

# Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu

## Ceòl Nàiseanta 5

### Ceòl na h-Alba



Ainm:

Clas:

Earrann:

Tidsear:



This unit of work involves studying the main musical features and concepts associated with the **Scottish Music**. It contains sections on Listening, Inventing and Performing.

## About this unit:

This unit of work covers all the most important concepts that you will need to know about **Scottish Music**. It will involve listening to, performing, and learning about, a wide range of **Scottish Music**.

There are a number of **Listening** Exercises, and a Homework Revision Exercise, all designed to help deepen your knowledge and understanding of **Scottish Music**.

There is also a section on **Inventing** to provide you with the opportunity to compose your own music, making use of musical features and concepts that you have learned about, and some Scottish dances to play for your **Performing**.

<b>Contents:</b>	<b>Page:</b>
Background	3
Scottish Dances and Instrumental Forms	4
Instruments	7
Vocal Music	12
Revision Homework	16
Inventing - Melody and Rhythm	20
Listening Revision	21

# Background

Music and dance has always been an important part of Scottish culture and tradition. Hundreds of years ago, most Scottish Clans had a poet and harpist who were employed to write songs about events surrounding the Clans such as important people, battles fought and places they lived.

Before television or radio were invented, local communities regularly held ceilidhs in one another's crofts and houses where people would dance, sing songs and tell stories. Music was composed for special occasions such as weddings or funerals but also to accompany everyday tasks such as working in the tweed mills, taking in the harvest, pulling in the fishing nets or singing a baby to sleep.

However, after the battle of Culloden in 1746, wearing tartan and playing the bagpipes were banned and those who broke this new law were killed.

Traditionally very little music was written down (people learned the music by ear) so when the Highland Clearances began, much of the music left Scotland and was lost. However, a lot of music was passed down through the generations and remains today, as well as the new works that are always being composed.

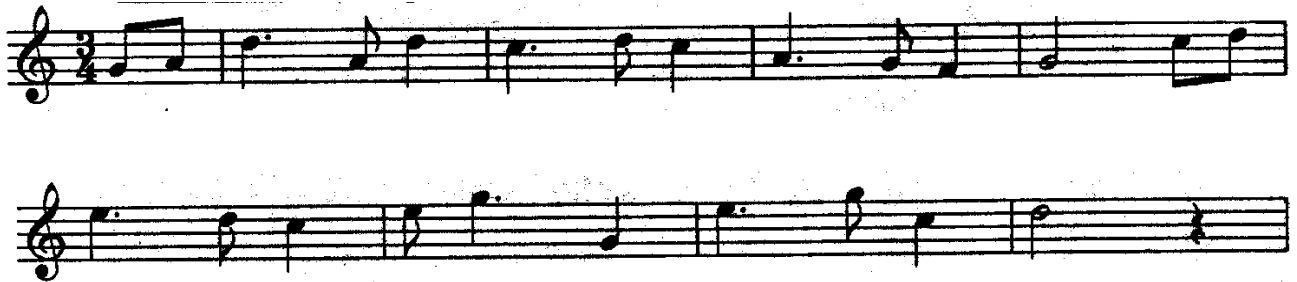


# Scottish Dances and Instrumental Forms

There are a number of different dances that are popular in Scottish music. Here are some of the most common.

**WALTZ**                      A dance with 3 beats in the bar.

The Dark Island



**MARCH**                      Music that you can march to (for example "Scotland the Brave"). It can have 2 or 4 beats in the bar and can be in either **compound time** (the beat can be divided into 3) or **simple time** (the beat can be divided into 2).

Scotland The Brave



**STRATHSPEY**                It is slower than the reel and is characterised by dotted rhythms. The strathspey usually features the **Scotch-snap** (a short note on the beat followed by a long note).

Stumpie



## REEL

It can be written in 2/4 or 4/4. A **reel** often has a quick **tempo** (speed) and features a rhythm that includes fast crotchets and running quavers. It is usually played after a Strathspey.

### Balquidder Lassies



## JIG

It is in compound time (the beat is divided into 3). The jig is often written in 6/8 or 9/8.

### Drops Of Brandy



## SLOW AIR

A slow instrumental tune. It is in the style of a song but usually played on bagpipes or the fiddle.

### Neil Gow's Lament for the death of his second wife



# Scottish Dances and Instrumental Forms

## Listening Exercise

Listen carefully to the following excerpts of music.

