



MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Exam board: Pearson

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Welcome to Music Technology. This four-week preparation programme is designed to give you an introduction to the world of Music Technology and to get you immersed in some of the exciting things we will be doing when you start the course.

Week 1

For your first task, I would like you to carry out an investigation into the following question:

- What were the main factors that led to the closure of Sound City recording studios?

This investigation will require around 2-3 hours of your time. You need to carry out an internet search into Sound City, read articles and, if you have access to it, watch the documentary, 'Sound City', directed by Dave Grohl (streaming on various different platforms).

Suggested links include:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2012/12/recording-studios-may-die-but-the-false-mythology-around-them-may-not/265919/>

<http://drownedinsound.com/news/4146072-10-things-we-ve-learned-from-dave-grohl-s-documentary-about-sound-city-studios>

<https://www.soundandvision.com/content/digital-killed-sound-city-studio-star>

<https://tapeop.com/blog/2019/02/17/sound-city-dave-grohl-and-changing-business-record/>

You should formulate a 500 word summary of the main factors that led to the closure of Sound City.

Week 2

Select one of the following 'Classic Albums';

Fleetwood Mac - Rumours

Nirvana - Nevermind

The Beach Boys - Pet Sounds

The Beatles - Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band

Metallica - The Black Album

Paul Simon - Graceland



Prepare a presentation on your chosen 'Classic Album' carrying out research into the following areas:

- What year was it released?
- Who produced, engineered and mixed the album? Have any of these people worked on other 'Classic Albums'?
- Which studio was it recorded at? What other albums were recorded here?
- Were there any unusual/innovative techniques used in the creation of the album?
- What other significant historical moments were occurring around the same time?
- What was the critics response to the album?
- What was the fan response to the album?
- What are the total global sales figures for the album?

Week 3

Listen to the two versions of the song 'Rusty Cage' below - the original by Soundgarden and the cover by Johnny Cash.

Soundgarden - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBZs_Py-1_0

Johnny Cash - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYefHCyDXxo>

Both versions of this song were successful for their respective artists.

- Write a summary of the significant differences between the two versions using as much musical language as possible; eg. genre, tempo, dynamics, texture, timbre, instrumentation, articulation, (If you are unsure of any of these terms, use Google to research them first).
- Write a paragraph on why you believe Johnny Cash and his producer, Rick Rubin, made the decision to cover this song in a different musical style.
- Lastly, write a conclusion about which version you prefer and why.

Week 4

For our final task we are going to look at the world of foley and sound design.

Read the information on the website below and watch the video on the Vimeo link.

- <https://tarproductions.com/the-power-of-foley-sound-design-5-great-examples/>
- <https://vimeo.com/170948796>

It is clear that foley and sound design are huge elements of computer games, TV, radio and film production. For this final task, you are going to try and recreate the foley and sound design for a short film/tv clip.

- Step one: choose a film clip that has no dialogue in it (a character walking somewhere or carrying out an activity)
- Step two: watch the scene closely with the sound on and note all of the sound effects that you can hear
- Step three: watch the scene without the sound on and see which elements are absolutely essential to recreate

- Step four: find everyday objects to replicate those sounds and record them using your phone (suggested free Apps for this are: Garageband, Voice Recorder, Bandlab, Voice Memo)

There are many great substitutes for sounds that you think you are hearing in films. Indiana Jones Raiders Of The Lost Ark made great use of a bowl of spaghetti for the sound of snakes in the 'Well of the Souls' scene. The sound of people being punched is frequently a pile of jackets being hit with a rolling pin. A broken bone has often been replicated with chicken bones. In Jurassic Park, the sound of the T-Rex was actually several animal noises blended together.

Be creative and see if people around you can guess what the sound is when you play it back to them.

Reading list

Books:

The Recording Engineers Handbook - Bobby Owsinski
The Mixing Engineers Handbook - Bobby Owsinski
Mixing Secrets - Mike Senior

BBC iPlayer:

Mark Ronson: From The Heart
Slipknot Unmasked: All Out Life
Sounding Out: BB King
Stewart Copeland's Adventures In Music

YouTube:

Trevor Horn - The Art Of Record Production
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0l2Lmvo4rvA>

Vance Powell - Recording Rock
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsAGtM9YaG8>

Recording Drums - What Difference Does A Room Make?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sydt50-Cxhc>

Eric Valentine - Barefoot Recording Studio Tour
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8jymtu45kl>

Mixing Queen - Don't Stop Me Now
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Em9EwVQy-6s>

Recording 50's Style
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-scxybnp0>

Netflix:

The Defiant Ones
Daft Punk Unchained
Springsteen On Broadway
Hip Hop Evolution
Clive Davis: The Soundtrack of Our Lives
Quincy
20 Feet From Stardom
Satan & Adam

