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New Classical Piano Syllabus

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Trends in Modern Studio Teaching

- More teachers are teaching students in **groups**
- **Recreational** Music Making is becoming more popular
- Students are looking to learn music that is more **relevant** to their social experience
- More Teachers and Students are engaging **technology** in learning
- Schedules and **convenience** are becoming top priorities
- Emphasis now on the "**experience**" rather than "learning"
- Much **less practice time** for students
- Students learn in short **bursts of curiosity**

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What Makes Us Different?

- More time with the Examiner: Grade 1 - 20 minutes; Grade 8 - 40 minutes
- Mini lessons with the Examiner: 15 minutes at the end of the exam
- Background questions (viva voce)
- Keyboard Harmony, improvisation and other important skills
- Own Choice piece
- Partial exams from Grade / Level 7
- Marking system using decimal gradations to 0.1
- Option for Recital Assessment (pieces only, no skills)

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Two Exam Streams

Classical Stream: Group 1 / Group 2 repertoire plus Own Choice piece. Technique; Sight Reading; Ear Training; Keyboard Harmony (Grades 4 and up); Background Info.

Contemporary Idioms Stream: 4 Pieces (Own choice for style); Contemporary Technique; Sight Reading; Ear Training; Improvisation (Using APP Etudes and lead sheets).

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Newer Exam Features

- Contemporary Idioms Syllabus (Piano, Voice, Guitar)
- Flex exams or Seasonal exams
- eExams represent one quarter of our exams
- Flex Theory exams
- Partial Theory exams (Theory 1 - 3)
- Free irregular list approvals (all instruments)
- Pre-Grade One Piano Exam Experience

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Newest Options

- **New Classical Piano Syllabus**
- **New Piano Pedagogy Research Exam (written followed by oral component)**
- **Forthcoming revisions to**
  - **Classical Vocal**
  - **Contemporary Idioms Vocal**
  - **Guitar and other instrumental (more distant)**

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New Classical Piano Syllabus Revisions

- **First major revisions since 1999**
- **Balancing modern workload / commitment with progressive skills**
  - Fewer repertoire pieces with more flexibility for choice
  - Expanded repertoire using legacy publication, with free approvals (irregular list pieces)
  - Condensed technical requirements
  - Sight and Ear training remain similar
  - Keyboard Harmony starting at Gr. 4, using Wanless workbook
  - Background Information questions

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Repertoire Groups

- Repertoire lists are now divided into “**Groups**” instead of the former “Lists” and “Studies”.
- Up to Grade 5:
  - **Group 1** includes Baroque and Classical style music;
  - **Group 2** includes Romantic and Modern style pieces.
- Starting in Grade 6, **Groups are added** gradually requiring more specificity for music from various style periods.
- Teachers can still incorporate music from all style periods on the exam, as with the former system.

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Repertoire

- **Own Choice** pieces do not require approval.
- **Free approval** for any piece not on the lists (scan and send to the office).
- New Millennium Series publications remain unchanged:
  - Consult new syllabus lists for new Grouping of pieces
  - New Table of Contents with new relevant Groups to be published online
  - Need to ignore old syllabus requirements in back of books
- One Group piece may be of any grade level higher.
- Consult **Contemporary Rep list** for more modern choices (online).

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We renew our commitment to promoting music by Canadian composers by awarding one *BONUS* mark for performing a piece by a Canadian composer.

The exam is still marked out of 100.

Group or Own Choice piece.
Canadian compositions are noted with an asterisk in the syllabus lists.

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Photocopying Is Illegal

- Use of photocopies in the exam room will not be tolerated.
- Examiners are now instructed to stop any exam where photocopies are found to be used.
- Examiners and students both require original scores
- Students risk forfeiting their exam if they rely on a photocopy to play from.

