

2017

AP®

 CollegeBoard

AP Music Theory

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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AP® MUSIC THEORY 2017 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 7

0–9 points

A. ARRIVING AT A SCORE FOR THE ENTIRE QUESTION

1. Score each phrase separately and then add the phrase scores together to arrive at a preliminary tally for the entire question.
2. Before deciding on the final score for the entire question, consider giving an extra point to responses that are extremely good or those that would otherwise receive a score of 0 (see **E.2.a–b** below).
3. Except for instances where the guidelines specify otherwise, judge the bass and Roman numerals separately and ignore mismatches between them.
4. Errors are categorized as either minor or egregious. Two minor errors equal one egregious error (see D below).

B. SCORING PHRASE 2 (0–2 points)

1. Judge the bass and Roman numerals separately, considering each in two halves:
 - The first half consists of the opening beat and the approach to it.
 - The second half consists of the last two notes (the cadence).
2. **The phrase is scored 2 if:**
 - (a) the bass has no egregious errors and
 - (b) the final two Roman numerals match the last two bass notes (even if the first Roman numeral is incorrect).

N.B.: A phrase that receives **2 points** must have a good cadence in both bass and Roman numerals, with the bass and Roman numerals (and inversions) matching one another; otherwise, give the phrase *at most* 1 point.
3. **The phrase is scored 1 if:**
 - (c) the bass has no egregious errors, but any of the two final Roman numerals (and inversions) do *not* match the final bass notes;
 - (d) one-half of the bass contains an egregious error, and at least one-half of the Roman numerals has no egregious errors; or
 - (e) both halves of the bass have an egregious error, but the Roman numerals have no egregious errors.
4. **The phrase is scored 0 if:**
 - (a) both halves of the bass have an egregious error, and at least one-half of the Roman numerals has an egregious error; or
 - (b) at least one-half of the bass has an egregious error, and both halves of the Roman numerals have egregious errors.

Summary of the Method for Scoring Phrase 2

Bass Line	Roman numerals	Score
No egregious errors	Roman numerals (and inversions) must match bass notes	2
No egregious errors	First half of the phrase contains an egregious error, but the cadence is good	2
One-half of the phrase contains an egregious error	No egregious errors	1
One-half of the phrase contains an egregious error	One-half of the phrase contains an egregious error	1
Both halves of the phrase contain an egregious error	No egregious errors	1
Both halves of the phrase contain an egregious error	One-half of the phrase contains an egregious error	0
One-half of the phrase contains an egregious error	Both halves of the phrase contain an egregious error	0

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Question 7 (continued)

C. SCORING PHRASES 3 AND 4

1. For each of these phrases, judge the bass and Roman numerals separately, considering each in two halves.
 - The first half of phrase 3 is comprised of the first four beats of the phrase.
 - The first half of phrase 4 is comprised of the first five beats of the phrase.
 - The last three notes and their approach comprise the last half of each phrase.
2. Then provide a phrase descriptor both for the bass line and for the Roman numerals according to the following guidelines:
 - (a) Judge it to be **good** even if it contains a specific egregious error and one minor error.
 - (b) Judge it to be **fair** if:
 - (i) it contains two egregious errors or two egregious errors and one minor error; or
 - (ii) it contains three or more egregious errors, but one-half of the phrase is without egregious error.
 - (c) Judge it to be **poor** if it contains three or more specific egregious errors, with at least one egregious error in each half of the phrase.

Summary of Good/Fair/Poor Determinations for Bass Lines and Roman numerals for Phrases 3 and 4	
good	0–1 egregious errors (+ 1 minor error)
fair	2 egregious errors (+ 1 minor error)
poor	3 or more egregious errors

3. Combine the descriptors to arrive at the following preliminary scores:

Summary of the Method for Scoring Phrases 3 and 4		
Bass Line	Roman numerals	Score
good	good to fair	3
good	poor	2
fair	good to fair	2
fair	poor	1
poor	good to fair	1
poor	poor	0