For each excerpt of music you should identify the Scottish Dance or Instrumental Form.

Choose from:

**Waltz**

**Strathspey**

**Reel**

**March**

**Slow Air**

**Jig**

1. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.
7. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.
8. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.
9. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.
10. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.

# Instruments

There are a number of instruments, which although being played around the world, are often associated in particular with Scotland. Here is a summary of some of the most common.

## Bagpipes

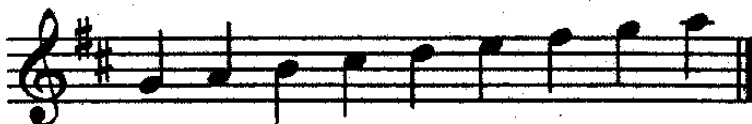
There are two main types of bagpipes common to Scotland: the Great Highland bagpipe and the Lowland bagpipe.

## Highland Bagpipes

The Highland bagpipe can be found all across the world, including Asia, and there are a number of military **pipe bands** (which includes pipes, bass drum, tenor drums and snare drums).

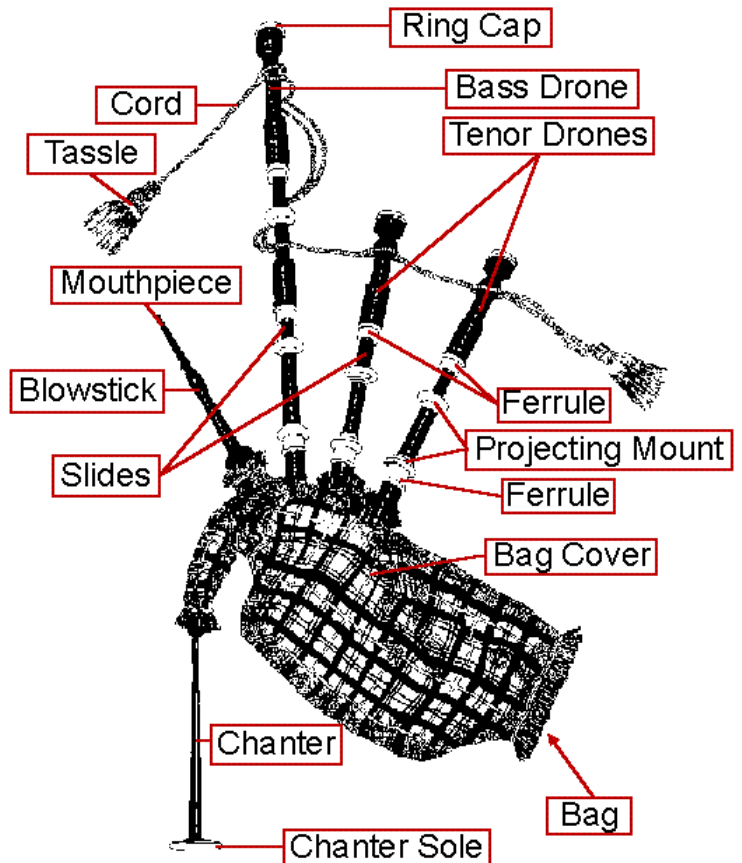
The instrument consists of

- **Bag** (originally made from sheepskin but now more commonly gortex) which provides a continuous stream of air and sound
- **Mouthpiece** with a 1-way valve (the air can only go in)
- **Chanter** which plays 9 notes



- **Reeds** - a *double reed* (like that of an oboe) at the top of the chanter  
*single reeds* for the drones (see below)
- **Drones** - 2 *tenor drones* (tuned 1 octave below the chanter)  
1 *bass drone* (tuned 2 octaves below the chanter)

## The Great Highland Bagpipe



One main characteristic of the bagpipes is the use of **grace notes**, which are short notes used to emphasise the music and add expression because the bagpipes cannot add dynamics (louds and quiet). They also enable the same note to be played twice, which due to the continuous stream of air would otherwise not be possible.



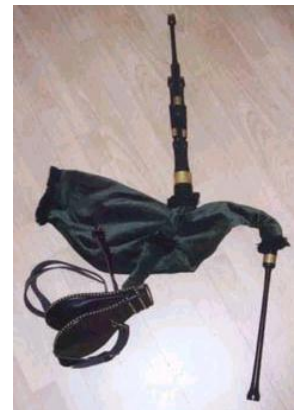
The music of the bagpipes is split into 2 types

- **Marches, jigs, strathspeys, reels** etc.
- **Pibroch**. This is almost like “classical” pipe music and is used for competitions. It is always in a theme and variation form.



