

College Admission

AP-Music-Theory
AP Music Theory Exam (Advanced Placement Exam)

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Question: 1

What is the following key signature?



- A. G# minor
- B. D# minor
- C. A# minor
- D. E# minor

Answer: B

Explanation:

To determine a sharp key signature, take the last sharp in the key signature and raise it by a half step to find the major key. For the minor key, take the major key and count down three half steps. In the pictured example, the key signature has the last sharp as E#; a half step up finds the major key as F# Major. The relative minor key is three half steps lower, or D# minor.

Question: 2

What is the definition of tonicization?

- A. Long key changes for many phrases
- B. Short key change for repeated measures
- C. Long key change for a section
- D. Short key change for only a few measures

Answer: D

Explanation:

Tonicization is a short key change, for only a few measures. The new key is established through harmonic movement and cadences. Tonicization commonly uses key relationships such as closely related keys, enharmonically equivalent keys, and parallel keys.

Question: 3

Which of the following harmonic progressions is a common chord progression?

- A. I-IV
- B. I-ii
- C. I-vi
- D. I-vii

Answer: A

Explanation:

I-IV is a common harmonic chord progression. The tonic to subdominant movement is often used as a step away from the home key in preparation for the dominant. Tonic to supertonic, tonic to submediant, and tonic to the leading tone are all less common harmonic chord progressions.

Question: 4

Which of the following harmonic progressions is a rare chord progression?

- A. IV-v
- B. ii-V
- C. v-I
- D. I-ii

Answer: D

Explanation:

I-ii is a rare harmonic chord progression. The tonic usually moves to the more common subdominant function of the IV chord. The chord progressions subdominant to dominant, supertonic to dominant, and dominant to tonic are all much more common harmonic chord progressions.

Question: 5

Which describes the rise and fall of a melody?

- A. Sequence
- B. Repetition
- C. Contour
- D. Countermelody

Answer: C

Explanation:

Contour describes the rise and fall of a melody; it refers to the movement of the pitches, whether ascending or descending, near or far. Words that describe the contour of a melody include conjunct, disjunct, terraced, arc contour, and undulating contour.

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