

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

MUSIC

H543

For first teaching in 2016

H543/05 Summer 2022 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers are also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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Paper 5 series overview

H543/05 Listening and appraising is the written paper for A Level Music. The paper targets two Assessment Objectives (see OCR specification, version 1.6, January 2020, page 24):

AO3 demonstrate and apply musical knowledge.

AO4 use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about music.

Areas of Study

Candidates needed to analyse, explain and compare styles of music, musical elements and the conditions and context in which music was created in four Areas of Study:

- AoS1: Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven
- AoS2: Popular Song: Blues, Jazz, Swing and Big Band
- Two other Areas of Study, chosen from:
 - AoS3: Developments in Instrumental Jazz 1910 to the present day
 - AoS4: Religious Music of the Baroque Period
 - AoS5: Programme Music 1820-1910
 - AoS6: Innovations in Music 1900 to the present day.

In the examination, candidates had to demonstrate and apply their knowledge and skills in answering questions on:

- AoS1 and AoS2:
 - Unfamiliar music and its related background
 - Prescribed repertoire and its related background
- AoS3-6: Wider listening based on the chosen Areas of Study

Most candidates attempted all the questions. Some left out questions in Sections A and B: most frequently unanswered were the dictation question or the question about harmony and tonality.

An error in the production of the audio CD for the examination resulted in the audio being presented in one continuous track, rather than in five separate tracks as shown in the paper. We apologise that this made the CD more difficult to navigate, particularly in Question 2, which included a number of timings of specific passages in the music. However, having carefully reviewed candidate responses, our examiners found the impact was minimal.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe music accurately, using detail and bar numbers. • Be able to identify key features of unfamiliar music by Beethoven. • Write about singers, their technique and how they express the meaning of a song. • Read the question carefully and follow the instructions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write too much about the accompaniment and not enough about the singing. • Know only a limited amount of music and only know superficial details. • Not make a judgement or explain an opinion about music they have studied.

Section A overview

Section A has two questions on unfamiliar music from Areas of Study 1 and 2. In addition to the exam paper, candidates are provided with recorded extracts on CD and (in a separate Insert) a lead sheet of the song and an outline score in two staves of the instrumental extract. In general, Question 1 has shorter questions and Question 2 has longer ones.

The order of extracts and questions may change from one year to the next. This year, Question 1 asked about Area of Study 2: Popular Song (Cab Calloway singing Harold Arlen's wartime song, 'Let's Take the Long Way Home'). Question 2 featured Area of Study 1: Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven (the opening of the finale of Beethoven's Symphony No. 3).

There was a very positive response from candidates, particularly to the song. Questions on structure and tonality made Question 2 more challenging than Question 1 for most candidates. However, compared to 2019, most candidates managed to score quite well in Section A.

Question 1 (a)

- 1 **Track 2** on your **CD** is a recording from Area of Study 2: Popular Song: Blues, Jazz, Swing and Big Band.

The extract is 'Let's Take The Long Way Home' by Johnny Mercer and Harold Arlen. The singer is Cab Calloway.

A lead sheet of the original song is provided: **Extract 1** in the accompanying **Insert**.

The lyrics sung on the recording are below:

Let's take the long way home,
Let's look for the long way home
And on the way, let's pretend
That this wonderful night won't end.

Through Asia won't be much too soon,
We'll circle once around the moon,
Our dream boat will carry us across the foam,
We'll take the long way, make sure it's the wrong way,
Let's take the long way home.

Shall we fly through the night,
Shall we dream as we go?
Shall we see the star on the right,
See the farm down below?

The whole trip appears,
Only takes a million years.
If you're in the mood to roam
Then let's take the long way home.

If you're in the mood to roam
Then let's take the long way home.

- (a) Identify the instrument playing the bass in the recording. Underline your answer.

baritone saxophone

bass guitar

bass tuba

double bass

[1]

Question 1 (b)

- (b) Listen to Cab Calloway singing 'And on the way, let's pretend' in bar 8² to bar 11. Compare the notes that he sings with the notation in the lead sheet, shown in **Fig. 1** below.

Three pitches are different in the recorded version. Circle these three notes **and** write the sung pitches on the line below the lyrics.

You may write on the Insert but you must copy your final answer onto **Fig. 1** below. Examiners will see and mark only this answer.

