

## AP Music Theory

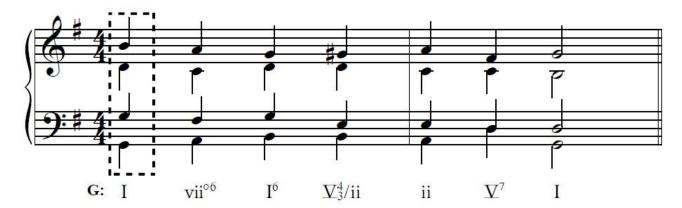
# Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

### **Inside:**

Free-Response Question 6

- **☑** Scoring Commentary

One possible 18-point answer (others are possible):



#### 1. Chord Spelling, Spacing, and Doubling

- **A.** Award 1 point for each chord that correctly realizes the given chord symbols.
- 1 point per chord (max 6)
- The chord must be spelled correctly and in the proper inversion (i.e., the bass note must be correct). 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 seventh chord.
- 4. All inverted triads and inverted seventh chords must be complete.
- 5. All triads must contain at least three voices.
- 6. All seventh chords must contain at least four voices.
- **B.** Award 0 points for a chord that breaks one or more of the conditions of **I.A.** 
  - N.B.: Award 0 points for voice leading into and out of these chords.
- **C.** Award ½ point 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  $_4^6$
  - 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 **I.C.** (e.g., doubled 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 **I.A.1.**)

#### II. 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.
- 2 points per chord connection (12 max)
- **B.** If all chords are correctly realized, and there are no voice-leading errors (as described in **II.C.** and **II.D.**), but the response has excessive leaps within the upper three voices:
  - 1. Award 12 points for voice leading if there are five or fewer leaps in the three upper voices combined.
  - 2. Award 11 points for voice leading if there are more than five leaps in the three upper voices combined.
- **C.** Award only 1 point for voice leading between two correctly realized chords (as defined in **I.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.
- **D.** Award 0 points for voice leading between two correctly realized chords (as defined in **I.A.**) if any of the following statements is true:
  - Parallel octaves, fifths, or unisons occur (immediately successive or on successive beats), 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 must move down by step if possible. In some cases, such as  $\mathrm{ii}^7$  to cadential  $_4^6$ , the seventh will be retained in the same voice. The seventh may move UP by step only in the case of the  $\mathrm{i-}\nabla_3^4-\mathrm{i}^6$  progression.)
  - 4. The leading tone in an outer voice is unresolved or resolved incorrectly. (When I and vi are connected by  $\nabla$ ,  $\nabla^7$ , or  $\nabla^6$  (e.g.,  $I-\nabla^7-vi$ ) early in the phrase (so that there is no expectation of a cadence), an  $\hat{8}-\hat{7}-\hat{6}$  line is acceptable in any voice.
  - 5. At least one of the chords has more or fewer than four voices (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass).
  - 6. More than one error listed in section **II.C.** occurs.
- **E.** Award 0 points for voice leading into and out of an incorrectly realized chord.

#### **III. Scores with Additional Meaning**

- 1 This score can be given to a response that has two or more redeeming qualities (e.g., correct chord spelling with the wrong inversion, knowledge of chord roots/inversions demonstrated through a correct bass line, or voice leading such as resolving a leading tone or chordal seventh correctly).
- **0** This score is used for a response that represents an unsuccessful attempt to answer the question (has no redeeming qualities, or only one) or a response that is off-topic or irrelevant.

NR Reserved for blank responses.

#### **IV. Scoring Notes**

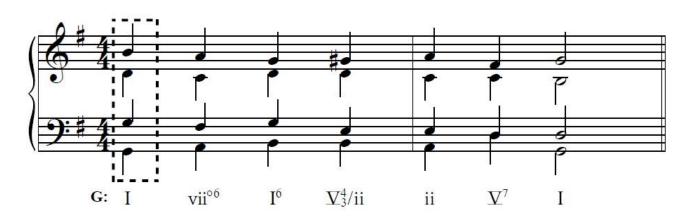
- **A.** Do not penalize a response that includes correctly used nonchord tones.
- **B.** An incorrectly used nonchord tone will be considered a voice-leading error.
  - 1. Award 1 point if the incorrect nonchord tone results in one error listed in II.C.
  - 2. Award 0 points if the incorrect nonchord tone results in at least one error from **II.D.** or more than one error from **II.C.**
- **C.** Half-point totals round up with one exception: A total score of 17½ rounds down to 17.

