

Music



Revision Exercises



Musicology

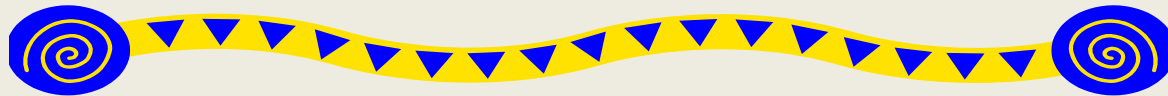
Four terms are regularly used to describe types of layer relationships:

monophonic, **heterophonic**, **polyphonic** and **homophonic**.

MONOPHONIC



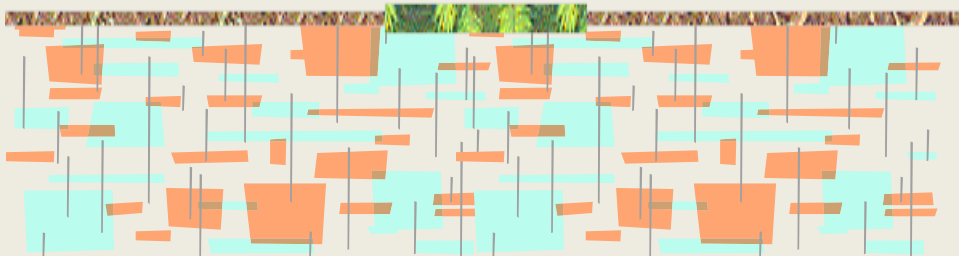
HETEROPHONIC



POLYPHONIC



HOMOPHONIC



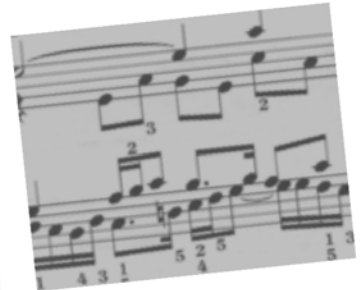
Monophonic texture

- Monophonic texture describes music where there is a single layer.
- Usually referring to a **solo** melodic layer eg. an unaccompanied vocal solo
- When performed by a **solo** instrument or voice the *density* is thin, but **unison** performance of the layer **thickens** it.



