

# Singing Homework - Reading Quiz

Singing Reading: The choir is the oldest of all musical groups. Before human being ever thought of making musical instruments, they used their own voice to make music together. Since choral music come directly from people, it has a more powerful emotional impact than musical instruments. There is nothing more moving that hearing an entire football stadium resound to the tune of "You'll Never Walk Alone" or an enthusiastic church congregation throwing their hearts and souls into favourite hymns.

Human voices vary in pitch (some are high, and some are low). This make it possible to sing harmonies in different layers using different pitched voice.

Soprano:	A high woman's voice
Alto:	A low woman's voice
Counter tenor:	A very high male voice (very rare)
Tenor:	A high male voice
Baritone:	A low male voice
Bass:	The lowest male voice

There are also many different ways of singing:

Solo singing: Singing on your own

Unison singing: A group of people singing the same thing together

Harmony: A group singing melodies that are different, but fit together to make nice sounds

A capella: Singing without instruments

Ostinato singing: Repeating the same line over and over again as an accompaniment

Call & Response: Where one singer copies or answers the first phrase

Rounds: Where a group of people divide into smaller groups and sing the same melody but enter the song at different times

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The respondent's email (**null**) was recorded on submission of this form.

## 1. Email \*

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2. High woman's voice

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Counter tenor
- Alto
- Soprano

3. Low woman's voice

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Tenor
- Alto
- Soprano

4. A very high male voice

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Counter tenor
- Tenor
- Baritone

5. A high male voice

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Counter tenor
- Tenor
- Baritone

6. A low male voice 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Bass
- Baritone
- Tenor

7. The lowest male voice 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Tenor
- Baritone
- Bass

8. Solo singing means... 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- A group of people singing the same thing together
- A group singing melodies that are different, but fit together to make nice sounds
- Singing on your own

9. Unison singing means... 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- A group of people singing the same thing together
- Where one singer copies or answers the first phrase
- Where a group of people divide into smaller groups and sing the same melody but enter the song at different times

10. Harmony singing means...

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Singing without instruments
- A group singing melodies that are different, but fit together to make nice sounds
- A high male voice

11. A capella singing means...

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Repeating the same line over and over again as an accompaniment
- A high woman's voice
- Singing without instruments

12. Ostinato singing means...

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Where a group of people divide into smaller groups and sing the same melody but enter the song at different times
- Where one singer copies or answers the first phrase
- Repeating the same line over and over again as an accompaniment

13. Call & Response singing means...

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Where one singer copies or answers the first phrase
- Singing on your own
- The lowest male voice

14. Singing a Round means...

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- A group of people singing the same thing together
- Where a group of people divide into smaller groups and sing the same melody but enter the song at different times
- A very high male voice (very rare)

15. Fill in the missing word: Generally speaking, men have \_\_\_\_\_ pitch voices

1 point

\_\_\_\_\_

16. Fill in the missing word: Not all vocal music is accompanied by instruments, unaccompanied singing is called \_\_\_\_\_

1 point

\_\_\_\_\_

17. Fill in the missing word: Whilst women have \_\_\_\_\_ pitch voices

1 point

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Fill in the missing word: Sometimes voices sing different parts at the same time creating \_\_\_\_\_

1 point

\_\_\_\_\_

**Choose your favourite song and analyse it using the questions below:**

19. Favourite Song:

\_\_\_\_\_

20. Artist:

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21. What type of voices can you hear? (Male, female, backing singers, a choir etc.)

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22. What vocal features are used in this song? (A capella, call & response, unison, harmony etc.)

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23. Where might you hear this song? (At what occasion?)

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24. How would you describe the style/genre of this song?

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**Singing Homework: Unison**  
**Class:**

**Name:**

**Homework: 1**

**Lesson: 1**

**Date:**

**Down by the Bay: Lyric Writing Task**

Task: Create your own lyrics for Down by the Bay. Fill in the missing lines: 7 and 8 for verses 2 and 3. Make sure that your lines rhyme. In the first example, you will see that **cow** and **eyebrow** rhyme.

**Verse 1**

- 1) Down by the bay
- 2) Where the watermelons grow
- 3) Back to my home
- 4) I dare not go
- 5) For if I do
- 6) My teacher will say
- 7) Did you ever see a **cow**?
- 8) With a green **eyebrow**
- 9) Down by the bay?

**Verse 2**

Down by the bay  
Where the watermelons grow  
Back to my home  
I dare not go  
For if I do  
My teacher will say

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Down by the bay?

**Verse 3**

Down by the bay  
Where the watermelons grow  
Back to my home  
I dare not go  
For if I do  
My teacher will say

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Down by the bay?



# THE BUILDING BRICKS OF MUSIC

5 MINUTES READING #1

***“I feel like my kind of music is a big pot of different spices. It’s a soup with all kinds of ingredients in it.”***

- Abigail Washburn



Questions to think about:

1. Think about your favourite piece of music – it could be a song or a piece of instrumental music. How have the **Elements of Music** been used in your favourite piece? Can you think of some words to describe how the **Elements of Music** have been used?!
2. Can you make an “Acrostic” to help you remember the **Elements of Music**? Take the starting letters (P, T, D, D, T, T, S, A and D) and arrange them vertically in any order and make up a “catchy” or even funny saying to help you remember them.

Music is made up of many different things called **elements**. They are the **building bricks of music**. When you compose a piece of music, you use the elements of music to build it, just like a builder uses bricks to build a house. If the piece of music is to sound right, then you have to use the elements of music correctly.

## What are the Elements of Music?

**PITCH** means the highness or lowness of the sound. Some pieces need high sounds and some need low, deep sounds. Some have sounds that are in the middle. Most pieces use a mixture of pitches.

