From Scribbles to Meaning: The Art of Taking Notes

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Note Templates: Two Types

• Demonstration Lectures
• Informative Lectures
• Students complete the templates in real time as the instructor is lecturing
Music Theory

- Subject has unique challenges
  - Specialized symbols
  - Specialized paper (staff paper)
- Students often don’t bring staff paper
- Try to draw their own
  - Draw it incorrectly and messy
  - Lecture has moved on by the time they’ve finished
Example 1

• Early Attempt at a Demonstration Lecture Template

• Uneven results
  – Some examples missing
  – Notation is not precise or always clean
  – Information about chords left incomplete (only included the copied chords, but none of the relevant information provided and discussed)
Example 1

Examples of Proper Notation:
- Example A: Notating seconds
- Example B: Notating Accidentals in seconds
- Example C: Notating seconds with stems

Chord notation drill:

- Accidental not positioned properly
- ‘Gap’ is not clean
- No information about the chords was included
- Example was missing
Example 2: More Successful Demonstration Lecture Template

• Starts with a ‘warm up’
  – Direct copying of some relevant information
  – Use something you’ve covered before
• Step by step procedures clearly outlined
  – Additional bullet points used to clearly state additional required information
• Be very specific about details
  – i.e.: space notes ½ inch apart
• ‘Discussion breaks’ built in
• Include a rubric
Example 2: More Successful Demonstration Lecture Template

IN CLASS DRILL:
All parts of this drill must be completed accurately and cleanly to receive complete participation credit.

Preliminary exercise: Complete the following chart showing all the intervals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>R0</th>
<th>m2</th>
<th>m3</th>
<th>M3</th>
<th>P4</th>
<th>T5</th>
<th>P5</th>
<th>M6</th>
<th>M6</th>
<th>M7</th>
<th>M7</th>
<th>P8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H-steps</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 1: Diagram the Eb Major scale:

```
W W W W W W
C D E F G A B C
```

Eb F G A B b c d E b
Example 2: More Successful Demonstration Lecture Template

Step 2: Write this scale on the staff below in the treble clef using a key signature, spacing the notes about ½ inch apart

```
\begin{music}
\new staff \range{0.0}{4.0} \input thisScale
\end{music}
```

Step 3: label the following:
- Name of the notes underneath
- The pattern of whole and half steps above
- The number of semitones between each note of the scale above that
Step 4: Form intervals by stacking each scale degree on top of the 1\textsuperscript{st} scale degree. You need to redraw the clef and the key signature:

\[ \text{Eb} \quad F \quad G \quad A_{b} \quad B_{b} \quad C \quad D \quad E_{b} \]

\[ P_{u} \quad M_{2} \quad M_{3} \quad P_{4} \quad P_{5} \quad M_{6} \quad M_{7} \quad P_{8} \quad E_{F_{6}} \text{A}_{b} \text{B}_{b} \text{C}_{d} \text{E}_{b} \]

Step 5: Label each interval that is created. See a pattern?
Example 2: More Successful Demonstration Lecture Template

Assessment:

- Excellently done in both quality of notation and accuracy of information (+1, Congratulations!, you just earned a bonus point to your participation grade!)
- Done, but some minor issues with quality of notation and/or accuracy of information (No points withheld or bonus given, this is the expected level of participation for the lecture)
- Done, but there are errors in the notation and/or accuracy of information (-1, focus!)
- Not well done, your work shows significant problems with you attempts (-2, are you able to see the board? Are you keeping up with the pace? Are their things distracting you?)
- Sections have been left blank! (additional points withheld, generally -1 per step that is skipped)
Assessment

• Give immediate feedback
• Assess over a break or before dismissing, if you can
Results (12 students total)

- Three students had exceptional work
- Five students had near exceptional work
- One student had satisfactory work, but with minor errors
- One student had passable work, but with inaccuracies
- Two students had unsatisfactory work
Results at exam time

• 7 passed the midterm with near perfect scores
• 1 passed satisfactorily
• 3 did not pass
  – 2 members of this group frequently did not complete the note templates
  – Remaining 1 had missed 50% of the class sessions
Example 3: Graphic Design Template

• Good for Informative Lectures
• Start with a premise:
  – Question: *Composers in Western culture had been writing music in the common practice style for close to 300 years. In the first decade of the 20th Century, composers began to abandon the traditions of tonal music and write in avant-garde styles. The question is ‘why?’.*
• Graphic design helps show the pertinence of the lecture materials as it relates to the question
Example 3: Graphic Design Template

QUESTION: Composers in Western culture had been writing music in the common practice style for close to 300 years. In the first decade of the 20th Century, composers began to abandon the traditions of tonal music and write in avant-garde styles. The question is “why”?

Improvements in Recording Technology
1902: First recording of opera star Enrico Caruso
What:
Significance:

Rapid Technological Progress
1903: Wright Brothers
What:
Significance:

Impact on the new generation of composers:
The ‘avant-garde’ emerges
>
>
>
Main composers/new 20th Century style
>
>
>
New Theories about the Physical Universe
1905: The Miracle Year
What:
Significance:

Rapid Technological Progress
1908: Model T
What:
Significance:
Example 3: Graphic Design Template

Improvements in Recording Technology
1902: First recording of opera star Enrico Caruso

What: Music started being 'preserved' on recordings and sold to the public.

Significance: No longer a need for composers to repeat or honor the traditions of the past; composers were given the opportunity to stray out of the norm (tradition) and dare to be different.

Rapid Technological Progress
1903: Wright Brothers

What: First controlled heavier-than-air flight.

Significance: The dream of flying now a reality. Flying is no longer a figment of the musicians' imagination.

Impact on the new generation of composers:
The 'avant-garde' emerges

- Eager for progress
- Favor innovation over traditions (tonal)
- Question long held ideas about music (no absolutes)

Main composers/new 20th Century style
- Debussy / Impressionism
- Stravinsky / Primitivism
- Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern / Expressionism
Results

• 100% completion
• 100% accuracy of information
• Small details could be fixed (capitalization)
Application

• Template proposes a question
• Graphic layout of information shows the answer
  – Facilitate a discussion
  – Provides the basis for a short answer/end of class reflection assignment
Tips

• Know what do you want the completed template to look like
• Then design the PowerPoint lecture
Most Important...

• Test drive your templates
  – See what it is like to fill out your own template
  – Too much writing, not enough room/time
  – Well designed ‘Prompts’: pictures, clear headings
Study a bunch of information, much of it incomplete, inaccurate and unhelpful!

Study your well organized, meticulously accurate notes!