

**MUS 111 – Music Appreciation  
Online Class  
Listening Essay 1 Topic 1**

Remember that there will be a total of four Listening Essay topics assigned and each student is expected to submit a total of two Listening Essays during the course of the semester for a possible 100 points each. If you'd like, you may submit a third Listening Essay for a possible 25 points extra credit. See the assignment listed as EXTRA CREDIT.

Choose one of the two topics for your first LISTENING ESSAY.

Please make note of the fact that each topic has a different due date. You shouldn't write on the "Elements of Music," essay topic until you have completed the text and lecture material that covers Part 1 – Elements of Music (Weeks 1 – 3)

You will submit your work by either typing it into the field below, typing it into a word processor and pasting it in the field below, or you may type it in a word processor and submit that file as an attachment in the field below.

If you submit your essay early, I'll give it a preliminary grade and allow you to revise to essay to try to raise your grade on this assignment!

**Music 111 – Music Appreciation  
Listening Essay Topic – Elements of Music  
DUE on or before October 8, 2007**

**Choose one of your own favorite musical works: instrumental or a song. This can be a piece in any musical style: rock, jazz, hip hop, country, classical, etc. You will then write a one to two page essay describing how the MUSICAL ELEMENTS that we are discussing in class are used in this work. Remember to include the song title, the composer, the name of the main performer or group, and what instruments are used. You will need to listen to the piece several times to be successful with this assignment.**

**The following are some things to think about while you are listening to the song and preparing to write the essay:**

I. PITCH

A. MELODY

1. Does MELODY seem to be a prominent feature in this work? (Is there a "hum-able" tune?)
2. Does the melody feature a wide or a narrow PITCH RANGE
3. Does the melody seem to move primarily in STEPWISE MOTION or does it feature frequent LEAPS?
4. Is the melodic line performed with LEGATO or STACCATO?
5. Are the phrases of the melody arranged in "question and answer" pairs as discussed in class?

B. HARMONY

1. Does HARMONY, chords, chord progression, etc., seem to play an important role in this piece?

2. Would you describe this piece as using primarily CONSONANT or DISSONANT harmonies?

3. How does the use of CONSONANCE and DISSONANCE contribute to the mood of the piece?

4. Did you notice the use of arpeggios in the piece?

5. Were you able to determine if it was in a MAJOR or MINOR key?

6. Did you notice the use of MODULATION in the piece? If so, how does its use affect the listener?

## II. DYNAMICS

A. Where changes in dynamic level a prominent feature in this piece?

B. Did you notice any use of CRESCENDO or DECRESCENDO in this piece? If so, where was it used, and how did it affect you as the listener?

C. Using the Italian terms for DYNAMICS, found on page 5 of your text, how would you describe the overall dynamic level of this piece?

## III. TONE COLOR/TIMBRE

A. List all of the instruments used in this piece, (include voices – lead singer, background singers, etc.) and include a descriptive term to tell me something about the specific quality of tone color that the performers are using with each instrument. (Example: Electric Guitar – Harsh, distorted; or Electric Guitar – Warm, mellow.)

B. Did you notice any prominent changes in TONE COLOR throughout the course of the piece? (Example: A melody that is first sung by the singer, now played by a saxophone; a sudden entrance of a string section after the first verse.)

C. Did you notice the musicians employing any interesting techniques: strings playing pizzicato (plucking instead of bowing,) or double stops (playing two strings at the same time); brass playing with mutes; etc.

## IV. DURATION

A. Does RHYTHM seem to be a prominent feature in this work?

B. Did you notice a prominent steady BEAT or pulse throughout the work, or was the beat subtle and flowing

C. Try to determine if this piece is in a DUPLÉ or TRIPLE meter.

D. Was SYNCOPATION a prominent feature in this piece

E. Using the Italian tempo indications found on page 34 of your text, tell me what term you would use to describe the TEMPO of this piece.

You may also find it helpful to create a listening outline similar to the ones found in our class textbook. Listening outlines are basically timelines that list striking features of the work: when the singer starts, when a verse or chorus begins, when a section is repeated, when a guitar or piano solo begins, etc. (See examples on pages 10, 11, 30–31, etc, of the text.)

Or if you prefer you could write on the following topic. Please make note of the fact that each topic has a different due date. You shouldn't write on the "Baroque Style" topic until you have completed the text and lecture material that covers the Part 3 The Baroque Period (Weeks 4 – 6)