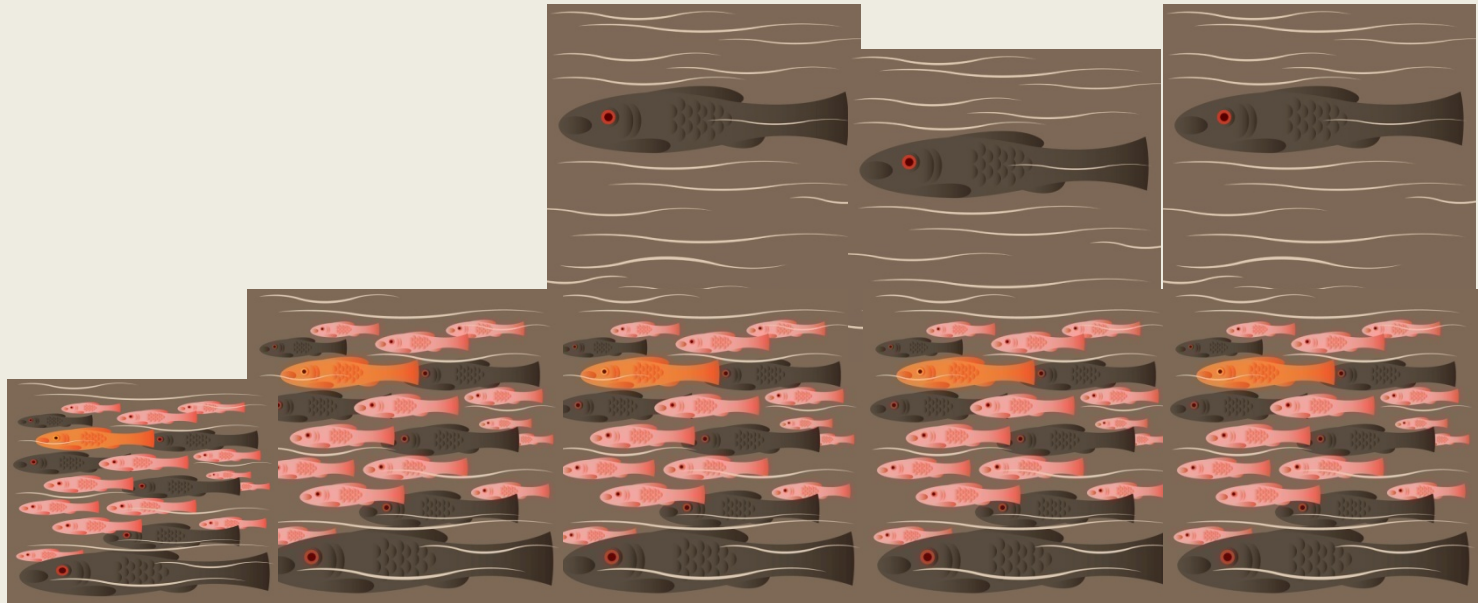
Polyphonic Texture

- Polyphony occurs when there are two or more layers of equal interest **or** featuring.
- Each layer is **vying for attention**.
- The techniques of *imitation* and *counterpoint* are readily applied.



Homophonic Texture

- Where the **melody layer** is accompanied by **harmonic layers**.
- Referring to a **dominant melodic layer** accompanied by **subordinate harmonic layers**.



Heterophonic Texture

- This is a type of unison playing, where each instrumental or vocal layer performs an independently embellished version of the same melody
- The relationship between the layers is that they are **nearly in unison.**
- The general contour (melodic shape) remains roughly the same, but there are many individual versions of the melody occurring simultaneously



Write these points...



The **thickness of a layer** can be affected by:

- a) The number of instruments or voices in the layer
eg. Choir vs solo vocalist
- b) Technology – effects like distortion and chorus applied to an instrument creates a thicker density
- c) The intensity of the playing can produce more upper harmonics and echo effects – thicker density

To describe density use words like

Thick

Dense

Heavy

solid

or

Thin

Light

Wispy

Sparse

Choose from the words below to complete each sentence

1. The vocal layer usually has a role that is:
2. The guitar layer often contributes strummed chords so its role is:
3. The drum layer role is:
4. Synthesiser might mimic the sound of the wind. It's role is:

harmonic

melodic

rhythmic

spfx

The role of a layer is determined by **what the instrument is doing** not on which instrument is being used



Match these correctly

If the bass part consists of...



Solid accented pulses on a single note, it's role is:

harmonic

Gently strummed chords in the upper register:

melodic

A sensitive, lyrical tune:

spfx

High – pitched squeaks, from sliding along the strings:

rhythmic

TRUE

True or False?

FALSE

1. An instrument can be played in ways that creates multiple roles for a layer.
2. A walking bass line incorporates melodic and rhythmic roles
3. Density refers to the thickness of the layers

Draw how each of these this might happen in an extract

Several layers playing at once

New layers added one after the other

Layers gradually taken away

Discussion



What would you expect to hear 'in musical layers' for each of these images?

