Composer Tool: PHRASING

Music is a language full of ideas. Often these ideas fall into groups, similar to words that fall into sentences. These musical sentences are called *phrases*. Phrases are marked with curved lines (slurs) and are played legato (smoothly).

Two-measure phrases are very common, although phrases can be longer or shorter.



Music is not like other languages. It is a language of imagination and emotion. Composers can express thoughts and feelings beyond words. This is their gift to the world. What do you have to say through your music?

Meditation



Composer Tool: MUSICAL HIGH POINT

Crescendos and diminuendos are used throughout music. However, there is often one moment in the piece that becomes the loudest and most powerful. This is called the *musical bigh point*. This point usually happens after the halfway point in the music. It usually follows a crescendo. The melody can also climb to its highest note to add to the excitement.

Composing a musical high point is about creating a special event in your piece. You might imagine hiking to the top of a magnificent mountain or making a great touchdown at a football game. You can also let the music tell its own story.

Touch Down!

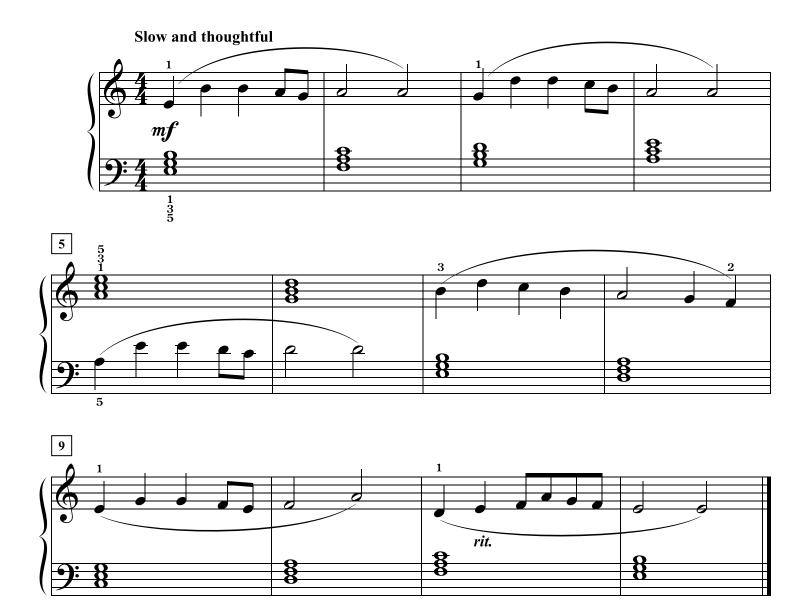


Composer Tool: PANDIATONICISM

Primary chords are the most commonly used chords. However, some music uses all of the chords built on the scale equally. This is call *pandiatonicism*. It is a fancy word, but it is a simple concept. Moving from chord to chord gives music a wandering quality.

Composers love to try new things. They are musical inventors. Pandiatonicism was a totally new experiment in the 20th Century, and many people were confused by the new sounds. Now most people like them. It takes time to adjust to new inventions, even in the music world.

Wandering Gypsy



Composition Tool: LYRICS

Upbeats and downbeats are very important if you are adding *lyrics* to the music. Words have natural accents, similar to downbeats. "AL-li-ga-tor" and "hy-E-na" are examples. Composers listen for these accents, matching them with downbeats and other strong beats. They often choose rhythms that sound similar to how people speak.

Which example feels more natural to you?



Music and lyrics have been combined to create some of the most famous compositions of all time. An example is "Ode to Joy" from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Composers can write their own words, but they often use text written by famous writers, philosophers and poets.

Roses Are Red

