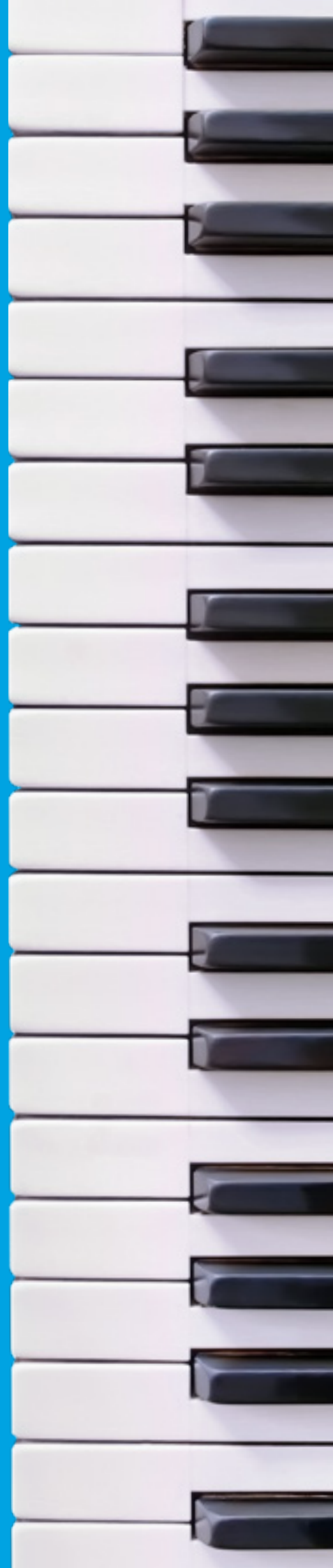


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This interactive booklet is designed to give a flavour of the pieces of music contained within the graded music exam syllabus and information on the musical skills and understanding that have been benchmarked at each grade. This sits alongside the Syllabus Guide which provides full details of the graded examinations run by Rockscool for Piano.

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If you are using Adobe Acrobat to view this document, you will be able to hear the sample audio alongside the sample repertoire pages. Alternatively, please visit the [RSL Awards website](#) to hear the audio previews.

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THE ROCKSCHOOL BOOKS ARE DIVIDED INTO THREE KEY SECTIONS:

PERFORMANCE PIECES:

Each graded exam book contains all the material you need to learn at each grade and has been benchmarked according to a set of criteria which are contained in this booklet.

The songs are also supported by Performance Notes. These sections cover the song from the performers' perspective, focusing on the technical issues the learner will encounter as they navigate each track.

Each book also contains both a full mix and backing track to provide the learner with the ideal level of performance they need to aim for. Both versions have spoken count-ins at the beginning much like you would expect in a professional recording environment.

Please note: any solos played on the full mix versions are indicative only.

TECHNICAL EXERCISES:

There are either three or four groups of technical exercise, depending on the grade:

Group A – scales

Group B – arpeggios/broken chords

Group C – chord voicings

Group D – a choice of stylistic studies

Please note: Group D only exists at Grades 6–8.

Rockschool's Technical Exercises are designed to introduce a gradual increase of expressive techniques and ideas, that collectively enable each player to attain a true sense of musicality. Whether that's achieved in tone modification, ornamentation, or articulation; each technique can be freely applied to any specific style a player chooses to identify with.

SUPPORTING TESTS AND GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS:

The candidate is required to undertake three kinds of unprepared, supporting test:

1. Sight Reading **or** an Improvisation & Interpretation (Debut to Grade 5).

Please note: these are replaced by mandatory Quick Study Pieces (QSPs) at Grades 6–8 in all graded exams except for Piano and Keys.

2. Ear Tests: featuring Melodic Recall and Chord Recognition (Debut to Grade 3) and Melodic Recall and Harmonic Recall (Grades 4–8).

3. General Musicianship Questions (GMQs), which will be asked by the examiner at the end of each exam. Each book features examples of the types of unprepared tests likely to appear in the exam. The examiner will give a different version in the exam.



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REPERTOIRE:

The pieces of music in the graded exam book have been carefully selected to cater for a wide range of musical tastes so please refer to the syllabus guide and our website for more details.

Learners also have the opportunity to use Free Choice Pieces alongside this specified repertoire and the benchmarking criteria in this booklet should be used to identify whether the piece they want to use meets the required standard for the grade chosen.

This is also available on our [website](#).

There are six hit tune arrangements which fall into three categories:

1. Melody and Accompaniment:

These arrangements are performed to full band backing tracks, with the piano performing both melody and accompaniment.

2. Solo Piano Arrangement:

These are full solo piano arrangements, performed without backing tracks.

3. Vocal Accompaniment:

These arrangements are reflective of the skills required of a pianist working in ensemble environments and the backing tracks feature a vocal melody line.

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AUDIO:

Audio is provided in the form of backing tracks (excluding the assessed part) and examples (including the assessed part) for the pieces and the supporting tests where applicable. Audio files are supplied in MP3 format to enable playback on a wide range of compatible devices. Digital versions of the book include audio files in the download. Physical versions of the book include a code to download the audio at [rslawards.com/downloads](https://www.rslawards.com/downloads).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The books also contain information on exam procedures, including online examination entry, marking schemes, information on Free Choice Pieces and any improvisation, notation and tone requirements for each grade.



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EXAMS

When they are ready, candidates can enter for the following types of exam:

Graded Music Exam

candidates perform Three Pieces; a selection of Technical Exercises; and a series of Unseen Tests.

Performance Certificate

candidates perform Five Pieces only. This exam can also be taken via video submission.

Learners can take their exam at one of our Public Exam Venues or, should your venue meet certain criteria, we can convene a private exam day at your venue for your students.

