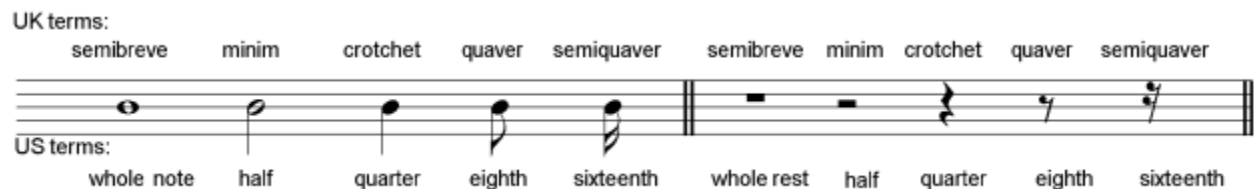


Grade Two Music Theory Lesson 1:

Notes, Rests and Ledger Lines

Notes and Rests in Music

In the Grade One music theory course, we learnt about the most common note and rest values, and we also learnt that if a note or rest is **dotted** (has one dot on the right side of the note head), its length is increased by half again.



The semibreve (whole) rest is also used a **full bar rest** in any time signature. It represents one bar of silence, whatever the time signature is.

Ties in Music

We also learnt that we can use **ties** to join notes of the same pitch together to make them longer. (Don't confuse ties with slurs - ties join together two notes which are the same pitch!)



Ledger Lines

We met middle C in the both the treble clef



and bass clef



and found out that the little line that goes through the middle of the note is called a **ledger** line, and that it makes extra room on the staff for us to use.

We can add more ledger lines to make more space on the staff. We can add ledger lines to the top of the staff, and to the bottom.

Let's add some ledger lines to the top of the staff in the treble clef



The first note we use a ledger line on is the A.

Let's now add them to the bottom:



To the top of the bass clef:



and to the bottom:



In Grade Two Music Theory (ABRSM and Trinity), you will need to be able to read notes written with up to 2 ledger lines.

Grade Two Music Theory Lesson 2: Treble Clef & Bass Clef, Pitch and Transposition

What's New in Clefs at Music Theory Grade Two

Hopefully you don't have too much difficulty working out where the notes are in treble and bass clef, but if you need to do some revision, check the Grade One lesson on [treble and bass clefs](#).

In ABRSM Grade Two Music Theory you need to be able to **rewrite** a melody in a **different** clef - from treble to bass or from bass to treble, **without changing the pitch of the music**.

In Trinity Grade Two Music Theory you need to be able to **rewrite** a melody in the **same** clef, but transposing (moving) the tune up or down by **one octave**.

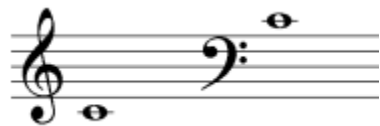
Pitch

What is pitch? The **pitch** of a note means how high or low it is. We have many notes called "C", for example.

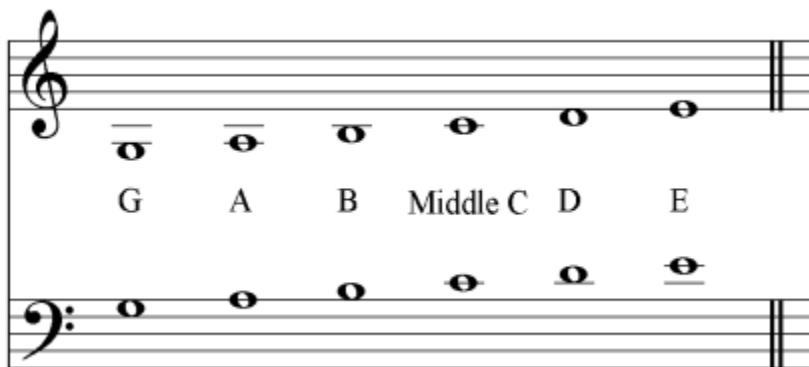
Listen to these three Cs - they are all at different **registers**, or pitches.



On the other hand, these two Cs are at the **same pitch** although they are written in different clefs:



In the same way, the notes in each of these melodies are also at the **same pitch** although they are in a different clef:



Rewriting in a New Clef (ABRSM Only)

Let's look at the kind of questions you might get in the ABRSM Grade Two Music Theory Exam.

The question could ask you to rewrite **single notes** with a new clef, or to rewrite a **whole melody**.

Here's a question asking you to rewrite the whole melody:

Rewrite this melody in the treble clef, keeping the pitch the same. The first two notes are given.



You need to write the correct notes of course, but also make sure your handwritten music is neat!

Copy each note into its new position right underneath the original melody - that way you'll make sure your notes are spaced correctly, and it's also easier to check that you haven't missed a note out by mistake!

Another useful tip is to write the last note first. Work this note out **very** carefully, and write it on your blank stave. If you make a small mistake in the middle of the melody, you will notice it more easily when you get to the end if things don't match up.

So, first, we'll put the last note in. It's the G below middle C:



Now, start from the beginning. You don't need to spend time working out every note - just look at the general pattern. For example, for each note just say to yourself "next line up" or "2 spaces down" and so on.

When you have groups of quavers (eighth notes) or semiquavers (sixteenth notes), draw **all** the note heads in each group first. Next draw the first and last stems in each group, and finally add the beams and any other stems - and use a ruler!

Pay attention to the direction of the stems - notes below the middle line have stems pointing upwards, and notes above the middle line should have stems pointing downwards.

Here's the finished answer:



Transposing at the Octave (Trinity Only)

We can make a melody sound mostly the same, but **higher** or **lower**, if we **transpose** it by one octave.

Here's the same melody from above:



The melody begins on the note G - but which G? Is it a high or low register G? The easiest way to explain **exactly** which G, is to say whether it is above or below **middle C**, and by how much.

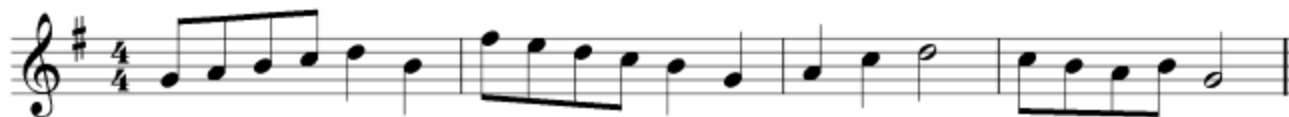
This G is the **first G below middle C**.



We can change it to the first G **above** middle C, and write it on the 2nd line of the staff. It's still the same basic note, but now it is an octave higher in pitch.



Using this as the starting point, we can copy over all the notes of the melody, so that the whole thing is one octave higher:



Notice that we have to change the stem direction on some of the notes.

Being able to transpose by an octave is a useful skill. Let's say you have a song written for a very high-pitched voice and want to make it singable for someone with a lower voice - you could transpose it one octave down and the problem is solved!

In the Trinity exam, you may be asked to transpose a tune so that a different pitched voice can sing it.

Voices are divided into four main groups - two for women, and two for men.

High-pitched women's voices are called **soprano**, and low-pitched women's voices are called **alto**.

High-pitched men's voices are called **tenor**, and low-pitched men's voices are called **bass**.

Grade Two Music Theory Lesson 3:

Major Scales

Major Scales

Major scales are built from tones and semitones, with the pattern TTS TTTS. (T=tone (whole step), S=semitone (half step))

You should already know the scales of C, D, G and F major which are covered in Grade One Music Theory.

In Grade Two ABRSM there are **three** new major scales which you need to know: **A**, **Bb** and **Eb** major. For Grade Two Trinity there are **no** new major scales to learn.

A Major Scale

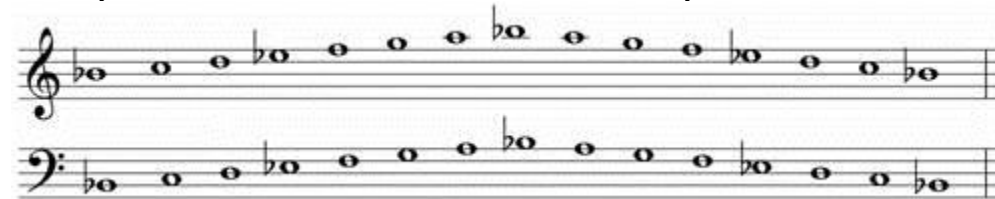
A major has three sharps - F#, C# and G#.

Here's the scale of A major ascending (going up) and descending (going down) in the treble and bass clefs:



Bb and Eb Major Scales

Bb major has two flats - Bb and Eb. Here's Bb major in full:



Eb major has three flats - Bb, Eb and Ab. Here's Eb major:



Tip! All major keys which have the word "flat" in their name have flats in the scale but no sharps, and all keys with the word "sharp" in their name contain sharps but no flats!

That's another reason why we always write Eb in the scale of Bb major, and never D#, for example.

Remember, in a scale, you can use each letter name only once, except for the first and last note.

Grade Two Music Theory Lesson 4: Minor Scales

Minor scales sound different to major scales because they are built on a different pattern of tones (whole steps) and semitones (half steps).

Many people think that minor scales sound sad, compared to major scales which sound happy.

Types of Minor Scales

Although there is only one kind of major scale, there are three kinds of minor scale - "**harmonic**", "**melodic**" and "**natural**".

- For the **ABRSM** Grade Two Music Theory exam, you can choose the **harmonic** or **melodic** minors (whichever you prefer), but you must know which is which! You will not be asked about the natural minor scale.
- For the **Trinity** Grade Two Music Theory exam, you need to know the **harmonic** and **natural** minor scales.

