

Year 9: MUSIC - Minimalism



West Kirby
Grammar School

Learning about this topic is important because:

Minimalism is one of the most influential musical styles of the twentieth century. Through studying minimalist music, you will explore how composers create engaging music from small musical ideas and simple patterns. You will learn how composers such as Steve Reich and Mike Oldfield manipulate motifs and cells using a range of techniques to create texture, interest and development. You will also discover how twentieth-century composers challenged traditional ideas about music through experimentation with tonality, rhythm, timbre and structure.

This builds on:

Musical Elements, Music Theory, Keyboard Skills, African Music, Music History, Jazz and Blues. Students apply their understanding of rhythm, texture, structure, notation and performance whilst exploring how musical ideas can be developed and transformed.

This leads to:

Riffs and Hooks, Folk and Fusion, Film Music and GCSE Music. Students develop compositional, listening and performance skills whilst learning how musical ideas can be manipulated, arranged and developed in a variety of styles.

We will learn:

Technical

- How to perform minimalist music accurately using keyboards and percussion.
- How to maintain pulse, rhythm and timing within repetitive musical patterns.
- How to recognise and use minimalist vocabulary and musical terminology.
- How to apply music theory knowledge when learning and arranging music.

Constructive

- How minimalist composers develop music from motifs and cells.
- How musical ideas can be manipulated through phase shifting, augmentation, diminution, note addition and subtraction.
- How to create and arrange music in a minimalist style.
- How simple musical ideas can be organised and developed into extended compositions.

Expressive

- How composers create interest and variety from limited musical material.
- How twentieth-century composers experimented with new sounds, timbres and sonorities.
- How minimalist music creates atmosphere, tension and musical interest.
- How critical listening helps us understand the purpose and impact of minimalist music.

We will develop/practise skills including:

- Performing accurately and confidently on keyboards and percussion instruments.
- Listening critically to identify musical features, techniques and styles.
- Applying music theory knowledge when learning, arranging and performing music.
- Practising independently and persevering when learning challenging musical parts.
- Developing motifs and cells using a range of minimalist compositional techniques.
- Experimenting with musical ideas to create original arrangements and compositions.
- Organising and structuring musical material to create coherent performances and compositions.
- Exploring how composers use repetition, texture and timbre to create musical interest.
- Evaluating your own work and the work of others using appropriate musical vocabulary.
- Working creatively and imaginatively to communicate musical ideas and artistic intentions.

You could learn more about this topic by:



Minimalism



Minimalist Techniques



Clapping Music

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Atonality, Polytonality, Chromaticism, Dissonance, Timbre, Sonority, Minimalism, Motif, Cell, Rhythmic Motif, Melodic Motif, Phase Shift, Phase In, Phase Out, Metamorphosis, Note Addition, Note Subtraction, Augmentation, Diminution, Tone, Semitone, Clapping Music, Tubular Bells. Conjunct, Disjunct.

Your Teacher will assess your knowledge by:

- Completing listening and retrieval activities throughout the topic.
- Performing extracts from *Clapping Music* and *Tubular Bells*.
- Creating and arranging a minimalist composition using a range of development techniques.
- Evaluating your own and others' performances and compositions.
- Completing twentieth-century music listening and appraising tasks.

Year 9: MUSIC – Major/Minor Scales, Tonic Triads and Intervals



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Learning about this topic is important because: Understanding major and minor scales, tonic triads and intervals is essential for developing musicianship. In this topic, you will extend your knowledge of scales and key signatures by exploring major and minor keys, relative majors and minors, tonic triads and melodic and harmonic intervals. You will learn how composers use these building blocks to create melodies, harmony and modulation. These skills form the foundation of performance, composition and musical analysis and are essential preparation for GCSE Music.

This builds on: The Musical Elements, Staff Notation and the Keyboard, Major Scales, Key Signatures and Accidentals, Tonic Triads, Chords and Intervals, and Keyboard Skills. Students apply their understanding of notation, scales and harmony whilst developing more advanced theoretical and practical musicianship.

This leads to: GCSE Music, A Level Music, Harmony, Composition, Musical Analysis and advanced keyboard performance. Understanding scales, intervals and harmony underpins listening, appraising, composing and performing across all musical styles.

We will learn:

Technical

- How to construct and perform major and minor scales accurately.
- How to identify and perform melodic and harmonic intervals.
- How to construct tonic triads in major and minor keys.
- How to recognise and use the Circle of Fifths and relative major and minor keys.