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ASSESSMENT:

Candidates are assessed against specific Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria which are detailed in full in the Syllabus Guide and on our [website](#).

We have also included a summary of the Assessment Criteria in this booklet.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

There are three learning outcomes in Rockschool graded music exams:

1. Be able to perform music in popular musical styles.
2. Be able to demonstrate technical ability on an instrument/voice through responding to set technical demands.
3. Be able to demonstrate musical understanding through a range of set tests.

Graded Examinations reference all three learning outcomes, whereas Performance Certificates only require the first outcome to be met.

WHAT ARE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA?

Assessment Criteria are how we assess the learning outcomes.

- They are applied to evidence musical outcomes at progressing grades.
- Each criterion is equally weighted.
- Each is considered / marked separately.
- The combination gives the total mark for each piece/ supporting test.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

1. Command of Instrument

The quality of the sound produced from the instrument, including the consistency of sound/tone, control of sound/tone commensurate with grade.

2. Sync or Pulse

Alignment of the performance to backing track, metronome or applied to a solo performance, observing notation markings. For unaccompanied pieces candidates should maintain a secure internal pulse and adjust the pulse where instructed within the music.

3. Accuracy and Understanding

Representing the written notation accurately, except by instruction through performance notes, or interpreting the written part with equivalent skills demonstrated. Secure understanding of musical structure evidenced through transitions of phrases, bars and sections.

4. Style and Expression

An expressive and commanding performance of the notated material dictated by the demands of the performance piece.

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PIANO DEBUT MUSICAL SKILLS AND FEATURES

Duration	40 secs–1 min 20 secs
Key	C major / A minor
Tempo	60-130 bpm
Time Signatures	4/4, 3/4
Rhythmic Values	8th notes and rests, occasional dotted quarter notes
Dynamics	None, or very simple/sparse
Articulation & Phrasing	None, or very simple/sparse
Melodic Features	Mainly stepwise movement or small intervallic transitions
Harmonic Features	Occasional two-note chords in one hand (three-note chords will be between both hands)
Rhythmic Features	Non-complex rhythmic groupings
Keyboard Features (Keys Syllabus only)	Single patch settings with basic variety of sounds [e.g. electric piano, organ, pad] Basic layering of sounds (e.g. piano/pad)

Imagine

SONG TITLE: 'IMAGINE'
ALBUM: IMAGINE
RELEASED: 1971
LABEL: APPLE
GENRE: SOFT ROCK/POP
WRITTEN BY: JOHN LENNON/YOKO ONO
PRODUCED BY: JOHN LENNON/YOKO ONO/
PHIL SPECTRE
UK CHART PEAK: 1

The image shows a snippet of musical notation for the beginning of the song 'Imagine'. It is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 76 beats per minute, categorized as Pop/Rock. The notation is in C major. The right hand (treble clef) starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The left hand (bass clef) starts with a whole note chord consisting of C4, E3, and G3. A box labeled 'A' is placed above the first measure. A 'C' is placed above the second measure. Fingerings are indicated: '1' above the G4 note and '1 5' above the C4 and E3 notes respectively.

Written by John Lennon in 1971, 'Imagine' was a worldwide hit which conveyed themes of politics, religion and love. Lennon wrote the song at his home in Berkshire and was heavily influenced by the poetry works of his wife Yoko Ono, specifically her book *Grapefruit*, so much so that she was later given a writing credit. His song speaks of a world where all humans are one, with no countries or religion to separate them. Lennon was often criticised by religious groups, claiming that the song was an atheist anthem. However, Lennon is quoted as stating that the song was not about a world with no religion at all but rather a world of one religion without competition as to whose God is the most powerful. An intriguing sentiment which was well received by the ever-liberal movement of the 1970s.

'Imagine' was released in the US in late 1971 and peaked at number 3 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. Although the single wasn't officially released in the UK at that time, the LP on which it featured (of the same name) managed to top the UK album charts in the November of that year. It was later released as a single in the UK in 1975 to promote a compilation LP and peaked at a respectable number 6. Re-released for one last time following the Singers tragic death in 1980, 'Imagine' finally achieved the position it deserved and claimed number 1 in the UK Singles Charts.

The song itself has sold over 1.6 million copies in the UK alone, making it by far Lennon's biggest success as a solo artist. He is of course widely known as one part of the multimillion selling quartet, The Beatles. During their time together, The Beatles took the world by storm, shaping the music industry as we know it today an immeasurable amount. To date, The Beatles are the best-selling band of all time, with estimated sales of over 800 million records worldwide.

Following his huge success with The Beatles, Lennon went on to influence countless musicians and was highly regarded in the industry. His song 'Imagine' was actually inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's *500 Songs that Shaped Rock and Roll* and earned him a Grammy Hall of Fame Award. Since its original release 'Imagine' has been covered by dozens of successful artists, including: Madonna, Stevie Wonder, Elton John, Joan Baez and Diana Ross. It is a fitting tribute to the incredible songwriter that was John Lennon, that so many music icons would want to cover this unquestionably remarkable song.



Imagine

John Lennon

♩=76 Pop/Rock

A

Musical notation for the first system of the piano accompaniment. The key signature is C major and the time signature is 4/4. The first measure is marked with a 'C' chord and a '1' above the treble clef. The second measure is marked with an 'F' chord and a '2' above the bass clef. The notation includes a treble clef, a bass clef, and a grand staff.

Musical notation for the second system of the piano accompaniment. The first measure is marked with a 'C' chord and the second measure with an 'F' chord. A bracketed number '[3]' is positioned below the first measure.

Musical notation for the third system of the piano accompaniment. The first measure is marked with a 'C' chord and the second measure with an 'F' chord. A bracketed number '[5]' is positioned below the first measure.

