LCM Exams

Specimen Aural Tests (revised 2006)

Introduction

LCM Specimen Aural Tests are intended as exactly that; specimens of the tests that candidates will need to do in most LCM practical examinations. Candidates and teachers are encouraged to use tests in this and other similar books as models from which to create or find their own additional examples. There may also be many useful examples to be discovered in the music candidates are studying.

LCM encourages the development of aural skills as an integrated part of normal practical lessons, and these tests are strongly influenced by this philosophy.

Aural skills should never be regarded as a separate entity, simply tagged on to the end of lessons and examinations. LCM regards the acquisition of aural skills as key to students' overall musical development.

The test book from which examiners work is closely modelled on this book.

To enter for an examination, or for more details, syllabuses and repertoire lists, please contact:

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Specimen Aural Tests

Notes:

1. These aural tests are used for Graded and ALCM Examinations in the following: Piano, Pipe Organ, Electronic Keyboard, Electronic Organ, Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Bassoon, Recorder, Classical Saxophone, French Horn, Trumpet, Cornet, Flugelhorn, Baritone, Euphonium, Trombone, Tuba, Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Classical Guitar, Harp, Singing and all Jazz instruments.

2. **GRADE 1 TEST 1(b); GRADE 3 TEST 2(b):** where a candidate wishes to respond to either of these tests in the alternative manner as specified, the examiner must be informed in advance of the tests being administered. This may be done either via the Centre representative or attendant on the day (in advance of the examination), or by the candidate (in the examination, in advance of the tests).

3. In tests where the identification of note values (rhythmic values) is required, such as **Grade 2, test 1(c)**, candidates are required to respond by listing the rhythmic values in order, e.g. 'minim, crotchet, crotchet' or 'minim, four quavers'.

4. In tests where a sung response is required, candidates may use any clear and appropriate syllable or vowel sound (e.g. 'ah', 'la', 'oo', etc.) They may also hum or whistle. Candidates may request tests to be transposed if required by their vocal range. Candidates may play back such tests on their instrument if they prefer; in this case, examiners must be informed prior to the administration of the tests (see Note 2 above).

5. In tests where responses describing pitch are required, candidates may use letter-names (A, B, C, etc.), tonic sol-fa (doh, re, mi, etc.), or number (1, 2, 3, etc., or 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) (Where a minor key is used, it will be assumed that doh=tonic.)

6. Please note that **from Grade 2 onwards**, candidates are required to beat time (i.e. conduct), NOT to tap or clap the pulse. They may join in during the initial playing, or a second playing may be given.

7. Candidates may request any test to be given one repeat playing without loss of marks.

8. **Please note that in all cases, examiners will use a piano to conduct the tests.** Examiners will ask candidates to stand or sit in such a position that they cannot see the piano keyboard.

9. Please note that the printed wording is a guide only. Examiners are encouraged to conduct the tests in a conversational manner.

Transposing Instruments:

Dealing with transposing instruments requires particular care in the 'play-back' alternatives to some of the 'sing-back' test, especially in cases where the candidate has a keen or absolute pitch sense.

When a candidate elects to play back using a transposing instrument, examiners will first ascertain if they have absolute pitch. If so, they may need a slightly fuller explanation of the following method of delivering the test or agreement on a way to proceed. If the answer is 'no', or the candidate does not understand what absolute pitch is, then the examiner will simply announce to them, using the guidance below, their key, such that the response will sound at concert pitch. Thereafter they will work from the printed material. The candidate's response will be in concert pitch, though may sound an octave lower, which is acceptable.

For B flat instruments (Clarinet, Trumpet, Saxophone), examiners will announce to the candidate that the test is in a key a tone higher than the concert key they are actually working in (i.e. C major = D major). For a French Horn, the examiner will announce the key as a Perfect 5th higher (i.e. C major = G major); and for an Alto or Baritone Saxophone, the examiner will announce the key as a Major 6th higher (i.e. C major = A major). However, examiners will take care in the choice of test that the resulting key for the candidate is not more advanced than is suitable for the grade.

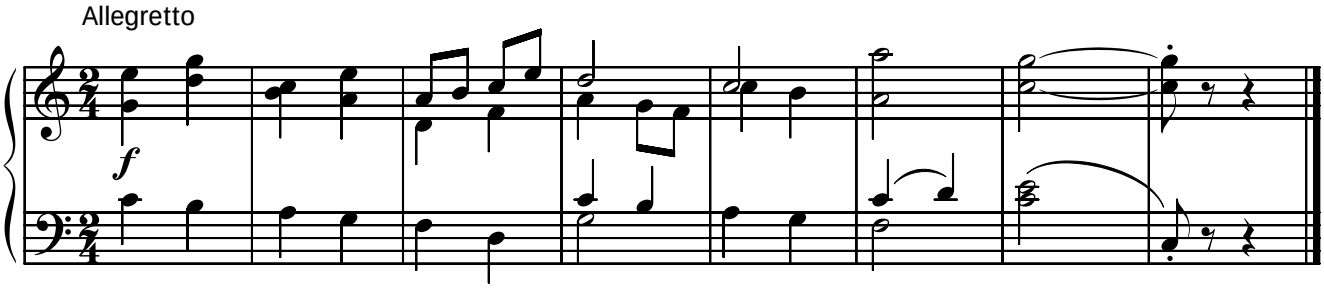
Grade One

Rhythm

Test 1a [2 marks]

Identify the time signature as 2 or 3 time.

i)



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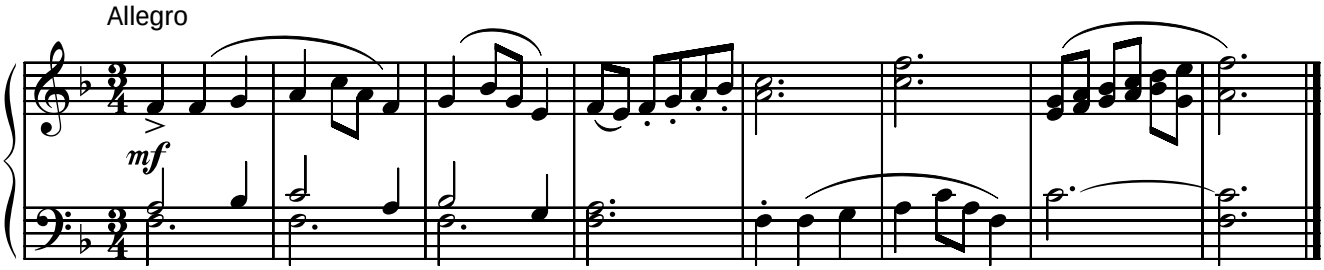

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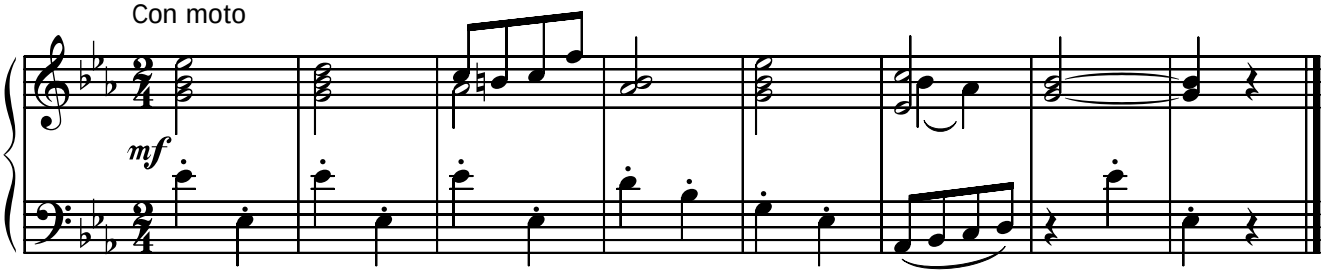

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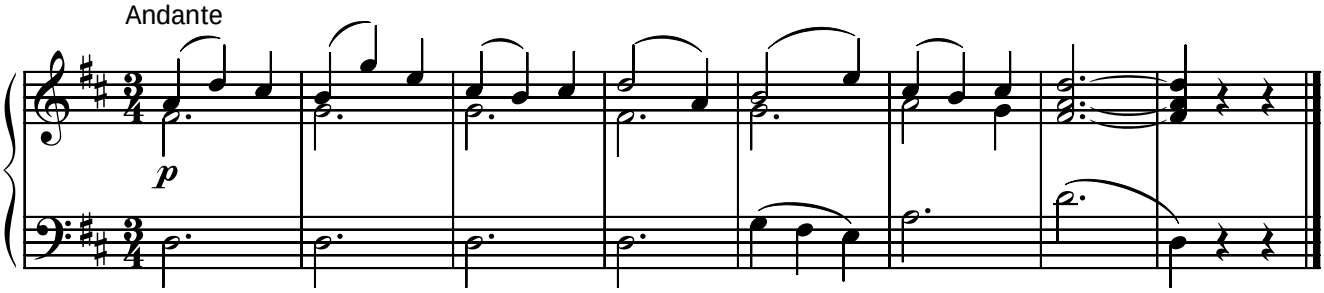

