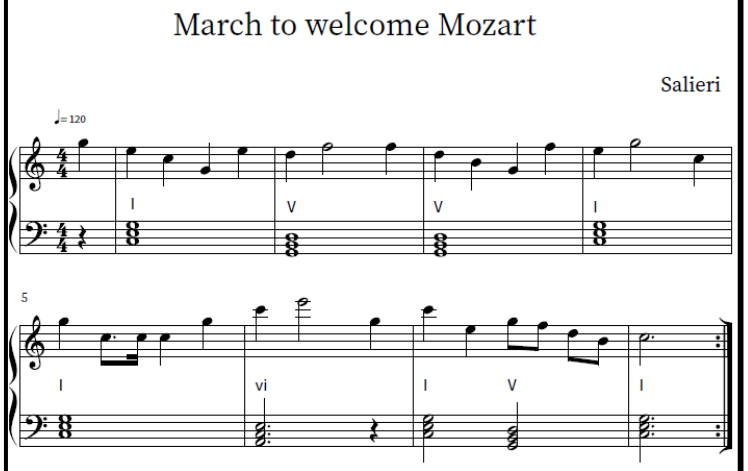
David Ross Education Trust
Broadening Horizons



Year 8 Unit 1
Amadeus

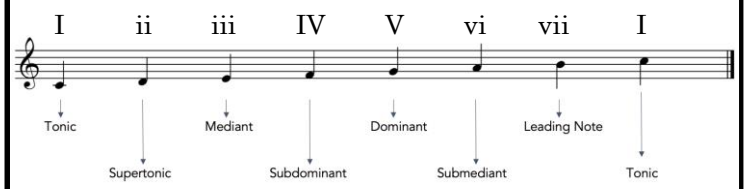
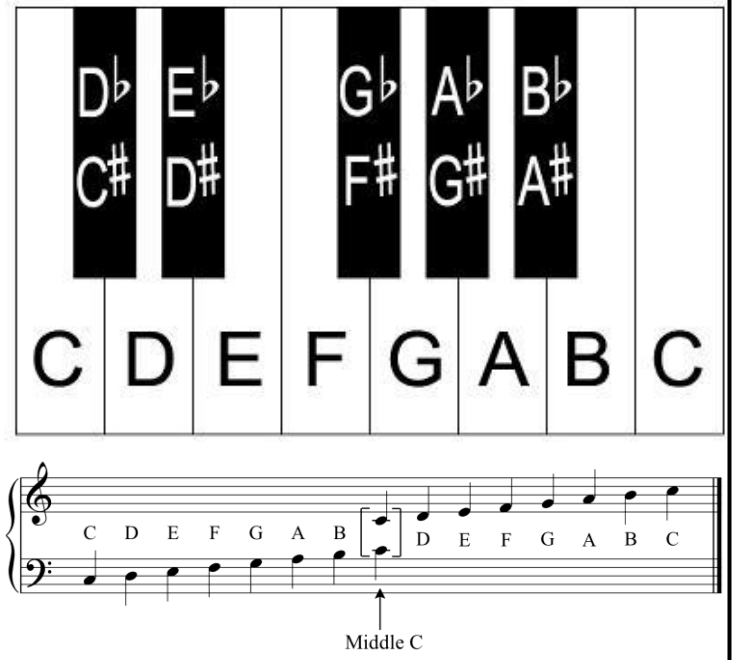
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria, where his father Leopold was a violinist and composer. Wolfgang (or Wolferl as his family called him) was a child prodigy. He composed his first piece of music at age five; he had his first piece published when he was seven; and he wrote his first opera when he was twelve. By the time Wolfgang was 6, he was an excellent pianist and violinist. He and his sister Maria Anna (known as Nannerl) travelled all over Europe performing for royalty.

When he grew up, Mozart moved to Vienna, and tried to earn a living as a pianist and composer. But he had a lot of trouble handling the fact that he was no longer a child prodigy. Mozart was still a musical genius, but after he stopped being a cute kid, people stopped making a big fuss over him. Back then, musicians were treated like servants, but Mozart did not, and could not think of himself as a servant.

Mozart was only 35 when he died. During his short life, he composed in all different musical forms, including operas, symphonies, concertos, masses, and chamber music. Today, he is still considered a genius!

Key Words and Definitions

Melody	a series of single sounds that form a tune.
Rhythm	the placement of sounds in relation to time.
Pitch	how high or low a sound is.
Texture	how the layers of sound within a piece of music interact.
Harmony	multiple pitches being played at the same time.
Structure	the arrangement of a piece of music.
Chord	three or more single pitches heard simultaneously.
Triad	a set of three notes that can be stacked vertically in thirds.
Root	the tonic or fundamental note of a chord.
Tonic	the first degree of any diatonic scale.
Dominant	the fifth degree of any diatonic scale.
Cadence	



Perfect cadences sound as though the music has come to an end. A perfect cadence is formed by the chords V - I.
Interrupted cadences are 'surprise' cadences. You think you're going to hear a perfect cadence, but you get a minor chord instead.
Imperfect cadences sound unfinished. They sound as though they want to carry on to complete the music properly. An imperfect cadence ends on chord V.