
AP[®] Music Theory

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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Question 5: Part-writing from figured bass

25 points

One possible 25-point answer (others are possible)

Musical score for "The Rose Tree" in E-flat major, 4/4 time. The score shows the first two measures of the melody and bass line. The first measure is boxed with a dashed line. Below the staff, the chord progression is given as: Eb: I V vi ii I V vi or: V V.

I. Roman Numerals

Award 1 point for each correct Roman numeral.

1 point per numeral (max 7)

1. Accept the correct Roman numeral regardless of its case.
2. Ignore any Arabic numerals because they are included in the question itself.
3. Award no credit if an accidental is placed *before* a Roman numeral.

II. Chord Spelling, Spacing, and Doubling

- A.** Award 1 point for each chord that correctly realizes the given figured bass.
1. The chord must be spelled correctly. A missing accidental will be considered a misspelling. An incorrect accidental on the wrong side of the notehead will also be considered a misspelling.
 2. The fifth (but *not* the *third*) may be omitted from any root-position triad.
 3. The fifth (but *not* the *third* or *seventh*) may be omitted from a root-position dominant seventh chord.
 4. All inverted triads and inverted seventh chords must be complete (i.e., have all chord tones).
 5. All triads must contain at least three voices.
 6. All seventh chords must contain at least four voices.

**1 point per
chord
(max 6)**

- B.** Award 0 points for a chord that breaks one or more of the conditions of **II.A.**
N.B.: Award 0 points for voice leading into and out of these chords. (See **III.E.**)
- C.** Award $\frac{1}{2}$ point each for a correctly realized chord that has exactly one of the following errors:
1. A doubled leading tone, a doubled chordal seventh, or incorrect doubling of a $\frac{6}{4}$ chord.
 2. More than one octave between adjacent upper parts.
 3. Crossed voices.

- D.** Award 0 points for a correctly realized chord that has any of the following:

N.B.: Do check the voice leading into and out of these chords.

1. Two or more errors listed in **II.C.** (e.g., double leading tone and spacing error, or two spacing errors), and/or
2. The correct accidental on the wrong side of a notehead. (For an incorrect accidental on the wrong side of a notehead, see **II.A.1.**)

III. Voice Leading

- A.** Award 2 points for acceptable voice leading between two correctly realized chords.

N.B.: This includes the voice leading from the given chord to the second chord.

- B.** If all chords are correctly realized, and there are no voice-leading errors (as described in **III.C.** and **III.D.**), but the response has excessive leaps within the upper three voices:

1. Award 12 points for voice leading if there are six or fewer leaps in the three upper voices combined.
2. Award 11 points for voice leading if there are more than six leaps in the three upper voices combined.

- C.** Award only 1 point for voice leading between two correctly realized chords (as defined in **II.A.**) with exactly one of the following errors:

1. Uncharacteristic unequal fifths. (See *DCVLE*, no. 4.)
2. Uncharacteristic hidden (covered) or direct octaves or fifths between outer voices. (See *DCVLE*, nos. 5 and 6.)
3. Overlapping voices. (See *DCVLE*, no. 7.)
4. A chordal seventh approached by a descending leap of a fourth or larger.
5. The fourth of a cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ (i.e., $\hat{1}$) approached by a descending leap of a fourth or larger.

- D.** Award 0 points for voice leading between two correctly realized chords (as defined in **II.A.**) if any of the following statements is true:

1. Parallel octaves, fifths, or unisons occur (immediately successive or beat-to-beat), including those by contrary motion. (See *DCVLE*, nos. 1 through 3.)
2. An uncharacteristic leap occurs (e.g., augmented second, tritone, or more than a fifth).
3. A chordal seventh is unresolved or resolved incorrectly. (The voice with the seventh should move down by step if possible. In some cases, such as ii^7 to cadential $\frac{6}{4}$, the seventh will be retained in the same voice. The seventh may move UP by step only in the case of the $i-V_3^4-i^6$ progression.)
4. The leading tone in an outer voice is unresolved or resolved incorrectly.
5. The 6th or 4th of the cadential $\frac{6}{4}$ chord is unresolved or resolved incorrectly.
6. At least one of the chords has more or fewer than four voices (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass).

**2 points per
chord
connection
(12 max)**

Definitions of Common Voice-Leading Errors (DCVLE)

The image shows a musical score with two staves, treble and bass clef. It contains seven examples of voice leading, labeled Ex. 1 through Ex. 7. Ex. 1 is labeled 'Parallel' and shows two voices moving in the same direction by the same interval. Ex. 2 is labeled 'Beat-to-beat' and shows two voices moving in the same direction, but the intervals are not the same. Ex. 3 is labeled 'By contrary motion' and shows two voices moving in opposite directions. Ex. 4 is labeled 'Unequal 5ths (d5 to P5)' and shows two voices moving in the same direction, but the intervals are not the same. Ex. 5a and Ex. 5b are grouped under the label 'Hidden (covered)'. Ex. 5a is labeled 'OK' and shows two voices moving in the same direction, but the intervals are not the same. Ex. 5b is labeled 'Not OK' and shows two voices moving in the same direction, but the intervals are not the same. Ex. 6 is labeled 'Direct' and shows two voices moving in the same direction, but the intervals are not the same. Ex. 7 is labeled 'Overlapping voices' and shows two voices moving in the same direction, but the intervals are not the same.

