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Composer Notes For Each Solo

Texas Rag
This happy and syncopated melody unfolds in the Mixolydian mode, the major mode distinguished by a lowered seventh scale degree. The B section moves to F minor with an offbeat left hand accompaniment, followed by a left hand melody in measures 25–32. This section provides a good exercise in listening for an effective balance between melody and accompaniment.

Jed's Tune
My grandson, Jed, proudly wears cowboy boots and hats and most recently received a belt buckle for a birthday gift. Based in the D harmonic minor, this solo begins with a thin texture in the A section which gives way to a thicker B section, with interesting and contrasting left and right-hand parts.

Jaunty Sway
The gentle sway, with a syncopated accompaniment in the B section, reminds me of a Texas cowboy walking along with a gentle sway. The Aeolian mode suggests a pleasant sound for the swaying motion of the melody and accompaniment. The circle of fifths in the B section provides a nice contrast from the A sections.

Bluesy Cowhand
A cowhand is a person who works on a ranch. The word cowboy dates from the early 1800s in the Western United States. These workers were often called cowhands or cowpokes. The key of D minor and melody has a bluesy feeling.

A Sad Rag
This solo unfolds in A minor and strikes a sad note with the minor tonality. The B section interrupts the sad quality with the pleasant and happier feeling of the relative major (C Major) and the consonant right hand thirds. The A section returns and closes the solo with a minor triad plus a major ninth and seventh interval added.

Afternoon Roundup
When I was a young boy growing up with a black and white television set, we would watch cowboy movies with Roy Rogers, Gene Autry (originally from Tioga, Texas) and the Lone Ranger. These movies had cowboys rounding up the cattle on the sprawling ranches. Set in the key of C major with a section in the relative minor (A), this solo depicts the memories the composer has of those movies.

Springtime Stroll

This solo begins with a four measure introduction which paves the way for a pleasant sounding stroll on a sunny spring day. The bluesy B section, comprised of a plagal progression (IV to I), provides a contrast to the strolling sound of the A sections. The intro morphs into a short postlude to end the solo.

Mysterious Night

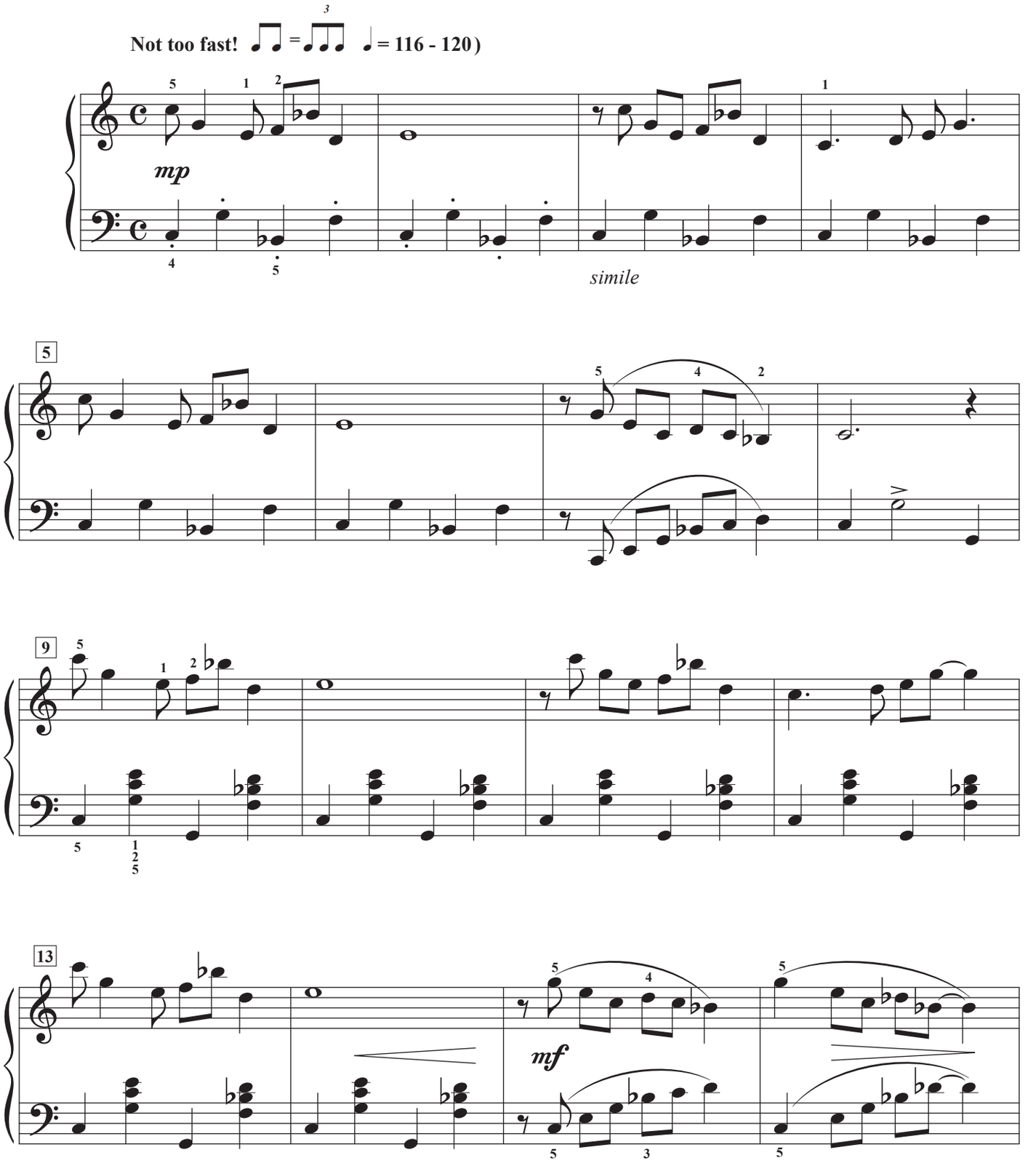
In the early 20th century living on a ranch with many acres of land often suggested rather quiet and sometimes, mysterious nights. The C minor tonality and right hand sonorities depict the mysterious evenings often experienced by people living on ranches.

