

# **Specimen Improvisation Tests**

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## **Stylistic Stimulus**

for Trinity College London exams from 2017

Initial-Grade 8

### **C Instruments – Treble Clef**

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## Stylistic stimulus

The stylistic stimulus requires candidates to improvise over a notated piano part played by the examiner. Candidates are given a stimulus which includes the notated piano part and chord symbols. The stimulus begins with a two-bar introduction played by the examiner alone, followed by a further section over which candidates must improvise for a specified number of repeats. In the exam, the examiner plays the stimulus twice for candidates' reference, without repeats. Candidates are then given 30 seconds' preparation time, during which they may prepare for their improvisation aloud if they wish. The test then follows. The examiner then plays the stimulus again, and candidates join after the introduction, improvising for the specified number of repeats. Candidates should aim to improvise in a way that complements the musical idiom of the stimulus.

# Initial

## Example 1

March ♩ = 92

C G G C

## Example 2

Lullaby ♩ = 72

C G G C

# Grade 1

## Example 1

Fanfare ♩ = 112

C G G C

*to be played through twice*

### Example 2

Moderato ♩ = 100

G D D G

*to be played through twice*

## Grade 2

### Example 1

Tango ♩ = 120

F B $\flat$  C F

*to be played through twice*

### Example 2

Andante ♩ = 82

Am Dm E Am

*to be played through twice*

# Grade 3

## Example 1

Waltz ♩ = 104

Dm Gm A Dm

*mf*

*to be played through twice*

## Example 2

Allegretto ♩ = 112

B♭ Cm F B♭

*mp*

*to be played through twice*

# Grade 4

## Example 1

Quick Waltz ♩ = 124

Gm Cm D Gm

*mf*

*to be played through three times*

### Example 2

Adagio ♩ = 60

D Em G D

*to be played through three times*

*mf*

## Grade 5

### Example 1

Vivace ♩ = 90

A D Bm E A

*to be played through three times*

*mp*

### Example 2

Grazioso ♩ = 104

E♭ A♭ Cm B♭ E♭

*to be played through three times*

*mp*

# Grade 6

## Example 1

**Agitato** ♩ = 132

Cm G7 Cm

*to be played through twice*

*f*

Fm Cm Ab G7 Cm

### Example 2

Nocturne ♩. = 63

The first system of the musical score is in F# major, 12/8 time, and begins with a treble clef. The right-hand part (RH) starts with a whole rest for two measures, followed by a repeat sign and four eighth notes (F#, C#, G#, D) marked *to be played through twice*. The left-hand part (LH) features a melodic line in the upper register and a bass line in the lower register, both starting with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The system concludes with a double bar line.

The second system continues the piece with a treble clef. The RH part features a series of chords: C#, C#7, D, Bm, C#, and C#7, each accompanied by a rhythmic pattern of four eighth notes. The LH part continues with its melodic and bass lines. The system ends with a double bar line.

The third system continues with a treble clef. The RH part features a series of chords: Bm, F#m, C#, C#7, and F#m, each accompanied by a rhythmic pattern of four eighth notes. The LH part continues with its melodic and bass lines. The system concludes with a double bar line.

# Grade 7

## Example 1

Grave ♩ = 42

E B C#m

*to be played through twice*

*p*

G#m A maj7 B B7 E

### Example 2

**Gigue** ♩ = 92

*to be played through twice*

*mp*

C C<sup>7</sup> Fm C<sup>7</sup> Fm E<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b7</sup> A<sup>b</sup>

A<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b7</sup> A<sup>b</sup>

# Grade 8

## Example 1

### Lively Dance ♩ = 138

The musical score is for a piece titled "Lively Dance" in 5/4 time, with a tempo of ♩ = 138. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes a treble clef staff with a repeat sign and a guitar part consisting of six measures of rhythmic slashes. Above these slashes are the chords: Fm, C, D $\flat$ , A $\flat$ , D $\flat$ , and A $\flat$ . Below the treble staff is the instruction "to be played through twice". The piano part consists of a right-hand staff with chords and a left-hand staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system continues the piano accompaniment and includes a second guitar part with ten measures of rhythmic slashes and chords: B $\flat$ m7, C, Fm, C, D $\flat$ , A $\flat$ , D $\flat$ , Fm, C7, and Fm. The piano part concludes with a double bar line.

Example 2

Impressionistic:

Slow and smooth ♩. = 63

Chord symbols for the first system: C#m<sup>9</sup> F#m C#m<sup>9</sup> F#m Emaj7 A

Chord symbols for the second system: Emaj7 A F#m<sup>7</sup> G#7 F#m<sup>7</sup> G#7 C#m<sup>9</sup> F#m C#m<sup>9</sup>

to be played through twice