

# Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?

## AMuse VCE Conference Notes Jenny Gillan 2017

Listening Analysis skills: comparing interpretations

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Some thoughts on Comparison:

1. Use a table to order your thoughts
  - a. Two columns with arrows to show similarity
  - b. Three columns with similarities in the middle
2. Match like with like
3. Focus on particular elements that stand out and create headings

Interpretation One	Interpretation Two
<b>has a slower tempo:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• use of rubato, more relaxed approach to time</li></ul>	<b>has a faster tempo:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• steady tempo, unchanging</li></ul>
<b>has louder dynamics through:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• thicker texture</li><li>• more instrumental layers</li><li>• use of higher register</li><li>• sharper brighter tone colour of the trumpets</li></ul>	<b>has softer dynamics through:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• thinner texture</li><li>• sparse instrumentation, fewer instrumental layers</li><li>• use of mid register</li><li>• warmer, richer tone colour of the cello</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• repeated thirds</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• arpeggiated intervals</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• melodic contour more linear</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• more wave like contour</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• limited range</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• wider range</li></ul>

From listening beyond hearing 3rd edition.  
<http://dsmusic.com.au/music-analysis-ebook/>

## Comparison of Interpretations: Eleanor Rigby – The Beatles, Cathy Berberian

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**Question:** Compare how blend and balance of voices and tone colour is treated in these two interpretations of Eleanor Rigby

### Strategy –

1. Pick out something noticeable about the first interpretation and describe it on one side of the page.
2. Listen for how this is treated in the second interpretation and write about that.

Example 1. **Remember the question – BLEND/BALANCE Tone Colour.**

Version 1	Version 2
The strings are in the background during the introduction while vocals are singing. In the answering phrase, while vocalists drop out the strings come to the foreground aided by heavy, accented, marked articulation on the cellos.	
	There is a bright, clear, slightly harsh tone colour in the soprano due to high register and use of heavy vibrato. This is a highly trained, operatic voice which places an importance on diction version one does not.
	Tone colour of voice does not blend as well with the accompaniment. This defines the solo soprano role and brings the melody forward. Melody TC is more clear while the strings have a more resonant, warm quality.

## Guided listening Worksheet: Unforgiven: Metallica & Apocalyptica

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What is the initial character of the piece version 1? \_\_\_\_\_

Version 2 initial character? \_\_\_\_\_

- Describe the tone colour in the opening section of version 1

Instruments/tone colours:

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Influences on this tone colour?

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- Compare the tone colour in the opening section of version 2 to version 1

Instruments/tone colours:

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Influences on this tone colour

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- Make some links from tone colour to the resulting character - version 1

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- Compare this to version 2 character and tone colour

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Character of the contrasting section version 1? \_\_\_\_\_

Version 2 character of contrasting section? \_\_\_\_\_

- Describe the tone colour in the contrasting section of version 1

Instruments/tone colours:

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Influences on this tone colour?

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- Compare the tone colour in the contrasting section of version 2 to version 1

Instruments/tone colours:

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Influences on this tone colour

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- Make some links from tone colour to the new character - version 1

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- Compare this to version 2 character and tone colour

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- Describe a combination of instruments heard in this excerpt with complementing timbre and describe their tone colour

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- Compare this to version 2

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- Describe the overall Tone colour of the two excerpts in the two contrasting sections (contrasting/unified/multilayered/simple/complex/blended/clashing)

	Version 1	Version 2
S1		
S2		

Use these notes to write a paragraph outlining how tone colour is used to create contrasting characters in the two versions of this song

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## Sample Comparison Responses

“...The main theme in version 2 is very different to that of version 1 theme, use of different dynamics, note, values and articulation. The tone colour in the first example where the tone colour is drastically changed by the use of the upper register of the piano – articulation gives dreamlike/magical quality. This is the first time this sort of ornamentation has been used. The melodic contour gently ascends and descends with small stepwise, sequential, rhythm of melody, which is slower. The Strings play a high held drone/pedal.....”

Comments/Feedback:

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“...The second version makes use of ‘bell tree’ to add to the ‘sparkling’ tone colour. The first version uses Harp in a similar way but the tone colour is less lively. The minor tonality also adds to create a new feeling of magic in both interpretations ...”

Comments/Feedback:

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“...The difference between version one and version two is that while the main melody in the first version is in unison the second melody treats the melody canonically. This changes the texture....”

Comments/Feedback:

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“...Both versions stylistically different, version 1 being more neo-romantic and version 2 being a more folk-like style. An expressive similarity between the two would be dynamics, being that both have a wide range of dynamics...”

Comments/Feedback:

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## Quick fire Comparison

15 second listening, 1 minute analysis, 15 second listening, 1 minute analysis

### Distant Sun

Crowded House <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=snAeHSbXdzs>

Brooke Fraser [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arFl\\_MfdULg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arFl_MfdULg)

Version 1	Similarities	Version 2

### Fly me to the Moon

Frank Sinatra [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQR0bXO\\_yI8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQR0bXO_yI8)

Tony Bennett (1:03) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9c0wOX5dMc>  
<https://youtu.be/P9c0wOX5dMc?t=1m3s>

Version 1	Similarities	Version 2

### Bach Christmas Oratorio

Hanoncourt: <https://youtu.be/98UjjwzJBFE?t=57s>

Richter: <https://youtu.be/8WQk3QVCUoE?t=7s>

Version 1	Similarities	Version 2