

## Students' Guide: Area of Study 3 (Traditional Music)

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### “Supernatural” by Santana

#### “Supernatural” – Background

Carlos Santana (born July 20<sup>th</sup> 1947) is a Mexican/American musician who first rose to prominence in the late 1960s / early 1970s for his fusion of rock music with Latin American rhythms and instrumental groupings. His band, simply called ‘Santana’, had a very distinctive sound that fused together his effortless melodic blues based guitar playing with Latin and African based rhythms, largely captured by the use of percussion instruments such as congas and timbales not normally found in rock music at that time. Influenced by blues players such as B.B. King, John Lee-Hooker, Jimi Hendrix, Peter Green, Mike Bloomfield and Hank Marvin, Santana developed a highly distinctive sound characterized by virtuosic playing with soulful, extended improvised solos, coloured with pitch bends, ornamentation and sweeping runs. In common with many other similar musicians of the time, his music became less fashionable in the mid to late 70s when Punk Rock dominated the scene, but he experienced an extraordinary revival in the late 1990s, particularly with his seventeenth album “Supernatural” which won nine Grammys, album of the year, went 15 times platinum and was a major hit across the world.

Santana was born in Autlan de Navarro, Jalisco, Mexico and started his musical journey at a very young age, taking up violin at the age of five. His father who was a Mariachi musician and an accomplished professional orchestral violinist taught him. Mariachi is a form of traditional Mexican music that gradually evolved into what is often now referred to as Son music. At the age of eight the young Carlos emigrated from violin to guitar preferring the sound of the instrument. Santana’s father was frequently absent during his early years and eventually the family moved to Tijuana, a city right on the Mexican/Californian border before finally settling in San Francisco. This movement and exposure to different musical cultures was clearly instrumental in helping Santana forge his own unique and individual style in the 60s and 70s. This was not unusual in America. As one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse countries in the world, it was common for bands to form that contained musicians from different musical and cultural backgrounds, each bringing their own experience and stylistic qualities to create a new fusion of sound. Other examples from the same period include Steely Dan (rock/pop/jazz) and Little Feat (rock/jazz/funk/Latin).

The album is one of the best selling albums in the world, reaching no 1 in many countries and selling over 30 million copies. Unlike most of Santana's previous albums, this one is a little more unusual in that it contains different artists, mainly vocal, on different tracks. This is certainly not a new concept, for example, the English blues/rock singer Paul Rodgers (Free/bad Company/Queen) released 'Muddy Waters Blues' in 1993, featuring a different lead guitarist on each track. However, unlike the Paul Rodgers recording, where the album has a unity in that all the tracks are blues based, in the case of 'Supernatural' it could be argued that the album lacks unity and cohesion because the musical styles and artists, particularly the singers, are so diverse. Of course it could also be argued that this diversity is the album's strength because there is great variety in the musical content. The three tracks that we have selected for study exemplify this diversity, 'Love of my Life', 'Smooth' and 'Migra'.

### 'Love of my Life'

Co-written with Dave Matthews, a South African/American singer/song-writer/guitarist

Guitar – Carlos Santana

Vocal – Dave Matthews

Keyboards – George Whitty

Bass – Benny Rietveld

Drums – Carter Beauford

Congas and percussion – Karl Perazzo

### Structure:

Intro / Verse 1 / Verse 2 / Verse 3 / Chorus / Instrumental verse x 2 / Chorus / Bridge / Latin instrumental section leading to fade-out

After the death of his father in 1997, Santana didn't really feel up to playing or even listening to music for some time. When he did return to it, perhaps not surprisingly, given his father's background, he started listening to radio channels playing classical music. One of the pieces that he was struck with was the opening 'cello theme from the third movement of Brahms' third symphony in F, Poco Allegretto. This beautifully arching, lyrical theme in 3/8 metre definitely has a somewhat somber, melancholic, contemplative mood so it is not difficult to see how this might affect someone grieving the loss of their father. There are several (coincidental) parallels between Brahms and Santana in this respect:

