

BLITZ!

How To ~~Pass~~

AMEB Theory Grade 2
Teacher Guide

Samantha Coates

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Introduction

When I first started writing BlitzBooks at the end of 2000, I had been preparing students for AMEB theory and musicianship exams for twelve years. Over this time, I have tried several texts and workbooks, none of which my students found particularly stimulating. I also found that the various texts did not address the way in which the questions are asked in the actual exams. My inspiration to write a series of books arose from this lack of appropriate materials.

At the time of publishing this web edition it is nearly 17 years on from there and BlitzBooks is about to celebrate its – you guessed it – 17th birthday. I am delighted to say that there are now some students who used BlitzBooks who have grown up to become teachers who recommend BlitzBooks.

This teacher guide is designed to support and enlighten teachers who are unfamiliar with the general expectations of AMEB examiners. Apologies if some of the page numbers are slightly inaccurate; these can change with new edition of workbooks. The content, however, is appropriate to any edition of the workbook.

I hope that the workbooks together with engaged teachers will create confident and well-prepared students. If students know their stuff and they know what to expect when they walk into the exam room, they should come out feeling like they “blitzed” it.

About AMEB Grade Two

The Theory syllabus for AMEB is designed progressively: grade two expands on knowledge gained in grade one. The hints and tips can be easily applied to online exams.

This book follows on from Book 1, in that it not only assumes 1st grade skills but also assumes the same techniques will be used to complete the tasks.

For students and teachers who have decided to skip the first grade exam, I would recommend referring to the Grade One workbook for basic concepts and drills where needed.

Note to Teachers of Instruments Other Than Piano

This book is easy to follow no matter what instrument is being learnt. However, I believe there are certain worksheets, such as 'Semitones in Minor Scales', that will work best with a keyboard demonstration. It is much easier to see a pattern of tones and semitones than to hear it! It is hard to hear a triad without a keyboard; concepts such as intervals and sharps and flats are also much easier to reinforce *visually*.

I recommend instrumental teachers try to organise two or three sessions over the year with a keyboard or piano. This will make a huge difference to a student's understanding of some concepts.

About the BlitzBooks Style

These books are written specifically for those students preparing for AMEB written examinations. For each grade there is a workbook, teacher guide and answer book. This workbook is also suitable for students who wish to complete an online exam. There is no need to purchase an online theory course.

Each new concept is introduced with a 'step-by-step' worksheet which shows the student how to approach the question. Many teachers who use BlitzBooks prefer their own methods of explanation for new concepts and leave the 'step-by-step' pages until close to the exam, when the student can use them as a revision resource.

The conversational style of the worksheets makes revision easy, and the book sets out the concepts in the same order as an AMEB exam. The multiple-choice section shows up silly (and not so silly!) mistakes in an amusing way that appeals to children. There is also a Test Paper at the end for students to mark. This is a great way to help students understand how to check their work.

This teacher guide outlines certain points for discussion and shows common mistakes or variations of acceptable answers. Answer books are also available – these consist of replicas of workbook pages with answers written in.

How Long Will It Take to Complete This Book?

This depends on the type of music lesson. If theory is taught as a small part of a practical lesson, each book will last approximately 9-12 months. If lessons are solely theory or musicianship, it will potentially take much less time. However, teachers should allow a minimum of approximately six months to cover syllabus requirements and at least a further 2-3 months for revision. The workbook is designed to make

revision easy: it would be quite adequate to read through all the 'Remembers' and 'Hot Tips' and anything else highlighted or boxed on the page.

The important thing for teachers to remember is that apart from this book, there are three important ways to practice for an exam:

Past papers, past papers and past papers!!

There is no better learning experience than seeing your mistakes. Completing past papers, sometimes under 'exam conditions', is an important revision strategy.

If you have students enrolled for an online exam, they have the advantage of being able to complete as many online practice papers as they wish, prior to the exam.

Exam Techniques

Students need to have a few good 2B pencils and a really good eraser. Also, some students prefer/need to use a ruler for bar lines and/or stems.

I often put my hair in a tight bun, put glasses on and, just for a joke, pretend I am the 'fussy old lady' who is going to mark their exam! It's amazing how their performance improves.

We all know how hard it is to proof read our own work. This course aims to help the students to get it right the first time, but the most important thing is for them to be able to check their work properly. So I tell them they must turn themselves into the 'fussy old lady', and go about marking their own paper two or three times. This works wonders!

