



COURSE OVERVIEW

Listen! is designed as an aid for those involved in teaching aural perception skills, either to school classes or individual students. *(Click on the musical terms that are embedded with hyperlinks for an explanation on Naxos Dictionary of Music.)*

Initial | Level 1 | Level 2

At these three levels students will need to know the names and the meanings of the following elements of music, and the initial ways of describing each element in more detail. *(Click on the words with embedded hyperlinks for an explanation on our Naxos Dictionary of Music.)*

- [tonality](#): major, minor
- [texture](#): monophonic, homophonic
- [timbre](#): string, woodwind, brass, percussion, vocal
- [tempo](#): allegro, moderato, lento
- [dynamics](#): forte, mezzo forte, piano
- [metre](#): 2, 3 or 4 beats in a bar
- [pitch](#): high, medium or low
- [rhythm](#): short notes, long notes or a mixture of short and long notes
- [articulation](#): legato, staccato
- [phrase structure](#): short phrases or long phrases

Level 3

Students will be required to describe 3 elements of the music in each audio clip. They will also be required to identify instruments by name from the following list:

- **strings:** violin, viola, cello, double bass, harp
- **woodwind:** flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, saxophone
- **brass:** trumpet, horn, trombone, tuba
- **percussion:** cymbals, timpani, snare drum, triangle

[Contrapuntal music](#) is now added to the list of textures.

Level 4

Students will be required to describe 3 elements of the music in each audio clip, including the following additional characteristics:

- **metre:** compound duple time
- **cadences:** perfect, imperfect cadences
- **timbre:** naming instruments in combination
- **instrumental playing techniques:** [pizzicato](#), [arco](#), [glissando](#)
- **word setting:** syllabic, melismatic
- **dynamics:** fortissimo, pianissimo

Level 5

Students will be required to describe 3 aspects of the music in each audio clip, including the following additional characteristics:

- **melodic and rhythmic devices:** [ostinato](#), [imitation](#), [syncopation](#)
- **ornamentation:** trill, acciaccatura/grace note
- **accompaniment styles:** block chords, broken chords, divided chords
- **cadences:** plagal
- **texture:** unison, in octaves, [a cappella](#)

Level 6

Students will be required to describe 3 aspects of the music in each audio clip, including the following additional characteristics:

- **technical devices:** repetition, [sequence](#) (rising and falling)
- **vocal timbre:** soprano, alto, tenor, bass
- **chord-playing instrumental timbre:** piano, organ, harpsichord, [lute](#)
- **cadences:** interrupted
- **tonality:** [atonal](#)
- **pitch:** melody moves largely by step, largely by leaps or a mixture of steps and leaps
- **performing techniques:** [con sordino](#), [tremolando](#)
- **changes:** changes in dynamics, texture, tonality, timbre, tempo etc

Level 7

Students will be required to select 3 words from a list of eight that could be used to describe the music in the audio clip. The following additional characteristics are included:

- **technical devices:** [inversion](#), [pedal point/drone](#)
- **vocal timbre:** [countertenor](#)
- **instrumental timbre:** electronic sounds, guitar, tubular bells, gong/tam-tam, tambourine
- **tonality:** [modal](#)
- **pitch:** wide melodic range or narrow melodic range
- **performing techniques:** [harmonics](#), [double-stopping](#)
- **rhythm:** [dotted rhythms](#)
- **metre:** no regular pulse
- **ornamentation:** [mordent](#)
- **ensemble terms:** [symphony](#), [concerto](#), [sonata](#), [string quartet](#), [piano trio](#)

Level 8

Students will be required to give a detailed description of what they hear, with reference to the elements of music, technical terms, devices etc, all of which have formed the basis for answers at previous levels.

At this more advanced level, however, it is expected that students will have accumulated an extended vocabulary of their own in understanding how music is constructed and the corresponding technical language that is used to describe it.

No guidance is given in the question, which is the same for each audio clip, viz “What can you hear?”

A set of possible answers is given for each question, but none of these are exhaustive. They are intended as an initial guide, leaving scope for additional observations and discussion between the teacher and students.

Details of the music's composer, title and year of composition are given to help associate certain characteristics with the different periods of music history.

Rhythmic Dictation

All the tests use excerpts from recordings. Students are required to notate the rhythm of the upper melodic line. The exercises become progressively more difficult.

Exercises Sets A and B are in simple time.

Exercises Set C include tests in compound time.

Melodic Dictation

All the tests use excerpts from recordings. Students are required to notate the rhythm and pitch of the upper melodic line. The exercises become progressively more difficult.

Exercises Sets A and B are in simple time.

Exercises Set C include tests in compound time.