

Music

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Leaving Certificate

Higher Level

2021 - 2022

Composition: Melody



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Composition Paper Layout (paper 2) 100

There are 6 questions on the Composition Paper. You are required to complete 2 of the 6 questions: 1 melody question and 1 harmony question

These notes will focus on Q.1 and touch on Q.2. The harmony question will be discussed in detail in a separate handout

- Q.1 Melody (40 marks)
 - 16 Bar melody
 - Modulation
 - Dynamics, articulation, phrase marks
 - Pick an instrument
- Q.5 Harmony (60 marks)
 - Add chords to given melody (must form a good progression)
 - Compose a bass line
- (Q.2 Melody: Setting music to a given text)

You will be given 1.5 hours to complete the two questions. I would recommend spending approximately 30 minutes on the melody question and 50 minutes on the harmony question; this will leave you 10 minutes at the end to check over everything. This timing split is only a suggestion, you may choose to divide the time differently – do what works for you. Generally the harmony question will take longer than the melody question.

Please ensure that you complete your composition exercises using a sharp pencil. It is very important to be neat. You will also require a rubber, ruler and sharpener. On the day of the exam it is advisable to bring a few pencils with you.

You are required to know all major and minor keys up to 4 sharps and 4 flats (please see theory sheet). The melody/harmony questions could appear in any of the following keys:

Major: C, G, D, A, E, F, Bb, Eb, Ab

Minor: A, E, B, F#, C#, D, G, C, F

You must also be familiar with both the treble and bass clefs



Question 1 Melody 40 Marks

Continuation of a given opening:

- Continue the given opening (4 bars/1 phrase) to make a 16 bar melody (i.e. add a further 12 bars/3 phrases)
- If the melody is in a major key you must include a modulation to the dominant at a suitable point
- Add performing directions (phrasing and dynamics)
- Choose an instrument (4 options provided) to perform the melody

How is the question marked?:

The examiner is looking for EXCELLENT

- Style and imagination
- Shape and structure
- Development of opening ideas
- Sense of direction and climax
- Successful modulation
- Suitable phrasing, dynamics and instrument

The 'X'factor' Strong Nice!/Solid! Mistakes Little understanding

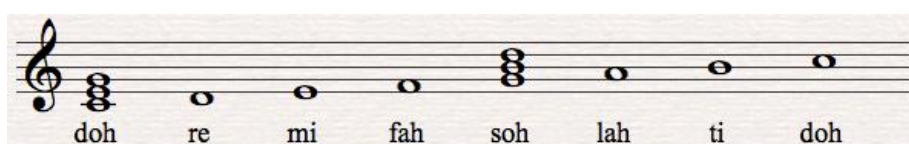
	40-34	33-28	27-22	21-16	15-10	9-4
Style and Imagination	Excellent					
Melodic & Rhythmic Interest		Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
Shape & structure	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
Dev. of opening ideas	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
Sense of direction	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
Sense of climax	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair		
Modulation	Successful	Successful	Unconfirmed	Unsuccessful	No attempt	None
Performing directions (phrasing & dynamics)	Appropriate	Appropriate	Appropriate	Appropriate	Inappropriate	None
Instrument	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	Unsuitable	None



Question 1 Before composing...

- Identify the **key** of the melody (check the key signature, and the chord that the opening complete bar is based on. Keep an eye out for any accidentals in the given opening; if there is an accidental in the given opening it is likely that the melody is in a minor key)
- Carry out your **rough work**:
 - Draw the **scale** of the home key and add solfa. It is also advisable to draw the tonic (1st) and dominant (5th) chords e.g.

C major



- If in a major key work out your **modulation**. Modulation will be discussed in detail later in handout
- **Map** your melody (see map later in handout)
- Check if the given opening has any **unique features** (e.g. rests, accents, staccatos, syncopation). If the given opening contains a unique feature, this feature should be incorporated into your answer

Please ensure that your stem directions are correct:

- Notes above the middle line = stems go down by the left
- Notes below the middle line = stems go up by the right
- Notes on the middle line can go either down by the left or up by the right
- If you have a group of notes where some stems should go up and some stems should go down (e.g. 4 quavers), then you should go with the majority



Please ensure that your grouping is correct:

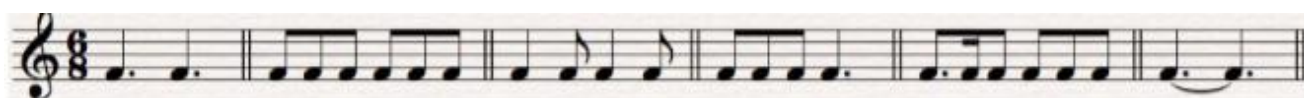
- In 4/4 time (4 crotchet beats per bar) beats 1 and 3 are strong. NEVER beam across beats 2 + 3. Dotted crotchets should only be used on beat 1 or 3 to avoid syncopation, and should be followed by a single quaver or two semiquavers. Examples of 4/4 grouping:



- In 3/4 time (3 crotchet beats per bar) think of 3 separate beats per bar - keep three beats separate, e.g. If using quavers in 3/4 time beam in groups of 2. Never beam across crotchet beats. Dotted crotchets should be used on beat 1 only to avoid syncopation, and should be followed by a single quaver or pair of semiquavers



- In 6/8 time (6 quaver beats per bar) there are 2 strong beats in a bar – quaver beat 1 and quaver beat 3. Imagine that there is an imaginary barline that goes down between the 3rd and 4th quaver beats – NEVER beam across this imaginary line. Possible rhythmic patterns in 6/8 time include:



Mapping your melody

- AABA is an effective form for your melody:
 - A (bars 1-4)
 - A1 (bars 5-8)
 - B (bars 9-12)
 - A2 (bars 13-16)
- The first note of bars 5 and 13 often sound best as 'doh'. The first note of bar 5 is often best as 'doh' because it helps to form a connection with the given opening, and often the last note of bar 4 requires resolution to the tonic (doh). The first note of bar 13 is often best as 'doh' as it helps to connect with the given opening and it helps the melody to come full circle: make sure that the you go to the 'doh' that is the closest to the last note of bar 4/12 respectively i.e.
 - if the last note of bar 4/12 is 're' then the first note of bar 5/13 should be the 'doh' a step below 're'
 - if the last note of bar 4/12 is 'ti' then the first note of bar 5/13 should be the 'doh' a step above 'ti'
 - if the last note of bar 4/12 is 'soh' then the first note of bar 5/13 can either be the high or low 'doh'
- It is important to finish your melody on the tonic; the first note of bar 16 should be 'doh'. In bar 16 if you move off 'doh', make sure that you return to 'doh' to finish the melody. Some nice patterns for bar 16 include:
 - A sustained doh
 - Doh to doh (octave leap)
 - Doh soh doh (finishing on a long doh)
 - Doh mi so doh (finishing on a long doh)
- Try to avoid using 'doh' as the last note of bar 15; this takes away from the impact of doh in the final bar. 're' or 'ti' are beautiful as the last note of bar 15
- It is important that the third phrase sounds unfinished so as that it doesn't take away from the final phrase. In order to ensure that the phrase sounds unfinished it is best if you go to the chord of V here e.g. the strong beats of bar 12 should be part of the chord of V (i.e. soh, ti, or re)
- The modulation is very effective at the end of the second phrase (i.e. bars 7-8). It works beautifully to begin the modulation in bar 7 and to stay in the new key until the end of the phrase:
 - Try 'fi' as the final note of bar 7 to begin modulation (fi' is a semitone higher than 'fah')
 - If there are sharps in the key signature you will add a sharp sign before 'fah' to make it 'fi'
 - If there are flats in the key signature you will add a natural sign before 'fah' to make it 'fi'
 - Ensure that the first note of bar 8 is 'soh'. If you move off 'soh', make sure that you go to another note from the chord of V (soh, ti, re) on the next strong beat of the bar. It is important to stay on chord V (which is the tonic of your new key i.e. the one that you have modulated to) until the very end of the phrase. The modulation will be outlined in detail later in the handout.
- Stepping across the bar line from bar 8 into bar 9 works very nicely



- It is nice to include a sequence in bars 9 and 10 (see examples in melodies below). A sequence is a melodic pattern/motif that is repeated at a higher or lower pitch
 - If your sequence motif predominantly ascends, an ascending sequence is recommended. If your sequence motif descends, a descending sequence is recommended
 - It sounds strong when there is the distance of a step between the first note of each motif. I would suggest pretending to start another motif in bar 11, but the change it to add more interest (see examples below)
 - Try to pick a sequence motif that moves predominantly in step, take inspiration from the opening 4 bars, but show your imagination by changing it to suit you
 - Sequence motifs that begin and end on the same note are particularly strong
- Your melody should include at least 1 climax point. A climax point is a focal point of your melody – it is usually a high point in your melody, although it can be a low point. Effective climax points
 - Build over time (ideally 1.5-2 bars)
 - Don't move too quickly off the highest/lowest note
 - In an ascending climax draw a crescendo starting directly below the lowest note of your climax and finishing directly below the highest note of your climax. In a descending climax draw a diminuendo (dynamics will be discussed in more detail later in the handout)
 - I would suggest including a climax in the final two bars of one of your phrases as this will allow you to stay on the high/low point

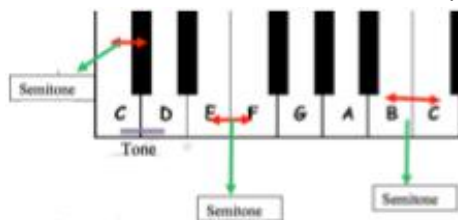
Sample melody map (major key):

The sample melody map consists of four staves of music in a major key, with various annotations and markings:

- Staff 1 (A):** Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first two notes are circled in blue and labeled "chord I" in red. The first note is "Doh" and the second is "m". A blue oval encircles a later melodic motif. The staff ends with a note labeled "ti" with an upward arrow.
- Staff 2 (A1):** Continues the melody. The first two notes are circled in blue. The first note is "Doh" and the second is "d/m/s". A blue arrow points from the motif in Staff 1 to this staff. The staff ends with the notes "fi - soh" and is labeled "modulation" in red.
- Staff 3 (B):** Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. It features a "Sequence" of three identical melodic motifs, each enclosed in a green box. A blue arrow points from the motif in Staff 1 to the first box of the sequence. The staff ends with two motifs labeled "V chord II" in red, each circled in blue and containing the notes "s/t/r".
- Staff 4 (A2):** Continues the sequence. The first two notes are circled in blue. The first note is "Doh" and the second is "d/m/s". A blue arrow points from the motif in Staff 1 to this staff. The staff ends with the notes "r/ti/soh" and "Doh", with "Doh" circled in blue and labeled "chord I = tonic" in red.

Major melody: Modulation roughwork

It is useful to draw one octave of the piano keyboard to help you work out the modulation:



If the melody is in a major key you are required to modulate to the dominant key. The dominant key is the 5th note of the scale e.g. the dominant of C major is G, the dominant of F major is C etc.

In order to modulate you will be required to add an accidental (a sharp/flat/natural sign written directly before the note, covering the line/space that the note is on). A sharp sign raises a note by a semitone. A flat sign lowers a note by a semitone. A natural sign cancels a sharp/flat.