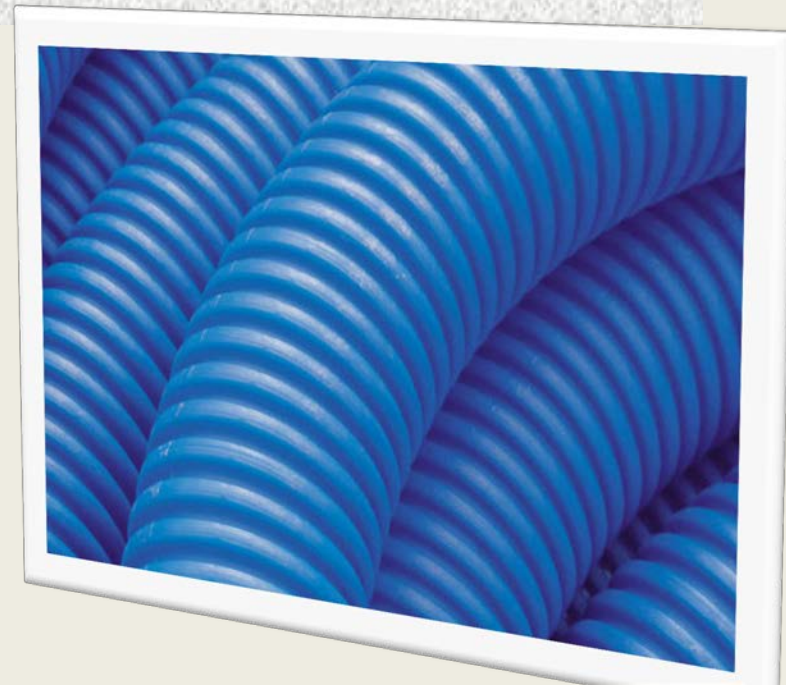
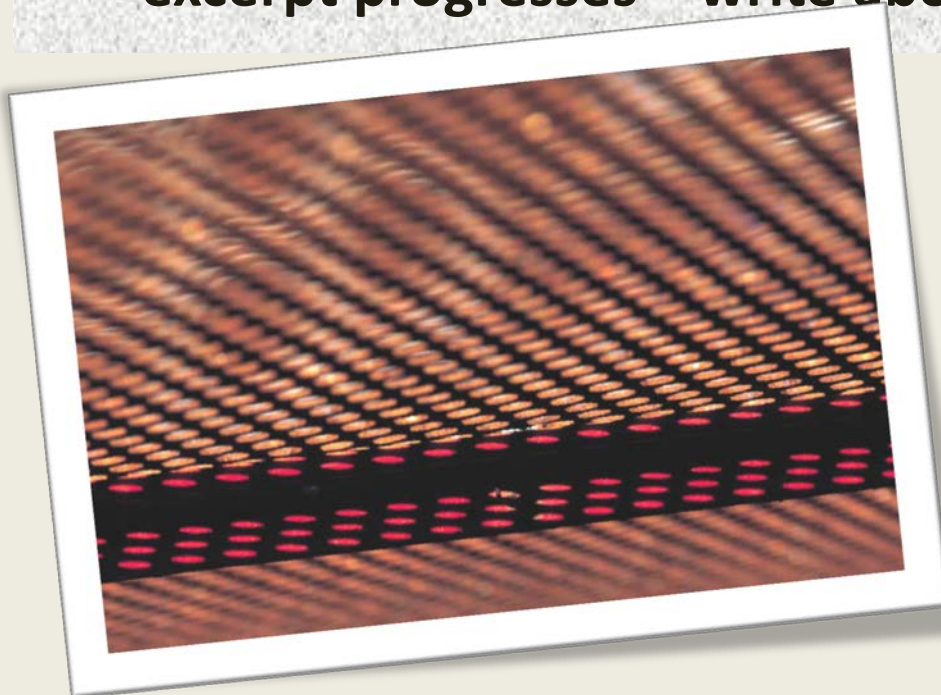




Listening: TEXTURE



1. Identify the layers in the excerpt
2. Identify the role of each layer in the excerpt
3. Describe the density nb. This may change as the excerpt progresses – write about the changes



Dominant or Subordinate

1. The layer that has the main role or featuring role in described as the **Dominant layer**
2. Accompanying layers are **Subordinate**



Active or Inactive

It may seem logical to say that ‘Dominant layers’ are active & ‘Subordinate layers’ are inactive but the opposite could be the case.

