

Essentials of JAZZ THEORY

LESSONS • EAR TRAINING • WORKBOOK

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FOREWORD

MUSIC IS THE MORTAR OF HUMANITY. It binds people of all backgrounds and experiences, as it poignantly expresses universal human emotions. It is an amazing and elusive complement to our existence. And yet, this spiritual art form is rooted in concepts that are easily explained in the practical realm. Music theory is the study of these concepts. The yin and yang of music results from the fact that it is created out of a limited supply of simple, theoretical formulas, and yet, any piece of music can be entirely unique.

When a musician composes or improvises, the material emanates from two creative wells. There is the "spiritual" well, which houses our emotions and experiences, and also the "technical" well, in which resides the theoretical elements that we have practiced and perfected. Music is at its best when the impetus is from the spiritual well. The technical well will be unconsciously called upon to provide the raw materials of expression. So, a study of theory is not merely a dry analysis of technical functions, but rather an exploration of how the elements can provide fuel to the creative process, an energizing activity toward the goal of meaningful music making.

WELCOME TO JAZZ—welcome to an exhilarating journey to musical freedom!—Shelly Berg

To successfully navigate this jazz theory course, you should be versed in basic music theory concepts, such as those taught in Books 1 and 2 of *Alfred's Essentials of Music Theory*. You are encouraged to play and/or sing the examples in this text, at first along with the enclosed recording, and then on your own.

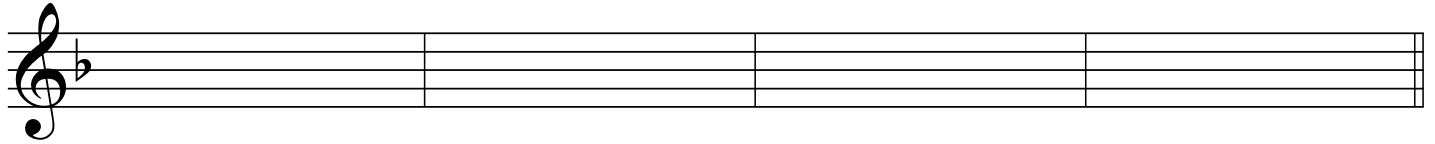
BOOKS 1, 2, 3: *Alfred's Essentials of Jazz Theory* is made up of three books, 40 pages each, with each book containing six units. A unit consists of four or five pages of instructional material (including written exercises), an Ear Training page and a Review page.

COMPLETE BOOK: *Alfred's Essentials of Jazz Theory* is also available as one complete book of 120 pages that contains all the pages included in the separate books.

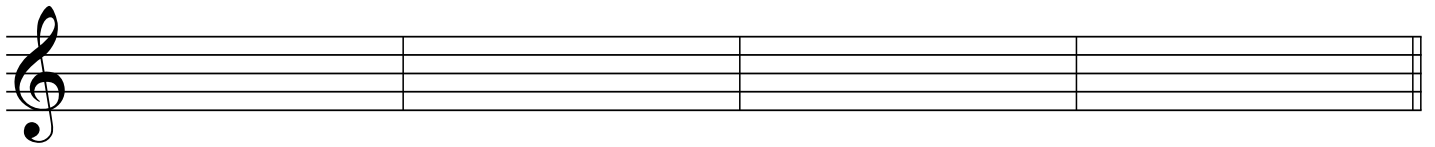
COMPACT DISCS: Each book in *Alfred's Essentials of Jazz Theory* is packaged with a CD, allowing students to hear the musical elements discussed, and offering students the opportunity to test their listening skills. Music examples are played by a variety of instruments.

TEACHER'S ANSWER KEY: A *Complete Book* with the answers for the exercises from the Lesson and Review pages and music for the Ear Training pages. Also included is a reproducible sheet for listing student names and grades for the Ear Training and Review pages.

