

Directions: Read about texture, then, listen to Disc 1 and answer the questions.

Most of the music we listen to share the same basic elements. It is not necessary for music to possess all of these elements, but in most cases one or more are present. The basic elements that we will deal primarily with in our exploration will be Harmony, Melody, Rhythm, Timbre, Texture, Form, and Dynamics.

TEXTURE

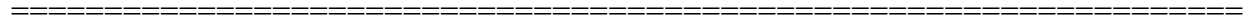
There are several different musical textures that we encounter frequently. They are called Monophonic, Homophonic, Polyphonic, and Mixed Texture.

Monophonic texture consists of a single melody alone. This can also include a group of voices or instruments playing a single melody together in unison, such as a family singing “Happy Birthday.” (Mono = Single + Phonic = Sound)

Harmony is characterized by pitches occurring simultaneously; when harmony is present, there is a vertical relationship among pitches. One way harmony occurs is through **Polyphonic** texture which consists of two or more different melodies are performed at the same time in different musical voices. (Poly = Many + Phonic = Sounds)

Homophonic Texture consists of a melody with chordal accompaniment, or chordal harmony alone. (Homo = Same + Phonic = Sounds)

Mixed Texture consists of multiple melodic voices plus chordal harmony. Both vertical and horizontal relationships are present among notes in different voices.



Listen to Track 1. This is the world-famous cellist, Yo Yo Ma performing Bach’s Cello Suite No. 1 in G, Prelude. The instrument you’re hearing is a cello. It is an example of **Monophonic Texture**.

Listen to Track 2. This is a recording of a 17th century canon being performed by three english horns. A canon is very similar to a musical round. It is an example of **Polyphonic Texture**.

Listen to Track 3. This is jazz singer/pianist Nina Simone singing “Strange Fruit” which is a haunting musical depiction of the aftermath of a violent lynching and hanging of an African American in the deep south. It is an example of **Homophonic Texture**.

Strange Fruit

Lyrics by Lewis Allen;

Originally sung by Billie Holiday in 1939.

*Southern trees bear strange fruit,
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze,
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.*

*Pastoral scene of the gallant south,
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth,
Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh,
Then the sudden smell of burning flesh.*

*Here is the fruit for the crows to pluck,
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck,
For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop,
Here is a strange and bitter crop.*

Listen to Track 4. This a piece called “The Rush of Wings” by Metamora. It uses a variety of instruments, including 2 flutes, a guitar, and perhaps a hammer dulcimer. Also, I’m hearing hints of either bowed instruments faintly in the background and perhaps some synthesized sounds. The variety of melodies and countermelodies floating above a simple arpeggiated chordal accompaniment makes this selection a fine example of **Mixed Texture**.

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Listen to Track 5. This is a piece called “Elegy for Mippy II” by Leonard Bernstein.

1. How many different musical voices are present in this piece?

- A. One.
- B. Two.
- C. Three.
- D. More than three.

2. The example above demonstrates a melody because:

- A. Several notes occur at the same time.
- B. There is a series of single pitches in succession.
- C. There is a vertical relationship among pitches.
- D. There are words to be sung.

3. The example shows monophonic texture because:
- A. There is a melody alone.
 - B. There are several melodies together.
 - C. There is chordal harmony.
 - D. There are several melodies plus chords.

Listen to Track 6. This is a piece called “Arioso” by Johann Sebastian Bach.

1. How many different musical voices are present?
- A. One. An oboe.
 - B. Two. An oboe and an organ.
 - C. Three. An oboe, organ, and a singer.
 - D. Four. An oboe, organ, singer, and an electric guitar.
2. This example is best described as...:
- A. ...an example of a monophonic texture because there is only a single melodic voice without harmonic accompaniment.
 - B. ...an example of polyphonic texture because there is more than one melodic voice creating harmony.
 - C. ...an example of homophonic texture because there is a single melodic voice accompanied by chordal harmony.
 - D. ...an example of mixed texture because there is more than one melodic voice accompanied by chordal harmony.

Listen to Track 7. “No Surprises” by Radiohead is best described as...

- A. ...an example of a monophonic texture because there is only a single melodic voice without harmonic accompaniment.
- B. ...an example of polyphonic texture because there is more than one melodic voice creating harmony.
- C. ...an example of homophonic texture because there is a single melodic voice accompanied by chordal harmony.
- D. ...an example of mixed texture because there is more than one melodic voice accompanied by chordal harmony.

Listen to Track 8. “Goin’ To Chicago” is being sung by Kurt Elling and John Hendricks.

1. How many melodic voices do you hear?
- A. One...Just the bass.
 - B. Two...The bass and one singer.
 - C. Three...The bass and two singers.
 - D. Four...The bass, two singers, and a piano.

2. This particular version of “Goin’ To Chicago” is best described as...

A. ...an example of a monophonic texture because there is only a single melodic voice without harmonic accompaniment.

B. ...an example of polyphonic texture because there is more than one melodic voice creating harmony.

C. ...an example of homophonic texture because there is a single melodic voice accompanied by chordal harmony.

D. ...an example of mixed texture because there is more than one melodic voice accompanied by chordal harmony.

Listen to Track 9. “Genggong Duet (Sekar Sungsang)” is an example of traditional music from Indonesia. The instruments you are hearing are similar to the jaw harm. This piece is best described as...

A. ...an example of a monophonic texture because there is only a single melodic voice without harmonic accompaniment.

B. ...an example of polyphonic texture because there is more than one melodic voice creating harmony.

C. ...an example of homophonic texture because there is a single melodic voice accompanied by chordal harmony.

D. ...an example of mixed texture because there is more than one melodic voice accompanied by chordal harmony.

Listen to Track 10. “Quick, We Have But a Second” is being sung by The Cambridge Singers. It is best described as...

A. ...an example of a monophonic texture because there is only a single melodic voice without harmonic accompaniment.

B. ...an example of polyphonic texture because there is more than one melodic voice creating harmony.

C. ...an example of homophonic texture because the melodic voices are moving together with the chordal accompaniment in very nearly the same rhythm.

D. ...an example of mixed texture because there is more than one melodic voice accompanied by chordal harmony.

Listen to Track 11. “Spoke” by Shellac is a song made up of nonsense lyrics. There really isn’t a “melody.” However, it is a clear example of what kind of musical texture?

A. Monophonic.

B. Polyphonic.

C. Homophonic.

Explain your answer. _____

Listen to Track 12. “Fanfare for the Common Man” by Aaron Copland is best described as having which kind of musical texture?

- A. Monophonic.
- B. Polyphonic.
- C. Homophonic.

Explain your answer. _____
