

2025 Unit 7: Harmonic Foundations and Practical Applications

Content Area: **Template**

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Harmonic Foundations and Practical Applications

In this unit, students will develop a thorough understanding of vertical harmonic structures, including triads, seventh chords, and their inversions. They will learn to label chords using guitar chord symbols and Roman numerals with figured bass, and explore the function of dominant seventh chords in resolving to the tonic. Students will practice selecting appropriate chord inversions for smooth progressions and accurately measure intervals using multiple methods. The unit also covers ensemble nomenclature and the order of triads in major and harmonic minor scales. Through performance, analysis, and composition, students will master tertian harmony, chord qualities, and the use of primary chords in styles such as the 12-bar blues, culminating in participation in jam sessions with rhythm section instrumentation and their primary instruments or voice.

Learning Objectives

- Students will accurately demonstrate and apply the stacking of thirds to create chords using standard tertian harmony. They will perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, recognize, spell, transcribe, transpose, and compose chords built on this principle.
- Students will accurately demonstrate understanding of the nomenclature used in performing within an ensemble, including the specific singing parts in a choral ensemble. They will perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, and apply this terminology in ensemble settings.
- Students will accurately measure an interval's size by counting note-letter names, lines/spaces on the staff, and semitones. They will demonstrate the techniques required for these methods through performing, identifying, discussing, analyzing, comparing, drawing, recognizing, spelling, transcribing, transposing, and composing intervals.
- Students will accurately recognize, play, and write major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads. They will demonstrate, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, spell, transcribe, transpose, and compose using these triad types.
- Students will accurately recognize, sing, play, and write the diatonic intervals of the major scale, focusing on perfect and major intervals. They will demonstrate, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, spell, transcribe, transpose, and compose using these intervals.
- Students will become familiar with and develop in-depth knowledge of the vertical use of harmonic material. They will demonstrate, analyze, discuss, and apply harmonic concepts through performance and composition activities.
- Students will correctly demonstrate, perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, recognize, spell, transcribe, transpose or compose The ability to invert triads and seventh chords to their different inversion possibilities.
- Students will correctly demonstrate, perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, recognize, spell, transcribe, transpose or compose The ability to label each chord according to its root and its inversion using both standard guitar chord symbols and the combination of Roman numerals with figured bass notation.

- Students will correctly demonstrate, perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, recognize, spell, transcribe, transpose or compose The addition of a fourth element to the triad to create dominant seventh chord V7 and its use in leading music back to tonic (I)
- Students will correctly demonstrate, perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, recognize, spell, transcribe, transpose or compose The logical choice of each inversion as a point of practicality in writing or playing a series of chords in a chord progression
- Students will correctly demonstrate, perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, recognize, spell, transcribe, transpose or compose The order of these triads as they appear in any major scale or any harmonic minor scale
- Students will correctly demonstrate, perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, recognize, spell, transcribe, transpose or compose The recognition and writing of the inversion and interval
- Students will correctly demonstrate, perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, recognize, spell, transcribe, transpose or compose The recognition, playing, and writing of all other intervals as variations in the number of semitones of the major diatonic intervals defined as minor, diminished, or augmented.
- Students will correctly demonstrate, perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, recognize, spell, transcribe, transpose or compose the use of proper order of primary chords in simple keys for creating a standard 12-bar blues progression upon which students will participate in a jam session using the basic rhythm section instrumentation of keyboard, bass, guitar and drums, as well as their primary instruments
- Students will correctly demonstrate, perform, identify, discuss, analyze, compare, draw, recognize, spell, transcribe, transpose or compose The verbal definitions of chords built on various scale degrees as tonic, supertonic, mediant, subdominant, dominant, submediant or leading tone.

Essential Skills

- Analyze and discuss the functional role of dominant seventh chords in leading back to tonic.
- Analyze vertical harmonic structures within musical excerpts and compositions.
- Choose logically appropriate chord inversions to facilitate smooth voice leading in progressions.
- Compare and analyze harmonic functions of chords within different progressions and styles.
- Compose chord progressions incorporating triads and seventh chords with appropriate inversions.
- Identify and discuss ensemble performance terminology, including choral singing parts.
- Discuss and demonstrate practical instrument and voice techniques for playing chords and intervals.
- Identify and define key harmonic concepts and terminology confidently.
- Identify and use standard guitar chord symbols corresponding to chord structures and inversions.
- Identify and write intervals as major, minor, perfect, diminished, or augmented.
- Integrate harmonic knowledge into improvisation and ensemble playing confidently.
- Label chords using Roman numeral analysis combined with figured bass notation accurately.
- Label scale-degree chords verbally and in notation: tonic, supertonic, mediant, subdominant, dominant, submediant, leading tone.
- Measure and identify intervals by counting letter names, staff positions, and semitones.
- Participate in a 12-bar blues jam session using appropriate chord voicings and rhythmic patterns.
- Perform and demonstrate seventh chords, especially dominant seventh (V7) chords and their inversions
- Perform and demonstrate triads in root position and all inversion forms.

