

Examiners' Report
June 2016

GCSE Music 3 5MU03 01

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Introduction

This paper is based on the study of twelve prescribed works over four Areas of Study. Every year, two questions are set on each Area of Study: Questions (Q) 1-8.

The final question choice (either Q9 or Q10) is a short 25-minute essay. For Q9, this will be based on a work from Area of Study 1 or 2 and Q10 will then be based on a work from either Area of Study 3 or 4.

Music heard in the examination is familiar music because it is taken from the set works. The questions aim to mix listening and perception tests with factual and historical information, learnt through the two-year study of the twelve set works.

Question 1 (a)

Most of the students responded with either 'woodwind' or 'wind.'

Question 1 (c)

Most students identified the first subject correctly.

Question 1 (d)

This was a demanding question. Students had to listen very carefully, in order to identify two features of the part played by the violas, bassoons, cellos and double basses.

Many students stated the most obvious point – that these instruments play the melody or first subject.

Other creditable features mentioned frequently were: scalic/conjunct, quavers, repeated melody, in sequence, octave doubling, and forte (loud) dynamics.

(d) After the violin melody has been played, the violas, bassoons, cellos and double basses all play the same part. Describe this part. Make **two** points.

(2)

1. play a sequence
2. play upwards scales.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

A good answer, here, showing two features, ie the use of sequences and scale patterns.

2 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Always think about the musical elements in student responses.

Here, the melody shape is:

- heard to repeat in sequence
- based on scalic patterns.

Question 1 (e)

Questions on dynamics require a sequencing of events, ie **at the start** the dynamics are..... then the music becomes..... **then at the end** the dynamics are.....

Chronological answers are important because unlocated statements such as 'soft', 'loud' have no meaning in isolation. It is impossible to identify the section to which the student is referring – the beginning or end.

The mark scheme plots basic changes from **starts soft** louder in the middle and then **soft at the end**. Credit is also given for the observation of sudden changes/terraced dynamics.

(e) Describe the dynamics in the extract. Make **two** points.

(2)

- 1 Beginning is ~~very~~ piano
- 2 ~~Middle of extract~~ Middle of extract
• suddenly changes to forte.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a good response, providing a location of the opening dynamic, then the louder dynamic in the middle of the extract.

Additional credit is given for observing 'sudden' change in dynamics.

2 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

In a question on dynamics (or texture), think chronologically of the changes over time in your response.

Question 1 (f)

The common feature of the development section should have been well-known, as part of a study of this sonata form movement.

The two main answers were the:

- development of the 1st/2nd subject motifs
- exploration of different keys through modulation.

Good responses also gave the example of the use of the distant key of F# minor at the beginning of this section.

(f) Give **one** common feature of the development section in a sonata form movement.

Subjects from the exposition are experimented ^{with} through ⁽¹⁾
eg - a ~~or~~ different keys, eg like a circle of fifths



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

A full response, here, citing use and development of subjects from the exposition, as well as 'different keys.'

1 mark



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Learn the stylistic features of sonata form in general. This was a knowledge-based, rather than a listening, question.

Question 2 (b)

Most of the students were able to give the dominant, Ab, or 5th degree of the scale. Some students seemed not to understand the word 'degree' in relation to notes of the scale.

Question 2 (c)

This was a demanding question because the students needed to identify **three** melodic features. However, there were mainly impressive responses, showing a good knowledge of how this melody had been constructed.

Many students described the shape of the opening bar, discussing the falling arpeggio of Db, major followed by the stepwise ascent. This alone scored three marks. Other features identified frequently were the *legato* and *cantabile* phrasing, as well as the use of the ornament (turn or decuplet).

No students mentioned the repeat of the first five notes (or opening bar) at the end, or that the melody ended abruptly as an unfinished phrase. The responses demonstrated that students often focus on the first thing they hear, and not always on what happens subsequently, or at the end!

(c) Give **three** features of the melody in the first half of the extract.

