

SESSION SKILLS

PLAYBACK

For your exam, you can choose either Playback or Improvising.

If you choose Playback, you will be asked to play some music you have not seen or heard before.

In the exam, you will be given the song chart and the examiner will play a recording of the music. You will hear several two-bar or four-bar phrases: you should play each of them straight back in turn. There's a rhythm track going throughout, which helps you keep in time. There should not be any gaps in the music.

In the exam you will have two chances to play:

- First time – for practice
- Second time – for assessment.

You should listen to the audio, copying what you hear; you can also read the music. Here are some practice song charts.

Practice playback 1

$\text{♩} = 116$

Measures 1-8 of Practice playback 1. The music is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is marked as 116 beats per minute. The score is written for piano with a treble and bass clef. Measure 1 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measures 5-8 are marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The piece ends with a repeat sign at the end of measure 8.

f

5 *mp*

9 *mf* *f*

Practice playback 2

$\text{♩} = 120$ **Swung**

Measures 1-4 of Practice playback 2. The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The tempo is marked as 120 beats per minute with a 'Swung' feel. The score is written for piano with a treble and bass clef. Measure 1 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measures 5-8 are marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic, and measures 9-12 are marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The piece ends with a repeat sign at the end of measure 12.

f

5 *p* *mf*

SESSION SKILLS IMPROVISING

For your exam, you can choose either Playback, or Improvising. If you choose to improvise, you will be asked to improvise over a backing track that you haven't heard before in a specified style.

In the exam, you will be given a song chart and the examiner will play a recording of the backing track. The backing track consists of a passage of music played on a loop. You can choose whether to play a lead melodic line, rhythmic chords, or a combination of the two.

In the exam you will have two chances to play:

- First time – for practice
- Second time – for assessment.

Here are some improvising charts for practice.

Practice improvisation 1

♩ = 80 **Blues (swung)**

Practice improvisation 1 is a blues chart in 4/4 time. The first line contains four measures: F, C, B^b, and C. The second line contains four measures: Dm, Am, C⁷, and F. The chart is marked with a repeat sign at the end of the second line.

Practice improvisation 2

♩ = 100 **Heavy Rock**

Practice improvisation 2 is a heavy rock chart in 3/4 time. The first line contains four measures: Gm, Cm, F, and Gm. The second line contains four measures: F, B^b, D⁷, and Gm. The chart is marked with a repeat sign at the end of the second line.