

Grade 1

Improve your theory!

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Additional resources

Stage 1



Making connections to your pieces

Look at any pieces you know and find examples of a semibreve, minim, crotchet and quaver, filling in the box below. Now find examples of semibreve, minim, crotchet and quaver rests. (The first one is an example.)

Name	Sign	Piece name and bar number
Crotchet (quarter note)		Popcorn, bar 3

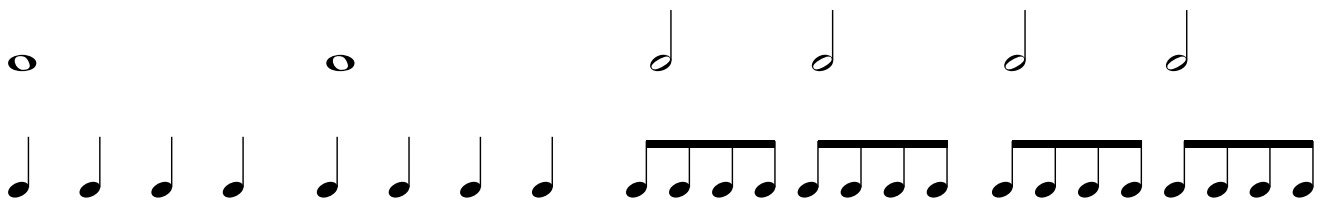
Theory box of fun

The word 'theory' comes from a very old Greek word meaning 'to look at things'. That's what theory is all about: looking at things and understanding them. Always ask yourself, 'Do I understand that?'



More connections

- Tap s with your foot, then clap this rhythm.



Now try singing it to 'la' or your favourite sound. Can you sing the rhythm back to front?

- Get creative! Play this rhythm and improvise a melody using some notes from a piece you are learning.



Aural/listening

You'll hear a rhythm made up of groups of semibreves, minims, crotchets and quavers in turn. Put them in order of appearance by writing **1st**, **2nd**, **3rd** or **4th** in the boxes. You'll hear a crotchet beat first. So if minims are first, put '1st' next to .

Stage 2

Theory box of fun

Hucbald the One-legged (who lived from about 840–930) was possibly the first musician to write music down. Here's an example of early music; play or sing what you think this might have sounded like.



Making connections to your pieces

Find a piece or song you are currently learning that is either in $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{4}{4}$ and write out the first few bars on the staves below. Make sure you include all of the information and write clearly and accurately, with good spacing between notes.

Two sets of empty musical staves for writing.

Now try this quiz:

- What does the top number of the time signature mean? _____
- What does the bottom number mean? _____
- Are there any repeated rhythms? Write them out in the workspace below.
- Now write down any rests.



Workspace

A large rectangular box for writing answers to the quiz questions.



More connections

- Using the same piece, tap the pulse with your foot and clap the rhythm. Alternatively, use home percussion (saucepan lid and spoon, for example!)
- Play or sing the piece using the same note-values but changing all the pitches.
- Make up (improvise) your own short piece using the time signature. Give it a title.



Aural/listening

Listen to the four excerpts and decide whether the time signature is $\frac{2}{4}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$. Fill your answers in the boxes.

