

Music Extension (Musicology) 2020 v1.1

IA1: High-level annotated sample response

August 2022

Investigation 1 (20%)

This sample has been compiled by the QCAA to assist and support teachers to match evidence in student responses to the characteristics described in the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG).

The following sample is an authentic student response produced with permission.

Assessment objectives

This assessment instrument is used to determine student achievement in the following objectives:

1. apply written literacy skills using terminology relevant to genre/style, and use referencing and language conventions
4. express meaning or ideas about music
6. investigate the use of music elements and concepts and ideas about music.

Note: Objectives 2, 3, 5 and 7 are not assessed in this instrument.

Instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG)

Criterion: Applying literacy skills

Assessment objective

1. apply written literacy skills using terminology relevant to genre/style, and use referencing and language conventions

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• application of written literacy skills through articulated ideas and controlled structure of information	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• application of written literacy skills through sequenced and connected ideas	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• application of written literacy skills using terminology relevant to genre/style, and use of referencing and language conventions	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• application of written literacy skills to describe ideas	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0



Criterion: Expressing meaning

Assessment objective

4. express meaning or ideas about music

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• expression of meaning or ideas about music is enhanced through the summary of key findings	7–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• expression of meaning or ideas about music reveals a summary of the text	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• expression of meaning or ideas about music	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identification and citation of music source/s	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0



Criterion: Investigating music

Assessment objective

6. investigate the use of music elements and concepts and ideas about music

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
• investigation of a selection of sources to examine for relevance and value	7–8
• investigation of the use of music elements and concepts and ideas about music from a range of sources	5–6
• investigation of the use of music elements and concepts and ideas about music	3–4
• selection and description of sources	1–2
• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0



Task

The following information is an overview of the endorsed assessment instrument that this sample response was prepared for.

The task asked students to:

- investigate a music idea, problem, question, issue or hypothesis through the collection and investigation of primary and/or secondary data
- prepare an annotated bibliography of a collection of relevant sources. The bibliography is to provide a summary of the text and an assessment of the value, quality and relevance of the text to the selected research topic.



Sample response

Criterion	Marks allocated	Provisional marks
Applying literacy skills Assessment objective 1	4	4
Expressing meaning Assessment objective 4	8	8
Investigating music Assessment objective 6	8	8
Total	20	20

The annotations show the match to the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG) performance-level descriptors.



Annotated sample response — Bibliography

Applying literacy skills [4]

application of written literacy skills through articulated ideas and controlled structure of information

The introduction clearly articulates the direction and the main themes of the musicological research that will be investigated in the annotated bibliography.

For centuries, since the antebellum era of slavery (1783-1861), Black Americans have used music as a powerful tool of protest. By setting their stories to song, music has given them a voice in their non-violent struggle against racism and discrimination. Whether through laments of suffering or calls to action, the traditional slave and Civil Rights Freedom Songs born of Black pain, endurance and identity remain prominent in numerous music genres today – such as Jazz, Rap, Blues and Pop. As more people stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement against police brutality and systemic racism, it is clear that Black protest music has been, and continues to be, shaped by the enduring spirit of Black protest.

With a focus on Civil Rights Freedom Songs, this annotated bibliography explores its influence on contemporary Black protest music in the Black Lives Matter movement by examining its:

1. Symbolic aims of unity
2. Instrumental purposes of galvanising change; and
3. Communicative functions as a commentary of Black experiences and emotions.

Please be advised that this resource contains some terms and references that are inappropriate today, but provided in a historical context. They have been retained to demonstrate the authenticity of the student work.



Annotated sample response — Bibliography

Investigating music [8]

Investigation of a selection of sources to examine for relevance and value

The annotation examines the relevance and value of this earlier source from 1953 and enables a fuller historical overview of topic.

Fisher, M. (1953). *Negro Slave Songs in the United States*. Cornell University Press for the American Historical Association.

