

2025 Unit 7: Advanced Harmonic Concepts: Intervals, Triads, and Tonal Analysis

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Advanced Harmonic Concepts: Intervals, Triads, and Tonal Analysis

This unit provides an in-depth exploration of harmonic materials focusing on vertical structures, intervallic relationships, chord construction, and their functional roles within tonal music. Students will develop detailed knowledge of perfect, major, minor, diminished, and augmented intervals, including their inversions, and apply this understanding in performance, transcription, and composition. Emphasis is placed on tertian harmony, exploring triads and seventh chords, their inversions, and how these chords contribute to harmonic progression and tonal expression. Students will analyze examples across diverse musical genres, enhancing interpretive insight and stylistic awareness. Practical skills include accurate performance of intervals and chords, mastery of notation, and ensemble awareness through understanding singing parts. This comprehensive study prepares students for advanced harmonic analysis and expressive musicianship.

Learning Objectives

- Students will accurately identify and define tertian harmony, analyzing how chords are constructed by stacking thirds and applying this understanding to chord recognition and construction.
- Students will accurately identify and define the four triad types—major, minor, diminished, and augmented—analyzing their unique structures and distinctive sound qualities within harmonic contexts.
- Students will accurately identify and name diatonic intervals within the major scale—including major seconds, major thirds, perfect fourths, perfect fifths, major sixths, and major sevenths—analyzing their roles and relationships in melodic and harmonic contexts.
- Students will accurately identify and name intervals derived from major diatonic intervals—including minor seconds, minor thirds, diminished fourths, augmented fourths, diminished fifths, augmented fifths, minor sixths, and augmented sixths—analyzing their function and expressive use within musical contexts.
- Students will accurately identify, define, play/sing, and write intervals and their inversions, demonstrating an understanding of the relationships between intervals and their inverted forms within musical contexts.
- Students will accurately measure intervals by counting note-letter names and semitones between two notes, demonstrating an understanding of how these methods relate to intervallic use in playing scale steps, chromatic steps, and diatonic melodic intervals of varying sizes
- Students will accurately write chords in musical notation, ensuring correct spacing and placement on the staff while demonstrating understanding of chord structure and voicing principles.
- Students will accurately write original intervals and their inversions in musical notation, ensuring correct placement on the staff and demonstrating understanding of their theoretical relationships.

- Students will accurately write triads in musical notation, ensuring proper placement and spacing on the staff while demonstrating an understanding of their structural and harmonic roles.
- Students will analyze and compare chord progressions built on tertian harmony, recognizing and evaluating how these progressions shape the overall harmonic structure and expressive character of a piece
- Students will analyze and compare musical examples featuring diatonic intervals, discussing their impact on harmonic progression and melodic development to deepen their understanding of tonal relationships.
- Students will analyze and compare musical examples featuring major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads, recognizing and evaluating how these triads contribute to harmonic context, expression, and overall musical structure
- Students will analyze examples from diverse musical genres that utilize specific intervals, discussing their effects on harmony and melody to understand stylistic and expressive variations across contexts.
- Students will analyze musical examples featuring intervals and their inversions, comparing how different intervals influence harmonic and melodic context to deepen interpretive insight
- Students will analyze musical examples to identify intervals by counting note-letter names and semitones, verifying their findings to develop precise interval recognition and understanding.
- Students will compose short melodies incorporating diverse diatonic intervals of the major scale, demonstrating their understanding of the melodic function and expressive potential of these intervals.
- Students will compose short musical phrases incorporating minor, diminished, and augmented intervals, illustrating their understanding of how these intervals shape the character and emotional expression of music
- Students will demonstrate the ability to construct major, minor, diminished, and augmented chords by stacking thirds on their primary instrument or voice, accurately measuring interval sizes by counting note-letter names and semitones, and applying proper techniques for interval identification
- Students will demonstrate the ability to invert triads and seventh chords through all inversion possibilities, analyzing how each inversion affects harmonic function and voice leading.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to play each type of triad on their instruments with correct fingerings and voicings, while accurately identifying and understanding the nomenclature of singing parts in a choral ensemble to enhance ensemble awareness and performance.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to play intervals and their inversions on their instruments with accurate intonation and technique, while applying the skill of inverting triads and seventh chords through their various inversion possibilities to enhance harmonic understanding and performance.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to play intervals on their instruments or voices with accurate pitch and sound quality, analyzing their role in melodic and harmonic contexts to enhance musical expression.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to play intervals on their instruments or voices with proper intonation and technique, while accurately identifying and understanding the nomenclature of singing parts in a choral ensemble to support effective ensemble performance.
- Students will develop in-depth knowledge of the vertical use of harmonic material, analyzing chord structures, voicings, and their functional roles within harmonic progressions.
- Students will discuss the importance of tertian harmony as the foundation of most Western music composition, while demonstrating familiarity with the correct use of melodic material in monophony, homophony, polyphony, and counterpoint to understand diverse textural approaches.
- Students will discuss the theoretical implications of chord inversions, analyzing how they influence harmonic function and the overall sonic texture of a musical piece
- Students will discuss the theoretical implications of major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads, analyzing their roles within harmony and chord progressions to deepen their understanding of tonal function and musical expression.

