



Defying Gravity: Initial thoughts

Dynamics:

Rhythm and tempo:

Structure:

Melody:

Instrumentation and  
sonority:

Texture:

Harmony and tonality:



## BASIC INFORMATION

1. Read p109-111 of the text book. What is a musical?

.....  
.....

2. Name as many other musicals as you can (also give the composers where possible)

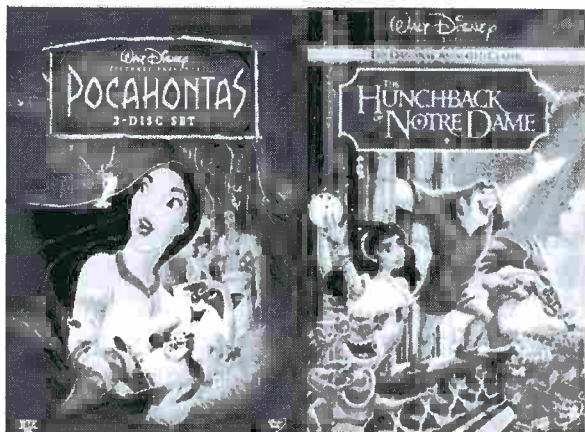
.....  
.....  
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The composer: fill in the gaps.....

Stephen Schwartz was born in ..... He attended ..... and composition classes at the famous Julliard School of Music while still at school and then graduated in Drama from Carnegie Mellon University.



Schwartz first came to public attention by writing new material for the musical ..... This was followed by the English texts in collaboration with Leonard Bernstein for Bernstein's *Mass* (1971), which opened the Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Over the following three years, he wrote the music and lyrics for *Pippin* and *The Magic Show*, both of which ran on Broadway. In addition to many other music theatre productions, Schwartz has worked in film, too, most notably with the composer Alan Menken on Disney's ....., *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Enchanted*. The musical *Wicked* opened in ..... and is currently running on Broadway and in the West End.



Background to Wicked

The musical *Wicked* is based on the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz* and the book *Wicked* by Gregory Maguire.

Read page 111 of the text book, & then write a brief synopsis of the storyline. Include brief descriptions of the main characters.

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***Defying Gravity is a vocal duet for the characters Elphaba (the wicked witch of the west) & Glinda (the good) with some spoken dialogue.***

Question: look at the score.

How are the 'spoken bits' portrayed on the music?.....

Which word from operatic music means 'spoken' bit? R \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ E

***DR SMITH analysis:***

<p><b>DYNAMICS</b></p> <p>Look through the score paying attention to the dynamics. Write a few comments below about what you see. Give examples of dynamics used. Are there any unusual ones?</p> <p><b>Sf =</b>                      <b>What does an accent look like?</b>                      <b>What does a crescendo look like?</b></p>
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# Rhythm, Metre and Tempo



There are numerous tempo changes through this song and they are important to the overall structure. Add the tempo changes alongside the correct bar number.

Bar 1	
Bar 20	
Bar 49	
Bar 88	
Bar 103	
Bar 111	
Bar 129	
Bar 162	
Bar 168	Maestoso = majestic

Find examples of:

Rallentandos meaning? .....

'A tempo' meaning? .....

Time signature (metre) changes

Syncopation (meaning ? .....) )

How are a lot of the syncopations created? By the use of .....

Dotted rhythms

Triplets

A pause.....what does it look like? .....

***INTERESTING.....Notice how a lot of the melodic phrases start after a crotchet rest!***

# STRUCTURE

The overall structure of this movement is **Extended Verse Chorus form**

*(the structure is complex & will be hard to remember in the exam.*

*Tip: know how to recognize the verse & which is the chorus. Know that there are 3 verses & 4 choruses, an introduction & a coda)*

Within this structure the piece has multiple sections which are defined by :

