

Four Note “Ear to Hand” Melodies

Objective:

Given a demonstration and guided practice of a one octave RH C Major Scale ascending and descending, instruction in note names and solfege in the key of C Major Scale, and guided practice in playing 4 note melodies in quarter notes comprised of the scale degrees 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 1' in the key of C major, the student will demonstrate the ability to recognize and perform four note melodies in a "call and response" or "ear to hand" format in the key of C Major, as assessed in an in-class evaluation where the student will be given three melodies to play back from the teacher and must perform at least one with no errors in pitch or rhythm. (S/NS)

Equipment & Resources:

- Piano or keyboard
- Chair or piano bench with no arms, suitable for playing the piano
- Handout exercise including the RH C Major Scale ascending and descending

Methodology:

AS Teacher (T.) demonstrates a couple “ear to hand” exercises to a four note melody in the C Major using scale degrees 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 1' by singing the notes on “doo”, taking a moment to think, and then playing them back on the piano.

I T. explains that this class will include reviewing the C Major Scale with the RH ascending and descending so that we can play back short, four quarter note melodies using every scale degree except the fourth.

M T. demonstrates/reviews fingering for C Major Scale with the right hand ascending and descending (i.e., right hand begins with finger 1, 2, 3, then crosses under with fingers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 cross over 3, 2, 1, descending) and sings along with fingering.

GP T. checks for students’ (Ss.) understanding in reading the scale sheet by asking Ss. to play the RH C Major Scale ascending and descending. T. guides Ss. in their efforts. Ss. play the scale ascending and descending. T. checks for students’ success in playing the scale and makes suggestions as necessary.

M T. demonstrates playing the scale ascending and descending and singing along in solfege.

GP T. checks for Ss. understanding of solfege by asking them to play the RH C Major Scale ascending and descending while singing along in solfege.

M T. demonstrates how the “call and response” or “ear to hand” exercise will work. Ss. will hear a melody (sung on “doo”) made up of 4 quarter notes (using scale degrees 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 1’) and will play it back without any notation (i.e., “by ear”) on their own piano. Ss. are encouraged to use solfege if it helps them to determine the notes, but solfege will not be given in the initial “call” from T.

GP T. will play 4-5 melodies that Ss. will play back. Again, Ss. are encouraged to use solfege if it helps them to determine the notes, but solfege will not be given in the initial “call” from T.

IP Ss. are given time to practice in pairs. One partner will sing 4 quarter note melodies (on “doo”) and the other will play them back on the piano. T. monitors progress and offers suggestions as needed.

A One at a time, Ss. are asked to play back three 4-note melodies, and must play at least one of them back correctly with no pitch or rhythm errors. Grading of student accomplishment of the instructional objective of this lesson is done on a Satisfactor/Non Satisfactory basis.

C Ss. are congratulated on their efforts and progress, given suggestions of what aspects of the scale and/or “call and response” they may need to continue working on, and feedback on what they did well. Class concludes with three to four “call and response” activities where T. will play four note melodies made up of *any note* in the C Major Scale (adding 4), giving them a sneak peek of what to expect next!

Warm Up Exercise

C Major scale 1 octave (right hand)

The image shows a musical score for a C Major scale exercise for the right hand. The score is written in 4/4 time and consists of two measures. The first measure contains the ascending scale: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The second measure contains the descending scale: B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Fingering numbers are placed above the notes: 1, 2, 3, ①, 2, 3, 4, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, ③, 2, 1. The circled numbers ① and ③ indicate the first and third notes of the descending scale. The bass clef staff is empty, with a short horizontal line indicating a whole rest.