8

And on the way, let's pre - tend_____

Sung pitch:

Fig. 1

[3]

Answers for this question were often either completely correct or completely wrong. The most common mistake was wrongly identifying the three notes to be circled. Candidates should be aware that in Area of Study 2 singers quite often change pitches and rhythms from what is printed on the lead sheet. Instrumentalists in Area of Study 1, on the other hand, very rarely make changes to the printed score.

Question 1 (c)

- (c) Comment on Calloway's interpretation of the phrasing in bar 20² to bar 28 ('We'll circle once around the moon, Our dream boat will carry us across the foam').

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.....

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..... [2]

'Phrasing' means something very specific when it comes to singing. Singers have to breathe. Where in the song they choose to breathe is an important part of the performance. The score and the lyrics suggest that you might expect a singer to take a breath at the end of a line of lyrics: the comma shows a natural break in the words. Cab Calloway chooses to breathe after 'once' so that he can sing 'around the moon, our dream boat' in one long, legato phrase.

Some candidates wanted to write about changes to the rhythm (1 mark was allowed for this), but the 'phrasing' was a more successful response.

Question 1 (d)

(d) Explain how contrasts of mood are achieved in the passage from bar 36² to bar 49¹ in **either** the voice **or** the band.

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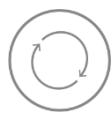
.....

.....

[4]

The more successful were good at linking the music with the mood, for example, 'the singer sings with a light tone, short, staccato notes, sounding playful and light-hearted'. Some candidates did not read the instructions in the question fully and wrote about both the voice and the band, when they should only have written about one.

Assessment for learning



If you are writing about the accompaniment, be specific about sections in the band:

- 'brass' (for example, 'the brass play chords'). Learn to tell the difference between trumpets and trombones. Avoid the word 'brass': 'the trumpets play chords' or 'the trombones play chords'.
- 'reeds' can be used. Reeds can be any woodwind.
- 'horns' is very general and can be confusing. In AoS2 'horns' means any instrument that's blown, but it can also mean French horns.

Question 1 (e)

(e) Identify the type of dance for which the music on this recording was intended. Underline your answer.

Foxtrot	Jitterbug	Tango	Waltz
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[1]

Question 1 (f) (i)

(f) (i) Identify the year in which the recording was made. Underline your answer.

1925	1945	1965	1985
------	------	------	------

[1]

Question 1 (f) (ii)

(ii) Identify **three** features of the recorded performance that are characteristic of the year you have chosen.

1

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2

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3

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[3]

This was answered well. More successful responses were able to find three different features, for example the singing, the accompaniment and the recording. They remembered to write about the singer. Singers from 1965, 1985 or later usually have a much fuller tone, but here Calloway is 'crooning' close to the microphone.

Less successful responses often concentrated on the recording, but there was only 1 mark for the poor quality of the recording.

More successful responses wrote about the features of the music, not what the music doesn't do. The mark scheme allowed negatives about the recording (e.g. "poor quality, textures are not clear"), but as a general rule write about what you can hear, not about what is missing.

Question 2 (a)

2 **Track 3** on your **CD** is a recording from Area of Study 1: Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven.

A skeleton score is provided: **Extract 2** in the accompanying **Insert**.

The extract is from the beginning of the final movement from Beethoven's *Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, 'Eroica', Op. 55*.

(a) On the bass staff in **Fig. 2** below, write the notes played by the 'cellos from bar 45 to bar 48 (© 0'59", repeated 1'09"). Use the rhythm indicated above the staff.

You may write on the Insert but you must copy your final answer onto **Fig. 2** below. Examiners will see and mark only this answer.

The image shows a musical score for Figure 2. It consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff starts at bar 43 and contains a melody with a 'cresc.' (crescendo) marking and a 'p' (piano) dynamic marking. The bass staff contains a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes. The score is in E-flat major and 3/4 time.

Fig. 2

[4]

There were many fully correct answers to this question. Often candidates were able to hear the broken chords (Eb in bars 45 and 48, Bb7 in bar 47). Appendix 1 in the mark scheme shows how this type of question is marked. More successful responses included lots of intervals of a third, less successful responses tended to move in step or go in random directions.

Question 2 (b) (i)

(b) (i) Briefly outline the **structure** of the music from bar 1 to bar 64 (Ⓢ 0'08" to 1'44").

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..... [3]

Some candidates were unsure what was meant by 'structure'. The more successful responses discussed the overall shape of the passage, its phrases or sections of music, and how (and in what order) sections are repeated or varied or new material introduced. They correctly identified a theme and variations.

Less successful responses discussed instruments or features that were obvious from the score, such as the repeat signs or the first- and second-time bars. Many candidates wrongly tried to explain the structure in sonata form terms (introduction, first subject, second subject and so on). If the bar numbers were correct, describing how the passage divides in a 3-part structure gained 1 mark.

Experience of listening to different music from the period will help candidates to identify 'theme and variations' and other common structures.

Question 2 (b) (ii)

(ii) Identify **three** ways in which the structure of the music develops from bar 65 (⊙ 1'45") to the end of the extract. Refer to bar numbers for each answer.

1

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2

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3

.....

[3]

The second part of the question was more challenging. More successful responses usually identified that (i) the variations continue with a new melody before (ii) breaking into a longer, imitative development section, followed by (iii) another variation in the major key at the end. The question asked for bar numbers at each stage. Less successful responses tended to ignore the issue of structure and bar numbers.

Some candidates picked up the word 'develops' from the question and used it in their answer. There were no marks for 'the melody is developed', but there was a mark available for recognising the 'development' as part of the structure (with the correct bar numbers). The beginning of this passage (up to bar 96) is a continuation of the variations (the melody is in the bass with 8-bar phrases and is repeated, although elaborated by a new melody). After this the predictable pattern of 8-bar phrases breaks down, the music moves into C minor and it begins to feel like a 'development' section.

Exemplar 1

At bar 126 it is in F minor, but then modulates to the relative major of Fm, A^b major, ~~at~~ ^{by} bar 148 which gives a sense of building intensity, and then the diminished 7th at bar 160 creates a feeling of tension. Bars 164 to 167 are comfortably in B minor, and then the tension is relieved ~~by~~ at bar 168 when it modulates to D major which is a more bright key, and it stays here ~~until~~ through to ~~the~~ past bar 171. [5]

The response is concise and uses the space well. The candidate is consistent in identifying keys throughout the passage, with bar numbers to show which part of the passage is meant. More keys could have been mentioned but there is a good understanding of the tonality and it is clearly related to the mood of the music. One example of harmony (the diminished 7th chord at bar 160) is correctly identified.

The response in Exemplar 1 scored 5 marks.

Section B overview

This section is based on the study of prescribed works, one each from Areas of Study 1 and 2.

Candidates who did well in Section B were usually:

- able to discuss the prescribed works by Haydn and Barbra Streisand in detail.
- familiar with the conditions and context in which the music was created.
- able to refer to examples of other Haydn symphonies and performances of 'Yesterdays' by other singers (for example, to show how music changed over time).

Question 3 (a)

3 Area of Study 1: Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven.

A full score for **Extract 3** is in the accompanying **Insert**. The extract is the beginning of the second of the prescribed movements from Haydn: *Symphony No. 48 in C major, 'Maria Theresa'*.

There is a recording of the extract on your **CD**: **Track 4**.

(a) The extract is the first half of a movement in binary form. Identify and explain features in bar 1 to bar 38 that give the music a sense of moving forward.

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..... **[10]**

Many candidates answered this question well. They were able to identify a range of relevant features in the music. More successful responses used bar numbers to locate examples. They understood how different elements of the music worked together to propel the music forward, for example the constant movement of the triplet semiquavers from bar 12, combined with the 6/8 metre, the repeated one-bar phrases and the movement through chords of C – F – Dm – G as the music modulates to the dominant, C major.

Question 3 (b)

(b) Explain how working for Prince Nicolaus I Esterházy influenced Haydn's symphonies.

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..... [10]

Most candidates knew of Haydn's long service for the Esterházy family. There were several accounts of his appointment as Kapellmeister and the nature of the establishment at Eszterháza. Many answers discussed Prince Nicolaus's enthusiasm for music and his requirements as an employer. The more successful responses were able to discuss Haydn's significance as 'father of the symphony', tracing developments from the writing for soloists in the early symphonies to the 'Sturm und Drang' period (of which No. 48 is an example). Many answers referred to the London symphonies (written after the death of Prince Nicolaus) as examples of Haydn's greatest achievements as a symphonist.