- 1) tempo                      2) mood                      3) melodic material

**You always know when you're in the CHORUS because of the lyrics? (write them below)**

**Complete the chart below by adding in the bar numbers:**

Bar No.s ?? (Fill in this column)  <b>1-31</b>	Free tempo recitative-like	Duet between Glinda and Elphaba with a combination of spoken dialogue and singing. Orchestral chord stabs at start-homophonic texture. Then becomes chordal and sustained. Like a recitative because it moves through the action quickly to get to the next section.
	Andante Verse 1	Homophonic chordal opening moving through different major keys. Legato, conjunct melody. The verse contains tremolo strings with dissonant harmony for accompaniment-strings marked <i>colla voce</i> (with voice- follow singers).
	Allegro Chorus 1 Link 1 Verse 2 Chorus 2	The title 'hook' leaping melody is sung over a broken chord accompaniment and driving hi-hat rhythms. Next Glinda sings a crotchet triplet-based melody before Elphaba takes over with a syncopated version of the verse, which leads into the chorus.
	Moderato Dialogue section Bridge	A contrasting section in the new key of G major with both characters singing a new melody in unison over semiquaver accompaniment.
	Allegro Chorus 3	Return to D major for the chorus sung by both characters, opening in unison with strong piano accompaniment.
	Allegro Link 2 Revised version of intro Verse 3 Chorus 4	Climax of the song with full orchestra and loud dynamic. Opens with the homophonic chordal music which leads into an extended version of the verse at a higher register and with developed melodic and rhythmic ideas. There is a reprise of the chorus



	Andante to Maestoso Link 3 Coda	Build up to full tutti finale, in B minor at bar 168 with Elphaba, Glinda, ensemble chorus and orchestra in counterpoint with different musical lines and lyrics.
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## MELODY

The 2 main vocalists are female. The vocal range for Elphaba is slightly lower than that for Glinda, known as mezzo soprano...slightly lower than soprano.

What does the term 'colla voce' mean?  
(see p55 of score).....

What's the term in music for when both singers sing the same part?  
eg bar 101 - b105? U \_\_\_\_\_ N

Question. The text setting is mainly what? S \_\_\_\_\_ C.

some of the melody is very stepwise...or C \_\_\_\_\_ T.

the opposite (very jumpy) is called what? A \_\_\_\_\_ R.

Schwartz seems obsessed with the intervals of a 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. Look at the melody and start to label some on your score. You'll see just how frequently they occur!!

**A leitmotif is a recurring musical idea which is associated with a particular theme, character or place. (They are used a lot in film music.) There are a few in this piece that the text book labels 'motif a', 'motif b' etc.**

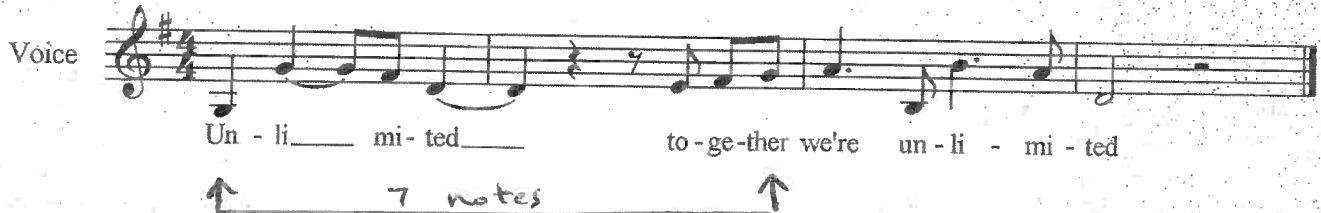
The most prominent leitmotif that Schwartz uses is also used to link the plot to *The Wizard of Oz*, as it is based on the first seven notes of the song 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow'!

Copyright law dictates that, once 8 notes of another composers tune has been used, then the person using the notes is 'stealing'. Schwartz therefore only uses 7 notes! In the text book, it's called motif x.