(3)

1. It contains a falling motif outlining the D^b major triad
2. It contains a decuplet
3. It's ornamented stepwise and cantabile



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This student provides four clear features, namely the:

- falling Db major arpeggio
- decuplet ornament
- stepwise melody
- fact that it is played cantabile.

3 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Try to think about the shape of the melody.

Is it mainly stepwise or conjunct?

How is it played, *legato* or *staccato* or both?

What is its defining feature? Here, it is the falling triad, imitating falling raindrops.

Question 2 (d)

This was quite a straightforward question. The two textures heard in the extract were 'monophonic' and 'homophonic'. Most students identified the textures correctly.

Question 2 (e)

Describing the tempo at the end of the extract was quite straightforward. Again the advice is: **think of the chronology**.

The tempo was slow at the beginning, then the music slowed down further. There was a pause before the last note. Throughout the extract, some rubato was applied to the tempo.

Many points were awarded for the two marks. Most of the students said the tempo was slow, and also that it slowed down.

(e) Describe the tempo towards the end of the extract. Make **two** points.

(2)

- 1 Rubato is used
- 2 It slows down (ritardando)



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a typical response, gaining two marks.
2 marks



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Try to use musical vocabulary wherever possible.
In this response, the student uses the terms *rubato* and *ritardando*.

Question 3 (c)

This proved to be a demanding question. Very few students gave two correct instruments (out of a possible three).

The trumpet and bassoon were identified most frequently, but few students mentioned the cello. There were many who thought the cello was a viola, possibly because the cello was playing in a high register.

Question 3 (d)

This type of question has already been discussed at Q2(e). In this question, too, location is vital.

Reference to the tempo at the beginning and end, as well as what happens in the middle, is important and this was reflected in the mark scheme, ie **starts** slow/higher etc. Students who knew the stylistic features received credit for 'sudden' and 'frequent' changes of tempo.

(d) Describe the tempo of the music in the extract. Make **two** points.

(2)

- 1 The tempo starts slow legato
- 2 then a sudden change and the tempo increases



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Examiner Comments

A good response with location, ie 'starts slow'.

There is further credit for 'tempo increases' = faster, and also for observing the 'sudden change.'

2 marks



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Examiner Tip

Learn the key stylistic features of expressionism. This will provide answers for general observations of the musical elements, in this case, the tempo.

Question 3 (f)

The study of expressionism would have furnished the answer 'atonal' here, in regard to the tonality of music in this style.

Question 4 (a)

A straightforward question, looking for the response of 'resultant melody.'

Question 4 (b) (i)

There are two bass guitars playing in the extract.

Question 4 (c) (i)

The answer was **True**: During the extract the metre changed several times.

Question 4 (c) (ii)

The answer was **False**: The tempo did not increase throughout the extract.

Question 4 (c) (iii)

The answer was **False**: The music did not stay in the same key throughout.

Question 4 (c) (iv)

The answer was **True**: The texture of the music was polyphonic.

Question 4 (d)

As in the questions on dynamic change, observations on changes in texture need a chronological approach.

Nearly all students were able to observe that the texture 'thins out' or 'there are fewer parts'.

For the second mark, instruments/parts were mentioned, ie 'the bass guitars drop out', 'the strummed guitars drop out.'

(d) Describe how the texture changes towards the end of the extract. Make **two** points.

(2)

- 1 bass guitars drop out - thinner texture
- 2 chordal guitars playing chords (bottom? guitars) drop out - texture



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

A good, clear, answer that includes the general observation that the texture 'thins' and then identifies which parts 'drop out' of the musical texture.

2 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Always try to support comments with more detail, as in this response.

Question 5 (a)

Most students identified the first section as the link.

Because the music is very similar to the opening passage, 'introduction' was also an acceptable answer.

Question 5 (b)

The alto and tenor saxophone were often given correctly, here. The string bass was an acceptable answer, because it also plays a riff.

