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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

## Level 1 Music 2024

**91950 Demonstrate understanding of music in  
relation to contexts**

**EXEMPLAR**

**Excellence**

## Another Brick in the Wall pt2 – Pink Floyd

Another Brick in the Wall pt2 is part of Pink Floyd's 1979 album The Wall. The purpose of this piece is to comment on the negativity of the British education system, particularly in the 1950s, and to comment on how that system oppressed differences in people and society. The album tells a story about the life of a rock star named Pink and shows his struggles throughout his life.

The instruments used are guitar, bass, drums, organ, synthesizer, tambourine, lead vocals, and a children's choir ( [Another Brick in the Wall Pt 2 – Simon Reich Music \(wordpress.com\)](#) ). At the end of the song, there is also the sound of a man – the headmaster – yelling, and children's voices. The genre of this piece is progressive rock.

The stylistic features typical of progressive rock are:

- Concept driven lyrics
- Emphasis on musical elements/instruments
- Strong beat, often in unusual time signatures
- Unconventional instrument choices
- Strong focus on guitar, occasionally also keyboard/piano

An element that shows the purpose of this song is the use of unconventional instrument/vocal choices, such as a children's choir. This shows the context of a school environment. By conveying this message through a children's choir, it helps the audience to see who would actually have experienced the bad system and feel sympathy and agreement with the message. At the very end of the song, there is also the sound of the headmaster yelling at children, with their overlapping voices in the background. This shows how in the band's experience, teachers were not kind to their students, contributing to the oppression and negativity of the education system. Overall, this element is very effective in conveying the message of the song as it very clearly shows how bad and oppressive the school experience is.

The lyric "we don't need no education" itself also shows the purpose of the song. The lyric is a double negative, which shows the failure of the system to actually teach children and says that in reality we do need education. Ironically, this song is often misunderstood as being against education as a whole. The lyric "just another brick in the wall" shows how all the individual bad elements of the system, such as abusive teachers, strict rules, and the suppression of individuality together make the system as bad as it is and make education as traumatic as it was for Waters. The vocal melody for most of the song is simple, often with a lot of overlapping voices – either the choir, or Gilmour and Waters' voices in both verse and chorus. This shows how dull and depressing the education system was for children, also shown through the relatively droning melody. Overall, this is very significant and effective for showing the meaning of the song, as it clearly conveys the negativity and depression the system invoked.

The use of a D minor key creates a sad and negative mood in the song. This helps create a negative feel for the audience and helps convey the negativity of the song's message. It conveys how the education system is sad and negative like a minor key, instead of happy like a major key. Overall, while the use of

this key signature holds a lot of significance for the makeup of the song, it is not as effective at quickly conveying the message to the audience.

For the majority of the verse and intro of the song, the guitar plays a Dm chord. By mainly sticking to chord I, which is a minor chord, it shows how little change occurs in the British system, and how they spent a lot of their time in a depressing and boring state, as if they stuck in their ways. In the chorus, it switches to an F – C – Dm progression, which shows how even when positive change occurs, shown by the major chords (F, C), it reverts to the minor chord, showing how the system just goes back to its same old negativity. Overall, this is very effective for showing the meaning of the song, as it gives the whole song a negative feel with only small hints of positivity. This shows how their message on the British school system they experienced is very predominantly negative and depressing and is a very significant aspect of the song.

## **Kai Tangata – Alien Weaponry**

Kai Tangata is a song from Alien Weaponry's 2018 album Tu. The purpose of this piece is to remake the memory of the 19<sup>th</sup> century New Zealand musket wars. These were intertribal battles fought between Māori, often involving muskets that were brought over from Europe.

The instruments used in this piece are drums, guitar, bass, and vocals, as well as a Putatara (shell) at the beginning of the song. The genre of this piece is metal.

