
AP Music Theory

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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AP[®] MUSIC THEORY 2018 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question S1



0–9 points

Use EITHER the regular scoring guide OR an alternate scoring guide, whichever gives the higher score.

I. Regular Scoring Guide

- A. Score 1 point for each segment (i.e., each half-measure) correct in pitch, rhythm, and tempo (0–8).
- B. If at least one segment is correct using **I.A.**, add 1 point for a complete response that has no hesitations or restarts (= overall flow; the “flow” point).
- C. Record any score of 4 or higher and move to the next response.
- D. If the score is less than 4, try an alternate scoring guide.

II. Alternate Scoring Guides (N.B.: Do *NOT* award the “flow” point in the alternate scoring guide.)

- A. If a student sings many of the pitches correctly but is consistently inaccurate in rhythm, you may determine holistically to award up to 4 points for pitch.
OR
- B. If a student is accurate or nearly accurate with respect to rhythm but is consistently inaccurate in pitches, you may determine holistically to award up to 2 points for rhythm.

III. Scores with Additional Meaning

- 1 This score may be given to a response that has two or more redeeming qualities (e.g., retention of the tonic pitch and singing the melody with a correct contour; persistence alone is *not* a redeeming quality).
- 0 This score is used for a response that has no redeeming qualities (or only one) or a response that is off-topic or irrelevant.
- NR** This score (no response) is used for blank responses (including spoken AP number but no response).

Scoring Notes:

- A. If a student restarts, score the last *complete* response, but do *not* award the “flow” point.
- B. Score from the tonic established by the student. However, credit any exactly transposed segment approached by the correct interval. In other words, *any segment entered correctly (by the correct interval) is eligible for the point.*
- C. The last note may be eligible for the point if the student returns to the original tonic, even if the preceding segments have been transposed, and the original tonic is not approached correctly.
- D. If the student changes tempo and continues in the new tempo, do not credit the segment where the change occurs, but credit the ensuing segments.
- E. The last note must be held at least to the attack of the final eighth note of measure four for that segment to receive credit.
- F. Ignore any use (correct or incorrect) of syllables, letter names, or numbers, as well as expletives, giggles, and the like.
- G. If you try both regular and alternate guides, record the higher of the scores.
- H. Scores from one guide may *not* be combined with those of another.
- I. Listen beyond the end of the performance to ensure that the student made no additional response.

AP[®] MUSIC THEORY

2018 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question S1

Overview

This question assessed students' ability to:

- sight read and sing a melody in major mode;
- sing in simple duple meter;
- perform common rhythmic patterns;
- perform a dotted rhythm;
- sing skips and stepwise motion in both ascending and descending directions;
- sing a melody with a vocal range of a ninth;
- perform chordal skips within the tonic and dominant triads;
- establish and maintain a steady tempo;
- establish and retain a sense of tonic; and
- read in bass clef.

Sample: S1A

Score: 9

This represents an excellent response. The student sings all eight segments of the melody with correct pitch and rhythm; 1 point was awarded for each segment. At the midpoint of the melody, the student takes a breath, which results in a slight hesitation, but full credit was awarded. Because the student maintains the momentum of musical motion, the flow point was awarded, which resulted in a score of 9. Scoring by segments was:

1111 1111 +1 = 9.

Sample: S1B

Score: 6

This represents a fair response. The student sings segments one through four with correct pitch and rhythm. In segment five, the student sings a B-flat on the second note instead of an F as notated. In segment six the student sings the pitches E-flat, D, C, B-flat instead of G, F, E-flat, D as notated. In segment seven the student continues to sing incorrect pitches, singing A, A, and G instead of C, B-flat, and A. The student returns to tonic in segment eight and was awarded 1 point for that segment. Because the student sings without hesitation, the flow point was awarded, resulting in a score of 6. Scoring by segments was: 1111 0001 +1 = 6.

Sample: S1C

Score: 3

This represents a weak response. The student sings segments one and eight with correct pitches and rhythms. Segments two through seven are incorrect in both pitch and rhythm. Because the student sings without hesitation, the flow point was awarded, resulting in a score of 3. Scoring by segments was: 1000 0001 +1 = 3.