The Basics of Reading Music

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Composers from Each Style Period

The following lists provide names and dates of birth and death. The names are presented in chronological order by birth. For more information on any composer, use a search engine to find reference material.

Middle Ages   450–1450
- Hildegard von Bingen, 1098–1179
- Léonin, 1135–1201
- Beatriz de Dia, c. 1140–c. 1200
- Pérotin, 1160–1225
- Adam de la Halle, c. 1237–1288
- Phillippe de Vitry, 1291–1361
- Guillaume de Machaut, c. 1300–1377
- John Dunstable, c. 1390–1453
- Guillaume Dufay, 1397–1474
- Gilles Binchois, c. 1400–1460

Renaissance   1450–1600
- John Dunstable, c. 1390–1453
- Guillaume Dufay, 1397–1474
- Gilles Binchois, c. 1400–146
- Johannes Ockeghem, c. 1410–1497
- Josquin des Prez, c. 1450–1521
- Thomas Tallis, c. 1505–1585
- William Byrd, c. 1540–1623
- Orlando Gibbons, 1583–1625
- Jacob Obrecht, c. 1457–1505
- Pierre de La Rue, c. 1460–1518
- Orlande de Lassus, c. 1532–1594
- Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, c. 1525–1594
- Carlo Gesualdo, 1560–1613

Baroque 1600–1750
  Claudio Monteverdi, 1567–1643
  Jean–Baptiste Lully, 1632–1687
  Arcangelo Corelli, 1653–1713
  Henry Purcell, 1659–1695
  Alessandro Scarlatti, 1660–1725
  François Couperin, 1668–1733
  Antonio Vivaldi, 1678–1741
  Johann Sebastian Bach, 1685–1750
  Dominico Scarlatti, 1685–1757
  George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759

Classical 1750–1820
  Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, 1710–1784
  Carl Phillipp Emmanuel Bach, 1714–1788
  Franz Joseph Haydn, 1732–1809
  Johann Christian Bach, 1735–1782
  Antonio Salieri, 1750–1825
  Muzio Clementi, 1752–1832
  Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, 1756–1791
  Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770–1827

Romantic 1820–1900
  Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770–1827
  Gioacchino Rossini, 1792–1868
  Franz Schubert, 1979–1828
  Hector Berlioz, 1803–1869
  Fanny Mendelssohn, 1805–1847
  Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847
  Frédéric Chopin, 1810–1849
  Robert Schumann, 1810–1856
  Franz Liszt, 1811–1886
  Giuseppe Verdi, 1813–1901
  Richard Wagner, 1813–1883
  Clara Schumann, 1819–1896
  Anton Bruckner, 1824–1896
  Johann Strauss II, 1825–1899
  Johannes Brahms, 1833–1897
  Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky, 1840–1893
  Cécile Chaminade, 1857–1944
  Giacomo Puccini, 1858–1924
  Gustav Mahler, 1860–1911
  Amy Beach, 1867–1944
  Sergei Rachmaninoff, 1873–1943

Impressionism   1890–1910
        Claude Debussy, 1862–1918
        Maurice Ravel, 1875–1937

Contemporary (20th and 21st centuries)
        Charles Ives, 1874–1951
        Arnold Schoenberg, 1874–1951
        Béle Bartók, 1881–1945
        Igor Stravinsky, 1882–1971
        Anton Webern, 1883–1945
        Alban Berg, 1885–1935
        Paul Hindemith, 1895–1963
        Henry Cowell, 1897–1965
        Aaron Copland, 1900–1990
        Ernst Krenek, 1900–1991
        Luigi Dallapiccola, 1904–1975
        Dmitri Shostakovich, 1906–1975
        Elliott Carter, 1908–
        Olivier Messiaen, 1908–1992
        Samuel Barber, 1910–1981
        William Schuman, 1910–1981
        John Cage, 1912–1992
        Milton Babbitt, 1916–1983
        Alberto Ginastera, 1916–1983
        Ned Rorem, 1923–
        Cathy Berberian, 1925–2003
        Pierre Boulez, 1925–
        Karlheinz Sockhausen, 1928–2007
        George Crumb, 1929–
        Toru Takemitsu, 1930–1996
        Krzystof Penderecki, 1933–
        Harrison Birtwistle, 1934–
        Terry Riley, 1935–
        Steve Reich, 1936–
        Philip Glass, 1937–
        John Corigliano, 1938–
        Joan Tower, 1938–
        Wendy (Walter) Carlos, 1939–
        Tom Johnson, 1939–
        Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, 1939–
        John Adams, 1947–

