

Chapter 5

Reading Music Scores

Chapter Summary

Chapter 5 presents types of music scores. It discusses the specific points that define a music score, introduces a variety of music scores along with brief histories, and examines how useful understanding a music score might be.

Glossary Terms With Definitions

Acrobats of God—A 1960 orchestral score by Carlos Surinach that was commissioned by and dedicated to Martha Graham.

bourrée—A baroque-era court dance style that French King Louis XIV's court composer Jean Baptiste Lully created. It was usually written in duple time, with a rapid tempo, and in binary form. The melody usually begins on the third beat of a measure.

Cantique de Noël—In English, this traditional Christmas song is known as "O Holy Night." It was composed by the 19th-century ballet composer Adolphe Adam.

chamber orchestra—Uses many of the instruments of the orchestra but in smaller numbers, often omitting some of the groups of a full orchestra.

chord—Three or more pitches played simultaneously and that produce various types of harmonies.

conductor's score—See *full score*.

fake book—A music book that contains melodies of jazz tunes or popular songs on a staff with the lyrics below and chords above the corresponding notes. Capital letters above the staff symbolize chords (e.g., A, G, F).

fret—The small metal bar that divides a fret board into sections along the neck of the instrument and allows a musician to play different pitches by pressing specific fingers on specific strings between the frets.

full orchestra—Woodwinds (piccolos, flutes, clarinets, oboes, bassoons), brass (trumpets, trombones, French horns, tubas), strings (violins, violas, cellos, double basses), and percussion (drums, triangles, bells, and so on).

1 From N. Nolen Holland, 2013, *Music fundamentals for dance web resource* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics).

full score—Also known as a conductor’s score. The original score in which every vocal or instrumental part appears individually.

guitar tablature—Shows a musician how to play a chord with an illustration of which finger goes on which guitar fret.

march—A music style often played in concerts, marched to by marching bands, and heard and seen in parades as well as at halftime during football games.

music score—Staffs with every voice’s or instrument’s part listed with all of the composer’s directions on how the parts should be performed (e.g., using notations such as tempo terms and symbols, dynamic markings, and expression markings). A score may be for one instrument or for every conceivable number and combination of instruments and voices.

piano score—A series of grand staves; music for the piano.

rehearsal letters—May appear above the staves of a longer music work. Rehearsal letters or actual bar numbers may appear intermittently throughout a work. These letters or numbers give the conductor and musicians reference points at which they can resume playing together in rehearsal. In a long work, rehearsal letters may signify distinct sections of the composition. Also known as rehearsal marks or rehearsal figures.

string quartet score—Has four staves, one for each instrument of the string quartet: two violins, a viola, and a cello.

trio—Music for three voices or instruments; also the second section of a scherzo or minuet movement.

two-step—An early 20th-century popular dance form (also known as the cakewalk) whose title has evolved to describe a current country-western dance form (Texas two-step) in which partners two-step counterclockwise with a variant of ballroom dance’s closed position while moving in a circular formation around a dance floor.

Glossary Terms Without Definitions

Acrobats of God—

bourrée—

Cantique de Noël—

chamber orchestra—

chord—

conductor's score—

fake book—

fret—

full orchestra—

full score—

guitar tablature—

march—

music score—

piano score—

rehearsal letters—

string quartet score—

trio—

two-step—

Web Links

- The International Music Score Library, also known as the Petrucci Music Library, provides access to scores for music that has passed into the public domain. www.imslp.org
- Indiana University's Cook Library has some scores available. They have a range of scores for operas, songs, orchestral works, choral works, chamber music, and piano. They also have sound recordings. www.dlib.indiana.edu/variations/scores
- Alexander Street Press's Classical Scores Library offers a free trial subscription. They also have links to recordings of the scores. Your library may have a subscription to this database. <http://alexanderstreet.com/products/classical-scores-library>
- Piano Passion offers a guide to searching for free music on the Internet. It lists over 60 sites on which to find scores and includes the first two listed above. <http://pianopassion.com/guideanglais.htm>

Extended Learning Activities

1. **Composer notations:** Can you find a music score or archival music score for a famous dance work or Broadway musical with composer notes or directions handwritten or printed within the score? How might these directions influence the way the conductor asks the musicians to play the music? What dance style would a choreographer create in order to comply with the dance genre for which the composer wrote the score?
2. **Score reading:** In the library or from an Internet music library, locate and look at various scores (try looking for Norton Scores). Select a score to analyze in terms of type of score, instrumentation, composer, and particular effects in the music (e.g., mixed meter or the use of an unusual instrument, dynamic terms and symbols, or expression terms and symbols). Bring the score to class and share a brief analysis with the class. Back up your analysis by showing your points in the score.
3. **Composing a score:** Create short, simple scores for two or more instruments, such as a drum and a flute or a piano and a voice. With a music composition program such as Garage Band, this is a relatively simple task. If you do not have access to a music composition program, you can use the blank staff paper provided in worksheet 5.1. Apply principles of texture when possible. Bring your composition or print it out for the class to read or follow as you and other classmates play the composition or as the compositions play via the music composition program.

Once you have listened to the compositions, work individually or in groups to create dances for the music. Make a decision to follow the music's form or style and to follow the structure of the music as it is written or to have the dance diverge from the music. Try to create movement that is totally different from the obvious choices, using the phrasing and flow of the melody or by including movement that contrasts to or extends beyond the music's phrases. Perform the dance you have created for the entire class.

Forms, Worksheets, and Other Materials for Student Work

- Worksheet 5.1