

ACDC

Thunderstruck

Part 1

Question: Discuss how interest is created. In your answer refer to the music concepts of Duration, Texture, Dynamics and Expressive Techniques (0.00 – 1.04 minutes.)

Instrumentation

Lead male voice (mid to upper register)
Electric Guitar 1 and 2
Bass Guitar
Drum Kit
Backing male voices (mid to upper register)

Introduction A

Duration

4/4-time signature
Fast tempo

Bars 1 – 16

- The Electric Guitar plays a riff which consists of a repetitive pattern of semi-quaver notes (rhythmic and melodic ostinato.) A combination of hammer-on and pull-off (left hand) Guitar techniques is used.
- Towards the end of bar three (between beat three and four) the backing voices enter singing 'ow' really softly (ppp) and gradually becoming louder in volume (crescendo). Each time we hear the 'ow's', its volume increases on every repeat (heard four times and the fifth time there is no volume change). Although the texture of the three layers of sound i.e. the Electric Guitar, the Drum Kit and the backing vocal line, remains the same, the use of the increased dynamics of the backing vocals makes the texture sound as if it has thickened.
- There is a vocal downwards slide from the note F# to the B.
- The Drum Kit provides rhythmic accompaniment with underlying high-hats (repetitive quaver pattern.)
- We have contrasting layers of texture: This section constantly changes between two and three layers of sound i.e. the Electric Guitar and Drum Kit constantly playing throughout. The third layer is the backing vocals 'ow' sound. It is when the backing vocal line has rests between each repeat of its riff that the texture is made up of two layers only (Electric Guitar and Drum Kit.)

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Listening Activities

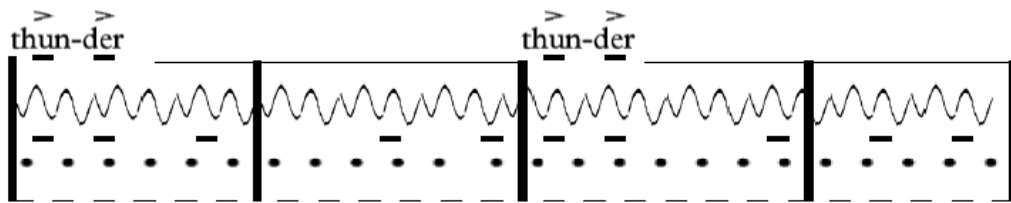
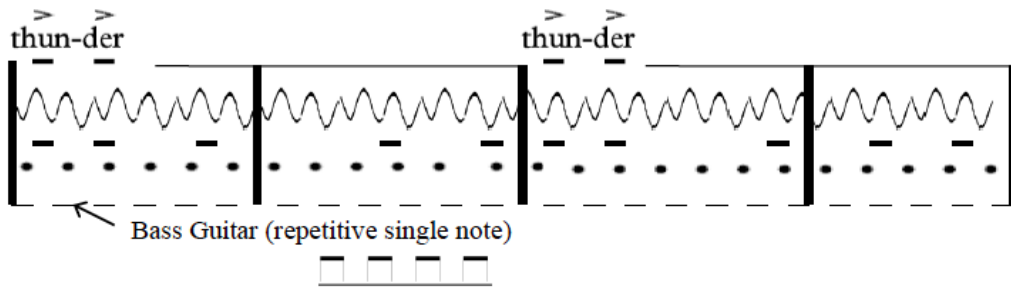
Listen to the excerpt and answer the following questions:

Introduction (Bars 1 – 16)