- Students will identify and discuss the significance of both note-letter counting and semitone counting methods in music theory, applying this understanding to the construction of melodies and harmonies for enhanced musical comprehension.
- Students will perform intervals on their instruments or voices using proper technique, while recognizing and measuring intervals—including scale steps, chromatic steps, and diatonic melodic intervals of varying sizes—to deepen their understanding of melodic construction and expression
- Students will practice transcribing intervals by measuring their size using both note-letter counting and semitone counting techniques, reinforcing their understanding and precise application of interval measurement in musical contexts.
- Students will transcribe given melodic lines containing diatonic intervals, ensuring accurate notation and demonstrating a deep understanding of interval relationships within the melodic context.
- Students will transcribe melodic lines featuring a variety of intervals, ensuring precise notation and demonstrating comprehensive understanding of interval relationships and their musical function.

Essential Skills

- Analyze and compare harmonic progressions in diverse musical styles.
- Analyze harmonic functions of chords within progressions.
- Apply note-letter and semitone counting methods to construct and analyze melodies and harmonies.
- Build triads and seventh chords by stacking thirds using tertian harmony principles.
- Compose and perform standard 12-bar blues progressions using primary chords.
- Construct and perform dominant seventh (V7) chords and understand their resolution to tonic (I).
- Demonstrate knowledge of ensemble singing parts and their harmonic roles.
- Identify and define vertical harmonic material and chord structures.
- Identify and perform major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads.
- Identify, perform, and write minor, diminished, and augmented intervals and their relationship to major intervals.
- Integrate harmonic analysis into expressive performance and improvisation.
- Label chords by root and inversion using standard guitar chord symbols.
- Label chords using scale degrees: tonic, supertonic, mediant, subdominant, dominant, submediant, leading tone.
- Measure interval size by counting note-letter names and semitones accurately.
- Participate in jam sessions applying harmonic knowledge with rhythm section instruments.
- Perform and write interval inversions, understanding their harmonic and melodic functions.
- Perform intervals and chords with proper intonation and technical proficiency.
- Play triads and seventh chords in all inversion forms accurately.
- Recognize and analyze chord qualities within major and harmonic minor scales.
- Recognize and perform perfect and major diatonic intervals in the major scale.
- Select chord inversions for practical voice leading in harmonic progressions.
- Transcribe intervals and harmonic progressions accurately from audio or notation.
- Transpose chord progressions and melodies maintaining harmonic integrity.
- Understand the role of intervals in melodic and harmonic contexts.
- Write and space chords correctly in musical notation with appropriate voicing.

Standards

MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Cr1a	Describe and demonstrate multiple ways in which sounds and musical ideas can be used to represent extended experiences or abstract ideas.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Cr2a	Assemble and organize multiple sounds or extended musical ideas to create initial expressive statements of selected extended experiences or abstract ideas.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Cr2b	Analyze and demonstrate the development of sounds and extended musical ideas in drafts of music within a variety of moderately complex or complex forms.
MU.9-12.1.3D.12adv.Cr3a	Develop and apply criteria to critique, improve, and refine drafts of compositions and improvisations in a variety of styles, as well as stylistically appropriate harmonization for given melodies.
MU.9-12.1.3E.12adv.Cr3a	Develop and implement varied strategies and apply appropriate criteria to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations.
MU.9-12.1.3D.12adv.Cr3b	Perform final versions of a collection of compositions and improvisations in a variety of styles, as well as stylistically appropriate harmonization for given melodies, demonstrating technical skill in applying principles of composition, improvisation and originality.
MU.9-12.1.3E.12adv.Cr3b	Share a portfolio of musical creations representing varied styles and genres that demonstrates musical and technological craftsmanship as well as the use of digital and/or analog tools and resources in developing and organizing musical ideas.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Cr3b	Share music through the use of notation, solo or group performance, or technology, and demonstrate and explain how the elements of music, compositional techniques, and processes have been employed to realize expressive intent.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Pr4c	Develop interpretations of works based on an understanding of the use of elements of music (including form), compositional techniques, style, function, and context, explaining and justifying how the interpretive choices reflect the creator's intent.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Pr5a	Create rehearsal plans for works, identifying the form, repetition and variation within the form, compositional techniques, and the style and historical or cultural context of the work.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Pr5b	Using established criteria and feedback, identify the ways in which performances use compositional techniques and convey the formal design, style and historical/cultural context of the works.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Pr5c	Identify, compare and implement strategies for improving the technical and expressive aspects of multiple contrasting works.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Pr6a	Share live or recorded performances of works (both personal and others') and explain and/or demonstrate understanding of how the expressive intent of the music is conveyed.
MU.9-12.1.3C.12adv.Re7a	Use research and personally developed criteria to justify choices made when selecting music, citing knowledge of the music and individual and ensemble purpose and context.
MU.9-12.1.3D.12adv.Re7b	Develop and justify evaluations of a variety of individual and small group musical selections for listening based on personally developed and established criteria, personal decision making, and knowledge and understanding of context.
MU.9-12.1.3C.12adv.Re7b	Demonstrate and justify how the analysis of structures, contexts and performance decisions inform the response to music.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Re7a	Apply researched or personally developed criteria to select music that expresses personal experiences and interests, visual images, concepts, texts, or storylines in moderately complex or complex forms, and describe and justify the choice as models for composition.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12adv.Cn10a	Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills related to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