EXPLAIN

Andante 

Piano 

mp 

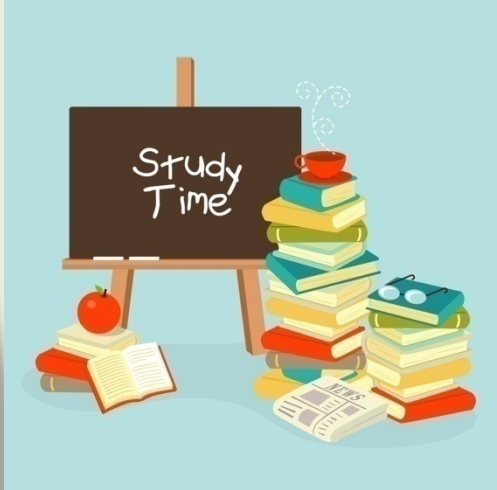
In the next example, the active layer is in the accompaniment of the left hand (L.H.). Although busy, it is still only an accompaniment and so remains subordinate:

Allegro

Piano 



Dominant & Subordinate layers



How would this sound?

Compositional Devices



Write your own definition for each of these terms

- ✓ Solo
- ✓ Unison
- ✓ Counterpoint
- ✓ Call and response
- ✓ Rhythmic unison
- ✓ Imitation
- ✓ Fills
- ✓ Parallel harmonies
- ✓ Staggered entries & exits
- ✓ Stabs

Discussion

- You are listening to a solo vocalist – a choir joins in but all are singing in **unison**. Describe the textural change.
- Where can the term ‘solo’ be applied?

Unaccompanied performance in a single layer

Featured instrument supported by accompaniment

Soloist performs a featured improvisation

Regardless of the context, the term **solo** is always associated with featuring

Some points to write down...



Counterpoint occurs when two or more layers sound like they are having a music ‘conversation’.

Generally, we find that one layer is busy at a time.

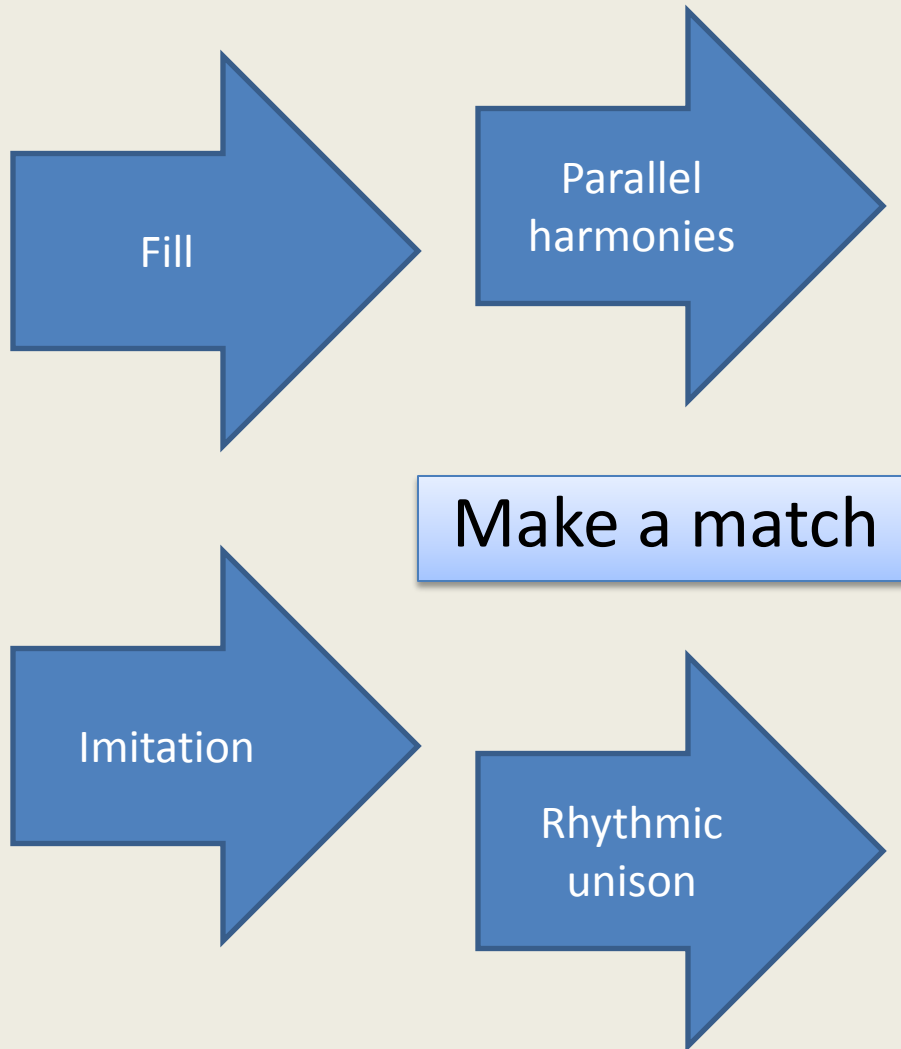
When one layer ‘interrupts’ the other this creates musical **tension**.