Medieval and Renaissance Notation

Music notation in the Middle Ages developed during the reign of the Emperor Charlemagne (768-814 A.D.). The earliest notation consisted of simple lines that often appear to our eyes as "squiggles." This form of notation is called *neumatic* and was most often used to notate Gregorian chant. Here is an example of early notation from the Middle Ages.


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As music grew complex, so did the methods of notating it. The first change to neumatic notation was the introduction of a single straight line that was a reference point for a single pitch. Over many decades, the single line evolved to a four-line, and eventually, to a five-line staff. This style of notation was called *mensural* notation because it represented the lengths of the notes (or their "measurement"). Here is an example of mensural notation from the Renaissance period.

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PRACTICE: Name Treble and Bass Clef Notes

Write the name of each note below the staff.
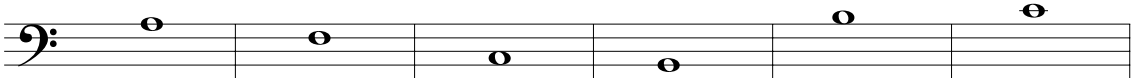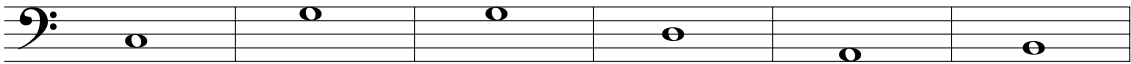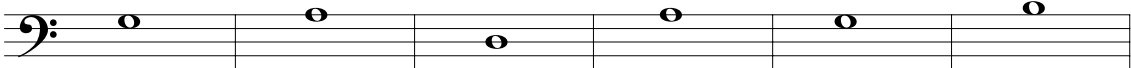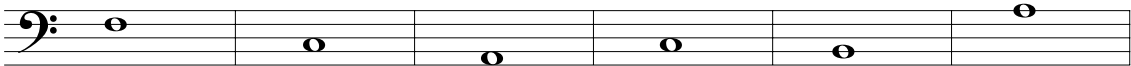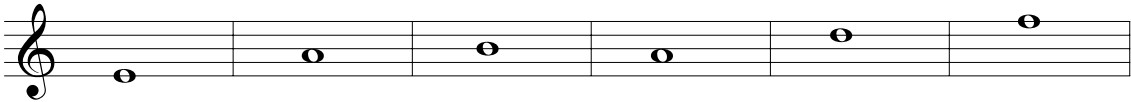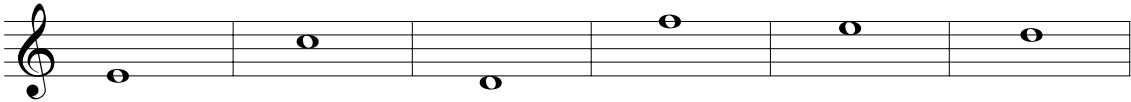
ANSWER KEY: Name Treble and Bass Clef Notes