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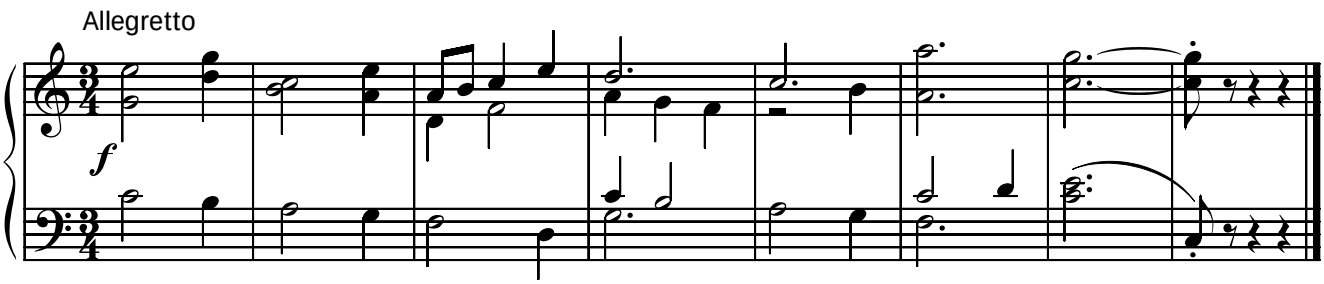
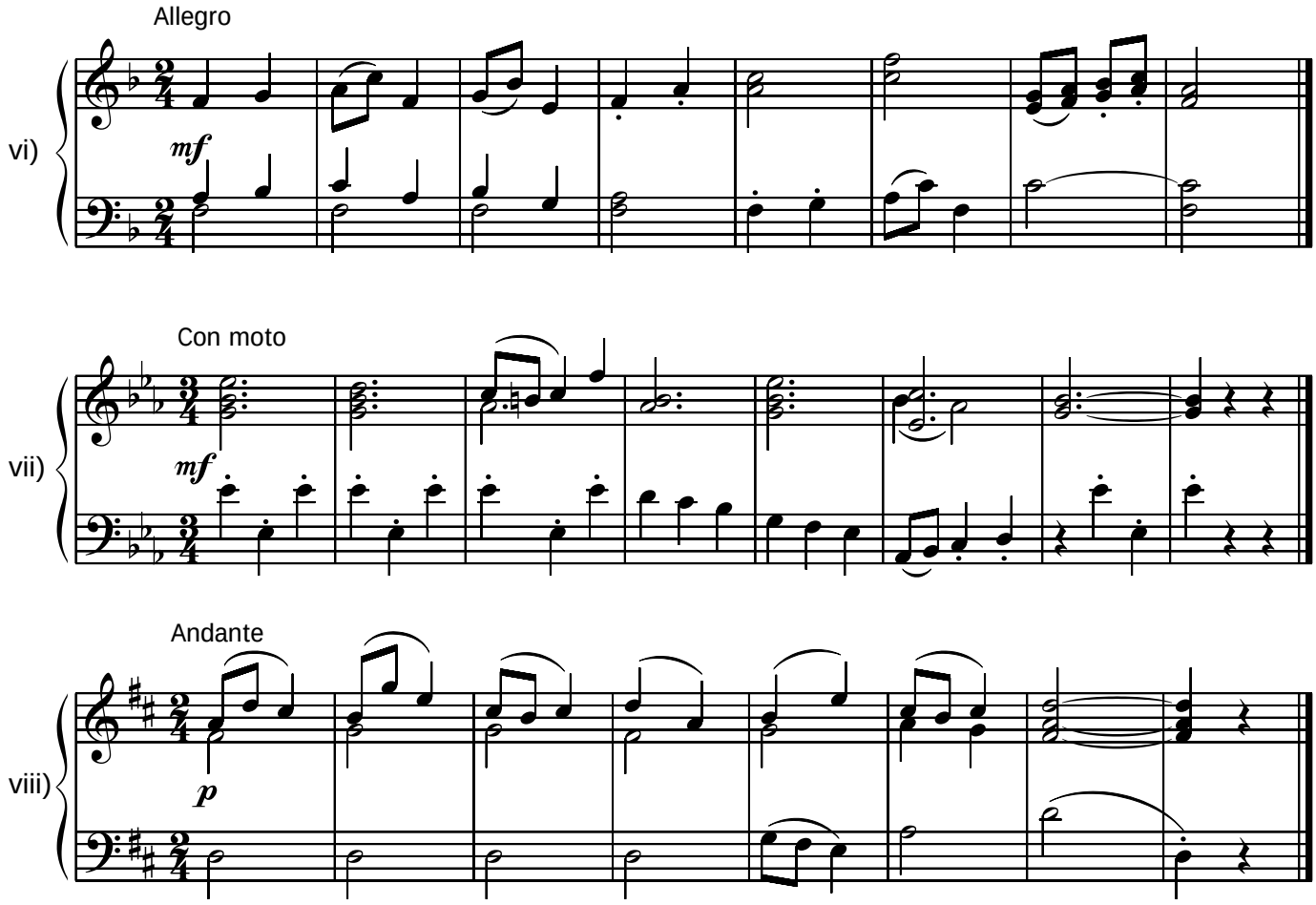




Test 1b [2 marks]

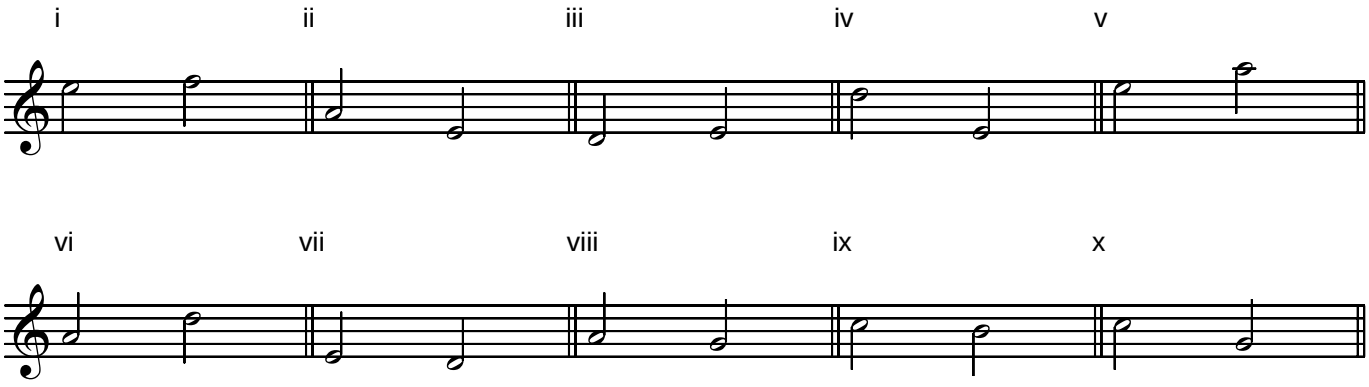
Clap or tap on each pulse beat, in time, in 2 or 3 time, accenting the first beat of each bar as the examiner plays the same example again.

N.B. Candidates may elect to respond to tests 1(a) and 1(b) in reverse order (see Note 2).

Pitch

Test 2a [1 mark]

Identify as "first" or "second" which of two notes played consecutively is EITHER the higher OR the lower, at the examiner's discretion.



Test 2b [1 mark]

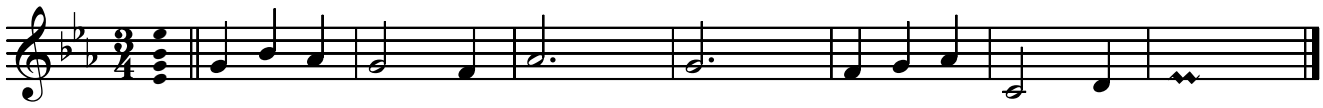
Sing one of the two notes as requested.
(The examiner will play the two notes again and say: "Sing the 1st / 2nd note I played".)

Test 2c [2 marks]

Sing clearly the missing final tonic of a short melody in a major key.

The key chord will be sounded.

i)



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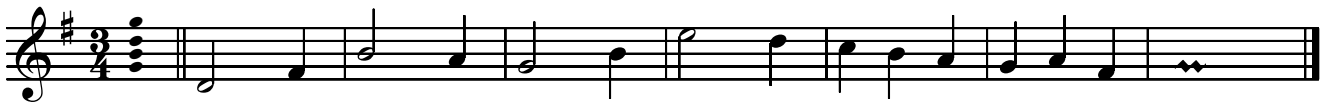

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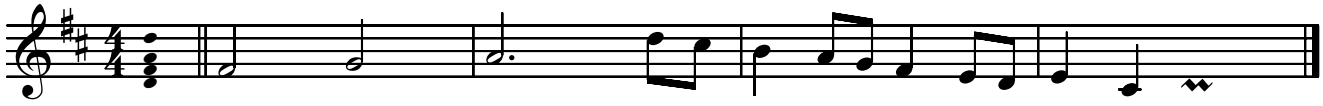

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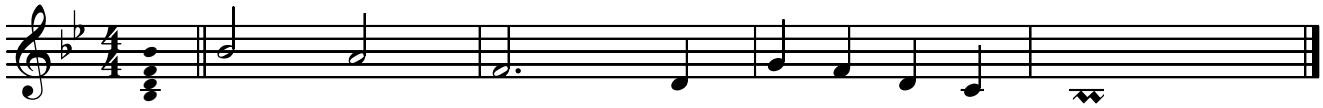

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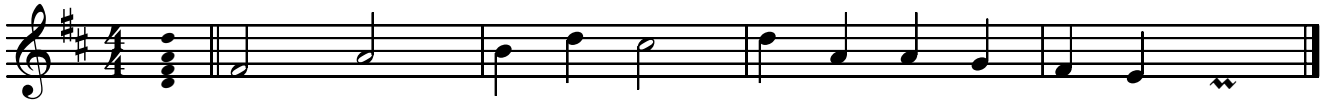

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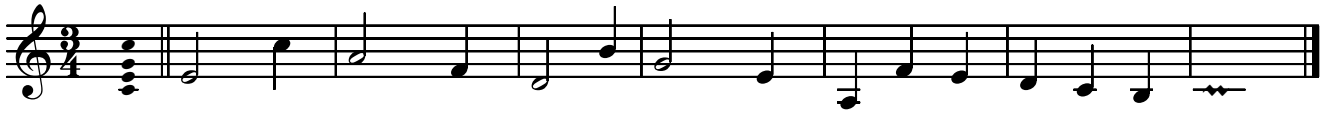

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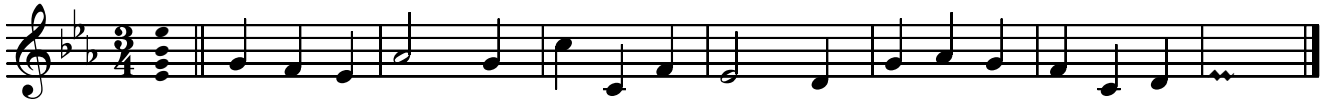