Musical notation for the fourth system of the piano accompaniment. The first measure is marked with a 'C' chord and the second measure with an 'F' chord. A bracketed number '[7]' is positioned below the first measure.

Musical notation for the fifth system of the piano accompaniment. The first measure is marked with a '1' above the treble clef. The second measure is marked with an 'Am/E' chord, the third with a 'Dm' chord, and the fourth with a 'Dm/C' chord. A bracketed number '[9]' is positioned below the first measure.

Piano Debut

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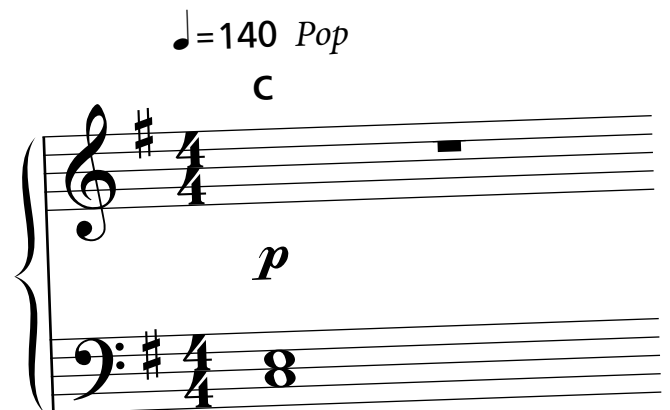


PIANO GRADE 1 MUSICAL SKILLS AND FEATURES

Duration	50 secs – 1 min 30 secs
Key	One sharp or one flat, or no sharps or flats but accidentals may occur within the piece
Tempo	60-140 bpm
Time Signatures	4/4, 3/4, 6/8
Rhythmic values	8th notes and rests, dotted 8th notes and syncopations, occasional 16th notes, occasional non-complex triplet groupings
Dynamics	Simple dynamics [<i>P</i> , <i>F</i>]
Articulation & Phrasing	Simple changes in articulation and phrasing, occasional slurs and simple occasional use of staccato and accented articulation may occur.
Melodic features	Mainly stepwise movement or small intervallic transitions – overall tessitura generally not greater than an octave
Harmonic features	Two-note chords in one hand, occasional three-note chords, four-note chords will generally be spread across both hands
Rhythmic features	Rhythms will be simple; simultaneously differing patterns will be limited
Keyboard Features (Keys Syllabus only)	Single patch settings with basic variety of sounds [e.g. electric piano, organ, pad] Basic layering of sounds (e.g. piano/pad)

Wildest Dreams

SONG TITLE: 'WILDEST DREAMS'
ALBUM: 1989
RELEASED: 2014
LABEL: BIG MACHINE/REPUBLIC
GENRE: DREAM POP
WRITTEN BY: TAYLOR SWIFT/
MAX MARTIN/SHELLBACK
PRODUCED BY: MAX MARTIN/SHELLBACK
UK CHART PEAK: 40



'Wildest Dreams' was a chart hit for American singer songwriter Taylor Swift and was the 5th single to be released from her popular album *1989*. The song was written by Taylor Swift, Max Martin and Johan Schuster (professionally known as Shellback), a common collaborative for Swift, with hits including three tracks on her earlier album *Red*. Together the trio created what has been described as a "dream pop power ballad" and although the song did well commercially it did receive some mixed reviews. Many felt that the sound was simply too comparable to that of Lana Del Rey, claiming that it was so similar that they couldn't tell whether the song was intended as a homage or a parody.

Nevertheless, the track went on to achieve success in the US charts where it peaked at a very respectable number 5. This gave Swift her 5th consecutive top ten single from her chart topping 3rd album, *1989*. The single was by no means her most successful in the UK, peaking at only number 40 on the UK Singles Chart. However, the album itself had great success in the UK and topped the chart on its first week of release, thus becoming her second number one album in the UK.

Taylor Swift was born and raised in Pennsylvania but moved to Nashville at the young age of 14 in search of a music career. She originated as a country

singer and honed the sounds of her then home Nashville. Swift quickly found success and was signed by Big Machine Records, making her the youngest person ever to have been signed by the Sony/ATV Music publishing house. In 2006 she released her self-titled debut album, which peaked at number 5 on the US album chart and included the track 'Our Song' – for this particular song she became the youngest ever artist to solely write and perform a number one hit for the Hot Country Songs chart.

In 2008 the crossover from country to pop began for Swift with her second album, *Fearless*. The album received rave reviews and became the highest selling US album of 2009. The album also won Swift a cool four Grammy awards, amongst which was the Album of the Year award for which she became the youngest ever winner.

Taylor Swift's repertoire has now reached an impressive six studio albums, a feat only achieved due to launching her career at such a young age. During her career she has received an impressive number of awards, including an outstanding total of 10 Grammy's (31 nominations). 'Wildest Dreams' became Swift's 13th top ten hit in the US, a clear representation of her success in the industry.



Wildest Dreams

Taylor Swift

♩=140 *Pop*

C

Em

D

C

Em

D

[5]

A

C

Em

D

[9]

C

Em

D

[13]

[17]

[21]

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PIANO GRADE 2 MUSICAL SKILLS AND FEATURES

Recommended Maximum Duration	1 min 10 secs–1 min 45 secs
Key	Two sharps or flats (or fewer, but accidentals may occur within the piece)
Tempo	60-140 bpm
Time Signatures	4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 6/8, 9/8, 12/8
Rhythmic values	16th notes and rests, dotted 8th notes and syncopations, occasional 16th note syncopation, non-complex triplet groupings. Simpler rhythms appear in conjunction with other elements (e.g. more detailed harmonic work)
Dynamics	Simple dynamics [<i>P</i> , <i>F</i> , <i>MP</i> , <i>MF</i>], crescendo (<) and diminuendo (>)
Articulation & Phrasing	Frequent changes in articulation and phrasing, slurs and simple use of staccato/accented articulation may occur.
Melodic features	Greater intervallic transitions and more frequent accidentals may occur
Harmonic features	Two-note chords in one hand, occasional three-note chords, four-note chords will generally be spread across both hands
Rhythmic features	Rhythmic groupings may differ more frequently between hands
Keyboard Features (Keys Syllabus only)	Single patch settings with basic variety of sounds [e.g. electric piano, organ, pad] Basic layering of sounds (e.g. piano/pad)

Thinking Out Loud

SONG TITLE: THINKING OUT LOUD
ALBUM: X
LABEL: ASYLUM / ATLANTIC
GENRE: BLUE EYED SOUL / POP

WRITTEN BY: ED SHEERAN, AMY WADGE
AND JULIAN WILLIAMS

PRODUCED BY: JAKE GOSLING

UK CHART PEAK: 1

'Thinking Out Loud' was released as a single in September 2014 and reached the no.2 spot on the Billboard Hot 100 subsequently spending a year in the Top Forty. It reached no.1 in many countries across the world and by 2015 it had reached half a billion streams on Spotify and over 2 billion views on YouTube. The song won two Grammy Awards, for Best Pop Solo Performance and Song Of The Year respectively.

'Thinking Out Loud' was written in partnership with long-time collaborator Amy Wadge, who Sheeran has worked with since 2007. They also collaborated on the 2017 single 'Shape Of You', a massive worldwide success. 'Thinking Out Loud' is a romantic ballad and its lyrics reflect the feeling of getting older and how love and fidelity are impacted by it. Sheeran has defined the song as a 'walking down the aisle song'. The song's similarities with Marvin Gaye's 'Let's Get It On' brought claims of plagiarism that were later withdrawn. 'Thinking Out Loud' has sold in excess of 10 million copies worldwide.

Ed Sheeran's meteoric rise to fame has been the result of a highly productive work ethic. He performs relentlessly to this day, as a solo acoustic artist, to thousands of fans worldwide.

Musical notation for the beginning of the song 'Thinking Out Loud'. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as 79 bpm and the genre as Pop. The dynamics are marked as mp (mezzo-piano). The notation includes a boxed letter 'A' in the top left, a 'D' chord above the first measure, and a 'D/F#' chord above the second measure. The melody in the treble clef starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The bass line in the bass clef starts with a whole note chord consisting of F#2, C#3, and G2.

His 2017 album '+' had, at one time, a record 10 singles in the UK Singles Chart

Sheeran was born in West Yorkshire in 1991 and raised in Suffolk. He dropped out of school aged 16 to pursue a career in music and moved to London. His independent releases caught the attention of Elton John and Jamie Foxx, and he signed to Asylum records in 2011. He is one of today's most popular and commercially successful artists.

Sheeran is an outspoken artist, not afraid of making his political and social views known, and he remains an accessible and down to earth character. He is an actor, and had cameos in *Game of Thrones*, *Home and Away* and *The Simpsons*.

With only three albums to his name to date, Ed Sheeran has already had an immensely successful career.



Thinking Out Loud

Ed Sheeran

♩=79 Pop

A

mp

[3]

[6]

[9]

[12]

[15]

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PIANO GRADE 3 MUSICAL SKILLS AND FEATURES

Duration	1 min 30 secs –2 mins
Key	Three sharps or flats (or fewer, but accidentals may occur within the piece)
Tempo	60-150 bpm
Time Signatures	4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 6/8, 9/8, 12/8
Rhythmic values	16th notes and rests in more complex groupings, 16th note syncopation, more frequent triplet groupings. Simpler rhythms appear in conjunction with other elements (e.g. more detailed harmonic work)
Dynamics	[<i>P, F, MP, MF</i>], crescendo (<) and diminuendo (>)
Articulation & Phrasing	Articulation and phrasing will have variety and may differ between hands at simultaneous points
Melodic Features	Greater intervallic transitions may appear spanning over an octave, and more frequent accidentals may occur
Harmonic Features	Four note chords may appear in either hand
Rhythmic Features	Rhythmic groupings may differ more frequently between hands or occur simultaneously
Other Features	Melody and accompaniment voicings may appear in one hand; musical passages may spread between both hands
Keyboard Features (Keys Syllabus only)	Single patch settings with basic variety of sounds [e.g. electric piano, organ, pad] Basic layering of sounds (e.g. piano/pad)

Don't Know Why

SONG TITLE: DON'T KNOW WHY
ALBUM: COME AWAY WITH ME / 2002
LABEL: FAVORED NATIONS
GENRE: POP/JAZZ
WRITTEN BY: JESSE HARRIS
GUITAR: JASON ROBERTS
AND NORAH JONES
PRODUCER: NORAH JONES,
ARIF MARDIN AND
JAY NEWLAND

♩ = 90 Jazz/Country/Pop
B^b maj⁷ B^b7

The image shows a musical score for the piano introduction of the song 'Don't Know Why'. It is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 90, and the style is Jazz/Country/Pop. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. The bass staff provides harmonic support with a series of chords: Bb2, Bb3, Bb4, Bb5, Bb6, Bb7, and Bb8. The dynamics are marked as *mp* (mezzo-piano).

'Don't Know Why' was featured in Norah Jones' 2002 Platinum release, *Come Away With Me*. The track was well received in the US where it peaked at number 30 in the Billboard chart, and the album is her most successful to date having spent four consecutive weeks at the top of the UK album chart.

The single won Grammy awards for Record of The Year, Song of The Year and Best Female Pop Vocal Performance. 'Don't Know Why' was written by Jesse Harris and has been covered by numerous artists as a result of Norah Jones' recording success.

