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KATHERINE
CHARLTON

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EXPERIENCE MUSIC



Fourth Edition

EXPERIENCE MUSIC



Katherine Charlton

Professor Emerita, Mt. San Antonio College



EXPERIENCE MUSIC, FOURTH EDITION

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To my husband, Jeff Calkins, who likes music with tunes he can hum.

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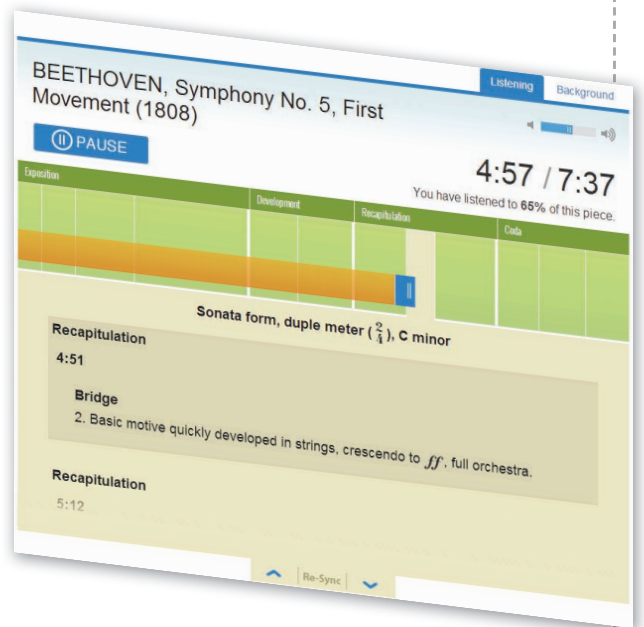
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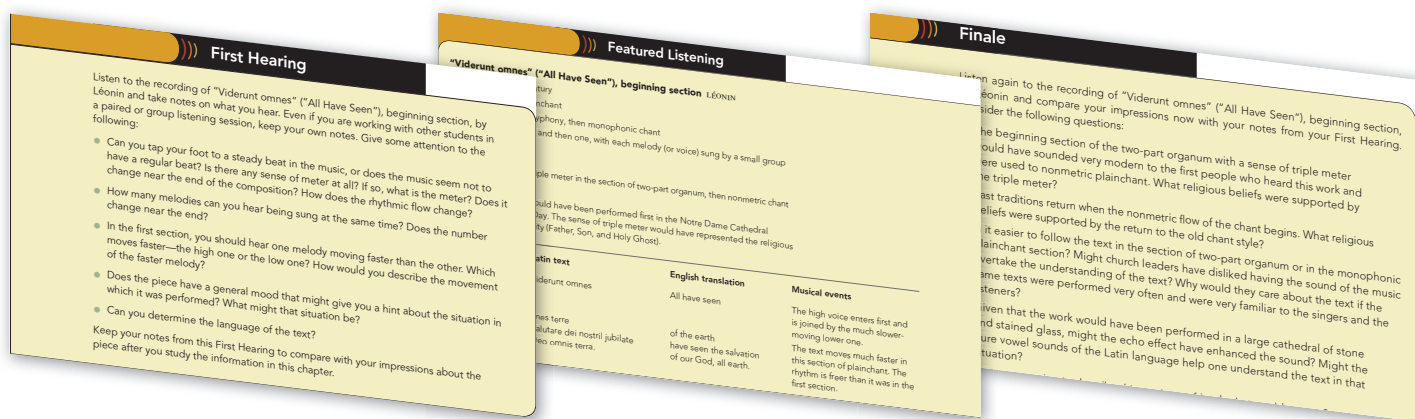
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Lesson 10 points
Listen to each of the musical excerpts below, identify the composer and the genre, and drag the correct labels into the spaces provided. Composer and genre labels may be used more than once.

