TEACHING BEYOND THE AP MUSIC THEORY EXAM:
Innovative Tools to Reach What Colleges Expect of Your Students

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PART I: EAR TRAINING "TOOLS OF THE TRADE"

RHYTHMIC DICTATION – Building a mental map/image of rhythm
   ❖ Pre-dictation
      a. Rhythm blocks
      b. Pattern repetition (physical or verbal syllables)
      c. Improvisation chains

   ❖ Mapping in real-time: pre-notation

Spatial technique

Metric Tracking (Protonotation)[1]

Graphic subdivision tracking

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[1] Karpinski, Gary. Manual for Ear Training and Sight Singing, W.W. Norton, 2006.

MELODIC DICTATION
- ❖ Pre-dictation
  - a. Tune blocks
  - b. Pattern sing back – numbers or solfége
  - c. Contour mapping – physical representation
  - d. Bottom-up strategy – track rhythm, syllables before notation takes place
  - e. Group work at the board – no one student holds the chalk, encourage dialogue as they work. A variation with a small class - single student at the board talking aloud.

HARMONIC DICTATION
- ❖ <u>Vertical</u> vs. horizontal hearing
- ❖ Arpeggiate scale degrees or solfege (learn patterns)
- ❖ Map inversions – arpeggiate intervals above the bass note
- ❖ Learn the most common chords that are found above a given scale degree in a major or minor key.
- ❖ Strategy:
  - a. Bass line only
  - b. Sketch out the possible Roman numerals
  - c. Listen for triad vs. seventh chord; quality

PART II: WRITTEN THEORY "TOOLS OF THE TRADE"

INTERVALS – Imagery and Patterns of Inflection – beyond counting half steps
- ❖ **White notes first – isolate and build recognition based on the visual size and the note each is built on.**
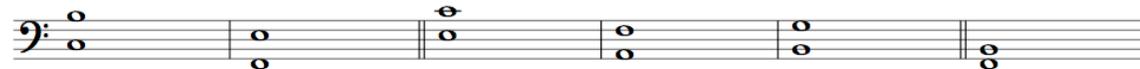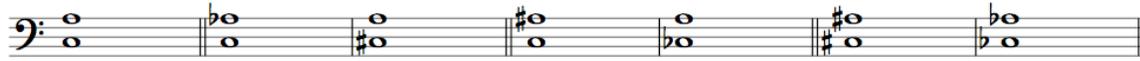
- ❖ Interval inflection patterns – three general rules
  - ○ **Contract (make ½ step smaller): flat the upper OR sharp the lower note**
  - ○ **Expand (make ½ step larger): sharp the upper OR flat the lower note**
  - ○ **Retain (maintain same quality): flat OR sharp BOTH notes**

**For Major intervals:**   **Contract = m**   **Expand = A**   **Retain = M**

ANALYSIS
- ❖ **Tonal profile analysis – beyond the key signature – before Roman numerals**
  - ○ **Learn the CRKS – use the circle of fifths, or the key signature**
  - ○ **Rules of thumb for "scale scanning"**
    - ▪ **Raised accidental implies new scale degree 7**
    - ▪ **Lowered accidental implies new scale degree 4 or 6**
    - ▪ **Find melodic and bass shapes to support the new key**

