

TALKING TECH

Software for Levels 3A and 3B

BY SANDRA BOWEN

In the last two newsletters, I've been talking about software that complements the early levels of *Piano Adventures*®. Programs that discuss and drill notes, keys, and note values abound. Even more whimsical programs in the edutainment market help with these early concepts. But in Levels 3A and 3B, we get into the nuts and bolts of music theory. Now it's all about scales and chords, with a little syncopation thrown in to spice things up.

The most useful programs for the early intermediate level:

- Essentials of Music Theory (Alfred)
- Music Lessons I and II (MiBAC)
- Musition 2 (Sibelius)
- PBJ Computer Activities (PBJ Music)
- Practica Musica (Ars Nova)

Other software that supports the teaching principles of Levels 3A and 3B:

- Interactive Musician (Alfred)
- Juilliard Music Adventure (Theatrix)
- Keyboard Chords and Keyboard Intervals (ECS)
- Music Ace 2 (Harmonic Vision)
- Music Goals by Eye and Ear, Music Goals Rhythm (Singing Electron)
- Music Skills Builder (ECS)
- Musicianship Basics (New Horizons)
- Scales and Key Signatures (Maestro Music)

Each of these programs is available for Windows and Macintosh, except for Music Goals and Musition which support only Windows.

Concepts Presented in Level 3A	
3/8 and 6/8	Sevenths
Triplets	Arpeggios
Chromatic scale	Key of D Major

3/8 and 6/8 Time Signatures

- Essentials of Music Theory/Volume 2/Unit 11: Lessons 43, 44
- Music Ace 2: Lesson 23
- Musicianship Basics/Level 23
- Musition 2/Music Reading/Meter Recognition/Levels 2, 5
- PBJ Computer Activities/Level 2: Lesson 7
- Practica Musica/Activity 3/Level 2
- Practica Musica/Activity 4/Level 2
- Practica Musica/Activity 15/Level 2

Triplets

- Essentials of Music Theory/Volume 2/Unit 11: Lesson 45
- Music Goals Rhythm
- Musicianship Basics: Lesson 43

Chromatic Scale

- Essentials of Music Theory/Volume 2/Unit 8: Lesson 32

Sevenths

- Essentials of Music Theory/Volume 2/Unit 8: Lesson 33
- Keyboard Intervals/Spelling and Keyboard Drills
- Music Ace 2: Lesson 22
- Music Goals by Eye and Ear
- Music Lessons I/Drills/Intervals/Level-Beginning
- Music Skill Builder/Intervals
- Musition 2/Key Centres/Intervals/Level 5
- PBJ Computer Activities/Level One: Lesson 4
- PBJ Computer Activities/Level Two: Lesson 3

Arpeggios

- Musicianship Basics/Levels 17, 24

Key of D Major

- Essentials of Music Theory/Volume 2/Unit 7: Lesson 27

Concepts Presented in Level 3B	
Minor Scale	12 Major and Minor Triads
Syncopation	Triad Inversions
Sixteenth Notes	Motive and Sequence

Minor Scale

- Essentials of Music Theory/Volume 3/Unit 14: Lesson 56
- Interactive Musician/Pitch /Scale/Advanced Options-Customizing Scales/Aeolian
- Interactive Musician/Pitch /Scale/Advanced Options-Customizing Scales/Harmonic Minor
- Music Ace 2: Lesson 19
- Music Lessons I/Drill-Major/Minor Scales/Level-Natural Minor Scales
- Music Lessons I/Drill-Major/Minor Scales/Level-Harmonic Minor Scales
- Music Skill Builder/Major and Minor Scales/Options
- Musition 2/Key Centres/Scales /Levels 1, 2
- PBJ Computer Activities/Level 3: Lesson 3
- Practica Musica/Activity 9/Levels 2, 3
- Scales and Key Signatures/Scales/Natural or Harmonic Minor

Motive and Sequence

- Juilliard Music Adventure/Level 1/Princess' Room
- PBJ Computer Activities/Level 2: Lesson 10
- PBJ Computer Activities/Level 4: Lesson 10

