



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

Peacefully

5

9



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 high 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!

Majestic

The musical score for "Touch Down!" is written in 4/4 time and consists of three systems of music.

System 1 (Measures 1-4): The piece begins with a piano (*mp*) dynamic. The melody in the treble clef starts on a middle C and moves up stepwise. The bass clef accompaniment consists of a steady bass line with a 1/5 interval. Fingerings are indicated as 1, 4, 1.

System 2 (Measures 5-8): The music becomes more intense, starting with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The melody rises further, reaching a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic by measure 8. A fermata is placed over the final chord of measure 8, with the instruction "(fermata: hold longer)". The bass line continues with the 1/5 interval accompaniment. Fingerings include 5, 1, 1, 2, 1.

System 3 (Measures 9-12): The music concludes with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The melody descends from the previous system. The piece ends with a *rit.* (ritardando) marking and a final chord. The bass line continues with the 1/5 interval accompaniment. A finger of 1 is indicated for the first measure.



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 called *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

Slow and thoughtful



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?

$\frac{3}{4}$ Spring is so beau-ti - ful! $\frac{3}{4}$ Spring is so beau - ti - ful!

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

Gently

1

The ro - ses are red, The vio - lets are

$\frac{1}{3}$ I $\frac{1}{2}$ V7 I

4

2 3

blue, The ris - ing sun shines on the fresh morn - ing

$\frac{1}{4}$ IV

8

dew, Each day it makes ev - 'ry - thing new!

V7 I