

Motiflab — Flashcards

A Spark & Anvil printable flashcard deck. Quiz yourself on the Motiflab cast's curriculum — one card at a time.

How to use these cards

Fold each sheet down the middle line so the answers are hidden. Read the **question** on the left, say your answer out loud, then **unfold** to check the right side. Testing yourself — then checking — is one of the most powerful ways to remember. Get one wrong? That's the best kind of practice: try it again tomorrow.

Want real flashcards? Cut along the fold line and the rows into cards — question on one side, answer on the other.

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Motiflab — Flashcards

How to use these cards

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1. What Is a Motif?

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
Which best describes a motif's job in a piece of music?	To give the piece a recognizable identity — A motif gives a piece its identity and unity — it's the recognizable thread listeners follow.
A motif is memorable partly because of its —	distinctive shape or pattern — A distinctive, clear shape or pattern is what makes a motif stick in the listener's memory.
A motif made from a memorable sequence of pitches is a —	melodic motif — A melodic motif is a short, memorable pitch shape — you could hum it.
You hear the same 4-note idea in the flute, then the cello, then the trumpet. This is a motif being —	passed between instruments — The same motif handed from flute to cello to trumpet shows a motif traveling between instruments while keeping its identity.
How long is a motif, usually?	Just a few notes or one short rhythm — A motif is usually only a few notes or a single short rhythmic cell — small enough to recognize the instant it returns.
Why is a SHORT motif easier to develop than a long one?	Small ideas are easy to change and combine — A short motif is flexible: it's easy to repeat, transform, and combine — a long melody is harder to rework.
Which is NOT a reason motifs are useful?	They make a piece impossible to remember — Motifs make music MORE memorable, not less — they create unity, identity, and material to develop.
Which pairing is correct?	Motif = small idea; Theme = larger complete idea — A motif is a small building block; a theme is a larger, more complete musical idea often built from motifs.
A motif can be made of —	pitches, rhythm, or both — A motif can be a melodic shape (pitches), a rhythmic pattern (timing), or both together.
Why do composers repeat a motif?	So the listener remembers and recognizes it — Repeating a motif makes it familiar, so the listener recognizes it and feels the piece hold together.
If you clap 'short-short-short-long', you have created a —	rhythmic motif — Clapping 'short-short-short-long' is a rhythmic motif — a memorable timing pattern with no fixed pitch.
The big idea of MotifLab is that a small motif can —	grow and change to tell a whole story — MotifLab's core idea: a small motif can grow, vary, and develop across a piece to tell a complete musical story.
A motif that keeps its rhythm but moves to higher or lower notes still counts as —	the same motif — As long as the recognizable shape or rhythm stays, moving it up or down keeps it the SAME motif.
Composers often introduce a motif at the very start of a piece so that —	listeners meet the 'main character' early — Introducing the motif early lets listeners meet the 'main character' so they can follow its journey through the piece.
A motif built only from a rhythm pattern (no fixed pitches) is a —	rhythmic motif — A rhythmic motif is a memorable timing pattern; it can appear on different pitches but keeps the same rhythm.

A motif is different from a full melody because a motif is —	shorter and more fragment-like — A motif is a short building block; a melody is a longer, more complete musical line often built from motifs.
Which is the BEST test of whether an idea is a good motif?	Can you hum it back after hearing it once? — A strong motif is instantly memorable — if you can hum it back after one hearing, it will work as a recurring idea.
If a motif never came back in a piece, the listener would probably —	not notice it as an important idea — An idea that appears once and never returns is hard to hold onto; repetition is what turns a phrase into a motif.
Two pieces can share the same rhythm but sound different because they have different —	pitches — The same rhythmic motif on different pitches makes different-sounding music — pitch and rhythm are separate layers.
The famous 'da-da-da-DUM' opening of Beethoven's 5th Symphony is an example of a —	motif — 'da-da-da-DUM' is a four-note motif — one of the most famous in all of music — that Beethoven repeats and transforms throughout the movement.
A good motif usually has —	a clear, simple shape — The strongest motifs tend to be simple and clear — simplicity is what makes them easy to remember and transform.
In MotifLab, the motif is treated like the —	main character (protagonist) of the piece — MotifLab treats the motif as the protagonist: we follow it as it changes and grows, like a character in a story.
Which of these is most likely a motif?	A snappy 3-note idea that opens and reappears — A snappy short idea that opens the piece and keeps returning is a textbook motif.
What is a musical motif?	A short, memorable musical idea that repeats — A motif is the smallest musical idea — a few notes or a rhythm — that is memorable and repeats through a piece.
The film theme for Jaws uses just two alternating notes. This makes it a —	very short, tense motif — The Jaws motif is only two alternating notes — proof that a motif can be extremely short yet unforgettable.

2. Motifs in Famous Music

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
A motif in a video game that plays when you collect a coin helps you —	instantly know what happened — A short motif tied to an event (a coin, a level-up) instantly tells the player what just happened.
A motif that keeps its rhythm but appears on new pitches is being —	moved to a new pitch level — Keeping the rhythm but changing the pitch level is a simple, common way to reuse a motif.
Beethoven's 5th Symphony opens with a motif of how many notes?	Four — The opening motif of Beethoven's 5th is four notes: 'da-da-da-DUM'.
The 'William Tell Overture' finale motif is famous because it is —	catchy and instantly recognizable — The William Tell finale motif is instantly recognizable — a hallmark of a strong, memorable motif.
Which statement about famous motifs is TRUE?	They are often very short and simple — The most famous motifs (Jaws, Beethoven's 5th) are strikingly short and simple, which is why they're unforgettable.
Recognizing a returning motif helps a listener —	follow the story of the music — Spotting a returning motif gives the listener an anchor and helps them follow the music's story.
Hearing a motif return at the END of a piece often gives a feeling of —	coming home / resolution — When a motif returns near the end, listeners feel a sense of return and resolution — the journey coming full circle.
A motif you hear in a TV show's theme that returns each episode is a —	recurring signature idea — A theme motif that returns every episode is a recurring signature idea — a motif tied to the show.
A motif used to represent a specific character or idea in film/opera is called a —	leitmotif — A leitmotif is a recurring motif tied to a character, place, or idea — famously used in opera and film scores.
A listener who notices the SAME motif in two different sections has spotted —	unity across the piece — Spotting the same motif in different sections reveals the unity the composer built into the piece.
Star Wars gives the villain Darth Vader his own recurring motif. That is a —	leitmotif — The 'Imperial March' is Darth Vader's leitmotif — a motif that signals his presence.
A motif can signal a character's return even before that character appears on screen because —	the listener has learned to link the motif to them — Once a leitmotif is linked to a character, hearing it tells the audience that character is near — even before we see them.
Peter and the Wolf gives each character its own tune. This uses the idea of —	motifs representing characters — In Peter and the Wolf, each character has its own instrument and motif — a clear example of motifs as characters.
Which pair is a real famous motif?	Beethoven's 'da-da-da-DUM' — 'da-da-da-DUM' from Beethoven's 5th is a genuine famous motif.
A composer transforms a famous motif so it sounds sad instead of happy, often by switching to —	a minor key — Switching a motif from a major to a minor key is a common way to make the same idea sound sad or tense.
Identifying motifs by ear is a skill that improves with —	practiced listening — Recognizing motifs by ear is a listening skill that grows with focused, repeated practice.

Why are short motifs common in film scores?	They can flash by quickly to signal something — Short motifs work in film because they can appear in a flash to signal a character, mood, or idea.
When a motif is played higher and faster near a movie's climax, the composer is using it to build —	excitement/tension — Raising a motif higher and faster increases energy, building excitement toward a climax.
A returning motif that has been changed each time still helps unity because —	listeners recognize its core shape — Even when varied, a motif's core shape stays recognizable, so its returns still create unity.
A motif heard softly and slowly, then loudly and quickly, shows the SAME idea with different —	expression — Playing one motif soft/slow then loud/fast keeps the idea but changes its expression and mood.
The Jaws theme is built from —	two alternating notes — The Jaws motif alternates just two low notes, speeding up to build tension.
Which is the BEST reason composers reuse one motif instead of many new tunes?	It ties the whole piece together — Reusing a motif gives the piece unity and identity — a single thread listeners can follow throughout.
Why do many famous motifs use STEPWISE or simple intervals?	They are easier to remember and sing — Simple, singable intervals make a motif easy to remember — a key reason famous motifs feel so natural.
Which is a RHYTHMIC motif you might clap?	Short-short-short-long — 'Short-short-short-long' is a rhythmic motif — clappable, memorable, pitch-free.
The best one-sentence summary of a motif is —	a small, memorable idea that recurs and can be transformed — A motif is a small, memorable musical idea that recurs and can be transformed — the foundation of MotifLab.

3. Building a Melody

⌂ Question (fold →)	Answer
The up-and-down SHAPE of a melody is called its —	contour — Contour is the shape of a melody — how it rises and falls over time.
A melody made mostly of steps tends to sound —	smooth and singable — Stepwise (conjunct) motion sounds smooth and is easy to sing.
A melody with many big leaps tends to sound —	more dramatic or angular — Leaps (disjunct motion) make a melody sound more dramatic or angular.
A motif can be the 'seed' of a melody because —	a melody can grow out of repeating and varying the motif — A motif is the seed: repeating and varying it can grow a full melody — MotifLab's core building move.
A sequence is when a melodic idea is repeated —	at a higher or lower pitch level — A sequence repeats a melodic idea starting on a higher or lower pitch, like climbing stairs.
A melody that ends on a NON-home note tends to feel —	unfinished / wanting to continue — Ending away from the tonic leaves a melody feeling open, as if it wants to continue.
A melody's 'peak' or climax is effective partly because it is —	prepared by the notes leading to it — A climax lands best when the melody builds toward it — the approach makes the high point feel earned.
A short musical 'sentence' that feels somewhat complete is a —	phrase — A phrase is a short, sentence-like unit of melody that feels somewhat complete.
Moving from one note to the very next note (like C to D) is a —	step — A step moves to an adjacent note (a 2nd) — the smallest melodic move.
A 'call and response' melody works by —	one idea answered by another — Call and response pairs a 'question' phrase with an 'answer' phrase — a natural way to build melodies.
Singers usually breathe at the ends of —	phrases — Phrase endings are natural breathing points, like the ends of spoken sentences.
A melody is —	a series of pitches heard as a musical line — A melody is a succession of single pitches heard as a connected musical line — the 'tune'.
A melody that falls step by step to a low note tends to feel —	settling or relaxing — A descending contour usually feels like release — settling toward rest.
Good phrasing helps a melody sound —	natural, like speech — Thoughtful phrasing shapes a melody into natural, speech-like units.
Balancing steps and leaps in a melody helps it be —	both singable and interesting — Mixing steps (singable) with occasional leaps (interesting) makes a melody both easy to sing and engaging.
Which contour word describes a melody that arches up then comes back down?	Arch shape — An arch contour rises to a peak then descends — a very common, satisfying melodic shape.
Moving to a note several notes away (like C to G) is a —	leap — A leap skips over notes, moving a larger distance than a step.
Which is the BEST description of	Shaping pitches into a memorable, well-shaped line — Building a melody

melody-building?	means shaping a sequence of pitches into a memorable, well-contoured line.
If a melody ends on the 'home' note (tonic), it usually feels —	finished/resolved — Ending on the tonic (home note) gives a melody a sense of arrival and completion.
The highest note a melody reaches is often its —	climax / high point — The highest note is often the melodic climax — a natural high point of tension or excitement.
Which makes a melody easier to remember?	A clear, repeating shape — A clear, somewhat repeating shape is easier to remember than a random one.
A repeated pitch (same note several times) in a melody is a —	repeated tone — Repeating the same pitch is a valid melodic move that can add emphasis or rhythm interest.
Drawing a melody's contour as a line helps you —	see its shape and high/low points — Sketching the up-and-down line of a melody makes its contour, peaks, and valleys visible.
Which is the smallest melodic move?	A step (to the next note) — A step (a 2nd, to the adjacent note) is the smallest melodic move.
A melody that keeps rising higher and higher tends to build —	tension/energy — A steadily rising contour builds tension and energy toward a peak.

4. Rhythm & Meter Basics

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
Syncopation means putting emphasis on —	unexpected (weak) beats — Syncopation stresses normally-weak beats or offbeats, creating a surprising, groovy feel.
3/4 time is often felt as a —	waltz (ONE-two-three) — 3/4 time has three beats per measure — the classic waltz pulse (ONE-two-three).
The steady pulse you can tap along to is the —	beat — The beat is the steady underlying pulse of music — what you tap your foot to.
Why does a rhythmic motif help unify a piece?	Its repeating pattern is recognizable — A recurring rhythmic motif is recognizable, giving the piece rhythmic unity.
Which is the BEST way to build a strong groove?	A clear, repeating rhythmic pattern — A clear, repeating rhythmic pattern creates a groove listeners can feel and move to.
Clapping 'ta ta ti-ti ta' is an example of —	performing a rhythmic pattern — Rhythm syllables like 'ta' (quarter) and 'ti-ti' (eighths) help perform a rhythmic pattern.
A dotted half note in 4/4 lasts how many beats?	Three — A dot adds half the note's value: a half note (2) plus 1 = 3 beats.
Combining a melodic motif with a rhythmic motif gives you —	a richer, more memorable idea — Pairing a strong melodic shape with a strong rhythmic pattern creates a richer, more memorable motif.
A note that lasts one beat in 4/4 is usually a —	quarter note — A quarter note lasts one beat in 4/4, so four of them fill a measure.
Tempo means —	how fast or slow the beat goes — Tempo is the speed of the beat — how fast or slow the music moves.
Grouping beats into repeating patterns (like groups of 4) is called —	meter — Meter groups beats into repeating patterns, such as groups of 4 (4/4 time).
A faster tempo usually makes music feel —	more energetic or urgent — Faster tempos tend to feel more energetic or urgent; slower tempos feel calmer.
A rhythmic motif can appear on different PITCHES while keeping the same —	durations (timing) — A rhythmic motif keeps its pattern of durations even when the pitches change.
The BEST one-line summary of rhythm and meter is —	how music is organized in time — Rhythm and meter are how music is organized in time — the beat, the durations, and how beats group.
Notes played BETWEEN the main beats create —	offbeats / syncopation feel — Playing on the offbeats (the 'ands') adds rhythmic interest and can create syncopation.
A tie connects two notes so they —	sound as one longer note — A tie joins two notes of the same pitch into a single, longer sustained sound.
Rhythm is —	the pattern of long and short sounds — Rhythm is the pattern of durations — long and short sounds — over the beat.
A rhythmic motif is a —	memorable pattern of note lengths — A rhythmic motif is a memorable pattern of durations that can recur throughout a piece.

Keeping a steady beat while a rhythm changes above it shows the difference between —	beat and rhythm — The steady beat is the pulse; the rhythm is the changing pattern of durations over that pulse.
Two eighth notes together last as long as —	one quarter note — Each eighth note is half a beat, so two eighth notes equal one quarter note (one beat).
The 'strong' beat we naturally feel as the start of a group is the —	downbeat — The downbeat is beat 1 of a measure — the strong beat that anchors the meter.
An accent mark tells the player to —	play that note stronger — An accent (>) tells the performer to play that note with extra emphasis.
A whole note in 4/4 lasts how many beats?	Four — A whole note lasts four beats — the entire measure in 4/4.
In 4/4 time, how many beats are in each measure?	Four — The top '4' in 4/4 means four beats per measure.
A silence in music is written as a —	rest — A rest is a notated silence — timed just like a note but with no sound.

5. Repetition & Variation

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
Why might a composer state a motif exactly THEN vary it?	To make it familiar before changing it — Stating a motif clearly first makes it familiar, so listeners recognize it when it later varies.
If your piece feels boring, the FIRST fix to try is —	add variation to the repeated idea — When music feels boring from over-repetition, adding variation to the repeated idea is the first fix.
A composer repeats a motif softly, then loudly. This is variation of —	dynamics — Repeating a motif at a different volume is a variation of dynamics — same idea, new intensity.
An ostinato in the bass under a changing melody is common in —	many pop and classical pieces — A repeating bass ostinato under a changing melody appears across pop, film, and classical music.
Repeating a rhythmic motif on a drum while the melody changes is using the drum pattern as an —	ostinato — A repeating drum pattern under a changing melody is a rhythmic ostinato.
Variation helps a listener because it —	keeps interest and shows growth — Variation sustains interest and lets a motif grow and develop across a piece.
An ostinato differs from an exact repetition of a whole melody because it is —	usually a short pattern used as a backdrop — An ostinato is typically a short pattern repeated as an accompaniment, not the full foreground melody.
Playing a motif exactly the same way again is —	exact repetition — Exact repetition plays the idea again with no changes — the simplest way to reinforce a motif.
Repetition helps a listener because it —	builds familiarity and memory — Repetition builds familiarity, helping the listener remember and connect with the music.
Too much EXACT repetition can make music sound —	boring or repetitive — Endless exact repetition can bore the listener; variation keeps repeated ideas fresh.
Repeating a motif at a higher pitch level (same shape) is a —	sequence — A sequence repeats a motif starting on a new pitch, keeping the same shape — like climbing stairs.
Which is an example of a SEQUENCE?	Playing a 3-note idea, then the same idea a step higher — Repeating a 3-note idea a step higher (same shape, new pitch) is a sequence.
An ostinato is useful because it —	gives a steady, unifying foundation — An ostinato provides a steady, repeating foundation that unifies the music beneath a changing melody.
Varying only the PITCHES while keeping the rhythm is also a kind of —	variation — Keeping the rhythm but changing some pitches is another way to vary a motif.
A 'theme and variations' piece works by —	stating a theme, then transforming it many ways — In theme and variations, a theme is stated and then repeatedly transformed — a whole form built on variation.
Variation is a key idea in MotifLab because it lets the motif —	grow and change through the story — Variation lets MotifLab's 'protagonist' motif grow and change as the musical story unfolds.
Too much variety with NO repetition can	confusing or hard to follow — Constant change with no repetition

make music sound —	leaves the listener with nothing familiar to hold onto.
Good composers balance —	repetition and variation — Strong music balances repetition (familiarity/unity) with variation (interest/growth).
Varying only the RHYTHM of a motif while keeping its pitches is one kind of —	variation — Changing only the rhythm (but keeping the pitches) is a common variation that keeps the motif recognizable.
Which keeps a varied motif RECOGNIZABLE?	Keeping some part of its core shape — A variation stays recognizable as long as some core feature (shape or rhythm) survives the changes.
Which is the strongest sign of a well-crafted set of variations?	Each variation feels both new AND connected to the theme — The best variations feel fresh yet clearly connected to the original theme — unity with variety.
The BEST summary of repetition vs variation is —	repetition gives unity; variation gives interest — Repetition provides unity and memorability; variation provides interest and growth — composers balance them.
Changing a motif a little each time it returns is —	variation — Variation keeps a motif recognizable while changing something — rhythm, pitch, harmony, or texture.
A motif returning UNCHANGED after lots of variation can feel like —	coming home — After many variations, the original motif returning unchanged feels like a satisfying homecoming.
A short pattern repeated over and over as a background is an —	ostinato — An ostinato is a persistent repeating pattern used as a foundation or backdrop.

6. Transforming a Motif

⌘ Question (fold →)	Answer
Transposition changes the motif's _ but not its _.	pitch level; shape — Transposition changes where the motif sits (pitch level) but keeps its shape and intervals.
Using several transformations of ONE motif across a piece creates —	unity with variety — Deriving material by transforming a single motif gives a piece both unity (one source) and variety (many forms).
Flipping a motif's up-and-down directions (ups become downs) is —	inversion — Inversion mirrors a motif's contour: where it went up, it now goes down by the same interval, and vice versa.
Inversion is a good way to create —	a related-but-new-sounding version — Inversion produces a version that sounds fresh yet is clearly related to the original.
Making every note of a motif LONGER (e.g., doubling durations) is —	augmentation — Augmentation lengthens the motif's note durations, stretching it out in time.
Retrograde is sometimes called turning a motif —	backward — Retrograde is often described as playing the motif backward.
A composer wants a tense, hurried climax from a calm motif. A good transform is —	diminution (make it faster/shorter) — Diminution compresses the motif into a faster, more urgent form suited to a tense climax.
Which transformation reverses the ORDER of the notes?	Retrograde — Retrograde reverses the order of the notes; inversion flips direction, not order.
Which transformation would you use to make a motif sound like a slow, majestic version of itself?	Augmentation — Augmentation stretches the motif into a slower, more majestic version.
If a motif rises C-D-E, its INVERSION starting on C would —	fall C-B-A — Inverting a rising C-D-E gives a falling C-B-A — the same steps in the opposite direction.
Inversion is sometimes called turning a motif —	upside-down — Inversion is often described as flipping the motif upside-down — its contour is mirrored.
Retrograde-inversion means the motif is —	reversed AND flipped upside-down — Retrograde-inversion combines two operations: the motif is both played backward and inverted.
Augmentation of a motif often makes it feel —	grander or more important — Stretching a motif with augmentation can make it feel grander, weightier, or more triumphant.
Diminution of a motif often makes it feel —	faster or more urgent — Compressing a motif with diminution can make it feel faster and more urgent.
Moving a motif up or down to start on a different pitch (keeping its shape) is —	transposition — Transposition moves a motif to a new pitch level while keeping its intervals and shape.
If a motif is C-D-E, its RETROGRADE is —	E-D-C — The retrograde of C-D-E reverses the order to E-D-C.
Doubling a motif's note lengths from quarters to half notes is —	augmentation — Turning quarter notes into half notes doubles each duration — augmentation.

Transposition is useful because it lets a motif —	appear in new keys or registers — Transposition lets the same motif appear in different keys or pitch registers while keeping its identity.
Which set lists the FIVE common motif transformations in MotifLab?	Transposition, inversion, retrograde, augmentation, diminution — MotifLab's five core transformations are transposition, inversion, retrograde, augmentation, and diminution.
Making every note of a motif SHORTER (e.g., halving durations) is —	diminution — Diminution shortens the motif's durations, compressing it in time.
Which is TRUE about transformations?	They keep a link to the original motif — Transformations are derived from the original, so they keep an audible link to it while sounding new.
Which best captures WHY transformations matter?	They grow a small idea while keeping the piece unified — Transformations are how composers develop a small idea into a large, unified work — the heart of MotifLab.
Transformations turn one small motif into —	lots of related material for a whole piece — Transformations let a single motif generate a whole piece's worth of related material.
Playing a motif backward (last note first) is —	retrograde — Retrograde plays the motif's notes in reverse order, from last to first.
Halving a motif's note lengths from quarters to eighths is —	diminution — Turning quarter notes into eighth notes halves each duration — diminution.

7. Development Techniques

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
Taking just PART of a motif and using it alone is —	fragmentation — Fragmentation isolates a small part of a motif and develops that fragment on its own.
Developing a motif means —	growing and exploring it in many ways — Development is the process of growing and exploring a motif through transformation, fragmentation, and combination.
An 'answer' phrase that extends and varies the 'call' shows —	development within call-and-response — When the answering phrase extends or varies the call, development is happening within the phrase structure.
The development phase of MotifLab's arc corresponds to the motif's —	exploration and struggle — In MotifLab's narrative arc, the development phase is where the motif is explored and tested — the story's rising action.
Development is especially important in ___ forms.	longer — Development matters most in longer forms, where a little material must sustain a large structure.
Adding notes to make a motif longer is —	extension — Extension lengthens a motif by adding new notes, spinning the idea out further.
Combining two DIFFERENT motifs at the same time is —	counterpoint / combination — Playing two motifs together (combination/counterpoint) is a rich development technique.
Fragmentation is useful for building tension because it —	focuses on a small, insistent piece — Repeating a small fragment insistently can build tension by focusing the ear on one intense piece.
Good development feels like the motif is —	on a journey, growing and changing — Effective development makes the motif feel like it's on a journey — growing and changing across the piece.
Which technique makes a motif SHORTER by removing notes?	Fragmentation (using only part) — Fragmentation shortens by using only part of the motif; extension does the opposite.
A 'development section' in a piece is where the composer —	works and transforms the themes — In a development section, previously-stated themes are transformed, fragmented, and explored.
Which is the BEST reason to develop rather than just repeat?	Development keeps a long piece interesting and unified — Development sustains interest across a long piece while keeping it unified — more than mere repetition can.
Spinning out a motif into a longer line is called —	developing / extending it — 'Spinning out' a motif means developing and extending it into a longer, flowing line.
Motivic development is important because it —	creates a large piece from small material — Motivic development lets composers build large, unified works from very little starting material.
Developing a motif keeps a piece UNIFIED because —	everything grows from the same source — When all material develops from one motif, the piece stays unified even as it grows complex.
Which is an example of FRAGMENTATION?	Using only the first three notes of a longer motif — Isolating the first three notes of a motif and developing them alone is fragmentation.
The BEST summary of development	ways to grow and vary a motif to build a piece — Development techniques (fragmentation, extension, combination, sequence) are the

techniques is —	tools for growing a motif into a full piece.
A development section often feels more ___ than the opening.	unstable / tense — Development sections often feel unstable or tense because themes are being explored and pulled apart.
Combining fragmentation with sequence means —	repeating a fragment at rising or falling pitches — A fragment repeated in sequence (at new pitch levels) is a powerful, common development move.
Which is an example of EXTENSION?	Adding extra notes to spin the motif out longer — Adding notes to lengthen a motif and carry it further is extension.
Why might a composer fragment a motif near a climax?	To intensify and focus the energy — Fragmenting a motif near a climax intensifies the music by hammering a small, focused idea.
Extending a motif's ending is a way to —	delay resolution and build anticipation — Extending a phrase delays its resolution, building anticipation before the arrival.
If a piece feels like it 'goes nowhere,' the composer may need more —	development of the motif — Music that feels static often needs more development — growing and exploring the motif rather than repeating it.
A composer states a motif, fragments it, sequences the fragment, then extends it. This shows —	a development process — State → fragment → sequence → extend is a chain of development techniques working the idea.
Combining development techniques (fragment + sequence + extend) usually creates —	rich, evolving music from one idea — Combining several development techniques generates rich, evolving music from a single motif.

8. Contrast & Tension

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
Resolving tension often uses —	falling pitch, softer dynamics, arriving at the home key — Resolution often comes with falling pitch, softening dynamics, and arriving at the tonic (home).
Contrast in music means —	using different, opposing ideas — Contrast places different, opposing musical ideas side by side to create interest and shape.
Tension and release together create a piece's —	emotional shape / arc — The pattern of tension and release forms the emotional arc that gives a piece its shape.
A sudden silence before a big moment can INCREASE tension because it —	makes the listener wait — A well-placed silence heightens anticipation, increasing tension before an important arrival.
A decrescendo (getting softer) tends to —	ease tension — A decrescendo decreases volume, often easing tension toward rest.
Why do composers NEED both tension AND release?	Constant tension exhausts; constant rest bores — Music needs both: unrelenting tension exhausts the listener, while unbroken rest bores them.
Consonance (smooth notes) usually creates —	a sense of rest — Consonance sounds stable and restful — the resolution that dissonance seeks.
Alternating a calm motif with a stormy one creates —	contrast that shapes the drama — Alternating contrasting characters (calm vs stormy) shapes the emotional drama of a piece.
Increasing tension often uses —	rising pitch, louder dynamics, faster tempo — Tension typically builds through rising pitch, growing loudness, and quickening tempo.
After a big climax, contrast often provides —	a calmer, resolving section — Contrast after a climax — a calmer section — provides needed release and balance.
A high, bright passage after a low, dark one is contrast in —	register — Moving between high (bright) and low (dark) pitch ranges is register contrast.
Dissonance (clashing notes) usually creates —	tension — Dissonance sounds unstable, creating tension that seeks resolution to consonance.
Contrast between the FIRST theme and a SECOND theme helps listeners —	tell the sections apart — Contrasting themes help listeners distinguish the sections and follow the form.
Release (resolution) is the feeling of —	arriving at rest — Release is the satisfying arrival at stability after tension.
Which creates the MOST tension?	Loud, high, dissonant, and fast together — Combining loud, high, dissonant, and fast elements stacks tension to a peak.
The BEST summary of contrast is —	difference that creates variety, drama, and shape — Contrast is difference — in dynamics, register, texture, or theme — that creates variety, drama, and form.
A contrasting SECOND theme is common in many forms because it	balances the first theme — A contrasting second theme provides balance and variety against the first theme.

—	
Contrast helps a piece by —	adding variety and shaping its form — Contrast adds variety and helps define sections, shaping the overall form.
A calm motif returning AFTER a stormy contrast can feel like —	reassurance / return — When the calm motif returns after a stormy contrast, it feels like reassurance — the protagonist endures.
A crescendo (getting louder) tends to —	build tension/energy — A crescendo increases volume, building tension and energy.
Tension in music is the feeling that —	something wants to resolve — Tension is the sense of instability or pull that makes listeners want the music to resolve.
A loud section after a soft section is contrast in —	dynamics — Following a soft section with a loud one is dynamic contrast.
Which element is NOT a common way to create contrast?	Keeping everything exactly identical — Keeping everything identical creates no contrast; dynamics, register, and texture changes do.
A busy, thick passage after a sparse, thin one is contrast in —	texture — Changing from many layers (thick texture) to few (thin) is textural contrast.
In MotifLab's arc, the CONTRAST stage introduces —	an opposing idea that challenges the motif — MotifLab's contrast stage introduces an opposing idea that challenges the motif — the story's conflict.

9. Harmony & Mood

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
A cadence is —	a chord ending that punctuates a phrase — A cadence is a harmonic ending that punctuates a phrase, like a comma or period in language.
Harmony in MotifLab helps color the motif's —	emotional journey — In MotifLab, harmony colors the motif's emotional journey — the same motif can be recolored across the arc.
Music in a MAJOR key often sounds —	bright or happy — Major keys tend to sound bright or happy (though context matters).
The BEST summary of harmony and mood is —	chords color a melody's feeling and shape tension — Harmony colors a melody's mood and shapes tension and resolution through chord choices.
A chord progression is —	a series of chords in order — A chord progression is an ordered series of chords that supports and moves the music forward.
Harmony that changes frequently can feel —	more active or restless — Frequently changing chords create a more active, restless feeling.
A chord is —	three or more notes played together — A chord is three or more pitches sounded simultaneously.
Which is TRUE about consonance and dissonance?	Music often moves between them for expression — Expressive music moves between dissonance (tension) and consonance (rest) rather than using only one.
Consonant chords sound —	smooth and stable — Consonant chords sound smooth and stable, giving a sense of rest.
Which best pairs mood with key?	Triumphant → major; mournful → minor — Commonly, major keys suit bright/triumphant moods and minor keys suit dark/mournful ones.
Harmony is —	notes sounded together to support a melody — Harmony is the combination of notes sounded together, usually supporting a melody.
If a happy-sounding motif needs to sound sad in a later scene, a strong tool is —	shifting it to a minor key / reharmonizing — Shifting a motif to minor (or reharmonizing it) is a powerful way to make a once-happy idea sound sad.
Harmony can support a melody by —	adding depth and mood underneath it — Harmony adds depth and mood beneath a melody, coloring how it feels.
A drone is —	a sustained low note held under the music — A drone is a sustained low pitch held under the music, providing a stable harmonic foundation.
Reharmonizing a motif means —	keeping the melody but changing the chords under it — Reharmonization keeps the melody but places new chords beneath it, changing its color and mood.
The 'home' note or chord a piece centers on is the —	tonic — The tonic is the home pitch or chord — the point of greatest rest a piece centers on.
Harmony that stays on ONE chord for a long time can feel —	static or calm — Staying on one chord creates a static or calm feeling, since the harmony isn't moving.

Adding a dissonant chord before the final tonic chord —	increases the sense of resolution when it lands — A dissonant chord before the tonic heightens tension, making the final resolution feel stronger.
Ending on the tonic chord gives a feeling of —	resolution / arrival — Landing on the tonic chord gives a sense of resolution and arrival home.
A chord that creates strong pull BACK to the tonic is the —	dominant (V) — The dominant chord (V) creates strong tension that pulls toward the tonic (I).
Music in a MINOR key often sounds —	dark or sad — Minor keys tend to sound darker, sadder, or more serious.
Changing a motif from major to minor keeps its _ but changes its _.	shape; mood — Recoloring a motif from major to minor keeps its recognizable shape but changes its mood.
Why is harmony a powerful tool for MOOD?	The same melody can feel different over different chords — The same melody over different harmony can feel joyful, tense, or sad — harmony is a strong mood tool.
The chord built on the tonic note is called the —	I (one) chord / tonic chord — The tonic chord (I) is built on the home note and is the most restful chord in a key.
Dissonant chords sound —	clashing and tense — Dissonant chords sound tense and unstable, creating a pull toward resolution.

10. Musical Form: Small Forms

⌘ Question (fold →)	Answer
Rondo form features —	a main theme that keeps returning (ABACA) — In rondo form, a main theme (A) returns repeatedly between contrasting episodes: ABACA.
Small forms are useful for —	shorter pieces and songs — Small forms (binary, ternary, rondo, verse-chorus) organize shorter pieces and songs.
Which is the correct letter scheme for verse-chorus with a bridge?	Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus — A common pop layout is Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus, with the chorus recurring.
Repetition of a section (like the chorus) helps a song be —	memorable — Repeating a section like the chorus makes a song more memorable.
A motif transformed differently in each rondo episode shows —	unity (the motif) with variety (the episodes) — Using a transformed motif across rondo episodes provides unity (one source) with variety (different treatments).
Verse-chorus form is common in —	popular songs — Verse-chorus form, where the chorus recurs between changing verses, is standard in popular songs.
The RETURN of A in ternary form gives a feeling of —	coming home — The return of A in ternary form provides a satisfying sense of homecoming and unity.
A 'bridge' in a song provides —	contrast before returning to familiar material — A bridge offers contrasting material, often heightening interest before the chorus returns.
Which form keeps bringing back ONE main theme between different episodes?	Rondo — Rondo repeatedly returns to a main theme (A) between contrasting episodes.
The BEST summary of small forms is —	compact plans (AB, ABA, rondo, verse-chorus) for organizing a piece — Small forms are compact structural plans — binary, ternary, rondo, verse-chorus — for organizing music.
Form helps listeners by —	giving the music a clear, followable shape — Form gives music a clear shape listeners can follow and anticipate.
The CHORUS in a song usually —	repeats with the same words and tune — The chorus repeats with the same lyrics and melody — the memorable recurring part of a song.
A motif can appear in MULTIPLE sections of a form to create —	unity across the whole piece — Reusing a motif across sections ties the whole form together with unity.
Contrast between sections helps a form by —	making each section distinct — Contrast between sections makes them distinct, clarifying the form.
Form in MotifLab supports the narrative by —	arranging the motif's story into clear stages — Form arranges the motif's journey into clear stages, supporting MotifLab's narrative-arc approach.
Which best shows FORM thinking?	Planning which sections repeat, contrast, and return — Form thinking is planning how sections repeat, contrast, and return to shape the whole piece.
The return of familiar material at	

the end of a form gives —	closure — Returning to familiar material at the end provides closure and unity.
Through-composed music means —	new material throughout, with little repetition — Through-composed music continually presents new material with little or no large-scale repetition.
Ternary form is described as —	ABA (statement, contrast, return) — Ternary form is ABA: an opening section, a contrasting middle, and a return of the opening.
Musical form is —	the overall structure or plan of a piece — Form is the large-scale structure — how the sections of a piece are arranged.
Binary form is described as —	AB (two contrasting sections) — Binary form has two sections: A and B.
Which form is a 'sandwich' with the same bread on both sides?	Ternary (ABA) — Ternary (ABA) is the 'sandwich': the same A section on both sides of a contrasting B.
If a song feels shapeless, adding a recurring CHORUS would help by —	giving a memorable, unifying return — A recurring chorus gives a shapeless song a memorable, unifying return that clarifies its form.
A da capo instruction ('D.C.') tells performers to —	go back to the beginning — Da capo (D.C.) means 'from the head' — return to the beginning, a common way ternary (ABA) form is notated.
The VERSE in a song usually —	changes its words each time — Verses typically keep a similar tune but change their words, advancing the song's story.

11. Musical Form: Large Forms

⌘ Question (fold →)	Answer
Theme and variations is a whole form built on the principle of —	variation — Theme and variations is an entire form built on transforming one theme repeatedly.
Which is the BEST reason large forms use recurring themes?	To unify a long piece and reward the listener's memory — Recurring themes unify long works and reward listeners who remember earlier material.
Large forms in MotifLab correspond to —	telling a complete, multi-stage motif story — Large forms let MotifLab tell a complete, multi-stage story with the motif as protagonist.
In sonata form, the DEVELOPMENT —	explores and transforms the themes — The development section explores and transforms the themes, often the most unstable part.
A motif in a large form can unify it by —	appearing and transforming across all sections — A motif recurring and transforming across all sections unifies even a large, complex form.
If a long piece feels like it lacks payoff, a strong fix is —	recapitulate a familiar theme, now resolved — Returning a familiar theme, now resolved, gives a long piece the payoff it was missing.
In sonata form, the EXPOSITION —	introduces the main themes — The exposition presents the main themes for the first time.
The development section of a large form often feels the most —	unstable and exploratory — The development is usually the most unstable, exploratory part of a large form.
Contrast between a lyrical first theme and an energetic second theme is common in the —	exposition of sonata form — Sonata expositions commonly present contrasting themes — e.g., a lyrical first and an energetic second.
Sonata form's three main parts are —	exposition, development, recapitulation — Sonata form has an exposition (themes presented), development (themes explored), and recapitulation (themes return).
In theme and variations, each variation should feel —	connected to the theme yet distinct — Good variations stay clearly connected to the theme while each sounds distinct.
The BEST summary of large forms is —	extended structures that present, develop, and return themes — Large forms (sonata, theme and variations) are extended structures that present, develop, and return themes.
A motif introduced in the exposition and transformed in the development shows —	one idea explored across a large form — A motif presented in the exposition and transformed in the development shows a single idea explored across a large form.
The recapitulation feels satisfying largely because it —	returns familiar themes, now resolved — The recapitulation satisfies by returning familiar themes, usually resolved in the home key.
Theme and variations lets a composer show —	many possibilities hidden in one theme — Theme and variations showcases the many possibilities hidden within a single theme.
Which best matches sonata form to MotifLab's arc?	Exposition = introduce; development = explore/struggle; recap = return/resolve — Sonata's three parts map onto MotifLab's arc: introduce the motif, explore/struggle, then return and resolve.

Large forms demonstrate that a small motif can —	power an entire large-scale work — Large forms prove a small motif can, through development, power an entire large-scale work.
A large form usually contains —	several contrasting sections with returns — Large forms typically string together several contrasting sections, often with returns of earlier material.
The exposition–development–recapitulation shape mirrors a story's —	beginning, middle, and end — Sonata form mirrors a narrative: setup (exposition), conflict/exploration (development), resolution (recapitulation).
A coda is —	a concluding section that rounds off a piece — A coda ('tail') is a concluding section that brings a piece to a satisfying close.
Theme and variations form works by —	stating a theme then transforming it repeatedly — In theme and variations, a theme is presented and then transformed in a series of variations.
The recapitulation usually brings the second theme back in the —	home key — In the recapitulation, themes (including the second) typically return in the home key, resolving the piece.
In sonata form, the RECAPITULATION —	brings the themes back (often resolved home) — The recapitulation brings the themes back, usually resolved in the home key — a satisfying return.
Why is a coda useful?	It gives a strong sense of ending — A coda reinforces closure, giving the piece a strong, satisfying ending.
Large forms need strong DEVELOPMENT because —	little material must sustain a long structure — Large forms rely on development to grow limited material across a long span.

12. Texture & Orchestration

⌂ Question (fold →)	Answer
A thick texture (many layers) tends to feel —	full or powerful — A thick texture with many layers feels full, rich, or powerful.
Doubling a melody with two instruments in unison makes it —	sound fuller/stronger — Doubling a melody in unison reinforces it, making it fuller and stronger.
Timbre is best described as —	the characteristic 'color' of a sound — Timbre is the tone color of a sound — what makes a flute and violin sound different on the same note.
Musical texture refers to —	how many layers of sound are happening and how they relate — Texture describes how many musical layers sound together and how they relate.
If a section sounds flat and lifeless, one texture fix is —	add or vary the layers/instrumentation — Adding or varying layers and instrumentation can bring a flat, lifeless section back to life.
A thin texture (few layers) tends to feel —	intimate or clear — A thin texture with few layers feels intimate, open, and clear.
Giving a motif to a bright trumpet vs a mellow cello changes its —	timbre / tone color — Timbre (tone color) changes with the instrument: the same motif sounds different on trumpet vs cello.
Which is a good use of texture to build to a climax?	Gradually add layers (thicken the texture) — Gradually adding layers thickens the texture, building energy toward a climax.
Monophony is —	a single melodic line with no harmony — Monophony is a single melodic line with no accompanying harmony.
The BEST summary of texture is —	how many layers sound together and how they relate — Texture is how many layers sound together and how they relate — mono-, homo-, or polyphony.
Homophony is —	a melody supported by chords/accompaniment — Homophony is a main melody supported by chords or accompaniment — the most common texture in pop.
Instrumentation (orchestration) is —	choosing which instruments play what — Instrumentation/orchestration is the choice of which instruments play each part.
Orchestrating a motif for a full orchestra vs a solo flute changes its —	scale and impact — Orchestrating a motif for many instruments vs a solo changes its scale, weight, and emotional impact.
A round like 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat' sung in overlapping parts is an example of —	polyphony — A round layers the same melody at staggered times, creating independent overlapping lines — polyphony.
Changing texture during a piece is a way to create —	contrast — Shifting between thin and thick textures is a strong way to create contrast.
The BEST summary of orchestration is —	choosing instruments/timbres to color and shape music — Orchestration is choosing instruments and timbres to color and shape the music.

Layering a melody, a bass line, and inner harmony creates a —	richer, fuller texture — Combining a melody, a bass line, and inner harmony builds a richer, fuller (thicker) texture.
Why does timbre matter for MOOD?	Different instruments carry different emotional colors — Different instruments carry different emotional colors, so timbre strongly shapes mood.
A motif passed BETWEEN instruments (flute, then oboe, then horn) shows —	orchestration creating variety — Passing a motif between instruments varies its tone color, adding orchestral variety while keeping the idea.
Which texture is a solo singer with NO accompaniment?	Monophony — A solo, unaccompanied singer is monophony — a single line with no harmony.
Texture and orchestration in MotifLab help the motif's story by —	changing its sound-world across the arc — Varying texture and orchestration changes the motif's sound-world across the arc, supporting its story.
Counterpoint is —	the art of combining independent melodic lines — Counterpoint is the craft of combining independent melodies so they work together.
Polyphony is —	two or more independent melodies at once — Polyphony weaves two or more independent melodic lines together.
Which texture is a singer with a guitar strumming chords?	Homophony — A singer accompanied by strummed chords is homophony — melody plus supporting harmony.
Thinning the texture suddenly can make a returning motif feel —	exposed and intimate — Suddenly thinning the texture leaves a motif exposed and intimate, drawing focus to it.

13. Narrative Arc in Music

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
A motif's FIRST appearance in the arc is like a story's —	introduction of the main character — The motif's first appearance is like introducing the main character at a story's opening.
The six stages of MotifLab's arc are —	motif, variation, development, contrast, recapitulation, resolution — MotifLab's arc: motif (introduce) → variation → development → contrast (challenge) → recapitulation (return) → resolution.
The BEST summary of the narrative-arc idea is —	shape music like a story, with the motif as the hero — MotifLab's core: shape music like a story — introduce, develop, challenge, and resolve the motif as protagonist.
The narrative-arc approach helps a young composer by —	giving a clear plan for shaping a whole piece — The narrative arc gives a clear, story-shaped plan for organizing and shaping a whole piece.
Resolution in a musical story is —	the release of tension and arrival at rest — Resolution releases the built-up tension, bringing the story to rest.
Which BEST maps music to story?	Introduce → complicate → climax → resolve — A musical arc mirrors story structure: introduce, complicate, reach a climax, then resolve.
Rushing to the climax too fast can make it feel —	unearned — Rushing to the climax without enough build can make it feel unearned; pacing lets tension accumulate first.
A recurring motif across the arc gives the story —	a consistent 'character' to follow — A recurring motif gives listeners a consistent character to follow through the story.
Building toward a single strong CLIMAX helps a piece feel —	purposeful and shaped — Aiming the tension toward one strong climax gives a piece direction, purpose, and shape.
A motif that CHANGES across the arc mirrors a character who —	grows and is changed by the story — A motif transformed across the arc mirrors a character who grows and is changed by their journey.
Tension and release across a piece create its —	emotional arc — The pattern of tension and release over time forms the emotional arc of a piece.
The CLIMAX of a piece is —	its point of greatest tension or intensity — The climax is the moment of greatest tension or intensity — the emotional peak.
If a piece feels emotionally flat, the FIRST arc fix is —	build a clear climax and resolution — Building a clear climax and resolution gives an emotionally-flat piece a shape and payoff.
A common problem is a piece that is ALL climax, which feels —	exhausting with no relief — Unrelenting intensity with no release exhausts the listener — tension needs relief.
In MotifLab's arc, the motif acts as the —	protagonist (main character) — The motif is the protagonist — the character whose journey the piece follows.
A CONTRAST section works like a story's —	conflict or challenge — A contrasting section functions like conflict — an opposing force that challenges the motif.

Emotional impact in music comes largely from —	how tension is built and released over time — A piece's emotional impact comes largely from how it builds and releases tension over time.
A common problem is a piece with NO climax, which feels —	flat or directionless — A piece with no climax lacks a high point, so it feels flat and directionless.
The RECAPITULATION works like a story's —	return / homecoming — The recapitulation is the return — the motif comes home, often changed by its journey.
Contrast BEFORE the recapitulation makes the return feel —	more meaningful/rewarding — Placing challenge/contrast before the return makes the recapitulation feel earned and rewarding.
MotifLab's core idea is that a piece can be shaped like a —	story with a beginning, middle, and end — MotifLab shapes a piece like a story: the motif is a character with a beginning, middle, and end.
Why introduce the motif clearly at the START?	So listeners can follow its journey — Introducing the motif clearly lets listeners recognize and follow it as it changes.
Pacing in a narrative arc means —	how tension rises and falls over time — Pacing is how tension builds and eases over time — the timing of the emotional arc.
A motif returning TRANSFORMED at the end suggests —	the character has been changed by the journey — A motif that returns transformed shows the 'character' has been changed by the story's events.
Resolution feels earned when it —	follows real tension that has been built up — Resolution feels earned when it follows genuine tension — the release means more after a build.

14. Dynamics, Articulation & Expression

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
'Forte' (f) as a dynamic means —	loud — Forte (f) means loud.
A motif marked forte and staccato at a climax would sound —	bold and punchy — Forte (loud) plus staccato (detached) makes a motif sound bold and punchy — fitting for a climax.
Dynamics and articulation are tools for —	expression, not just notes — Dynamics and articulation shape HOW the notes are played — the expressive layer beyond pitch and rhythm.
Expressive phrasing means shaping a phrase with —	subtle changes in dynamics and timing — Expressive phrasing shapes a musical phrase with subtle changes in dynamics and timing, like speech.
Playing a motif legato vs staccato changes its —	character/expression — The same motif feels different played smoothly (legato) versus crisply (staccato) — articulation shapes character.
Which dynamic shape best builds toward a climax?	A crescendo — A crescendo (getting louder) naturally builds energy toward a climax.
Why do expressive markings matter?	They tell performers HOW to shape the emotion — Expressive markings (dynamics, articulation, tempo changes) tell performers how to shape a piece's emotion.
Tempo markings like Allegro and Adagio tell you the —	speed — Tempo markings indicate speed: Allegro is fast, Adagio is slow.
'Piano' (p) as a dynamic means —	soft — In dynamics, piano (p) means soft.
A crescendo means —	gradually getting louder — A crescendo is a gradual increase in loudness.
A fermata tells a performer to —	hold a note longer than its written value — A fermata marks a note or rest to be held longer than written, often for expressive emphasis.
A sudden loud accent in a quiet passage creates —	a dramatic surprise — A sudden accent in a quiet passage creates a dramatic, attention-grabbing surprise.
A diminuendo (decrecendo) means —	gradually getting softer — A diminuendo/decrecendo is a gradual decrease in loudness.
Playing the SAME motif softer and slower can make it feel —	more intimate or tender — Softening and slowing a motif can transform it into a more intimate, tender version of itself.
Articulation refers to —	how notes are attacked and connected — Articulation is how notes are performed — smooth, detached, accented, etc.
An accelerando means —	gradually speeding up — An accelerando is a gradual increase in tempo, often building excitement.
Rubato means —	flexible, expressive give-and-take in the tempo — Rubato is expressive flexibility in tempo — subtly speeding up and slowing down for feeling.
	dynamics, articulation, and timing that shape how music feels — Expression —

The BEST summary of expression is —	dynamics, articulation, and timing — shapes how music feels beyond the notes themselves.
A ritardando means —	gradually slowing down — A ritardando is a gradual slowing of the tempo, often near an ending or a moment of arrival.
Which dynamic shape best signals a gentle ending?	A diminuendo to soft — A diminuendo to a soft dynamic signals a gentle, settling ending.
Expression in MotifLab helps the motif's story by —	shaping HOW each version feels — Dynamics and articulation shape how each version of the motif feels, coloring the story's emotions.
If a performance sounds robotic, the FIRST expression fix is —	add dynamic shaping and phrasing — Adding dynamic shaping and expressive phrasing brings life to a robotic-sounding performance.
Staccato means —	short and detached — Staccato means playing notes short and detached.
Legato means —	smooth and connected — Legato means playing notes smoothly and connected.
Dynamics in music refer to —	how loud or soft the music is — Dynamics describe the loudness or softness of music.

15. Composing Choices

⌕ Question (fold →)	Answer
Choosing where to place the climax is a —	structural decision — Deciding where the climax falls is an important structural decision that shapes the arc.
A 'plagal' cadence (IV-I) is nicknamed the —	'Amen' cadence — The plagal cadence (IV-I) is nicknamed the 'Amen' cadence from its use at the end of hymns.
A composer deciding to reharmonize the final statement of a motif is making a choice about —	harmony/mood — Reharmonizing the final motif statement is a deliberate choice affecting its harmony and mood.
Modulating to a new key can make music feel —	fresh or lifted — Modulation can inject freshness or a sense of lift by moving the music to a new key.
The BEST summary of composing choices is —	deliberate decisions about harmony, structure, and revision to serve the music — Composing is making deliberate choices — about harmony, structure, and revision — that serve the music's intent.
A cadence is a —	harmonic ending that punctuates a phrase — A cadence is a harmonic close that punctuates a phrase, like punctuation in a sentence.
Which is a strong reason to modulate UP near the end of a song?	To add energy and lift for the final chorus — Modulating up before a final chorus is a classic way to add energy and lift.
Deciding the ORDER of sections (which comes first, which returns) is —	a form/structure choice — Choosing the order and return of sections is a fundamental form/structure decision.
Revision in composing means —	improving a draft by changing and refining it — Revision is refining a draft — changing and improving it toward the composer's intent.
Why plan the placement of tension and release?	It shapes the whole piece's emotional arc — Planning where tension builds and releases designs the piece's overall emotional arc.
Deliberately leaving a section's ending UNRESOLVED is —	a valid expressive choice — Leaving a section unresolved (e.g., on a half cadence) is a deliberate expressive choice that keeps momentum going.
Revision is best seen as —	a normal, valuable part of composing (not a sign of failure) — Revision is a normal, valuable part of composing — refining a draft, not a sign of failure.
Cutting a section that doesn't serve the piece is —	a valid, common revision choice — Cutting material that doesn't serve the piece is a common and valuable revision choice.
Revising is easier when a composer —	has a clear goal for the piece's feeling and shape — Revision is most effective with a clear intent — a target feeling and shape to revise toward.
Which is the BEST mindset for composing?	Draft freely, then revise thoughtfully — Strong composing pairs free drafting (generating ideas) with thoughtful revision (refining them).
A composer who tries several versions of an ending is practicing —	revision / refining choices — Trying several versions of an ending and choosing the best is active revision — refining the choices.

A good FIRST question when revising is —	Does each section serve the whole piece? — A key revision question is whether each section serves the whole piece's purpose and arc.
A cadence at the end of a large section signals —	the section is closing — Cadences punctuate the ends of phrases and sections, signaling closure within the form.
Modulation and cadences are tools for shaping a piece's —	harmonic journey and structure — Modulation moves the harmonic journey; cadences punctuate it — together they shape harmonic structure.
A 'half' cadence (ending on V) feels —	unfinished, wanting to continue — A half cadence ends on the dominant (V), feeling unfinished — like a comma.
Listening back to a draft helps a composer —	hear what works and what to change — Listening back to a draft reveals what works and what needs changing — essential to revision.
Composing choices ultimately serve —	the feeling and story the composer wants to convey — Every composing choice — cadence, modulation, structure, revision — should serve the intended feeling and story.
Modulation means —	changing from one key to another — Modulation is moving from one key to another within a piece.
An 'authentic' cadence (V-I) gives a feeling of —	strong conclusion — An authentic cadence (dominant to tonic, V-I) gives a strong, conclusive ending — like a period.
A common revision fix for a confusing piece is —	clarify the form (clearer repetition and contrast) — Clarifying the form — with clearer repetition and contrast — often fixes a confusing piece.

16. Capstone: Whole-Piece Thinking

⌘ Question (fold →)	Answer
Carrying these skills forward, a young composer should now be able to —	start from a motif and shape a whole, unified, expressive piece — The capstone goal: start from a motif and shape a whole, unified, expressive piece using all the tools learned.
Harmony's role in a whole piece is to —	color mood and shape tension/resolution — Across a whole piece, harmony colors mood and shapes the tension-and-resolution arc.
A unified piece usually grows most of its material from —	one or a few motifs — Unified pieces typically derive most material from one or a few motifs — a shared source.
The single most unifying element in most well-crafted pieces is —	a recurring, developed motif — A recurring, developed motif is usually the strongest unifying element in a well-crafted piece.
Contrast in a whole piece is valuable because it —	makes sections distinct and the return meaningful — Contrast across a whole piece makes sections distinct and makes the eventual return feel meaningful.
If a piece feels repetitive and dull, it likely needs more —	variation and development — A dull, repetitive piece usually needs more variation and development of its ideas.
A capstone composition should demonstrate —	motif, development, form, and a clear arc together — A capstone piece shows the composer combining motif, development, form, and a clear arc.
If a piece has great ideas but feels shapeless, it likely needs better —	form and arc planning — Great ideas without shape usually need better form and arc planning to organize them.
The recapitulation/return in a whole piece rewards the listener by —	bringing back the familiar, now transformed — The return rewards listeners by bringing back familiar material, now transformed by the journey.
The most important thing to remember from MotifLab is —	a small idea, developed with care, can become a whole expressive story — The lasting takeaway: a small motif, developed with care through transformation and form, can become a whole expressive story.
A piece where the motif never changes across the whole arc would likely feel —	static and undeveloped — If the motif never changes across the arc, the piece feels static and undeveloped — the character never grows.
When self-evaluating a piece, a great question is —	Does the motif's journey feel complete and satisfying? — A powerful self-evaluation question: does the motif's journey feel complete and satisfying — a story well told?
Texture's role in a whole piece is to —	add contrast and shape energy across sections — Across a piece, changing texture adds contrast and helps shape energy from section to section.
A piece where EVERY section is unrelated would likely feel —	disunified and hard to follow — If every section is unrelated, a piece feels disunified — with no motif thread to connect it.
The FINAL test of a whole piece is whether —	all the elements serve one coherent musical story — The final test is coherence: do motif, form, harmony, texture, and arc all serve one musical story?

A motif that appears in every section, transformed each time, provides —	unity with variety across the whole piece — A motif recurring (transformed) across all sections gives the whole piece both unity and variety.
Which order best describes composing a whole piece?	Generate a motif → develop it → shape it into a form → revise — A whole-piece workflow: generate a motif, develop it, shape it into a form/arc, then revise.
The BEST one-sentence summary of MotifLab is —	grow a small motif, through development and form, into a complete musical story — MotifLab in one line: grow a small motif — through development, transformation, and form — into a complete musical story.
Balancing unity and variety means —	enough repetition to unify AND enough change to stay interesting — The central craft balance: enough repetition for unity, enough variation for interest.
Sharing one motif between two DIFFERENT instruments across a piece supports —	unity through a shared idea — Passing one motif between instruments across a piece unifies it while adding tone-color variety.
Which shows the DEEPEST understanding of MotifLab's approach?	A small motif, developed and shaped into a complete emotional story — MotifLab's deepest idea: a small motif, developed and shaped into a complete emotional story.
A strong ending usually —	resolves tension and often recalls earlier material — Strong endings resolve tension and often recall earlier material, giving closure and unity.
If a piece feels chaotic and hard to follow, it likely needs more —	repetition and unity — A chaotic piece usually needs more repetition and unity — a recognizable motif to anchor it.
A well-shaped piece has a clear —	arc of tension and release — A well-shaped piece has a clear arc — tension building to a climax and resolving.
Whole-piece thinking means considering —	how motif, form, harmony, and arc work together — Whole-piece thinking considers how the motif, form, harmony, texture, and arc all work together.

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