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### **CLEP Humanities Exam**



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## Question: 1

Which of these is not a type of musical scale?

- A. Chromatic
- B. Diatonic
- C. Triadic
- D. Minor
- E. Pentatonic

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

A triad is a type of chord comprised of three notes. The remaining choices are all types of scales: a chromatic scale consists of twelve half steps, a diatonic scale consists of seven different pitches, a pentatonic scale consists of five different pitches, and a minor scale lowers the third pitch of a major scale by a half step.

## Question: 2

Which of the following are characteristic of the Baroque period?

- I. It began with the invention of opera and ended with the death of Johann Sebastian Bach.
- II. It began with the death of Johann Sebastian Bach and ended in the 1820s.
- III. Franz Haydn was a major composer of the period.
- IV. Imitative polyphony is characteristic of the period.
- V. Antonio Vivaldi is a major composer of the period.

- A. I and V
- B. II and III
- C. I and IV
- D. III and V
- E. III and IV

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

The Baroque period began around 1600 with the invention of opera and ended around 1750 with the death of Johann Sebastian Bach. Antonio Vivaldi also wrote extensively for the violin during the Baroque period, establishing the three-movement concerto. The Classical period began with the death of Johann Sebastian Bach and ended in the 1820s. Franz Haydn was a major composer during this period. Imitative polyphony, in which voices sing the same text and the same music, entering one after another, was a characteristic of Renaissance music.

### Question: 3

Nineteenth century opera was dominated by which two composers?

- A. Samuel Barber and Benjamin Britten
- B. Richard Wagner and Giuseppe Verdi
- C. Christoph Gluck and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- D. Giacomo Puccini and Maurice Ravel
- E. Claudio Monteverdi and George Frideric Handel

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Richard Wagner and Giuseppe Verdi dominated opera during the nineteenth century, with Verdi composing 28 operas (including *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, and *Aida*) and Wagner writing his famous *Der Ring des Nibelungen* series, among others. Samuel Barber and Benjamin Britten are famous opera composers of the twentieth century. Christoph Gluck and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart were famous opera composers of the eighteenth century. Giacomo Puccini and Maurice Ravel wrote operas in the nineteenth century, but not as prolifically as Wagner and Verdi. Claudio Monteverdi and George Frideric Handel composed operas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

### Question: 4

Moderato, vivace, andante and presto are all examples of...

- A. Rhythms
- B. Meters
- C. Tempos
- D. Dynamics
- E. Intervals

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

These are all tempos, or speeds, in music: moderato (moderate), vivace (fast), andante (walking speed) and presto (extremely fast). Rhythm refers to the pattern of music's duration of notes. Meter refers to a musical piece's pattern of rhythms. Dynamics are the degree of loudness or softness in a series of notes. Intervals are the distances between two musical pitches.

### Question: 5

Musical notes are arranged in meter, or a series of beats. When an unexpected accent occurs (either between beats or on a weak beat), it is called...

- A. Duple meter
- B. Pulse
- C. A key signature
- D. Timbre
- E. Syncopatio

**Answer: E**

Explanation:

Syncopation occurs when a melodic accent falls on a weak beat or between beats. It occurs commonly in jazz and swing musical styles. Duple meter is a rhythmic pattern in which a strong beat is followed by three weak beats. Pulse refers to a musical beat. A key signature indicates the scale a musical piece is based on. Timbre refers to the texture of sound made by a musical instrument or voice.

### Question: 6

Which is true of jazz?

- A. It is widely considered to be America's only original contribution to music
- B. It originated in American Hispanic culture.
- C. It originated around the middle of the nineteenth century.
- D. It is atonal.
- E. John Cage was a famous jazz composer of the twentieth century.

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Jazz is widely considered to be America's only original contribution to music. Jazz originated in American black culture around the beginning of the twentieth century. Jazz is not atonal, or without key or tonal center. John Cage composed modern or "chance" music during the twentieth century, not jazz.

### Question: 7

What is true of a key signature?

- I. It indicates the meter of a piece of music.
- II. It is indicated at the beginning of a piece of music, just after the time signature.
- III. It indicates how a tune gets from one pitch to the next.
- IV. It is the scale that a piece of music is built on.
- V. It refers to how loud or soft a tone is.

- A. I and II
- B. I
- C. III and IV
- D. II and IV
- E. V

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

A key signature indicates the scale a piece of music is built on, and is located at the beginning of a piece of music, just after the time signature. The time signature denotes the meter of a piece of music. How a tune gets from one pitch to the next is called melodic motion. The loudness or softness of a tone is called intensity.

### Question: 8

Which shows the correct order of the periods of Western music history?

- A. Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and 20th century
- B. Gregorian, Baroque, Renaissance, Classical, Romantic, and 20th century
- C. Gregorian, Medieval, Renaissance, Classical, Opera, and 20th century
- D. Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Expressionist, and 20th century
- E. Gregorian, Medieval, Baroque, Classical, Expressionist and Atonal

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

The six historic periods of Western music in chronological order are Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and 20th century. Gregorian refers to a type of a capella liturgical music common in the medieval period. Opera was a musical form invented during the Baroque period. Expressionist was a type of painting popular during the Romantic musical period. Atonal music lacks a center, or key, and was popular during the 20th century period.

### Question: 9

During which period did Giovanni Bellini, Josquin Desprez, and William Shakespeare work?

- A. Classical
- B. Renaissance
- C. Baroque
- D. Classical
- E. Romantic

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

William Shakespeare was the most influential writer of the Renaissance period. Italian painter Giovanni Bellini was one of the Renaissance's most famous artists. Josquin Desprez was a famous composer of the Renaissance. He was called "master of the notes" by Martin Luther.

### Question: 10

Which languages are used in music and ballet?

- A. Italian for music and ballet.
- B. Italian for music, French for ballet.
- C. German for music, Italian for ballet.
- D. French for music and ballet.
- E. French for music, Italian for ballet.

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Italian terms are used in music (andante, forte, vivace, allegretto, etc.). French terms are used in ballet (plie, pas de chat, pas de deux, etc.).

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