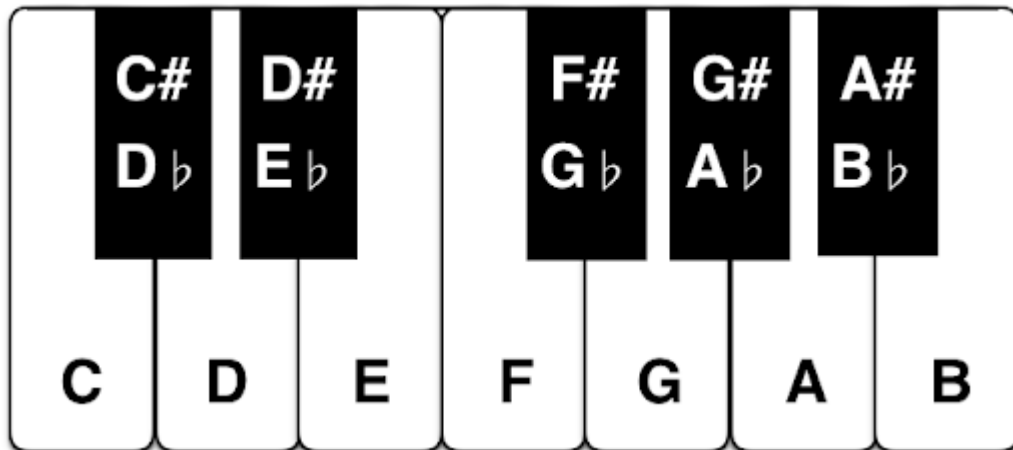


GCSE Music

THEORY BOOKLET



Name _____

GCSE Music Theory

In the Listening and Appraising paper you will be expected to know some general music theory as well as the appraisal skills you will learn throughout the course. This booklet will cover some of these areas.

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The Elements of Music – MR TIGHTS

In GCSE Music, we will use **MR TIGHTS** to talk about the music we listen to. **MR TIGHTS** is an easy way to remember the Elements of Music. Spend a few moments looking at the words below and then complete the table at the bottom of the page by adding the correct word(s) to give the correct definition of each of the Elements of Music.

GENRE TONALITY RHYTHM TEXTURE METRE
MELODY STRUCTURE INSTRUMENTATION (SONORITY)
HARMONY TEMPO

Element(s) of Music	Definition
	A tune or succession of notes, varying in highness or lowness, that have an organised and recognisable shape.
	1. The organisation of particular sounds by their length. 2. The speed, or fastness or slowness of the music. 3. The organisation of rhythms into certain regular patterns.
	Layers of sound combined to make music. More layers produce a 'thicker' sound, fewer produce a 'thinner' sound.
	Describes the different sounds or 'tone colours' produced by instruments and voices allowing us to tell them apart.
	A category that identifies some pieces of music as belonging to a shared tradition or set of conventions.
	The effect produced by two or more pitched notes sounding at the same time, often described as a chord.
	The relationship between notes of different pitches in a musical scale. Can be described in a number of ways: major, minor, modal etc.
	The way in which a piece of music is put together. Usually created by organising or repeating different sections in a particular order.