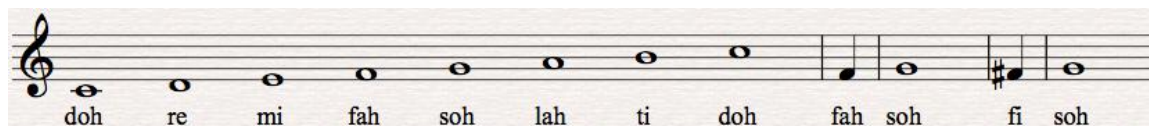
There are a few different ways to work out the modulation:

Option 1: work out the key signature of each key i.e. the home key (tonic) and the dominant key (5th), and the difference will be the accidental, for example:

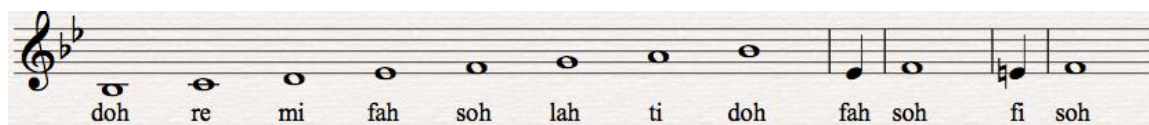
- The melody is in the key of C major (tonic). The dominant key (5th) is G major. C major has no sharps/flats, G major has 1 sharp (F#), therefore the new note will be F#
- The melody is in the key of D major (tonic). The dominant key (5th) is A major. D major has 2 sharps (F# and C#), A major has 3 sharps (F#, C#, G#), therefore the new note will be G#
- The melody is in Bflat major (tonic). The dominant key (5th) is F major. Bflat major has 2 flats (Bb and Eb), F major has 1 flat Bb, therefore you have to cancel the Eb, so the new note is E natural
- Remember if you raise a natural note it becomes #, if you raise a **flat** note it **becomes natural!!** (if there are #s in the key sig add a #, if there are flats in the key sig add a natural)

Option 2: draw the tonic scale (i.e. the home key), add solfa. Raise the 4th note (fah) by a semitone (fah will become fi), and that will be your accidental note e.g.

If you are given a melody in C major in order to modulate you must include an F# and go to G (the new dominant key)



If you are given a melody in Bflat major in order to modulate you must include an Enatural and go to F (the new dominant key)



MODULATION

Diagram illustrating modulation on a piano keyboard and musical notation. The keyboard shows intervals: Tone (C-D) and Semitone (D-E, E-F, F-G, G-A, A-B, B-C). The musical notation shows two staves. The first staff shows a melody in D major: d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d. The second staff shows the same melody with a modulation to the dominant (A major) at the end: d, r, m, f, s, l, t, d, fi, s. Blue arrows indicate the modulation from the end of the first phrase to the start of the second phrase.

- Suggestions for how to approach the raised note of the modulation in a major key:
 - From the note below e.g. m fi s
 - From the note above e.g. s fi s
 - From a third above e.g. l fi s
- I recommend modulating to the dominant at the end of the second phrase of the melody, by using fi (the raised fah) as the last note of bar 7 and going to soh (as a long note) in bar 8
- It is really important to end your modulation phrase on the dominant (i.e. go to a long soh, and if you move off it ensure that you go to another note of the dominant chord). NB the dominant chord is you 'new tonic'
- NB once you move in the next phrase (phrase 3) you can return to the original key

Points to note:

- I recommend always composing from left to right – let each note dictate the next – voice leading is very important
- Never leap off a passing note (i.e. a pair of quavers that move in step/a dotted crotchet quaver that move in step). In other words If you have 2 short notes which move in step keep moving in step i.e. step off a passing note
- In a major key ti wants to resolve to doh, unless in a descending scale, or as part of your sequence. Always check if the last note of the given phrase is 'ti' (or re), if so the first note of the next phrase must be 'doh'
- In a major key re often wants to resolve to doh
- It is recommended to use a long note to establish a clear modulation
- Make sure you do your rough work carefully
- Don't add syncopation unless it is used in the given opening
- Check if there are any 'unique features' in the given opening. If there are try you use these in the same place in the subsequent A phrases (see sample answers)
- If there is articulation (staccatos, slurs, stresses, accents) or rests in the given opening take inspiration from this and use them suitably throughout the entire melody
- The first bar of phrases 2 and 4 (e.g. bar 5 and 13) should be based on the tonic chord if bar 1 is based on the tonic, as this creates a lovely connection with the given opening
- The final bar of the third phrase (B phrase, bar 12) should be based on the dominant chord (do not change from this chord), in order to make the phrase sound unfinished
- Try a sequence in bars 9 + 10
- Keep leaps to a minimum – leaps within the tonic chord are strong
- In a major key avoid the following weak intervals/leaps
 - Fah-doh (4-1)
 - Lah down to doh (6-1)
 - Ti jumping down to doh (7-1)
 - Fah-ti
 - These intervals are also weak in a minor key, but they will have different solfa
- Stepping across the barline is strong



Points to note contd. + The Passing Note

- Make sure the range is good (you should aim for at least 2 octaves)
- Your melody should have at least one climatic point
- Ensure correct placement of phrases and performing directions
- The examiner is looking for you to develop both the melody and the rhythm

The Passing Note

Never leap off a passing note

When you have:

- A pair of quavers that move in step, you should continue in step
- A dotted crotchet quaver that moves in step, you should continue in step



Composing your melody

Phrase 2/A1 Phrase (bars 5-8)

- This phrase should also be reminiscent of phrase 1, however there is room for individuality here
- The first bar of phrase often sounds best if based on the tonic
- Think about expanding the range
- Don't forget if you are in a major key, you must modulate to the dominant at the end of this phrase
- In a major key end this phrase on a long dominant. If you move off the dominant note ensure that you go to another note of the dominant chord on the next strong beat (in a minor key you might like to end the phrase on the tonic chord)
- Suggestions on how to approach the raised note of the modulation in a major key:
 - From the note below e.g. m fi s
 - From the note above e.g. s fi s
 - From a third above e.g. l fi s

Phrase 3/B phrase (bars 9-12)

- Use your imagination in this phrase
- Try for a rhythmic and interesting sequence motif
- End this phrase with an imperfect cadence (i.e. on the chord of V)
- I would suggest a 2 bar sequence at the beginning of the B phrase
- In 4/4 time the sequence motif can be 2 or 4 crotchet beats in length (e.g. half a bar or a full bar)
- In 3/4 time the sequence motif should be 3 crotchet beats in length (e.g. a full bar)
- In 6/8 time the sequence motif can be 3 quaver beats or 6 quaver beats in length (e.g. half a bar or a full bar)
- In upbeat melodies, you may start the sequence motif on beat 1 of the first full bar of the phrase, however, you must include an upbeat in the previous bar as an introduction to the sequence
- You may like to put a climax point at the end of your B phrase



Phrase 4/A2 phrase (bars 13-16)