Composer	Genre
Mozart	Symphony
Haydn	Chamber music
Mozart	Opera
Beethoven	Sonata
	Serenade
	Concerto
	Beethoven
	Chamber music
	Mozart
	Opera
	Symphony
	Haydn
	Mass



Experience Music the Way You Want to Teach It

Through **McGraw-Hill Create**, a newly revised Rock Music chapter is available for instructors who want more focus on this genre—Katherine Charlton’s area of expertise. Create-only concert reports are also available by genre for instructors who want to include worksheets that guide students through this popular course exercise.

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Chapter Updates

Those of us who teach music appreciation courses often discuss how we might connect the subject matter of our courses with the music that most interests today’s students. Students tend to like and be familiar with popular or rock music, and *Experience Music 4e* has added many suggestions for linking popular, rock, or jazz recordings with the material discussed in this book through Spotify. Students will find multiple marginal links to Spotify playlists in the chapters. As added value, Spotify playlists are designed around core features of music—for example, sound, meter, and texture—and instructors and students can access those playlists for a trove of current and relevant examples, thus enhancing the connections between classical and popular music for their students.

A few examples:

In Chapter 1, on elements of music, beside a discussion of quadruple meter, students will find a reference to a Spotify playlist called “Meter: Quadruple.” On the Spotify website, they will find this playlist and might hear something by ZZ Top as a contemporary example of quadruple meter.

On the recordings that came with your book, “Comfort Ye” from Handel’s *Messiah* is in quadruple meter. Listen to it and see if you can hear the meter.

Meters other than duple, triple, and quadruple exist but are less common than those three. **Compound meters** subdivide the basic beats into sets of threes. Two groups of three are counted as six beats, and three groups of three are counted as nine beats. **Irregular meters** in which beats are accented in groups of five, seven, or other numbers can be found, particularly in music after the early twentieth century. By the late twentieth century, some music avoids any accenting of beats or meter at all.

Earlier in this chapter, we touched on the term *accent*. Ways of accenting a note include playing it louder or longer than its surrounding notes. Accents cause notes to



Meter: Quadruple

Quadruple is the most common meter used in popular music, particularly rock music. Listen to examples in this Spotify playlist.

[spotify.fi/quadruple](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/37i9dQZF1DX0XUx1u8qoWl)

In Chapter 2, on structural elements of music, beside a discussion of homophonic sound, students will find a reference to a Spotify playlist called “Texture: Homophony.” On the Spotify website, they will find this playlist and might hear Paul McCartney’s “Hey, Jude,” as an example of homophonic texture.

Notice that when more than one voice sings, the texture is polyphonic.

In homophonic (“same sound”) music, a *single* melodic line predominates, while the other voices or instruments provide an accompanying harmony. The listener’s attention is focused on the melody; the harmonic accompaniment is heard as a kind of musical background. Harmonic accompaniment to the melody can take various forms—from the simple strumming of chords on a guitar to a full orchestra playing music that supports, but does not get in the way of, the melody.

Amy Beach’s “Ah, Love, but a Day” in the book’s recordings is an example of homophonic texture. Listen to it and notice that the primary single melody is sung with piano accompaniment.

Another type of homophonic texture occurs when several melodies are played together in the same rhythm. That rhythm may include the presence of a steady beat or



Texture: Homophony

Homophony is the most common texture used in popular music because it allows the main singer or solo instrumentalist to stand out over an accompaniment. Listen to examples in Spotify.

[spotify.fi/homophony](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/37i9dQZF1DX0XUx1u8qoWl)

The goal is to help students understand that the classically oriented topics covered in this book have reach beyond those long-ago centuries; in fact, they relate to much of the music students listen to and love every day.

Experience Music 4e also includes updates for the online-only chapter on Rock Music, bringing it into the early 2000s with a discussion of several styles that are popular today. Many instructors who use the book find that they do not have time to cover this material but want to have it available and current in case they can use it.

In addition, a set of eight Concert Report forms, tied to various genres—for example, choral music, opera, chamber music, and jazz—is available online to guide students in writing the reports many music appreciation instructors require. Moreover, you’ll find changes in the coverage of elements of music and several new photos. The Glossary and other support materials have been updated to reflect these changes.

A Chat with Katherine Charlton

How did *Experience Music* evolve?