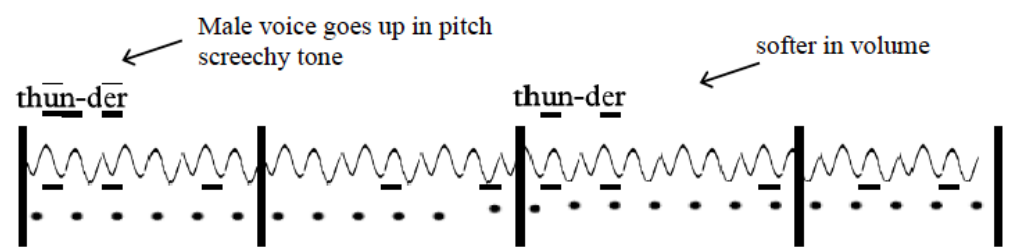
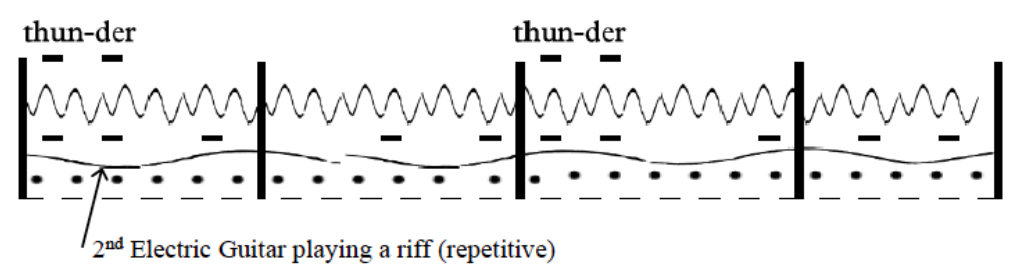
1. Identify all performing media and their performance role.
2. Identify the time signature.
3. Describe the tempo of the piece of music.
4. A. Describe the rhythm of the Electric Guitar part between bars 1 – 16. B. What expressive techniques are being employed in the melodic riff by the guitarist? C. Notate the rhythm of the Electric Guitar riff (bars 1 – 4.) D. Does the Electric Guitar play the first note of its riff on the down or upbeat when the music begins?
5. Describe the volume of the backing voices layer between bars 3 to 16.
6. Notate the pitch pattern of the backing vocal 'ow' riff.
7. With reference to dynamics, describe the texture of the music between bars 1 to 16.

Introduction (Bars 17 – 36)

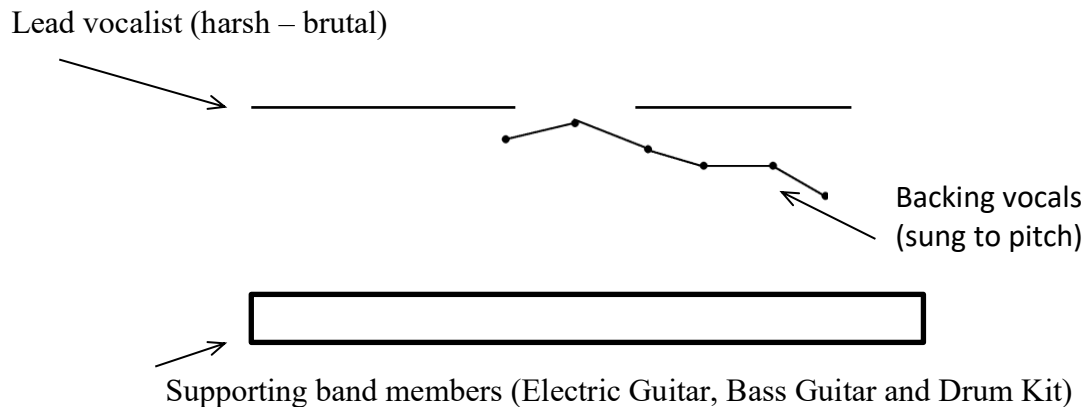
8. The backing male vocals are heard saying the word *thunder*. On which beats of the bar is this word emphasised?
9. Describe the tone colour of the backing voices saying the word *thunder*.
10. Which other instrument emphasises the word *thunder* with the backing voices?
11. The Drum Kit is playing heavy accents on certain beats in the bars of music. Notate the Drum Kits rhythm and label the accents.
12. Describe the overall rhythm of the Bass Guitar.
13. Describe the tone colour of the lead male vocalist from bar 25.



Extra layer of voice
 Male voice raspy tone



Graphic Notation of Vocal Layers



After bar four of the chorus section, the supporting instruments lead into a four bar instrumental bridge. The Acoustic Guitar repeats a chord progression as found in the introduction section and the Electric Guitar improvises a melodic line.

Unity and Contrast

Unity

- The introduction, verse, pre-chorus are all eight bars in length.
- The same time signature 4/4 is used throughout.
- The Acoustic Guitar harmony is the same in the introduction, verse and instrumental bridge section.
- The rhythm of the vocal line in the chorus uses crochets and minims to drive the rhythm (long notes.) The Electric Guitar accompaniment in this section is playing more sustained chords (long notes.)

Contrast

- Verse 1 is sung to pitch and has a clear and mellow tone. This is in contrast to the pre-chorus and chorus section where the vocalist shouts the melodic line, which is (harsh, brutal and aggressive tone) not sung to pitch.
- The vocal line in the verse uses mainly quavers to drive the rhythm of the melodic line that is also syncopated in rhythm. This is in contrast to the Acoustic Guitar accompaniment, which uses a repetitive semi-quaver rhythm pattern to accompany the chord progression.

