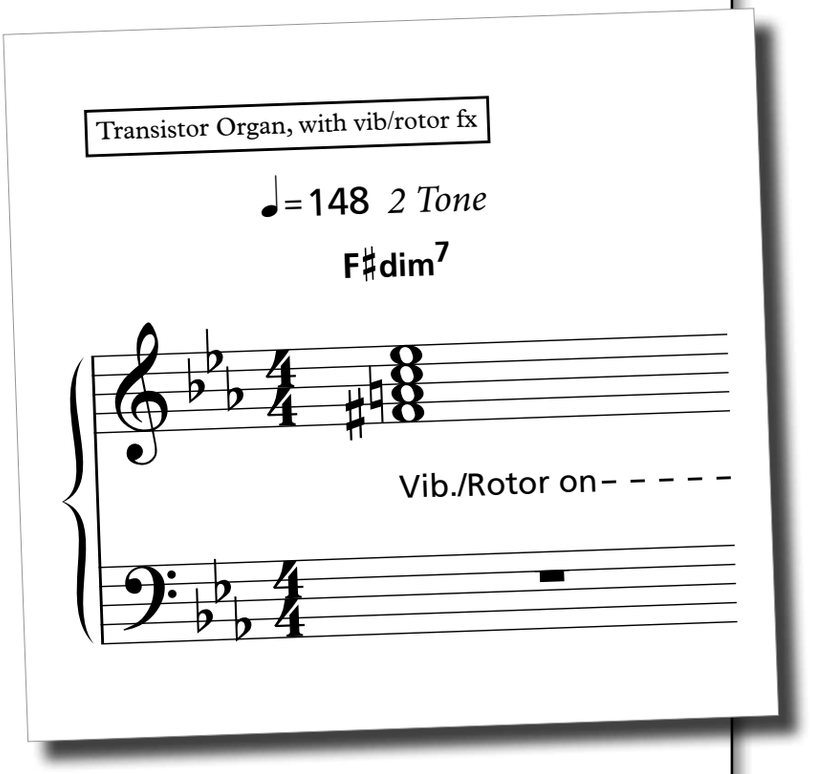
Ghost Town

SONG TITLE:	'GHOST TOWN'
ALBUM:	N/A
RELEASED:	1981
LABEL:	2 TONE
GENRE:	2 TONE
WRITTEN BY:	JERRY DAMMERS
PRODUCED BY:	JOHN COLLINS
UK CHART PEAK:	1



'Ghost Town' was the last single to be released by the British two-tone band, The Specials. The song doesn't actually feature on an album, as the original seven piece line-up split up shortly after its release. The song hit the UK charts on the 12th June 1981, where it peaked at number 1 for three weeks and then spent another seven weeks within the top ten.