- This is a very important phrase as it concludes the entire melody
- In order for the melody to sound whole and complete it needs to be reminiscent of the opening phrase (though not identical)
- The first bar of phrase should be based on the tonic
- Expand the range
- End this phrase on a long tonic
- If there is an upbeat make sure that the last bar has the correct number of beats
- Do not approach the final note from fah (4th note) or lah (6th note) – these are weak
- Octave leaps are effective at the end of the melody
- Aim for a strong ending – try more movement here/flourish



Performing directions, Instrument

You will be required to add performing directions to your melody. These should include phrasing and dynamics. You may add some tempo changes if you wish – but make sure that they suit the melody and that they are used with care

- **Phrasing**
 - Be careful of phrase placement
 - If using long slurred phrase marks, ensure that the phrase marks start and end on top of the note
 - If using comma phrase marks the phrase mark should appear shortly after the last note of each phrase
 - Take particular care when adding phrase marks to an upbeat melody
- **Dynamics**
 - One or max two per phrase
 - If melody ascends by step crescendos are effective
 - If melody descends by step diminuendos are effective
 - Follow the contour of the melody
 - Dynamic markings should be written directly under the note on the stave
- **Tempo markings**
 - Rit./Ritardando, Rit./Ritenuto Rall./Rallentando – to slow down
 - Poco Rit. – get a little slower
 - Accel./Accelerando – to get faster
 - A tempo – back to the original tempo
 - Tempo markings are written above the stave
- **Instrument**
 - Pick one instrument from four given options
 - Good instruments to choose
 - Violin
 - Clarinet
 - Oboe (providing that your melody doesn't go below Bb below middle C)
 - Flute/Descant recorder (providing that your melody doesn't go below middle C)



Sample melodies

Please observe how the melodies below follow the aforementioned map:

Sample Melody 1

- In this sample answer you can see how the unique feature (the rest in bar 2) is carried through the melody, being used in the same place in the subsequent A phrases
- Notice how the range is above 1 octave in each phrase and the range of the entire melody is over 2 octaves
- Notice how the dynamics follow the contour of the melody. Remember less is more with dynamics
- I brought in some articulation into the third phrase to add some new interest
- There are a number of points of climax (see the ends of phrases)
- The rhythm is developed, and semiquavers are added to the sequence to add more interest

Sample Melody 2

- Notice how the range is above 1 octave in each phrase and the range of the entire melody is over 2 octaves
- Notice how the dynamics follow the contour of the melody. Remember less is more with dynamics
- I brought in some new rhythmic features to add some more interest (semiquavers and triplets). Please take care when adding new rhythmic features – they must be used sensitively. The melody is simple when these additions have been made
- Notice how I split the final 4 bars into 2 shorter phrases – I wanted to make an impact of the high point in bar 14 and added a pause to emphasise this further

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of four staves. Handwritten annotations in red ink provide additional context:

- Staff 1 (Bars 1-4):** Labeled "Chord I" above the first bar. A "doh" note is written above the first bar line, and a "mp" (mezzo-piano) dynamic marking is below the first bar.
- Staff 2 (Bars 5-8):** Labeled "Chord I" above the first bar. A "doh" note is written above the first bar line, and a "mf" (mezzo-forte) dynamic marking is below the first bar. A bracket labeled "modulation" spans bars 7 and 8.
- Staff 3 (Bars 9-12):** Labeled "sequence" above bars 9 and 10, and "Chord V" above bar 12. Triplet markings (a '3' over a group of three notes) are present in bars 10 and 11.
- Staff 4 (Bars 13-16):** Labeled "Chord I" above the first bar. A "doh" note is written above the first bar line, and a "f" (forte) dynamic marking is below the first bar. A "doh" note is written above the final bar line.

Upbeat Melody

- An upbeat melody is when the melody does not begin on beat 1 of the bar
- Be careful when numbering bars - we call bar 1 the first complete bar of the melody
- The given opening is phrase 1 – do not add any notes to this phrase. Step 1 – add phrase mark to given opening
- Each phrase must start with an upbeat. Your upbeat should be the exact same rhythm/value as the given upbeat. This upbeat should be written in bar 4, but will form the beginning of phrase 2 (see sample answers). For example, if the given melody has 2 quaver beats for an upbeat, you should also use 2 quaver beats for the upbeat of all other phrases
- Each phrase must end with the same number of beats as phrase 1 finished with (see sample answers)
- The upbeat should connect melodically to the bar that follows
- Dynamics should be written under the upbeat (if you are putting one at the start of the phrase)
- The final bar of an upbeat melody will never be complete i.e. the top figure of the time signature minus the number of beats in the given upbeat = the number of beats in the final bar



Steps in preparing an upbeat melody

1. Roughwork



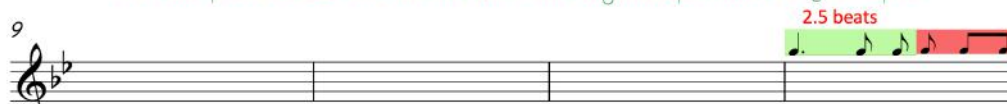
2. Add barlines



3. Plan for upbeat



NB! Each phrase should start with the exact same rhythmic pattern as the given upbeat



Phrase 2 will begin in bar 4. Phrase 3 will begin in bar 8. Phrase 4 will begin in bar 12.

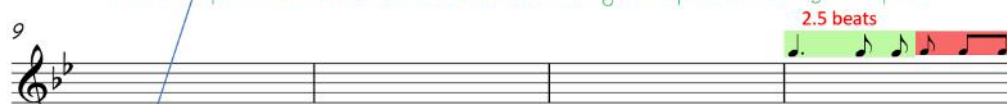
NB! You will never have a complete bar at the end of an upbeat melody



5. Identify unique features



NB! Each phrase should start with the exact same rhythmic pattern as the given upbeat



NB! You will never have a complete bar at the end of an upbeat melody



Steps in preparing an upbeat melody contd.