**TEMPO** means the fastness or slowness of the music. Sometimes this is called the **speed** or **pace** of the music. A piece might be at a moderate tempo, or even change its tempo part-way through.

**DYNAMICS** means the loudness or softness of the music. Sometimes this is called the **volume**. Music often changes volume *gradually*, and goes from loud to soft or soft to loud.

**DURATION** means the length of each sound. Some sounds or notes are long, some are short. Sometimes composers combine long sounds with short sounds to get a good effect.

**TEXTURE** – if all the instruments are playing at once, the **texture** is thick. If only one instrument is playing, the texture is thin. You can build up the texture from thin to thick, or reduce it from thick to thin.

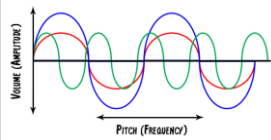
**TIMBRE** or **SONORITY** – every instrument has its own **tone colour**. For example, a metal instrument sounds different from a wooden one, and hitting the skin of a drum sounds different from blowing a recorder.

**ARTICULATION** describes how individual sounds or notes are played. Some sounds and notes may be played *smoothly* together, others may be played *spikily*, *crispily* or *detached* or some may be emphasised more than others.

**SILENCE** is as important as sound in music. It gives time to think and for echoes to die away. It can also be dramatic and in music is shown by “rests”.







# PITCH

5 MINUTES READING #2

**“Being in music forever, I have good pitch, so I know when I’m singing in or out of tune”**

- John Tesh



Questions to think about:

1. How would you describe the pitch of everyday sounds? Make a list of some everyday sounds that you hear, saying whether you think the sound is high, medium or low in pitch.
2. How many **pitched** musical instruments can you name or identify? (Instruments that play notes of a definite pitch).
3. How many **unpitched** musical instruments can you identify (Instruments that do not have a definite pitch – there may be many of these type of instruments in your music room!)

Does your cat ever talk to you? Some people believe that they can understand the sounds their pets make, whether they hear the **low-pitched** purring of a well-fed cat, or a **high-pitched** angry “Meow!” The fact that one sound is pitched **low** and the other **high**, helps us distinguish one from another. Although we do not usually stop to think about it, many everyday sounds that we hear can also be described as being high or low – with, of course, many that fall somewhere in between.

In order to understand why we hear some sounds as **low pitch** and others as **high pitch**, we must understand that sound travels in **waves**. When an object vibrates, it causes the air next to it to be put under pressure and this in turn puts pressure on the air next to that. So, the change in pressure moves through the air like a “Mexican Wave”, until it meets our ears and we experience it as sound. We call these chains of pressure-changes **sound waves**. Sound waves radiate outwards from a vibrating object in all directions – invisibly and very fast.

Whether the vibrations are slow or fast has an important effect of the sounds we hear: *slow* vibrations are heard as **low pitch** sounds and *fast* vibrations are heard as **high pitch** sounds. The rate of vibration is called the **frequency**. Frequency is measured in “vibrations per second” – **low pitch** sounds have fewer vibrations per second than **high pitch** sounds.

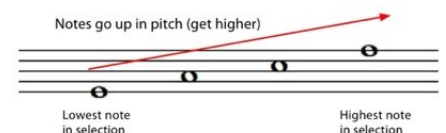
The word **pitch** is used to describe the way we experience the frequency of a sound. We hear low frequencies as **low pitched** sounds and high frequencies as **high pitch** sounds.

When writing music down, we often use the **treble clef** symbol to show notes that are to be played at **higher pitches** and the **bass clef** symbol to show notes that are to be played at **lower pitches**.

## Pitched and Unpitched Sounds

Any object that vibrates with a regular frequency will produce a sound of definite pitch – a musical note. If an object vibrates with mixed or irregular frequencies, then the sound it produces will be *without* a definite pitch.

Musical instruments that play notes of definite pitch are called **pitched** instruments *e.g. piano, violins, flutes*. Musical instruments that do not have definite pitch are said to be **unpitched** and most of them are played by being hit or shaken *e.g. drums and percussion instruments*.





# TEMPO AND DURATION

5 MINUTES READING #3

*“Since I started composing I have always worked with series of tempos, even superimposed the music of different groups of musicians, of singers, instrumentalists who play and sing at different tempos simultaneously and then meet every now and then in the same tempo.”*

- Karlheinz Stockhausen

## Tempo

**TEMPO** means the fastness or slowness of the music. Sometimes this is called the **speed** or **pace** of the music. A piece might be at a moderate tempo, or even change its tempo part-way through.

Composers often use Italian terms to indicate the speed or **TEMPO** of their music. Some common Italian terms connected with **TEMPO** include: *Lento, Largo, Adagio, Andante, Allegro, Vivace* and *Presto*.

Sometimes, as well as (or instead of) a tempo marking expressed in Italian words, composers give a metronome marking. A metronome, invented by a friend of Beethoven’s called Maelzel) ticks away the number of beats to a minute at any given speed. For example:

M.M. (Maelzel’s Metronome) ♩ = 120

means there will be 120 crotchet beats per minute (or 2 per second).

## Duration

**DURATION** means the length of each sound. Some sounds or notes are long, some are short. Sometimes composers combine long sounds with short sounds to get a good effect. The particular shape and design of a musical note symbol indicates its **DURATION** – the length of time it lasts in relation to other notes.

Some of the most common notes are given below in descending order of **DURATION** – the longest note is given at the top.

♩	Semibreve	4 beats
♪	Minim	2 beats
♫	Crotchet	1 beat
♫♫	Quaver	½ beat
♫♫♫	Semiquaver	¼ beat



Questions to think about:

1. What Metronome Marking (M.M.) would you give your favourite pop song? Sing this in your head and try and count the number of beats for 30 seconds and then double it to get the “M.M.”
2. Which instruments in your music classroom produce sounds or notes of **LONG DURATION**?
3. This note is longer in **DURATION** than a semibreve



Can you find out its name and how many beats it’s worth?