Revision

Many of these worksheets are step-by-step instruction sheets with one or two examples. With my own students, I usually continue this step-by-step style on the whiteboard for at least 2-3 more examples or until I'm sure they've really got the hang of it. Even so, upon revising these concepts most students have forgotten the specific order of processes required. I feel that a lot of the art of teaching theory lies in getting the students to understand all of the concepts at the same time!

Doing past papers is a very important learning device for students and teachers. Attempting a past paper two or three months before the exam will show up any weak spots and will perhaps jolt the more laid back student into doing some revision!

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Guide to Workbook Sheets

This guide does not contain answers to every workbook question, as most of them will be immediately obvious to the teacher.

Some worksheets are not featured in the guide as they are either straightforward revision or self-explanatory.

D Major and A Major/Major Keys Quiz - pp.4-5

Objective

To learn two new major key signatures.

Comments

Most students do not have trouble remembering that D major has two sharps and A major has three sharps – but the problem lies in learning the **order** of the sharps. It seems to take a while to sink in to some students that F sharp always goes first, no exceptions.

The best way to teach the order of sharps is with a mnemonic, a sentence in which the first letter of each word represents a sharp. Probably the oldest and most famous is:

Father Charles Goes Down And Ends Battle'

which of course, when said backwards becomes

Battle Ends And Down Goes Charles' Father',

which is the mnemonic for remembering flats.

My personal opinion is that only the order of sharps need be memorised, as the order of flats is simply the reverse. Since the above mnemonic does not really capture children's imagination, I prefer this sentence:

Fat Cat Goes Driving And Eats Bananas'

Of course, there are hundreds of possible variations! Another one I heard recently was:

Five Cats Got Drowned At Elizabeth Bay'

Being a dog person myself, I really liked this one... but it's not really politically correct!

But my favourite mnemonic of all time actually comes out as a two-line story (1st line for sharps and 2nd line for flats):

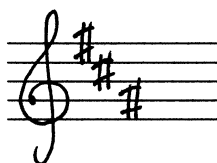
Father Christmas Gave Dad An Electric Blanket'

Blanket Exploded And Dad Got Cold Feet!'

For students who are having trouble with D and A key signatures, I show them all seven sharps on the staff and explain that each sharp is like a child in a big family, where F sharp was born first! (And will therefore always be the oldest and will always go first). To remember that D major has **two** sharps and A major has **three** sharps, a

good tip is to demonstrate that it takes two pen strokes to write a capital D and three pen strokes to write a capital A!

Once the order of sharps is established, the most common mistake is this:



Interestingly, this mistake does not crop up as often in the bass clef, perhaps because the G in the bass is still within the staff!

Two Octave Scales: Double the Fun! - pp.6-7

Objective

To learn how to write a scale over two octaves.

Comments

Students will not be penalised for starting within the staff and, as a result, using many leger lines in the second octave, but I have rarely seen students write all their leger lines correctly in this case, so it is much safer to establish a good habit of starting above or below the staff.

The most common mistakes in two octave scales are:

- Repeating the tonic in the middle of the scale
- Marking tones/semitones incorrectly (students forget that no. 8 becomes no. 1) or not marking them at all in the second octave
- Forgetting to write accidentals in the second octave.

Scale Practice / Tiny Test - pp.8-9

Objective

To familiarise students with examination-style questions.

Comments

If the key signatures are well known and the student has a good grasp of scales at first grade level, 2nd grade scales will usually present no problems. As mentioned in the Grade 1 Teacher Guide, the most common mistakes are...

- Misreading the clef
- Marking tones instead of semitones or vice versa
- Marking tones/semitones incorrectly because of direction of scale
- Misreading the 'going up/down' instruction.

Remembering Relatives - p.11

Comments

I have found that making up these 'words' has been extremely successful in helping students to remember minor key signatures. The words they generally come up with are:

Cola or Cinema

Grape or Garbage

Food or Fred

Of course, there are endless possibilities – but if the students pick the words themselves, they are far more likely to remember them!

A colleague of mine came up with the idea of making up a sentence that would help to remember relatives **and** the relevant key signature. For example, 'George' could represent G maj/E min, but the sentence 'George was a very sharp boy' helps to reinforce that G major and E minor have F sharp as their key signature! (You could then have 'Fred was always a bit flat'.)