1.5 beats 1 *chord I* 2 3 4 2.5 beats

+ 4 + soh doh 1 + 2 + 3

6. Sketch map

5 *chord I* d/m/s doh modulation 2.5 beats

fi soh s/t/r

NB! Each phrase should start with the exact same rhythmic pattern as the given upbeat

9sequence..... 2.5 beats *chord II in bar 12*

s/t/r V s/t/r

NB! You will never have a complete bar at the end of an upbeat melody

13 *chord I* d/m/s doh $\text{doh}^4 \text{ minus } 1.5 = 2.5$

2.5 beats

1.5 beats 1 2 3 4 2.5 beats

+ 4 + soh doh 1 + 2 + 3

7. Sing/clap given opening

5 d/m/s doh 2.5 beats

fi soh s/t/r

NB! Each phrase should start with the exact same rhythmic pattern as the given upbeat

9sequence..... 2.5 beats

s/t/r V s/t/r

NB! You will never have a complete bar at the end of an upbeat melody

13 d/m/s doh $\text{doh}^4 \text{ minus } 1.5 = 2.5$

2.5 beats



Sample Upbeat Melody

Each colour in the sample answers below signifies a different phrase i.e. phrase 1 is purple, phrase 2 is blue, phrase 3 is green, and phrase 4 is red. Please also observe how the melodies follow the aforementioned map. Also take note of the dynamics and phrasing.

Sample Melody 1

- Notice how syncopation is used in bar 1 (N.B. bar 1 is the first complete bar), therefore it has been brought into the first complete bar of the subsequent A phrases
- The syncopated rhythm of bar 1 has pushed the tonic (doh) onto the 2nd beat of the bar (i.e. the minim), therefore bars 5 and 13 have done the same
- Notice that the end of the second phrase (the F in bar 8) is in the new modulated key, however, the third phrase (beginning with the Eflat in bar 8) returns to the original key (hence the Eflat). The modulation need only last for phrase 2 – the upbeat in bar 8 is part of phrase 3 and so therefore is in the home/tonic key

The musical score is written on four staves, each representing a different phrase. The first staff (purple) contains measures 1-4, with a 1.5-beat segment labeled 'chord I' and 'soh doh'. The second staff (blue) contains measures 5-8, with a 2.5-beat segment labeled 'fi modulation' and 'soh'. The third staff (green) contains measures 9-12, with a 2.5-beat segment labeled 's/t/r' and 'chord IV in bar 12'. The fourth staff (red) contains measures 13-16, with a 2.5-beat segment labeled 'chord I' and 'doh'. Handwritten annotations include 'sequence' pointing to measures 9-10 and 11-12, and 'doh' pointing to the final note of each phrase. Dynamics include *mf*, *mp*, and *f*.

Sample Melody 2

The musical score for Sample Melody 2 is presented across four staves, each with specific annotations and color-coded sections:

- Staff 1 (Measures 1-4):** Labeled "1.5 beats" and "chord I". The notes are grouped under a blue highlight. The first measure is marked "doh".
- Staff 2 (Measures 5-8):** Labeled "chord I" and "d/m/s". The notes are grouped under a blue highlight. The first measure is marked "Doh". A modulation is indicated between measures 6 and 7, with notes marked "fi" and "soh". The section ends with a green highlight labeled "1.5 beats" and "mf".
- Staff 3 (Measures 9-12):** Labeled "sequence" and "sequence". The notes are grouped under a green highlight. The first measure is marked "Doh". The section ends with a red highlight labeled "1.5 beats" and "mp".
- Staff 4 (Measures 13-16):** Labeled "chord I" and "d/m/s". The notes are grouped under a red highlight. The first measure is marked "Doh". The section ends with a red highlight labeled "1.5 beats" and "f".

Minor Melody

How to tell if the melody is in a minor key:

- The question will not ask you to modulate
- There will probably be an accidental (raised 7th) in the given opening
- The first bar of the given opening is likely to be based around the tonic minor chord

How to work out the minor key:

- Look at the key signature
- Work out the major key with this key signature
 - To find the relative minor count down 3 semitones from the note which you are on (e.g. If the key signature is C major count down three semitones from C i.e. B B \flat and A – the relative minor is A minor)
 - Alternatively draw the major scale, add the solfa and go to lah in the scale – this note will be the relative minor
- NB relative keys will have the exact same key signature
- It often helps to visualise or draw the piano keyboard when working out tones and semitones

Major scale

Natural minor scale

How to work out the relative minor key:

- Count down 3 semitones from the major tonic
 - Draw the major scale and go to the 6th note (lah)
- Major scales starts on doh, minor scales starts on lah



Given opening:



- Step 1: Identify the key
- Step 2: Complete your rough work (see examples on following pages)
- Step 3: Map your melody (see sample answers)
- Step 4: Compose your melody. Don't forget to treat the 7th correctly
- Step 5: Add phrasing
- Step 6: Add performing directions
- Step 7: Pick a suitable instrument

N.B.

- No modulation is required (although you can modulate to the relative major if you wish)
- You must remember to add accidentals...

How to treat the 7th note of the minor key:

- Minor scales contain a raised 7th (i.e. the 7th note of the scale is raised by a semitone. In order to raise the original note by a semitone an accidental is used. A sharp sign is used to raise a white note (e.g. F), and a natural sign is used to raise a black note (e.g. Bb)
- The 7th note of the scale must be treated very carefully (!!) in order to avoid the augmented 2nd interval that is present in the harmonic minor scale: fah-si
- You must ALWAYS step off the 7th note of the scale UNLESS you are doing a broken chord/triad of chord V (i.e. m – si – t)
 - If you ascend in step you must raise the 7th (i.e. add an accidental in front of the note)
 - Soh will become si
 - Si must be followed by lah (unless as mentioned – the broken chord of V)
 - If you descend in step you do not raise the 7th (i.e. no accidental, unless you are cancelling a raised 7th that was earlier in the bar)
 - Soh will remain soh
 - Soh will be followed by fah
 - Lah – soh – fah



To recap:

ALL 7th notes of the minor scale MUST be raised UNLESS you descend in step off the 7th

