

SILVER STATE AP SUMMER INSTITUTE
AP MUSIC THEORY
COURSE OUTLINE
June 21-24, 2010

Monday, June 21

Morning Session

Getting acquainted

Discussion of teaching situations, schedules, student experience in music, qualifying students for AP, placement test, expectations, etc. How music theory fits into the high school music curriculum. The AP Music Theory Vertical Teams Guide.

Where Are We Headed?

Overview of AP Music Theory Examination

Developing aural, composition, analytical, and performance skills

Becoming fluent in the vocabulary and symbols used to describe musical elements and their interaction

Examples of AP Music Theory Exam Activities:

Multiple-Choice questions based on both aural and non-aural stimulus (45%)

Free-Response questions: Melodic Dictation (two questions); Harmonic Dictation (two questions); Figured Bass Realization and Roman Numeral Harmonization; Melodic Harmonization (45%)

Sight Singing (two questions) (10%)

How Do We Get There?

Using the Vertical Teams Guide for Music Theory as a Template for Creating Lessons:

Teach ear-training and aural skills on a regular basis using a systematic and consistent approach.

Relieve students of their fear of singing.

Use music as your main textbook.

Keep written music theory from becoming your bias!

Listen to music constantly in class.

Use the Vertical Teams Guide for Music Theory and other textbooks as templates for creating lessons.

Creating a Lesson Using the Listening Approach: A Structured Approach to Listening

“Sonata in A Major, K. 331” by Mozart

“Scarborough Fair/Canticle” by Simon & Garfunkel

The building blocks of melodic and harmonic dictation

Helping students develop the ability to listen perceptively and critically.

A structured, sequential curriculum utilizing listening lessons and writing activities.

Instructional activities rather than evaluative ones.

Sensitizing students to musical ideas and elements that will be heard before the first listening.

Training the ear to hear and articulate the elements of music.

Creating a Lesson Using the Visual Approach

“Nature’s Way” by Charles Ives (VTG—pp. 17-18)

Impressions of music through simple visual observation

Prescribing and structuring the visual observation

Predicting how the visual representation might sound

Allow observations to exist at the level of knowledge that the students possess

Utilizing different genres of music and a variety of written scores

Providing a basis for the skills of music analysis, both non-aural and aural

Solfège Warm-Up and Foundations: Aural Skills—A Major Key To Success

Solfège systems—pro and con

Warm-Up drills

Call and Response singing

Rhythm Reading

Vocal Connections—putting things on automatic

Reading melodies—The Sight-Singer

Analyzing and practicing melodies

Sight-Singing melodies from the AP exams

Activities: Singing, Reading, Structured Improvisation, and Analysis using “America” (VTG—pp. 36-37). Using these activities as a template for other songs.

America Matrix (Matrix 1)
Bach Matrix (Matrix 2)

Afternoon Session

Teaching Music Fundamentals—integrating the fundamentals of ear-training and dictation with written theory—developing “music literacy.”

Theory and Language—Teaching fundamentals is like teaching the alphabet, word spellings, meanings and pronunciations, but this can become tedious and frustrating. Because context is lacking, this area can become tedious and frustrating. Tap into that which they already know and emphasize the need to associate it with written music. Students come with a tremendous amount of stored aural knowledge and have much reading readiness for the study of music theory. It is our job to teach them to become thinking musicians.

Learning Styles—Rote learning is an effective and necessary tool, but it should definitely be integrated with other approaches as well:

- Oral quizzes
- Score analysis
- Error detection
- Aural association
- Association with common songs

Notation – Get students physically involved in notation by putting music in front of them as often as possible.

The aspects of sound: pitch, amplitude, timbre, envelope (articulation) and duration.

Aspects of notation as they relate to aspects of sound.

Representation of pitch and the musical alphabet.

Explain the simple relationship between the highness of a sound and its relative position on paper.

Sing a well-known song for the class and then have them notate it.

The Piano Keyboard and Range Designation

Knowledge of the keyboard is essential. It provides a visual means of understanding the musical alphabet. Some keyboard skills should be included as part of the class, for example, learning to play I-IV-V-I progression.

Range identification and the influence of MIDI.

The Staff and Clefs

Most students will have some knowledge of this area. Dispel false notions such as the G clef vs. treble clef etc. Why the clef shapes?

Discuss the use of clefs as they relate to instrumental range. Show clefs in scores—preferably in music that the ensembles are performing.

Read and sing melodies in the various clefs.

Transcribe melodies from one clef to the other.

Train pitch memory.

Introduction to syllables and systems.

Scales, Keys, and Key Signatures—Scales to be covered are the major scale and the three forms of the minor scale.

