

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Sonic Strategy: Ace the Elements of Music Theory for Juniors

Deconstruct complex textures like Ligeti's micropolyphony and Stravinsky's polyrhythms through rapid-fire analysis to sharpen your ears for high-level composition.

1. In the context of 20th-century orchestral works like György Ligeti's 'Atmosphères', how is the element of timbre specifically used to replace traditional melody and harmony?

Answer: B) By utilizing 'micropolyphony' where dense textures obscure individual lines to focus on shifting sound masses.

Ligeti used micropolyphony to create a 'sound mass' where the listener perceives a wall of shifting timbre rather than distinct intervals or rhythms.

2. The rhythmic technique used famously in Igor Stravinsky's 'The Rite of Spring' to create jarring, unpredictable accents is known as ____.

Answer: C) Asymmetrical meter

Stravinsky utilized asymmetrical meters and unpredictable accents to break away from the traditional, predictable pulse of Western classical music.

3. True or False: In Jacob Collier's microtonal experiments, 'just intonation' is used to achieve harmonic resonance that deviates from the standard 12-tone equal temperament system.

Answer: A) True

Just intonation uses frequency ratios of whole numbers, allowing for pure-sounding harmonies that differ from the standardized equal temperament used in most modern instruments.

4. Which term best describes the texture of a Bach Fugue, where multiple independent melodic lines move simultaneously while maintaining harmonic coherence?

Answer: D) Polyphony

Polyphony involves two or more simultaneous lines of independent melody, a hallmark of Baroque contrapuntal writing.

5. When a composer like Gustav Mahler marks a score 'molto ritardando' followed by 'a tempo', they are manipulating the musical element of ____.

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Answer: B) Tempo

Ritardando refers to a gradual slowing of the speed, which is a facet of tempo management in musical performance.

6. True or False: Functional harmony, as seen in the Common Practice Period, relies heavily on the tension and release between the Tonic (I) and the Subdominant (IV) chords as the primary resolution.

Answer: B) False

The primary tension and release in functional harmony is between the Dominant (V) and the Tonic (I), known as a perfect cadence.

7. In Indonesian Gamelan music, what rhythmic concept describes the interlocking patterns played by various instruments to create a complex, shimmering whole?

Answer: A) Kotenkan

Kotekan is a style of playing fast, interlocking rhythmic parts in Balinese Gamelan that creates a composite melody more complex than any individual part.

8. The use of _____ dynamics in works by composers like Arvo Pärt often serves to emphasize the 'tintinnabuli' style, where silence is as important as sound.

Answer: C) Minimalist

Minimalist dynamics focus on subtle shifts and often involve sustained, quiet levels to draw the listener into a meditative state.

9. Which harmonic device is characterized by a stable 'pedal point' being held while other voices move through dissonant chords?

Answer: B) Organ point

An organ point (or pedal point) is a sustained tone, usually in the bass, during which at least one foreign, dissonant harmony is sounded in the other parts.

10. True or False: The concept of 'Sprechstimme', used by Arnold Schoenberg, is an element of melody that blends the boundary between singing and speaking.

Answer: A) True

Sprechstimme is a vocal technique where the singer follows the rhythm but only approximates the pitch, creating a hybrid of speech and song.

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