

## A Little About Scoring

Let's talk about the most common errors and how to avoid them. Free-Response 5 (FR5) is part writing by realizing figured bass. Free-Response 6 (FR6) is part writing to the Roman numerals. FR5's possible high score is 25 and FR6's is 18. Both are scored similarly with one point awarded for correct chord spelling and two points awarded for each "connection" between chords—voice leading. Let's look at a short example to demonstrate a couple of critical issues.

The musical score shows five chords in E minor, 4/4 time. Chord 1 is the tonic (i). Chord 2 is the supertonic (ii), misspelled as a major triad (F-A-C) instead of a minor triad with a raised 7th degree (F-A-C#). Chord 3 is the mediant (iii). Chord 4 is the dominant (V), misspelled as a major triad (B-D-F) instead of a dominant seventh chord (B-D-F-A). Chord 5 is the tonic (i).

This example is in E minor; therefore, the V or V<sup>7</sup> chord must have the raised 7th scale degree, in this case, D#. Students lose more points for this error (omitting the accidental) than for any other, and it is a *critical* mistake. Without the sharp sign the chord is spelled incorrectly; that means a one-point deduction (or *zero* points added). Plus, because the chord is misspelled, there are *zero* voice leading points *into* chord 2, and *zero* points *out* of chord 2. That's what our graders call a "triangle affect."

The musical score shows three chords in E minor, 4/4 time. Chord 1 is the tonic (em). Chord 2 is the supertonic (i), misspelled as a major triad (F-A-C). Chord 3 is the mediant (i<sup>6</sup>), misspelled as a major triad (F-A-C). A triangle is drawn around the three chords, with arrows pointing to the text 'CHORD SPELLING POINTS AWARDED' and 'VOICE LEADING POINTS AWARDED', both of which are zero.

em: i V<sub>3</sub><sup>4</sup> i<sup>6</sup>

By omitting just one accidental, five points are lost. Now let's look at another common mistake in chord 3. This chord has two thirds, two fifths, but no root. In a root position triad or seventh chord it is acceptable to omit the fifth, but not in an inverted chord, and *never* omit the root. This would be considered incorrect chord spelling, and once again zero points are awarded for chord spelling or voice leading. Chords 4 and 5 are both spelled correctly. The V<sup>7</sup> chord has the accidental and both resolutions are correct; however, another major error has occurred. There are parallel fifths between the bass and tenor. This happened because the final tonic contains all three chord members. So many progressions end V<sup>7</sup> to I or i, so here is the rule to remember:

When (root position)V<sup>7</sup> goes to (root position) I or i, **IF** the V<sup>7</sup> has all four members, **THEN** the tonic chord will have three roots, one third, and no fifth. **IF** the V<sup>7</sup> is *not* complete, **THEN** leave out the fifth and *double the root*. That will lead you to a complete (all three chord members) tonic triad. Here are the two ways this could have been corrected.

V<sup>7</sup>                      i  
 chord: 5                      6

In this example the final tonic chord has three roots (E) and one third (G).

V<sup>7</sup>                      i  
 chord: 5                      6

In this example the V<sup>7</sup> chord does *not* have the fifth. The root is doubled (B), and there is the third (D#) and the seventh (A). The tonic chord is now complete with all three members (E-G-B).

So, how would these three critical errors affect our score on just chord spelling and voice leading?

em: i                      V<sub>3</sub>                      i<sup>6</sup>                      V<sup>7</sup>                      i

2 CHORD SPELLING POINTS  
 0 VOICE LEADING POINTS

Chord 1 is always given, so there are no chord spelling points awarded.

Possible high score in this short example for chord spelling (4) and voice leading (8) = 12

Our score = 2