

Musical Element Checklist

TIME

- **RHYTHM:** the duration of the notes. Some notes are short and some are long. All music has rhythm since without duration we would not hear it.
- **PULSE:** the regular, recurring underlying even, consistent beat of a piece. Because it is predictable, we can clap to it and dance to it.
- **METER:** the grouping of the pulse. Our music tends to be grouped in twos (duple) or threes (triple), but pulses can be grouped in any arrangement.
- **TEMPO:** the speed of the pulse.
- **SWING:** uneven subdivision of the pulse - a rhythm that is long-short-long-short-long-short.
- **SYNCOPIATION:** different accents on different beats.
- **MOTIVE:** a small pattern used as a building block.

MELODY

- **PITCH:** A note or tone. The high-ness and low-ness of a single note.
- **INTERVAL:** the distance in pitch between two notes.
- **SCALE:** a collection of notes that form the basis of the melody.
- **CONTOUR:** shape of the melody (ups and downs).
- **CHARACTER:** size of the intervals in the melody- large or small.
- **RANGE:** distance between highest and lowest notes.
- **PHRASING:** are phrases short, long, equal, unequal.
- **MOTIVES:** melodic patterns and building blocks

TEXTURE

- **MONOPHONY:** One melody only, no other pitches.
- **MONOPHONY WITH**
- **PERCUSSION:** One melody only, with percussion but no other tunes or notes.
- **LAYER:** a horizontal set of sounds that has single function within the music, be it accompaniment, rhythmic, harmonic, or melodic.
- **POLYPHONY:** more than one pitch or melody heard simultaneously. This is the most common kind of texture we hear in the United States.
- **HETEROPHONY:** one melody played in different layers by different people simultaneously, all a bit different and individual.
- **CALL AND RESPONSE:** two or more layers in alternation with one beginning (calling) answered by another (the response).

FORM:

- **LINEAR:** Music that changes through time. Linear form has a discrete beginning and ending.
- **CYCLICAL:** Music built from continual repetition of patterns. Cyclical form does not have an obvious beginning nor ending.

HARMONY

- **CONSONANCE:** a sound with little or no tension between multiple notes played simultaneously. (Adjective “consonant”)
- **DISSONANCE:** a sound with much tension between simultaneous notes. (Adjective “dissonant”)
- **HARMONIC CHARACTER:** How much of the harmony is consonant and how much is dissonant. Where is the harmony consonant, and where is it dissonant.

TIMBRE:

- **Tone quality:** use normal words to describe