Question 5 (c)

The description of the ornamentation played on the piano was trill/tremolo or shake.

Question 5 (d)

The new section, where the trumpet enters, is the Head.

Question 5 (e)

The study of the chord sequence is fundamental to the study of the 12-bar blues.

'12-bar blues' alone would have elicited one mark. There were many other features to observe. The most common responses included:

- 7ths
- extended chords
- altered chords
- repeated pattern
- D7#9
- Eb7#9.

(e) Give **two** features of the chord sequence used in *All Blues*.

(2)

1 follows Loosley for 12 bar blues

2 The chord sequence uses G7, C7, E^{D7#9} and D^{#9}



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Here is a typical response, showing a good knowledge of this 12-bar blues chord progression used by Miles Davis.

2 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Learn the key features of the set works.

In this case, the repeated pattern of chords used by Miles Davis is central to the music.

Question 5 (f)

The description of the string bass part is that it **plucks** a one-bar **riff**. Most students found this question quite straightforward.

Question 6 (a)

The dictation question was reasonably well done.

Many students missed the # sign before the last note – C#. Other students wrote the whole phrase one note too high or too low, thus obtaining no marks, unfortunately.

The last note given (F#) was the first note to be written of the four. This was quite a simple, descending, stepwise phrase.

Area of Study 3

J.Buckley: *Grace* from the album *Grace*

6 Listen to the following extract, which will be played **four** times.

(a) Look at the following melody, which is heard at the beginning of the extract. Fill in the missing notes in bar 2. The rhythm is given above the staff.

(4)

My fa - ding voice sings of love _____

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

A correct response.
4 marks

ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Watch out for accidentals!

Question 6 (c)

This was a question asked frequently in relation to this set work, ie describing the vocal line.

There were many pleasing responses here, although only the best students could provide three creditworthy points. This was an effective question for differentiation.

(c) Describe the vocals in this extract. Make **three** points.

(3)

- 1 effect added to create whisper affect
- 2 occasionally goes into falsetto
- 3 backing vocals (pre-recorded of Jeff) to add harmony



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This student identifies three common features, the:

- whisper effect
- use of falsetto
- use of backing vocals to add harmony.

3 marks



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Think about the common features of the vocal part:

- high range with *falsetto*
- falling phrases,
- *portamento* (sliding) between syllables of some of the lyrics
- *vibrato* on the voice and vocalisation.

Question 6 (d)

Q6d invited students to provide two musical reasons. They could give two likes or dislikes, or one of each.

The important point is that it is a **musical reason**. For example, to say 'I dislike this piece because of the dynamics' is not enough. What is it about the dynamics that is disliked? If the student referred to the very loud, screaming nature of some of the music, this would be acceptable as a reason.

(d) Give **two** musical reasons why you like or dislike this piece of music.

(2)

- 1 I like the wide range of vocals throughout the piece.
- 2 I also like the use of the Reverb EQ in Verse 3 creating a ghost effect.

Total for Question 6 = 10 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

In this example, two valid reasons are given, ie the:

- wide vocal range
- ghost effect created by EQ.

2 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Always check that your response does not require an explanation, eg

'I like the tempo of the music.' This begs the question 'what is it about the tempo that you like?'

'I dislike the chords used.' Again, what is it about the chords that you dislike?

Question 7 (a)

This question tested aural awareness of pitch and rhythm.

The 'yiri' calls were simple to internalise and most students were able to find things to say. The points noted most frequently were that the first 'yiri' was sustained and *legato* and 'yiris' two and three were the opposite, ie short and *staccato*.

Area of Study 4

Koko:Yiri

7 Listen to the following extract, which will be played **three** times.

(a) Describe the melody of the word *yiri* heard three times at the beginning of the extract. Make **two** points.

(2)

- 1 *long sustained notes for the first yiri*
- 2 *second two are short and staccato.*



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This response was typical of many, highlighting as it does the essential differences between the 'yiri' calls.

2 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

When asked to compare melody lines, always think about the basic attributes, ie is it:

- syllabic or melismatic
- *staccato* or *legato*
- high pitch or low pitch
- long or short.

There will usually be stark contrasts like these, on which to comment.

Question 7 (b)

The correct words from the list, to describe what the balaphons play, were **ostinati** and **solo**.

Question 7 (c)

This question asked the students to describe the rhythm in the extract.

Through study of this work, students should have learnt several features of the rhythm in *Yiri*, including:

- polyrhythmic
- syncopation
- cross-rhythms
- repetitive (ostinato)
- improvised.

Question 7 (d)

The focus of this question was knowledge of how pitch changes can be made on the talking drum.

The intended responses were to mention three aspects, namely:

- the tightening/loosening of the strings to alter pitch
- playing different parts of the drum ie in the centre of the skin or on the edge etc
- using different parts of the hand/stick.

Most students achieved at least 1 mark on this question.

(d) Describe **two** ways in which different pitches are achieved on the talking drum.

(2)

1. Tightening the skin on the drum
2. Tapping the centre and the side of the drum



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This good response highlights two of the aspects mentioned above:

- the tension of the strings
- playing on different parts of the drum.

2 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Make sure that you understand how the instruments operate in this piece.

Question 8 (a)

Bhajan or Bandish describe this type of vocal raga.

Question 8 (b)

Most students knew that the bowed string instrument was called the sarangi.

Question 8 (c)

This question asked for two features of the alap. Again, it was a straightforward knowledge-based question.

Most of the students mentioned the free tempo, improvisatory aspect and the experimenting with notes from the rag. They also talked about the soft (*piano*) dynamics.

Question 8 (d)

This question concerned the mood of the raga.

There were many correct responses, focussing on the mood of devotion, worship, peacefulness, relaxed nature, as well as the notion of romance, longing and supplication.

Question 8 (e)

The question asked for the name of the rhythmic cycle, which is the tal (taal) or tala. Nearly all of the students knew this fact.

Question 9 (c)

This essay on the Handel set work was generally well done, with students displaying an impressive knowledge of the key stylistic features of the music.

Evidence of careful preparation was apparent. The weakest bullet point was 'dynamics' (as was also the case in Q10c). The Baroque practice of terraced dynamics was often forgotten, and mention of *crescendos* and *diminuendos* was not relevant here. That said, the bullet points on melody, texture, tonality, and instrumentation were all well-answered, in the main.

*(c) Comment on how Handel uses the following musical elements in *And the Glory of the Lord*.

- Melody
- Texture
- Tonality (key)
- Dynamics
- Instrumentation

Remember to use correct **musical vocabulary** where appropriate.

(10)

In this oratorio, there are four main motifs, which are all contrasting. The first motif is sung by the altos which solidifies and stands out the fact of the piece being in A major. The second motif is sung by the tenors, which is a descending sequence with melisma. This sequence has been repeated twice. The third motif is sung by the altoes, which is also a descending sequence. The fourth motif is sung by the tenors and basses, which has repeated long sustained notes of 'A' throughout the motif, which also emphasises that this piece is in A major.

The texture of this piece is mainly homophonic and polyphonic. Throughout this piece, there are 'conversations' between different voices of the choir, ~~and~~ making a 'call and response' effect to the piece. The orchestra acts as an accompaniment but sometimes plays the

melody line along with the choir.

The main tonality of this piece is A major. However it alternates in the middle of the piece by a perfect cadence to E major. Then the perfect cadence of the perfect cadence to B major. This helps to create a joyful mood to the music. This piece ends with a plagal cadence which makes it similar to other chapel pieces as the plagal cadence sounds like the word 'amen'.

The dynamics in this piece is mainly piano, which moderates to mezzoforte or even forte in the middle of the piece. ~~There~~ There isn't any crescendoes or diminuendoes, because it ~~has~~ has terraced dynamics, which means it doesn't get louder between loudness of the piece ~~but~~ but steps like terraces, which is a key feature for baroque music.

