



## Knowledge Organiser

## GCSE Music

## Area of Study 2: Pop Music

## Little Shop of Horrors







### Context

- First performed off-off Broadway in May 1982
- Moved off-broadway (bigger capacity theatre of up to 499) in June 1982
- Horror, comedy, rock musical
- Composed by Alan Menken

### Plot

- Show opens with an off-stage voiceover saying that the human race 'suddenly encountered a deadly threat to it's very existence' (Audrey 2)
- Three street urchins set the scene singing about a shop – **Little Shop of Horrors**
- Seymour realises that a plant feeds on blood... pricks his finger to feed the plant
- The plant grows and brings new interest to Mr Mushnik's flower business
- Mr Mushnik realises how crucial Seymour is to his business and adopts him for his own selfish gain – **Mushnik and Son**
- The plant, Audrey 2, suddenly starts speaking and offers Seymour his heart's wishes in exchange for food (blood) – **Feed Me**
- Seymour sees Orin being rough with her and wants to defent her... Seymour realises that Orin must be fed to the plant

### Characters

Character	Description
Audrey 	Employee of Mr Mushnik's flower shop and in a relationship with Orin. Part of a love triangle with Orin and Seymour
Seymour 	Other employee of Mr Mushnik's. Finds flesh-eating plant (alien). In love with Audrey
Mr Mushnik 	Greedy flowershop owner Possibly of Jewish heritage Adopts Seymour for his own financial gain
Orin 	Abusive and controlling dentist boyfriend of Audrey's
Chiffon, Crystal and Ronnette 	Three street urchins who often provide commentary on the plot and backing vocals in most musical numbers
Audrey 2 	Flesh-eating plant (alien) plotting world dominatino

### Plot continued...

- Seymour and Audrey declare their love for each other
- The shop owner realises what is happening and after a scuffle with Seymour, ends up in the plant too
- Seymour finally realises the plant is alien
- Audrey visits Seymour at the shop – is pulled in by the plant and Seymour tries to save her but he's too late and she dies in his arms
- Seymour tries to kill the plant as revenge but ends up being eaten himself



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# Prologue/LSOH

## Doo-Wop Music

- The song *Little Shop of Horrors* is influenced by **Doo-Wop Music**
- Doo-wop music is a style of vocal music from the 50s and 60s
- Doo-wop music has close harmonies in thirds

## Doo-Wop Chord Sequence

C: I vi IV V I

## Structure

### Prologue

- 15-bar introduction in 3 x 5-bar phrases
- The prologue is a reference to the Star Wars films



### Little Shop of Horrors

- Ternary form (AABA) with a repeated A section before the contrasting B section
  - A section = Little Shop of Horrors (use of the 'hook')
  - B section = Shingalings
  - A2 section = Little Shop of Horrors with extended 'oh no's'

## Instrumentation

- Piano
- Keyboard – playing patches through a laptop
- Guitar
- Drums
- Bass Guitar
- Brass



## Texture

### Prologue

- Homophonic
- Chordal (music moves in time with the chords)

### Little Shop of Horrors

- Melody and accompaniment

## Rhythm

- **Back-beat** drum rhythm
- Clave/Calypso rhythm in the **bass**
- Repetitive rhythms in the B-section
- **Syncopation:**
  - "Little shop... Little Shop of Horrors"
  - "No, oh oh, no..."



