

Scottish Music – VOCAL MUSIC

Bothy Ballad

- Unaccompanied folk song from North East Scotland
- Sung by MEN
- Many repeating verses – STROPHIC
- Male labourers housed in bothies on the farm sang bothy ballads.
- Songs were about their living conditions, their work, boss, food served etc.

STROPHIC

Each verse of a vocal piece has the same music



Extract 1



Extract 2

Lively

As ah gaed doon tae Tur-ra Mer-ket, Tur-ra Mer-ket fur tae fee,
Ah met in wi a weal-thy fair-mer, The Barn-yards o' Del-ga-ty. Lin-ten a-die, too-ren a-die,
Lin-ten a-die, Too-ren ay, Lin-ten lowr-in lowr-in lowr-in, The Barn-yards o' Del-ga-ty.

This is one of the most famous of all the old bothy ballads. The young ploughman at the Barnyards of Delgaty had gone to the town of Turriff (Turra) 'tae fee' - to get employment on a farm for three or six months. The farmer promised two fine working horses, but he lied. The snorter is the burnt wick of a candle. The song makes gentle fun of the farm and the workers.

Waulking Song

- A Gaelic work song with strong rhythmical rhythm
- Sung by WOMEN to keep the timing of the banging of the tweed on the table.
- Women slammed wet, newly woven woollen cloth against wooden boards to thicken and soften it. This process was called "waulking"
- Call and response style – line sung by soloist and the rest of the women join in with the refrain – often 'hi-ri-I, ho ro hu o'



Extract 1



Extract 2

$\text{♩} = 76$

Refrain (solo) *(chorus)* *Fine*
Ho ro hó hì, hò ro nan, hò ro chall. éil-eadh, ho ro hó hì, hò ro nan.
8 Verse (solo) *Refrain*
Chunn-a mis-e mo leann-an, Air each glas nan ceum eu-trom, ho
(I saw my love) (On a lightly stepping grey horse)

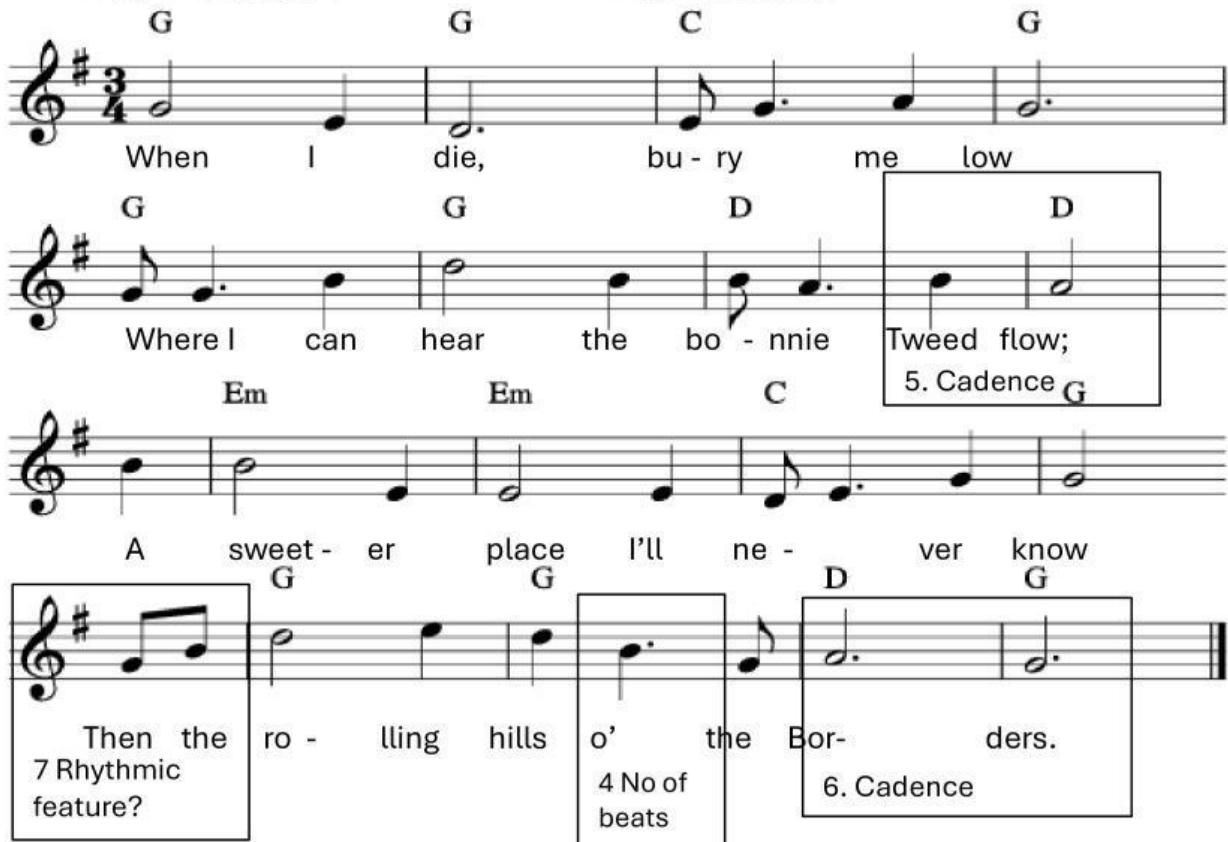
The songs start slow and steady, then get faster as the work nears the end