We think it's a good idea to learn about all three kinds while you're studying, but to use the "harmonic" scale in the ABRSM exam, because it's less complicated. So let's find out what the difference is!

Natural Minor Scales - A, E and D.

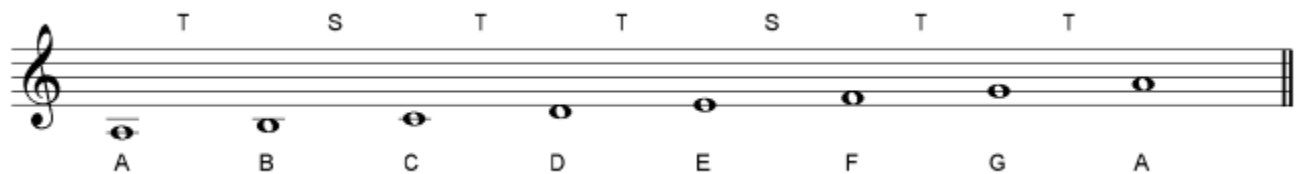
Natural minor scales are built on this pattern:

T - S - T - T - S - T - T

T=Tone (or "whole step")

S=Semitone (or "half step")

If you play a one octave scale on the piano, starting on A and using only the **white notes**, this is the "natural A minor scale".



The descending scales uses the same notes, but in reverse order:



Using the same pattern of notes, we can make the natural minor scales in E and D:



This pattern of tones/semitones has another name - it is the **Aeolian mode scale**.

Harmonic Minor Scales - A, E and D.

Harmonic minor scales are built on this pattern:

T - S - T - T - S - 3S - S

"3S" = three semitones

Let's start by building a scale of A minor harmonic ascending (going up):



And now let's look at A minor harmonic descending (going down):



As you can see, it's exactly the same notes, but in reverse order.

The harmonic minor scale is like the natural minor scale, but with one important difference - the 7th degree of the scale is one semitone higher in the harmonic minor.

Let's look at the two other minor scales you need to know for Grade Two Music Theory, E minor and D minor.



Play them slowly on a piano, if you have one, and look carefully at how many semitones there are between each note.

Minor Melodic Scales

Melodic minor scales are a bit more complicated, because they have one pattern on the way up, but another on the way down.

On the way up (ascending), the pattern is:

T - S - T - T - T - S

but on the way down the pattern is:

T - T - S - T - T - S - T

As you can see, the descending scale is not just a back-to-front ascending scale, (as it was in the harmonic scale).

The top end of the melodic scale uses a completely different pattern. The very top note will always be the tonic (keynote) of the scale, but the two notes just below it are the ones which change, depending on which direction you're going in.

Here's A minor melodic, ascending and descending. Click the play button and concentrate on the notes in red- they're the ones which change on the way down.



Let's see how E minor melodic and D minor melodic look:

E Minor Melodic:



D Minor Melodic:



Scales and Key Signatures

We'll learn about the key signatures for these scales in Lesson 7 - Key Signatures, and Lesson 8 - Writing Scales.

Extra Info

Just in case you were wondering, in music theory the words "harmonic" and "melodic" can be used to describe **intervals** as well as *scales*- but when we use them to talk about intervals they have a different meaning. You'll learn about harmonic and melodic intervals in Lesson 14 - Intervals.

It's correct to say "melodic minor scale" and "minor melodic scale". It doesn't matter which way round! The same goes for harmonic scales.

Grade Two Music Theory Lesson 5:

Degrees of the Scale

What are the Degrees of the Scale in music theory?

Any note of any scale can be given a number as well as a name.

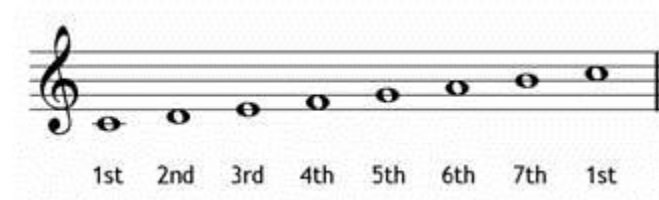
The first/last note of the scale is often called the "tonic" or "keynote".

In the key/scale of C major, C is the tonic. In the key/scale of A minor, A is the tonic.

It's also known as the "first degree of the scale", because it is the first note.

Degrees of the C Major Scale

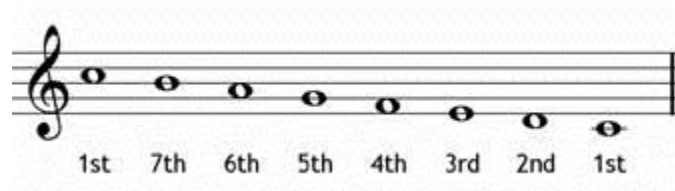
Here's a scale of C major ascending, with all the **degrees of the scale** added:



D is the 2nd degree of the scale, E is the third, and so on.

Notice that both Cs are called the "1st degree" even though the last one is higher than the first. It doesn't matter which register (high or low) the notes are in - the name is the same.

It's important to remember that we work out the degrees of the scale from the **ascending** (upwards) scale only. If we write out the descending scale, we will need to reverse the order of the numbers:



Degrees of Minor Melodic Scales

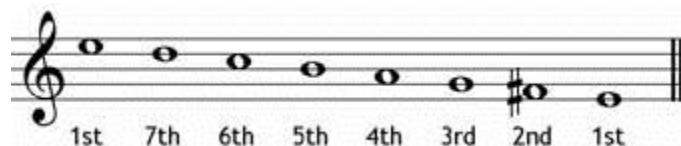
As we learnt in Lesson 4 - Minor Scales, minor melodic scales are **different** on the way down. So what happens to the degrees of the scale? Let's take a look.

We'll look more closely at one of our new scales, E minor melodic. First we'll write out the ascending scale, then add the degrees of the scale under each note:



Look at the top end of the scale: C# is the 6th and D# is the 7th degree of the scale.

Now we'll write out the descending form of E melodic minor, also known as "E natural minor", and add in the numbers:



In E minor melodic, there is no D#, only D natural, and no C#, only C natural.

This doesn't make any difference to the **degree** of the scale.

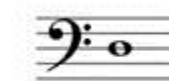
So, we can say that the 6th degree of the scale of E minor melodic is C natural *or* C sharp.

Working Out the Degree of the Scale

To work out what degree of the scale a note is on, all you need to do is count **upwards** from the first note (or "tonic" or "keynote") of the scale.

Here are two questions for you:

1) What degree of the scale of Bb major is this note?



In Bb major, the tonic is Bb. The second note is C, and the third note is D. This note is D (notice the bass clef!), so it's the **third degree of the scale of Bb major**.

2) What note is the 5th degree of the scale of A minor?

In A minor, A is the first note. B=2, C=3, D=4 and E=5. So **E** is the 5th degree of the scale of A minor.

Grade Two Music Theory Lesson 6:

Key Signatures & Accidentals

Keys and Key Signatures

If a melody uses mostly the notes of the Bb major scale, we say that the music is "in the key of" Bb major.

We don't write out the flat symbols for the Bs and the Es every time they appear in the music - because there would probably be rather a lot of them! Instead, we use a **key signature**: at the beginning of each new line of music, we write a Bb and an Eb, to remind us that **all** the Bs and **all** the Es need to be flattened.

The key signature also tells us very quickly that the music is in Bb major, without having to count all the flats!

Here's a key signature of Bb major, with the note names marked under the melody:




Accidentals



Sometimes we need to add extra flats, sharps and naturals within a melody, even when we have already got a key signature. It might be because

- the music changes key for a short time, or
- just because they sound nice, or
- because the music is in a **minor** key.

If we add sharps, flats and naturals inside the music itself, they are called "accidentals". Special rules apply to all accidentals.

Rules for Accidentals

Accidentals are always written on the **left** side of the note they affect. We write  and

 never .

Accidentals don't only affect the note they are next to. After an accidental has been written, every other note of the **same position** on the staff is also affected, but **only until the next bar line**. (Unlike key signatures, accidentals only affect the other notes at the same position on the staff. Sharps and flats in key signatures affect all the notes with the same letter name, whatever their position on the staff.)



- Note 1 is C natural
- Note 2 is C sharp, because of the accidental
- Note 3 is also C sharp, because it's in the same bar
- Note 4 is C natural, because the sharp is "cancelled" (stopped) by the bar line

When a note is tied across a bar line, any accidental will also apply to the note in the next bar as well, even if there is no accidental.



- Note 1 is Bb because of the key signature
- Note 2 is B natural because of the accidental
- Note 3 is also B natural, because it's tied to the previous B natural

Key Signatures WITH Accidentals

Now let's see what happens when we have both a key signature **and** accidentals together.

Here's a couple of bars of music in the key of F major, so the key signature has one flat, Bb:



- Note 1 is Bb, because of the key signature
- Note 2 is B natural, because of the accidental
- Note 3 is also B natural, because it's in the same bar as note 2
- Note 4 is B flat, because the barline cancels (stops) the natural accidental

Grade Two Music Theory Lesson 7:

Working with Key Signatures

Major Key Signatures with Sharps

(Note: D and A major are not required at grade 2 on the Trinity Syllabus)

The major scales that we've learnt which use sharp key signatures are G, D and A major. The sharps in key signatures are always written in this order:

F# - C# - G#

in these treble clef positions:



and these bass clef positions:



You need to learn the **exact** positions of the sharps on the staff. We **never** write the sharps in the following positions, for example:



The F sharp and G sharp need to be moved up an octave.