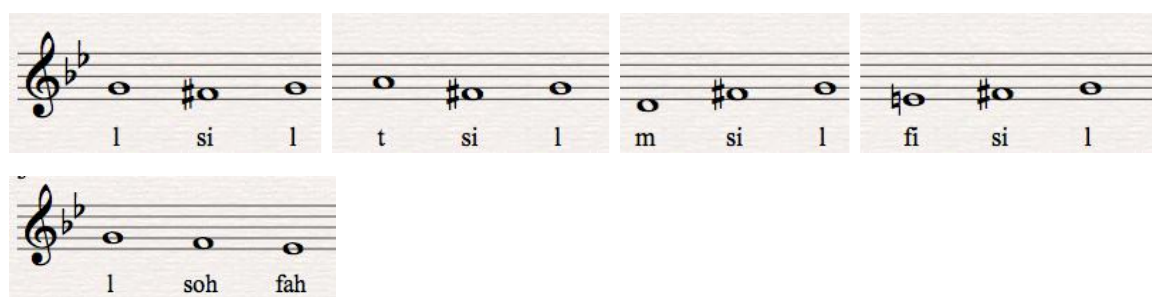
The best ways to use the raised 7th (si) are as follows (remember si must always be followed by lah unless using a broken chord of V):

- Lah – si – lah (creating a lower auxiliary)
- Mi – si – lah (approaching from a third below)
- Ti – si – lah (approaching from a third above)
- Fi – si – lah (approaching from the raised note below)

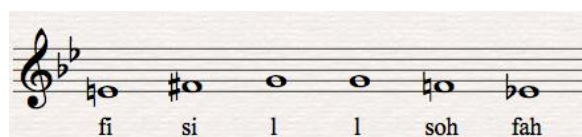
If you descend in step off the 7th note you should use:

- Lah – soh – fah (i.e. no accidentals)

For example, in the key of G minor, these would be the possibilities:



NB You do not need to add accidentals to make soh/fah, unless you fi/si appear earlier within the same bar e.g.



Let's recap again!:

- Never leap off si (raised 7th) unless using a broken chord of V
- Si (raised 7th) should always rise to/be followed by lah (unless a broken chord of V)
- Alternatively you can descend Lah – soh – fah
- If you are using soh it must be followed by fah
- Never pivot around the 7th note i.e. lah – soh – fah – si – lah; for this to be correct you would need to change it to: lah – soh – fah – fi – si – lah

I would suggest:

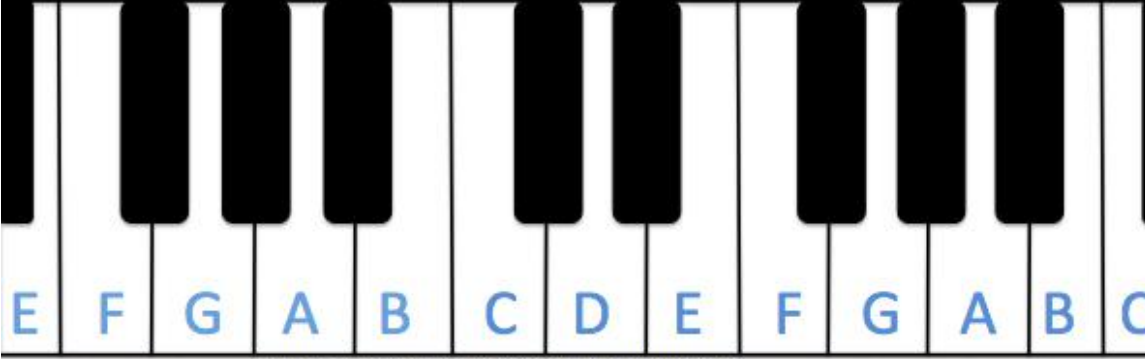
- Avoiding crossing the 7th note of the scale in the sequence

Remember:

- NEVER fah-si or si-fah (this is the augmented 2nd interval that we want to avoid)!!



Sample Rough work in a Minor Key



SAMPLE ROUGH WORK FOR A MINOR KEY

Major scale: A maj

Natural minor scale: F# min

Acceptable patterns for using the 7th in a minor key

l si l m si l t si l fi si l

l s f

NB It is also useful to draw the chord of V in your scale – chord V contains the raised 7th

NB the different accidentals used to raise a note depend on the key signature

SAMPLE ROUGH WORK FOR A MINOR KEY

Major scale: F maj

Natural minor scale: D min

Acceptable patterns for using the 7th in a minor key

l si l m si l t si l fi si l

l s f

Sample Map for Minor Melody

The musical score consists of four staves. The first staff is in C minor (one flat) and starts with a treble clef and a common time signature. It contains a melody starting on G4, moving up to A4, Bb4, and then a series of eighth notes. Handwritten annotations include "i chord i" in red above the first measure, "lah" in red below the first measure, and "l/d/m" in black above the second measure. The second staff is in D major (two sharps) and starts with a treble clef. It contains a melody starting on D5, moving up to E5, F#5, and then a series of eighth notes. Handwritten annotations include "i chord i" in red above the first measure, "lah" in red below the first measure, and "l/d/m" in black above the second measure. The third staff is in D major and contains a sequence of three empty boxes. Handwritten annotations include "Sequence" in blue above the first box, "V chord V" in red above the first box, and "m/si/t m/si/t" in black above the first box. The fourth staff is in D major and contains a melody starting on D5, moving up to E5, F#5, and then a series of eighth notes. Handwritten annotations include "i chord i" in red above the first measure, "lah" in red below the first measure, and "l/d/m" in black above the second measure. The score ends with a double bar line.