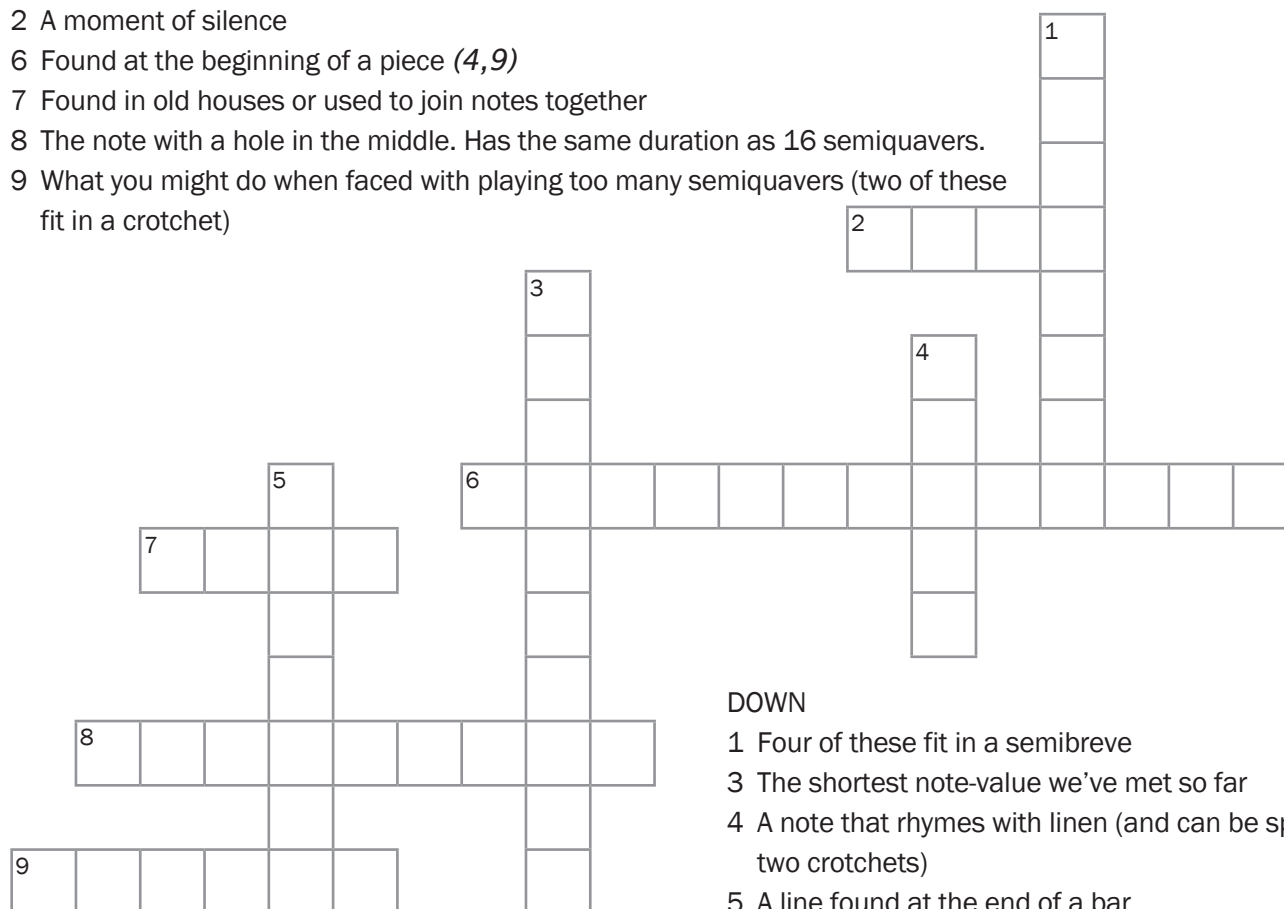
Excerpt 1	
Excerpt 2	
Excerpt 3	
Excerpt 4	

Stage 3

Test your knowledge by completing this crossword.

ACROSS

- 2 A moment of silence
 6 Found at the beginning of a piece (4,9)
 7 Found in old houses or used to join notes together
 8 The note with a hole in the middle. Has the same duration as 16 semiquavers.
 9 What you might do when faced with playing too many semiquavers (two of these fit in a crotchet)



DOWN

- 1 Four of these fit in a semibreve
 3 The shortest note-value we've met so far
 4 A note that rhymes with linen (and can be split into two crotchets)
 5 A line found at the end of a bar



Making connections to your pieces

Find a piece or song you are currently learning that is either in $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{4}{4}$ and write out the first few bars on the staves below. Make sure you include all of the information and write clearly and accurately, with good spacing between notes.



More connections

- Tap the pulse with your foot and clap the note-values of your piece. Now play or sing the rhythm, changing all the pitches.
- Improvise your own short piece using the same time signature. Give it a title that reflects the character.



Aural/listening

Listen to the four extracts and circle the note-value that appears the most in each example. You will be given a $\bullet$ count.

Extract 1



Extract 2



Extract 3



Extract 4





Stage 4

Making connections to your pieces

Look through all the pieces you are currently learning and see if you can find some passages that contain ties and dotted notes. Write them down on the staves below, ensuring you include all of the information clearly and accurately.

- Choose one of the pieces that you found and, with a pencil, add in some more ties. Remember that a tie only connects together two notes of the same pitch.
- Try playing your piece with the extra ties; how does it compare to the original?
- Look again at the piece you chose. Can any of the tied notes that you added in be rewritten as single notes with dots? If so, write them down below.
- Now erase the ties you added in.

Theory box of fun

Barlines are so called because they look like bars (an iron bar, for example). They were first used around the beginning of the 1600s.