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | Parallel fifths and octaves (immediately consecutive): unacceptable (award 0 points). |
| 2. | Beat-to-beat fifths and octaves (equal perfect intervals on successive beats): unacceptable (award 0 points). |
| 3. | Fifths and octaves by contrary motion: unacceptable (award 0 points). |
| 4. | Unequal fifths
d5→ P5 (by step): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An ascending d5→ P5 is acceptable ONLY between upper voices when passing between I and I⁶, e.g., I–V₃⁴–I⁶ and I–vii^{o6}–I⁶ (no deduction).• An ascending d5→ P5 in other situations is unacceptable (award 1 point only).• A descending d5→ P5 is acceptable between upper voices (no deduction).• Any d5→ P5 (ascending or descending) between the bass and an upper voice is unacceptable (award 1 point only). P5→ d5 (by step): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An ascending P5→ d5 between two upper voices is acceptable (no deduction).• A descending P5→ d5 between two upper voices is acceptable (no deduction). |
| 5. | Hidden (or covered) fifths and octaves in outer voices (similar motion to a perfect interval that involves one voice moving by step). <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When the step is in the upper voice, as shown in Ex. 5a: acceptable (no deduction).• When the step is in the lower voice, as shown in Ex. 5b: unacceptable (award 1 point only). |
| 6. | Direct fifths and octaves in outer voices: unacceptable (award 1 point only).
Definition: Similar motion to a perfect interval that involves a skip in each voice.
N.B.: Many sources equate “hidden” and “direct.” |
| 7. | Overlapping voices: unacceptable (award 1 point only).
Definition: Two voices move to a position in which the lower voice is higher than the previous note in the higher voice, or they move to a position where the higher voice is lower than the previous note in the lower voice. |

Question 5

Write your response to QUESTION 5 on this page.

Question 5. (Suggested time—15 minutes)

Realize the figured bass below in four voices, following traditional eighteenth-century voice-leading procedures. Continue logically from the spacing of the first chord. Do not add embellishments unless indicated by the figured bass. On the blank below each chord, write the Roman numeral that appropriately indicates harmonic function.

E \flat : I V⁶ vi ii⁴ I⁶ V⁷ vi

Use a pencil only. Do NOT write your name. Do NOT write outside the box.

0001380



Question 5

Write your response to QUESTION 5 on this page.

Question 5. (Suggested time—15 minutes)

Realize the figured bass below in four voices, following traditional eighteenth-century voice-leading procedures. Continue logically from the spacing of the first chord. Do not add embellishments unless indicated by the figured bass. On the blank below each chord, write the Roman numeral that appropriately indicates harmonic function.

Eb3b6

6

4
36
4

7

E♭: I V⁶ vi ii⁴ I⁶ V⁷ vi

Use a pencil only. Do NOT write your name. Do NOT write outside the box.

0001382



Question 5

Write your response to QUESTION 5 on this page.

Question 5. (Suggested time—15 minutes)

Realize the figured bass below in four voices, following traditional eighteenth-century voice-leading procedures. Continue logically from the spacing of the first chord. Do not add embellishments unless indicated by the figured bass. On the blank below each chord, write the Roman numeral that appropriately indicates harmonic function.

A musical score for the song 'The Rose Tree'. It is written for piano in 4/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The melody is primarily in the treble staff, featuring a series of eighth and quarter notes. The bass staff provides a simple harmonic accompaniment with quarter and eighth notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

EE9B

6

4

6

7

E♭:

1

✓

16

22

vi

i

BDFG

2446

B44

HOFA

Question 5

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

This question assessed the following abilities:

- chord spelling from a figured bass;
- Roman numeral analysis;
- knowledge of four-part part-writing and voice leading;
- knowledge of the deceptive progression/deceptive cadence;
- handling of the cadential 6/4 chord;
- chord spacing and doubling rules;
- treatment of the chordal seventh; and
- treatment of the leading tone.

Sample: 5A

Score: 21

This represents a very good response. All Roman numerals are correct and were awarded a total of 7 points. Chord 2 contains a doubled leading tone and was awarded $\frac{1}{2}$ point (but voice leading could still be considered). All other chord spellings are correct, for a total of 5 points. There are parallel octaves between chords one and two, and parallel fifths between chords two and three. No points were awarded for these two voice-leading connections. All other voice-leading connections have no errors and were awarded a total of 8 points. (Roman numerals: 7; Chord spelling: $5\frac{1}{2}$; Voice leading: 8; Total = $20\frac{1}{2}$, rounded up to 21)

Sample: 5B

Score: 15

This represents a fair response. All Roman numerals are correct; 7 points were awarded. Chords four, five, and six are correct and received 1 point each. Chord two contains a doubled leading tone; it was awarded $\frac{1}{2}$ point (but voice leading could still be considered). Chord three has no chordal third, and chord seven is misspelled. No points were earned for chord spelling or voice leading into and out of these chords. The voice leading between chords four and five and between chords five and six is correct, and 2 points were awarded for each. There are parallel octaves between chords one and two, so no points were awarded for this voice-leading connection. (Roman numerals: 7; Chord spelling: $3\frac{1}{2}$; Voice leading: 4; Total = $14\frac{1}{2}$, rounded up to 15)

Sample: 5C

Score: 5

This represents a weak response. Two Roman numerals are correct; 2 points were awarded. Chords six and seven are spelled correctly and earned 2 points. Chord five contains a doubling error on the cadential 6/4 chord and was awarded $\frac{1}{2}$ point (but voice-leading could still be considered). All other chords are spelled incorrectly, so voice leading could only be considered between chords five to six and six to seven. From chord five to six, there is a resolution error of the 6th of the cadential 6/4 chord, so no voice-leading points were awarded. From chord six to seven, there are parallel fifths

Question 5 (continued)

between the bass and the soprano voices, so no voice-leading points were awarded. (Roman numerals: 2; Chord spelling: $2\frac{1}{2}$; Voice leading: 0; Total = $4\frac{1}{2}$, rounded up to 5)