

**STANDARD HARMONY  
In Four Parts**

**A set of Harmony Exercises for  
SMMS/RSAMD**

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**Set 2**

**Student Name.....**

5 x 1 hour lessons

Date for completion of Set.....

Lesson 1: Construction of a Four Part Texture.

Lesson 2: Construction of a Four Part Texture; Exercises.

Lesson 3: Construction of Perfect and Imperfect Cadences.

Lesson 4: Construction of Interrupted and Plagal Cadences.

Lesson 5: Class Test.

## 1. Construction of a Four Part Texture.

Standard Harmony is conventionally studied by imitating the aesthetic and texture of the Victorian and Edwardian Hymn Tune. That is in four parts, Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass, without accompaniment. For this reason each part will remain within the range of that particular voice and the texture will be essentially homophonic. You would do well to remember that you are writing harmony for singers who would sing the same syllable at the same time and all breathe at the same time. You may question the validity of studying what might appear to be a narrow aesthetic but it is generally considered to be an excellent way of learning how functional harmony works, and the purity of this style renders it applicable and adjustable to a whole host of other styles and textures. This is a splendid subject for class discussion and it would be worth your while asking your teacher to talk about these issues.

The conventional way of writing Four Part Harmony is to use two staves, Treble and Bass, with the Soprano Part sounding the tune (usually given to you so that your standard exercise is to add to a given Soprano tune, Alto, Tenor and Bass parts), written with stems up on the Treble Staff. The Alto part shares the Treble Staff with the Soprano but is written with stems down. The Tenor and Bass parts share the Bass Staff with the stems of the Tenor up and the stems of the Bass down. Here is an example:

Eg 22

I V I vii I V<sup>7</sup> I V I IV I V V<sup>7</sup> I V I

You will notice that from time to time two parts will share the same note. Even though only three pitches are being sounded at these points, the harmony is still in four parts. You will also notice that each part stays within the range of that voice. The following ranges are generally considered to be the extremities at which a part can be written and you should write your parts well within them.

Eg 23

The construction of a Four Part Texture as in the example above is a relatively short step from the Chord Choice Exercise you did in Set 1. Consider the following procedure as an example.

A tune is given for harmonisation which is allocated to the Soprano:

Eg 24



On a Bass Staff below this tune you will indicate which chords you will choose to harmonise each note:

Eg 25

I I V I IV V V vi iii IV V<sup>7</sup> I V I

On another Bass Staff below the Soprano you will now generate a Bass Part which will consist of the Roots of the Chords you have just chosen:

Eg 26

I I V I IV V V vi iii IV V<sup>7</sup> I V I



2. Here are three more exercises for you to complete in the same way:

Eg 29

Musical exercise Eg 29: A piano exercise in G minor, 4/4 time. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line of quarter notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, F5, E5, D5, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. The bass clef staff is empty. The exercise is divided into four measures.

Eg 30

Musical exercise Eg 30: A piano exercise in G minor, 4/4 time. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line of quarter notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, F5, E5, D5, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. The bass clef staff is empty. The exercise is divided into four measures.

Eg 31

Musical exercise Eg 31: A piano exercise in G minor, 3/4 time. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line of quarter notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, F5, E5, D5, C5, Bb4, A4, G4. The bass clef staff is empty. The exercise is divided into five measures.

### 3. Construction of Perfect and Imperfect Cadences.

Performing musicians must think very carefully about how the music they are performing is phrased. So too must the Composer, Arranger or Harmoniser. The rise and fall of tension within a piece of music is expressed through the ebb and flow of its phrases and these phrases are articulated one and all by a cadence at their conclusions.

(It is worth remembering that this may not apply to Musics out-with the Western European Mainstream Tradition or to the music of composers whose interests lie elsewhere.)

So cadences are very much the punctuation of music. You will need to identify the phrases in the tunes you will be harmonising and make sure that one of the four valid cadences is placed properly at their conclusions.

