



New College A Level Music - Summer Independent Learning - Year 12-13

Welcome to your Summer Independent Learning pack for A-Level Music! This pack is designed to consolidate your knowledge, introduce you to new exciting musical concepts, and prepare you for the challenges of Year 13. Remember, independent learning is key to success at A-Level. Dive in and enjoy the musical journey!

Task 1: Your Personal Performance Showcase

Objective: To prepare and refine a performance program that showcases your musical abilities and understanding across different styles. This will be a key part of your progression task.

Instructions:

1. **Curate Your Program:** Design a performance program of **10-12 minutes** in total.
2. **Piece Selection:** Your program must consist of **3 or more pieces of music**.
3. **Genre Diversity:** Ensure your chosen pieces come from **at least two of the following areas of study**:
 - Musicals / Music Theatre
 - Western Classical Tradition
 - Pop and Rock
4. **Refine & Rehearse:** Dedicate significant time to practicing your pieces. Focus not just on accuracy, but on musicality, interpretation, and projection.

Why this is interesting: This task is about *you*! It's your chance to shine and show off your hard work. Think of it as your mini-concert, where you are the star. Choosing pieces from different areas will also challenge your versatility as a musician.

Task 2: Haydn 104 "London" Symphony Deep Dive

Objective: To thoroughly revise and internalize the key musical elements of Haydn's Symphony No. 104, preparing you for detailed analysis.

Instructions:

1. **The "DR.A.P. SMITH" Challenge:** For *each movement* of the symphony, create comprehensive revision materials covering every element of "DR.A. P. SMITH" (Dynamics, Rhythm, Articulation, Phrasing, Structure, Melody, Instrumentation, Tonality, Harmony). You can choose to create:
 - **Mind Maps:** Use colours and key phrases to visually connect ideas for each element within a movement.

- **Flashcards:** Create detailed flashcards with definitions, specific examples from the score, and bar numbers for each element.

2. **Sing Your Way to Success!** Utilize the specially designed revision songs on YouTube to help embed key points and structural elements in your memory. These are fantastic for auditory learners and remembering tricky details!

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zjaal6ul_tw
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7quIHlP0qPY>

Why this is interesting: This task isn't just about memorization; it's about *mastery*. Using mind maps or flashcards helps you organize complex information, and the revision songs are a fun, active way to learn that will stick with you long after the summer. Think of them as your secret revision weapon!

Task 3: Unveiling Impressionism - Debussy's World

Objective: To introduce you to the characteristics of Impressionism in music, focusing on Debussy's pioneering works.

Instructions:

1. **The Sound of Impressionism:** Watch the following video documentaries and actively make detailed notes. Pay attention to the defining characteristics of the style, its origins, and how it differs from previous periods.
 - Debussy and impressionism | Music - Howard Goodall's Story of Music
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKwRQh94toA>
 - Impressionism in Music: Characteristics of the Style and Composers who created It
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lof6AHvXCPw>
 - The Music of Debussy (piano TV) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P42pjGoVmJo>
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2. **Active Listening & Score Study:** Listen to the following Debussy pieces multiple times, *with the score in front of you*. As you listen, try to identify and annotate examples of the Impressionistic characteristics you noted from the videos (e.g., use of whole-tone scales, parallel chords, blurred harmonies, exotic scales, new sonorities).
 - Debussy - Voiles <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FVV0jkZC4jI>
 - Debussy. Prelude a l'apres-midi d'un Faune <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnz4T33Jl7I>
 - Debussy: Nuages from Trois Nocturnes - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S96Ojs9mcxg&t=2s>

Why this is interesting: Impressionism is a beautiful and often enigmatic style of music. This task will open your ears to new sound worlds and challenge you to think about music in terms of atmosphere and colour, much like a painter uses light. *Nuages* is a particularly evocative piece that you'll enjoy dissecting.

Task 4: The Drama of Expressionism - Schoenberg's Bold Statements

Objective: To explore the challenging and innovative world of Expressionism in music, focusing on Schoenberg's radical approach.

Instructions:

1. **Experiencing Atonality:** Listen to "Peripetie" by Schoenberg (No. 4 out of 5 Pieces) while following the score closely. This piece is a prime example of atonality – how does Schoenberg achieve this effect?

<https://youtu.be/8AQx0V2lZs8?t=751>

2. **Vocal Expressionism:** Listen to "Der Kranke Mond" (No. 7) from *Pierrot Lunaire* Op. 21 by Schoenberg, again with the score. Pay particular attention to the vocal technique of *Sprechstimme* and how it contributes to the unsettling mood.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ykh4RUBYinE>

Why this is interesting: Expressionism is a direct contrast to Impressionism, taking you into a world of intense emotion and psychological depth. Schoenberg's music is often challenging but incredibly rewarding. Understanding his break from traditional tonality is a crucial part of your A-Level journey.

Task 5: The Symphony Unveiled: Structure, Drama & Mendelssohn's Overture

Objective: To trace the development of the symphony's structure, form, drama, and narrative from 1750-1900, with a focus on Mendelssohn's contributions.

Instructions:

1. **Symphonic Structure & Form Timeline:** Create a detailed **annotated timeline** illustrating how the structure and form of the symphony developed between 1750 and 1900.
 - **Key Requirement:** Your timeline *must* include specific examples from Haydn's symphonies (e.g., how Haydn developed sonata form, the inclusion of the minuet/scherzo) and *other symphonies we have looked at*.
 - **Detail is King:** Be very detailed in your annotations, as this information is crucial for your progression exam essay.
2. **Symphonic Drama & Narrative Timeline:** Create a detailed **annotated timeline** showing how drama and narrative elements evolved in the symphony from 1750 to 1900.
 - **Key Requirement:** Again, include specific examples from Haydn and other symphonies discussed in class.
 - **Detail is King:** This timeline also needs to be very detailed to support your progression exam essay.
3. **Exploring Mendelssohn's "Italian" Overture:** While we have covered Rock and Pop, you still need to learn about Mendelssohn's "Italian" Overture. Research and analyze this piece focusing on:
 - **Structure:** How does it conform to or deviate from typical overture forms?
 - **Orchestration/Sonority:** What instruments are prominent? How does Mendelssohn create his characteristic "sparkle"?
 - **Melody and Motifs:** Identify key melodic ideas.
 - **Harmony and Tonality:** Note any interesting harmonic features or modulations.
 - **Relationship to the "Italian" theme:** How does the music evoke a sense of Italy?
 - **Historical Context:** What was the purpose of an overture in this period?

Why this is interesting: This task prepares you for one of the most important aspects of A-Level Music – essay writing! By creating detailed, annotated timelines, you're building a strong foundation of knowledge that will allow you to construct compelling arguments. Mendelssohn's "Italian" Overture is a vibrant and accessible piece that will help you bridge the gap between the Classical and Romantic eras.

General Tips for Success:

- **Pace yourself:** Don't leave everything until the last minute. Break down these tasks into manageable chunks over the summer.
- **Active Engagement:** Don't just passively watch or listen. Take notes, make connections, and ask yourself questions.
- **Utilize Resources:** The links provided are invaluable. Use them!
- **Stay Curious:** Music is a vast and exciting subject. If something piques your interest, explore it further!
- **Bring your completed work:** Your detailed notes, timelines, and prepared performance pieces will be essential for your first lessons and progression assessment in Year 13.

Good luck and have a productive musical summer!