

Diploma Exam: Study Guide

For the examination, you will be expected to engage in intelligent conversation about your pieces with the examiners. You need to be able to give extended (i.e. more than just one or two word) answers to questions on the following topics:

- The title of each piece, including any subtitles or identification numbers.
Did the composer write other piano pieces with this title? In this key?
Which other composers have written works with this title?
- The key and formal structure (including modulations and treatment of main themes) of each piece. Is there anything unusual about the formal structure?
- Any signs or terms used in each piece.
- The life of each composer (including places of residence, training or other influences, positions held, significant personal events, etc.).
- The repertoire of each composer, with particular focus on piano works, as well as significant works of other genres. Where does this piece fit into the overall piano music output of the composer (is it an early, middle or late work)?
- Characteristics of the composer's style.
Is this piece typical?
- The period and stylistic characteristics of each piece.
Is this piece typical of the general style of the period?
- The historical development of the piano.
If the piece was composed before 1900, for what instrument was it written?
How would that instrument differ from the modern piano?

To do this, you need to study the score of each piece very carefully, and also research the following areas:

- Composers.
- Musical periods and their stylistic characteristics.
- Development of the piano.

You should use the following sources:

- General encyclopaedias.
- Music dictionaries - *The New Grove* is a very good source of information on the composers' repertoire.
- Text books from your school music courses.
- CD liner notes and concert program notes.
- The internet (but don't believe everything you read!).

Important points for exam preparation

- Read as widely as you can, and analyse the pieces in as much detail as you can. But don't get too bogged down in small details. Make summaries of the most important things you want to be able to mention (no more than 6 points per topic area).
- Try to show that you understand what you are talking about, rather than just repeating information you have read somewhere. Use your own words if possible.
- Always relate what you have read back to the pieces that you are playing. The music will be in front of you when you are discussing each piece. Use concrete examples rather than abstract generalisations.
- Practise discussing the main features of the form (keys, themes, etc.) of each movement or piece in about five sentences. Be clear about what you think are the most important details to point out. Try to have someone listen to you do this, or else record yourself.

What should be memorised?

- Bar numbers? The examiners are not interested in you memorising bar numbers - show on the music the passage you are talking about.
- Dates? You should memorise key dates such as composer's birth/death, and if possible the year your piece was written. Other dates, including birth/death of contemporary composers, don't need to be memorised (though they help to put your composer/piece in context, so don't ignore them altogether).
- Cadences? The examiner will probably not ask you specific or detailed questions about the cadences in your pieces. You certainly won't be expected to point out every cadence. But you should be aware of where they occur, because they often mark important structural points or key changes. Cadences provide the proof that the music has arrived in a new key.
- Special chords and harmonic techniques? Even more important than being able to name the chord or technique is being able to explain why it was used. For instance:
 - Chromatic chords like Neapolitan or Augmented 6ths add richness to the harmony, and usually lead to the dominant (or the tonic), so they give the harmony a clear sense of direction.
 - Chords that move in a circle of 5ths also give the harmony a clear sense of direction.
 - Diminished 7th chords might be used to create a sense of drama or mystery.
 - Dominant pedal points create a sense of excitement or expectation.
 - Tonic pedal points clarify the harmony.
 - Suspensions make the music more expressive by creating then releasing tension.
- Older instruments? Unless you are technically minded, you don't really need to go into great technical detail about older instruments. Be able to explain the main differences in construction and tone if you are playing a piece that would have been written for an older instrument. It is only necessary to discuss instruments that relate to the pieces you are playing.
- Repertoire? This is an area that lets a lot of students down. Make sure you have memorised the other important works that the composer wrote for your instrument (try to be able to list at least 6, especially for the major composers). Also be aware of their other important works, particularly for Licentiate students.
- Stylistic characteristics? Another important area that can be difficult. Think about what are the main features that distinguish each piece you play from the others.

Predecessors of the modern piano

Harpsichord

- In use from approximately 1400 to 1800.
- Compass up to five octaves (F'-f''').
- The strings are plucked by a small piece of quill or leather (called a plectrum).
- The speed or force with which the key is depressed has no bearing on the volume of the note produced, so the possibilities of dynamic shading by touch alone were limited; articulation and arpeggiation of chords were important means of achieving a sense of accentuation in performance.
- Some harpsichords have two (occasionally three) manuals, with stops or couplers that enable a different tone or volume to be produced on each manual; some pieces, such as J. S. Bach's *Italian Concerto*, were specifically written for such an instrument.
- The virginal and spinet were relatives of the harpsichord.

The harpsichord was the predominant stringed keyboard instrument prior to the development of the piano. Although the piano is not directly related to the harpsichord in its mechanical construction, early piano music was often intended for performance on either piano or harpsichord.