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Grade 1 Mark Distribution

Requirements		Total Marks
Repertoire 4 pieces of varying styles	Group 1 Piece	12
	Group 1 *or* Group 2 Piece	12
	Group 2 Piece	12
	Own Choice Piece	12
Memory	Two marks for each piece memorized	8
Technique	Scales/Triads	16
Sight Reading	Rhythm (3) Piano Passage (7)	10
Aural Tests	Clap Back (4) Triads (3) Chord Tones (3)	10
Background Information		8
Total Possible Marks		**100**

*One bonus mark will be awarded for including a repertoire piece by a Canadian composer

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Grade 5 Mark Distribution

Requirements		Total Marks
Repertoire 5 pieces of varying styles	Group 1 Piece	10
	Group 1 Piece	10
	Group 2 Piece	10
	Group 2 Piece	10
	Own Choice Piece	10
Memory	One mark for each of the four Group pieces memorized	4
Technique	Scales/Triads/Chords/Arpeggios	14
Sight Reading	Rhythm (3) Piano Passage (7)	10
Aural Tests	Play/Sing Back (4) Chords (3) Intervals (3)	10
Keyboard Skills	Progression (2) Harmonization (4)	6
Background Information		6
Total Possible Marks		**100**

*One bonus mark will be awarded for including a repertoire piece by a Canadian composer

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Grade 8 Mark Distribution

Requirements		Total Marks
Repertoire 5 pieces of varying styles	Group 1 Piece	10
	Group 2 Piece	10
	Group 3 Piece	10
	Group 4 Piece	10
	Own Choice Piece	10
Memory	One mark for each of the four Group pieces memorized	4
Technique	Scales/Chords/Arpeggios	14
Sight Reading	Rhythm (3) Piano Passage (7)	10
Aural Tests	Play/Sing Back (4) Chords (3) Intervals (3)	10
Keyboard Skills	Progression (2) Harmonization (4)	6
Background Information		6
Total Possible Marks		**100**

*One bonus mark will be awarded for including a repertoire piece by a Canadian composer

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Technique

- Adds one sharp and one flat at each successive level
- Smooth transitions between levels
- Exploring some blues, whole tone, contrary motion scale patterns early on, simplifying and streamlining at higher levels
- 7th chords now labelled according to their letter name (not dominant or diminished function)
- Fewer keys to rehearse, broader review beginning at Grade 8
- Teachers can still teach broader requirements as they see fit - students are much more reluctant to rehearse these skills

Technique

Examiners are looking for fluency within a pulse that is steady. It is preferable to perform exercises at a slower tempo than it is to challenge the tempo with errors / hesitations / inaccuracies.

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Grade 4 Technique

Scales					
	Keys	Hands	Range	♩=	Performance
Major	A, E ♭	Together	2 octaves	92	Legato in eighth notes
Harmonic & Melodic minor	F♯, C	Together	2 octaves	92	Legato in eighth notes
Chromatic	A, E ♭	Together	2 octaves	80	Legato in eighth notes
Pentatonic	C, F♯	Separate	2 octaves	80	Legato in eighth notes

Triads					
	Keys	Hands	Range	♩=	Performance
Solid	A, E ♭ major F♯, C minor	Together	1 octave	132	Quarter notes, separated by a quarter rest
Broken	A, E ♭ major F♯, C minor	Together	1 octave	69	Triplet 8th notes

Arpeggios					
	Keys	Hands	Range	♩=	Performance
Major & Minor	A, E ♭ major F♯, C minor	Separately	2 octaves	76	Eighth notes

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Sight Reading remains largely the same: Clap rhythm and play a piano passage

Ear Training: Clap or Play back; Chord identification; Interval identification

(Cadence identification is no longer required)

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Keyboard Harmony

- Begins at Grade 4, using **“Keyboard Harmony, Harmonizing Made Fun!”**, by Debra Wanless.
  - **Introductory Level 1** is used with CC Grades 4 and 5 (chords in LH, single melody notes in RH - like lead sheet reading).
  - **Intermediate Level 2** is used with CC Grade 6 (developing “keyboard” style with chords under melody note in RH, single notes LH).
  - **Advancing Level 3** is used with CC Grades 7 and 8 (“keyboard” style, chords under melody note in RH, single notes LH).
  - A forthcoming Level 4 book will provide resources for Grades 9 and 10.