In this book, Black historian Dr Fisher examines the history and functions of the Antebellum South Negro 'Spirituals' throughout critical periods of American slavery – with each chapter's title reflecting significant themes of well-known Negro songs. In particular, Chapter 4 – “*Steal Away*” – outlines how Spirituals allowed intercommunication between slaves where meetings of insurrection and warnings of slave patrols were convened. An example is seen in the Spiritual, *Steal Away*, which famous Black slave Nat Turner often used to organise his slave revolts. In Chapter 7 – “*When I Die*” – plantation slaves would improvise on traditional songs to make their work more tolerable; this led to creating plantation songs inspired mainly by traditional Negro Spirituals. Moreover, the desire for freedom constituted a significant theme where their hope of return to Africa influenced well-known songs such as *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*. Finally, Fisher concludes by analogising the diverse functions of Negro Spirituals as a “safety valve that saved their souls”. While not informing the basis of this investigation due to its predominant focus on traditional Negro Spirituals, this book supplements useful information on the historical context and development of Negro Spirituals, which continue to influence Black protest songs today.

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Annotated sample response — Bibliography

Expressing meaning [8]

expression of meaning or ideas about music is enhanced through the summary of key findings

Clear summary of the historical underpinnings of the investigation topic. Effectively expresses ideas about the role Freedom songs played in the formation of contemporary Black social movements and protest songs.

Edet, E. (1976). One Hundred Years of Black Protest Music. *The Black Scholar*, 7(10), 38-48. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00064246.1976.11413848>

This article explores the interrelationships between Black protest music and the social conditions post-Civil War. After briefly referencing the history of the Negro Spirituals, Black musicologist Dr Edet focuses on the emancipation era during the Civil Rights and Black Revolution movements. Though the ex-slaves sang modified lyrics of past Negro Spirituals to reflect their new-found freedoms, this was quickly silenced by the 1865 Jim Crow laws. The combination of “doubled- standard laws”, lynching without cause and segregation contributed significantly to damaging the “Negro’s psyche”. While these experiences inspired their songs, such as the lynching of innocent Black bodies in Billie Holiday’s *Strange Fruit*, these years of oppression ultimately destroyed their identity. Consequently, Black communities reacted by “adopting the white man’s standards” with their self-hatred reflecting their oppressors’ attitudes. However, with the Black Revolution escalating the fight for integration, more traditional Negro songs were used to create new Freedom Songs to oppose segregation and take “control of their own destinies”. Hence, while useful in substantiating the relationship between Black experiences and their Freedom Songs, its limited examination of contemporary Black protest songs will require adaptation to be an inclusive commentary on Freedom Songs and their influence in contemporary Black social movements.

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Annotated sample response — Bibliography

Expressing meaning [8]

expression of meaning or ideas about music is enhanced through the summary of key findings

Summary of the music ideas effectively compares and evaluates the relationship between this source and the previous one, linking both to the key music ideas of the investigation.

Boots, C. (2014). *Creating Community in the American Civil Rights Movement: Singing Spirituals and Freedom Songs* [Master's thesis, Boston University School of Theology]. Boston University Libraries. <https://hdl.handle.net/2144/15158>

This thesis investigates the role of Freedom Songs during the Civil Rights Movement in inspiring hope for justice and unity. Here, Professor Boots begins by acknowledging the Spirituals' legacy on the newly-composed Freedom Songs with both sharing "word-for-word affinity and the call and response structure...". In particular, these songs evidenced the Black activists' resilience when confronted with physical and emotional violence – where they were sung frequently at "mass meetings, demonstrations, Freedom rides, in jails". Through its improvisatory nature, Freedom Songs allowed grass-roots activists to orally record, validate and memorialise their movement's historical importance – especially their fellow Black peoples who died fighting for their rights. A brief analysis of the well-known song *We Shall Overcome* is used to support the author's claim of its power as a non-violent weapon in "dissipating fear" and "galvanising the collective determination" against desegregation. Further, this sense of "egalitarian resonance" fostered through Freedom Songs is evident in a Freedom Rider's testimony, where its inherent non-violent nature "transcended the physical line between the jailed and the jailer". Thus, as evident in Edet's paper, Boots' thesis further corroborates the significance of Freedom Songs in empowering the Black community against racial segregation through song analysis and first-hand testimonials.

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Annotated sample response — Bibliography

Investigating music [8]

Investigation of a selection of sources to examine for relevance and value

Given the 1972 date of this source, the annotation examines the relevance and identifies areas for future research to allow a more contemporary understanding of topic.

