

## Reading Part 2

Read the text. Use the sentences to complete the text. Choose the correct sentence for each gap. There are two extra sentences you will not need.

Listening to music relies on memory. We make sense of what we hear by framing it in the context of what we have already heard. We don't have a 'memory box' into which we dump an entire tune.

**(1)**\_\_\_\_\_ We group the 'pixels' of music into lumps with recognisable outlines, a process called chunking. To do this we use subconscious rules that help us decide if the notes belong together. Unifying features such as small melodic interval steps and shared tonality provide the glue that binds them.

**(2)**\_\_\_\_\_ If we had to encode it in our brains note by note, we'd struggle to make sense of anything more complex than the simplest children's songs. Of course, most accomplished musicians can play compositions containing many thousands of notes entirely from memory, without a note out of place. If you ask a pianist to start a piece of music from a certain point in the middle of a phrase, she'll probably have to mentally replay the music from the start of a phrase until reaching that point – the music is not simply laid out in her mind, to be picked up from an arbitrary point. **(3)**\_\_\_\_\_ It's rather like describing how you drive to work; you don't reel off the names of roads as an abstract list but have to construct your route by mentally re-tracing it.

The contour of a melody – how it rises and falls in pitch – is one of the most important clues for memory and recognition. **(4)**\_\_\_\_\_ And most of the spontaneous, charmingly wayward songs that children begin to sing from around 18 months contain brief phrases with an identical repeated contour.

Musically untrained adults asked to sing back an unfamiliar melody might not get a single note right, yet will capture the basic contour. **(5)**\_\_\_\_\_ This is essentially what young children do when they learn to sing a song: they make rather arbitrary guesses at the right pitch steps and produce a generally compressed version which is recognisable.

Predictability can be pleasurable rather than boring. We will belt out the chorus of a favourite song with gusto. And when a tune reappears unexpectedly, it is like bumping into an old friend.

**(6)**\_\_\_\_\_

- A Even babies as young as five months will respond with an altered heartbeat when a melody changes its contour.
- B The greater the complexity of a piece of music, the more its notes vary.
- C This chunking is vital for cognition of music.
- D And familiar tunes remain recognisable when the contour is 'compressed'.
- E Once the recognition dawns, we know what is going to come next and that can be delightful.
- F Rather, we remember structures and patterns, with varying degrees of accuracy and which fade from memory at various rates.
- G This seemingly awesome feat of recall is made possible by remembering the musical process, not the individual notes as such.
- H This means less memory is required to recognise more simple melodies.