Norah Jones was born in 1979 in Brooklyn, New York. She is the daughter of Indian sitar virtuoso Ravi Shankar and Sue Jones, an American concert producer. She started singing at junior school and by high school had won Down Beat Student Music award for Best Vocalist and Best Composition. She attended The University of North Texas (UNT) where she majored in piano. During this time she met Jesse Harris, with whom she started a band in 1999 after moving to New York City. Jones was signed to Blue Note Records after presenting a three track demo, including two standards and a song by Harris.

Jones has released six studio albums to date. She is a versatile and curious artist and has taken part in a variety of other projects. These include singing in Herbie Hancock's version of 'Court and Spark' by Joni Mitchell, co-writing with Ryan Adams, playing piano and singing in 'Victoria Moon' by the Foo Fighters, and being in the alternative country band For the Good Times. For her fifth studio album, *Little Broken Hearts*, Jones teamed up with DJ and producer Danger Mouse. Jones also recorded a Christmas duet with Cyndi Lauper. She has toured extensively to promote each of her records.



Don't Know Why

Norah Jones

♩=90 Jazz/Country/Pop

mp

B^bmaj⁷ B^b7 E^b D⁷ Gm⁷ C⁷ F⁹sus⁴

A

B^bmaj⁷ B^b7 E^b Daug Gm⁷ C⁷ F⁹sus⁴ B^b

[5]

B^bmaj⁷ B^b7 E^b Daug Gm⁷ C⁷ F⁹sus⁴ B^b

[9]

⌘

B^bmaj⁷ B^b7 E^b Daug Gm⁷ C⁷ F⁹sus⁴ B^b

[13]

To Coda ☪

B^bmaj⁷ B^b7 E^b Daug Gm⁷ C⁷ F⁹sus⁴ B^b

[17]

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PIANO GRADE 4 MUSICAL SKILLS AND FEATURES

Duration	1 min 45 secs–2 min 15 secs
Key	Four sharps or flats (or fewer, but accidentals may occur within the piece) There may be very occasional, simple key changes
Tempo	60-150 bpm
Time Signatures	4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 6/8, 9/8, 12/8. There may be very infrequent, simple time signature changes
Rhythmic values	16th notes and rests in more complex groupings, occasional 32nd notes, 16th note syncopation. Simpler rhythms appear in conjunction with other elements (e.g. more detailed harmonic work)
Dynamics	[<i>P, F, MP, MF</i>], crescendo (<) and diminuendo (>)
Articulation & Phrasing	Articulation and phrasing will have variety and may differ between hands at simultaneous points
Melodic Features	Intervallic transitions may span over an octave and frequent accidentals may occur
Harmonic Features	Five note chords may appear in either hand, and partial chords may be combined with melodic elements
Rhythmic Features	Rhythmic groupings may differ more frequently between hands or occur simultaneously
Other Features	Variety in voicings and accompaniment styles within sections
Keyboard Features (Keys Syllabus Only)	Patch settings will include layers and splits Sound manipulation may include applying effects [e.g. vibrato/rotary effect]

Goodbye Yellow Brick Road

SONG TITLE: 'GOODBYE YELLOW
BRICK ROAD'
ALBUM: GOODBYE YELLOW
BRICK ROAD
RELEASED: 1973
LABEL: MCA/DJM
GENRE: SOFT ROCK/GLAM ROCK
WRITTEN BY: ELTON JOHN/
BERNIE TAUPIN
PRODUCED BY: GUS DUDGEON
UK CHART PEAK: 6

The image shows a snippet of musical notation for the beginning of the song. It features a grand staff with a treble clef on the top line and a bass clef on the bottom line. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 122 Rock/Pop. Above the staff, there are two chords: F and C/E. The first measure shows a treble clef with a whole note chord of F (F2, A2, C3) and a bass clef with a whole note chord of F (F2, C3). The second measure shows a treble clef with a whole note chord of C/E (E2, G2, C3) and a bass clef with a whole note chord of C/E (C2, E2, G2). A dynamic marking of *mf* is placed below the first measure. Above the second measure, there is a triplet of eighth notes: C4, E4, G4.

'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road' was the second single to be released from Elton John's seventh studio album of the same name. The single hit the charts in 1973 and quickly surpassed the success of his previous single 'Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting', making it to the top ten in both the UK and US singles charts. By January 1974 the song had reached gold status in the US, only to be re-certified as platinum in 1995.

With Elton John writing the music and Bernie Taupin the lyrics, the song was sure to be a commercial hit. Taupin's lyrics are inspired by the classic story of 'The Wizard of Oz'. The 1939 adaption was the first film Taupin ever saw and so its plot remained somewhat nostalgic to the writer. John sings of wanting to return to his roots and to a simpler time, similar to the character of Dorothy who follows the yellow brick road in her quest to get back home.

The duo received excellent reviews for their latest hit, with many claiming that it was John's best release yet. Allmusic described the track as a "vocal triumph" and a "pinnacle of its style", with other music critics praising it for its delicacy and beauty. The album on which the song features, also named *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*, was also met by critical acclaim and is regarded as John's most successful and recognisable work. On its release in 1993 it entered the US album chart at number 17, before climbing to the top spot

where it stayed for eight weeks. In 2003 the album was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame and was ranked number 91 on Rolling Stone magazine's 'The 500 Greatest Albums of all Time' list. With sales of over 8 million copies in the US, the iconic album is now certified 8xPlatinum.

Elton John and Bernie Taupin are one of the most successful writing teams of the 20th Century, their work includes smash hits 'Candle in the Wind', 'Bennie and the Jets' and 'Crocodile Rock' to name just a few. Their working partnership is highly regarded in the music industry, with many fans thriving to know more about the pair. Taupin has published several books about his time working with Elton, including 'Bernie Taupin: The One Who Writes the Words for Elton John' which is actually a collection of all of his work for the album *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*.