Workspace



More connections

- Clap, play or sing the rhythm of your piece, then try doing it back-to-front!
- Create a musical bank using ingredients from your piece. Add them in the bubbles and then try improvising some music using them.



time
signature



key
signature



dotted
rhythm 1



rhythm 2



note 1



note 2



note 3



Aural/listening

Two of the following five pieces have ties or dotted notes (you can't be certain if they are written as ties or dotted notes as they *sound* the same). Circle the pieces that *do* have ties or dotted notes.

piece 1 **piece 2** **piece 3** **piece 4** **piece 5**



Stage 5

Making connections to your pieces

Find a piece or song you are currently learning and write out the first few bars on the staves below. Make sure you include all of the information and write clearly and accurately, taking particular care over your clefs.

Now try this quiz:

- Does your piece use: **treble clef** **bass clef** **both clefs** (*circle*)
- How many times can you find:
(a) the note G in the treble clef *and/or* (b) the note F in the bass clef? _____
- Look at the bars you wrote out above. Can you write the note names under the notes?



More connections

- Sing the rhythm of your piece on either a G or an F.
- Write out the first few bars of your piece using the same rhythm, but with every note written at a different pitch. Can you or your teacher play or sing it? How does it sound?



Aural/listening

High-pitched notes are usually written on the treble clef and low-pitched notes on the bass clef. Listen to these notes and write down the name of the clef you think they are probably written on.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____

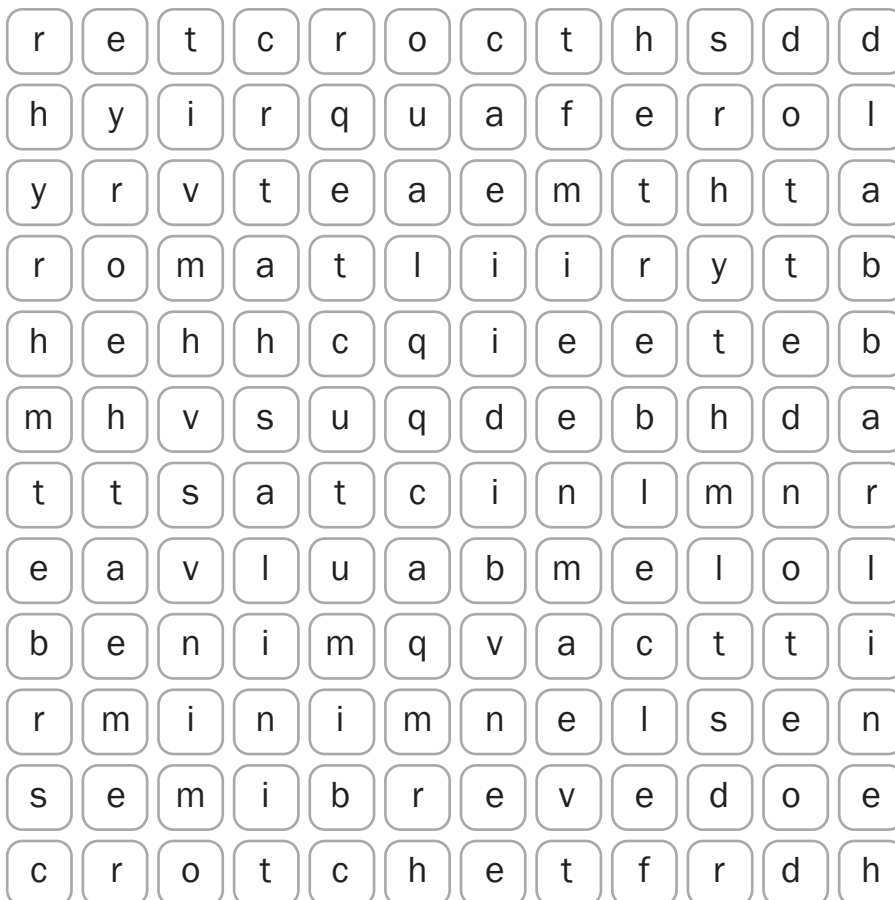
Theory box of fun

- The symbol for the treble clef comes from from the letter G, which curled around the G line on the staff. Here's how it developed:



- Try drawing a treble clef in the air and then find some clear space and walk a treble clef! Now make up a piece or song that suggests the shape of a treble clef in sound. Try this for the bass clef too, then design a music bag with a treble clef on one side and a bass clef on the other.

Test your musical terms with this word search.



semiquaver
dotted note
treble clef
semibreve
crotchet
bass clef
hucbald
bar-line
quaver
theory
rhythm
minim
stave
tie



Stage 6

Making connections to your pieces

Find a piece or song you are currently learning and write out the first few bars on the staves below. Make sure you include all of the information and write clearly and accurately.