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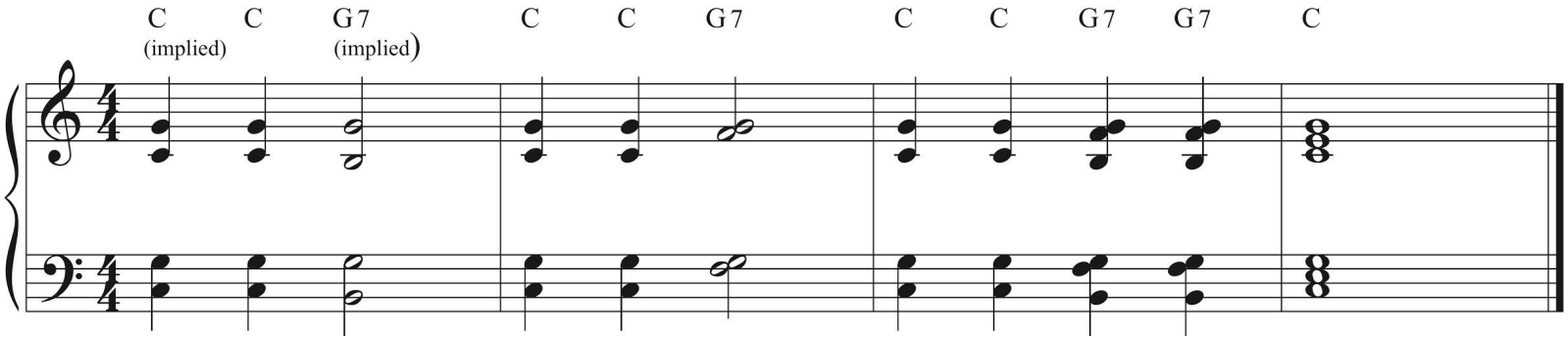
Grade 4 Chord Progression

- From memory
- **Keys C and G** using I and V7 chords of those keys
- Chords are labelled by letter name



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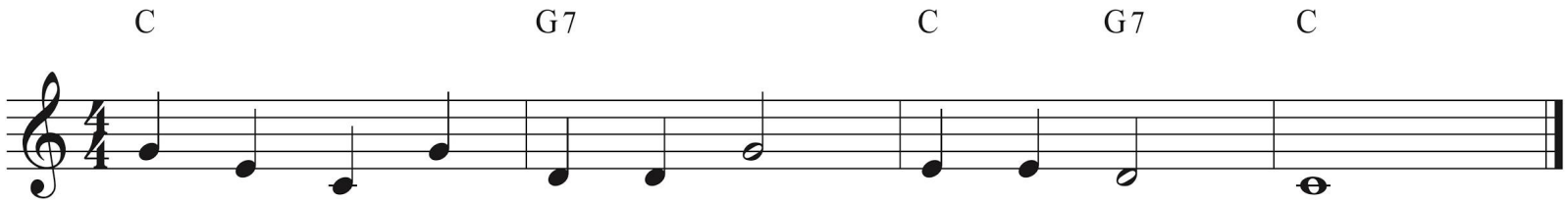
Grade 4 Harmonizing

- **“Lead sheet” style:** 3 note chords in LH, single melody notes RH
- LH chords move smoothly between voices (I chord in root position)
- Chord symbols will be given (no more “X”s at chord changes)