Major Key Signatures with Flats

The major keys with flats we need to know about for ABRSM Grade Two Music Theory are F, Bb and Eb. For Trinity Grade 2, only F major is needed. The flats are always written in this order:

Bb - Eb - Ab

The treble clef flats are always written in these positions:



and the bass clef flats are written in these positions:



Again, the **exact** position of the flats is very important, so make sure you know where they go!

Minor Key Signatures & Relative Majors

Music which is written in a minor key will usually use a mixture of a **key signature** plus **accidentals**.

There are no special **minor** key signatures in music theory- we use the same ones as in the major keys, but we write accidentals in the music where they are needed.

Let's look at A minor again, as an example. For grade 2, you need to know these different A minor scales:

- A minor **harmonic**: A - B - C - D - E - F - G# - A
- A minor **melodic, ascending** (ABRSM only): A - B - C - D - E - F# - G# - A
- A minor **melodic, descending**: (ABRSM only) A - G - F - E - D - C - B - A
- A minor **natural** (or "Aeolian") (Trinity only): A - B - C - D - E - F - G - A

So, in our music, sometimes we might need F# or G# and sometimes not!

For the key signature, we use the notes in the **melodic minor descending** or **natural minor scale**. For A minor, this means no sharps or flats, so it's the same key signature as C major.

The key signature for a minor key is always the same as the key signature for the major key which is the **3rd degree** of the minor scale.

Count up three notes from the tonic to find the key with the same key signature. For example, in A minor, the 3rd degree of the scale is C, so A minor and C major have the same key signatures.

We use the words "**relative minor**" and "**relative major**" to talk about this relationship. For example, C major is the **relative major** to A minor.

In the Grade Two Music Theory exam (ABRSM and Trinity), you also need to know about D minor and E minor, so let's work out the relative major keys for these two:

- D minor: D - E - F.
F is the 3rd degree of the scale of D minor, so the key signature for D minor is the same as for F major - one flat.

- E minor: E - F# - G.
G is the 3rd degree of the scale of E minor, so the key signature for E minor is the same as for G major - one sharp.

Re-writing Music With or Without a Key Signature

In the grade two music theory exam, you might be asked to copy out a short tune with or without a key signature.

If the melody has already got a key signature, you'll have to write it **without**, and if it doesn't have a key signature, you'll have to re-write the music **with** a key signature.

From "With" a Key Signature to "Without"

Look carefully at the key signature and accidentals in this melody, and think about which notes need to have sharps or flats next to them:



All the Bs and Es will need to be flat, the low ones and the high ones, **except** where there are accidentals.

Start by pencilling in a cross above each flattened note, so you don't forget any.



Copy out the music **neatly**, adding the flats (or sharps) where they are needed. Remember that you only need to put **one** accidental in a bar for it to affect the rest of the notes in that bar that are the same pitch.

Check whether you need to keep any of the accidentals from the original tune, like the E natural here.

Write the accidentals on the left side of the note, making sure they are right next to the note-head on the same line or space:



Here's the finished answer:



From "Without" to "With"

If you have to rewrite a melody **with** a key signature in your music theory exam, you will be told the key of the melody (phew!)

Start by putting in the correct **key signature**. Check above if you've forgotten them!

Now start to copy the notes. Every time you come across an accidental, check if it's already in the key signature. If it is, don't copy it. If it isn't in the key signature, you'll need to keep it there in the music as an accidental.

We'll use the same tune as before, but work backwards on it!



The key is Bb major, so the key signature will have Bb and Eb in it.

The only accidental in this tune which is neither a Bb nor an Eb is the **E natural** in bar 4. So, we need to get rid of all the flats but keep this E natural:



Always go back and check your answers, as it's very easy to miss out an accidental by mistake!

Grade Two Music Theory Lesson 8:

Writing Scales

Types of Scales Questions

In the ABRSM and Trinity Grade Two Music Theory exams there are lots of different types of questions with scales.

Here are some things you might have to do:

- Write a major or minor scale either ascending (going up) or descending (going down), and either with or without a key signature.
- Add clefs, key signatures or accidentals to a given scale.
- Mark out the semitones within a scale

You will need to remember the pattern of tones and semitones (whole and half steps) for scales, or learn at least one scale by heart so that you can work the patterns out:

- For **major** scales the pattern is T-T-S-T-T-T-S.
- For **minor harmonic** scales, the pattern is T-S-T-T-S-3S-S.
- For **minor melodic ascending** scales (ABRSM only), the pattern is T-S-T-T-T-T-S
- For **minor melodic descending** scales (ABRSM only), the pattern is T-T-S-T-T-S-T
- For **minor natural** scales (Trinity only), the pattern is T-S-T-T-S-T-T

You will also need to remember the key signatures for the keys in this grade:

- C major/ A minor - no key signature
- G major / E minor - 1 sharp (F#)
- D major - 2 sharps (F#, C#) (ABRSM only)
- A major - 3 sharps (F#, C#, G#) (ABRSM only)
- F major / D minor - 1 flat (Bb)
- Bb major - 2 flats (Bb, Eb) (ABRSM only)
- Eb major - 3 flats (Bb, Eb, Ab) (ABRSM only)

More information about tones and semitones can be found in major, minor harmonic and minor melodic scales, and about key signatures in the key signatures lesson.

We now need to practice each type of question which might come up in the exam.

Writing Scales in a Music Theory Exam

Here are two important rules for you:

1. Write ONE note per line or space
2. Use the note value you have been told to use.

Here's an example question, and the steps to follow to get full marks in your music theory exam:

Write as semibreves (whole notes) the scale of A minor ascending, without key signature but adding any necessary sharp or flat signs. State which form of the minor scale you have used.

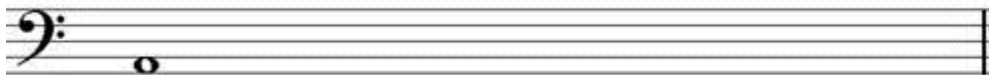


1. Whatever the scale is, the first thing you need to do is put in your starting note (the tonic, or "keynote"). If you're writing an ascending scale, start low. For descending scales, start high. Make sure you leave enough room on the left for the key signature, if you need one.
2. Next, using semibreves (whole notes), fill up the lines and spaces - one note per line/space, until you have **eight** notes. Don't draw the notes too close together!
3. Look again at the **type** of scale you need to write - is it major or minor? Think about the sharps and flats you'll need for that scale - what sharps or flats appear in the **key signature**?
4. Do you need to add any **extra accidentals**? Major scales and minor melodic descending scales don't need **any** extra accidentals. In minor harmonic scales you need to raise ONE note by a semitone (half step): the 7th degree of the scale. In minor melodic **ascending** scales you need to raise TWO notes by a semitone: the 6th and 7th degrees of the scale.
5. Put in the key signature, if you've been asked to write one. Now add any necessary extra accidentals. (Note - you'll NEVER write a **flat** as an accidental in a scale with a key signature - only sharps and naturals are possible). If there is a key signature, remember that the only degrees of the scale which could ever need an accidental are the 7th (all minor scales) or 6th (melodic minor ascending).
6. If you were asked to write the scale **without** a key signature, add the necessary sharps and flats next to each note of the scale. Don't forget to add an accidental to the top note of the scale if you are writing Bb or Eb major.

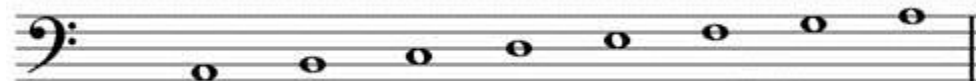
Working Through a Music Theory Exam Question on Scales

Let's work together through the scales question at the beginning of this lesson, using the steps we suggested above.

- 1) We write the first note: A. It's an **ascending** scale, so we start with an A low on the stave:



- 2) We'll fill up the lines and spaces, until we have 8 notes:



3) We need to write a minor scale, without a key signature. (We'll choose A minor **harmonic**.) A minor has no sharps or flats in the key signature, like its relative major, C major.

4 & 5) Minor harmonic scales have an accidental sharpened 7th degree of the scale, so we need a G sharp. Let's put it in.

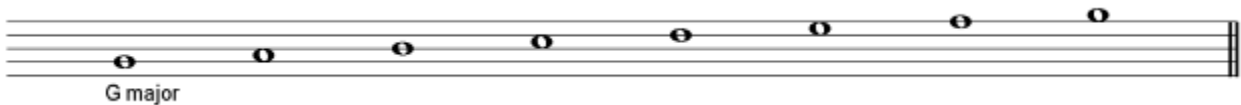


That's our finished scale of A minor (harmonic) ascending.

Adding Clefs and Key Signatures

Sometimes you'll be asked to write in the clef and/or key signature of a scale.

Look at the first note and key of the scale. Decide if the first note must be treble or bass clef:



In this scale, the first note needs to be a G, so we should write a treble clef. The key of G major has one sharp: F#.

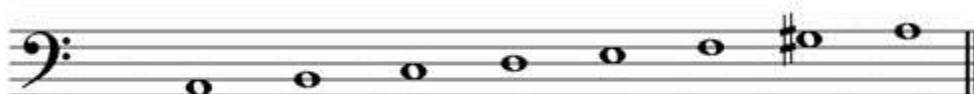
Add the clef, then the key signature.



Marking the Semitones (Half Steps)

You may be asked to mark out the places where there are semitone steps in a scale. Remember that a semitone (or "half step") is the smallest possible distance between two notes. It might help to sketch out a mini piano keyboard to help you see where the semitones fall.