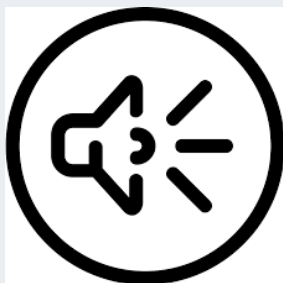


# DYNAMICS

5 MINUTES READING #4

**“It’ll help you be imaginative if you listen to classical music. It helps you understand dynamics and how important they are to create an environment”**

- Brittany Howard



Questions to think about:

1. Make a list of 10 sounds that you hear around school, some which you may consider “musical” e.g. the school bell and others which you may consider “noise”. Put these sounds in order from what you consider to be the softest to the loudest.
2. If **pp** means “pianissimo” or very soft, what do you think **ppp** means? What about **fff**?
3. What other sounds can you think of that may approach our ‘threshold of pain’ – around 120 dB?

If you pluck a string on a violin or guitar, first gently and then more firmly, the two notes you’ll hear are the same pitch, but the second is louder than the first. Pitch depends upon the frequency of the vibrations; but volume or loudness depends upon the strength of the vibrations – *amplitude*. The more force or energy applied in starting the vibrations, the greater the amplitude and so the louder the sound.

You will sometimes hear the word **DECIBELS** mentioned in connection with the loudness of sounds in relation to each other. According to the scale of decibels, a sound measuring just 1 dB (a single decibel) is extremely soft – just loud enough to cross our ‘threshold of hearing’. A violin played quietly rates about 25 dB; a large orchestra playing at its loudest, around 100 dB. Sounds above 120 dB approach our ‘threshold of pain’ – for example, a low-flying aircraft.

Music can be loud or soft, or somewhere in between. It can change gradually or suddenly from one to the other. This is most important to all musicians and we call this aspect of “volume” – **DYNAMICS**.

## Dynamic markings

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when music printing became established, Italian composers were generally regarded as the leaders of European music. For that reason, it became natural for composers to use Italian when writing down directions to performers and this practice still continues. This is why you meet the Italian words **forte (f)** (loud) and **piano (p)** (soft), letting you know what dynamics to use when playing a particular piece. Contrasts in dynamics are most often used to add to the expressive qualities of a piece of music and help set the mood of the piece.

Here are some of the dynamic directions you will meet most often and their abbreviations:

	<i>pianissimo</i>	<b>pp</b>	very soft
	<i>piano</i>	<b>p</b>	soft
	<i>mezzo piano</i>	<b>mp</b>	moderately soft
<small>This sign is also used to show a <b>CRESCENDO</b></small>	<i>mezzo forte</i>	<b>mf</b>	moderately loud
	<i>forte</i>	<b>f</b>	loud
	<i>fortissimo</i>	<b>ff</b>	very loud
	<i>crescendo</i>	<b>cresc.</b>	gradually getting louder
<small>This sign is also used to show a <b>DIMINUENDO</b></small>	<i>diminuendo</i>	<b>dim.</b>	gradually getting softer

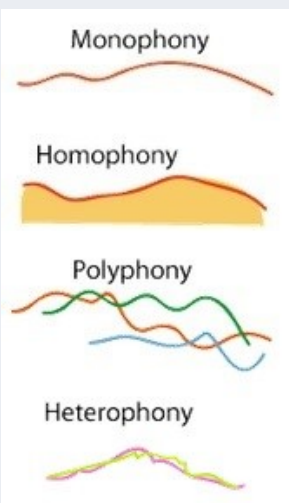


# TEXTURE

5 MINUTES READING #5

*“To me it’s all about textures, and that’s the side of music that I’m finding really exciting. I feel like it’s one of the only parts of music that mankind hasn’t fully discovered yet.”*

- Flume



Questions to think about:

1. Can you think of any types or styles of music which have a **MONOPHONIC TEXTURE**?
2. What other examples of **ROUNDS** or **CANONS** have you sung or performed that could be examples of a **POLYPHONIC TEXTURE**?
3. Can you think of other types of World Music that create **HETEROPHONIC TEXTURES**?

Some pieces of music have a rather thin, sparse sound, perhaps producing an effect which is angular or jagged. Other pieces of music have a rather dense sound – rich, smoothly flowing, perhaps rather complicated. To describe this aspect of music we use the word **TEXTURE**, likening the way the sounds are “woven together” in a musical composition to the way in which the threads are woven in a piece of fabric. Just as you run your finger over wool, and then silk, the feel of the two materials is very different, so in two pieces of music, the “feel” of the sounds can differ. The number of parts or “layers of sound” can vary – music with a single melody line, even though there may be more than one performer or musician performing it can be described as **THIN TEXTURE**, music where there are lots of melody lines, parts or layers, often interweaving with each other and producing a complex sound can be described as **THICK TEXTURE**.

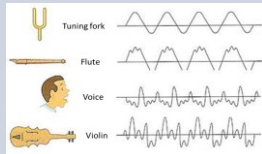
## Describing Musical Textures

The simplest kind of musical texture consists of a single melody line called a **MONOPHONIC TEXTURE** or **MONOPHONY**. The single melody may be performed by one musician, or several musicians in **UNISON**.

A **HOMOPHONIC TEXTURE** or **HOMOPHONY** is created when a single melody line is heard against an accompaniment with basically the same rhythm moving in all the parts at the same time. The melody is usually, though not always, at the ‘top’ of the texture and is the most ‘important part’.

