

STUDENT WORKSHEET 9

MUSICAL THEMES

“FOR ME, ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING THINGS HAS BEEN HEARING THE SCORE COME TO LIFE LIVE EVERY NIGHT. IF ONLY EVERYONE COULD HAVE BEEN IN THE ROOM THE FIRST TIME THE CAST GOT TO HEAR THE BAND, THE ORCHESTRA PLAYING, ALAN SILVESTRI’S SCORE. I’LL JUST NEVER FORGET IT.”
ROSANNA HYLAND (LORRAINE BAINES - ORIGINAL LONDON CAST)

BACK TO THE FUTURE: The Musical has three distinct musical styles - **the fifties, the eighties** and the **film score** composed by Alan Silvestri. Let’s use our skills in listening, performing, and composing to explore and understand the music from the show in more detail, with the help of Musical Director Jim Henson.

THE MAIN THEME

TASK 1

Look at the following notation of the Main Musical Theme, composed by Alan Silvestri and play it several times on the keyboard.

MAIN THEME

The musical notation consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The first staff shows the melody with a tritone interval highlighted in red (F to B). The second staff shows the chord progression: F/A, G(SUS4), G, C(SUS4), and C.

TASK 2

Now play just the first three notes, highlighted in RED. These are called the tritone.

KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - THE TRITONE

The interval encompassed by three consecutive whole steps. For example, from F to B (the whole steps F-G, G-A, and A-B).

Q1. WHAT DOES THIS THEME CONVEY FOR AN AUDIENCE, IN TERMS OF MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE?




Q2. CAN YOU THINK OF A MOMENT WHEN YOU HEARD IT IN THE PRODUCTION?



TASK 3

Now play the Main Theme Variation Motif. How does it differ from the Main Theme?

MAIN THEME VARIATION MOTIF



TASK 4

Can you play the Tritone again but drop down one interval to create a perfect fourth? (see below)

KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - DIATONIC

The music theory term “diatonic” is usually intended to mean “of the scale”. For example, if you’re playing in the key of C major and you’re using C major scale notes, then you would say that the notes you’re using are *diatonic*.

THEME VARIATION - DIATONIC

The image displays three systems of musical notation for piano. Each system consists of a treble staff and a bass staff. The first system shows a melodic line in the treble staff and a bass line. The second system continues the melody with a tritone interval. The third system features a triplet in the treble staff and a bass line.

Q. WHAT EFFECT IS CREATED BY THIS?

A large rectangular area with ten horizontal blue lines, intended for a student to write their answer to the question.