Music revision sheet for Year 8 Blues assessment
Autumn examination

Listen to 'Sweet Home Chicago' or 'How Blue Can You Get' on You Tube to hear all the features below. The Blues Brothers 'Sweet Home Chicago' is a more modern version of The Blues.

Melody - is the main tune; it is made up of different pitches.

- **Call and response**: a vocal call and an instrumental response in each line.
- **The blues scale**: The melody uses notes from the blues scale.
- **Improvised**: The melody is often improvised or made up on the spot.

Tonality - is the key the music is in e.g. major or minor

- **Blue notes**: flattened notes that make the music sound sad.
- **Major chords**: major chords are used in the blues; however they have a 7th added; the 7th is often a blue note.
- **Blues scale**: the scale, with blue notes, that is used for blues melodies.

Harmony - the chords used in the music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line 1</th>
<th>Bar number</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chord</td>
<td></td>
<td>C7</td>
<td>C7</td>
<td>C7</td>
<td>C7</td>
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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chord</td>
<td></td>
<td>G7</td>
<td>F7</td>
<td>C7</td>
<td>C7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line 3</th>
<th>Bar number</th>
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<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chord</td>
<td></td>
<td>G7</td>
<td>F7</td>
<td>C7</td>
<td>C7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure - different sections in the music

- **The verses**: The verses are all the same in a blues song. There are 3 lines in a verse. The first two lines are the same and the third one is different: we call this an ‘AAB’ structure.
- **Call and response**: The structure of each line can be divided in two; a vocal call followed by an instrumental response.
Instruments

- **A capella**: this means with no instrumental accompaniment. Original Blues songs were sung a capella.
- **Accompanying instruments**: the guitar and the piano.
- **Melody instruments**: the harmonica, the guitar and (after 1940) the electric guitar.

Rhythm and time signature

- **Swing rhythm**: a 'Humpty Dumpty' rhythm.
- **Time signature**: 4

Tempo

- Traditionally the tempo is moderate to slow.

Texture - the different layers in the music

- If the Blues song is unaccompanied there will be only one layer in the texture: the melody.
- The accompaniment of a Blues Song is usually played on guitar or piano. The melody usually consists of a vocal call and an instrumental response. This makes a texture of at least 2 layers.

Dynamics - louds and softs. Remember to explain whether dynamic changes are gradual or sudden in your exam.

Performing techniques - how the singer or player uses his instrument or voice

- **Slides**: When the singer or guitarist or harmonica player slides up to a note.
- **Melisma**: Lots of notes spread over one syllable.
- Any other types of expressive singing or playing that you can hear.

Songs that influenced the Blues were:

1. Work songs
2. Spirituals
3. American folk songs

The Blues went on to influence:

1. Pop and rock
2. Jazz