Texture

Texture is how the lines in a piece fit together: how many there are, and what each one does. Three words describe it.

LISTEN
Texture is easiest to hear: scan to play every example
tissimo.co/worksheets/texture

THREE TEXTURES

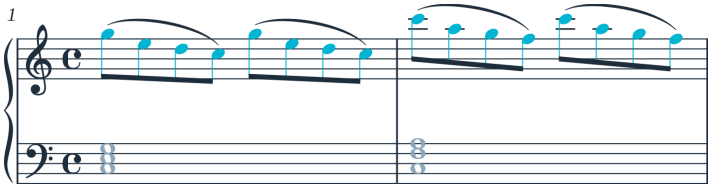
Monophonic
one line

A single tune and nothing else. In bars 36–38 of *Für Elise* the left hand stops and the right hand plays **alone** (Handout 342).



Homophonic
a tune with support

One **tune**; everything else **supports** it with chords, held notes or a repeating pattern. Most music works this way. *La Candeur*, bars 1–2 (Handout 344).



Polyphonic
many voices

Two or more tunes at once, each with its own notes and its own rhythm. *Minuet in G*, bars 7–8: the right hand ends its tune on a long A while the **left hand** answers with a tune of its own (Handout 238).



HOMOPHONIC MUSIC COMES IN TWO KINDS

A tune and an accompaniment

The **tune** on top, a **pattern** underneath: here the 1–5–8–5 ballad pattern (Handout 230).



Chords that move with the tune

Each **tune** note gets its own chord, all in one rhythm, as in a hymn (Handout 334).



THE TEXTURE CAN CHANGE INSIDE A PIECE

The *Musette in D* (Handout 346) starts with a tune over a drone, then both hands play one line in octaves. The tune can change hands too: in *The Happy Farmer* (Handout 347) it starts in the left hand and moves up to the right hand in bar 9, with the left hand doubling it below. Baroque music loves polyphony; Classical music mostly sets one clear tune over an accompaniment (Handout 340).



Try it Play bars 7–8 of the *Minuet in G* (above) with the left hand alone and **sing the right hand**: two tunes at once. Then name the texture of each section of a piece you are learning. More practice: Exercises 55 and 74.

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