The Texan Way

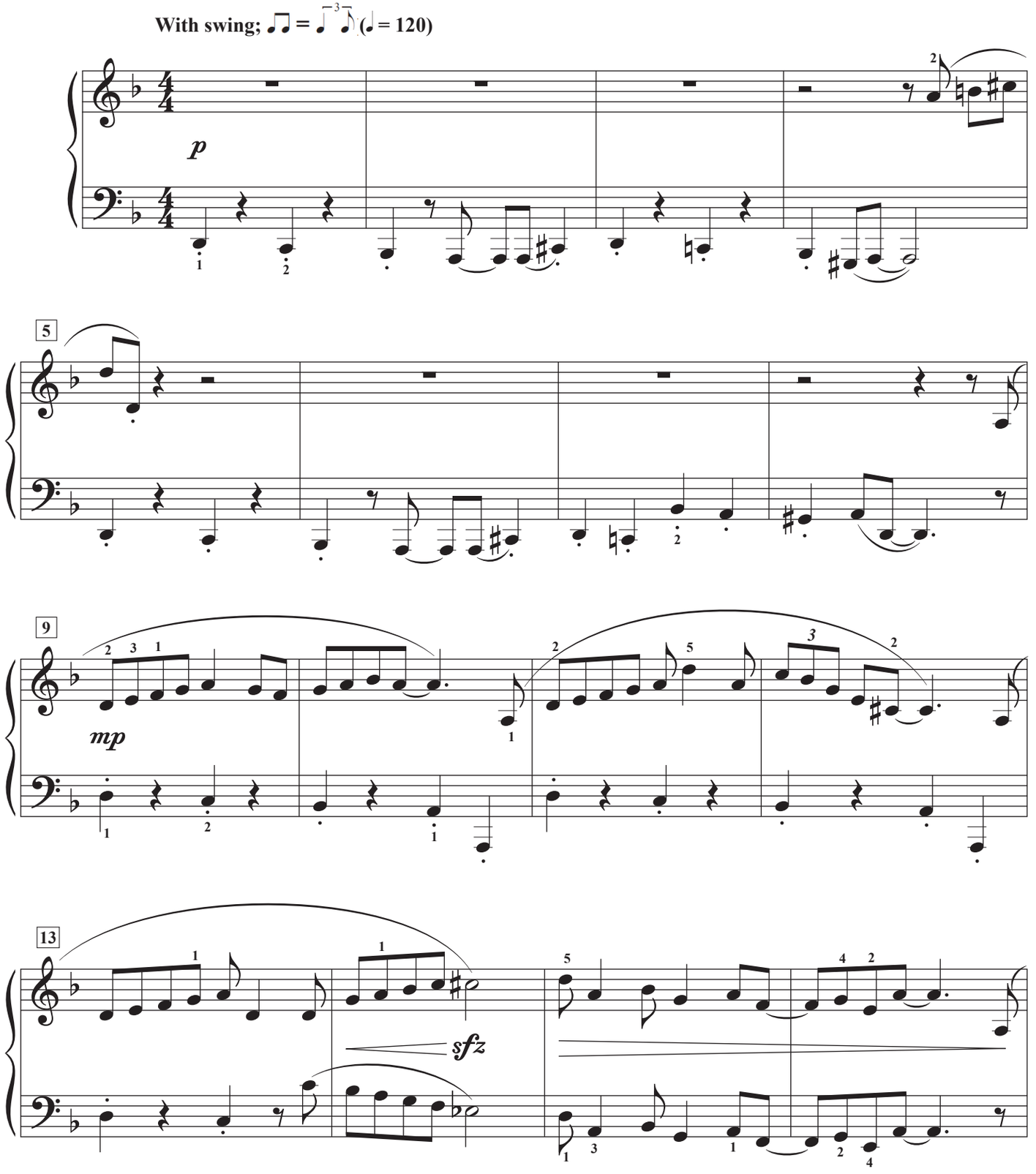
This solo with its jazzy feeling has a left-hand accompaniment sounding like the pizzicato of the double bass. When performing, the pianist should strive to imitate the quality of the pizzicato sound. The middle section with its mini-fugal imitation provides an interesting contrast to the A sections.

