Your notes

GCSE Music: revision notes

Texture and structure

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Texture

- **Monophonic**: a single melody line with no accompaniment, which may be played in unison or octaves.
- **Homophonic**: a melody with chordal accompaniment, or parts moving together in chords.
- **Polyphonic** (contrapuntal): two or more independent melodies at the same time.
- Imitation: one part copies another; a **canon** is strict imitation throughout.
- Heterophonic: several players play different versions of the same melody at the same time.
- Textures can be thin (few parts) or thick (many layers).

Structure (form)

- Binary form: AB. **Ternary form**: ABA, where the first section returns.
- **Rondo form**: ABACA, with a main theme returning between contrasting episodes.
- Theme and variations: a theme, then changed versions of it.
- **Strophic**: the same music for each verse; through-composed: new music throughout.
- Verse–chorus form is common in pop; other pop sections include intro, bridge, middle 8 and outro.
- The 12-bar blues is a chord pattern using chords I, IV and V.
- Call and response: a phrase answered by another phrase or group.

Sonata form

- Used in Classical symphony first movements: exposition (two themes in contrasting keys), development (the themes are changed and moved through keys), and recapitulation (the themes return in the home key).

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Key terms

Monophonic	A single melody line with no accompaniment.
Homophonic	A melody with chordal accompaniment.
Polyphonic	Two or more independent melodies at once.
Canon	Strict imitation where one part copies another exactly.
Ternary form	A structure in three sections: ABA.
Rondo form	A structure where the main theme returns: ABACA.
Strophic	The same music for every verse.
Sonata form	A structure of exposition, development and recapitulation.

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. What is a monophonic texture?
2. What is a homophonic texture?
3. What is a polyphonic texture?
4. What is ternary form?
5. What is rondo form?
6. What is strophic form?
7. What is a canon?
8. What are the three sections of sonata form?

Answers

1. A single melody line with no accompaniment
2. A melody with chordal accompaniment
3. Two or more independent melodies at once
4. ABA
5. ABACA
6. The same music for every verse
7. Strict imitation, with one part copying another exactly
8. Exposition, development and recapitulation

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 3 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

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