Minor Scales - p.12

Objective

To learn how to write a minor scale, especially remembering to raise the 7th note.

Comments

The only minor scale form required in Grade 2 (and in fact all the way until Grade 5!) is the harmonic minor. I have therefore not made too big a deal of the term harmonic minor in the titles of pages to do with minor scales – it is very well implied.

I have used '7th' rather than 'leading note' since technical scale degree names are only required from Grade 3.

Raising the 7th would have to be the most commonly omitted step in minor scales. I teach my students that the word 'minor' is a code for 'raise the 7th note'!

It can be helpful in the exam (and in this workbook) if students underline 'minor' as soon as they see it and write in an extra 'instruction' to raise the 7th. Then when they check the paper at the end, they could circle 'minor' and check they have written the accidental. It is *extremely* difficult for students to proofread, so it's better to get it right the first time!

Semitones in Minor Scales / Tricky Tones in Minor Scales - pp.13-14

Objective

These worksheets reinforce the correct positioning of tones and semitones in minor scales.

Comments

The mistakes made marking tones and semitones in minor scales are much the same as major – that is, students forget to allow for a descending scale or they misread the question.

Marking the tones in a minor scale is by far the hardest question. The tones look unbalanced because the top half of the scale is made up of semitone, tone-and-a-half, semitone, and should not be marked. I find I must really drill the point that the tones 'look funny'. A good way to reinforce marking tones correctly is to constantly drill that 6-7 is NOT a tone NOR a semitone!

Accidentals in Minor Scales – p.15

Objective

To understand the different ways scales can be written.

Comments

This concept needs LOTS of practice, as it does for major keys too.

Awesome Accidentals – p.16

Objective

Practice in adding accidentals.

Comments

This is also a good page to use for practice of adding stems correctly and marking tones or semitones.

Minor Scale Practice / Even More Practice / Scale Trivia – pp.17-19

Objective

To familiarise students with examination-style questions.

Comments

As I mentioned for major scales, these sheets will be adequate practice for some students, but I have found that most need lots of extra practice. I incorporate a small segment on scale writing at least every second or third lesson throughout the year. Mostly it's a matter of saying, 'OK, quickly follow these instructions!' and off they go!

Once again, the most common mistakes are:

- Misreading the clef
- Marking tones instead of semitones or vice versa

- Marking tones/semitones incorrectly because of direction of scale
- Misreading the 'going up/down' instruction.
- Forgetting to raise the 7th note
- Marking the tones/semitones for a major scale instead of minor

It is extremely difficult to proof read one's own work, especially for children. Most students do not pick up mistakes when checking through their papers, so the best chance they have is to get it right the **first** time. This is why they need constant reminders about all the special things in minor scales; practice in scale writing every second or third lesson throughout the year is extremely beneficial to those who struggle.

Intervals - pp.20-24

Objective

An introduction to the quality of intervals and practice in naming them.

Comments

Learning to identify and write the correct quality of intervals is a daunting subject to teach. There are so many procedures and things to remember! It is a huge jump from 1st grade and intervals need to be taught with lots of patience.

Comparing the major and minor scales is a great way to introduce quality of intervals, and as a teaching point this helps to reinforce that only 3rds and 6ths are either major or minor.

The AMEB syllabus states that **diatonic** intervals will be examined – that is, intervals that occur in major and minor scales. There is no such thing as a minor 2nd or minor 7th in diatonic scales, which means these intervals will not appear in the exam. For this reason I have always taught that 2nds and 7ths are **major** even in minor scales – this is easy to demonstrate by playing the scales, and much easier for students to remember. Many teachers choose to teach minor 2nds and 7ths, and the more capable students will not find this confusing.

On pages 21, 22 and 23 the students should memorise the tips in the shaded boxes! On the bottom of page 21, the point about the perfect 4th needing an accidental is an important point: a lot of students interpret 'Perfect' in the sense that it needs nothing - it represents perfection! It is a good idea to drill that 'Perfect' simply means 'same in major or minor scales' and that perfect intervals may still need an accidental – this is good preparation for Grade 3. For Grade 2, however, a 4th above F is the **ONLY** perfect interval requiring an accidental – phew!