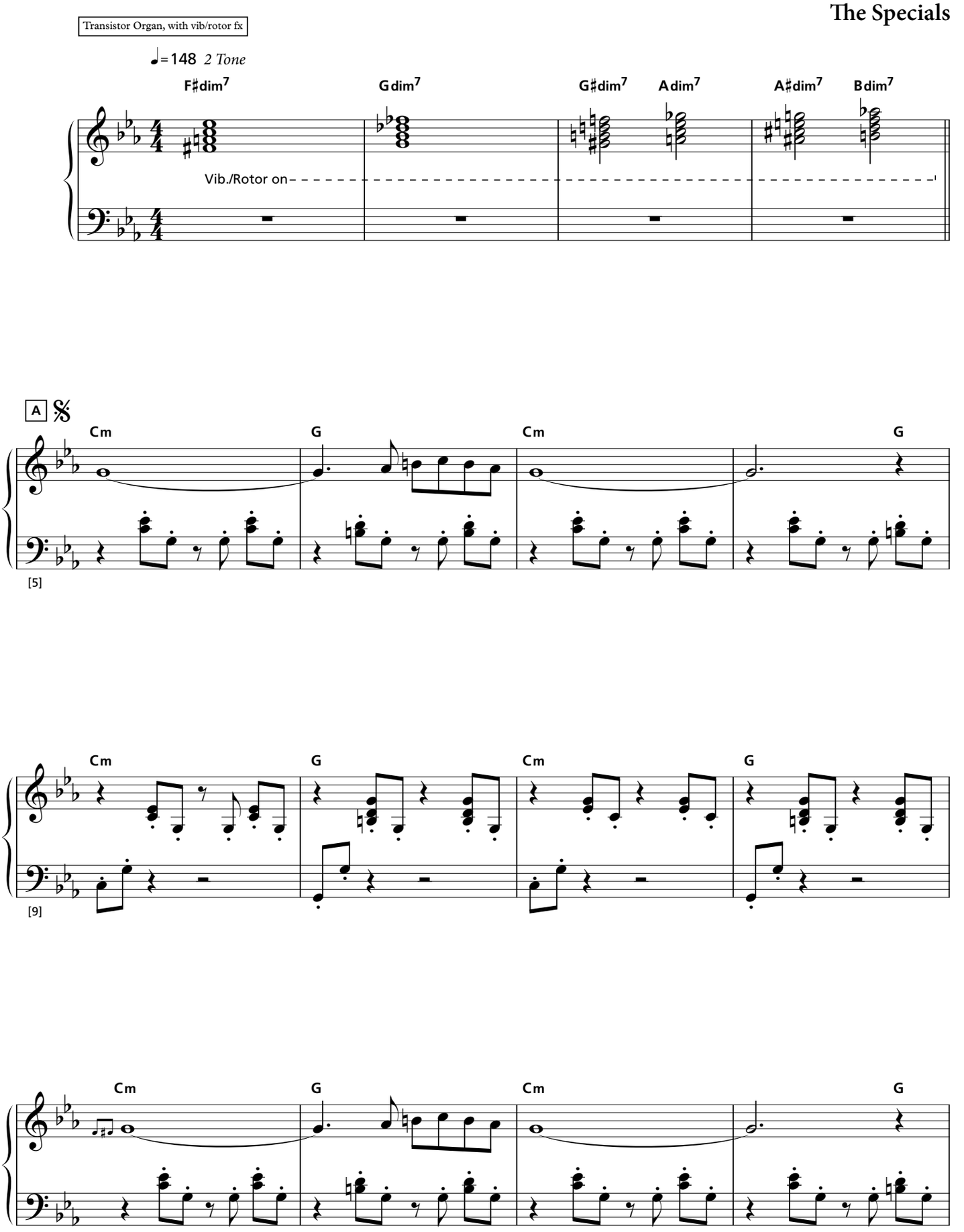
Written by band leader and keyboardist, Jerry Dammers, the song was inspired by the UK recession which was very much underway and had shocked the band during their *More Specials* tour in the autumn of 1980. Moving from town to town, the band were reportedly met with desperate conditions, with entire high streets boarded up and elderly women selling their belongings in the streets. Much of the country was angry and frustrated which meant that violence was at a high, most of their gigs seemed to be ending in brawls amongst fans and this upset Dammers a great deal.

Previously, The Specials had been known for simple chord progression but with 'Ghost Town' Dammers used a diminished tone throughout. Setting the scene of a dismal and dreary world, with only minimal lyrics. Other members were unsettled by this change, but Dammers was proved right when the song topped the UK charts.

The song also reflects the feeling among the original band line up at the time. With many of the seven struggling to cope with Jerry Dammers, tensions were high and the end was in sight. At their Top of The Pops performance of the song, three members actually announced their decision to leave, claiming that they couldn't even bare to look at their co-musicians. Looking back, they admit that they failed to see Dammers legend and took his songwriting for granted.

Ghost Town is a two-tone piece, a genre actually named after record label 2 Tone which was founded by none other than Jerry Dammers of The Specials. The genre is a fusion of traditional ska and punk rock, deriving at a time of racial and financial tension in the UK. With artists such as Madness on the roster, the label 2 Tone supported the diffusion of such tensions in the then Thatcher-era Britain. Predominantly popular in the UK, The Specials did have some success elsewhere and 'Ghost Town' made it to the top ten in both Ireland and Norway.

