

## GRADE THREE MUSIC CRAFT

AUGUST 2008

*Grade 3 Music Craft written requires a number of complex tasks to be undertaken including recognising and writing figurings, writing a short four-part harmony, writing a melody, using the alto clef in scale writing and transposition, answering questions on metre/rhythm and terminology etc. The principal aural tasks include melodic and rhythmic dictation, recognising scale forms, intervals and triads and being able to track changes in articulation and dynamics. Both papers include questions involving instruments as well as the set works. The following report gives an overview of the standard encountered in marking the papers. Teachers will find that the 'General Comments' at the end of each candidate's written report, gives a brief summary of where principal individual weaknesses occurred.*

### WRITTEN PAPER

#### Q1: Rhythm and Metre

- (a) Most candidates were able to correctly complete each bar with one note although not all recognised that a breve was needed in the 4/2 bar.
- (b) Writing the correct time signatures was universally well done.

#### Q2: Pitches, scales and keys

- (a) The response here was to either correctly write the scale of A $\flat$  major in the alto clef according to the directions given including starting on the right note or, make one or several errors.
- (b) The answer needed the full name of the scale ie C $\sharp$  *melodic minor*, not just C $\sharp$  *minor*.
- (c) Transposition was well handled by the majority of candidates.

#### Q3: Triads and Intervals

- (a) Writing a minor second below middle C $\sharp$  was not always correctly written; other than that, a good response to this question.
- (b) Inverting a minor third and correctly renaming it, was not always successful. Many candidates forgot to write the treble clef, and did not name the inversion correctly.
- (c) Writing triads elicited many incorrect responses with candidates often:
  - omitting the key signature
  - writing incorrect key signatures
  - writing both key signature and accidentals
  - forgetting to raise the leading note in the dominant triad
  - writing the triads in root position instead of first inversion
  - misspelling the notes of the triad.

**Q4: Terms**

This question required the English meanings of four terms and whilst the majority of candidates were successfully able to carry out this task, several were unsure of *rubato* (simply writing 'stolen' was not enough) and *stringendo*.

**Q5: Harmony and Voice Leading**

- (a) This consisted of a two-bar exercise in C# minor in which a figured bass line was given, requiring three voices to be added above. Sadly, no marks could be awarded to a few candidates who simply wrote a melody line above the bass, not understanding the concept of four-part vocal writing.

The figuring was very clearly stated and completely in line with Grade 3 Music Craft syllabus but even so, endless problems were caused by many candidates failing to recognise or resolve the cadential figure.

The many faults included:

- weak voice leading
- misspelling of chord members
- doubling the leading note
- grammatical errors (consecutive and exposed fifths and octaves and spacing errors between parts)
- a static soprano line

*Very few candidates achieved more than half marks for this question which was a disappointing result.*

- (b) This task, requiring writing a melody above a bass line, drawing on pitches supplied by the figured bass, drew a mixed response. Despite the figuring, candidates often used notes that were not members of the designated chords; the cadence was often unconvincing (leading note to tonic was all that was needed); repeating the opening note gave a static moment, as did any other areas of repeated notes and there was a scattering of exposed and consecutive 5ths and 8ths.

*Again, very few candidates misunderstood the question, writing a four-part harmony instead of a melody line.*

- (c) Conversely to writing harmony, most candidates scored well in this question, requiring full figuring to be added to a four-bar progression. Not all candidates are aware that Roman figuring is 'case-sensitive', the chord quality designating the use of upper or lower figures.

**Q6: Instruments**

A mixed response here, in writing the range for tuba and horn in F.

### **Q7: Set Works**

- (a) Identifying the mode of the set work and marking the interval of a minor seventh was universally well done.
- (b) Transposition into the alto clef was again, mostly well done although candidates are advised to heed the directions – in this case – transposing the last two – not four – bars.

## **AURAL PAPER**

### **Q1: Pitch**

- (a) **Scales** – recognition of scale forms was universally well done.
- (b) **Intervals** – recognition of three different intervals (major second, minor sixth, and the tritone) at times caused a problem.
- (c) **Triads** – there was a varied response to correctly recognising the three triads: Major, followed by two diminished triads.
- (d) **Form** – a good response to recognising contrast and repetition.
- (e) **Melodic Dictation** – overall, a poor response to the two dictations, the first in 6/8 in D major had 13 pitches, and the second in 4/4 in D minor, had 12 pitches. Very few candidates were able to correctly write either or both of the melodies.