Constructive

- How scales, intervals and triads create melody and harmony.
- How composers organise music using different keys and chord structures.
- How modulation creates contrast and musical development.
- How theoretical knowledge can be applied to practical performance and composition.

Expressive

- How major and minor tonality influences mood and character.
- How composers use harmony and intervals to communicate emotion.
- How performers interpret music through an understanding of tonality.
- How harmonic choices shape the expressive qualities of music.

We will develop/practise skills including:

- Constructing major and minor scales using the correct tone and semitone patterns.
- Identifying relative major and minor keys.
- Recognising and performing melodic and harmonic intervals.
- Constructing tonic triads in a variety of keys.
- Applying the Circle of Fifths to identify key relationships.
- Performing scales, triads and intervals accurately on the keyboard.
- Applying theoretical knowledge to practical musical activities.
- Developing speed, accuracy and fluency when reading and writing notation.
- Evaluating harmonic and melodic features using appropriate musical vocabulary.
- Building confidence and independence when solving complex music theory problems.

You could learn more about this topic by:



Tonic Triads



Teaching Gadget



Minor Scales



Intervals

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes: Major Scale, Minor Scale, Relative Major, Relative Minor, Key Signature, Circle of Fifths, Tonic, Triad, Chord, Interval, Melodic Interval, Harmonic Interval, Tone, Semitone, Raised 7th, Accidental, Sharp, Flat, Natural, Modulation, Harmony, Melody, Ascending, Descending.

Your Teacher will assess your knowledge by:

- Completing retrieval and theory activities throughout the topic.
- Constructing major and minor scales accurately.
- Identifying and writing tonic triads and melodic and harmonic intervals.
- Performing scales, triads and intervals confidently on the keyboard.
- Applying the Circle of Fifths to identify related keys.
- Completing a written assessment demonstrating understanding of major and minor scales, tonic triads and intervals.

Year 9: MUSIC – Folk and Fusion



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Learning about this topic is important because:

This unit develops your understanding of Folk Music as a traditional musical genre and explores how musical traditions evolve through fusion with other styles and cultures. You will learn about the instruments, timbres, textures and structures associated with Celtic Folk Music and develop your understanding of accompaniment patterns, harmony and arrangement. Through performing, composing, listening and appraising, you will explore how music reflects identity, culture and community whilst developing increasingly sophisticated musical skills. This unit builds upon your previous learning in African Music, Jazz and Blues and Music Theory

This builds on:

Links to the National Curriculum through performing, composing, listening, reviewing and evaluating music. Students build upon their understanding of the Musical Elements, Music Theory, African Music, Jazz and Blues, ensemble performance and accompaniment patterns. Your prior knowledge of rhythm, texture, harmony, timbre and structure is applied within the context of Folk Music traditions. You will also draw upon their understanding of intervals, chords and accompaniment techniques developed throughout KS3

This leads to:

Applying your knowledge of harmony, accompaniment, arrangement and musical traditions to future topics including Film Music, Hooks and Riffs, advanced composition and GCSE Music. You will continue to develop their understanding of how music is constructed, performed and interpreted across different times, places and cultures.

We will learn:

Technical

- How to perform Celtic Folk melodies accurately using appropriate stylistic features.
- How to perform chords using different accompaniment techniques including drones, pedals, broken chords and arpeggios and how accompaniment patterns support a melody.

Constructive

- How Folk Music is structured using melody, harmony, texture and accompaniment.
- How intervals, triads, chords and bass lines are used within Folk Music.
- How arrangements are developed from lead sheets.
- How fusion combines traditional and contemporary musical ideas.

Expressive

- How Folk Music reflects culture, heritage and community traditions.
- How musicians communicate meaning through performance and interpretation.
- How musical traditions evolve and influence one another over time.
- How Folk Music can communicate identity, storytelling and shared experiences.

We will develop/practise skills including:

- Performing confidently as part of an ensemble.
- Developing fluency when performing accompaniment patterns.
- Using notation, lead sheets and chord symbols accurately.
- Developing independence and accuracy when rehearsing and performing.
- Analysing how harmony and accompaniment create musical interest.
- Creating accompaniments using drones, ostinati, triads and arpeggios.
- Applying harmonic knowledge when arranging Folk Songs.
- Creating original arrangements and adding new musical material.
- Listening critically and responding to music using specialist vocabulary.
- Making creative decisions when arranging and performing music.
- Working collaboratively to create effective ensemble performances.
- Evaluating performances and identifying areas for improvement.