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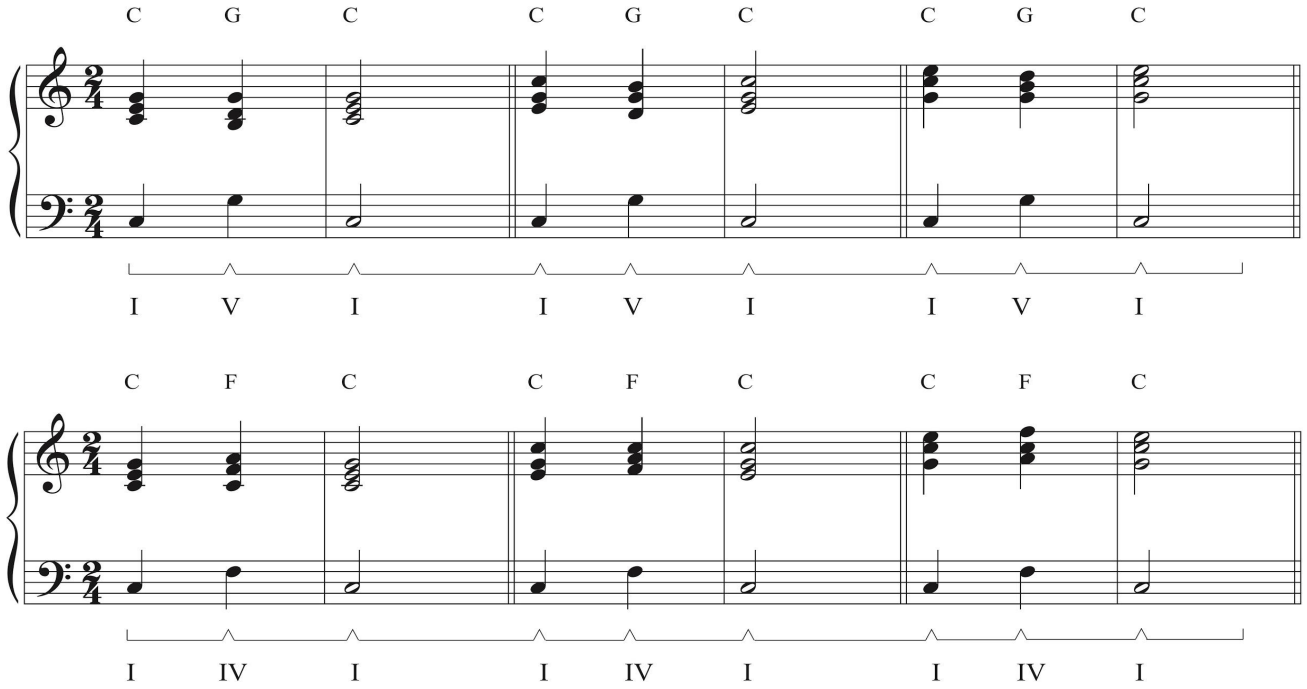
Grade 6 Chord Progression



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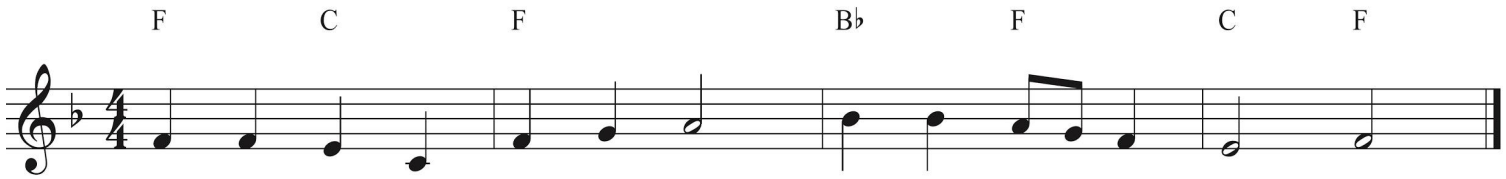
Grade 6 Harmonizing

- **“Keyboard Style”:** 3 notes RH (melody note on top); single notes LH
- Chord symbols only will be given
- **Pedal** should be used
- **Keys** of C, G, and F major; A minor
- I, IV and V chords mixed into same example