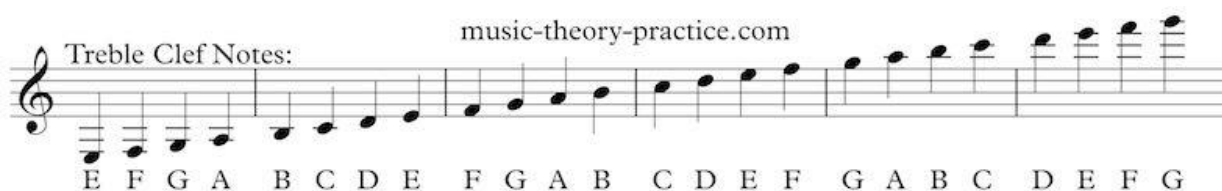
Reading Staff Notation

The Treble Clef

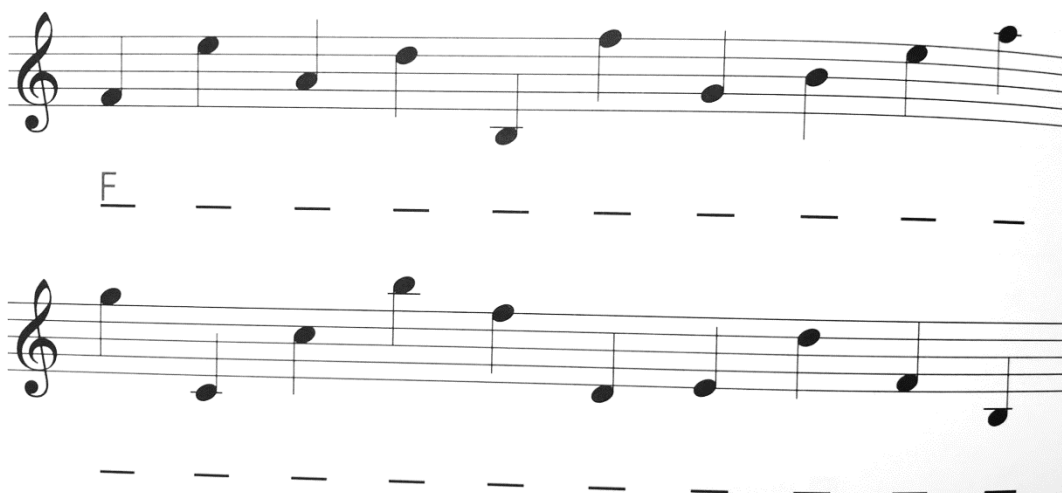
Often used for high notes. The little curved line in the middle of the clef curls around the second line where the note **G** sits.



Notes of the treble clef:



TASK 1: Name these notes.

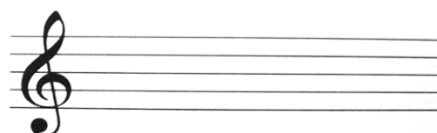


TASK 2:

2 Write two different Ds.



3 Write two different Bs.



4 Write two different Cs.

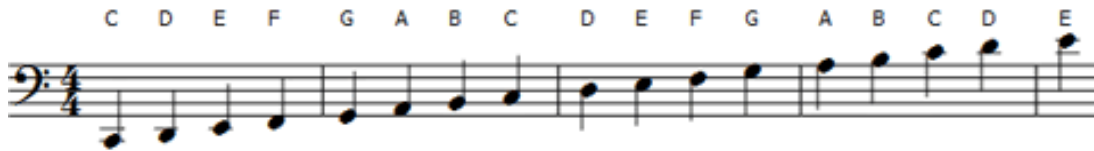
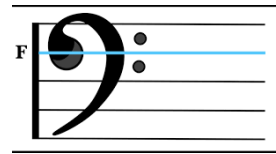


5 Write two different Es.



The Bass Clef

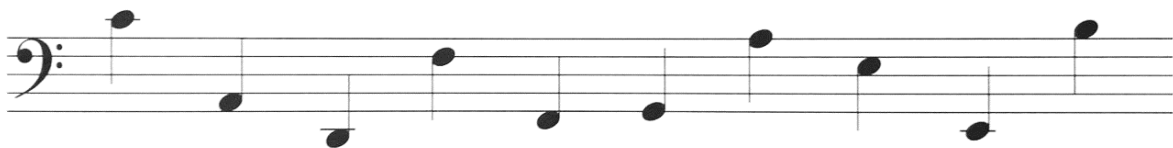
Often used for low notes. The little dots go on either side of the line where the note **F** sits.



TASK 3: Name these notes.



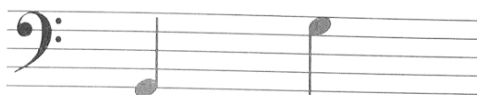
A _ _ _ _ _



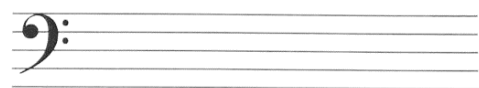
_ _ _ _ _

TASK 4:

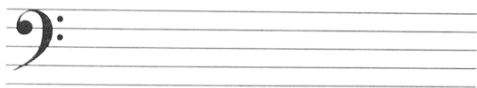
2 Write two different Gs.



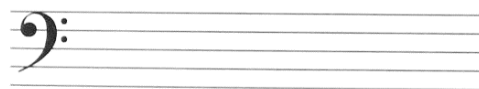
3 Write two different Cs.



4 Write two different As.



5 Write two different Fs.



The image shows a page from a music manuscript with two systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a treble and a bass staff. The first system has a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a bass line. The second system has a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a bass line. The notes are written on a five-line staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first system has a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a bass line. The second system has a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with a bass line.

Worksheet for musical notation practice, showing six staves with notes and letter labels.

