

**AP Music Theory**  
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Summer Assignment

All musical concepts build upon themselves. One cannot understand voice leading until one understands harmony. One cannot understand harmony without first learning the key signatures. One cannot memorize the key signatures without knowing the notes on the staff. In this AP course, we will begin with the most basic of musical concepts before building up to the larger ideas that compose music.

Students typically begin this class with varying degrees of prior knowledge. Some of you have been exposed to chord progressions, and others of you are wondering what voice leading is. Some of you don't know what direction the stem goes on a note head. That's OK! This course prepares students for first year music theory classes at the university level. Whether you intend to major in music, minor in music, or not, this course will help you to become an informed music listener.

Five items you can do this summer to best prepare for AP Music Theory:

1. **Visit music theory websites and work through the lessons and assessments. Here are a few of many available online:**
    - a. <http://www.musictheory.net>
    - b. <http://www.musiccards.net>
    - c. <http://www.8notes.com/theory/>
    - d. [tonedear.com](http://tonedear.com) (for ear training)
    - e. **By the end of the summer, you should know the basics: note names for pitches on the Treble, Bass, and Alto Clefs, up to two ledger lines above and below the staff. Major/Minor Key Signatures (up to 7 flats/sharps). Rhythmic values (16<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, Quarter, half, whole notes & rests with dots, etc.). Intervals would be great too – just quantity, not quality yet.**
  2. **Purchase and read “What to Listen for in Music” by Aaron Copland.**
    - a. We will refer to this, as well as the official textbook throughout the course. If you already have an idea of “what to listen for in music,” the concepts we discuss in class will be more applicable.
    - b. Pay closest attention to the Four Elements of Music: Rhythm, Melody, Harmony, and Tone Color.
    - c. Online purchase links are posted to Google Classroom (see below).
  3. **Purchase the Barron’s Review Book: AP Music Theory Premium, Fifth Edition: 2 Practice Tests + Comprehensive Review + Online Audio”**
    - a. Purchase link posted on Google Classroom in July. *Do not worry about reading or completing this yet.*
  4. **Spend time every day listening to music. Find various artists from various genres and put into practice what you have read in Copland’s book.**
    - a. “All books on understanding music are agreed about one point: You can’t develop a better appreciation for the art merely by reading a book about it. If you want to understand music better, you can do nothing more important than listen to it. Nothing can possibly take the place of listening to music. Everything that I have to say in this book is said about an experience that you can only get outside this book. Therefore, you will probably be wasting your time in reading it unless you make a firm resolve to hear a great deal more music than you have in the past. All of us, professionals and nonprofessionals, are forever trying to deepen our understanding of the art. Reading a book may sometimes help us. But nothing can replace the prime consideration – listening to music itself.”  
-Aaron Copland, “What to Listen for in Music”
    - b. Spotify has a great selection of Western Art Music as well as Popular Music. I will post a link to a Spotify playlist on our Google Classroom (see below).
  5. **Join our Google Classroom for Brookwood AP Music Theory, and complete the assignment posted before returning to school.**
    - a. Visit [classroom.google.com](https://classroom.google.com)
    - b. Use the code `kcynase` to join our class. Use your GCPS G Suite account to join.
    - c. You can also visit: <https://tinyurl.com/bhsaptheory2425>
- ❖ **For the first day of class, be prepared to discuss the elements of music as stated in Copland’s book and tell us what you have listened to this summer.**