More than anything else, students have shaped this book. I have always encouraged my students to ask questions and talk to me about what they hear in the music I play for them. Happily, I taught an honors section of music appreciation when I was planning and writing this book, and that class had only twenty students, many of whom knew one another because they had taken classes together before. The small size of the class and the students' comfort with one another encouraged them to be more open with questions they asked me, and more eager to take part in class discussions than students I have had in larger classes. Most of the pedagogical features in *Experience Music* came from my work with those honors students. Other decisions I made about the content of the book, including the exclusion of music notation and the placement of world musics before music in the late twentieth century, were also based on the reactions and interests of my students.

How do you decide what to cover?

One goal was to keep the coverage of essential material as concise and clear as possible. I know that I included more listening activities than any instructor has time to use in a single semester or quarter, but I did that to give instructors flexibility and a rich array of choices. When I found myself teaching more than one section of the class in a single semester, I often changed the activities I used from one class to another, just to give myself variety.

What's new in this edition?

I often talk to colleagues about the music that most interests today's students and how we might connect the subject matter of our courses to those interests. Because our students tend to like and be familiar with popular or rock music, I added many suggestions for popular, rock, or jazz recordings that relate to the material discussed in the book. Specifically, I suggested that Spotify be used as the source of these contemporary examples because it is free and easily available. As added value, Spotify allowed me to design playlists around core features of music—for example, sound, meter, and texture—that I can add to while this edition of *Experience Music* is in print. The goal is to help students understand that the classically oriented topics covered in this book have reach beyond those long-ago centuries; in fact, they relate to much of the music students listen to and love every day.

I also updated the chapter on Rock Music for this new edition of *Experience Music*, bringing it into the early 2000s with a discussion of several styles popular today. That chapter is only accessible online because many instructors who use the book have told me that they do not have time to cover it, but I wanted to have it available and current for those who can include it.

Any final comments?

I hope very much that students who use this book will come away from their music appreciation classes with both listening skills and an appreciation of music that will last their entire lives.

— Katherine Charlton



About the Author

Katherine Charlton taught courses in music appreciation, music history for music majors, and history of rock music for over thirty years at Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut, California. Before teaching an all music history schedule, she developed the college's guitar program, taught all levels of guitar classes, and conducted guitar and other chamber music ensemble classes. In 1990, she was one of the first instructors at the college to be chosen to teach music history, appreciation, and history of rock music for the American Institute for Foreign Study at the University of London. There, her students came from a variety of community colleges in Southern California and were studying in London, England, for one semester. Taking advantage of the rich cultural environment, Charlton took her students on tours of the city and its collections of early musical instruments and to concerts, operas, and musicals.

With her first husband, Andrew Charlton, who was well known in the field of early music, she performed on medieval gittern, Renaissance lute, baroque guitar, and modern classical guitar. The couple toured and performed in Southern France and Tuscany with the early-music group Li Troubador, led by Gloria Ramsey. In addition to performing early music, Charlton has played percussion in the California University at Fullerton Wind Ensemble and toured Japan as a performer with that group.

Charlton's first book was *Rock Music Styles: A History*, currently in its seventh edition, published by McGraw-Hill Education. In addition to updating that and *Experience Music* for new editions, she has done studies in other music-related subjects, particularly ones related to women as musicians, composers, and teachers of music. One such study was prepared during a sabbatical leave in 2007–2008 to help her colleagues include more women in their courses.

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Colleagues who helped me with their suggestions and proofreading include Gary Toops and Kevin Wiley. Gary is an organist who has recently retired from teaching music appreciation at my college and was very helpful in suggesting additions that enriched the book. He also provided wonderful insights when I wrote the MusiCurious box about playing the organ. Kevin is an accompanist and librarian in my department. Other colleagues who advised and encouraged me in various ways include Scott Zeidel, Dr. Margaret Meier, Dr. Robert Bowen, Jason Chevalier, Kevin Mayse, Dr. David Cahueque, and Greg Stier. One of my former teachers, Dr. Robert Stewart, was also very encouraging. I learned more about contemporary music from him than from any other source, and I constantly find myself quoting him when I teach the subject. Dr. Larry Timm, author of *The Soul of Cinema: An Appreciation of Film Music*, is an old friend of mine and was very helpful in making suggestions to improve the chapter on music in film.

