

Text Setting in Pop Music

Name: _____



Worksheet playlist

PART 1: Text scansion

Below you are given several lines of text. Analyze the strongly and weakly emphasized syllables by marking above them with an x (**strong stress**), - (**unstressed**), or / (**secondary stress**). The first is completed for you as an example.

x - x - - x x - x - x - x - x

1. Hello darkness my old friend; I've come to talk with you again (Paul Simon)
2. The world is changed because you are made of ivory and gold (Oscar Wilde)
3. His soul just crawled behind his heart and curled up and went to sleep (Maya Angelou)
4. "i forgive you" slipping like a key beneath a door (Wo Chan)

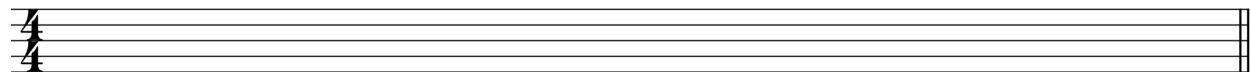
PART 2: Setting text to meter

Choose one lyric from Part 1 and create three different rhythmic settings of it following the directions below.

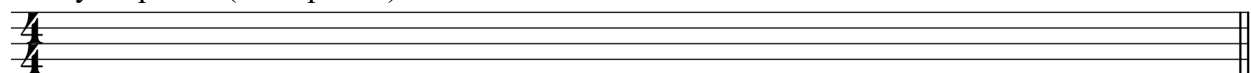
1. Begin on beat 1; put stressed syllables on strong beats



2. Begin with a pickup (that is, *do not* begin on beat 1); put stressed syllables on strong beats



3. Revise version 1 or 2 (your choice) to syncopate some stressed syllables using straight syncopation (anticipation)



PART 3: Analyzing scansion and text setting in pop songs

The text setting of the melodic snippets given below do not align stressed syllables with musical accents. For each snippet:

- **Add lyrics by transcribing them** from the recording. (If needed, look up lyrics online.)
 - **Underline** the syllable that is unstressed when spoken normally, but accented in the music.
 - **Above that underlined syllable, write letters** corresponding to the accent types used there:
 - a. Metric accent (strong beat or syncopated rhythm)
 - b. Agogic accent (longer rhythmic value)
 - c. Dynamic accent (louder)
 - d. Melodic accent (melisma or higher pitch)
 - **Circle** the syllable that is stressed when spoken normally, but unaccented in the music.
- The first exercise is completed for you as an example.

1. Metallica, “Fight Fire with Fire” (1:31, “Nuclear...”)

Em

Nu - cle - ar (war) - fare

a, d

2. Lady Gaga, “Plastic Doll” (0:20, “I come with...”)

Am C F

I come with...

3. Toto, “Africa” (2:04, “Rises like...”)

A/E E/F# G#m A

Rises like...

PART 4: Adjusting text setting

The text setting of the melodic snippets given below do not align stressed syllables with musical accents. For each snippet:

- **Rewrite the melodies from part 3** to place the accent on the stressed syllable of the word and remove the accents from the unstressed syllable identified in #1. Be sure to include the lyrics.

The first exercise is completed for you as an example.

1. Metallica, “Fight Fire with Fire” (1:31, “Nuclear...”)

The first staff shows the original melody with lyrics "Nu - cle - ar war - fare" and an Em chord. The second staff shows the revised melody with lyrics "Nu - cle - ar war - fare" and an Em chord. The revision places the accent on the stressed syllable "war".

2. Lady Gaga, “Plastic Doll” (0:20, “I come with...”)

The first staff shows the original melody with lyrics "I come with..." and chords Am, C, and F. The second staff is empty for the student to rewrite the melody.

3. Toto, “Africa” (2:04, “Rises like...”)

The first staff shows the original melody with lyrics "Rises like..." and chords A/E, E/F#, G#m, and A. The second staff is empty for the student to rewrite the melody.