), homophonic (single line with accompaniment), or polyphonic (many voiced).

Monophonic. Single-line texture, or melody without accompaniment.

Homophonic. Texture with a principal melody and accompanying harmony; as distinct from polyphony.

Polyphonic. Occurs when two or more melodic lines combine into a multi-voiced texture, as distinct from monophonic.

Heterophonic. Texture in which two or more voices (parts) elaborate the same melody simultaneously; often the result of improvisation.

Counterpoint. The compositional art of combining two or more simultaneous melodic lines (polyphonic texture); term means "point against point" or "note against note."

Imitation. Compositional technique in which a melodic idea is presented in one voice (or part), then restated in another while the first voice continues with new material.

Canon. A type of polyphonic composition in which one musical line strictly imitates another at a fixed distance throughout.

Round. A popular type of perpetual canon for voices, in which each vocal part enters in succession on the same melody.

TIMBRE

Timbre. The quality of a sound that distinguishes one voice or instrument from another. Also called "tone color".

Properties of Musical Sound. Musical sound can be said to have four properties: pitch, duration, volume and timbre.

String instruments. The members of the string family include two types of instruments: bowed and plucked. The standard bowed string instruments, from highest to lowest, are: violin, viola, cello, and double bass. The harp and guitar are common plucked string instruments. String instruments often play special effects, including: trill, pizzicato, harmonic, and arpeggio. The bowed strings (violin, viola, cello, double bass) form the core of the orchestra.

Woodwind instruments. The woodwind family is less homogeneous in construction and sound production than the strings; it includes the piccolo, flute, oboe, clarinet, English horn, and bassoon. The saxophone is a more recent woodwind instrument that is frequently heard in jazz.

Brass instruments. The principal orchestral instruments of the brass family, from highest to lowest, are: trumpet, French horn, trombone, and tuba. Other brass instruments commonly used in concert and marching bands include cornet, and euphonium. These instruments all have cup-shaped
mouthpieces attached to a length of metal tubing that flares into a bell at the end. A column of air is set vibrating by the tightly stretched lips of the player.

**Percussion instruments.** The many, varied percussion instruments fall into two basic categories: pitched (such as timpani and xylophone) and unpitched (snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine).

**Vocal Ranges.** The standard voice types are: (female) soprano, mezzo-soprano, alto; (male) tenor, baritone, and bass.

**Aerophones.** Any instrument that produces sound by using air as the primary vibrating means, such as flute, whistle, or horn. The most common Western instruments of this category belong to the woodwind and brass families. Bagpipes are aerophones frequently used in traditional music.

**Chordophones.** Instruments that produce sound via a vibrating string(s) stretched between two points, which is bowed, struck, or plucked. The most common Western instruments of this category belong to the string family. The koto (Japan), erhu (China), and the sitar (India) are examples of non-Western chordophones.

**Idiophones.** World music classification for instruments that produce sound from the substance of the instrument itself by being struck, blown, shaken, scraped, or rubbed. The most common Western instruments in this category belong to the percussion family. Examples include cymbals, triangle, gong, and maracas.

**Membranophones.** World music classification for instruments that produce sound from a tightly stretched membrane that can be struck, plucked, rubbed, or sung into (setting the "skin" in vibration). The most common Western instruments of this category belong to the percussion family (timpani, bass drum). The conga drum is a membranophone often used in popular music.

**Examples of different musical ensembles.** Musical performing groups; common Western ensembles include chorus, choir, men's chorus (and women's chorus), orchestra, chamber group (such as string quartet), and band (concert, marching, jazz).