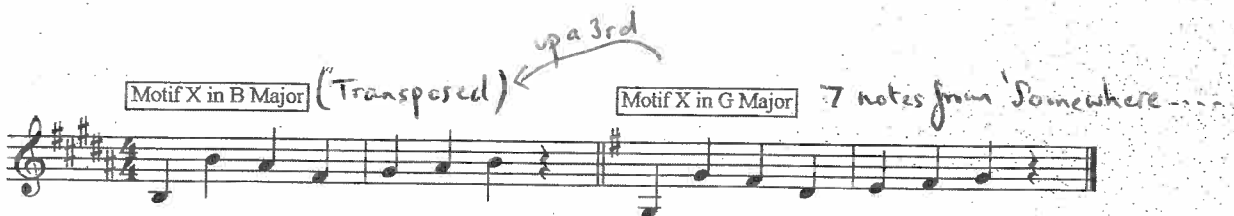
## somewhere over the rainbow



Schwartz also calls this melody the '**Unlimited**' theme (because of the lyrics that appear with it. It first appears in bar 93.) Notice how it is derived from the opening pitches of 'somewhere over the rainbow', but with a new rhythm.



Another important motif used is the following...the textbook calls it **Accompaniment Motif B**. It can be referred to as *Elphaba's theme*. It is derived from the seven pitches of **Melodic Motif X**. It appears several times in *Defying Gravity* starting in B major at bar 20.



Schwartz uses a 3<sup>rd</sup> motif - **Melodic Motif C** - derived again from **Melodic Motif X**, to generate much of the melodic material in *Defying Gravity*.



Notice how the motif/pattern 'c' in bar 21 (B F# B A# F# B) becomes the pattern of pitches in bar 33 just transposed up a minor 3<sup>rd</sup> (D A D C# A D).

Then how the 3 pitches ADC# backwards (C#DA) are used in the melody b34.

And then later in bar 51, how the 3 pitches C#DA becomes an ostinato pattern that is used as an accompaniment pattern.

## INSTRUMENTATION

Wicked is scored for a very large ensemble. The score however, is known as a 'short score'. It gives the main musical ideas shown on just 2 piano staves...treble & bass. A pianist would play from this to accompany rehearsals. Read pages 121 - 122. Make a list of the actual instruments below. Try and group them into families.

Woodwind	Brass	Strings	Percussion
Other: keyboard/synth			

The piece uses lots of instrumental 'effects'.

What's an E bow?

.....  
 .....

Brass effects:

What's a mute? .....

Guitar effects:

What does 'guitar with overdrive mean b11 & b39?  
.....

Name other guitar effects used.....

String effects:

What's the purpose of 'strings tremolando' (b33) & (b162) ?  
.....

Percussion effects:

What's a timp gliss? .....

What does 'drum fill' mean b54?.....

What's a piano 'stab' ? .....

**TEXTURE**

Type	Where?
Homophonic	
Monophonic	
Melody dominated homophony	
Singing in unison	
Singing in 3rds	

**HARMONY**

Important facts:

- 1) Frequent changes of key
- 2) Use of Suspended chords (chords with 2<sup>nd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> not 3<sup>rd</sup>). this often creates a clash that adds drama.
- 3) Lots of chromatic chords (ie. Chords with # & b's) see p54

## Defying Gravity: Vocabulary

Leitmotif	
Metrical Shifting	
Augmented Chord	
Tremolo/tremelando	
Colla voce	
Bare 5 <sup>th</sup>	
Circle of 5 <sup>ths</sup>	
Polytonal Chords	
Vocalisation	
Perfect Intervals	
sfz	
Mute	
sus chord	
Recitative	
Tutti	
Counterpoint	
Conjunct	
Angular	

## SET WORK REVISION: S.SCHWARTZ 'Defying Gravity' revision.

Read through the paragraphs below and complete the gaps with words from the box at the bottom of the page

This set work is a \_\_\_\_\_ for Glinda and \_\_\_\_\_, the two lead characters in the musical \_\_\_\_\_. It is the \_\_\_\_\_ song in the first act and tells of how Elphaba will lead her life as she wants to, fighting the wizard. WICKED's plot is a prequel to the Wizard of Oz story. The music was composed by Stephen \_\_\_\_\_ whose first hit was with the musical \_\_\_\_\_ in 1972.