I'm grateful to McGraw-Hill Education sales representative Lorraine Zielinski, who suggested to the company that I would be right for this project. I would like to thank Tom Laskey of the Custom Marketing Group at Sony BMG Music Entertainment for his work in researching the recordings used. I appreciate the work of the many McGraw-Hill Education editorial, media, marketing, and production staff members and freelancers who were involved in this book. In addition to those who are listed on the copyright page, I would like to specifically acknowledge the work of Sarah Remington, Susan Messer, Dawn Groundwater, Sandy Wille, and Robin Sands.

As I indicated earlier, the most important people who guided my choices and attitudes about this book were the many students I have had over the years. I hope that the students who use this book enjoy it, learn from it, and feel encouraged to ask questions in class. After all, we teachers and writers work for them.

—Katherine Charlton Calkins

EXPERIENCE MUSIC



Prelude



The Fundamentals of Music

By the time you have finished reading this text, you will have listened to a wide range of works, including symphonies, chamber music, opera, and jazz. Despite their apparent differences, these works are all made from the same component parts: sound, rhythm, melody, and harmony. Before you can begin a serious study of music, you need to understand

its most basic elements, and you need to understand how those elements combine to form individual pieces. In addition, for a full appreciation of music, it is helpful to be familiar with the orchestra and various musical instruments. The following chapters will give you the fundamental vocabulary necessary to study music of all kinds.



A young violinist in the string section of an orchestra.



The exuberant Venezuelan conductor Gustavo Dudamel.

1

Elements of Music: Sound, Rhythm, Melody, and Harmony

The man that hath no music in himself, nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils . . . let no such man be trusted.

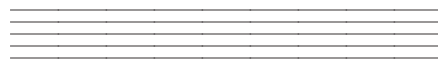
—WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(1564–1616)

Music is built from elements that we describe using a particular vocabulary. After you have studied that vocabulary, you will be in a much better position to discuss a piece of music with a friend, write a report that describes music you have listened to, and understand what someone else has written about music. For example, a review that criticizes a conductor for not using enough dynamic contrasts or says that an opera singer had problems maintaining good tone quality in certain pitch ranges will make more sense to you when you know what dynamics, tone quality, and pitch ranges are. Without knowing those terms, you might still understand that the reviewer did not like everything about the performance, but the musical vocabulary communicates more than that simple fact.

Sound

Music is an art based on the organization of sounds in time. A sound, any sound, is the result of vibrations in the air set in motion by the activation of a sounding body—the slamming of a door, the ringing of a bell, or the playing of a musical instrument. In the case of a *musical* sound, the vibrations are so definite and steady that they produce what is called a *tone* (also referred to as a **note**), the highness or lowness of which is called the **pitch**.

The precise pitch is determined by the *frequency*, as measured in cycles per second, of its vibration—the *faster* the frequency, the *higher* the pitch, and conversely, the *slower* the frequency, the *lower* the pitch. When music is written down, the higher pitches are represented by notes that are higher (toward the top of the page) on the **staff**: the set of five horizontal lines on or between which the notes are placed. That staff helps us measure how much higher or lower one note is in comparison with another. Each line and each space represents a different pitch:



The higher the position of the note on the staff, the higher the pitch of the tone:



The following is an example of the contour (or high and low shape) of pitches (without the staff) for the beginning of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

by
the
see, dawn’s
“O you light.”
oh, can ear-
say ly

The distance between two pitches is called an **interval**. The smallest interval that occurs when two identical pitches are played one after the other is called a **unison**. Another interval, called an **octave**, is that between notes of the same name—for example, one C and the next C above it (Figure 1.1). They will sound similar to one another because the higher pitch is produced by exactly double the number of vibrations that it takes to produce the lower pitch. For example, the words *say* and *see* in “The Star-Spangled Banner” are separated by an octave. Between the two notes that mark an octave, there are eleven other notes and many intervals possible among them.