Avoid using the 7th in the sequence

Sample Answers in a Minor Key

Staff 1 (A): *mf* lah m m si lah

Staff 2 (A1): *mp* lah l/d/m l soh f t d

Staff 3 (B): Sequence *f* V = m/si/t

Staff 4 (A2): *f* lah si lah m si lah

Staff 5: lah l/d/m

Staff 1: 1 beat lah m si lah 2 beats 1 beat

Staff 2: lah fi si lah l/d/m 2 beats 1 beat

Staff 3: 3 3 l s f 2 beats 1 beat

Staff 4: lah m si lah 2 beats

Staff 5: m si lah fi si lah

This is a delayed resolved from si to lah - we will discuss the delayed resolve further in class

Question 2 Melody: Setting Music to a Given Text

This question is an alternative to Question 1 Melody ('Continue the given opening...'). It is also worth 40 marks

N.B. The 'Before composing' (pages 3 + 4) and 'Points to note' sections (pages 9 + 10) also apply to this question

Steps to completing this question:

1. Read the opening text aloud with the given rhythm
2. Add bar lines to opening line of text
3. Read the entire text
4. Underline emphasised words
5. Put a barline before each of the underlined words (see example below)
6. If upbeat melody add upbeat text (i.e. first word of each line) to end of each stave (see highlighted words in example below)
7. Write first syllable of underlined word at start of each bar (but remember you may wish to repeat some words)
8. Map your melody – loose version of 16 bar melody
 - a. Form: loose A A1 B A2 (A3 if you wish to do 20 bars)
 - b. If upbeat melody the final bar will be 'incomplete'
 - c. First bars of A phrases based on the tonic
 - d. End of every phrase (except final phrase) unfinished (i.e. not on doh)
 - e. Finish the melody on doh
 - f. Can modulate if you wish (e.g. bars 7-8)
 - g. Can do a sequence in B phrase if you wish
9. Check for word painting possibilities
10. Compose melody
11. Add slurs to melismas i.e. more than one note per syllable
12. Hyphenate words that are more than one syllable
13. Underscore one syllable words that are to be held over more than one note (see examples below)
14. Add phrasing and dynamics (dynamics will be above stave as text is below)

The examiner is looking for:

1. Excellent style and imagination
2. Excellent marriage of words and music
3. Excellent sense of shape and structure
4. Excellent sense of direction and climax
5. Appropriate performing directions (phrasing and dynamics) inserted



Into that silent sea



Given Question:

The sun smiles over every land,

A parting for me from the brood of cares:

Hounds bark, stags tryst

Ravens flourish, summer has come!



Sample Answer:

Word painting possibilities: bark, flourish

N.B. Upbeat melody (therefore incomplete final bar)



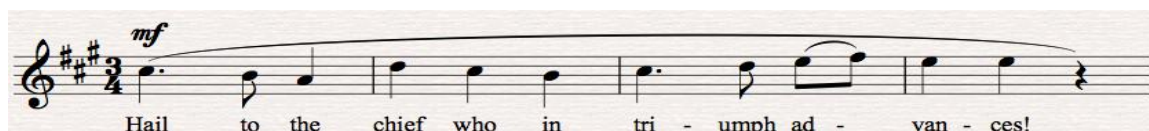
Given Question:

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!

Honoured and blessed be the evergreen pine!

Long may the tree in his banner that glances

Flourish the shelter and grace of our line!



Sample Answer:

Word painting possibilities: bark, flourish

Student Notes



Student Notes



New Layout of Melody Question 1

Question 1 Continuation of a given opening

(50 marks)

- Continue the given opening to make a 15-bar melody.
- Include a modulation to the dominant at a suitable point.
- Add appropriate performing directions (phrasing and dynamics) to the melody.
- Choose a suitable instrument for your melody from the following list:

- ☐ trumpet
☐ violin
☐ clarinet
☐ oboe

Roughwork

Andante
mf

STEP 1: add bar lines + bar numbers!
max 3 bars per stave (see following pages)

UPBEAT MAJOR MAP

If bar 1 (i.e. 1st full bar) starts on doh start bars 5 + 13 on doh.

✓
final bar
4 - $\frac{1}{2}$ = 3 ds

I
Bars 5 + 13: tonic chord

II
Bars 8 + 12: dominant chord

= unique feature

finish on doh

upbeat melody: phrase 2 starts in bar 4
 phrase 3 starts in bar 8
 phrase 4 starts in bar 12

all phrases start w/ same rhythmic pattern

Moderato 1. I=tonic 2.