Clavichord

- In use from approximately 1400 to 1800.
- Small and rectangular in shape, with the strings running (more or less) perpendicular to the keys rather than parallel to them.
- Compass up to five octaves (F'-f''').
- The strings are struck by a small brass blade (called a tangent); the tangent divides the string into two parts - one of these parts vibrates, to produce the sound, while the other part is dampened by felt.
- The tangents remain in contact with the string while the note is sounding, and hence it is possible to make a type of vibrato called *Bebung* on sustained notes.
- The clavichord is capable of dynamic shading; however, its tone is very soft, which limited its use to solo performance (as opposed to chamber music) in a fairly small room.

The clavichord was J. S. Bach's favourite keyboard instrument, according to Forkel, his first biographer. The music of his son C. P. E. Bach is especially suited to the clavichord.

Fortepiano

The piano of the late 18th Century is sometimes referred to as a fortepiano to distinguish it from the modern instrument. Some differences between fortepianos and the modern piano are:

- The frame was made of wood, rather than iron.
- The range was smaller (around 5½ octaves).
- The hammer was made of leather rather than felt.
- The strings all ran parallel to each other (there was no overstringing).
- The sustaining pedal was often operated by the knee, just under the keyboard, rather than by the foot.

The tone of the fortepiano is lighter and has less sustaining power than the modern piano.

The development of the pianoforte

The first piano was made in Florence around 1700 by Bartolomeo Cristofori, and was called a *gravicembalo col piano e forte* (i.e. a “harpsichord with loud and soft”). By the second half of the 18th century it began to replace the harpsichord as the preferred instrument of C. P. E. Bach, Haydn, Mozart and their contemporaries. The chief advantages of the piano over the harpsichord are that it is capable of subtle changes in volume in response to the player’s touch, and has a mechanism for sustaining the tone after the key had been released (operated with the knee in the early instruments rather than by the foot). The 18th century instrument is usually referred to as a *fortepiano* (to distinguish it from the modern *pianoforte*), and had a thinner tone than today’s instruments, with less sustaining power and a smaller range (about five octaves).

The piano as we now know it emerged in the nineteenth century, after a number of important developments; the range was increased to seven octaves, the frame was made of iron rather than wood, and the hammers were covered with felt rather than leather. Also, the bass strings were “overstrung” (i.e. they run diagonally across the higher strings rather than parallel to them) which allowed the use of longer and thicker strings, and a “double-escapement” mechanism was invented to facilitate rapid repetition of a note. All of these developments became standard by the middle of the nineteenth century. With the modifications to the frame and strings, the piano was able to produce a sound capable of filling large concert halls, and the solo recital became popular. It was very successful as a solo instrument with an orchestra, and more concertos were written for piano in the nineteenth century than for any other instrument.

Before gramophone recordings, piano transcriptions were the principal way in which orchestral and operatic works became familiar. With the rise of the middle class, the piano became a symbol of culture; most middle class families owned a piano, around which many hours of entertainment were spent. The piano became the favoured instrument of many romantic composers, because it was capable of both intimacy and extravagant virtuosity, and an idiomatic style of piano writing developed.

Listed below are some important dates in the development of the modern piano. In most cases, the dates indicate the first appearance of a new development; it may take years or decades before the development became standard.

- 1700s Bartolomeo Cristofori, working at the court of Prince Ferdinand de’ Medici in Florence, invents the *piano e forte*. The strings are struck by a hammer, and there is an “escapement mechanism” to stop the hammers from rebounding on the strings. The range is 4 to 4½ octaves.
- 1780s Range increases to 5½-octaves.
- 1790s Range increases to 6 octaves.
- 1816 Range increases to 6½ octaves
- 1820s Metal frames begin to be used.
- 1821 Double-escapement action patented by Sébastien Erard, allowing greater ease and speed in repetition of a note.
- 1822 Range increases to 7 octaves.
- 1826 Felt covering for hammers patented by Henri Pape in Paris
- 1859 Overstringing, to better distribute string tension across the frame, and to allow for sympathetic vibration and longer strings, patented by Henry Steinway, Jr.
- 1874 Sostenuuto (selective sustain) pedal patented by Albert Steinway.

Musical Styles

Baroque (c.1600 - c.1750)

Keyboard instruments used: harpsichord, clavichord.

Popular keyboard compositions: dance suites, preludes, fugues, toccatas.

Popular forms: binary, ternary, ritornello.

Composers: Purcell (English), Couperin (French), Telemann (German), Rameau (French), J. S. Bach (German), Handel (German), Scarlatti (Italian).

Chief characteristics: Baroque music is ornate and elaborate.

