

TEXTURE



Texture is the term used to describe the effect of the mix of the different sounds/instruments/voices used. (This appears very complex but is in fact very simple if approached logically.)

The different terms that you will need to know are:

- **Unison** – the performers performing **exactly** the same melody.
- **Melody and Accompaniment** – Tune and Backing.
- **Homophony / Homophonic** – the performers all doing mostly the same rhythm, e.g. a hymn.
- **Polyphony / Polyphonic** – complex use of different melodies at once.
- **Antiphony – Call & Response** - Otherwise referred to as **Question and Answer**, performers take short turns to play, often copying each others tune.
- **Canon** – The same tune started at regular intervals so that they overlap e.g. London’s Burning, Frere Jacques.
- **Fugue / Fugual** – Very similar to a canon except the tune comes in at a different pitch each time. (*You will not have to choose between canon and fugue in the exam.*)
- **Counterpoint / Contrapuntal** – Two equally decorated or complex tunes played at the same time, usually applies to a harpsichord or piano piece.
- **Countermelody / Descant / Obligato** – A second different melody/tune added over the top of the main melody/tune.

Other General Words That May Be Called For In The Exam

- **Thin** – Not many instruments playing
- **Light** – Not many instruments playing, mostly high sounding.
- **Heavy / Thick** – Lots of performers making a loud powerful sound.
- **Complex** – Can be used in place of some of the above in open response questions.