4. Before giving a final score of 0 or 3, first consider the cadence.
 - (a) Award *at least 1 point* for the phrase if its cadence (i.e., its final two chords considered by themselves) is good in both bass and Roman numerals, even if nothing else in the phrase is good; the bass and Roman numerals (and inversions) *must agree* in this case.
 - (b) A phrase that receives **3 points** must have a good cadence in both bass and Roman numerals, with the bass and Roman numerals (and inversions) matching one another; otherwise, give the phrase *at most 2 points*.
 - (c) Phrase 4 must end with a perfect authentic cadence.
5. Award at most **2 points** to a phrase that uses half notes exclusively or almost exclusively.

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Question 7 (continued)

D. WEIGHTING ERRORS

- 1.** The following are **egregious** errors:
 - (a) Blatant violations of the instructions.
 - (b) Parallel octaves or fifths, or diminished fifth to perfect fifth.
 - (c) Doubling the leading tone; unresolved or incorrectly resolved leading tone.
 - (d) Tonally inappropriate six-four chord (N.B.: Cadential six-fours, passing six-fours, and pedal six-fours are allowed).
 - (e) Unresolved sevenths or incorrectly resolved sevenths.
 - (f) Other note-against-note dissonances (including fourths) that are not treated correctly, including Roman numerals (and inversions) that do not match with the given melody note.
 - (g) Poor chord succession (e.g., V-IV ; V-ii ; ii-iii ; IV-iii , ii-I ; V^6-I^6 ; V-vi^6 ; iii-vii^o , etc.).
 - (h) Root-position leading-tone chord (vii^o) followed by anything other than root-position I.
 - (i) Poor chord use, such as vi^6 (unless as part of parallel $\frac{6}{3}$ sequence or modulation); iii^6 (unless as part of parallel $\frac{6}{3}$ sequence).
 - (j) Inappropriate leaps (sevenths, augmented fourths, augmented seconds, compound intervals, etc.), successive leaps in the same direction that do not outline a triad, or leaps of an octave that do not change direction.
 - (k) An entire phrase of consecutive thirds or sixths (applicable to phrases 3 and 4).
- 2.** The following are **minor** errors (two minor errors = one egregious error):
 - (a) Repeated notes and/or Roman numerals and inversions from weak beat to strong beat (unless at start of phrase, or if the second note is a suspension).
 - (b) Rhythmically inappropriate six-four chords.
 - (c) Approach to octave or fifth in similar motion in which the upper voice leaps, or consecutive perfect fifths and octaves in contrary motion.
 - (d) Cross-relations.
 - (e) Root-position vii^o triads that move directly to I.
 - (f) Four or more consecutive thirds or sixths for half of a phrase.
- 3.** The following errors are marked on the first chord:
 - (a) incorrectly resolved or unresolved leading tones, chordal sevenths, or incorrect dissonances (see D.1.(f)).
 - (b) poor chord use (e.g., vi^6 , iii^6 , etc.)
 - (c) tonally inappropriate six-four chord
 - (d) cross relations
- 4.** The following errors are marked on the second chord:
 - (a) parallel fifths and octaves
 - (b) hidden fifths and octaves
 - (c) unequal fifths (diminished fifth to perfect fifth)
 - (d) inappropriate leaps
 - (e) successive nontriadic leaps
 - (f) poor chord progression

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Question 7 (continued)

E. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 1.** General considerations:
 - (a) Consider each phrase independently; do not judge the connections between each phrase.
 - (b) Ignore any inner voices supplied by the students; ignore any/all extraneous labels (nonchord tones, etc.).
 - (c) Judge the bass line as either part of a contrapuntal two-part framework or as a bass line for a four-part harmony exercise, giving the student the benefit of the doubt.
 - (d) In judging harmonies, always consider the implied bass line suggested by the Roman numerals (and inversions).
- 2.** Special scores:
 - (a) Award 1 bonus point for a truly musical response or for a response that is solid throughout.
 - (b) Award 1 point to a response that otherwise would earn a 0 but that has two or more redeeming qualities.
 - 0** This score is used for a response that represents an unsuccessful attempt to answer the question (has no redeeming qualities, or only one) or a response that is off-topic or irrelevant.
 - The dash is reserved for blank responses.

