

# Discovering Music Theory

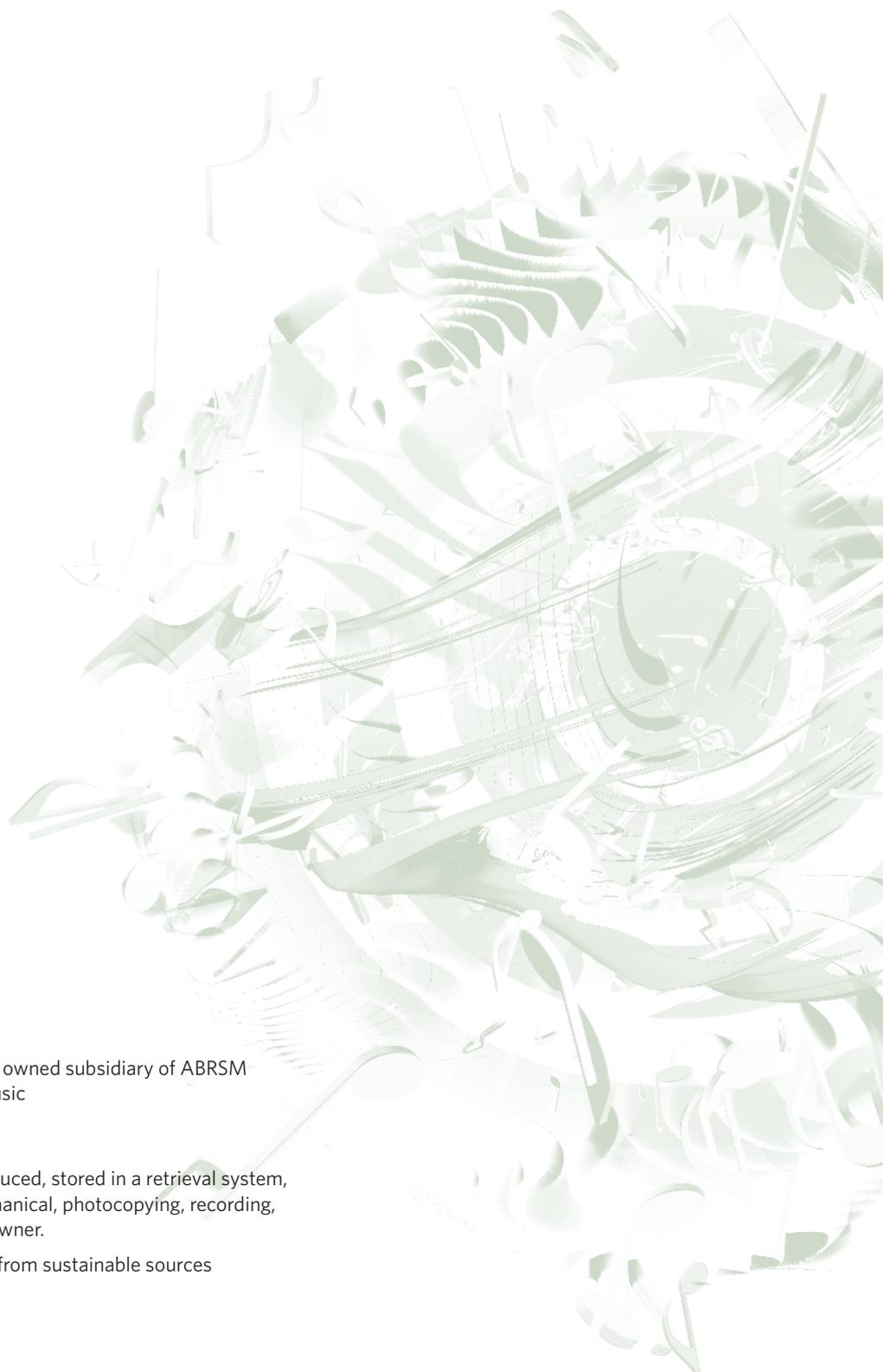
THE ABRSM GRADE 1 WORKBOOK

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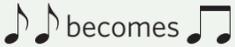
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# 1 RHYTHM (PART 1)

In this chapter you will learn about

- Time values (notes)
- Bars and metre
- Time signatures

## i Time values

- Time values show how many counts a note lasts. Four common time values are semibreves, minims, crotchets and quavers.
- Pairs of quavers add up to one count. They are joined together with a **beam**:  
 becomes 

<b>Semibreve</b>		4 counts	
<b>Minim</b>		2 counts	
<b>Crotchet</b>		1 count	
<b>Quaver</b>		½ a count	

## Exercise 1 Complete this table.

Name of note	Looks like	How many counts?
Semibreve		4
		
Crotchet		
		½

## Theory in sound

Try clapping different time values while your teacher or a friend taps a steady pulse. Count the pulse out loud as you clap.

