

Descant Recorder Sight-reading tests from 2018 – a sampler

The sight-reading requirements for woodwind are changing for 2018. A set of tests for Grades 1-8 are provided here to give you a flavour of what to expect, along with a table outlining the new parameters.

Further practice material can be found in ABRSM's new books of sample sight-reading tests, available to purchase at www.abrsm.org/shop.

Grade 1

Lively

Musical notation for Grade 1, Lively. It consists of a single staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music starts with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The melody includes a half note, a quarter note, a pair of eighth notes, a quarter rest, another pair of eighth notes, a quarter note, a pair of eighth notes, and a quarter rest.

Grade 2

Allegro

Musical notation for Grade 2, Allegro. It consists of two staves in 2/4 time with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The music starts with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The melody is more rhythmic, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes, and includes a fermata over the final note.

Grade 3

Leggiero

Musical notation for Grade 3, Leggiero. It consists of two staves in 3/8 time with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The music starts with a piano (p) dynamic on the first staff and mezzo-forte (mf) on the second. The melody is light and includes slurs, a fermata, and a final fermata.

Grade 4

Maestoso

f *p*

f

Grade 5

Allegro moderato

mf

p *mf*

p **rit.**

Sight-reading parameters

The table below shows the introduction of elements at each grade. Please note that these parameters are presented cumulatively, i.e. once introduced they apply for all subsequent grades (albeit within a logical progression of difficulty).

	Length (bars)	Time	Keys*	Range	Other features that may be included
Grade 1	4	4/4 3/4	C, F majors	d'-d''	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note values; rests • notes tongued or with simple two-note slurs • <i>mf</i>
	6	2/4			
Grade 2	8		D major D minor	c'-f''	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • patterns; rests • tied notes • staccato
Grade 3		3/8	A minor	c'-a''	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accidentals (within minor keys only) • ; simple semiquaver patterns; rests • accents • <i>p</i>
Grade 4	c. 8	6/8	G major E minor	c'-b''	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chromatic notes • anacrusis • tenuto • pause sign • <i>f</i> and <i>mp</i>
Grade 5	c. 8-16		A, B \flat majors B, G minors	c'-b''	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple syncopation • slowing of tempo at end • <i>cresc.</i> and <i>dim.</i> hairpins

* Minors - natural form at Grade 2, any form from Grade 3

Ranges are presented using the Helmholtz system, i.e.:

