

# Knowledge organiser AoS3: Music of the Indian subcontinent

## Key ideas and concepts

## Key terms

<b>1. Indian classical music</b>	The Indian subcontinent is a vast and culturally diverse area. The classical music we have looked at comes from the north (Hindustani). The music is largely improvised based around ragas and talas, and usually contains three separate sections.	<b>1. Guru</b>	A master performer
<b>2. Bhangra</b>	Bhangra started in the Punjab region of India (now split between India and Pakistan) from the 14th Century. Normally performed at festivals. Modern bhangra is a fusion of traditional bhangra and western pop influences.	<b>2. Improvise</b>	Making up music during a performance, rather than referring to a pre-existing melody or part.
<b>Music of the Indian subcontinent</b>		<b>3. Raga</b>	A set of pitches, similar to a scale.
<b>1. Indian classical music</b>	1. Performers play <b>entirely by ear and from memory</b> , and learn from a master performer called a <b>guru</b> .	<b>4. Drone</b>	A repeated note or set of notes repeated throughout a piece.
	2. Performers (and often the audience) <b>sit crossed legged</b> on the floor during performances.	<b>5. Tala</b>	A cycle of beats that repeat.
	3. <b>Performances can last several hours</b> and are of indeterminate length.	<b>6. Alap</b>	The opening section of a piece of Indian classical music.
	4. The vast majority of the music is <b>improvised</b> , and the performers are constantly communicating and responding to each other with their playing.	<b>7. Gat</b>	The main, middle section of a piece of Indian classical music. It is a fixed composition.
	5. <b>Raga</b> - a <b>set of pitches</b> , similar to a scale or mode. Used to create a melody. There are <b>hundreds of different ragas</b> to be used at <b>different times of the day or year</b> . Usually played on a <b>sitar</b> .	<b>8. Jhala</b>	The fast climax of a piece of Indian classical music.
	6. <b>Drone</b> - a repeated note or set of notes played throughout the piece. It is <b>static</b> - unchanging. It does not change chord. Traditionally played on a <b>tanpura</b> or <b>shruti box</b> .	<b>9. Sitar</b>	A stringed instrument. Its distinctive sound is due to a number of 'sympathetic strings' incorporated within the instrument.
	7. <b>Tala</b> - a cycle of beats that repeat. Hundreds of different types. The <b>tintal</b> is 16 beats long. - divided into 4 <b>bols</b> (bars). The <b>sam</b> is the first beat and is accented. Bols 1, 2 & 4 are the <b>vibhag</b> , and bar 3 is the <b>khali vibhag</b> . This is performed on a <b>tabla</b> - played with hands and fingers to create a wide variety of sounds and pitches. The performers <b>improvises rhythms</b> based on the tala.	<b>10. Tabla</b>	A pair of Indian drums, capable of a wide variety of sounds and pitches.
	8. The <b>structure</b> can be divided into <b>3 sections</b> : <b>Alap</b> - opening section, slow, improvised, in free time, only the drone and melody play. <b>Gat</b> - tabla plays, there is a clear pulse, some fixed phrases may be played, but still has lots of improvisation. <b>Jhala</b> - fast and exciting final section, music becomes faster and more virtuosic.	<b>11. Sarod</b>	A lute
	9. Famous performers include <b>Ravi Shankar</b> (sitar) and <b>Alla Rakha</b> (tabla).	<b>12. Tanpura</b>	A stringed instrument used to create a drone.
<b>2. Bhangra</b>	1. The term 'bhangra' originally referred to a type of <b>Punjabi dancing</b> .	<b>13. Sarangi</b>	A stringed instrument that is bowed.
	2. <b>Traditional</b> bhangra is from the <b>Punjab</b> region.	<b>14. Bansuri</b>	A side blown flute.
	3. <b>Modern</b> bhangra formed by <b>British Asian</b> musicians and is a <b>fusion</b> between traditional bhangra and <b>western pop</b> influences.	<b>15. Dhol</b>	A double-headed barrel drum .
	4. The <b>structure</b> of most bhangra pieces is similar to a standard pop song, featuring <b>verses, choruses and instrumental</b> sections.	<b>16. Tumbi</b>	A high-pitched, single-stringed instrument.
	5. Modern bhangra uses <b>synthesisers, drum machines, samples</b> . It often contains shouts of <b>'Hoi'</b> .	<b>17. Riff</b>	A short repeated phrase.
	6. Instrumental sections are frequently constructed of <b>riffs</b> and the use of samples.	<b>18. Chaal</b>	The fundamental rhythm used in bhangra, played on the dhol.
	7. Famous performers include <b>Punjabi MC</b> .	<b>19. Synthesiser</b>	An electronic keyboard instrument.
	<b>20. Sampling</b>	Taking an extract from one recording and using it in another.	