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| Cantus Firmus Mass | A cyclic Mass in which preexistent music, often from a secular source, is used exactly (note for note) in the tenor voice in all of the Mass movements |
| Paraphrase Mass | A cyclic Mass in which preexistent music is used (but is freely altered) in all voices and in all of the Mass movements |
| Cyclic Mass | A polyphonic setting of the Mass Ordinary (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei) in which there is some concrete musical connection between the Mass movements |
| Contra Tenor Altus | A voice part written "against the tenor" in a higher range (altus) than the tenor; an early example of a voice part being defined by range, as opposed to relative speed or function |
| Contra Tenor Bassus | A voice part written "against the tenor" in a lower range (bassus) than the tenor |
| Superius | Beginning in the 15th century, the highest voice in a polyphonic vocal texture |
| Homophonic | A multi-voiced texture in which the highest voice predominates and the other voices provide chordal support |
| Homorhythmic | when all voices in a multi-voiced texture move in the same rhythm |

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| Martin Luther | One of the founding figures of the Protestant Reformation in Western Europe. Founded Lutheranism in the 1520s |
| Jean Calvin | Swiss prelate and the founder of Calvinism, a major strand of the Protestant Reformation in Switzerland, Holland, Scotland and parts of France |
| Reformation | A Western European religious movement that led to the institutional breakup of Western Christianity during the Renaissance. Occurred for religious and for political reasons |
| Lutheranism | The branch of Protestantism first led by Martin Luther |
| Calvinism | The branch of Protestantism first led by Jean Calvin |
| Chorale | A sacred, monophonic strophic musical genre designed for use in Lutheran religious services; text was in the vernacular |
| Metrical Psalter | The collection of psalms from the Hebrew scriptures paraphrased into vernacular verse. Set to monophonic strophic music |
| Anglicanism | That branch of Protestantism first founded when Henry VIII broke away from the Roman Catholic Church |

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| Service | The main liturgical genre of Anglicanism; based on a combination of "Holy Communion" (roughly equivalent to the Catholic Mass), "Matins" (the equivalent of Matins and Lauds from the Monastic Office) and "Evensong" (roughly equivalent to Vespers and Compline from the Office). Its musical setting was the main musical genre of Anglican worship, much as the Mass was in the Catholic church. |
| Full Anthem | After the "Service," the anthem was the most important musical genre of Anglicanism. Similar to a motet, but in English. A full anthem would be for polyphonic choir |
| Verse Anthem | A verse anthem would be performed using solo singers and instruments alternating (in verse style) with a full choir |
| Vernacular | The language spoken in everyday situations by people living in a particular place, as opposed to specialized languages used for worship, such as Latin |
| Counter Reformation | The movement in the Catholic Church that occurred in the mid 16th century as a response to the challenges of the Protestant Reformation |
| Palestrina | A native Italian composer trained in the composition of Franco Flemish polyphony; worked for many years in Rome and was a prominent musical consultant for the Counter Reformation. His style considered by subsequent generations to be the peak of the High Renaissance |
| Texture | In a musical context, a term that refers to the number of voices used and the nature of their relationship to one another |
| Polyphony | A multi-voiced texture in which all voices are relatively independent and are closer to being of equal importance than is the case in homophony |

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| Monophony | A texture in which there is only a single line of music |
| "The English Guise" | The writer Martin le Franc coined this term to describe the fashion for English musical style that developed after the music of Dunstable was introduced to the continent (in the early 15th century) |
| Perfect Consonances | Intervals that are "open," such as 4ths, 5ths and octaves. Acoustically speaking, these intervals have the simplest mathematical relationships |
| Imperfect Consonance | Intervals that are recognized as consonances, but that are acoustically less pure, such as 3rds and 6ths |
| Chanson | A generic term for a polyphonic secular poem set to music of the 14th and 15th century |
| Dunstable | An English composer that was highly influential in France at the beginning of the 15th century |
| Dufay | A Northern French composer of the 15th century |
| Motto Mass | A cyclic mass in which all movements begin with the same musical material but are then freely composed |

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| Josquin | A Northern French composer who worked primarily in Italy; the most influential composer of his generation. His life spanned the first three quarters of the 15th century |
| Throughcomposed | A piece of music that contains no large patterns of formal repetition |
| Martin Le Franc | A mid 15th-century writer who celebrated the change in musical style that occurred in France at the beginning of the 15th century. |
| Tinctoris | A 15th-century music theorist from whom we learn of the major stylistic change that took place at the beginning of that century in France |
| Fauxbourdon | A French method of setting a chant for three voices that results in large numbers of parallel 6/3 chords. Influenced by faburden, an English improvisational practice that produced similar sonorities |