Staff 1 (Treble Clef): Notes C, A, B.

Staff 2 (Treble Clef): Notes D, E, E, D.

Staff 3 (Treble Clef): Notes B, E, A, D.

Staff 4 (Treble Clef): Notes F, A, C, E.

Staff 5 (Bass Clef): Notes A, G, E.

Staff 6 (Bass Clef): Notes B, E, E, F.

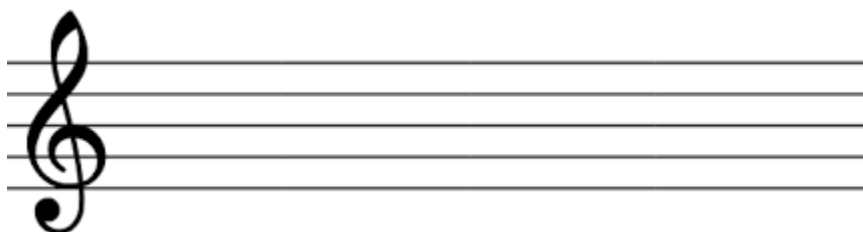
Melody

A **melody** is a tune or succession of notes, varying in highness or lowness, that have an organised and recognisable shape. This shape can be described as **conjunct** or **disjunct**.

Conjunct	A melody that moves mainly by step between notes. Can also be described as stepwise .	
Disjunct	A melody that moves mainly in leaps between notes.	

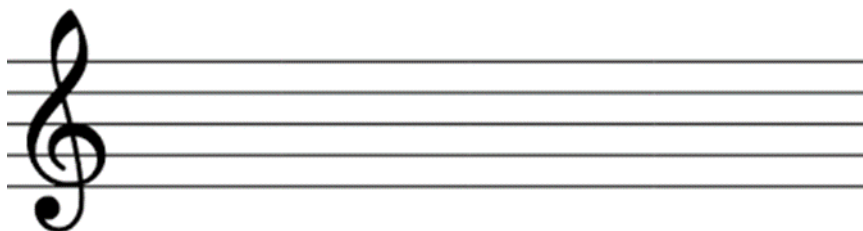
TASK 1: Using the empty stave below, compose a **conjunct** melody using crotchet notes.

Challenge: Use a mix of crotchet, quaver and semiquaver notes.



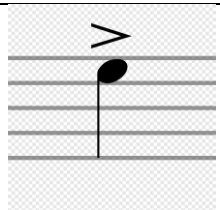
TASK 2: Using the empty stave below, compose a **disjunct** melody using crotchet notes.

Challenge: Use a mix of crotchet, quaver and semiquaver notes.



Articulation

Articulation tells the performer how they are to play or sing a note. It is an important part of performing music expressively. Read the table below and complete the tasks.

	Staccato	Played in a detached fashion. Short and spikey.
	Legato	Played in a smooth fashion (opposite to staccato).
	Accent	An emphasis or 'attack' on a particular note.
<i>sfz</i>	Sforzando	An accent showing that a note or chord should be played with greater force than any other notes surrounding it.

TASK 1: You are writing a piece of music with the theme 'Stormy'. What articulation might you use in your piece and why?

Pizzicato and Arco

String instruments (such as the violin and cello) are often given additional articulation.

- **Pizzicato** tells the performers to **pluck** the string with their fingers.
- **Arco** instructs the performers to play the strings using their bow.



TASK 2: Listen to following extracts – what articulation are the strings using?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

CHALLENGE: How else would you describe the **articulation** in the third extract?

Keys and Key Signatures

A key signature is a collection of sharps or flats on the stave that tell the performer which notes will be sharpened or flattened. For example, the key signature below tells the performer there is one sharp.



You can work out what notes will be sharpened/flattened by using a rhyme.

Sharp Rhyme

Father Christmas Gave Dad An Electric Blanket

If key signature has 3 sharps, the notes that have been sharpened are the first three in the rhyme (F#, C#, G#).

Flat Rhyme

Blanket Exploded And Dad Got Cold Feet

If key signature has 2 flats, the notes that have been flattened are the first two in the rhyme (Bb, Eb).