Question: How is interest and variety created with the role of the Electric Guitars in the song _____? Make reference to the concepts Duration and Dynamics and Expressive Techniques (0:00 – 1.28 minutes.)

The Electric Guitars create interest and variety in the following ways:

The introduction (bars 1 – 17)

The first Electric Guitar layer, using power chords, plays a two-bar syncopated riff that is repeated throughout the entire introduction. The riff uses crotchets, quavers and quaver rests to drive its rhythm.

From bar five, a second Electric Guitar layer enters with a repetitive pattern of melodic notes. A third Electric Guitar layer enters from bar seven harmonising, but in rhythmic unison, with Electric Guitar 2.

From the beginning of bar 9, the repetitive Guitar riff heard from bar one continues. The second Guitar plays a melodic line and the third Guitar layer harmonises with this in rhythmic unison between bars 9 – 12. Guitars 2 and 3 play in the upper register using mainly quavers and minims to drive the rhythm (with some fast fills using semi-quaver note values.) The Guitars use expressive techniques such as string bends, vibrato and sustain to add colour to the melodic line. This creates contrast to bars 13 – 16 (second half of the melodic line), where Electric Guitars 2 and 3 now perform in melodic and rhythmic unison. Both guitars continue playing in the upper register using a combination of crotchets, quavers and semi-quavers to drive the rhythm of the melody line. However, the melodic motifs sound more tense in these bars with the use of quick string bends occurring at bars 13 and 15, as well as fast descending scalar runs using semi-quaver note values at bars 14 and 16.

Two accented power chords, the first occurring between beats three and four and the second occurring on beat four, is heard in Electric Guitar 1 (bar 16.) The second accented chord is sustained and continues to ring into bar 17.

Verse 1 (bars 18 – 25)

This section begins with an Electric Guitar playing a moderately soft muted line based on the root note of the chord structure. The Electric Guitar uses short notes (repetitive quaver rhythm) for this harmonic line. This constant rhythm of quavers repeats throughout verse 1 (rhythmic ostinato.)

Between beats three and four of bar 21, a second Electric Guitar is heard playing a Guitar fill in the upper register (four notes in total – sounding bright and metallic in

1. Strong downbeat.
2. Acoustic Guitar harmonic accompaniment continues from previous section (same chord progression.)
3. The rhythm of the vocal line is complex (syncopated.)
4. Male vocal line sung in the middle register.
5. The melody of the vocal line is narrow in range.
6. Mellow tone colour.
7. Singing parts of the melody line in harmony with the lead male voice.
8. The Drum Kit plays a syncopated rhythm utilizing the kick and snare drums (rhythmic ostinato pattern.)
9. Refer to the original music score.
10. Moderate tempo.
11. Harsh, brutal, aggressive and dark (haunting.)
12. Spoken.
13. The Electric Guitars power chords and the kick drum (bass drum) section of the Drum Kit both play in rhythmic unison (fast-rapid notes played with ferocity and speed.)
14. Simple harmony based on two chords.
15. Refer to the original music score.
16. Four bars in length.
17. Moderately fast in tempo (faster in tempo than previous section.)
18. Vocal layer 1 - Harsh, brutal, aggressive tone (not sung to pitch.)
Vocal layer 2 - Smooth/legato and clear tone (softer in volume and sung to pitch.)
19. Refer to the original music score.
20. Refer to the original music score.

The Amity Affliction

1. Minor tonality.
2. Moderately slow tempo.
3. Low-mid register.
4. Warm and mellow.
5. Sustained chords used throughout. There is some use of syncopation.
6. The Electric Guitar is playing single sustained notes sounding light and eerie in tone colour. These single sustained notes fade in and out in volume.
7. Dry tone colour.
8. The Drum Kit (kick drum) is playing most of the time a repetitive rhythmic ostinato pattern.
9. Sweet, sparkling, and majestic in tone colour.
10. Beat four.
11. Refer to the original music score.
12. Refer to the original music score.
13. The word *down* is sustained in duration and continues to echo and reverberate into the next bar.
14. Brutal, throaty and haunting tone colour.
15. These words are being shouted (spoken.)
16. The Electric Guitar has been tuned down in pitch (drop tuning.) The heavy distortion and lower strings tuning of the Guitar makes this riff sound more eerie and haunting. The textures of the low notes are thick.