



Early Music

Plainchant

The earliest music that we know, both sacred and secular, consists of a single line melody. This is a monophonic texture.

Examples of this can be found in early church music, in the form of **plainchant** (also known as **plainsong** or **Gregorian chant**). **Plainchant** melodies were generally flowing, often moving by **step** rather than by **leap**, and would be sung in an **a cappella** style (i.e. **unaccompanied**).

The rhythm would be irregular and very free, following the natural rhythms and stresses of the Latin words.

Plainchant melodies were based on special types of scaled called **modes**. **Modes** can be found by playing any notes within an octave, but keeping to the white notes only. Here is an example of a **mode**:



Here is an example of a simple **plainchant** melody, dating from about the year 800:

Mainly Syllabic	Major	Modal	A cappella
Mainly melismatic	Polyphonic	Triplets	Unison



Choose 4 relevant concepts from the box above and write them in the correct categories on the table below.

Melody	Harmony	Texture	Timbre

Sacred Music in the Renaissance period

Composers throughout history have written sacred music. In the Renaissance period sacred music was generally sung in Latin and performed **a cappella** (without instrumental accompaniment). It often contained some of the following features:

Melodic	Harmonic	Rhythmic	Structural
Imitation Melisma Mode Plainchant	Consonance Dissonance Modal Suspension Passing notes Plagal cadence	Simple time Rallentando	Contrary motion Pedal Inverted pedal Polyphony Homophony

The most important forms of sacred music in the Renaissance period were the **Mass**, **Motet** and **Anthem**.

Mass

The **Mass** is the chief service of the Catholic Church. The Latin setting of the Mass divides into five main sections, or "items":

<i>Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison</i>	Lord have mercy, Christ Have mercy
<i>Gloria in excelsis Deo</i>	Glory to God in the highest
<i>Credo in unum deum</i>	I believe in one God
<i>Sanctus; Osanna; Benedictus</i>	Holy, holy, holy; Hosanna; Blessed is he....
<i>Agnus Dei</i>	Lamb of God

Motet

The **Motet** is a short sacred choral work, usually contrapuntal in style, with a Latin text. Here are some examples of texts used for motets:

<i>Veni Sancte Spiritus</i>	Come, Holy Spirit
<i>Haec Dies</i>	This is the day
<i>Ave Maria</i>	Hail Mary
<i>Jubilate Deo</i>	Be Joyful in the Lord
<i>O quam gloriosam est regnum</i>	O How Glorious is the Kingdom
<i>Ave Verum Corpus</i>	Hail, True Body
<i>O Magnum Mysterium</i>	O Great and Mighty Wonder

Anthem

The **Anthem** is a short sacred choral piece sung in English. It may be sung a cappella or with organ accompaniment. Examples of Anthems include:

*I Will Exalt Thee
Teach Me O Lord
Sing Joyfully Unto God*



Sacred Music – Revision of Concepts

(a) Tick **four** boxes to identify the titles of movements you would expect to find in a **Mass**.

Kyrie eleison

Veni Sancte Spiritus

Exsultate Deo

Sanctus

Credo

For unto us a child is born

Ave Maria

Agnus Dei

(b) Tick **four** features you would expect to find in a **Mass** from the **Renaissance** period.

Pavan

Modal

A cappella

Basso continuo

Suspensions

Polyphonic

Polytonality

Passacaglia

(c) Complete the table below by inserting in the correct concept alongside the brief description given

Description	Concept
A large-scale choral work in five main sections, usually sung in Latin, being the chief service of the Roman catholic church.	
A short unaccompanied choral piece sung in Latin.	
A short sacred choral piece sung in English. It may be sung a cappella or with organ accompaniment.	
Unaccompanied modal melody set to the words of the Roman Catholic liturgy.	

3. a) Follow the melody below and tick the correct box to fill the missing notes in bar 5

?



1 2 3

Be- ne- dic - - - - -

4 5 6 7

- - - - - tus.

(b) Tick **three** features present in the music.

Plagal cadence

Tritone

Mode

Turn

Three against two

Suspensions

Time changes

Acciaccatura

Mordent

(c) Tick **one** box to identify the type of work this music is from.

Anthem

Mass

Motet

Chorale

(d) Tick **one** box to identify the period or style of this music.

Renaissance

Romantic

Baroque

20th century

Classical



This question is based on "*O quam gloriosam est regnum*" by Victoria.

Listen to the music 3 times and answer all questions 1-3

1. (a) Tick **one** box to identify the combination of performers.

Choir and organ

Solo voice and organ

Choir and strings

Unaccompanied choir

- (b) Tick **one** box to describe the voices.

The voices are singing in unison

The voices are singing in harmony

- 2 (a) In the first phrase there are two contrasting textures used. Tick **one** box from **Column A** to identify the texture of the bars 1-4 and **one** box from **Column B** to identify the texture in bars 5-9.

Column A

Single line melody

Homophonic

Polyphonic

Column B

Single line melody

Homophonic

Polyphonic

- (b) Tick **one** box to identify a feature of the performance.

Arco

Glissando

A cappella

Tremolando

- (c) Tick **one** feature to describe the time signature of this piece.

Simple duple

Simple quadruple

Simple triple

Compound duple



3. a) Follow the melody below and tick the correct box to fill the missing notes in bar 5



1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 10

O- quam glo-ri o
sum estreg- num

- (b) Tick **three** features present in the music.

Change to compound time

Syncopation

Whole-tone scale

Mordent

Hemiola

Retrograde

Tierce de picardie

Imitation

Melisma

- (c) Tick **one** box to identify the type of work this music is from.

Anthem

Mass

Motet

Chorale

- (d) Tick **one** box to identify the period or style of this music.

Renaissance

Romantic

Baroque

20th century

Classical