Major and Minor Triads

- Essentials of Music Theory /MAJOR/Volume 2/Unit 12: Lessons 47, 48

Essentials of Music Theory/MINOR/Volume 3/Unit 14:
Lesson 58
Interactive Musician/Pitch/Chord/Triads
Keyboard Chords/Spelling and Keyboard Drills/Root
Position
Music Skill Builder/Major and Minor Triads
Musition 2/Music Reading/Chord Recognition/Level 1
PBJ Computer Activities/Preparatory Level: Lesson 7
PBJ Computer Activities/Level 1: Lesson 7
PBJ Computer Activities/Level 2: Lesson 4
PBJ Computer Activities/Level 3: Lesson 5
Practica Musica/Activity 10/Level 1
Practica Musica/Activity 11/Level 1
Practica Musica/Activity 12/Level 1

Triad Inversions

Essentials of Music Theory/Volume 3/Unit 13: Lessons 51, 52
Keyboard Chords/Triads/Spelling and Keyboard Drills/1st
and 2nd Inversions
Musition 2/Music Reading/Chord Recognition/Level 2
PBJ Computer Activities/Level 3: Lesson 6
PBJ Computer Activities/Level 4: Lesson 6
Practica Musica/Activity 10/Level 3
Practica Musica/Activity 11/Level 3
Practica Musica/Activity 12/Level 3

Syncopation

Essentials of Music Theory/Volume 2/Unit 11: Lesson 46
Music Ace 2: Lesson 17
Music Goals Rhythm
Practica Musica/Activity 3/Level 3

Practica Musica/Activity 4/Level 3
Practica Musica/Activity 15/Level 3

Sixteenth Notes

Essentials of Music Theory/Volume 2/Unit 10: Lesson 39
Music Ace 2: Lesson 18
Music Goals Rhythm

Where To Find the Software

Alfred
www.alfredpublishing.com/frameset.cfm?sub=software
Ars Nova
www.ars-nova.com
ECS
www.ecsmedia.com
Harmonic Vision
www.harmonicvision.com
Maestro Music
www.wrlcon.com/maestro/
MiBAC
www.mibac.com
New Horizons
<http://users.dragnet.com.au/~donovan/mb/music.html>
PBJ
www.pbjmusic.com
Sibelius
www.sibelius.com/products/musition/
Singing Electron
www.musicgoals.com
Theatrix (for Juilliard)
Out of print, but available many places—just Google!

You don't have an exhaustive software library? Where should you start?

Theory Comprehension

This category is a showdown between Harmonic Vision's *Music Ace* and Alfred's *Essentials of Music Theory*. Both programs are visually appealing and tutorial (not merely drill-and-practice), and each tests the user on the information presented. *Music Ace* follows each lesson with a challenging game; *EMT* concludes each unit with a review quiz.

What about cost? *Music Ace Maestro*, which includes *Music Ace* and *Music Ace 2* with Maestro Manager, lists for \$127.95. (You can still purchase *Music Ace* and *Music Ace 2* separately at \$49.95 each, but Maestro has put the lessons in sequential order and added significant management options.) *EMT*, Educator Version, including all three volumes, retails for \$199.99. Both programs include extensive teacher management options, but *Music Ace* includes 48 lessons and games while *EMT* features 75 lessons in 18 units, each with a review quiz. Both programs are available for Windows or Macintosh.

Ear Training

Music Ace and *EMT* provide extensive ear-training lessons

so you don't have to purchase specific ear-training software. *EMT*, in particular, includes an ear-training section in each unit. I like this feature—the ear training follows the instruction, so the concept is reinforced on the spot.

If you want more ear-training experience for your students, you can augment these programs with either Trail Creek Systems' *Ear Training Expedition* (www.trailcreeksystems.com) or Adventus' *Ear Training Coach* (www.adventus.com). *Ear Training Expedition* is a recently updated theory and ear-training program in three volumes, each priced individually at \$79.95 or \$199.95 for the set. *Ear Training Coach* is an appealing program in five volumes of two levels each. Levels 1-2 and 3-4 are available now for \$29.95 each, with Levels 5-6, 7-8, and 9-10 coming soon. Sorry, Mac users, both of these programs are Windows only.

Exploration

Use what you've learned! This choice is easy—the one and only *Juilliard Music Adventure* from Theatrix. Let your students explore the castle and put their newly honed skills to work helping the dragon, saving the queen, and returning music to the kingdom! With just a little Googling, you can find it for as little as \$9! Win/Mac. ■■■