

MEDIEVAL MUSIC - KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

HISTORY AND CONTEXT

The Medieval period lasted almost a thousand years from 500 to 1450. Medieval actually means 'middle ages'. Medieval music was split into two groups - **SACRED** and **SECULAR**.

FEATURES OF MEDIEVAL MUSIC

- Music was written using modes (certain groups of notes) and written down in a very different way than today's music notation and without a time signature;
- There were no electric instruments or amplifiers, so instruments were roughly divided into two types - chamber (indoor) instruments and outdoor instruments (ones that may be louder or where the sound carried better).

- Medieval instruments included:

Lute - string instrument, ancestor of the guitar

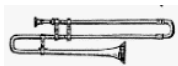
Nakers - small kettledrums made of wood, metal or copper. Played in pairs with hard sticks

Rebec - a bowed string instrument with a narrow, bowl-shaped body made of wood. Similar to the modern violin.

Shawm - an outdoor instrument, a wooden tube with holes and with double reed. Ancestor to modern oboe, but louder!

Sackbutt - made of metal, with slide like a trombone.

Dulcimer - a string instrument played on your lap using small hammers.



MEDIEVAL MUSIC KEY TERMS

Sacred



Religious music written and sung by nuns and monks in monasteries (the buildings where nuns/monks lived, studied and worked).

Secular



Any music that was non-religious. This music was spread by minstrels.

Minstrel



Musician who travelled Europe singing songs in royal courts and inns/taverns (medieval pubs).

A Capella



Vocal music sung unaccompanied (no instruments).

Accompaniment

Musical part that provides the rhythm and harmony to support the melody.

Drone

A note (or two notes) that sound throughout a piece (usually low in pitch).

Mode

A certain set of notes used to compose a melody/harmony. There were many different modes during the medieval period.

Time signature



Specifies how many beats per bar and how the beat is grouped.