TASK 1: Name the sharps/flats in each key. E.g. 2 sharps = F#, C#

4. 1 Sharp = _____

5. 3 Flats = _____

6. 1 Flat = _____

7. 5 Sharps = _____

1. 6 Flats = _____

2. 4 Sharps = _____

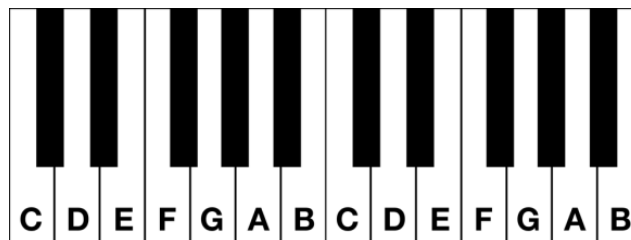
3. 3 Sharps = _____

Working out Key Signatures - Sharps

Rule: The note **after** the last sharp is the name of the key.

E.g. A key signature of F# and C# is D major because C# is the note before D

TASK 2: Work out the key signatures below. Use the keyboard to help you.



1.

2.

3.

Working out Key Signatures – Flats

Rule: The flat **before** the last flat is the name of the key.

E.g. A key signature of Bb, Eb and Ab is Eb major because Eb is the flat before the last flat.

TASK 3: Work out the key signatures below.

1.

2.

3.

Minor Keys

All minor keys have a **relative** major key. This means they **share a key signature**. The only difference is that the **7th note** in the **minor** key will be **sharpened**.

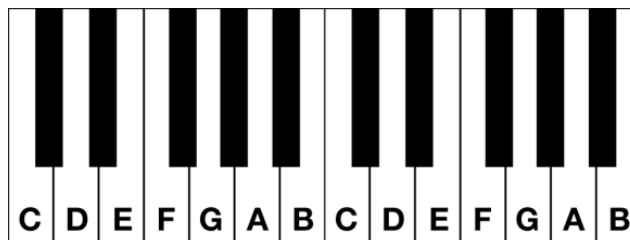
For example, the relative minor of C major is A minor. This means they have the same key signature (no sharps or flats), however A minor will have a sharpened 7th note – G#.

Rule: To find the relative minor, count **down 3 semi-tones** and sharpen the 7th note.

E.g. To find the relative minor of C major, move down 3 semi-tones to A. The key signature is the same (no sharps or flats). however all Gs will be turned into G#s as it is the 7th note.

TOP TIP: The sharpened 7th note **will not** be added to the key signature. Instead, it will be added using **accidentals** later in the music.

TASK 4: Fill in the table below. Use the blank keyboard to help you work out the semi-tones.



Key signature	Major key	Minor Key = Down 3 semitones`	7 th note is sharpened (not in key signature)
Nothing	C	A	G#
F#, C#	D		
Bb, Eb	Bb	G	
	A		
F#			

CHALLENGE:

	E		
	Db		

Dynamics

1. 'Dynamics' means: _____

2. Put the following dynamics in order from softest to loudest:



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

3. What does a **crescendo** mean? _____

4. Draw a **crescendo**:

5. What does a **diminuendo** mean? _____

6. Draw a **diminuendo**:

7. Write the definitions of the following terms:

sfz: _____

Accent: _____

Rhythm

TASK 1: Write the name of each note value using the box below.

CROTCHET	MINIM	SEMIBREVE	SEMIQUAVER
	QUAVER	REST	DOTTED MINIM

1.



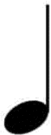
2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



TASK 2: How long is each note? Complete the following sentences with the right number.

Example

A  lasts as long as 2 

A  lasts as long as _____ 

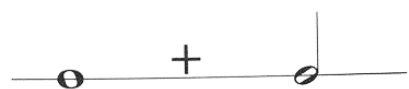
A  lasts as long as _____ 

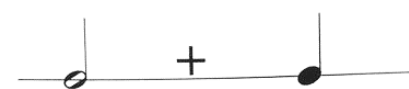
A  lasts as long as _____ 

A  lasts as long as _____ 

TASK 3: Add the total number of crotchet beats in these note values.

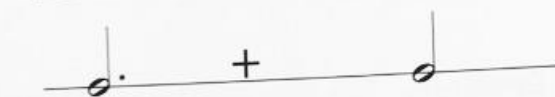
1. 
 $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} + 1 + 2 = 4 \text{ crotchet beats}$