There was some confusion about Haydn's terms of employment. Haydn was under contract as a permanent employee/servant of the Prince. He was not commissioned to write symphonies in the sense that he was being paid to write each one separately. He was not allowed to travel abroad. Haydn's only periods of travel (his two trips to England) were after Prince Nicolaus's death and after Haydn's retirement.

Some answers suggested that because Haydn was writing on demand that he was therefore less daring than he might have been and writing symphonies to a formula. More convincing accounts explain that his 'father of the symphony' reputation is because of the consistent development of the form through his originality and experimentation over decades working for Prince Esterházy. A few answers criticised the early symphonies for lacking features common in the later ones or those of Beethoven. It would be better to regard the early symphonies as necessary stages in Haydn's development as a composer. Even the greatest composers have to start somewhere. More successful responses were able to focus on what Haydn was doing at Eszterháza, not on what he hadn't learned to do yet.

Question 4 (a)

4 Area of Study 2: Popular Song: Blues, Jazz, Swing and Big Band.

Extract 4 (Ⓞ **Track 5**) is 'Yesterdays', one of the prescribed songs from Barbra Streisand: *Color Me Barbra* (1966).

There is no score of this music.

(a) Compare and evaluate the performance and arrangement of 'Yesterdays' by Barbra Streisand with one or more versions of the song by other singers and arrangers.

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..... [10]

Barbra Streisand's 'Yesterdays' was very well known. Almost all candidates had something to say about the 'Baroque pop' elements of the song. There were detailed observations about the instrumentation and imitative writing which is a feature of Robert Mersey's arrangement. More successful candidates were able to comment in vivid detail on Streisand's singing (see Exemplar 2 below) and contrast it with that of other singers, most often Ella Fitzgerald or one of Billie Holiday's recordings.

Less successful answers commonly focused too much on the instrumentation. Often this was quite detailed about the introduction to Streisand's version but was then very brief on the chosen comparison.

Negative comparisons were often limiting, for example: 'Streisand has a harpsichord but Fitzgerald doesn't', 'Streisand sings with a bold, full tone, Holiday does not', 'Sinatra doesn't go into a quicker swing tempo at the end'. Such answers did not tell us anything meaningful about both singers, only about one.

Misconception



Instrumental arrangements are outside the scope of this question. There was no credit for discussing Miles Davis's arrangement of 'Yesterdays'.

Teaching and learning in Area of Study 2 should focus on singers and singing, song composers and song arrangers. This may include accompaniment but not purely instrumental versions of popular song.

Exemplar 2

prominent role given to the strings. Additionally, Sinatra's vocal timbre is generally more subdued than Streisand's, who often belts her lyrics, particularly in the 3rd verse. Both songs climax at approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of the way through, but whilst in Streisand's version the time signature changes to $\frac{3}{4}$ at the 3rd verse, in Sinatra's version the time signature remains the same. Also, the tempo of Streisand's version is significantly faster than Sinatra's, which is arranged by Riddick to be more of a ballad to suit his "crooning" vocal style. Sinatra mostly uses his chest voice to sing, whilst Streisand uses her head voice towards the end of her song in the 3rd verse. [10]

Exemplar 2 is part of a longer response which scored 7/10.

The candidate comments on the singing of both Barbra Streisand and Frank Sinatra. There are technical words which describe the singing: 'Streisand... often belts her lyrics, ... his [Sinatra's] "crooning" vocal style. ... his chest voice ... her head voice'. There is just enough detail on the singing to get into the 7-8 marks band.

The response could be improved by adding more detail on the **singing** (vocal style and technique) and on the **interpretation** (the expressive effect of the singing). For example:

'Streisand projects her voice strongly, with plenty of attack and crescendos through long notes. Sinatra is more sensitive, sings in long, legato phrases. She is energetic and determined, while he is more thoughtful and regretful about the past'.

Assessment for learning



Where possible there should be discussion of the effectiveness of singers in popular song.

Some singers have a rich or bright vocal tone, consistent across their range and always in tune – singers such as Ella Fitzgerald or Frank Sinatra. Others – such as Billie Holiday – may offer more of a challenge to listeners. Her tone is sometimes thin, not as beautiful or as consistent as Fitzgerald or Sinatra, but her recordings are often thought of as getting to the heart of the songs in a unique way.