The lyrics often feature local gossip, love stories, or tragedy. Men were strictly banned from the room, allowing women to sing freely about them

Scots Ballad

- A Scottish folksong which tells a story
- Sung by MEN and WOMEN
- Many repeating verses – STROPHIC
- Sometimes A CAPPELLA and sometimes with instruments

 Extract 1  Extract 2



When I die, bu-ry me low

Where I can hear the bo-nnie Tweed flow;

A sweet-er place I'll ne-ver know

Then the ro-lling hills o' the Bor-ders.

5. Cadence

7 Rhythmic feature?

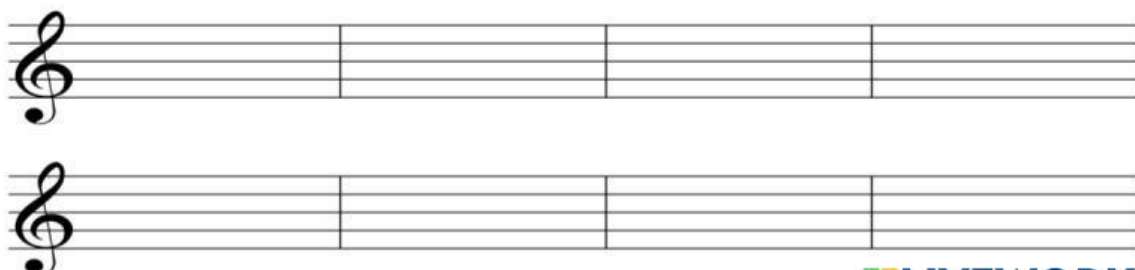
4 No of beats

6. Cadence

1. Name the key _____
2. Is the music in simple or compound time? _____
3. On what scale if this music based? _____
4. How many beats is this note worth? _____
5. Name the cadence at end of line 2 _____
6. Name the cadence at the end of line 4 _____
7. Name the rhythmic feature at the start of line 4. _____



CHALLENGE: Transpose lines 1 and 2 DOWN a TONE to F major



Mouth Music

- **Mouth music** (*puirt-à-beul* in Gaelic) is traditional Scottish and Irish vocal music meant for dancing.
- Singers used their voices to mimic instruments when they were missing.
- The songs are very fast, punchy, and highly rhythmic to keep dancers moving.
- It relies on sharp consonant sounds and tongue-twisters to create a beat.
- The words are often nonsensical, humorous, or just silly sound patterns



Extract 1



Extract 2

The main reasons it developed include:

- **Lack of instruments:** Most ordinary folk in the Scottish Highlands could not afford expensive fiddles or bagpipes but still wanted to dance.
- **Historical bans:** Following the 1745 Jacobite uprising, the British government banned bagpipes as "instruments of war". Mouth music allowed people to dance without leaving incriminating evidence.
- **Religious restrictions:** In the 19th century, strict Presbyterian church rules in certain communities banned musical instruments, labelling them sinful. The human voice was the only loophole allowed for socialising.