- There is generally one main mood, one main theme, and one main rhythmic pattern used throughout a Baroque composition.
- It is usually performed with a constant rhythmic pulse.
- *Counterpoint* (the simultaneous sounding of different melodic lines) and *imitation* are frequently used, so both hands are often of equal importance. The texture is often *polyphonic*.
- Ornamentation is common, particularly in slow movements and at cadences. Performers were often expected to add their own ornaments, especially at cadences or during repeats. Trills usually begin on the upper note in the Baroque period. Larger chords are often *arpeggiated*.
- Baroque music is performed with a clearly articulated sound, often using detached notes. There is no sustaining pedal on a harpsichord, and the tone dies away quite rapidly.
- Dynamics were usually left to the performer to determine. Where they are indicated by the composer, they are often “terraced” (i.e. changing immediately from one level to another), although this does not imply that *crescendo* or *diminuendo* should never be used.
- Baroque music often contains long phrases, with few internal cadence points.
- Modulations are generally to closely related keys, typically up or down a 5th. Pieces in minor keys often end with a *tierce de Picardie*.
- Sequences are common. *Hemiola* rhythm is sometimes used before important cadences.

Classical (c.1750 - c.1810)

Keyboard instruments used: fortepiano.

Popular keyboard compositions: sonatas, rondos, variations.

Popular forms: sonata, rondo, minuet and trio, theme and variations.

Composers: Haydn (Austrian), Clementi (Italian), Mozart (Austrian), Beethoven (German), Hummel (Austrian), Schubert (Austrian).

Chief characteristics: Classical music is light, elegant and restrained.

- It is usually performed with a steady pulse, but this should not imply a rigid or mechanical feel. Discreet *rubato* is sometimes used in slow movements, but never to excess.
- The texture is usually *homophonic*. This means there is one clear melody line (usually in the upper voice), with a subordinate accompaniment. The accompaniment often consists of simple chordal or broken chord figures, such as an *Alberti bass*.
- Ornamentation is common, particularly at cadence points, but is not used as extensively as in the Baroque period. Trills usually begin on the upper note in the Classical period.
- Classical music is performed with a clearly articulated sound. Short slurs, rests and detached notes are frequently used. The sustaining pedal may be used discreetly.
- Dynamics contrasts are important, but extreme dynamic levels are not appropriate. Expressiveness is essential, but sentimentality or emotional excess should be avoided.
- Classical music often contains short, balanced phrases. The melodies often use motives that are based on scales or broken chords, and which can be developed.
- Modulations are generally to closely related keys, typically up or down a 5th. Harmonies tend to be straightforward and triadic, and are mostly *diatonic* (i.e. without accidentals).

Romantic (c.1810 - c.1900)

Keyboard instruments used: pianoforte (still undergoing development).

Popular keyboard compositions: descriptive or character pieces, études, impromptus, rhapsodies, short lyrical pieces (e.g. intermezzo, prelude, song without words, romance), nationalistic dances (e.g. mazurkas, malagueñas).

Popular forms: ternary, through-composed (free form).

Composers: Mendelssohn (German), Schumann (German), Chopin (Polish), Liszt (Hungarian), Brahms (German), Tchaikovsky (Russian), Grieg (Norwegian), Albéniz (Spanish).

Chief characteristics: Romantic music is passionate and expressive.

- It should be performed with a sense of spontaneity and deep personal involvement. Most Romantic compositions require the use of *rubato* (expressive fluctuations in tempo, at the performer's discretion). There are often a number of tempo changes marked in the score.
- The texture is usually thicker than in the Classical period, with large chords, widely-spaced accompaniments and a wide keyboard range. Pedal is essential in most Romantic works.
- Detailed expressive instructions are usually indicated by the composer, and a wide dynamic range is often called for.
- Romantic melodies have long, lyrical phrases, and should be played with a warm *cantabile* tone. The melodies usually remain intact throughout the piece, rather than being developed, but they may be embellished or transformed. Expressive dissonance often creates a sense of yearning.
- Romantic harmonies are rich and often chromatic, using many 7th and some 9th chords. Modulations extend beyond the closely related keys; modulations by 3rds are common.
- Virtuosity and the quest for a transcendent technique were often important elements.

Impressionist (c.1890 - c.1918)

Keyboard instruments used: pianoforte.

Popular keyboard compositions: descriptive pieces, often involving water images.

Popular forms: through composed (free form).

Composers: Debussy (French), Ravel (French), Delius (English), Scott (English).

Chief characteristics: Impressionist music is delicate and misty.