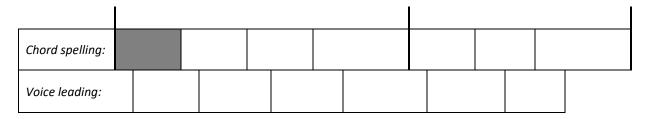
Total for question 6

18 points

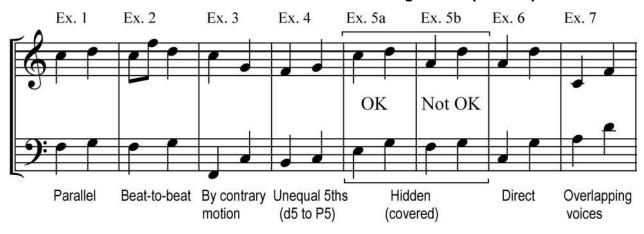
Record points for chord spelling, spacing, and doubling in row 1 and for voice leading between chords in row 2.

One possible 18-point answer (others are possible):





#### **Definitions of Common Voice-Leading Errors (DCVLE)**



- 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

#### $d5 \rightarrow P5$ (by step):

- An ascending d5 $\rightarrow$  P5 is acceptable ONLY between upper voices when passing between I and I<sup>6</sup>, e.g.,  $I \nabla_3^4 I^6$  and  $I vii^{06} I^6$  (no deduction).
- An ascending  $d5 \rightarrow P5$  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).

#### $P5 \rightarrow d5$ (by step):

- Any P5→ d5 (ascending or descending) between any two 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).
  - When the step is in the upper voice, as shown in Ex. 5a: acceptable (no deduction).
  - When the leap is in the upper 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.

#### Write your response to QUESTION 6 on this page.

#### Question 6. (Suggested time—10 minutes)

Write the following progression in four voices, following eighteenth-century voice-leading procedures. Continue logically from the spacing of the first chord. Do not add embellishments unless indicated by the Roman and Arabic numerals. Use only quarter and half notes.



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Page 14

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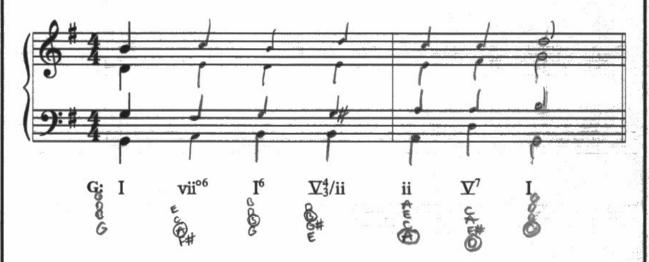




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F#G ABC DEF# DEF#6ABCD BCDEF#6AB GABCDE#6

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Page 14

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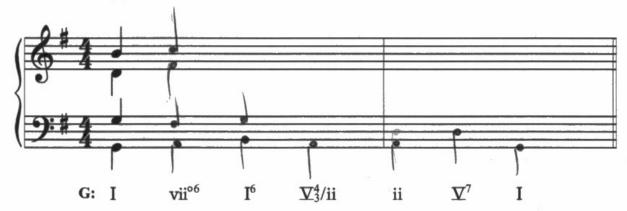


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Page 14

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

#### **Overview**

The question tested students' knowledge of eighteenth-century chorale-style voice-leading. Skills included:

- appropriate interpretation of Roman numerals and figures;
- writing and resolving secondary dominants;
- resolving tendency tones;
- triads vs. seventh chords;
- correct chord spelling; and
- understanding inverted chords.

Sample: 6A Score: 17

This represents a very good response. Chord two has a doubled leading tone and was awarded ½ point for chord spelling. All remaining chords are spelled correctly and were each awarded 1 point for chord spelling. All voice-leading connections are acceptable and were each awarded 2 points. Overall, this response earned 5½ points for chord spelling and 12 points for voice leading, for a total of 17½ points, rounded down to 17.

Sample: 6B Score: 10

This represents a fair response. Chord two has an added seventh and was awarded 0 points for chord spelling. Chord four has the correct accidental on the wrong side of the notehead, so it was awarded 0 points for chord spelling (although voice leading may still be considered leading into and out of this chord). All other chords are spelled correctly and were each awarded 1 point. Due to the chord misspelling, the voice-leading connections into and out of chord two could not be considered. The chordal seventh in chord six does not resolve correctly, so the voice-leading connection between chords six and seven was awarded 0 points. The remaining three voice-leading connections were each awarded 2 points. Overall, this response earned 4 points for chord spelling and 6 points for voice leading, for a total of 10 points.

Sample: 6C Score: 3

This represents a weak response. Chord two has a doubled leading tone and was awarded ½ point. No other chord has enough voices to be considered for spelling. The voice-leading connection between chords one and two is acceptable. This was awarded 2 points. Overall, this response earned ½ point for chord spelling and 2 points for voice leading, for a total of 2½ points, rounded up to 3.