Melodic Dictation Websites & Link


Review

Prepare your students for a dictation. Get them to sight read some music or sing a known song that uses the same tone set as the dictation, do some echo singing of phrases, sing from a tone ladder focusing on any intervals that may be more difficult. Echo singing can be particularly helpful.

1. Sing or play a short phrase for each student to ‘clever echo’
2. Students sing back to ‘loo’ showing the contour by pointing in the air
3. An individual sings the phrase in solfa with handsigns
4. The whole class echos with handsigns.
5. Repeat with a different student. Or, if this is too much too soon, try with the whole class or a group giving the answer.

It is not ‘cheating’ to practice a tone set or intervals before a dictation. In order to aurally comprehend a melody and pick out patterns these skills need to be practiced before they are tested just as in any other subject. Aural skills that are improved in other activities – games, sight reading, agility exercises etc. are also building up these skills in recognition and helping build a bank of melodic patterns that will be recognised more easily over time.

Point

Once students are prepared, give the dictation. Let students listen once without writing and ask questions: What note did we start on/finish on? What were the highest/lowest notes? Is there any repetition? Where?

Give sign posts along the way: Ask the class to sing the final interval in solfa. Ask students to show the handsigns for a repeated phrase or of the highest/lowest notes when they occur. Encourage students to use handsigns to check their answers. Once students get used to this, it is amazing how many mistakes they will discover by showing the handsigns and inner hearing the melody. I allow my students to use
handsigns in their exams. They make no noise and can be done without other students seeing, depending on the exam set up.

Scaffold your dictation to include extension. Ask any students who have finished to notate it from stick notation and solfa onto the stave, or transpose it, memorise it, be prepared to play it on the piano from memory, in the original or in a different key, sing and handsign, sing to letter names either in the original key or transposed. These activities (in the original key) have the added benefit of giving more hearings for those in the class who are weaker and need more.

Be active during the dictation. Walk around the class and council students who need help. This will also give you an indication of how well your students are doing and whether their technique of attempting the dictation is flawed more than seeing their final answers will. I often have one or two students up at the board doing dictation while the rest of the class attempt it on paper. This can be nerve wracking for students initially but those I have done this with have stated how useful a process is as you can see and direct their technique to a greater extent and the class benefit from the feedback.

**Reinforce**

Once the dictation has been heard a number of times, and the answer derived, get the class to sing the melody in solfa with handsigns, to letter names using the finger staff, inner hear particular notes, listen to students who have done extension work while the rest of the class handsign their task, and get the whole class to sing the melody from memory. Scaffolding and increasing difficulty can also occur in the melodic dictation itself.

Whole melodies need not be dictated. Start off with a missing bar or bars, give certain notes, even prepare the dictation for weaker students by giving them particular intervals or bars to help keep them on the right track. Melodic dictation is an intricate skill to learn. Often it is not given enough time in the classroom and students are often not taught the process of getting a dictation right in a way that lets them believe it is a skill they CAN grasp with work. Working with University students or music teachers can quickly show the negative effect on their confidence of years of not being taught this skill in a detailed, sequential and meaningful way. Using the Review, Point, and Reinforce steps can give students the success they long for and prepare them for a musically literate life up to VCE and beyond.
To begin building this important skill, start with very short fragments - three or four notes of a simple melody. Try to sing the phrase and convert the tones of the melody to scale numbers. Visualize how the melody will look and feel on your instrument. Soon you will be ready to move on to longer, more complex phrases. Notice how the longer phrases are often made up of shorter melodic patterns that you already know. As your ability increases, you will eventually be able to mentally practice and compose music away from your instrument.

ONLINE GAMES----Parrot Phrases will greatly increase your visualization skills. By regularly training your ear with this game, you will soon be able to mentally 'see' exactly how to play all kinds of melodies on a piano or guitar.

The Melody a Day web site is designed to give music students the practice they need to become proficient in melodic dictation. Implementing the FREE Finale Notepad software for Windows or Macintosh, this web site allows you to choose a melody, print the setup page for the melody from your computer, and then listen to the hidden version as you take melodic dictation with your pencil on the printed sheet. You can also choose to download a Notepad version, that will allow you to write out your dictation using the Finale Notepad tools, save it to your computer desktop, and then print it out to hand into your instructor. When you are finished taking the dictation, click on the Answer version of the melody and you will be able to see and hear the answer as it scrolls and plays within the Finale Notepad software.

Strategies for Teacher Aural Recognition
Dr. Brad Hansen,
Portland State University

The Instrumental Ear Training Cheat Sheet
Seven effective strategies
for connecting your ears
to your instrument.