STAFF 1: E, A, D C, G, F

STAFF 2: E, C, D, F, E, D

STAFF 3: F, C, F, G, D, C

STAFF 4: E, A, B, A, D, F

STAFF 5: F, C, A, C, B, A

STAFF 6: G, A, D, A, G, B

STAFF 7: C, G, G, D, A, B

STAFF 8: A, F, C, B, B, C

PRACTICE: Name Alto Clef Notes

Write the name of each note below the staff.
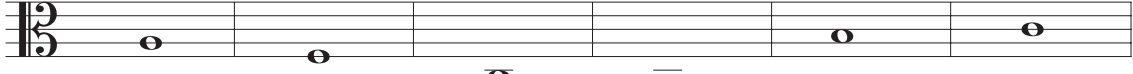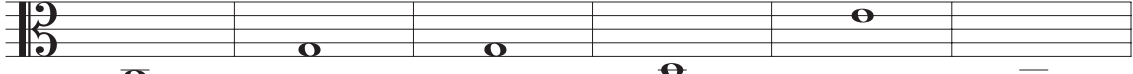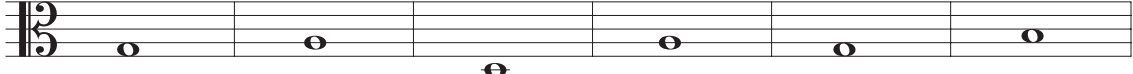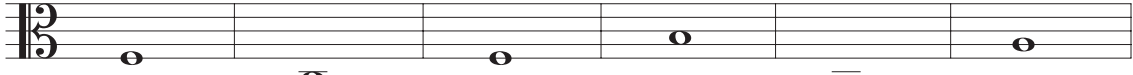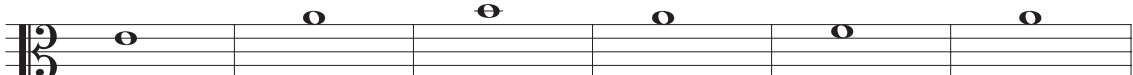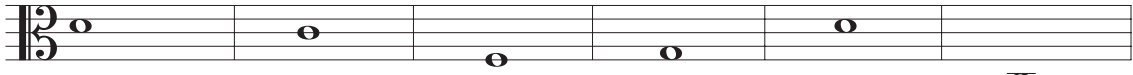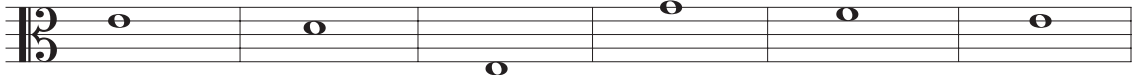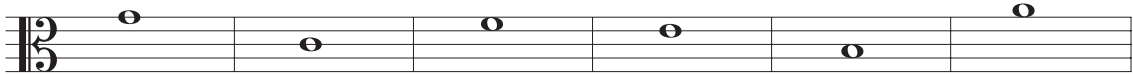
ANSWER KEY: Name Alto Clef Notes

STAFF 1: G, C, F, E, B, A

STAFF 2: E, D, E, G, F, E

STAFF 3: D, C, F, G, D, C

STAFF 4: E, A, B, A, F, A

STAFF 5: F, C, F, B, B, A

STAFF 6: G, A, D, A, G, B

STAFF 7: C, G, G, D, E, B

STAFF 8: A, F, C, B, B, C

PRACTICE: Name Ledger Line Notes

Write the name of each note below the staff.