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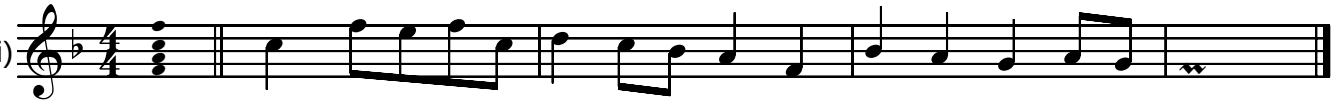
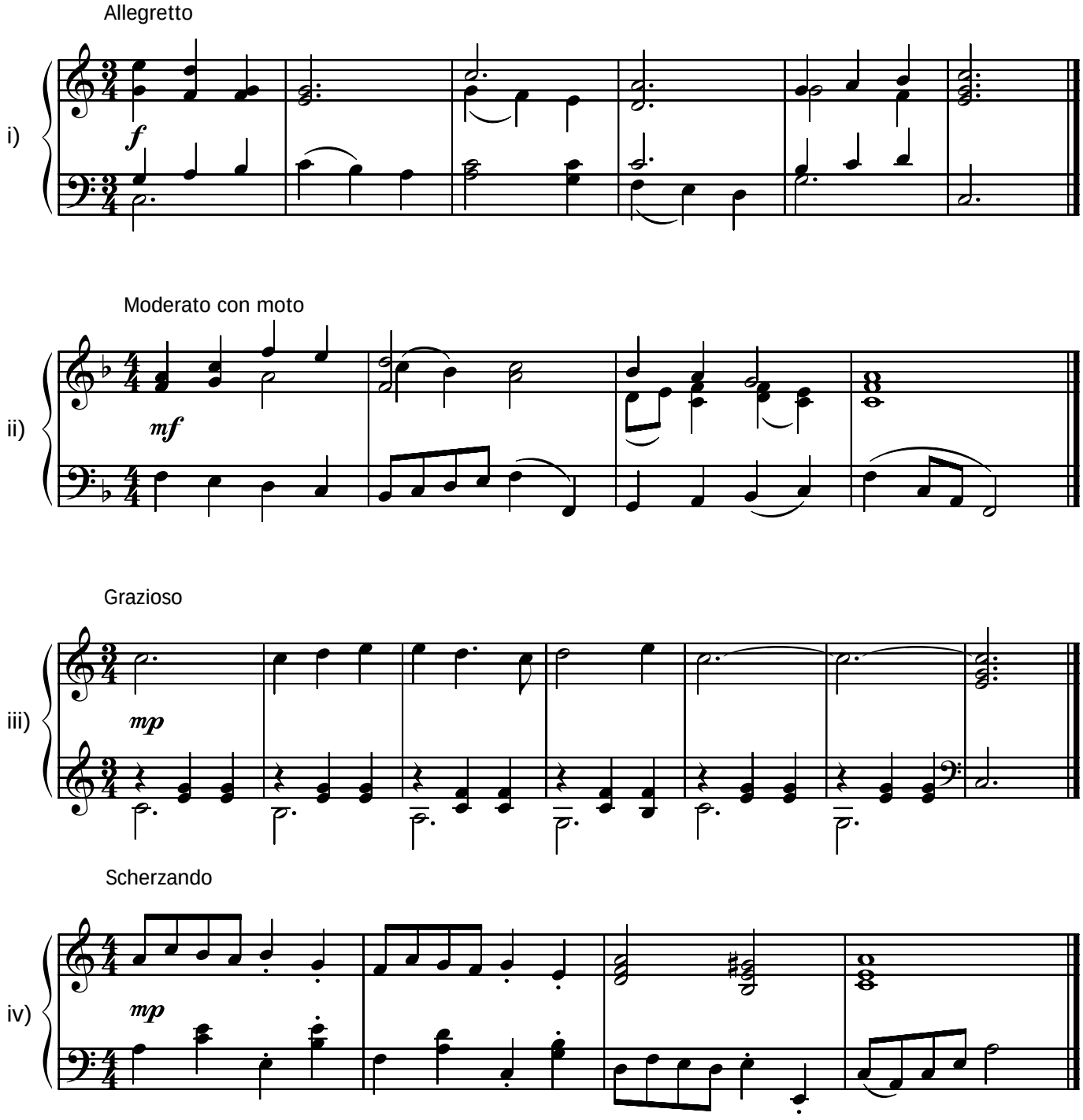


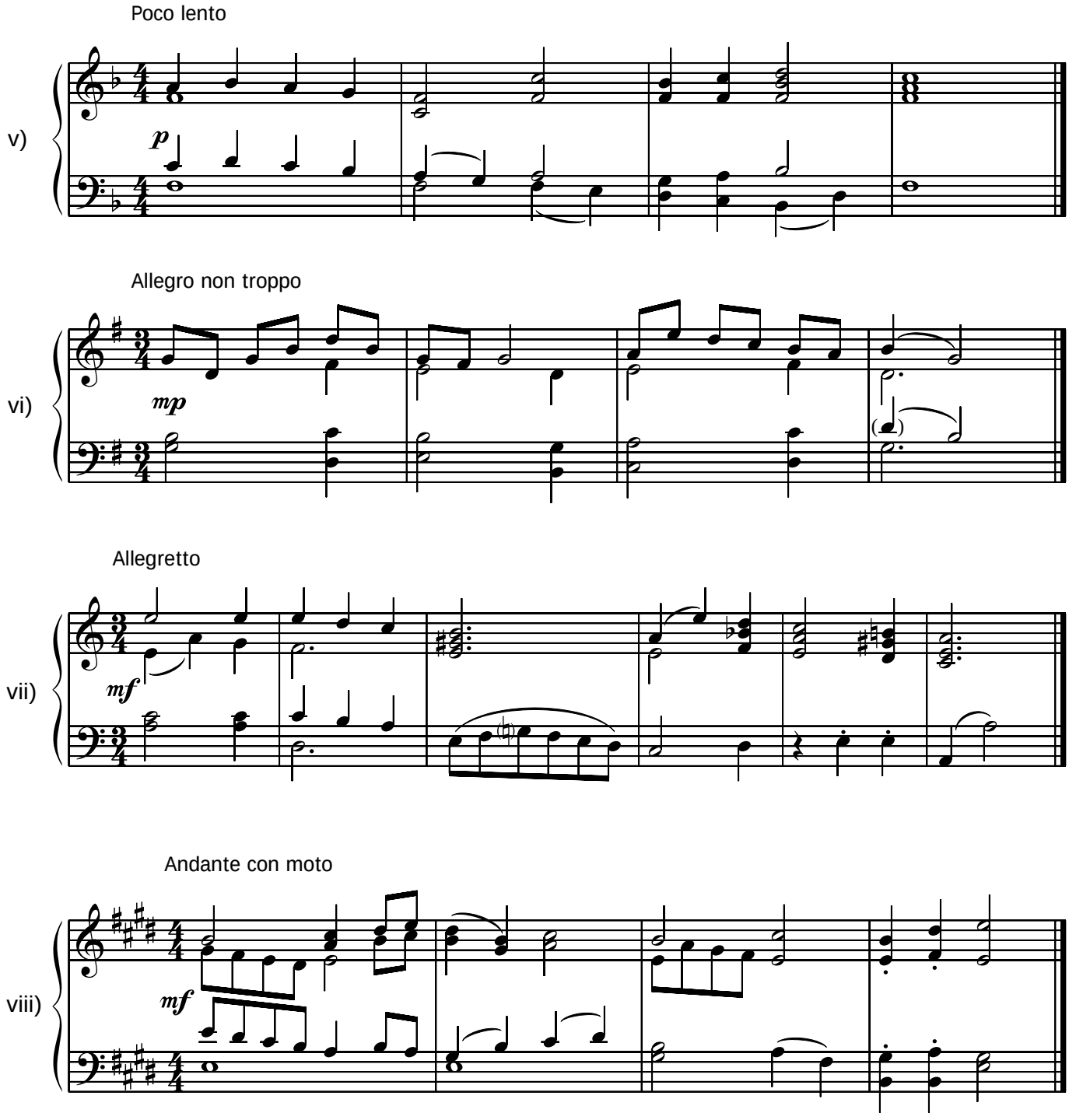
Grade Two

Rhythm

Test 1a [1 mark]

Identify the time signature as 3 or 4 time.





Test 1b [1 mark]

Beat (conduct) time, having a clear beat-shape (conducting pattern), in time with the examiner's playing. (The same example will be played again.)

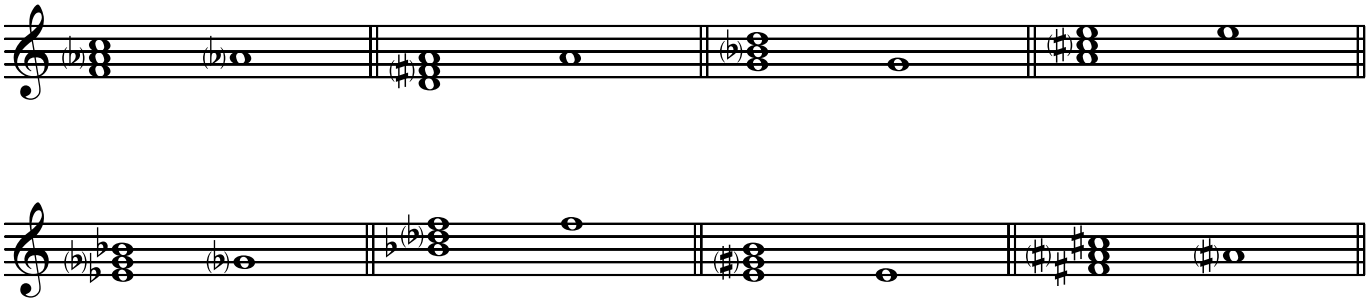
Test 1c [2 marks]

From the same test example, identify and describe the note values in any single bar (crotchet, quaver, etc.), selected by the examiner. The chosen bar will be played again in an unharmonised version. American time names (¼-note, etc.) will be accepted.

Pitch

Test 2a [1 mark]

Identify as "bottom, middle or top" OR "d, m or s" OR "root, 3rd or 5th" any note of a major or minor triad, the chord having first been played, followed by one of the notes alone.

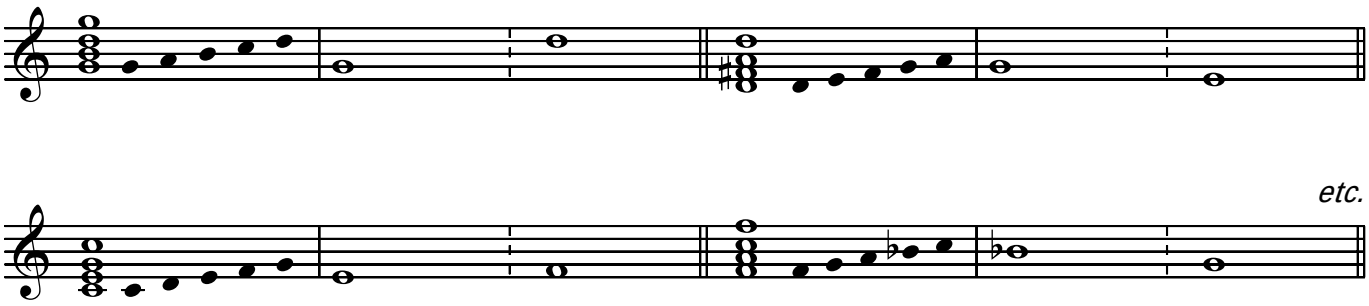


Test 2b [1 mark]

State if the triad is major or minor (examiner plays the same triad again).