Gaelic Psalm

- **Gaelic psalm singing** is a unique, powerful style of A CAPPELLA (unaccompanied) church singing practiced in the Scottish Hebrides.
- It was created centuries ago for congregation members who could not read Bibles, allowing everyone to participate by ear.
- The music has no fixed beat and is sung **incredibly slowly**, creating a haunting, rolling wave of sound.
- A solo leader (the *precentor*) sings a line first, and then the congregation joins in to echo it back.
- There is no harmony; instead, every person subtly bends, stretches, and improvises on the melody in their own way at the same time.



Extract 1



Extract 2

Voices

In vocal music, voices are primarily classified by their **pitch range** (how high or low they can sing) and their gender.

Voice Type	Description & Key Features
Soprano	The highest female voice. They often sing the main melody in choral music and opera.
Mezzo Soprano	A middle-range female voice. It lies between Soprano and Alto, offering a warmer, darker tone than a standard soprano.
Alto	The lowest standard female voice. Altos typically sing supporting harmonies rather than the main melody.
Tenor	The highest common male voice. In operas, tenors are very frequently cast as the romantic hero or lead.
Baritone	A middle-range male voice. It sits between Tenor and Bass, leaning slightly closer to the lower bass range .
Bass	The lowest male voice . Bases provide the harmonic foundation (the "bassline") of vocal and choral music.

The term **CHORUS** can be used to describe a group of singers (e.g. choir) or the music performed by a group of singers.

SATB is used to describe a chorus of mixed voices – **Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass**

When a question asks you to identify the voice type:

- Check **if** the singer is **male or female**.
- Listen to the **brightness/tone of the voice**:
 - **High voices** (soprano / tenor) sound bright, piercing, and light.
 - **Low voices** (alto / bass) sound heavy, rich, warm, and deep.
 - **Middle voices** (mezzo-soprano / baritone) can be tricky but listen to see if they lack the extreme high notes of a soprano/tenor or the extreme low rumble of an alto/bass.
- In opera, the lead male is often a **tenor** and the lead female is a **soprano**. Villains or older characters are often cast as **basses** or **baritones** to sound more imposing.



Recognising voices quiz

Vocal Music : Word setting

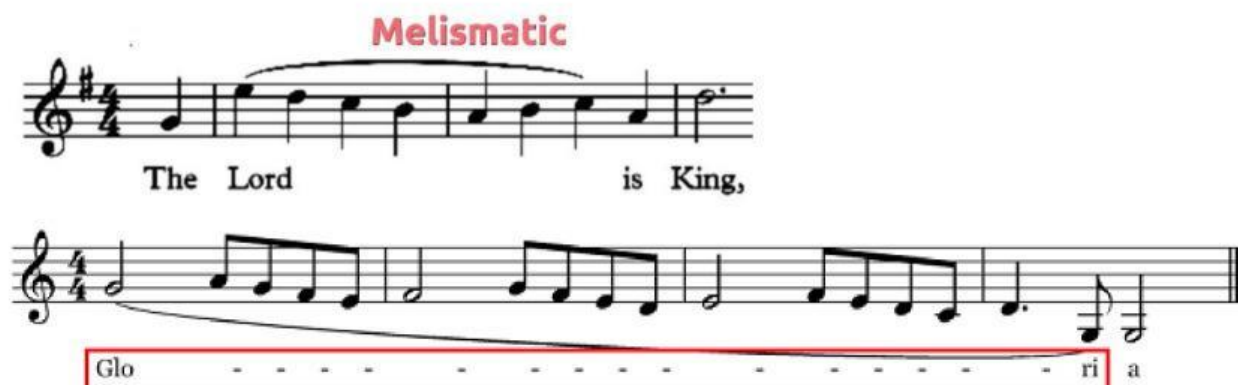
Word setting

When listening to voices, you will often be asked about the word setting.