ANSWER KEY: Name Ledger Line Notes

STAFF 1: E, B, D, A, C, G

STAFF 2: E, D, B, D, C, B

STAFF 3: F, G, E, C, A, A

STAFF 4: E, B, A, F, D, G

STAFF 5: C, G, F, D, F, B

STAFF 6: A, D, G, A, D, E
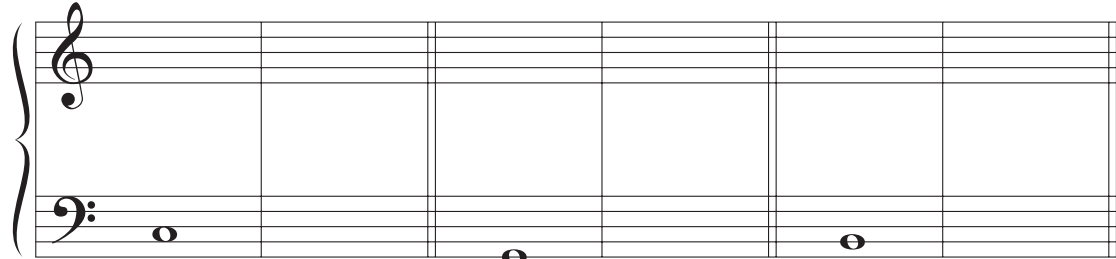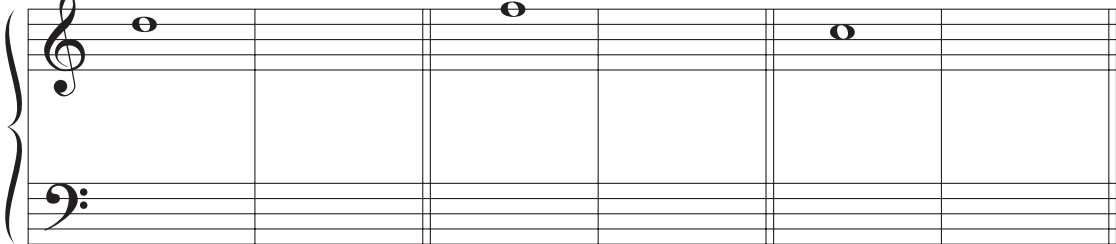
STAFF 7: G, C, D, F, A, B

STAFF 8: E, C, A, B, E, C

PRACTICE: Read *8va* and *15ma* Signs
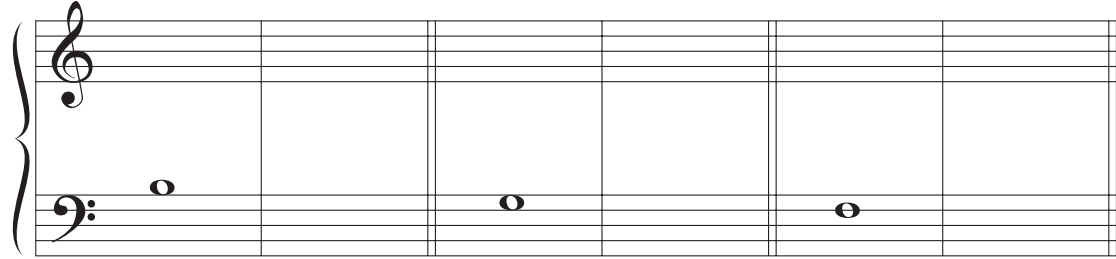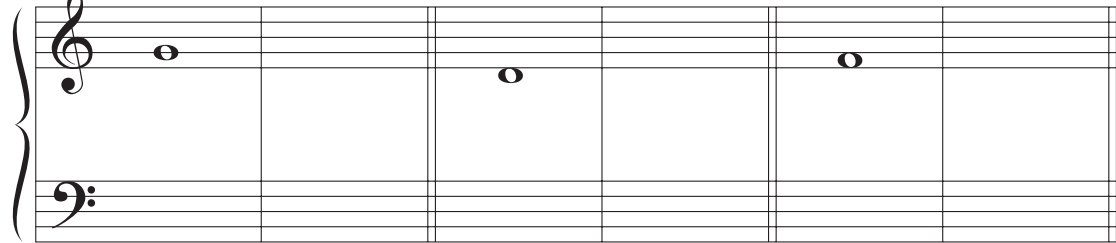
In the blank measure following each given note, use ledger lines to write the note as it would actually sound.

Octave Identification on the Piano Keyboard

PRACTICE: Name Notes with Accidentals

Write the name of each note below the staff.