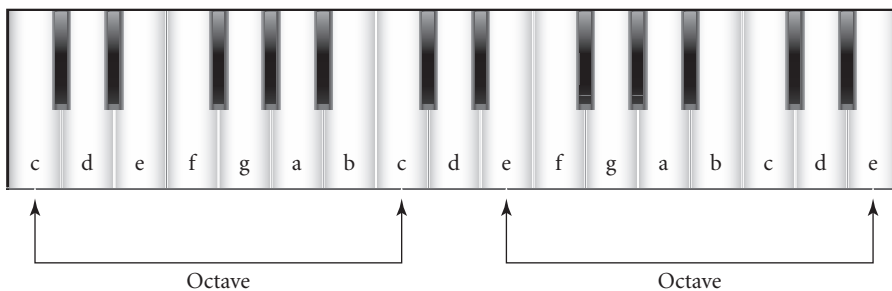


Figure 1.1

Piano keyboard with one octave from C to C and another octave from E to E marked

As you look at the piano keyboard, you will notice that the black keys are grouped in patterns of twos and threes. Each note looks different from any other, depending on where it fits within those groupings. Any note on the white key just to the left of a set of two black keys, for example, will be the note C. If you play one C and then the next higher or lower C, you have played an octave. If you play the notes on the white keys from one C to the next, you are playing a **C major scale**, sometimes referred to as the *do-re-mi* scale because those syllables are used to identify the notes as follows: C = *do*, D = *re*, E = *mi*, F = *fa*, G = *sol*, A = *la*, B = *ti*. If you were to continue on and play the notes up to the next higher C, you would be playing what is called a two-octave scale. The two-octave scale has a greater **pitch range** than the single-octave scale. The distance between the lowest and the highest notes an instrument or a voice can produce is referred to as the instrument’s or voice’s *pitch range*.

Another important aspect of musical sound is **dynamics**, or levels of loudness and softness. Sometimes musicians use a variety of dynamic levels when playing a single piece of music. If the musician wants to emphasize one note over the others, he or she can **accent** it by playing it louder. **Piano**, which means soft, and **forte**, which means loud, are Italian terms used by musicians to indicate dynamic levels. Extremes of those dynamic levels are written by adding the suffix “*issimo*.” In other words, *piano* is soft and *pianissimo* is softer yet. *Forte* is loud and *fortissimo* is even louder. *Mezzo* means medium, so *mezzo piano* is medium soft and *mezzo forte* is medium loud. Sometimes letters are used to abbreviate the full dynamic terms. To abbreviate the *issimo* terms, simply double the letters (*pianissimo* is notated as *pp*, and *fortissimo* as *ff*). “*Mezzo*” is represented by an *m*, so *mp* is medium soft and *mf* medium loud. These dynamic levels are listed below, from the softest to the loudest:



Sound: Dynamics

Changes in softness and loudness levels occur in both popular and classical music. Listen to ways popular music uses dynamics by visiting this Spotify playlist. For information on how to access the playlists throughout *Experience Music*, see p. xxi. spotify.fi/dynamics

<i>pianissimo</i>	<i>pp</i>
<i>piano</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>mezzo piano</i>	<i>mp</i>
<i>mezzo forte</i>	<i>mf</i>
<i>forte</i>	<i>f</i>
<i>fortissimo</i>	<i>ff</i>

Other terms are used to indicate a gradual change in dynamic levels. **Decrescendo**, or **diminuendo**, indicates that the music is getting softer, which can often give the effect of calming tension; and **crescendo** indicates that it is getting louder, which can express exuberance.

Different instruments and voices each have their own distinct kind of sound. A melody played on the flute sounds different from the same melody played on the clarinet because the sound quality of the clarinet is clearly different from that of the flute. The distinctive sound quality of an instrument is called *tone color*, or **timbre** (pronounced *tam-bur*).