SYLLABIC – one note per syllable of text. The words sound clear, speech-like, and easy to follow. Most pop songs and verses of hymns are predominantly **syllabic** so that the lyrics are easy for the audience to understand.



MELISMATIC (Melisma) – Many notes sung to just one syllable of text. The singer "stretches" a single vowel sound over a decorative run of notes.



- [Melismatic or syllabic quiz](#)

VOCAL MUSIC: OPERA / MUSICAL

While both **Opera** and **Musicals** are forms of musical theatre that combine drama, singing, and instrumental accompaniment, they are distinct styles with very different origins, vocal techniques, and structures.

An **OPERA** is a secular drama set to music featuring vocal soloists, a chorus, and acting, accompanied by an orchestra, normally performed in a theatre.

- » • *Queen of the Night* – A high, demanding soprano aria.
- » * *Va Pensiero* – A powerful, dramatic chorus.

Key OPERA concepts

ARIA	- A solo song in an opera designed to show off the singer's vocal ability and emotion accompanied by orchestra. - Highly melodic and often feature MELISMAS, REPETITION, SEQUENCES and any other musical devices appropriate to the text setting.
DUET/ TRIO/ QUARTET	In opera, these group numbers are highly dramatic. Instead of just singing the same thing, the characters often sing about different feelings at the same time.
CHORUS	A large group of singers performing together (often SATB), representing a crowd, soldiers, or villagers in the story. Accompanied by an orchestra.
CADENZA (vocal)	- A show-stopping, highly decorated passage where the orchestra stops playing, leaving the soloist to sing completely unaccompanied to show off their incredible vocal skills, speed, and range. - A cadenza is most famous in instrumental concertos, but opera composers also wrote them into the most dramatic moments of an aria.
Opera singers do not use microphones; they use classical vocal techniques to project over a full orchestra.	



- e.g. *La dona e mobile* - (*Rigoletto* – Verdi)



Voice heard? _____ Beats in the bar? _____

- e.g. *The Bird Catcher Song* - (*Magic Flute* - Mozart)



Voice heard? _____ Rhythmic concept? _____

- e.g.. Mozart – *Parto ma tu ben mio* – *Opera La Clemenza di Tito*



Voice heard? _____ Solo instrument? _____

MUSICAL

While both **Opera** and **Musicals** are forms of musical theatre that combine drama, singing, and instrumental accompaniment, they are distinct styles with very different origins, vocal techniques, and structures.

A **MUSICAL** is a popular musical play featuring speaking, singing, and dancing, accompanied by an orchestra or combo band.



- A Whole New World* - Aladdin

Key MUSICAL concepts	
SOLO/ DUET	A song sung by a single character is simply referred to as a solo (or a song/duet/trio depending on how many people are singing).
CHORUS	A large group of singers performing together (often SATB), representing a crowd, soldiers, or villagers in the story. Accompanied by an orchestra.
SPOKEN DIALOGUE	Unlike opera, characters in a musical frequently stop singing to speak to one another to move the plot forward.
COMBO BAND / ORCHESTRA	The accompaniment often includes modern rhythm sections (drums, electric bass, synthesizers, and guitars) alongside orchestral strings and brass.
DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY	High-energy dance routines and choreography are central to the storytelling.

In this question you will hear an excerpt of a song which will be played three times.