### **Q2: Rhythm and Metre**

On the whole, the rhythm dictation was much more successful, with most candidates able to write either both or one of the rhythms.

### **Q3: Texture**

Only a few candidates were unsuccessful at stating ‘homorhythmic’ as the correct answer.

### **Q4: Articulation, Dynamics and Tempo**

Very few candidates scored the full six marks for this question, the common fault being an inability to recognise the various resources and/or the changes as they occurred.

### **Q5: Timbre**

- (i) Due to a fault in the CD, all candidates were awarded the mark for the answer *French Horn* regardless of whether it was recognised or not.
- (ii) Most candidates recognised the trumpet in the second phrase.

### **Q6: Set Works**

Some candidates gave the incorrect key for the Beethoven – ie E minor instead of E major; otherwise, both works were successfully recognised by nearly all candidates.

**Q1: Keys and Scales**

- A. The scale degrees were generally secure.
- B. Although this was mostly well done, the placement of key signatures sometimes needed more care. *All* parts of the question need to be addressed.

**Q2: Intervals**

- A. Missed accidentals were responsible for most lost marks.
- B. The quality was sometimes wrong.
- C. Marks here appeared to be lost through carelessness, eg naming the inversion a sixth.

**Q3: Chords and Cadences**

- B. The raised seventh in chord V was not always remembered.
- C. Voice-leading sometimes needed more care.

**Q4: Time and Rhythm**

- A. (i) The duplet appeared to confuse some candidates.
- B. Grouping problems most commonly cost marks here.
- C. Again, grouping errors accounted for most lost marks.

**Q5: Memory**

- A. Well done.
- B. Mostly very good although phrasing was sometimes omitted.

**Q6: Rhythmic Invention and Melody**

- A. Well done in most cases.
- B. There was often difficulty in finding the right balance between monotonous and too angular a shape. Cadence points were not always well managed.

**Q7: Terms and General Knowledge**

- A. *Una corda* was the least known term.
- B. Ranges were mostly good but the absence of clefs cost all marks.
- C. The *meaning* was sometimes not addressed, with the sign merely named.
- D. The form was mostly known. The sequence caused the most problems.
- E. Modulation was mostly good. For *relationship*, just writing a scale degree is not sufficient.

**Q1: Keys and Scales**

- A. To mark tones in a harmonic minor, the augmented second between the sixth and seventh should not be included.
- B. The writing of E major with a key signature was not a problem.
- C. Key signatures and named notes (subdominant etc) was easy provided the clef was noted. Subdominant and submediant were at times confused.
- D. B flat major was sometimes given as B major – forgetting the flat.

**Q2: Intervals**

- A. The perfect fourth above F needed B flat – this was often left as B.
- B. Only the third and sixth can be named as minor when considering a minor scale. Some think the major seventh can be either major or minor as it occurs in both major and minor scales.

**Q3: Chords and Cadences**

- A. In writing the key signature and named triad, the most common error was omitting the raised leading note (C#) in the dominant triad in first inversion.
- B. Writing cadences in crotchets was mostly well done. Some confused the order (Plagal then Perfect) or failed to note style and use of crotchets.

**Q4: Time and Rhythm**

- A. Rests to be added in the correct order proved tricky and any notes added were not accepted.
- B. Duplets in compound time were often not given the correct value causing incorrect answers in the context of the time signature.
- C. 3/ 8 is simple triple: some candidates believe that 8 as the lower figure must mean a compound interval.

**Q5: Folk Songs and Transposition**

- A. Often if neatly written, candidates gained full marks of six, but there were some who hadn't bothered to learn the time – or learnt the wrong one. Only a few candidates did not attempt this question.
- B. Transposition to a minor key means that the given melody must also be in a minor key.

**Q6: Creative**

Candidates who chose to write a rhythmic pattern to the couplet usually gained full marks. Those candidates who chose to write a melody in G major to a given rhythm found this more difficult. In most cases the rhythmic pattern was well understood.

**Q7: Terms and General Knowledge**

- A.** The clef and range of the alto voice was confused with the soprano range.
- B.** Words were known but *dal segno* was given as 'to the sign' and not 'from the sign'. This could suggest going back to the beginning then 'to the sign'.
- C.** The form was very straightforward : **A B A** at the beginning of each line without an anacrusis.