You could learn more about this topic by:

- Researching Celtic Folk traditions from Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
- Exploring performances by contemporary Folk Fusion artists.
- Listening to Sea Shanties, Reels, Jigs and Waulking Songs.
- Exploring BBC Bitesize resources on Folk Music.
- Investigating traditional Celtic instruments and their role within ensembles.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Melody, Chord, Bass Line, Accompaniment, Texture, Drone, Harmony, Ostinato, Broken Chord, Arpeggio, Alberti Bass, Root, 3rd, 5th, A Cappella, Penny Whistle, Accordion, Bodhrán, Harmonica, Banjo, Concertina, Mandolin, Reel, Jig, Waulking Song, Sea Shanty, Folk Song, Fusion, Compound Time, Simple Time, Triplets.

Your Teacher will assess your knowledge by:

- Completing listening and appraising activities.
- Identifying Folk Music features and conventions.
- Performing melodies and accompaniment patterns.
- Creating and refining accompaniments for Folk Songs.
- Arranging music from a lead sheet.
- Completing written analysis and listening tasks.
- Performing and evaluating an ensemble arrangement.
- End of Unit assessment on Folk Music and accompaniment techniques.

Year 9: MUSIC – Music Theory



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Learning about this topic is important because: Music theory helps musicians understand how music is written, organised and performed. In this topic, you will build on your knowledge of notation by studying the concepts required for Trinity College London Grade 2 Music Theory. You will develop a deeper understanding of scales, key signatures, intervals, triads, transposition, musical terms and notation. These skills will strengthen your confidence when performing, composing and listening to music, whilst preparing you for more advanced musical study at GCSE, A Level and beyond.

This builds on: The Musical Elements, Rhythm and Metre, Staff Notation and the Keyboard, Major Scales, Key Signatures and Accidentals, Tonic Triads, Chords and Intervals, and practical performance skills developed throughout Key Stage 3.

This leads to: GCSE Music, A Level Music, Harmony, Composition, Musical Analysis and advanced keyboard performance. Understanding scales, intervals and harmony underpins listening, appraising, composing and performing across all musical styles.

We will learn:

Technical

- How to read, write and interpret increasingly complex staff notation.
- How to construct and identify major scales, key signatures and intervals.
- How to recognise and write tonic triads and simple chord progressions.
- How to identify time signatures, rhythmic patterns and musical signs with accuracy.

Constructive

- How scales, intervals and chords combine to create melody and harmony.
- How transposition changes music into different keys.
- How musical structures are organised through notation.
- How theoretical knowledge supports composition and performance.

Expressive

- How dynamics, tempo, articulation and expression markings influence musical interpretation.
- How composers communicate mood and character through notation.
- How understanding theory leads to more confident and expressive performances.
- How critical listening strengthens musical understanding.

We will develop/practise skills including:

- Reading and writing staff notation accurately.
- Constructing major scales and identifying key signatures.
- Recognising and writing melodic and harmonic intervals.
- Building tonic triads and identifying chord patterns.
- Completing rhythmic and notation exercises accurately.
- Applying Italian musical terms and performance directions.
- Using theoretical knowledge to improve practical performance.
- Solving increasingly complex music theory problems independently.
- Developing speed, accuracy and fluency when reading music.
- Building confidence and resilience through regular retrieval and practice.

You could learn more about this topic by:



Grade 2 Theory
Support Video



Teaching Gadget

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Treble Clef, Bass Clef, Stave, Ledger Lines, Bar Line, Time Signature, Key Signature, Major Scale, Tonic, Triad, Interval, Semitone, Tone, Sharp, Flat, Natural, Accidental, Transposition, Dynamics, Tempo, Articulation, Repeat Marks, Italian Terms, Chord, Harmony, Melody.

Your Teacher will assess your knowledge by:

- Completing retrieval activities throughout the topic.
- Successfully completing exercises from the **Trinity College London Grade 2 Music Theory Workbook**.
- Constructing scales, intervals and tonic triads accurately.
- Applying theoretical knowledge during practical keyboard activities.
- Demonstrating understanding through regular low-stakes quizzes and written assessments.
- Completing an end-of-unit assessment based on the knowledge and skills required for **Trinity College London Grade 2 Music Theory**.