## Metre

- Common time
- 4/4

## Clave/Calypso Rhythm

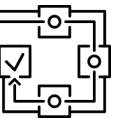
123 123 12

## D Pentatonic Scale

D E F# A B D

## Melody - Prologue

- 5-bar phrases
- Sequence
- Narrow **range** of a perfect 4<sup>th</sup>





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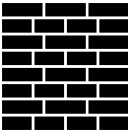
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# Area of Study 2: Pop Music

# Prologue/LSOH

## Melody – Little Shop of Horrors

- Simple melodies with narrow **range**
- Repeating phrases
- Conjunct
- Mostly **syllabic** with **melismatic** *oh no's*
- Use of **hook and riff**:
  - Hook = “Little Shop of Horrors”
  - Riff = *Little Shop, Little Shop of Horrors*
- **Pentatonic scale** based on D (5-note scale)
- Conjunct, ascending link back to A section
- Extended ‘oh no’s’ in the final A section
- **Ostinato** in the bass



## Tonality

- Prologue**
- Eb Major (3 flats – B, E and A flat)
- Little Shop of Horrors**
- Modulated to G major (1 sharp – F#)
  - The higher key elevates the mood and makes the song sound brighter



## Harmony - Prologue

- **Primary** chords
- **Inversions** – first inversion of the **dominant** (chord V)
  - Bb/D
- **Extended chords** – Abmaj7 (note G is added to an Ab chord)
- **Dominant 7<sup>th</sup>** in G to prepare modulation – D7
- **Perfect cadence** leading into LSOH

## Harmony – Little Shop of Horrors

- Stock chord progression makes up most of the A section – G, Am7, D7
- **Minor plagal cadence** – A section
- **Major plagal cadence** – B section
- Extended chords:
  - Minor 7ths (Am7) - A section
  - Dominant 7ths (D7) - A section
  - 6<sup>th</sup> chords (C6) - B section

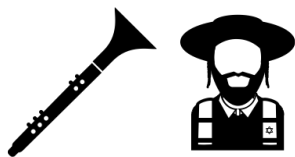
## Key Words

Inversion	A non-root note of a chord is played in the bass. Chord symbols often show a note after a slash (e.g. Bb/D)
Sequence	Melodic pattern repeated based on a note higher or lower
Back-beat	Emphasis on beats 2 and 4
Syncopation	Rhythms/melodies played off the beat
Melodic <b>range</b>	Distance between the lowest note and the highest note
Ostinato	Repeating melodic pattern
Syllabic	Each syllable of a word has a note/pitch
Melismatic	One syllable stretched across multiple pitches (also referred to as a <b>vocal riff</b> )
Perfect cadence	End of a phrase goes from chord V (5) to chord I (1)
Plagal cadence	End of a phrase goes from chord IV (4) to chord I (1)... A minor plagal cadence does from minor chord iv to I.
Extended chord	A chord with more than three notes (e.g. Ab <sup>maj7</sup> in the prologue)



Klezmer Music

- Mushnik and Son is in the style of Klezmer music
- Klezmer music is a type of Jewish celebration music (most commonly played at weddings)
- The most common instruments used in Klezmer music are:
  - Clarinet
  - Acoustic guitar
  - Violin
  - Accordion
- The music characterises Mr Mushnik as Jewish and also creates slightly playful/disingenuous feel
- It has been adapted for more western audiences and Musical Theatre – added piano, keyboards, bass guitar, drums and brass



Instrumentation

- Piano
- Keyboard – playing patches through a laptop
- Guitar
- Drums
- Bass Guitar
- Clarinet – common Klezmer instrument
- Castanets – common in Middle Eastern music further contributing to the Klezmer style



Structure

- Verse chorus form
  - Also known as **strophic form** (this is a grade 8/9 response – verse chorus form works just as well)
- 3 verses:
  - V1, V2, Chorus, V3, Chorus
  - V1 = slower moving notes and an ascending passage on the words “Seymour, I want to be your dad...”
  - V2 = faster moving notes and a descending run before a build-up to the chorus



Metre

- 4/4 (common time)

Tempo

- 160bpm (allegro (fast) or vivace (lively))
- BPM = Beats per minute
- This fast tempo is a typical feature of **Klezmer music**



Rhythm

- Triplet



“Mushnik”: use of triplet [0:19–0:22]

I'll glad-ly treat you like my blood and my own flesh

Texture

- Main (prevailing texture) is **melody and accompaniment**
- **Monophonic** – “How would you like to be my son?” and “Don’t make me sick just be my son!”
- **Chordal** – on the words “Mushnik and Son” (the hook) the melody moves in time with the chords



