Specimen Improvisation Tests

Stylistic Stimulus

for Trinity College London exams from 2017

Initial–Grade 8

C Instruments – Bass Clef
Specimen stylistic stimulus – C instruments, bass 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 $\frac{3}{4} = 92$

Example 2
Lullaby $\frac{3}{4} = 72$

Grade 1

Example 1
Fanfare $\frac{3}{4} = 112$

(to be played through twice)
Example 2

Moderato $\text{q} = 100$

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\[\text{G} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{G}\]
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\text{to be played through twice}

Example 1

Tango $\text{q} = 120$

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\[\text{F} \quad \text{B}_b \quad \text{C} \quad \text{F}\]
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\text{to be played through twice}

Example 2

Andante $\text{q} = 82$

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\[\text{Am} \quad \text{Dm} \quad \text{E} \quad \text{Am}\]
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\text{to be played through twice}
Grade 3

Example 1

Waltz $\frac{3}{4}$
$q = 104$

Grade 3

Example 2

Allegretto $\frac{3}{4}$
$q = 112$

Grade 4

Example 1

Quick Waltz $\frac{3}{4}$
$q = 124$

mf
Example 2

Adagio $\frac{\text{J}}{= 60}$

to be played through three times

Grade 5

Example 1

Vivace $\frac{\text{J}}{= 90}$

to be played through three times

Example 2

Grazioso $\frac{\text{J}}{= 104}$

to be played through three times
Example 1

Agitato $\text{q} = 132$

Cm

G7

Cm

to be played through twice

Fm

Cm

Ab

G7

Cm
Example 2

Nocturne $\frac{1}{4} = 63$

\begin{align*}
\text{C#} & \quad \text{C#7} & \quad \text{D} & \quad \text{Bm} & \quad \text{C#} & \quad \text{C#7} \\
\text{Bm} & \quad \text{F#m} & \quad \text{C#} & \quad \text{C#7} & \quad \text{F#m}
\end{align*}
Example 1

Grave $\frac{\dot{\quad\quad\quad}}{42}$

E       B       Cm

$\text{to be played through twice}$

Gm       Amaj7      B      B7      E
Example 2

Gigue \( \text{\textit{j}} \approx 92 \)

\( \text{to be played through twice} \)

\( \text{C} \quad \text{C}\textsuperscript{7} \quad \text{Fm} \quad \text{C}\textsuperscript{7} \quad \text{Fm} \quad \text{Eb} \quad \text{Ab} \quad \text{Eb}\textsuperscript{7} \quad \text{Ab} \)
Example 1

Lively Dance  $J = 138$

Grade 8
Example 2

Impressionistic:
Slow and smooth \( \text{\textcyrc} = 63 \)

C\#m\(^9\)  F\#m  C\#m\(^9\)  F\#m  E\#maj7  A

(to be played through twice)

E\#maj7  A  F\#m\(^7\)  G\#7  F\#m\(^7\)  G\#7  C\#m\(^9\)  F\#m  C\#m\(^9\)