- Rhythms are delicate and supple, avoiding any feeling of strong, regular accent.
- The texture is usually light and ethereal, and dynamic levels are generally soft; the tone required is often that of a piano without hammers. Use of the sustaining pedal is essential, and the *una corda* pedal is also needed at times.
- There is a deliberate vagueness or lack of direction in the harmony. Dominant-tonic cadences are avoided. Unrelated triads are often juxtaposed. Modal, whole-tone and pentatonic scales are often used. Bitonality is sometimes used.
- Chords are often used for their sonority rather than their harmonic function. Parallel chords (including discords and consecutive 5ths) are common. 7th and 9th chords are frequently used, sometimes in parallel motion. Chords with added 2nds or 6ths are sometimes used.
- Pedal points and ostinati are common.

20th/21st Century

During the 20th Century, a great diversity of styles emerged. At times, the musical principles of the "common practice" era (c.1600 - c.1900) were abandoned. Some of the music from this period is very dissonant, with no clear sense of key. Composers such as Schoenberg used *serial* techniques, so that all twelve chromatic pitches were treated equally. The piano was often used percussively, particularly in the music of Bartók and Prokofiev, with strong accents, driving rhythms, and a very wide dynamic range. Some composers wrote in a combination of traditional and modern styles (the *neoclassicists*), while others rejected modernism altogether (the *postmodernists*).

Form in Music

Form is a way of describing the structure or shape of a piece of music - i.e. the way it has been constructed from various smaller sections. Form is primarily determined by harmony (keys, chords, cadences etc.), although melody, rhythm, dynamics, texture and register can also be important. Some commonly used forms are:

Binary - AB (or AABB, AAB, ABB; occasionally $||:AB:||$)

Two sections. Either or both may be repeated. The first section usually ends in the dominant or relative major key, or on the dominant chord. The second section ends in the tonic key.

Ternary - ABA (often AABA; sometimes ABA' ; occasionally $A||:BA:||$ or $A||:BA':||$)

Three sections, with the third being similar to the first. Sometimes the first and third sections are identical (e.g. a *da Capo*). Both A sections will usually end in the tonic key. If the second A section is somewhat altered, it may be designated A' . Section B is contrasting, and is usually in a different key.

Rounded Binary - $A BA'$ (often $||:A:||:BA':||$)

A combination of binary and ternary characteristics. Falls into two main sections, often indicated by repeat signs, as in binary form. The first section usually ends in the dominant or relative major key. The opening (A) theme returns midway through the second section, which ends in the tonic key.

Minuet and Trio - $||:A1:||:A2:||:B1:||:B2:||A1||A2$

A type of compound ternary (i.e. ABA with internal subdivisions). The Minuet (A) and Trio (B) are each usually in binary or rounded binary form, with two repeating sections (A1 and A2, B1 and B2). After the Trio, the Minuet is played again, without repeats. Very common in the Classical period. In the 19th Century, the Minuet was often replaced by a Scherzo (making Scherzo and Trio form).

Sonata - $||:Exposition:||:Development - Recapitulation:||$

An elaboration of Rounded Binary, sometimes referred to as First-Movement or Sonata-Allegro form. The Exposition contains two thematic groups (subjects), the first in the tonic key and the second in a related key (usually the dominant or relative major). The Development is a reworking of the thematic material of the Exposition in various keys, or (less often) a contrasting episode using new material. The Recapitulation contains a return of all thematic material in the tonic key. Very common in the Classical period.

Rondo - ABAC...A

The main theme (A) returns at least twice, always in the tonic key, separated by two or more contrasting episodes (B, C, etc.). Very common in the Classical period.

Ritornello - $ABA'C...A$

Similar to Rondo, except that the main theme returns in *various* keys, beginning and ending in the tonic, separated by contrasting episodes. Very common in the Baroque period.

Sonata-Rondo - ABACAB'[A]

Also called Rondo-Sonata form. A combination of sonata and rondo characteristics. The first subject (A) is heard three or more times, as in a rondo. The second subject is heard twice, initially in a related key, and later in the tonic key, as in sonata form. The development section is replaced by an episode (C). The first subject may also return as a Coda.

Theme and Variations - $AA'A''A'''...$

The theme (or "air") is stated and then subjected to a number of changes - melodic, harmonic, rhythmic or textural. Popular in all periods of music from the Renaissance to the present.

Glossary of terms

Accidental - a sharp, flat or natural found within a bar of music (not in the key signature).

Aeolian mode - an ancient scale that is identical to the *natural minor scale*. See *mode*.

Alberti bass - a broken chord accompaniment style particularly associated with Domenico Alberti (c.1710-1746) and subsequently used by many composers in the Classical period. The typical pattern is C-G-E-G.

Appoggiatura - a note that does not belong to the prevailing harmony (chord), and which moves by step (usually downwards) to a chord note. For example, in a C major triad, F could be an appoggiatura (resolving to E). The term comes from an Italian word meaning "leaning". Appoggiaturas are always played or sung with more emphasis than the note of resolution, and they make the music more expressive. In the Baroque and Classical periods, appoggiaturas were often written as grace notes.