It all comes down to students learning their key signatures thoroughly and knowing **which** key signatures they will be tested on. The keys of C, G and F minor are not required for this grade. I think it is worth discussing this with students. E major is also not studied which means that 3rds and 6ths above D and A are the only intervals which could be major or minor, and the differences between major and minor scales for these two keys should be reinforced all the time. Of course, there is no harm in learning C, G and F minor or E major for the sake of comparing intervals, but I have found that in the long run, the less complicated, the better.

Writing Intervals - pp.25-26

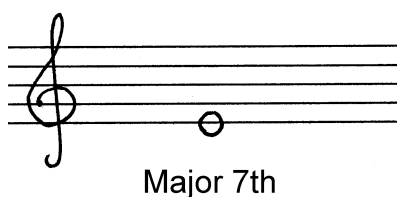
Objective

To learn how to draw intervals correctly using accidentals where needed.

Comments

The step-by-step nature of this page will ensure a good understanding of how to write intervals; the trick is to get students to remember the steps and to **know their key signatures**. I tend to approach intervals a bit like scales and test my students on a couple of intervals (both writing and naming) every second lesson.

The first question on page 26 deals with writing major 7ths. Of the 8 keys studied, all major 7ths except those above C and F will require a sharp. Consider this question:



Some students panic when they cannot remember the key signature of E major, which is fair enough if they have not studied it! This question does in fact relate to E minor but as the 7th is raised in minor keys it becomes a major 7th. This is why it is good to reinforce that **all** 7ths are major. This worksheet will hopefully alleviate any confusion surrounding 7ths.

I felt that the whole student workbook could easily be taken up with explanation of intervals and practice worksheets! The best way to approach this is to take it slow – pages 20-27 could take 6-8 weeks with lots of revision and extra practice in between.

Tonic Triads - p.29

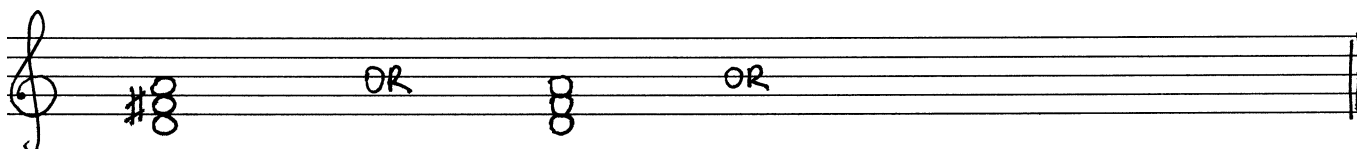
Objective

To understand the concept of a chord based on scale degree no. 1 – a tonic triad.

Comments

Root position is the only position studied, so it is not necessary to drill this term but is certainly worth mentioning, as it will be good preparation for future grades when they study triads in first inversion.

The trend I have observed in the past few years is that triads are examined with key signatures, not accidentals. It is important however to learn to write and recognise triads with accidentals, especially if these questions appear:



Name this triad

Name this triad

Write D maj using accidentals

Students may not be aware of the difference between D major and D minor or A major and A minor triads in the absence of their key signatures!

There was also a question recently asking students to write triads as MINIMS. This really threw some students as they weren't sure how to draw the stem. As a rule, the stem direction of a triad is dictated by the position of the **middle note** of the triad.

When identifying triads, students must focus on the BOTTOM note, even if that means reading notes on leger lines.

Timed Test - p.31

Objective

To help students understand that rushing through a test causes silly mistakes.

Comments

The first time I do any timed test with my students, I make a big deal of timing them and getting them all excited about being first to finish. This is a bit mean because I don't draw their attention to the opening paragraph on the page - which tells them that they will get time added on for every mistake!

This works really well in groups because inevitably the person who proudly finishes first will have rushed through and made mistakes... and we often end up with a 'tortoise and hare' situation when the person who finished in 3rd or 4th place ends up coming first because they didn't rush and completed everything correctly!

Rushing through anything is the biggest cause of silly mistakes and these fun tests bring this point home to students.

Time and Rhythm - p.33-35

Objective

These worksheets drill all the notes, rests and grouping of quavers required for this grade.

Comments

I find that many students regularly confuse  with 

They are so used to seeing four semiquavers together that they forget to consider it could actually be four quavers! It is also important to drill the grouping rules for four quavers - it should never appear in $\frac{3}{4}$ and never on beats 2 and 3 in $\frac{4}{4}$.