In a **POLYPHONIC TEXTURE** or **POLYPHONY**, two or more equally important melody lines weave along at the same time. Quite different melodies can be combined together, or the texture may be woven from just one musical idea. If you’ve ever sung a “Round” e.g. *London’s Burning*, where you begin at different times, then you’ve created a **POLYPHONIC TEXTURE**.

A **HETEROPHONIC TEXTURE** or **HETEROPHONY** is a kind of musical texture where everyone performs at the same time – different versions of the same melody. For instance, one voice or instrument performs a simple melody while another presents a more intricate, decorated version of it. Others may join in, presenting even more intricate versions of the melody, or perhaps a simplified version. If you’ve listened to young children singing “playground songs”, it’s likely that they’ll be singing slightly different versions of the same melody – some children will be singing slightly different notes creating a **HETEROPHONIC TEXTURE**.



# TIMBRE AND SONORITY

5 MINUTES READING #6

**“It was a harsh, rasping voice, in its timbre not unlike a sawmill”**

- P G Wodehouse



Questions to think about:

- How many different sounds (**TIMBRES** or **SONORITIES**) can you think of making from a **CYMBAL**? Think about the many different ways it can be played and how sounds can be produced.
- Can you make a list of the instruments in your music room? Decide on different ways to group the instruments together, for example, keep all the **WOODEN** instruments in one group, the **METAL** instruments in another and the **ELECTRONIC** instruments in another.

At the fashion show, the first two models glide smoothly down the cat-walk. He is wearing a green suit with a yellow tie, while she has on a long swirling evening dress in matching colours. Minutes later they are back, but this time you would hardly recognise them. He is wearing the padded jersey of an American football player and she has cycling shorts and a T-shirt. It’s the same two people but they make an entirely different impression as they bounce along to some lively music.

Just as a person may look changed in new clothes, the same note played first on a violin and then on a piano will sound very different. What makes this difference? It is because each instrument or voice has a distinct and recognisable quality of sound – known as the tone-colour, **TIMBRE** or **SONORITY**. The characteristic **TIMBRE** or **SONORITY** of a trumpet makes it possible for us to tell the difference between a trumpet and a violin.

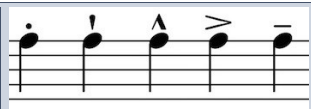
Several factors account for the distinctive **TIMBRE** or **SONORITY** of an instrument including the materials from which it is made, the way it produces its sounds and the way in which these sounds are made to resonate (e.g. the hollow wooden body of a violin). The distinctive **TIMBRE** or **SONORITY** of each instrument can change according to the way it is played. Composers love to use these different kinds of sounds, in order to make their music as interesting and expressive as possible.

## The Orchestra

One way that composers control and vary the **TIMBRE** or **SONORITY** of their music is by using combinations of different instruments – which can then be used separately, all together, or in different combinations. Depending on what instruments are used, and the style of music played, such a collection of instruments may be called a *band* or *ensemble* – or, if it is large enough, an *orchestra*. Voices also have different **TIMBRES** or **SONORITIES** – women’s voices *sound different* to men’s voices – they have a different **TIMBRE**.

## Describing TIMBRE and SONORITY

There are lots of different words which can be used to describe a particular **TIMBRE** or **SONORITY**. Here are a range of descriptive words which are frequently used when describing an instrument or a sound’s **TIMBRE** or **SONORITY**: *blustery, flat, grating, hoarse, muted, thin, whiny, brassy, dull, full, hollow, nasal, sharp, smooth, sweet, tinkly, clinky, gruff, husky, pure, rich, shrill, squeaky, tinny, wooden, metallic, scratchy* – there are many more!

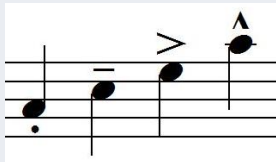


# ARTICULATION

5 MINUTES READING #7

*“I thought of Gene Krupa’s drumming, his staccato drumming. I went and put ‘Misirlou’ to that rhythm.”*

- Dick Dale



Questions to think about:

1. Can you think about any other instruments, from the orchestra or in your music room where you could perform a **GLISSANDO** on?
2. What type of music or songs would be suitable performed with **LEGATO** articulation?
3. Distortion is one of a number of “FX’s” which guitarists use when performing. Can you think of any others?

When you listen to music, you hear changes in tempo, rhythm and in the character of the sound. For instance, does the musician hit a series of notes loudly and then back off or begin softly and build up to a large sound?

Musicians know where and when to make such changes because of **ARTICULATION**.

**ARTICULATION** in music refers to how specific notes or passages are played or sung – how smoothly or ‘spikily’ something is played.

Composers and arrangers provide articulation directions in the form of written notation, symbols placed above or below notes. Some articulation, like **ARCO** - bowing (using the bow of a stringed instrument to play a note) or **PIZZICATO** – plucking the strings with the fingers instead of using the bow are exclusive to specific instruments – here stringed instruments – brass and woodwind players would never see these **ARTICULATION** markings on their music!

The word **LEGATO** (Italian for ‘linked together’), means played smoothly. Notes are joined by curving lines. The word **STACCATO** (Italian for ‘detached’), means played short and sharp, and is indicated by dots above or below the note. Notice the **LEGATO** and **STACCATO ARTICULATION** markings in the music below.



Sometimes a composer wants certain notes to “stand out” or be emphasised more than others. Here, they would use an **ACCENT** (>) placed above the note to indicate to the performer to place more emphasis on this particular note.

Another way of doing this is using a dynamic marking – **SFORZANDO** (*sfz*) or (*sf*) on certain notes.

If you rapidly run your finger from the very lowest note up to the highest note of a piano or keyboard as fast as possible and making sure each note sounds, you’re performing a **GLISSANDO** – which gives a continuous slide upwards (or downwards) between notes and is another form of **ARTICULATION**.