Here are some basic principles to follow:
• First, coordinate melodic dictation work with sight-singing. What we sing is what we write.
• Second, start simple and move to the complex, rhythmically, melodically, and harmonically, as well as in the
  length of the dictations.
• Third, stay with pentatonic materials for a significant amount of time.
• Fourth, prepare aurally now, through singing, for future written work.

Sequencing
As a Kodály educator, I base my students’ aural and written skill work on Kodály’s sequence of singing development.
My students also “sign” the various solfège syllables; this practice gives them the opportunity to manipulate the
syllables they are both singing and hearing. With each pattern taking anywhere from a few days to a few weeks, my
beginning students sing and sign the following sequence of pitch patterns (in various creative combinations and
melodies) and scale work:

- Sol-mi
- La-sol-mi
- La-sol-mi-re-do
- Do'-la-sol-mi-re-do
- Do'-la-sol-mi-re-do-(low) so
- Major scale (moveable do) -- stepwise motion only
- Major scale -- stepwise motion, plus skips of the tonic triad
- Major scale -- stepwise motion, plus skips of the tonic and dominant triads
- “La”-based minor patterns and scales (natural, harmonic, melodic)

Embellishments
Coordinating sight-singing with melodic dictation is the real “key” to success. My students sight-sing specific
syllables in patterns and melodies. The same syllables and patterns are found in the dictations the students are
writing. For instance, if the class is singing patterns and simple melodies using only the pitches la-sol-mi, then these
are the only pitches that will appear in their melodic dictations. I also coordinate keys, keeping warm-up exercises
and dictations in the same key on the same day. This gives the students the opportunity to examine pitch
relationships on the staff, both melodically and intervallically, within a specific key.

The principle of starting simple and moving to the complex is important to all three types of dictation study --
melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic -- and has an immediate bearing on the length of dictation examples. My
very beginning dictations are one measure in length, use only quarter notes, and incorporate sol and mi exclusively.
We then advance to two-measure dictations, sequentially adding additional pitches (la, re, do) and rhythms (half
notes, eighth notes). Four-measure pentatonic melodies, with an occasional fa or ti found exclusively in scalar
passages, follow. The next step finds the students writing four-measure dictations in major keys with more complex
rhythm patterns (adding dotted rhythms, eighth-quarter-eighth, eighth-two sixteenths, two sixteenths-eighth, etc.) or
eight-measure dictations with simpler rhythms. These dictations employ predominantly scalar motion with skips in the
tonic and, eventually, in the dominant triads. As my students become more competent in their minor key sight-
singing, we begin melodic dictations in minor. In the beginning, nearly all dictations are in 4/4 meter, with a few in 2/4
and 3/4. After students demonstrate proficiency in these, I add melodic dictations in 2/2, 3/2, 4/2, 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8.

Focus on pentatonic for a significant portion of time. My beginning students write exclusively pentatonic
exercises for several weeks. This allows them to really lock in the tonic triad (both aurally and in their written work)
while examining its relationship to surrounding pitches. Once fa and ti are added to the sight-singing mix, and,
ultimately, to their written work, sight-singing and melodic dictations become more difficult.

Aural preparation is important in reinforcing current skill levels and preparing for future sight-singing and
dictation tasks. A major portion of beginning students’ class periods is spent drilling sight-singing patterns and
melodies at the students’ current level of advancement. The students use class dictation time to practice listening to
and writing the syllables they are studying. In addition, class time is spent preparing and singing patterns in the next
step listed above in the sequential study. This continual reinforcement and preparation is an important element in students' grasp of and progress in the language of our tonal music.


Aural Survival Skills: High School Teachers on Melodic Dictation Nathan O. Buonviri, Ph.D., Temple University, buonviri@temple.edu Andrew S. Paney, Ph.D., University of Mississippi, apaney@olemiss.edu Presented at the annual conference of the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association Hershey, PA, March 27-29, 2014.

http://www.timbuckland.id.au/2014/08/13/4-steps-for-doing-melodic-dictation-with-piano-students/

Step 1: Melodic dictation without rhythm. Have the student write out the appropriate clef (in the example below, it’s a treble clef), and provide a starting note which they can also write.

Step 2: Derive the rhythm from hearing the melody. Provide the student with the time signature and the number of bars in the melody. In this case, the time signature is simple duple, and there are four bars. Now play the melody with the correct rhythm, and the student should write it out in stick notation.

Step 3: Add the rhythm notation to the melody. This should be a simple matter of transferring the stick stems, beams and barlines to the previously written out melody notes.