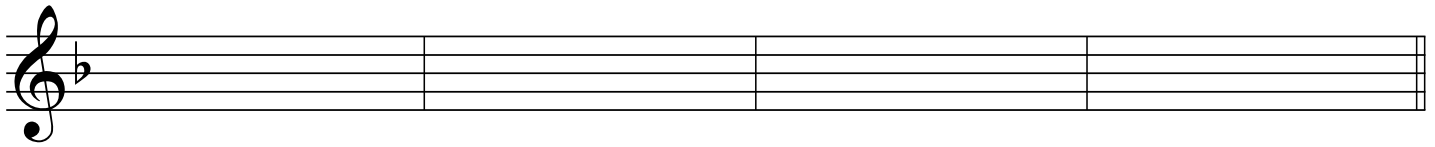
1 This melody is notated in a standard way. Re-write it as it would sound in jazz performance.



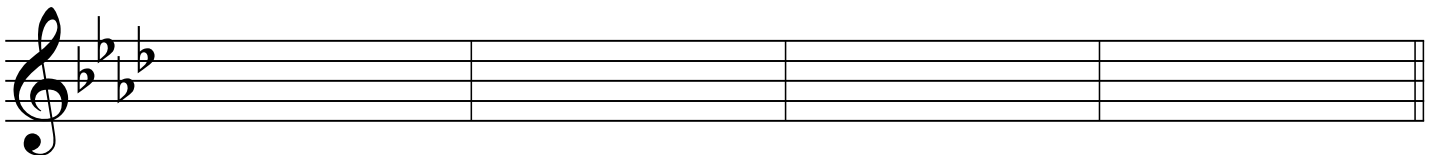
2 This melody is notated as it would sound in jazz. Re-write it in standard notation.



3 "Rag" the following melody with syncopation.



4 "Un-rag" the melody by removing syncopation.

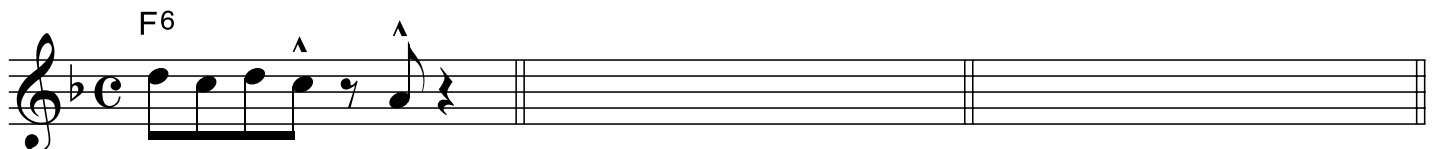


5 Bebop melodies are characterized by _____
phrase lengths and accents.

6 Off-beat accentuation is also called _____.

7 _____ is a constant energy channeled into subdivision. The subdivision of swing is the _____.

8 Compose two variations to this lick.



9 Well-conceived jazz solos balance the elements of _____, _____, and _____.

Dissonant 4th and Resolution

Beware the DISSONANT FOURTH! Except for one note, every note of the major scale sounds reasonably consonant over tonic harmony, because these pitches can be explained as chord tones or extensions. The offending, DISSONANT (non-consonant) tone is the fourth note of the scale. In fact, the note a perfect 4th (P4) above any major chord is very dissonant. When a melody emphasizes the dissonant 4th the result is extremely tense, and so the note must RESOLVE (release) by step—usually into the 3rd of the chord, 1/2 step below (CD Track 20). Skipping both into and out of the P4 above a major chord is not possible, because that is arpeggiating the wrong chord!



Each 4th above is used as an APPOGGIATURA, which is a dissonant note on a strong beat. An appoggiatura (appog.) must be RESOLVED by stepwise motion into a chord tone (usually downward). As you can hear, the use of appoggiaturas is a wonderfully expressive device in music.

Exercises

Track 17

1 *Dig It!*—Go back to CD Track 17, which features an FMA7 chord. Play the dissonant fourth along with the track. Next, play the 4th and resolve the dissonance by moving down a 1/2 step to the 3rd of the chord. You just experienced the power of appoggiatura and resolution!

2 Label each dissonant 4th (appog.) and circle each. Draw an arrow between each 4th and 3rd to show the resolution.

E \flat MA7 GMA7
A \flat MA7 B \flat MA7

3 Compose jazz melodies to the following major seventh chords using 4th appoggiaturas and other characteristic devices. Can you use other notes as appoggiaturas?

CMA7 E \flat MA7

AMA7 FMA7