Cone, J. (1972). The Blues: A Secular Spiritual. In J. Cones, *The Spirituals and the Blues: An Interpretation* (pp. 108- 128, 133-142). New York: Seabury Press.

Within this chapter, Black theologian Professor Cone examines the Blues' purpose as a commentary of Black existence during a period "where colour [represented] humiliation". By analysing the Blues, Cones argues that it is the "state of mind that affirms the worth of Black humanity" despite having their identity destroyed by years of oppression and racial violence. Here, Cones highlights the importance of acknowledging the inseparability of the Blacks' suffering to the meaning of the Blues. As Cones explores numerous unnamed Blues songs, he affirms that the Blues is not "music for music's sake" but an expression of their will to survive – a way to escape their troubles without necessarily ignoring it. Finally, Cones concludes that while the Blues' political significance was not impressive during its time, for Black communities who "live[d] the Blues" such music exemplified their affirmation of the Black being and courage to confront their oppression – and oppressors. Therefore, this chapter is useful in supporting the importance of music, specifically the Blues, in reclaiming Black identity and a "firm hope" for change. It would be worthwhile to further explore Cone's arguments by examining the significance of contemporary Blues music in Black communities today.

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Annotated sample response — Bibliography

Investigating music [8]

Investigation of a selection of sources to examine for relevance and value

The inclusion of this primary source full book text adds to the variety of source types, and the annotation is succinct, showing a clear understanding of the main music ideas covered.

Simone, N. & Cleary, S. (1991). *I Put a Spell On You: the Autobiography of Nina Simone*. London: Ebury.

This autobiography explores Nina Simone's life as an influential Black female musician within the Civil Rights movement. Following her development as a child pianist prodigy, Simone recounts her transition from a classically-trained pianist to one of the most renowned Civil Rights movement performers. Initially, Simone completely disregarded the movement, claiming that to "acknowledge racism was in itself defeat" – until the murder of Black activist Medgar Evers in 1963. While she "knew nothing about killing, [she] knew music", consequently responding to these racially-motivated murders through her anthems such as *Mississippi Goddamn*. Simone later admitted her previous criticisms of 'protest music' as "stripping the dignity from the people it tried to celebrate" before dedicating herself to "the historical destiny of her people". In particular, she often voiced her "fierce pride" in the unity and self-empowerment created by such songs within the Black revolution. However, despite facing boycotts in the music industry and ultimately damaging her career, she affirmed no regrets for her "hard but joyous" fight for Black rights. Hence, this autobiography is crucial in understanding the impacts of Black protest music on Black musicians and providing a first-hand account of their involvement and dedication to creating these songs.

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Annotated sample response — Bibliography

Applying literacy skills [4]

application of written literacy skills through articulated ideas and controlled structure of information

Ideas about the purpose and value of the article are clearly articulated through sophisticated sentence structures linked into controlled paragraph structures that effectively summarise the article.

Bohonos, J., Otchere, K. & Pak, Y. (2019). Using Artistic Expression as a Teaching Strategy for Social Justice: Examining Music from the Civil Rights and Black Lives Matter Movements. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 21(2), 250-266. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422319827942>

This article examines how performing arts education can be incorporated with social movement learning to deepen students' knowledge about racism. Here, the authors analysed the development of Black protest music, from the Civil Rights and Black Lives Matter movement, through its communicative, symbolic and integrative functions. In particular, Freedom Songs were organised around a "congregational call and response" which enabled songs' to be learned quickly by both Black and white activists. Similarly, the "melodic and lyrical simplicity" of Kendrick Lamar's *Alright* highlights its effectiveness in contemporary protests, as it allows newer activists to connect with the chant, the current movement and importantly, the history of Black struggle. The authors argue that this sense of community fostered ultimately underpins the historical and musical connection between social justice movements throughout history. Thus, this article is useful as it illustrates the influence of Black protest music on contemporary Black Lives Matter movements – especially building unity and furthering students' knowledge about injustices. To further students' understanding of social movements globally, it would be valuable to expand this research by exploring the development and influence of protest music in different contexts such as Australian Indigenous Rights.

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Annotated sample response — Bibliography

Expressing meaning [8]

expression of meaning or ideas about music is enhanced through the summary of key findings

Clear summary of a range of sophisticated music ideas around music elements and concepts and their psycho-social effects, and how these ideas connect to the formation of cultural and political identities.