- Both started their musical studies at an early age and became prodigious performers
- They both developed an ability to compose sustained melodic ideas, Brahms through carefully crafted development of initial musical ideas, often based on minimal material, Santana through extended

improvisation based on initial ideas. He was renowned for never playing the same solo exactly the same twice

- Brahms was 50 when he wrote the third symphony, Santana was 51 when Supernatural was released
- Each produced (arguably) their most successful work later in life
- Brahms spent much of his later years composing music specifically for other musicians he admired and befriended, for example, the clarinet works for Richard Muhlfield, and Santana composed the songs on Supernatural for various different artists to sing and play

Brahms' melody certainly made a strong impact on Santana at this time of his life and it forms the basis of 'Love of my Life'. The original Brahms melody is twelve bars long, in the key of C minor, 3/8 time and played by the 'cello section. To make this more accessible at GCSE level, here it has been modified into  $\frac{3}{4}$

Cello

Poco Allegretto

1

5

9

13

*p*

time:

Santana's version is virtually identical in relation to:

- The melodic shape in pitch
- The melody starting with an anacrusis (up-beat)
- A similar sombre, melancholic, contemplative mood is created although this becomes more optimistic in the final section

However, Santana's version is a master class in creative arranging making some clever and significant changes to alter the character and style of the music:

- He changes the metre from 3 to 4
- He changes the key from C minor to G minor, one of Santana's favoured keys
- The long notes are syncopated, appearing on the last half beat of the bar rather than the first beat of the next bar
- Santana splits Brahms' theme using bars 1 to 8 for the introduction, bars 5 – 8 at the end of the verse and bars 9 – 12 for the chorus

## Intro

The song starts with quite a lengthy intro before settling into a not untypical pop song structure. The opening drum kit upbeat leads into a four bar strident rock beat accompanied by Congas and characterized by:

1. The backbeat snare drum and
2. The bass drum semiquaver 'kick' on the very last 16<sup>th</sup> beat of the bar leading into the first beat of the next bar giving the music a strong sense of drive and urgency despite the steady tempo:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

### *Reference – Opening drum beat*

Above this rhythm, the monotone rapped vocal gives a sombre feel to the introduction after which, Santana enters with his modified version of Brahms' theme played on electric guitar. The first thing to notice about this is how Santana modifies the anacrusis at the start of the phrase and in each subsequent bar. In the Brahms version, the two-note anacrusis is constructed from a dotted quaver/semiquaver rhythm leading to the long notes (dotted minims) of the melody on the first beat of the next bar. In Santana's version, he changes the dotted rhythm to two straight quavers leading to the long notes (dotted minims) appearing on the final quaver of the bar giving the music a syncopated feel:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

### *Reference – Opening guitar melody*

If you look closely at Brahms' melody, you will notice that in the first four bars, the final note of the phrase is merely a crotchet in length, but in Santana's version, he augments these notes to dotted minims, the same length as the others, giving the melodic structure an equal balance throughout:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

### *Reference – Opening guitar beat*

Other points to notice:

- The melody is now in 4/4 time instead of 3/8 time
- The key is now G minor instead of C minor
- He only uses the first eight bars of the twelve bar theme
- The tone of the guitar used here is very mellow with just a minimal hint of vibrato on the longer notes

## First Verse

After this instrumental introduction the first verse appears. The opening to this is structured around a two-bar, three chord sequence played four times:

4 Gm / / / | Cm / D7 / / |

4

Above this, the understated vocal melody, sung by Dave Matthews has a relaxed, improvised feel and for the most part is restricted to a range of a perfect 4<sup>th</sup> and dominated by the use of the minor third interval of the tonic chord (G minor). The end of each two bar vocal phrase is punctuated by subtle improvised guitar responses from Santana. At the end of the final vocal phrase, Matthews leaps an octave into falsetto for the final 'me' giving greater emphasis to the word. If you listen carefully here you'll notice how Santana brings back the final four bars of the guitar introduction based on the Brahms melody.

