

**Critical Music Listening Rubric - Comprehensive**

<b>Tone and Overall Sound</b>	<b>Melody and Harmony</b>	<b>Rhythmic Qualities</b>	<b>Mixing and Production</b>	<b>Theme and Concept</b>	<b>Presentation</b>
Excels in all areas, dynamics are thoughtful, effort put into all ranges, voices are pleasing. Instruments all have presence; end result is beautiful and innovative. 20 Points	Technical mastery is displayed of melody and harmony; both are used to their fullest potential given the context of the work. Innovation and originality are shown. 20 Points	Rhythm helps the work go above and beyond, reaches beyond the norms of the genre for new rhythms and percussion instruments. Varied rhythms if an album. 20 Points	Work is extremely polished, effects, samples and dynamics help the work go above and beyond. Album flow from track to track feels natural and improves the album. 20 Points	Work shows a powerful theme or story. Lyrics are meaningful, well-presented and improve the work as a whole. Work innovates in the genre conceptually. 10 Points	Artwork and packaging effectively reinforce the album's theme. Presentation fits the artist and vice-versa. Artwork is visually pleasing and thought-provoking. 10 Points
Overall sound is solid, and well-represents the genre. Dynamics and voices are good, and reinforce the other graded qualities. Originality and innovation are shown. 16 Points	Melodies and harmonies are pleasing and reinforce the work. No real flaws but resulting sound is simply good, not great. Innovation and originality are shown. 16 Points	Effective use of rhythm and syncopation within the context of the work. Rhythm reinforces the work. Innovation and variety are shown. 16 Points	Work is solid on a technical level, effects, dynamics and post-production reinforces the work as a whole. Album flow does not detract from the album itself. 16 Points	Theme and concept are effectively used to reinforce other qualities in the work. Innovation is shown and no major flaws are evident. Technical proficiency shown. 8 Points	Artwork and packaging are well-done and do not detract from other graded areas. Artwork is good, not great, aesthetically but not a natural fit for the artist, or vice versa. 8 Points
No major flaws in execution of overall sound; dynamics and voices do not hold back the other graded qualities. No significant innovation or originality shown. 12 Points	Melody and harmony are used well and do not hold the work back, but do not do anything to help it. No significant innovation or originality shown. 12 Points	Rhythm is solid if slightly repetitive given the context of the work. No originality or variety used, which is noticeable given the genre. Does not set itself apart. 12 Points	Some technical mastery shown, but some production-related flaws exist. Post-production values distract from other graded qualities. No innovation shown. 12 Points	Consistent theme is evident with few deviations, but with no significant impact. Lack of creativity shown within the genre. Lyrics neither help nor hurt the work as a whole. 6 Points	Artwork and packaging is good but not great. No obvious connection to the artist. Lack of creativity shown, presentation feels rushed or an afterthought. 6 Points
Overall sound has consistent minor or a few major flaws. Dynamics and voice are not used to their fullest. Lack of technical mastery displayed. No innovation shown. 8 Points	Melody and harmony show flaws or lack of creativity by repetition. Flaws distract and take away from the work as a whole. Lack of mastery shown. No innovation shown. 8 Points	Rhythm is poor or repetitive enough to distract, or a few errors are heard in non-live performances. No innovation or variety shown. Lack of technical mastery shown. 8 Points	Consistent minor flaws or a few major ones detract from the work as a whole. Lack of technical mastery shown. No innovation shown, work sounds "off" from production. 8 Points	Theme is sporadically used or self-contradictory within the work. Lyrics are not clear or meaningful. No innovation or creativity shown, lack of technical mastery displayed. 4 Points	Presentation gives an initial negative reaction to the work. Artwork is fair to poor and does not fit the artist. No creativity shown, presentation feels last-minute. 4 Points
Overall sound is poor and takes away from any other graded criteria. Dynamics are poorly used or not at all. Tone is slavish to genre, lack of technical mastery. No attempt at innovation made. 4 Points	Poor use of melody and harmony, repetitive and subpar throughout the work. Flaws are significant and detract from other graded criteria. No attempt at innovation made. 4 Points	Rhythm is poor, repetitive, and slavish to the genre. Obvious errors heard in non-live performances. No attempt at innovation or variety, lack of technical mastery shown. 4 Points	Post-production effectively ruins any other redeeming qualities of the work. Several major flaws exist, dynamics are off, or album flow is jarring and careless. No attempt at innovation made. 4 Points	No evident theme or concept for the work. Lyrics are poor, excessively vulgar and/or not clearly articulated. Theme and lyrics are slavish to the genre, with no attempt at innovation made. 2 Points	Presentation is off-putting to the work and artist. Shock value substitutes for creativity, art is poor or design flaws are present in finished version. If no artwork, score 0 and double theme score. 2 Points

Notes: