

MUSIC HISTORY STUDY GUIDE

OVERVIEW

The graduate entrance (diagnostic) and qualifying exams may consist of multiple-choice, short answer, score ID, and/or essay questions covering the six broad periods of Western art music:

1. Before 1400 (including Antiquity and the Middle Ages)
2. Renaissance
3. Baroque
4. Classical
5. Romantic
6. Post-1900 (including modern and postmodern styles)

These exams assess knowledge of musical terms, major composers and works, and contextual factors that influenced the creation and experience of music over the centuries.

NOTE: This guide is intended to support one's preparation for the exams but does *not* account for every question that might be asked. Students are strongly encouraged to begin reviewing a music history textbook well in advance of their exam(s).

SAMPLE WEBSITES FOR REVIEW

1. <https://tinyurl.com/usm01>
2. <https://tinyurl.com/tamukmh2>
3. <https://tinyurl.com/usm02>

INCOMPLETE LIST OF TERMS AND COMPOSERS BY ERA

Before 1400

Terms: Antiquity, Ars antiqua, Ars nova, Cantus firmus, Church modes, Clausula, Hocket, Isorhythm, Musica enchiriadis, Neume, Rhythmic modes, Trecento, Trope

Genres: Ballata, Canso, Cantiga, Conductus, Estampie, Mass Ordinary/Proper, Motet, Organum, Plainchant, Rondeau, Rota, Sequence, Virelai

Key Figures: Anonymous IV, Guido d'Arrezzo, Hildegard von Bingen, La Comtessa de Dia, Adam de la Halle, Landini, Machaut, Perotin, Pythagoras, Ventadorn, de Vitry

Instruments: Aulos, Lute, Lyre

Renaissance

Terms: Cantus firmus, Contenance angloise, Fauxbourdon, Imitation, Madrigalism, Musica ficta, Musica transalpine, Odhecaton, Reformation / Counter-Reformation, Word painting

Genres: Anthem, Carol, Chanson, Chorale, deutsches Lied, Frottola, Hymn, Lute song, Madrigal, Mass (cantus firmus and parody), Motet, Mass, Villancico

Key Figures: Binchois, Byrd, Casulana, Dowland, Dufay, Dunstable, di Lasso, Gesualdo, Gutenberg, Luther, Ockeghem, Palestrina, Petrucci, des Prez

Instruments: Clavichord, Lute, Sackbut, Shawm, Viola da gamba, Virginal

Baroque

Terms: Affections, Agréments, Aria, Basso continuo, Chorale, Collegium musicum, Concertino, Da capo (aria), Figured bass, Ground bass, Monody, Opera, Ordre, Recitativo obbligato, Recitativo secco, Ritornello, Treatise on Harmony

Genres: Cantata, Concerto grosso, Dance suite (with movements), French overture, Fugue, Opera seria, Oratorio, Sacred concerto, Solo concerto, Suite, Toccata, Tragedie lyrique, Trio sonata

Key Figures: J. S. Bach, Francesca Caccini, Corelli, Couperin, Handel, Lully, Monteverdi, Pergolesi, Peri, Purcell, Rameau, A. Scarlatti, Schütz, Stradivari, Strozzi, Telemann, Vivaldi

Instruments: Harpsichord, Organ

Classical

Terms: Alberti bass, Cadenza, Empfindsamkeit (style), Enlightenment, Fortepiano, Galante, Intermezzo, Mannheim, Sturm und Drang, War of the Bouffons

Forms: Minuet and Trio, Rondo, Scherzo, Solo sonata, Theme and variations

Genres: Opera buffa, Concerto, Drame giocoso, Reform opera, Serenade, Singspiel, Sonata, String Quartet, Symphony

Key Figures: Countess Maria Theresia of Ahlefeldt, Beethoven, Chevalier de Saint-Georges, Gluck, Haydn, Rameau, Mozart, Stamitz

Romantic

Terms: Bel canto, Exoticism, Gesamtkunstwerk, Historicism, Idée fixe, Leitmotif, Nationalism, Programmatic music, Thematic transformation, Rubato, Verismo

Forms: Cyclic form, Theme and variation

Genres: Ballet, Character piece, Concert overture, Concerto, Grand opera, Lied, Mazurka, Nocturne, Opera comique, Operetta, Parlor song, Song cycle, Symphonic poem

Key Figures: Beethoven, Berlioz, Bizet, Brahms, Bruckner, Chopin, Coleridge-Taylor, Dvořák, Foster, Hensel, Liszt, Mahler, Paganini, Mussorgsky, Rossini, Schubert, The Schumanns, Tchaikovsky, Verdi, Wagner

Post-1900

Terms and Genres/Styles: Aleatoric (chance) music, Atonality, Combinatoriality, Electroacoustic music, Expressionism, Formalism, Impressionism, Indeterminacy, Minimalism, Musique concrète, Neoclassicism, Neotonicity, Postmodernism, Primitivism, Serialism, Sound mass, Sprechstimme, Tone cluster, Tone row

Key Figures: Babbitt, Bartok, Beach, Berg, Boulanger, Cage, Carter, Copland, Crumb, Debussy, Glass, Hindemith, Ives, Messiaen, Pärt, Price, Prokofiev, Reich, Saariaho, Schoenberg, William Grant Still, Stravinsky, Varese, Villa-Lobos, Webern

PRACTICE ESSAYS

1. Identify a major work from each style period and describe how the musical features of each piece reflect the time in which it was written.
2. Contrast the style and aesthetics of the Baroque and Classical eras, the Classical and Romantic eras, or the Romantic and Modern eras. After identifying specific differences, discuss some of the larger social, political, and/or technological changes that contributed to the shift in style.
3. Choose three composers who were active between 1500 and 1900. Reflect on the ways in which (1) employers, (2) intended audiences, and (3) broader socio-political events shaped each composer's creative output.