- Perform and write chord progressions using primary chords (I, IV, V) in simple keys.
- Perform intervals aurally and on the primary instrument, recognizing their qualities.
- Recognize and analyze chord qualities and inversions within major and harmonic minor scales.
- Recognize and spell major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads accurately
- Spell intervals correctly in written exercises and compositions.
- Transcribe melodic and harmonic intervals accurately from audio or notation.
- Transcribe, compose, and transpose harmonies incorporating inversions and seventh chords.
- Transpose chord progressions and melodies between related keys accurately.
- Understand and apply standard tertian harmony by stacking thirds to build chords.
- Understand the structure and harmonic progression of the 12-bar blues form.
- Write triads in root position and inversions correctly on the staff.

Standards

MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Cr1a	Describe how sounds and short musical ideas can be used to represent personal experiences, moods, visual images, and/or storylines.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Cr2a	Assemble and organize sounds or short musical ideas to create initial expressions of selected experiences, moods, images or storylines.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Cr2b	Identify and describe the development of sounds or short musical ideas in drafts of music within simple forms (e.g., one part, cyclical, binary).
MU.9-12.1.3D.12prof.Cr3a	Develop and apply criteria to critique, improve and refine drafts of improvisations, compositions (e.g., theme and variation, 12-bar blues), as well as three-or-more-chord accompaniments in a variety of patterns (e.g., arpeggio, country and gallop strumming, fingerpicking patterns).
MU.9-12.1.3E.12prof.Cr3a	Drawing on feedback from teachers and peers, develop and implement strategies to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations.
MU.9-12.1.3D.12prof.Cr3b	Perform final versions of improvisations, compositions (e.g., theme and variation, 12-bar blues), and three-or-more-chord accompaniments in a variety of patterns (e.g., arpeggio, country and gallop strumming, fingerpicking patterns), demonstrating technical skill in applying principles of composition, improvisation and originality.
MU.9-12.1.3E.12prof.Cr3b	Share compositions or improvisations that demonstrate musical and technological craftsmanship as well as the use of digital tools and resources in developing and organizing musical ideas.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Cr3b	Share music through the use of notation, performance or technology, and demonstrate how the elements of music have been employed to realize expressive intent.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Pr4c	Develop interpretations of works based on an understanding of the use of elements of music, style and mood, explaining how the interpretive choices reflect the creator's intent.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Pr5a	Create rehearsal plans for works, identifying repetition and variation within the form.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Pr5b	Using established criteria and feedback, identify the way(s) in which performances convey the elements of music, style and mood.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Pr5c	Identify and implement strategies for improving the technical and expressive aspects of multiple works.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Pr6a	Share live or recorded performances of works (both personal and others') and explain how the elements of music are used to convey intent.

MU.9-12.1.3D.12prof.Re7b	Develop and apply teacher or student-provided criteria based on personal preference, analysis and context (e.g., personal, social, cultural) to evaluate individual and small group musical selections for listening.
MU.K-12.1.3C.12nov.Re7a	Identify reasons for selecting music based on characteristics found in the music, connection to interest, and purpose or context.
MU.K-12.1.3C.12nov.Re7b	Identify how knowledge of context and the use of repetition, similarities and contrasts inform the response to music.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Re7a	Apply teacher-provided criteria to select music that expresses a personal experience, mood, visual image, or storyline in simple forms (e.g., one-part, cyclical, binary), and describe the choices as models for composition.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Cn10a	Demonstrate how interests, knowledge and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.
MU.9-12.1.3B.12prof.Cn11a	Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