It is a good thing to point out that quaver tails always go forwards, even when the stem is going down!

Completing the Beat - p.36

Objective

To understand that half beats must be made up to whole beats before anything else can be added.

Comments

This worksheet is strategically placed before the introduction to $\frac{6}{8}$ time, with the intention that a couple of lessons will be devoted to 'making half beats up to whole beats.' It is imperative that students have a firm grasp of the treatment of quavers and dotted crotchets in simple time **before** they attempt compound time!

It is also worth mentioning to your students that under no circumstances may they alter what is written on the page. Many students try to do the following to complete a single quaver beat:



If the quaver tail is given, the next quaver must also have a separate tail!

The Triplet - p.37

Objective

To learn the correct definition and value of a triplet.

Comments

To define a triplet as 'three quavers in one crotchet beat' is like saying the definition of fruit is 'orange' – it only defines one sort of triplet/fruit! Although only the quaver triplet is studied, it is better for students to learn the generic definition.

The thing all the triplets have in common is the number three over or under the beam. Triplets are just not triplets without this! It is also worth mentioning that a triplet with a slur over/under the number three is an old-fashioned way of writing it, and the slur is not necessary.

Simple Facts - p.38

Objective

To reinforce all the definitions and rules of grouping in simple time before moving on to compound time.

The final true/false question about the planets is designed to be a bit ambiguous and perhaps spark a friendly debate!

Meet $\frac{6}{8}$ Time - p.39

Objective

To introduce the unfamiliar groupings in this time signature and to derive the correct wording of the definition of $\frac{6}{8}$ time.

Comments

Up until now we have only dealt with '4' as the bottom number, and most students are quite used to remembering that 4 = crotchet. But suddenly they are hit with 8 = quaver, and it's all a bit more difficult. I feel that if we worked with American rhythm names (i.e. quaver = eighth note) that this might be a little easier to grasp, as the time signature could then be read as a fraction:

$$\frac{6}{8} = 6 \times \text{eighths (notes)!}$$

Sometimes I demonstrate the American system to students who struggle with 8 = quaver. It can make quite a difference!

Most children will hopefully have played many pieces in $\frac{6}{8}$ before embarking on this theoretical explanation. It's a good idea to clap lots of rhythms and notice the groupings in their $\frac{6}{8}$ pieces.

To describe $\frac{6}{8}$ as 'six quavers per bar' tells nothing about the way the quavers are grouped, and would not be an acceptable answer in an exam.

$\frac{6}{8}$ is from Mars - p.40

Objective

To learn the correct grouping of notes in simple and compound time.

Comments

I have used the Earth/Mars analogy in the hope that it will appeal to all students the way it did (and still does!) to my own. It becomes easy to take the analogy even further and say that on Earth ♩. means 1½ but on Mars ♩. means 3 quavers. How far you choose to take this, of course, depends on your students.

Accents and Grouping in $\frac{6}{8}$ - p.41

Objective

To learn the correct grouping of notes and rests through an understand of accents.

Comments

A dotted crotchet rest is not on the syllabus for Grade 2 and will not appear on the exam paper. For this reason, I have approached rests in $\frac{6}{8}$ without the use of the dotted crotchet. The more students understand accents in this worksheet, the better they will understand the illegalities of writing ? within a beat. I tend to separate this worksheet from the next by at least a week; the students are trying to take in a whole new set of grouping rules, and it can be a little overwhelming.

Drawing a dotted line or seeing the 'imaginary' line through the middle of the bar is a very useful tool in understanding the groupings in this time signature. I find I need to spend quite a few lessons on this concept before moving on to the grouping of rests.

Completing the Bar in $\frac{6}{8}$ - p.42

Objective

To apply the rules of grouping when completing a bar in compound time.

Comments

The trickiest part of completing a bar in compound time is remembering that there are THREE quavers in each beat, not just two. As a result, the rests end up looking 'the wrong way around' as compared to how they look in simple time.

An understand of accents really helps.

Many students ask me if they can use a dotted crotchet rest. I try to dissuade them as it is not on the Grade 2 syllabus. However, if it is correctly used, they shouldn't be marked down for doing so.

Complete These Bars - p.43

Objective

To apply the rules of grouping when completing a bar and to reinforce the differences between simple and compound time.