Let's mark the semitones in this scale:



The semitone steps are between B-C, E-F and G#-A, so we will mark them with brackets like this:



Grade Two Music Theory Lesson 9:

Simple Time Signatures

Quick Time Signatures Review

In Grade One Music Theory we learnt three time signatures: 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4. We learnt that the lower number "4" tells us that we need to count crotchet beats and that the top number tells us **how many** beats to count.

So, 2/4 means "count 2 crotchets per bar", 3/4 means "count 3 crotchets per bar" and 4/4 means "count 4 crotchets per bar".

New for Grade Two Music Theory

In Grade Two Music Theory, we have some new time signatures to look at.

For Grade 2 ABRSM you need to know 2/2, 3/2, 4/2 and 3/8, and for Grade 2 Trinity the time signatures are 2/2, 3/2 and 3/8 only.

The lower number "2" tells us to count minims. 2/2 means "count two minims per bar", 3/2 means "count three minims per bar" and 4/2 means "count four minims per bar".

Sometimes music in 2/2 is written with an old-fashioned time signature which we call "cut common time". It is a C with a vertical line through it:



The cut common time signature goes in the same place as a normal modern signature:



And finally, we need to know 3/8. The lower number 8 tells us to count quavers, so 3/8 means "count three quavers per bar".

All the time signatures you have learned so far (3/8, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 2/2, 3/2 and 4/2) are **simple** time signatures. All simple time signatures have 2, 3 or 4 as their top number.

Types of Question

In the Grade Two Music Theory exam, you might get a question asking you something like this:

Complete this sentence:

The time signature 2/4 means that there are two beats in a bar.

We need to figure out what kind of beats - so we look at the lower number. The lower number is "4", which means "crotchet" beats. So, the correct answer is "The time signature 2/4 means that there are two **crotchet** beats in a bar.

Writing Time Signatures

In a typed page like this one, it's ok to write out time signatures as two numbers with a slash between them, like so - 3/8. But when you write time signatures on a staff, in your music theory exam you should make sure you don't write them like this! On a staff, time signatures should be written **one number directly above the other** and **without** a slash or line, like so:



Time signatures are placed at the beginning of the staff, after the clef and key signature. They only appear right at the beginning of a piece (unless there is a change of time signature in the middle of the piece somewhere).

Examples

Here are some short tunes using the new time signatures from the grade two music theory syllabus. Click the play buttons to hear them.



Grade Two Music Theory Lesson 10:

Working with Time Signatures

In the Grade Two Music Theory exam, your knowledge of time signatures will be tested in a variety of ways. Here are some of the questions that might come up:

- Adding bar lines to a melody with a given time signature
- Adding a time signature to a melody with given bar lines
- Rewriting a melody in a new time signature
- Adding rests of the correct time value
- Composing a rhythm
- Questions about the meaning of the numbers in time signatures

In this lesson we will look at adding bar lines or a time signature. Rewriting in a new time signature is explained in lesson 11, adding rests in lesson 12, and composing a rhythm is covered in lesson 16.

Adding Bar Lines

If you are asked to add bar lines to a short melody, you'll be given the time signature and the first bar line will be in place already.

The question could look something like this:

Add the missing bar lines to this tune. The first bar line is given.



Look carefully at the time signature - **how many** beats are there per bar, and **what type** of beats are they?

This melody is in 3/4, so we need to have three crotchet (quarter note) beats per bar.

Underneath each note, carefully pencil in its value, like this:



Now count out the note values, and draw a bar line when each bar has the value of three crotchets (quarter notes):



See lesson 15 for more about adding bar lines to melodies that contain triplets .

How to Draw Bar Lines in Your Music Theory Exam

You could lose points if your work is messy or difficult to read. Always use a ruler to draw your bar lines neatly. Place them closer to the edge of the **1st** note in the bar, like this:



Don't draw the bar line too close the **last** note of the bar, and make sure you leave more space for longer note values. This bar line is in the wrong place because there isn't enough space after the minim (half note), and it's not close enough to the crotchet (quarter note):



This bar line is also in the wrong place, because it's more or less exactly half way between the two notes, instead of being closer to the crotchet (quarter note):



In the Grade Two Theory Exam, every bar should be a complete bar, even the last one (although in real life the last bar can be incomplete).

Working Out a Time Signature

The method for adding a time signature is the opposite of that for adding bar lines.

Here's an example question:

Add the time signature to this tune.



Start by counting the notes in each bar. Use a value of 1 for a crotchet (quarter note), 1/2 for a quaver (eighth note), 2 for a minim (half note) and so on. Group quavers (8th notes) and semiquavers (16th notes) together to make complete beats:



Here you can see that each bar contains **three** crotchet (quarter note) beats. The top number of the time signature tells you **how many** beats to count in each bar, so the top number must be 3 in this case. The lower number tells you **what kind** of beats to count, and the number 4 means "crotchet" (quarter note) beats, so our time signature needs to be 3/4. Remember that the **lower** number of the time signature tells you the **type** of beats you need to count. In Grade Two, there are only three possibilities:

- 2 = minims (half notes)
- 4 = crotchets (quarter notes)
- 8 = quavers (eighth notes)

And, in Grade Two, there are only three possibilities for the top number too. Your top number will always be 2, 3 or 4.

This means the answer can only be one of these time signatures: 3/8, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 2/2, 3/2 or 4/2. (4/2 is ABRSM only for grade 2)

Difficult Time Signatures

Let's try another question, this time a bit harder. What's the time signature for this tune?



When you count up the notes in each bar, you'll find there are in fact 8 crotchet (quarter note) beats per bar. So is the time signature 8/4?

Well, no. (The time signature 8/4 does exist, but it's very rare and it's definitely **not** on the Grade Two Music Theory syllabus!)

We can count the minims (half notes) instead, and we'll find that we have four minim beats per bar.

When we count minims (half notes), the time signature has the number "2" as the bottom number. We counted four minims, so the time signature must be 4/2. Other "minim" (half note) time signatures you might see in the Grade Two music theory exam are 2/2 and 3/2.

Here's a final question. What time signature do we need here?



Here, we can't count crotchets (quarter notes), because we would have one and a half beats per bar, which is not possible - no half beats allowed! We can't count minims (half notes) either, so we'll need to count quavers (eighth notes).

This melody has three quaver (8th note) beats in each bar, so the time signature must be 3/8. Remember that the "8" means "quaver beats" (eighth note beats).

2/2 or 4/4?

You might be wondering what the difference is between 4/4 and 2/2, as they have exactly the same number of beats per bar?

Well, the answer is, not much! If you see lots of minims (half notes), you could choose the 2/2 time signature. If you see lots of crotchets (quarter notes), you could use the 4/4 time signature. But don't worry if you're not sure which one it should be - in the Grade Two music theory exam these two time signatures are completely interchangeable.

Here are some typical 4/4 bars - you can usually find crotchets and quavers (quarters and eighths) in the melody:



And here are some 2/2 bars - you'll often see more minims and crotchets (half notes and quarters), and not so many quavers (8th notes):



Grade 2 Music Theory - Lesson 11:

Rewriting a Melody in a New Time Signature

What's New in Grade Two

ABRSM Grade 2 Music Theory introduces a new kind of exercise with time signatures which you didn't see in Grade 1: rewriting music in a **new** time signature.

The question will ask you to rewrite a melody using notes and rests which have either **TWICE** or **HALF** the value of the original.

The new time signature will already be in place, and you'll get a few notes done for you to get you started.

Twice the Value

Here's an example question:

Rewrite the following in notes of twice the value, beginning as shown.

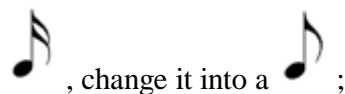



There's actually nothing very complicated about doing this!

Start by jotting down, lightly in pencil, the value of each note in order, like this:



Each of the original notes needs to be **twice** as long. This means you need to change each one into the next longest type of note. So, if you have a





if you have a , change it into a ,
and so on.

Dealing with Dotted Notes and Ties

What do we do with dotted notes? Just change them in the same way, but keep the dot there!

Looking at small dotted notes like quavers (eighth notes) can get confusing, so let's compare a dotted crotchet and a dotted minim to see what happens.

 = 1½ beats (or 3 quavers/8th notes)

 = 3 beats (or 6 quavers/8th notes)

So, you can see that a dotted minim (half note) is **twice as long** as a dotted crotchet (quarter note). In the same way, a dotted quaver (eighth note) is twice as long as a dotted semiquaver (16th note), and so on.

Here's the finished answer to our question:



Tied notes don't need any special treatment either - just add any ties in the same place in your rewritten tune.

Half the Value

If you are asked to rewrite the music in notes/rests of **half** the value, the process is the same, but the other way round.

A semibreve (whole note) will become a minim (half note), a minim will become a crotchet (quarter note) and so on.

Again, dots don't make a difference, just keep them there! Look at the finished answer for the question we just did - if we **halve** all the note values in our answer we'll get back to the original note values again!

Make sure you write your notes and rests out as neatly as you can, and don't forget to add any ties or accidentals if necessary!






Grade 2 Music Theory - Lesson 12:

Adding Rests

Rests Review

Do you remember how to draw each of the rests correctly?

Here's some quick revision:

	UK Rest Name	US Rest Name	Tips
	Semibreve	Whole	Hangs off the second line from the top
	Minim	Half	Sits on the middle line (think 'middle=minim')
	Crotchet	Quarter	Draw it like a backwards '3'
	Quaver	Eighth	Like a '7' with a blob on the top!
	Semiquaver	Sixteenth	A '7' with 2 blobs!

How to Add Rests to a Melody

If you get a question asking you to add a rest or rest to a melody, the first thing you need to check is the time signature.

Here's an example question:

Add the correct rest(s) at the places marked * in this tune to make each bar complete.



The time signature is 2/2, so we need to have 2 minim (half note) beats per bar.

Find the first bar with missing rests, and pencil in the values of the notes that you **do** have. Add small values together to make complete beats, where you can.



Here we can see that we only have one and a half beats in the second half of the bar, where in fact we need 2. So we need a quaver (eighth note) to complete the full minim beat. Here's the rest added to the bar:



Try to work out the other rests for yourself, in the same way. Remember that your rests need to make **complete beats**. Think carefully about the last bar - you need to complete the first minim (half note) beat first, then finish the bar off, so you'll need two rests in the last bar. Hover your mouse over the staff to reveal the answer.



Is this wrong?

Look at that last bar again. Students often wonder if it's wrong to write something like a dotted minim (half) rest, or a minim followed by a crotchet (quarter), in this type of bar. After all, it's just a silence isn't it, so does it really matter?

Well, the short answer is, yes, it does matter! You **must** look carefully at the time signature, and you **must** make up **complete beats** before you do anything else.

Here's another example. In 4/4, there are four crotchet (quarter note) beats per bar. So how should you fill up a bar like this with rests?



So far the notes in the bar make up a total of 3 beats ($1\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2}$). Since we need four in total, you might be tempted to write a crotchet (quarter) rest here, but you'd be wrong. The rests you choose need to make it obvious to the eye where the beats of the bar fall. If you write a crotchet (quarter) rest, the position of beat 3 will be hidden – somewhere in the middle of that rest.



Instead, you need to write a quaver (eighth) rest first, to finish off the second beat, then another one to begin the third beat.



To Sum Up

- Write rests that equal ONE BEAT and place them ON the beat (not between the beats).
- Always combine rests that equal TWO, THREE or FOUR beats into longer rests, but ONLY if they fall on the strong beat of the bar. The strong beats are beat 1 (all time signatures), beat 3 in 4/4 (third crotchet/quarter note) and beat 2 in 2/2 (second minim/half note).
- If a rest follows a note which is less than one beat, FINISH that beat first.

Here are some examples of correct and incorrect rest writing.



2/4

1: correct, 2: rest on off beat, 3: rest on off beat, 4: correct (half beat finished first), 5: rest on off beat.

3/4

1: correct, 2: combined beat rest on weak beat, 3: correct (half beat finished first), 4: half beat not finished first, plus rests on off beat, 5: correct, 6: rest on off beat, 7: correct (combined rest on strong beat).

4/4

1: correct, 2: rests not combined, 3: correct (rest combined on beat 3), 4: combined rest on

weak beat, 5: correct (half beat finished first), 6: half beat not finished first, rests on off beat).

3/8

1: correct (rests not combined because weak beats), 2: rests combined on weak beat, 3: correct, 4: rests not combined on strong beat.

3/2

1: correct (rests not combined because weak beats), 2: rests combined on weak beat, 3: rests equal half beat in this time signature, 4: correct (2nd minim/half note beat finished first), 5: rest on off beat, 6: correct (rest combined on strong beat).

Grade 2 Music Theory - Lesson 13:

Tonic Triads

Building Tonic Triads

What are tonic triads? Tonic triads are simple chords with just three notes in them.

To build a tonic triad, we start by taking the first note from any scale (which is also known as the "tonic" or "key note").

Let's make a tonic triad of D major.

We start by writing the first note of the scale of D major - D:



Next we add a note which is 2 notes higher (also known as the third degree of the scale). In the scale of D major, the note which is 2 notes higher than D is F#:



Finally, we add the note which is two notes higher than the last note - otherwise known as the fifth degree of the scale. In the scale of D major, the fifth degree of the scale is A:



The notes D-F#-A make up the tonic triad in the key of D major.

We can also build tonic triads in minor keys of course. The rules are the same, but we need to use the minor scale. In D minor, the tonic is D, the third degree of the scale is F (natural) and the fifth degree of the scale is A. So, the tonic triad of D minor looks like this:



Tonic triads are always built on the tonic, third and fifth degrees of the scale of the same key.

Here is the tonic triad in D major, and the one in D minor. Listen to them carefully, and try to remember the difference in their sounds:



Labelling a Tonic Triad

We sometimes use Roman numerals to name chords. Because the tonic triad is built from the 1st degree of the scale, we chord this chord I ("chord one" - capital I in Roman numerals = 1). Minor tonic triads are sometimes written in lower case to show they are minor: i. Roman numerals are usually written below the staff.

In modern song books it's more common to label chords by their chord symbols. The chord symbol is the letter of the root of the chord, plus "m" for minor chords. Chord symbols are usually written above the staff.

Here are some examples of tonic triads with their labels:



Adding a Clef to a Tonic Triad

You might be asked to add a clef (either treble or bass) to a tonic triad. You'll see the tonic triad on the staff, and will be told what key it's in, like this:



Remember that tonic triads are always built on the **first** note of the scale, so in this tonic triad, the lowest note has to be a G, because the key is G major. This note will be a G if we add a bass clef:

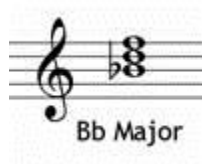


Adding Accidentals to a Tonic Triad

Sometimes you might need to add some accidentals as well as a clef. Look at this tonic triad:



Here we need to add a treble clef, so that the lowest note is a B, and we also need to put a flat sign \flat on the B, to make it a Bb:



Naming the Key of a Tonic Triad

Another type of question you might get in the Grade Two Theory Exam, is to **name the key** of a tonic triad.

Again, you need to think first about the **lowest note** of the chord. Look carefully at the **clef** and the **key signature** or **accidentals** too. You should also look at the middle note of the chord to see if it's a **major** or a **minor** tonic triad.

What key is this tonic triad in?

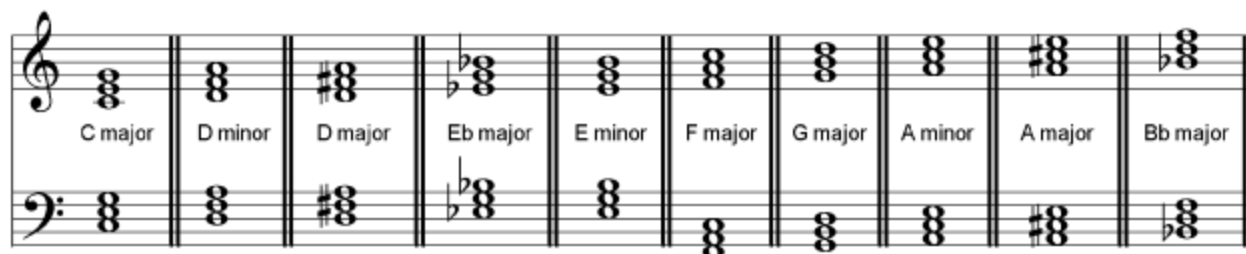


The lowest note is A (it's in the bass clef), so it's a tonic triad in the key of A. The middle note is C#, which is the third degree of the scale in A major (in A minor, the third degree of the scale is C **natural**). So, this tonic triad is in **A major**.

Grade Two Tonic Triads

Here's a list of all the tonic triads you'll need to recognise for Grade Two, in both the treble and bass clef:

(Note: For Trinity you will not be tested on D, A, Bb or Eb major at grade 2).



Finding Tonic Triads in a Melody

Sometimes you might need to find three notes in a melody which form a tonic triad when they're put together.

You'll be told what key the melody is in, and could see a question like this:

This melody is in C major. In which bar can all three notes of the tonic triad be found?



Because the piece is in C major, the tonic triad must contain the notes C-E-G. (They could be in any order.) Bar two contains the notes C, E and G, so that's the right answer. (Bar one doesn't contain a G, so it's not right!)

Broken Chords and Arpeggios (Trinity Only)

In music, chords (or triads) can appear with all the notes sounding at the same time, or with the notes played one after another in a pattern, to make an accompaniment.

Here is an example of a chord played at the same time. It's a tonic chord in G major. This is also known as a **block chord**.



When a chord is played straight up or down with one note at a time, it's called an **arpeggio**. This time, each note of the E minor tonic triad is played one after another, starting and finishing on the tonic note E.



Finally, a **broken chord** is a triad played in a pattern of three or four notes, starting on a different chord note each time.

In a pattern of three notes, the broken chord is built on the three notes of the triad. For example, here is a broken chord in A minor:



Each group of three notes contains the three notes of the tonic triad (A, C and E). Notice how each group begins on the next available note from the triad, (the first notes in each bar are A, then C, then E then A again). The three notes in each group are played in strict order – don't jumble them around!

In a pattern of four notes, the broken chord is built from the tonic triad, plus another tonic note to “top off” the chord.

Here is a four-note pattern in E minor. This time the pattern is moving downwards. The first note in each bar is each note of triad, in order, starting from the tonic note.



Root Position and First Inversion Triads (Trinity Only)

Up until now, all the triads we have written have been organised the same way – the lowest note of the triad is the “root” or “name note” of the chord.

Here are some examples.

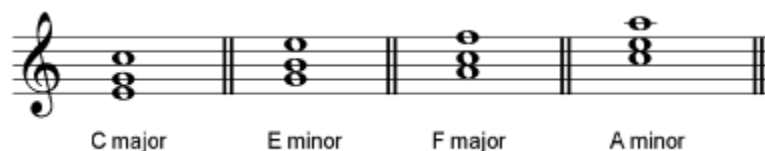


The C major chord has C as its lowest note. E minor has E as its lowest note, and so on.

