**YEAR 13 Cover Work 02/11/15**

**20th Century Music**

Listen to Threnody to the victims of Hiroshima by Penderecki (composed 1960).

Background:

The piece—originally called *8'37"* (at times also *8'26"*), perhaps as a nod to John Cage's 4'33"—applies the sonoristic technique and rigors of specific [counterpoint](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counterpoint) to an ensemble of strings treated to unconventional scoring. Penderecki later said, "It existed only in my imagination, in a somewhat abstract way." When he heard an actual performance, "I was struck by the emotional charge of the work...I searched for associations and, in the end, I decided to dedicate it to the Hiroshima victims". The piece tends to leave an impression both solemn and catastrophic, earning its classification as a threnody. On 12 October 1964, Penderecki wrote, "Let the *Threnody* express my firm belief that the sacrifice of Hiroshima will never be forgotten and lost."

The piece includes an "invisible canon", in 36 voices, an overall musical texture that is more important than the individual notes, making it a leading example of sound mass composition. As a whole, *Threnody* constitutes one of the most extensive elaborations on the tone cluster.

**Answer the following question in approximately 750 words. Use MS word and submit back to moodle when completed.**

*What compositional techniques does Penderecki use to conjure up the image of the desolation and the horror of the aftermath of the bombing of Hiroshima? (You may wish to refer particularly to the use of instrumental timbre and technique as well as other elements of music that you feel are appropriate).*