



WECOMPOSE

**STUDENT (KS3) RESOURCE PACK
2024-2025**

Your name:

Composer:

Title:

Date of composition:

Instruments:

Start in the circle below. As you listen, note down any words that you would use to describe the music.

Then, think about the seven elements of music in the coloured circles. How do each of these elements help express the mood, or feeling of the music? If you're stuck, start by mapping your words from the circle below onto the different elements.

1. What words would you use to describe this piece? Does it convey a particular mood or feeling? (Write your words below)

2. How do these elements (tonality/ tempo etc.) convey the mood or feeling of the piece? (Write your ideas under each heading)

RYTHM

TEMPO

MELODY

HARMONY & TONALITY

TEXTURE

DYNAMICS

FORM

Your name:

Composer:

Title:

Date of composition:

Instruments:

Start in the middle on the other side of the sheet. As you listen, note down any words that you would use to describe each of the eight elements of music in the coloured circles.

Work your way out. How do each of the features you note down help express the mood, or feeling of the music? You can then come back to this side and note down anything that feels important to you under each of these headings.

What can you discover about the context of this piece?

What inspired it? What circumstances was it written in? What pieces was it written to be similar -- or different -- to?

How were the different instruments used within this piece?

What do you like about this piece?

Try to be as specific as possible

What do you dislike about this piece?

It's OK not to like it! Try to be as specific as possible

Did you notice any contrasting moments in the piece?

Overall, how does this music make you feel?

When you are composing, what could you take from this piece?

CHOOSING A SCALE

Scales and **modes** are collections of pitches that composers often use when composing melodies. It's important that the choices you make about which scale or mode to use reflect the mood you want to create for the listener. To help with this, take a look at the table below which provides information on some different scales and modes, the pitches they use and the mood they can help create:

Scale	Example	Mood
Major	D major - D, E, F#, G, A, B, C#, (D)	Happy, uplifting
Minor	D natural minor - D, E, F, G, A, Bb, C, (D)	Sad, more reflective
Harmonic Minor	D harmonic minor - D, E, F, G, A, Bb, C#, (D)	Scary, haunting
Whole Tone	C, D, E, F#, G#, A#	Dreamy
Blues	D, F, G, G#, A, C, (D)	Jazzy
Chromatic	All of the pitches!	Free-falling, exciting
Major Pentatonic	D, E, F#, A, B	Joyful, used a lot in folk music
Minor Pentatonic	D, E, F, A, C	Used in rock and folk music
Octatonic	D, E, F, G, G#, Bb, B, C#	Dark, mysterious
Hexatonic	D, F, F#, A, Bb, C	Spacious, elusive

Tonal music...

...is written using a major or minor scale.

Modal music...

... is music written using a mode.

Atonal music...

...is music written outside of a particular scale or mode. Composers who write atonal music often choose their own set of pitches that they will use for the composition.

Write down the notes of your scale here:



RHYTHM

	1	2	3	4
Semibreve (4 beats each)				
Minim (2 beats each)				
Crotchet (1 beat each)				
Quaver (1/2 beat each)				
Semiquaver (1/4 beat each)				

Composers combine different rhythms to make patterns or phrases that help them express the mood of their piece. Here's some different ways in which composers use rhythm:

- a) Create lilting or dance-like figures using dotted rhythms
- b) Blur the sense of a strict pulse using crotchet triplets or syncopation
- c) Create the feeling that energy is building by using rhythms that gradually divide the beat further and further
- d) Create the feeling that energy is decreasing by using rhythms that gradually use fewer and fewer subdivisions
- e) Compose patterns of repeating rhythms and ostinatos to create a driving energy
- f) Compose phrases that use lots of different rhythms within them to create a conversational statement from a solo instrument
- g) Compose phrases that use minimal rhythms within them to create a memorable or striking statement (perhaps making a feature of rests, too)
- h) Use similar rhythms across a texture to create a sense of landscape or mass
- i) Use different rhythms in a solo instrument to the rest of the ensemble to emphasise a statement from an instrument

Match the labels above with the music on the next page.

Here's some examples of what we mean by dotted rhythms, triplets, syncopation, etc.

Dotted rhythms

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Triplets (and some ways to develop them)

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Syncopation

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Setting up a repeating pattern with rests

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Setting up a repeating pattern with rests ...

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

...but starting the pattern part-way through

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Creating Harmony With Triads

Music would sound a little bit boring if it was just a series of notes played one at a time. In order to create music that portrays certain feelings or emotions, composers combine notes together, so they are played at the same time. This playing of more than one note at a time creates 'harmony'.

We can think of melody as a horizontal aspect of music, because melodies are a sequence of notes played one after the other. However, we can think of harmony as a vertical aspect of music with notes stacked on top of one another, because they're played at the same time.