These are called **root position** triads, which means that the root (or name note of the chord) is the lowest sounding note in the chord.

For Grade 2 Trinity, you might also be asked to name or write a **first inversion** triad. In a first inversion triad, the lowest note in the chord is the note which is a 3rd above the root (name-note) of the chord. The actual notes of the chord are the same – it is only the order of the notes that changes.

Here are the same triads as above, but this time they are in first inversion:



Now, the lowest note in each chord is the note which used to be in the middle of the triad, when it was in root position. We have moved the root (name note) of the chord up one octave, and put it at the top of the chord, instead of at the bottom.

Grade 2 Music Theory - Lesson 14:

Intervals

Harmonic and Melodic Intervals

A **harmonic interval** is the distance between two notes played at the same time. It is called a "harmonic interval", because the two notes together create harmony, or a chord.



A **melodic interval** is the distance between two notes played one after the other. It's called a "melodic interval", because the two notes occur as part of a melody.



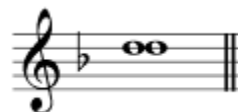
Working out Intervals

The method of working out intervals is the same for both melodic and harmonic intervals: Count up the letter names, starting from the lower note.

Look again at the intervals above.

The lower note is D. The higher note is F. This means we count the letter names D, E and F. Three letters, so this interval is a **third**.

When two notes are exactly the same pitch (the same position on the staff), the interval is called a **unison**.



An interval of an 8th is normally called an **octave**, or "**8ve**" for short.



Here are the intervals from the unison to the octave in D minor, built on top of the tonic note D:



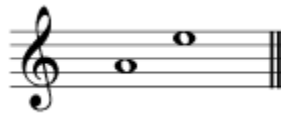
Writing Intervals

You might get a question which asks you to write a note to make the named interval, something like this:

Add a note next to this note, to make the melodic interval of a 5th. The key is A minor.



Count the letter names, starting with the given note, A. We need to count five letters: A-B-C-D-E. Here is the answer:



If there is no key signature, you will need to remember which sharps or flats belong in the scale of that key. For example, in F major, there is one flat: Bb, so you will need to add a Bb accidental to the interval of a 4th.



If the interval you have to write is a **unison** or **harmonic 2nd**, you would need to move the top note to the **side** of the lower one, otherwise they will cross over each other! They should be right next to each other, touching. A melodic unison or 2nd should have a clear gap between the two notes.



Interval Quality (Trinity Only)

Note: for grade 2 ABRSM, you will not be asked about an interval's quality.

All intervals have a **quality**, which is another word to describe more precisely what they sound like. For Trinity grade 2, you need to know about these intervals and their qualities:

- major 2nd and 3rd
- minor 2nd and 3rd
- perfect 4th
- perfect 5th
- perfect octave

The interval between the **tonic and 2nd degree** of any major or minor scale is called a **major 2nd**. The major 2nd is also known as a **tone** in British English, or a **whole step** in USA English.

Here are some examples of major 2nds:



The **minor 2nd** is the same as a **semitone** (British English) or **half step** (USA English). Here are some examples of minor 2nds:



The minor 2nd is one semitone narrower than the major 2nd.

The interval between the tonic and the 3rd degree of the scale can also be major or minor.

We find a major 3rd from the tonic of a major scale. For example, there is a major third between G and B:



And there is a minor 3rd from the tonic of a minor scale. For example, there is a minor 3rd between E and G:



If you count the semitones carefully, you will see that a minor third is one semitone narrower than a major 3rd, just like the minor 2nd was one semitone less than the major 2nd. In the major 3rd there are four semitones, but the minor 3rd has only three.

A perfect 4th is found when we count four letter names, and the distance between the notes is two tones (whole steps) and a semitone (half step).

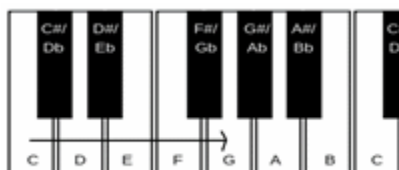
For example, if we begin on C and count four letter names, we arrive at F: C-D-E-F.



C to D is a tone (whole step), and so is D to E. We then need a semitone step, and we arrive at F.

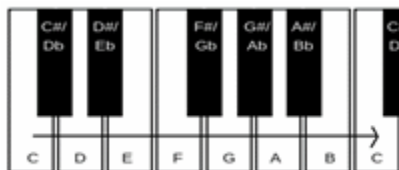
C to F is a perfect 4th. So are D-G, E-A, F-Bb, G-C, A-D and B-E.

A perfect 5th is found when we count five letter names, and the distance between the notes is three tones (whole steps) and a semitone (half step).



These are all perfect 5ths: C-G, D-A, E-B, F-C, G-D, A-E, B-F#.

A perfect octave is simply the same note but an octave higher.



C-C is a perfect octave, and so are D-D, E-E and so on.

Grade 2 Music Theory - Lesson 15:

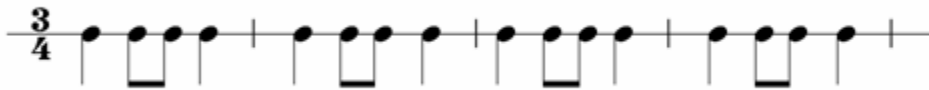
Triplets

Triplets

A "triplet" is a group of three notes played in the time of two.

To look at how triplets work, we'll first look at a short rhythm in 3/4 time.

Remember that in 3/4 time, one crotchet (quarter note) beat can be divided into two quavers (8th notes):



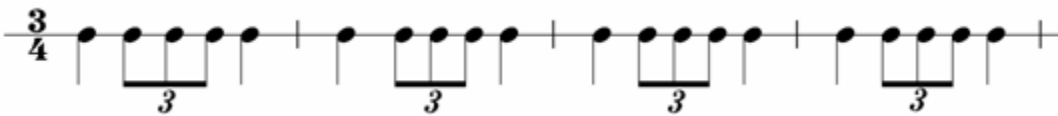
It can also be divided into four semiquavers (16th notes):



But, if we want to split the crotchet (quarter note) into **three** equal parts, we need to use a triplet.

To show a triplet, we write the notes as three quavers (8ths) beamed (joined) together, and we also write "3" on the beamed side of the notes.

Look and listen to this rhythm using triplets:



Crotchet (Quarter Note) Triplets

Triplets don't always have to be quavers (8th notes) - we can make triplets out of notes of **any** length. We can split a minim (half note) up into three equal notes by writing triplet crotchets (quarter notes), for example:



Crotchets (quarter notes) don't have beams, of course, so we write crotchet triplets with a square bracket, with the number 3 in the middle of the longest line.

Mixed Note Value Triplets

Triplets don't always have to have **three** notes in them: the notes of the triplet just need to **add up to** three of whatever value there would normally be two of.

In 4/4 time, for example, a crotchet (quarter note) is worth two quavers (8ths), or three triplet quavers. This means you can make a triplet out of other note values, as long as they also add up to three quavers overall. Here are some different ways one crotchet beat can be split into triplets with different rhythms.



Adding Bar Lines with Triplets

Adding bar lines to music with triplets can look difficult at first glance, but don't panic! Remember that you are looking at three notes in the space of two, and that they are grouped together in whole beats. Here's an example:

Add the missing bar lines to this tune.



The time signature is 3/4, so each bar needs to have an equivalent of three crotchet (quarter note) beats.

Each "3" symbol shows a triplet group. One triplet group is worth one crotchet. The quavers (8th notes) beamed in twos are also worth one crotchet each.

Write a "1" under each group of notes which adds up to one crotchet. (You can write "2" under the minim, and any other values which are necessary, of course!)



Then after each count of three (because this is 3/4 time), draw a bar line.



Adding Rests with Triplets

Here's a melody which you need to add rests to, and the melody contains a triplet:



What do we need to do? We can see that there is a triplet marked with a "3" above the beamed quavers (8th notes), but there are only two notes written instead of three. The star (*) shows us where the missing rest is supposed to go - in this case it's in the middle of the triplet.

The other notes in the triplet group are quavers (8ths); we've got two quavers but we need three, so the rest must have the value of a quaver. Draw the quaver rest carefully, in the place shown by the star. If you have to write a crotchet triplet rest, make sure it's inside the square "triplet" brackets.

Here's the finished answer, with the quaver rest in place:

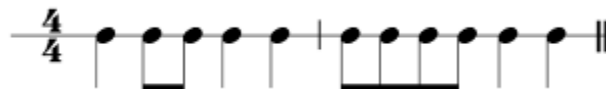


Trinity Grade 2 Composition

- use notes of the tonic triad
- use the first five degrees of the scale

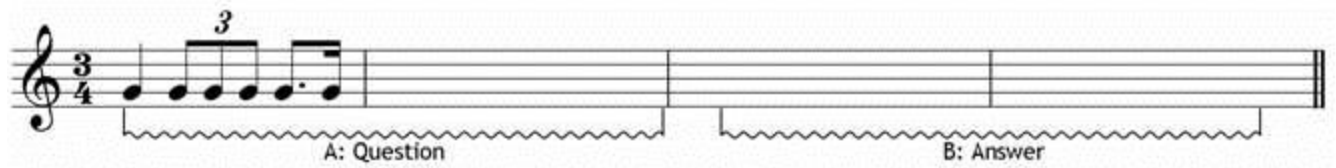
- correct notation (stem direction, nicely drawn notes)
- accurate copying of the given rhythm
- correctly written key signature
- correct selection of notes (take notice of the clef!)