Comments

Hopefully by this stage of the workbook the students are becoming quite adept at understanding the differences between simple and compound time. 'Completing the bar' is the hardest of all the time and rhythm questions in the AMEB exam. Lots of practice is the only way to keep on top of it!

What's the Time Signature? - p.45

Objective

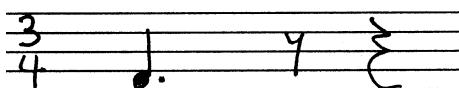
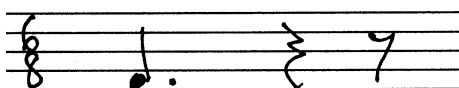
To learn how to decipher the time signature of a given passage, in particular $\frac{6}{8}$ vs $\frac{3}{4}$, and to recognise the different groupings in these time signatures.

Comments

The triplet is an excellent 'giveaway clue' for simple time. I find that if I really drill into my students that three quavers may not be grouped together in simple time except when using a triplet sign, they recognise the differences between these two fairly easily:

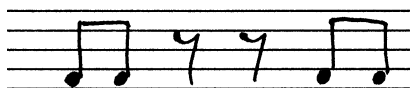


As mentioned before, it is the differences between $\frac{6}{8}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ that can be confusing. Consider the following bars:



I have found showing these two bars a very successful way of 'warning' students to look out for the differences in grouping in these two time signatures. It takes a lot of explaining but the students do get there in the end!

In a recent exam, candidates were required to add the time signature to this bar:



The two quaver rests are the giveaway clue for $\frac{6}{8}$ time, but I was appalled to see the grouping of the last two quavers – they should be separated. When questions like this appear, it sends very mixed messages to students – if they had completed the bar this way themselves, they would have been marked wrong! On top of this, the syllabus clearly states that students need only be familiar with the following grouping in $\frac{6}{8}$ time: $\text{♩}, \text{♩} \text{ ♩} \text{ ♩}, \text{♩} \text{ ♩}, \text{♩}$.

I am constantly writing to the AMEB over questions with incorrect grouping. If more teachers take an active part in bringing these errors to the AMEB's attention, our students will have a much better chance of 'blitzing' time and rhythm questions.

Naming the Key of a Melody – pp.50-51

Objective

To help students to correctly identify the key of a melody.

Comments

Occasionally a melody is given that does not end on the tonic, in which case the student needs to defer to clue no. 3! On the other hand, there are plenty of minor melodies that either do not contain scale degree no. 7 or which use the melodic form of the scale in a descending passage, and therefore have no accidentals. Another very common mistake is misreading the clef.

Transposition – pp.54-55

Objective

To understand the concept of the same melody starting in a different key.

Comments

The only difference from Grade 1 is the inclusion of minor keys and the raised 7th. The accidental must be transposed correctly and, most importantly, must not be omitted. Assuming a student has a good grasp of this and did well in first grade transposition, there are only two reasons why second grade transposition should go wrong:

1. Misinterpreting the original key or clef (see 'Naming the Key of a Melody')
2. Pure laziness!

A lot of students figure they've done it all before and can't be bothered to write in the scale degree numbers or follow the shape of the melody. These steps are **crucial!**

It is also a great idea to write the bar lines in first and keep in line with the original notes, this makes it much easier for them to check their work.

Marking Accents in Poetry – pp.58-59

Objective

To learn how to find and mark the accents in a given couplet. This exercise is called 'Creative' in the exam papers.

Comments

Once students get the hang of putting lines between syllables and the fact that the first one or two words may not be accented, this section usually presents no problem. A good habit to get into is to say the verse at least 8-10 times through before marking any of the accents! It can also work to pretend you are reading to a toddler and emphasising the important syllables.

Italian Terms - p.62

Objective

This worksheet lists all the terms required for the grade. Students can also refer to the free downloads at www.blitzbooks.com and can also try the online multiple-choice quiz.

Comments

Students are only required to give **English translations** for Italian terms.

As for first grade, these simply must be learned. One year I told all my students to put their list of terms up on the bathroom wall, so that whenever they sat on the toilet they would read the list. They found this most amusing... then afterwards one of the students confessed that during the exam he had closed his eyes and imagined himself sitting on the toilet so that he could remember his Italian terms!