- How can this be explained?
- Does close study of her singing reveal why she is so successful?
- Can you give an example of how she sings a phrase?

Question 4 (b)

(b) Explain the extent to which Barbra Streisand's album *Color Me Barbra* is characteristic of the 1960s.

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..... [10]

There were many well-informed answers about Barbra Streisand and the 1960s. Many candidates were able to comment in detail on the social context in which Streisand worked, contrasting her music with that of Bob Dylan, a safer choice for middle-of-the-road audiences. They also noted how she was a role model for women and had an unusual degree of artistic control over her work in TV and recording.

More successful responses to this question were able to support their answers by referring to songs from the album. Less successful responses tended to discuss 'Yesterdays' only, referring correctly to Baroque pop but overestimating how important it was. These answers knew only a little about the social context in which the recording was made or the type of career enjoyed by Streisand in this period.

Section C overview

In Section C, candidates must answer two essays, one from two different Areas of Study.

Centres continue to give candidates a varied and interesting programme for listening and discussion. Many candidates wrote knowledgeably about music and its historical and social context. The advance information helped many candidates to focus successfully on the topics in the examination. As a result there were fewer essays in the bottom two bands of marks and more in the middle and higher bands.

More successful responses were often familiar with a wide range of music and its background. They understood the technical aspects of the music. They could write about the music's significance in history and its effectiveness for them as a listener or performer. They could organise their ideas clearly and concisely.

Less successful responses tended to show a knowledge of a limited amount of music, sometimes with only a basic idea of its content or background. They might have written in detail about the music but left out important parts of the question or mentioned important things only in the last paragraph.

Evaluative and critical judgements about music

The essay questions in Section C are designed to test candidates' ability to 'use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about music' (Assessment Objective AO4, A Level specification, page 24).

75% of the marks for this paper (30% of the whole qualification) are for this skill.

This is not simply a matter of describing or analysing the music. Candidates also have to use their knowledge and skill to write intelligently about the music. The key features of a question can sometimes be missed if candidates are only looking to see what music they are going to have to write about.

The Section C questions from this paper include the following phrases:

- Explain why ...
- Evaluate the effectiveness ...
- Discuss the role ...
- Explain how this contributes to the impact of the music on its audience.

Candidates who score marks in the highest bands are able to answer this type of question confidently. They have practised expressing and justify their opinions in discussions with others (for example, in class) and in practice essays. Listening to a range of music and learning about it has given them the confidence to evaluate music and to make effective and confident judgements of their own.

Exemplar 3 shows how one candidate was able to make 'evaluative and critical judgements'.

Exemplar 3

This use of string writing is used also by Haas and Johnston. Haas' Second String Quartet uses a plethora of string techniques (the open C string on the cello, falling glissandi, microtonal harmony, etc.) to create extremely interesting and alien textures. The Second String Quartet is incredibly foreboding.

~~and~~ Johnston's Seventh String Quartet also uses microtonality, but to a much higher degree of precision. Each note is extremely specific in pitch. However, the third movement 'With Solemnity' is particularly effective. The dissonances and microtonality create a sound world unlike any other. It is, however, expressive, lyrical music. There is ample room for the strings to play quite beautiful flowing lines, all while completely eschewing any normal harmony. It is a truly fantastic movement.

[Typed transcription of exemplar script:

This use of string writing is used also by Haas and Johnston. Haas' Second String Quartet uses a plethora of string techniques (the open C string on the cello, falling glissandi, microtonal harmony, etc.) to create extremely interesting and alien textures. The Second String Quartet is incredibly foreboding. Johnston's Seventh String Quartet also uses microtonality, but to a much higher degree of precision. Each note is extremely specific in pitch. However, the third movement 'With Solemnity' is particularly effective. The dissonances and microtonality create a sound world unlike any other. It is, however, expressive, lyrical music. There is ample room for the strings to play quite beautiful flowing lines, all while completely eschewing any normal harmony. It is a truly fantastic movement.]

Exemplar 3 is part of a longer response which scored full marks.

The essay questions in Section C are designed to test candidates' ability to 'use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about music' (Assessment Objective AO4, A Level specification, page 24). 75% of the marks for this paper (30% of the whole qualification) are for this skill.