## Lowland Bagpipes

One of the main differences between the Lowland and Highland bagpipes is that the Lowland pipes have a small bellow that provides the instrument with air. It has 2 drones (tenor and bass) and is only about half the volume of the highland bagpipes, making it a popular choice for ceilidh bands and indoor use.



## Pipe Band



In Scottish Music we are familiar with the bagpipes and drums making up a pipe band. The chanter pipe has a reed and different finger holes, so that different notes can be played. The drones produce a single note in the background.



## Fiddle



The fiddle is exactly the same instrument as the violin but the technique used by folk players is different to that of classical players – mainly due to the number of grace notes in the music. The repertoire for the fiddle comes from areas all around Scotland, each with their own characteristics (Shetland fiddle music is slightly different from that of Aberdeenshire in its use of grace notes, style etc).

## Clarsach

The Clarsach (Gaelic for “sounding strings”) is a small harp consisting of around 30 strings, which are colour-coded. The strings are made from gut and are tuned individually with a harp key. The harp keys were traditionally made from precious metal and heavily jewelled. The clarsach has small levers at the top of each string that adjusts the note by a semi-tone.



The traditional role of the harpist in the clan household was closely linked to that of the poet. The harp would accompany the poetry and the harpist would take at least 7 years to train.

## Bodhran



The bodhran is a large drum often found in Ceilidh bands and folk groups. They are often decorated with pictures and played with a small double-ended beater or stick.

## Irish Flute and Tin Whistle

Although commonly known as an “Irish flute”, many Scottish groups use this instrument. The Irish flute differs to that of an orchestral flute by being made from wood and having open holes (like a recorder) which enables the player to bend notes with more ease.



The tin whistle has a similar sound to the Irish flute but is made from metal and is played at the front of the musician (unlike the flute which is played to the side).

## Accordion

The accordion looks like a box with a small keyboard on one side (played with the right hand), small buttons on the other side (played with the left hand) and bellows which produce the actual sound (also operated by the left hand). Each button produces a major or minor chord, which means the melody that is played on the keyboard can be harmonised. Some of the more expensive accordions can also include dominant 7<sup>th</sup> and diminished 7<sup>th</sup> chords. The accordion can be found in various ensembles throughout the world, including Scottish dance bands.



## Ceilidh Band / Scottish Dance Band



A group of musicians playing instruments such as the fiddle, accordion, piano, bass and drumkit. A Ceilidh band is sometimes known as a Scottish dance band.

The piano often plays a simple accompaniment (bass note followed by a chord) known as a **vamp**.

# Scottish Instruments – Listening Exercise

Listen carefully to the following excerpts of music.

For each excerpt of music you should identify the instrument, or instrumental group featured.

Choose from:

**Bagpipes**

**Clarsach**

**Pipe band**

**Fiddle**

**Accordion**

**Ceilidh Band**

1. \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_.
6. \_\_\_\_\_.
7. \_\_\_\_\_.
8. \_\_\_\_\_.
9. \_\_\_\_\_.
10. \_\_\_\_\_.

# Scottish Vocal Music

## Mouth Music (Port-a-beul)

After the Jacobite Rebellion and battle of Culloden in the 1740's, bagpipes were banned in Scotland as they were regarded as a "*weapon of war*". As much of the folk music from this period was not written down, in order not to forget some of the much-loved tunes and provide an accompaniment for dancing, mouth music was used.

**Port-a-beul** (Gaelic for mouth music) usually had words or syllables which were non-sense, or humorous. Diddling was the lowland Scotland version of this, using syllables to sing the dance tunes, imitation the instruments e.g. "*dee diddle di*" etc.

## Waulking Song



Much of the music written in Scotland was traditionally for a specific purpose – for a special occasion, in memory of someone or to accompany work such as sea shanties, lullabies, ploughing songs etc.

One of the most famous work songs of the Gaelic tradition was the **waulking song**. Waulking was the process of shrinking tweed by wetting the tweed then thumping it on a board with feet or hands which made the tweed stronger and more waterproof, and was traditionally woman's work. The songs were **rhythmic**, **accented** (to accompany the thumping) and often in a **call and response** style (the solo and chorus alternate).