Instructional Tasks/Activities

1. **Chord Inversion Drills:** Students practice playing and identifying triads and seventh chords in all inversion forms on their instruments.
2. **Roman Numeral and Figured Bass Labeling:** Analyze given chord progressions and label each chord with Roman numerals and figured bass symbols.
3. **Guitar Chord Symbol Matching:** Match standard guitar chord symbols to their corresponding triads and inversions on the staff.
4. **Interval Identification Flashcards:** Use flashcards to drill recognition and spelling of intervals including perfect, major, minor, diminished, and augmented.
5. **Interval Measurement Practice:** Count letter names, staff positions, and semitones to determine interval sizes in written music.
6. **Stacking Thirds Composition:** Compose chords by stacking thirds and write them out in root and inversion forms.
7. **Dominant Seventh Analysis:** Listen to and analyze examples highlighting the dominant seventh chord's role in leading to tonic resolution.
8. **12-Bar Blues Jam:** Participate in a group jam session using primary chords and rhythmic patterns typical of the 12-bar blues form.
9. **Transposition Exercises:** Transpose simple chord progressions and melodies into related keys, maintaining correct chord qualities and inversions.
10. **Chord Progression Composition:** Create short chord progressions using triads and seventh chords with thoughtful inversion choices for smooth voice leading.
11. **Score Annotation:** Mark given scores with chord names, inversions, and interval identifications.
12. **Ensemble Terminology Role Play:** Practice and discuss choral ensemble terminology by assigning and performing specific singing parts.
13. **Interval Singing Practice:** Sing intervals to develop aural recognition and intonation accuracy.

14. **Performance Application:** Perform prepared pieces or exercises demonstrating correct use of chord inversions and intervals.
15. **Peer Teaching:** Students create mini-lessons explaining chord inversions, figured bass, or interval qualities to classmates.
16. **Notation Software Projects:** Use notation software like MuseScore to compose, label, and playback chord progressions incorporating inversions and seventh chords.
17. **Listening Comparison:** Compare recorded performances focusing on how different chord inversions affect harmonic texture and progression.
18. **Reflective Journaling:** Write about how understanding harmonic concepts and inversions influences their own playing and composition.

- 12-Bar Blues Jam
- Chord Inversion Drills
- Chord Progression Composition
- Dominant Seventh Analysis
- Ensemble Terminology Role Play
- Guitar Chord Symbol Matching
- Interval Identification Flashcards
- Interval Measurement Practice
- Interval Singing Practice
- Listening Comparison
- Notation Software Projects
- Peer Teaching
- Performance Application
- Reflective Journaling
- Roman Numeral and Figured Bass Labeling
- Score Annotation
- Stacking Thirds Composition
- Transposition Exercises

Recommended Technology Activities

1. **Digital Notation Software:** Use MuseScore, Finale, or Sibelius for students to compose, notate, and playback chord progressions with inversions and seventh chords.
2. **Interactive Roman Numeral Exercises:** Utilize online tools or apps like musictheory.net to practice Roman numeral and figured bass identification with instant feedback.
3. **Guitar Chord Symbol Apps:** Use apps that allow students to explore and play chord shapes while connecting symbols to notation (e.g., Chord! or Guitar Tuna).
4. **Interval Recognition Software:** Employ ear training programs like Tenuto or EarMaster to practice identifying and spelling intervals aurally and visually.

5. **Transposition Tools:** Use digital keyboards or apps that help students transpose melodies and chord progressions between keys interactively.
6. **Virtual Ensemble Rehearsal:** Use platforms like SmartMusic for students to rehearse parts and receive feedback on harmonic accuracy.
7. **Recording and Playback:** Students record their performances on GarageBand, Audacity, or smartphones to self-assess chord voicing and intonation.
8. **Chord Inversion Games:** Use gamified apps or websites that challenge students to identify or construct chord inversions under time constraints.
9. **Collaborative Composition Platforms:** Use Flat.io or Noteflight for students to collaboratively compose and edit harmonic progressions with labeled chords.
10. **Listening Analysis Software:** Use tools that allow slowing down and looping music excerpts (e.g., Transcribe! or Amazing Slow Downer) for detailed harmonic study.
11. **Online Jam Tracks:** Provide students with backing tracks for 12-bar blues or other progressions to practice chord changes and improvisation.
12. **Dynamic Score Annotation:** Use tablet apps like Notability or OneNote for students to annotate scores digitally with chord symbols, inversions, and interval markings.

- Chromebook
- Collaborative Composition Platforms
- Digital Notation Software
- Dynamic Score Annotation
- Google Classroom
- Google Docs
- Google Forms
- Google Slides
- Guitar Chord Symbol Apps
- Interactive Roman Numeral Exercises
- Interval Recognition Software
- Kahoot
- Listening Analysis Software
- MagicSchool AI
- Online Jam Tracks
- Quiziz
- Recording and Playback
- Screencastify
- Transposition Tools
- Virtual Ensemble Rehearsal

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

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