PART III: ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an important part of gauging learning outcomes. Unfortunately it can be difficult to pull together materials with limited reference resources and time. <u>Exposition</u> is an online, customizable assessment tool for theory and ear training. The instructor may add their school colors and logo and select from 8 categories of over 800 pre-designed questions. Adding new questions to the database is just clicks away using imported graphic or sound files. Students receive immediate feedback and scores that are managed on Exposition's dedicated server.
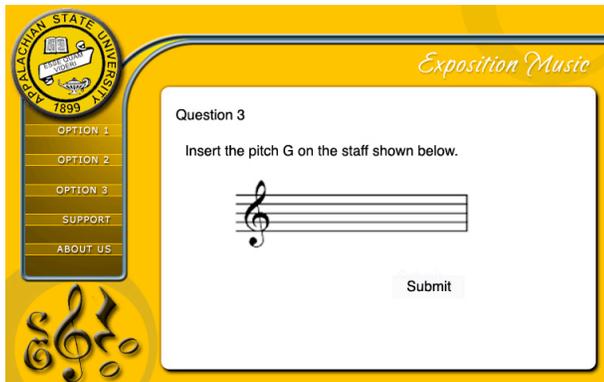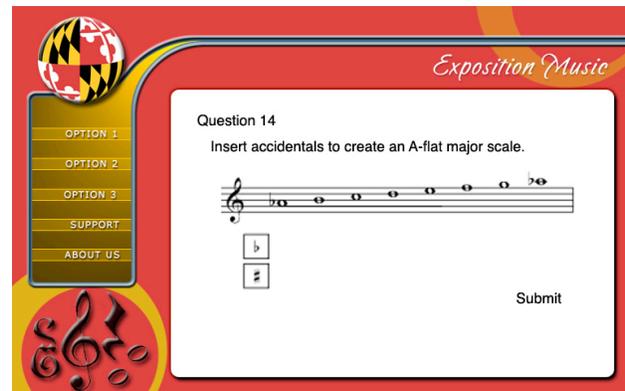

Pitch entry
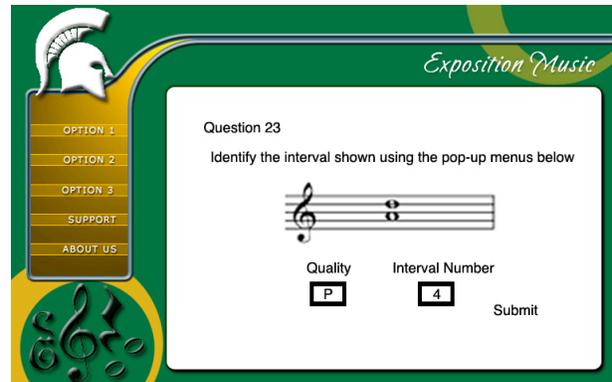
Pull down menus
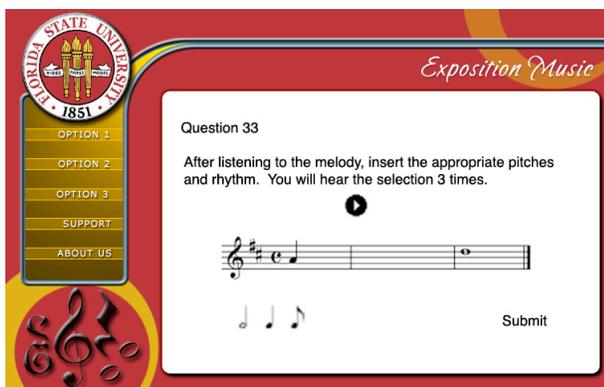
Pitch and rhythm entry

Drag and drop notation

Select helpful theory web links for students and instructors:

Theory Tutorials/Practice	http://www.musictheory.net
	http://www.emusictheory.com
	http://www.teoria.com (bilingual – English/Spanish)
Theory Worksheets	http://www.people.vcu.edu/~bhammel/theory/homework/index.html
Listening Analysis Tool	http://lipscomb.umn.edu/indexCurrent.htm
Music Dictionary	http://www.music.vt.edu/musicdictionary/
Invention & Fugue Analysis:	http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~tas3/bachindex.html
Midi/Score collection of Bach	http://www.bachcentral.com/midiindexcomplete.html
.PDF Score collection	http://www.mutopiaproject.org/
.PDF & Midi Bach Chorales	http://www.jsbchorales.net/
Midi/Graphic Files for Web Use	http://www.finearts.txstate.edu/Music/faculty/bios/js_fr_index.html?/
	Music/faculty/bios/gonzalez_cynthia.htm