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<tr>
<th>TEMPO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tempo.</strong> The rate of speed or pace of the musical pulse. Tempo markings are traditionally given in Italian.</td>
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<th>DYNAMICS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dynamics.</strong> Designations for the relative loudness or quietness of music. The main dynamic terms are based on the Italian words for loud (&quot;forte&quot;) and quiet (&quot;piano&quot;). These words can be modified by the prefix &quot;mezzo&quot; (medium) or the suffix &quot;issimo&quot; (more).</td>
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<tr>
<th>PITCH NOTATION</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pitch.</strong> The highness or lowness of a tone, depending on the frequency (rate of vibration). Also, a musical sound.</td>
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<td><strong>Note.</strong> The written symbol for a musical sound indicating its pitch and duration.</td>
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<td><strong>Staff.</strong> Five parallel lines separated by four spaces. One of the basic symbols of music notation.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Clef.</strong> A symbol placed at the left end of a staff to determine the relative pitch names and range of the notes on that staff. The Treble clef is used for pitches within the range of the female singing voices and the Bass clef for a lower group of pitches, within the range of the male singing voice.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Staff.</strong> A combination of a treble staff and a bass staff.</td>
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<td><strong>Accidentals.</strong> Signs used to alter the pitch of a written note. A sharp before the note indicates the pitch a half step above; a flat indicates a half step below. A natural sign cancels a sharp or flat.</td>
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<th>RHYTHM NOTATION</th>
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<td><strong>Rhythm.</strong> The element of time in music (Since music is an art that exists solely in time, rhythm controls ultimately all the relationships within a musical work.)</td>
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<td><strong>Beat.</strong> Regular pulsation; a basic unit of length in musical time.</td>
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<td><strong>Measure.</strong> A rhythmic group or metrical unit that contains a fixed number of beats, divided on the musical staff by bar lines. Also known as Bar.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bar Lines.</strong> Vertical lines that separate measures.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Meter.</strong> The grouping of beats into larger, regular patterns, notated as measures. The two basic meters are duple (two beats) and triple (three beats); quadruple (four beats) is the most common. In simple meters, such as duple, triple, and quadruple, each beat subdivides into two; in compound meters, such as sextuple, each beat divides into three.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Metric Rhythm.</strong> Rhythm that has a strong sense of meter or beat.</td>
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<td><strong>Dot.</strong> A symbol that, when placed after a note, increases the note value by half.</td>
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| **Tie.** A curved line used to connect successive notes of the same pitch together. When notes are tied, only one note is played with a length equal to the
combined lengths of all the tied notes.

**Rest.** A symbol that indicate silence for a specified time in musical beats.

**Time Signature.** The symbol that indicates the metrical organization of a piece of music. It appears as two numbers written as a fraction. The upper number indicates the number of beats in a measure; the lower shows which note value equals one beat.

**DYNAMICS NOTATION**

**Crescendo.** The dynamic effect of gradually growing louder.

**Decrescendo.** The dynamic effect of gradually growing softer.

**Forte.** The Italian term for "loud" (literally "strong"). This is indicated in a musical score by the marking "f".

**Fortissimo.** The Italian term for "very loud" (literally "more strong"). This is indicated in a musical score by the marking "ff".

**Mezzo-forte.** The Italian term for "moderately loud." This is indicated in a musical score by the marking "mf".

**Mezzo-piano.** The Italian term for "moderately quiet." This is indicated in a musical score by the marking "mp".

**Pianissimo.** The Italian term for "very quiet" (literally "more piano"). This is indicated in a musical score by the marking "pp".

**Piano.** The Italian term for "quiet" (literally "small"). This is indicated in a musical score by the marking "p".

**Sforzando.** A sudden stress or accent on a single note or chord. This is indicated in a musical score by the marking "sf".

**TEMPO NOTATION**

**Grave.** Tempo marking meaning solemn (very, very slow).

**Largo.** Tempo marking meaning broad (very slow).

**Adagio.** Tempo marking meaning quite slow.

**Andante.** Tempo marking meaning a walking pace.

**Moderato.** Tempo marking meaning moderate.

**Allegro.** Tempo marking meaning fast (cheerful).

**Vivace.** Tempo marking meaning lively.

**Presto.** Tempo marking meaning very fast.

**Ritardando.** Tempo marking meaning getting slower.

**Accelerando.** Tempo marking meaning getting faster.

**A tempo.** Tempo marking meaning in time or returning to the original pace.

**ARTICULATION NOTATION**

**Staccato.** An articulation mark which indicates that notes should be played short and detached. Marked as a dot above or below the note heads.

**Legato.** An articulation mark which indicates that notes should be played smooth and connected. Marked as a curved line above or below the notes that should be connected.

**MORE MATERIALS OF FORM**

**Motive.** Short melodic and/or rhythmic idea; the smallest fragment of a theme that forms a melodic-harmonic-rhythmic unit.

**Absolute music.** Music that has no literary, dramatic, or pictorial program.

**Sonata cycle.** Term that describes the multi-movement structure found in sonatas, string quartets, symphonies, concertos, and large scale works of the 18th and 19th centuries.

**Sonata–allegro form.** The opening movement of the sonata cycle, consisting of themes that are stated in the first section (exposition), developed in the second section (development), and restated in the third section (recapitulation). Also known as sonata form or first-movement form.