## Exercise 2 Circle the correct answer for each question.

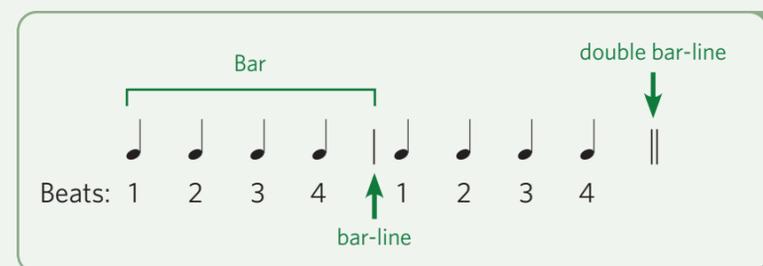
- a** Which of these notes has the **shortest** duration?   
- b** Which of these notes has the **longest** duration?   
- c** Which of these lasts **longer** than a minim? **crotchet** **quaver** **semibreve**
- d** How many counts is  worth? **2 counts** **1 count** **4 counts**
- e** How many counts is  worth? **3 counts** **2 counts** **1 count**

## Exercise 3 Answer each musical 'sum' with one note.

- a**  +  = 
- b**  +  = 
- c**  +  = 
- d**  +  +  = 
- e**  +  +  = 
- f**  +  +  = 
- g**  +  = 
- h**  -  = 
- i**  -  = 

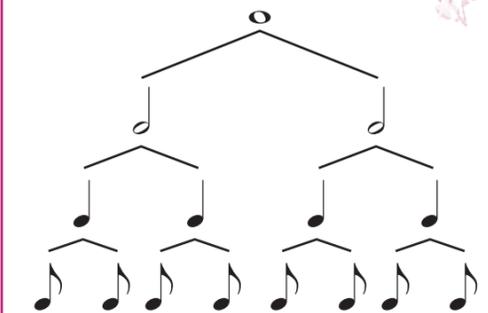
## i Bars and metre

- Rhythm is the arrangement of notes of different time values over a pulse.
- The pulse is organised into bars containing a certain number of counts, or beats. This organisation is called **metre**.
- We use **bar-lines** to make it easy to see where each bar starts and ends.
- At Grade 1, we will explore bars containing **two**, **three** and **four** beats.



## Smart tip

Use this note tree to help you with your musical maths.



## Smart tip

Watch out for the subtraction sums in **h** and **i**.

## Did you know?

Double bar-lines are used at the end of sections of music.

### Smart tip

The following rhythms are made up of bars containing two, three or four beats.



### Exercise 4

Mark the beats in the following rhythms by adding numbers.

**a**

Beats: 1 2

**b**

Beats:

**c**

Beats:

**d**

Beats:

### Challenge!

Can you change the order of the notes in Exercise 4 **b** to create your own three-bar rhythm? Write it down below, then see if you or your teacher can clap it while you count '1, 2, 3' to the beat.

Rhythm:

Beats: 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3



### Time signatures: $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

A time signature tells us how many beats there are in each bar. At Grade 1 we will encounter the time signatures used for music containing two, three or four beats in a bar.

- The top number of the time signature shows you the **number of beats** in each bar.
- The bottom number shows you what the **time value** of the beat is. At Grade 1, this number is always '4', which means that the beat is always measured in crotchets (♩).

$\frac{2}{4}$				
1	2			
$\frac{3}{4}$				
1	2	3		
$\frac{4}{4}$				
1	2	3	4	

### Exercise 5

Circle TRUE or FALSE for each of these statements about time signatures.

- a** The top number tells you how many beats there are in each bar. TRUE FALSE
- b** The bottom number tells you how many bars there are in each piece. TRUE FALSE
- c**  $\frac{3}{4}$  tells you there are three crotchet beats in each bar. TRUE FALSE
- d** The time signature is written at the end of a piece of music. TRUE FALSE
- e** The number 4 at the bottom tells you to count in crotchet beats. TRUE FALSE

### Common time: c

$\frac{4}{4}$  is sometimes called **common time**. When you see **C** at the start of a piece, this means there are four beats in a bar, just as there are in  $\frac{4}{4}$ .