**ARTICULATION** also features in popular music. Guitarists often use **DISTORTION** to give a rough, fuzzy or harsh sound. Drummers often use a **RIM SHOT** playing on the metal rim and the skin of a drum at the same time, making a smacking sound and even a **DRUM ROLL** is a form of **ARTICULATION**.

# Musical Elements - Quiz

Answer the questions below...

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The respondent's email (**null**) was recorded on submission of this form.

1. Email \*

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2. 1) Which element means the Highness or Lowness of the sound?

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Attack and Decay
- Duration
- Pitch
- Timbre
- Dynamics
- Tempo
- Texture
- Silence

3. 2) Which element means the Fastness or Slowness of the music?

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Attack and Decay
- Duration
- Pitch
- Timbre
- Dynamics
- Tempo
- Texture
- Silence

4. 3) Which element means Loudness or Softness of the music?

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Attack and Decay
- Duration
- Pitch
- Timbre
- Dynamics
- Tempo
- Texture
- Silence

5. 4) Which element means the Length of each sound?

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Attack and Decay
- Duration
- Pitch
- Timbre
- Dynamics
- Tempo
- Texture
- Silence



6. 5) Which element means Thick or Thin?

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Attack and Decay
- Duration
- Pitch
- Timbre
- Dynamics
- Tempo
- Texture
- Silence

7. 6) Each instrument has its own colour / Tone / Sound. Name the musical element...

1 point

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8. 7) Which element means no sound at all?

1 point

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# String Instruments

5 MINUTES READING #1

*“If we were all determined to play the first violin we should never have an ensemble. therefore, respect every musician in his proper place.”*

- Robert Schumann

The strings form the ‘backbone’ of the orchestra – more than half the members of an orchestra play string instruments.

The string section of a large orchestra may include:



- 16 first violins
- 14 second violins
- 12 violas
- 10 cellos
- 8 double basses
- 2 harps

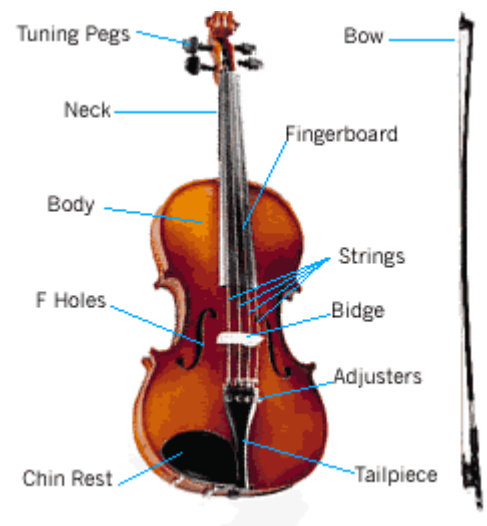
Notice that the violins are divided into two groups: first violins and second violins. The difference is not in the instruments themselves (which are exactly the same of course), but in the music which they play – the first violins usually playing higher notes than the seconds.

## String family



Violins, violas, cellos and double basses all produce their sounds in exactly the same way. Four strings – of gut, metal or nylon – are stretched across a hollow wooden body. They are fixed to the tailpiece at one end, then taken across the bridge to the tuning-pegs.

Sometimes, the player uses his fingertips to pluck the strings: this is called playing **PIZZICATO**, but the more usual way of causing them to vibrate is by drawing a bow across them: this is called playing **ARCO** (‘with the bow’). The bow is a wooden stick with more than 200 strands of horsehair stretched tightly across it. Playing **ARCO** and **PIZZICATO** gives two different **TIMBRES** and **SONORITIES**.



Questions to think about:

1. What is the difference between the first and second violins in an orchestra?
2. How many strings does a violin, viola, cello and double bass all have?
3. What are the two different ways to play a violin, viola, cello or double bass?
4. How many strings does a harp have?
5. Describe two different playing techniques of the harp.



## The Harp

Although the harp is counted as a string instrument, its construction and the way in which it is played is set apart from the other members of the string section. The harp is always plucked. It has 47 strings and seven pedals, one for each note of the scale. Two typical harp ‘effects’ are **ARPEGGIOS** – spreading out the notes of a chord; and the **GLISSANDO** – sweeping the fingers across the strings, again both producing different **TIMBRES** and **SONORITIES**.



# Woodwind Instruments

5 MINUTES READING #2

*“Never let the horns and woodwind out of your sight; if you can hear them all, they are too loud.”*

- Richard Strauss

## WOODWIND family



Although instruments of the woodwind section were originally made of wood, nowadays, other materials may be used. The sounds are made by causing a column of air to vibrate inside a hollow tube. Along the length of each instrument there is a series of holes, controlled by a system of keys, springs and levers. By opening and closing these holes, the player alters the length of the vibration column of air: the shorter the air column, the higher the note, the longer the air column the lower the note.

**The woodwind section of a modern orchestra often includes:**



- 2 flutes and piccolo
- 2 oboes and cor anglais
- 2 clarinets and bass clarinet
- 2 bassoons and double bassoon

Except for the flute and piccolo, each of these instruments has either a single or double reed. The flute and piccolo – which are held horizontally rather than straight in front of the player – produce their sounds by blowing air across an oval-shaped hole.



Questions to think about:

1. What modern day materials are woodwind instruments normally made out of today?
2. Which two woodwind instruments don't have reeds?
3. Which family of the orchestra is the saxophone sometimes wrongly placed in? Why?
4. Where do the woodwind instruments sit in an orchestra? Why?