Manabe, N. (2019). We Gon' Be Alright? The Ambiguities of Kendrick Lamar's Protest Anthem. *Society for Music Theory*, 25(1), 1-29. DOI: 10.30535/mto.25.1.9

This article explores the significance of Kendrick Lamar's 2015 *Alright* within the Black Lives Matter movement by analysing Lamar's manipulation of musical elements in enhancing his message for change. Although not intending to create a protest song, Lamar describes the song's approach as "more uplifting... but aggressive". This sense of solidarity is supported by his inclusion of a gospel, multi-part chorus, typically associated with the uplifting and empowering nature of Freedom Songs. Manabe draws attention to co-vocalist Pharrell Williams' rising inflections in his rap - arguing the connection between the ambiguities of intonation with the ambiguity of the socio-political tension within the Black Lives Matter movement. This theme is further reinforced through Lamar's repetition of an unusual rhythmic structure throughout the song, causing audiences to become "entrained" in "embracing the uncertainty of [his] message". However, while acknowledged as an effective protest chant due to its "mesmerising rhythmic repetition" and "hopeful tone", Manabe concludes that to only listen to Lamar's song in positivity disregards the struggles that ultimately define the Black identity. Thus, this deconstruction helps to inform the interrelationship between the communicative and symbolic functions of modern Black protest music in fulfilling its purpose as a resonant call for change.

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Annotated sample response — Bibliography

Investigating music [8]

Investigation of a selection of sources to examine for relevance and value

The inclusion of this opinion editorial adds to the variety of source types. The annotation succinctly identifies a key point about the importance of musical expressions of Black pride in affirming Black identity.

Kennedy, R. (2018). *How James Brown Made Black Pride a Hit*. The New York Times.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/20/opinion/sunday/james-brown-say-it-loud-50-years.html>

This opinion editorial, written by Law Professor Randall Kennedy, explores the legacy of Black artist James Brown's 1968 hit *Say It Loud – I'm Black and Proud* 50 years later. By sharing a personal childhood experience during the 1960s, the author documents his internalisation of American society's derogation of blackness: "luxuriating in our denigration".

Kennedy argues that due to the widespread colourism of the 70s, Brown's anthem posed an "exhilarating" challenge that "resonated amongst the Black communities so powerfully". The author further affirms that the song's "new-found empowerment" and "triumphal sense of self-acceptance" continued to inspire younger Black generations decades later. He concludes that such an anthem was instrumental in reclaiming their collective and individual identities. Ultimately, this "liberation of Blackness" from contempt, fear and hatred led to the renaming of Negro to Black, the establishment of more Black education programs and the empowerment of the Black being. Kennedy concludes that while colourism remains a "baleful reality", the "valorisation" of the Black identity remains influential in the fight against social injustice.

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Annotated sample response — Bibliography

Applying literacy skills [4]

application of written literacy skills through articulated ideas and controlled structure of information

Ideas are clearly articulated through the use of a broad range of subtle word choices.

Genius. (2020, July 23). *DAX "Black Lives Matter" Official Lyrics & Meaning | Verified [Video]*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHx1eI9bGOM>

In this video, Black hip-hop artist DAX explains his song *Black Lives Matter* as a call for justice against systemic racism – one echoed strongly within the Black Lives Matter movement. Throughout the interview, DAX reaffirms his intentions to create solidarity instead of division. Feeling compelled to use his platform for change, he describes the song as his response to the world’s current events in hopes of “unify[ing] all colours and races”. In particular, DAX reflects many of the Freedom Songs’ symbolic and instrumental functions, evidenced as he attempts lyrically to galvanise unity and change from a “grass-roots” perspective. He also reflects the communicative function of Freedom Songs through his lyrics, as he explores the connection between systemic racism, George Floyd’s death and his personal experiences of racism. Moreover, the influence of Freedom Songs on modern Black protest music is further illustrated through his memorialisation of the innocent Black victims of police brutality, his affirmation for a future where their deaths have meaning and his enduring hope for change. Although less academic, this interview still provides an informed understanding of the legacy of Freedom Songs on modern Black protest artists, their social activism and their response to racial injustices today.

Word Count: 1904

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