Goodbye Yellow Brick Road

Elton John

♩ = 122 Rock/Pop

F C/E Dm7 Dm7/C B^b F/C C/E F

A Gm7 Gm7/B^b C7 C/E F F/A

[5]

B^b B^b/F E^b E^b/B^b C C7/E

[8]

F Gm7 Gm7/B^b

[11]

Piano Grade 4

Words by Bernie Taupin
 Music by Elton John
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PIANO SAMPLE PACK



PIANO GRADE 5 MUSICAL SKILLS AND FEATURES

Duration	2 mins–2 mins 45 secs
Key	Five sharps or flats (or fewer, but accidentals may occur within the piece) There may be occasional key centre changes
Tempo	60-160 bpm
Time Signatures	4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 6/8, 9/8, 12/8. There may be occasional time signature changes
Rhythmic values	16th notes and rests in more complex groupings, occasional 32nd notes, 16th note syncopation. Simpler rhythms appear in conjunction with other elements (e.g. more detailed harmonic work)
Dynamics	[<i>P, F, MP, MF</i>], crescendo (<) and diminuendo (>)
Articulation & Phrasing	Articulation and phrasing will have variety and may differ between hands at simultaneous points. More subtlety of control between legato and staccato will likely be required
Melodic Features	Intervallic transitions over an octave may be regular, and frequent accidentals may occur
Harmonic Features	Five note chords may appear in either hand, and partial chords may be combined with melodic elements. Chordal cluster voicings may be more advanced or more frequent
Rhythmic Features	Rhythmic groupings may differ frequently between hands and occur simultaneously; faster note values may be more repetitive/continuous
Other Features	Variety in voicings and accompaniment styles within sections
Keyboard Features (Keys Syllabus only)	Patch settings will include layers and/or splits Sound manipulation may include applying effects [e.g. vibrato/rotary effect]

Life On Mars?

SONG TITLE: LIFE ON MARS
ALBUM: HUNKY DORY
RELEASED: 1973
LABEL: RCA
GENRE: ROCK
VOCALS: DAVID BOWIE
PIANO: RICK WAKEMAN
GUITARS: MICK RONSON
BASS: TREVOR BOLDER
DRUMS: MICK WOODMANSEY
MELLOTRON
& STRING
ARRANGEMENT: MICK RONSON
WRITTEN BY: DAVID BOWIE
PRODUCED BY: KEN SCOTT
UK CHART PEAK: 3

$\text{♩} = 60$ Pop/Rock

F F/E

mf

The song was released in 1973 as a single from the 1971 album *Hunky Dory* (Bowie's fourth album) and stayed in the UK charts for thirteen weeks, peaking at No.3. The Daily Telegraph ranked the hit at the top of their 'Greatest Hits of All Time' list and in 2016 online music magazine Pitchfork titled it the best song of the 1970s. The track featured progressive rock band Yes' Rick Wakeman on guest piano.

The song was allegedly written as a parody of Frank Sinatra's 'My Way', with the liner notes of Bowie's song reading: 'inspired by Frankie'. Bowie has referred to the song as "my kind of modern take on 'My Way'"; although he often provides different explanations as to the song's meaning. He has been known to describe it as relationship: "you fall in love, you write a love song. This is a love song". Although he had previously said that it was about a young girl struggling with reality: "she's being told there's a far greater life somewhere and she's bitterly disappointed she doesn't have access to it".

Bowie himself said that he composed the song at the piano and "had the whole lyric and melody finished by late afternoon". Rick Wakeman embellished Bowie's original piano parts and Mick Ronson created a string arrangement that layered over this.

David Bowie has often been described as one of the most influential British rock stars due to his innovative ideas. He had an interest in embodying different personae (such as Ziggy Stardust) and the idea of telling cinematic stories. The selection of artists he gathered to play on this album and the producer, Ken Scott would all become part of the Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars phase. Bowie felt *Hunky Dory* was one of the most important albums in his career, stating: "It was like: I'm finding my feet. I'm starting to communicate what I want to do".

David Bowie sadly passed away on the 10th January 2016. A leading figure in the music industry, Bowie was regarded as one of the most influential musicians of the 20th century. His successes include an induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, eleven number 1 UK albums, five UK number 1 singles, five Grammy awards and four Ivor Novello awards. These accomplishments only scratch the surface of his career, but the list is simply too long to cover in full.



Life On Mars?

David Bowie

♩ = 60 *Pop/Rock*

mf

F F/E F/E^b D⁷

G^m G^m/F C⁷

[3] F F/E F⁷/E^b D^{sus}4 D⁷

[5]

G^m G^m/F C⁷

[7]

A^b/E^b C^{aug}/E F^m A^b/G^b A^bsus⁴/G^b

[9]

D^b F^{aug}/A B^bm *poco rall.* B^bm/C^b

[11]

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PIANO SAMPLE PACK



PIANO GRADE 6 MUSICAL SKILLS AND FEATURES

Duration	2 min 15 secs–3 mins
Key	Six sharps or flats (or fewer, but accidentals may occur within the piece) There may be key centre changes
Tempo	50-200 bpm
Time Signatures	4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 6/8, 9/8, 12/8. There may be more regular time signature changes, or occasional irregular time signatures
Rhythmic values	16th notes and rests in more complex groupings, 16th note triplets, 32nd notes and frequent syncopation may occur. Simpler rhythms will appear in conjunction with other elements (e.g. more detailed harmonic work)
Dynamics	[<i>PP, F, MP, MF, FF</i>], crescendo (<) and diminuendo (>)
Articulation & Phrasing	Articulation and phrasing will have variety and may differ between hands at simultaneous points.
Melodic Features	Notated solos may feature. Intervallic passages and transitions may exceed an octave
Harmonic Features	Five note chords may appear in either hand, and partial chords may be combined with melodic elements. Chordal cluster voicings may be more advanced, denser and/or more frequent
Rhythmic Features	Rhythmic groupings may differ frequently between hands and occur simultaneously; faster note values may be more repetitive/continuous
Other Features	Variety in voicings and accompaniment styles within sections
Keyboard Features (Keys Syllabus Only)	Patch settings will include multiple layers and splits, and switching to alternative settings in performance Sound manipulation may include applying effects, pitch wheel, modulation