The Specials



Words & Music by Jerry Dammers
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Technical Exercises

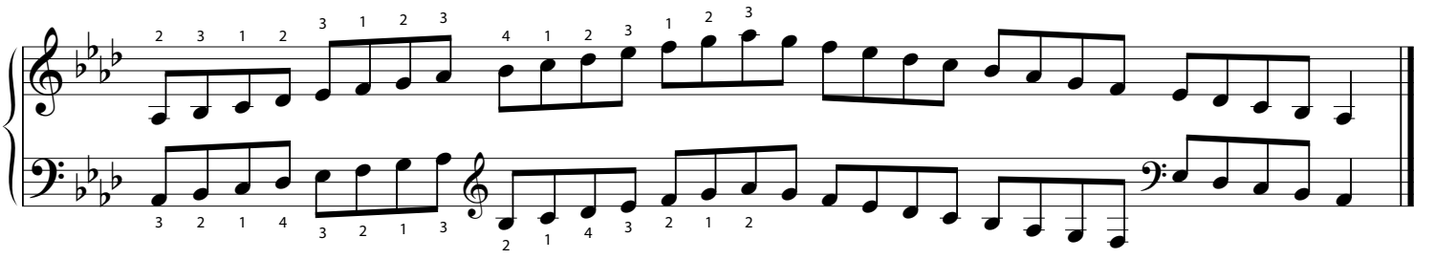
In this section you will be required to play a selection of exercises drawn from each of the groups below. The examiner will be looking for the speed of your response and will also give credit for the level of your musicality. Please see the syllabus guide for details on the marking criteria.

- Candidates can choose to play ***either*** natural minor ***or*** harmonic minor scales
- Major and contrary motion scales, minor scales, chromatic scales and arpeggios need to be played hands together, in straight or swung feel, ascending and descending, in the keys, octaves and tempos shown
- Pentatonic scales are <u>right hand only</u>
- Dorian and mixolydian modes need to be played hands separately
- Groups A, B and C (scales, arpeggios and chords) need to be played from memory. You may use your book for Group D (technical studies)

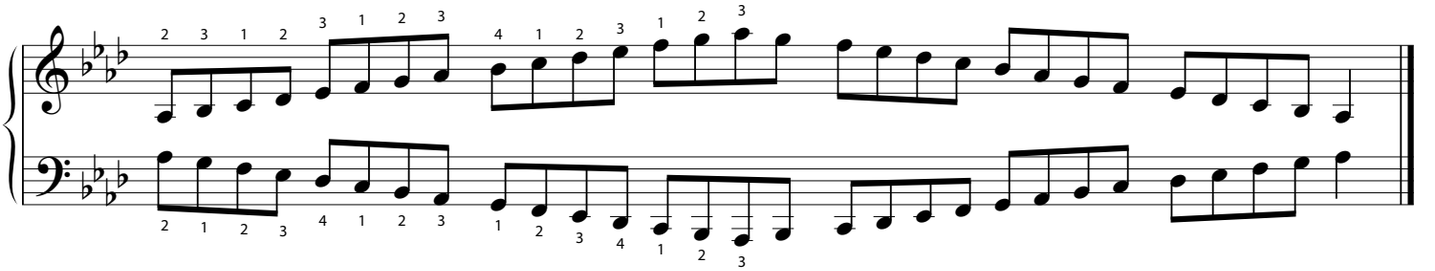
Note that Groups A and B need to be played to a click and any fingerings shown are suggestions only.

Group A: Scales
The tempo for this group is ♩=104 bpm.

