

## 1. Compare and contrast “Honey Don’t” with “A Day in the life” referring to structure, tonality and forces used. [14]

Give details and examples to support your observations.

1. “Honey Don’t” was written and recorded by Carl Perkins in 1955 and "A Day In The Life" was written by Paul McCartney and John Lennon in 1967. A musical dictionary definition of Carl Perkins says: “ A pioneer of rockabilly music, a mix of rhythm and blues and country music that evolved at Sun Records in Memphis in the early 1950s.”

As the definition states, rockabilly is a cross genre between blues and American country music. "Honey Don't" fits into this category, rhythmically it is more tight than blues and the rock and roll influences can be heard clearly through the bass line. This is a stark contrast to "A Day In The Life" written towards the start of the Beatles career, on the whole it tends to look forward rather than taking influences from rock 'n' roll. However, there is a link between this and "Honey Don't" when discussing the role of instruments. There is a section in at bar 50 in "A Day In The Life" which could be linked to "Honey Don't". This comparison comes in the bass line. Rhythmically "Honey Don't" is tied to the walking bass line, the guitar follows it almost throughout playing the same notes an octave higher. The walking bass line drives the piece and is always prevalent with its steady four crotchets per bar with small exceptions where there is a short rhythmic break from the vocals for two beats. This creates rhythmic interest as the guitars, bass and drums play a motif that is rhythmically comparable. This walking bass line compares with "A Day In The Life" from bar 50 when the mood of the piece changes from quite slow moving, to something that moves forward with more pace. Primarily this is created by the drums playing quavers as opposed to crotchets which would give the impression that the piece is moving at a faster tempo. The bass line also mirrors this quaver movement from bar 50 where elements of chromaticism are involved. (D#, C#, C natural)

When analyzing an overall structure for the two pieces, on the surface it is evident that "A Day In The Life" has a more complex structure in comparison to "Honey Don't." "A Day In The Life" consists of an into (4 bars) and for verses, varying in bar length. (9, 10 & 11) However, there are two notable structural sections in it that add interest to the piece. These are the orchestral transitions lasting 12 and 10 bars. These sections crescendo and rise in pitch to match the dynamic level and are used in transition to a contrasting section within the piece which contains the walking/chromatic bass line as mentioned before. The first example of this lasts 12 bars and can be found between bars 35-46. The second is a slight variation on this, lasting for 10 bars between 58-67. The variation is the note lengths that the orchestra plays, in the first section they play semi-quavers and in the second, they play sustained semibreves.

This is more complex than the structure of "Honey Don't." This piece is based around a loose 12 bar blues form. The structure starts with verse 1, chorus, verse two and then a solo section by the guitar using intervals of parallel fourths. This is different to "A Day In The Life" because the only section that could be described as a solo section is the vocal line however this is continuous throughout giving the same role. Whereas, in "Honey Don't" the guitar is taking on two roles; the solo and rhythmic backing when there are solo vocals.

The tonality of "A Day In The Life" is worthy to note. By analyzing the key signature and the introductory chord sequence, it can be deduced that the key is G major. However all the way through the first verse the dominant chord (D major) is avoided which gives the music a deceptive feel that it is in a minor key. The orchestral transitions are much harder to harmonically analyze, and could be described as atonal, which again completely changes the tonality of the piece. The only chord that can be picked out of this atonal transition is the resolving chord of E major used at the end of it, leading into the bridge section which is in this key.

The tonality of "Honey Don't" is more simple to analyze, the key of E major tied with the form of 12 bar blues provides scope to working with chords I, IV & V. The piece follows this structure in the second progression but a slight variation is added in the first progression which changes the tonality and harmony of the piece. By adding chord VI (C major) into the progression it changes the harmony of the conventional 12 bar blues and gives the harmonies of country music. (Emphasis on chord six)

Although on the surface, these varying tonal devices in the two pieces are very contrasting and opposite to each other, they can be linked. They can be linked in the sense that they both harmonically vary from a conventional form. The conventional form of a 12 bar blues structure in "Honey Don't" is tampered with. This is similar to "A Day In The Life" where the idea of using chords I, IV and V in conventional pop songs is rejected and replaced with a long atonal transitional section played by instruments un-characteristic of the style.