This oratorio is written for a small choir and an orchestra. There are violins, cellos, violas, double bass, flutes, oboes, bassoons, ~~trumpets~~ horns, tuba and timpani in the orchestra.



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Examiner Comments

Marks are given for:

Melody: four themes/contrasting/melody 2 descending sequence/melisma/
melody 4 long notes/ repeated notes

Texture: homophonic/polyphonic/instruments double voices

Tonality: A major/perfect cadences/ E major/B major

Dynamics: terraced

Instrumentation: violin, viola, cello, double bass = 1 mark, choir = 1 mark

The student provides 16 valid points

Max: 10 marks



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Examiner Tip

Ensure that you answer all parts of the question,
ie five bullet points.

Question 10 (c)

This essay, too, on the Capercaillie work was well-answered, in the main. The weak bullet point was 'dynamics' and sometimes there were no creditworthy points here. The other four elements of instrumentation, harmony, structure and texture were replete with musical detail.

*(c) Comment on how Capercaillie uses the following musical elements in *Skye Waulking Song*.

- Instrumentation - fiddle, uilleann pipes, bass guitar, accordion, drum kit
- Harmony - vocals have harmony
- Structure
- Dynamics - starts softly, gradually builds up
- Texture - mainly homophonic, some monophonic vocals

Remember to use correct **musical vocabulary** where appropriate.

(10)

Instrumentation -

* as the song is fusion of rock and folk music.

Skye Waulking song uses a variety of traditional Scottish instruments and more modern Western instruments. It uses the fiddle, the uilleann pipes and accordion, but also uses a drum kit and bass guitar. vocals are also included.

Harmony - The vocals include harmony to back up the melody which is sung. The instruments in the piece play chords to go with the vocals. The chords played are G, E minor and C major.

Structure -

The song has a typical structure of verse including verses and a chorus. ~~At the start of the piece~~ As it is a Waulking song, the structure is simple as it was originally the type of song that women used to sing when working.

Dynamics -

At the start of the piece, it's very quiet and soft, but when the first chorus comes in, the dynamics have a sudden change to loud (forte). There is a variety of dynamics in the piece, ~~but it is soft quite a lot of the time~~. The piece gradually gets louder towards the end, which is a crescendo.

Texture -

The piece is mainly homophonic, as it is vocals singing the melody and chords being played in the background. However, there are some monophonic parts when the vocals are on their own. At the start of the piece, the texture is quite thin as it is vocals and only some instruments but in the chorus, the drum kit, accordion etc come in so the texture is thicker.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Marks are awarded for:

Instrumentation: fusion of folk/rock. Five instruments were listed = max 3

Harmony: G, E minor and C major

Structure: verses

Dynamics: soft at start/dynamics increase as parts come in

Texture: homophonic/monophonic/parts build up

The student makes 11 valid points.

Max: 10 marks



Results+

Examiner Tip

Ensure that all five of the bullet points are answered.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, students are offered the following advice.

- Students should listen to the prescribed works as often as possible, in order to internalise the complete structure of the music
- Students should practice listening to extracts (of approximately one-minute duration) from different sections of the piece, and not only the opening bars
- There are many facts on each of the twelve pieces. Students should create key fact cards or similar, summarising the salient points, which are then often tested in the questions
- For dictation questions (which include chord sequences, rhythms etc), the principal melodies in the pieces should be studied and used as practice dictation exercises
- The weakest answers are often of the 'compare and contrast' or 'similarities and differences' nature. Practice these using any of the verses/choruses, Section A to Section B etc, in the set works
- The essay question can be prepared thoroughly
- Key fact cards on the musical elements, such as structure, harmony, texture, rhythm, melody etc will be invaluable
- There are now many practice paper resources to aid efficient revision and preparation for this paper. As in any subject at GCSE level, it is the quality and quantity of revision that will determine the degree of success on 5MU03

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