Rhythm

Rhythm is the ordered flow of music through time. The regular, recurrent pulsation in most music is called the **beat**. Perhaps the beating of our own heart is the most basic beat we feel. In some music the beat is pounded out by a drum or other instrument and is so clear that you may find yourself clapping along. That steady beat helps us measure musical time, but the word *rhythm* refers to much more than that. Rhythm includes the way music flows between the beats. Although the presence of a steady beat is common, in some music the beat is not clear at all, perhaps because the composer wished to evoke a smooth or even floating effect. We can see such an effect in nature if we watch waves washing up on a beach. The waves do not pound away at any steady sort of beat, but the effect they create is indeed very rhythmic. It is rhythmic because of the sense of flowing motion they create. In other words, *beat* refers to the steady pulse you might hear in music, whereas *rhythm* covers much more about musical time. A beat can be part of rhythm, but musical rhythm can exist without a beat.

Sometimes individual notes are played on each beat, but notes can also be held for more than or less than a whole beat. In the first phrase of “America,” observe the notes that are longer than one beat—the note for the word *’tis*, for example. Also notice that the longer notes are followed by notes that are held for less than one beat, such as the note on *of*. The word *liberty* has three notes of varying lengths, and *sing* is held for a full three beats.

“My country ’tis of thee, sweet land of li- berty. Of thee I sing.”
 Beats: / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / /

Against this background of regularly occurring beats or pulsations, notes of varying lengths make some beats sound more prominent—or “heavier”—than others. That does not necessarily mean that those notes should be played louder; they usually stand out because of the patterns of long and short notes. In the case of “America,” the first of every three beats is given more weight. The following example groups the beats into patterns of three.

“My country ’tis of thee, sweet land of li- berty. Of thee I sing.”
 Meter: 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

This organization of beats into regular groups is called **meter**, and the units themselves are called **measures**. Different types of meters are defined by the number of beats in

the measure. The example we heard in “America” is called **triple meter**, because it consists of three beats per measure. The first beat of each group, the one that carries more weight, is called the **downbeat**. On the recordings that came with your book, “When I Am Laid in Earth” from Purcell’s opera *Dido and Aeneas* is in triple meter. Listen to it and see if you can hear the meter.

When music has two beats in each measure, which means an accent on every other beat, we say it is in **duple meter**. “Mary Had a Little Lamb” is in duple meter.

“Mar-y had a little lamb, little lamb, little lamb, Mar-y had a little lamb, Its fleece was white as snow.”
Meter: 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2

On the recordings that came with your book, the first movement of Mozart’s Symphony no. 40 is in duple meter. Listen to it and see if you can hear the meter.

Music played to a four-beat measure is in **quadruple meter**, which can sound a lot like music in duple meter because the groups of four beats are usually also two groups of two beats. There is, however, a difference: in duple meter, every other beat is a downbeat, but this is not the case in quadruple meter. The four beats of quadruple meter begin with a strong downbeat followed by a weaker second beat. The third beat is stronger than the second or fourth beats but not as strong as the downbeat. The following example of quadruple meter also has a short note before the downbeat. That short note is called an **upbeat**.

“Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. He has . . .”
Meter: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

On the recordings that came with your book, “Comfort Ye” from Handel’s *Messiah* is in quadruple meter. Listen to it and see if you can hear the meter.

Meters other than duple, triple, and quadruple exist but are less common than those three. **Compound meters** subdivide the basic beats into sets of threes. Two groups of three are counted as six beats, and three groups of three are counted as nine beats. **Irregular meters** in which beats are accented in groups of five, seven, or other numbers can be found, particularly in music after the early twentieth century. By the late twentieth century, some music avoids any accenting of beats or meter at all.