If all layers compete for attention this creates the highest density and a high level of tension.

This is the **climax** of the music.

The adjective of **counterpoint** is **contrapuntal** -
“The music uses counterpoint” or “This music is contrapuntal”

Unifying Textural Devices



Dominant rhythmic layer is the same as the subordinate rhythm

Melodic or rhythmic ideas of one layer are repeated in another

Dominant layer 'takes a breath' and another plays a short section usually at the end of a phrase

Melody is harmonised at a constant distance. The melodic shape is identical

Flute *Andante* ♩ = 90

The first system of the musical score includes five staves. The Flute staff (top) has a melodic fill starting in the third measure, marked *mf*. The Steel Drums staff has a rhythmic fill in the first two measures, marked *mf*. The Guitar staff has a parallel harmony accompaniment, marked *p*. The Ac. Bass staff has a rhythmic accompaniment, marked *mp*. The Drums staff has a rhythmic accompaniment, marked *mp*.

The second system of the musical score includes five staves. The Flute staff (top) has a melodic fill starting in the first measure, marked *mf*. The Steel Drums staff has a rhythmic fill in the first two measures, marked *mf*. The Guitar staff has a parallel harmony accompaniment, marked *p*. The Ac. Bass staff has a rhythmic accompaniment, marked *mp*. The Drums staff has a rhythmic accompaniment, marked *mp*.


Quick Quiz




1. Which layer has the melodic fill?
2. Which layer has the rhythmic fill?
3. Describe the location of the fills.
4. Which layer has the parallel harmony?
5. How does the addition of the harmony affect the texture?

Tip!



- Sometimes the texture changes. For example... a solo vocalist begins and a choir joins in the second verse, singing harmony with the soloist. 
- Simply write **what is happening:**



“The soloist creates a monophonic line that becomes homophonic texture when the choir accompanies her in harmony in the second verse” 

Or comment on the style:

“The use of counterpoint and imitation within the polyphonic layers, contributes to the baroque style of this piece.”

Quick Quiz



1. What does the term TEXTURE refer to?
2. Name four approaches to identifying layers?
3. List four types of layer roles
4. What does layer density refer to?
5. Name two things that layer density depends on.
6. When is a layer a dominant layer/
7. When is a layer a subordinate layer/
8. Are dominant layers active or inactive?
9. What does the term solo refer to?
10. What does playing in unison refer to?

Quick Quiz 2



1. What is counterpoint?
2. What is the adjective of the word counterpoint?
3. How does 'call and response' relate to the terms solo and unison?
4. How are the terms unison and rhythmic unison different?
5. What does imitation refer to in music?
6. Where do fills usually occur in music?
7. What are parallel harmonies?
8. Explain staggered entry.
9. What are stabs?
10. Monophonic texture is one of four types – what are the other three?