The key of this piece is \_\_\_\_\_ although it was originally in Db major and it uses a \_\_\_\_\_ orchestra including extended woodwind section with a cor \_\_\_\_\_, bass clarinet and the highest woodwind instrument – the \_\_\_\_\_. There are guitars, synthesizers as well as the three other orchestral sections- percussion, \_\_\_\_\_ and strings.

'Defying Gravity' is written for singers with a \_\_\_\_\_ vocal range nearly two \_\_\_\_\_ and whilst the word-setting is \_\_\_\_\_ it is demanding because of the awkward wide or \_\_\_\_\_ leaps in the melodies as well as \_\_\_\_\_ or stepwise movement. There is some use of the voice using just the sound 'ah' which we call \_\_\_\_\_.

In terms of structure this extract relies on typical song style with \_\_\_\_\_-chorus form but there are many changes of \_\_\_\_\_ or speed, mood and melody within sections which give the music a sense of drive and \_\_\_\_\_. The speeds vary from a free tempo at the start where the voice is used like a recitative ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) to allegro, andante and the use of \_\_\_\_\_ (the Italian term for stately). To add to the sense of growth the texture at the start is light with some \_\_\_\_\_ moments. The main texture is melody-dominated \_\_\_\_\_ or tune and accompaniment but the final section builds up to use \_\_\_\_\_ making it polyphonic.

Although it starts and finishes in D major, the tonality is sometimes ambiguous and there is \_\_\_\_\_ (or clashing notes) and some movement by semitone step or \_\_\_\_\_ writing.

Adding to the musical drama in the song, changes of \_\_\_\_\_, as well as tempo are used and the use of pauses (also known as \_\_\_\_\_) helps to intensify the drama.

'Defying Gravity' is a great example of how musical theatre can heighten moods with a song and can bring an act to a finale with drama and a strong sense of characterisation.

Tempo brass anglois wide conjunct duet  
homophony maestoso dissonance chromatic syllabic time-  
signature Monophonic Elphaba piccolo finale  
verse colla voce Schwartz large vocalisation  
angular counterpoint Godspell fermata  
Wicked D major octaves excitement



# Schwartz: Defying Gravity (2003)

From the musical "Wicked"

## Instrumentation

Large Orchestra (classical instruments) and popular instruments e.g. electric guitar, drums, synthesizers.

Marcato (very accented)

Stabbed piano chords

Legato

3 note ostinato played staccato

Unusual techniques: palm muting, chorus, delay, flange. E-bow on guitars. Timpani glissandi.

Unusual percussion: bell tree, chimes, shaker, finger cymbal, crotales, tin maraca, nut rattle.

Vocalists have large range

Tremolo strings = tension

## STRUCTURE (Simplified)

Intro dialogue | Verse 1 | chorus |  
 Verse 2 | chorus | dialogue | chorus |  
 Verse 3 | chorus | Coda

## CONTEXT

End of Act I. Dramatic song sung by Elphaba and Glinda. Elphaba vows to fight Wizard of Oz and not give in to his rules.

## TONALITY & HARMONY

D major

Major and minor harmonies throughout

Augmented chords

Opening has no tonality/ambiguous (chromatic movement)

Verse and chorus start major

Coda starts minor

Pedal notes used

Sus chords

Dissonance (clashes) occasionally

## DYNAMICS & TEXTURE

Melody dominated homophony mainly

Monophonic vocal lines occasionally for witches

Builds up towards the end – contrapuntal. 3 ideas happening at once.

## MELODY

Use of Leitmotifs

Intervals of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> very important

"unlimited" theme – based on the first 7 notes of *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*.

Vocalisation "ahhh" at end

Syllabic

Ascending sequences

Combination of stepwise (conjunct) and angular leaps

## RHYTHM

Alternating... slow chordal accompaniments contrasted with driving quaver rhythms

Syncopation

Rubato

Heavy percussion for rhythmic emphasis & effects

Many tempo changes e.g. andante, moderato, allegro

3/2, 2/2, 4/4, 2/2

Triplets