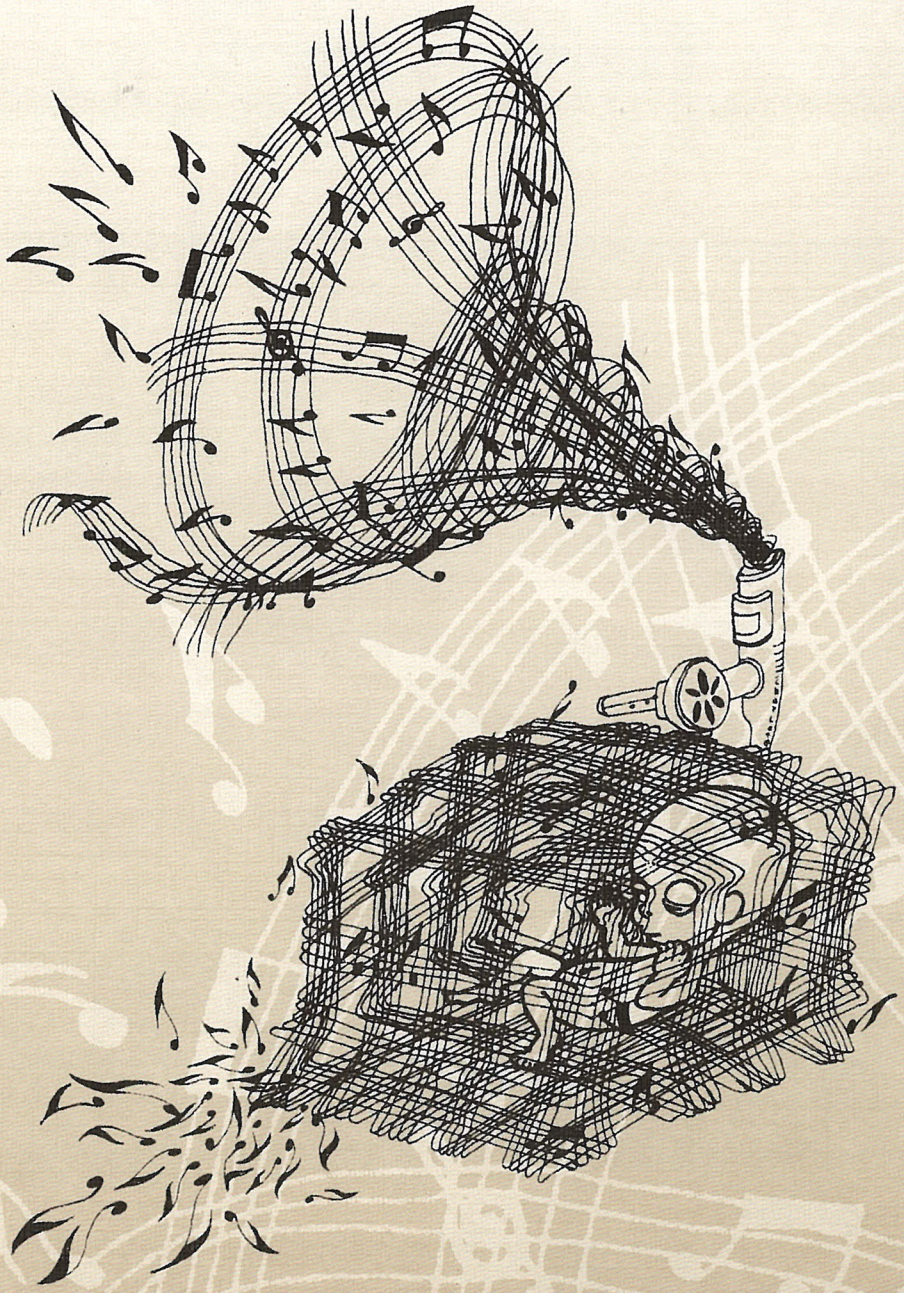
Inge Bjarke

SNAPSHOT



An introduction to sight-reading

SNAPSHOT

AN INTRODUCTION TO SIGHT-READING

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PREFACE

Shortly about

SNAPSHOT

AN INTRODUCTION
TO SIGHT-READING

A prima vista is Italian and means *at first sight*, or *first time seen*.
Within music, this means to play or to sing from a score without having prepared the performance in advance.
In common speaking it is simply called sight-reading, no matter if you are singing or playing the music.
To be good at *sight-reading* is an important part of the musician's skills, and is of considerable value in both the study process, and in ensemble playing and in accompanying.

In this book, the focus will be on some crucial skills within sight-reading:
Speed of reading, memorizing, and perceiving in entire musical phrases.

The first part of the book will deal with the actual reading process and the most important conditions for sight-reading.
The second part consists of a number of practical exercises and music examples founded on major/minor tonality. The exercises have been written both in the treble clef and the bass clef, and transposed for Bb instruments.

The book addresses everybody who wants to improve their sight-reading skills. The many different ways of executing the exercises make it possible to use them at several levels as well in various teaching groups.

Thus the book may be used in connection with

- instrumental teaching, both for individuals and groups, and at various levels
- aural training; the exercises being performed instrumentally as well as vocally
- self-tuition, - if possessing a basic theoretical, aural and instrumental foundation

The exercises and the music examples show, in a progressive order, typical parameters on which the composition of a melody may be founded. By understanding the musical language and its components, the ability of reading and perceiving in entire musical phrases is strengthened.

SNAPSHOT was published in Danish in 2009, and an English translation has been made in 2011.
I want to thank everybody who made this possible, and special thanks are given to Paul Harris for helping with the translation of specific concepts within the musical terminology.

Odense, November 2011

Inge Bjarke

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INTRODUCTION

Instrumental playing and reading of music

"How did you learn to read music?", I asked students at the Academy of Music in Odense some years ago. Among the answers was this statement from a piano student:

"But it really is annoying that I am so bad at sight-reading. It is as if I have to start by inventing the wheel every time..... It was a revelation to me when I found out that I must read ahead. But it is difficult to rehearse and improve sight-reading because it is so far removed from what you spend time on in your instrumental main lessons."

A colleague in Norway has carried out a similar inquiry about learning to read music, and one of the students (a brass player) remembers this from the instrumental lessons of her childhood:
".... the important thing was to look at the picture of the note, remember it and then press the button...It was a visual stimulus all the time; I never listened to the note I was playing...."
(Hilde Blix/Täller og Brekke 2007: "Samklang" - profesjonsdidaktikk)

These answers reveal two very important elements of sight-reading:

- The ability to read ahead and structure a score
- The ability to combine a written note with a sound, and not just a fingering on the instrument

If these abilities can be combined, one becomes *able to read and perceive entire musical phrases with a clear imagination of the sound*, and - as long as technical mastery of the instrument is achieved - *to play fluently and musically when sight-reading*.

This textbook focuses on fast reading and the perception of entire musical phrases - as if taking a snapshot, not only of the notation, but of *the sound* symbolized by the notation.

Different instruments make different demands on sight-reading ability - just think of a recorder and a piano. Also the need to learn sight-reading may differ, depending on your intended role as a musician (ensemble player, accompanist, soloist).
To improve sight-reading skills, it is very important to choose exercises carefully in a well-graded progression, as a certain level of success in both technical and musical performance must be gained.

This book deals with the fundamental aspects of sight-reading and the processes involved. Theory is transformed into practice by means of exercises and music examples that are playable on most instruments and can also be sung.

The overall idea is to develop an awareness of musical phrases as a whole, so you can read and understand the music while hearing it in your head.

About the exercises and music examples

Just as a certain familiarity with language is a precondition for being able to learn to read, a certain familiarity with musical language is an important factor in playing written music.
The musical idiom of this textbook is based on a common style grounded in classical major/minor tonal music, also found in popular songs and hymns.
The aim is to promote such a high degree of familiarity with the individual 'words' and expressions of this language that one becomes able to read and understand complete musical sentences.
There are in fact many typical building blocks, patterns, set phrases and formulas in classical music that resemble the syntactic constructions of language.
Apart from the actual notes, a melody is also anchored in both a metric/rhythmic and harmonic basis, of which the combinations are of importance for the cohesive force of the melody. An understanding of these many components and contexts creates a greater overview in reading musical notation and playing from sight.

Via melodic exercises combined with examples from the literature of music, an understanding of phrase construction and an ability to read, understand and memorise whole musical entities is facilitated. The progression is from short, five-note melodies with simple note values to long, more complex exercises and examples - still, however, in a relatively simple tonal style.

The exercises are based on my own ideas and experiences from many years as a piano teacher at a music school and as a teacher of aural training at academies of music, where the students have represented many different instruments, levels of proficiency and skills at playing from sight.
Even though many of the exercises seem simple and short and will be easy to play if one looks at the notes while playing, they represent a challenge even for advanced players when the 'read-remember-play by memory' method underlying this book is adopted. Furthermore, they are an important step in becoming aware of one's own sight-reading techniques.

The basic pedagogical idea of working with the sight-reading exercises is described in detail in the section 'How to use the exercises' immediately before the first exercises.
The exercises can be adapted to various levels and can (apart from reading-remembering-playing) also be used for imitation (instrumentally or vocally, possibly singing the degrees of the scale or the names of the notes), dictation and transposition.
The exercises are able to be played on practically all instruments. Some of the more basic exercises are written in both treble and bass clef and also for Bb transposing instruments.

The music examples have mainly been taken from the classical music repertoire and from traditional song books, and have been chosen on the basis of several criteria:

- The extracts must be able to function as a melodic whole, and therefore consist of quite short, complete phrases which (with very few exceptions) end on the tonic
- The extracts must be playable on many different instruments
- There must be a progression in the level of difficulty, moving from a limited range of notes and a simple rhythm to longer, more complex examples
- The exercises should offer an opportunity to focus on various types of melodic components (e.g. scales and triads), set phrases, sequences and forms
- The exercises should offer an opportunity to focus on other elements in the music, such as rhythm and tempo, harmony, articulation and dynamics.

A complete overview of exercises and music examples is to be found at the end of the book.

Background literature

This textbook is based partly on many years of music-pedagogical experience and partly on research and reading of literature about reading and playing from sight.
Below are titles of a number of books and articles that I have found particularly interesting and relevant, and from which interested readers can gain more knowledge about the subject.

As a pianist and piano teacher, I have over the years become familiar with textbooks on piano sight-reading. In particular, I would recommend thorough and comprehensive publications by two authors:

In his textbooks 'Vom Blatt' (Hug and Co., 1972) Kurt Herrmann deals with practically all aspects of sight-reading on the piano. There are four volumes: 1) Die Applikatur. Spielbewegungen. 2) Technik des Notenlesens. 3) Wert der Musiktheorie. Das musikalische Gedächtnis. 4) Das Dechiffrieren. Das Notenbild.
For advanced students of the piano, these four volumes offer a thorough introduction to, and instruction in, sight-reading, with plenty of examples of musical literature.

The publications by the British music educationalist Paul Harris are extremely comprehensive, covering all levels of sight-reading, from the complete beginner to the quite advanced player. He has published several textbooks (published by Faber Music Ltd.): 'Improve your Sight-Reading! - Piano Pre-Grade 1-8' (second edition 2009) and 'Perfect your Sight-Reading - Piano grade 1-3' (2000). These have been supplemented in 2005 by 'More Improve your Sight-Reading' grade 1-5. The individual volumes are related to the graded musical examination system (Associated Board Exams), which, apart from the prepared pieces, includes a sight-reading test.
A concise and easy-to-grasp introduction to sight-reading techniques is linked at regular intervals to Harris' many self-composed piano pieces, which are carefully graded.

Paul Harris has also published similar textbooks for most other instruments. 'Improve your Sight-reading!' also exists, for example, for all string instruments as well as for wind and brass instruments - all published by Faber Music Ltd.

In 2007-08, Schotts published a series of sight-reading books for practically all instruments. John Kember has prepared this wide-ranging series in cooperation with relevant instrumentalists, and apart from solo pieces the books also contain duets and pieces with accompaniments. The titles of the books are identical, apart from the name of the instrument, e.g. 'Violin Sight-Reading - a fresh approach'.

Even though the challenges of sight-reading might vary from one instrument to another, the actual *reading process* involves many common strategies.

I have found it extremely inspiring to read a book by the Norwegian aural training teacher Hilde Blix: Notelesing, hva slags lesing er det? Didaktiske betraktninger rundt hørelærefaget - sett i lys av språkopplæringsteorier (Eureka Forlag/Høgskolen i Tromsø, 2004) [Music reading, what sort of reading is that? Didactic considerations related to aural training - seen in the light of language-learning theories].

Of the many articles from various books and periodicals, I would recommend the following:

Blix, Hilde: 'Hva slags forståelse behøver en noteleser?'
[What sort of understanding does a music-reader need?]
(Eureka Digital/Høgskolen i Tromsø, 2006)

Blix, Hilde and Bergby, Anne Katrine (eds.): Øre for musikk - om å undervise i hørelære
[An ear for music - on teaching aural skills] (Unipub, 2007)

Den Store Danske Encyklopædi [The Large Danish Encyclopedia] (Gyldendal, 1998):
Articles on 'reading' (Carsten Elbro) and 'Memory' (Steen Folke Larsen)

Harris, Paul: Improve your Teaching (Faber Music Ltd, 2006)

Parncutt, Richard & McPherson, Gary (eds): The Science and Psychology of Music Performance: Creative strategies for teaching and learning (Oxford University Press, 2002).
Articles by:

Gary McPherson & Alf Gabrielsson: From Sound to Sign
Andreas C. Lehmann & Victoria McArthur: Sight-Reading
Rita Aiello & Aaron Williamson: Memory

Sloboda, John: Exploring the musical mind (Oxford University Press, rev. 2005)

Williamon, Aaron (ed): Musical Excellence (Oxford University Press 2005).

Especially articles by:
Sam Thompson & Andreas C. Lehmann: Strategies for sight-reading and improvising music
Jane Ginsborg: Strategies for memorizing music

Finally, there is a large selection of textbooks in aural training that deal specifically with solfeggio. The forewords or pedagogical guides in such books often contain valuable information.
The older textbooks on solfeggio* are often based on more exercise-oriented methods where one advances step by step, whereas many of the more recent textbooks have musical structures and melodic phrases as their point of departure.

A more holistic and general view, where reading is placed in a context, is thus more closely related to the underlying concept in SNAPSHOT.

Textbooks of this category I would like mentioning include:

Johansen, Niels Eskild: Hørelære. Med på notene (Norsk Musikforlag 2006) [Aural training]

Edlund, Lars: Modus Vetus. Gehörsstudier i dur/moll tonalitet
[Aural training, major/minor tonality]
(Nordiska Musikförlaget/WH, 1966/1976)

Berkowitz, Fontrier and Kraft: A New Approach to Sight Singing
(W. W. Norton & Company, 4th Edition, 1997)

The melodic approach can also be based on a harmonic grounding, as in
Raitio, Seija-Sisko: Lectio Sonorum I-II (Edition Fazer, 4th edition, 1971)

It should be mentioned that developing SNAPSHOT has been part of my research work as a teacher at The Academy of Music & Dramatic Arts, Southern Denmark.
Discussions with many of my colleagues have helped give me greater insight into the challenges different instruments present as regards sight-reading. They have also confirmed my conviction that there is a need for a general textbook in this field.
During my work on the book, I have also had most rewarding dialogues with my colleagues in aural training in Tromsø, Norway - Niels Eskild Johansen and Hilde Blix.

*A distinction has to be made here between *learning to sing from music*, which includes many basic concepts such as learning about scales and intervals, rhythm and harmony, and *being able to sing or play from sight*, which has to do with an instant reproduction of a score (cf. *a prima vista* - at first sight, seen for the first time).
There is of course considerable overlapping between these two areas, but this textbook deals with the latter, i.e. singing or playing from sight.

LANGUAGE LEARNING: READING AND UNDERSTANDING TEXTS

Learning language and learning to read

In order to understand the music-reading process, one can compare it to reading texts. In both cases, use is made of a system of written symbols that refer to sounds, and these sounds - in order to make sense - must be reproduced in phrasal contexts, which calls for quick, fluent reading. This presupposes familiarity with what the symbols refer to - language and music, respectively.

When a child learns to read, this is on the basis of several years' continuous, progressive acquisition of the spoken language. At first, single words are learned and recognized, and gradually the words are connected into sentences.
Later on, the spoken language is connected with the written language, where much time is spent on reading aloud. Apart from controlling the child's level of proficiency, it also serves to help the child connect written words with sounds. The written word thereby merges with the spoken word, and in the case of 'silent reading', one is able to hear the words inside one's head.
The entire process - in which writing exercises are also important - lasts many years, with both the oral and the written language being trained. The teaching of reading is so thorough that for most people it becomes automated - it is simply impossible not to read words when one sees them. In addition, the words evoke an acoustic association inside one's head.

The reading process

When one reads a text, the eye and the brain very swiftly carry out various strategies in order to decode the content. After an immediate and holistic visual orientation, the overall picture is split up and the text is divided into smaller units - *segmentation*. This ability to divide in a structured manner is innate; at the same moment the brain, via the eye, registers a mass so large that it cannot be grasped at one go (chaos), it will attempt to order it into well-known groups, patterns or forms.
In the actual reading process, the eye does not move forward at a steady pace but leaps forward in small jerks (*saccadic movements*), pausing in between at strategically important points - *fixation points*. From these points, the eye is capable of comprehending the surrounding letters and words. The fixation point can even be a 'blind' or empty point that forms a centre for many surrounding items of information.
If the eye places itself in a wrong position, or the content is not being understood, correcting eye movements occur, with collecting taking place retrospectively (regression).
The eye, or the brain, is able to recognize whole words at one go. The eye/brain does not read each individual letter or syllable, but sends at high speed the entire word-picture through its own word-database, in the expectation that the word is known in advance*. This process is called *analogy strategy*.
After this very quick identification of known words, the practised reader via scanning gains an overview of the text, and collects the words into meaningful clauses and sentences. When a text is read aloud, it is thus easy to hear if the reader has understood the totality of the text, or if (s)he is spelling it word by word.

*By selecting key letters (the first and the last, plus a couple in the middle) the brain attempts to guess whole words. Words like *grammophone* or *cromatically* are first recognized in their totality. Note that one has to take an extra look to discover the spelling mistakes.

Even with completely jumbled letters, the brain is able to figure out the right word.
On http://www.ecenglish.com/learnenglish/lessons/can-you-read I found this:
"Unisg the icndeblire pweor of the hmuan mnid, aocdcrnig to rseecrah at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it dseno't mttaer in waht oderr the lterets in a wrod are, the olny irpoamtnt tihng is taht the frsit and lsat ltteer be in the rhgit pclae."

Prerequisites for understanding what is read

Understanding a text requires various forms of prior knowledge, some of which are linked to the decoding of the individual word, while others are necessary for an overall comprehension of the text.

Fluent, effortless reading is a technical necessity, since imperfect and slow decoding can effect what can be extracted from the text in at least two ways:

- Reading speed can be so low that it is impossible to maintain an overview of the overall meaning
- Too many incorrect readings can hinder full comprehension of the content of a text.

Meaningful comprehension of a text also presupposes a relevant previous knowledge of the concepts covered by the words and of the subject matter of the text. To be able to read and understand a text, one has to have 'read' the world beforehand.

So there are many different prerequisites for reading and to understanding a text:

- *An understanding of symbols* - a knowledge and understanding of letters and their combinations into words
- *An auditory conception* of the text, which gives a spontaneous connection between the written and the spoken language
- *An extensive vocabulary* is of great importance for the identification (or recognisability) of the words. In the course of childhood, both the child's spoken and written vocabulary increases - the latter partly via mother-tongue (L1) teaching in school, and partly via the reading of many different types of text (books, comic strips, newspapers)
- *A knowledge of repertoire and genre*, which increases via reading many types of text, and one also becomes familiar with innumerable variations of syntactical constructions and
- *Sentence construction* - various meaningful ways of combining words
- *The context* is important for the correct interpretation of words that have more than one meaning (e.g. lead, bow, train), just as short, frequent function words (and, which, but) almost slide into the formation of sentences by themselves with the aid of the context
- Finally, *relevant previous knowledge* and *frameworks of reference* play an important role in the level of comprehension of a text, which in turn is important for decoding words and reading speed (compare, for example, reading aloud a children's book and a complex legal text).

To sum up, we can say that:

Just as an understanding of the details is necessary to encode the whole, an understanding of the whole facilitates a decoding of the details.

LEARNING MUSICAL NOTATION:
READING MUSIC AND UNDERSTANDING THE SCORE

Reading music - reading texts

Many processes from reading texts can be immediately transferred to reading music: The eye carries out a quick initial orientation and attempts to create order out of the chaos by gathering details into familiar groups, forms or patterns. The greater the 'vocabulary' is, the more identifications can be carried out in the database. The eye's fixation points are strongly influenced by this - an experienced sight-reader immediately registers where in the score it is most rewarding to focus, where most information can be retrieved. Less skilled sight-readers will pay equal attention to all notes in the phrase and thus read or understand as if spelling what is there.

Learning and reading musical notation differs in certain aspects from learning and reading texts. Two of these should in particular be mentioned: The amount of time and thoroughness devoted to learning, and the actual musical notation, which moves not just horizontally but also vertically.

Learning musical notation

Language, spoken and written, is a necessary, universal means of communication used by all people, with learning taking place in infancy and childhood, both in the home and, under more structured conditions, during schooling.
The language or universe of music is not a universal necessity in the same way, and its components do not, like words, refer to concrete objects or concepts. This does not, however, mean that the language of music seems strange to us. Most people listen to music every day, all of us can sing and have a certain repertoire of songs we have learnt by ear (children's songs, hymns, popular songs, etc.).

Learning musical notation and to read music is often something we first do when learning to play an instrument and, compared to language teaching, a relatively short time is spent on understanding both what can be heard and what is written down and on making connections between them. Note, in particular, the vast number of repetitions that take place when learning a language.

Mastering an instrument in itself calls for a high level of attention, both as regards the physical aspect (e.g. posture, position of the fingers, touch, coordination of right and left hand and, for wind and brass players, the tension and position of the lips and mouth - embouchure) and the musical elements (pulse, rhythm, intonation, etc.). Producing a note can call for such undivided attention that the pupil cannot even listen to his or her playing as a whole and understand how the notes are part of a musical phrase.
Instead of becoming synonymous with sounding notes, printed notes risk only being associated with a particular fingering on the instrument, or a key on the piano, and are not necessarily connected a sound to the sign.

Compared to reading texts, the thoroughness and extent of practice and training in reading music is relatively small - not necessarily something one does every day. It takes a long time to study a piece, and one often looks at the same music on the page time and time again.
The degree and extent of active (new) reading is thus not particularly extensive, and the reading challenge - sight-reading - is thus inversely proportional to the thoroughness of practising a particular piece of music.

Reading musical notation
Unlike the written language, notes are not placed only on one single horizontal line but also move vertically (up and down). A number of notes can occur at the same time (chords), and they can be written in various staffs with different clefs. This makes great demands on the eye as regards overview and quick mobility in several directions at once.
A further complexity in reading written music is that it contains several different types of symbols - apart from the notes themselves, which already comprise two types of information (pitch and rhythm), there are various indications of articulation, dynamics and tempo.

Prerequisites for understanding the score
Just as too slow or incorrect reading of a text can prevent an understanding of the overall meaning, fluent reading of notes and an effortless transfer into sounding notes is a prerequisite for a musical realisation of written music.
A considerable previous experience, in the form of a knowledge of repertoire and style, can be of help here, i.e. that one is familiar with the particular musical idiom.

Many of the prerequisites for textual understanding can be directly transferred to an understanding of written music, e.g.

- *An understanding of symbols* - knowledge and understanding of the alphabet of music, i.e. notes, indications of articulation, dynamics, etc.

- *An auditory conception* of what is expressed in notes, an immediate connection between notation and sound

- *A comprehensive vocabulary* is of great importance in the language of music for identification or recognizability.
  There are many small building-blocks in the language of music (rather like function words), rhythmical figures, melodic and harmonic connections in recognisable combinations, patterns and set phrases

- *Knowledge of repertoire* helps to increase the musical vocabulary and familiarity with various types of combinations of 'words'

- *Sentence construction* - i.e. phrases that make musical sense via the combinations of sounding notes

- *The context* facilitates the understanding of the role of the individual notes (e.g. one does need to read all the individual notes if the eye at a quick glance has registered an unbroken scale spanning two octaves). It can also provide a certain expectation as to what is about to come.

- *Relevant previous knowledge* and *frames of reference* as well as knowledge of style and genre play an important role in the understanding and execution of the music, which in turn is of importance for decoding the notes and reading speed (compare, for example, playing a simple classical movement and an atonal work).

To sum up,

just as an understanding of the details is necessary to encode the whole, an understanding of the whole facilitates a decoding of the details.

COMPETENCES REQUIRED FOR SIGHT-READING

Necessary for fluent sight-reading are an understanding of the musical language, mastery of instrumental skills and the possession of a certain practical/theoretical knowledge within aural training, theory, styles, etc.
For the sake of clarity, these various proficiencies are dealt with separately, although in many cases there will be connections and overlaps between the individual areas

Short-term memory and long-term memory
In the actual reading process, short-term (or working) memory constantly operates. Having taken a snapshot of the musical information, you play by memory what you have just read, as the eyes already are busy reading the coming notes.

The long-term memory functions as a kind of database that is constantly enlarged as one acquires an increasing number of instrumental and practical skills, along with theoretical knowledge. Subjects such as aural training, knowledge and theory of music, etc. help one to understand, apprehend and store concepts that the short-term memory can make use of in a swift perception. Much information is stored in units consisting of several details, which in turn facilitates a better grasp of the score when reading.

Overview and understanding of musical notation
Familiarity with basic elements in the music, such as scales, triads, keys, harmonies and rhythm, facilitate an overview of the score, also opening up the possibility for good phrasing.
Apart from the actual notes, which indicate both pitch and length, written music can contain various types of information that are of significance for the correct realisation of the notes, e.g. dynamics, tempo, character and articulation.

Furthermore, individual instruments place special demands on reading, as a result of their different characteristics. Some examples:
Instruments that can play chords have many notes on the page (which thus appears to be more complex) than melodic instruments, although here too there can be considerable variety as regards the density of the notes on the page. The flute often makes long, swift runs, while the tuba cannot produce the notes as quickly.
Change of key and transposition (e.g. trombone) as well as notation in several systems and in several keys (e.g. piano and percussion) are other factors that can make reading more difficult.
The rhythmical notation of vocal music is based on the syllables of the text, which means that the linking beams on quavers and semiquavers are often replaced by flags. As a result, the rhythmical grouping in easy-to-grasp units (beats) disappears, and long syllables in the text can displace the notes, so that the graphic image does not correspond to the relative note-length.

Instrumental proficiencies

Comprehensive mastery of the instrument is a fundamental requirement for sight-reading, based partly on the possession of technical skills and partly on a sound knowledge of common, frequently occurring musical patterns and set expressions.

In addition to this, it is also interesting to consider the two main ways we access music: from notation and by ear.

To play music by reading notation is the way most classically trained musicians access their music, with the printed notes as much a sign of where fingers are to be placed on the instrument as symbols of the sound. The musician *reproduces* the notes and is thus to a certain extent passive in his or her approach to the music.

When learning to read texts, reading skills are also improved by the spin-off effect of the *active process* of writing texts.

Something similar is also beneficial within the language of music. Without actually writing the music down, playing by ear is a way of establishing the notes heard inside your head, and the active role of *producing* the sound calls for a keen awareness of the connection between the sounding note and the instrument.

Unfortunately, playing by ear is something of a neglected discipline within classical music. It is, however, never too late to practise - and it is easily done: Choose a well-known melody and play it by ear in a new key every day. And choose a new melody every week.

The active role in accessing the music helps one to gain a wider understanding of both the instrument and the language of music, which in its turn improves one's reading skills.

Musical understanding, stylistic awareness and knowledge of the repertoire

Musical understanding is based on musicality and talent as well as on knowledge and experience. Apart from an interpretative understanding, stylistic awareness provides the musician with a certain expectation as to what the composition might bring; one is often almost able to predict what is coming next in the music.

Extensive knowledge of the repertoire contributes to expanding the musical vocabulary and enhancing the understanding of phrasal constructions.

Intuition cannot be defined as an actual skill, or as an isolated concept, but rather as a capacity that is supported by growing knowledge and experience. Stylistic awareness and a broad knowledge of repertoire thus help to develop the musician's intuition, which is also important for the decoding of written music.

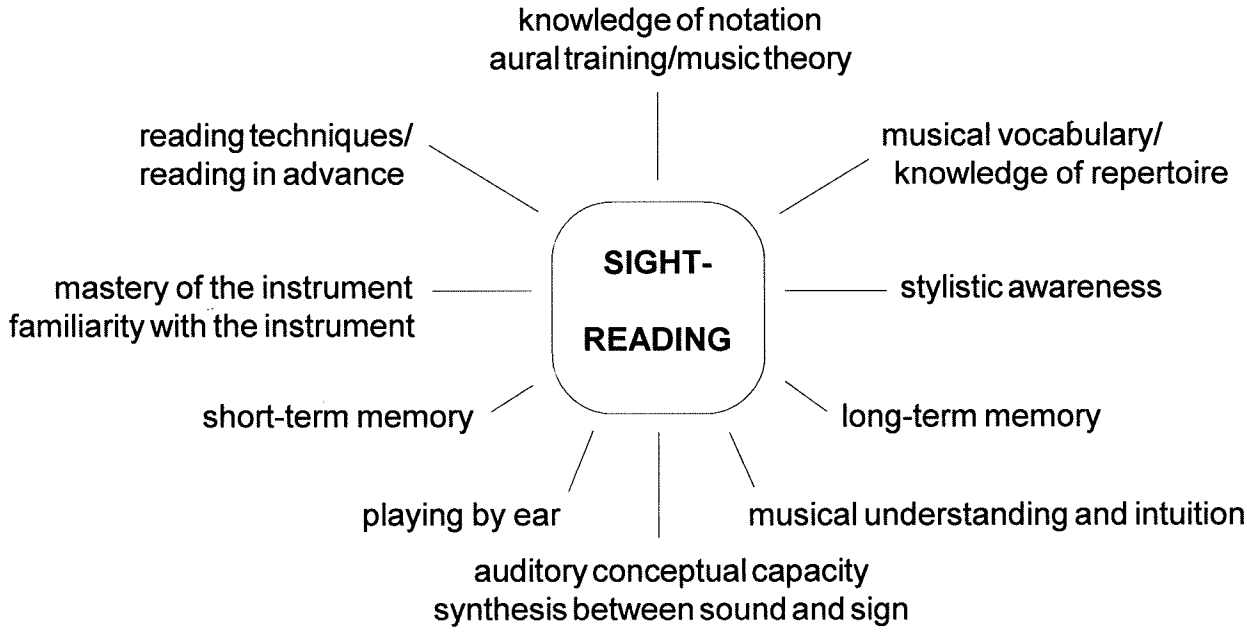
Auditory reading

Normally, the reader gets just as much from reading a text silently as from reading it aloud, and it is hard to imagine that one could read a text aloud fluently without also being able to read it silently. In the same way, one ought to be able as a musician to read notes silently and thereby gain an impression of what the music sounds like.

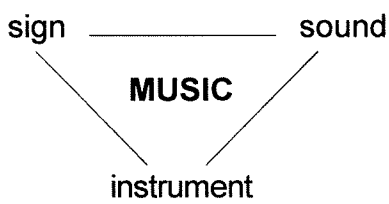
This capacity to imagine music is valuable during the studying phase as well; one can occasionally benefit from laying aside one's instrument, devoting oneself to a purely musical conception and analysis of the work without the limitations that the technical difficulties of playing the instrument can involve.

Summary

As can be seen from the previous pages, good sight-reading depends on many different aspects of proficiency, knowledge and experience:



Sight-reading is part of the musician's craft and is a component of the practical musicianship in which the following three elements merge:



Effortless interaction between all three elements means that the musician is able to

- play from sight
- play by ear
- read auditorially / 'hear with the eyes' (transform sign into sound)
- hear visually / 'read with the ears' (transform sound into sign)

THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF MELODY

As a prelude to the sight-reading exercises themselves, the next three pages provide an overview of certain commonly occurring melodic, rhythmic and harmonic components and figures in tonal music.

Notes, rhythm and harmony show examples of melodic, rhythmic and harmonic components in tonal music, while

Patterns and modules show examples of combinations of these components in certain typical patterns, e.g. sequences.

All these small recurring "expressions" will appear to be simple, familiar and easy to play or sing, but since they represent typical building material for melodic phrases (like most of the common function words in a text), it is important that one becomes *actively* aware when going through them. Even if it takes more time to describe the melodic "expressions" with words than simply to play them, going through this phase is worth it in the long run.

In *Forms and figures*, the small building-blocks are gradually assembled to form slightly larger melodic phrases. The first short melodies, in order to promote active awareness, ought to be described purely graphically, and in the case of slightly longer phrases, a brief analysis of form is also provided (e.g. a-a', a-b).
Apart from a visual analysis, the examples are also used for an auditory analysis; the teacher plays and the student describes the main features of the melody (e.g. a scale up to the fifth, a downward triad).

The ability to assemble quickly small components into larger wholes or phrases improves one's ability to read in advance, just as an understanding of the harmonic basis contributes to a quicker overview and better memorizing.

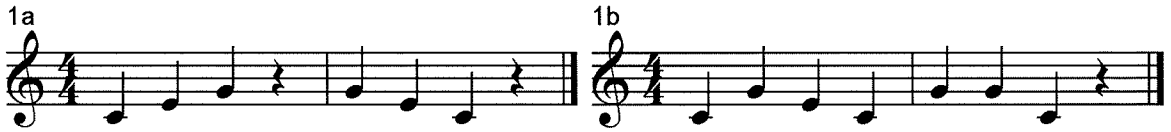
Work through and analyse the following three pages, and play/sing the examples.

NOTES, RHYTHM AND HARMONY

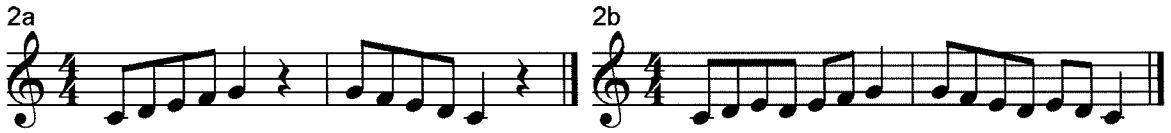
Examples of the use of triads, scales, rhythm and harmony

NOTES

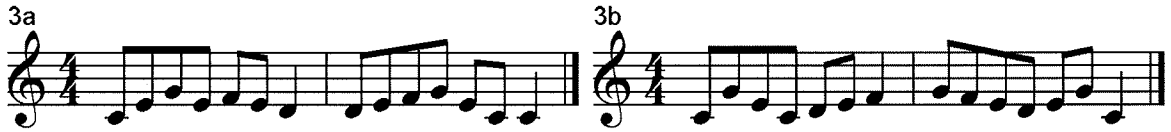
triad



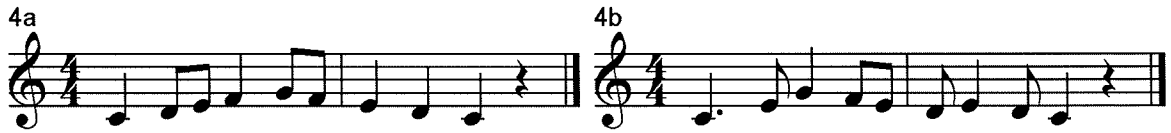
scale



triad
and scale

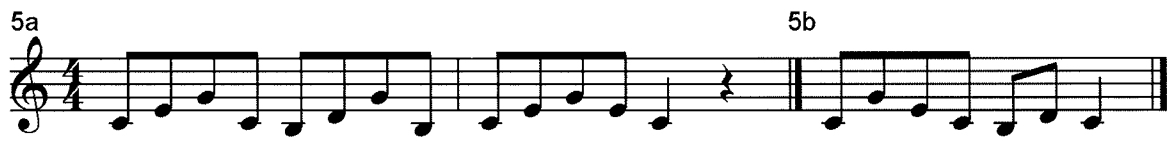


RHYTHM

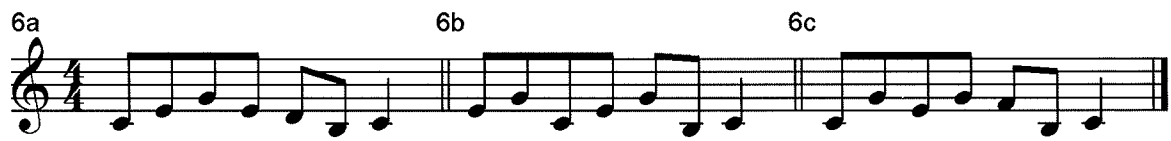


HARMONY

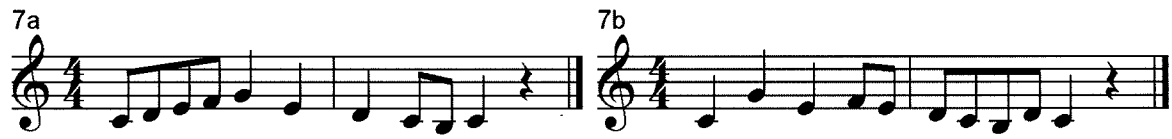
tension
D-T



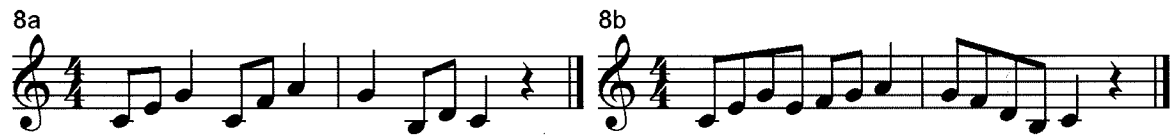
T-T-D-T



scales
and triads



T-S-D-T



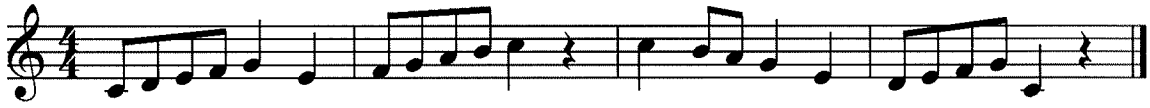
PATTERNS AND MODULES

Examples of melodic and rhythmic patterns

MELODIC

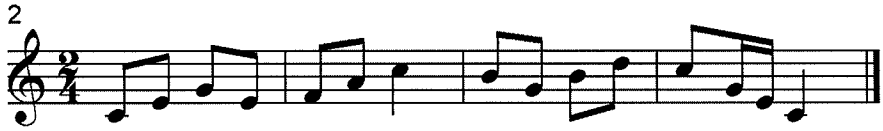
use of scales

1



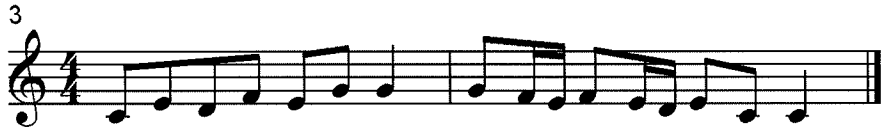
triads/
harmony

2

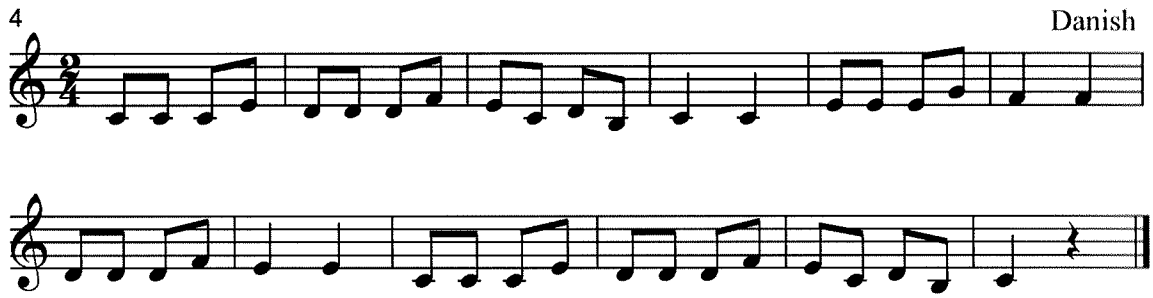


sequences

3



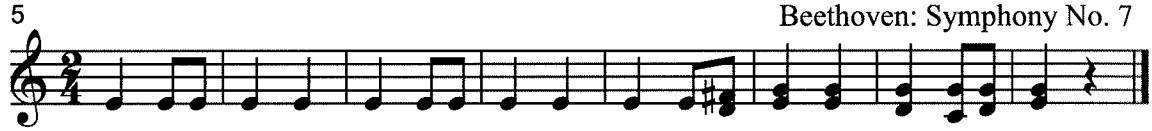
4 Danish



RHYTHMIC

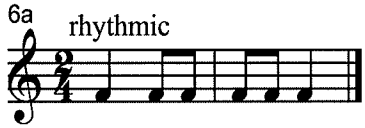
ostinato

5 Beethoven: Symposium No. 7

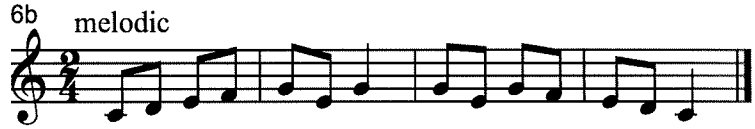


palindrome

6a rhythmic

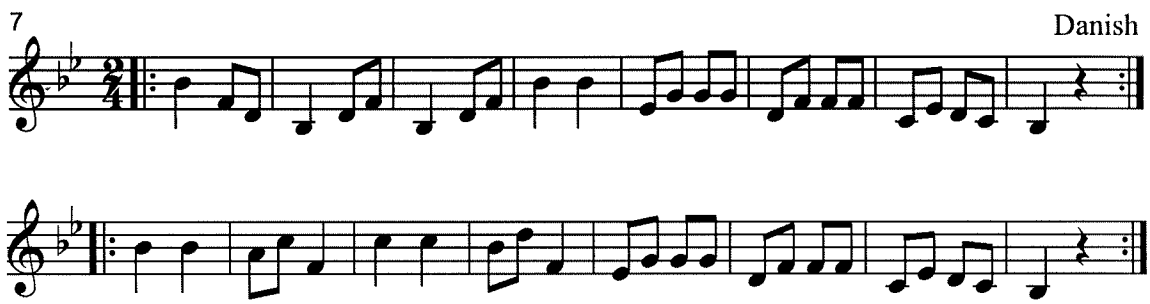


6b melodic



rhythmic and
melodic
sequences

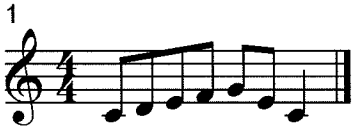
7 Danish



FORMS AND FIGURES

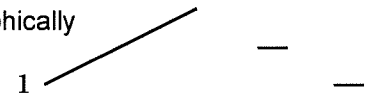
Analyse the melodies and describe them

1



Example 1: C major, 4/4, one bar, beginning at the tonic root note at the first beat, ascending stepwise to 5th degree of the scale, triad down, similar note values (quavers)

or graphically



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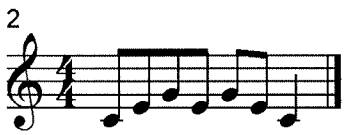
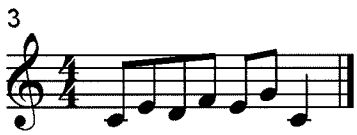


3



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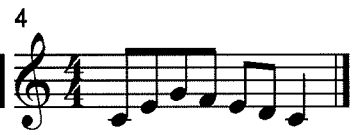

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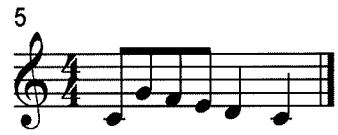

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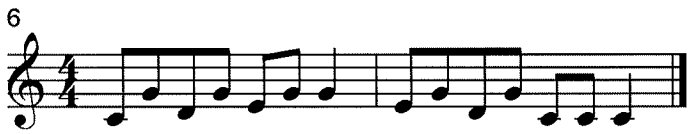

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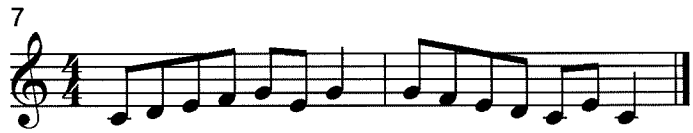

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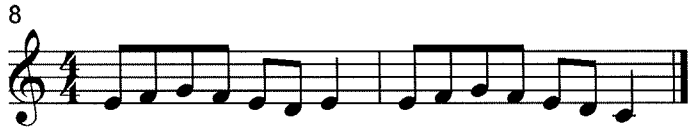

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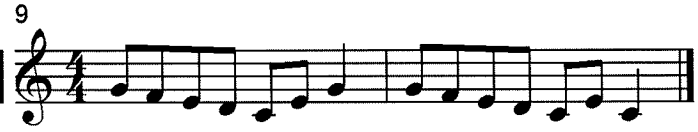

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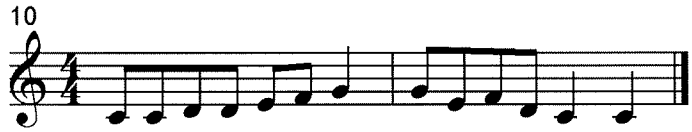

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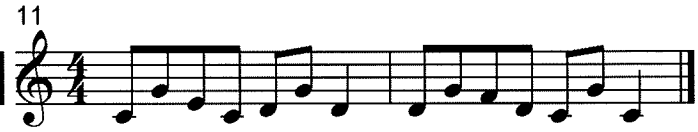

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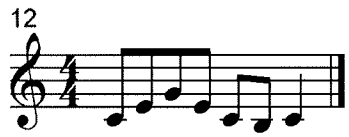

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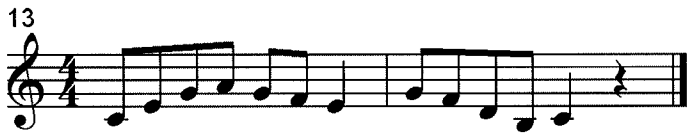

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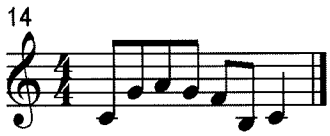

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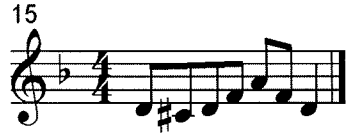

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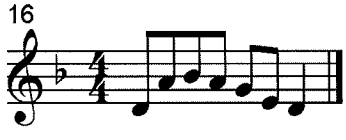

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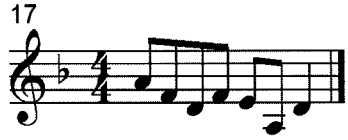

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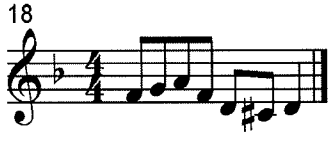

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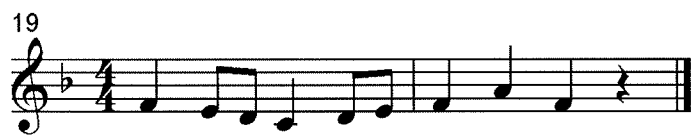

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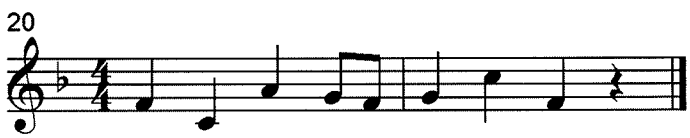

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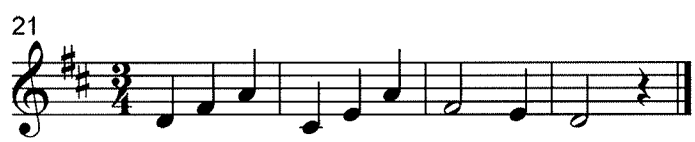

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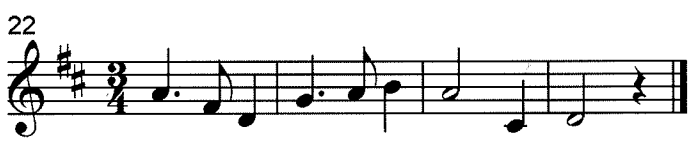


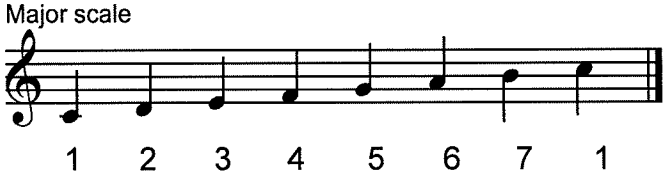
COHESIVE FORCE IN THE MELODY

Melody and major/minor tonality

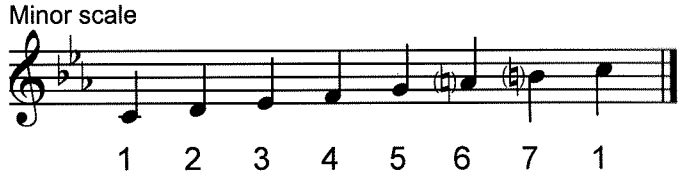
The music that is the point of departure for the exercises and music examples in this book is based on major-minor tonality. The particular blend of whole tones and semitones in the scales results in a certain hierarchy between them, with each individual tone also being connected to a harmonic foundation.
An understanding of these relations will assist quicker perception of the music.

The major and minor scales have in common their tonal centre (the 1st degree of the scale) plus the 2nd, 4th and 5th degrees of the scale.
The crucial difference between major and minor is the third of the scale which is either high (major) or low (minor). The 6th and 7th degrees of the minor scale can be raised if required (harmonic and melodic minor).

Major scale



Minor scale

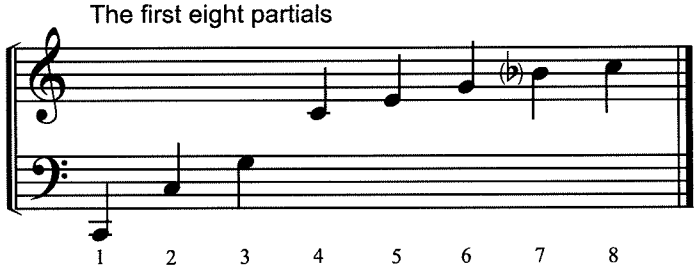


The status of 1st step as the tonic note is enhanced by the fact that it is only a semitone up from the 7th degree - the leading note - which is also used in minor scales when followed by the tonic. In a major scale, the semitone between 3rd and 4th degrees has a 'leading-note' effect both upwards (to the fourth) and downwards (to the third).

The major scale consists of two identical four-tone patterns - tetrachords - which, as they ascend, end with the feeling of 'coming home' via the leading note. This means that the 4th degree in the first tetrachord acquires a brief status as a key note/goal for the upward movement, and 5th degree has a brief status as a 'tonic' (point of departure) for the second tetrachord.

Apart from the linear/melodic value, the various steps of the scale also exist in a vertical/harmonic context that can be viewed on the basis of the series of overtones (also called partials)

The first eight partials

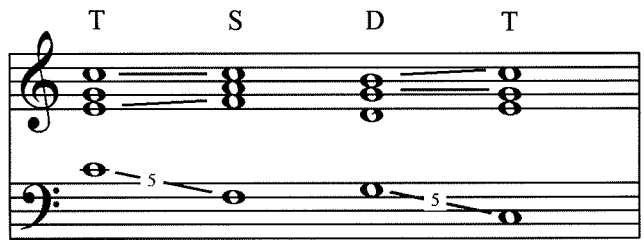


The first four partials comprise: Tonic - tonic' - fifth - tonic"
The fifth is the first new tone to arise in the initial series of tonic-dominated overtones, which indicates its strength and importance.
Between the third and fourth partials a new interval enters the series - a fourth.
The fifth clearly derives from the preceding key note, which means that its basis or strong tone is at the bottom, whereas the complementary interval, the fourth, has its key note at the top. To go a fifth down or a fourth up therefore feels like 'coming home' (Compare with the role of the fifth and fourth in a triad.)
Note also that the 4th, 5th and 6th partials form a major triad on the tonic.

Harmonics - affinity

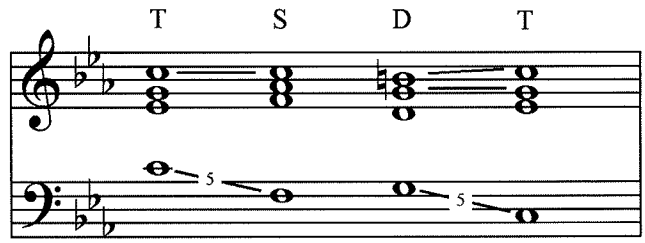
The series of triads formed at the 1st, 4th and 5th degrees: I-IV-V-I or tonic-subdominant-dominant-tonic (T-S-D-T) can be considered as a basis for classical music; a kind of nucleus on which many melodies are based.

The force of attraction between the chords is referred to as their *affinity*, and important factors in this respect are the *descending fifth connection* (between the key notes), *leading notes* and *identical notes*
The T has exactly the same relation to the S as the D has to the T; there is a descending fifth connection, a leading-note and two identical notes.

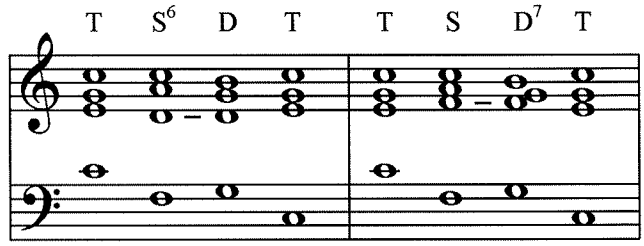


In a minor scale, however, there is no leading-note from T to S, as the T's third is low.
To obtain a leading-note from D to T, the 7th degree of the minor scale is raised which causes a major-dominant.

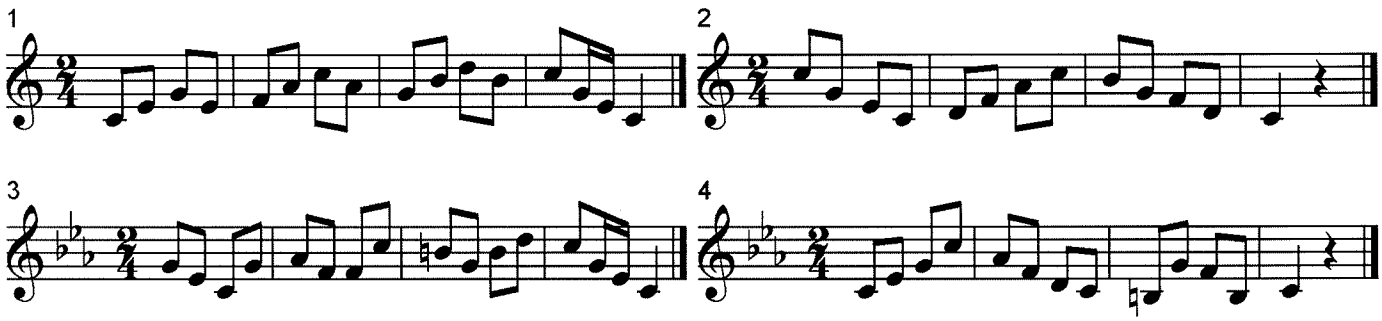
There are none of these connections (descending fifth, leading note or identical notes between S and D.



By adding a sixth to S or a seventh to D
it is however possible to form common notes between the two chords:

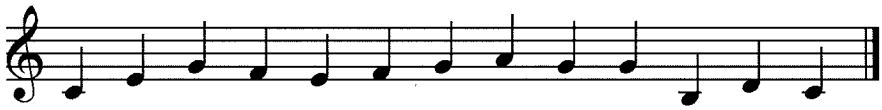


By breaking the chords melodies can be formed:



Rhythm and bar division

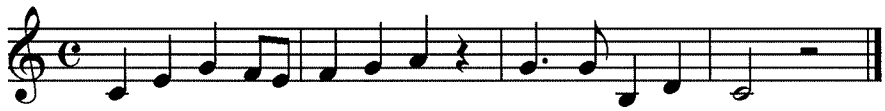
Ex. 1.
Sing this melody with notes of the same value:



It is difficult to memorize since all the notes have the same length.

Try to sing well known melodies making all notes of equal length (e.g. *Mary had a little lamb*), and notice how important a role the rhythm plays.

Ex. 2
The previous melody has now had rhythm added. Sing, repeat from memory and compare with Ex. 1.

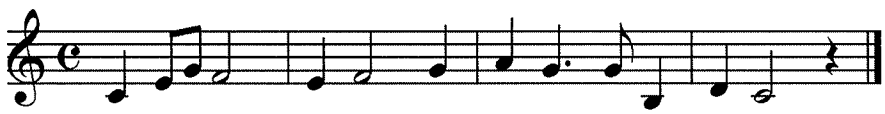


The rhythm in the melody contains two elements:
Changes between various *note values*, and changes between various *accentuations*.
Rhythm is regulated by the concept of *measures* or *bars*, containing a given number of beats.
The division into bars makes it much easier to follow the music, and also indicates a certain hierarchy between the single beats.

In classical music, the overall division of bars is usually characterised by metric regularity, where a melodic sequence of e.g. 16 bars will normally first be able to be subdivided into 8+8, and subsequently into 4+4 and 2+2 bars.

The influence of rhythm on melody is considerable, since - apart from adding the actual rhythmical dimension - it affects the weight and value of the individual note, which in turn will provide important points of reference in a longer context.

Ex. 3.
Sing, repeat from memory and compare with Ex. 2.

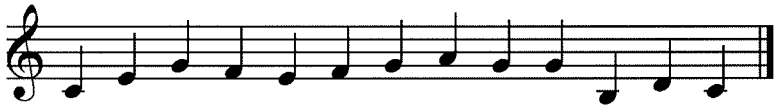


Notice how disconnected the melody becomes when not supported by the rhythm.
Find better rhythmical variations on the melody yourself.

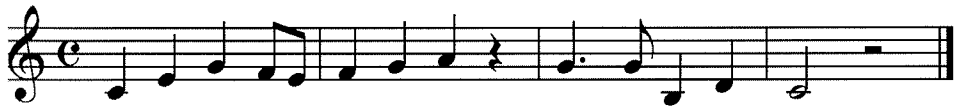
Melodic analysis - an example

This short melody from p. 22 is just one example of how various parameters can link the notes of the melody together.

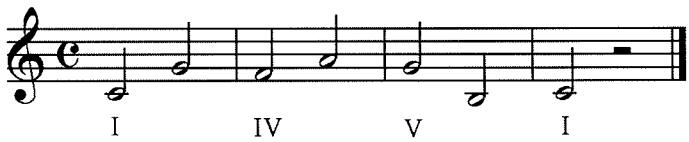
Ex. 1
The melody without rhythm seems just to be a series of notes:



Ex. 2
Bars and rhythm now regulate the notes and place them in a metrical, organic and clear structure. The four bars naturally fall into two halves, both of which end with longer notes or pauses.



The notes on the accentuated beats (1 and 3) gain greater weight than the other notes and will instinctively be perceived as shaping parameters.

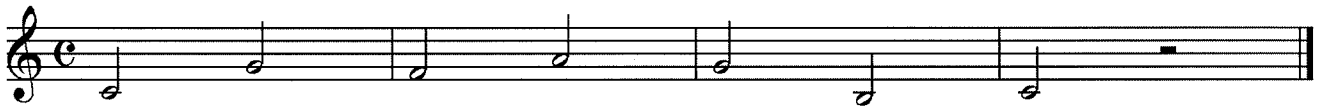


The harmonic skeleton of the melody, T-S-D-T, is now evident, and the rhythmical distribution of the notes results in each chord lasting one bar.
The root of the chord also occurs on the first beat of each bar.
The chord foundation of this example is very simple (T-S-D-T), but it can of course be much longer, varied and complex.

The construction and sequence of the melody can be described as follows:
The 4 bars of the melody can be divided into 2+2.
The melody grows out of, and up from, the tonic note, establishing the key via the T-triad. Via an energetic upbeat of quavers, it approaches the S-key note on the first beat of the second bar, where the first half of the melody ends on its highest note (the S's third), followed by a rest.
The second half of the melody begins on the 5th step (D), which is repeated in a rhythmical upbeat down to the leading note, then returns around the 2nd step, finishing with a minim on the tonic note on the first beat of the last bar.
Development and energy thus characterise the first half, where the melody rises and there is at least one note on each beat. The second half falls and comes to rest after having encircled the tonic note - the dominant pulls you towards the tonic.
The two halves of the melody correspond well to each other, creating a dynamic, balanced whole.

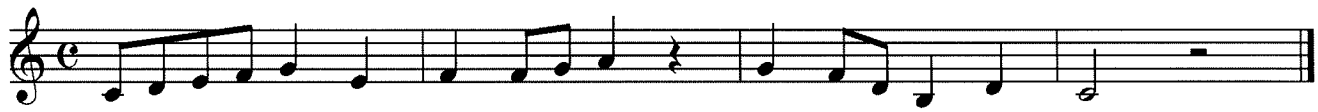
Chord based melodies

The short melody on p. 22 was based on the harmonic sequence of Tonic, Subdominant, Dominant and Tonic with these notes on the accentuated beats:

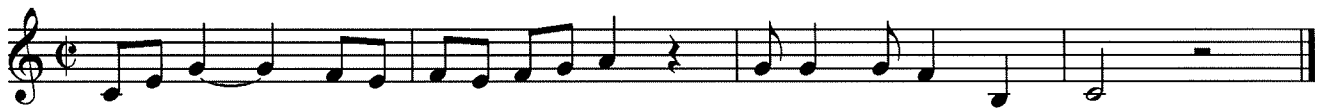


Many other melodies can be formed over the same skeleton (possibly with D7), e.g.

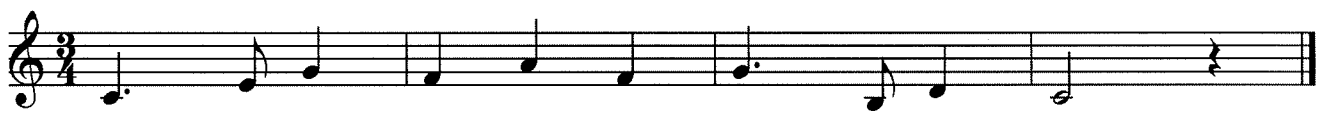
a)



b)



c)



Compose some more yourself:

d)

e)

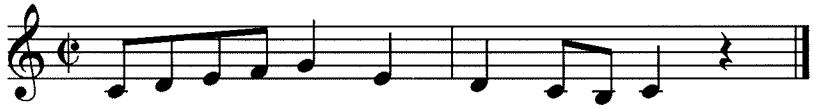
f)

For more exercises on harmonic foundation: See p. 34 and 40 (T and D) and p. 37 and 40 (T S D T)
General remark: Be aware of the harmonic foundation of all the exercises and music examples

Test the melody

The melodies below basically use the same note material, but they are not all equally successful. Sing, analyse and give a reasoned assessment of the melodies.

1



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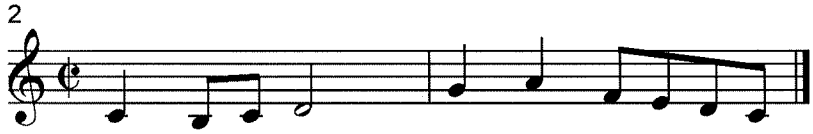

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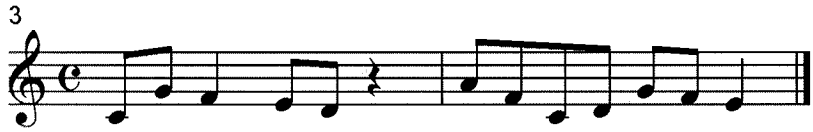

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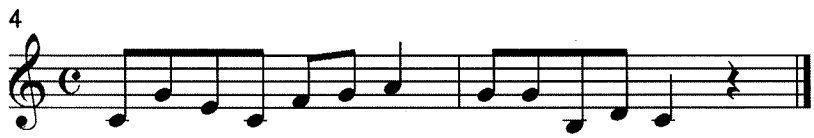

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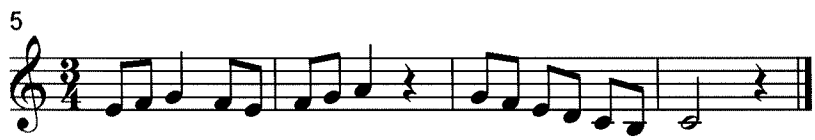

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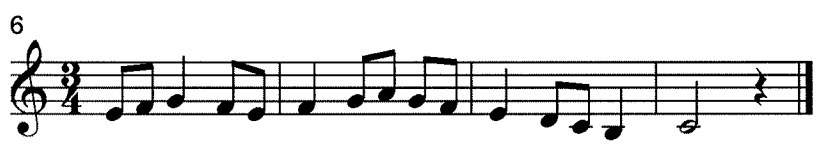

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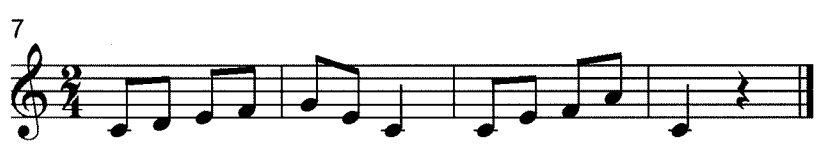

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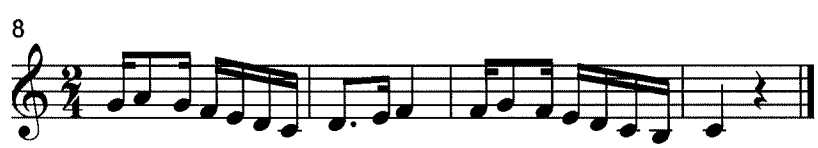

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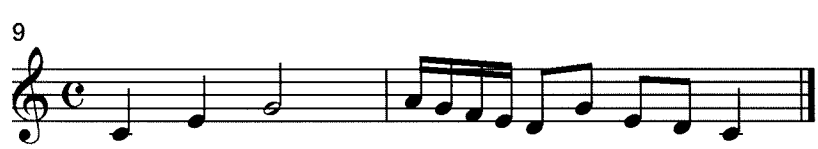

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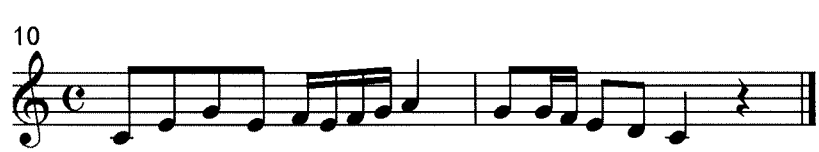


PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE SIGHT-READING EXERCISES

The overall idea in working with the exercises is that you should read the music by perceiving an entire musical phrase. The strategy in this process should be as follows:

1. Read the music while singing it internally, remember it by heart
2. Sing or play the phrase from memory

The perception should be based on a combination of eye and inner ear; you remember what you have *heard* inside your head, and play or sing it aloud afterwards. If necessary, you should make a short analysis of the melody as a support for the memory.
Test the method in the following *Melodic Variations 1*, where you can also adjust the difficulty of execution at different levels.

Melodic Variations 1
The 2 x 10 short phrases (A and B) are similar, in terms of range (5 notes), key, initial and final tone, rhythm, and length.
This makes it possible to perform the phrases in each part (A and B) continuously in a steady pulse, in the following way:

- Sight-reading: The initial note is played, the pulse is given. Read silently in time.
  Maintain the pulse, sing the phrase aloud while looking at the empty bar next to the first bar.
  Continue reading the next phrase silently over four beats, and sing it while looking at the next empty bar.
  The time for reading may be reduced to two beats, or for advanced students even to one beat, still singing aloud over four beats.

The very simple tunes also give the opportunity to practise reading and listening at the most elementary level, strengthening the connection between ears and eyes:

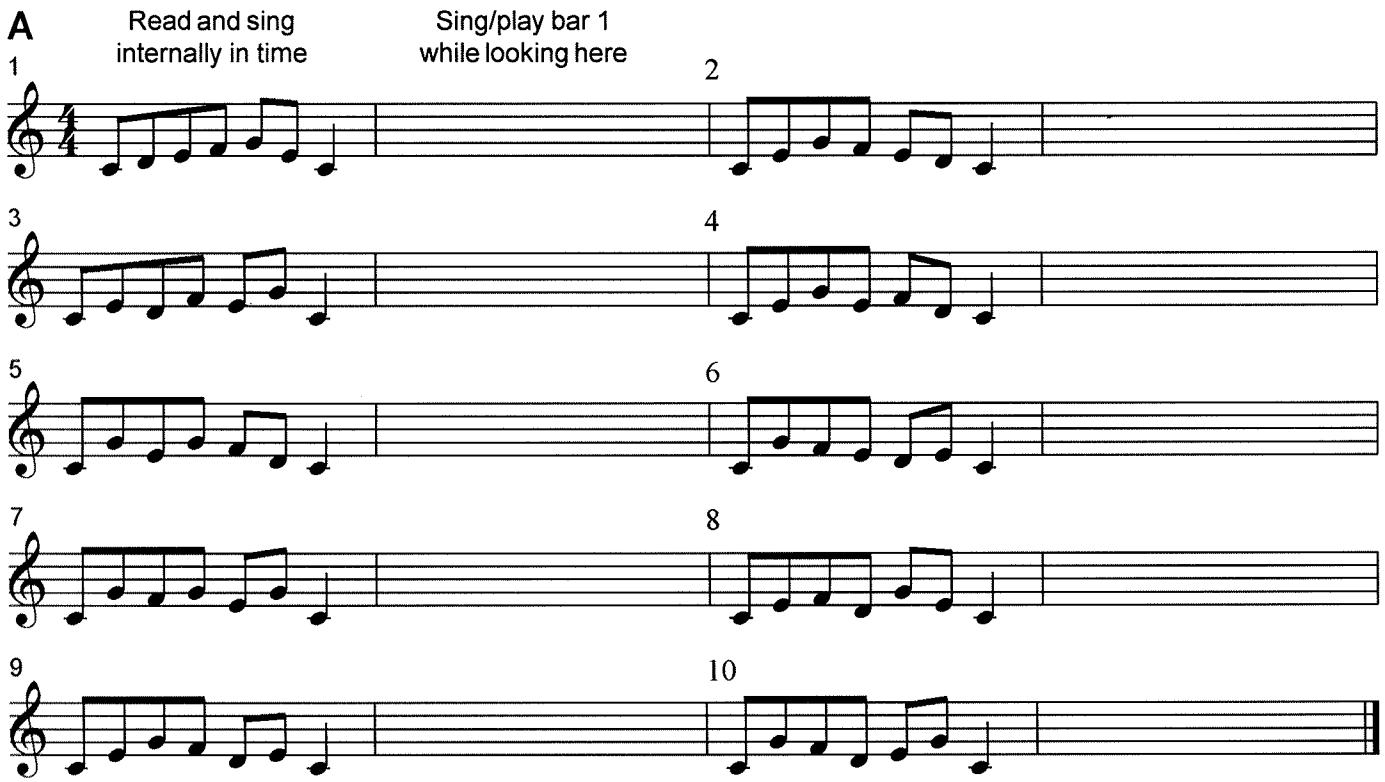
- Ear and eye: The teacher plays a phrase, the pupils following it in the score. Then the pupils imitate the phrase, singing it on "la", or on the note names, or on numbers (the note to its degree of the scale) - still following the score.
  The graphic profile of the melody might be described while singing, drawn in the air with the hand.

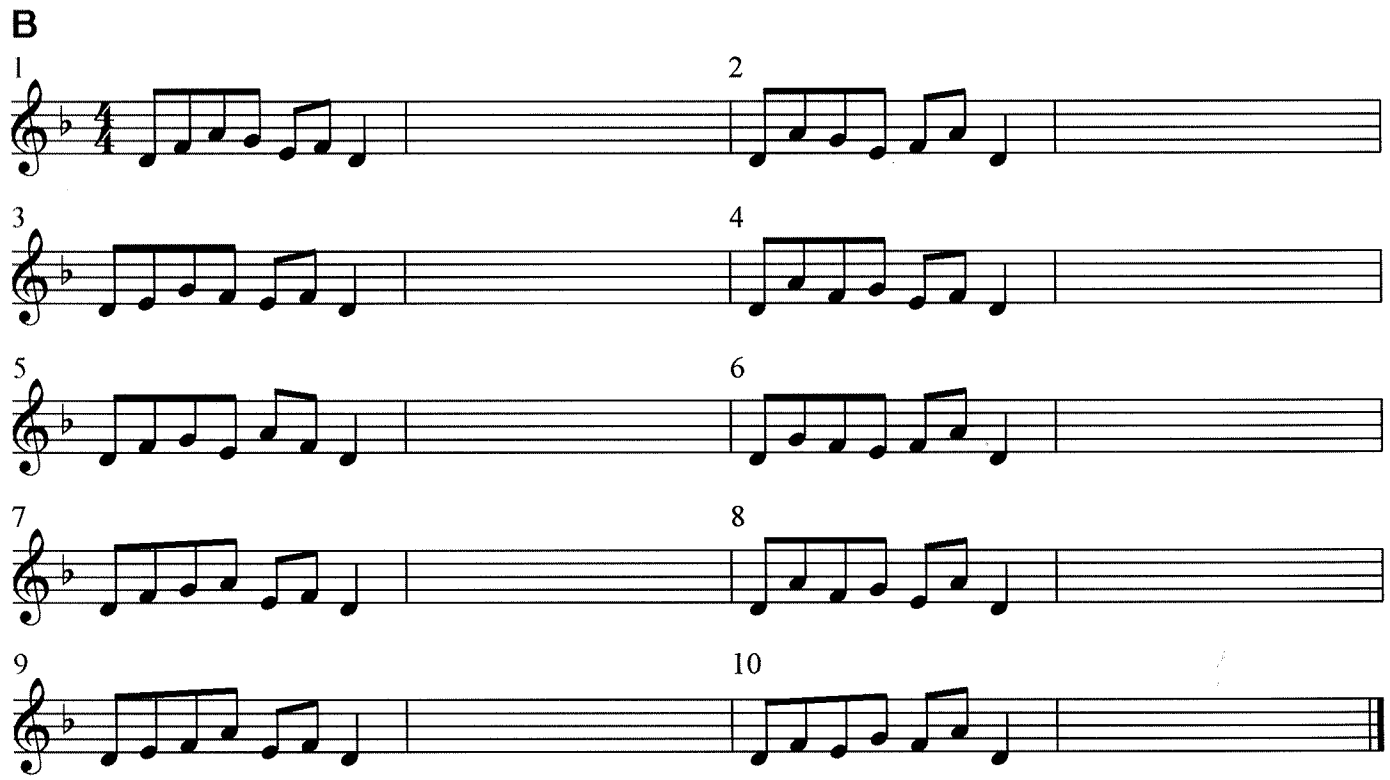
- Graphic description, by ear: The teacher plays a phrase, the pupils imitate by singing, showing the movement of the melody with the hand. Try also with words to describe the melody's movements.

- Recognition, from ear to eye: The teacher plays one phrase chosen from a certain number (for instance A:1-6). The pupils listen (not looking in the score!), imitate by singing, and then point out which of the phrases were played.
  To make this exercise a bit more difficult, the imitation should be sung silently.
  The homogeneity in the many short melodies creates a well-known frame, but at the same time means that you have to listen precisely for the details, being able to identify which phrase was played.

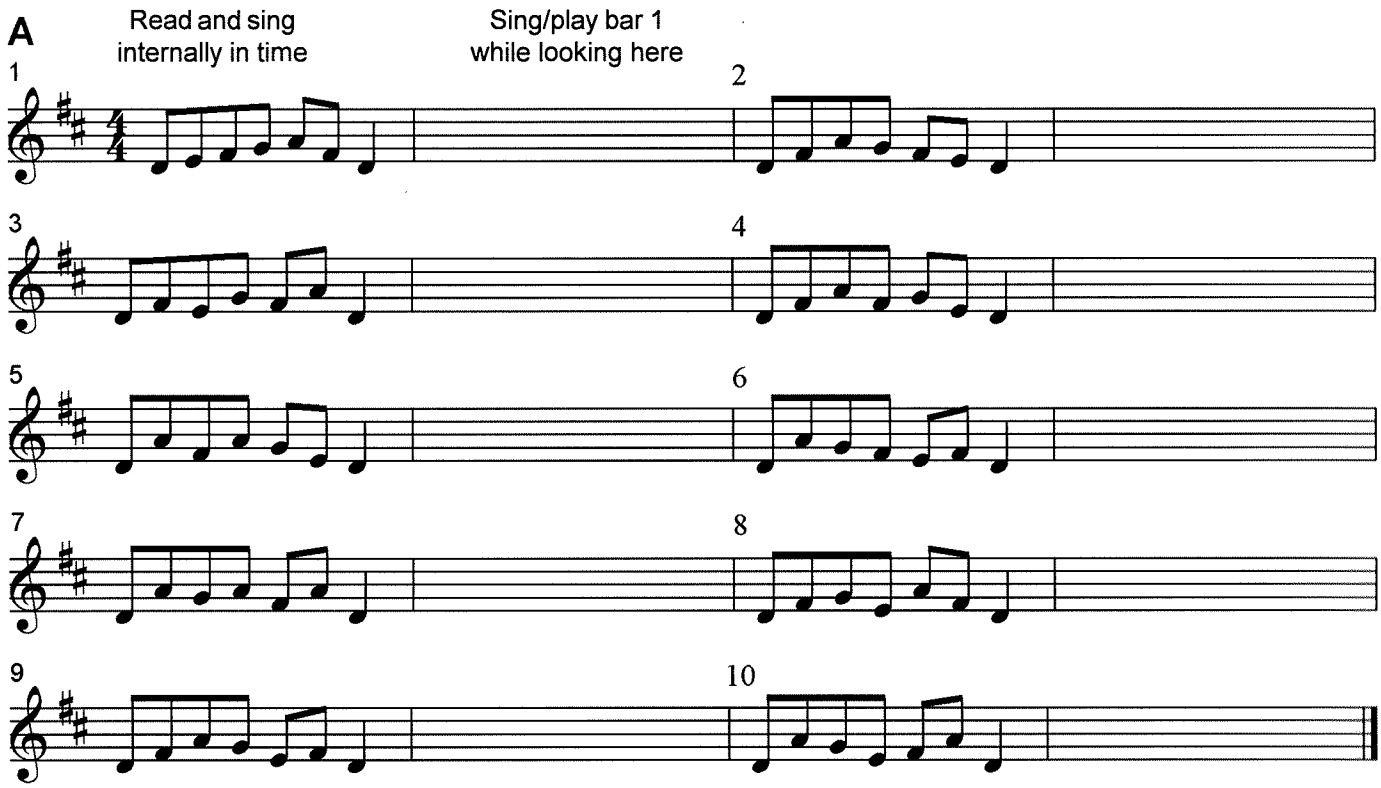
MELODIC VARIATIONS 1

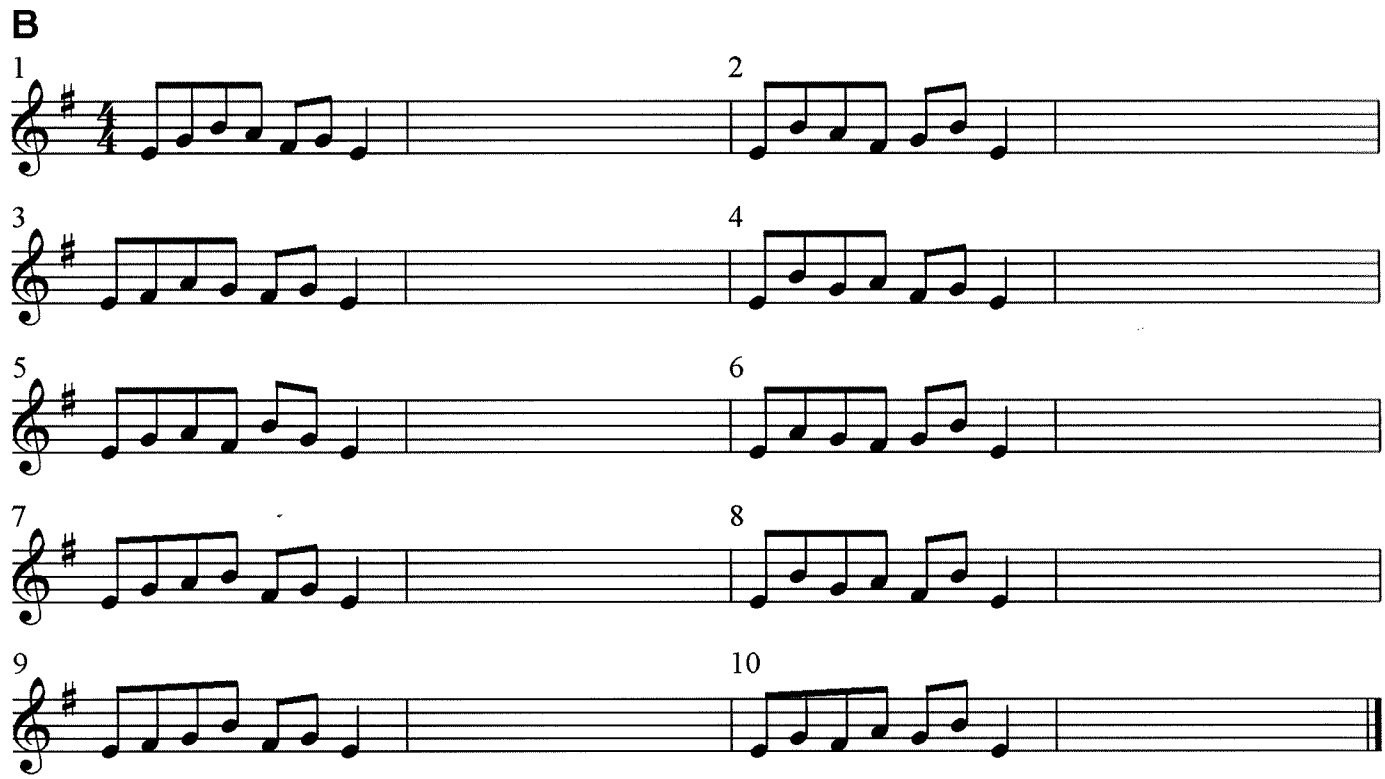
Score in Bb and in bass clef at the following pages





MELODIC VARIATIONS 1 - Bb-score



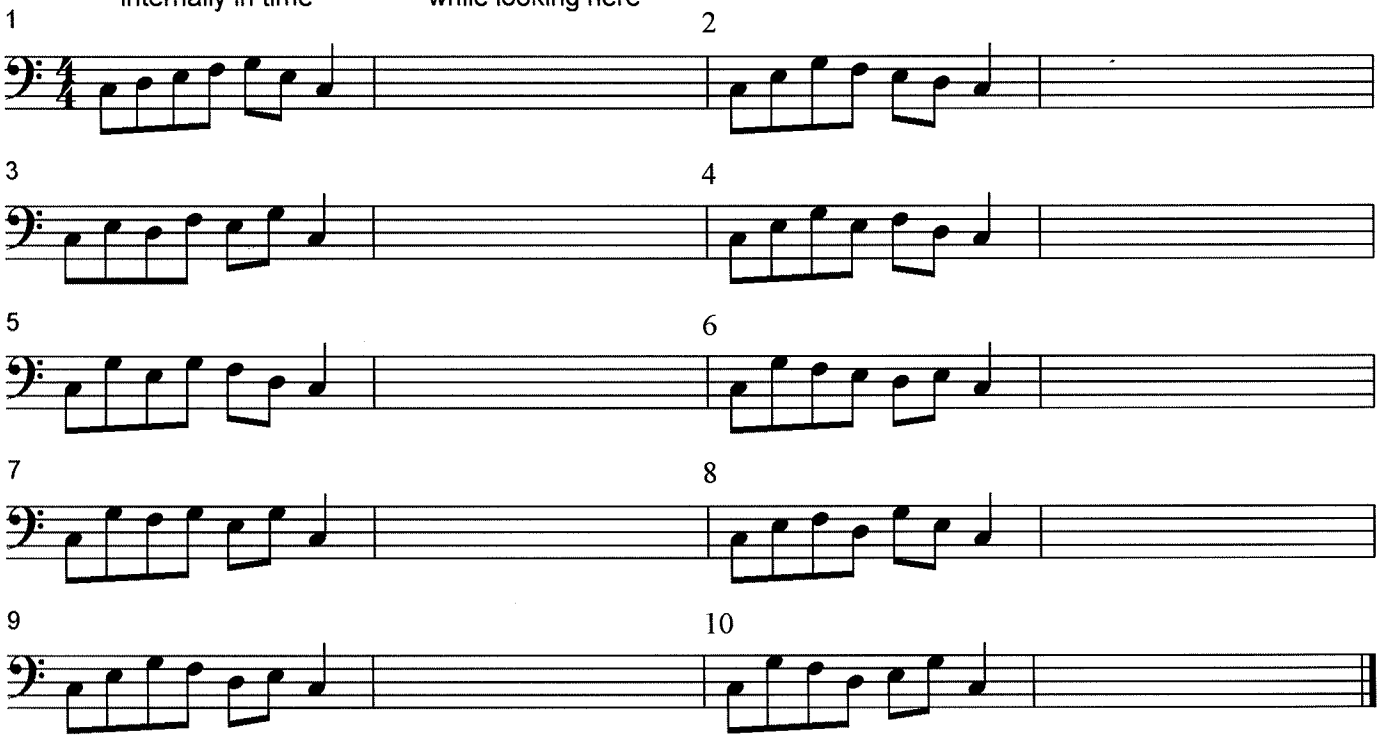


MELODIC VARIATIONS 1 - bass clef

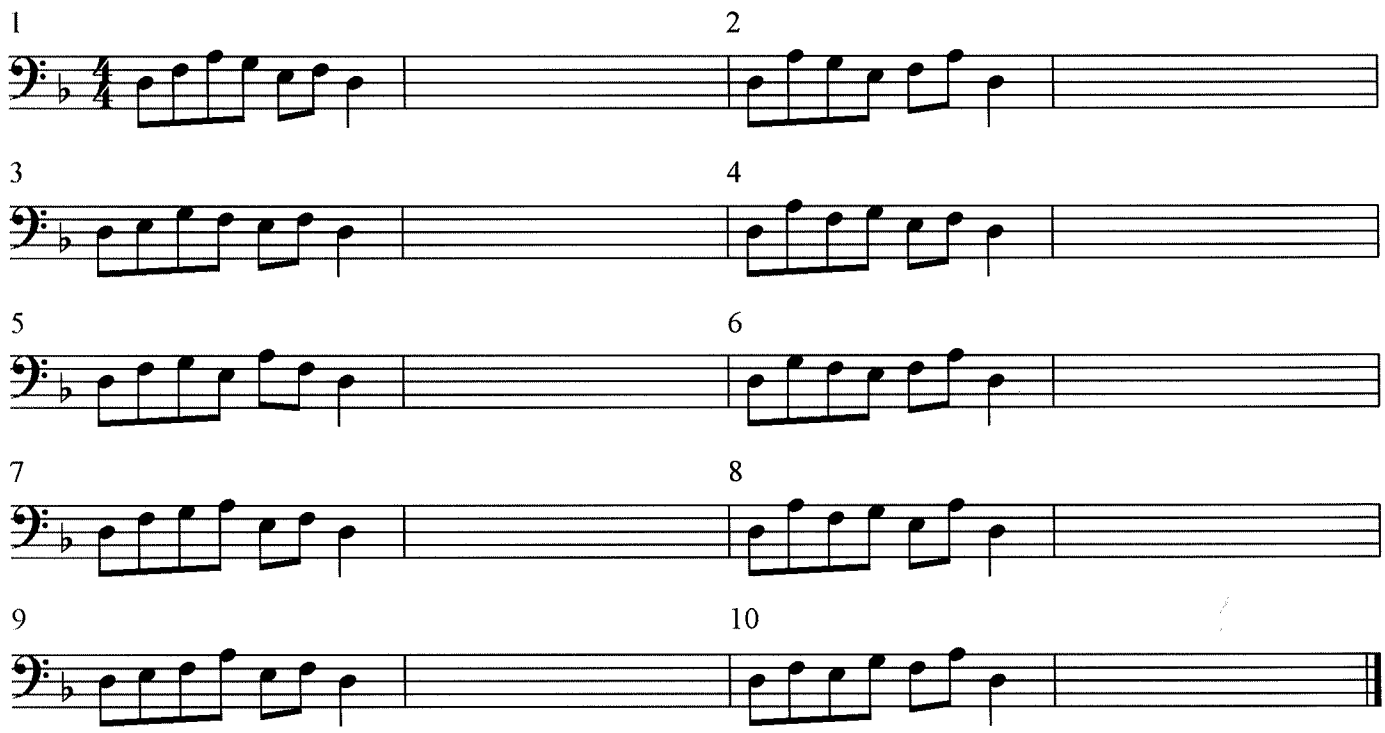
A

Read and sing internally in time

Sing/play bar 1 while looking here



B



Various forms of memorizing in the perceiving phase

The way you assimilate a piece of music develops through different forms of perception, which in turn influences the way you remember it from memory.
Though it might seem nonsense to talk about playing by memory together with sight-reading, there are certain overlapping processes in the basic phase of perception, and it is useful and interesting to test your own capability within perceiving and memorizing.

You can use the simple exercises in *Melodic Variations 1* to focus on respectively *tactile, auditory and visual* perception and memory.
(Read more of how to work with these exercises at p. 32)

These ways of perceiving, work within the long-term memory as well as within the short-term memory; the tactile and the auditory memory mostly being connected to the long-term memory, and the visual memory to the short-term memory.

The tactile memory (touching) is also called *muscular memory*, and all musicians know the importance of this way of remembering. It would simply not be possible to play fast passages if the brain had to conduct every single move of the fingers; instead entire muscular chains are encoded in the memory.
The tactile memory is very strong, and an incorrectly rehearsed note or passage might be very difficult to change. This mistake might even show up again at a later time when replaying the piece.

Rehearsing music at advanced level requires great absorption, improving technical as well as musical skills. The many repetitions of a piece may result in the fingers remembering how to play the music, without the brain really having been consciously active in memorizing the music.
The tactile memory is based on reflexes and does not stand too much interference from the brain while playing the music - the consciousness might disturb the unconscious!
Being aware of the different forms of memory therefore is of major importance when rehearsing a new piece of music.

In sight-reading, the tactile memory secures a fast and steady execution of well-known patterns such as scales and triads.

The auditory memory plays a more or less active role in memorizing, depending on how strong the synthesis between sound, sign and instrument is for the musician. Musicians with strong auditory abilities should be able to play by purely remembering how the music sounds - like playing by ear.
For all musicians, the auditory memory is important as a correcting support; it will immediately be revealed by the ear if a sound does not correspond to what was expected.

The visual memory is of major importance in sight-reading, as the eyes must always read ahead of what is presently being played, remembering what has just been read (working memory).
Within the long-term memory, the visual memory facilitates quick recognition of well-known patterns, rhythms and harmony. Playing rehearsed music by score, the visual memory helps familiarization with the score, not spending too much time on active reading. How much a well-known image of the score matters is detected if you suddenly must play following another edition with a different layout.

SIGHT-READING - PLAY AND SING

How to use the exercises

The following practical exercises will focus especially on

- Fast reading
- Fast perception of musical phrases
- Fast memorizing

Most of the exercises and musical examples consist of musical phrases which are to be perceived at a glance and remembered as a musical entity.
The time of reading (perceiving time) of each exercise must be adjusted individually; spend more time perceiving the phrase as a whole rather than breaking it up, using several attempts to learn it by heart.

It is important that the written music is regarded as a sign for the sounding music. This may sound obvious, but the fact is that many instrumental students tend to perceive the notes as symbols of where to place their fingers on the instrument, rather than symbols representing sound. So it is important to sing the exercises too.
If it is difficult to sight-read by singing, it may be helpful to the pupil to have her/his hands on the instrument for a period of time, "playing" silently while (s)he sings the melody. If necessary, the pupil may play aloud while singing (pianists and strings). Brass players may "buzz" on the mouthpiece.

The numerous exercises and musical examples have been composed according to a clear progression in which melodic and rhythmic material gradually increases in difficulty.
New topics such as triads, rhythms or sequences are being introduced in a number of exercises, generated from the same concept as Melodic variations 1, reading and playing in a constant pulse. The single phrases have all been written in the same time and key, and are of equal length. Between each phrase there is an empty bar - designed to fix your eyes on while you play the previous bar, remembering it by heart.

Various teaching methods

The degrees of difficulty of the exercises range from elementary to advanced level, depending on which of the many variations they are executed in.
The exercises can be both played and sung, and they can be used for individuals as well as for group teaching. One can focus partly on specific elements of sight-reading or partly on related aural skills such as imitation and playing by ear. Imitation and playing by ear benefits sight-reading, since awareness and transformation of sound into sign (fingering or singing the note names) strengthens the connection between sign and sound.

INDIVIDUAL TEACHING, INSTRUMENTAL OR VOCAL

You may work with the exercises in many different ways:

- **Read, remember, play or sing from memory**
  The student studies the phrase silently, and plays it afterwards without looking in the score. Also, sing the note names and the numbers denoting its degree of the scale.
  As homework, the student might afterwards write down the phrase from ear and finally compare it with the score. As an extra exercise, the phrase might be transposed to other keys.

- **Listen, remember, play or sing by ear, transfer to notes***
  The teacher plays or sings a phrase which the student imitates.
  Afterwards, sing on note names and / or numbers.

- **Inner ear**
  The teacher plays a phrase, the student remembers it, says it rhythmically (not singing!) on note names or numbers while hearing the melody inside his/her head.
  Important exercise for strengthening the auditory imagination.

  Imitation of inner hearing: Read in time while hearing the melody inside your head, look away and sing aloud, repeating what you just heard inside your head.
  The focus is on auditory memory and imagination.

- **Visual memory***
  Read and fix the sheet music like a photo, noticing the structures of the phrase.
  Look away, sing or play while remembering the notation as saved in your memory.

- **Tactile memory***
  "Play" the exercise mutely with energetic fingers while reading (pianists might play on a table or on the piano lid; strings and guitar players can use the right arm as a fingerboard; wind and brass players can finger silently). Let your fingers repeat what they have just "played" without thinking too much, leaving it to the tactile memory. Repeat once more on the instrument, and experience how strong the tactile memory is.

- **Transpose by having read the music**
  Read and remember, play or sing while transposing to another key

- **Transpose by ear**
  Listen to a phrase played by the teacher, play it back in another key.

*To detect and become aware of auditory, visual and tactile perception and memory, all three modes of assimilation may be tested separately. The tactile memory does not play a major role in sight-reading - except for what is stored in long-term memory of for instance scales and triad patterns. The purely visually perceived exercises are to be regarded as a kind of work-out for the eyes. The optimal way of reading the music is based on a combination of the eye and the ear.

GROUP TEACHING, INSTRUMENTAL

Most of the exercises and music examples can be used for group teaching in the following combinations, where many different skills may be trained:
Playing by sight-reading, playing by ear, vocal imitation singing on "la" or on note names or numbers, and transposition.
Students of all instruments may attend, yet some consideration should be given to transposing instruments *

The name of the initial note in the phrase is given before the first student plays it, and having heard the phrase, the other students decide the key by ear.
To facilitate the following exercises, all students may do vocal imitation immediately after the phrase has been played by the first student

- **Groups of 3 students**
  Student 1: Read - remember - sing or play
  Student 2: Imitate (vocally or instrumentally)
  Student 3: Imitate by singing note names or numbers

- **Groups of 4 students** (with a more difficult variation)
  Student 1: Read - remember - sing or play
  (Everybody might imitate singing on "la")
  Student 2: Imitate instrumentally
  Student 3: Sing the phrase using note names or numbers
  Student 4: Transpose (by ear) to another key, given by the teacher

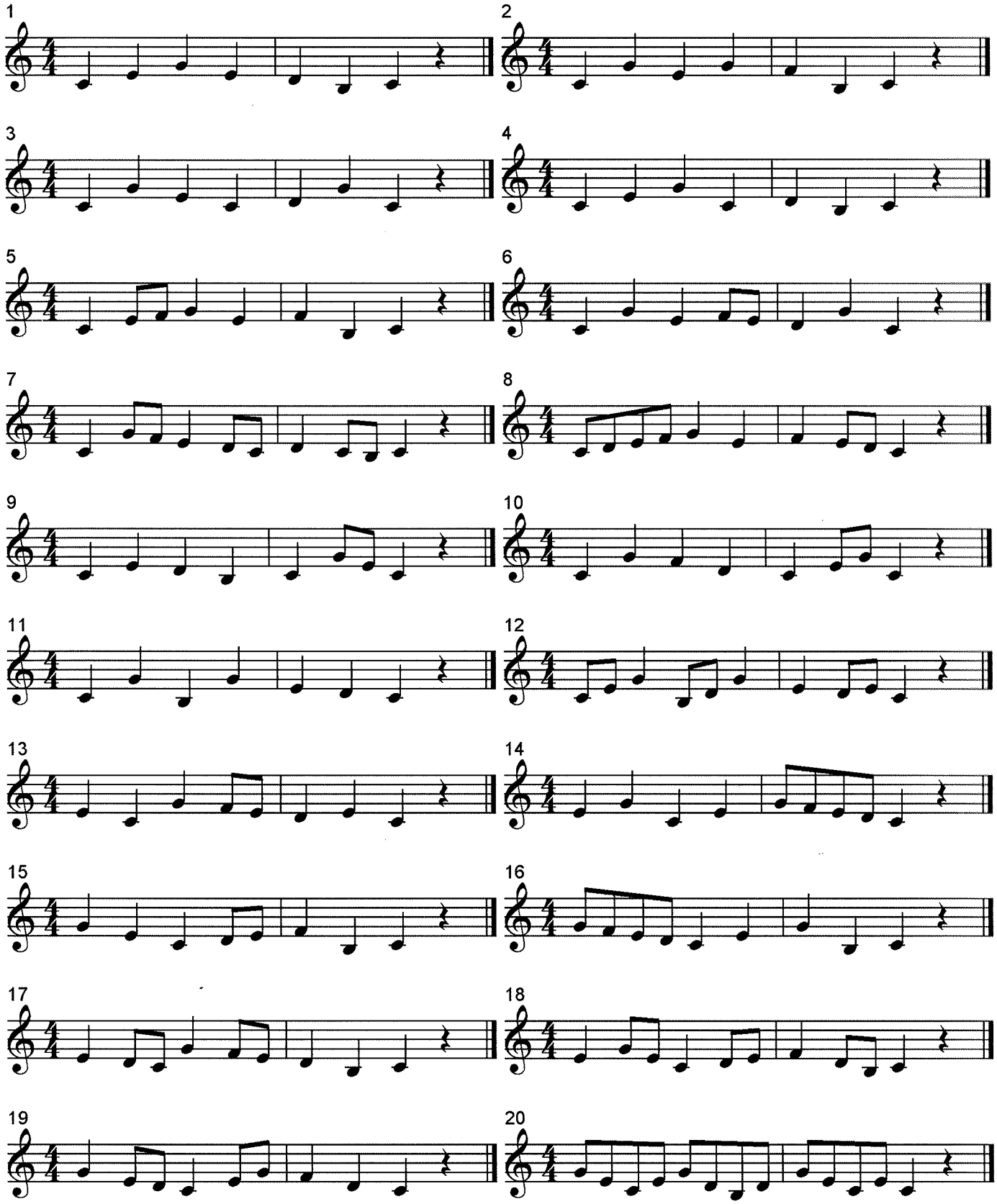
- **Groups of 5 students** (with yet more difficult variations)
  Student 1: Read - remember - sing or play
  Student 2: Play back, changing major to minor (or vice versa), or transposing immediately to another key
  Student 3: Say (not sing!) the phrase using note names or steps, in time
  Student 4: Sing transposed to yet another key using note names
  Student 5: Play transposed to yet another key

There may be more students participating on each step, and the suggested variations may be used in more different ways.

***Transposing instruments**
A number of the exercises are written both in the treble clef and the bass clef and for Bb instruments, being usable in groups consisting of various instruments. In groups consisting of C as well as Bb instruments, vocal imitation using numbers should be preferred to singing note names.
Exercises 6-12 are written only in C, which gives an additional, but relevant challenge to transposing instruments.
Finally, C-instrumentalists should also face the challenge of transposing the exercises.

EXERCISES 1

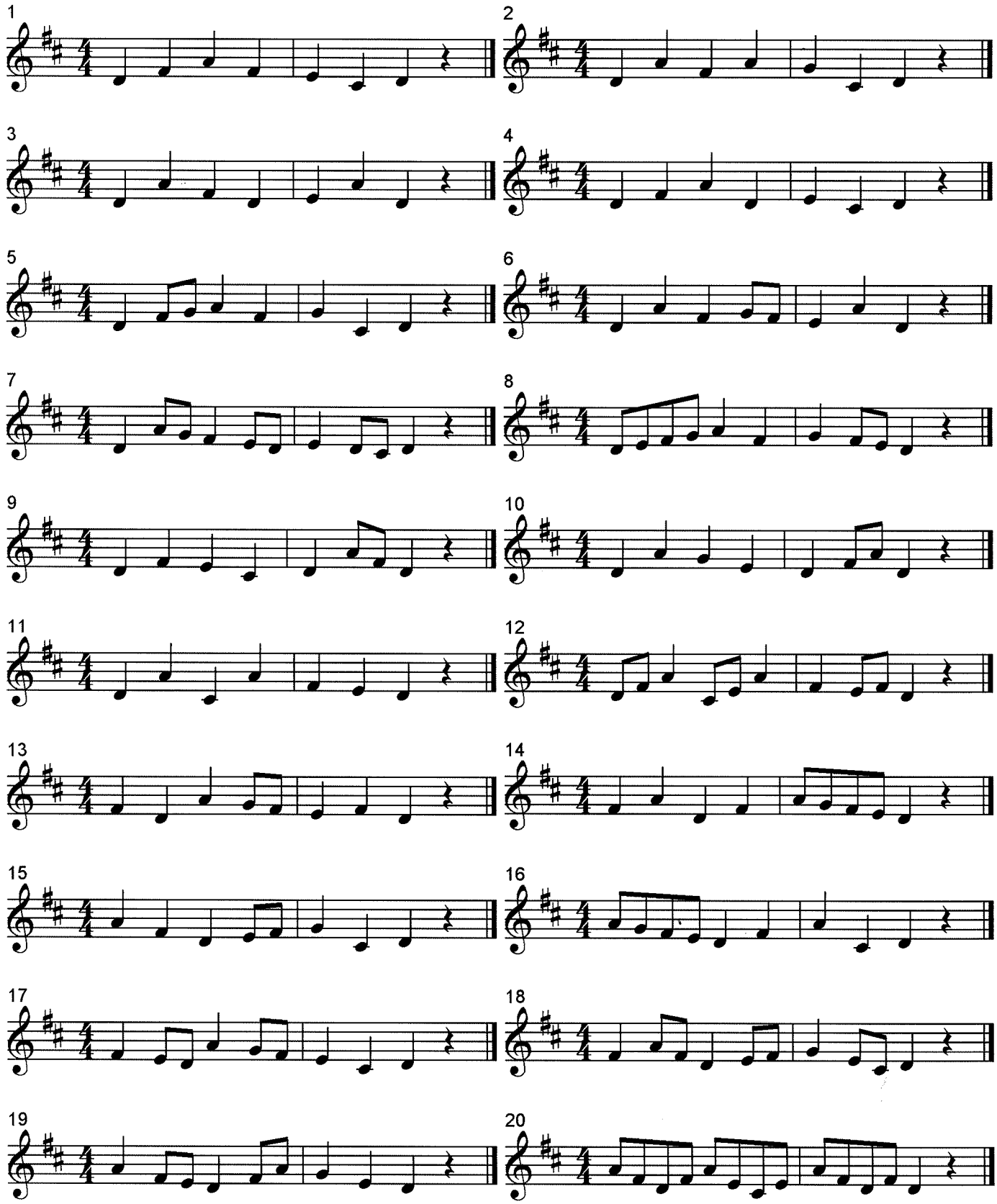
Melodic material: C major, 1.-5. plus 7. degree of scale. Harmonic basis: T and D.
Time: 4/4. Typical final melodic patterns: 2-7-1, 4-7-1, 5-7-1, 2-5-1.
Score in Bb and in bass clef on the following pages
Read more about how to use the exercises on pp. 32, 33 and 26.



EXERCISES 1 - Bb-score

Melodic material: D major, 1.-5. plus 7. degree of scale. Harmonic basis: T and D.
Time: 4/4. Typical final melodic patterns: 2-7-1, 4-7-1, 5-7-1, 2-5-1.

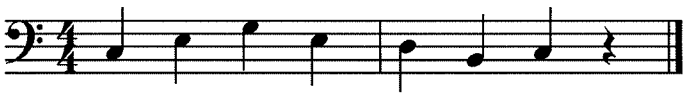
Read more about how to use the exercises on pp. 32, 33 and 26.

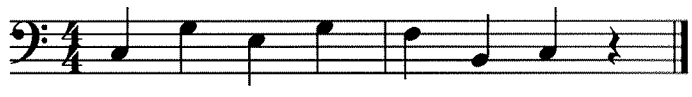


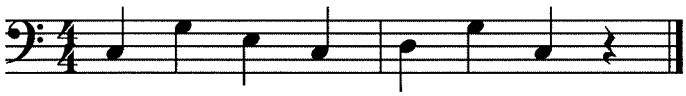
EXERCISES 1 - bass clef

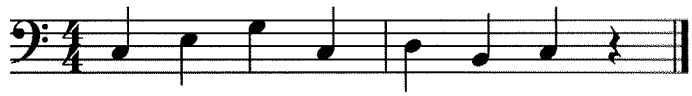
Melodic material: C major, 1.-5. plus 7. degree of scale. Harmonic basis: T and D.
Time: 4/4. Typical final melodic patterns: 2-7-1, 4-7-1, 5-7-1, 2-5-1.

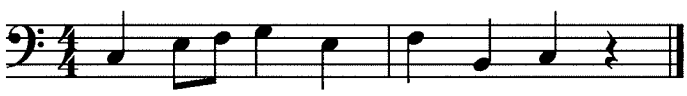
Read more about how to use the exercises on pp. 32, 33 and 26.

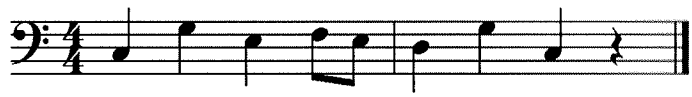
1 

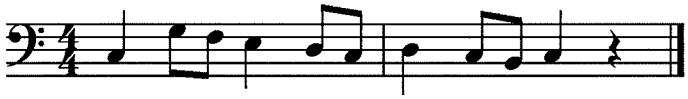
2 

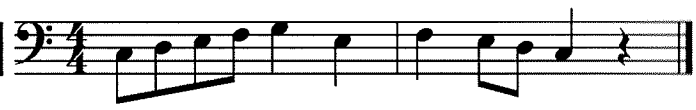
3 

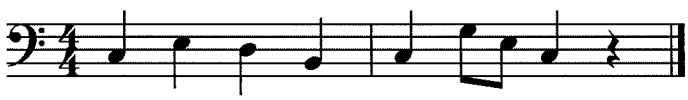
4 

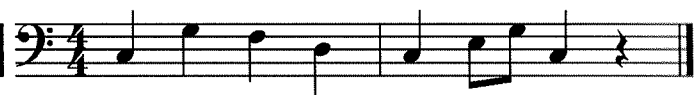
5 

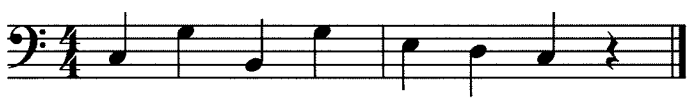
6 

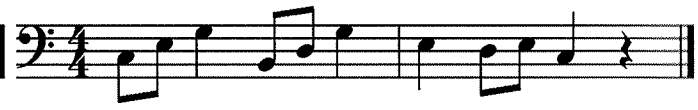
7 

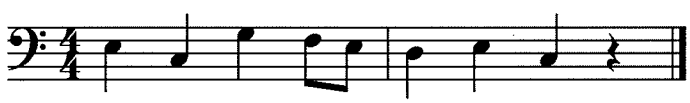
8 

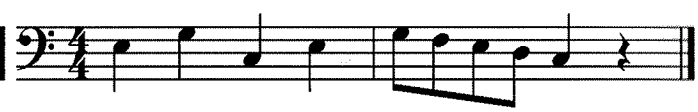
9 

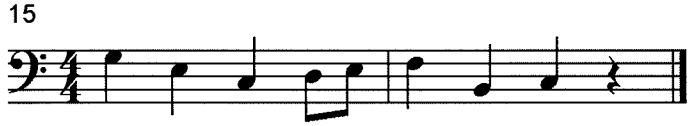
10 

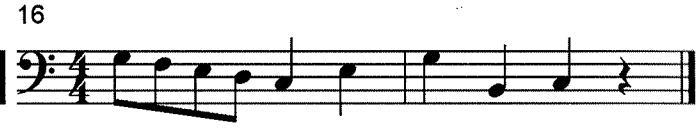
11 

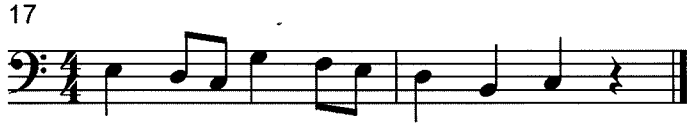
12 

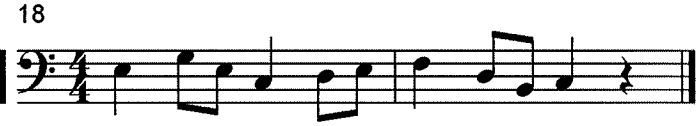
13 

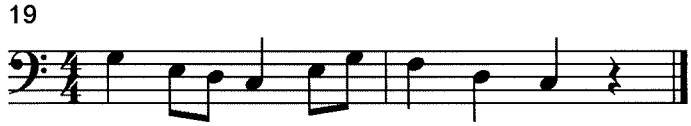
14 

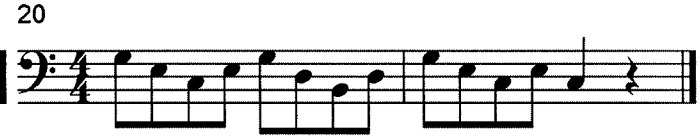
15 

16 

17 

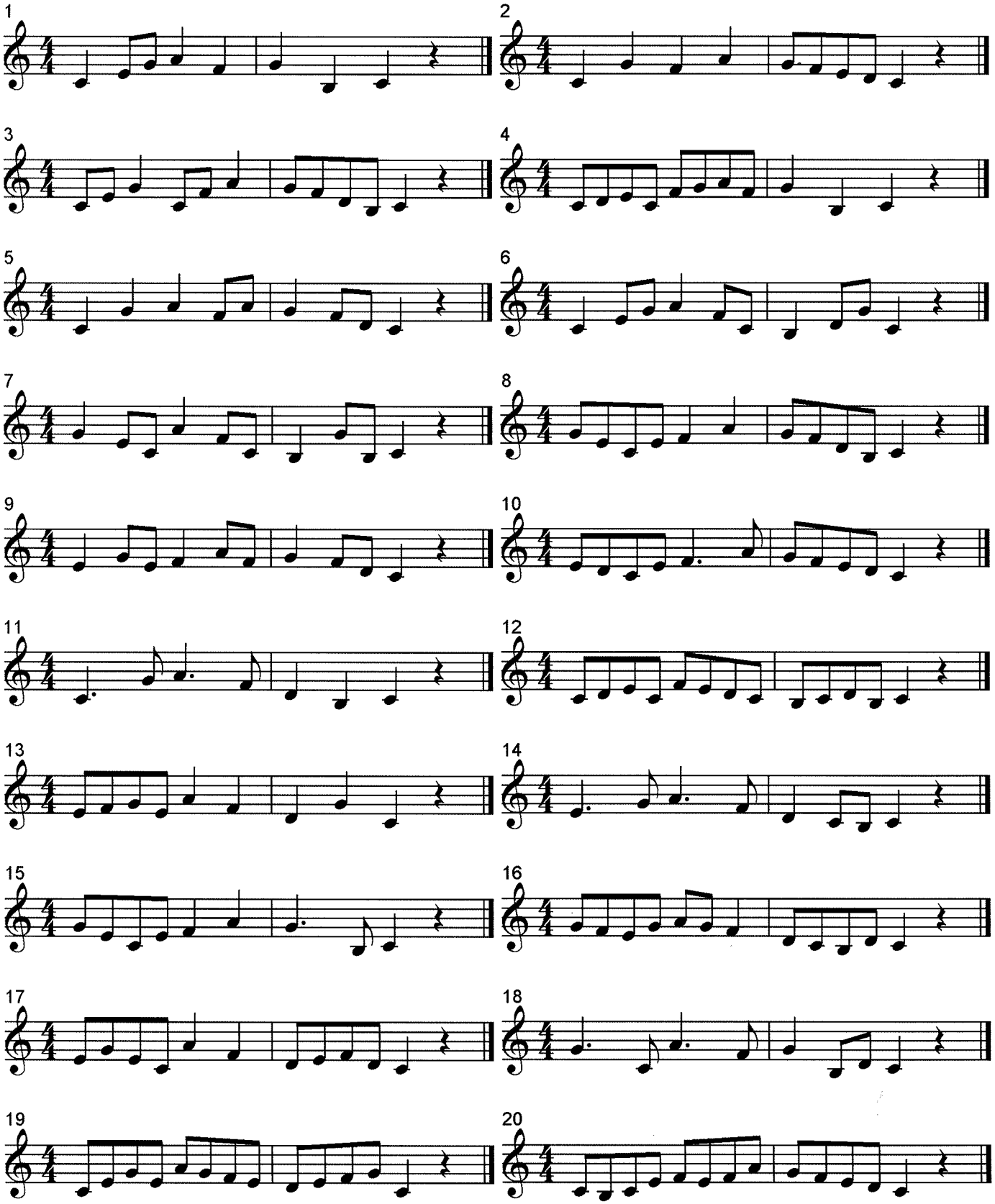
18 

19 

20 

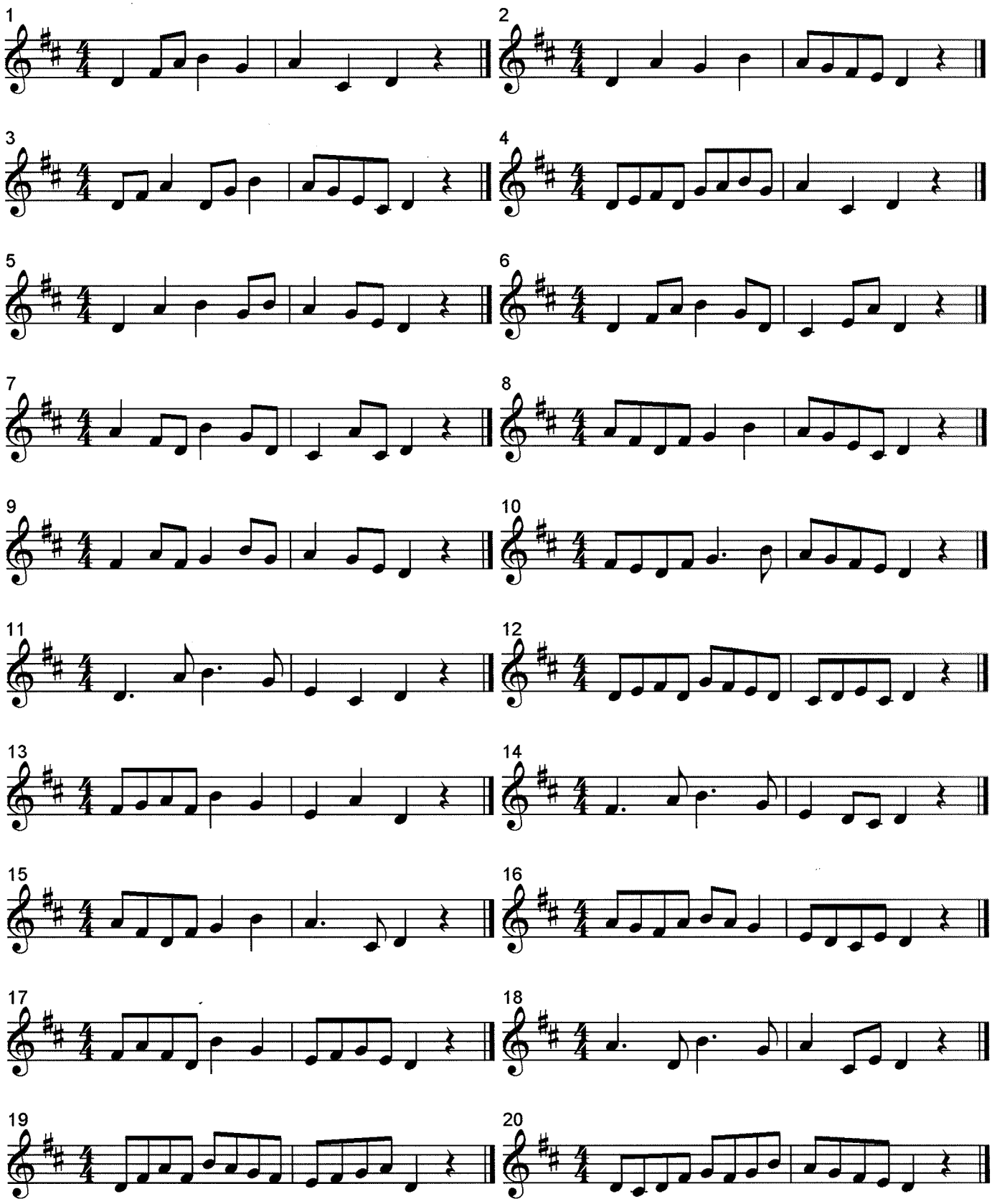
EXERCISES 2

Melodic material: C major, 1.-6. plus 7. degree of scale. Harmonic basis: T-S-D-T
The chords may be played as an accompaniment, also while imagining the melody internally - before playing or singing aloud.
Score in Bb and in bass clef on the following pages



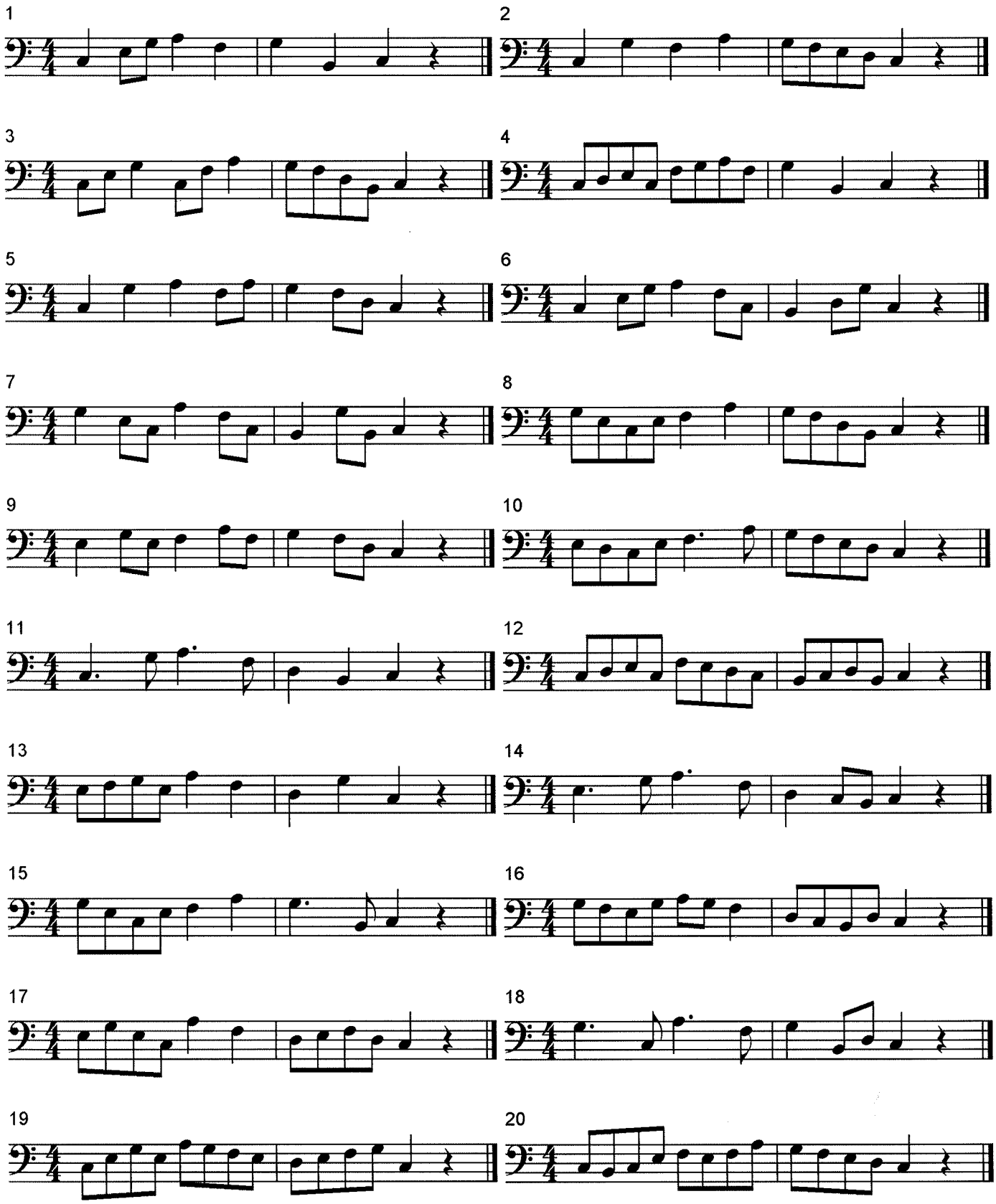
EXERCISES 2 - Bb-score

Melodic material: D major, 1.-6. plus 7. degree of scale. Harmonic basis: T-S-D-T
The chords may be played as an accompaniment, also while imagining the melody internally - before playing or singing aloud.



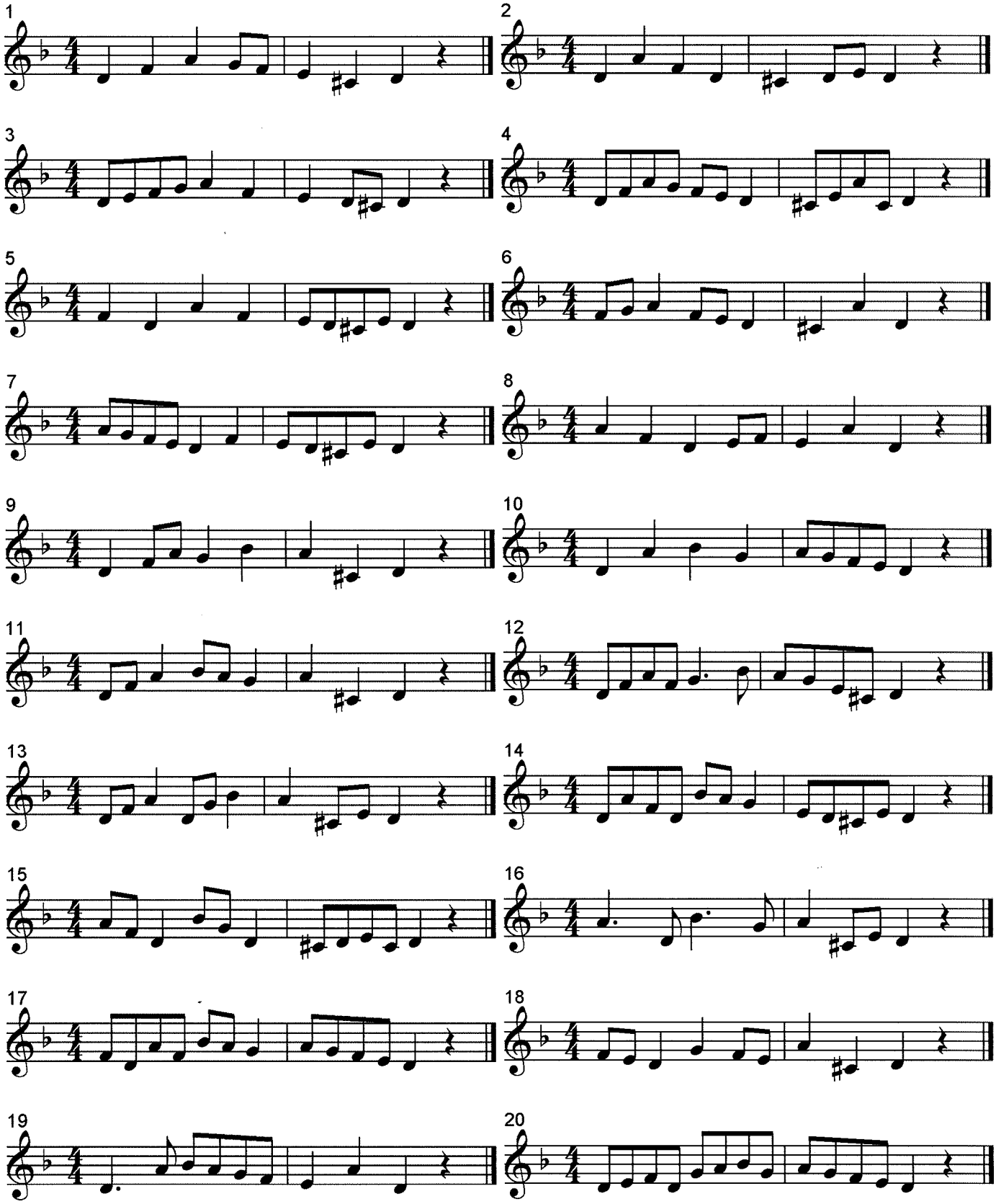
EXERCISES 2 - bass clef

Melodic material: C major, 1.-6. plus 7. degree of scale. Harmonic basis: T-S-D-T
The chords may be played as an accompaniment, also while imagining the melody internally - before playing or singing aloud.



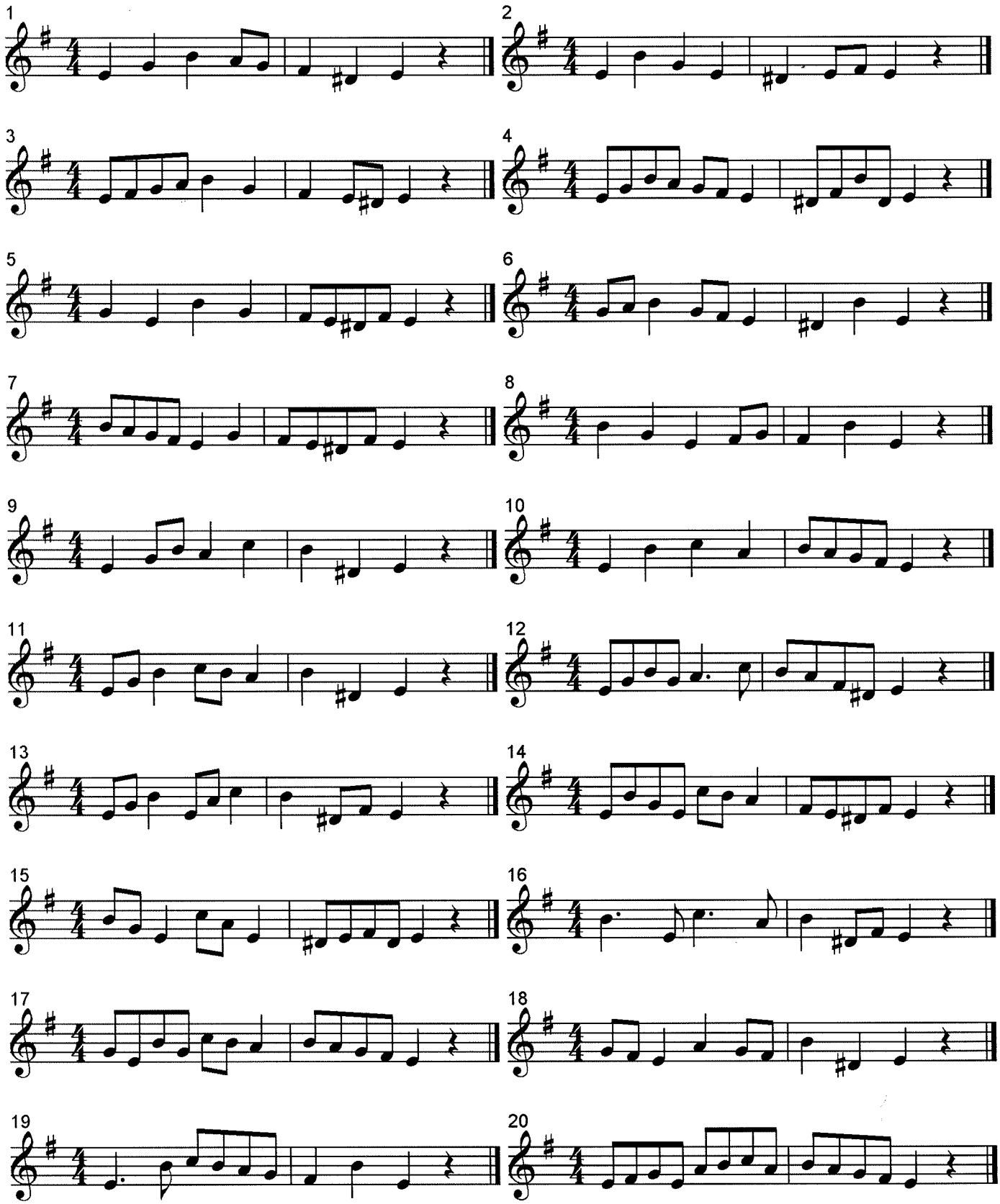
EXERCISES 3

Melodic material: d minor, 1.-6. plus 7. degree. Harmonic basis: T-T-D-T (exercises 1-8), T-S-D-T (exercises 9-20). Accompaniment may be used.
Score in Bb and in bass clef on the following pages



EXERCISES 3 - Bb-score

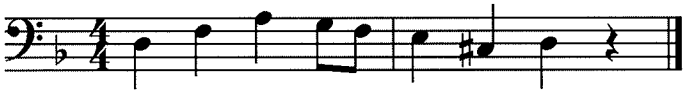
Melodic material: e minor, 1.-6. plus 7. degree. Harmonic basis: T-T-D-T (exercises 1-8), T-S-D-T (exercises 9-20). Accompaniment may be used.



EXERCISES 3 - bass clef

Melodic material: d minor, 1.-6. plus 7. degree. Harmonic basis: T-T-D-T (exercises 1-8), T-S-D-T (exercises 9-20). Accompaniment may be used.

1



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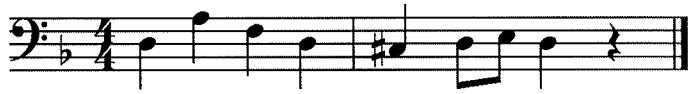

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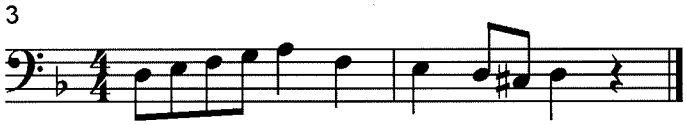

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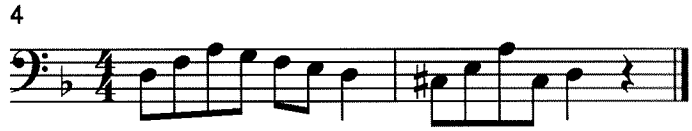

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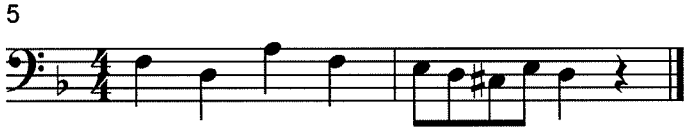

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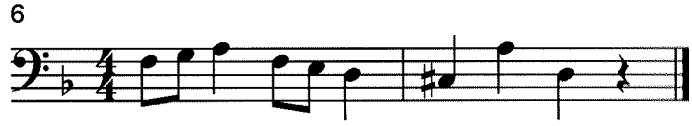

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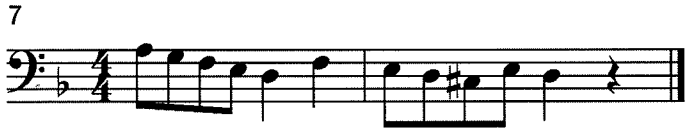

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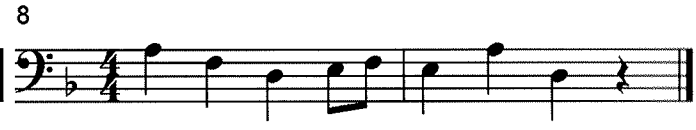

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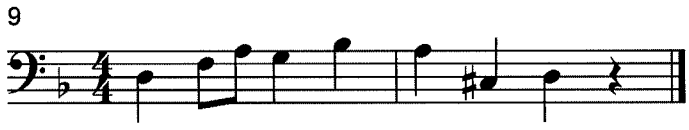

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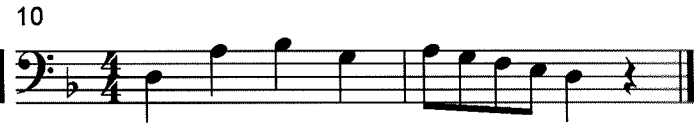

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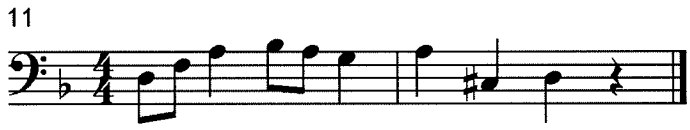

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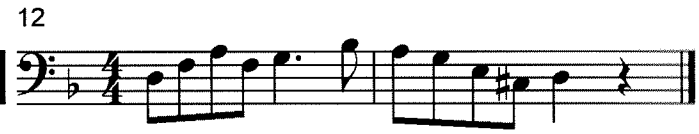

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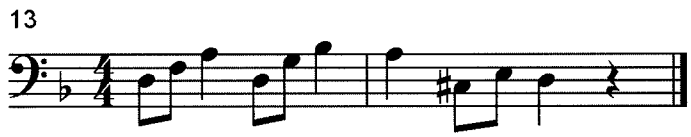

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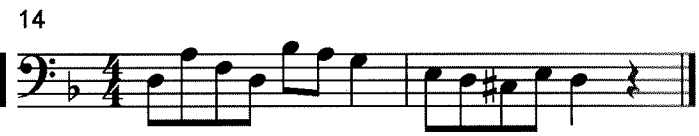

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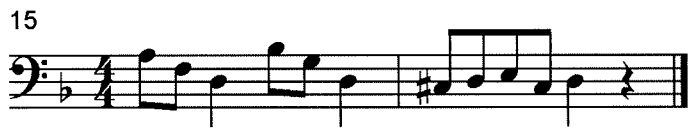

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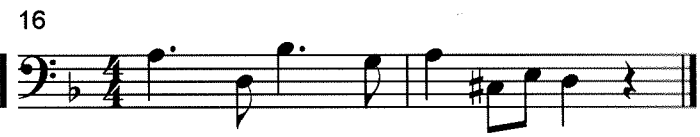

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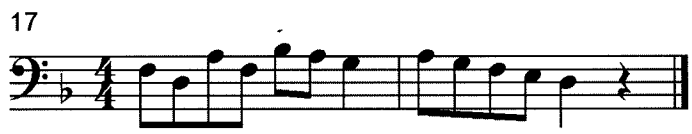

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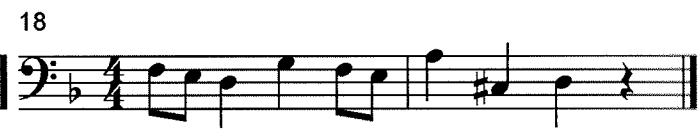

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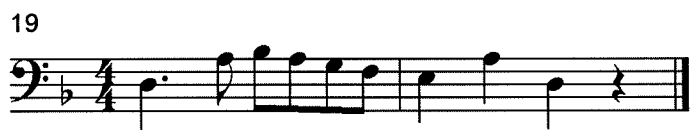

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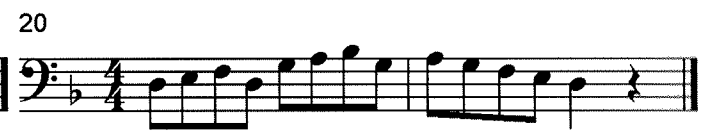
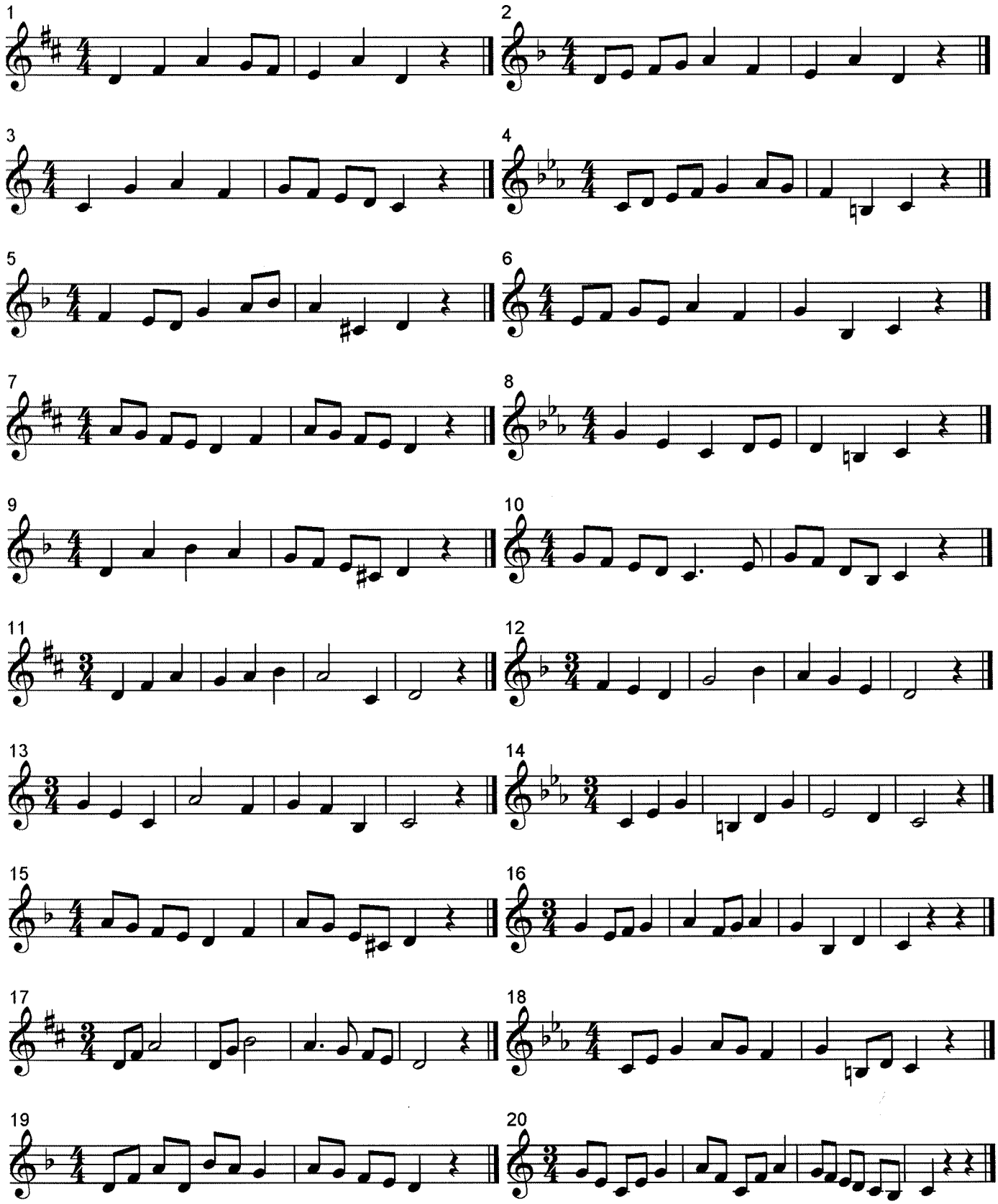


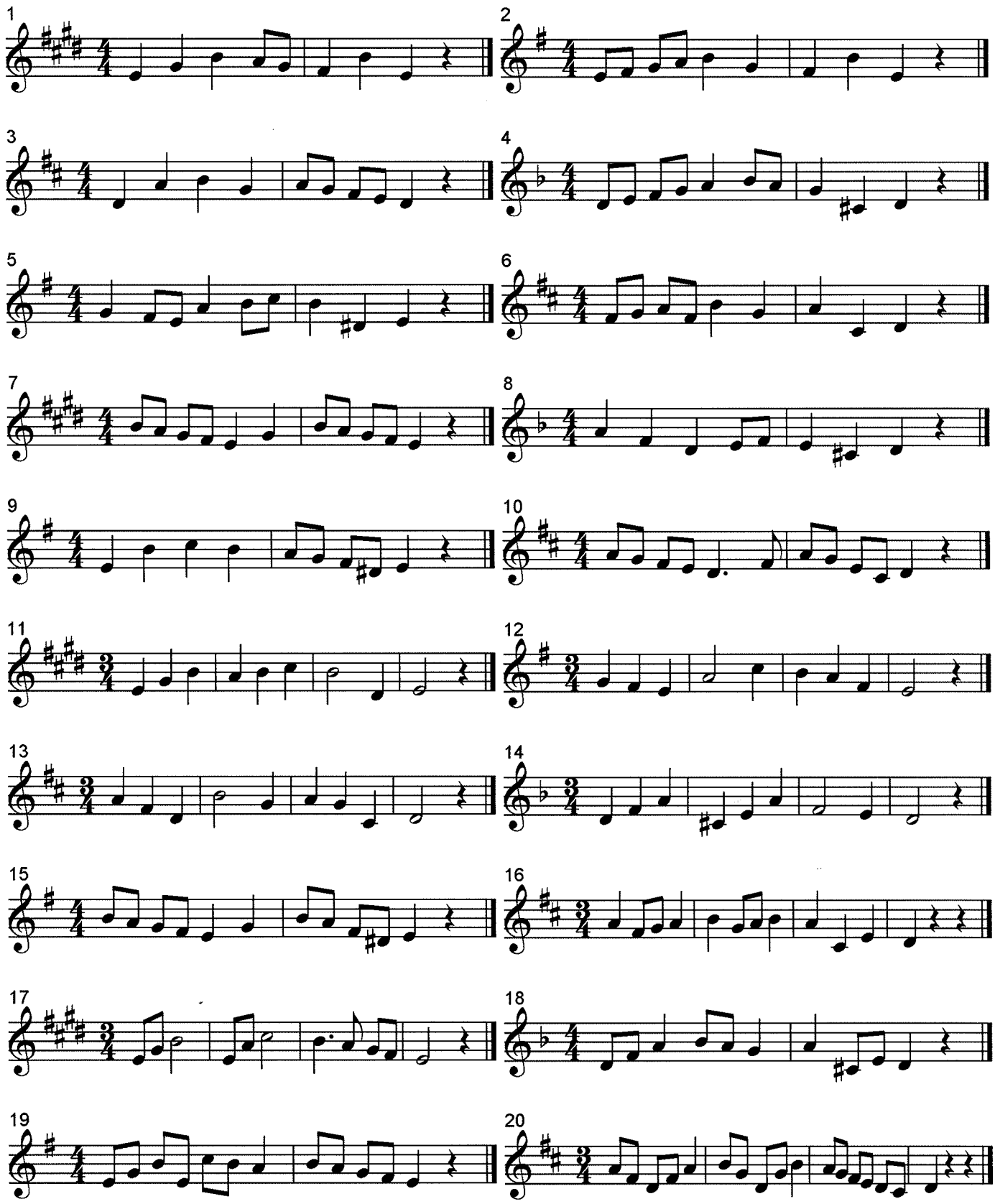
EXERCISES 4

Melodic material: Major and minor, more keys. 1.-6. plus 7. degree.
Decide key, initial note and time. Read, remember and sing/play
Score in Bb and in bass clef on the following pages



EXERCISES 4 - Bb-score

Melodic material: Major and minor, more keys. 1.-6. plus 7. degree.
Decide key, initial note and time. Read, remember and sing/play



EXERCISES 4 - bass clef

Melodic material: Major and minor, more keys. 1.-6. plus 7. degree.
Decide key, initial note and time. Read, remember and sing/play

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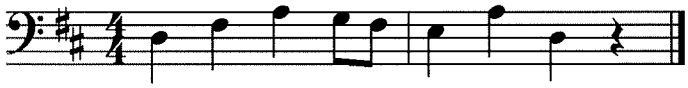

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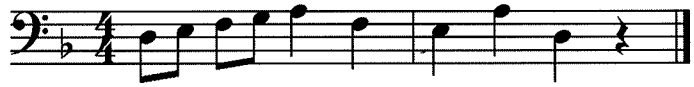

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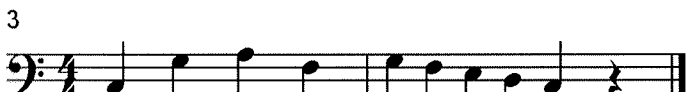

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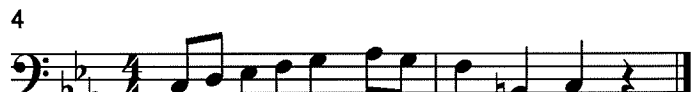

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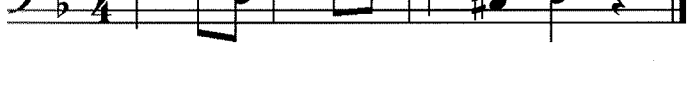

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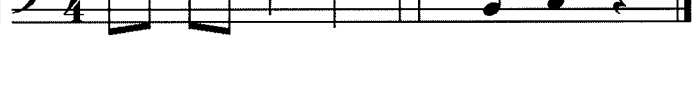

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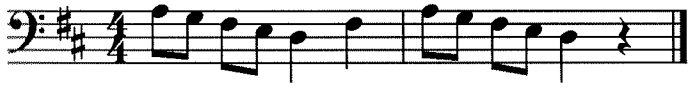

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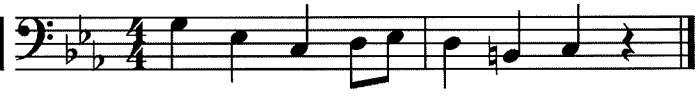

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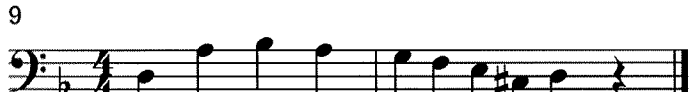

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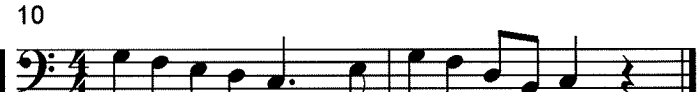

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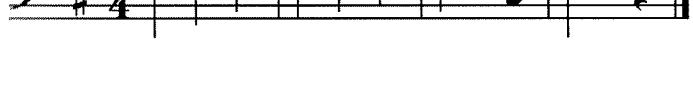

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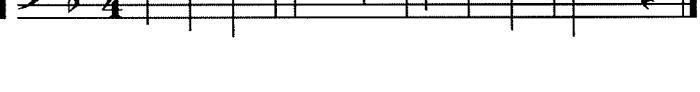

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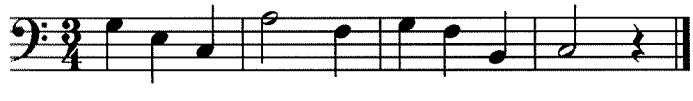

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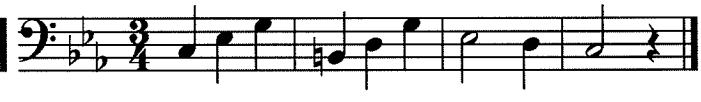

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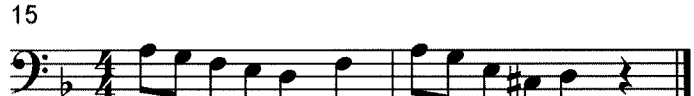

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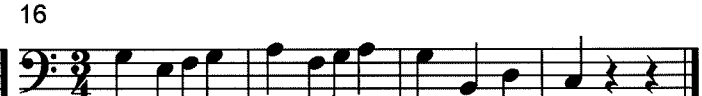


FIND THE MELODY or BINGO

The four sections A, B, C and D on this and the following page all consist of six short 5-6 note melodies written either in D major or D minor, and either in 2/4 or 3/4 time.
They can be employed in various ways, and pupils at the beginner stage are advised to play or sing all the exercises before proceeding to the ways of performing as indicated below:

1. Find the melody

a) Individual teaching: The teacher plays one of the melodies from a particular group (A, B, C or D), and the pupil points to the one has been played (possibly after vocal or instrumental imitation)

b) Group teaching: One pupil plays one of the melodies. The first pupil who says which melody has been played then plays the next one, etc.

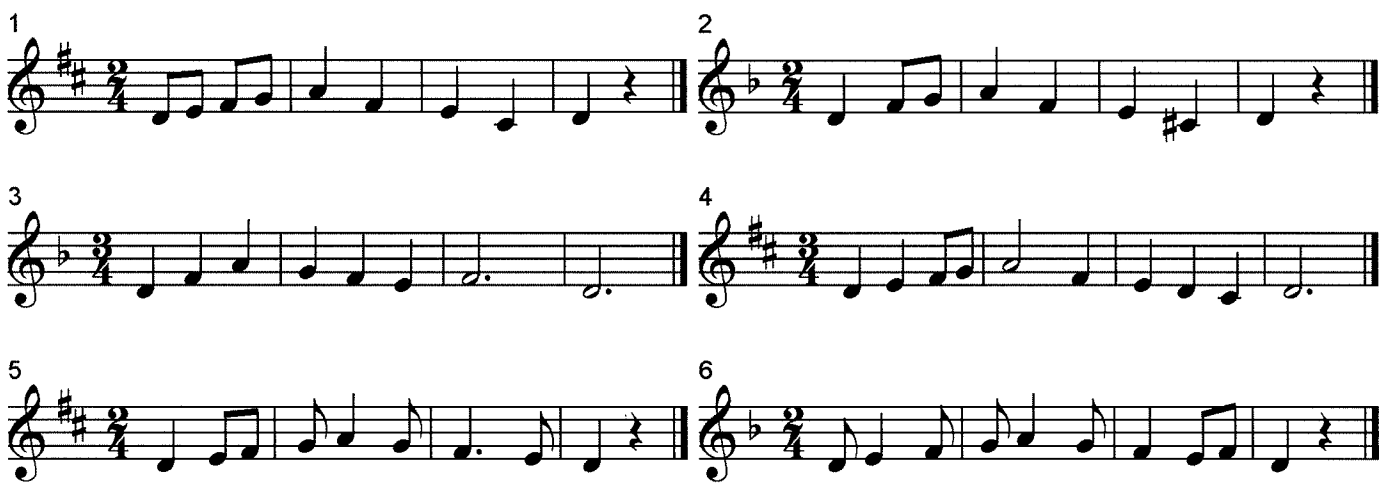
c) More advanced: Choose between melodies from a larger number of groups.

NB. When listening, do not look at the notes while the melody is being played. Listen, remember and then compare with the notes. The melodies resemble each other quite a lot, so you have to listen carefully.

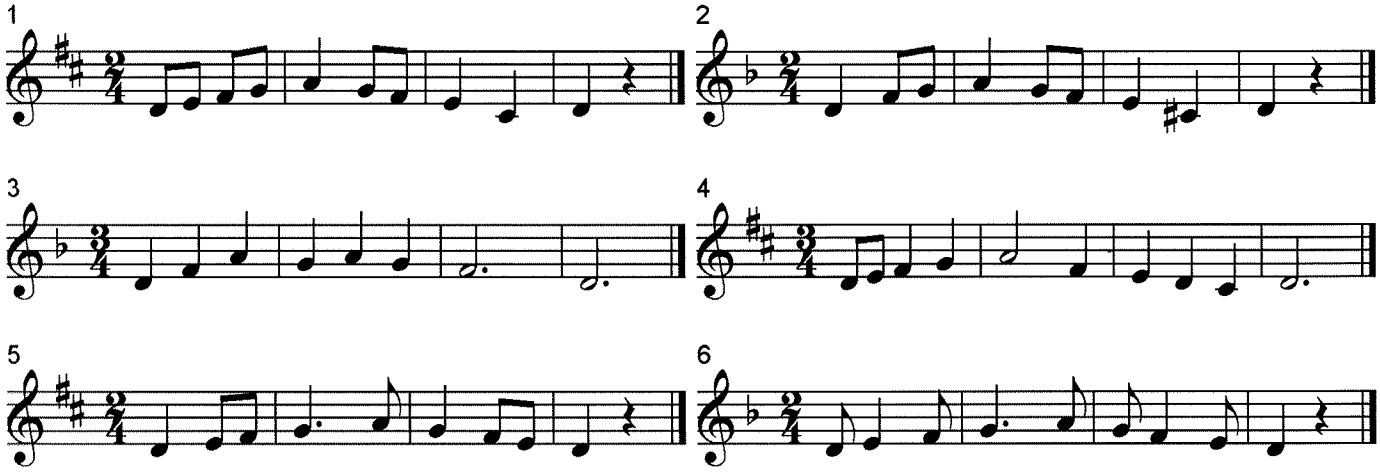
2. Bingo

Make a copy of these two pages, and cut out all the melodies individually.
The melodies are played in the order called out by the person who picks one out of the well-shuffled pile.
The pupil who first has a completed card (A, B, C or D) calls out 'bingo' and the teacher checks this by having the pupil sing or play all the melodies on the card.

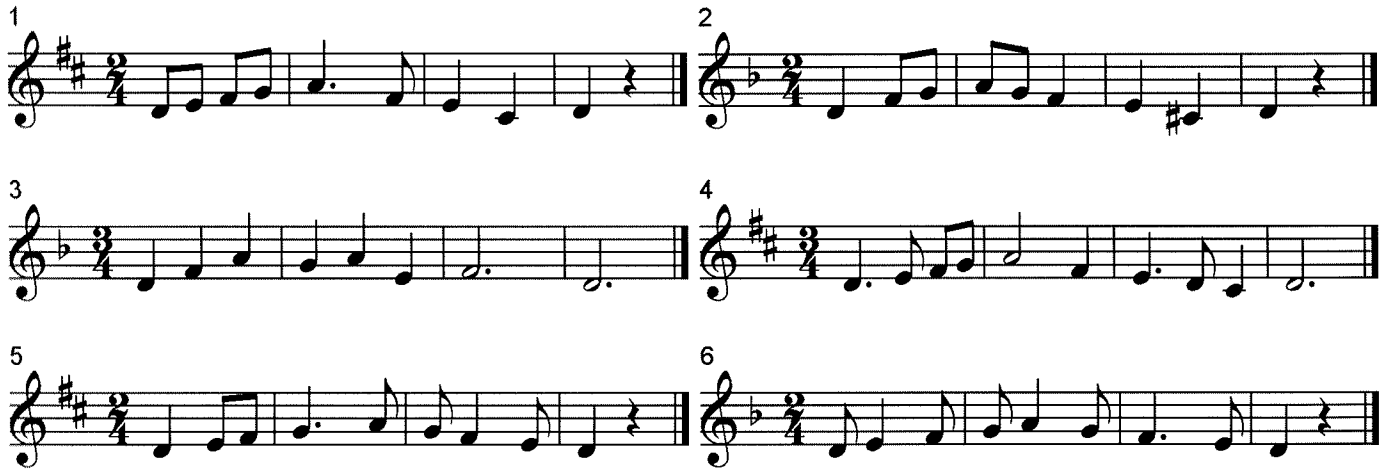
A



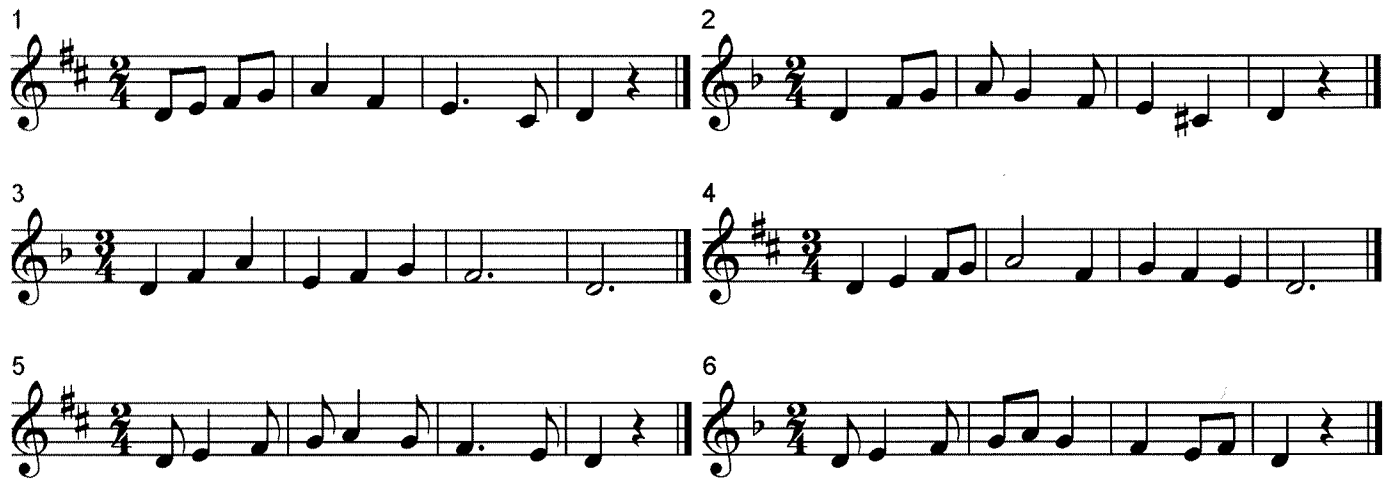
B



C



D

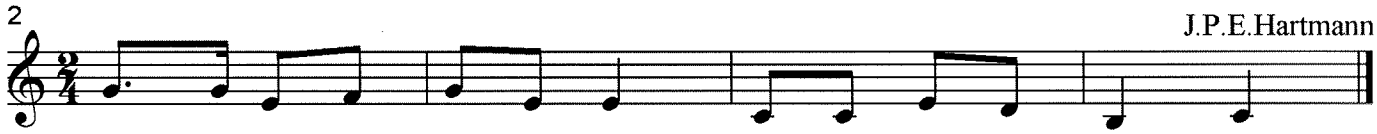


MUSIC EXAMPLES 1

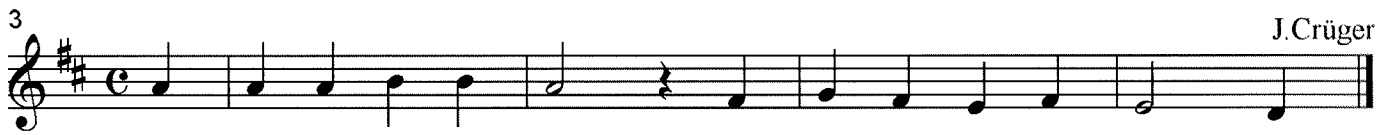
More information about the music examples on the last pages of the book
Range of melody: 1.-6. plus 7. degree.
Decide key, initial note and time. Read/analyse, remember and sing/play

1 H.Thomissøn/tysk

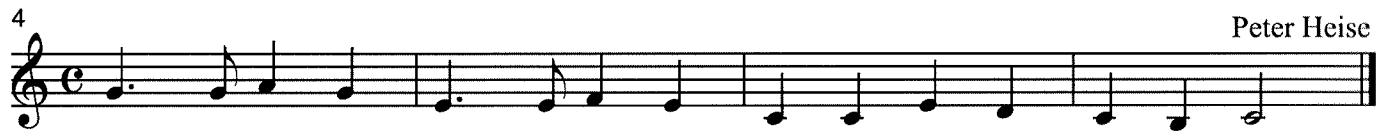
2 J.P.E.Hartmann



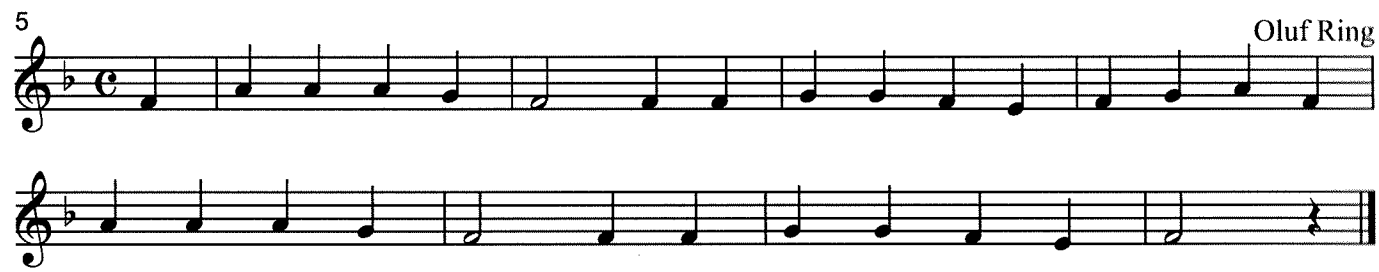
3 J.Crüger



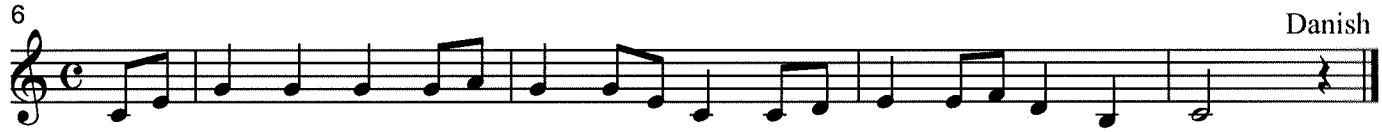
4 Peter Heise



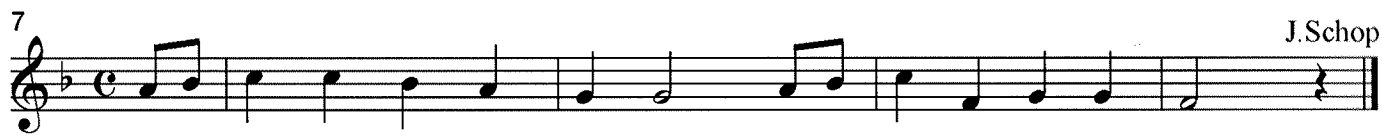
5 Oluf Ring



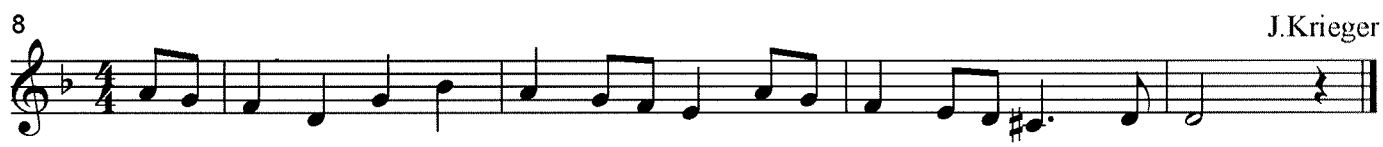
6 Danish



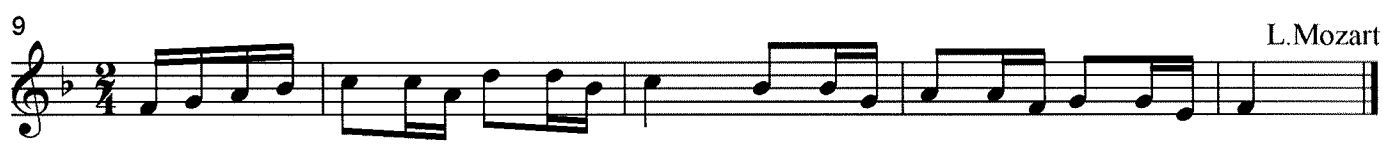
7 J.Schop



8 J.Krieger

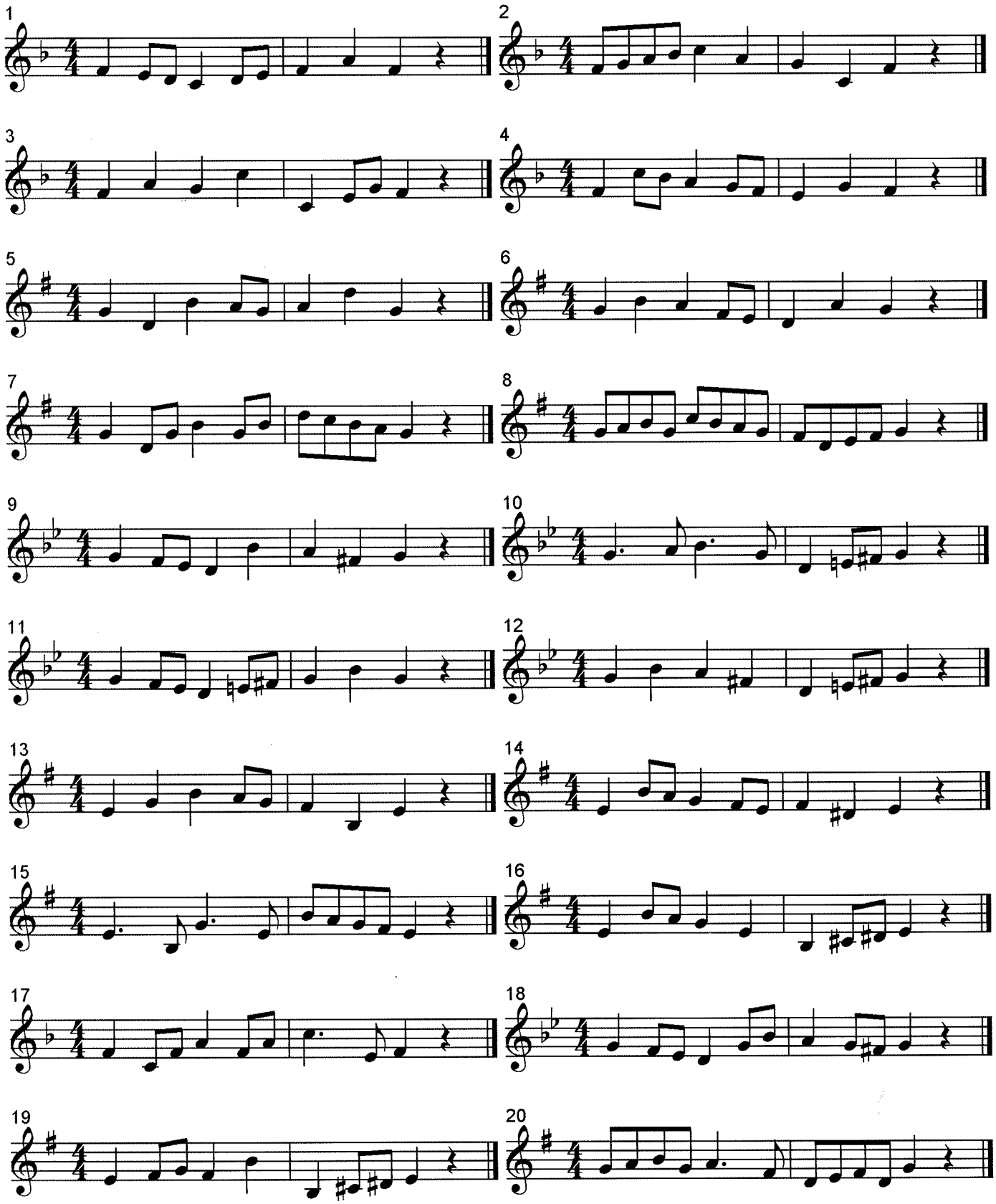


9 L.Mozart



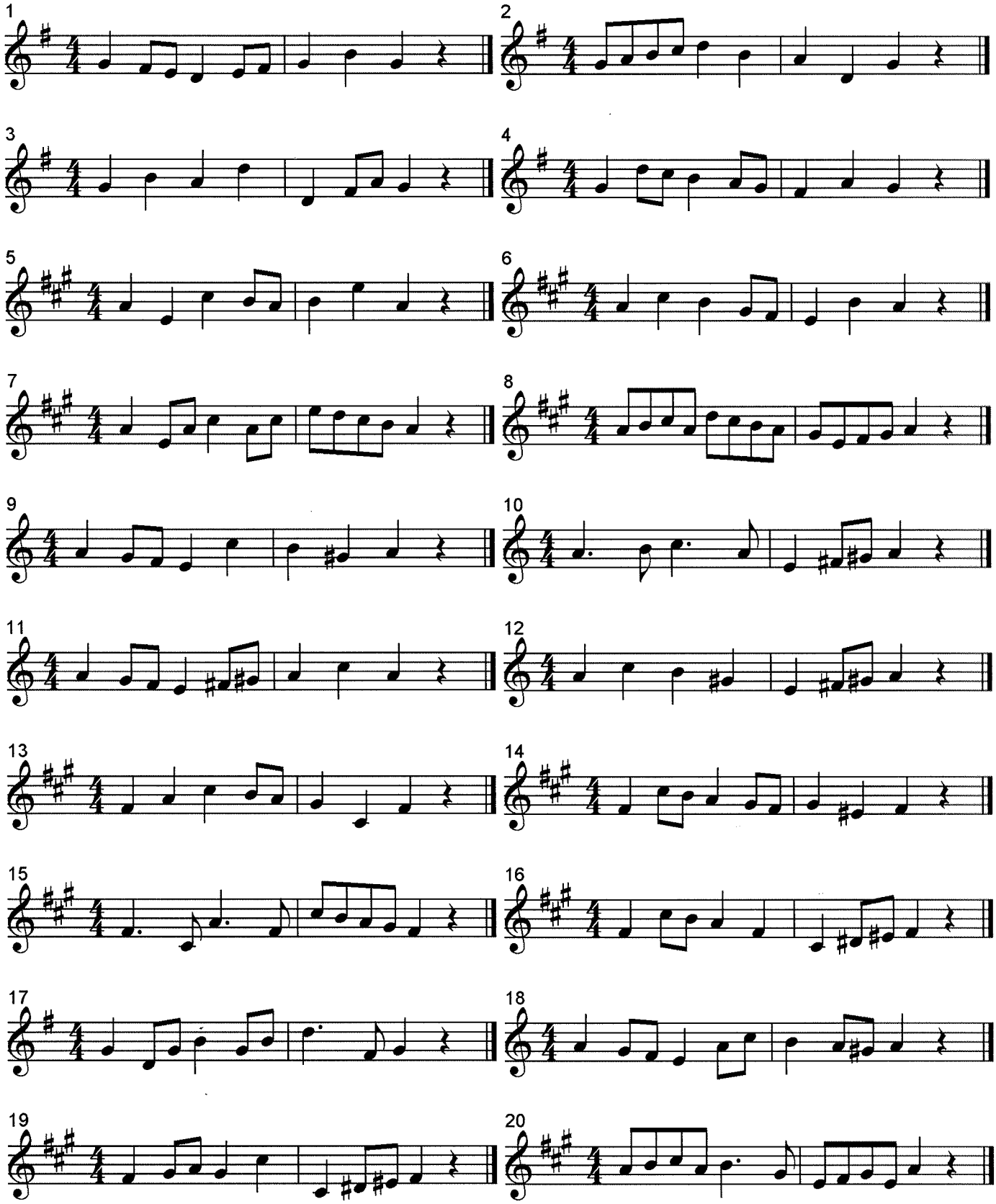
EXERCISES 5

Range of melody: Octave (5.-5. degree). Initial note: Tonic.
Score in Bb and in bass clef on the following pages



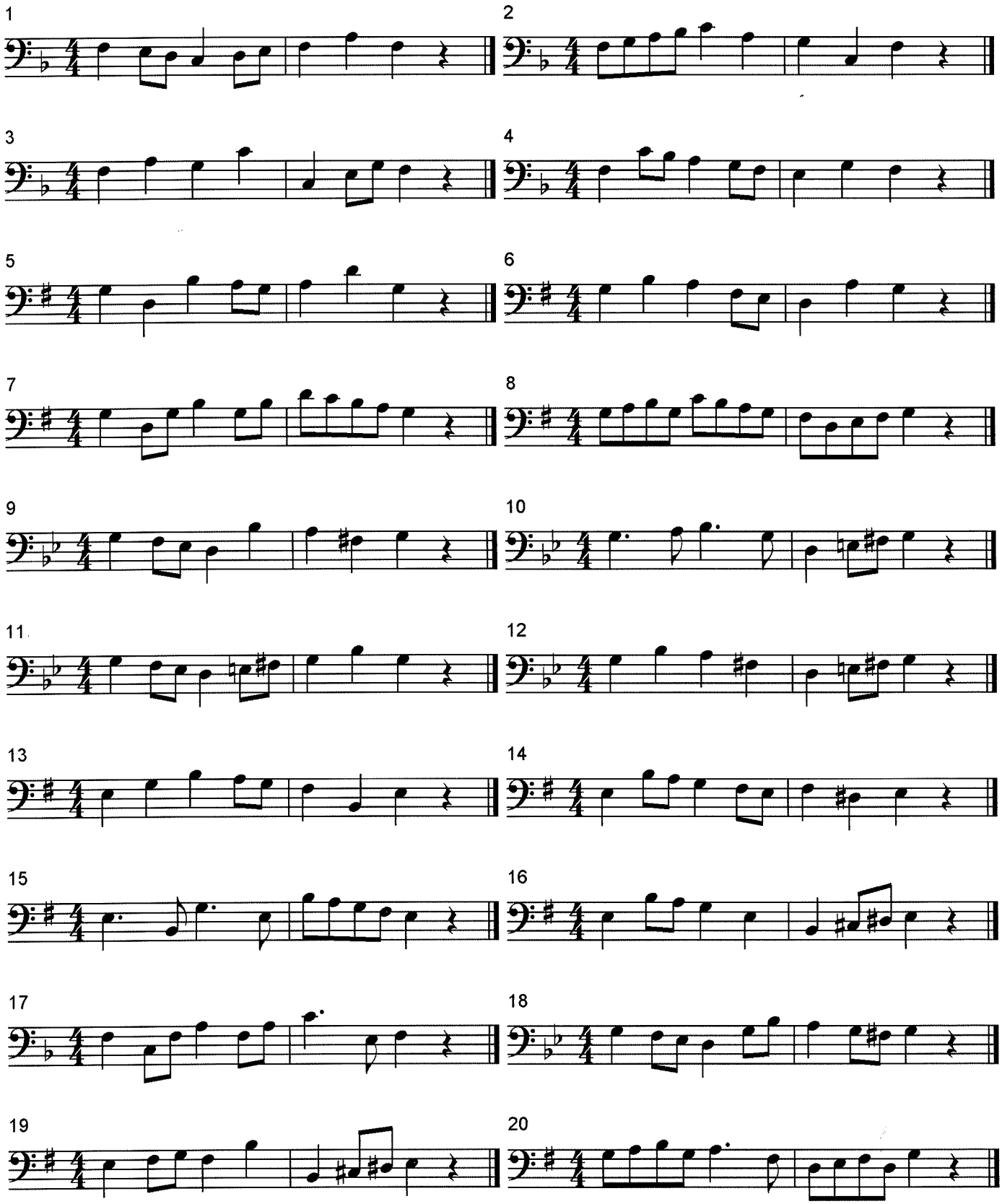
EXERCISES 5 - Bb-score

Range of melody: Octave (5.-5. degree). Initial note: Tonic.



EXERCISES 5 - bass clef

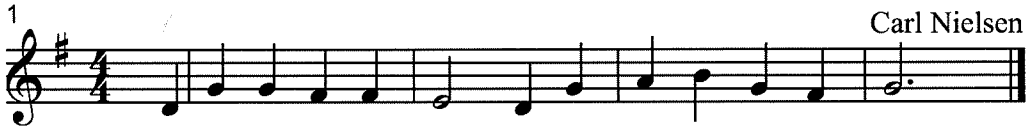
Range of melody: Octave (5.-5. degree). Initial note: Tonic.



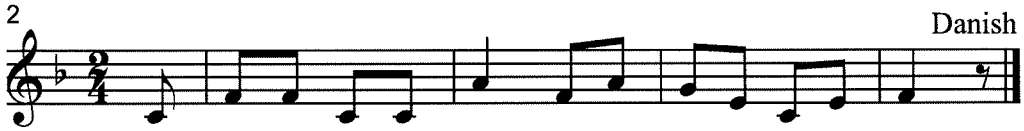
MUSIC EXAMPLES 2

Range of melody: Octave (5.-5. degree).

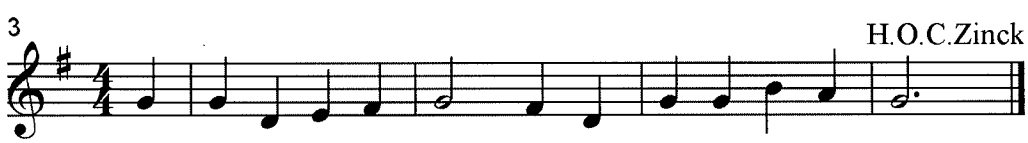
1 Carl Nielsen



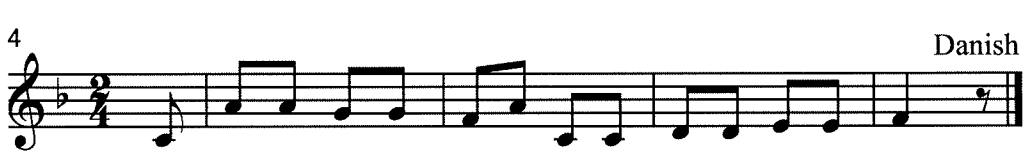
2 Danish



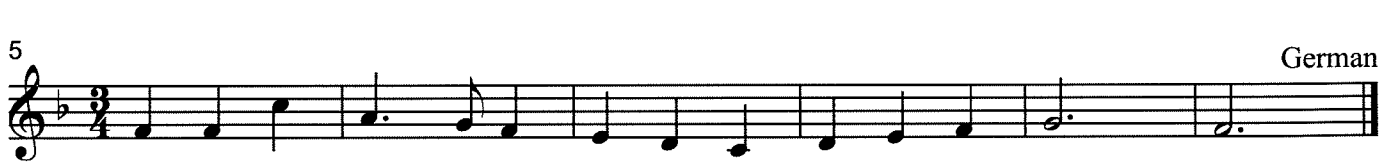
3 H.O.C.Zinck



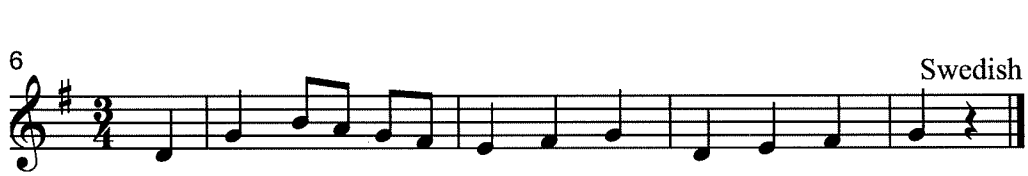
4 Danish



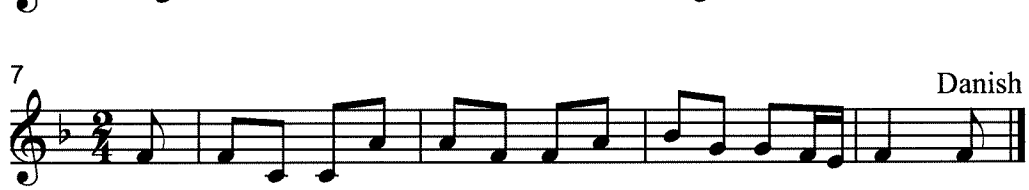
5 German



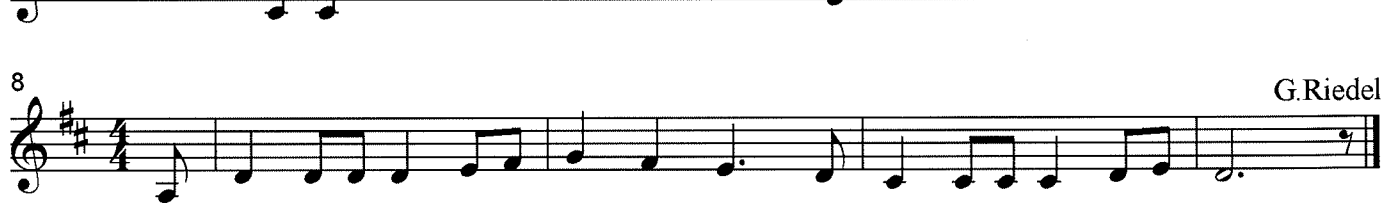
6 Swedish



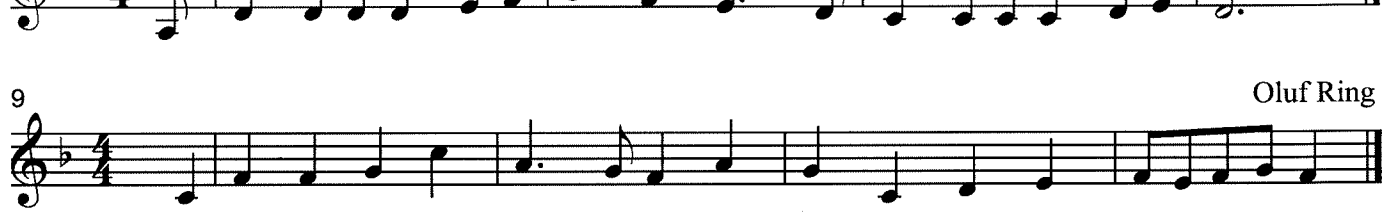
7 Danish



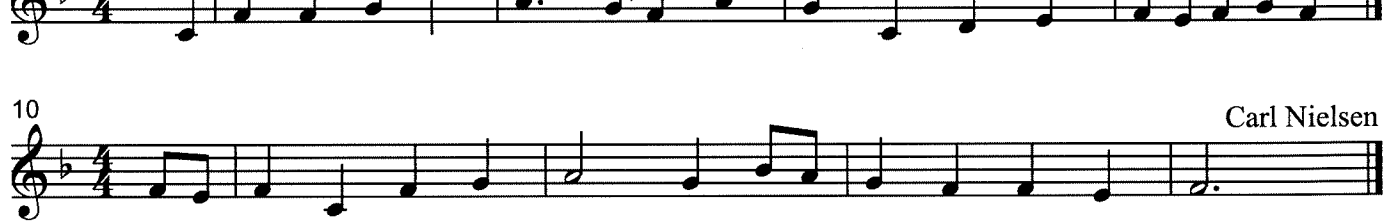
8 G.Riedel



9 Oluf Ring

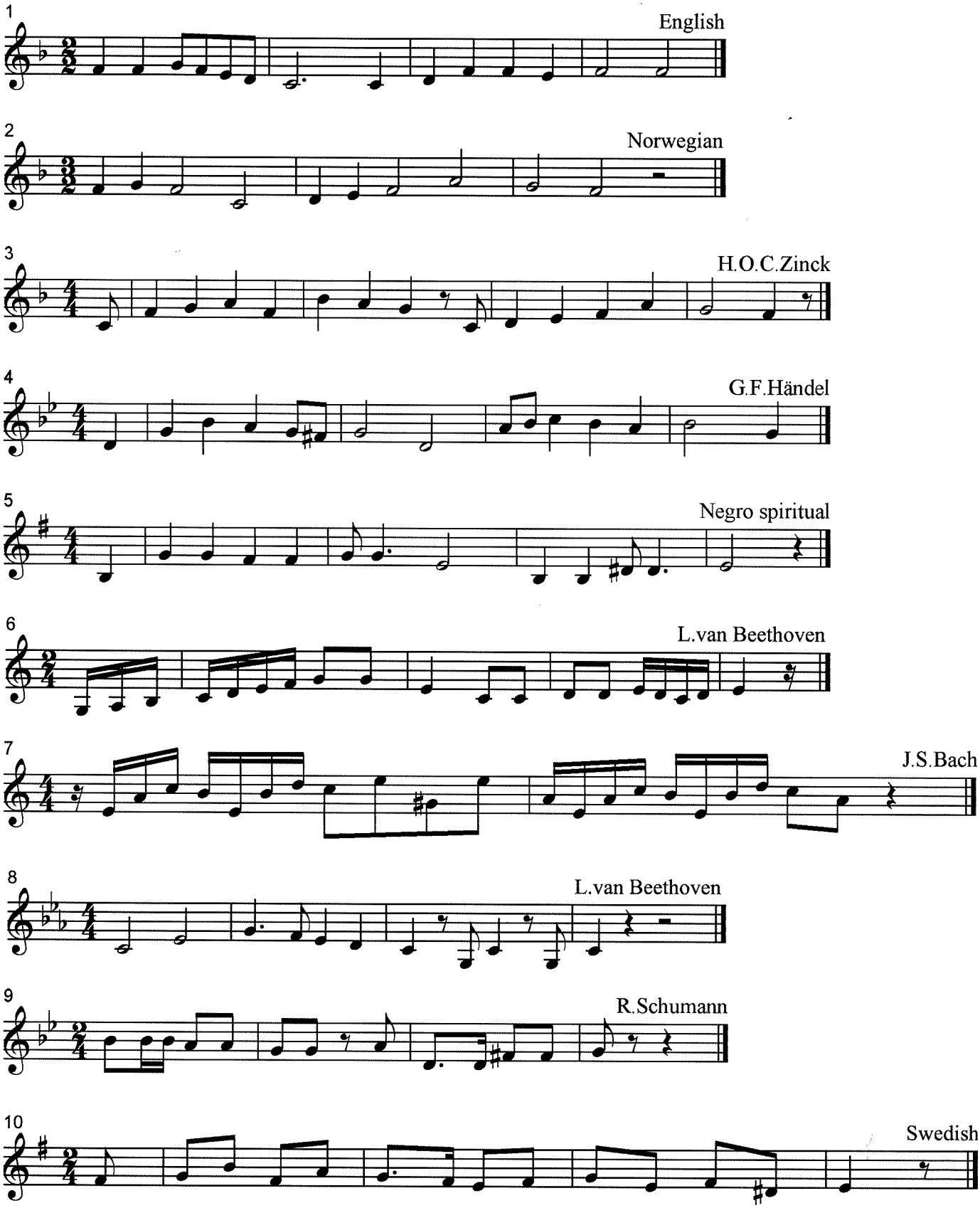


10 Carl Nielsen



MUSIC EXAMPLES 3

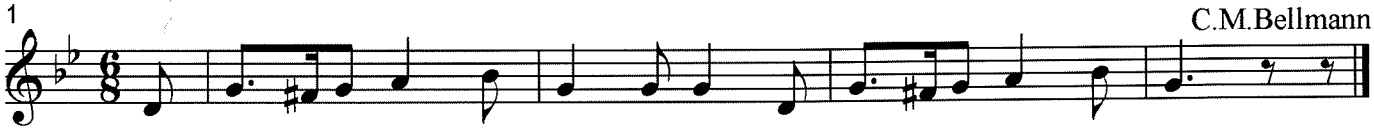
Range of melody: Octave (5.-5. degree).



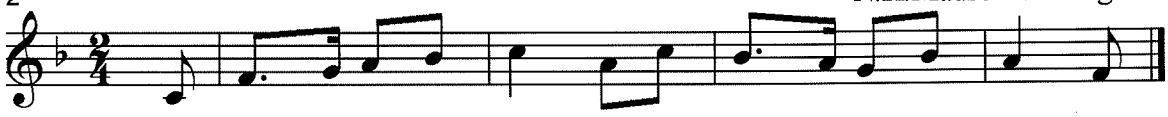
MUSIC EXAMPLES 4

Range of melody: Octave (5.-5. degree). Initial note: Low 5. degree of the scale

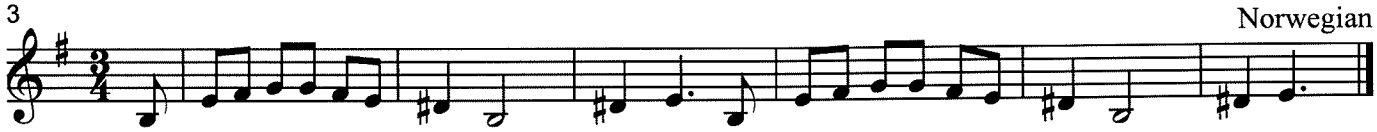
1 C.M.Bellmann



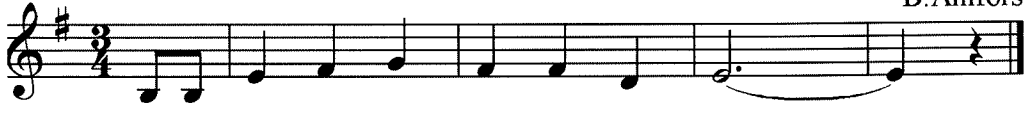
2 N.K.Madsen-Steensgaard



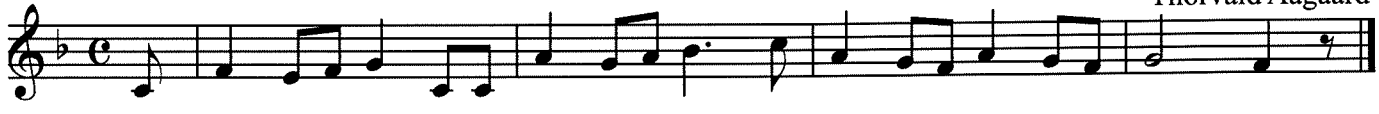
3 Norwegian



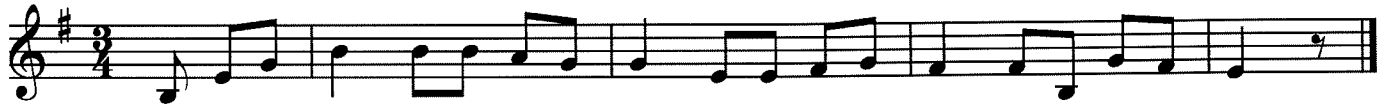
4 B.Ahlfors



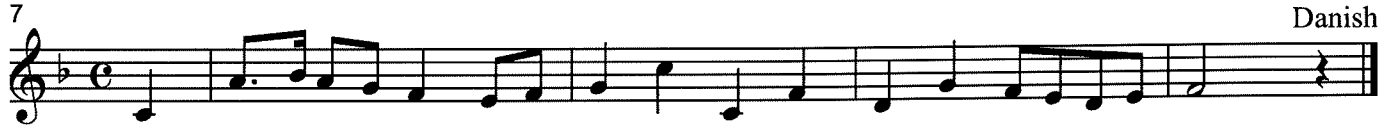
5 Thorvald Aagaard



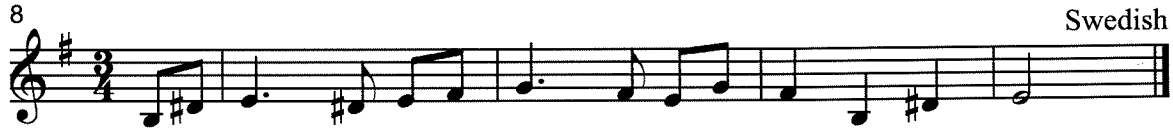
6 Knud Vad Thomsen



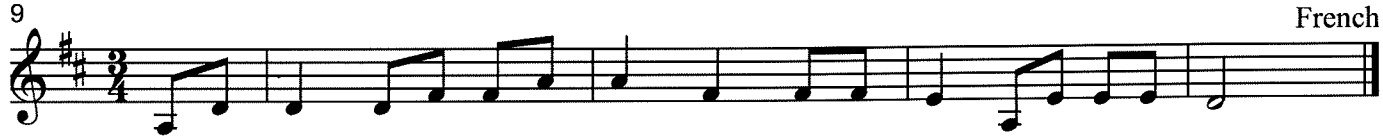
7 Danish



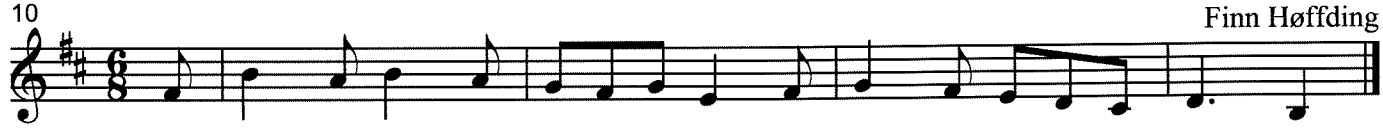
8 Swedish



9 French

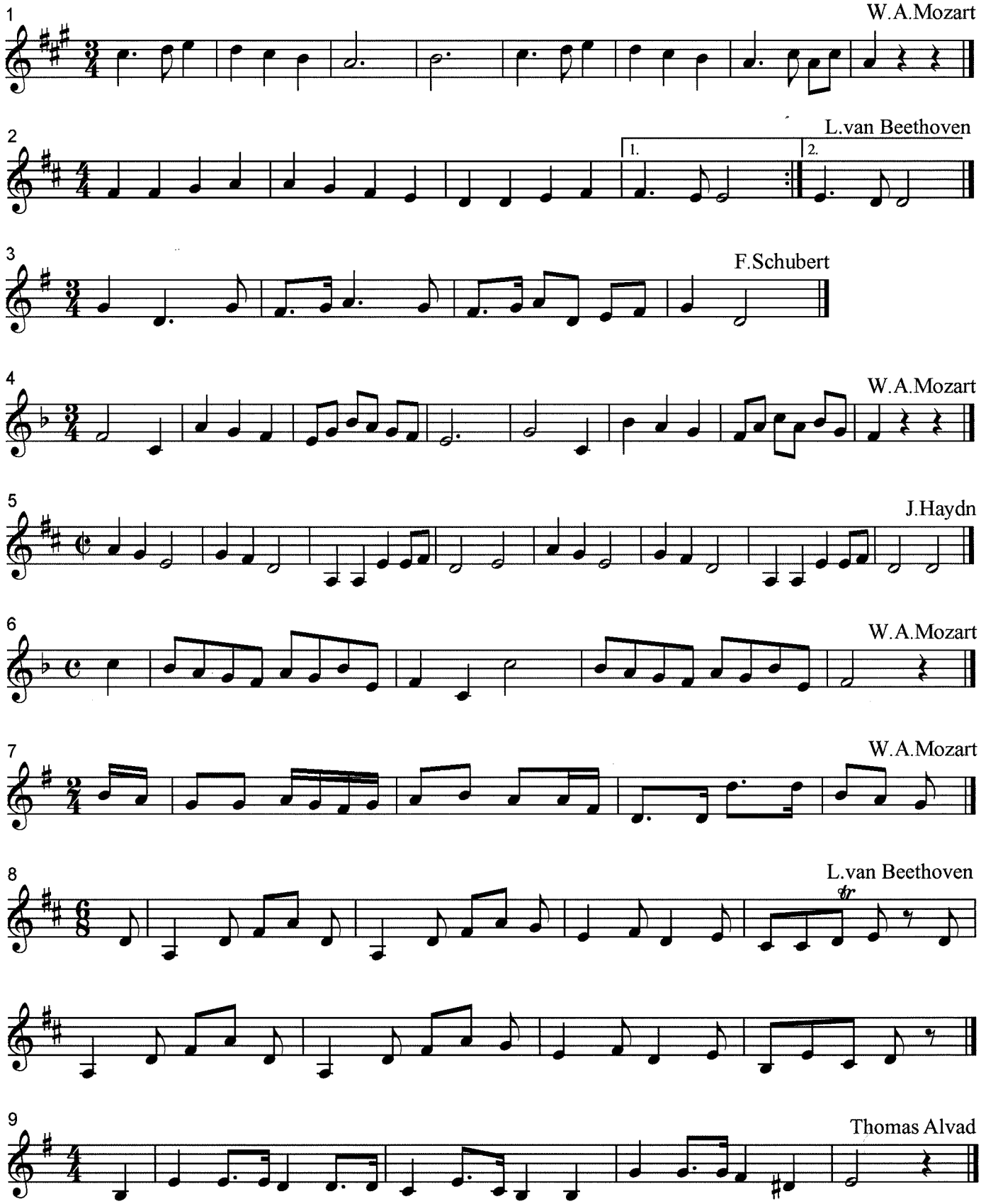


10 Finn Høffding



MUSIC EXAMPLES 5

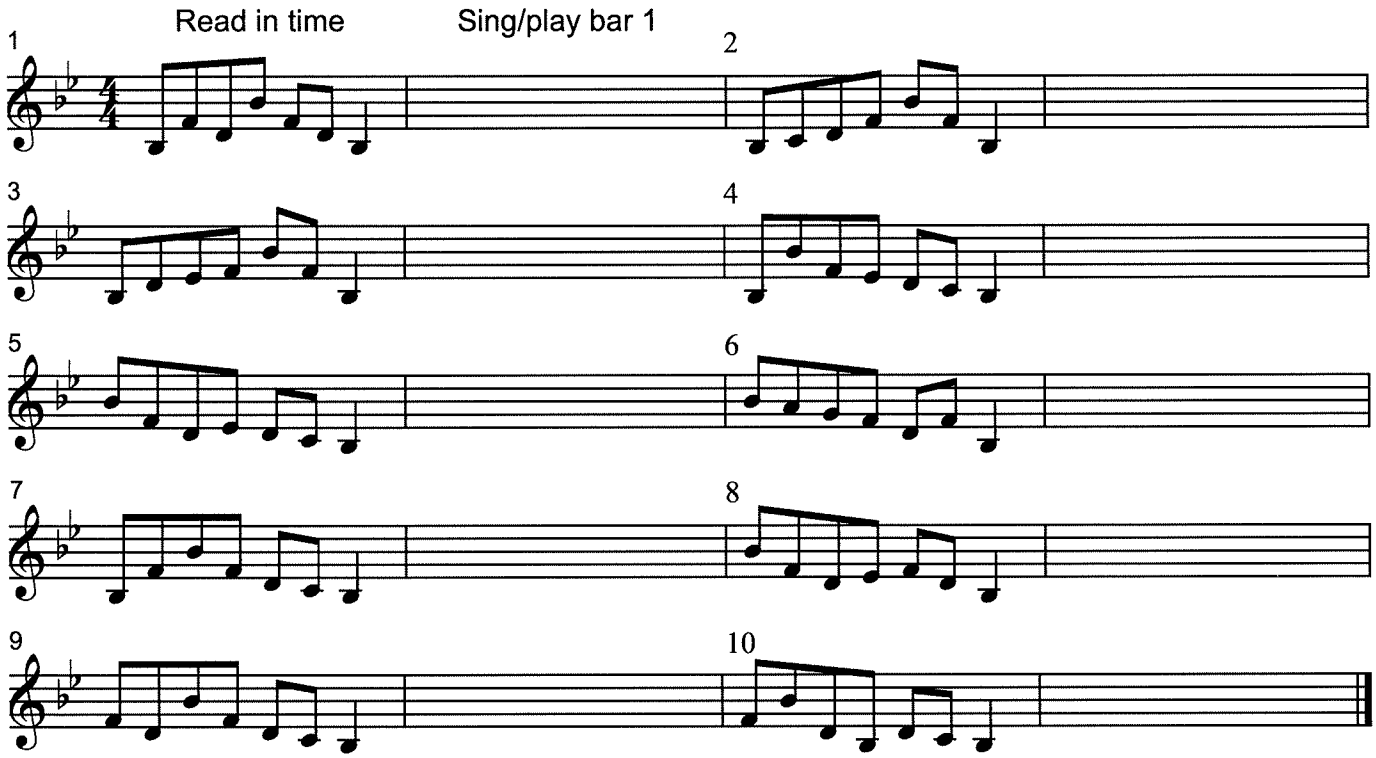
Examples of a-a' form



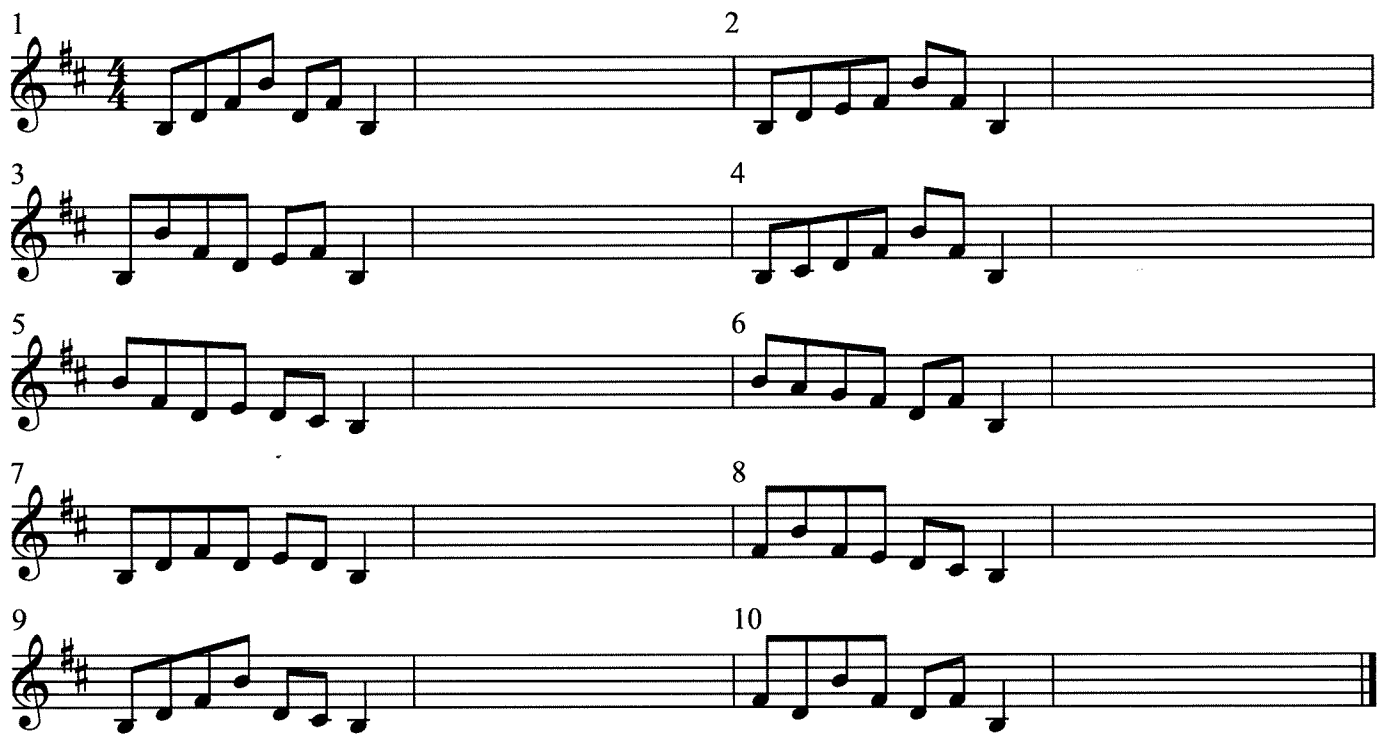
MELODIC VARIATIONS 2

Triads and stepwise motion in combination. Range: Octave (from tonic)
Play section A also in minor, and section B in major.
Score in Bb and in bass clef on the following pages

A



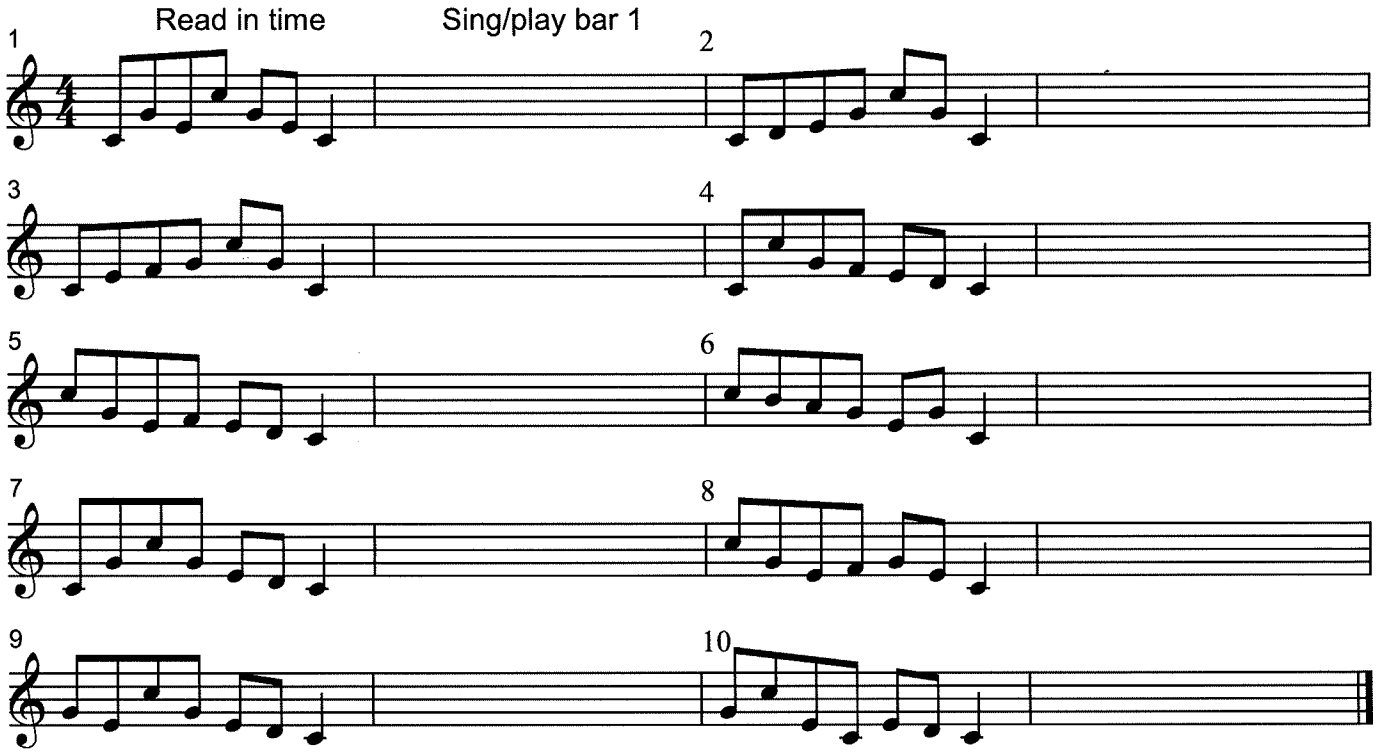
B



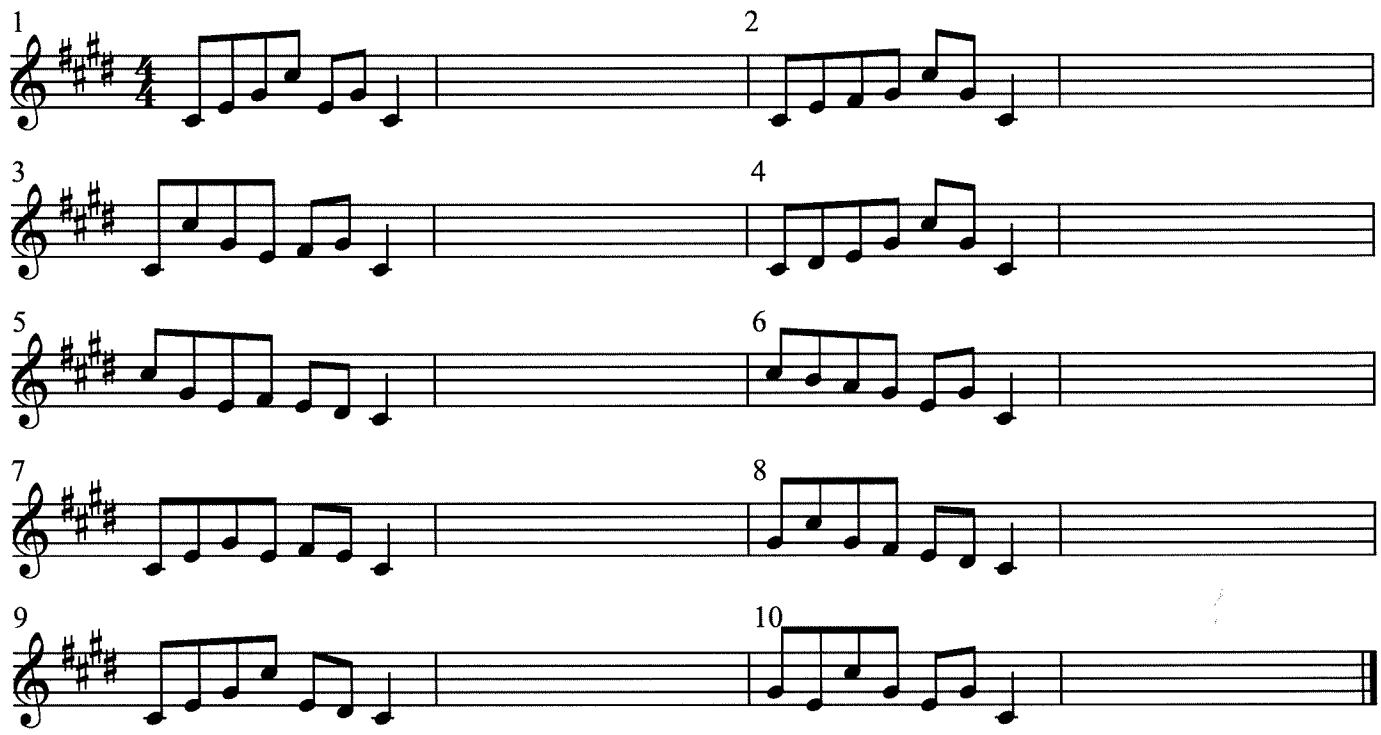
MELODIC VARIATIONS 2 - Bb-score

Triads and stepwise motion in combination. Range: Octave (from tonic)
Play section A also in minor, and section B in major.

A



B

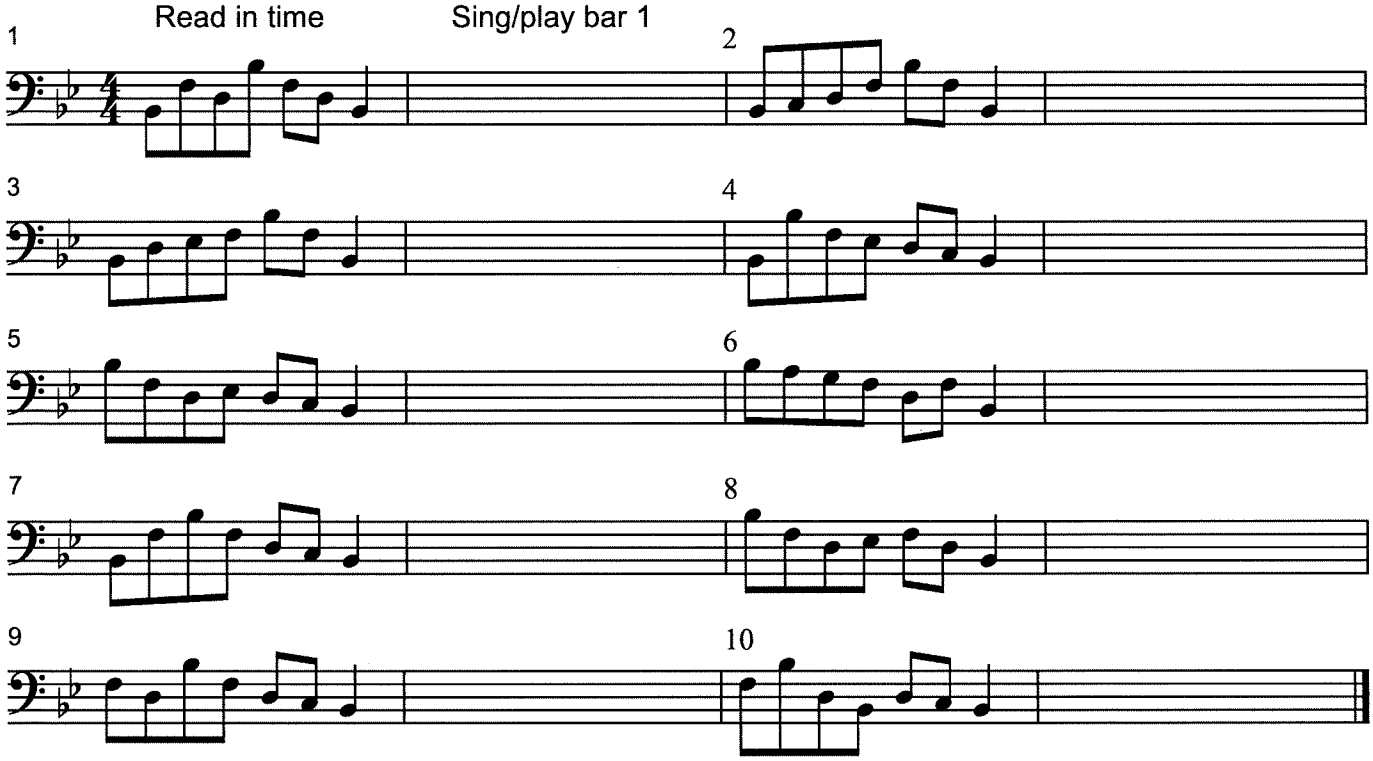


MELODIC VARIATIONS 2 - bass clef

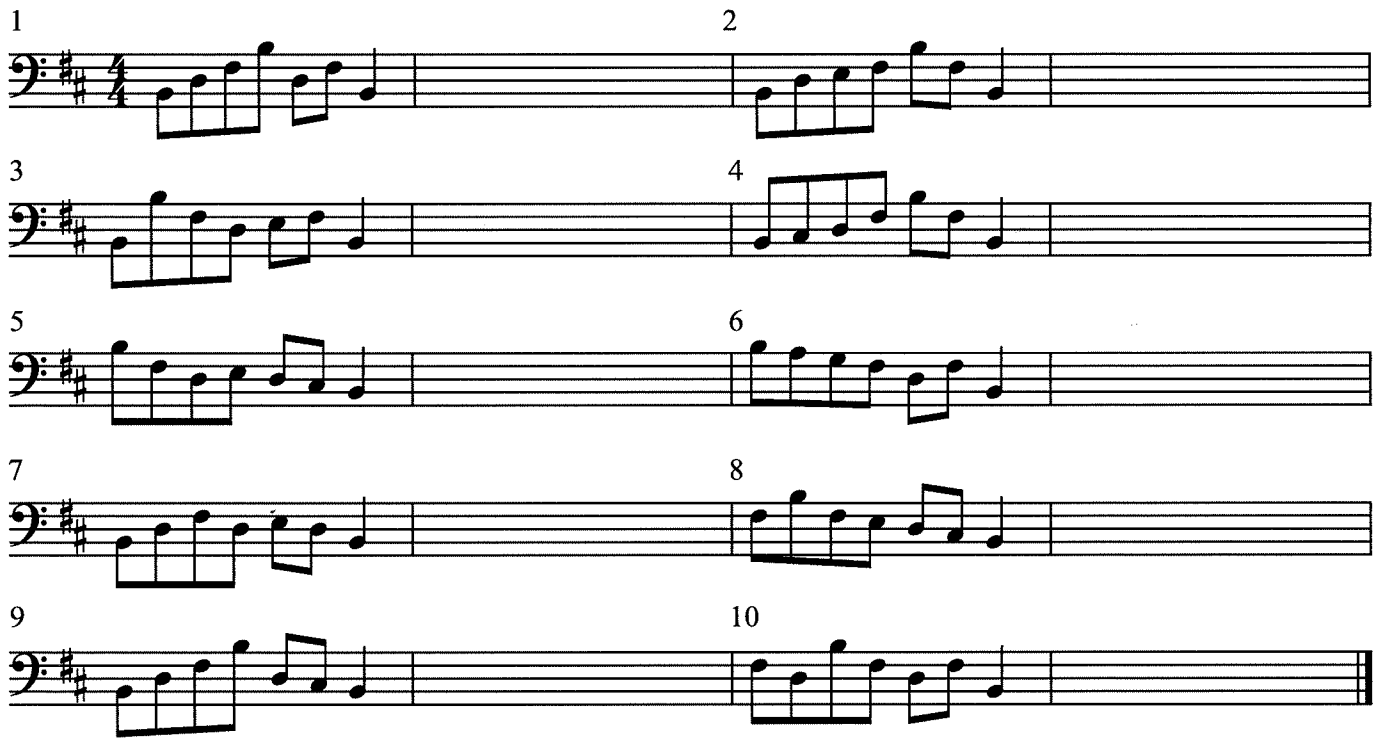
Triads and stepwise motion in combination. Range: Octave (from tonic)
Play section A also in minor, and section B in major.

A

Read in time Sing/play bar 1

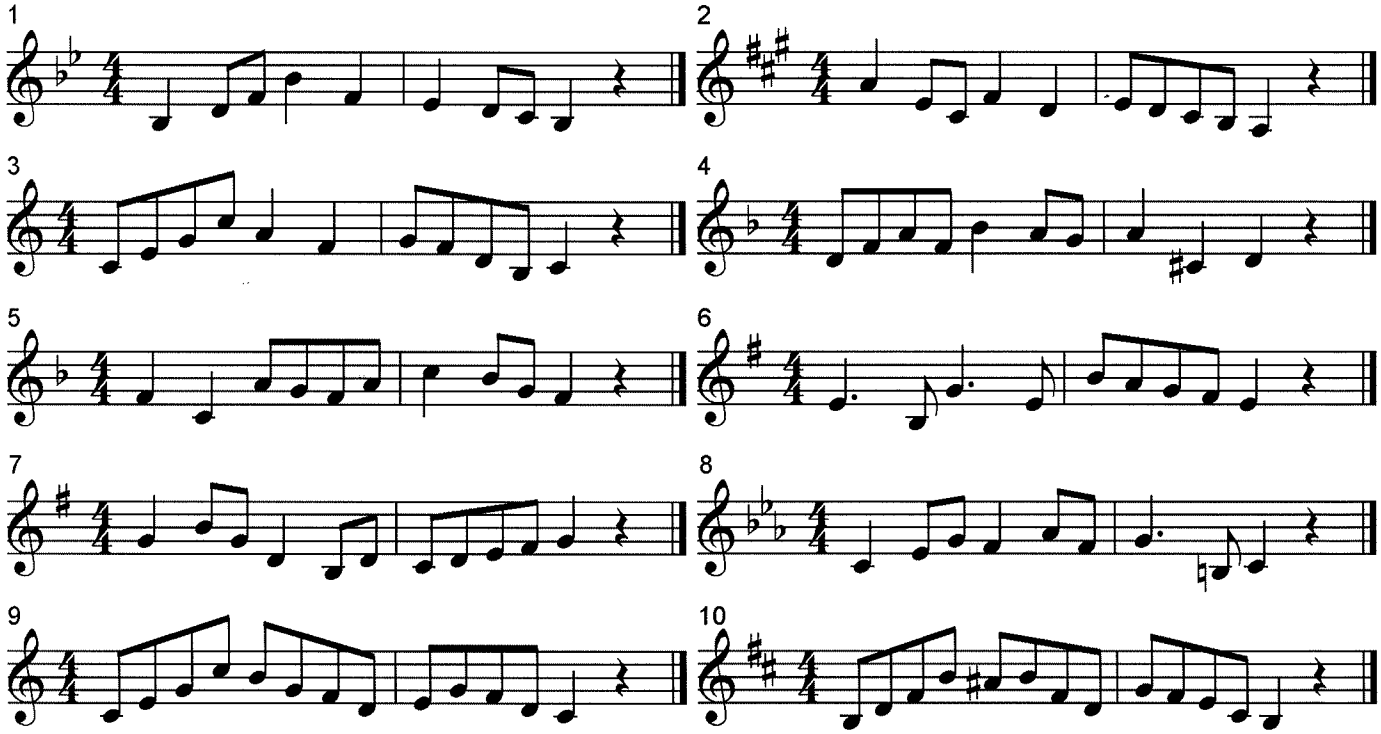


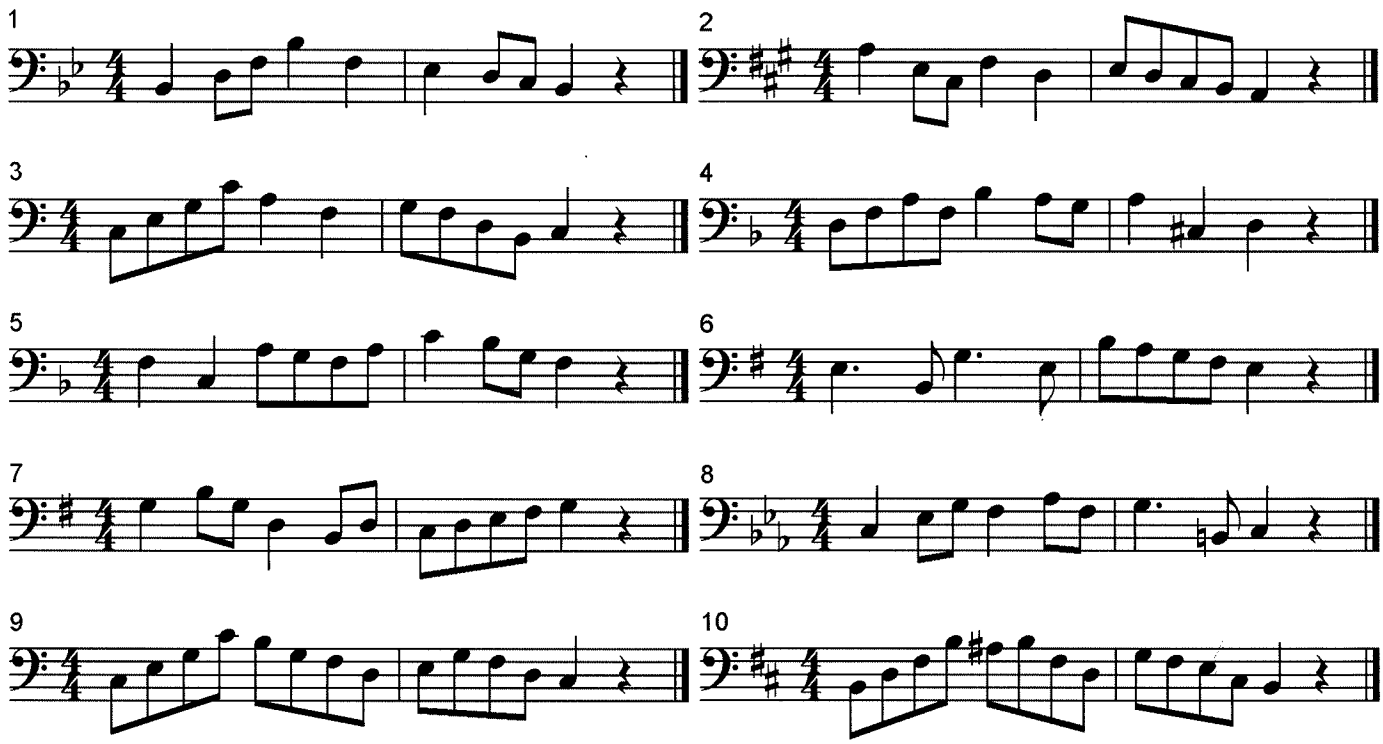
B



EXERCISES 6

Triads and stepwise motion
Initial note: Tonic
Range: Octave plus down to the fifth

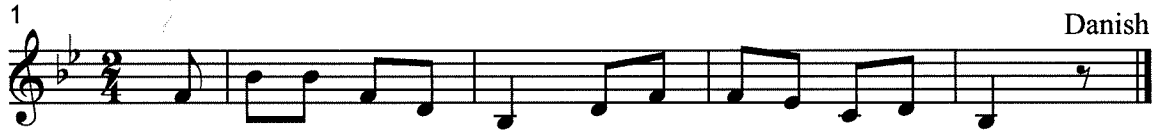




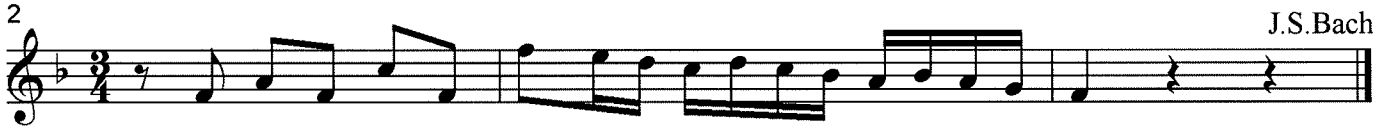
MUSIC EXAMPLES 6

Triads and stepwise motion

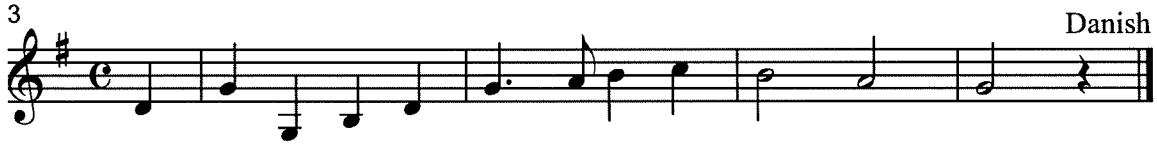
1 Danish



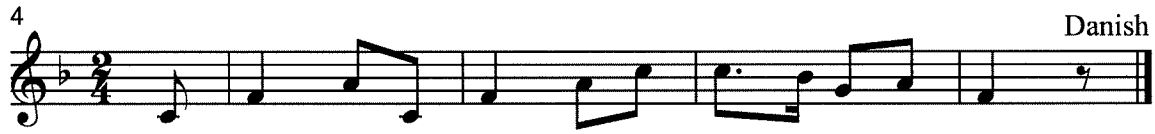
2 J.S.Bach



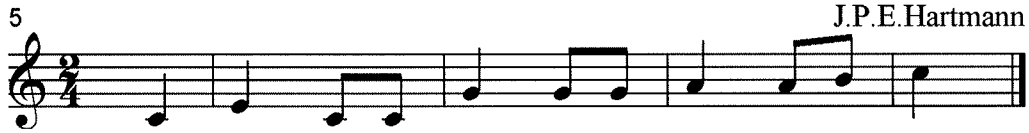
3 Danish



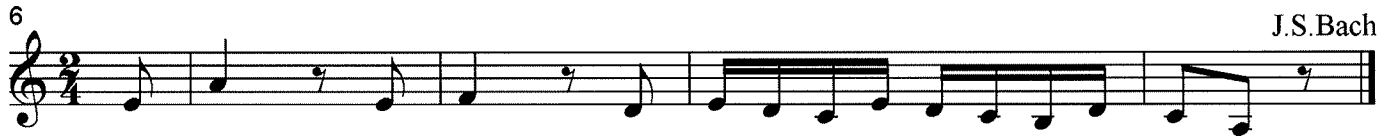
4 Danish



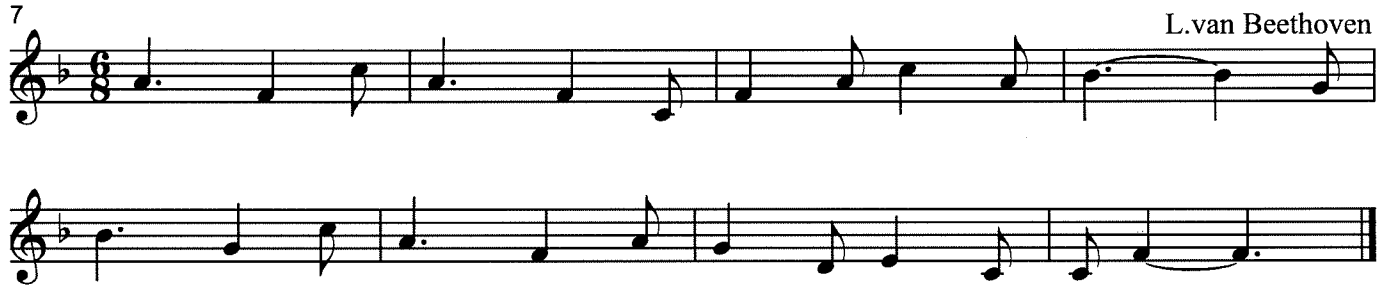
5 J.P.E.Hartmann



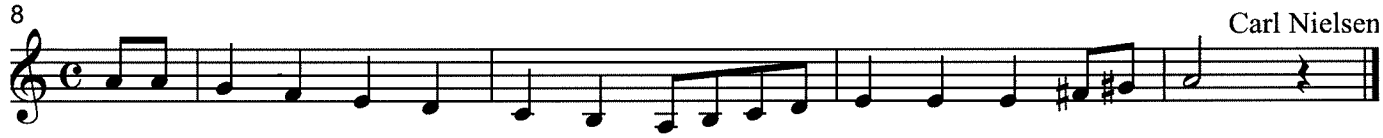
6 J.S.Bach



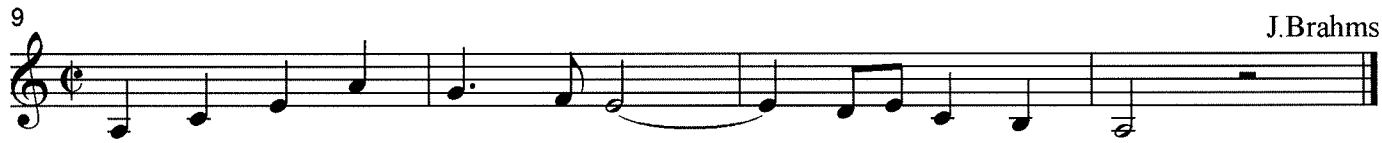
7 L.van Beethoven



8 Carl Nielsen

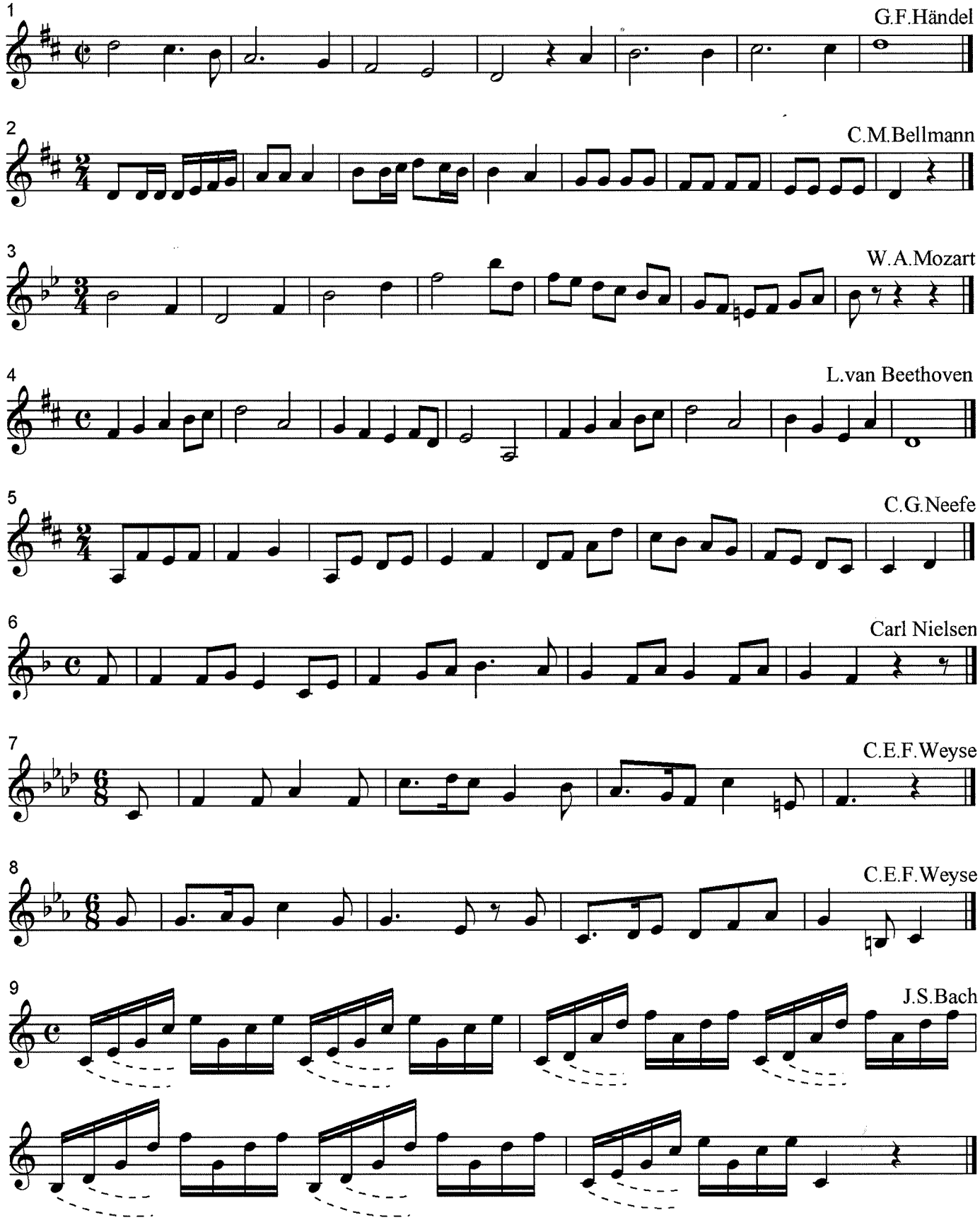


9 J.Brahms



MUSIC EXAMPLES 7

Triads and stepwise motion

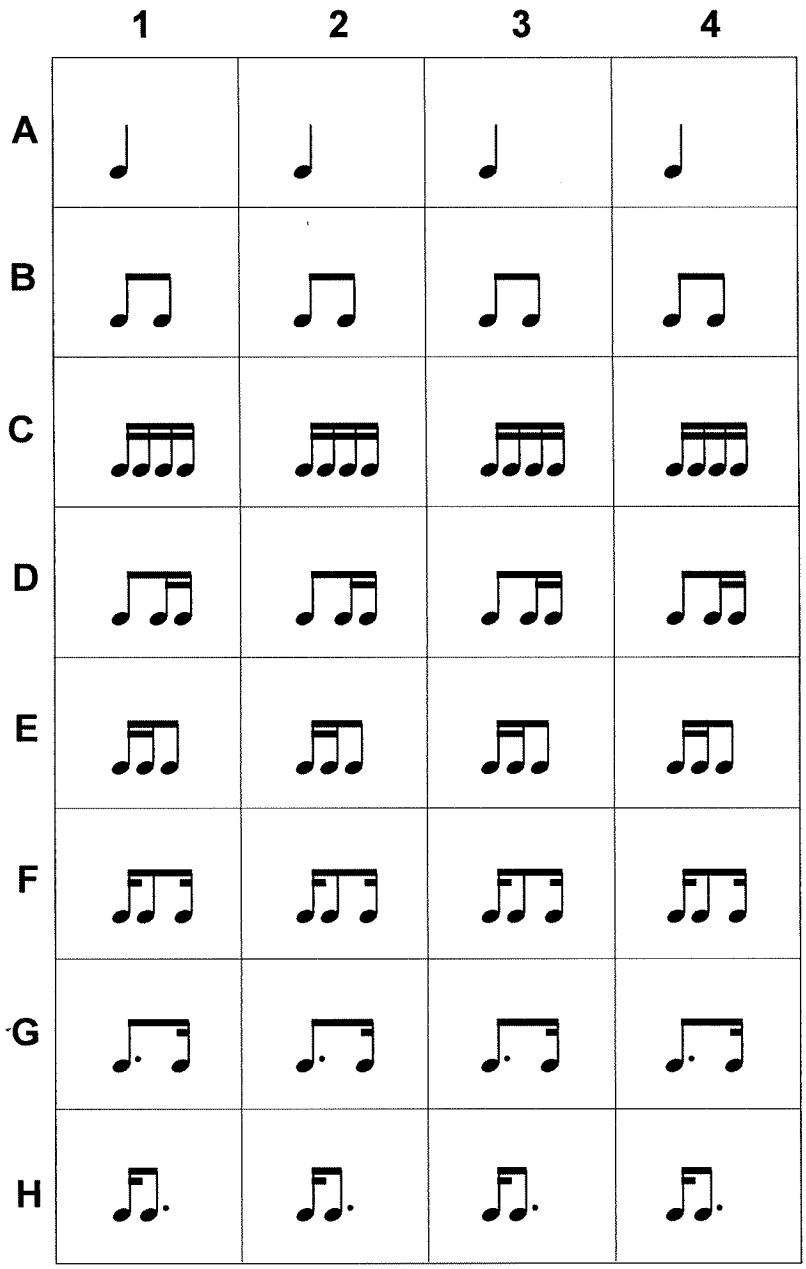


READING RHYTHM or "BEAT THE BOXES"

The rhythm chart below is used for various exercises, the aim of which is to develop reading in advance. The combination of horizontal and vertical movement corresponds to the way one reads music, and the level of difficulty rises as the actual distance between the boxes increases.
To be able to point to the right box in time with the music, the eye is forced to move in advance.

- Combine 4 boxes from rows 1-2-3-4 to make one bar in 4/4 time: e.g. 1 B - 2 D - 3 C - 4 A, or, at a higher level of difficulty because of the larger leaps): e.g. 1 C - 2 G - 3 B - 4 E
  Articulate the whole bar a couple of times, pointing to the right box at each beat - and keeping time.
- The teacher creates and articulates one bar, the pupil imitates and points to the right boxes while articulating the rhythm. Melodies from p. 63 might be used aswell.

  In short: Listen to a rhythm (one bar) - imitate - work out the notation - point to it.

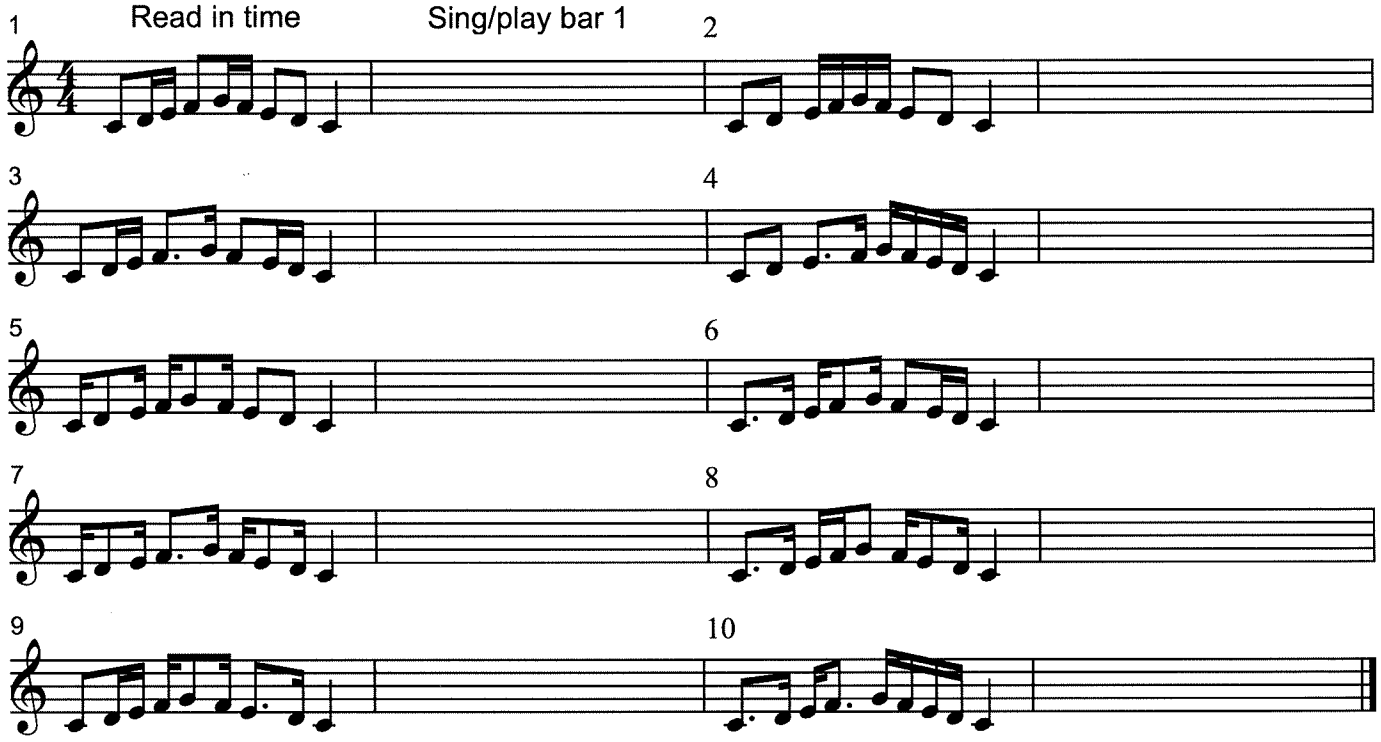


RHYTHMIC VARIATIONS

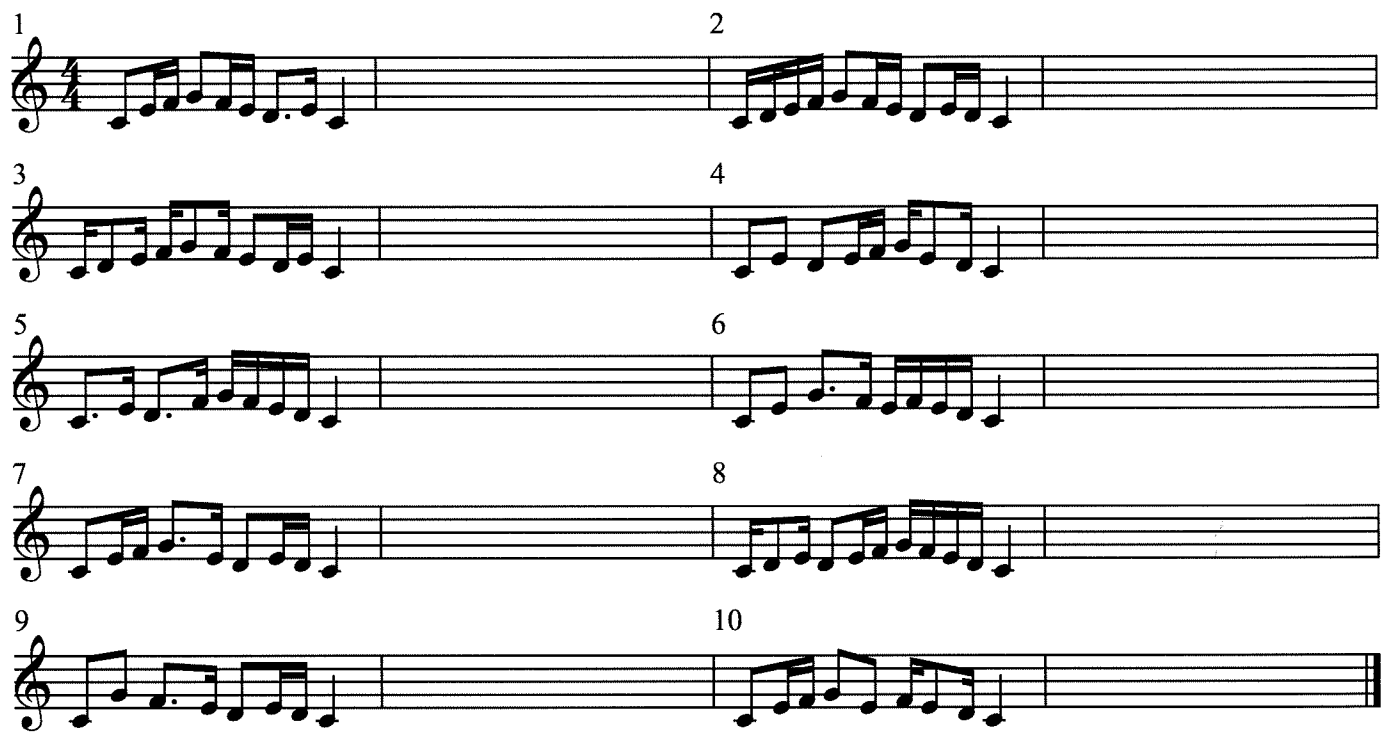
See instructions for Melodic Variations p. 26
Section A: Same melody in all examples, stepwise motion
Section B: Different melodies
Also useful for dictation

Score in Bb and in bass clef at the following pages

A



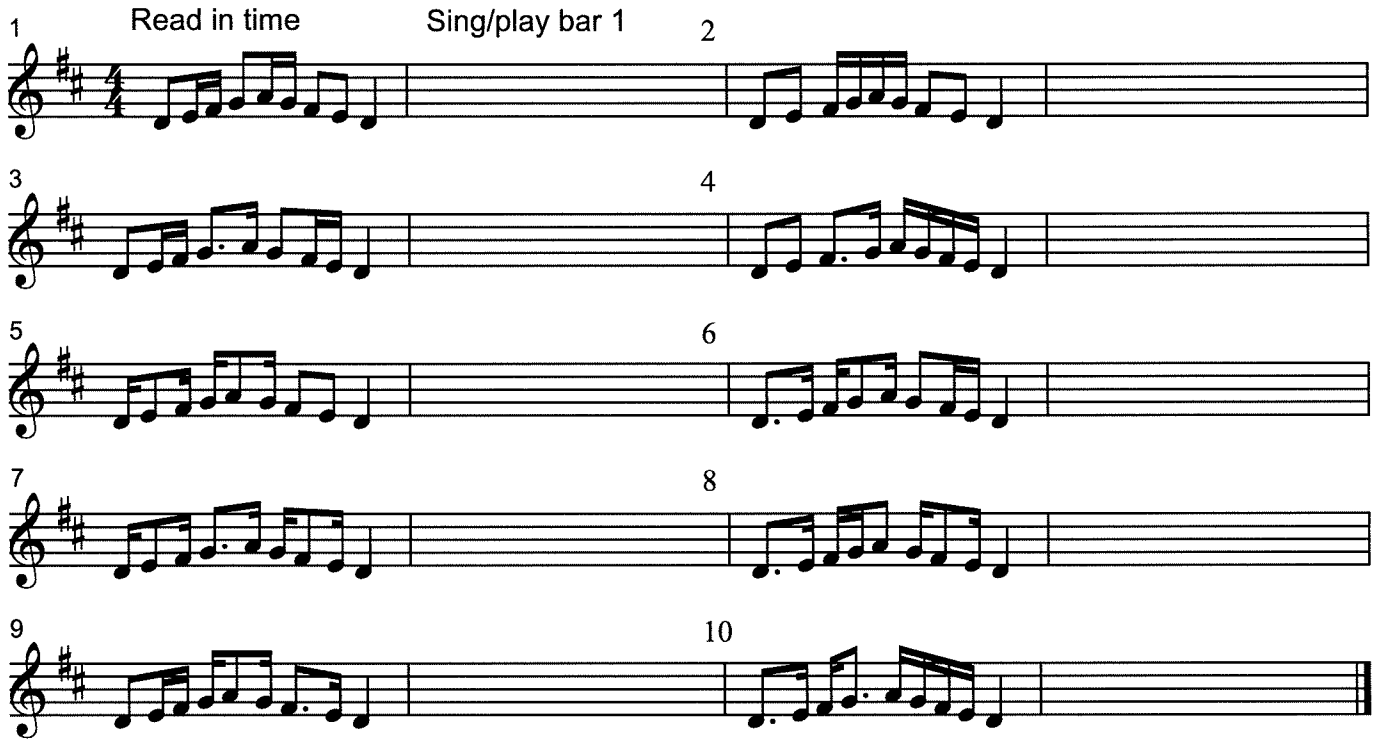
B



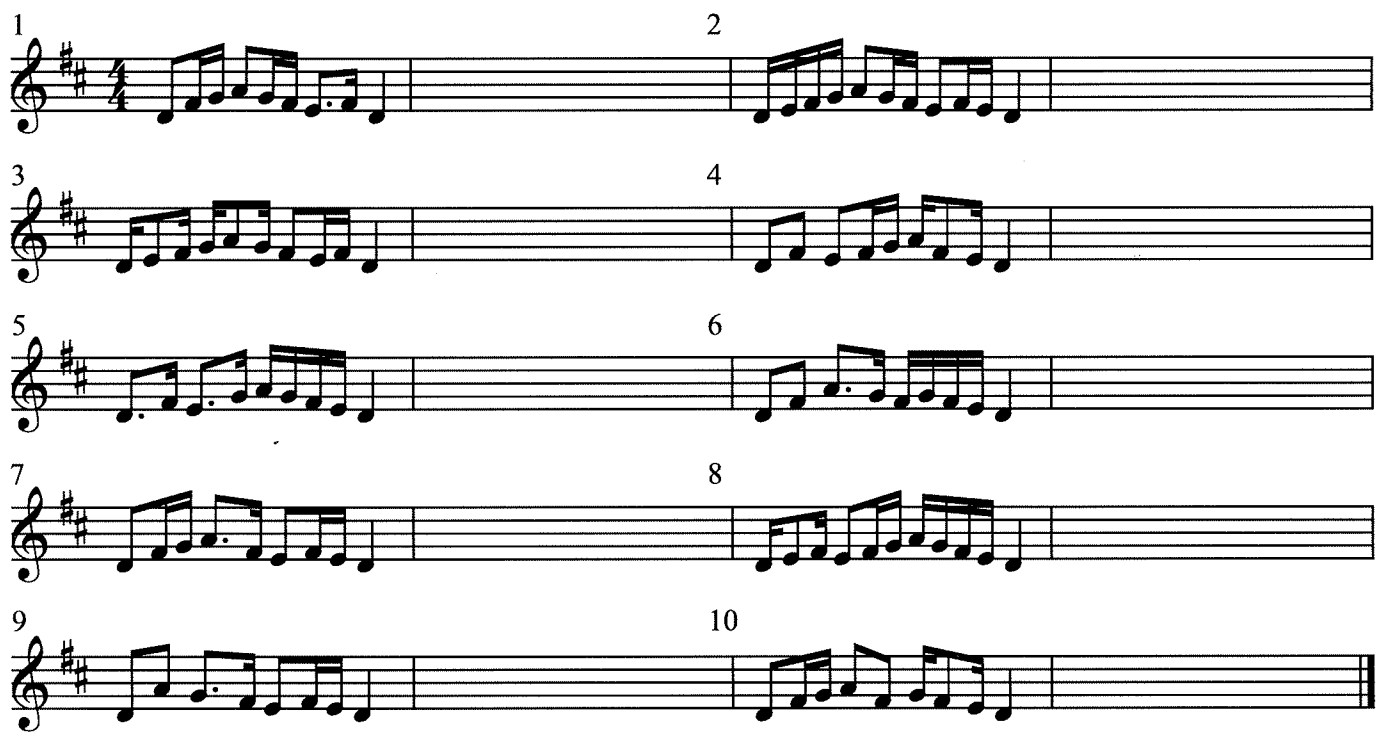
RHYTHMIC VARIATIONS - Bb-score

See instructions for Melodic Variations p. 26
Section A: Same melody in all examples, stepwise motion
Section B: Different melodies
Also useful for dictation

A



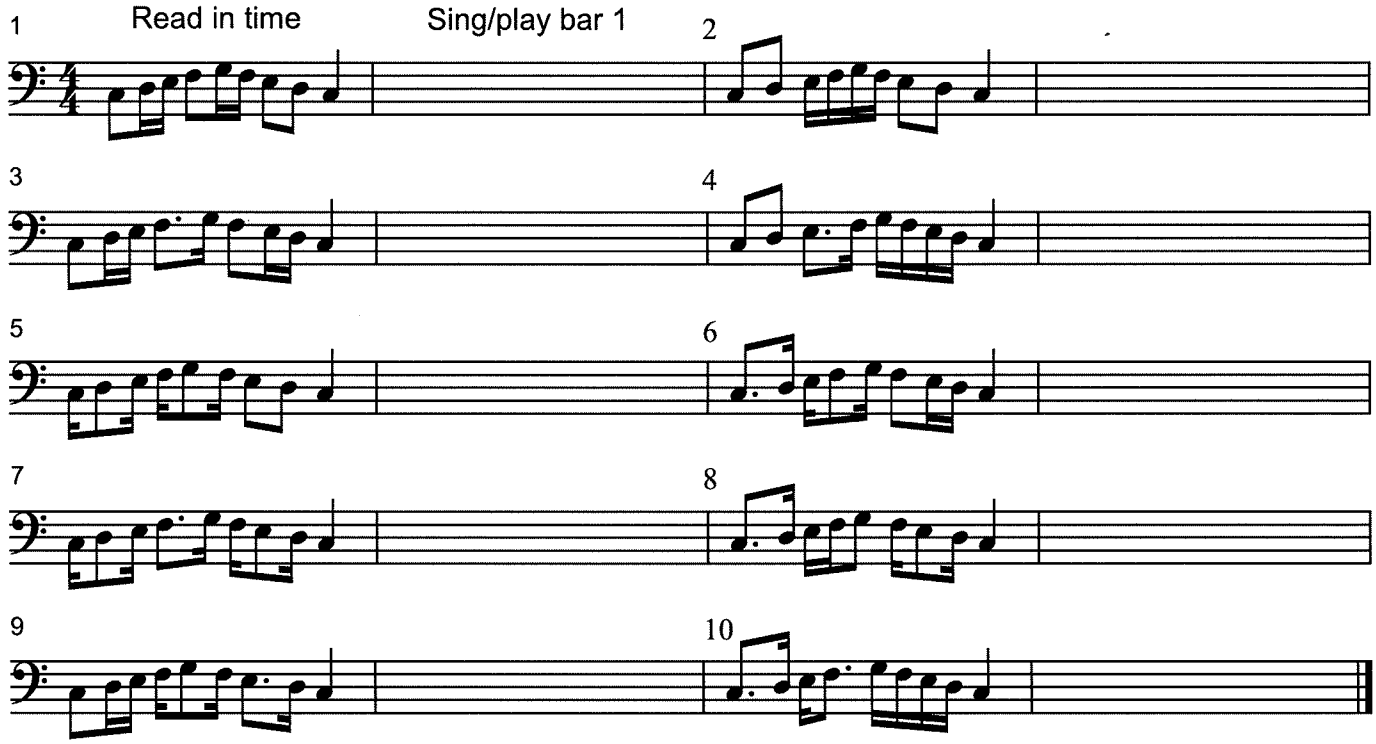
B



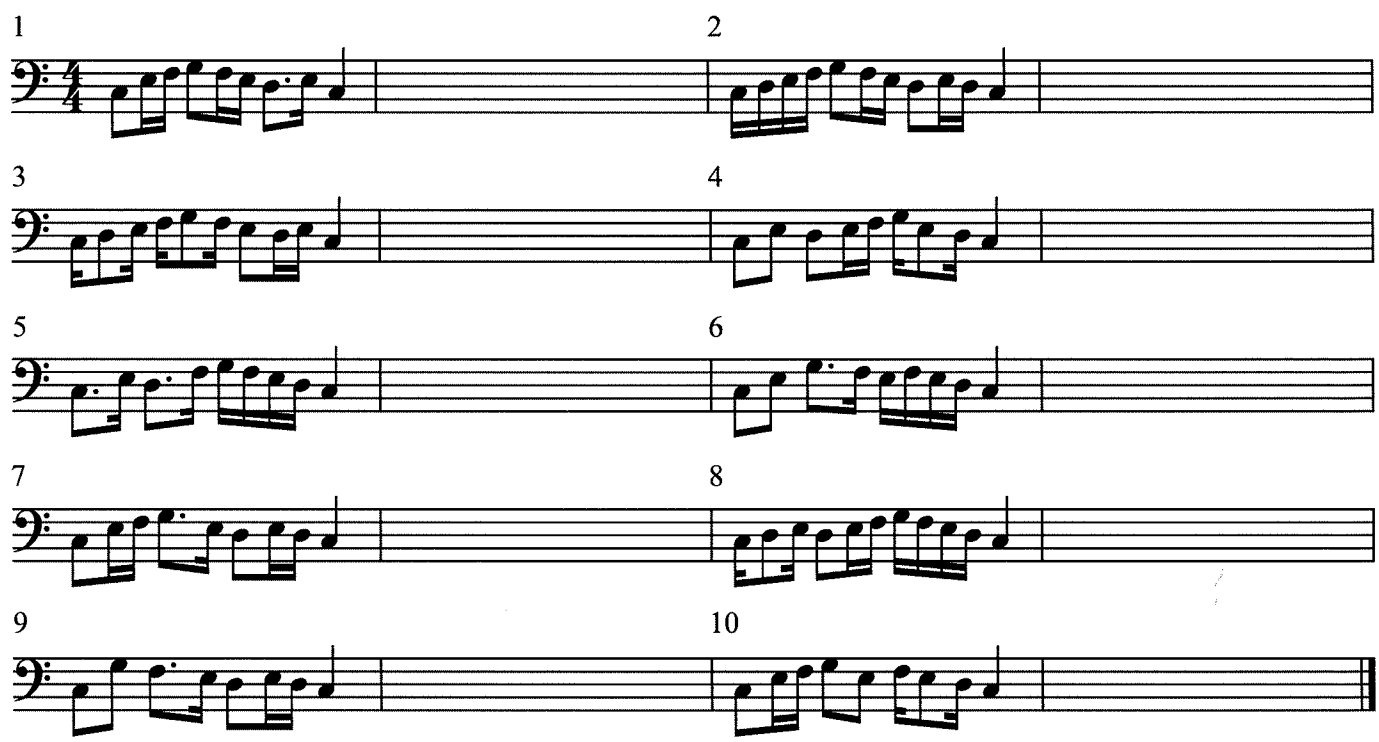
RHYTHMIC VARIATIONS - bass clef

See instructions for Melodic Variations p. 26
Section A: Same melody in all examples, stepwise motion
Section B: Different melodies
Also useful for dictation

A

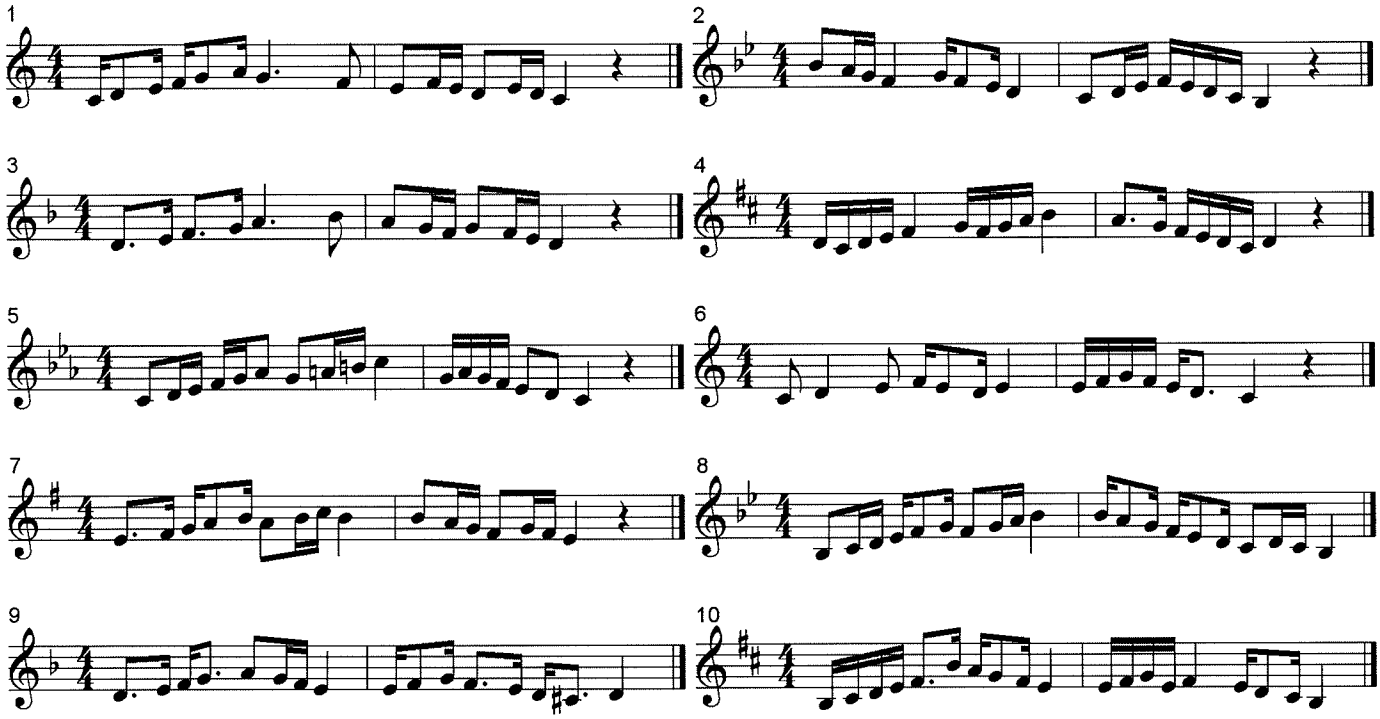


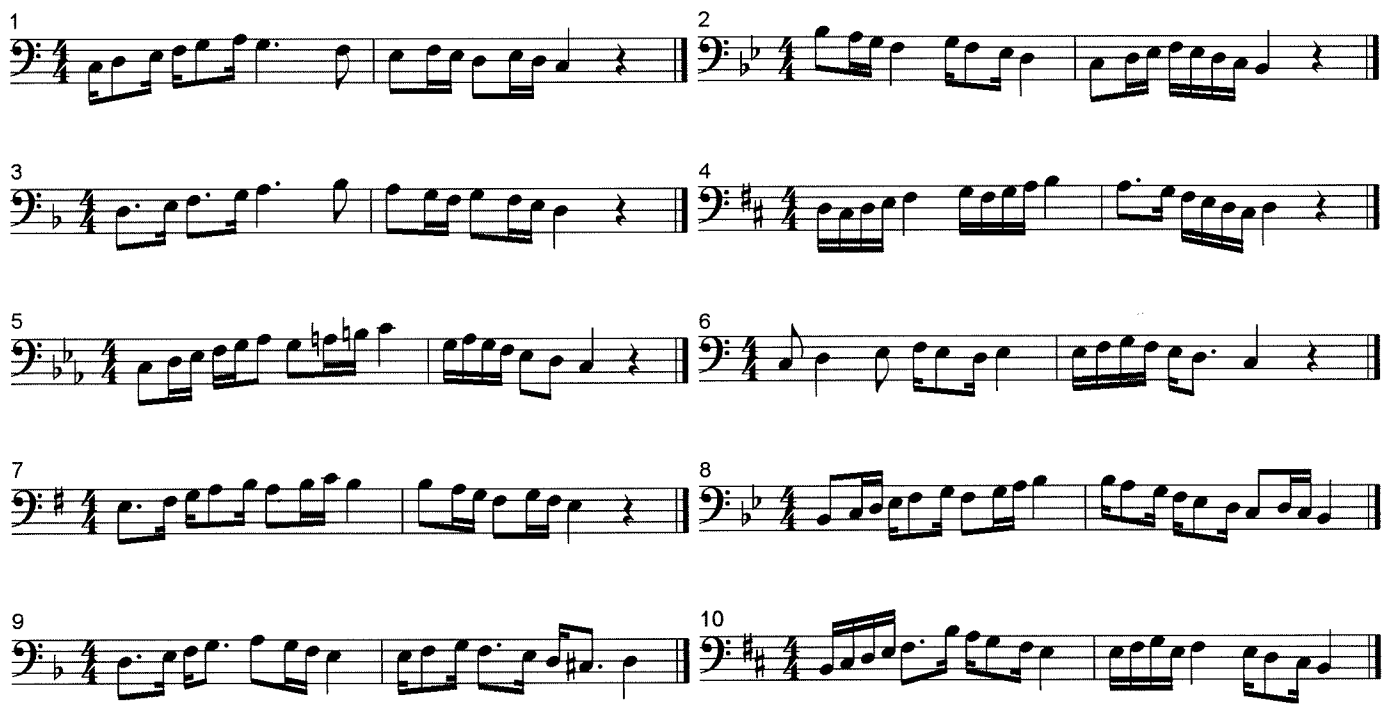
B



EXERCISES 7 - RHYTHMS

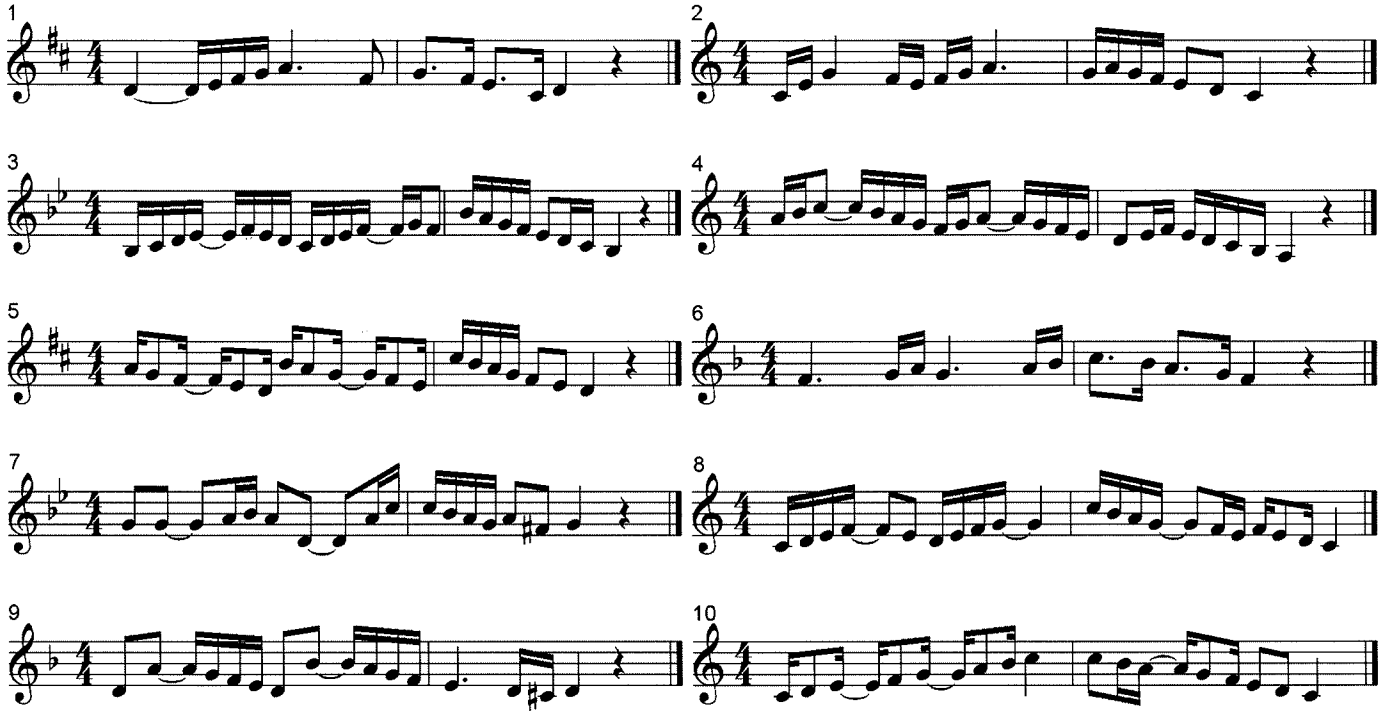
Semiquavers
Melodies based on stepwise motion.
Also useful for dictation
Score in bass clef below

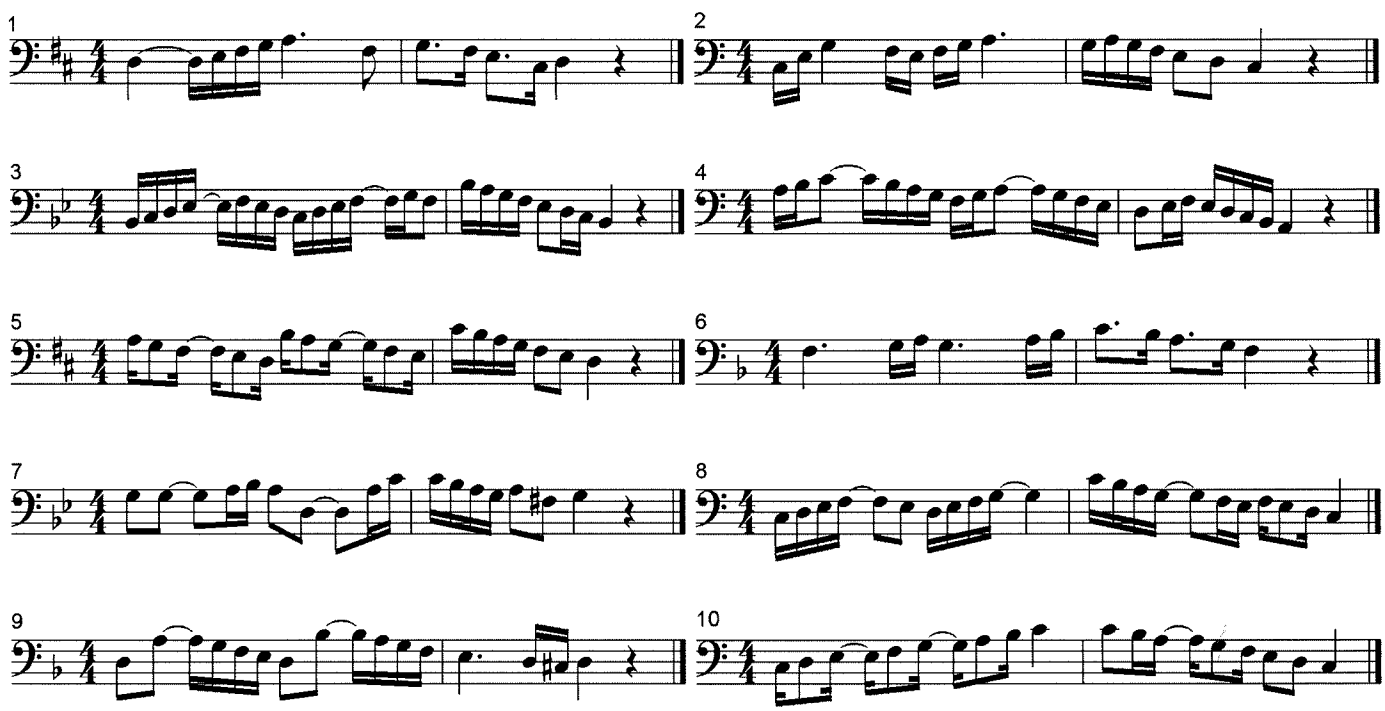




EXERCISES 8 - RHYTHMS

Semiquavers and tied notes
Melodies based on stepwise motion.
Also useful for dictation
Score in bass clef below





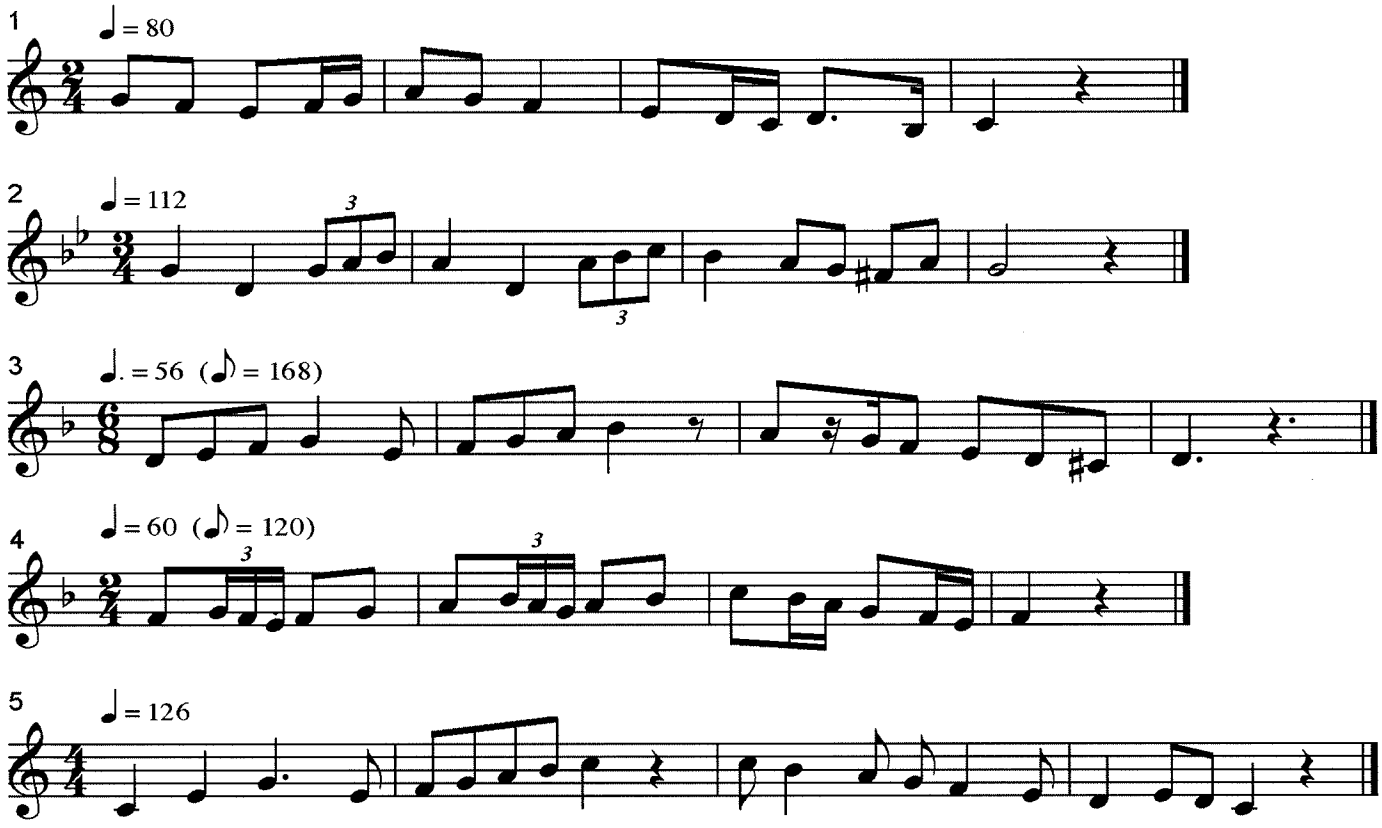
EXERCISES 9 - TEMPO

The tempo of the music is indicated by a metronome mark and/or an Italian term that also indicates the character of the music.
A metronome indicates the number of beats per minute (BPM), and it is either written as a note value plus a number, or by MM plus a number (MM stands for Mälzel's Metronome).
J.H. Mälzel invented the metronome in 1816, and Beethoven was the first composer to make use of a metronomic term for indicating tempo.

Some of the most common indications of tempo are:

Grave	*heavy*, slow and serious. MM approx. 40-50
Largo	*broad*, slow and dignified. MM approx. 40-60
Larghetto	less broad and slow than largo
Lento	*slow*, but less broad than largo
Adagio	*slow*. MM approx. 66-76
Andante	*walking*. MM approx. 76-108. The minuet lies within this range
Andantino	slightly faster than andante
Moderato	*moderate/slightly fast*. MM approx. 108-120. March tempo = 116
Allegretto	less fast than allegro. MM approx. 108-120
Allegro	*fast*, joyful, lively. MM approx. 120-168
Vivace	*lively,* fast. MM approx. 144-168
Presto	*very fast*. MM approx. 168-200

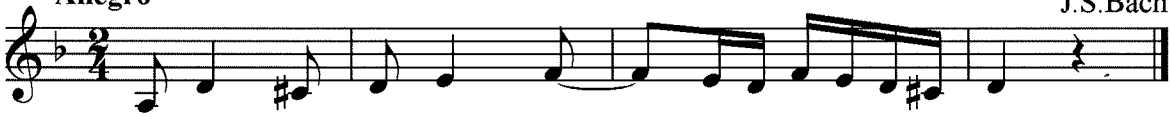
Use a metronome to find the tempo of the exercises below.



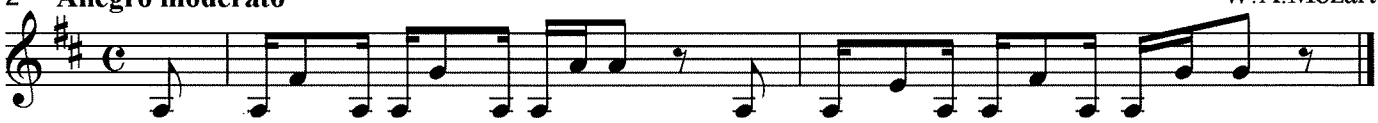
MUSIC EXAMPLES 8

Syncopations and ties, various tempi
Decide key, time and tempo; read the whole phrase in time hearing it internally; play while reading, repeat by memory

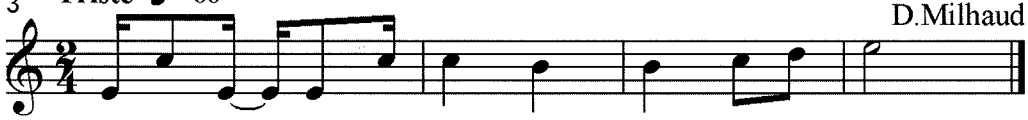
1 **Allegro** J.S.Bach



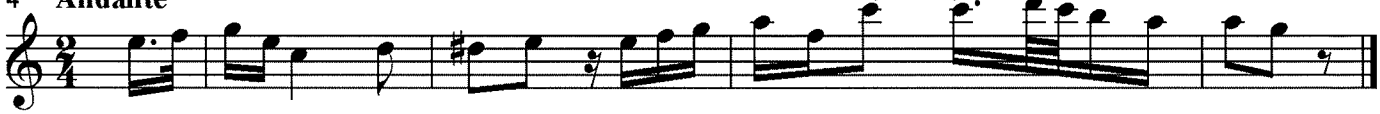
2 **Allegro moderato** W.A.Mozart



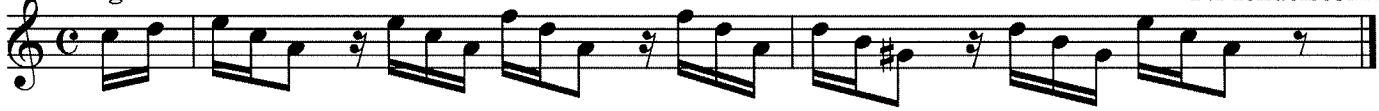
3 **Triste** ♩ = 88 D.Milhaud



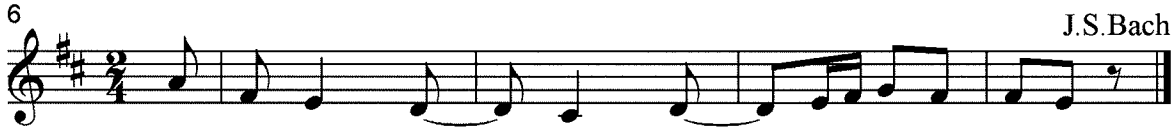
4 **Andante** W.A.Mozart



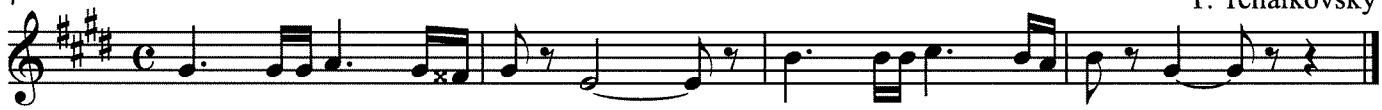
5 **Allegro con fuoco** [1] F.Mendelssohn



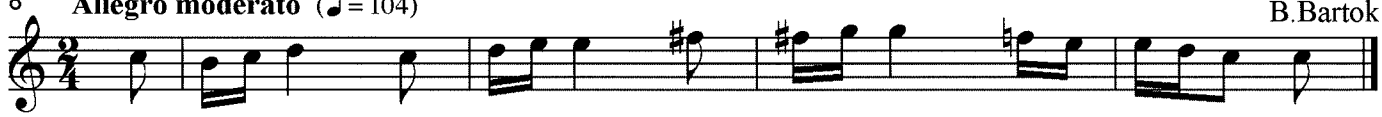
6 J.S.Bach



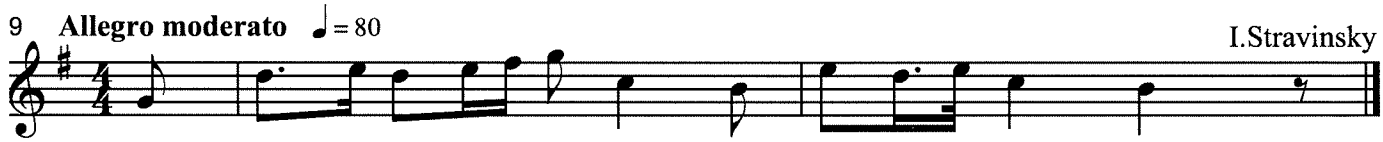
7 **Andante maestoso** [2] P. Tchaikovsky



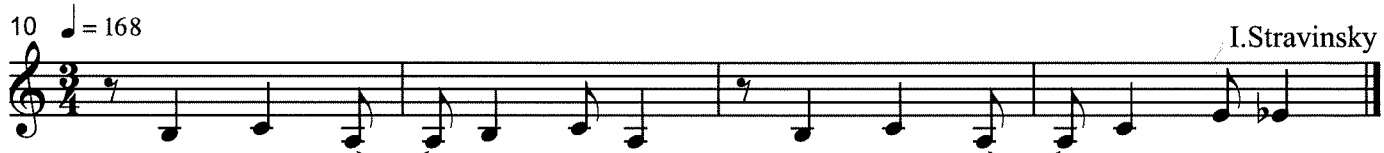
8 **Allegro moderato** (♩ = 104) B.Bartok



9 **Allegro moderato** ♩ = 80 I.Stravinsky



10 ♩ = 168 I.Stravinsky

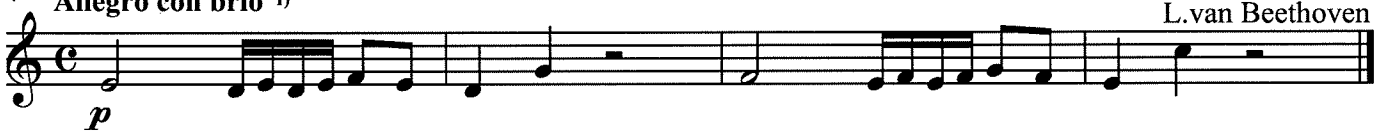


[1] con fuoco = with fire; in a fiery manner [2] maestoso = majestically

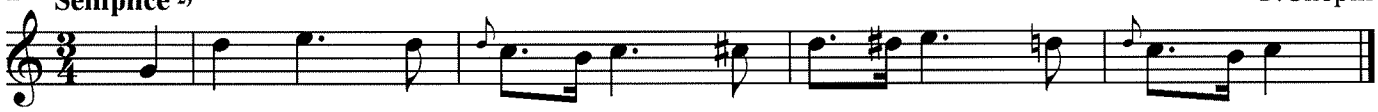
MUSIC EXAMPLES 9

Decide key, time and tempo; read the whole phrase in time hearing it internally; play while reading, repeat by memory

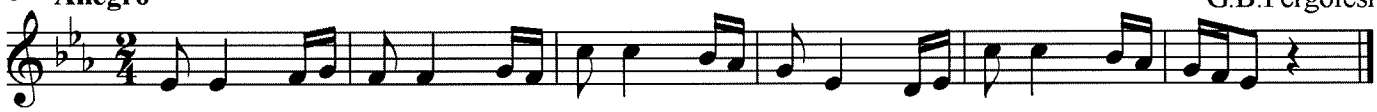
1 **Allegro con brio** [1] L.van Beethoven



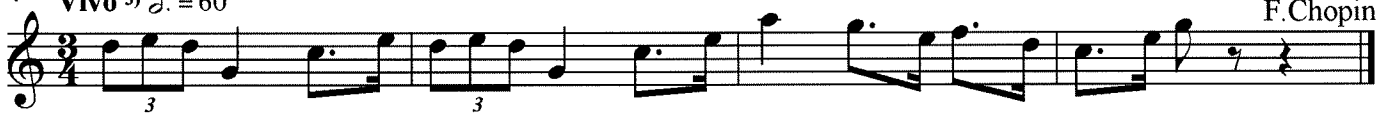
2 **Semplice** [2] F.Chopin



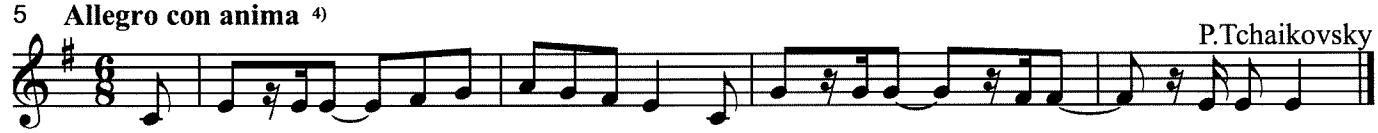
3 **Allegro** G.B.Pergolesi



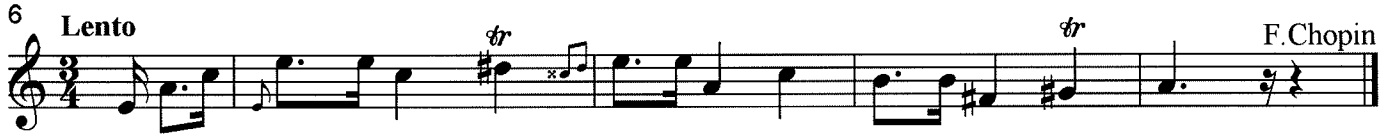
4 **Vivo** [3] ♩. = 60 F.Chopin



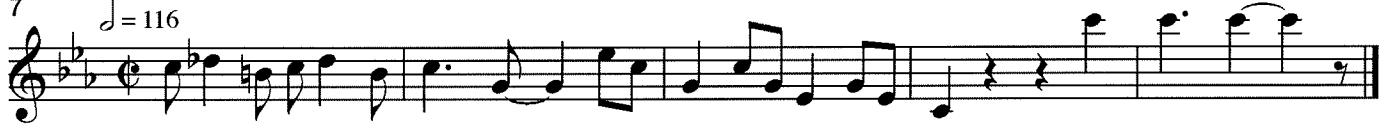
5 **Allegro con anima** [4] P.Tchaikovsky



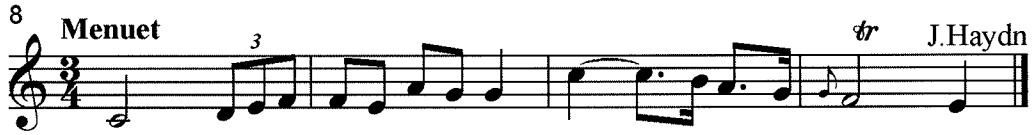
6 **Lento** F.Chopin



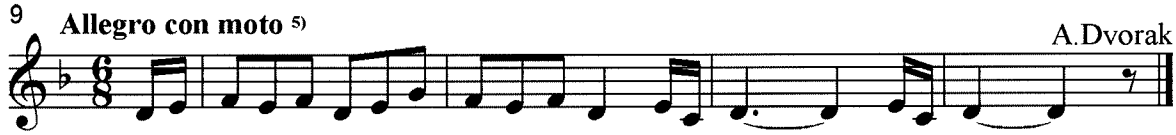
7 ♩ = 116 C.Corea



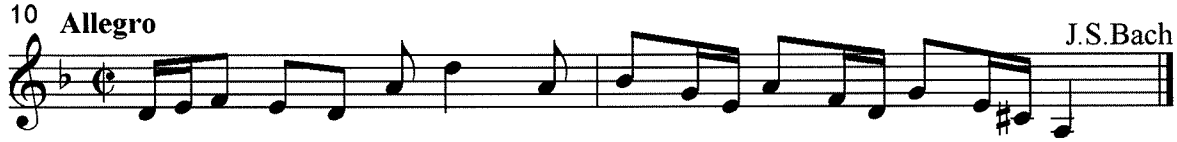
8 **Menuet** J.Haydn



9 **Allegro con moto** [5] A.Dvorak



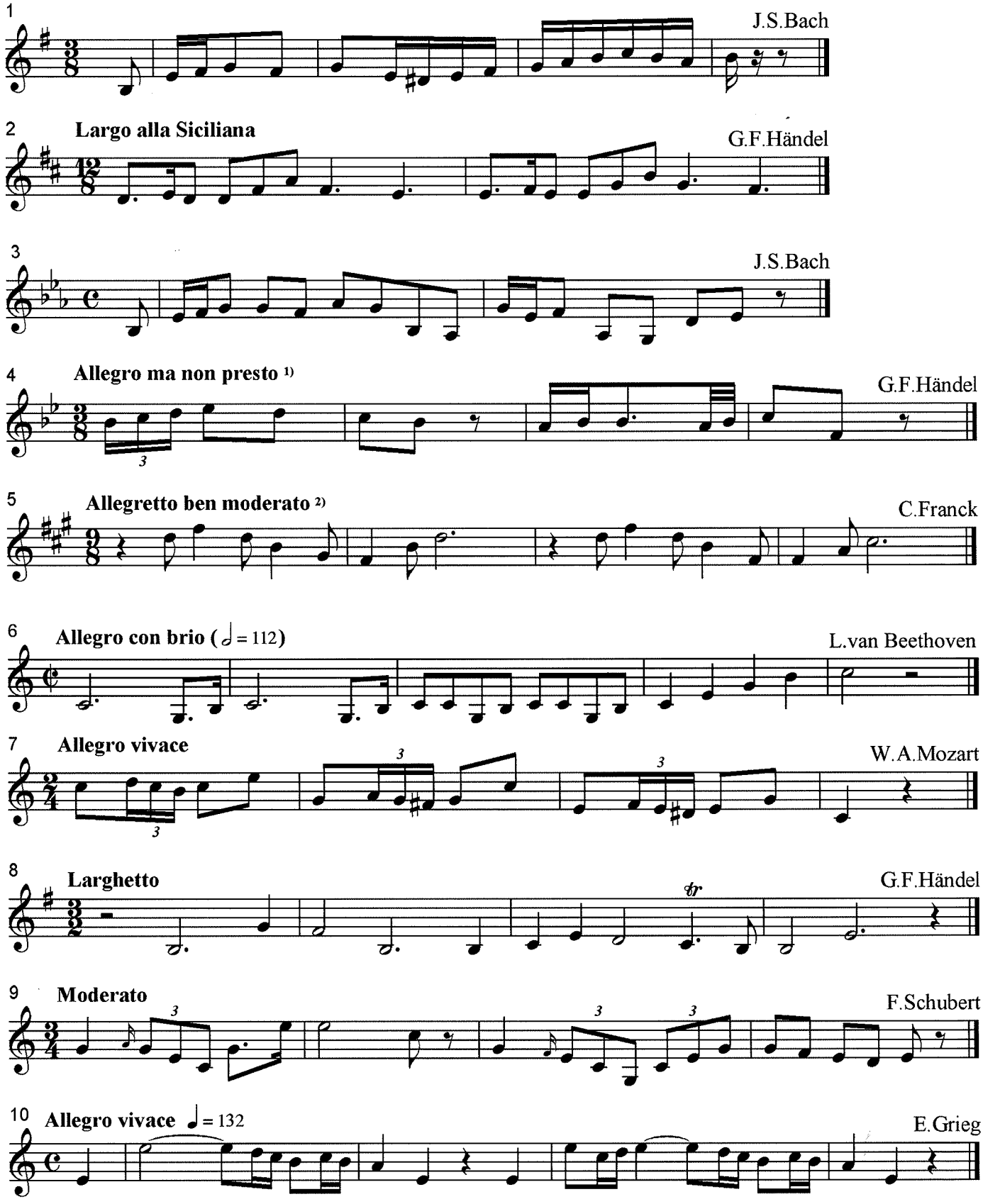
10 **Allegro** J.S.Bach



[1] con brio = with great energy; vigorously
[2] semplice = simple
[3] vivo = with life
[4] con anima = expressive
[5] con moto = lively

MUSIC EXAMPLES 10

Various rhythms and times

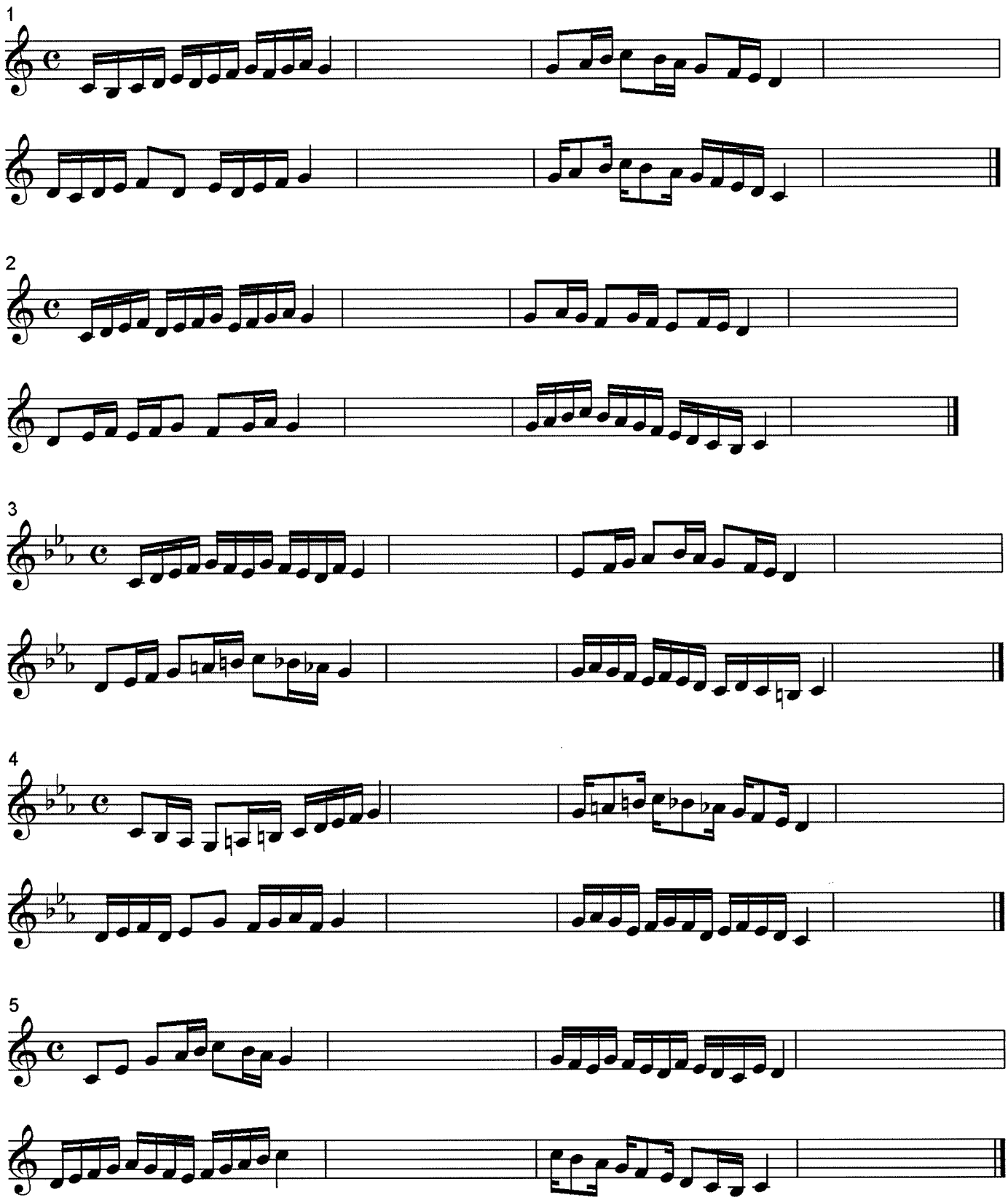


1) ma non = but not

2) ben = well (stressing the following word)

EXERCISES 10 - SEQUENCES 1

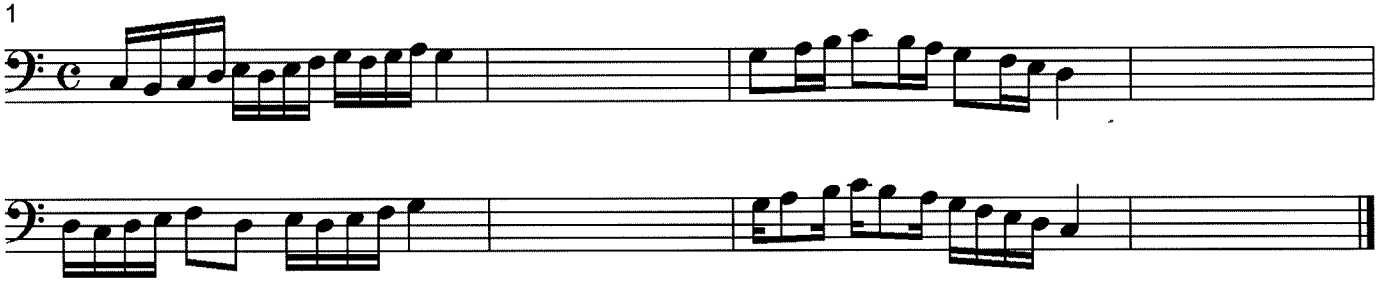
Read a whole bar in time - look away and sing/play
Score in bass clef at next page



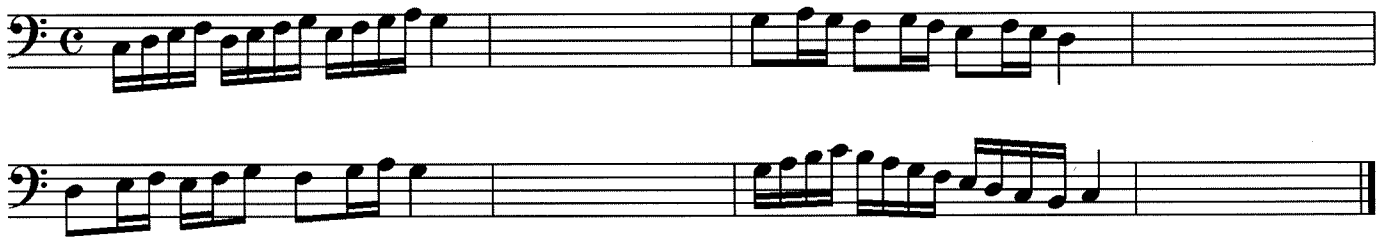
EXERCISES 10 - SEQUENCES 1 - bass clef

Read a whole bar in time - look away and sing/play

1



2



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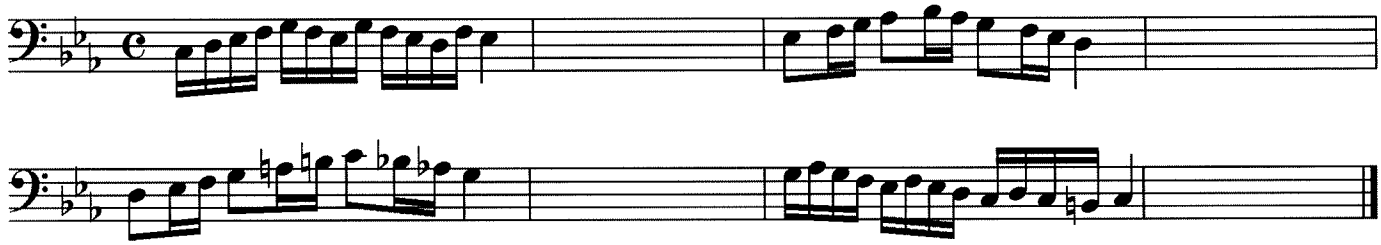

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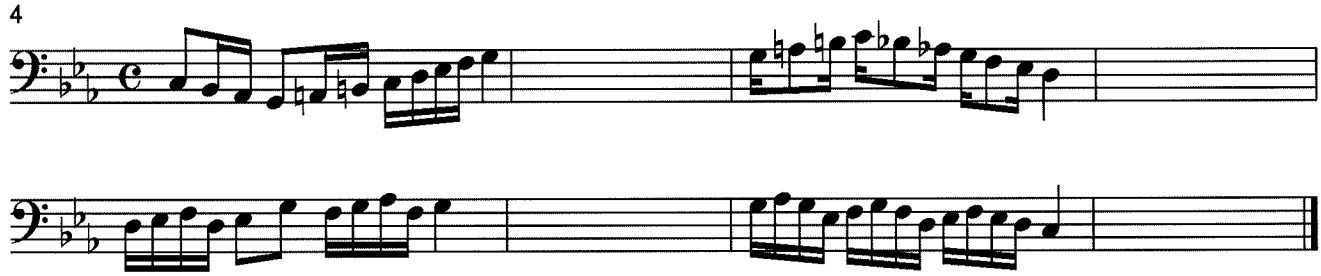

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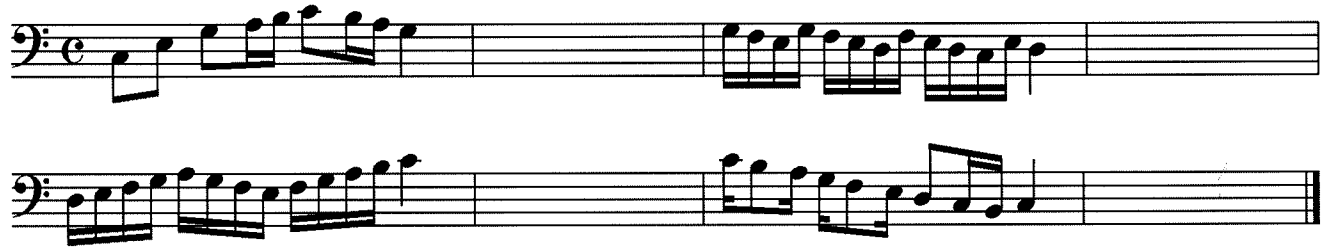
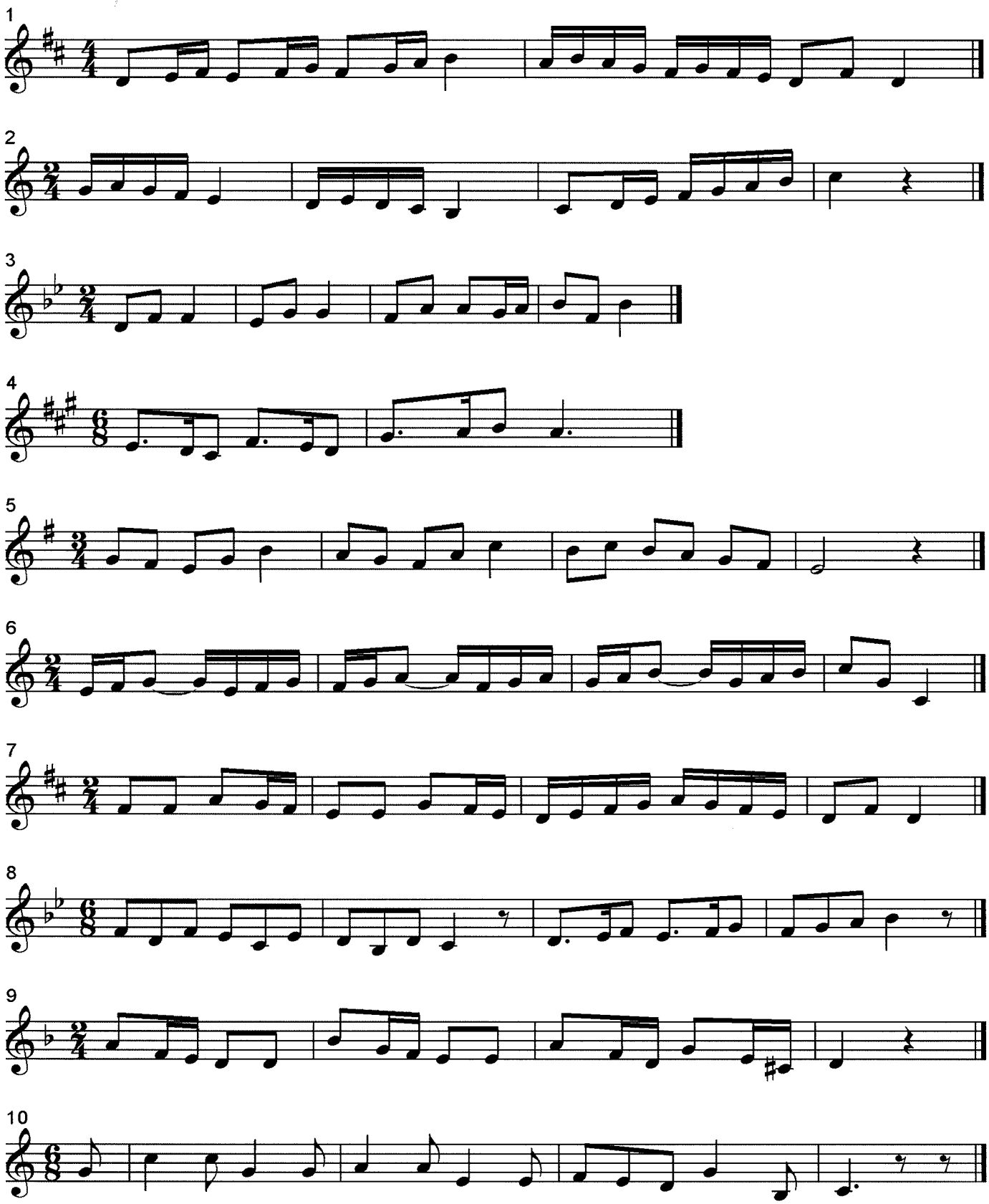


EXERCISES 11 - SEQUENCES 2

Read, remember, sing/play by memory
Score in bass clef at next page

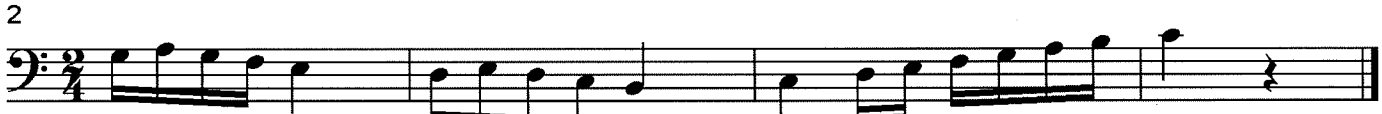


EXERCISES 11 - SEQUENCES 2 - bass clef

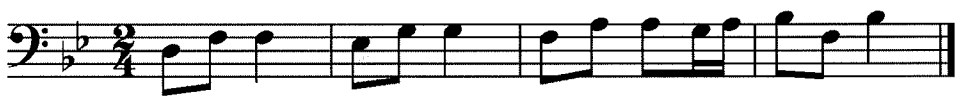
Read, remember, sing/play by memory

1

2



3



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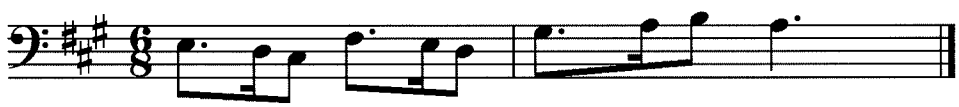

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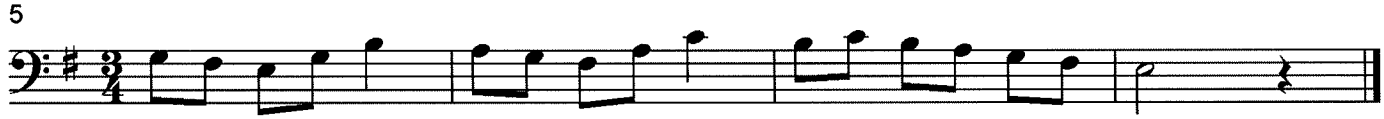
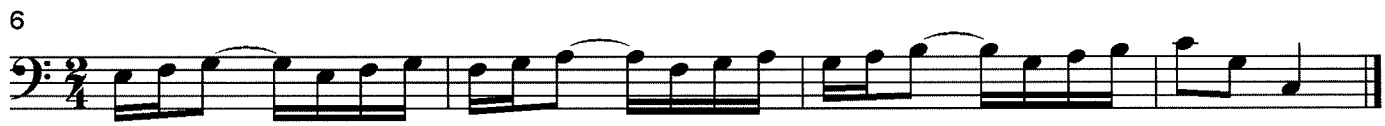


6



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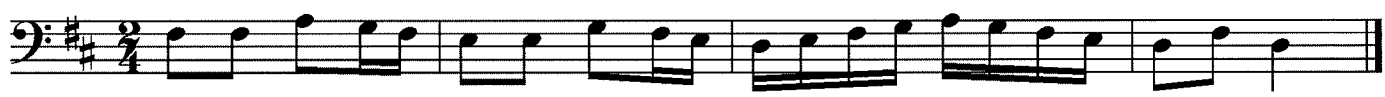

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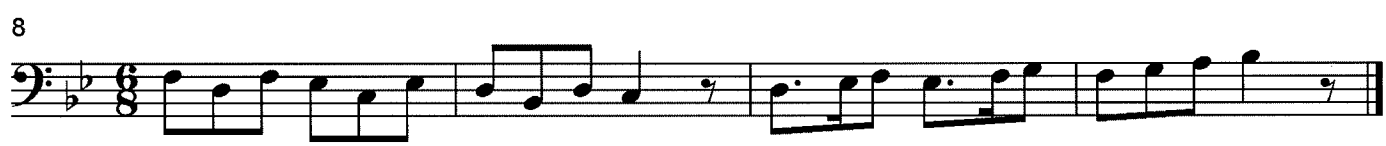
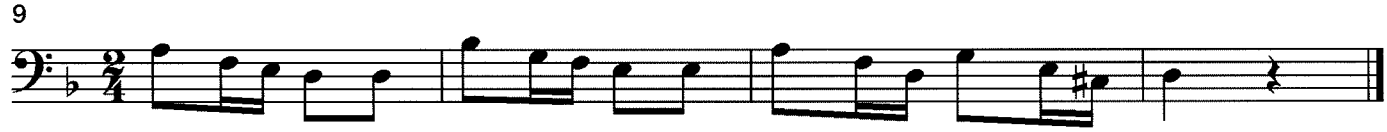


9



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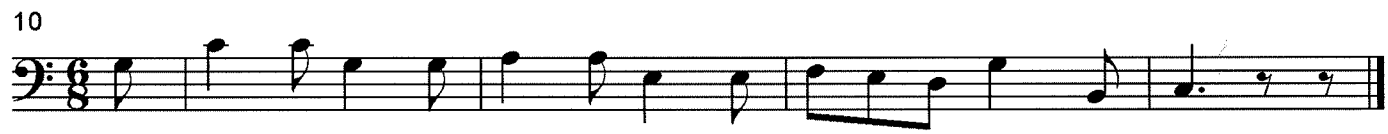
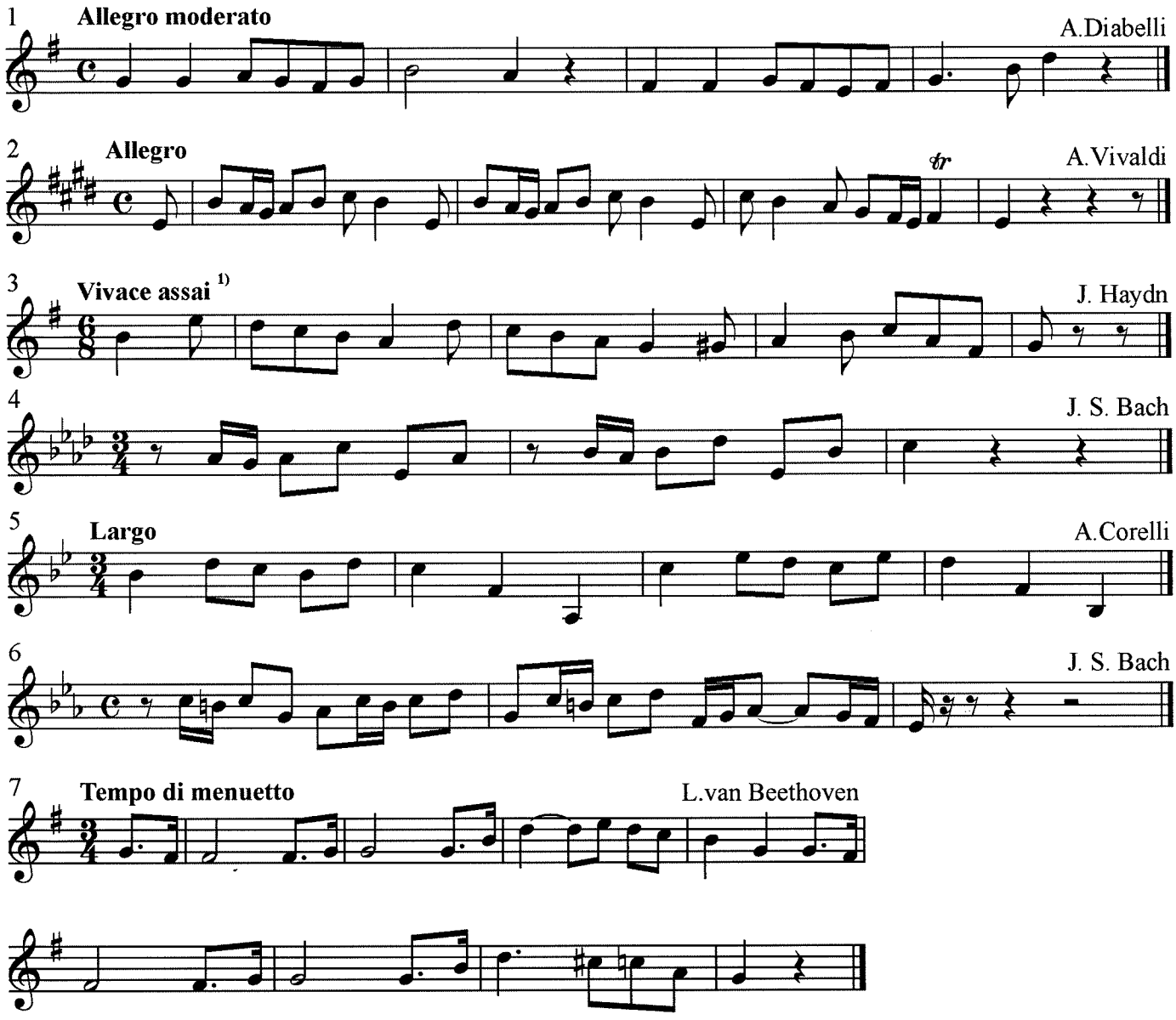


MUSIC EXAMPLES 11

Preparation for sight-playing

Make a short and effective study of the music before playing:

- Decide the key
- Decide the time and tempo / character
- Read the whole piece in time, hearing the music inside your head. Notice as much as possible (repetitions/sequences, accidentals, rhythmical figures, articulation marks etc.)
- Establish tempo and pulse, get a clear imagination of the first bars - and play.
  Continue even if there should be mistakes.
  Read ahead, keep the concentration, and play with musical expression

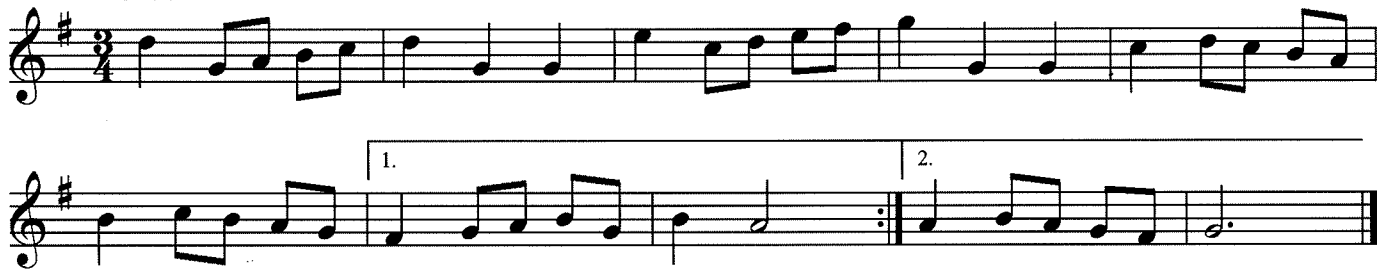


1) assai = very

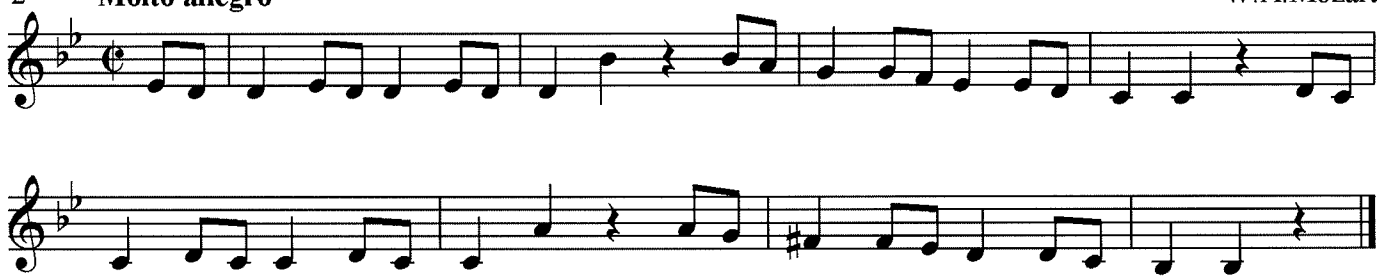
MUSIC EXAMPLES 12

Sequences and a-a' form
Longer extracts

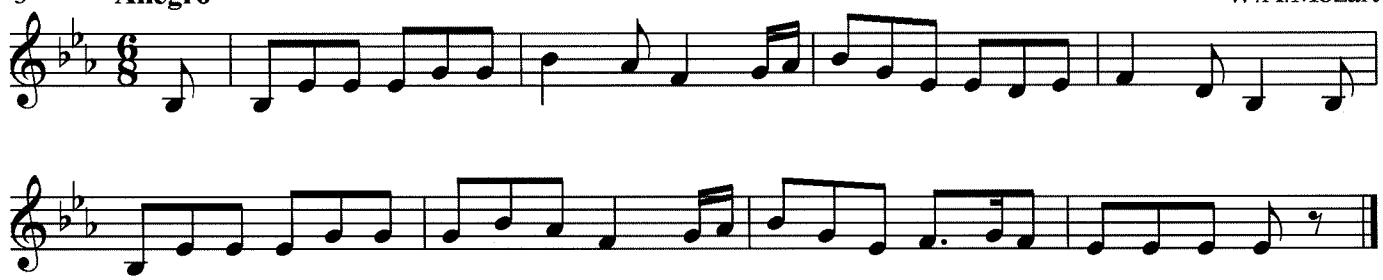
1 **Menuet** J.S.Bach



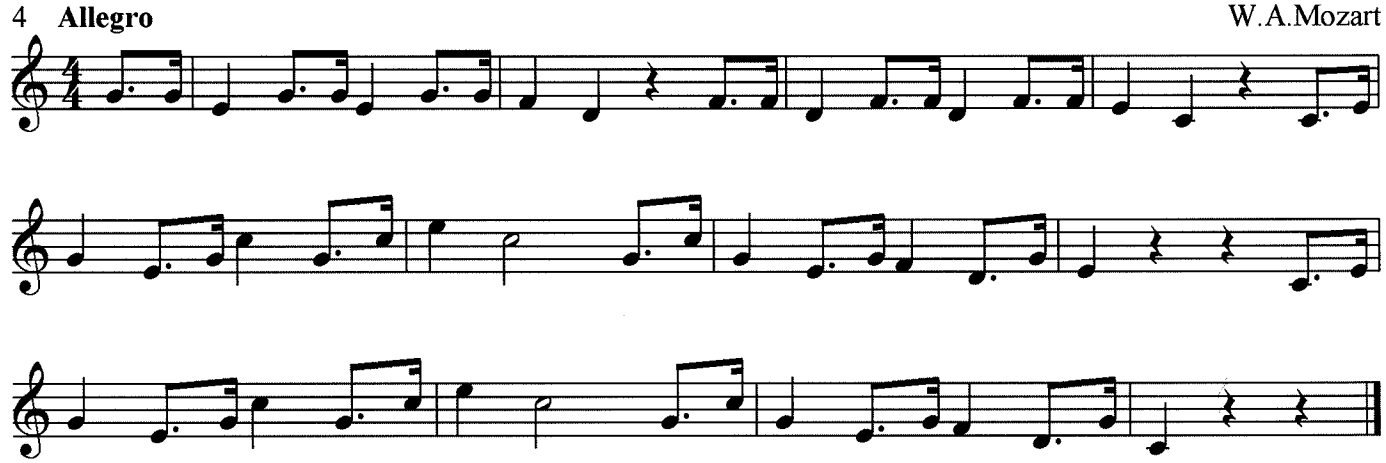
2 **Molto allegro** [1] W.A.Mozart



3 **Allegro** W.A.Mozart



4 **Allegro** W.A.Mozart

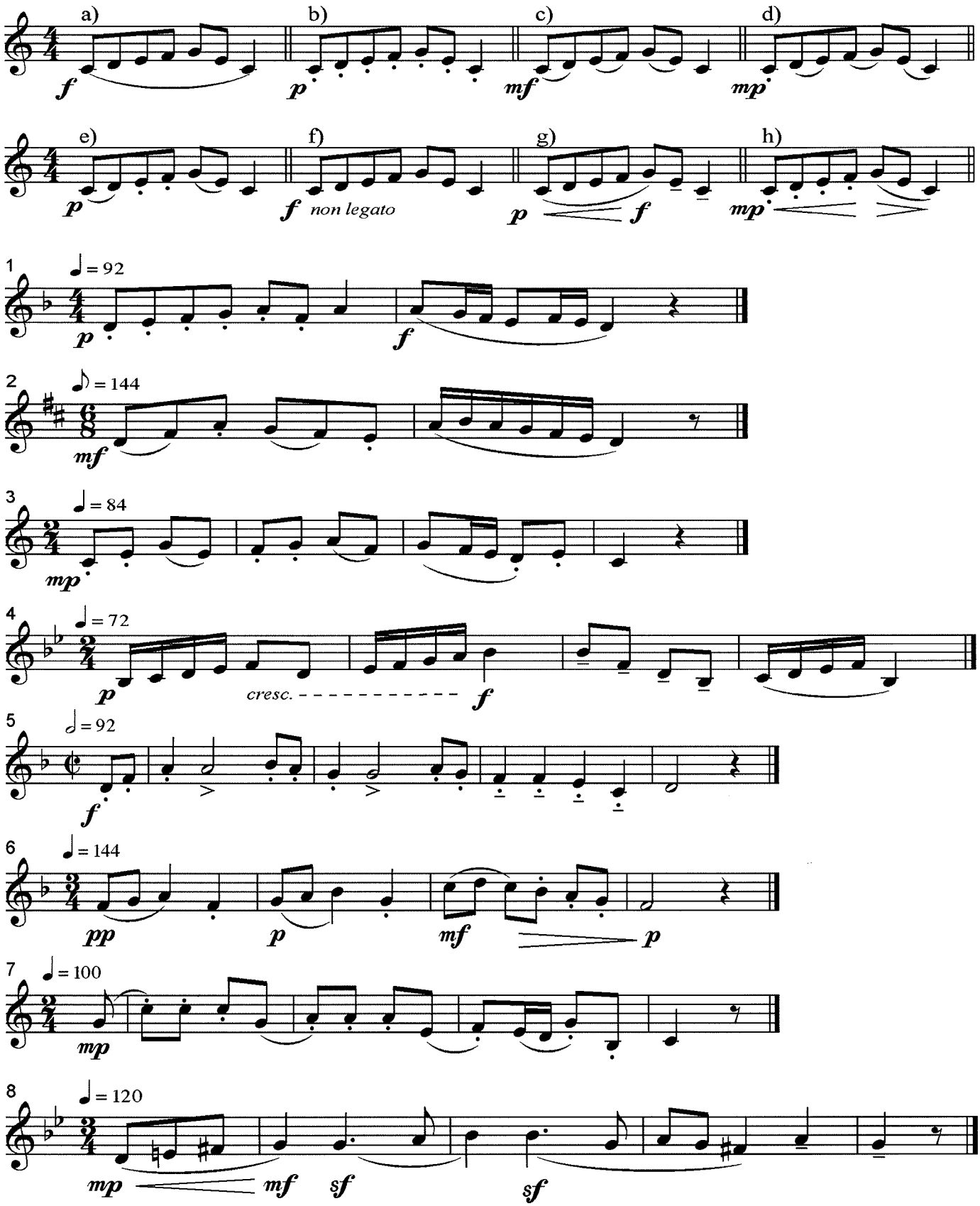


[1] molto = very

EXERCISES 12

Phrasing, articulation, dynamics
Score in bass clef at next page

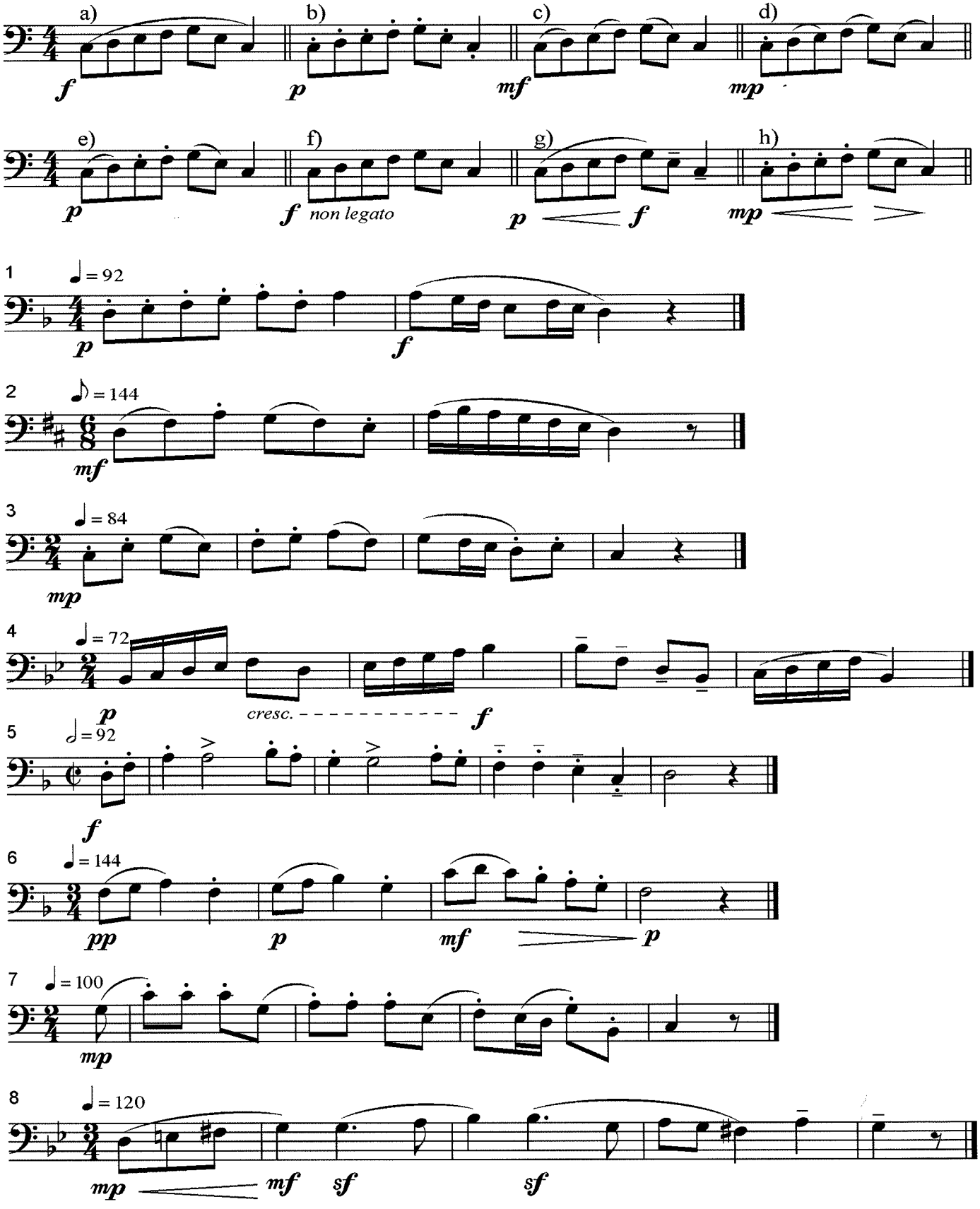
Preparation exercises



EXERCISES 12 - bass clef

Phrasing, articulation, dynamics

Preparation exercises

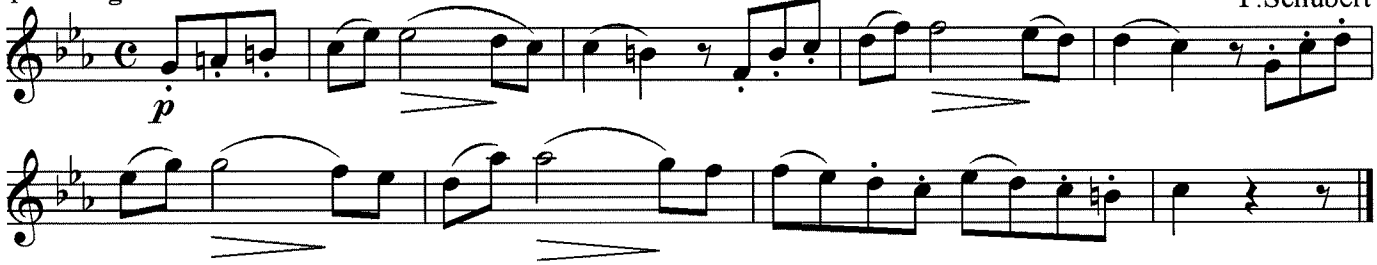


MUSIC EXAMPLES 13

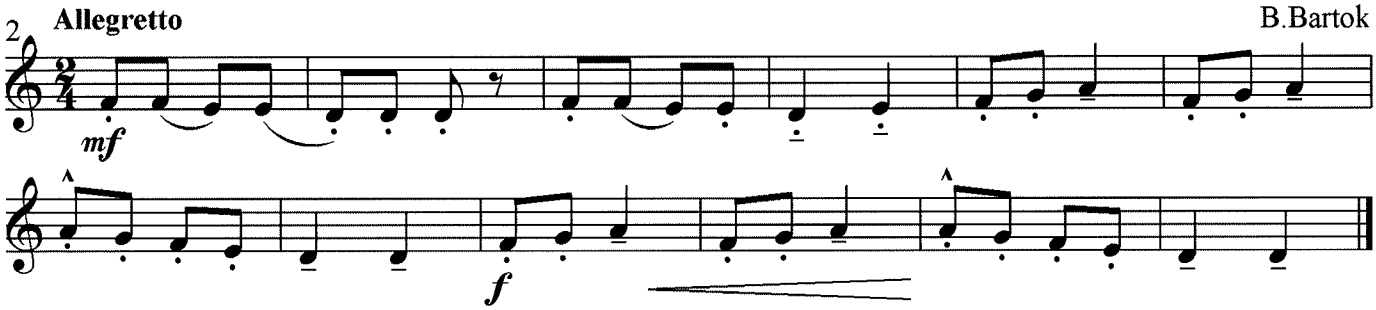
Phrasing, articulation, dynamics

a) Decide key, time and tempo
b) Read through the piece, imaging the sounding music
c) Play (if needed: play first in a slower tempo)

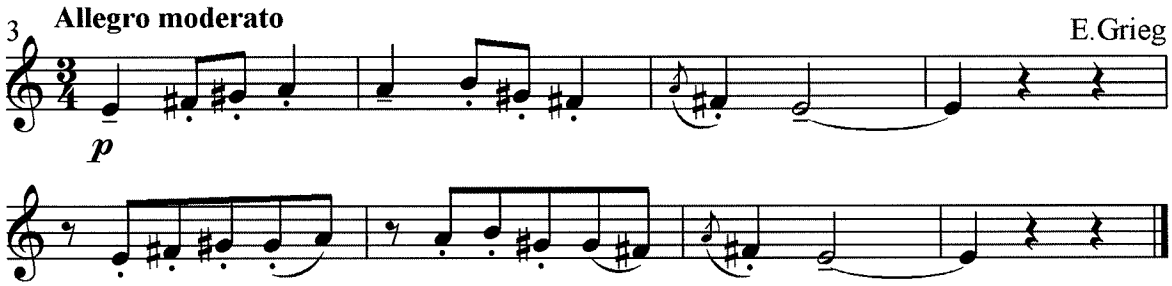
1 **Allegro vivace** F.Schubert



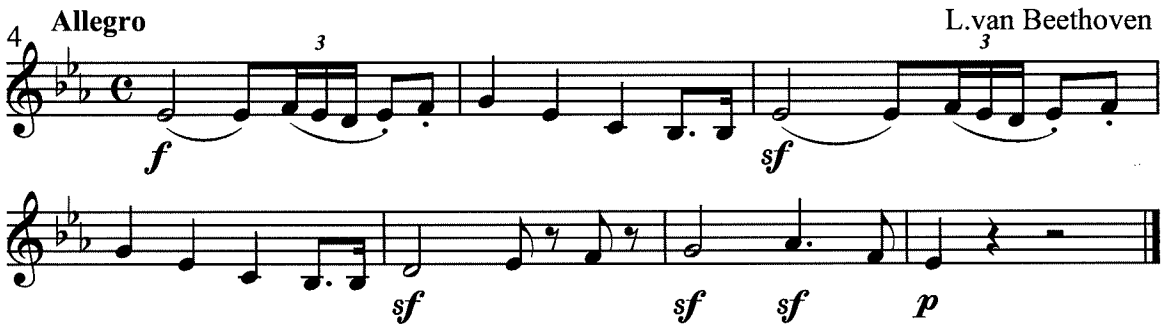
2 **Allegretto** B.Bartok



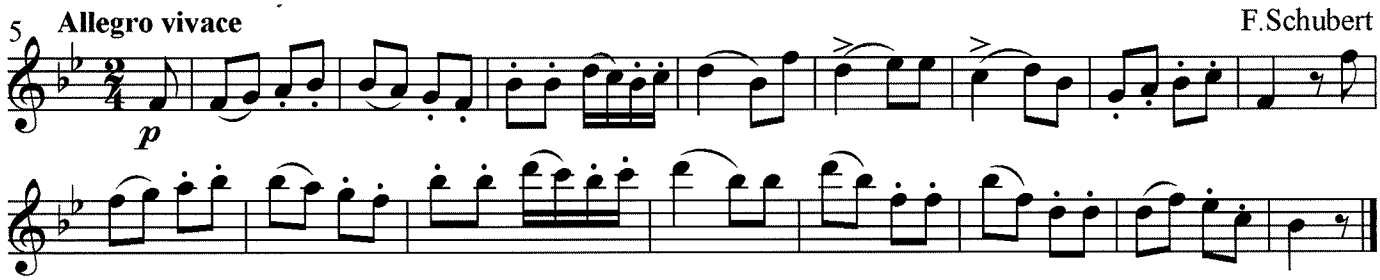
3 **Allegro moderato** E.Grieg



4 **Allegro** L.van Beethoven

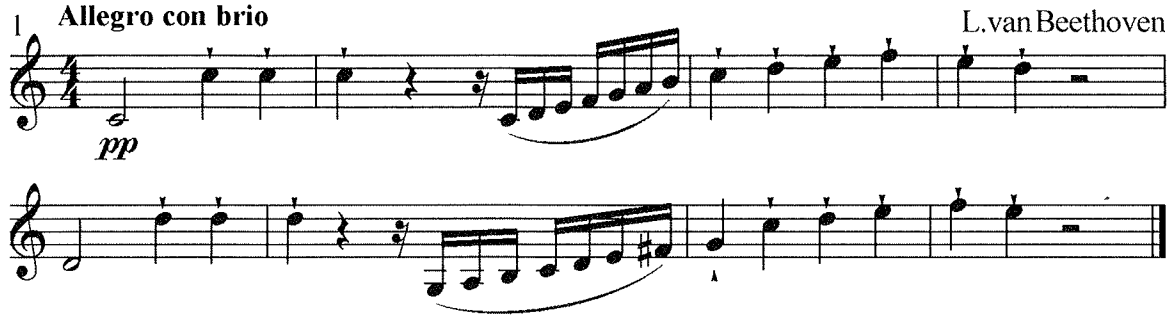


5 **Allegro vivace** F.Schubert

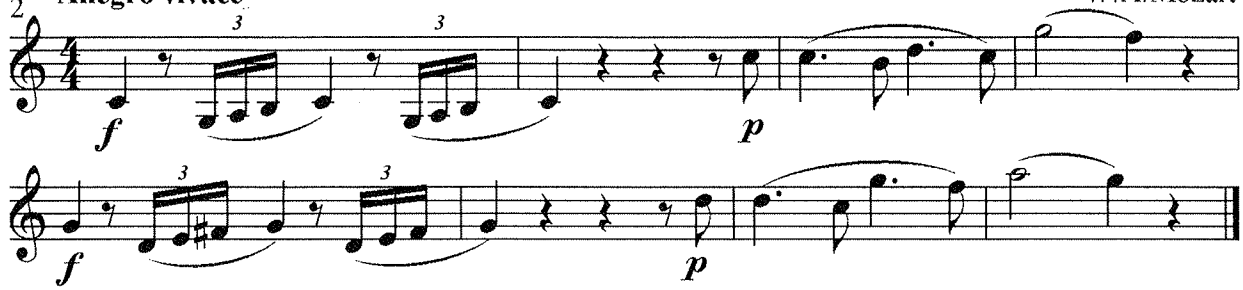


MUSIC EXAMPLES 14

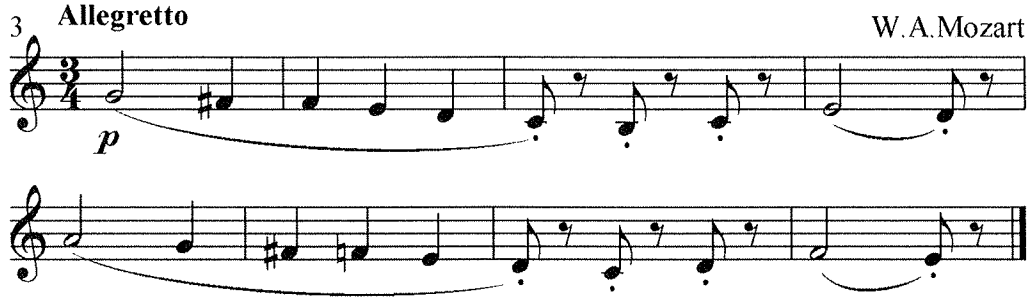
1 **Allegro con brio** L.van Beethoven



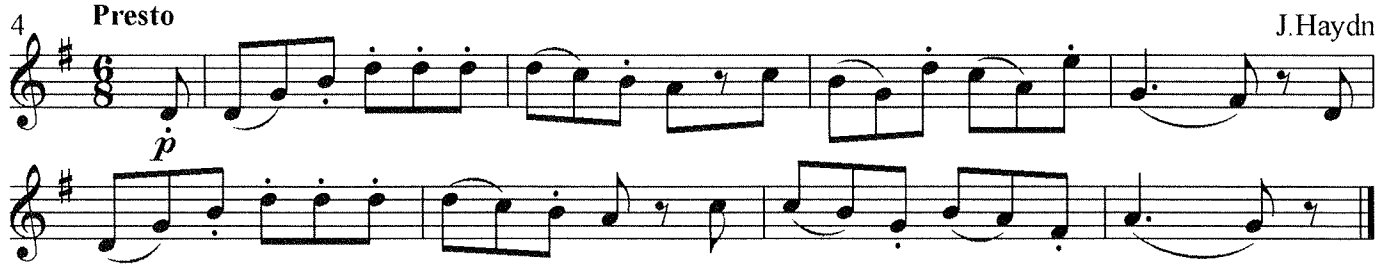
2 **Allegro vivace** W.A.Mozart



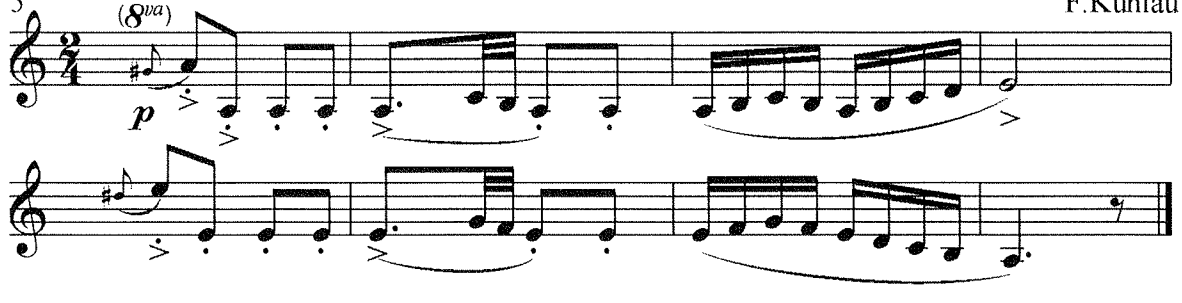
3 **Allegretto** W.A.Mozart



4 **Presto** J.Haydn



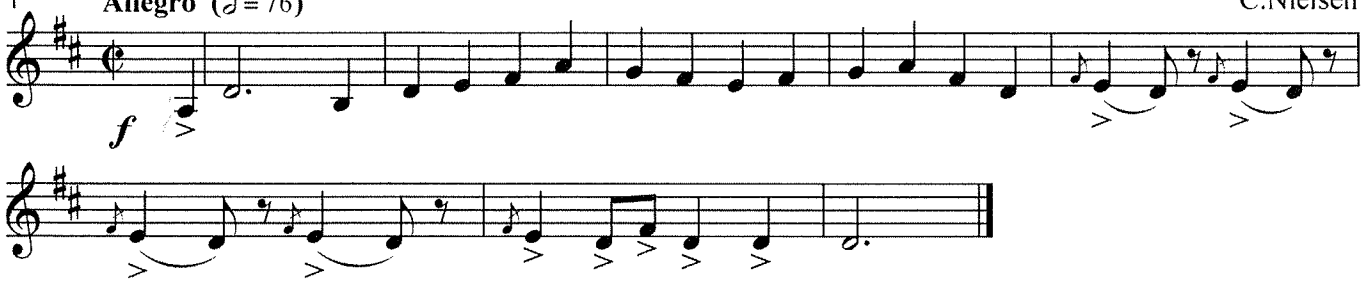
5 **Allegro Burlesco** [1] F.Kuhlau



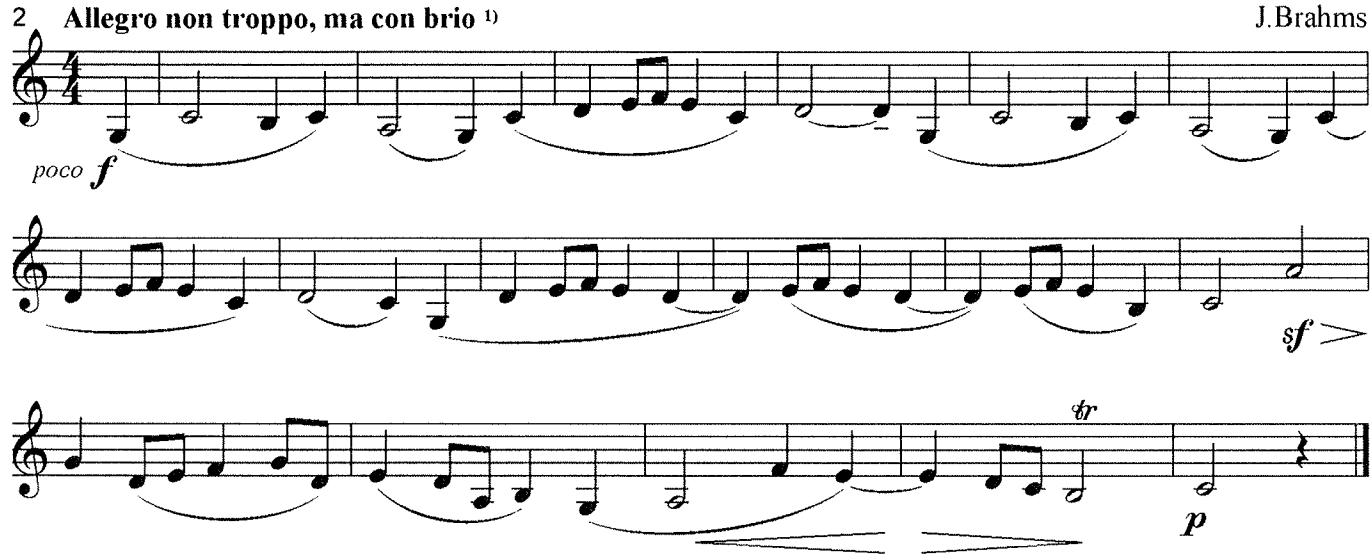
[1] burlesco = burlesque

MUSIC EXAMPLES 15

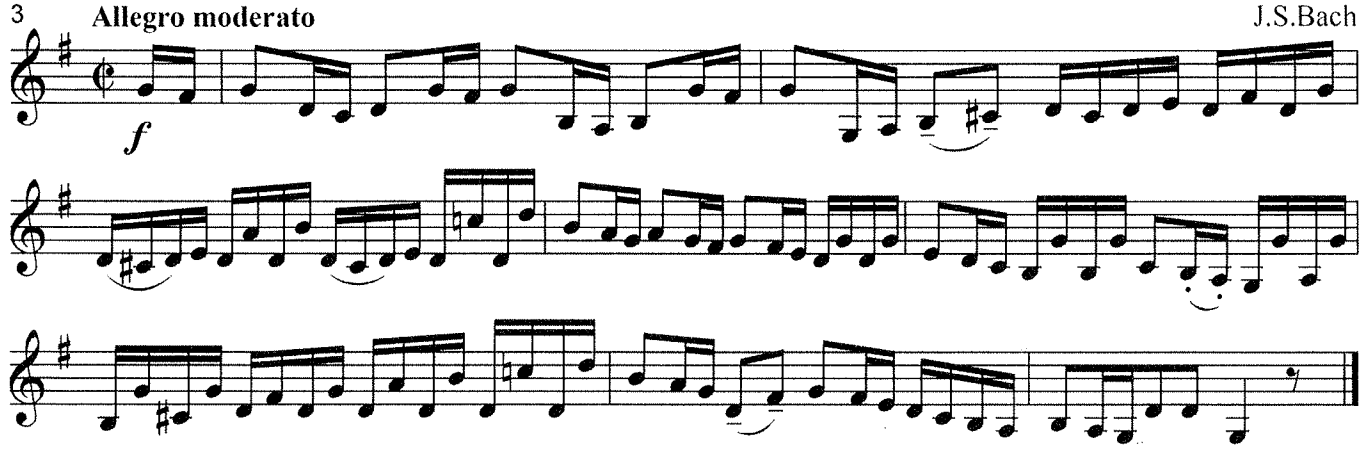
1 **Allegro** (♩ = 76) C.Nielsen



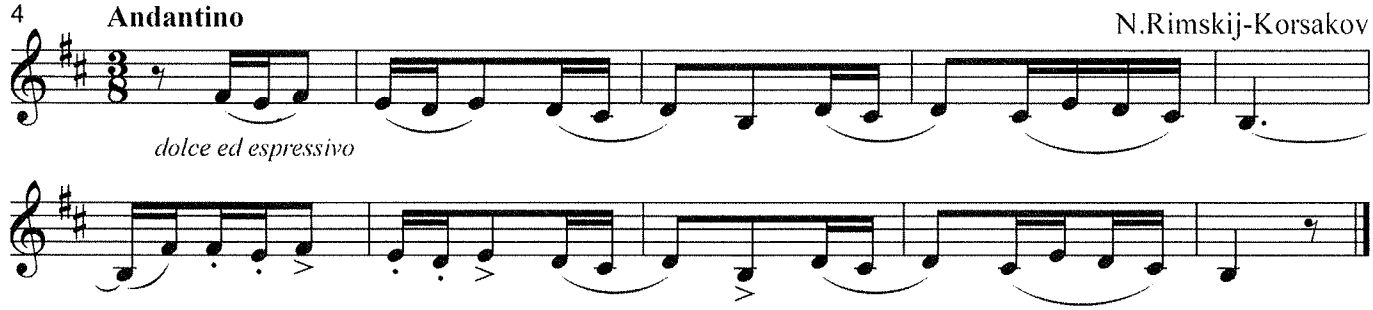
2 **Allegro non troppo, ma con brio** [1] J.Brahms



3 **Allegro moderato** J.S.Bach



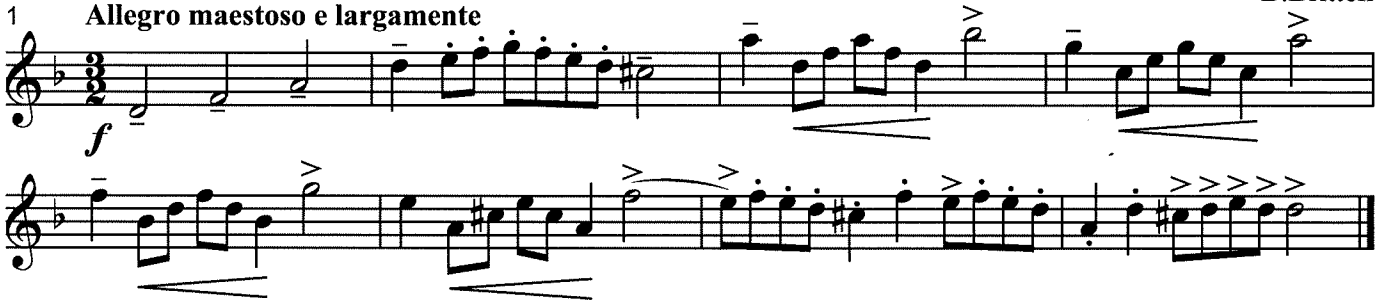
4 **Andantino** N.Rimskij-Korsakov



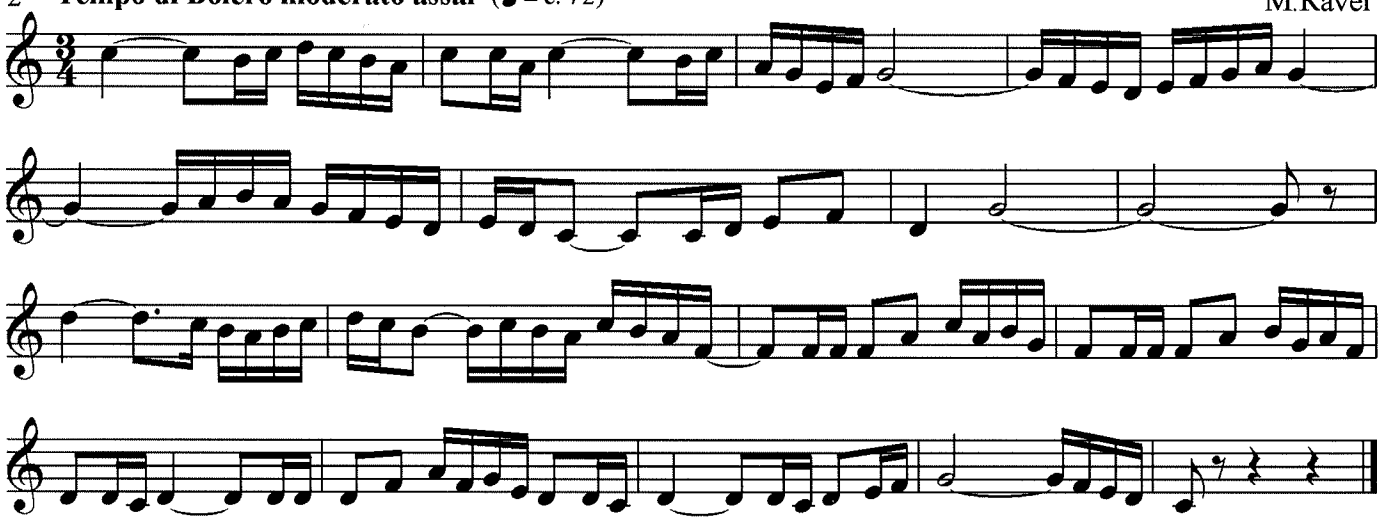
[1] non troppo = not too much; ma con = but with

MUSIC EXAMPLES 16

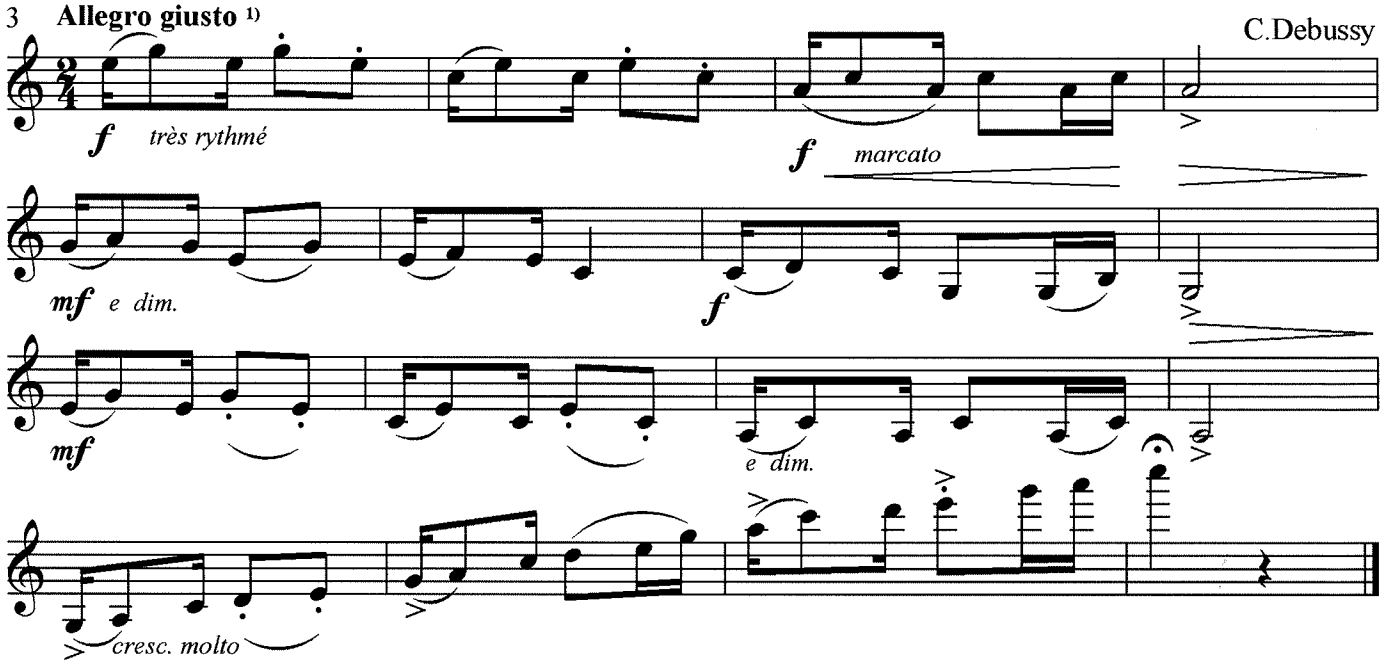
1 **Allegro maestoso e largamente** B.Britten



2 **Tempo di Bolero moderato assai** (♩ = c. 72) M.Ravel

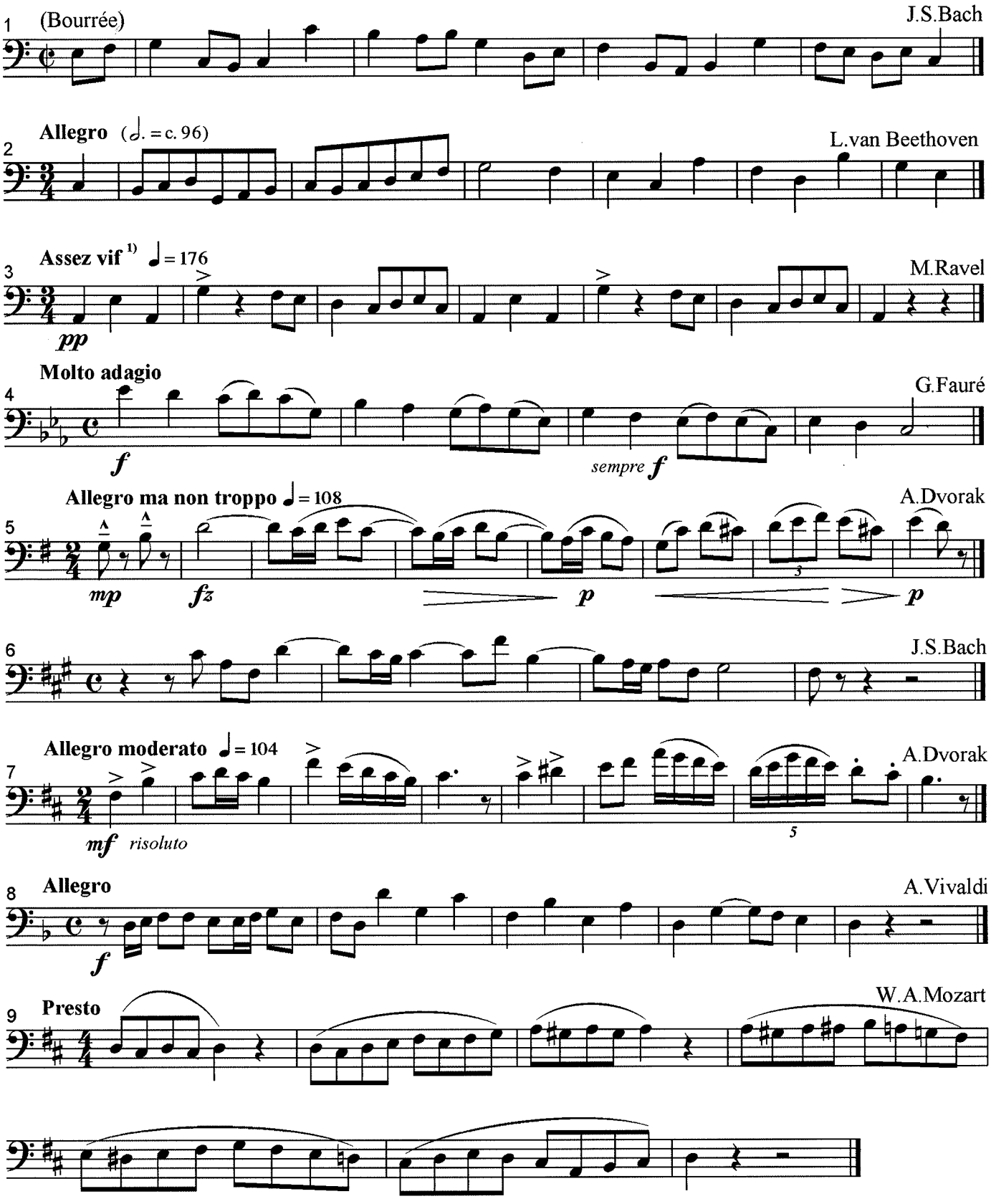


3 **Allegro giusto** [1] C.Debussy



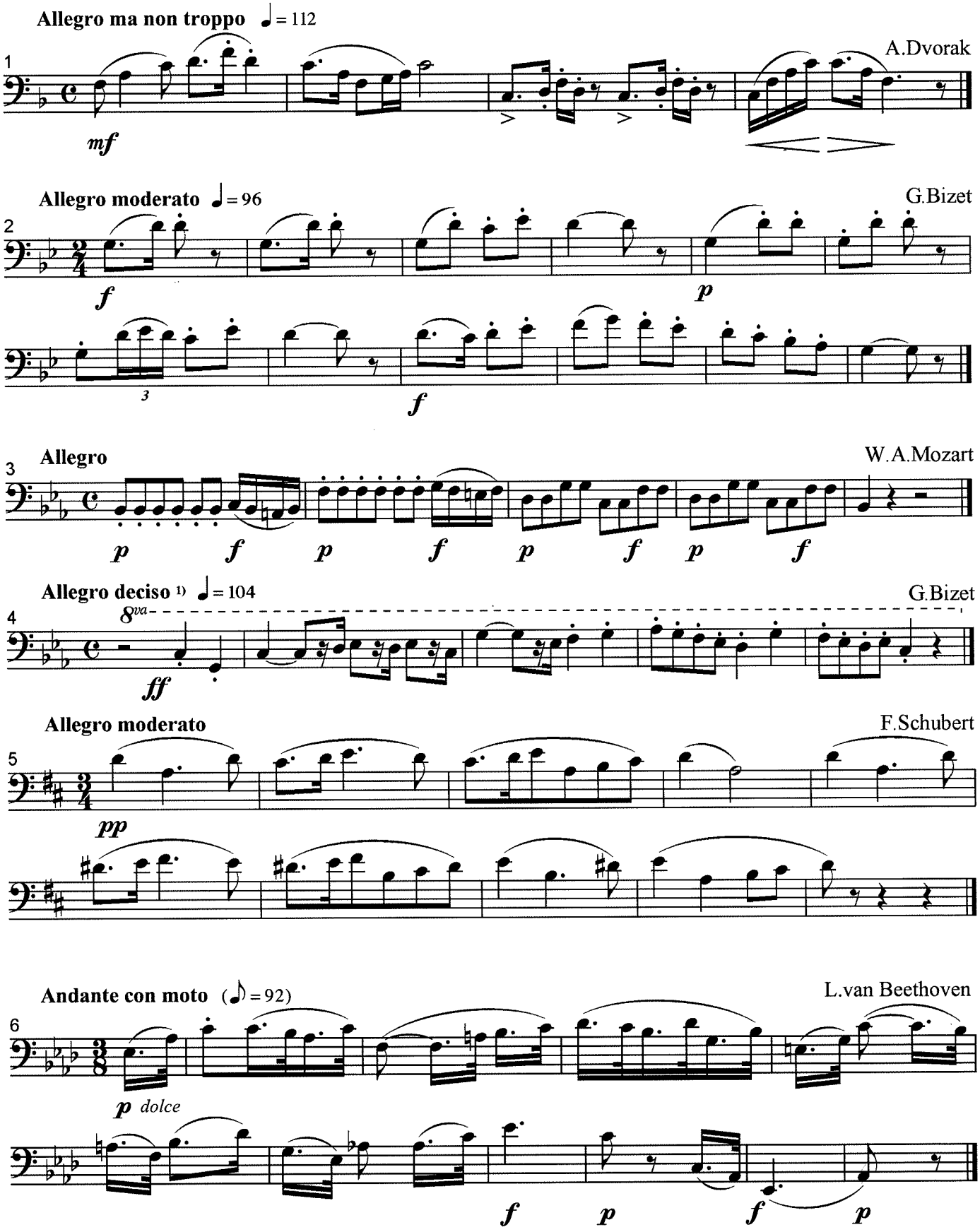
[1] giusto = to be observed strictly / appropriately

MUSIC EXAMPLES 17



1) Assez vif = rather quickly

MUSIC EXAMPLES 18



1) deciso = determined, energetic

LIST OF EXERCISES AND MUSIC EXAMPLES

Exercises marked with * are written in treble clef and bass clef
Exercises marked with ** are written in treble clef and bass clef and in Bb-score
Music examples 1-16 are written in treble clef; examples 17-18 in bass clef

Most Danish composers are mentioned by their full name, and the titles of the songs/compositions are in the original language.

Range of the melodies are referred to as degrees of the scale

Melodic variations 1**
C major, 1.-5. degrees of the scale

Exercises 1**
C major, 1.-5. plus 7. degree. Harmonic basis: T and D.

Exercises 2**
C major, 1.-6. plus 7. degree. Harmonic basis: T-S-D-T

Exercises 3**
D minor, 1.-6. plus 7. degree. Harmonic basis: T-T-D-T and T-S-D-T

Exercises 4**
Major and minor, more keys. 1.-6. plus 7. degree

Find the melody or Bingo
24 almost similar melodies in D major and D minor. 1.-5. plus 7. degree

Music examples 1
Hymns and songs and a few piano pieces.
Melodic range as the previous exercises.

1. Thomissøn/German: Han som på jorden bejler
2. J. P. E. Hartmann: Blomstre som en rosengård
3. J. Crüger: Nu takker alle Gud
4. Peter Heise: Jylland mellem tvende have
5. Oluf Ring: Nu er det længe siden
6. Danish/anonymous: I skovens dybe stille ro
7. J. Schop: Nu velan vær frisk til mode
8. J. Krieger: Bourrée (piano)
9. L. Mozart: Burlesque (piano)

Exercises 5**
Range: Octave (5.-5. degree). Various keys

Music examples 2
Songs and hymns
Major. Range: Octave (5.-5. degree).

1. Carl Nielsen: Mit hjerte altid vanker
2. Danish/anonymous: Det var en lørdag aften
3. H. O. C. Zinck: Jeg ved på hvem jeg bygger
4. Danish/anonymous: En lille frø i mosen sad
5. German/anonymous: Lover den Herre
6. Swedish/anonymous: Skøn jomfruen går i dansen
7. Danish/anonymous: Mads Doss
8. G. Riedel: Du skal inte tro det blir sommar
9. Oluf Ring: Den kedsom vinter gik sin gang
10. Carl Nielsen: Som en rejselysten flåde

Music examples 3
Vocal and instrumental music
Major and minor. Range: Octave (5.-5. degree).

1. English/anonymous: Ding dong! Merrily on high
2. Norwegian/anonymous: Herre Gud! Dit dyre navn og ære
3. H. O. C. Zinck: Nu kom der bud fra englekor
4. G. F. Händel: Bourrée
5. Negro spiritual: Go down, Moses
6. L. van Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C major, 4. mov.
7. J. S. Bach: 2 Part Invention, A minor
8. L. van Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 3, C minor, 1. mov.
9. R. Schumann: Hör ich das Liedchen klingen
10. Swedish/anonymous: Jag vet en dejlig rosa

Music examples 4
Popular songs
Major and minor. Range: Octave (5.-5. degree).

1. C. M. Bellmann: Liksom en herdinna
2. N. K. Madsen-Steensgaard: Der er så travlt i skoven
3. Norwegian/anonymous: Siri-visa
4. B. Ahlfors: Har du visor min vän
5. Thorvald Aagaard: Han kommer med sommer
6. Knud Vad Thomsen: Jeg plukker fløjlsgræs
7. Danish/anonymous: En yndig og frydefuld sommertid
8. Swedish/anonymous: Det var dig og det var mig
9. French/anonymous: Chevaliers de la table ronde
10. Finn Høffding: Det var en nat ved Elversø

Music examples 5
Instrumental music. Examples of a-a' form
Range: Octave (5.-5. degree).

1. W. A. Mozart: Symphony No. 35, D major ("Haffner"), 3. mov. (Menuet)
2. L. van Beethoven: Symphony No. 9, D minor, 4. mov. (Allegro assai)
3. F. Schubert: Symphony No. 8, B minor, 1. mov. (Allegro moderato)
4. W. A. Mozart: Symphony No. 39, E flat major, 3. mov. (Allegretto)
5. J. Haydn: Symphony No. 104, D major. Finale (Spiritoso)
6. W. A. Mozart: Piano Sonata, F major, KV 533, 1. mov. (Allegro)
7. W. A. Mozart: Opera: Die Zauberflöte: "Der Vogelfänger"
8. L. van Beethoven: Violin Concerto, D major, op. 61, 3. mov. (Allegro)
9. Thomas Alvad: Vom Morden am Morgen

Melodic variations 2**
Triads and stepwise motion
Range: Octave (1.-1. degree)

Exercises 6*
Triads and stepwise motion
Larger range

Music examples 6
Vocal and instrumental music
Triads and stepwise motion

1. Danish/anonymous: På Tave bondes ager
2. J. S. Bach: 2 Part Invention, F major
3. Danish/anonymous: Kong Christian stod ved højen mast
4. Danish/anonymous: Goj awten
5. J. P. E. Hartmann: Til himlene rækker din miskundhed, Gud
6. J. S. Bach: Violin concerto, A minor, 1. mov. (Allegro)
7. L. van Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 ("Pastorale"), 5. mov. (Allegretto)
8. Carl Nielsen: Irmelin Rose
9. J. Brahms: Trio, A minor, op. 114 for clarinet, cello and piano, 1. mov. (Allegro)

Music examples 7
Vocal and instrumental music
Triads and stepwise motion

1. G. F. Händel: Joy to the world! the Lord is come
2. C. M. Bellmann: Joachim uti Babylon
3. W. A. Mozart: Piano Sonata, B major, KV 570 (Allegro)
4. L. van Beethoven: Violin concerto, D major, op. 61, 1. mov. (Allegro non troppo)
5. C. G. Neefe: Piano piece (Allegretto)
6. Carl Nielsen: Vi sletternes sønner
7. C. E. F. Weyse: Det blanke sværd på væggen hang
8. C. E. F. Weyse: Der er en øe i livet
9. J. S. Bach: Prelude, C major. Das Wohltemperierte Klavier I

Reading rhythm
Rhythm chart - point out the right combinations

Rhythmic variations **
Section A: Same melody in all examples, C major
Section B: Different melodies, 5-note range, C major
Useful also for dictation

Exercises 7* - rhythms
Semiquavers
Various keys, larger range. Melodies based on stepwise motion.
Useful also for dictation

Exercises 8* - rhythms
Semiquavers and tied notes
Melodies based on stepwise motion.
Useful also for dictation

Exercises 9
Tempo - most common indications of tempo

Music examples 8
Instrumental music
Syncopations and tied notes, various tempi

1. J. S. Bach: Triple Concerto No. 1 for 3 pianos, D minor, 3. mov.
2. W. A. Mozart: Violin Concerto, D major, KV 211
3. D. Milhaud: Saudades do Brazil. VIII - Tijuca
4. W. A. Mozart: Andante in C major for flute and orchestra KV 315
5. F. Mendelssohn: Lieder ohne Worte No. 23, op. 53 no. 5
6. J. S. Bach: Partiata No. 4, D major, for piano. Aria
7. P.I. Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5, E minor, op. 64, 4. mov.
8. B. Bartok: Romanian Folk Dances No. 1
9. I. Stravinsky: Pulcinella Suite. Sinfonia (Ouverture)
10. I. Stravinsky: The Firebird (Infernal Dance)

Music examples 9
Instrumental music
Various rhythms, tempi an time signatures

1. L. van Beethoven: Piano Sonata C major, op. 2 No. 3, 1. mov.
2. F. Chopin: Mazurka op. 33 No. 3, C major
3. G. B. Pergolesi: Stabat Mater (Quae moerebat)
4. F. Chopin: Mazurka op.7 No. 5, C major
5. P. I. Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5, E minor, 1. mov.
6. F. Chopin: Mazurka op. 68 No. 2, A minor
7. C. Corea: Armando's Rhumba
8. J. Haydn: Strygekvartet, C major, op. 1 No. 6
9. A. Dvorak: Symphony No. 2, D minor, 1. mov.
10. J. S. Bach: Piano Concerto, D minor, 1. mov.

Music examples 10
Instrumental music
Various rhythms, tempi an time signatures

1. J. S. Bach: English Suite No. 5, Passepied I
2. G. F. Händel: Music for the Royal Fireworks, 4. mov. (La Paix)
3. J. S. Bach: Organ Chorale: Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme
4. G. F. Händel: Concerto for Organ No. 2, B flat major, 3. mov.
5. C. Franck: Sonata for violin and piano, A major, 1. mov.
6. L. van Beethoven: Symphony No. 1, C major, 1. mov.
7. W. A. Mozart: Violin Sonata, C major, KV 296, 1. mov.
8. G. F. Händel: Concerto Grosso op. 6 No. 3, 1. mov.
9. F. Schubert: Moment Musicaux op. 94 No. 1
10. E. Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 2: Arabian Dance

Exercises 10* - Sequences 1
Read one bar, remember, and play. Every exercise consists of four bars.

Exercises 11* - Sequences 2
Melodies of 2-4 bars. Read, remember, play.

Music examples 11
Sequences

1. A. Diabelli: Sonatine for piano
2. A. Vivaldi: La Primavera (The Spring /The Four Seasons), 1. mov.
3. J. Haydn: Symphony No. 94, G major, 1. mov.
4. J. S. Bach: Prelude, A flat major. Das Wohltemperierte Klavier I
5. A. Corelli: Concerto Grosso, B flat major, op. 6 No. 11. Sarabanda
6. J. S. Bach: Fugue, C minor. Das Wohltemperierte Klavier I
7. L. van Beethoven: Piano Sonata op. 49 No. 2, G major. Menuet

Music examples 12
Longer extracts. Sequences and a-a' form

1. J. S. Bach: Minuet, G major
2. W. A. Mozart: Symphony No. 40, G minor, 1. mov.
3. W. A. Mozart: Horn Concerto No. 2, E flat major, 3. mov. Rondo
4. W. A. Mozart: Opera: Le Nozze di Figaro: Non più andrai

Exercises 12*
Phrasing, articulation, dynamics

Music examples 13
Phrasing, articulation, dynamics

1. F. Schubert: Symphony No. 4, C minor, 1. mov.
2. B. Bartok: For Children I. Children's Game
3. E. Grieg: Lyric Pieces I op. 12: Vals
4. L. van Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 5, E flat major, 1. mov.
5. F. Schubert: Symphony No. 5, B flat major, 4. mov.

Music examples 14

1. L. van Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 1, C major, 1. mov.
2. W. A. Mozart: Symphony No. 41, C major, 1. mov.
3. W. A. Mozart: Symphony No. 41, C major, 3. mov.
4. J. Haydn: Symphony No. 100, G major, 4. mov.
5. F. Kuhlau: Piano Piece, op. 88 No. 3

Music examples 15

1. Carl Nielsen: Sinfonia Espansiva, 4. mov. Finale.
2. J. Brahms: Symphony No. 1, c minor, 4. mov.
3. J. S. Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, G major, 1. mov.
4. N. Rimsky-Korsakov: Shéhérazade, 2. mov.

Music examples 16

1. B. Britten: The young person's guide to the orchestra / Theme by H. Purcell
2. M. Ravel: Bolero
3. C. Debussy: Le petit nègre

Music examples 17
All examples are written in the bass clef

1. J. S. Bach: Cello Suite No. 3, C major. Bourrée
2. L. van Beethoven: Symphony No. 5, C minor, 3. mov.
3. M. Ravel: Rapsodie Espagnole, 2. mov.
4. G. Fauré: Elegie for cello and orchestra, op. 24
5. A. Dvorak: Symphony No. 8, G major, 4. mov.
6. J. S. Bach: Fugue, F sharp minor. Das Wohltemperierte Klavier II
7. A. Dvorak: Cello Concerto, B minor, op. 104, 3. mov.
8. A. Vivaldi: Concerto Grosso, D minor, op. 3 No. 11
9. W. A. Mozart: Opera: Le Nozze di Figaro: Ouverture

Music examples 18
All examples are written in the bass clef

1. A. Dvorak: String Quartet, F major, op. 96, 1. mov.
2. G. Bizet: Opera: Carmen. Interlude before act 2
3. W. A. Mozart: Opera: Die Zauberflöte. Ouverture
4. G. Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1. Ouverture
5. F. Schubert: Symphony, B minor ("Unfinished"), 1. mov.
6. L. van Beethoven: Symphony No. 5, C minor, 2. mov.