The clarinet and saxophone (which belongs to the woodwind family although often gets confused with the brass section and isn't normally found in a traditional orchestra), have single reeds – a flat piece of cane shaved to delicate thinness at the end. Sometimes the bass clarinet is used – it looks similar to the saxophone and produces the same sounds as a lower pitch clarinet. The oboe, cor anglais (meaning 'English horn' – a kind of larger oboe with a slightly different **TIMBRE** and **SONORITY**), bassoon and double bassoon each have a double reed – two strips of thin cane bound together. Whereas the **TIMBRES** and **SONORITIES** of the strings section blend together, those of the woodwind are more distinctive and individual, tending to contrast rather than to blend. The woodwinds are frequently given solos to play, and so this section is placed in the centre of the orchestra directly in front of the conductor.



# Brass Instruments

5 MINUTES READING #3

*“To play the trumpet, you must train your lips for a long time. When I was twelve or thirteen I was a good player, but I lost the skill and now I play very badly. I do it every day even so. The reason is that I want to return to my childhood. For me, the trumpet is evidence of the sort of young man I was.”*

- Umberto Eco

## BRASS family



Questions to think about:

1. Put the four instruments from the brass section into 'rank order' from the lowest pitch to the highest pitch.
2. What was the problem with early trumpets?
3. Which of the brass instruments does NOT have valves?
4. How does a brass player produce a sound on brass instruments?
5. Where is the bell on a brass instrument?

Each instrument in the brass section is a length of hollow tubing with a mouthpiece at one end and a flaring 'bell' at the other. Although 'brass' is a convenient name for these instruments, they are more likely to be made out of mixed metals nowadays than pure brass.

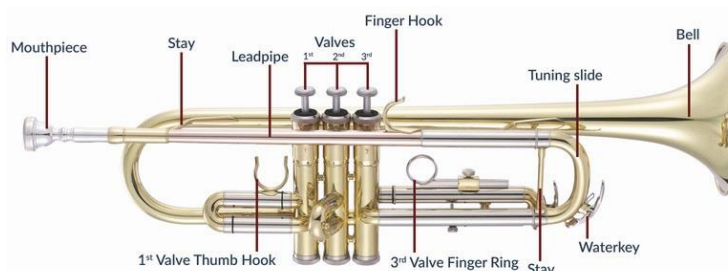
**The brass section of a modern orchestra often includes:**



- 4 French Horns (often just called 'Horns')
- 3 Trumpets
- 3 Trombones
- 1 Tuba

The pitch range of each of the brass instruments depends upon its length of tube. For instance, the tube of the French Horn is longer than that of the trumpet enabling it to sound lower notes.

To sound a note, a brass-player applies his lips to the cup-shaped mouthpiece and, as he blows, makes them vibrate. This causes the air column inside the tube to vibrate also, and so produce a note. A player can sound several notes merely by altering the tension of his lips, or slackening them – the tighter the lips, the higher the note. We call these 'natural sounds' the **HARMONIC SERIES**. Early trumpets could only play a limited range of notes, the harmonic series, but this was solved in 1815 by the invention of valves. The Trumpet, French Horn and Tuba all have three valves which are selected by the touch of a finger. Each of the three valves brings in an extra length of tubing. When a valve is pressed down, the air is then diverted along the extra loop. Valves may be used singly or in combinations.



The **TIMBRE** and **SONORITY** of brass instruments depends upon the type of mouthpiece used, the width of tubing and the flare of the bell. The Trumpet has a brilliant and majestic timbre and sonority. The French Horn has a rounder, more mellow timbre and sonority. The Trombone is the only brass instrument which doesn't have valves and the length of tubing is adjusted by a 'slide'. The tuba was not invented until the 1820's and is the largest and lowest pitch member of the brass section.



# Percussion Instruments

5 MINUTES READING #4

*“Percussion is the most adaptable family of instruments. The biggest challenge is to project percussion in a lyrical way.”*

- Evelyn Glennie

## percussion family

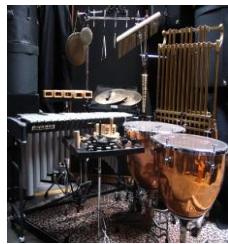


Questions to think about:

1. What are the 4 ways in which percussion instruments are played?
2. What is the difference between tuned and untuned percussion instruments?
3. Think about the instruments in your music room at school. Add to the untuned or unpitched percussion list naming any instruments not mentioned here.
4. Why is the piano a percussion instrument?

The percussion section includes those instruments which are struck or shaken, crashed or banged. These instruments can be divided into two groups. The first group is called **PITCHED** or **TUNED** percussion. These are instruments which can play one or more notes of definite pitch, and so possibly could play a melody or tune.

**Examples of pitched or tuned percussion instruments include:**



- Timpani (or Kettle Drums)
- Glockenspiel (metal bars)
- Xylophone (wooden bars)
- Tubular Bells
- Celesta

The second group is larger and includes all **UNPITCHED** or **UNTUNED** percussion instruments – those which make sounds of indefinite pitch, and so can only play rhythms, not melodies or tunes or different notes.

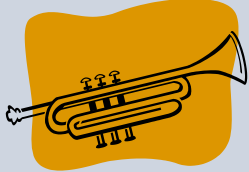
**Examples of unpitched or untuned percussion instruments include:**



- Bass Drum
- Snare Drum (or side drum)
- Cymbals
- Triangle
- Tambourine
- Castanets
- Woodblock
- Whip (slapstick)
- Tamtam (or gong)

Only on rare occasions will all these percussion instruments be heard in the same piece. Music written in the 1600's and 1700's for orchestra often only used the kettle drums as the only percussion instrument. During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, composers began to explore the colourful and exciting **TIMBRES** and **SONORITIES** of the percussion section much more and often used a large and varied selection of percussion instruments in their pieces to give exciting and unusual effects.