**Theme and variations.** Compositional procedure in which a theme is stated and then altered in successive statements; occurs as an independent piece or as a movement of a sonata cycle.

**Minuet.** An A-B-A form (A = minuet; B = trio) in a moderate triple meter; often the third movement of the Classical sonata cycle.


**THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY**

**Classicism.** See book. An approach to the arts that emphasizes discipline, order, logic, stability and objectivity. In music the Classical style is restrained, valuing balance and grace.

**Members of the Viennese School.** Title given to three prominent composers of the classical era: Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven and their successor Franz Schubert.

**Mozart.** See book. Austrian composer; one of the leading composers of the Classical era and a master in...
all genres; child prodigy who toured Europe and wrote an opera before turning 12 years old; composed more than 600 works before dying at age 35.

**Haydn.** See book. Austrian composer; important influence on Mozart and Beethoven; most of his creative life was spent in the service of the Esterházy family; a central figure in the development of the symphony and string quartet (wrote over 100 symphonies).

**Beethoven.** See book. German composer. Often considered a transitional figure from the Classical to the Romantic era; one of the first composers not to rely on the patronage system but on individual commissions; produced many of his most profound works after becoming almost totally deaf by the middle of his life.

**Chamber music.** Ensemble music for up to about ten players, with one player per part.

**String quartet.** Chamber music ensemble consisting of two violins, viola, and cello. Also a multi-movement composition for this ensemble.

** Movements of a Classical symphony.** The symphony generally follows the sonata cycle: first movement in sonata-allegro form; second movement: slow, in A-B-A, variations, or sonata-allegro form; third movement: triple-meter, minuet and trio (later scherzo); fourth movement: quick, light-hearted, often in rondo form.

**Classical orchestra.** The eighteenth century orchestra numbered from thirty to forty players. The volume was still more appropriate for small halls or salons than the concert hall. The string choir was the heart of the orchestra with the woodwinds assisting the strings and providing timbral variety. The brass sustained the harmonies and the timpani supplied rhythmic life and vitality. Near the end of the Classical period musical life began to move to the concert hall and the orchestra grew in size as the halls became larger.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

**Romanticism.** An approach to the arts that focuses on individual subjectivity and emotional expression with influences drawn from wonder, strangeness and the exotic. In music the Romantic style is exuberant, stressing drama, conflict and strong emotions.

**Strophic form.** Song structure in which the same music is repeated with every stanza (strophe) of the poem.

**Through—composed form.** Song structure that is composed from beginning to end without repetitions of large sections

**Schubert.** See book. Austrian composer, one of the earliest of the Romantic movement; wrote prolifically in all genres, but is best remembered for his songs; died at the age of thirty-one.

**Lied.** German for "song"; most commonly associated with the solo art song of the nineteenth century, usually accompanied by piano.

**Song cycle.** Group of songs (lieder) that are unified musically or through their texts.

**Chopin.** Polish composer of music for the piano. The "poet of the piano"; helped to expand the technical and expressive range of the instrument; known as a great pianist as well as composer.

**Program music.** Instrumental music endowed with literary or pictorial associations, especially popular in the nineteenth century.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

**Copland.** Brooklyn-born American composer, conductor and author; helped define a twentieth-century American sound by creating musical images of the American West.

**Jazz.** A musical style created mainly by African Americans in the early twentieth century that blended elements drawn from African musics with the popular and art traditions of the West; "birthplace" is considered New Orleans.

**Ragtime.** ("Ragged rhythm") A late-nineteenth-century piano style created by African Americans, characterized by highly syncopated melodies; also played in ensemble arrangements. Contributed to early jazz styles. Scott Joplin is considered the "king of ragtime."

**Blues.** African American form of secular folk music, related to jazz, that is based on a simple, repetitive poetic-musical structure.

**Musical.** Genre of twentieth-century musical theater, especially popular in the United States and Great Britain; characterized by spoken dialogue, dramatic plot interspersed with songs, ensemble numbers, and dancing; considered to be America's unique contribution to world theater.

**Rhythm and Blues.** Popular African-American music style of the 1940s through 1960s featuring a solo singer accompanied by a small instrumental ensemble, driving rhythms, and blues and pop song forms.

**Rock and Roll.** American popular music style first heard in the 1950s; derived from the union of African-American rhythm and blues, country-western, and pop music.