Texas Rag

David Karp



Jed's Tune



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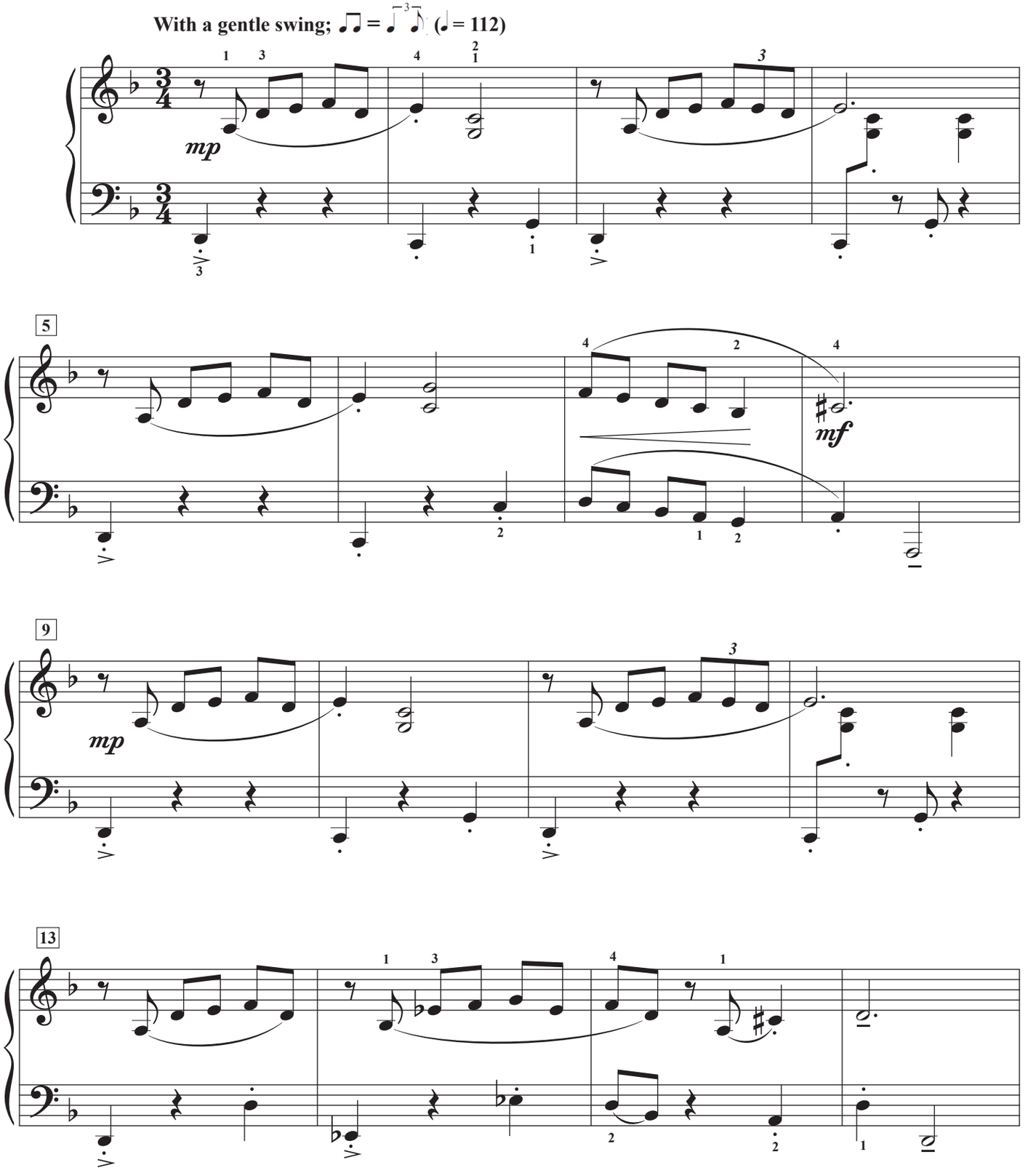

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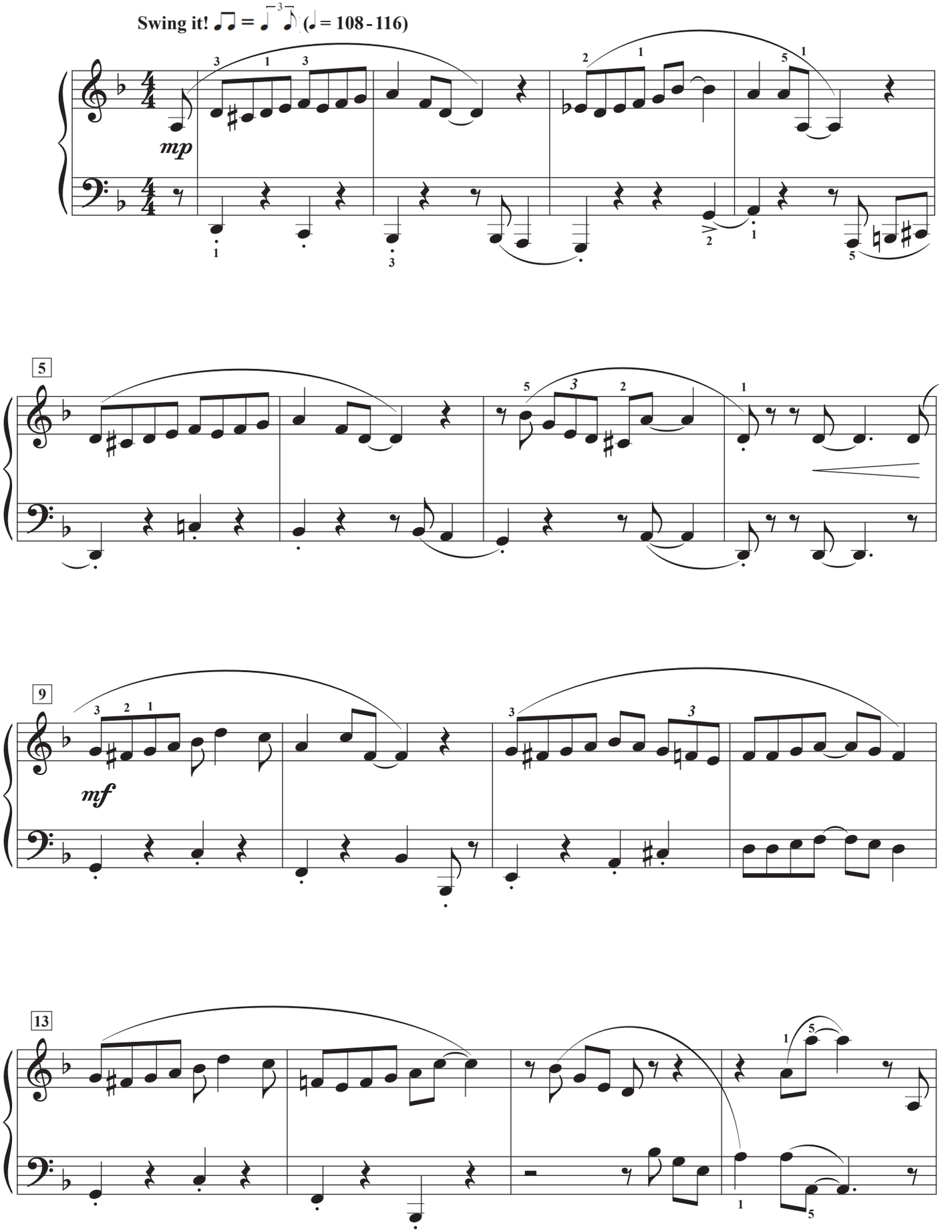