## Scots Ballad

A ballad was a song that told a story and a large number were composed. The ballads were often quite long (in comparison with other songs) and were told through a mixture of narrative and dialogue. They were **strophic** in form (verses and chorus as opposed to **through-composed** in which the song is continuous). The ballads were written to tell the story of the supernatural, tragedy, humour or historical battles or events.

## Bothy Ballad

As well as music FOR work, there was also music ABOUT work. One of the most famous of this type is a bothy ballad. A farm bothy was a small dwelling in the North-east of Scotland where farm labourers lived while working on the farms. The bothy ballads were songs about the farm, the work, the farmer himself or the harsh conditions the farm workers lived in. Below is an example of a bothy ballad. **They would often be sung unaccompanied.**

### It's Lonely in the Bothy      by Charlie Allan

Oh fin I gaed hame tae Ardo  
Well the boss had nae a clue  
He couldna back a tractor cairt  
There wis naewye he could ploo  
Therefor I got aa the wirk tae dee  
That suited me jist fine  
And I bade in a little timmer bothy.

**Chorus:**

*Oh the cauld wins they blaw in aneth  
Ma timmer bothy door  
An the moosies they jook in an oot  
The knot holes in the floor  
Bit that's nae the warst o bein here  
Discomforts I can thole  
It's lonely at nicht in the bothy.*

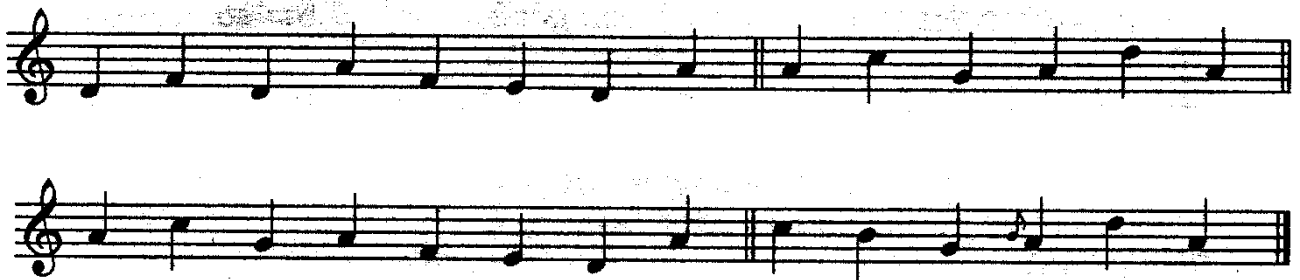
Oh I sort the mannie's funny bulls  
An pit them oot for Perth  
An I ken that I'm the best showman  
That iver walked the earth  
Bit fin aa the judgin's ower an fin aa the  
silver's won  
It's back tae my little timmer bothy.

Well now I've nae wife tae tie me doon  
Sae I'm aye on the loose  
An nearly ivery nicht I'm doon  
At Waldie's public hoose  
Bit ye canna blame a man  
For takkin comforts far he can  
For it's lonely at nicht in the bothy

## Gaelic Psalm

The Gaelic churches had their own way of singing Psalm tunes, which is still used today in certain areas. When the psalms were introduced hundreds of years ago, few people would have been able to read music and there would have been very few copies of the words. Therefore, the first couple of lines would have been sung by one person (the Precentor) then the congregation would join in.

The psalms are often very **slow**, **unaccompanied** and the congregation would add their own **ornamentation** (extra notes to make the melody more interesting).



### Martyrs – Psalm 79, vv 3 and 4

*Mu thimchioll fòs Iùrusalaim  
Dhòirt iad am fuil mar uisg;  
Is cha robh neach g'an adhlacadh  
's g'an cur san uaigh an taisg*

*Ball fanoid agus maslaidh sinn  
D'ar coimhearsnachaibh féin:  
Cùis spòrs' is mhagaidh do gach neach  
An ta m'ar cuairt gu léir*

*Their blood have they shed like  
water round Jerusalem;  
and there was none to bury them  
and put to rest in the grave.*

*We are become a reproach to  
our neighbours, a scorn and  
derision to them that are round  
about us.*

# Scottish Vocal Styles – Listening Exercise

Listen carefully to the following excerpts of music.

For each excerpt of music you should identify the Scottish vocal style.

Choose from:

**Mouth Music**

**Waulking Song**

**Scots Ballad**

**Bothy Ballad**

**Gaelic Psalm**

1. \_\_\_\_\_.

2. \_\_\_\_\_.

3. \_\_\_\_\_.