Now try this quiz:

- Which clef (or clefs) does your chosen piece use? _____
- Can you find an example of every note name?
Circle the letters of the notes that you find: **A B C D E F G**
- Which note appears most often? _____ Play or sing it.
- What is the name of the first and the last notes in the piece? _____ and _____
Which of these sounds is higher? _____



More connections

- Sing a few bars of your piece to the letter names of the notes.
- Using the same notes, now sing or play them to a completely new rhythm.
- Ask your teacher or a friend to play from your hand-written score above.
How accurately did they play? Ask them what they found easy and difficult about playing from your music, and then see if you need to make the music clearer for them to read.



Aural/listening

Listen to the three excerpts and write down the name of the second note in each.

Excerpt 1 _____

Excerpt 2 _____

Excerpt 3 _____

Now write down the name of the third note in each excerpt.

Excerpt 1 _____

Excerpt 2 _____

Excerpt 3 _____

Theory box of fun

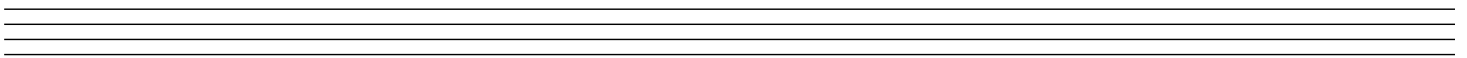
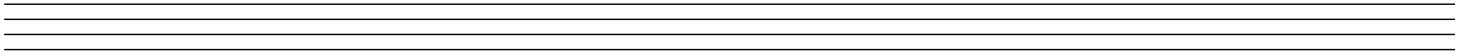
The idea of calling musical notes with the letter names of the alphabet was probably first introduced by a French abbot who had the wonderful name of Pseudo-Odo of Cluny. He introduced this idea in about the year 1000.



Stage 7

Making connections to your pieces and

Find a piece that you're learning (or have learnt) in C major and write out the first few bars on the staves below. Make sure you include all of the information and write clearly and accurately.



Now try this quiz:

- Play the scale of C major and enjoy it! Think of the TTSTTS pattern as you move from one note to the next.
- Look through the piece and circle any scale patterns that you can find. (Three- or four-note patterns count.)
- Choose one of the scale patterns you found and improvise a tune using these notes.
- Play and sing one of the tones that you found and listen to it very carefully. Do the same with a semitone and see if you can hear the difference (this will help you prepare for Aural/listening, below).

Theory box of fun

The word 'scale' comes from the Latin word scala, meaning a ladder or a flight of stairs. How does a scale resemble a ladder or stairs?

Theory box of fun

The history of scales is very complicated! The first-known scales were invented by the Chinese around 3000BC. Like ours, their scales were made up of eight notes, but each was related to a time of day!

So you had an early morning scale, a scale for lunch, a different one for tea, and so on! Can you relate the scales you know to a time of day?



More connections

- Looking at your piece again, choose one scale pattern and one repeated rhythm. Can you combine them to make a little tune? Try writing it down on the staff below.



- Now try playing your tune with some of the following ingredients: *forte*, *piano*, *staccato*, *legato*, *Andante*, *Allegro*.



Aural/listening

On track 18, you will hear some tones and some semitones. Listen to each example and write down whether it was a tone (T) or a semitone (S).

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 1 _____ | 4 _____ |
| 2 _____ | 5 _____ |
| 3 _____ | 6 _____ |

Theory box of fun

The word 'tone' comes from the Greek tonos, which originally meant a taut string that made a sound if you plucked it. A French word, ton, then evolved, which meant any musical sound. We still use the word 'tone' to mean the kind of sound we make. Do you play or sing with a good tone?

Stage 8



Making connections to your pieces

Find a piece you are learning or have learnt in G or F major and write out the first few bars on the staves below. Make sure you include all of the information and write clearly and accurately. Play it through and then answer the questions below.

- Circle all of the notes that are affected by the key signature.
- Can you find any scale patterns? They could be as short as just two or three notes. Write one or two out in the workspace.
- Find examples of semitones and circle them in the music.



Workspace



More connections

Play the scale of your piece (either G major or F major) and then improvise your own tune using the following ingredients:

- The notes of G major
- One of the scale patterns that you wrote down
- $\frac{4}{4}$ time signature
- Crotchets and quavers



Aural/listening

Listen to these three extracts and match them up with the correct description.