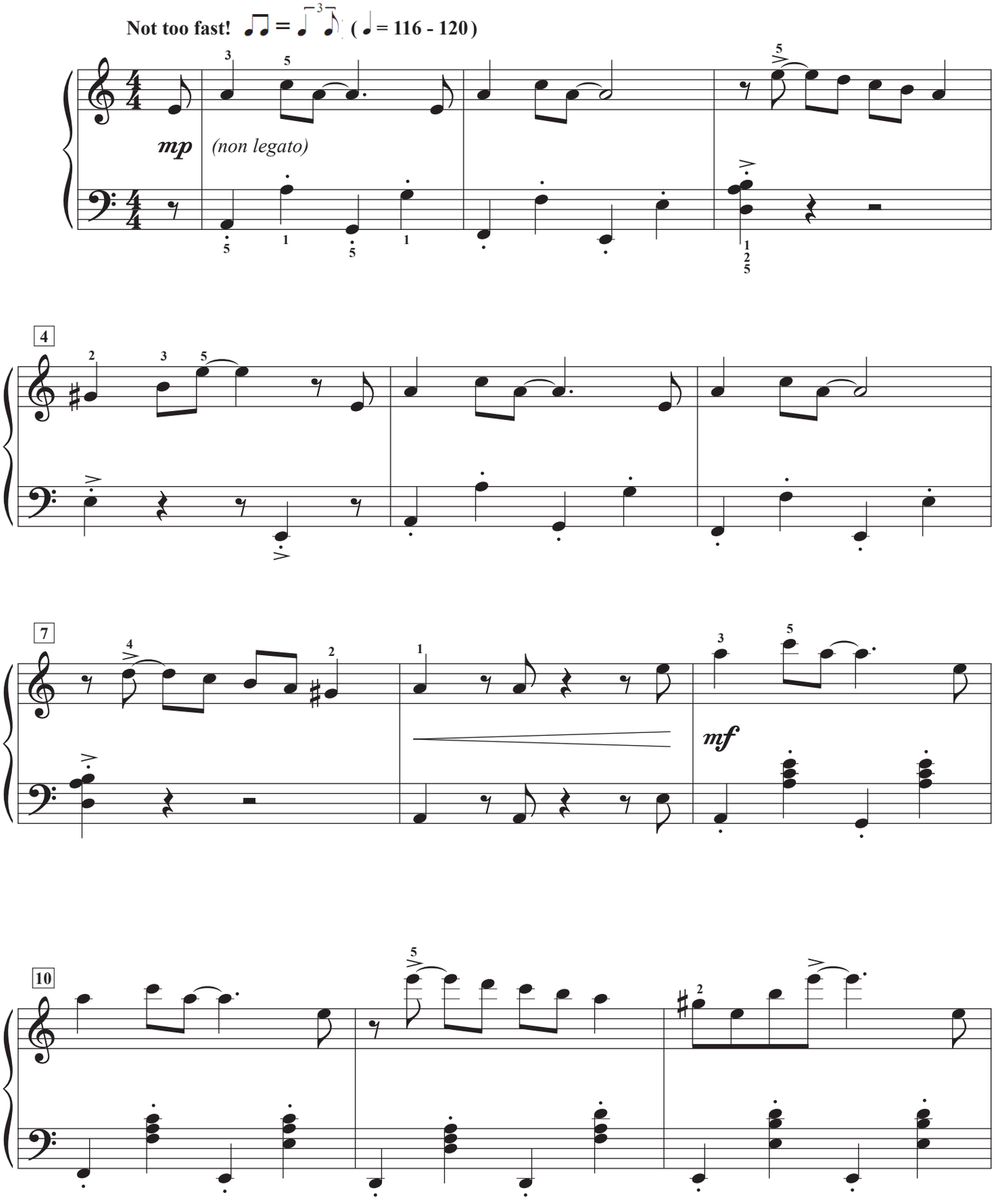
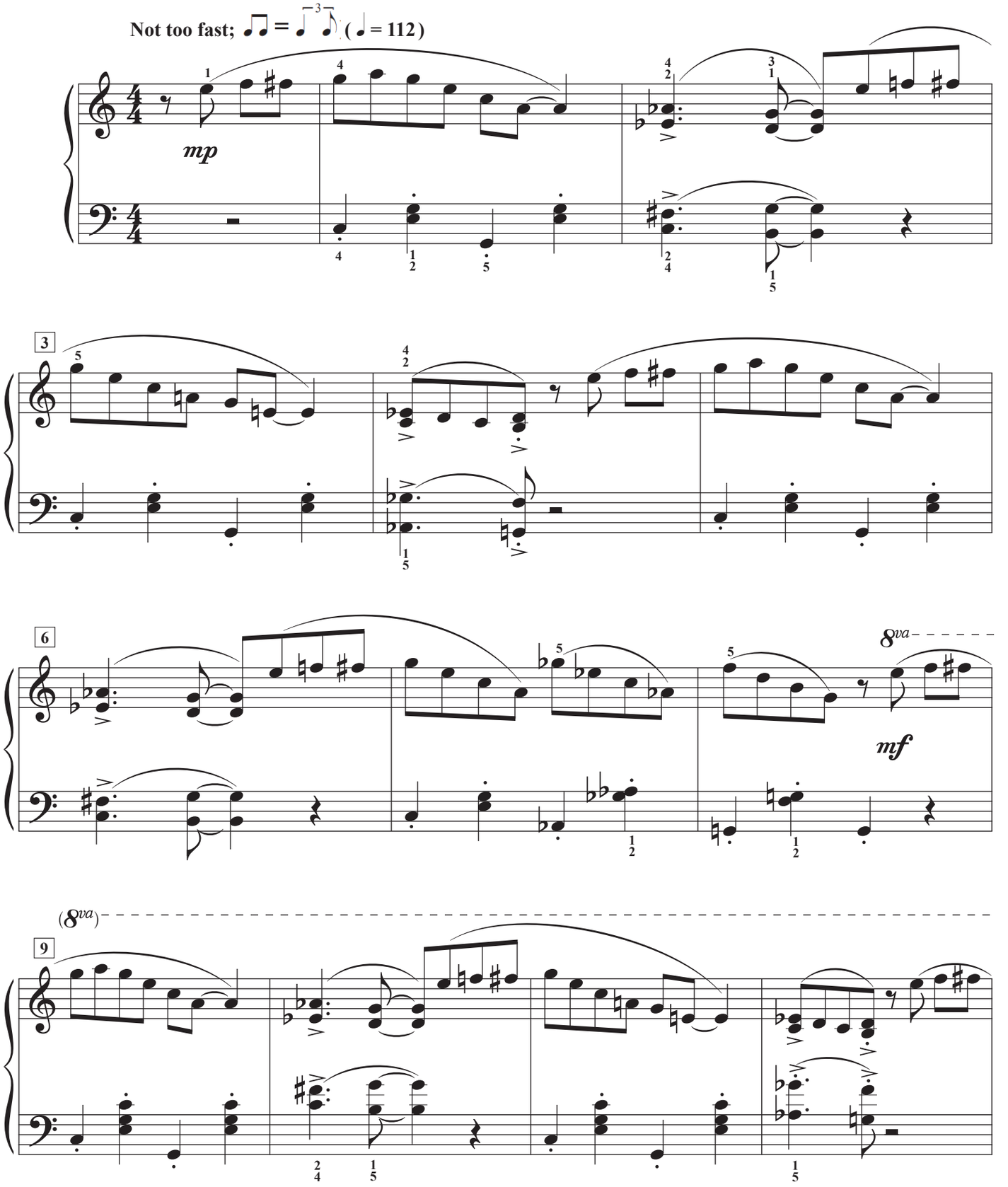