Question 7. (Suggested time—20 minutes)

Complete the bass line for the melody below, following eighteenth-century voice-leading procedures. Below the bass line, write the Roman and Arabic numerals that indicate the harmonies and inversions implied by the soprano and bass.

Observe the following:

- A. Keep the portion you compose consistent with the first phrase.
 1. Write an appropriate cadence at each phrase ending.
 2. Give melodic interest to the bass line. (Nonharmonic tones, if included, should be limited to unaccented passing and neighbor tones.)
 3. Vary the motion of the bass line in relation to the soprano.
 4. Use mostly quarter notes. (Where appropriate, note values ranging from half notes to eighth notes may be used.)
- B. Do not notate alto and tenor lines.

Start here

Key: G

Chord analysis: I V_4^6 I⁶ I ii⁶₅ V I V V_4^6 I V I⁶ V_4^7/V V

Chord analysis: I I⁶ IV V V⁴₃ I V VI V_4^7/V IV I⁶ II⁶ I⁶ V⁷ I

7B

Question 7. (Suggested time—20 minutes)

Complete the bass line for the melody below, following eighteenth-century voice-leading procedures. Below the bass line, write the Roman and Arabic numerals that indicate the harmonies and inversions implied by the soprano and bass.

Observe the following:

- A. Keep the portion you compose consistent with the first phrase.
 - 1. Write an appropriate cadence at each phrase ending.
 - 2. Give melodic interest to the bass line. (Nonharmonic tones, if included, should be limited to unaccented passing and neighbor tones.)
 - 3. Vary the motion of the bass line in relation to the soprano.
 - 4. Use mostly quarter notes. (Where appropriate, note values ranging from half notes to eighth notes may be used.)
 - B. Do not notate alto and tenor lines.

B. Do not notate alto and tenor lines.

Start here

Key: G

Chord analysis: I V^6 I^6 I V^6 V I V V^6 I V V^6 V

A handwritten musical score for a single melodic line. The music is in G major (indicated by a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp). The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. Below the staff, a "Chord analysis" is provided, showing Roman numerals I through VII placed under each measure. A handwritten note "neighbor gap" is placed above the third measure. A vertical bracket labeled "I" is placed under the first two measures, and another bracket labeled "II" is placed under the last three measures.

Question 7. (Suggested time—20 minutes)

Complete the bass line for the melody below, following eighteenth-century voice-leading procedures. Below the bass line, write the Roman and Arabic numerals that indicate the harmonies and inversions implied by the soprano and bass.

Observe the following:

- A. Keep the portion you compose consistent with the first phrase.
 1. Write an appropriate cadence at each phrase ending.
 2. Give melodic interest to the bass line. (Nonharmonic tones, if included, should be limited to unaccented passing and neighbor tones.)
 3. Vary the motion of the bass line in relation to the soprano.
 4. Use mostly quarter notes. (Where appropriate, note values ranging from half notes to eighth notes may be used.)
- B. Do not notate alto and tenor lines.

Start here

Key: G

Chord analysis: I V_4^6 I⁶ I ii⁶ V I V V_4^6 I V iii II IV

Chord analysis: I III ii IV ii II IV I II V II III II I

AP® MUSIC THEORY 2017 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 7

Overview

This question assessed students' ability to:

- compose a bass line following the rules of eighteenth-century counterpoint;
- write standard cadences;
- harmonize a melody with an appropriate chord progression;
- use conventional harmonic patterns;
- recognize and correctly use a secondary dominant chord;
- correctly harmonize scale degree 4 in an ascending step-wise melody;
- treat the leading tone correctly, concerning both chord voicing and voice leading; and
- use embellishments correctly in a two-part framework.