The piano (although often wrongly thought of as being in the strings section) belongs to the percussion family as it uses hammers which hit/strike the strings, although a piano is not a permanent member of an orchestra.



# Fanfares I

5 MINUTES READING #5

*And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him...*

*Joshua 6 v 4-5*



Questions to think about:

1. What is a shofar?
2. Describe three ways in which fanfares have been used.
3. What other ways can fanfares be used to mark time?
4. Why were certain instruments more suitable for playing fanfares on the battlefield?
5. What fanfare is played at Remembrance Day services?

A fanfare is “a loud short piece of music, played, usually on a trumpet, to introduce the arrival of someone important or a special event” (Cambridge International Dictionary of English) “a flourish of trumpets; a showy outward display (Webster’s Dictionary)

The very first fanfares were written for the Shofar. A Shofar (*shown right*) is an ancient type of trumpet made from the horn of a ram. It was one of the earliest wind instruments known to man. This made a very powerful sound when blown as Joshua describes in the Old Testament of the Bible (*see quote left*).

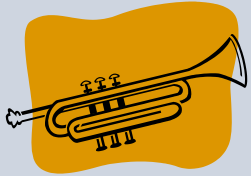


## Krakow Hourly Trumpet Signal

As well as being used to announce someone important or to mark the beginning of a special occasion, fanfares have also been used to mark the passing of time before people had clocks and watches. In Poland, there is a church called the Church of St. Mary (Mariacki) on the corner of the main Market Square in Krakow. Every hour, since 1241, a Bugle is played and a fanfare sounded to announce the hour, like some of our churches having bells that chime every hour. The fanfare is played first facing west, then east, then south and finally the north. The Polish call this tradition The Legend of the Trumpeter. It was believed to date back to the medieval era when music was used to announce the opening and closing of the city gates or to warn the citizens of the town if there was a fire or an enemy invasion. In 1241, a bugler was killed by an arrow from invaders as he sounded his alarm, and therefore the fanfare now comes to such an abrupt ending. This bugle call was adopted in 1927 by national radio, and a live rendition is transmitted every day at midday.

## Military Fanfares

Fanfares have been used for many years in the military and on the battlefield as a means of a signal for troops. Imagine the intense noise in a battle and before the invention of modern communications equipment, different fanfares were needed to signal retreat or attack. The fighting troops would need to be able to hear loud sounding instruments with a tone that could carry over long distances, so instruments such as the trumpet, bugle and drums were used – they had to be easy to carry too! There are many different fanfares (also called bugle calls) that are still in use by the military today. A fanfare such as “Reveille” is played first thing in the morning and is sounded as a wake-up call; “Mess” is sounded at mealtime and the best-known is probably “The Last Post” which is played at Remembrance Day services.



# Fanfares 2

5 MINUTES READING #5

*“I’ve always been a music fan. I played trumpet. When I was in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, we were getting demos from the music teacher about different instruments we could play, and I said I wanted to play the trumpet right away. It was easy; it just had three valves.”*

- Kurt Vile



## Royal Occasions

Since medieval times, fanfares have been used to glorify a sovereign and to herald the entrance of a King or Queen or other important person. Even now, fanfares are frequently performed when the queen visits different places and ceremonies. Early fanfares for royalty were simply a collection of musicians on bugles and trumpets blasting out as loud as they could and **improvising** music on the spot. At the wedding of George the Rich in 1470, it was said that there were “100 trumpeters and fifers producing ‘such a din’ that ‘one could hardly hear one’s own words’”.

The Italian composer **Monteverdi** uses a fanfare at the beginning of his **opera** ‘Orfeo’ which he wrote in 1607. This announces the mood of the occasion and gets the attention of the listeners – a musical way of saying “be quiet, the show is about to start!” The fanfare is played on violins and **cornetts**. A cornett is an ancient ebony instrument that is a cross between a recorder and a trumpet.



Cornett

## The Harmonic Series

Our modern-day trumpets have three valves which the player uses to alter the length of the tubing to produce notes of many different pitches. In earlier times, trumpets, like bugles, had no valves and could only play a limited range of notes. These notes were called the **harmonic series** and most early fanfares use only these notes.



A valveless trumpet

A modern trumpet with valves



Questions to think about:

1. Early musicians used to **improvise** when playing fanfares. What does this mean?
2. Why do you think fanfares are played when royalty visit special occasions?
3. Why did Monteverdi write a fanfare at the beginning of his opera **Orfeo**?
4. Why do composers use the notes of the Harmonic Series when writing fanfares?

# Sonority - Quiz

This Quiz focuses on who the conductor is and what they do, how to read music, and what the instruments are in instrumental family and their role within the orchestra.

The respondent's email (**null**) was recorded on submission of this form.

\* Required

## 1. Email \*

### The role of the Conductor

Watch the video below and answer the questions based on what you learn within the video.

You may need to watch parts of the video more than once to get the right answer!

If the video doesn't work - copy and paste this link into your browser:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x\\_6cTbyWP88&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_6cTbyWP88&feature=youtu.be)

What does a conductor do?



[v=x\\_6cTbyWP88](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_6cTbyWP88)

<http://youtube.com/watch?>

## 2. 1. What is one of the main things a conductor needs to do? \*

1 point

*Check all that apply.*

- Learn the music
- Not learn music



3. 2. What does a conductor do? \*

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Tunes the instruments
- Talks about what the Orchestra will play
- Keeps the musicians together
- Speaks

4. 3. What is important about a time signature? \*

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Tells you what speed to play
- Tells you when to come in
- Tells you the beats in the bar

5. 4. What is important about the gestures a conductor makes to the orchestra? \*

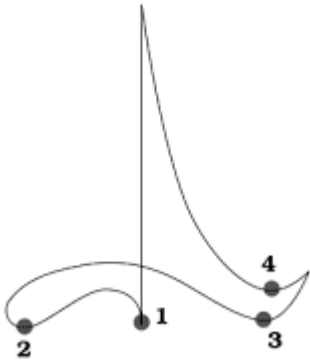
1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- It tells them the conductor is there
- So they know how long the music lasts
- So they can get the attention of the orchestra/they can stop together

6. 5. Look at the picture. Which time signature is it showing? \*

1 point



Mark only one oval.