Africa

SONG TITLE: 'AFRICA'
ALBUM: TOTO IV
RELEASED: 1982
LABEL: COLUMBIA
GENRE: SOFT ROCK/JAZZ FUSION
WRITTEN BY: DAVID PAICH/
JEFF PORCARO
PRODUCED BY: TOTO
UK CHART PEAK: 3

♩ = 93 Rock
A

'Africa' was the third single to be released from Toto's fourth studio album, *Toto IV*, and is their most successful hit to date. Written by founding members, David Paich and Jeff Porcaro, the single topped the US Billboard chart and peaked at number 3 in the UK, making it their first US number 1 and their first UK top 5. The song also topped the charts in Canada and made it to the top ten in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Switzerland; making it a worldwide success.

Paich was inspired to write the song after having seen a late-night documentary about the poverty and suffering in many parts of Africa. He admits that having never been to the continent his portrayal was purely based on the media, but that he was so shocked by what he had seen that he wanted to write a song about the subject. The writing duo describe the hit as 'a man's love of a continent', detailing that the main story follows a character flying in to Africa to meet a missionary. Having attending a Catholic school, Paich met several missionaries throughout his education and was inspired by their generosity and selflessness.

The song's well recognised opening is played on a Yamaha synthesiser, with Paich using a marimba sound to create an authentic sound. The recording also features six Kalimba tracks (a traditional African instrument) all created on the same Yamaha

synthesiser and playing the same rhythm but layered to create a larger sound. On recording Paich and the rest of the band worked hard to create a realistic feel, including a long percussion session which resulted in a two bar loop being chosen as the final beat. Knowing that a drum computer could have created the sound within five minutes, they took the longer option feeling that a live loop would be more effective.

In 2018 American rock band Weezer covered Toto's hit and sent 'Africa' back in to the charts. The cover gave Weezer their first Hot 100 hit since 2009 and increased popularity in Toto's original once again. Originally certified gold in 1991, the song's fame grew over the years having featured on several TV series as well as with Weezer's adaption and was re-certified 4 x Platinum in 2018.



Africa

Toto

♩=93 Rock

A Gm^7 $C\#m^7$

mp

A Gm^7 $C\#m^7$

[3]

A

B $D\#m^7$ $G\#m^7$ $B/F\#$

[5]

A/E $E/F\#$ $G\#m^7$ **A** $C\#m^7$ Play 3 times

[7]

B $D\#m^7$ $G\#m^7$ $B/F\#$

[9]

A $G\#m^7$ $C\#m^7$

[11]

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PIANO SAMPLE PACK



PIANO GRADE 7 MUSICAL SKILLS AND FEATURES

Duration	2 mins 30 secs–3 mins 30 secs
Key	Seven sharps or flats (or fewer, but accidentals may occur within the piece) There may be more frequent key centre changes
Tempo	50-200 bpm
Time Signatures	Any, with changes
Rhythmic values	Any, up to 32nd notes. Complex combinations beyond 16th note triplets will not be frequent, but variations may occur regularly. Simpler rhythms will appear in conjunction with other elements (e.g. more detailed harmonic work, faster tempos or more complex time signatures)
Dynamics	Any, with changes, and including strong contrasts
Articulation & Phrasing	Articulation and phrasing will have variety and may differ between hands at simultaneous points. Subtlety of control between legato and staccato will be required
Melodic Features	Developing notated solos may feature. Intervallic passages and transitions may frequently exceed an octave.
Harmonic Features	Five note chords may appear in either hand, and partial chords may be combined with melodic elements. Chordal cluster voicings may be more advanced, denser and/or more frequent
Rhythmic Features	Rhythmic groupings may differ frequently between hands and occur simultaneously; faster note values will be more repetitive/continuous and combine in both hands
Other Features	Voicings and accompaniment styles within sections will show depth and variety of technique
Keyboard Features (Keys Syllabus Only)	Patch settings will include multiple layers and splits, and switching to alternative settings in performance Sound manipulation may include applying effects, pitch wheel, modulation

I Got The News

SONG TITLE: 'I GOT THE NEWS'
ALBUM: AJA
RELEASED: 1977
LABEL: ABC
GENRE: JAZZ ROCK
WRITTEN BY: DONALD FAGEN/
WALTER BECKER
PRODUCED BY: GARY KATZ
UK CHART PEAK: N/A

The image shows a snippet of musical notation for the song 'I Got The News'. It is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 118 beats per minute, categorized as Rock/Jazz. The key signature is C major with a 7b9 chord indicated. The notation is presented on a grand staff with a treble clef on the top line and a bass clef on the bottom line. The bass line begins with a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest, a quarter note A2, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note C3. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

Steely Dan's song 'I Got the News' features on their sixth studio album *Aja*, released in 1977 on ABC Records. Although the song was never released as a single it was met with high regard along with the rest of the album, which received excellent reviews among the jazz rock community. Peaking at number 3 in the US and number 5 in the UK album charts, the release was the band's most successful to date and gave them their first platinum album, going on to sell over 5 million copies. *Aja* produced hit singles such as 'Peg', 'Deacon Blues' and 'Josie' and in 1977 it was nominated for Best Engineered Non-Classical Recording at the Grammy Awards ceremony.