The Grade 2 translations are printed in the workbook for convenience, but students take it in much more if they have to write down the translation themselves. It works quite well to introduce the terms gradually (i.e. 4 or 5 words per lesson) and give them practical applications, like 'play a C major scale **VIVACE!**', or even 'play a C major scale **molto** fast!' My students find this combination of languages quite amusing.

Worth a mention here is this common mistake:

Mezzo staccato = moderately staccato

Obviously, this is only half translated!

As mentioned in Grade 1, all dynamic markings must be written in lower case e.g. *f* not F.

Know Your Signs - p.54

Objective

This worksheet lists all the signs required for the grade.

Comments

Students need to be aware of the different ways of writing mezzo staccato for single notes and groups of notes, eg:



It is for this reason I have included 'tenuto' (meaning 'held') on the page,



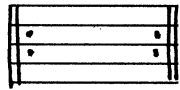
although this is not a syllabus requirement.

A pause (fermata) sign needs to be explained as 'hold for longer than written value'. Many students simply write 'pause'! Once I had a student describe it as 'keep holding it until the conductor says stop'!

Another interesting point is the definition of repeat signs.



repeat from the beginning



repeat the notes between these signs

Accents such as these



both mean the same thing - to stress that note or play it louder.

Form - p.65-66

Objective

To introduce Binary and Ternary form.

Comments

Form itself is not a complicated issue, but it certainly makes for a difficult subject to teach. This is because many (or dare I say most) students are unable to 'sight-sing' a melody out loud, let alone inside their heads! If they do not know what the piece sounds like, they are left with only visual clues to decide the form.

Having said that, the best way to introduce form is to listen to many pieces and short melodies and decide their form aurally. The terms 'Binary' and 'Ternary' are often quite unfamiliar to students and they need to get used to using them.

'Twinkle Twinkle' is always the most perfect example of ternary form - it ends on the tonic for both 'A' sections and on scale degree no. 2 (which belongs to chord V) for the end of the 'B' section. Seeing this piece in different formats and marking the sections really helps to solidify the understanding of ternary form, and of marking sections.

Becoming a Form Detective Piece / More Form Clues - pp.67-68

Objective

These worksheets familiarise students with examination-style questions and provide practice in 'seeing' the form.

Comments

These pages provide six examples for practice, but most students need HEAPS more. It is extremely important to look at past papers as the melodies in these are usually more difficult to decipher than extracts from general music repertoire.

Some students try to decipher the form by counting up the bars and seeing if they divide evenly into two or three sections. This is very dangerous! Another common mistake is that students see the melody written on two lines of manuscript and immediately assume binary form. (As you may have noticed, 5 of the 6 examples in the workbook are written on two lines!)

Allowing for the possibility of an anacrusis in section B and in the return of section A is another tricky point to consider. For group classes it works well to split them into parts A and B and sing the melody – in this way they can hear that the anacrusis belongs to the next bar. Otherwise it is simply a matter of drilling the more visual and rhythmic aspect: a short note right at the end of the bar after a rest or long note generally 'belongs' to the next phrase or section. Phrasing can also provide a clue, but students need to be aware that one section may contain more than one phrase.

'D.C. al fine' at the end of a binary melody generally transforms it into ternary form, provided the 'fine' is in an appropriate place. A repeat sign, however, does not change the form; it simply directs either the whole or part of the melody to be played twice. This is a very important point to drill.

The return of the 'A' section is often varied rhythmically and melodically. This makes it difficult to see, but the second or third bar is usually unchanged from the original, so I draw my students' attention to these bars.

Although it is good to point out that each section in binary form should balance the other, it is important to note that there may be slight alterations, and in Ternary form there may be distinct differences in the number of bars between A1 and A2.

Test Paper... sort of – pp.75-80

Objective

A mock test paper (completed) in which students must find all the mistakes and therefore practice 'proofreading' in preparation for checking their own work in the exam.

Comments

In 'completing' this mock exam paper I have tried to include as many common mistakes as I could think of.

This works best when marked *in the lesson*, stopping for discussion each time a mistake is found. It is also a great idea for the student to rewrite the answer correctly on spare manuscript.

Sometimes answers are wrong for more than one reason, some answers are actually correct! This is sure to provide an amusing resource for revision and is invaluable in helping students learn how to check their work.

Once students have marked the paper, they should download the uncompleted version and complete it for homework. They will hopefully not make the same mistakes!