ANSWER KEY: Name Notes with Accidentals

STAFF 1: G♯, C♮, F♯, E♭, B♭, B♮

STAFF 2: G♯, E♭, F♯, A♭, G♮, D♯

STAFF 3: C♯, D♭, A♮, A♭, F♯, E♭

STAFF 4: G♯, C♮, A♭, E♮, C♯, B

STAFF 5: A♮, E♭, C♯, B♭, D♯, C♯

STAFF 6: B♮, F♯, D♯, C♯, A♭, D♯

STAFF 7: E♮, F♯, B♮, F♭, C♯, D♯

STAFF 8: C𝄪, A♭♭, E♭, D𝄪, D♭♭, E♮
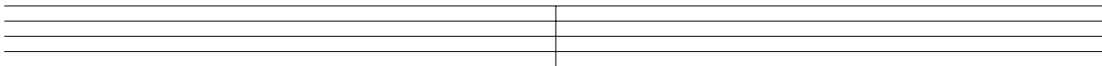
PRACTICE: Music Notation

Draw as many treble clef signs as you can fit on the following staves.
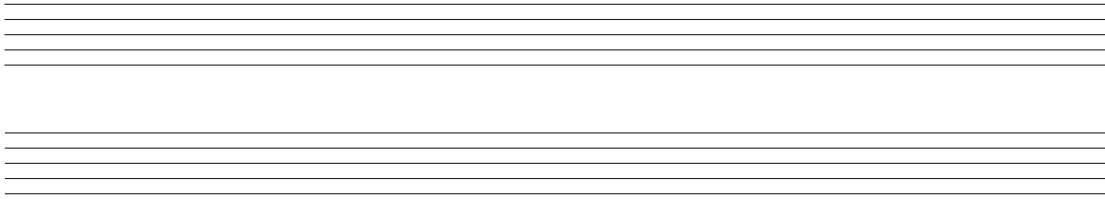
Draw as many bass clef signs as you can fit on the following staves.
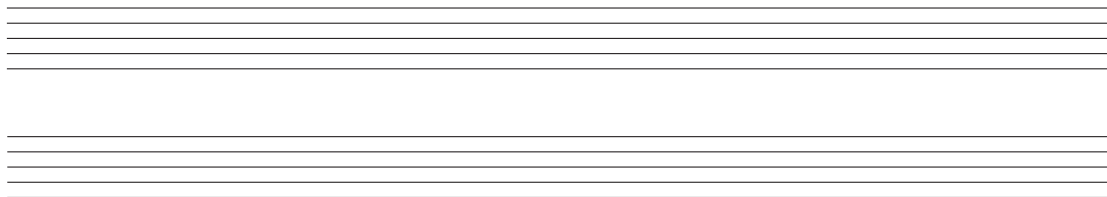
Draw a series of space notes in the first measure below. In the second measure, draw line notes. Be as precise as possible.

Add stems to the following note heads. Use the instructions on page 11 of the textbook to draw the stems in the correct direction.
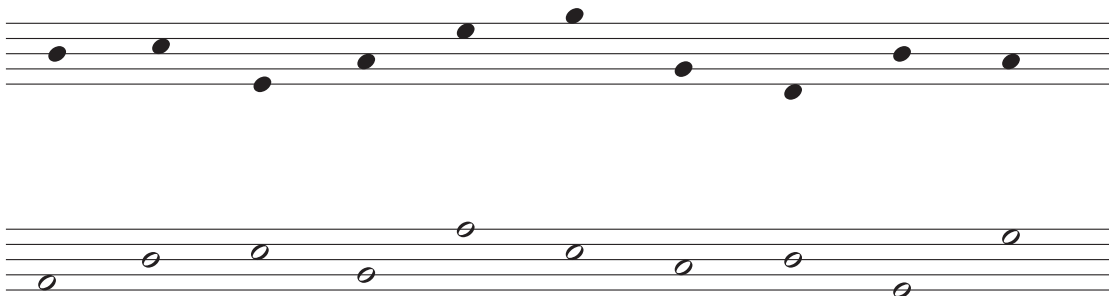
PRACTICE: Musical Math

Do the following musical math by drawing a single whole, half, or quarter note in each blank space.

_____ = ♩ + ♩ + ♩ + ♩

_____ = ♩ + ♩

_____ = ♪ + ♪ + ♪ + ♪

_____ = ♪ + ♪

_____ = ♩ + ♩

𝅝 = _____ + _____ + _____ + _____

♩ = _____ + _____

𝅝 = _____ + _____

♩ = _____ + _____ + _____ + _____

♩ = _____ + _____