Earlier in this chapter, we touched on the term *accent*. Ways of accenting a note include playing it louder or longer than its surrounding notes. Accents cause notes to stick out and grab our attention. Sometimes composers accent notes that are played between, rather than directly on, the steady beat. This effect is called **syncopation**. The beginning of Stephen Foster’s song “Camptown Races” is syncopated: both times “dah” is sung, it comes before the beat, though the listener most likely expects to hear it on the beat. You could sing the song with the “dahs” exactly on the second beats, but the effect would lack the energy added by the syncopation. The lyrics and beats follow:

“Camptown ladies sing this song, doo dah, doo dah”
Beats: 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2

All aspects of rhythm are very much affected by the **tempo**, or pace, of the music. The tempo is the rate or speed of the beat. If the beat is quick, the tempo is *fast*; if the beat is long, the tempo is *slow*. Indications concerning tempo are usually given in Italian and most often appear at the beginning of the piece, though they may also appear in other sections, particularly if the tempo changes abruptly:

very slow:	<i>largo</i> (broad)
	<i>grave</i> (grave, solemn)
slow:	<i>lento</i>
	<i>adagio</i> (leisurely; literally, at ease)
moderate:	<i>andante</i> (at a walking pace)
	<i>moderato</i>



Meter: Triple

Triple meter is less common than quadruple meter in popular music, but examples can be found. Listen for the triple meter in popular examples in this Spotify playlist.

spotify.fi/triple



Meter: Duple

Duple meter is often used for marches because it stresses the “left, right” movement of people marching together. Listen to examples in this Spotify playlist.

spotify.fi/duple



Meter: Quadruple

Quadruple is the most common meter used in popular music, particularly rock music. Listen to examples in this Spotify playlist.

spotify.fi/quadruple



Meter: Irregular

Irregular meters are not common in popular music, other than in some jazz styles. Listen to examples on Spotify and try to count the beats to determine the meter.

spotify.fi/irregular



Sound: Syncopation

Placing accents where the listener does not expect them adds rhythmic interest to music. Listen to examples in popular music and notice notes or words that seem to be misplaced from the steadier beat.

spotify.fi/syncopation



Sound: Tempo

Tempo has a big impact on the mood of the music. Listen to examples with extremes of slow and fast tempos and compare the effect.

[spoti.fi/tempo](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/37i9dQZF1DX0XUf1hQguzM)

fast:	<i>allegretto</i> <i>allegro</i> (faster than <i>allegretto</i> ; literally, cheerful)
very fast:	<i>vivace</i> (vivacious) <i>presto</i> (very quick) <i>prestissimo</i> (as fast as possible)

These basic terms are often accompanied by the following modifiers: *molto* (very), *meno* (less), *poco* (a little), and *ma non troppo* (not too much). For example, *allegro molto* is very fast; *poco adagio* is somewhat slow; and *allegro non troppo* is fast but not too fast. *Accelerando* (getting faster) and *ritardando* (becoming slower) indicate gradual changes in tempo. To reestablish the original tempo, the term *a tempo* is used.

Tempo can be altered in other ways. The term **rubato** indicates freedom to move ahead and fall behind the tempo, and the symbol \frown (**fermata**) tells the performer to hold the note longer than its normal time value—momentarily suspending the meter and tempo. As was the case with dynamic indications, tempo indications are approximate and relative, leaving a great deal of discretion to the performer.

Melody

We can define a **melody** as a series of notes that add up to a recognizable whole. Whereas rhythm measures the flow of music in time, melody fits into a given rhythm by adding a series of pitches that we might enjoy humming along with. We often will remember the melody—whether it is sung with words or played instrumentally—better than any other aspect of the music.

Melody gives music a sense of physical movement as it progresses forward in time. Different melodies follow different patterns of movement. Those that move from one note to another in a major scale (*do* to *re* in the *do-re-mi* scale, for example) move by steps. When the notes of a melody skip notes (or steps) of the scale (from *do* to *mi* or some other note in the scale), they are moving by leaps.

Another aspect of melody has to do with the way notes connect with one another. If the notes flow naturally and smoothly from one to the next, we say the melody is played or sung **legato**. If the notes sound “choppy”—that is, short and detached from each other—we say the melody is played or sung **staccato**. We will hear many examples of each of these effects as we explore the musical examples in this book.