Step 4: Sing it in solfa. This is an important step and it gives musical context to the process the student has just gone through. If the student does not know the solfa names, you can still sing it using the note names.

Variations to make melodic dictation harder or easier

To make it harder for students:

- Have the student derive the melody and rhythm simultaneously.
- Make the melody longer or more chromatic.
- Use a greater variety of intervals in the melody.
- Do not provide the time signature.
- Provide the starting note, but not the clef.
- Have the student transpose the melody to another key.

To make it easier for students:

- Limit the intervals to those between so, mi and la.
- Leave out the rhythmic dictation entirely, or limit rhythmic elements to ta and ti-ti.
- Make the melody shorter.

1000 Examples of Musical Dictation (Ladukhin, Nikolay)

https://ia601207.us.archive.org/0/items/manualforteacher00dann/manualforteacher00dann.pdf

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxZoZBExTbo
3 Melodic Dictation Games

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_QEJmpxxEw
Song & Music for Language Teaching : Speed Dictation

https://www.musicmindgames.com/dictationandsight
Dictation & Sight-Singing Videos

https://books.google.com/books?id=IdxoAgAAQBAJ&pg=PA109&lpg=PA109&dq=teaching+music+dictation&source=bl&ots=ZYz3bxdYUu&sig=l-yzRnGAJOh_Cf2GBMteU3NI7uE&hl=en&sa=X&ei=z87iVN_QJNTdoATI9YLABw&ved=0CHIQ6AEwCTgK#v=onepage&q=teaching%20music%20dictation&f=false
Teaching Music Through Composition: A Curriculum Using Technology


http://www3.northern.edu/wieland/theory/websites.htm
**Theory/Aural Skills Programs for Purchase**

- www.macgamut.com (complete aural/written skills, fundamentals to advanced)
- www.ars-nova.com/theory.html (complete aural/written skills, fundamentals to advanced)

Auralia (ear training) and Musition (theory)- (complete aural/written skills, fundamentals to advanced)

http://www.people.vcu.edu/~bhammel/theory/resources/index.html
Links to various sites, including an inexpensive sight singing site.

[www.rhythmbee.com](http://www.rhythmbee.com)  
Computer animations that help in fundamentals; requires subscription  
[www.music-theory.com](http://www.music-theory.com)  
Independent online study of fundamentals

**Sites that either have downloads or rate ear training software.**

[https://www.msu.edu/user/spangle9/etsoftware.html](https://www.msu.edu/user/spangle9/etsoftware.html)  
[http://www.educational-software-directory.net/music/ear-training](http://www.educational-software-directory.net/music/ear-training)  
[http://kellysmusicandcomputers.com/music_theory_ear_training_software.htm](http://kellysmusicandcomputers.com/music_theory_ear_training_software.htm)  


[http://kris.shaffermusic.com/tags/#aural_skills](http://kris.shaffermusic.com/tags/#aural_skills)  

[http://www.philharmonia.co.uk/assets/files/137/dictation_lesson_plan.pdf](http://www.philharmonia.co.uk/assets/files/137/dictation_lesson_plan.pdf)  
Dictation Lesson Plan Prepared by Anthony Anderson Head of Music and AST  
Beauchamp College, Leicestershire  

Rhythm and Dictation comes from Mr. W's classroom to yours and only requires up to 5 minutes each day for full benefit! One workbook suits all instrumental & vocal students. They will learn to count, understand rhythm patterns, and become confident rhythm readers. These rhythm skills translate to improved playing and sight reading ability.

Introduce Rhythm and Dictation into the classroom when students understand quarter notes and rests, and can count and sustain pulse in 4/4 time. This workbook progresses from simple quarter notes in 4/4 time to mixed meter, compound meter, 16th notes, triplets, and syncopation.

Rhythm and Dictation is also set up for home use with free online dictation sound files that can be accessed through the Neil A. Kjos Music Company website.

Rhythm and Dictation features 48 weeks of writing and dictation exercises. Each week includes two counting and rhythm writing exercises, followed by three dictation exercises. Melodic dictation lines are provided in the Teacher's Edition and students write the rhythmic equivalent in their workbook.

Rhythm and Dictation brings results! It gets the job done and because it only requires up to 5 minutes each day, the majority of your class time can still focus on new material, performance literature, and more.

Edition Number: L64T / Price: $9.95

https://www.pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=melodic%20dictation&term_meta%5B%5D=melodic%7Ctyped&term_meta%5B%5D=dictation%7Ctyped

Links on Pinterest