3. 4. 5. I=tonic

6. 7. 8. mod 9. 10. 11. 12. I=tonic

13. 14. 15. 16. deh

sample answer

modulation

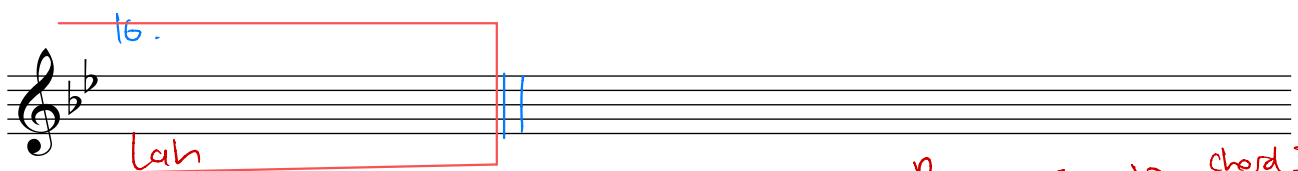
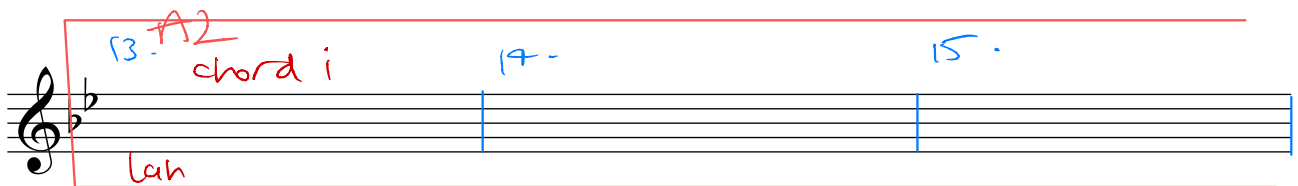
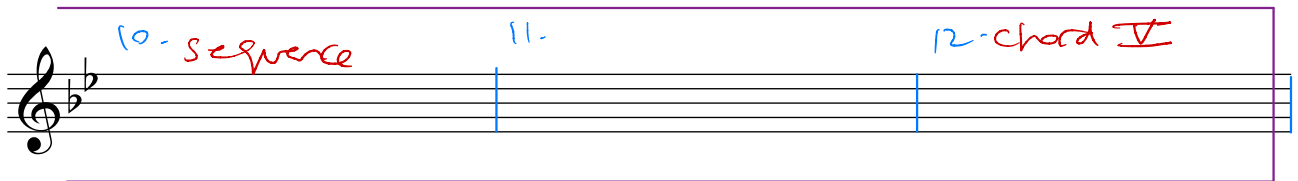
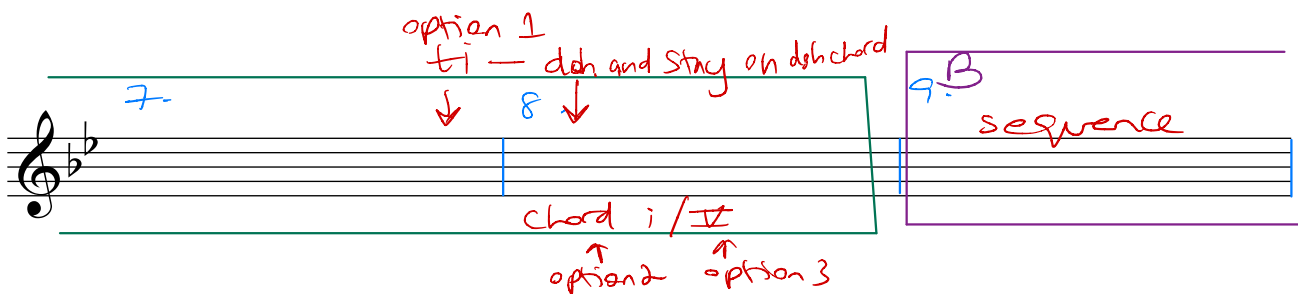
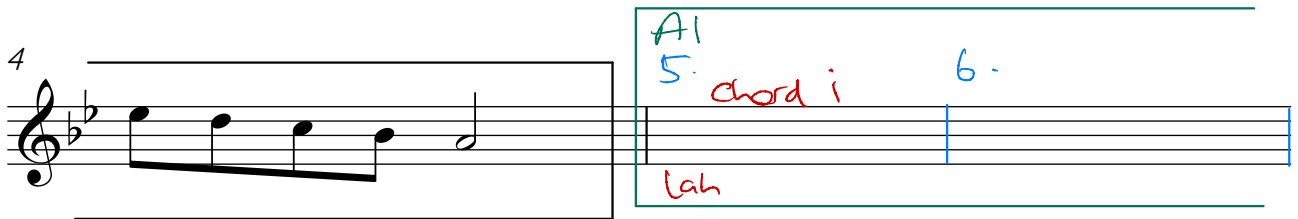
d e n f i l t d

I V

ti soh

remain on chord V until end of phrase

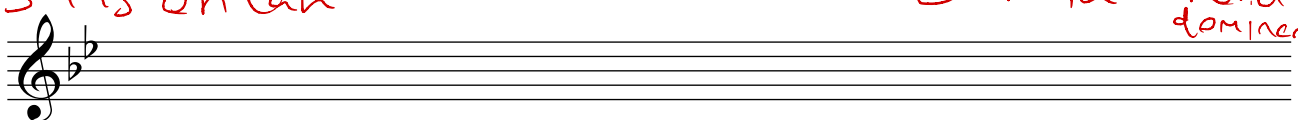
MINOR MELODY MAP



Bars 5 + 13: chord I
tonic chord

Bar 12: chord IV
dominant chord

If bar 1 starts on lah (tonic) start
bars 5 + 13 on lah



Maps of new melody layout

NB Each highlighted colour represents a different phrase

yellow = phrase A1 (1)
green = phrase A2 (2)
blue = phrase B (3)
pink = phrase A2 (4)

E♭ major

Handwritten musical score for E♭ major. The score is written on five staves. The first staff is marked 'Mod. Moderato' and 'chord I'. The second staff is marked 'chord I'. The third staff is marked 'modulation'. The fourth staff is marked 'Sequence' and 'chord II'. The fifth staff is marked 'chord I' and 'Cresc...'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'mf' and 'dim...'. The phrases are color-coded: yellow for A1, green for A2, blue for B, and pink for A2.

C minor

Handwritten musical score for C minor. The score is written on five staves. The first staff is marked 'Mod. Moderato' and 'chord i'. The second staff is marked 'chord i'. The third staff is marked 'Lah'. The fourth staff is marked 'Sequence' and 'chord i'. The fifth staff is marked 'chord i' and 'Lah = tonic'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'mf' and 'dim...'. The phrases are color-coded: yellow for A1, green for A2, blue for B, and pink for A2.

Lah = tonic
in a minor key

Maps of new melody layout

Canzone

late tonic
in a minor
key

Furion



Maps of new melody layout

Handwritten musical score with annotations and color-coding.

Annotations:

- Handwritten:* *6 major* (in red, on the left margin)
- Handwritten:* *Moderato* (above the first staff)
- Handwritten:* *doh chord I* (above the first staff, with a red arrow pointing to a note)
- Handwritten:* *chord I* (above the second staff, with a red arrow pointing to a note)
- Handwritten:* *sequence* (above the third staff, with a blue line underlining a sequence of notes)
- Handwritten:* *chord II* (above the fourth staff, with a red arrow pointing to a note)
- Handwritten:* *chord I* (above the fifth staff, with a red arrow pointing to a note)
- Handwritten:* *fresc.* (above the fifth staff, with a red arrow pointing to a note)
- Handwritten:* *4 - P = 3.5* (below the fifth staff)

Color-coding:

- Staff 1: Yellow background
- Staff 2: Green background
- Staff 3: Blue background
- Staff 4: Purple background
- Staff 5: Purple background

Other markings:

- Handwritten:* *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamic markings.
- Handwritten:* *1.*, *2.*, *3.*, *4.*, *6.*, *7.*, *9.*, *10.*, *11.*, *13.*, *15.* (measure numbers).
- Handwritten:* *4-5* (below the fifth staff, with a red arrow pointing to a note)

Maps of new melody layout