The most common and the strongest cadence is the Perfect Cadence which is expressed by the progression of Chords V to I:

Eg 32

The musical notation for Example 32 is in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble staff is: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The bass line in the bass staff is: G2 (quarter), B1 (quarter), D2 (quarter), E2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), B1 (quarter), D2 (quarter), E2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), B1 (half). A bracket labeled "Cadence" spans the final two measures. Below the bass staff, the chords are labeled as V<sup>7</sup> and I.

It is the musical equivalent of a full stop and provides a strong close to a phrase. However, it must be approached well and the best approach chords to Chord V are I, ii or IV. In the tune above the best approach chord to Chord V is ii:

Eg 33

The musical notation for Example 33 is in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble staff is: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The bass line in the bass staff is: G2 (quarter), B1 (quarter), D2 (quarter), E2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), B1 (quarter), D2 (quarter), E2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), B1 (half). A bracket labeled "Cadence" spans the final two measures. Below the bass staff, the chords are labeled as ii, V<sup>7</sup>, and I.

You will notice that this extract of “Twinkle, twinkle” has two phrases. Our Perfect Cadence has been placed at the end of the second phrase but a cadence is required at the end of the first. This would be a good place for an Imperfect Cadence.

The Imperfect Cadence is usually defined as “any chord moving to Chord V” but in practice the best approach chords to Chord V are, as with the Perfect Cadence, I, ii or IV. In fact, if you think of the Perfect Cadence as being a three chord progression, then the Imperfect Cadence is the same but

without the final Chord I. Indeed, this is how the Imperfect Cadence works in music. It is the musical equivalent of a question, it poses a question for which there should be an answer. It is very common for a phrase which ends with an Imperfect Cadence to be followed by a phrase ending with a Perfect Cadence. This kind of musical couplet is often referred to as a “Question and Answer.”

Eg 34


The musical notation for Example 34 is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two phrases. The first phrase is marked with a bracket and the word "Cadence" above it, ending with chords IV and V. The second phrase is also marked with a bracket and the word "Cadence" above it, ending with chords ii, V<sup>7</sup>, and I. The bass line is provided for the first phrase but is empty for the second phrase.

The following tunes have each two phrases which require either a Perfect or an Imperfect Cadence at their conclusions. Decide which cadence is most appropriate and then write it in in full (you need not complete the rest of the harmony). As with the last exercise an extra bass staff has been provided for you to write out your Triads or Chords if you wish.

Eg 35

The musical notation for Example 35 is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two phrases. The first phrase is marked with a bracket above it. The second phrase is also marked with a bracket above it. The bass line is provided for the first phrase but is empty for the second phrase, and an additional empty bass staff is provided below for writing out triads or chords.

Eg 36



Musical notation for Exercise 36. It consists of two systems. The first system has a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The treble staff contains a melodic line with two phrases, each under a slur. The first phrase consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second phrase consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass staff is empty. The second system has a single bass staff, which is also empty.

Eg 37



Musical notation for Exercise 37. It consists of two systems. The first system has a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The treble staff contains a melodic line with two phrases, each under a slur. The first phrase consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second phrase consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass staff is empty. The second system has a single bass staff, which is also empty.

#### 4. Construction of Interrupted and Plagal Cadences.

There are two more cadences in common use which may be used at the completion of phrases. They are not as common as the Perfect and Imperfect Cadences but they are essential punctuators nonetheless.

The first is the Interrupted Cadence which is almost identical to the Perfect Cadence but substitutes Chord vi for Chord I at the end. Its effect is similar to the Imperfect Cadence in as much as it poses a question for which the music must provide an answer. Its appearance should always be a surprise and, in context, would lead to an extra phrase the listener would not have expected.

Eg 38

The musical score for Example 38 is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble staff is a sequence of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass staff provides harmonic support with chords. The first two measures end with a cadence consisting of a D major chord (IV) in the bass and a G major chord (V) in the treble. The next two measures continue the melody. The final two measures end with a cadence consisting of a D minor chord (ii) in the bass, a G major chord (V) in the treble, and a D minor chord (vi) in the bass. Brackets above the treble staff group the first two measures and the last two measures.

