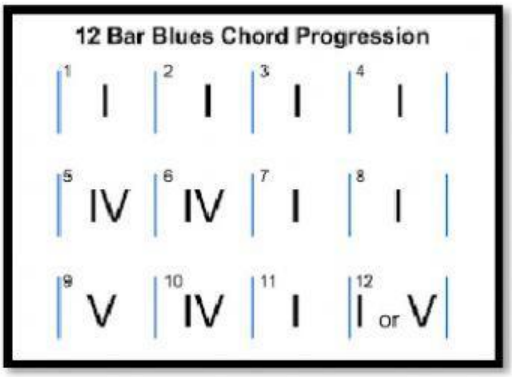
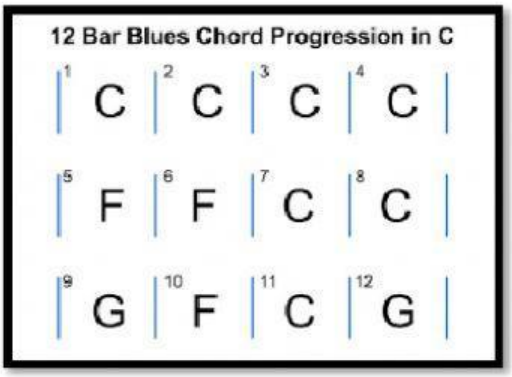
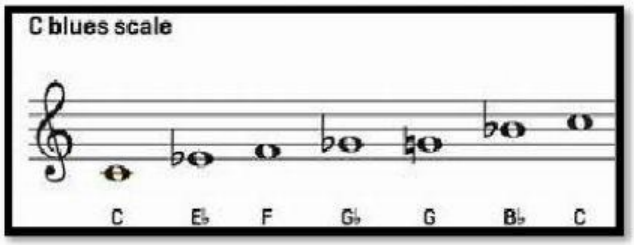
Blues – Origins in late 1800s/early 1900s

- style of music evolving from African American spirituals/ work songs and noted for its melancholy sound. Blues originated in the US (Deep South) in the late 19th and early 20th century.
- Blues music is usually in 4/4 time
- It has a strong beat, and often the singers or players bend the notes, sliding up and down to them, creating great emotion.
- A sung blues usually has just 3 lines on each verse, each line with 4 bars. This creates a 12-bar structure (with just 3 chords and uses blues notes (flattened notes). The 12 bar blues structure has subsequently been used in jazz and rock n roll.
- It can be divided into <u>Early acoustic Blues</u> and later <u>Electric Blues</u>







Key attributes:

- !2 bar blues chord progression
- Horn section – saxes/brass
- Backing vocals
- Emotional vocal delivery
- 4/4 time
- Slow tempo
- Blues scale
- Use of harmonica *(esp in acoustic blues)*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Blues - Listening

Early acoustic blues:

Robert Johnson - *Cross Road Blues*

Electric blues

Muddy Waters – *Hoochie Coochie Man*

Bessie Smith – *Down hearted Blues*

BB King – *Three O'Clock Blues*

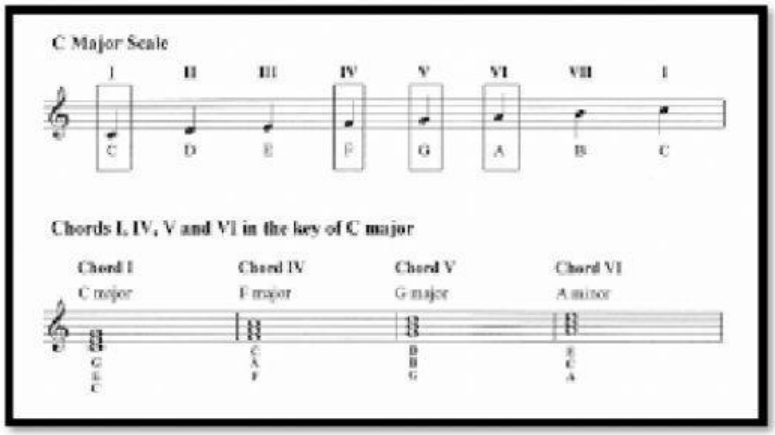
Leadbelly – *Goodnight Irene*

T-Bone Walker – *Call it stormy Monday*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Chord progressions – I IV V VI

You need to be able to recognise a chord progression based on the following chords of a major scale – I IV V VI.
NB – chord VI is always minor in a major key so easy to recognize



Most common chord progressions used in pop music are:

I VI IV V – e.g., in C major – C Am F G

I V VI IV – e.g., in C major – C G Am F

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Jazz

At first this was music created by black Americans in the early 20th century. Features of the music may include syncopation and improvisation.

Key features of Jazz:

- Improvisation
- solo piano, drumkit and bass
- Use of saxophone
- Syncopation
- vamp style accomp
- Use of trumpet/ trombone
- Scat singing

Improvisation

The performer makes up music during the actual performance. They don't have the melody written down to help, although there may be suggested chords as a guide. Improvisation is an important feature of jazz and popular music

Vamp

A rhythmic accompaniment with a bass note played on the beat and a chord off the beat. Usually played on piano or guitar.

