

ABRSM Pathways through the Clarinet Syllabus

This poster showcases exciting pieces from the new syllabus, grouped by theme and colour-coded for clarity. Most selections are fresh, lesser-known works chosen for their strong teaching potential. Use the poster in your lessons, to inspire lesson planning, explore new repertoire, and introduce engaging, topic-based pathways to your students.

Grade 1

A6 Mazurka by Carreño
A mazurka is a dance in three originating from Poland. Unlike a waltz, it is often the second beat of the bar that is accented and not the first.



B4 Moonlight by Roma Cafolla
Roma is from Northern Ireland. This is an expressive piece with a slurred melody that needs careful counting above an arpeggiated accompaniment. It depicts a peaceful mood.



B6 Moon River by H. Mancini
This piece was originally written as a song in the film, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, sung by Audrey Hepburn. It needs to be played very smoothly to show the cantabile style, with some rise and fall to mimic the movement of the water.



B9 Hatikvah, Trad., arr. Davies & Reade
This charming melody has been a popular choice as a Grade 1 piece over the years. It is an excellent link to the Klezmer style of clarinet playing, which features in higher grades. There are some rests to count carefully as the piece progresses.



Grade 2

A2 Pigwig Jig by Mike Mower
An example of Choro music, a tango-like style with strong connections to ballroom dancing. This arrangement includes moments where the clarinet plays an accompanying role, so allow the piano's melody to come through.



A7 Night Sky by Roma Cafolla
Although this piece is all below the break, it demands careful finger placement to jump down to the low Fs. Use a suitably dark tone to depict the night sky, and crisp staccato notes to portray some twinkling stars.



B6 Unter einer Wolke by Rudolf Mauz
This is at a relatively slow tempo for a Klezmer-style piece, and the rising and falling phrases could be seen to portray the title, which means Under a Cloud.



B7 Sarah-Jane by Roger Purcell & Nicholas Cox
In this piece by composer, Roger Purcell and virtuoso clarinet player, Nicholas Cox, it is not clear if Sarah-Jane is real or imagined. The melody sits well on the clarinet, making it a good early example to teach how to cross the break smoothly.



Grade 3

B8 Morning Song by Toivo Kuula, arr. North
Toivo Kuula was a Finnish composer who lived from 1883-1918. It is a charming folk melody in ternary form, with the middle section modulating to the minor key. A good exercise in thinking in two different keys during one piece.



B10 The Music of the Night by Lloyd Webber, arr. Lawrence
A famous melody from *Phantom of the Opera*. The opening is relatively easy to play, but there is some smooth crossing between registers needed later on, and the melody reaches some high notes in the middle section.



C1 Fly me to the moon by Bart Howard, arr. Iles
This tune was originally written in 3 time, but Quincy Jones changed it to 4 time for the Frank Sinatra recording. Look out for the fun and jazzy slow trill at the end. It uses staccato and a lightly articulated sound to capture the buoyant nature of this style of music.



C5 Tightrope Walker by Alan Bullard
This short piece by one of the ABRSM examiners demands some clean articulation up to Bb in the upper register. There is some syncopation to tackle early on as well.



C12 Hedwig's Theme by John Williams arr. Galliford, Neuburg & Edmonson
Everyone will know this famous theme from the Harry Potter films. It is fun to learn, but the chromaticism means that it requires some careful swapping between right and left little finger keys.



Grade 4

A8 Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Pike by Mike Nightingale
The main theme for this humorous piece has been taken from Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf, a song from the 1933 Disney cartoon of *The Three Little Pigs*. The composer has reimagined it in a lively march style.



A9 Soldier Soldier by Jim Parker
Teachers and parents may remember the TV series more than young learners. Jim Parker composed many successful TV themes, and this one is great fun, as it incorporates the British folk song, *Soldier, Soldier, won't you marry me?*



B10 Cairo Cradle Song by Ros Stephen
This piece combines a gentle lullaby style with a melody based on Egyptian scale patterns.



B11 Princess Leia's Theme by John Williams, arr. Galliford, Neuburg & Edmonson
This theme could not be more different from Cantina Band also from Star Wars, which features in the Grade 4 book. It needs lyrical playing to depict one of the main characters from the films.



C12 Sir Duke by Stevie Wonder, arr. Ramskill
This was a hit for Stevie Wonder in 1976, written as a homage to Duke Ellington, one of the great jazz composers and band leaders from the 1920s. The piece is perfect for lovers of swing style.



Grade 5

A5 Menuetto and Trio by Crusell arr. King
Crusell was a Finnish clarinetist who lived from 1775-1838. This piece is in a style used by many Classical composers, based on a dance style in triple time. The clarinet accompanies the melody in the Trio section with some rising and falling arpeggio figures.