Melodies are often made up of shorter sections called **phrases**. When a phrase or a melody ends with a sense of finality, that resting point is called a **cadence**. In the song “Row, Row, Row Your Boat,” for example, the two phrases are equal in length, with the second phrase sounding like a completion of the first. The phrases are identified by letters of the alphabet—“a” for the first phrase and “b” for the second. When you sing the song, notice that the end of the “a” phrase does not sound complete, but rather sets us up to expect the “b” phrase. That type of seemingly incomplete ending is called an *incomplete cadence*. The entire melody ends with a complete cadence.

phrase “a” “Row, row, row your boat gently down the stream,
phrase “b” Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily, life is but a dream.”

Sing the melody to “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” again and notice that there is a sense of energy on the first “merrily.” This energy is created by the fact that that note is the highest note in the melody. Such a melodic high point is called the *climax*.

When a melody is made up of two very similar phrases, we do not use the letter “b” for the second phrase. Instead, we identify it as a varied version of the first phrase by calling it “a’.” Such is the case with the song “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”

phrase “a” “Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little lamb,
phrase “a’” Mary had a little lamb; its fleece was white as snow.”

Of course, many melodies are much more complicated than the two we have cited. Some melodies are made up of phrases of unequal lengths. Sometimes, too, we find melodic patterns repeated at different pitch levels. This is called a **sequence**. The song “America” uses a sequence. The words “Land where my fathers died” and “Land of the Pilgrim’s pride” are sung to the same melodic pattern, but the second phrase is sung at a lower pitch than the first.

The melody is an extremely important part of any piece of music. In a long composition, some melodies assume greater importance than others. A melody that serves as the starting point for an extended work is called a **theme**. In the course of a musical composition, important themes may be stated and restated in many forms.

Harmony

If melody is the horizontal aspect of music, **harmony** is the vertical. That is, instead of sounds in succession, harmony involves notes sounding at the same time. Most Western music depends on harmony to help enhance its expressiveness.

We have defined *interval* as the distance between two notes in a melody, but we can also use it to refer to the distance between notes that are sounded together to make harmony. Thus, harmony is a composite sound made up of two or more notes of different pitches that are played or sung simultaneously. The smallest harmonic unit is one consisting of two notes, but we usually have three or more notes played or sung together to create harmony. Those groups of notes make up what we call **chords** (pronounced “cords”). A series of chords is called a **chord progression**.

An important quality of a given harmony is its degree of consonance or dissonance. A combination of notes that is considered stable and without tension is called a **consonance**. A combination of notes that is considered unstable and tense, so much so that they sometimes sound as if they are fighting with one another, is called a **dissonance**. Dissonance adds variety and a sense of forward motion to music. Dissonance usually occurs as a transient tension in a harmonic progression. *Resolution* usually refers to a dissonant chord moving to a consonant chord. The movement from dissonance to consonance can give a sense of dramatic or psychological resolution, like seeing the villain get what is coming to him or her in a movie.

The general character of most pieces is consonant, even though they may feature some dissonance. Joseph Haydn’s String Quartet, op. 33, no. 3, is a good example. Listen to its fourth movement on the recordings that accompany your book and notice that the music sounds as though the notes all fit together into a pleasing harmonic unit. Other works are predominantly dissonant, such as John Cage’s Sonata V from *Sonatas and Interludes for Prepared Piano*. When you listen to Cage’s work, you will hear many groups of notes that clash against one another, creating much tension. As we move through music history from century to century, we find that the relationship of consonance and dissonance begins to change, with a gradual increase in the importance or prevalence of dissonance as we approach the twentieth century.

The simplest chord is the **triad**. It is made up of three notes that are usually spaced one note apart—*do*, *mi*, and *sol* in the *do-re-mi* (major) scale, for example. The first note of any scale—in this case, *do*—is called the **tonic** note. The triad built on the notes beginning with *do* is, therefore, called the *tonic chord*. Tonic chords sound very stable and are traditionally played at the end of a musical composition to supply a sense of conclusion to the harmonic progression.

Chords can be broken up so that their notes are played one at a time instead of all together. This is called an **arpeggio**. Arpeggios can be used to accompany melodies or they can create a melody themselves. The melody to the words “Oh say can you see” from “The Star-Spangled Banner” is composed out of an arpeggio because all of the notes come from a single—in this case, tonic—chord.