Test 2c [2 marks]

Identify either by letter name or sol-fa or number, any of the first five notes of the major scales of C, G, D or F. (2 examples.) (The examiner will first play the key chord, followed by the first five notes of the scale in an ascending pattern.)



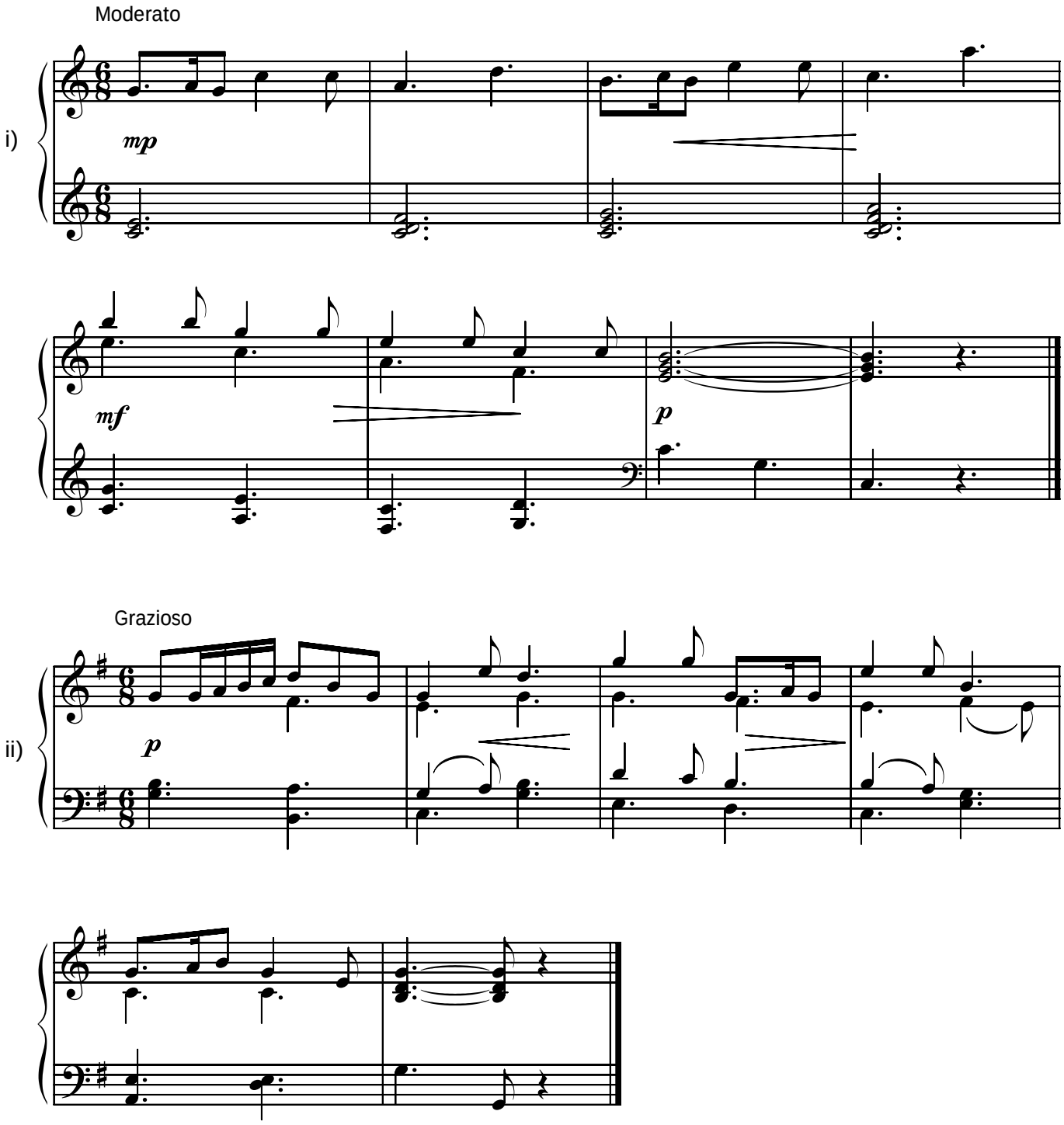
Grade Three

Rhythm

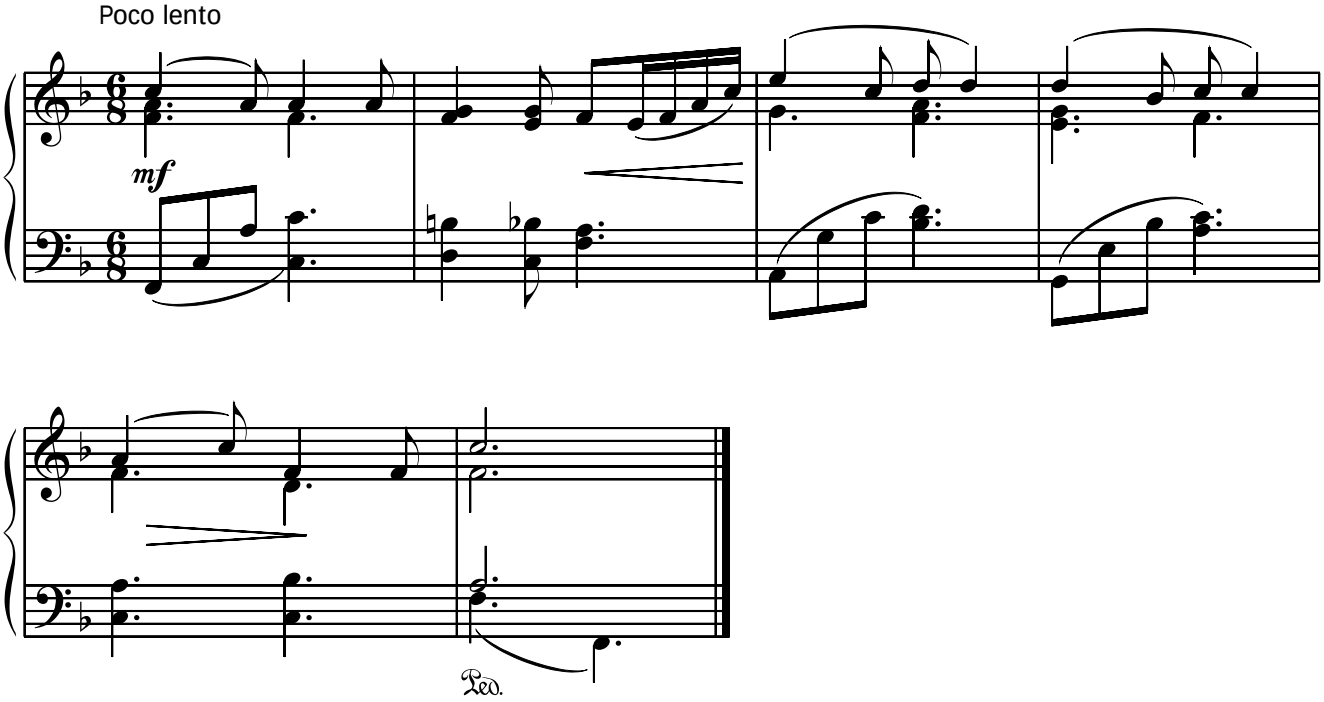
Test 1a [1 mark]

Beat (conduct) time to a passage in $\frac{6}{8}$ time ($\frac{6}{8}$ as 2-in-a-bar). The beating must have a clear beat-shape (conducting pattern) and be in time with the examiner's playing.

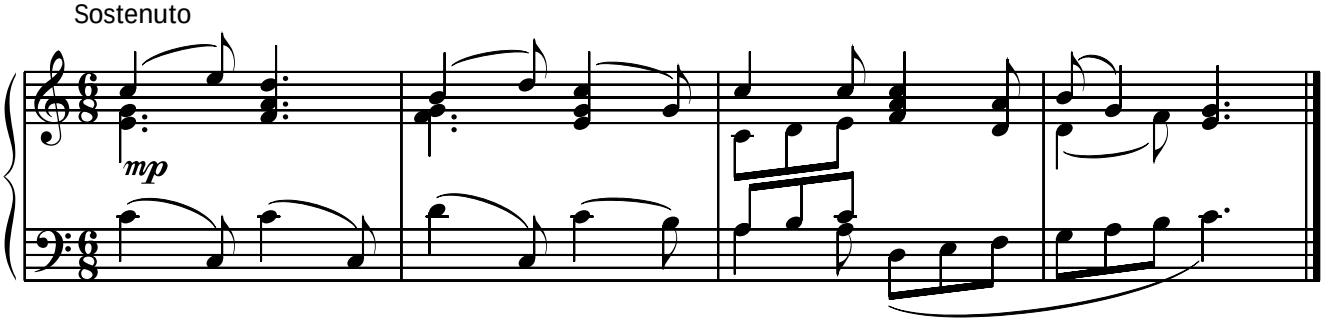
The test may be played twice.