Extract 1

Extract 2

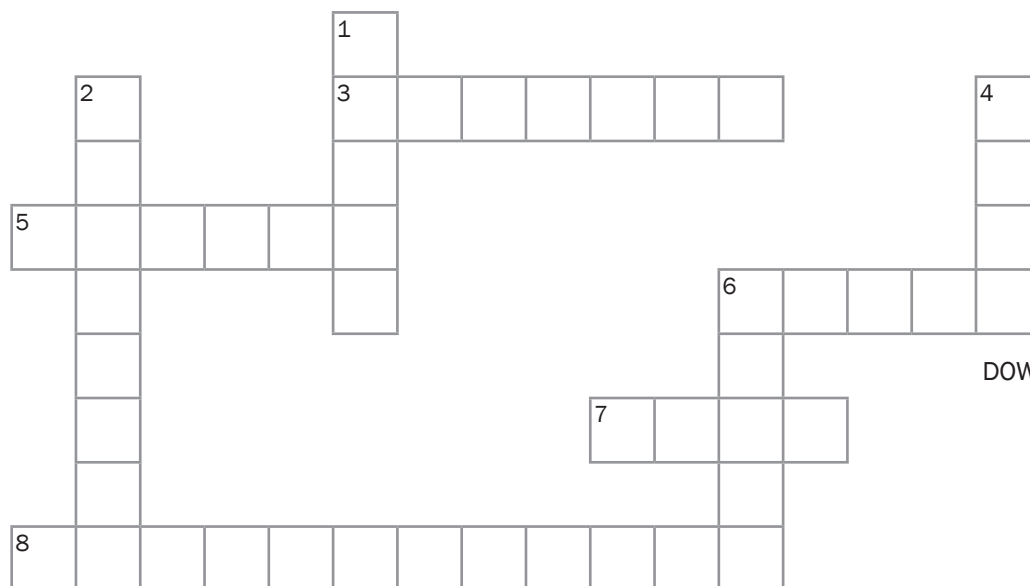
Extract 3

major scale
going up

major scale
going down

not a major
scale

Complete this crossword.



- ACROSS: 3 The man who first wrote music down
 5 The key with no sharps or flats (1,5)
 6 The five lines on which we write music
 7 The sign that lowers a note by a semitone
 8 Made up of sharps or flats and found at the start of a piece (3,9)
- DOWN: 1 The sign that raises a note by a semitone
 2 The smallest distance between two notes
 4 The distance between F and G
 6 A delightful pattern of notes that go up and come down

Theory box of fun

The origin of the flat sign is very interesting. In very early music only one note, the note B, had a lower (or flat) version. Normal B was written using a square-shaped 'b'. The lower (or flatter) version was written in a more rounded way and has become our flat sign: b.



Stage 9

Making connections to your pieces

Find a piece you are learning that contains triad patterns. Write out a few bars that contain these patterns on the staff below. Make sure you include all of the information and write clearly and accurately.

Now play your piece through and answer these questions:

- How many different triads can you find? _____
- What is the full name of the tonic triad of your piece? _____
- Choose one triad from your piece and see how many different ways you can play it.
Experiment with different rhythms, dynamics, articulation and the order of the notes.



Workspace



More connections

- Create a four-bar tune from the notes of the tonic triad and using some of the following ingredients. Write it in the workspace. Remember to add the key signature at the start.

Can you play or sing your tune? Give it a title that fits with the character of the music.



Aural/listening

- Find the note C (from a piano or your instrument) and then sing it.
- Now sing the notes of the C major tonic triad. Sing the first note (C), hear the next note in your head (D), then sing the 3rd note (E), and so on:

Now sing the notes of the D, F and G major triads in the same way.

Stage 10



Making connections to your pieces

Choose a piece you are learning and then try to find an example of each interval you know (they could be melodic or harmonic intervals). Write them out in the space below.

[illegible]

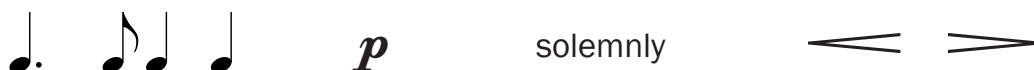
Now play your piece through and try this quiz:

- What is the key of your piece? _____
- Circle any natural signs you can find. Why are they there? _____
- What is the first melodic interval in your piece? _____ What is the last? _____
- Circle any of the following ingredients that you can find in your piece:
a melodic triad accidentals a descending melodic interval a harmonic interval



More connections

- Play the scale of your piece using some or all of these ingredients:



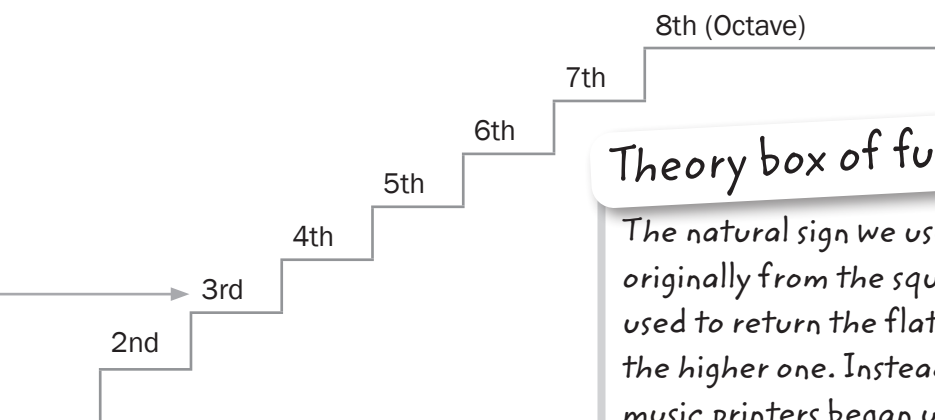
- Now play just the notes of the tonic triad in the same way.
- Finally, take some rhythms and dynamics from your piece and use them to play your scale.



Aural/listening

Listen to the melodic intervals on track 24 and work out which is which.
The first one has been done for you.

extract _____
 extract _____
 extract _____
 extract _____
 extract _____
 extract | _____
 extract _____
 extract _____



Theory box of fun

The natural sign we use today developed originally from the square , which was used to return the flattened note back to the higher one. Instead of the square , music printers began using a sign that looked like the letter 'h', which eventually grew into our natural sign.

Stage 11

Can you find the 14 Italian musical terms hidden in this word search? Write them out below and describe each one to a friend or teacher.



Term

Theory box of fun

The first ever composer to use dynamic markings was the 16th-century Italian Giovanni Gabrielli. A 20th-century Rumanian composer, György Ligeti, used the markings *ffffffffff* and *ppppppppp* in some piano pieces!



Making connections to your pieces

Choose a piece that you are learning that includes lots of different terms and signs. Write out the first few bars on the staves below, ensuring you include all of the information clearly and accurately.

- Write down all of the musical words and signs that are used in the workspace and then give their meanings.
- In the extract you have written out, replace or add the following types of ingredients:

a tempo marking a dynamic marking a style of playing

What terms and signs have you used? _____

- Now try playing this extract with the new ingredients and then with the original ones.
How has the character and mood of the music changed? _____



Workspace



More connections

- Play the scale of your piece in the following ways:

Piano *Forte* $\leq$ $\geq$ *Legato* *Staccato* **Andante** **Allegro**



Aural/listening

Listen to the three excerpts on tracks 25–7 and match them up with the correct ingredients.