In this paragraph the candidate writes about two string quartets by Georg Haas and Ben Johnston (both can be found on YouTube, with score). The response refers to other works in some detail, so the candidate has little time to make their points on these two works. The paragraph is concise.

The technical language shows that the candidate knows the music: 'falling glissandi, microtonal harmony, ... much higher degree of precision ... lyrical music'.

More effective is the candidate's understanding and clear judgement. The adjectives convey the effectiveness of the music: 'extremely interesting and alien textures ... incredibly foreboding ... a sound world unlike any other ... beautiful flowing lines ... truly fantastic'

The candidate makes a strong case for relatively unknown music. The technical language and knowledge is consistent throughout the essay and gives confidence in the candidate's evaluation of the music.

Question 5*

Area of Study 3: Developments in Instrumental Jazz 1910 to the present day.

- 5* Explain why jazz was at the height of its popularity in the period from 1920 to 1960. You should consider historical reasons for jazz's place in society and/or the popular appeal of the music and its different styles. Refer to examples from one or more bands, band leaders or players. **[25]**

This was a popular choice of essay. Many candidates structured their essay to trace the development of jazz from 1920 to 1960, referring to examples from Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker and Miles Davis. Most answers identified radio and recording as important forces driving the popularity of jazz. Many answers discussed the migration of New Orleans musicians to Chicago and New York and the popularity of social dancing. Convincing answers provided some specific detail to support general statements: the number of radio stations, or that Morton's band for 'Black Bottom Stomp' was hand-picked for the recording. Some candidates were well-informed about Duke Ellington's residency at the Cotton Club and the fame of his soloists (as seen by the bands tours of Europe in 1933 and 1939).

Candidates who did well identified the 'hot' features in the music itself – the novel swing and syncopation which made jazz so exciting in the 1920s. The popularity of star soloists and the 1930s bands was well known. The more successful responses were able to explain this in terms of the music, for example discussing Armstrong's opening trumpet solo in 'West End Blues' or the characteristic sounds of the popular Ellington, Count Basie or Glenn Miller bands.

Less successful answers tended to lose sight of the question. Some spent too much time discussing the origins of jazz, New Orleans and Storyville, all before 1920. A few spent half an essay on bebop, cool jazz and the post-war decline of the big bands: one of these topics would have been enough to show jazz's gradual drift away from mass popularity after the 1940s.

Question 6*

- 6* Discuss changes over time in the role of the 'front line' (instruments such as clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone) in jazz from 1910 to the present day. Refer to the music of **two** or more contrasting musicians. [25]

Fewer candidates answered this question compared to Question 5. Many candidates were able to write perceptively about the role of the front line in the big bands, playing riffs or close harmony in sections, with solos distributed among the players, encouraging both a team spirit and a fierce rivalry between virtuoso players. Answers were supported by examples from a range of soloists. The most successful answers made detailed comments on key figures, especially Louis Armstrong, Charlie Parker and Miles Davis. Some candidates wrote about important jazz figures, such as Johnny Hodges and Lester Young and contemporary musicians such as Courtney Pine. Examples in the more successful responses suggested that candidates had listened to the music several times and analysed and reflected on what they were hearing. Examples such as Parker's alto sax solo from 'Koko' or the solos from Davis's 'So What' (by John Coltrane, Cannonball Adderley and Davis himself) can be found in transcription and deserve careful study.

Less successful answers were often rather general and made little attempt to discuss the music. Some answers assumed that jazz developed by the constant process of younger players becoming better than their elders. Judgements of this sort tend to be simplistic. Often it is a case of younger players 'standing on the shoulders of giants', building on the achievements of older players and doing things in their own way.

Question 7*

Area of Study 4: Religious Music of the Baroque Period.

- 7* Evaluate the effectiveness of the writing for solo voice in religious music by **two** composers of the Baroque period. [25]

Area of Study 4 was answered a little less often than the other options in Section C. There were a number of fine discussions of solo passages, particularly from Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* or one of the cantatas, and from Monteverdi's *Vespers*, Carissimi's *Jephte* and Handel's *Messiah*. Candidates responded best to passages which exploited dramatic potential, writing convincingly about word painting, melisma, recitative and obbligato accompaniment. The more successful responses were able to make judgements about 'the effectiveness of the writing', relating the music to the drama of the situation. Some answers successfully related this to the influence of opera on solo religious music.