Louis Armstrong – *Hello Dolly*

Miles Davies – *Blue Green*

Dizzy Gillespie – *Quintet*

Count Basie – Jazz Casual

Scat singing

Nonsense words, syllables and sounds are improvised (made up) by the singer. Sometimes the singer is imitating the sounds of instruments. Used mainly in jazz singing.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Ragtime

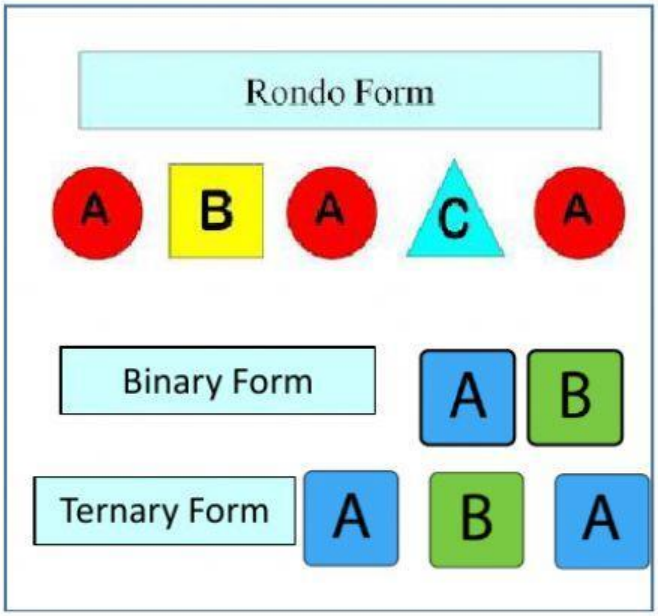
Early 1900s

Ragtime is a type of music, often for solo piano. e.g. music of Scott Joplin.
Popular around 1900-1910.
It is characterised by **syncopation** in the melody against a steady **vamp** style accompaniment.

Much of Joplin's ragtime music was played on player pianos. A player piano works on a pneumatic system where a vacuum is built up by bellows that are driven by pedals or an electric power. A paper roll (piano roll) is pulled over a metal bar with a row of punch holes. In the paper roll you can find punch holes too; one little hole for each tone.

Key features:

- Syncopation
- Solo piano
- Bright, cheerful
- Simple harmonies with chromatic notes
- Vamp accompaniment
- Tends to be in Rondo form with recurring A theme



Scott Joplin – *Maple Leaf Rag*

Scott Joplin – *The Entertainer*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Rock

A style of popular music with a **heavy, driving beat.** It usually features **electric guitar, bass guitar and drum kit.**

Rock' is a very broad genre of popular music. It originated as 'Rock and Roll' in the US in the early 1950s but by the late 1980s it had evolved into many sub genres. e.g.

Psychedelic Rock – late 1960s-early 70s
Progressive Rock - late 1960s-early 70s
Glam Rock – 1970-76
Heavy Rock - late 1960s-mid 80s with influences to present day

Key features

- Thick and heavy drums and bass
- Strong beat
- 4/4 time
- Electric instruments – guitars and synthesisers/ electric piano
- Use of **distortion** and **reverb** effects

- **Reverb -** *An electronic effect which can give the impression of different hall acoustics. For example, reverb can make a piece of music sound as if the performance is taking place in a cathedral.*

- **Distortion** on guitar - *An electronic effect used in rock music to colour the sound of an electric guitar – it gives it a 'grungy', 'dirty' sound*

- **Pitch bend -** *Changing the pitch of a note, for example, by pushing a guitar string upwards*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Rock

Progressive Rock

- Pink Floyd– *Dark side of the moon* (1973)
- Genesis– *Trespass(1970)*
- Yes– *Close to the edge(1972)*

Glam Rock

- David Bowie– *Life on Mars* (1973)
- Bryan Ferry – *Virginia Plain (1972)*
- Suzi Quatro– *Can the Can (1973)*

Psychedelic Rock

- Rolling Stones – *Paint it black (1966)*
- The Who – *I can see for miles (1967)*

Heavy Rock

- Jimmy Hendrix – *All along the watchtower*(1968)
- Led Zeppelin– *Stairway to heaven(1971)*
- Iron Maiden – *The Trooper(1983)*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Swing

1930s-40s

- The name given generally to the popular jazz of the 1930s and 1940s often played by a big band and with 'swung' dotted rhythms and featuring 'big bands' with saxophones, trumpets, trombones, drums, bass and piano.

Key attributes:

- Large brass and reed section
- Mostly instrumental but some vocals
- Dotted, swung rhythms
- Fast tempo
- Walking bass

Glen Miller– *In the mood*

Glen Miller– *Chatanooga choo choo*

Benny Goodman – *Stompin' at the Savoy*

Benny Goodman– *Sometimes I'm happy*

LIVEWORKSHEETS