### Theory in sound

Try clapping the rhythms in Exercises 4 and 6 while you count or tap the beat.



# 8 INTERVALS

In this chapter you will learn about  
Intervals in C, G, D and F major

## Intervals

- An **interval** measures the difference in pitch between two notes.
- We can use the degrees of the scale to measure the intervals between the tonic of a key and every other note in that key. Here are the intervals above the tonic in C major:



Degrees: 1 2    1 3    1 4    1 5    1 6    1 7    1 8  
Interval: 2nd    3rd    4th    5th    6th    7th    8th/8ve

### Did you know?

We can use the term **octave (8ve)** or **8th** to describe the interval from C to C.



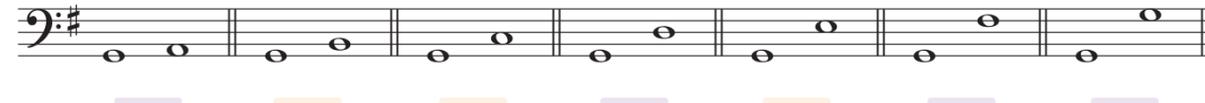
**Exercise 1** Write the missing numbers to identify these intervals above the tonic.

**F major**

**a** 

2nd          5th          8ve

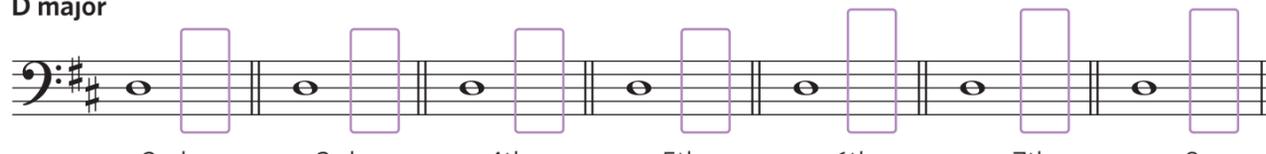
**G major**

**b** 

3rd    4th       6th         

**Exercise 2** Write one note after each tonic to form the named interval. The key is D major.

**D major**



2nd    3rd    4th    5th    6th    7th    8ve

### Theory in sound

Sing or play (or ask someone to play) some of the intervals written above. Try to get used to how they sound – some intervals sound relaxing and others sound quite tense.

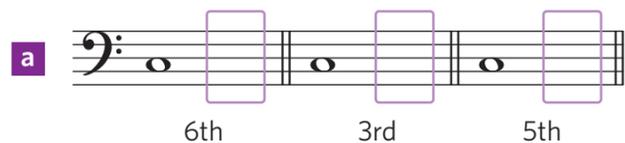
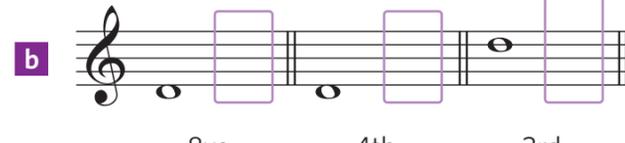


### Smart tip

In Exercises 2 and 3, your note should be **higher** than the given note.

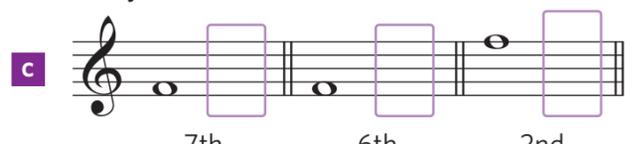
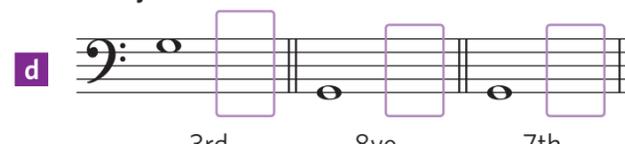
**Exercise 3** Write one note after each tonic to form the named interval. Remember to add accidentals where they are needed.

**C major**                      **D major**

**a**       **b** 

6th    3rd    5th                      8ve    4th    3rd

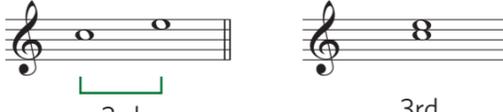
**F major**                      **G major**

**c**       **d** 

7th    6th    2nd                      3rd    8ve    7th

### Did you know?

Intervals can be written in two ways. Sometimes they will be written one note after the other, as in a melody, and sometimes they will be written one note above the other, as a chord. In the Grade 1 exam, intervals are written one note after the other.



3rd                      3rd