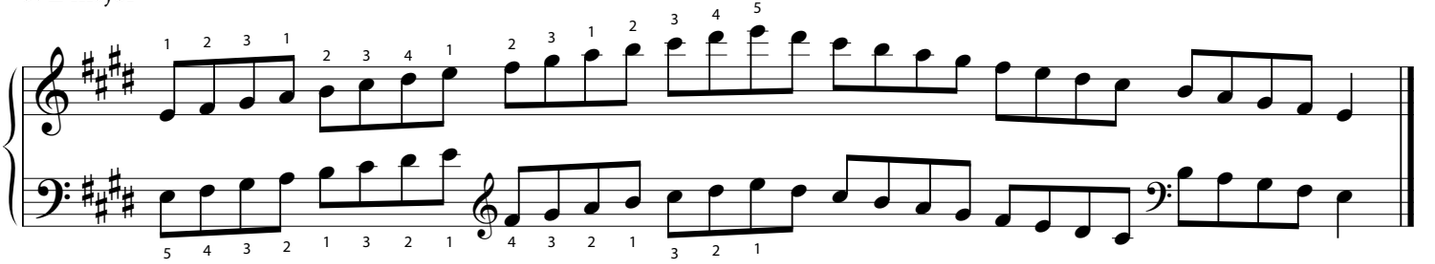
1. A♭ major



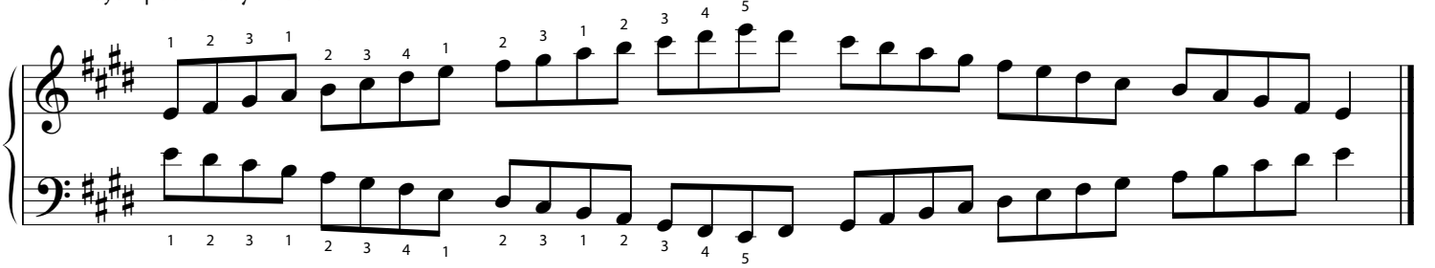
2. A♭ major | contrary motion



3. E major



4. E major | contrary motion



Ear Tests

In this section, there are two ear tests:

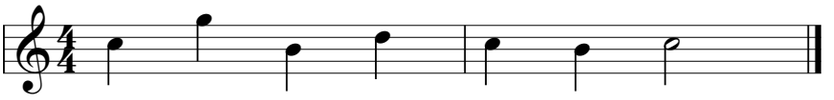
- Melodic Recall
- Harmonic Recall

You will find one example of each type of test printed below and you will need perform both of them in the exam.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play you a 2 bar diatonic melody in the key of C major with a range up to a sixth. The first note will be the root note. You will hear the test twice, each time with a one bar count-in, then you will hear a further one bar count-in after which you will need to play the melody to the click. The tempo is ♩= 95 bpm.

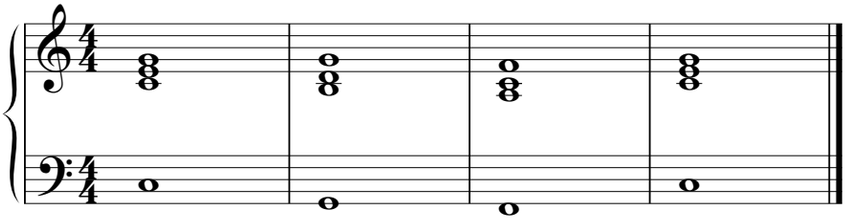
It is acceptable to play over the track as it is being played as well as practicing after the second playthough. The length of time available after the second playthrough is pre-recorded on the audio track so the count-in may begin while you are still practising.



Please note: The test shown is an example: The examiner will give you a different version in the exam

Test 2: Harmonic Recall

The examiner will play you a chord progression containing chords I, IV and V in any order or combination in the key of C major. You will hear the chord progression twice, each time with a one bar count-in. You will then hear a further one bar count in before playing back to a click. Please note, there is no requirement for the chords to be voicing-specific. The tempo is ♩= 95 bpm.



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