Less successful responses tended to have a limited number of things to say, perhaps only about short passages of music. Recitatives were sometimes discussed in more detail than the aria that followed. There was little discussion of the performance practice of the period or how modern singers approach this repertoire. A few answers discussed settings for SATB as if they were music for four soloists. While duets are one thing, there is a limit to the extent to which a composition for four voices can be regarded as 'writing for solo voice'.

Question 8*

8* Explain the development of **one** of the following forms of music during the Baroque period:

- anthem
- cantata
- motet.

Support your answer with examples from the music of one or more composers.

[25]

This was the more popular choice for those who studied Baroque religious music. There were very well-informed answers about all three forms.

Answers on the anthem was most often based on Purcell and Handel. More successful responses were able to distinguish between full anthem and verse anthem. Candidates knew about the importance of King Charles II in the revival of English church music after the Commonwealth. The influence of French practices on Purcell was recognised. There were some vivid descriptions of the music of *Hear my prayer, O Lord* and *My heart is inditing*. These were particularly convincing when candidates appeared to have sung the music as members of a choir. Handel was largely represented by *Zadok the Priest*.

Discussion of the cantata, naturally, was dominated by J. S. Bach. *Wachet auf* (BWV40) was the leading example, *Ein feste Burg* (BWV80) was also popular, but there were other cantatas as well. There was good detail on common features of the cantata and some understanding of the place of the cantata in Lutheran worship. When the music was very familiar, candidates were able to describe rhythmic and melodic devices used to illustrate the text.

In contrast, a variety of composers and nationalities were represented in the motets – Italian, French, German and English. Discussion of Heinrich Schütz's motets was particularly good in placing his music in a historical context, from his studies in Venice with Giovanni Gabrieli (bringing Italian influence into German church music) to works written for the limited resources available to church composers following the end of the Thirty Years' War.

Candidates who were in the middle bands of marks tended to be inconsistent in their knowledge of the music or knew the music well but were limited in their knowledge of the context.

Question 9*

Area of Study 5: Programme Music 1820–1910.

9* Discuss the role of the solo instrument in programme music from 1820 to 1910. Refer to the work of one or more composers from one or more of the following:

- piano music
- instrumental solos accompanied by orchestra
- other examples of solo music.

[25]

Piano music was a commonly chosen topic for this essay. Many candidates were able to discuss the repertoire. Robert Schumann's *Kinderszenen*, Grieg's *Lyric Pieces Book 5* and Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* often featured. Some candidates answered very well on instrumental solos, not just on major works like Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* or Strauss's *Don Quixote* but also on shorter solos, such as the violin in Saint-Saëns's *Danse macabre*.

Often the discussion was accompanied by details of the technological improvements to the instrument and the expressive opportunities this gave to composers of programme music. Candidates who did well in this question were able to describe passages of music, including specific piano techniques (melody in the right hand, bass and arpeggios in the left, use of pedals, contrast of registers, crossing of hands, and so on). In addition, more successful responses were very confident in discussing advances in the instruments and instrumental techniques. They captured the character of the music well and explained its effectiveness in illustrating the programme.

Less successful answers knew the music in a more limited way. Many candidates correctly linked the development of the upright piano with music that was suitable for amateur pianists, but some of the examples were of techniques that were common in the works of Haydn, Mozart or Beethoven. Answers had to show how piano music developed after Beethoven. More successful responses managed to include more technically demanding music by and for virtuoso pianists, such as Liszt's *Mazeppa*.

Question 10*

- 10*** Explain how composers between 1820 and 1910 used effects such as dynamics, expression, articulation, complex textures and dramatic contrast to illustrate a programme. **[25]**

This was the most often chosen question from this section. The question was directly related to the specification: 'development of dynamics, expression, articulation, complex textures and dramatic contrast and other effects' (page 11: Area of Study 5, musical elements, bullet point 4). Not all candidates were able to address these with confidence and clarity, but the music was mostly familiar and almost all answers were able to discuss some of the points, depending on the music chosen. Most often selected were Mendelssohn: *Hebrides overture*, Berlioz: *Symphonie fantastique*, Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet*, Smetana: *Vltava*.