Sample: 7A

Score: 9

This represents an excellent response. The second phrase is without error in both the bass line and the Roman numerals; the root position cadence properly acknowledges the chromaticism in the given melody. This phrase was awarded 2 points. Phrase three begins with a bass line that creates a voice exchange with the soprano, followed by stepwise movement including appropriate use of a passing tone. The bass line has no errors and was considered good. The harmonic progression works well, ends with a half cadence under the dominant in the soprano, and was also considered good. The entire phrase was awarded 3 points. Phrase four is also without error in the bass line and the Roman numerals. The bass line moves in contrary motion to the given melody until the repeated dominant in measure 8. The harmony makes good use of the C in measure 7, temporarily tonicizing the subdominant, and concludes the phrase with a cadential second inversion into a perfect authentic cadence. The final phrase was awarded 3 points. The scoring summary for this response was 2/3/3, however, this is an example of a truly musical response to the question and was therefore awarded 1 bonus point for a total score of 9.

Sample: 7B

Score: 6

This represents a good response. The second phrase is without error in the bass line and in the Roman numerals, and the root position cadence properly acknowledges the chromaticism in the given melody with a secondary dominant seventh chord resolving to the dominant. This phrase was awarded 2 points. Phrase three begins with parallel fifths and weak-to-strong movement in the bass line, resulting in egregious and minor errors, respectively. The bass line was still considered good. The harmony begins in similar fashion with implied consecutive fifths in contrary motion to the soprano on beats 1 and 2 of measure 5 and weak-to-strong movement with the repeated vi chord in the same measure. These two minor errors result in a good harmonic line. Even though this phrase has both a good bass line and harmony, it was awarded 2 points due to a mismatch in the cadence, where the Roman numeral under the penultimate chord indicates a root position secondary dominant of ii (the figure is misplaced), while the G♯ in the bass is the third of the chord. Phrase four contains two egregious bass line errors: an A against the soprano G in measure 6, beat 4 and E against D in measure 7 beat 3. Both errors create unacceptable dissonances as well as the use of an improperly executed escape tone in the latter example. There is also an escape tone in beat 4 of measure 7, but because it occurs in the first half of the phrase where there are already two egregious errors, it was not counted. The second half of the bass line has no errors and was, therefore, considered fair. The ii chord at the beginning of the phrase does not match the given soprano melody and is, therefore, an egregious error.

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Question 7 (continued)

The second egregious error in the harmony occurs on the next beat as the ii inappropriately progresses to I. The harmony was considered fair because there are no errors in the second half of the phrase. Phrase four was awarded 2 points. The scoring summary was 2/2/2 for a total score of 6.

Sample: 7C

Score: 2

This represents a poor response. In the second phrase, the dominant resolves deceptively at the “Start here” indication, but this creates parallel fifths with the given melody. The phrase ends well with II moving to V.

While “V/V” is preferred, “II” was accepted. This phrase was awarded 1 point. Phrase 3 begins with two sets of parallel fifths, on beats 1–2 and beats 2–3 of measure 5. The leading tone on beat 4 is unresolved, but only two egregious errors are counted in half a phrase, so this additional error did not affect the score. The harmony indicated in measure 5 does not imply the written parallels but does imply the unresolved leading tone at the end of measure 5 (V⁶-ii). The second half of the phrase includes a harmonic retrogression (V⁶-ii), a weak-to-strong motion at the cadence, and an incorrect harmonization of scale-degree 3 with V. Weak-to-strong motion is a minor error, but any error at the cadence is deemed egregious. Phrase 3 has both poor harmony and counterpoint, and no points were awarded. Phrase 4 begins with a held D (V) into beat 4, but this does not work with the melodic G anacrusis. The leading tone in measure 7, beat 2 is followed by a leap.

Although the student does not change the harmony at this location (moving from V⁵ to V), the leading-tone in the bass is never resolved, creating an egregious error. Measure 8 includes a harmonic retrogression from V-iii, and the bass leaps down a seventh from D to E and then back up a seventh from E to D. The bass line and harmony were considered to be poor, but phrase 4 was awarded 1 point because the cadence is good both harmonically and contrapuntally. The scoring summary was 1/0/1 for a total score of 2.