

## Music

Welcome to Music! We cannot wait to start work with you in September, and hope you enjoy these preparatory tasks which are aimed at keeping fresh / developing your practical skills in performing, composing and appraising.

### CORE activities:

**PERFORMING:** Regular practice! Component 1 of A-Level Music is performance, so it is essential you keep your performing level at a consistent level over the summer. Prepare one piece to perform to your teacher in the first fortnight. The goal is to be performing to at least Grade 7 standard at the start of Year 12, so that you can be performing repertoire of at least Grade 8 standard in your recital in Year 13.

**COMPOSING:** Compose a short piece for your own instrument/voice+piano (approx 60 seconds), which you will showcase to your teacher in the first fortnight of term. The main purpose of this is to demonstrate your ability to use a variety of different compositional techniques, whilst exploiting an instrument that you know well. Think about exploring...

- *Range – be daring and explore the lowest and highest tessituras*
- *Expressive capabilities, e.g. include sections which showcase different moods*
- *Variety of specific instrumental techniques, e.g. pedal, double stopping / pizz, double tonguing, mutes*
- *Possible articulations, e.g. slurs, staccatos, accents*

A set of variations could be an excellent way of exploiting a clear structure, demonstrating the versatility of your chosen medium and creating contrasting characters. You do not necessarily need to have notated it, but you must be able to perform it to us if not.

**APPRAISING:** **Attend at least one concert over the summer.** Ideally, try and get to see a concert at the Proms: [BBC Proms 2023 | Royal Albert Hall](#) You can queue up for very cheap tickets on the day, or pre-book using the link. If it's impossible to attend a concert, there are now lots of online opportunities for watching live music, for example a live-stream from Ronnie Scott's on YouTube, and there will be live coverage on TV (BBC) of concerts at the Proms.

TASK 1: Write a review of the concert you 'attend' (of approx. **300** words) which discusses:

- *the composer(s), e.g. nationality, when they were alive, their style;*
- *piece(s) performed and their context, e.g. when were they written? Why?;*
- *what emotions did the music create? Was the music 'about' anything? Was it successful?*
- *your personal experience of the concert, e.g. did you enjoy it? What was the highlight? Was there anything that you did not enjoy?*

TASK 2:

- Research, and make notes on, each of the following musical eras:
  - Renaissance
  - Baroque
  - Classical
  - Romantic
  - 20<sup>th</sup> Century

- You should focus on the musical style of the era, why composers were writing in that way, what social/cultural things were happening at the time, and find some key composers/pieces that represent that era well

*Having a solid awareness of the musical timeline from c1500-2023 is key when looking at the WIDER LISTENING part of the Appraising paper.*

**Extension activities:**

- Arrange some instrumental lessons over the summer to support your ongoing practice.
- Look out for a masterclass, pre-concert talk or holiday course which would develop your performance skills. The Proms have lots of pre-concert talks, and the London music colleges are a good place to start - they all run summer schools and courses. You could try the larger concert halls (e.g. Barbican, South Bank Centre – particularly the events around the Proms at the Royal College of Music and Royal Albert Hall).
- Watch these films and enjoy their soundtracks (the first two are set works) and dramatic approaches to music history:
  - Psycho (1960)
  - Batman Returns (1992)
  - Amadeus
  - Riot at the Rite (available on YouTube)