



MUSIC: BRIDGING ACTIVITY

Studying Music at A level will encourage you to:

- engage actively in music study
- develop performing skills to show an understanding of musical elements, style, sense of continuity, interpretation, and expression
- develop composing skills to show the manipulation of musical ideas and the use of musical devices and conventions
- broaden musical experience and interests, develop imagination and foster creativity
- develop as effective, independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- reflect critically and make personal judgements on your own and others' music
- appraise contrasting genres, styles, and traditions of music, and develop understanding of musical contexts and a coherent awareness of musical chronology.

Music theory. The A Level course uses full musical scores, and the more rapidly you can look at the information and read and understand it, the greater depth of detail and understanding you will be able to show.

You need to have an understanding of at least ABRSM Grade 5 standard.

There are lots of websites that will help you with this, as well as books and past papers.

- [My Music Theory](#) - a web site with exercises based on the ABRSM theory grades. You can print exercises off as well as do them on-line. A great place to start is [What Music Theory Grade Am I](#) to work out your starting point and areas of strength and weakness.
- [Music Theory Net](#) - a very useful site which starts at the very basics of music theory. It has exercises which you can tailor to your needs, from the most basic of concepts to more advanced ones. It also has interval and chord recognition, very useful if you are preparing for grade exams as well as for the listening paper. It is not the flashiest looking site, but the content is excellent

Task 1.

Compose a 16-bar melody with accompaniment. This can be for any combination of instruments and will need to be handed in as a score and audio recording.

Melody and harmony composing steps:

1. An easy way to add an accompaniment is to use a drone. This can be just one note but is often two notes, usually the tonic and dominant of the key.

Try writing a simple melody and adding first a one note drone. Then try a two-note drone. Experiment with long notes or repeated notes.

2. Try composing a simple bass line in semibreves. Add a melody above this, also in semibreves. Now try to decorate your semibreve melody by adding extra notes such as passing notes, extra harmony notes etc. to make a more interesting melody.
3. This time start with a chord pattern. Choose four chords as your starting point. Try writing a melody in crotchets to go with the chords using just notes available in the chords. Now make the melody more interesting by adding non chord notes such as passing notes, auxiliary notes and make use of some quavers to add interest to the original crotchet rhythm.

You can extend this by writing four different bars in the same way. This can be turned into a 16-bar melody by repeating phrases as desired. Instead of writing the chords as semibreves you can play them as broken chords. To record your ideas, you can use free software such as Musescore or Soundtrap.

Task 2

Prepare a 3–4-minute performance on your chosen instrument. This can be of any genre/style, and you may wish to play along with a backing track. You will perform this to the class in the first week of lessons and perform this in the Chamber Concert in Term One.

1. **Performing.** You will need to ensure you keep your instrumental practice going over the summer. When you present your A Level Recital in Year 13, you need to be a MINIMUM of Grade 6 standard. You don't need to have taken the exam, just be playing material which is that standard and play in a way which shows you have the technical control and mastery of the instrument to cope with it. Ideally, you should be closer to Grade 7 or 8 to access the higher marks.

It is vital that you continue to receive expert instrumental teaching on a weekly basis during the whole of your A Level course, and that you support and attend Becket Keys Music Department ensembles and concerts to hone and build your skills and confidence.

Over the summer, do your best to practice your instrument for at least half an hour a day.

When planning your repertoire, begin by looking at the published lists of grade pieces for your instrument. Some of the main boards for instrumental and vocal exams are:

- ABRSM
- Trinity Guildhall
- Rock School
- London College of Music (especially for Musical Theatre)
- Registry of Guitar Tutors

Task. 3

Watch Howard Goodall's The Age of Discovery Part 1. Create a presentation that outlines the early development of musical history based on the information in the video. Hand this in as a PowerPoint.

<https://youtu.be/I0Y6NPahlDE?si=T5uLARNts6wUH-pm>

Extension: There are 6 episodes in total, see if you can watch all 6!