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

### *Reference – Vocal melody, first verse*

The Italian word Falsetto literally translated means false voice. It is method of singing that only relates to male singers, normally tenors or baritones who are able to change the tonal quality of their voice into a higher 'false' register, similar to how they were able to sing as boy Trebles before their voices broke. It has always been a very common technique in Rock and Pop music and allows singers to explore a wider expressive range. Some notable examples are Barry Gibb (Bee Gees), Michael Jackson, Freddy Mercury (Queen), Frankie Valli, Prince, Brian Wilson (Beach Boys), Thom Yorke (Radiohead), Phil Bailey (Earth, Wind and Fire), Bono (U2), Justin Hawkins (The Darkness), Chris Martin (Coldplay), Sam Smith and Jimmy Somerville (Bronski Beat/The Communards). Most of these singers will use falsetto as part of their overall pitch range but in some areas of Renaissance and Baroque vocal music, male singers are required to sing in falsetto all the time. These are known as Countertenors and they normally undergo specialist training at Music College to perfect this art.

## Second Verse

The second verse develops from the first in that it is constructed from a call and response conversation between guitar and voice with Santana reverting to the original melody from the introduction.

## Third Verse

The third verse is structured exactly the same as the first with the guitar responses from Santana becoming a little more bold and expansive.

## Chorus

The chorus is very brief and based on the final four bars of the original Brahms melody, Santana's guitar playing in unison with Matthews' vocal melody. Note

how the syncopated feel is maintained, together with the addition of triplet figures at the end of the phrase:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Opening drum beat*

At the end of the chorus there is a two bar drum break leading into two instrumental verses. The structure of these is very similar to the second verse, the first part being essentially an imitative texture between two guitar parts recorded by Santana. In the second part, the two guitars settle into an octave texture. Once again, the tonal quality of the guitars is mellow with occasional pitch bends and subtle vibrato on the longer notes:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Instrumental verse, imitative guitars*

The repetition of this verse is almost identical, the only difference being the addition of a little more decoration to the melody towards the end of the phrase, before a repeat of the chorus.

**Bridge and final Latin section**

At the end of the chorus, a sustained 8 bar bridge (middle 8) ends with a sudden crescendo before leading into an entirely new instrumental 'Latin Section' characterized by the strong syncopated Afro-Cuban dance rhythms most closely resembling Merengue, especially in the two bar repeated piano pattern:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Final section, Piano 'Merengue' Pattern*

The Rhythm Section is completed by the syncopated bass and percussion parts:

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*Reference – Final section, bass guitar pattern*

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*Reference – Final section, drumkit/conga rhythm*

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*Reference – Final section, lead guitar syncopated solo*

Above this, Santana plays a highly syncopated, sequential melody that gradually evolves into increasingly complex improvised passages:

This section repeats for the whole of the rest of the song and as it progresses, Santana makes use of guitar techniques such as pitch bend, tremolo and vibrato

with increasing virtuosity encompassing the entire pitch range of the guitar, before finally fading to the end.

### Santana's guitar style and signature sound

The sound of most guitarists will be as a result of a combination of three different things:

1. The individual playing/performance techniques
2. The type of guitar including the strings and picks used
3. The amplifier, speakers and effects pedals/units

'Love of my Life' is heavily dominated by the guitar due to the structure and lengthy final improvised section and many of Santana's distinctive traits are evident here:

#### Individual playing/performance techniques

**Vibrato:** Santana tends to play long notes with very little or no vibrato, contrary to many of his contemporaries. When he does use vibrato it tends to be the less common vertical vibrato where the finger is moved parallel to the neck rather than perpendicular to it. However, he is often quite content to let long notes ring without vibrato occasionally using feedback for effect instead.

