**Instructor’s Manual**

*Discovering Music*, Third Edition

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Chapter 2: Rhythm, Meter, Texture, and Dynamics

**LECTURE OUTLINE**

# Rhythm, Meter, Texture, and Dynamics

## **Rhythm** – the pattern of sound durations

# Rhythmic Values – divide in groups of two

## Different types of notes indicate different rhythmic values

## **Whole note** – oval shaped note, typically the longest value note

## **Half note** – oval with stem attached, equal to half of a whole note

## **Quarter note** – solid note head with stem attached, equal to half of a half note

## **Eighth notes** – flags attached to stems or beamed together, equal to half of a quarter note

### More flags or beams indicate further divisions (i.e., 16th, 32nd, etc.)

## **Dotted note –** dot placed after a note extends the note by half of its value

## **Tie –** joins two or more notes together to produce a rhythmic value equal to the sum of the individual notes

## **Triplet** – group of three notes marked by the numeral 3, indicating that they have the same duration as two notes of the same value

## **Rests** – silence in measured quantities

## Normally divide in two, like notes

# Tempo Markings

## Durations of values are relative, and performers need to determine how long to hold a note value

## **Tempo** – basic pace of the music; speed of the musical composition

## **Tempo marking** – marking that indicates how fast or slow the music should be played

### Even with markings, interpretation by performer dictates the speed at which something is performed

### Allegro – fast

### Adagio – slow

### **Metronome –** clocklike mechanism with a sliding scale that precisely indicates tempo

#### Making Connections: The Metronome

##### Invented by Johann Nepomuk Mälzel (1772–1838)

###### Specialized in building musical machines

###### Experimented with pendulum powered machine, adding the ability to set the pendulum’s beat accurately

##### Musicians have debated the merits of a metronome—useful for mastering fast tempos, but regular ticking interferes with flexibility

# Pulse or Beat

## **Beat** – basic pulse of the music

## Performers must set this regardless of tempo

### Beats in groups of two (marches), or three (waltzes)

# Measures

## **Metrical** – musical rhythms are organized into equal segments of time

## **Measures** or **bars** – segments divided by a measure line

### **Measure lines** or **bar lines –** vertical lines that divide music into measures

### **Meter** – regular arrangement of stressed and unstressed beats

#### **Accents** – naturally felt stresses that greater divisions of beats and establish sense of meter

## Upbeats and Downbeats

### **Downbeat** – first beat of each measure where the natural accent falls

#### Other beats within the measure remain relatively unaccented, or “weak”

#### Stressed beats divide the music into repeating patterns

### **Upbeat** – a weak beat that precedes a downbeat and prepares us for the next measure

### **Syncopation** – stress falls on the second and fourth beat of each measure

## **Meter**

### Three basic types of meter

#### **Duple meter** – two beats per measure

##### Marches

##### **Quadruple meter** – variant of duple meter with four beats per measure

###### Third beat receives a slight stress

#### **Triple meter** – three beats per measure

##### Waltzes

#### **Compound meter** – beats subdivided into smaller groupings of three

##### Produces groups of six, nine, and twelve divisions

## Time Signatures

### **Time signature** – specifies meter

### Appears as a ratio of two numbers

#### Duple and triple:

##### Upper number indicates how many beats each measure has

##### Lower number indicates the rhythmic value assigned to each beat

#### Compound:

##### Upper number indicates how many divisions each measure has

##### Lower number indicates the rhythmic value assigned to each division

##### Common time and cut time

### Asymmetrical meters

#### Escapes the regularity of conventional meters

#### Popular examples include Dave Brubeck Quartet’s “Take Five” (1959) and Pink Floyd’s “Money” (1973)

# Texture

## **Texture** – the type of fabric of sound that the composer chooses to use

## Three basic musical textures: monophony, polyphony, and homophony

### Monophonic Texture

#### **Monophony** – simple texture; one musician performs a single line of music, or several musicians perform a single line of music in unison

### Polyphonic Texture and Counterpoint

#### **Polyphony** – multiple sounding lines

#### **Counterpoint** – art of fitting one line of music against another, different line

##### From the Latin phrase meaning “note against note”

##### **Imitative counterpoint** – after one line begins, it is “imitated” by other lines of music, typically one at a time

##### Texture gradually increases in complexity from one to two and then more parts

##### **Canon** – counterpoint that makes extensive use of imitation (e.g., “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”)

##### **Non-imitative counterpoint** – different parts are relatively independent; second part shares no material with the first

# Harmony

## **Harmony –** vertical combination of pitches to produce chords

## **Homophony –** texture with a single melodic line accompanied by block-like chords

### E.g., Guitar chords accompanying a singer

### Succession of simultaneously sounding chords (contrast to polyphony – music as separate lines moving at the same time)

## The Triad

### **Triad** – three-note chord, constructed by stacking two thirds together

## Harmonic Progression

### Rules developed for chord progressions

#### Consonance and dissonance

#### Consonant and dissonant intervals expanded to consonant and dissonant chords

#### Dissonant harmony progresses to a consonant harmony that “resolves” the tension of dissonance

# Tonality

## **Tonality** – system of musical organization that depends on a network of harmonic relationships, all centered on consonant triads

## Revolves around a tonic triad that establishes the key

# Dynamics

## **Dynamics** – how loud or soft a pitch is

### Dynamics are not absolute

## **Crescendo** – gradually increasing the sound

## **Decrescendo** – gradually decreasing the sound (also **diminuendo**)

## Making Connections: The Sound of Silence

### John Cage, modern American composer

### Music consists of two primary elements: sound and silence

#### Silence (rests) just as important as sound

#### 4’33” (1952)

#### Pianist sits in silence without touching the keys—audience must listen to silence and sounds occurring around them

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How are note values divided? What does a dot add to interpretation of note values?
2. Why are tempo markings important for musical compositions?
3. What are the different types of meters and what does each type communicate?
4. Name the three types of texture and describe the qualities of each.
5. What is the difference between how we hear polyphonic music and homophonic music?

**SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**

1. Show Fig. 2.01. Create “math” problems of adding notes (quarter + quarter = half) to engage students on how the divisions work. Add dotted notes and/or rests for greater complexity.
2. Using a metronome or a metronome app, play the ticks of several tempo markings. Perform a simple piece (e.g., “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”) either on the piano or sung as a class. Try it at different tempos. Does this change the character of the piece, and if so, how?
3. To demonstrate pulse, have students stand and march in place while playing or singing “76 Trombones” from *The Music Man*. Then, have them waltz in place to the waltz from Tchaikovsky’s *Sleeping Beauty* (using text from Disney’s *Sleeping Beauty* if sung as a group). Repeat the exercise, having students attempt to switch the emphasis of where they place their feet (3 pattern in the march, 2 pattern in the waltz).
4. Have students create line drawings or other video comparing the different types of texture. Divide the class into groups and ask each group to find a piece of music that demonstrates the texture assigned.
5. Play “4’33”” for the class. Ask them to discuss how the ambient noise had crescendos and decrescendos naturally and other dynamic contrasts they may have noticed.