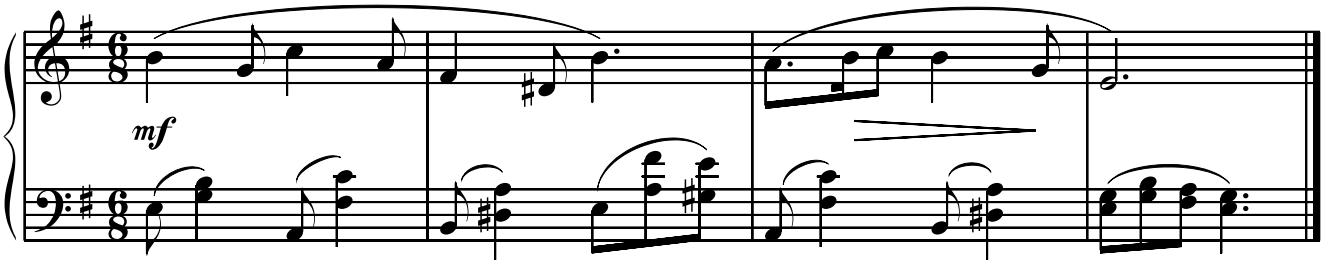
iii) Poco lento



iv) Sostenuto

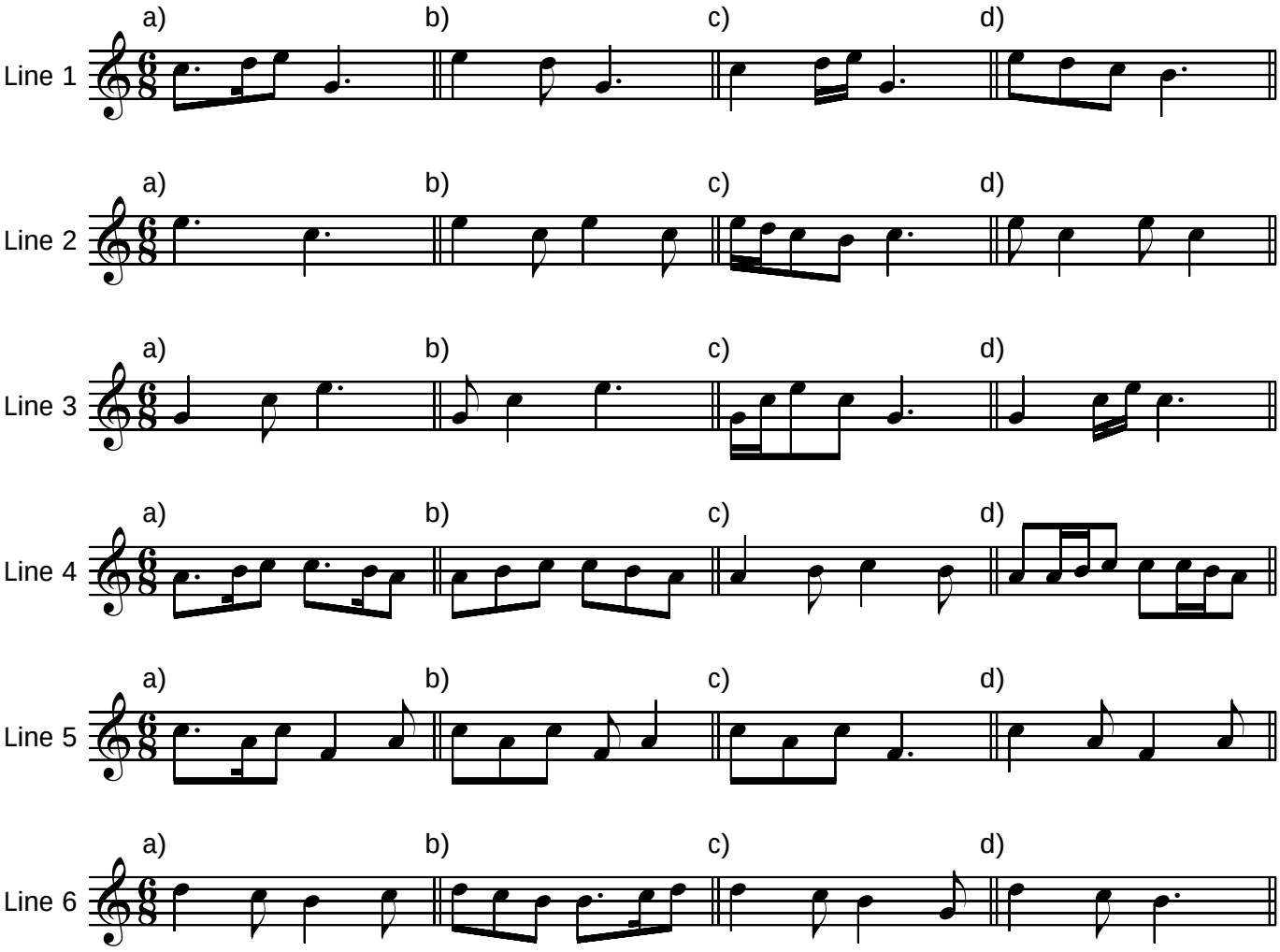


v) Andante



Test 1b [2 marks]

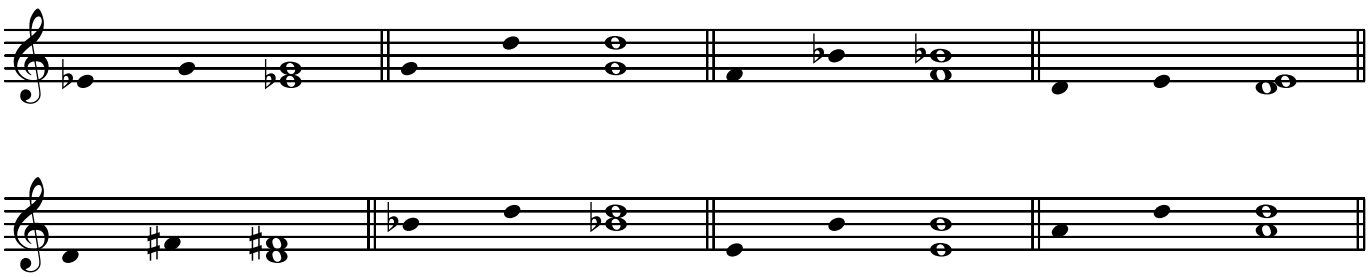
Candidates will be given a sheet with three lines of music, each containing four individual bars in $\frac{6}{8}$ time, marked a, b, c, d. The examiner will indicate which line is being used. The examiner will play one of the bars on that line twice, and ask the candidate which one it is. (2 examples.)



Pitch

Test 2a [2 marks]

Identify **by numerical value only**, intervals played once with the pitches sounding first successively, and then together. Intervals will be restricted to: (Major) 2nd and 3rd, (Perfect) 4th and 5th. (2 examples.)

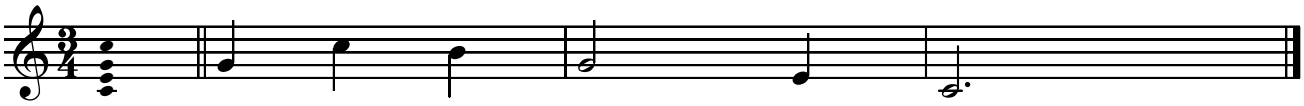


Test 2b [3 marks]

Sing or play back a phrase of not more than 3 bars in length, in either a major or minor key. Rhythms will be limited to crotchets, quavers, minims, dotted minims and semibreves.

The key will be announced and the tonic chord sounded. The melody will be played twice.

i)



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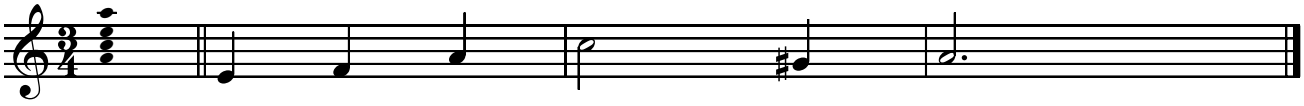

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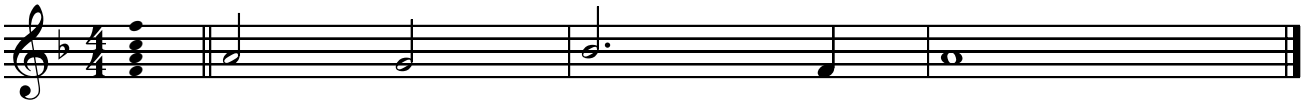

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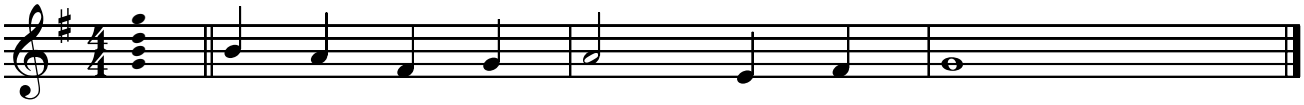

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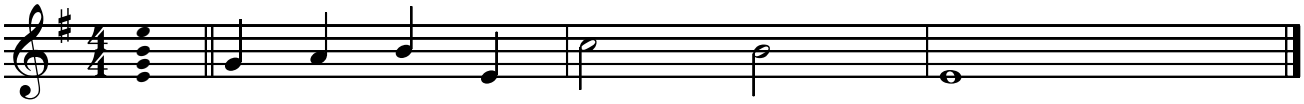

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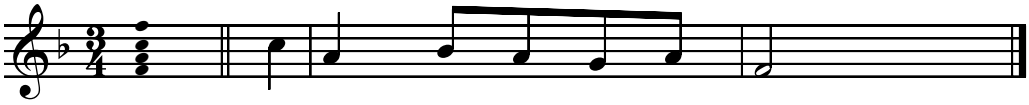