**Ornamentation and decoration:** He often uses mordents and in particular the upper mordent where you follow the initial note rapidly with the note above and back again. He also has a highly developed tremolo picking technique where he rapidly picks a single string. Both these effects are used frequently in 'Love of my Life'.

**Riff construction:** Santana's riffs tend to be melodically quite simple but rhythmically complex employing a lot of syncopation which makes them very distinctive.

**Tone:** His tone on early albums such as *AbraXas* tended to be quite raw. He would use the volume control carefully to move from clean to distorted tones and would also sometimes double-track his parts in the studio to combine different tones and enrich the sound. As his career progressed he tended to move towards the smoother, mellow and more rounded tone that we hear on *Supernatural*.

#### Santana's Guitars

For his earliest albums, Santana tended to use a Gibson Les Paul, initially with P90 pick-ups but later Humbucker pick-ups.



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The tone of this was not dissimilar to the Gibson SG that he often used on stage at that time.

Note: at GCSE level, students often confuse tone and tonality, especially in the listening test. Try not to make this basic error because the two things are distinctly different:

Tonality – refers to the key or mode of the music, e.g. the music is in a Major key or the music is in the Dorian mode.

Tone – refers to the quality and character of the sound of an instrument, voice or electronic sound source, e.g. the tone of the clarinet is mellow or the tone of Joe Cocker's voice is gravelly. (If you've studied 'With a Little help from my Friends' by The Beatles, you may have heard Joe Cocker's version. If not, have a listen and you'll understand.



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Neither of these were the most refined of guitars, particularly in relation to the neck, but the double cutaway of the SG allowed access to the highest notes and frets that Santana frequently liked to use. In the mid 1970s he started to use a Yamaha SG 175 which also had a double cut-away like the Gibson, but a slightly more streamlined body and neck, and importantly, 24 frets rather than 22. He also started to use Mesa Boogie Amplifiers and the sound from these contributed to the 'rounding' of his tone.



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In the late 1970s Santana switched to a PRS Custom and has for the most part has used these guitars ever since. There is even a 'Signature' model named after him. Note the similarity to the Gibson SG and Yamaha with the double cut-away and Humbucker pick-ups.



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## Use of effects

Santana uses very few effects preferring to maximize the output from Humbucker pick-ups and tube driven amplifiers. Tube or Valve amplifiers use vacuum tubes or valves rather than solid-state circuitry to produce the amplification. The general perception is that they produce a 'warmer' tone and are therefore often used more widely by guitarists of Santana's generation who grew up with them. His most often used pedal board is a MU-TRON volume / wah-wah pedal board that he has used for most of his career.

## "Smooth"

'Smooth' is a sensual dance record collaboration between Santana and the singer Rob Thomas from Matchbox 20, an American alternative rock band. It remains one of the biggest hits of all time spending 30 weeks in the top ten of the Billboard Hot 100, 12 of those at number 1, and only surpassed by Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars' 'Uptown Funk' (31 weeks) in 2015. It is still Santana's biggest hit to date and is regarded as the all time second most successful Billboard song behind 'The Twist'.

Lead vocals - Rob Thomas

Lead guitar - Carlos Santana

Bass - Benny Rietveld

Drums - Rodney Holmes

Percussion - Karl Perazzo

Congas - Raul Rekow

Keyboards - Chester Thompson

Trombones - Jeff Cressman and Jose Abel Figueroa

Trumpets - William Ortiz and Javier Melendez

Programmer - Mark Dobson

Written by Rob Thomas, DeGaetano and Ital Shur

## Structure

Intro

Verse 1

Bridge

Chorus (followed by intro riff)

Verse 2

Bridge

Chorus (with additional bar)

Guitar solo (based on intro riff)

Chorus

Long outro based on intro riff – fade to end

'Smooth' is another Latin based song from the album, essentially a Bossa Nova with Cha-cha elements. Hugely successful, it divides opinion with many critics despising it but millions of fans loving the infectious rhythms and guitar / horn riffs. You will make up your own mind but there is no disputing its success as a major hit at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Santana had little to do with the composition of the song other than to contribute the guitar parts that are crucial to the overall sound and success of the recording. Much of the song is based around the guitar/bass riff that appears in the intro.