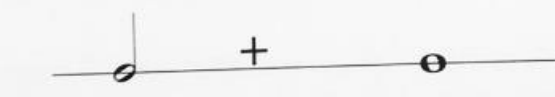
2. 
 =

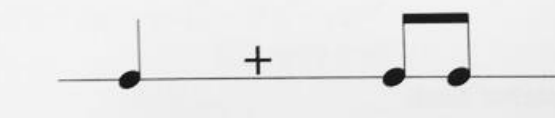
3. 
 =

4. 
 =

5. 
 =

6. 
 =

7. 
 =

8. 
 =

Tempo

1. Tempo is: _____

2. Draw a line to match these **tempi** to their definitions:

Allegro

At a moderate pace

Andante

At a walking pace

Adagio

Fast

Moderato

Slow

3. Tempo can also be expressed as **beats per minute** at the beginning of a piece of music.

♪ = 60

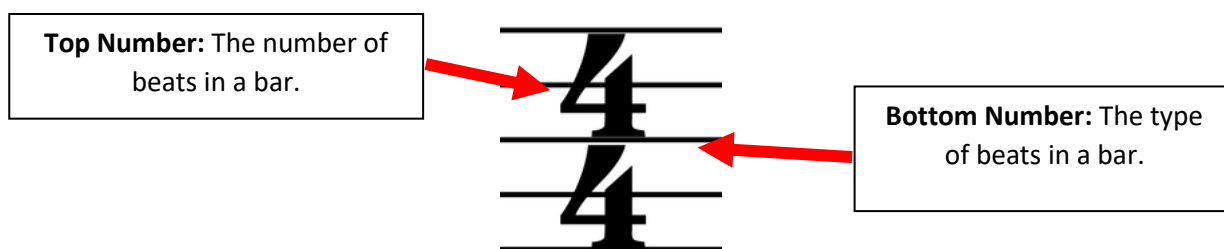
60 crotchets per minute / one beat per second

♪ = 120

♪ = 90

Time Signatures

A time signature is found at the start of every piece of music and tells you **how many** and **what type** of beats there are in a bar.



Bottom Numbers

2 Minims

4 Crotchets

8 Quavers

Example:

2 = 2

4 = crotchets

TASK 1: Label these time signatures.

4 = _____

4 = _____

6 = _____

8 = _____

4 = _____

8 = _____

2 = _____

2 = _____

TASK 2: Write the correct time signatures. The first one has been done for you.



Simple and Compound Time Signatures

Simple	The top number is divisible by 2 or 4.
---------------	--

Compound	The top number is divisible by 3 (with the exception of time signatures where the top number is already 3).
-----------------	---

TASK 3: Label the time signatures in Task 1 as 'simple' or 'compound'.

General Exercises

This is the beginning of a melody. Look at it, and then answer the questions below.

Andante Tchaikovsky, *Album for the Young* ('Morning Prayer')

- (a) What does **Andante** mean? _____
- (b) What is the time signature of the melody? _____
Explain what it means _____
- (c) Why is there a dot after the notes in bars 4 and 8? _____

- (d) What is **p** short for? _____
What does it mean? _____
- (e) The key of the melody is G major. Which degree of the scale does the melody start on? _____

- (f) What is the letter name of the highest note? _____
What is the letter name of the lowest note? _____
- (g) What is the value of the shortest note? _____
- (h) How many times is this rhythm used? _____
Tick the box: 1 2 3 4
 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- (i) How many bars contain only crotchets (quarter notes)? _____
Tick the box: 1 2 3 4
 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- (j) Answer true or false to the following sentence: _____
The melody uses all the notes of the scale of G major.
Tick the box: True False
 ☐ ☐
- (k) In bar 7, what does the > above the note mean? _____
- (l) Copy out the first four bars. Remember to put in the clef, key signature, time signature, tempo, dynamics and articulation.



This is the beginning of a melody. Look at it, and then answer the questions below.

Poco adagio, M.M. ♩ = 56 Dvořák, Symphony No. 7 (2nd mvmt)

- (a) **Poco** means 'a little'. What does **adagio** mean? _____
- (b) What is **dim.** short for? _____
What does it mean? _____
- (c) The key of the melody is F major. In which bars is the key-note *not* used? _____
- (d) What does 'M.M. ♩ = 56' tell you? _____
- (e) Give the meaning of *legato*. _____
- (f) Which is the quieter: **p** or **pp**? _____
- (g) Which bars contain the first four notes of the scale of F major? _____
- (h) Which bar has the same rhythm as bar 1? _____
- (i) What do the signs < and > mean? _____
- (j) How many bars contain only crotchets (quarter notes)?
Tick the box: 1 2 3 4 5
 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- (k) Which is the *lowest* note in the melody?
Tick the box: A Bb C D E F
 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- (l) Give the full name of the first note in bar 3. _____
- (m) Copy out the last four bars (5–8). Put in the clef, key signature, dynamics and articulation.
