Unit 5: Twentieth-century music

Outline
This unit will help students to develop an understanding of some of the extremely varied approaches taken to composition in the Twentieth Century through listening to a range of representative repertoire.

Syllabus reference	Suggested teaching activities	Learning resources
Melody and Rhythm Ensembles and instruments Instrumental effects Texture	**Debussy: *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*** Play a recording of Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* – initially from the beginning to rehearsal figure 3 (on page 8). As a **basic** listening activity, students could be asked to identify some different features of the music: e.g. the first solo instrument heard (flute) and the accompanying instruments (orchestra). They should be asked to try and describe the character of the music. As a more **challenging** listening activity they could compare the different textures found in the opening section each time the opening flute solo returns. The very beginning is a good example of monophonic texture; instrumental effects found in this section include tremolo (strings) and glissando (harp). Next, play the whole of the recording, listening out for features such as the use of the chromatic scale, and muted horns and pizzicato basses at the very end. The concept of impressionism could be discussed by showing paintings such as Monet's *Gare St Lazare*. Students should be taught about the characteristic features of impressionist music.	Recording: Debussy: *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* Score: http://petrucci.mus.auth.gr/imglnks/usimg/4/40/IMSLP14736-Debussy_-_Pr_lude_l_apr_s-midi_d_un_faune__orch._score_.pdf Painting: www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/claude-oscar-monet-the-gare-st-lazare
	Link to composing: the whole tone scale is found frequently in Debussy's music (e.g. the first bar/measure of page 9). Students could explore some of the different textures and effects that can be created using just the notes of the whole-tone scale.	

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Ensembles and instruments Instrumental effects Texture	**Schoenberg: *Variations for Orchestra*, Op. 31** Explain the concept of serialism, and show the tone-row Schoenberg used in his *Variations for Orchestra*. Now play a recording of Schoenberg's *Variations for Orchestra.* As a **basic** listening activity, students could be asked to describe the character of the music, and to name some of the different instruments and instrumental effects they hear. As a more **challenging** listening activity, they could be asked to compare the textures found in two or more different passages. Students should be taught about the characteristic features of serialism.	Recording: Schoenberg: *Variations for Orchestra*, Op. 31 Tone-row: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Schoenberg_-_Variations_for_Orchestra_op._31_tone_row.png (The score is still copyright in most countries.)
Melody and Rhythm Ensembles and instruments Texture Genre	**Prokofiev: *Allegro* from Symphony No. 1, *Classical*** Play a recording of the first movement (*Allegro*) of Prokofiev's Symphony No. 1. As a **basic** listening activity, students could be asked to identify some different features of the music: e.g. scale/key (major), instruments (orchestra), number of beats per bar/measure (2) etc. As a more **challenging** listening activity they could be asked to describe in detail the texture of the music in different passages. Next, play a recording of a symphony by Haydn. Students could compare the two performances listening for similarities as well as differences. Use their observations as the basis of an explanation of the characteristic features of neo-classical music.	Recording: Prokofiev: *Allegro* from Symphony No. 1, *Classical* (The score is still copyright in most countries.)
	Comparing different styles: Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor	
Melody and Rhythm Ensembles and instruments/voices Texture Genre	**Gershwin: *I got rhythm*** Play a recording of a vocal version of Gershwin's *I got rhythm* from the musical *Girl Crazy* – initially the chorus only (I got rhythm). As a **basic** listening activity, students could be asked to identify some different features of the music: e.g. scale/key (major), voice and instruments (these will vary according to the chosen recording), texture (melody and accompaniment), number of beats per bar/measure (2) etc. Next, focus on the syncopated rhythm – you could ask some of the class to clap the strong beats of the basic pulse, while others clap the rhythm of the melody – they should soon notice the effect of syncopation. As a more **challenging** listening activity, play one or two more different performances of the same piece. Students could be asked to compare the different ways the song is performed.	Recording: Gershwin: *I got rhythm* (The sheet music is still copyright in most countries, but is easily found in song collections.)

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	Students should be taught about the characteristic features of jazz and musicals.	
	Link to performing: if any students are learning a song or instrumental piece in a jazz style, they could perform it to the whole class. The class could be asked to identify the jazz elements that they hear in the music.	
	Formative assessment To check students' understanding of this unit, they could be asked (individually or in groups) to give a presentation on the different styles of twentieth century music they have studied. The presentation should include a variety of music examples chosen from beyond those studied in the class lessons.	
	Revision and self-study The *Classics for Kids* website contains further listening examples and a narrated description of the characteristics of impressionist music.	www.classicsforkids.com/shows/genre_impressionist.asp