### Introduction

Like 'Love of my Life', 'Smooth' starts with a brief one bar drum fill before the exciting three part contrapuntal texture in the key of A minor bursts in between guitar, bass and the horn section over a strong Bossa Nova rhythm. The bass provides the syncopated riff, the guitar the main melodic theme and the horns a strong, syncopated counter-melody. The term Horn Section is often used to refer to a group of brass/wind instruments in various genres such as rock, blues, soul, jazz, ska and reggae. The horn section is usually there to provide instrumental colour and usually play either countermelodies or close harmonies in a variety of textures, homophonic, contrapuntal, unison or octaves. Sometimes various members of the horn section will take individual improvised solos as well. Horn sections can contain any combination of brass/wind instruments, usually trumpet, trombone and various saxophones, usually one or more of alto, tenor, baritone. In 'Smooth' the horn section contains two trumpets and two trombones and all the features mentioned above are evident in the song. There are some very famous Horn Sections such as the Tower of Power horns who are highly regarded and in great demand to support bands playing live on the road.

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

### *Reference – Introduction – horns/guitar/bass guitar*

Notice once again that in bars 2, 4 and 6, the long notes in the guitar part have only minimal vibrato and the long sustained note in bars 8 and 9 has virtually no vibrato at all.

The horn writing is very typical with the trumpets and trombones playing in octaves in the first three bars of the phrase and moving into harmony in the fourth bar.

The final element crucial to the 'Latin' sound is the use of additional percussion instruments such as congas, timbales, guiro and cowbell.

## Verse

After this forceful introduction the dynamic dips somewhat to reveal another typically Latin syncopated piano groove in the verse whilst the bass riff and drum rhythm continues:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Piano groove in verse*

The harmonic structure here is typical of African/Cuban dance music being mostly based on three chords, in this case Am (I), F (VI) and E (V). The vocal melody is rhythmically quite loose and free. Notice that it is quite restricted in pitch during the first twelve bars encompassing a range of just a fifth between the tonic, (A) and dominant, (E).

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – First verse, vocal melody, bars 1-16*

Like many of the songs on 'Supernatural', Santana punctuates the vocal melody with frequent short burst of improvised responses, particularly at the ends of phrases. The first part of the verse is accompanied by the rhythm section, alone but in the second part, the horn section enter playing a simple syncopated countermelody. Once again, the texture here is octaves.

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Second parts of verse, syncopated horns*

You'll notice that the trumpet part appears to be in B minor rather than A minor. This is because the trumpet is a Bb transposing instrument, which affects how the music needs to be written on the score. Bb instruments need to be written a tone higher in pitch in order to sound correct. Other common Bb instruments include tenor/soprano saxophone and clarinet.

## Pre-Chorus /Bridge

Immediately after the verse there is a pre-chorus or bridge leading to the chorus.

The majority of this is based on the same chord sequence as the verse. For the first time we hear an additional keyboard, a Hammond Organ, sometimes called a Tone-wheel Organ. This fills out the texture with typically inverted chords:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Bridge, hammond organ, inverted chords*

In keyboard playing, using inverted chords makes for a much smoother transition from one chord to another rather than using root position chords all the time. It also makes the sound more satisfying. An inverted chord simply has a different note at the bottom of the chord rather than the root, as demonstrated below:

A minor – root position	A minor – 1 <sup>st</sup> inversion	A minor – 2 <sup>nd</sup> inversion
Root (A) at the bottom	Third (C) at the bottom	Fifth (E) at the bottom

## Chorus

The bridge builds steadily in dynamic until we reach the chorus:

[Quotation removed, copyrighted material.](#)

*Reference – Vocal melody, chorus*

Notice here how the rhythm of the melody is much more regular with less syncopation and mostly continuous quaver movement. Notice also how the rhythm stops in the last two bars of the chorus with short ‘stabs’ on ‘Gimme’, ‘make’ and ‘real’ adding emphasis to the vocal writing.