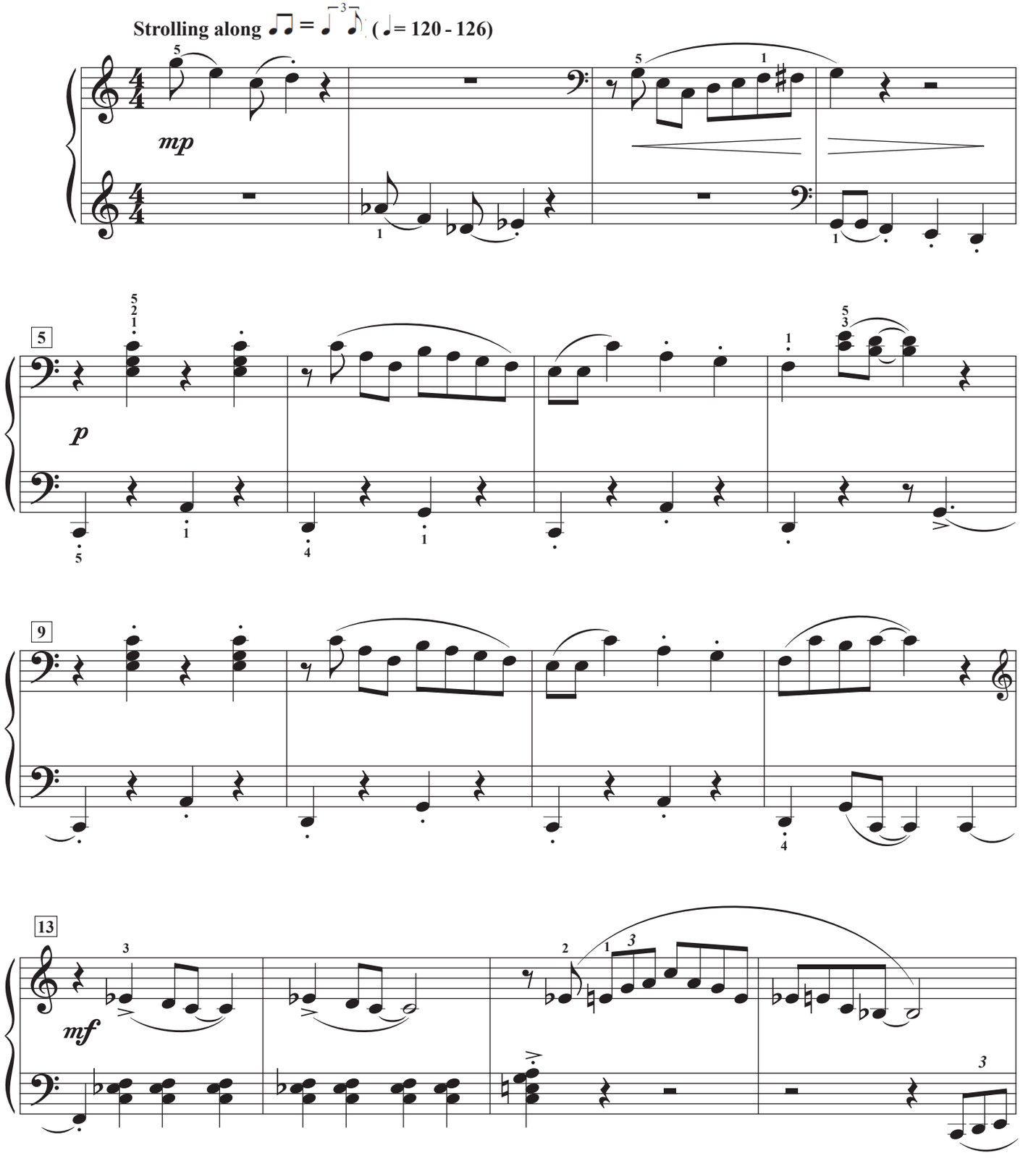
A Sad Rag



Afternoon Roundup



Springtime Stroll