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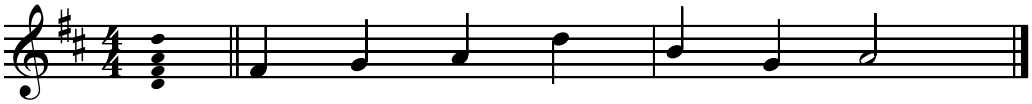
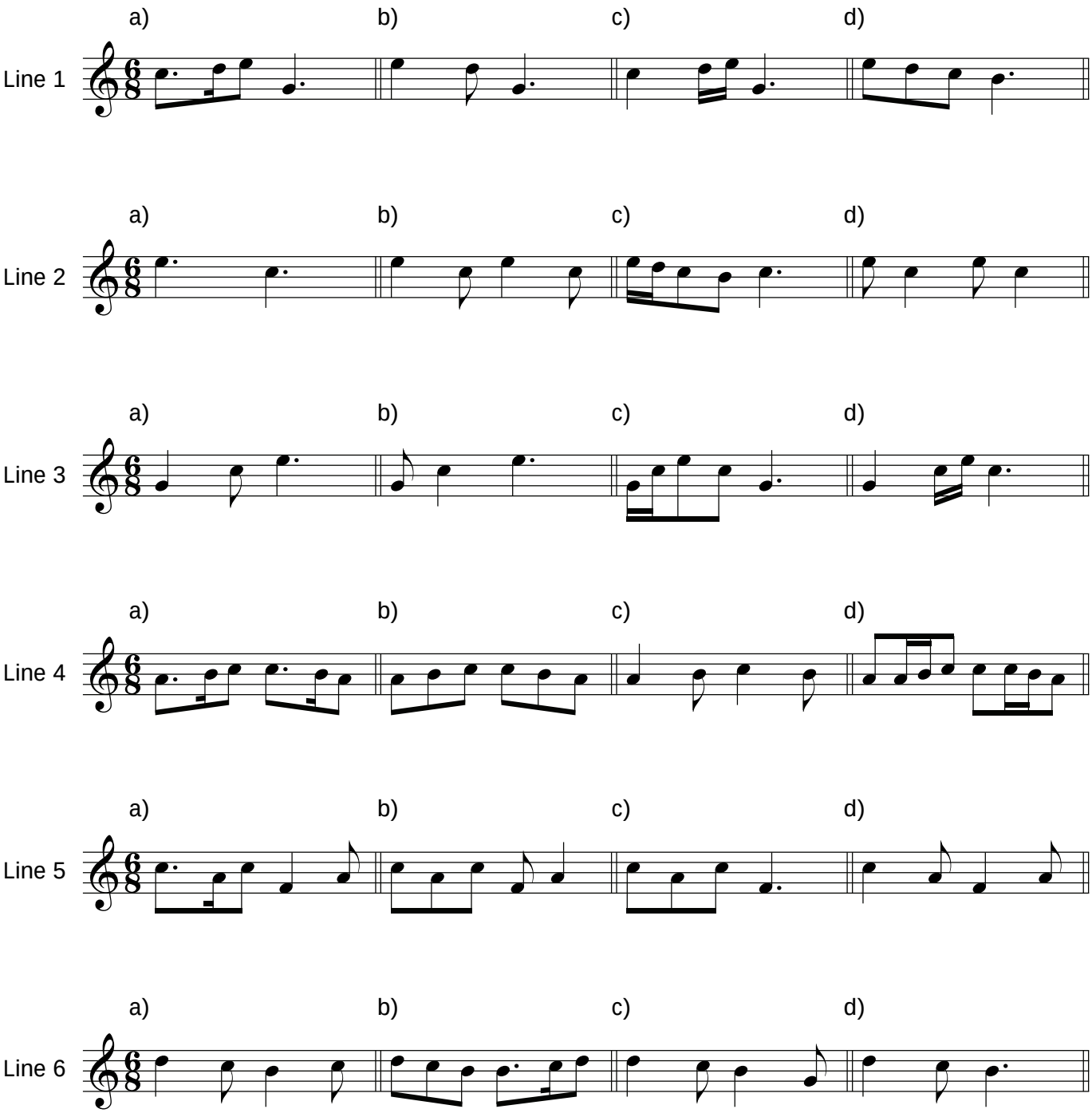


Transposing instruments: see page 4.

Candidate Copy: Grade Three

Test 1b



Grade Four

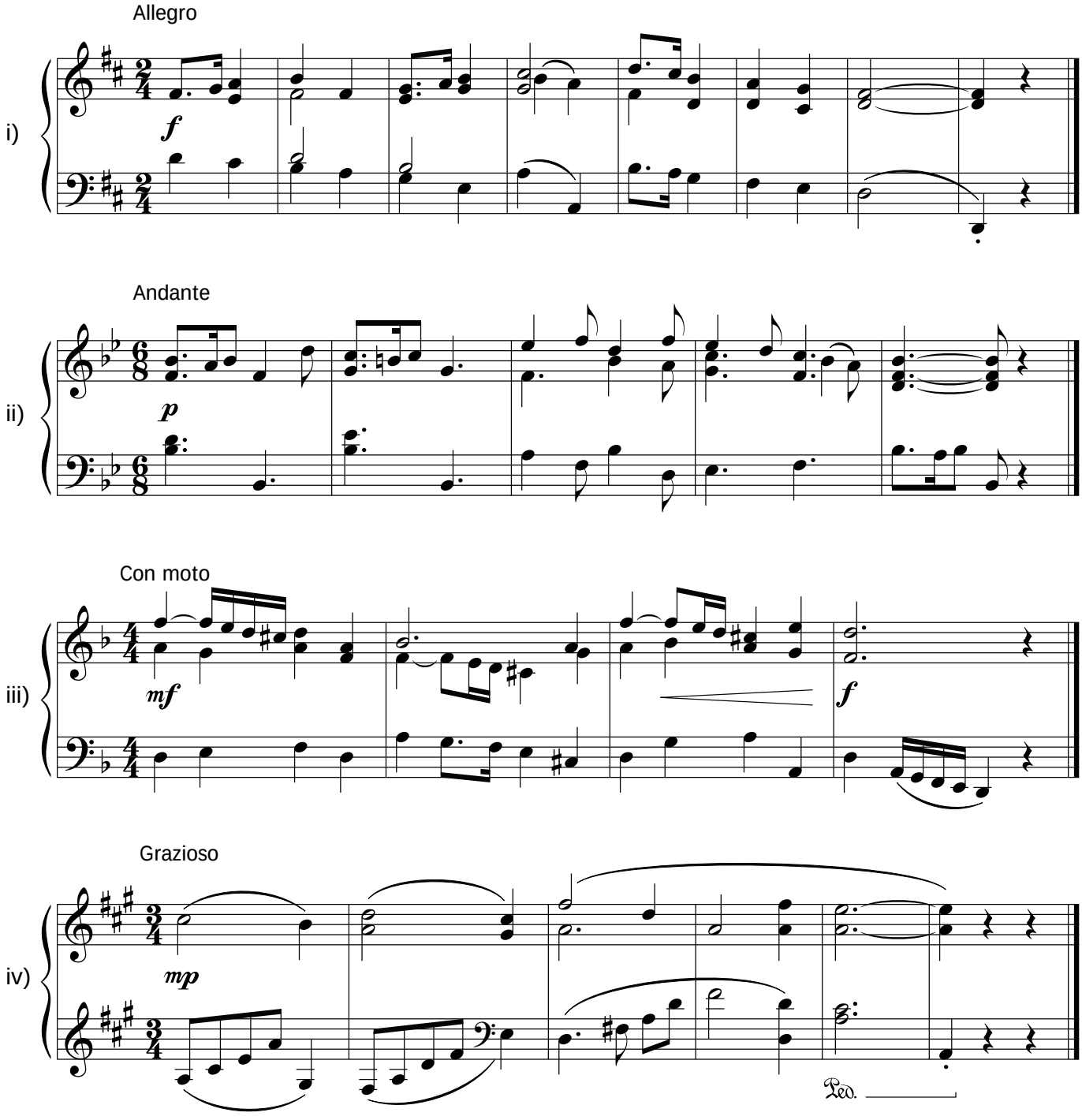
Rhythm

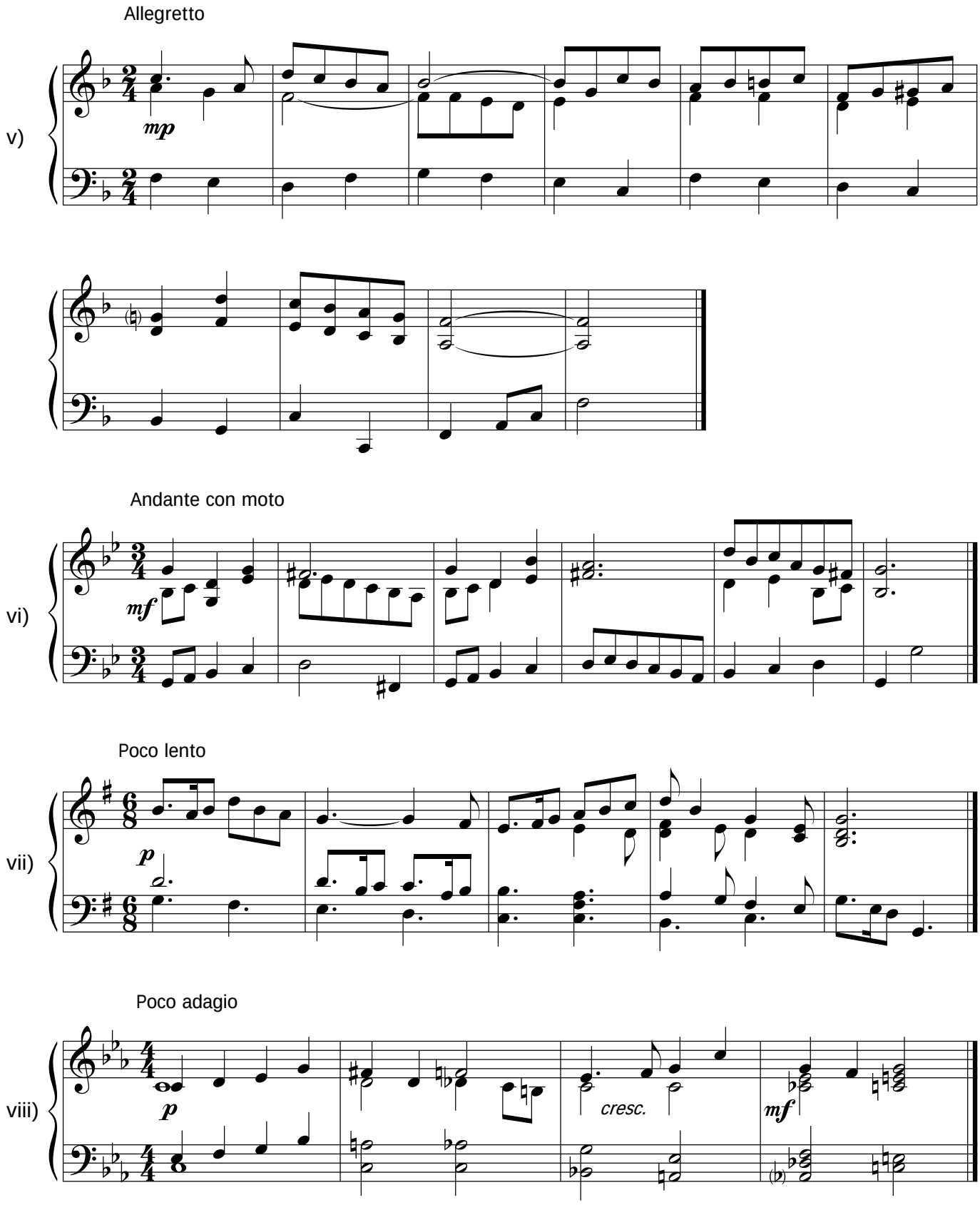
Test 1a [2 marks]

Beat (conduct) time with a clear and correct beat shape (conducting pattern) according to the time signature of the music, in time with the examiner's playing, as the examiner plays a short passage of music.

The passage will be in $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{4}{4}$ or $\frac{6}{8}$ time. Passages in $\frac{6}{8}$ time should be conducted with a 2-beat pattern.

The test may be played twice.