Another interesting feature of typical use of the horn section appears in the chorus. The trumpet players use lip trills on the long notes in the second and 6<sup>th</sup> bars of the phrase. Classical trumpeters generally use the valves to play trills but it is very common in rock, jazz, soul and Latin music for trumpeters to use lip trills instead. Valve trills will normally result in trills between adjacent notes but in a lip trill, the player rapidly alters the embouchure and this results in trills between the main note and the next one in the harmonic series. In the higher notes these can be quite close together but lower down the register these can easily be a fourth or fifth apart. Lip trills are generally easier to play on higher notes but they take a lot of practice to perfect. There are plenty of examples on the Internet of trumpeters demonstrating lip trills so in order to fully appreciate how this works, it would be worth investigating. Try listening to this section carefully by following the score and you will be able to hear the lip trills.

[Quotation removed, copyrighted material.](#)

*Reference – Chorus, trumpet lip trills*

After the chorus there is a return to the introduction followed by another verse and chorus. This time there are additional improvised responses from Santana and at the end of the chorus there is an additional bar with a rising chromatic horn phrase leading to an extended guitar improvisation over the basic chord

structure of the verse. In this solo, Santana employs all his tricks and techniques to the full:

- Increasing use of linear vibrato on long notes
- Frequent pitch bends
- Use of the full pitch range
- Rapid tremolo

A return to the chorus is followed by another lengthy guitar improvisation this time accompanied by vocal responses and drum kit / percussion fills, as the music fades to its conclusion.

## “Migra”

Composed by Santana, Rachid Taha and Tony Lyndsay.

Vocals – Tony Lindsay, K. C. Porter, Karl Perazzo

Guitar and sleigh bells – Carlos Santana

Keyboards – Chester D. Thompson

Accordion – K.C. Porter

Bass – Benny Rietveld

Drums – Rodney Holmes

Percussion – Karl Perazzo

Congas – Raul Rekow

Trumpet – Jose Abel Figueroa, Marvin McFadden, Mic Gillette

Trombone – Ramon Flores, Mic Gillette

## Structure

Structurally this is one of the simplest songs on the album. Basically it consists of a verse (theme) over a bass riff, drum groove and a single chord with three contrasting sections, two of which are not completely independent from the theme. We'll call these contrasting sections Interludes. They add variety and interest in what is otherwise a very repetitive structure. After all of these basic elements have been introduced they are repeated and layered together in different combinations.

Intro

Verse / theme – bass riff, clave rhythm, improvised call and response

Interlude 1 – accordion and synth programming

Verse / Theme – shortened

Interlude 2 – trumpets in harmony

Interlude 3 – new rock rhythm and bass riff with improvised guitar solo

Verse / Theme –

Interlude 2 – trumpets in harmony – repeat with bass riff to bridge 3

Interlude 1 – leading to final cadence

'Migra' is a protest song against what used to be the American Immigration and Naturalization Service who would undertake raids on undocumented immigrants in the United States. Although a protest song, the essential message is one of peace. 'Migra' is Spanish slang for Immigration and Naturalization Service.

The opening of the song starts with a four bar tom-tom introduction on the drum kit using a Clave rhythm. Clave is the repeated rhythmic pattern used as the basis of Afro-Cuban music. There are two basic types of clave, Rhumba Clave and Son Clave. 'Migra' uses the Son Clave:



As you might expect, the rhythm also became popular in America and was quickly adopted by Rock 'n' Roll musicians such as Buddy Holly and Bo Diddley. Bo Diddley used the rhythm so much that it became known as the 'Bo Diddley Beat' and Santana's use of the clave in 'Migra' closely resembles the Bo Diddley beat. Many artists have used combinations of Son Clave and Bo Diddley Beat to the extent that it has become universally accepted and used in many musical cultures. Some notable examples worthy of listening are:

'Not Fade Away' – The Rolling Stones, 1964 (originally recorded by Buddy Holly in 1957)

'American Girl' – Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, 1977

'Faith' – George Michael, 1987

'Desire' – U2, 1988

Santana's version is at a typical tempo of Crotchet = 125 and with the additional tom-tom and closed hi-hat beats looks something like this:

[Quotation removed, copyrighted material.](#)

*Reference – Opening drum rhythm*

The introduction continues with the introduction of a typical Santana guitar solo at bar 5 before the very simple single bar bass riff enters at bar 9. It uses just two notes, the tonic and leading note, (F & E):

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Opening bass guitar riff*

At the same time as the bass entry we hear the vocal melody (verse / theme) enter for the first time:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Opening vocal melody*

The question of tonality is very important here. The entire song is based around a single chord of F. Since the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the chord is not present there is uncertainty as to whether the song is in F major or F minor. We call this tonal ambiguity. This is further exemplified by the vocal melody where sometimes the minor 3<sup>rd</sup> (A<sub>b</sub>) is used, for example, in bar 11, and other times the major 3<sup>rd</sup> (A natural) is used, for example in bar 12. Overall though, there is a sense of F minor as the main tonality. Notice once again how restrictive this melody is, encompassing a range of just a fifth (C – G). As with the other two songs we've already looked at, once again Santana indulges in call and response with the singer. In these responses you can hear a fair amount of 'wah-wah' pedal being employed by Santana.



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There are many makes of 'wah-wah' pedal but with all of them the principal is the same. The pedal is linked between the guitar and the amplifier and when the pedal is pressed it produces the desired 'wah-wah' effect. The player controls the speed and intensity of the effect with the pedal.

At the end of the verse we get the first interlude, a really catchy two bar riff played on accordion and doubled by synth programming continuing over the top of the bass riff and clave rhythm:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – First interlude, accordion melody*

In keeping with the vocal ideas in this song, the accordion melody is really quite restricted in pitch encompassing just a perfect fourth between the tonic, (F) and subdominant (Bb). What makes this really interesting though is the use of ornamentation (turns and mordents) resulting in a highly decorated little two bar phrase.

The accordion is hugely popular in Afro-Cuban music and indeed many other forms of traditional music throughout the world. As an instrument it is essentially a cross between a keyboard instrument and a reed instrument. The accordion is secured over the shoulders by means of two straps and normally, the accordion player plays the melody on the keyboard with the right hand and uses the buttons on the left 'manual' to play bass notes and chords, all controlled by moving the 'bellows' with the left hand at the same time. The number of buttons on the left varies with the complexity of the instrument. The accordion in the picture below has 48 buttons and is known as a 48 bass accordion.



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The accordion riff is played four times after which, we return to another verse with more 'call and response' between voice and lead guitar.

After this shortened verse we hear the second interlude. This is made up from the same bass riff and clave rhythm and a new eight bar melodic idea played on two trumpets. This is very typical of afro-Cuban music with the two trumpets playing in harmony that is for the most part in parallel 3rds. Basically this means that the two parts move together rhythmically a 3<sup>rd</sup> apart:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Second interlude, trumpet melody in thirds*

Note that in the second part of this section the bass riff drops out to leave the drum rhythm accompanied by rhythm guitar with increasing use of wah-wah pedal.

From this we move straight to the third interlude. In this section a much quieter and more laid back rock-rhythm is introduced consisting of bass drum on beats 1 to 3, closed hi-hats on the second half of each beat with a strong snare drum accent on the fourth beat:

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Third interlude, drum groove*

Accompanying this beat we now have a more complex bass riff based on the root, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of the chord of F using dotted rhythms and syncopation.

Quotation removed, copyrighted material.