Rhythm

- Strong **backbeat**
  - **Clave rhythm** creates syncopation
  - **Syncopation** is created through tied notes in the vocal melody
    - “Own adopted boy”
  - **Syncopation** rhythm creating dialogue between singers and the band:
    - “Through thin and through thick...”
  - Use of **rests**:
    - Crotchet rest on beat one to emphasise the **hook**
- “Mushnik”: typical klezmer rhythm
- 
- “Mush - nik and Son”
- Use of rests to break up the flow of the melody line





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# Mushnik and Son

## Melody

- **Scalic passages**
  - “How would you like to be my son?” outlines the first 5 notes of a C minor scale
  - C minor scale is further confirmed by the sharpened (raised) 7<sup>th</sup> note of the scale – *B natural*
- Extended melodic phrases
  - Second phrase of the first verse is a direct repeat of the first, but with a slight **conjunct** extension
- Verse has a **range** of a compound minor 6th (massive!)
- Verse = conjunct
- Chorus has a **range** of a compound minor 2nd
- Chorus begins on an **anacrusis** which emphasises the **hook**
- Chorus = **disjunct**
  - These leaps emphasise the ironic nature of the text (Mr Mushnik wanting to adopt Seymour purely for financial gain... there’s no compassion! It is disingenuous. )

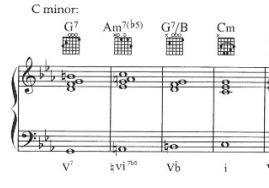
- **Melodic inversion**



- Melody at the end of the chorus is an inversion of the melody at the beginning of the verse

## Harmony

- Use of **primary chords**
- Use of **extended chords**:
  - Minor 7<sup>th</sup> flat 5 chords (also known as half-diminished)
  - Dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chords
- Major chord built on the **flattened second degree**
  - Db major chord (second degree of the C minor scale is D)... flattening it (moving it down a piano key) takes you to Db
  - Common **Klezmer** feature
- **Inversion**
  - Within anacrusis leading to the chorus
  - G7/B (first inversion G7 chord)



## Harmony

- Modulation uses **primary chords** of the modulated key (Eb major)
- Use of the **secondary dominant** (chord V of chord V) – D major (chord V of V) to G major (dominant of home key of C minor)

## Tonality

- The key of the song is **C minor**
- **Modulation to the relative major**
  - The relative major is a major key that shares the same key signature (group of sharps or flats) as a minor key.
  - E.G. C minor has 3 flats (Bb, Eb and Ab)... Eb Major has 3 flats (Bb, Eb, Ab)

## Key Words

Phrase	A musical sentence – a short melody that finishes with a cadence which is part of a bigger section/piece
Melody and Accompaniment	A common musical texture in pop music where there is a main melody and simple (usually chordal) accompaniment underneath
Syncopation	Rhythms/melodies played off the beat (avoiding the strong part of a beat)
Monophonic	One musical idea (think <b>monobrow</b> )
Chordal	A musical texture where the melody (tune) moves at the same time as the chords. A type of <b>homophony</b> .
Melodic inversion	Where a melody is repeated but the direction of the melody is flipped upside down (e.g. an ascending scale now descends)
Anacrusis	A ‘lead-in’ note(s) – where a melody/rhythm doesn’t begin on the first beat of a bar.
Modulation	A change of key within a section of music, not usually noted with a written key change

Blues Music

- Blues Music is a folk music of the Afro-Americans
- Blues Music evolved during the Slave trade in the late 19th century (1870s) in the deep south of America
- Victims of the slave trade sang Blues songs as a means of protest and expressing their emotions
- Most of this song is sung in a Blues style (particularly Audrey II's verse).