Steely Dan were praised for the recording and production of this album, pushing their experimentation into jazz rock even further with over 40 musicians being credited in the recording. Music critic Andy Gill described the album as true blend of jazz and pop/rock music, stating "it wasn't rock or pop music with ideas above its station, and it wasn't jazz's slumming...it was a very well-forged alloy of the two – you couldn't separate the pop music from the jazz in their music". In 2003 the album was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame and was ranked number 145 on the Rolling Stone Magazine's list of 'The 500 Greatest Albums of All Time'.

'I Got the News' features piano by Victor Feldman, a British Jazz musician known for his work with the Ronnie Scott's orchestra and quintet before emigrating to the US to further his career. By 1957 Feldman had settled in Los Angeles and was specialising in rewarding session work for the US film and recording industry. Some of his most notable session work includes appearances on albums for Joni Mitchell, Frank Zappa, Joe Walsh and of course Steely Dan. His vibraphone skills feature heavily on the Grammy Award winning *The Music from Peter Gunn*, the 1959 album by legendary jazz musician and composer Henry Mancini.

In 2001 Steely Dan had their first Grammy success winning three awards, taking Album for the Year for *Two Against Nature*, Best Pop Vocal Album for the same release and Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group With Vocal for their single 'Cousin Dupree'. Guitarist, vocalist and co-writer Walter Becker sadly died on September 3, 2017, but Donald Fagen made a promise to "keep the music we created together alive as long as I can with the Steely Dan band".



I Got The News

Steely Dan

♩=118 Rock/Jazz
C7^{b9}

mf

C¹³

[3]

[6]

p

A

G⁷/C Fmaj⁷/C G⁶/C Cmaj⁷ B^bmaj⁷/C Cm⁹ Cmaj⁷

mf

[9]

B^bmaj⁷/C G⁷/C Fmaj⁷/C G⁶/C

[12]

Piano Grade 7

Words & Music by Donald Fagen & Walter Becker
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PIANO GRADE 8 MUSICAL SKILLS AND FEATURES

Duration	2 mins 30 secs – 3 mins 45 secs
Key	Any, with changes
Tempo	50-200 bpm
Time Signatures	Any, with changes
Rhythmic values	Any. Complex combinations beyond 16th note triplets may be frequent and variations may occur regularly. Simpler rhythms will appear in conjunction with other elements (e.g. more detailed harmonic work, faster tempos or more complex time signatures)
Dynamics	Any, with changes, and including strong contrasts
Articulation & Phrasing	Articulation and phrasing will have wide variety and may differ between hands at simultaneous points throughout. Subtlety of control between legato and staccato will be required
Melodic Features	Advanced notated solos may feature. Intervallic passages and transitions may frequently exceed an octave.
Harmonic Features	Five note chords may appear in either hand, and partial chords may be combined with melodic elements. Chordal voicings may be more advanced, denser and/or more frequent, and differ regularly
Rhythmic Features	Rhythmic groupings may differ frequently between hands and occur simultaneously; faster note values will be more repetitive/continuous and combine in both hands
Other Features	Voicings and accompaniment styles within sections will show advanced depth and variety of technique
Keyboard Features (Keys Syllabus Only)	Patch settings will include multiple layers and splits, and switching to alternative settings in performance Sound manipulation may include applying effects, pitch wheel, modulation

End Credits

SONG TITLE: 'END CREDITS'
ALBUM: E.T. THE EXTRA-
TERRESTRIAL:
MUSIC FROM THE
ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK
RELEASED: 1982
LABEL: MCA
GENRE: CLASSICAL
WRITTEN BY: JOHN WILLIAMS
PRODUCED BY: JOHN WILLIAMS/
BRUCE BOTNICK
UK CHART PEAK: N/A

A $\text{♩} = 140$ Soundtrack

mp *expressively*

Ped.

This mesmerizing piece was written by award winning film composer, John Williams, for the 1980s blockbuster E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial. Another of William's beautiful scores, the soundtrack was extremely well received and has been released in several different formats. Firstly, in June 1982 a short eight track soundtrack was released. In 1996 a longer soundtrack was released, featuring a larger sample of the music from the film adaption, including the well known 'End Credits'. For the 20th anniversary of the film's release a slightly longer adaption of the soundtrack was released in 2002, and lastly in 2017 for the 35th anniversary of its release a full length (2 disc) soundtrack was released featuring the full film score.

John Williams is arguably one of the most successful film composers of all time. His scores for 'Star Wars', 'Jaws' and 'E.T.' are three of only six films in history to win the Academy Award, Golden Globe and BAFTA for BEST Original Score in the same year. Widely known for his work with director Steven Spielberg, Williams has scored all but three of Spielberg's films and has seen some of his biggest success working with the director. Some of the duo's best-known work includes Jurassic Park, Indiana Jones, Schindler's list and of course the aforementioned E.T. and Jaws.

Not only a composer but also a conductor and classical pianist, Williams began his musical career as a jazz pianist at a New York Jazz club whilst studying at Julliard. On finishing his education, he moved to Los Angeles where he began work as a session musician, most notably for Henry Mancini. It was with Mancini that Williams had his first introduction to music for film, featuring as a session musician on one of Mancini's scores.

Williams went on to become one of the most well-known names in film composition, with a career of over six decades he has contributed an undeniable amount to the sound of cinema today. He currently holds the record for most Oscar nominations for a living person (51) and is the second most nominated person in history. His long list of accolades includes five Oscars, three Emmy Awards, four Golden Globes, seven BAFTAs and an incredible twenty-three Grammys. His score for E.T. remains one of his most recognisable and has won him no less than four of the above coveted awards.



End Credits

John Williams

From 'E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial' (1982)

A ♩=140 Soundtrack

mp *expressively*

And. *cont. sim.*

[3]

[5]

[7]

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