

WESTERN MUSIC DEVELOPMENT

Simple (Medieval)
to
Highly Structured(Classical)
to
Complex/Experimental/Free Form (20th Century)

Texture

Medieval- Monophonic
Renaissance- Polyphonic
Baroque- Polyphonic/Homophonic
Classical- Homophonic
Romantic- Homophonic/ Mixed texture/ Some dissonance
20th Century- New Explorations/ Lots of dissonance

Instrumentation

Medieval- Mostly vocal music
Renaissance- Mostly strings and vocal but begin adding small number of strings, woodwinds
Baroque- Still largely strings and vocal, but adding still more instruments- early brass (high trumpets), woodwinds (flute, oboe, bassoon), harpsichord
Classical- Larger ensembles, add clarinets, french horns; some use of trumpets, trombones. Limited percussion use (timpani)
Romantic- Still larger ensembles- more use of brass (trumpet, horn, trombone and now tuba), woodwind and percussion
20th Century- Anything goes- lots of percussion, electronic music

Dynamics

Medieval- Voices, almost no dynamic contrast
Renaissance- occasional use of loud and soft (echo)
Baroque- Increasing use of loud and soft
Classical- More dynamic contrast- crescendo and decrescendo
Romantic- Much greater dynamic range
20th Century- Wide dynamic range

Rhythm

Medieval- Bland, almost non-existent
Renaissance- A bit more rhythm
Baroque- Very rhythmic but steady
Classical- More rhythm variation but generally still quite steady
Romantic- More rhythm and less steady beat
20th Century- Anything goes, lots of multi rhythm

Emotion

Medieval- None! Very bland and unemotional
Renaissance- Not much
Baroque- Still quite reserved
Classical- Highly structured but still subtle.
Romantic- Very gushy! Introduced program music.
20th Century- Highly emotional