Instructional Tasks/Activities

Interval Recognition Drills: Use flashcards and apps to identify and spell intervals.

Interval Inversion Practice: Sing and play inversions of intervals with analysis.

Chord Construction Workshops: Build triads and seventh chords on keyboards or notation software.

Roman Numeral Labeling Exercises: Label chords in progressions with Roman numerals and figured bass.

Guitar Chord Symbol Matching: Connect guitar chord symbols to chord shapes and inversions.

Voice Leading Composition: Compose progressions focusing on smooth inversion transitions.

12-Bar Blues Jam Sessions: Perform and improvise over blues progressions with rhythm section.

Score Annotation: Mark scores with chord qualities, inversions, and interval names.

Ensemble Role Practice: Assign and perform choral parts, identifying harmonic functions.

Transcription Exercises: Transcribe harmonic progressions from audio recordings.

Improvisation Labs: Improvise using chord tones and harmonic knowledge.

Notation Software Projects: Compose and playback harmonic progressions digitally.

Comparative Listening: Analyze recordings focusing on harmonic texture and chord usage.

Peer Teaching: Present lessons on interval and chord theory to classmates.

Reflective Journaling: Write about harmonic concepts and their application in performance.

- 12-Bar Blues Jam Sessions
- Chord Construction Workshops
- Comparative Listening
- Ensemble Role Practice
- Guitar Chord Symbol Matching
- Improvisation Labs
- Interval Inversion Practice
- Interval Recognition Drills
- Notation Software Projects
- Peer Teaching
- Reflective Journaling
- Roman Numeral Labeling Exercises
- Score Annotation
- Transcription Exercises
- Voice Leading Composition

Assessment Procedure

Interval Identification Quiz: Written and aural tests on interval recognition and spelling.

Chord Construction Test: Build and label triads and seventh chords in root and inversion forms.

Roman Numeral Analysis: Label chords in a harmonic progression using Roman numerals and figured bass.

Performance Assessment: Evaluate accuracy and musicality in performing chord progressions and intervals.

Transcription Assignment: Transcribe harmonic progressions and intervallic melodies from audio or notation.

- Chord Construction Test
- classwork/homework
- discussions
- Interval Identification Quiz
- participation in performance
- peer observation
- Performance Assessment
- Roman Numeral Analysis
- Teacher observation
- tests/quizzes
- Transcription Assignment

Recommended Technology Activities

- Chromebook
- Collaborative Composition Tools
- Digital Notation Software
- Google Classroom
- Google Docs
- Google Forms
- Google Slides
- Interactive Theory Games
- Interval Training Apps
- Jam Track Apps
- Kahoot
- Listening Analysis Software
- MagicSchool AI
- Other- Specified in Lesson
- Quiziz
- Recording and Feedback
- Roman Numeral Exercises
- Screencastify
- Sight-Reading Platforms

- Virtual Keyboard Exploration

Accommodations & Modifications & Differentiation

Accommodations and Modifications should be used to meet individual needs. Their IEP and 504 plans should be used in addition to the following suggestions.

Gifted and Talented

- Compare & Contrast
- Conferencing
- Debates
- Jigsaw
- Peer Partner Learning
- Problem Solving
- Structured Controversy
- Think, Pair, Share
- Tutorial Groups

Instruction/Materials

- alter format of materials (type/highlight, etc.)
- color code materials
- eliminate answers
- extended time
- extended time
- large print
- modified quiz
- modified test
- Modify Assignments as Needed
- Modify/Repeat/Model directions
- necessary assignments only
- Other (specify in plans)
- other- named in lesson
- provide assistance and cues for transitions
- provide daily assignment list
- read class materials orally
- reduce work load

- shorten assignments
- study guide/outline
- utilize multi-sensory modes to reinforce instruction

Environment

- alter physical room environment
- assign peer tutors/work buddies/note takers
- assign preferential seating
- individualized instruction/small group
- modify student schedule (Describe)
- other- please specify in plans
- provide desktop list/formula

Resources

- Google Classroom
- handouts
- instruments
- Music Theory texts
- MusicFirst
- Noteflight
- screen recordings
- SoundTrap
- The internet
- Tonesavvy
- virtual instruments
- whiteboard