2/4

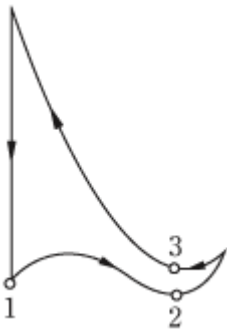
4/4

6/8

12/8

7. 6. Look at the picture. What time signature is it showing? \*

1 point



Mark only one oval.

2/4

3/4

4/4

6/8

8. 7. How does the conductor get the orchestra to play loud or soft? 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Jump up and down
- Shout at the musicians
- Dance around
- Make big gestures for loud and small gestures for soft

9. 8. How does the conductor show changes in tempo? \* 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Jump up and down
- Show the beat and get faster/slower
- Shout
- Dance around

10. 9. How does a conductor let the musicians know when to start playing? \* 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Visual cues
- Audio cues

Instruments and their families

These questions look at individual instruments and which families they belong to.

Watch the video and answer questions below.

If the video doesn't work - copy and paste this link into your browser:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=6&v=Sp52qyZsorw&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=Sp52qyZsorw&feature=emb_title)

What is an orchestra?



[http://youtube.com/watch?](http://youtube.com/watch?v=Sp52qyZsorw)

[v=Sp52qyZsorw](http://youtube.com/watch?v=Sp52qyZsorw)

11. 1. What is an orchestra? \*

1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- A random selection of musicians
- A load of string players together
- A large instrumental ensemble
- A collection of electronic instruments

12. 2. What are the families of instruments found in the orchestra? (Choose up to 4 answers) \*

4 points

*Check all that apply.*

- Strings
- Woodwind
- Brass
- Percussion
- Guitars
- Sitar
- Bongos

13. 3. What name is given to a large scale orchestra? (Choose up to 2 answers) \* 2 points

*Check all that apply.*

- Philharmonic  
 Symphony  
 Chamber

14. 4. What size is an average orchestra? \* 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- 0-50  
 70-over 100  
 100-150  
 150 +

15. 5. What is a smaller orchestra called? \* 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Philharmonic  
 Symphony  
 Chamber

16. 6. When did the orchestra grow in number? \* 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- 16-17th Century  
 18-19th Century  
 20-21st Century

17. 7. Which instrument leads the orchestra/is known as the concert master? \* 1 point

*Mark only one oval.*

- Viola
- Violin
- Flute
- Oboe
- Trumpet

18. 8. What are orchestras used for? (Choose up to 4 answers) \* 4 points

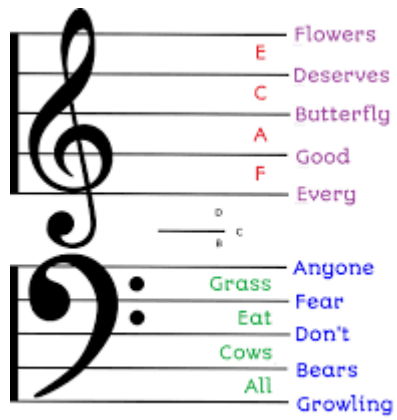
*Check all that apply.*

- Symphonies
- Ballets
- Rock Concerts
- Musical Theatre
- Concertos
- Instrumental music

Picture round

Look at the pictures for each question and answer questions based on each one.

19. This picture is showing you two clefs. What are they called? (Choose 2 answers) 2 points



Check all that apply.

- Treble
- Alto
- Tenor
- Bass

20. This is a picture of a score played by the string section. Name the largest note played. 1 point

Mark only one oval.

- Crotchet (1 beat note)
- Minim (2 beat note)
- Semi breve (4 beat note)

21. What is the shortest note used? \* 1 point

Mark only one oval.

- Crotchet (1 beat note)
- Minim (2 beat note)
- Semi breve (4 beat note)



General  
theory  
picture round

Each picture represents something found in the music we have been looking at.  
You may need to do extra research for some of the questions!

22. What is the name of this note? \*

1 point



Mark only one oval.

- Triplet
- Quaver
- Crotchet
- Minim

23. What is this note called? \*

1 point



Mark only one oval.

- Triplet
- Quaver
- Crotchet
- Minim

24. This is a rest and tells us how many beats to stop playing for. What is the rest called? \* 1 point



*Mark only one oval.*

- Crotchet
- Minim
- Quaver

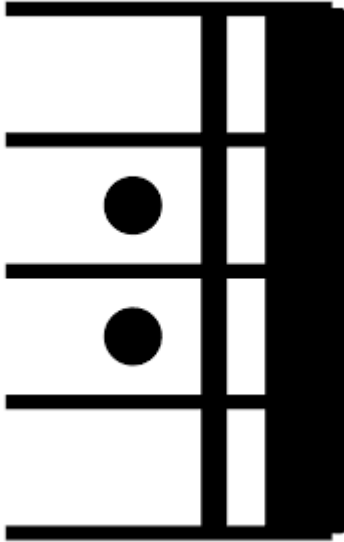
25. Is this a sharp or flat? \* 1 point



*Mark only one oval.*

- Sharp
- Flat

26. This tells us what to do when we get to it in the music. What is it telling us to do? \* 1 point



*Mark only one oval.*

- Play faster
- Play slower
- Play the same music again
- Play the music at a different pitch

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