B7 Theme from Ladies in Lavender by Nigel Hess
This famous film theme works well on the clarinet. There are some fast runs to tackle at the end of the middle section, and the main theme needs good breath control.



C1 Corta-jaca: Gaucho, arr. Hayter
An example of Choro music, a tango-like style with strong connections to ballroom dancing. This arrangement includes moments where the clarinet plays an accompanying role, so allow the piano's melody to come through.



C7 In a Sentimental Mood by Duke Ellington, arr. Wastall
Duke's pieces often swing along joyfully, but here is one of his more reflective numbers. The melody needs some sensitive contouring, and there is scope to add some flexibility to the pulse.



C10 Small Talk by Roger Purcell & Nicholas Cox
This piece is a homage to the famous composer, Gershwin. It is in a lively swing style, and it will appeal to any clarinet player who loves jazz music.



Grade 6

A5 Schon Rosmarin by Kreisler, arr. Langenus
Kreisler was a famous violinist and composer, who wrote many educational and virtuosic pieces. This arrangement works well for the clarinet, and it is in a lively waltz style. The opening requires some fluent playing of arpeggio figures with mixed articulation.



B4 Misty by Garner
The song was famously recorded by Ella Fitzgerald. This arrangement is a great choice for clarinet players who love slow jazz music.



C6 Swinging Shepherd Blues by Koffman
This is lively piece in swing style. Both registers of the clarinet are used, and look out for the humorous quotation of *Baa Baa Black Sheep*.



C8 March of the Malevolent Elephants by Mark Tanner
The elephants are depicted by some strong accents at the beginning, but the opening tempo needs careful thought, as there are semiquavers and quintuplets later on. It is a good piece for practising quick changes of articulation.



C11 Khosid and Khosid Wedding Dance, Trad., arr. Sayers
This is the most demanding Klezmer arrangement in the new syllabus. It is lively music written for a happy occasion, but it demands some fast fingers. Higher grade clarinet players may enjoy adding some vibrato and slides to make it sound truly idiomatic.



Grade 7

A4 Gigue by J.S. Bach
Bach's solo works have often been arranged for clarinet players, and they are a great way to get to know this great composer's style. As they were often written for string players, breathing will need careful consideration.



A8 The Quick Brown Fox by Graham Lyons
Graham Lyons played many wind instruments, and so all his compositions are idiomatic. This piece needs playing briskly as its title suggests. Although jazzy in style, the slurred quavers should be played evenly.



B9 Calm is the fragrant air by Edwin Roxburgh
This is a solo piece by one of our best-known living British composers. He is also an oboist and, although this piece was written for the clarinet, try to emulate how the smooth phrases would sound on an oboe. There is scope to play it very freely to paint a vivid picture.



B12 Oiseau doux de la nuit by V. Weigl
Vally Weigl was a composer of Czech Jewish origin who lived from 1894-1982. This is an expressive solo piece, which needs rubato, and contains trills and runs to depict the sweet bird of the title.



C11 Khosid and Khosid Wedding Dance, Trad., arr. Sayers
This is the most demanding Klezmer arrangement in the new syllabus. It is lively music written for a happy occasion, but it demands some fast fingers. Higher grade clarinet players may enjoy adding some vibrato and slides to make it sound truly idiomatic.



Grade 8

A5 Air slave by C. de Grandval
Clémence De Grandval was a French female composer of the 19th Century. In this piece she was influenced by the music of the Slavic countries, which include Russia, Ukraine and Poland.



B8 Lullaby by Castelnuovo-Tedesco
This is the slow movement from Italian composer, Castelnuovo-Tedesco's wonderful Sonata for Clarinet Op. 128. It is romantic in style, and it needs some controlled rubato. Dynamics should be varied without losing the gentle mood required for a lullaby.



B11 Cafe, 1930 by Piazzolla, arr. Varelas
Piazzolla was a composer from Argentina, and his expressive tango music has become famous in recent years, leading to some very successful arrangements for wind instruments. This example demands both musicianship and technical control of the faster runs.



C2 Scatty Cat by Cheri Baster
This is an ideal choice for anyone who likes jazz and rock styles, but they will need to enjoy moving around the instrument really quickly as well!



C5 I Got Rhythm by Paul Harvey
Paul Harvey was a fine composer for wind instruments. He wrote the *Three Etudes on Themes of Gershwin* for Solo Clarinet for three of his clarinet-playing friends. This piece alternates from free and expressive sections to some fast and rhythmic passages, using motifs from Gershwin's famous song in many imaginative ways.



KEY

● Pieces about animals
 ● Exploring Style and Influence
 ● Night music
 ● Film and TV music
 ● Music about people
 ● Scenic Pieces
 ● A new commission