4. \_\_\_\_\_.

5. \_\_\_\_\_.

6. \_\_\_\_\_.

7. \_\_\_\_\_.

8. \_\_\_\_\_.

9. \_\_\_\_\_.

10. \_\_\_\_\_.

# Revision Homework

1. Tick **three** features that you would expect to find in music played by a Pipe Band:

- |                                    |                                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accordion | <input type="checkbox"/> Clarsach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fiddle    | <input type="checkbox"/> Drums    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bagpipes  | <input type="checkbox"/> Drone    |

2. Tick **three** features that you might expect to find in music played by a Scottish Dance Band:

- |                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Piano    | <input type="checkbox"/> Pibroch   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fiddle   | <input type="checkbox"/> Accordion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bagpipes | <input type="checkbox"/> Drone     |

3. Complete the following table by inserting the correct Vocal concept alongside the brief description given. Choose from:

- |                      |                     |                         |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Bothy Ballad</b>  | <b>Gaelic Psalm</b> | <b>Traditional Song</b> |
| <b>Waulking Song</b> | <b>Scots Ballad</b> | <b>Mouth Music</b>      |

Brief description	Concept
A song with several verses that tells a story.	
A song, usually sung by women while processing tweed in the Highlands and islands.	
A hymn tune, lead by a precentor, with each member of the congregation responding with their own ornamented version of the tune.	
A rhythmic dance-like style of singing using nonsense syllables instead of words.	
A song about farm work, originating in the North East of Scotland.	
A folk song associated with a particular country.	



4. Complete the following table by inserting the correct Scottish Dance alongside the brief description given. Choose from:

**Waltz                      Strathspey                      Reel                      Jig                      March**

<b>Brief description</b>	<b>Dance</b>
A fast dance in compound time; e.g. 6/8 or 12/8	
A dance with 3 beats in every bar.	
A fast dance with 4 beats in the bar, and an even flowing rhythm.	
A relatively slow dance with 4 beats in the bar, containing dotted rhythms and “Scotch snaps”	
A steady pipe band tune with 4 beats in the bar.	

5. Complete the following table by inserting an appropriate concept alongside the brief description given:

<b>Brief description</b>	<b>Concept</b>
Music for the bagpipes with variations and grace notes, in which the variations become increasingly more complex.	
The group of five-notes on which many Scottish tunes are based (e.g. <b>G – A – B – D – E</b> )	
A small harp, often used to accompany Scottish songs.	
Another word to describe the Violin, when playing Scottish tunes.	
The continuous sounding note played on the bagpipes.	
The characteristic rhythm (short note followed by a longer note) commonly found in the Strathspey.	
A simple piano accompaniment, featuring a bass note alternating with a chord.	
A slow instrumental tune in the style of a song but usually played on bagpipes or the fiddle.	

6. Identify the “odd-one-out” in each of the following, and give a reason for your answer. The first one has been done for you as an example.

a) **Waltz**                      **Reel**                      **Scots Ballad**                      **Strathspey**

The “odd one out” is Scots ballad because all the others are examples of dances, and a Scots Ballad is vocal.

b) **Clarsach**                      **Pibroch**                      **Fiddle**                      **Accordion**

The “odd one out” is \_\_\_\_\_ because all the others are \_\_\_\_\_.

c) **Waulking Song**                      **Bothy Ballad**                      **Mouth Music**                      **Jig**

The “odd one out” is \_\_\_\_\_ because all the others are \_\_\_\_\_.

d) **Fiddle**                      **Drone**                      **Pibroch**                      **Chanter**

The “odd one out” is \_\_\_\_\_ because all the others are \_\_\_\_\_.

e) **6/8 time**                      **3/4 time**                      **9/8 time**                      **12/8 time**

The “odd one out” is \_\_\_\_\_ because all the others are \_\_\_\_\_.

f) **Simple**                      **Compound**                      **Dotted**                      **“Snap”**

The “odd one out” is \_\_\_\_\_ because all the others are \_\_\_\_\_.

## CONCEPTS

<b>Accordion</b>	Instrument consisting of a keyboard and bellows. Often found in Scottish dance bands.
<b>Ballad</b>	Song that tells a story.
<b>Bodhran</b>	Small hand held drum. Often found in ceilidh bands.
<b>Bothy ballad</b>	Song about farming life from the North-east of Scotland.
<b>Call and response</b>	One person sings or plays a melodic phrase and someone else provides a musical response. Can also be known as “question and answer”.
<b>Ceilidh</b>	Scottish social dance.
<b>Clarsach</b>	Small Scottish harp.
<b>Compound time</b>	The beat is divided into 3. This is a characteristic rhythm of a <b>Jig</b> .
<b>Diddling</b>	Lowland Scotland version of Mouth music.
<b>Drone</b>	Continuous sounding note or chord. Common feature of the bagpipes.
<b>Fiddle</b>	Scottish name for the violin.
<b>Gaelic Psalm</b>	Religious song in Gaelic. Often very slow and unaccompanied with congregation adding their own ornamentation.

<b>Grace notes</b>	Short notes used to make a tune more interesting. Feature of bagpipe music.
<b>Highland Bagpipes</b>	One of the most famous Scottish instruments. Consists of 3 drones, bag, mouthpiece and chanter.
<b>Irish flute</b>	Similar to the orchestral flute but made from wood.
<b>Jig</b>	Dance in compound time.
<b>Lowland Bagpipes</b>	Has 2 drones and a bellow which provides the air. Is quieter than the Highland bagpipes.
<b>March</b>	2 or 4 beats in the bar. Can be in compound or simple time.
<b>Mouth-music</b>	Type of vocal music used to resemble dance music or music of the bagpipes. Uses made-up or non-sense words.
<b>Ornamentation</b>	Extra notes added to make the melody more interesting
<b>Pentatonic scale</b>	Scale using 5 notes. Common feature of many Scottish songs.
<b>Pibroch</b>	“Classical” bagpipe music, consisting of a theme and a number of variations.
<b>Pipe band</b>	Band consisting of Highland bagpipes, bass drum, tenor drum and snare drum
<b>Port-a-beul</b>	See <b>Mouth music</b> .

<b>Reel</b>	2 or 4 beats in the bar. In simple time. Often features fast running quavers. Usually played after a strathspey.
<b>Scotch-snap</b>	Dotted rhythm (short note followed by a longer note). Feature of <b>Strathspey</b> .
<b>Scottish dance band</b>	Instrumental group used to provide music for the dances at a ceilidh. Often comprises of accordion, fiddle, drum-kit, piano, flute, guitar, and lowland bagpipes.
<b>Simple time</b>	The beat is divided into 2, e.g. 2/4, 3/4 or 4/4.
<b>Slow Air</b>	Slow instrumental tune usually played on bagpipes or fiddle.
<b>Strathspey</b>	Slower than the reel. Features a Scotch-snap rhythm.
<b>Strophic</b>	Musical form relating to song – with repeating verses and chorus
<b>Tempo</b>	The <b>speed</b> of the music
<b>Theme and variation</b>	Musical form where a tune is played then followed by a set of variations, all based on the original theme
<b>Through-composed</b>	Musical form relating to song – continuous song with no repetition of verse or chorus
<b>Tin whistle</b>	Small whistle often found in folk music groups

<b>Vamp</b>	Simple piano accompaniment featuring a bass note followed by a chord.
<b>Waltz</b>	Dance with 3 beats in the bar.
<b>Waulking song</b>	Song sung by women during the waulking (beating) of tweed. Features a strong beat throughout (the sound of tweed on the table) and is in a call and response form.

## Listening Revision

1. Tick **one box** to identify the Scottish Dance:

Waltz

Strathspey

Reel

Jig

2. Tick **one box** to identify the Scottish Dance:

Waltz

Strathspey

Reel

Jig

3. Tick **one box** to identify the Scottish Dance:

Waltz

Strathspey

Reel

Jig

4. Tick **one box** to identify the Vocal style:

Bothy Ballad

Waulking Song

Gaelic Psalm

Mouth Music

5. Tick **one box** to identify the Vocal style:

Bothy Ballad

Waulking Song

Gaelic Psalm

Mouth Music

6. Tick **one box** to identify a prominent feature of the music:

Vamp

Drone

Pibroch

Compound time

7. Tick **one box** to identify a prominent feature of the music:

Vamp

Drone

Pibroch

Compound time

8. Tick **one box** to identify a prominent feature of the melody:

Scotch Snaps

Pentatonic scale

Drone

Slow Air

9. Tick **one box** to identify what you hear:

Scots Ballad

Pipe band

Pibroch

Compound time

10. Tick **one box** to identify what you hear:

Fiddle

Accordion

Chanter

Clarsach