G major



Here is one possible answer:





Question Phrases

As you can see, in grade two we are actually only given **half** a question phrase (whereas in grade one you're given a complete 2-bar question). The same kind of thing in words could be something like *why do you.....?* or *"have you ever.....?"*

There are probably millions of ways to finish these questions in a sensible way, and even more ways to finish them with something meaningless!

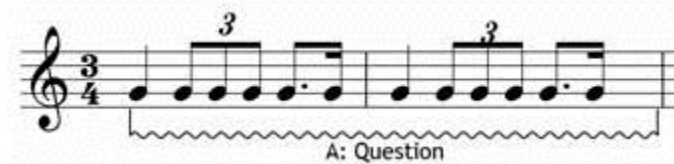
We could ask

- Have you ever been to France?
- Why do you get up at 7 o'clock?

But it wouldn't make much sense if we asked

- Have you ever yesterday afternoon?
- Why do you rabbit mountains?

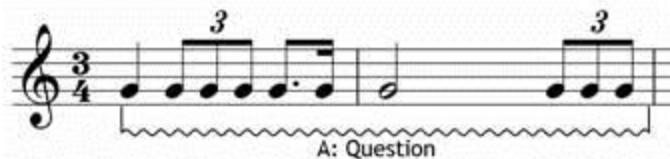
In music, the question must also make sense - **musical sense**. This means that you need to write something which fits with the first bar, and not something that is totally unconnected to it. Let's take a look at some examples.



This is ok, but not very interesting. We didn't create anything new, so we shouldn't expect many points for this! You won't normally get more than 7/10 if you copy the given opening exactly.



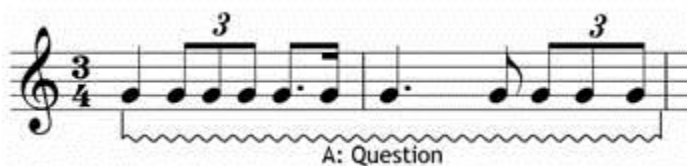
This doesn't fit very well because none of the note values in bar 2 appear in bar 1, so there's no connection.



This one is good - bar two uses some old material from bar one (the triplet), and some new material (the minim (half note)).



This one is also good - the note values all appear in the first bar, but we've changed the order of them. So, there is a strong connection, but it's not an exact copy.



Again, this is good because it re-uses some, but not all, of the rhythms from bar 1.



Not such a good choice - the only note value which appears in both bars is the crotchet (quarter note), but everything else is completely different. It's probably best not to include rests in your rhythm, unless they are part of the rhythm given in bar 1.

Answering Phrases

Before we think about answering the question phrase, we need to choose a completed question phrase. Let's say we finish our question phrase like this:



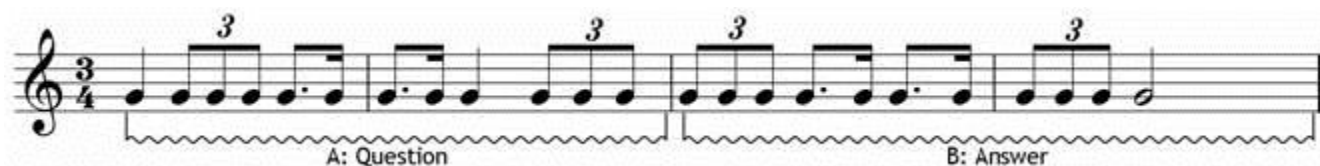
Look at the types of rhythm we've used **on each beat**.

We've got three types: a plain crotchet (quarter note), a triplet quaver (8th note) group and a dotted quaver/semiquaver (dotted 8th/16th) pair.

We should use mostly these same types of rhythm in our answering phrase.

The very last note of the phrase should be a reasonably long one (at least a crotchet (quarter note)), so that the rhythm sounds properly finished.

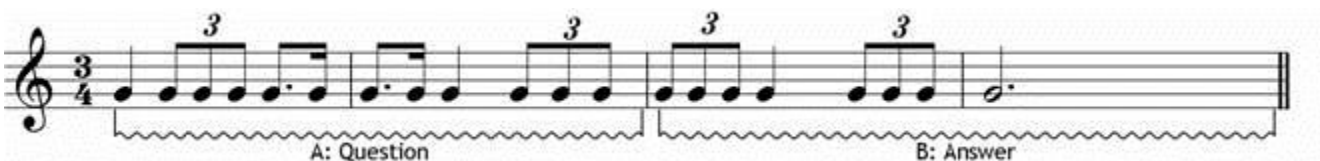
Let's take a look at some answering phrases and see which ones are any good, and why.



This sounds fine. We re-used some of the important rhythms, but not in the same order, and we finished on a nice long minim (half note).



This doesn't sound very good. Because we forgot about the triplets, the last two bars don't match the first two very well.



Here we forgot to re-use the dotted rhythm, and the last bar is certainly not very interesting!



This one is good - the rhythms are re-used in a different order and the final note value is a nice long end note.



Grade 2 Music Theory - Lesson 17:

Foreign Terms & Symbols

On From Grade One

For Grade Two Music Theory, you have to know all the foreign musical terms and symbols which are listed for Grade One, and a few more.

You can find a list of the [Grade One musical terms](#) here, and [musical symbols](#) here.

In each grade of the ABRSM music theory exams there are more foreign terms to learn, but you always have to know all the terms from the earlier grades too.

Metronome Markings

A metronome is a gadget which makes a loud, regular clicking noise. You can set the speed of the clicks. Metronomes are used so that musicians know exactly how fast to play a piece of music, and they're also useful to practise with.

Metronome markings sometimes appear above the stave, to tell you about the tempo of the music, because the Italian tempo terms are sometimes not very exact. Metronome directions are made up of a **note symbol** and a **number**, joined together by the equals sign, like this:

♩ = 126

This means that the tempo of the music should be about 126 crotchets (quarter notes) per **minute**.

Metronome indications always tell you how many notes to play per minute. (Of course, it's best if you actually have a metronome so that you can set it to click at the speed indicated.)

Metronome markings use the note length which is the beat shown by the **time signature**. So if the time signature is 3/2, the beat is a minim (half note), and there will be a minim (half note) shown in the metronome marking. Time signatures with a lower number 4 have a crotchet beat (quarter note), and if the lower number is 8, the beat is a quaver (eighth note).

New Terms for Grade Two ABRSM

Italian Term	Pronunciation	Abbreviation	English Meaning
TEMPO			
Allargando	al-lar-gan-do		Broadening (getting a little slower and probably a little louder)

Allegro assai	al- <i>leg</i> -ro as- <i>say</i>		Very quick
Andantino	an-dan- <i>tee</i> -no		Slightly faster than andante (or slightly slower)
Grave	<i>grar</i> -vay		Very slow and solemn
Larghetto	lar- <i>get</i> -toe		Rather slow (but faster than largo)
Largo	<i>lar</i> -go		Slow and stately
Presto	<i>press</i> -toe		Very fast
Vivace	vi- <i>var</i> -chay		Lively and quickly
Vivo	<i>vee</i> -voe		Lively and quickly
DYNAMICS			
Fortepiano	<i>for</i> -tay pi- <i>ya</i> -no	FP	Loud then immediately soft
Sforzando	<i>sfor-zan</i> -doe	Sf, Sfz	Forced, accented
Sforzato	<i>sfor-zar</i> -toe	Sf, Sfz	Forced, accented
PHRASING			
Dolce	<i>dol</i> -chay		Sweetly & softly
Espressivo	es-press- <i>ee</i> -voe	Espress., Espr.	Expressive
Giocoso	jo- <i>ko</i> -so		Playfully, merry

Grazioso	<i>grat-zee-oh-so</i>	Gracefully
Maestoso	<i>my-stoe-so</i>	Majestically
Sostenuto	<i>sos-ten-oo-toe</i>	Sustained
Tenuto	<i>ten-oo-toe</i>	Held

OTHER TERMS

A	<i>a</i> (as in "cat")	At, To, By, For, In, In the style of
Al, Alla	<i>al, a-la</i>	To the, In the manner/style of
Assai	<i>as-say</i>	Very
Con, Col	<i>kon, kol</i>	With
E, Ed	<i>e</i> (as in "bed")	And
Ma	<i>ma</i> (as in "man")	But
Marcia	<i>mar-chia</i>	March
Meno	<i>men-no</i>	Less
Molto	<i>mol-toe</i>	Very, Much
Mosso, Moto	<i>moss-o, mo-to</i>	Movement
Non	<i>nonn</i>	Not

Piu	<i>pi-yu</i>		More
Senza	<i>sen-za</i>		Without
Simile	<i>see-mi-lay</i>	Sim.	In the same way
Troppo	<i>tropp-o</i>		Too much (<i>non troppo</i> = <i>not too much</i>)

Grade 2 Music Theory - Lesson 17:

Foreign Terms & Symbols (Trinity)

On From Grade One


For Grade Two Music Theory, you have to know all the foreign musical terms and symbols which are listed for Grade One, and a few more.

In each grade of the Trinity music theory exams there are more foreign terms to learn, but you always have to know all the terms from the earlier grades too.

Metronome Markings

A metronome is a gadget which makes a loud, regular clicking noise. You can set the speed of the clicks. Metronomes are used so that musicians know exactly how fast to play a piece of music, and they're also useful to practise with.

