

Graduate Applicant Diagnostic Exam--Music History

This exam consists of 7 sections of 12 multiple-choice questions arranged by topic, and an 8th section of essay questions.

INSTRUCTIONS: 1) choose FIVE of seven multiple-choice sections, and answer all 12 questions in each
2) answer TWO essay questions—one from group A and one from group B

Section 1: Medieval/Renaissance period (12 QUESTIONS)

[2 sample questions:]

1. The term "melismatic" refers to:
 - A) a method of composition in which preexistent melodic formulae are recombined
 - B) harmonic intervals which imply motion or instability
 - C) the setting of more than one note per syllable of text
 - D) the use of a seven-note scale per octave
2. The repertoire of the troubadours, trouvères, and minnesingers:
 - A) was cultivated exclusively in what is now southern France
 - B) was a monophonic secular song in vernacular dialects
 - C) was set mostly to Latin lyrics
 - D) all of the above

Section 2: Baroque period (12 QUESTIONS)

[2 sample questions:]

1. In Baroque parlance, the "doctrine of the affections" referred to:
 - A) a preference for one or another musical genre
 - B) unnotated melodic embellishments
 - C) generic states of the soul represented musically
 - D) the emerging system of major-minor tonality
2. The four dances around which the German style keyboard suite was based are:
 - A) allemande – bourée – minuet – gavotte
 - B) allemande – courante – sarabande – gigue
 - C) chaconne – passacaglia – passamezzo – salterello
 - D) pavane – galliard – passamezzo antico – passamezzo moderno

Section 3: Classic period (12 QUESTIONS)

[2 sample questions:]

1. Which of the following became the standard for symphonic scoring with Haydn's London symphonies?
 - A) strings, double woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon), 2 trumpet, 2 horn, timpani
 - B) strings, single woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon), 1 trumpet, 1 horn, 1 trombone
 - C) strings, 2 oboe, 2 horn
 - D) strings alone, with optional oboe, trumpet, horn, and timpani
2. The most heavily used song form in operas of the first half of the 18th century was:
 - A) the strophic aria
 - B) the through-composed aria
 - C) the da capo aria
 - D) none of the above

Section 4: Romantic period (12 QUESTIONS)

[2 sample questions:]

1. Which of the following represent the most significant antecedents of Liszt's symphonic poem?

- A) the string quartet and the song cycle
 - B) the grand opera and the oratorio
 - C) the concerto and the piano sonata
 - D) the concert overture and the program symphony
2. A primary artistic motivation for the song cycle was to provide an opportunity for composers:
- A) to set a variety of poems by different authors within a given cycle
 - B) to mediate between the Romantic taste for miniature and grandiose compositions
 - C) to set to music a series of their own poems
 - D) to recreate in song a series of symphonic movements (e.g., sonata-allegro, adagio, scherzo, rondo)

Section 5: Modern period (12 QUESTIONS)

[2 sample questions:]

1. The works of Messaien and others from the late 1940s, which used taped natural sounds, are classed as:
- A) neo-Romantic
 - B) musique concrète
 - C) chamber operas
 - D) minimalistic
2. In analyses of 12-tone music, the symbol "R-4" indicates:
- A) that the section has the rhythmic pulse of common time
 - B) a retrograde of the principal row transposed by a perfect fourth
 - C) a retrograde of the principal row transposed by a major third
 - D) that the principal row is to be reiterated in canon at the fourth below

Section 6: Jazz and Popular music (12 QUESTIONS)

[2 sample questions:]

1. Among the bandleaders who instituted the practice of improvising without fixed chord progressions were:
- A) Charlie Parker and Thelonious Monk
 - B) Count Basie and Lester Young
 - C) Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor
 - D) Coleman Hawkins and Dizzie Gillespie
2. Which three melody instruments characterize the traditional Dixieland band?
- A) Cornet, Tenor Saxophone, Mellophone
 - B) Clarinet, Cornet, Trombone
 - C) Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Baritone Horn
 - D) Trumpet, Trombone, Baritone Saxophone

Section 7: Non-Western music (12 QUESTIONS)

1. Intergenerational transmission of culture within a society is referred to as:
- A) accommodation
 - B) enculturation
 - C) transculturation
 - D) assimilation.
2. Instruments such as West African **balafons**, Javanese **anklungs**, or Caribbean steel drums are examples of:
- A) aerophones
 - B) cordophones
 - C) membranophones
 - D) idiophones

Section 8: Essays (2 QUESTIONS)

INSTRUCTIONS: answer ONE question from Group A and ONE question from Group B (2-5 Bluebook

pages apiece)

**GROUP A: EARLY MUSIC (MEDIEVAL–RENAISSANCE–BAROQUE) ANSWER ONE
ESSAY**

[2 sample questions:]

- 1) Explain the eight-mode system as it was codified for plainchant in the High Middle Ages (c. 1000–1200)
- 2) Define the terms *prima prattica* and the *seconda prattica*, and explain the salient characteristics of each.

**GROUP B: MODERN MUSIC (CLASSIC–ROMANTIC–20TH CENTURY) ANSWER
ONE ESSAY**

[2 sample questions:]

- 1) Define the term *rounded binary form*, and illustrate the types of movements in which it was used in instrumental music of the late 18th century. Be sure to indicate its relationship to sonata form.
- 2) Define and describe the phenomenon of nationalism in European music beginning around 1870. Be sure to make reference to specific countries, composers, and works.