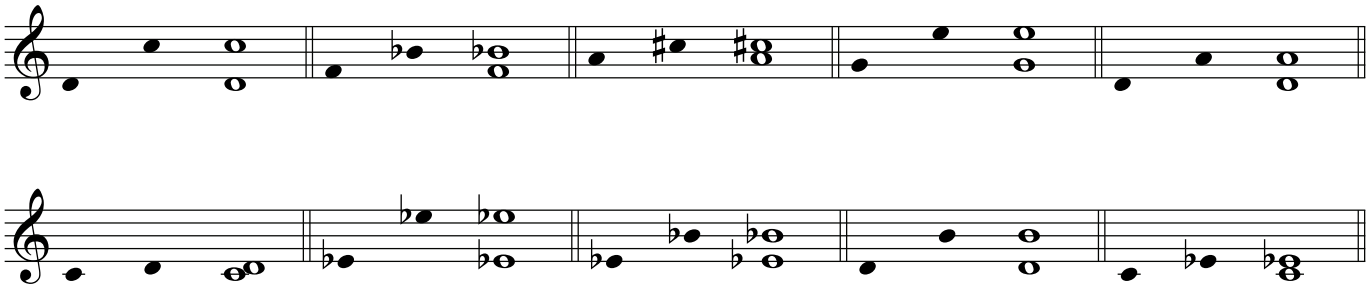
Test 1b [2 marks]

Reproduce, by clapping or tapping, the rhythm of a 2-bar phrase from the above passage when played again in an unharmonised version. Tests will contain no notes shorter than a semiquaver, but may include simple dotted patterns.
The test will be played twice.

Pitch

Test 2a [2 marks]

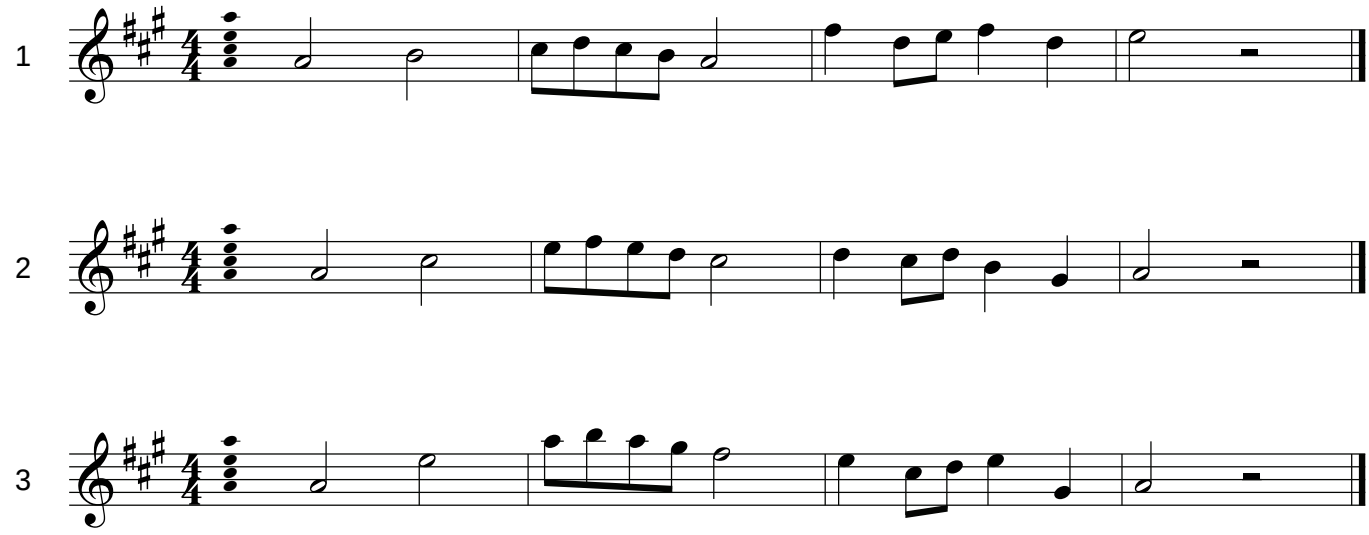
Identify any major, minor or perfect interval up to and including an octave, by numerical value and type. (Two examples.)
The notes will be sounded successively, and then together.



Test 2b [2 marks]

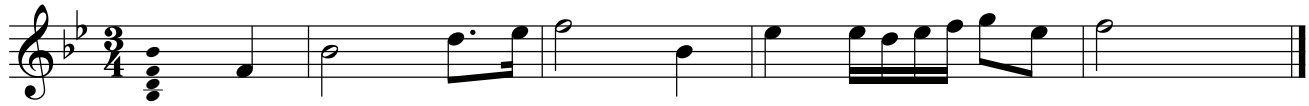
The examiner will show the candidate three similar versions of a short melody. The versions will differ in pitch, but not rhythm One of the versions will be played to the candidate twice. The candidate must state which version was played. [The examiner will tell the candidate which set is being used.] Examiners have this test printed on a separate sheet for candidates.

Set 1

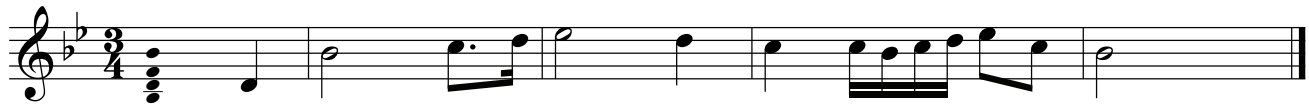


Set 2

1



2



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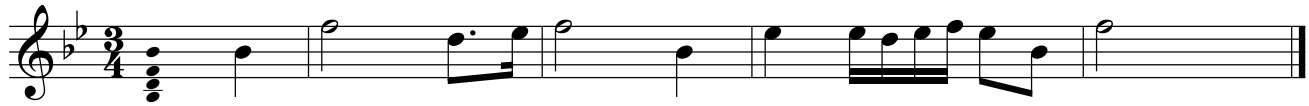

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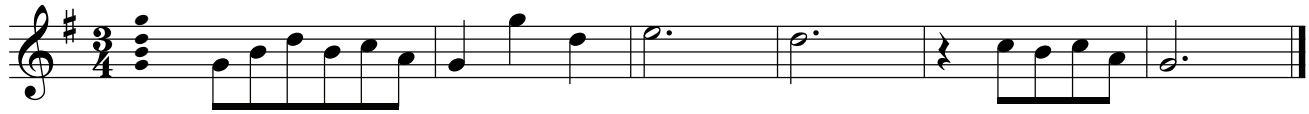

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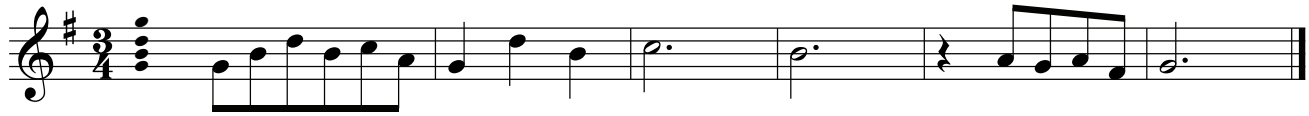

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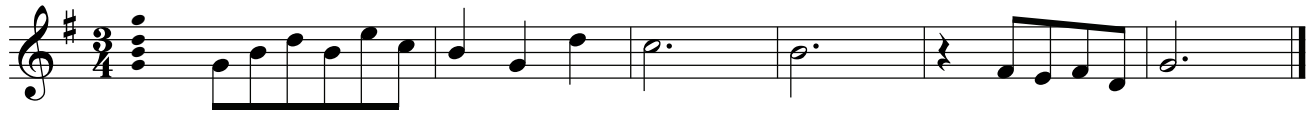

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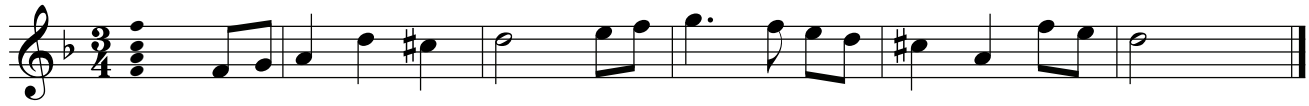

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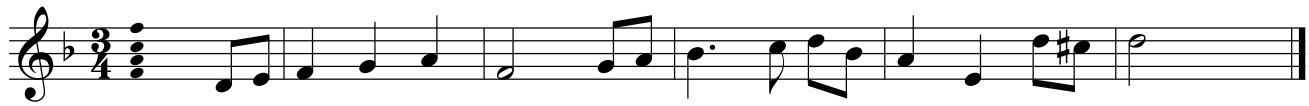

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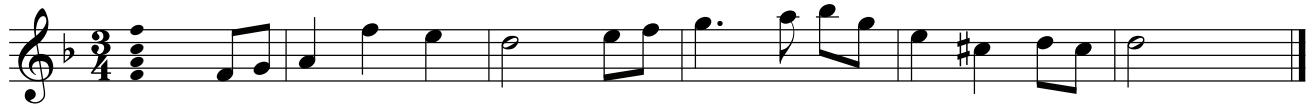

Candidate Copy: Grade Four

Test 2b

Set 1

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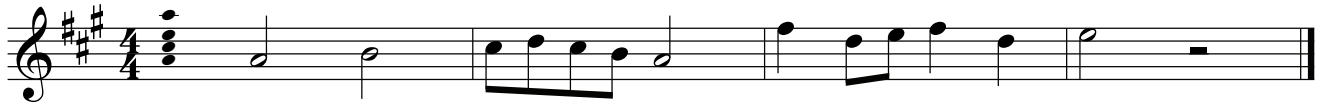

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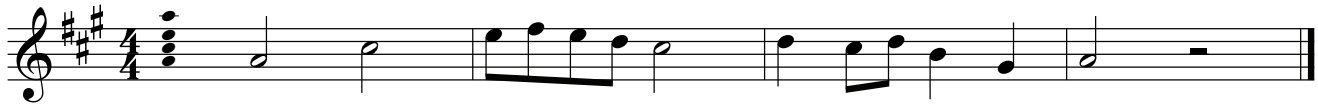

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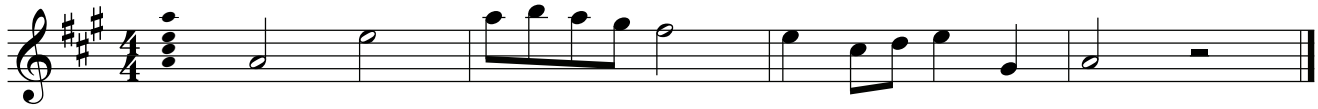