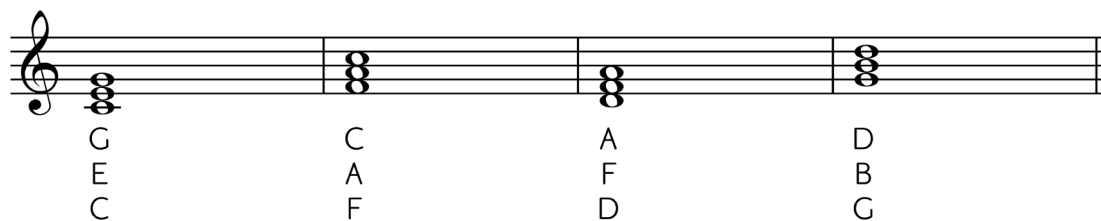
Composers use harmony alongside other elements of music such as the tempo (speed), dynamics (volume), structure, rhythm, melody, instruments and texture, to convey certain feelings, emotions or moods through their music.

Harmonies with two or more notes are called chords. One of the most commonly used chords is a triad. 'Tri' means the chord is made up of 3 notes.

Look at these notes from a C major scale (these are all the white notes on a piano):



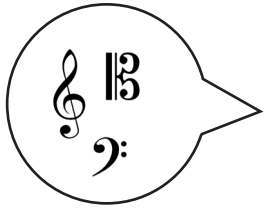
To build a triad, you choose one note from the scale, miss one out, play the next, miss one out, and play the next. For example these chords...



...are created like this:

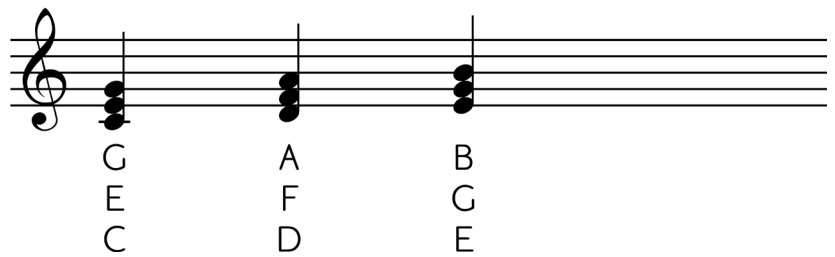


1. Write down the notes of your scale here:



2. Follow the steps below (a, b, c etc), to build a triad from each note of the scale. E.g. here is one we started in C major

C	C, E, G
D	D, F, A
E	E, G, B



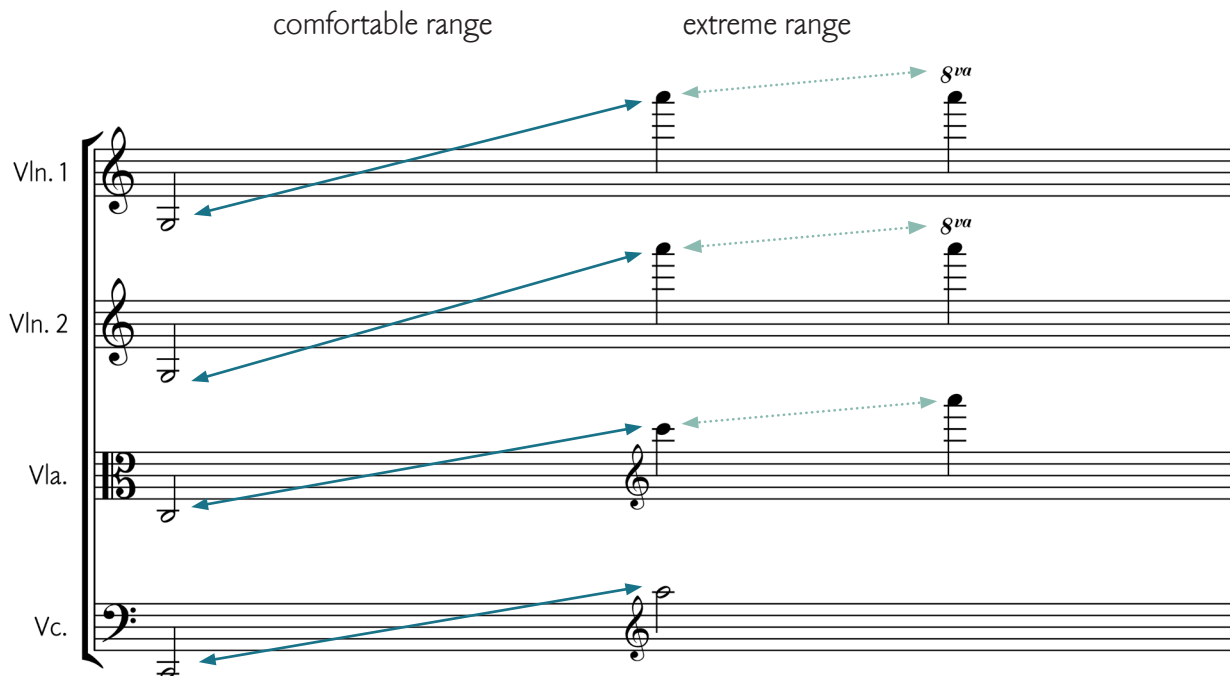
- Write each note of the scale in the left column of the table below. Start from the first note of the scale and don't forget about any sharps or flats!
- Write each triad in the right column
- Write out the triads on the staff
- Extension: Label each chord on the dotted lines. You could create your own label, based on what mood/ colour/ emotion/ place the chord could represent in your piece, or use names like 'Tonic', 'Dominant' etc. if you know them

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

IDIOMATIC WRITING TIPS

Exploring A String Quartet

A string quartet is made up of 2 violins, a viola and a cello. Together they cover a wide range of pitches from the cello being able to play very low, the violins being able to play very high, and the viola being the filling in the middle of this musical sandwich!