*Reference – Third interlude, bass guitar riff*

Above the rhythm and bass the voice can be heard chanting on the first beat of every bar. After eight bars of this, Santana produces the most dynamic and complex improvised solo in the song where he employs all of his usual trademark techniques, tremolo, linear vibrato, wah-wah, glissandi, syncopation, blistering runs and use of the full range of notes. After this solo we hear another verse followed by various repetitions of the interludes before the piece draws to the final cadence.

## Recommended further study to support your learning:

- You will gain a much greater understanding of the music if you have the opportunity to perform it so ask your teacher if you can have a look at the classroom performance editions that are on the AQA website. These have been simplified but they are all in the original key and offer scope for improvisation.
- Listening to some of Santana's earlier work will help you to gain insight into the development of his unique and individual style. Two albums worth starting with would be 'Abraxas', 1970 and 'Caravanserei', 1972.
- 'The Universal Tone' is a book that details Santana's memoirs from his earliest musical outings to the present

## Glossary of terms

### Anacrusis

An upbeat to a musical theme starting before the first beat of the bar

## Augmentation

Extending a musical idea rhythmically

## Backbeat

(Or offbeat) Refers usually to the second and fourth beat in a drum rhythm in 4/4 time

## BPM

The number of beats in a minute in a musical pulse

## Bridge

In song-writing a bridge is usually a contrasting section performed before returning to a verse or chorus. Can also be called a 'Middle 8'

## Call and Response

Refers to a musical texture whereby one musician or group of musicians makes a musical statement and this is immediately answered by another musician or group of musicians

## Congas

Tall wooden drums - Latin percussion instruments

## Contrapuntal

Two or more independent melodic lines performed at the same time

## Double Tracking

Recording the same identical musical phrase twice on different tracks to produce a chorus type effect

## Falsetto

False voice. Male vocal in highest register

## Feedback

Using the amplifier to set up vibration with the strings on electric guitar producing a howling effect

## Fusion

Music that combines different forms and genres

## Horn section

A group of wind/brass instruments in rock, soul, jazz etc.

## Humbucker pickup

A double coil electric guitar pickup

## Inversions

An inverted chord is one where any note from the chord appears as the lowest in pitch other than the root

## Interlude

Similar to a bridge or a break, an interlude breaks up the structure

## Imitation

One part copying or imitating another, not necessarily at the same pitch

## Lip trills

Using the lips to produce a trill effect on brass instruments rather than the valves

## Modulation

Process of changing from one key to another

## Mordent

A musical ornament involving moving rapidly from one note, to another, then back again

## Octave

The interval of eight notes

## Ostinato

A constantly repeated musical phrase

## Passing notes

Melodic notes that do not form part of the essential harmonic structure but 'pass' between one chord and another

## Perfect cadence

A perfect cadence is a progression from V to I in both major and minor keys. It gives the musical phrase a sense of finish

## Pitch Bend

Bending the strings on a string instrument such as guitar

## Punk Rock

Started in the mid 1970s. Short, fast and furious characterized by simple chord structures

## Rap

A vocal part that combines elements of speech, rhythm and chant

## Riff

A short, repeated musical phrase

## Root

The note from which the chord grows i.e. the 1<sup>st</sup> note

## Sequence

Repetition of a music motif or melodic phrase at a higher or lower pitch

## Stepwise

Refers to melody in cases where the movement is largely by step, i.e. from one note to the next adjacent note

## Syncopation

Refers to stresses in the rhythmic flow that appear to be off the main beats in the pulse

## Timbales

Shallow single-headed drums with a metal casing

## Tonality

The key of a piece of music

## Tone

The sound quality of an instrument or voice

## Tremolo

Producing a trembling effect, usually on a string instrument

## Triplet

Three notes played in the time of two

## Turn

A musical ornament where the player rapidly 'turns' around the note

## Vibrato

Making a note vibrate rather than playing/singing it pure

## Virtuoso

A musician with the highest level of technical skill and proficiency