Atonality - the absence of any recognisable key or tonal centre. In an atonal composition, all pitches are theoretically of equal importance, so there is no tonic.

Augmentation - to make larger, generally referring to rhythmic values. Hence, an augmentation of ♩ ♪ ♫ ♬ would be ♩. ♩. ♩. ♩.

Augmented sixth chord - a chromatic chord (i.e. one which uses accidentals without changing the key) containing a major 3rd and an augmented 6th above the root. There are three types: Italian, French and German. All augmented 6th chords contain a *tritone*, which resolves outwards by step. For example, in the augmented 6th chord built above a C, the E and A♯ would resolve to D♯ and B, respectively, in the next chord. Augmented 6ths are usually followed by a dominant chord, so are chords of "dominant preparation".

Augmented triad - a 3-note chord of superimposed major 3rds. There are only four unique versions of this chord: C-E-G♯, D♭-F-A, D-F♯-A♯ and E♭-G-B.

Auxiliary note - a note that does not belong to the prevailing harmony (chord), and which links two chord notes of the same pitch by step. Auxiliary notes can be *diatonic* (not requiring an accidental) or *chromatic* (requiring an accidental, and moving by semitone step). For example, in C major, C-B-C contains a diatonic auxiliary note, while G-F♯-G contains a chromatic auxiliary note. Also called *neighbour note*. See *unessential note*.

Bitonality - where two different keys are combined simultaneously, e.g. having a different key for each hand in a piece of piano music.

Cadence - a musical ending, consisting of a progression of two chords. Cadences help to confirm the key, and thus provide "evidence" of a modulation. The main types of cadence are:

V-I (or V-i in minor keys), also called a *perfect cadence*, *authentic cadence* or *full close*. This is the strongest type of ending, since the roots of the chords fall a 5th, and the leading note rises a semitone to the tonic.

V-vi (or V-VI in minor keys), also called an *interrupted cadence* or *deceptive cadence*, creating an unexpected turn in the harmony, and delaying the inevitable V-I (or V-i) cadence.

The *imperfect cadence*, *half cadence* or *half close* - ending on the dominant chord (e.g. I-V, ii-V, etc.), bringing a temporary sense of closure.

Cadential six-four - the second inversion of the tonic chord (or, strictly speaking, a double *appoggiatura* above the dominant note) which resolves to a root position dominant chord, making a strong cadential progression.

Canon - an imitative style of composition, like a round. Two or more voices (or instrumental lines) have the same melody, or a transposition of it, but one is always at a fixed distance (commonly one bar) behind the other. There are famous examples by Pachelbel and Tallis.

Chorale - a hymn tune, harmonised using a fixed number of voices (usually four).

Chromatic - relating to the chromatic scale, which divides an octave into 12 semitones. The term comes from a Greek word meaning "coloured". A chromatic note does not belong to the prevailing major or minor key, but usually moves by semitone step (as in a chromatic scale) to a note of the major or minor key. Chromatic harmony involves chords that require one or more chromatic notes. See also *diatonic*.

Chromaticism - the use of chromatic harmony, or of chromatic *unessential notes*. In such cases, accidentals do not necessarily indicate a modulation.

Circle of fifths - a progression of chords whose roots fall a 5th or rise a 4th, giving the music a strong sense of direction. Also called *cycle of 5ths*. A circle of 5ths is often used to lead to a cadence (e.g. vi - ii - V - I), and may make use of *secondary dominant* or dominant 7th chords (e.g. VI⁷ - ii - V⁷ - I, or A⁷ - Dm - G⁷ - C).

Cluster chord - a chord formed using every available pitch within a specified range.

Coda - the final section of a piece (literally, the "tail").

Codetta - a short concluding passage (not necessarily at the end of the piece).

Consecutive fifths or octaves - where the interval of a perfect 5th or a perfect 8ve is heard in succession between the same two voice parts. Also called *Parallel 5ths or 8ves*. Consecutive 5ths and 8ves are forbidden in *functional harmony*, because they cause the individual voices to lose their independence. However, they have been employed deliberately by some composers from the late 19th Century onwards, such as Debussy.

Consonance - a harmonious or restful sound, e.g. a 3rd, 6th, or perfect interval. See also *dissonance*.

Contrapuntal - a style of music that makes use of *counterpoint*. Similar in meaning to *polyphonic*.

Counterpoint - two or more lines of melody heard simultaneously, in a way that makes musical sense.

Cross rhythm - the simultaneous use of two different rhythmic groupings (e.g. 2 against 3).

Descant - a countermelody in the upper voice.

Development - where the melodic, rhythmic or harmonic components of a theme are broken down and reshaped to produce new musical material.