There are things that all the instruments in a string quartet can do for example they can all play the strings with a bow (arco), or by plucking the strings with their fingers (pizzicato). Remember, each of the instruments in a string quartet has a unique sound quality and the decisions you make for how each of the instruments are used will affect the overall mood of the music.

Pizzicato example:



excerpt from BEETHOVEN Ludwig Van, String Quartet in E-flat Major Op.74 "Harp", First movement (Poco adagio - Allegro), bars 125-128

Arco example:

The image shows a musical score for a string quartet. It consists of four staves: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is E-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into three measures. In the first measure, the Violoncello plays a bass line with a 'pizz.' (pizzicato) marking. In the second measure, all instruments play with a forte ('f') dynamic. The 'arco' markings on Violin 1, Violin 2, and Viola are circled in red. The 'arco' marking on the Violoncello is also circled in red.

excerpt from MENDELSSOHN Fanny, String Quartet in E-flat Major Op. 22, Second movement (Allegretto), bars 14-16

The role(s) of each instrument in a string quartet often change as a piece develops, and could include any of the following ideas:

- Playing a melody
- Playing a counter melody
- Providing harmonic accompaniment
- Providing a more rhythmic accompaniment
- Playing a motif
- Playing a bass line
- Playing extended techniques to provide certain effects

All of these roles contribute to the overall texture of the music. When we create music, we combine, mix and layer sounds together. Texture is the word we use to describe the way we do this. Different musical textures can depend on:

- How many instruments are playing at a particular time
- The timbre of the instruments that are playing
- What the instruments are actually playing

Try this!

Learning objectives: identify / analyse

Task: match each label to the correct texture:

- Homophonic texture
- Polyphonic texture
- Melody and accompaniment

Time
5-10
minutes

Violin I
 Violin II
 Viola
 Violoncello

ff
ff
ff
ff

sul pont
 sul pont
 sul pont
 sempre sul pont

excerpt from MEREDITH, Anna, 'Tuggemo', bars 89-92

Violin I
 Violin II
 Viola
 Violoncello

pp
pp
pp
pp

excerpt from SCHUBERT, Franz, 'Death and the Maiden', Movement Two (Andante con moto) bars 1-4

guitar style (bow in hand)
 pizz.
mf
 sim.

excerpt from MONTGOMERY, Jessie, 'Strum', bars 3-4

This image shows a musical score template for four instruments: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. Each instrument part is represented by a five-line staff. The Violin 1 and Violin 2 staves are in treble clef, while the Viola and Violoncello staves are in bass clef. A large brace on the left side groups all four staves together. At the top of each staff, there are three vertical lines, likely representing a specific musical notation or a placeholder for a title. The staves are otherwise blank, with dashed vertical lines indicating the boundaries of the score.

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

This image shows four empty musical staves for a string quartet. From left to right, they are labeled: Violin 1 (treble clef), Violin 2 (treble clef), Viola (alto clef), and Violoncello (bass clef). Each staff consists of five horizontal lines. A large bracket is positioned below the staves, spanning from the first staff to the fourth.

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

This image shows four empty musical staves for a string quartet. From left to right, the staves are labeled: Violin 1 (treble clef), Violin 2 (treble clef), Viola (alto clef), and Violoncello (bass clef). A large brace is positioned below the staves, spanning from the beginning of the first staff to the end of the fourth staff.

CLASSICAL MUSIC VOCABULARY

Dynamics

Don't forget to tell the musicians how loud or quiet you want your music to be, particularly at the start of the piece and in any changes of mood or energy in your piece.

Use these common words and symbols:

pp pianissimo (very quiet)

p piano (quiet)

mp mezzo-piano ("half quiet")

mf mezzo-forte ("half loud")

f forte (loud)

ff fortissimo (very loud)

crescendo (get louder)

diminuendo (get softer)

Tempo words

Composers often use words at the start of their score to help musicians know what speed to play the piece at.

Here's some tempo words you might want to use (but you can make up your own too):

adagio (slow)

agitato (agitated)

andante (at a walking pace)

animato (animated, lively)

allegro (fast)

energico (energetic)

forza (force)

leggiero (light or nimble)

maestoso (majestically)

pesante (heavy)

presto (fast)

prestissimo (as fast as possible)

risoluto (bold, strong)

scherzando (playful, joking)

tranquillo (calm)

triste, tristamente (sad, sorrowful)