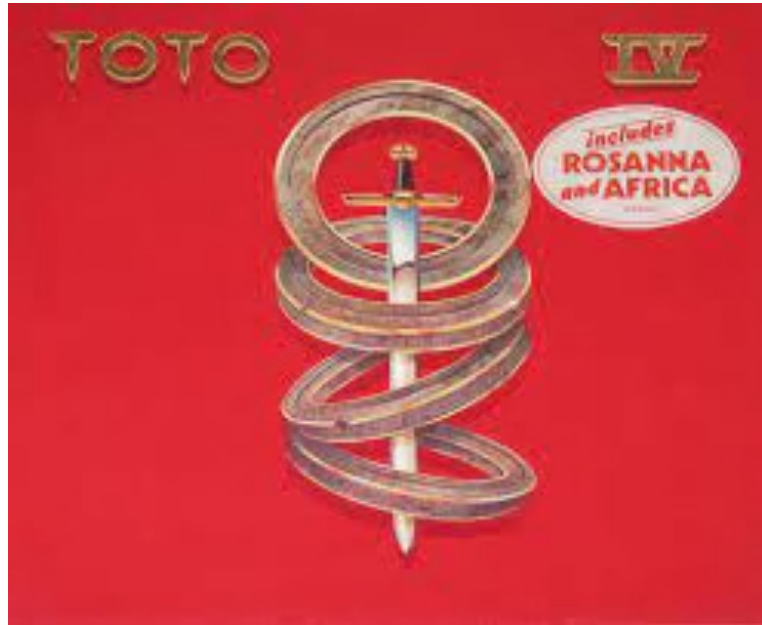


AoS 4

Popular Music



Revision tips and exercises

From the Eduqas specification:

Learners will study pop, rock and pop, bhangra and fusion, including:

- Use of instrumental and synthesised sound
- Use and modification of original music
- Use of vocal sounds
- Combining of instruments and voices
- Use of computer-generated sound
- Use of software and samplers

Learners will also understand the following musical features:

- 32 bar song form
- Strophic
- 12 bar blues
- Verse
- Chorus
- Riffs
- Middle 8
- Bridge
- Fill
- Instrumental break
- Intros and outros
- Cadences
- Improvisation
- Loops
- Samples
- Panning
- Phasing
- Syncopation
- Driving rhythms
- Melismatic and syllabic writing
- Lead and backing vocals
- Backing tracks
- Primary chords
- Secondary chords

What to expect...

AoS 4 – Popular Music

- 'Africa by Toto set work – know when it was written, the structure, instrumentation, chords used in the verse/ pre-chorus/ chorus and bridge, keys, differences between sections. Know it so well that you can identify a section when played it randomly!
- Unprepared listening – could ask you to identify/describe any of the elements (melody/ tonality, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, instrumentation/ sonority, texture, structure).

ANALYSIS

You should at least know:

- The chord sequence in each section
- The main differences between each section
- Which bits are melismatic, which bits are syllabic
- Which instruments are playing in each section
- Any notable instrumental techniques

See separate "Africa"
region materials!

Features of ROCK AND POP music

Instruments

- Rhythm guitar / lead guitar
- Bass guitar
- Drum kit
- Lead singer
- *Sometimes backing vocals and/or harmonies sung by other band members*

Musical devices

- Use of riffs
- Power chords
- Strong drum beat
- Syncopation
- Mixture of melismatic/syllabic writing
- Use of *false alto* - when a male voice sings higher than the usual range (head voice)

Use of music technology

- **Remixing** - *changing a musical piece stylistically through technology (e.g. remixing a classical piece on LogicPro in the style of disco)*
- **Panning** - *adjusting the sound levels between the left- and righthand speakers*
- **Delay and reverb** - *effects added to recorded sounds*
- **Phasing** - *a delay effect in music technology*
- **Looping** - *repeating a part of the music over and over again*

Structures

- **Strophic form** (A A A) - *when the verse repeats*
- **32-bar song form** (A A B A) - *e.g. 'Yesterday' by the Beatles*
- **Verse-chorus form** - *intro - verse - chorus - verse - chorus...*
- **12-bar blues** - *I-I-I-I IV-IV-I-I V-IV-I-I*

Test yourself

Listen to the songs suggested below and decide what song structure they best follow:

- 'Blowin' in the Wind' - *Bob Dylan*
- 'What's Love Got to Do with it?' - *Tina Turner*
- 'I Feel Good' - *James Brown*
- 'From Me to You' - *The Beatles*
- 'Kiss' - *Prince*
- 'Candle in the Wind' - *Elton John*

FUSION

Fusion is what happens when two or more different musical styles are blended together.