Diatonic - relating to a scale that contains five tones and two semitones, such as a major, minor or modal scale. Diatonic harmony consists of chords that are made entirely from scale notes, without containing any foreign notes. See also *chromatic*.

Diminished seventh chord - a chord containing three superimposed minor 3rds. There are only three unique versions of this chord: B-D-F-A \flat , C-E \flat -F \sharp -A and C \sharp -E-G-B \flat . The diminished 7th chord can be used for dramatic effect, as in the beginning of Beethoven's *Pathétique Sonata*. It is also very useful in modulations, since any note of a diminished 7th chord can be treated as a *leading note*. The diminished 7th chord is usually followed by a dominant or tonic chord.

Diminished triad - a 3-note chord of superimposed minor 3rds, e.g. C-E \flat -G \flat .

Diminution - to make smaller, generally referring to rhythmic values. Hence, a diminution of $\text{♩} \text{♪} \text{♩} \text{♪}$ would be $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$

Dissonance - a clashing sound, e.g. a 2nd, a 7th, or an augmented or diminished interval. In functional harmony, a dissonance must be followed by a *resolution*. Treatment of dissonance became much more liberal during the 19th and 20th Centuries.

Dominant - the 5th note of a scale. Hence G is the dominant note of C major, G-B-D is the dominant triad of C major, and G major is the dominant key of C major. The dominant chord (V) is the second most important chord in any key, after the tonic.

Dominant seventh chord (V⁷) - a dominant triad with an added minor 7th above the root. In F major, the dominant 7th chord would be C-E-G-B \flat . The dominant 7th chord always contains a *tritone* (E-B \flat in the example above), which usually resolves inwards (to F-A using the example above). The dominant 7th chord is followed by a *tonic* or *submediant* chord in *functional harmony*. The added dissonance in a dominant 7th chord makes the imperative of resolution stronger than is the case with a regular dominant triad. See also *secondary dominant*.

Dominant pedal - the sustaining or repetition of the dominant note, usually in the bass. A dominant pedal builds tension, as well as creating an expectation for the return of the tonic chord.

Dorian mode - a scale similar to minor, but with a raised 6th and no raised 7th note. See *mode*.

Enharmonic equivalent - an alternative name for the same pitch. So C \sharp is the enharmonic equivalent of D \flat . An example of an enharmonic modulation is in Chopin's *Raindrop Prelude*: C \sharp minor to D \flat major.

Episode - a contrasting section that is not based on the main theme or subject.

False relation - a clashing sound caused by two different notes with the same letter name (e.g. F \natural and F \sharp) in close proximity in different voice parts.

French sixth chord - a type of augmented 6th chord containing an augmented 4th as well as a major 3rd and augmented 6th, e.g. C-E-F \sharp -A \sharp .

Fugal - a *contrapuntal* style of composition in which each voice enters in turn with the *subject* (or a transposition of the subject).

Functional harmony - a harmonic system in which each chord has a particular function or role: the dominant chord leads to the tonic, chords ii, IV and vi prepare for the dominant, etc. Functional harmony was used in most European art music from 1700 to 1900.

German sixth chord - a type of augmented 6th chord containing a perfect 5th as well as a major 3rd and augmented 6th, e.g. C-E-G-A \sharp . A German 6th chord sounds the same as a dominant 7th (C-E-G-B \flat), but its resolution is different - the tritone (E-A \sharp in the example above) would resolve outwards, so the resolution of the chord above would be B-D \sharp -F \sharp -B, not F-A-C-F.

Half-diminished seventh chord - a chord containing two minor 3rds and one major 3rd (e.g. C-E \flat -G \flat -B \flat). See also *diminished 7th chord*.

Harmonic minor scale - a form of minor scale where the 7th note is raised by a semitone. This allows for a *leading note*, but creates an augmented 2nd interval between the 6th and 7th notes, which can sound awkward when used melodically.

Hemiola - a change in rhythmic grouping, e.g. from $\text{♩} \text{♪} \text{♩}$ to $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$; frequently used in the Baroque period, especially before cadences, and also often used by Brahms. Bernstein's *America* contains constant examples.

Homophony - a style of composition having a single melody line, with a simple accompaniment. Homophony was prevalent in the Galant and Classical periods, and was to some extent a reaction against the complexity of polyphony in the Renaissance and Baroque periods.

Imitation - where the melody or rhythm of one voice part is copied by another. Imitation may be strict (if the intervals of the original are preserved) or free (where some modifications are allowed).

Inversion - to turn upside down. This can apply to intervals, chords or melodies. When an interval is inverted, the pitch names remain the same (hence C-E becomes E-C). When a chord is inverted, the root is no longer the lowest sound. When a melody is inverted, the size of each interval remains the same, but its direction (up or down) is reversed. Hence, the inversion of C-E-D is C-A-B; this is referred to as *mirror inversion*.