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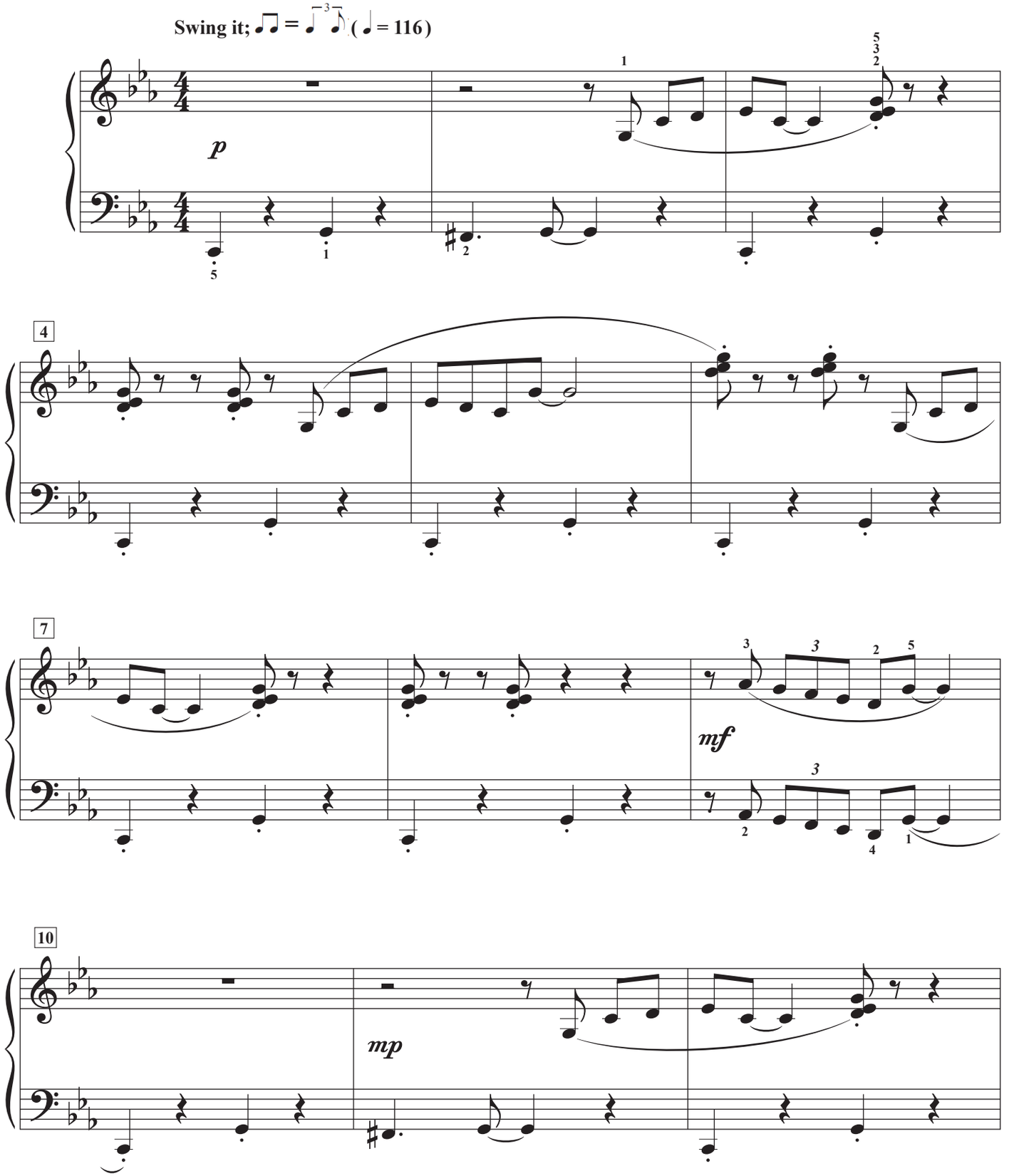
