

# Star Wars Main Theme

## Tonality/Harmony

Tonic key Bb major  
Quartal harmony at beginning (based on 4<sup>ths</sup>)  
Inverted pedal (violins) at start  
Bar 30 suggests modulation  
Bar 33 – unusual chords (complex) create unstable harmony  
Added 6<sup>th</sup> chords bar 12  
C major bar 36  
Bar 44 – dissonant chords  
Frequent pedals - violins in opening, bass pedal bar 12, bass pedal bar 51 to end

Full orchestra (brass, woodwind, strings and percussion) – typical of film music  
Percussion – Timpani, triangle, gong, crash cymbals, glockenspiel, celesta, harp  
Harp glissando – bar 29  
Timpani, crash cymbal and gong add power and drama to the music  
No electronic instruments/sounds  
Violin tremolando (opening)  
Flute trill bar 36

## Instrumentation/ Orchestration

## Context

Composed by John Williams  
Film released in 1977  
Genre is film music  
Underscore music – accompanies the opening titles of the film

## Melody

## Structure

Brass fanfare to start – grabs attention/march like  
Trumpet melody bar 4 – high register  
Melody based on rising 7<sup>th</sup> and falling 4<sup>th</sup> (bar 4)  
Upper strings melody bar 12 – in octaves  
French horn and strings melody bar 21  
Bar 32 – rising sequence in strings  
Piccolo melody bar 36 – high pitch to suggest stars

## Dynamics/Texture

ff (very loud) at beginning to grab attention  
Dynamic reduces (mf) bar 12  
Dramatic crescendo bar 17, 32 & 41  
Bar 36 dynamic is soft (p) to contrast 'star filled sky'  
ff (very loud) from bar 42 to end  
Big diminuendo in last bar  
Texture mostly melody dominated homophony  
Often uses block chords to accompany melody  
Homophonic texture (bar 44) in block chords – creates power

## Tempo/Metre/Rhythm

Tempo 100bpm – march like tempo  
4/4 metre throughout until bar 44 when changes to 3/4  
Ritardando (rit) bar 20 & bar 47 for dramatic effect  
Tempo increases to 160bpm in codetta  
Triplet rhythms suggest fanfare  
Lots of articulation (accents)  
Syncopated accompaniment bar 4  
Sextuplet rhythms in strings – bar 32 & bar 39  
Ostinato rhythms bar 51 to end

Fanfare introduction  
A (bar 5) – trumpet melody  
A (bar 8) – trumpet melody  
B (bar 12) – string melody  
A (bar 21) – Horn and string melody  
Rest of structure fits with opening titles  
Codetta section to finish (bar 51)