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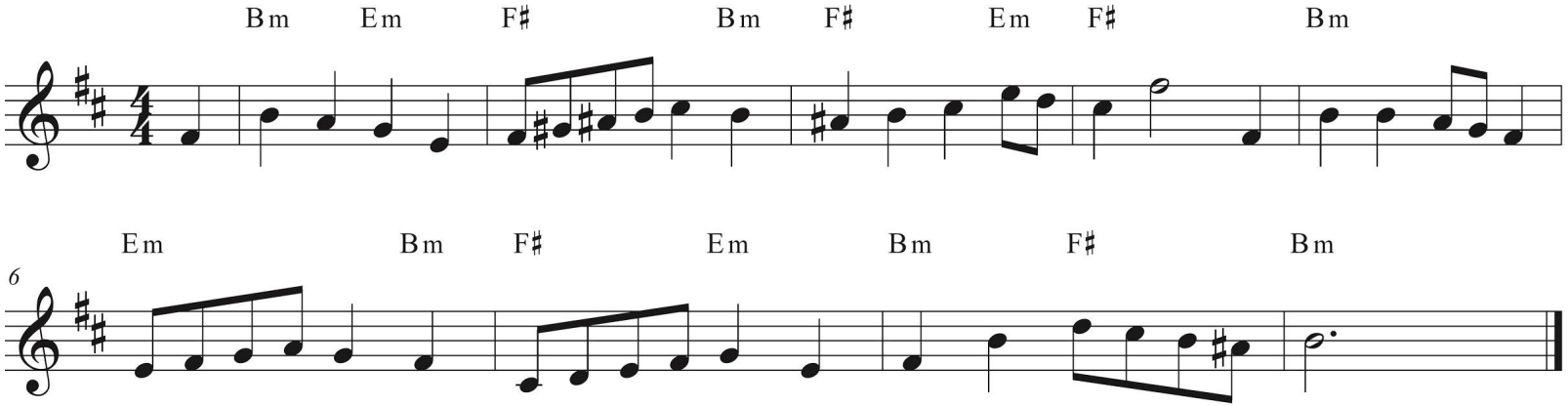
Grade 8 Harmonizing

- Keyboard style: 3 notes RH, melody on top; single notes LH
- Keys: B ♭ and E ♭ major; D, B, G and C minor
- I, IV and V chords, using chord symbols only

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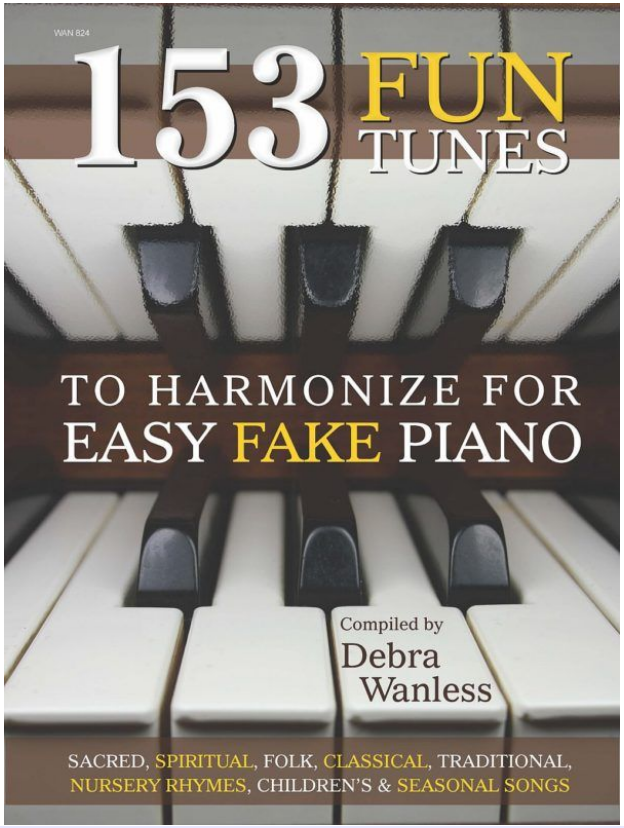
Supplementary resource for extra practice.

Keyboard harmony or lead sheet reading.



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Background Information remains largely the same:

- Signs, articulation, dynamic and tempo markings, musical terms
- Title, composer and key (without looking at score)
- Explain the meeting of the title
- Give relevant details about composer (starting at Grade 4)
- Questions about key structure and form will no longer be asked

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Classical Vocal Syllabus Changes

- Expanded repertoire with free approvals
- Addition of Musical Theater List
- Slightly updated skills
- Redistributed workload

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Contemporary Idioms Voice Changes

- Greatly expanded repertoire lists with free approvals
- Condensed workload while preserving progressive skills
- Technical exercises have been edited
- Sight and Ear training skills follow classical models more closely
- Improvisation becoming a choice (or own choice piece), with backing tracks for practice

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Conservatory Canada Teacher's Facebook page

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