- George Harrison (lead guitarist of The Beatles) experimented with playing Indian instruments in Western songs - he plays the sitar in 'Norwegian Wood', which you can search for on YouTube
- Some bands experiment with combining Celtic instruments (e.g. fiddle, bagpipes, harp) with Western sounds. You can hear this if you search for The Pogues on YouTube

FUSION

Bhangra

- Fuses music from the Punjab region of India with popular Western music

Features of Bhangra

- Fast, upbeat tempo
- Simple, repetitive melody
- Use of embellishments (decorations, ornaments)
- Ideas sung and/or played (i.e. on a synth, accordion, harmonium or guitar)
- Often includes shouts (e.g. 'Hoi!')
- Use of the *chaal* rhythm (crotchet-quaver, repeated)
- Use of Indian instruments (e.g. sitar, *dhol* drum) alongside Western instruments (e.g. drum kit, drum machine)
- Technology includes use of drum machines, synthesisers, samples from other music, mixing, scratching (turntabling technique)

Example of Bhangra: search for 'Panjabi MC - Mundian to Bach Ke'

Test yourself

Listen to the songs suggested below and decide:

1. What styles have been fused?
2. What features of each style can you hear?
3. What music technology has been used?

- 'Bhabiye Ni Bhabiye' - *Channi Singh*
- 'Love You To' - *The Beatles*
- 'Skye Waulking Song' – *Capercaillie*

Area of Study 4: Popular Music

32 bar song form	4 sections following the pattern A, A, B, A where each section is 8 bars = 32 bars in total
Strophic	The same tune with different words, e.g. each verse of a song may be strophic
12 bar blues	A common pattern in blues, using the chords I, IV and V: I-I-I-I IV-IV-I-I V-IV-I-I
Verse	Section of the song which is often strophic
Pre-chorus	Section leading into the chorus
Chorus	The repetitive of a song – usually simply and memorable
Riffs	Short repeated patterns on any instrument
Middle 8	Instrumental section of 8 bars
Bridge	Short passage which is different to the verse and chorus
Fill	Instrumental pattern to fill a gap e.g. drum fill
Instrumental break	Short section for instruments only
Intros and outros	Opening and closing section of a song
Improvisations	Sections where the melody is made up/ created by musicians over the chords
Syncopation	Off-beat rhythm
Driving rhythms	Fast, repeated rhythms which drive the music forward
Standard chord progressions	Common chord progressions such as: I-V-vi-IV, I-IV-V or I-vi-IV-V
Melismatic writing	More than one syllable per note in vocal writing; melismas may be improvised
Syllabic writing	One syllable per note in vocal writing
Lead Vocals	The front vocalist who sings the tune
Backing vocals	A small group or individual adding harmony to the main tune
Backing tracks	Tracks containing instrumentation for a singer to perform to
Primary chords	The most important chords – I, IV and V
Secondary chords	Other chords, most common are ii and vi

Cadences	A sequence of two or three chords which ends a phrase – the final two chords being the most important
Perfect cadence	Sounds finished: V-I
Imperfect cadence	Sounds unfinished: anything-V
Plagal cadence	A softer finish: IV-I
Interrupted cadence	Often V-vi, sounds strange, changes tonality
Harmonic rhythm	The speed at which the chords change
Multi track recording	Studio recording on more than one track in order to layer up sounds
Loops	Repeating patterns in a song, often created electronically
Samples	Short patterns or sounds recorded and manipulated electronically
Panning	Directing a sound to the left or right of centre in a track
Phasing	Taking an idea and layering it with a slight delay; can be done multiple times
Remix	A new version of a piece creating using technology
Sequencer/sequence	Using technology to create music, through insert and manipulating tracks
Vocoder	A device to change the sound of the voice
Reverb; delay	Adding extra “echo” to a sound; adding a delay/ longer echo to a sound
Distortion; overdrive	Created using an effects pedal or sequencer; a distorted, “dirty” sound
Double tracking	Duplicating a track to give the effect of more than one instrument/ voice being played
Panning	Moving the sound from left to right speaker
Overdub	Dubbing a second or subsequent sound onto an existing track
Balance	Manipulating tracks individually so as to create the best overall sound for a song