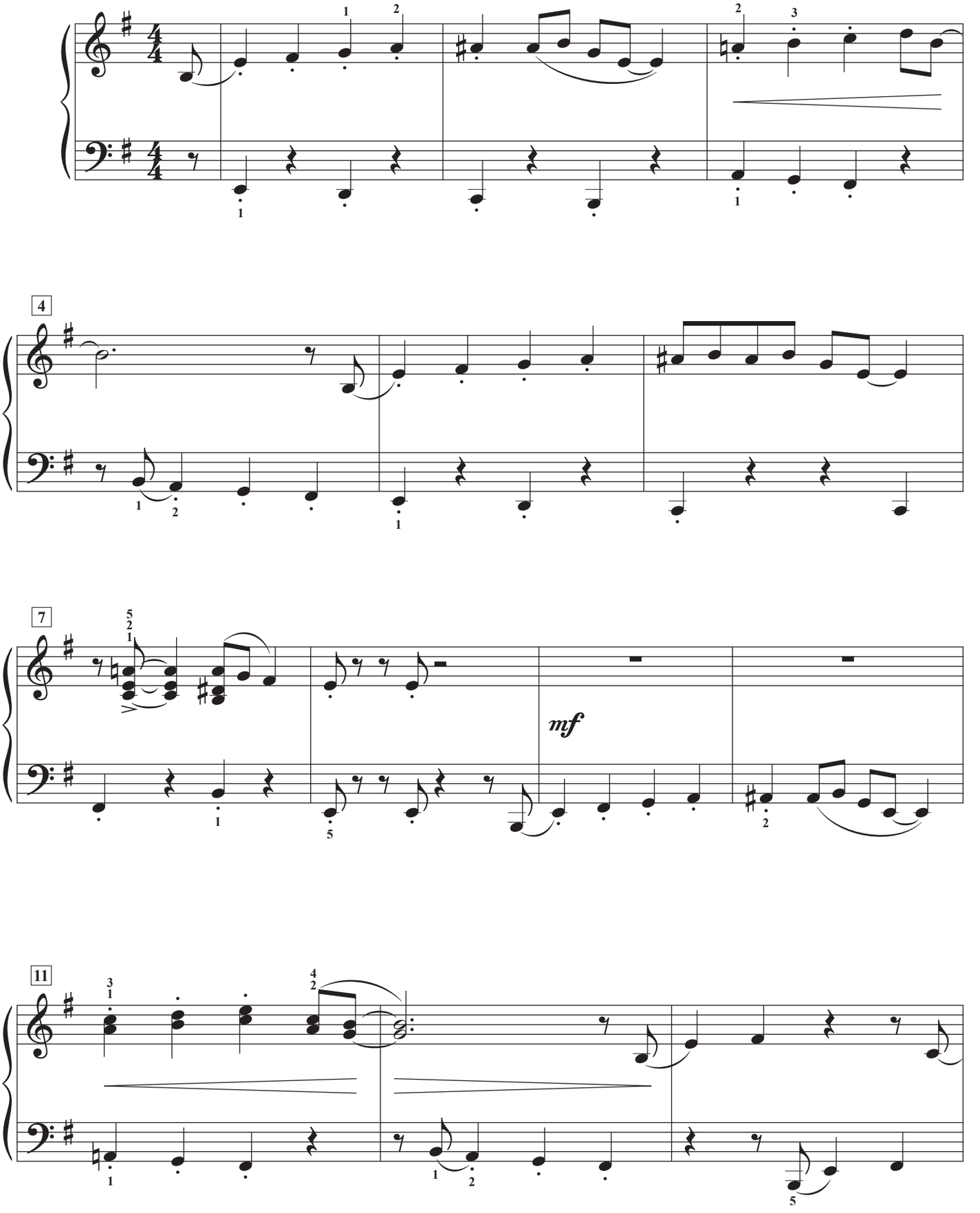


The Texan Way

With a bounce; ♫ = ♩³♪ (♩ = 120)