Instrumentation (Sonority/Timbre)



- Piano and sustained strings in opening
- Extensive use of **bass** and **drums** on low C **quavers**
- Use of **glissando** on piano
- Prominent **cymbal** crashes



Structure

- **Through-composed**
- Follows the narrative of the story
- Familiarity comes from harmonic structures (12-bar blues chord sequence) rather than general structure

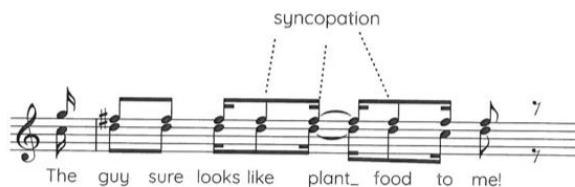


Context

- This is one of the final songs in the first act of the show
- It starts calmly with Seymour thanking Audrey 2 for his success and says that he 'owe(s) it to' Audrey 2
- This is the first time that Seymour realises that Audrey 2 can talk as Audrey begs Seymour for fresh blood
- Audrey 2 then says that if Seymour gives them everything they want in return for bloody and flesh

Rhythm

- **Ostinato**
  - Driving quavers (C's)
- Use of **syncopation** on the words "The guy sure looks like plant food to me!"



- Use of **back beat** (emphasis on beats 2 and 4)
- Driving bassline – a common feature of **Blues** music



Metre

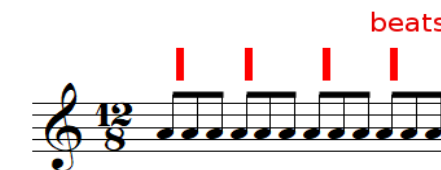
- (Duple Compound) – Seymour's introduction



- (Common Time) – Audrey starts singing



- 12/8 (Quadruple Compound) Seymour's "I don't know..."



Texture

- Main texture is **Melody and Accompaniment**
- **Monophonic texture** – just before the climax of the song
- Change in accompaniment in Seymour's "I don't know..." from sparse chords to constant quavers





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# Feed Me

## Melody

- Introduction is sung in a **Parlando** style
- Use of a **hook**: constant quavers on the note C... after so many repetitions the title of the song is spoken on the same note



Feed me, Sey - mour  
Feed me all night long.

"That's right, boy..."

- Riff** – the hook becomes the driving bassline in the piano during the verse
- The **blues scale** is used in the **vocals** and **piano**
- Blues notes – Eb and Bb (blues 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7ths)
- Strong **Motown** melody in the final verse where Audrey II and Seymour sing together – the high pitched melody that is **belted** shows how powerful Audrey II is
- Complete **contrasting melody** in Seymour's "I don't know..." section
  - This melody is much more lyrical and flowing showing Seymour is reflecting on what is being asked of him.



## Harmony

- Perfect** cadence at the end of Seymour's intro
- Non-diatonic (chord not belonging to the key) added in the intro for extra colour
  - Ab Major chord
- 12-bar blues chord sequence from when Audrey sings
- Mainly uses **primary chords with added 7ths (extended chords)**
- D7 Chord = **Secondary dominant**

**Tonality**

- C major (no sharps or flats)
- Use of **blues notes** to add colour (Eb and Bb)
- Other **chromatic notes** are added in the piano accompaniment for extra colour but these don't hint towards another key.

## 12-Bar Blues

I	I	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
V	IV	I	I



## Blues Scale (in C)

C Eb F Gb G Bb C



## Key Words

Perfect Cadence	The end of a phrase (musical sentence) sounds finished – ends with chord V to I
Secondary Dominant	This is the dominant (chord V) of any chord within the key you're in – e.g. the secondary dominant in C is D (D is chord V of G, which is chord V of C)
Primary Chords	Chords I, IV and V in a key – the most stable chords
Riff	A repeating pattern
Hook	Catchy part of a song, often used in the chorus containing the title of a song
Parlando	A singing style that imitates the natural pattern of speech
Blues Notes	Specific flattened notes used in the Blues scale
Through-composed	A musical structure where every section is different.