

Contextual Listening Lesson for Chord Qualities

Objective: Students will be able to identify major, minor, augmented, and diminished chord qualities in root position aurally. Students will also be able to identify these chords in root position in the context of a piece.

Prerequisite Material: This is an early lesson in the course.

- Students already know how to construct each chord in root position on any given pitch.
- Students have a solid foundation in hearing the Major and minor third intervals.

Procedures:

1. Review construction of triads.
 - Major – Major/minor: C-E (M3) E-G (m3)
 - Minor – minor/major: C-Eb (m3) Eb-G (M3)
 - Augmented – Major/Major: C-E (M3) E-G (M3)
 - Diminished – minor/minor: C-Eb (m3) Eb-Gb (m3)
2. On the piano, review identifying major and minor thirds on various pitches.
3. Go to www.musictheory.net
 - Go to trainers. Pull down to chord ear trainer. De-select suspended and all of the 7th chords. Change play mode to arpeggiated chords.
 - Have students listen for M3 vs. m3 to help identify chord quality. Practice many times.
 - Change the play mode to block chords. Students still need to listen for the M3 vs. m3 to help identify the quality. Practice on block chords many times.
4. Go to <http://www.gmajormusictheory.org/>
 - Click on “Contextual Listening”. Click on “Chord Quality”.
 - Play various examples of Major, minor, Augmented, and Diminished chords in the context of different pieces and have students identify the chord quality utilized. Most of the examples are arpeggiated.

Lesson Extension:

- Depending on how well and quickly students hear these chords in root position, move on to inversions of major and minor using the same websites. Begin with chords arpeggiated then block.
- Then move on to seventh chords using the same system.
- Students can use www.musictheory.net to practice identifying chord qualities on their own.