

Aural Tips - Grade 1

- In some tests you can ask for a second playing by the examiner, if necessary.
- The examiner may prompt if needed, although this may affect the assessment.
- Marks are not awarded for each individual test or deducted for mistakes; instead they reflect the candidate's **overall response** in this component.

GRADE 1

A. Clap the pulse of a piece played by the examiner, and to identify whether it is in 2 or 3 time.

- The pulse is the steady heartbeat that is regular and does not change. It will come in 2s or 3s.
- When the examiner starts to play, begin to work out if it is in 2 or 3 times - (walking or waltzing / apple or pineapple etc...)
- Start clapping as soon as you recognise the pulse (not the rhythm)
- Remember to clap louder on the first beat of the set. Make it really obvious.
- The examiner will then ask whether the music is in 2time or 3 time.

B. Sing as echoes 3 phrases played by the examiner (major Key)

- You might feel unsure about singing, but everyone does. It is such a small part of the exam. They are really not judging your singing ability as such.
- The phrases will be two bars long and in 2 or 3 time
- There will only be 3 different notes making up the phrases.
- Sing back the echo without a pause & keep in time.
- There are two intervals (gaps between the notes) that can appear in the notes - these are:
 - a tone (doe a deer) or (mary had a little lamb)
 - a major 3rd (sing the notes of a chord)
- Try playing 3 neighbouring notes in a random order and repeating them.

C Identify where a change in pitch occurs during a phrase played by the examiner.

- I call this the "spot the difference" test.
- The key to this one is to be able to remember the first phrase accurately
- Sing along in your head during the 2nd playing and you should notice where the change occurs.
- The phrase will be two bars long and in a major key
- Only 1 note will change
- State whether the change was near the beginning or near the end.

- If necessary, the examiner will play both versions of the phrase again (although this may affect the mark).
- My unofficial tip: if you are still really unsure - say beginning! These are harder to register and you have a 50/50 chance anyway. You have to say something.

D. Listen to a piece played by the examiner and answer some questions about dynamics or articulation

They might ask a couple of questions from the following:

- **Articulation**
 - Were the notes smooth or detached?
 - Were the quieter parts smooth or detached?
 - At the beginning/end were the notes smooth or detached?
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- **Dynamics**
 - Was the music loud or soft?
 - Where was the quietest/loudest part of the music?
 - Were the quieter parts smooth or detached?
 - Did it start quiet/loud?
 - Did it stay quiet/loud throughout?
 - Where in the piece did it change? (beginning/middle/end)
 - Did it change suddenly or gradually?
 - What was quieter - beginning or end?
 - Towards the end, did the music get louder or quieter?
 - The music began loudly/quietly - did it stay that way?