Excerpt 1

Excerpt 2

Excerpt 3

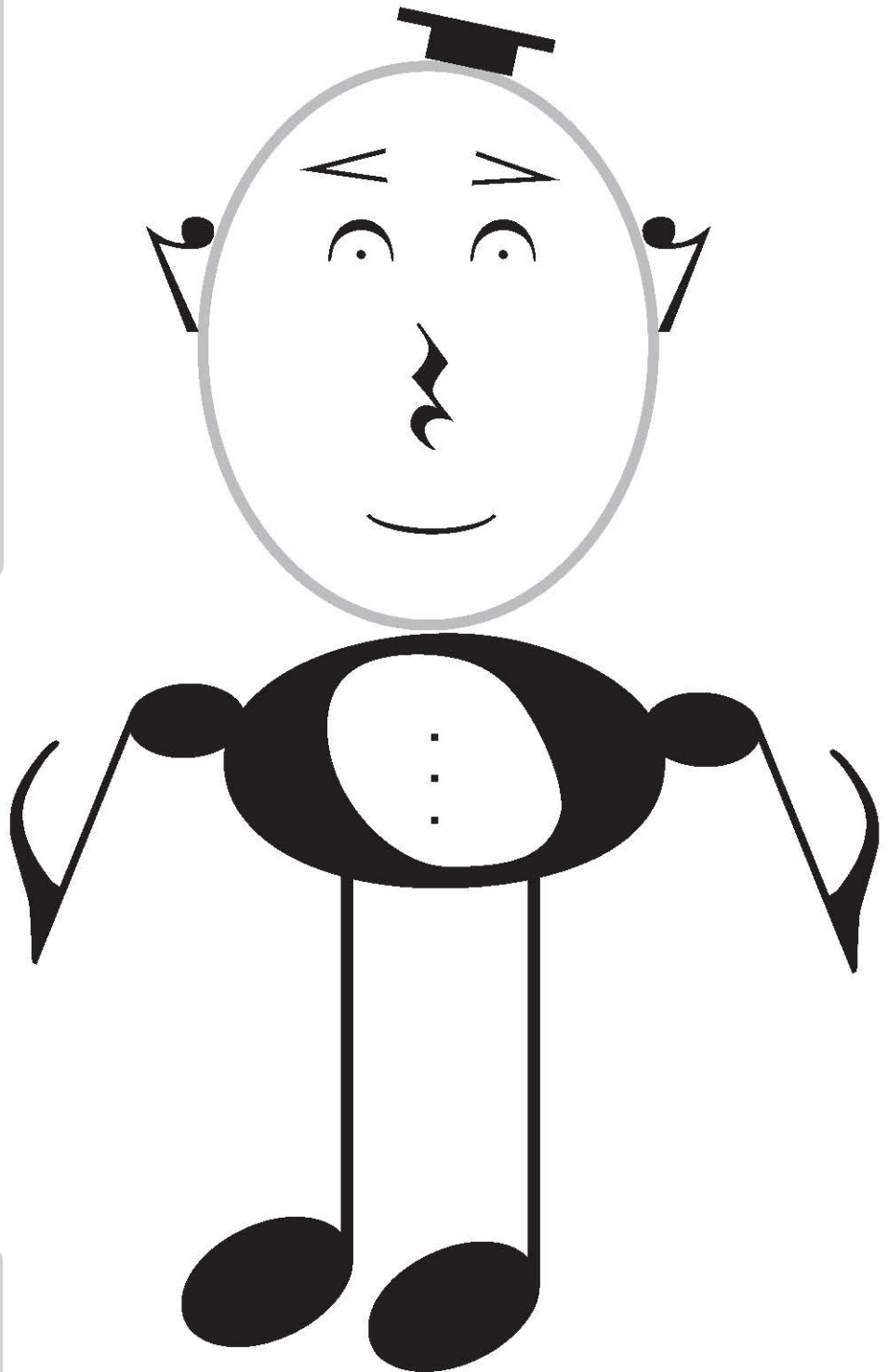
$\frac{3}{4}$, Allegretto, *cantabile*

$\frac{4}{4}$, rall., *pianissimo*

$\frac{2}{4}$, accel., *staccato*

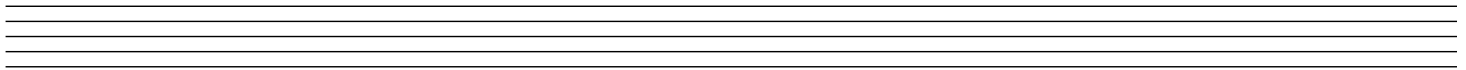
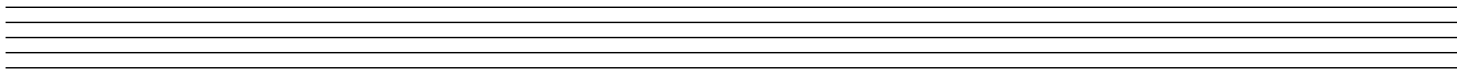
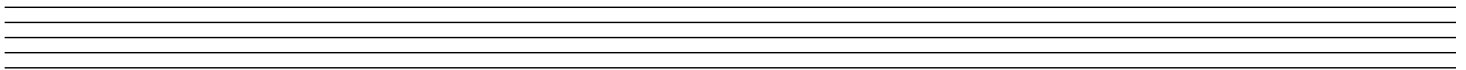
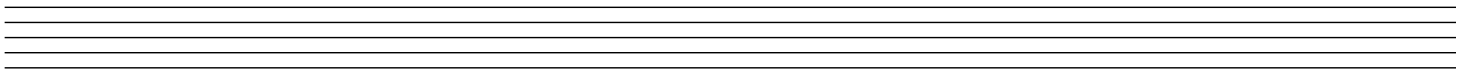
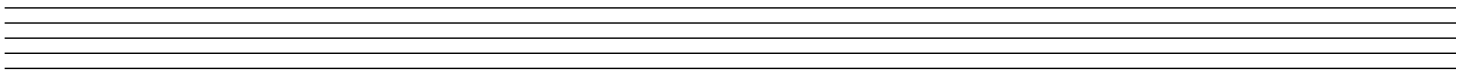
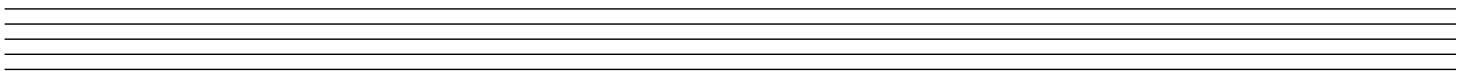
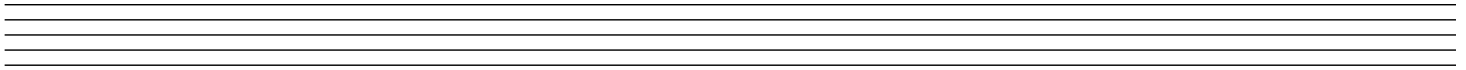
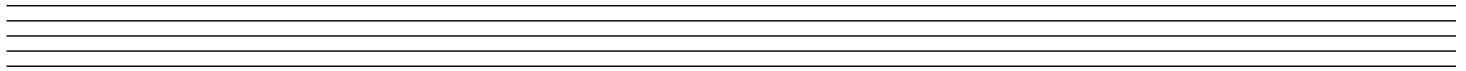
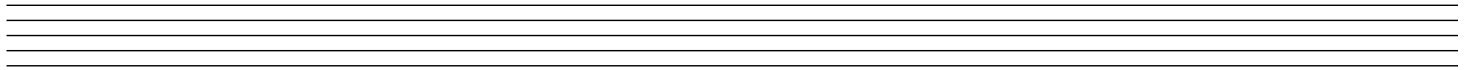
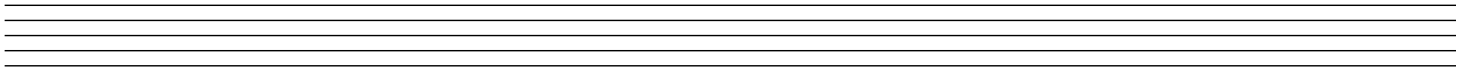
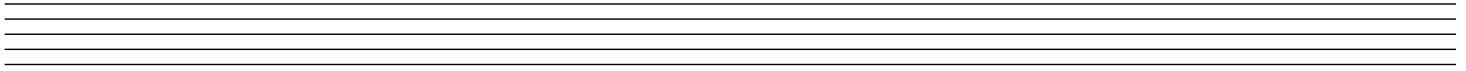
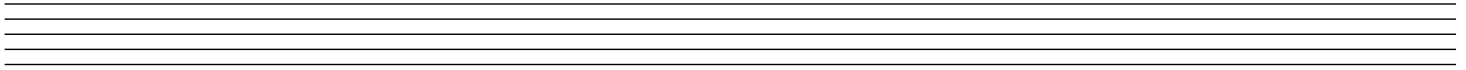
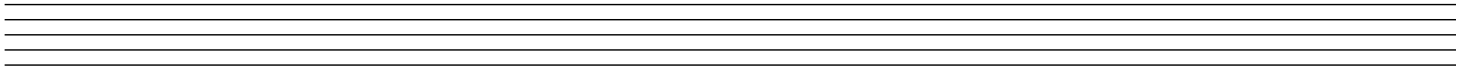
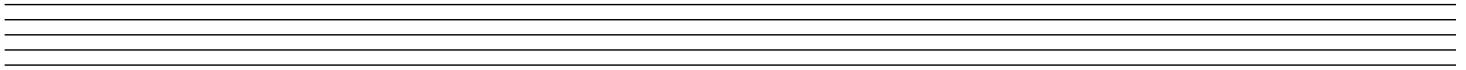
How many signs and symbols can you find in Theoryman?

Write them here



Congratulations

on completing
**Improve your
theory! Grade 1.**
See you again for
Grade 2!



Handwriting practice lines (first set).

Handwriting practice lines (second set).

Handwriting practice lines (third set).

Handwriting practice lines (fourth set).

Handwriting practice lines (fifth set).

Handwriting practice lines (sixth set).

Handwriting practice lines (seventh set).

Handwriting practice lines (eighth set).

Handwriting practice lines (ninth set).

Handwriting practice lines (tenth set).

Handwriting practice lines (eleventh set).

Handwriting practice lines (twelfth set).

Handwriting practice lines (thirteenth set).

Handwriting practice lines (fourteenth set).