The last cadence is the Plagal Cadence which does provide a definite close to a phrase although it is not as strong as the Perfect Cadence. It is most commonly heard as the harmonisation of the extra “Amen” at the end of many hymns. It is expressed by the progression of Chords IV to I and in the example tune of “Twinkle, twinkle” it can provide an alternative to the Imperfect Cadence at the end of the first phrase.

Eg 39

The musical score for Example 39 is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble staff is a sequence of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass staff provides harmonic support with chords. The first two measures end with a cadence consisting of a D major chord (IV) in the bass and a D major chord (I) in the treble. The next two measures continue the melody. The final two measures end with a cadence consisting of a D minor chord (ii) in the bass, a G major chord (V) in the treble, and a D minor chord (vi) in the bass. Brackets above the treble staff group the first two measures and the last two measures.

The following tunes have each two phrases which require either an Imperfect or an Interrupted Cadence at their conclusions. Decide which cadence is most appropriate and then write it in in full (you need not complete the rest of the harmony). As with the last exercise an extra bass staff has been provided for you to write out your Triads or Chords if you wish.

Eg 40

Example 40 is a musical exercise in 2/4 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff is a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The melody is written in the treble clef and consists of two phrases. The first phrase is a half note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note Bb4, quarter note C5, quarter note Bb4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4. The second phrase is a half note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note Bb4, quarter note C5, quarter note Bb4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4. The second staff is a bass staff with a bass clef, which is empty for the student to write triads or chords. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb).

Eg 41

Example 41 is a musical exercise in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff is a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The melody is written in the treble clef and consists of two phrases. The first phrase is a half note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note Bb4. The second phrase is a half note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note Bb4, quarter note C5, quarter note Bb4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4. The second staff is a bass staff with a bass clef, which is empty for the student to write triads or chords. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb).

Eg 42

Example 42 is a musical exercise in 4/4 time, key of D major. The first staff is a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The melody is written in the treble clef and consists of two phrases. The first phrase is a half note D4, quarter note E4, quarter note F#4, quarter note G4, quarter note F#4, quarter note E4, quarter note D4. The second phrase is a half note D4, quarter note E4, quarter note F#4, quarter note G4, quarter note F#4, quarter note E4, quarter note D4. The second staff is a bass staff with a bass clef, which is empty for the student to write triads or chords. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

5.Class Test.

Add Alto, Tenor and Bass parts to harmonise the following tune. (An extra Bass Stave has been provided for you to write out your Triads or Chords if you wish.)

Eg 43

The image shows musical notation for Example 43. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a melody of eight notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, and D5. The first four notes are grouped by a slur, and the last four notes are also grouped by a slur. The middle and bottom staves are empty bass clefs with the same key signature and time signature, provided for the student to write their own accompaniment.

The complete tune “Twinkle, twinkle” has six phrases, each requiring a cadence at its completion. It is printed out on the following page. Write in a cadence at the end of each phrase. Chose your cadences carefully and try not to be too repetitive. (An extra Bass Stave has been provided for you to write out your Triads or Chords if you wish. You need not harmonise the notes out-with the cadences. )

Eg 44

Musical score for Example 44, measures 1-9. The score is written for piano in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand (treble clef) contains a melodic line of eighth notes, with a slur over measures 1-4 and another slur over measures 5-8. The left hand (bass clef) is empty. A separate bass clef staff is provided below the grand staff, also empty.

Musical score for Example 44, measures 10-17. The score is written for piano in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand (treble clef) contains a melodic line of eighth notes, with a slur over measures 10-13 and another slur over measures 14-16. The left hand (bass clef) is empty. A separate bass clef staff is provided below the grand staff, also empty.

Musical score for Example 44, measures 18-25. The score is written for piano in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The right hand (treble clef) contains a melodic line of eighth notes, with a slur over measures 18-21 and another slur over measures 22-24. The left hand (bass clef) is empty. A separate bass clef staff is provided below the grand staff, also empty. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 25.