

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Middle School Modal Magic: A Melodic Theory Quiz

Evaluate the functional relationships between scales, chord construction, and key signatures through structural analysis of diverse musical excerpts.

1. Which specific scale degree must be raised by a half-step to transform a Natural Minor scale into a Harmonic Minor scale?

Answer: C) The 7th degree

Raising the 7th degree creates a 'leading tone,' which provides a stronger pull toward the tonic, a hallmark of the Harmonic Minor scale used in many classical and neo-classical compositions.

2. An interval consisting of six semitones (three whole steps), such as the distance between B and F, is technically known as a(n) _____.

Answer: B) Tritone

A Tritone is an augmented fourth or diminished fifth. It is historically known as the 'Diabolus in Musica' due to its extreme dissonance and tension.

3. In the Circle of Fifths, moving one step clockwise from C Major results in the addition of one flat to the key signature.

Answer: B) False

Moving clockwise on the Circle of Fifths adds one sharp (the key of G Major), while moving counter-clockwise adds flats (the key of F Major).

4. Which of these chord formulas correctly describes a 'Major 7th' chord (e.g., Cmaj7)?

Answer: A) Root, Major 3rd, Perfect 5th, Major 7th

A Major 7th chord uses the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th degrees of a Major scale. If the 7th were lowered, it would become a Dominant 7th chord.

5. If a piece of music is written in the key of Eb Major (3 flats), what is its 'Relative Minor' key?

Answer: C) C Minor

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To find the relative minor, you go down a minor third (three semitones) from the major tonic. C is the relative minor of Eb, sharing the same key signature.

6. The Dorian mode is often described as a 'Major' sounding mode because it contains a Major third interval from the tonic.

Answer: B) False

The Dorian mode is a minor mode because it has a minor third. It is distinguished from the natural minor scale by its raised 6th degree.

7. In a standard 12-bar blues progression in the key of A, what are the three primary chords used, identified by Roman Numerals?

Answer: B) I, IV, V

The I, IV, and V chords (A, D, and E in the key of A) form the harmonic backbone of the blues and much of early Rock and Roll.

8. The specific arrangement of chords to conclude a musical phrase, such as a V chord moving to a I chord, is called a(n) _____.

Answer: C) Cadence

A cadence acts like punctuation in music. A V to I movement is specifically called an 'Authentic Cadence' because it feels very final.

9. An 'Inversion' occurs when a note other than the root of the chord is placed in the lowest (bass) position.

Answer: A) True

When the 3rd is in the bass, it is first inversion; when the 5th is in the bass, it is second inversion. This changes the texture and 'weight' of the chord.

10. Which of the following describes the 'Lydian' mode, often used in film scores to create a sense of wonder?

Answer: C) A Major scale with a raised 4th

The raised 4th degree is the defining characteristic of the Lydian mode, giving it a bright, 'ethereal' sound compared to the standard Major (Ionian) scale.