The pattern of the major scale—W W H W W W H Half steps between 3—4 and 7—8.

Exercises with the major scale pattern.

Major key signatures. They come from the pattern!

The circle of fifths and accidental order. The importance of knowing key signatures. Don't move on in the curriculum until the students are on automatic with key signatures. Students have to understand that key signatures must be learned and memorized. Drill this regularly until it becomes second nature.

The pattern of the minor scale—W H W W H W W Half steps between 2—3 and 5—6 in natural minor.

The concept of relative keys and the minor scale's relationship to the major key signature.

Harmonic and melodic minor. Why? Relate to major scale and discuss concepts of leading tone and unusual linear intervals.

Scale degree names and their derivation.

Relative and parallel key relationships

Example Lesson exploring musical concepts and divided into parts that may be developed sequentially or overlapped based on the topics to be explored.

“Chaconne” from **First Suite in Eb for Military Band** by Gustav Holst (VTG—pp. 62-68)

Tuesday, June 22

Morning Session

Ear-Training Warm-Up

Fundamentals (continued)

Intervals

Quantity and quality as a means of relating two notes.

Aural recognition and oral reproduction.

Use familiar songs to help identify and remember intervals.

Melodic and harmonic intervals.

Identifying perfect and major intervals in relation to the major key signature—perfect intervals: unison, 4th, 5th, octave; major intervals: 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 7th.

Other intervallic qualities (minor, augmented, diminished, tritone).

Interval inversion.

Compound intervals.

Topic: Integrating singing and dictation with the teaching of intervals—going beyond perfunctory interval dictation.

Triads, Seventh Chords, and their Inversions

Most common-practice period chords are built with major and minor thirds. The four triadic qualities (i.e. major, minor, augmented, diminished) explore the combinations of the major and minor third. This is also a good time to discuss this course as the study of a particular style in force from approximately 1700-1875 in Europe. There are many other styles of music, but in this particular style the chordal language of the ensuing discussion is prevalent.

Building and Recognizing Triads—Typical standard triads that we know are always stacked in thirds.

Using thirds and fifths to construct triads

Build the “snowman”—the “given” note cannot change.

Identify the lower third.

Identify the upper third.

Identify the fifth.

Identify the chord with a letter (the bottom note of the “snowman” and add the quality).

Visual and aural recognition of the chords

Inversion of Triads

Inversion symbols

Figured bass symbols

Building chords from Figured Bass or Inversion symbols.

Identifying chords using proper terminology.

Aural recognition of root vs. inverted position

Score study—melodic implications: Hymn: “O Word of God Incarnate” arr. by Felix Mendelssohn.

Point of Discussion: It is important that the teacher familiarize students with the various ways of labeling chords by interchanging like terminology. Is it a C 6-4, a C major in second inversion, a C major with the fifth in the bass, a G with a 6th and 4th above, etc.? It is, of course, all of the above and only experience will allow the student the ability to judge the label best suited for the context.

Building and Recognizing Seventh Chords

Given the types of triads and types of sevenths there are sixteen possibilities of seventh chords. Only five are used in the common-practice style.

Five Basic 7th Chords:

Major 7th

Dominant 7th

minor 7th

half-diminished 7th

fully-diminished 7th

Follow similar steps outlined for triads and their inversions—inversion symbols for seventh chords:

6-5, first inversion
4-3, second inversion
4-2, third inversion

Application: Create problems that test the student's knowledge of the material. Try to make questions which test more than just a single area of study. An example of a good problem is: Write an Ab major triad on the staff in alto clef and include the note C4. Sing the interval from the lowest note to the highest note. (Answers will vary depending upon voicing and doubling. This is good in that it leads to further discussion.)

Afternoon Session

Ear Training Warm-Up

Rhythm and Meter

Definitions - duration, rhythm, meter, pulse, beat, tempo.

Durational symbols

The derivation of meter from language.

Understanding simple and compound meters

Reading and writing rhythms, rhythmic groupings and metrical coordination.

Oral and aural exercises

Rhythmic and metrical study of familiar songs (without the score)

Basics of conducting as they relate to rhythm and meter.

Score study of rhythm, meter and notation.

Composition project (example—"Desperado" VTG—p. 45-50)

Practice and Drill—"Putting It All Together"—Contextual Listening
Exploration – Discovery, Application and Understanding

"Prelude" (Overture) from **Carmen** by Georges Bizet (VTG—pp. 76-80)

"Rhosymedre" by Ralph Vaughan Williams (VTG—pp. 51-56)

Chords in a Diatonic Context

Diatonic triads found in the major key. Include ii^7 , V^7 , and $vii^\circ7$.