The stylistic features typical of the metal genre are:

- Distorted guitar
- Fast tempo
- Drum heavy
- Bass heavy
- Powerful/aggressive vocals

An element that shows the purpose of this song is Alien Weaponry's use of taonga puoro. At the beginning of the song, a Putatara (shell) can be heard. This instrument is often used in Māori culture as a signaling device, or in this case a call to arms. This conveys the context of the song as it reminds the listener of Māori culture. Its traditional use as a call to arms helps to show the context of a war, therefore helping to 'recreate the memory' of the wars. This significantly helps to convey the purpose of the song, helping to show the Māori nature of the song. It effectively conveys a part of the song's purpose very quickly.

Kai Tangata contains fast rhythmical drum hits, most prevalent in between the first chorus and verse 2. These drums imitate the sound of rapid gunfire, helping to recreate the memory of the musket wars and showing their violent nature. This is a more minor part of the song overall but is still effective at conveying its purpose despite not being as significant as other elements.



The dynamics of the song also convey its purpose. The song starts quiet, then gradually increases to be much louder towards the middle of the song. This shows the musket wars were intense for those involved and shows how Alien Weaponry aimed to show the intensity of those battles.

The texture of the song works with the dynamics to convey the song's purpose. The song starts off with a very sparse texture, with only the Putatara playing. It is later joined by grungy guitar, vocals, drums, and bass, which gradually start playing more and louder, linking to the dynamics. These elements are significant for accurately conveying the memory of the musket wars, and effective in conveying the song's purpose.

The lyrics are sung entirely in Te Reo. This honours the Māori warriors involved and makes it more accurate and realistic to the musket wars. This helps to better recreate the memory of the musket wars. The lyrics mention Tumatauenga in every verse and chorus, who is the Māori god of war. For those who understand Māori or know who the god is, it helps to make them think of war, helping to convey the memory of the musket wars. The vocal tone is also very loud and aggressive, particularly in the verse sections. This helps convey the memory of the musket wars by showing the anger and violence they contained. The use of melody in this song is very effective in conveying its message, and very significant to showing the overall mood and emotions related to the context.

## Excellence

**Subject:** Music

**Standard:** 91950

### Marker commentary

**Another Brick in the Wall.** In this script the candidate clearly states the context that they will link the music to in the first paragraph i.e. to comment on the negativity of the British education system (in the 1950s).

The candidate explains how the bands decision to use a children's choir and a headmaster's voice "yelling at the children" links directly to the school system and the band member's experience of school. "By conveying this message through a children's choir, it helps the audience to see who would actually have experienced the bad system and feel sympathy and agreement with the message." "This shows the band's experience, teachers were not kind to their students, contributing to the oppression and negativity of the education system.

The candidate explores how the lyrics contribute to the context with the line "we don't need no education" explaining how the use of a "double negative shows the failure of the system to actually teach children and says in reality we do need education." The candidate expands on the context of the song explaining that it not education that is the issue, but how the different parts of the education system can create negative experiences, which he links to the experiences of the composer.

The candidate discusses how the tonality of the piece contributes to the message. The predominant use of a I minor chord throughout the verses "shows how little change occurs in the British system, and how they spent a lot of their time in a depressing and boring state."

**Kai Tangata.** In this response the candidate clearly states the context that they will link the music to in the first paragraph i.e. the New Zealand musket wars.

The candidate explains the contextual use of Putatara and how the use of it in this piece links to the idea of Maori wars. "This instrument is often used in Maori culture as a signalling device, or in this case a call to arms. This conveys the context of the song as it reminds the listener of Maori culture. It's traditional use as a call to arms helps to show the context of war.

The candidate explains how the use of fast rhythmical drum hits (providing direction to find an example of this) are used to "imitate the sound of rapid gunfire, helping to recreate the memory of the musket wars and showing their violent nature."

The candidate explains how the band used dynamics and texture to build from a quiet start to an intense battle as in war.

The candidate discusses how each verse mentions Tumatauenga the Maori God of war links to the memory of the musket wars.