Italian sixth chord - a type of augmented 6th chord containing a major 3rd and augmented 6th above the root, e.g. C-E-A \sharp .

Leading note - the 7th note of a scale, which leads by semitone step to the tonic.

Lydian mode - a scale similar to the major scale, but with a raised 4th note. See *mode*.

Mediant - the 3rd note of a scale.

Melodic minor scale - a form of minor scale having a raised 6th and 7th note ascending, and using the *natural minor scale* descending. This allows for a leading note in the ascending scale, without having the augmented 2nd interval found in the *harmonic minor scale*.

Mixolydian mode - a scale similar to the major scale, but with a flattened 7th note. See *mode*.

Mode - an ancient scale which divides an octave into five tones and two semitones. Modes were used for religious chants in the Middle Ages. Initially, the modes contained no sharps or flats, and so could be played using only the white notes of the piano. The principal modes include:

Dorian - starting and ending on D, with semitones between 2nd-3rd and 6th-7th notes.

Phrygian - starting and ending on E, with semitones between 1st-2nd and 5th-6th notes.

Lydian - starting and ending on F, with semitones between 4th-5th and 7th-8th notes.

Mixolydian - starting and ending on G, with semitones between 3rd-4th and 6th-7th notes.

Aeolian - starting and ending on A, with semitones between 2nd-3rd and 5th-6th notes.

Modes have been used by more modern composers (particularly from the time of Debussy onwards), and are also used frequently in jazz; in these instances, the modes may undergo transposition, which means that sharps or flats would be required to preserve the pattern of tones and semitones.

Modulation - a change of key during the course of a piece. The simplest and most common modulations are to the most closely related keys (e.g. dominant, subdominant or relative major/minor), which involve the fewest added accidentals. A modulation generally requires a dominant-tonic cadence in order to establish the new key.

Natural minor scale - a form of minor scale without a raised 7th note. The 7th note of this scale is called the subtonic; it does not progress to the tonic note as strongly as the leading note found in the harmonic minor scale.

Neapolitan sixth chord - a chromatic chord (i.e. one which uses accidentals without changing the key) built on the flattened 2nd note of a scale. It is generally used in first inversion (hence the designation 6th, indicating a 6-3 or first inversion chord). In C \sharp minor, the Neapolitan 6th chord would be F \sharp -A-D (a D major chord); this chord can be found in the first movement of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*. The Neapolitan 6th chord is generally followed by the dominant chord, so it is a chord of "dominant preparation".

Neighbour note - see *auxiliary note*.

Ninth chord - a 5-note chord of superimposed 3rds. The most common of these are the dominant major 9th (e.g. G-B-D-F-A in C major) and the dominant minor 9th (e.g. G-B-D-F-A \flat in C minor).

Octatonic scale - an 8-note scale, consisting of alternating tones and semitones, used by various 20th Century composers. It is a "mode of limited transposition", since there are only three unique versions of the scale:

C-D-E \flat -F-F \sharp -G \sharp -A-B-[C], C \sharp -D \sharp -E-F \sharp -G-A-B \flat -C-[C \sharp] and D-E-F-G-G \sharp -A \sharp -B-C \sharp -[D].

Ostinato - a recurring musical pattern (i.e. something that is obstinate or persistent).

Parallel chords - a series of chords in which all notes or voices are moving in the same direction. For example, the following ascending series: C-E-G-B \flat , D-F \sharp -A-C, E-G \sharp -B-D. Chords moving in parallel do not obey the rules of *functional harmony*, since they involve *consecutive 5ths*, *consecutive 8ves* or unresolved *dissonance*.

Passing note - a note that does not belong to the prevailing harmony (chord), but which links two chord notes by step. Passing notes can be accented (i.e. on the beat) or unaccented, and can be *diatonic* (not requiring an accidental) or *chromatic* (requiring an accidental, and moving by semitone step). For example, C-D-E contains a diatonic passing note, D, while G-G \sharp -A contains a chromatic passing note, G \sharp .

Pedal - a sustained or repeated note, usually in the bass. Also called *pedal point*. The most commonly occurring are *tonic pedal* and *dominant pedal*.

Pentatonic scale - a 5-note scale. There are many versions of this scale, the most common being the one formed using the five black keys on the piano (used in the central section of Debussy's *Voiles*). Most pentatonic scales have no harsh dissonance between any of the notes.

Phrygian mode - a scale containing a minor 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th. See *mode*.

Pitch class - notes with the same letter name, regardless of octave register.

Polyphony - where several melodic lines are combined simultaneously. Similar in meaning to *counterpoint*.

Primary triads - the tonic, dominant and subdominant chords in any key. Some scholars consider only the tonic and dominant chords to be primary triads.

Relative major/minor - the major and minor scales having the same key signature, e.g. G major and E minor.

Reprise - the return of something that was heard previously.

Resolution - a consonance that follows a dissonance, with the dissonant note(s) usually moving by step (semitone or tone). The resolution releases the tension created by the dissonance.

Root - the note above which a chord is built. Hence C is the root of the chord C-E-G. In a root position chord, the root is the lowest note, which gives the chord a feeling of strength and stability.

Secondary dominant - a chromatic chord that temporarily functions as the dominant to a chord that is not the tonic. For example, in C major, the chord D-F \sharp -A could be a secondary dominant if followed by the triad G-B-D, without necessarily being considered a modulation. Also called *applied dominant*. The 7th is often added to the chord, making a secondary (or applied) dominant 7th. See also *circle of fifths*.

Sequence - the repetition of a musical pattern at a higher or lower pitch, e.g. E D C F \sharp E D G \sharp F \sharp E. If the melodic intervals are preserved exactly, it may be called a *real sequence*. If the intervals in the melody are altered but the chord pattern is preserved, it may be called a *harmonic sequence*.

Seventh chord - a 4-note chord of superimposed major or minor 3rds. These include the major 7th chord (a major triad with an added major 7th, e.g. C-E-G-B), minor 7th chord (a minor chord with added minor 7th, e.g. C-E \flat -G-B \flat), *dominant 7th* chord, *diminished 7th* chord and *half-diminished 7th* chord.

Stretto - the overlapping of subject entries in a *contrapuntal* piece. The term comes from the Italian for “drawn together”, and can also indicate an *accelerando* when used as a performance instruction.

Subdominant - the 4th note of a scale. Hence F is the subdominant note of C major, F-A-C is the subdominant triad of C major, and F major is the subdominant key of C major.

Subject - a theme or melody; the term is particularly used to designate important themes in fugues or sonatas.

Submediant - the 6th note of a scale (a 3rd below the tonic). Hence A is the submediant note of C major, and A-C-E is the submediant triad of C major.

Supertonic - the 2nd note of a scale, a tone above the tonic.

Suspension - a prepared *appoggiatura*. The dissonance (i.e. non-chord note) must be prepared by being sounded in the previous chord. Sometimes the preparatory note and the suspension are tied together, though this is not mandatory.

Syncopation - displacing the normal accent scheme by placing an accent or long note on a weak beat, or by having a rest or a tied note on a strong beat. Syncopation is used occasionally in classical music, and extensively in popular music.

Tierce de Picardie (Picardy third) - an alteration to the tonic chord in a minor key, changing the minor 3rd to a major 3rd to make a major triad. Commonly applied to the final chord of compositions in minor keys during the Renaissance and Baroque periods, as the major chord was considered to be more consonant.

Tonal centre - when a piece of music is not in a recognisable major or minor key, but still has an identifiable main note, this note is the tonal centre.

Tonic - the first, and most important, note of a scale. The tonic note is also known as the keynote, and the tonic triad is the “home” chord of any key.

Tonic major/minor - major and minor keys that have the same tonic note. Hence C major is the tonic major of C minor. Also known as *parallel major/minor*.

Tonic pedal - the sustaining or repetition of the tonic note, usually in the bass. A tonic pedal confirms or strengthens the sense of key.

Transposition - where a given melody is rewritten in a different key. The characteristic shape of the melody is preserved, but it will sound at a higher or lower pitch.

Triad - a 3-note chord of superimposed 3rds. Triads can be formed above any note of a scale, and are identified by Roman numerals (uppercase for major, lowercase for minor).

Tritone - an interval spanning three tones, e.g. from C to F \sharp . Also known as an augmented 4th or diminished 5th. It is one of the most dissonant of all intervals, and was called *diabolus in musica*, or the devil’s interval, in medieval times. Keys that are a tritone apart (e.g. C major and F \sharp major) sound extremely distant harmonically.

Unessential note - a note that does not belong to the prevailing harmony (chord), but which moves by step to a note of the chord. Examples are *passing notes*, *auxiliary notes*, *appoggiaturas* and *suspensions*. Unessential notes should be disregarded when analysing a chord or determining the key.

Whole tone scale - a 6-note scale, consisting only of whole tones. It is a “mode of limited transposition”, since there are only two unique versions of the scale: C-D-E-F \sharp -G \sharp -A \sharp -[C] and C \sharp -D \sharp -F-G-A-B-[C \sharp]. Because there are no semitones in the whole tone scale, there can be no *leading note*, so the whole tone scale creates a highly ambiguous tonality.