

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Sixth Grade Master Class in Musical Critique

How does a composer influence your pulse? Synthesize structural observations with cultural analysis to evaluate the power of global masterpieces.

1. When analyzing a minimalist composition like Terry Riley's 'In C,' how does the concept of 'emergent patterns' shift the listener's focus compared to traditional Western melody?

Answer: B) It emphasizes the evolution of texture through short, repeating cells.

Minimalism focuses on phasing and repetition where small variations (cells) create a larger, evolving soundscape or texture.

2. In the context of Jazz history, Duke Ellington's 'Black and Tan Fantasy' uses _____ to convey social commentary during the Harlem Renaissance.

Answer: C) the 'growl' trumpet style and blues motifs

Ellington used specific timbres like the 'growl' and traditional blues structures to represent African American identity and struggle.

3. True or False: In a Fugue, such as those by J.S. Bach, the 'subject' is a short melody that is introduced in one voice and then imitated by others in a complex, overlapping structure.

Answer: A) True

A fugue is a contrapuntal composition where a specific theme (the subject) is layered across different voices or instruments.

4. During the Romantic era, composers like Clara Schumann used 'rubato' in their piano works. What is the primary artistic purpose of this technique?

Answer: B) To allow for expressive stretching and rushing of tempo for emotional effect.

Rubato (stolen time) allows performers to deviate from a strict tempo to heighten the emotional delivery of the music.

5. When comparing West African Polyrhythms to Western Pop music, the primary difference is the simultaneous use of multiple _____ that may not align on a single downbeat.

Answer: B) independent rhythmic meters

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Polyrhythm involves two or more conflicting rhythms/meters heard or felt at the same time, common in African musical traditions.

6. True or False: Tone Poems, such as Debussy's 'Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune,' are designed to tell a specific story or evoke a mood without using words.

Answer: A) True

Tone poems are a form of program music intended to illustrate the content of a poem, short story, or landscape through sound.

7. Synthesize your knowledge of instrumentation: How does the use of the 'theremin' in 20th-century film scores affect the listener's psychological experience compared to a string quartet?

Answer: B) It evokes an eerie, otherworldly feel because of its electronic, sliding pitch.

The theremin's unique electronic timbre and portamento (sliding) effect became a hallmark for science fiction and psychological suspense.

8. Evaluating the 'Aria' in an opera like Puccini's 'Turandot,' this section serves as a moment for a character to _____ rather than to advance the physical plot.

Answer: C) express deep internal emotion through song

While 'recitative' moves the plot along with speech-like singing, the 'aria' is a reflective solo that focuses on emotional depth.

9. If you are analyzing the 'timbre' of a piece of Japanese Gagaku music, which of these would you be evaluating?

Answer: B) The specific 'color' or quality of the Hichiriki's piercing sound.

Timbre refers to the character or quality of a musical sound or voice as distinct from its pitch and intensity.

10. True or False: In Renaissance polyphony, as seen in the works of Palestrina, all voices move together in the exact same rhythm and notes, creating a single melody line (monophony).

Answer: B) False

Palestrina's polyphony involved multiple independent melody lines intertwining, which is the opposite of monophony.