Common diatonic triads in the minor key. i , ii° , III , iv , V , VI , vii° . Include seventh chords as above.

Discuss scalar variants dependent upon scale form. i.e. III^+ , v , and VII .

Wednesday, June 23

Morning Session

Identifying and Teaching Common Patterns In Sight-Singing and Melodic Dictation: Changing “Sight-Singing” to “Recognition” Singing

Sight-Singing Melodies and Melodic Dictation Melodies from AP Music Theory exams: Statistics Reveal Normal and Predictable Patterns

Keys—major and minor

Beginning and ending pitches

Beginning melodic patterns

Ending melodic patterns

Common rhythm patterns

Intervallic patterns: most common intervals; broken chord patterns; stepwise motion

Altered pitches

Cadential implications

Using Solfège Warm-Up Drills to Aid in Teaching Common Patterns

Putting patterns on “automatic”

Practice in both simple and compound meters

Fox drill incorporating tonic triad, tendency tones, and common endings

Ascending and descending major and minor thirds

Ascending and descending diatonic intervals—major and minor keys; treble and bass clefs; simple and compound meters

Ascending and descending broken triads

Triads in root position and in inversion

Introduction to Part-Writing

The grand staff and vocal ranges

Vertical rules: Spacing, voice-crossing, standard doublings in major and minor triads, inversions and standard doubling, similar, contrary and oblique motion, parallelisms.

Horizontal rules: general concerns of contour, conjunct vs. disjunct motion, characteristic motion for each of the four parts, implications based upon bass line or melody line.

Writing progressions and recognizing chord inversion and figured-bass sym-

bols. Dictation involving 4-part progressions. Learning to hear and sing characteristic bass lines.

The Matrix Revolution: An All-In-One Teaching Tool

Call and Response singing

Confirming what you hear through dictation

Hearing in musical contexts

Roman numeral identification

Creating and using a matrix

Application: Experiments in Part-Writing—Harmonizing in 4 parts—Learning to write a progression matrix.

Afternoon Session

Guest Speaker

Part-Writing (continued)

Progressions using the I, V and V⁷ chords.

Adding the IV chord.

Introduction to the supertonic chord.

Adding secondary chords—ii, ii⁷, vi.

Rules of resolution.

Using the solfège matrix.

Non-Chord Tones: Passing Tones, Neighboring Tones, Suspensions

Making the “Bass” the Base of Harmonic Dictation

Learning to listen and identify the bass line in four-part harmony

Understanding harmonic progression in music of the common-practice style

Predicting logical harmonic movement with knowledge of common bass line movement

Combining the soprano and bass lines to determine harmonic progression

Predicting cadences in common-practice style

Secondary Function: Secondary Dominant and Secondary Leading-Tone Chords

“Waltz No. 3” by Franz Schubert

“Propter Magnam Gloriam” from **Gloria** by Antonio Vivaldi (VTG—pp. 57-61)

Altered Chords in Tonal Music

Tonicization

Recognizing and Spelling Secondary Dominants

Resolution of Secondary Dominants

Secondary Leading-Tone Chords

Thursday, June 24

Morning Session

Music Theory and Technology

Using the resources of the College Board website

Music theory syllabi and placement tests

Miscellaneous technology for music theory

Phrases, Cadences and Periodic Structure

Comparing phrases and cadences to language structures.

Identifying phrases in familiar contexts.

Phrases vs. sub-phrases, the importance of tempo and context.

Periodic structure and familiar songs.

Enlarged, expanded and double periods. Terminology conflicts.

The binary nature of periodic structures and stylistic observations within the language of the common practice period.

Application: Study and Analyze “Polonaise” and “March” from the Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach (1725)

Strategies for Dealing with the Free Response Questions

Melodic Dictation

Harmonic Dictation

Figured Bass Realization

Roman Numerals Realization

Melodic Harmonization

Sight-Singing

Afternoon Session

Wrapping Up: Discussion/Question and Answer?

Advanced Placement Program
AP Vertical Team
AP Audit
Curriculum development/textbooks and resources

Taking the AP Music Theory Examination—Tips for Becoming Test Wise

Multiple-Choice questions based on aural stimulus test a student's listening skill and knowledge about theory largely in the context of examples from actual literature.

Multiple-Choice questions not based on aural stimulus emphasize the written fundamentals of music theory—terminology, notation, harmonic procedures, melodic organization and developmental procedures, rhythmic/metric organization, texture, phrase structure, small forms, etc.

Music Theory Trivia and Challenge Board

Evaluations and Farewells