Metronome markings sometimes appear above the stave, to tell you about the tempo of the music, because the Italian tempo terms are sometimes not very exact. Metronome directions are made up of a **note symbol** and a **number**, joined together by the equals sign, like this:

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Metronome markings use the note length which is the beat shown by the **time signature**. So if the time signature is 3/2, the beat is a minim (half note), and there will be a minim (half note) shown in the metronome marking. Time signatures with a lower number 4 have a crotchet beat (quarter note), and if the lower number is 8, the beat is a quaver (eighth note).

New Terms for Grade Two Trinity

Italian Term	English Meaning
Adagio	Slowly
Allegretto	Quite fast
Cantabile	In a singing style

Decrescendo

Gradually getting quieter

Espressivo

Expressively

Grazioso

Gracefully

Molto

Very

Tenuto

Hold the note for its full value

Vivace

Fast and lively

8va

Play an octave higher than written

8vb

Play an octave lower than written



Pause mark: hold the note slightly longer than usual

1.

First time bar (play this bar the 1st time through)

2.

Second time bar (play this bar the 2nd time through)

Grade 2 Music Theory - Lesson 18: Handwriting Music

Copying Out Music (ABRSM only)

Just like in the grade one ABRSM music theory exam, the final question in the paper is to copy out a section of music **exactly** as it is written.

There are ten points available for this question, which seems quite an easy ten points on the face of it, but you really must be very careful to copy out everything neatly.



Remember to copy out **everything**, including the markings for tempo, dynamics and expression. Go back and double check that you haven't forgotten anything, and then check again!

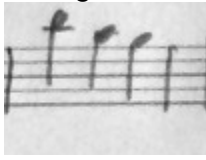
Try to copy every aspect of the music as it is written - make the notes the same size as the original, the stems the same length, the beams the same angle, the notes the same distance apart from each other and the bar lines in the same places (not closer to/further away from any notes).

Common Mistakes

Here are some very common mistakes that students make when copying out music - make sure you don't make them!

- Don't forget to put the bar line at the end of the extract.
- The first note of each bar is always the same distance (about 1/2 a centimetre) from the barline on its left.
- Accidentals are written on the **left hand** side of the note head, in the line/space of the note they affect.
- Try to keep the same distance between the notes as you see in the original.
- Make sure the note stems are pointing in the right direction.
- Black note-heads must be a good solid colour - make sure you can see no white space at all inside the notehead.
- Don't make the note heads too big.
- Don't forget ties!
- Read the question **very** carefully - make sure you copy out the right bars!
- Ledger lines are an extension of the staff and should be the same height apart, and slightly wider than the note heads. In this example, the B ledger line is too high, and the

A ledger line is not wide enough!



Grade 2 Music Theory Lesson 19:

Musical Devices

In this lesson we will learn about three devices or "tools" composers use when they write music. These tools help the composer to create more ideas which are connected to the music that has already been heard. This helps them to write longer pieces of music and also makes a piece of music feel "glued" together, because it uses similar ideas as it goes along.

The three devices we will learn in this lesson are **syncopation**, **ostinato** and **sequence**.

Syncopation

Usually, when a composer writes a rhythm, they fit it to a time signature so that the notes which fall on the **strong** beats of the bar are given a little emphasis, or slight **accent**, when they are played. This little "push" on the strong beat helps us to feel the beat and to understand how many beats per bar there are as we listen or play.

In all time signatures the beat which is strongest (or has the most accent) is **beat 1**. In 4/4 time, the 3rd beat of the bar is also quite strong, but not as strong as beat 1. Beats 2 and 4 are called the **weak beats**.

In 2/ and 3/ time signatures, beats 2 and 3 are both weak.

Most rhythms are not syncopated. This means they are written so that notes that are worth **more than one beat** fall on the **strong** beats, and not on the weak beats.

Here is an example:



As you can see, the notes which are worth more than one beat are the minim (half note), dotted minim (dotted half note) and semibreve (whole note). They fall either on beat 1 or beat 3, which are the strong beats in 4/4.

In **syncopated** music, the long notes are moved onto the weak beat of the bar. In 4/4 this means the long note is pushed onto beat 2. (It can also be pushed onto beat 4 and tied over the bar line, but you don't need to understand this type of rhythm for grade 2).



Rhythms can also be syncopated if a note which is worth one beat or more is placed **between** the beats of the bar.

Look at this un-syncopated rhythm in 2/4 - the crotchets (quarter notes) fall squarely on the beat.



Now compare this syncopated rhythm, also in 2/4. This time, the crotchets (quarter notes) fall between the beats - this "in between place" is called the **offbeat**. The music sounds different because we hear a relatively "important" note (because of its length) in a normally "unimportant" place (between the beats).



Syncopation was not used very often in melodies written in classical times, (although it was quite common as a element of the accompaniment to a tune). In more modern times, syncopation became more and more used, especially in popular music like jazz, pop and rock, as well as modern art music.

The two syncopated rhythms to look out for in the Trinity grade 2 exam are these:



Ostinato

"Ostinato" is a repeated pattern in music. Ostinatos (or "ostinati") can be built on a melody or just a rhythm (on a drum, for example). In the Trinity exam you may be asked to find an example of ostinato in a score, or to write out some repeats of an ostinato pattern.

To write out repeats of an ostinato, simply copy the given bar(s) exactly as they appear. Pay attention to the spacing of the notes, as well as things like stem direction, and how notes are beamed (joined) together.

Here is an example question and answer:

Write out one more repeat of this ostinato.



Sequences

- A sequence is a repeated section of melody, beginning on a different note. The interval distance between each of the notes in the melody will stay the same.
- Look at this example.



The original idea is a short melody of 2 bars beginning on C. Sequence 1 has the same idea, but this time it begins on a D. Sequence 2 is the same idea again, but it begins on E. A sequence can begin on any note from the scale of the key the music is in.

The **intervals** between each of the notes in the melody stay the same, and the **rhythm** stays the same.

Notice how the beginning of each repeat has a **dotted crotchet** (dotted quarter note), which moves **upwards** by the interval of a **2nd** to a **quaver** (8th note).



Next, each repeat moves **downwards** by the interval of a **3rd**, to a **crotchet** (quarter note), and so on.



Grade 2 Music Theory Test (ABRSM Candidates, New Syllabus)

- Time limit: 1.5 hours
 - Candidates should answer ALL questions.
 - Answers must be written clearly & neatly, otherwise marks may be lost.
 - Total marks: 100 (Pass=66, Merit=80, Distinction=90)
1. Add the missing bar lines to these two tunes. The first bar line is given in each. (10 points)

a.

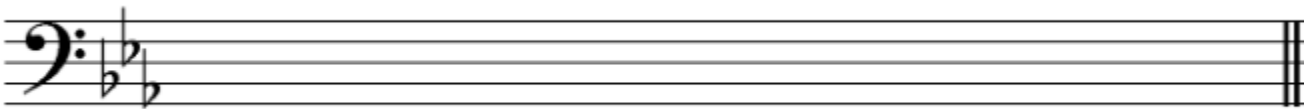


b.



2. Write the scales as indicated. (10 points)

a. One octave of the descending major scale that uses this key signature, using semibreves (whole notes).



b. One octave of the ascending scale of D melodic minor, using semibreves (whole notes). Use a key signature and add any other necessary accidentals.

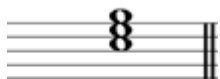


3. (a) Give the letter name of each of the notes marked *, including the sharp or flat sign where necessary. The first answer is given. (10 points)

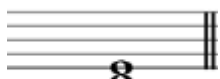


(b) Give the time name (e.g. crotchet or quarter-note) of the rest in the last bar.

4. Add the correct clef and any necessary sharp or flat signs to each of these tonic triads. Do not use key signatures. (10 points)



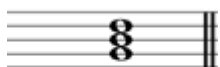
a. Eb major



b. A major



c. D minor



d. Bb major



e. E minor

5. Rewrite the following in notes and a rest of half the value, beginning as shown. (10 points)



6. In each of the numbered spaces add the note or rest named below, as shown in the answer to [1]. (10 points)



[1] minim (half-note) rest

[2] F, semibreve (whole-note)

[3] Bb, crotchet (quarter-note)

[4] F#, minim (half-note)

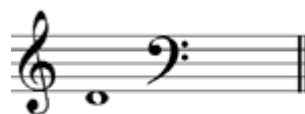
[5] F natural, dotted minim (dotted half-note)

[6] crotchet (quarter-note) rest

7. (a) Rewrite these treble clef notes in the bass clef, keeping the pitch the same. The first answer is given. (10 points)



i)



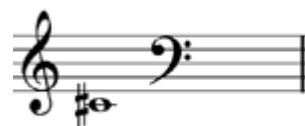
ii)



iii)



iv)



v)

(b) In which major key are all these notes found?

8. Look at this melody, adapted from a piece by Schumann, and then answer the questions below.

Molto cantabile ♩ = 60

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

mp dolce *cresc.* *f* *mp*

(a) Give the meaning of each of these: (10 points)

molto =
cantabile

=60 =

dolce =

cresc. =

mp =

(b) (10 points)

i) Give the time name (e.g. crotchet or quarter-note) of the rest in the last bar.

ii) Draw a circle round two notes next to each other which are a 6th apart.

iii) How many times does this rhythm occur?



- iv) The key of the melody is A major.
On which degree of the scale (e.g. 2nd, 3rd) does the melody begin?.....
- v) Answer TRUE or FALSE to this sentence: The time signature 2/4 means that there are two quaver (eighth-note) beats in a bar.