The mark scheme shows some of the general headings which could have been considered: the importance of personal expression; the wider expressive possibilities of better instruments and a larger orchestra; more detailed scores and instructions for performers; more dramatic contrast and extreme dynamics; improved playing techniques and more professional orchestras and conductors.

The most successful responses were able to organise their ideas successfully. They had a good grasp of the general ideas and referred to them consistently. If they were discussing piano repertoire, they linked the improvements in piano construction with the programmatic qualities of the music. They described the effects precisely, with the musical detail and the programme side by side. For example, the dramatic ending to Berlioz's 'March to the scaffold', with its exciting coda, suddenly the *idée fixe* on a high clarinet – a brief memory of love, interrupted by a tutti G minor chord as the guillotine descends, and so on. Above all they were able to select examples effectively, in a way that made a point.

Less successful responses tended to go through descriptions their chosen music from beginning to end. Smetana's *Vltava* was sometimes a long journey down the river, with each stage carefully described. Some of the detail was relevant, but the writing could be side-tracked by mentioning features of rhythm, melody or harmony that were not really needed.

Question 11*

Area of Study 6: Innovations in Music 1900 to the present day.

11* Discuss how one composer (or more than one) from 1900 to the present day has explored a new world of **sonority** and **timbre**. Explain how this contributes to the impact of the music on its audience.

For example, you may wish to write about music with unusual instruments or innovative playing techniques or new combinations of vocal, instrumental or electronic sounds. **[25]**

In Q11 most candidates answered with music from after 1945. A wide choice was available. Stockhausen was a popular choice (especially *Stimmung*, *Kontakte* and *Gesang der Jünglinge*). There were very good examples from Steve Reich (*Different Trains*, *Clapping music* and *Electric Counterpoint*). John Cage's *4'33"* was sometimes used to illustrate sonority and timbre. There was some sensible discussion of the philosophy behind its composition but also exaggerated claims for its effectiveness in performance. Candidates who went on to write about Cage's *Sonatas and interludes* found a more suitable choice. Information about the technical aspects of the prepared piano was helpful. The more successful responses discussed how the novel timbres contributed to the aural effect of the music.

Candidates who reached the top two bands of marks had a clear idea of the sound world of their chosen music and its impact on the audience. Exemplar 3 above shows what could be done, but there were several other very good discussions of contemporary music (much of it can be found on YouTube). Some candidates who did well discussed how Debussy (*La cathédrale engloutie*) and Schoenberg (*Five Orchestral Pieces*) explored sonority and timbre as an alternative to functional harmony.

Less successful responses tended to concentrate only on technical aspects of the music. The impact of Reich's music was sometimes lost in the discussion of his rhythmic techniques. However, mostly this was a well-answered question, with many candidates able to discuss a range of music from one composer.

Question 12*

12* Evaluate the success of **one or two** composers from 1945 to the present day in **either** writing new music in traditional forms (for example, symphony, concerto, opera) **or** writing new music in innovative forms. **[25]**

This question provided candidates with an opportunity to write about almost any music after 1945 that they knew well. Mostly candidates chose to write about 'innovative forms', the way in which music is organised in time for composers who choose not to use the traditional forms of symphony, concerto, opera, and so on.

Candidates who did less well tended to interpret 'form' too loosely, using it to mean style. As a result, discussions of examples (from repertoire similar to that chosen for Q11) focused on musical elements such as rhythm, pitch, textures and timbres. There were detailed descriptions of innovative techniques but not on the way these were brought together to make a completely structured work.

Some answers were limited in evaluating the success of the composers. Some simply suggested that the composer had wanted to write music in this style and had succeeded. Candidates should consider evaluating success in other ways, for example, audience reaction, repeated performances, contribution to a body of work, influence on other composers, fame, money, and so on.

Candidates who did well tended to know the music really well. They were able to discuss its structure fully, explaining how the music was presented to the audience over time.

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The [AS Level specification](#) includes a schedule of prescribed works for Section C. This may be a useful source of ideas for suitable music for candidates at A Level. The list for 2023 includes Jelly Roll Morton, Handel's *Messiah*, Sibelius's *En saga* and Ligeti's *Clocks and Clouds*.

The specification will be updated soon to include prescribed works for 2024, 2025 and 2026.

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