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 Messiaen and others from the late 1940s, which used taped natural sounds, are classed as:  
   A) neo-Romantic  
   B) musique concète  
   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)
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.