The Modern Era

- and World & Popular styles
The Modern Era-overview

- As we approach the late 19th century composers such as Wagner, Mahler and Richard Strauss had become more adventurous with their compositions, experimenting with more unusual chords, harmonies and structures.

- The strict rules of harmony and the Major/Minor tonalities that had been in place since the Baroque Era became more like guidelines that were challenged and pushed wherever possible.
By the time we reached the end of the first decade of the 20th century, there were composers who had completely abandoned these ‘rules’ and were composing music that was **Atonal**.

As the 20th century progressed, many varying styles and forms would develop, even within the ‘classical’ tradition—there is no one dominant style in the 20th century and beyond. This is mirrored by the diversity and pace of life and progression of technology as a whole in the 20th century.
The Modern Era-overview

- The way in which we identify and label Baroque Era, Classical Era, and Romantic Era music doesn’t quite work in The Modern Era; the music is too diverse to use a single label. As such ‘Modern’ is an umbrella term that encompasses many different styles, all of which you will need to be able to differentiate.
Some important composers of the Modern Era include:

- Arnold Schoenberg
- Philip Glass
- George Gershwin
- John Williams
Be careful…

- In this PowerPoint the term ‘classical’ is used to mean the opposite of popular – do not confuse this with **The Classical Era** (1750-1820).

- Hint: **Capital C** means **The Classical Era**. **Small c** means classical music in general from any of the periods.
In your groups discuss what you remember of 20th Century music from National 5. **Open the N5 Powerpoint**

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Impressionism

- How could we describe what this music is like?
  - Dreamy?
  - Blurry?
  - Vague?
  - Floaty?
Impressionism

- Impressionism **mirrors the style of painting by Artists such as Claude Monet**, where edges between objects are often blurred. In impressionist music, ideas merge and change to create a rather blurred and vague outline.

- Composers included Debussy, Ravel and Dukas.
Classical vs. Impressionism

A Classical era painting.

Music from the Classical era:
Classical vs. Impressionism

An Impressionist painting.

Impressionist Music:
Impressionism

- A musical feature that helps give Impressionistic music that “Dreamy” sound is the use of the Whole Tone Scale.

- First, let’s revise **semitone** and **tone**.
Semitones and Tones

- **Semitone:** The distance from one key to the very nearest key.

- **Tone:** Two semitones – always has one key in-between.
Whole Tone Scale

- A scale containing no semitones but built entirely on whole tones. Often used in impressionist music.

- Impressionist composers often used the Whole Tone Scale as it has a very dream-like sound.

Modéré $\dot{=}44$

$\frac{3}{4}$

$p$ très doux

$p$ ---

più $p$ ---
Whole Tone Scale
Musique Concrete

- Recorded natural sounds which are transformed using simple editing techniques such as cutting and re-assembling, playing backwards, slowing down and speeding up.
Popular Music Styles: Jazz Funk

- A combination of jazz improvisation and the amplified instruments and character of Rock.
Soul

- A style of Afro-American popular music including elements of blues and gospel and conveying strong emotions.

- Famous Soul Singers include Aretha Franklin and James Brown

- Music from “The Blues Brothers” leans more towards Soul than traditional Blues.
The third special chord type you have to know is the Added 6th chord. This chord is used frequently in jazz and popular music – not so much in classical.

To form this chord, simply add the 6th note from the root, i.e. the 1st, the 3rd the 5th and the 6th.
Added 6th chord

- Draw an C6 chord and then play one on your keyboard. Make sure you draw your last note slightly to the side of the first three so it fits on the stave.
New Rhythmic Concepts

- Harmony wasn’t the only musical element composers experimented with. Here are some rhythmic concepts frequently found in Modern Era music.
Time Changes

- Time Changes is when a composer changes time signatures often in a short space of time.
- This creates an unsettled feel. It is often very difficult to count along and feel the beat.
Irregular Time Signatures

- When composers use unusual time signatures with 5 or 7 beats in the bar.
Irregular Metres

- Often, both Time Changes and Irregular Metres are used together...
Slowly

One day, one night, one moment, my dreams could be tomorrow. One step, one fall, onealter, East or West, over earth or by ocean, one way to be my
You learned in N5 that a cross rhythm was

At Higher level, you have to be able to identify a specific type of cross rhythm: **Three against two.**
Cross Rhythms and 3 Against 2

- This occurs when one ‘part’ of the music is playing in groups of two, such as quavers, and another is playing in groups of three, such as triplets (or a compound time feel.)

- You could think of this as Simple Time and Compound Time happening at the same time.
Revision!

In your own words, what is the definition of Simple Time and Compound Time?

- Simple Time – when the beat subdivides into 2 (COUNT: 1 and 2 and...)

- Compound Time – when the beat subdivides into 3 (COUNT: 1 and a 2 and a...)

i.e. 2/4, ¾, 4/4

6/8, 9/8, 12/8
3 against 2

- You can do this yourself by tapping using your hands in this pattern:

- BOTH Left-Right-Left, BOTH Left-Right-Left

- OR

- Cold cup-of-tea
Augmentation

- A passage of music where the length of the notes used are doubled, for example, where a quaver was used originally it would be replaced by a crotchet. This has the same effect as the music sounding slower although the overall pulse remains the same.
Diminution

- A passage of music where the length of the notes used are halved, for example, where a crotchet was used originally it would be replaced by a quaver. This has the same effect as the music sounding faster although the overall pulse remains the same.
STUDY!

- Prepare for your first full Higher paper!