Tick **one** answer only in each of the four sections:

		Tick (✓)
 TIMBRE	Bass	
	Alto	
	Tenor	
TUNED PERCUSSION	Glockenspiel	
	Xylophone	
	Timpani	
RHYTHM	Dotted rhythms	
	Compound time	
	Scots snap	
TEMPO	Moderato	
	Adagio	
	Rubato	

} Tick (✓) one box from this selection

} Tick (✓) one box from this selection

} Tick (✓) one box from this selection

} Tick (✓) one box from this selection

Tick (✓) one box from this selection

Tick (✓) one box from this selection

Tick (✓) one box from this selection

Tick (✓) one box from this selection



You will now answer questions relating to the music printed below.



Listen to the excerpt and follow the music. Do not attempt to write during this playing. Here is the music.

The music will be played three more times with a pause of 30 seconds between playings. After the final playing you will have 2 minutes in which to complete your answers. A warning tone will sound 30 seconds before the next question starts.

9d

Here is the music for the first time.

Here is the music for the second time.

Here is the music for the third time.

3 Sa - la - ga - doo - la men - chic - ka boo - la bib - bi - di - bob - bi - di - boo

3 *mp* 3 3 3 3

5 put 'em to - geth er and what have you got bib - bi - do - bob - bi - di - boo

7 Sa - la - ga - doo - la men - chic - ka boo - la

3 3 3 3

put 'em to - geth - er and what have you got *mf* bib - bi - do - bob bi - di boo

4. Note

6. Cadence

3. Complete the missing notes

1. What is the **time signature** for this? _____
2. What is the **key signature**? _____
3. Complete the missing notes in bar 6.
4. Name the note marked in bar 7. _____
5. Provide a suitable **tempo** marking. _____
6. Name the **cadence** at the end of line 4. _____
7. Describe the **word setting** of this song. _____
8. What term describes the **change** in **dynamics** in bar 7? _____
9. CHALLENGE: Transpose line 2 down an octave into the BASS CLEF.





In this question you will hear an excerpt of vocal music.

- A musical map has been laid out below. You will see that further information is required and should be inserted in the highlighted areas 1 to 4 on the page.
- There will now be a pause of one minute to allow you to read through the question.
- The music will be played three times with a pause of 30 seconds between playings. In the first two playings a voice will help guide you through the music. There is no voice in the third playing. <https://www.liveworksheets.com/workbook/1229308/preview/0bh4fsxd>

There are _____ beats in the bar.

1

The type of male voice is a _____

2

The instruments playing the accompaniment are the _____

3

The Italian term for the change of speed is _____

4

1 (1 mark)	2 (1 mark)	3 (1 mark)	4 (1 mark)
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In this question, from the music *Aladdin*, you are asked to describe music you hear by inserting the appropriate concepts in the text below.

At the beginning of the piece, the low brass instruments play a/an _____

The music is in _____ time.

The tonality is _____



CHALLENGE: What is the interval on the opening 'Make way'? _____

DESCANT

A vocal melody sung ABOVE the main vocal tune. We often sing descants at Christmas in the final version of a carol – e.g. Once in Royal, Hark the Herald etc.



Extract 1



Extract 2

COUNTER-MELODY

This can appear in both vocal and instrumental music. It is a melody played or sung against the main melody.



Extract 1



Extract 2

A CAPPELLA

Voices singing without any instrumental accompaniment



Extract 1



Extract 2

SCAT SINGING

Nonsense words and sounds are made up by the singer. Used mainly in jazz.



Extract 1



Extract

IMITATION

Imitation is when a phrase or melody is copied in another part. In popular music a popular form of imitation consists of **BACKING VOCALS** repeating usually the last notes of the lead singer last line



Extract 1



Extract 2



ROUND/CANON

A very strict form of **IMITATION** is found in a **ROUND / CANON** e.g. *Frere Jacques*, *London's Burning*) After one part starts to play or sing a melody, another part enters shortly afterwards with exactly the same melody.



Quiz 1

Quiz 2

Quiz 3

Quiz 4