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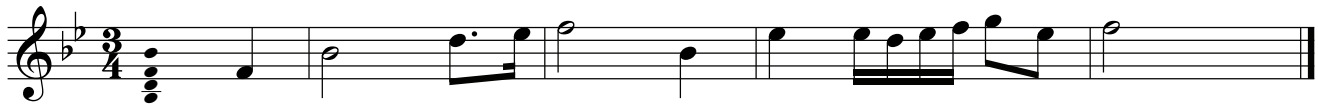

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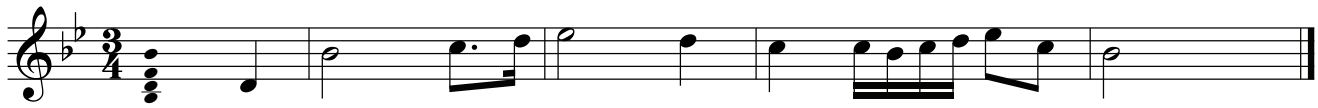

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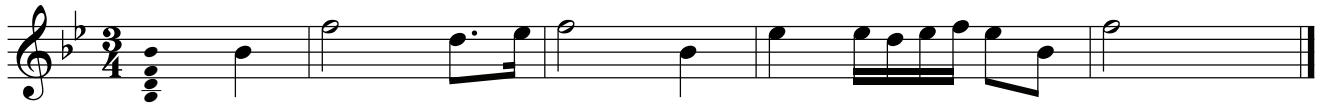

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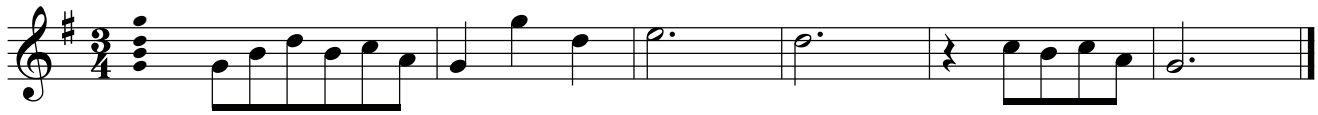

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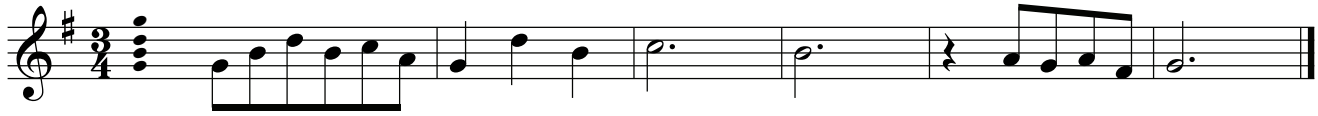

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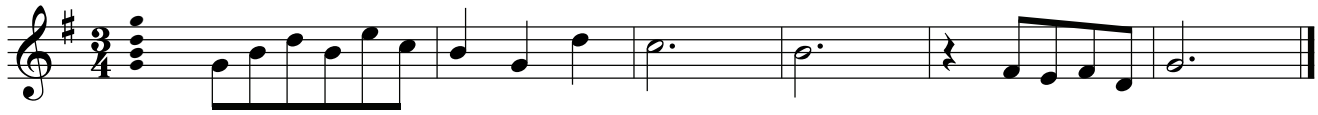

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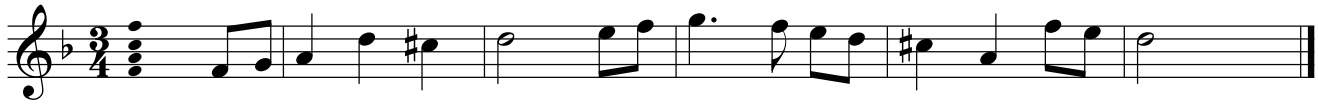

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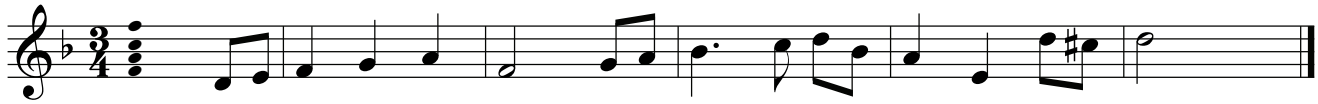

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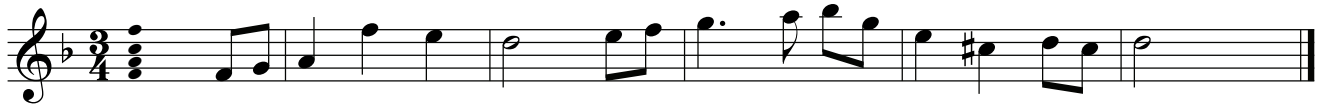


Grade Five

Rhythm

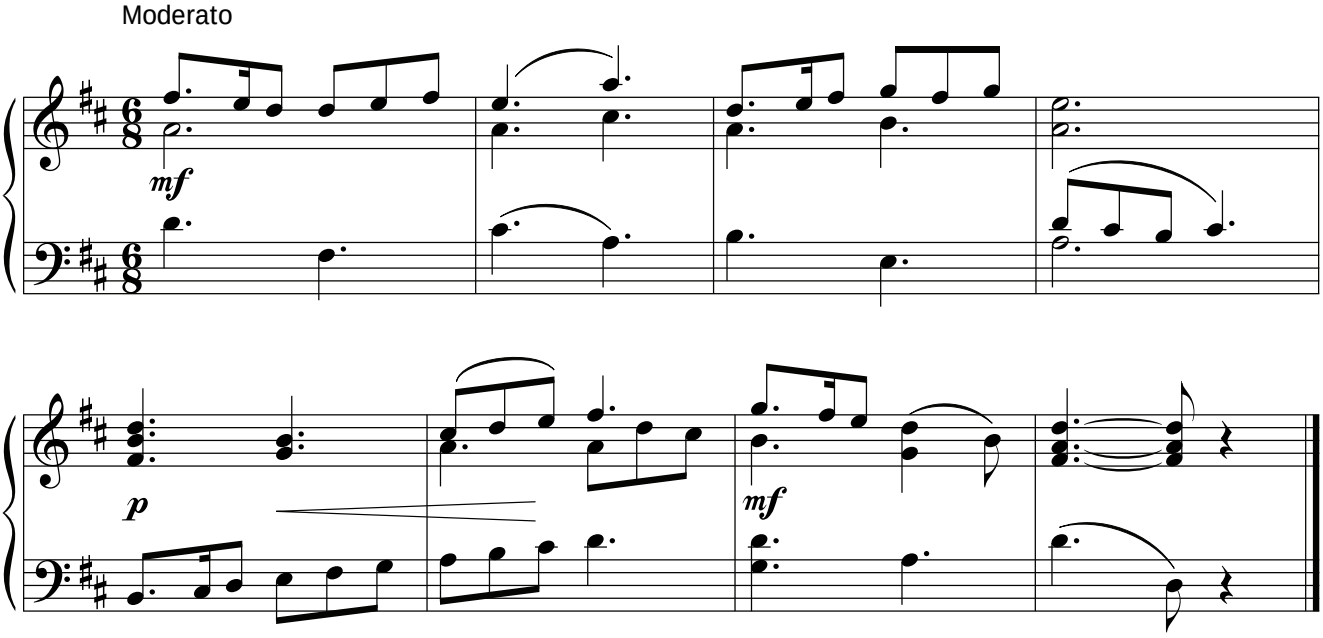
Test 1a [2 marks]

Beat (conduct) time, with a clear and correct beat shape (conducting pattern), according to the time signature of the music, in time with the examiner's playing, as the examiner plays a short passage of music.

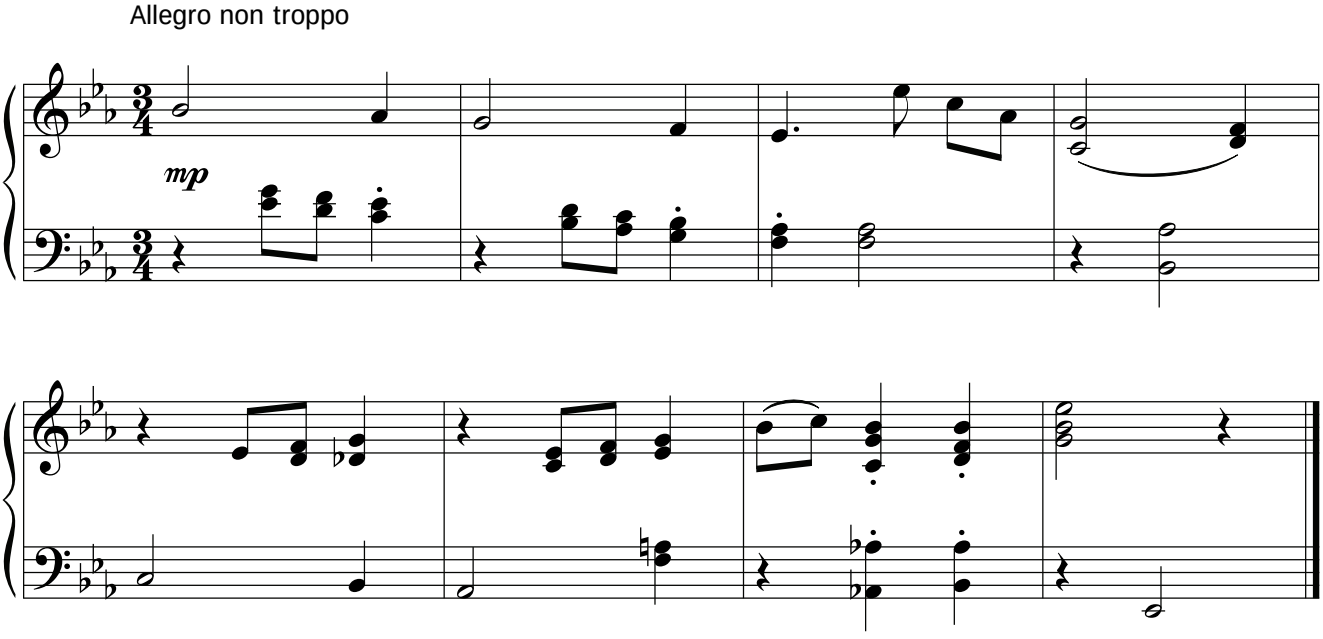
The passage will be in $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{4}{4}$, $\frac{6}{8}$ or $\frac{6}{4}$ time. Passages in $\frac{6}{8}$ or $\frac{6}{4}$ time should be conducted with a 2-beat or 6-beat pattern as appropriate.

The test may be played twice.

i)

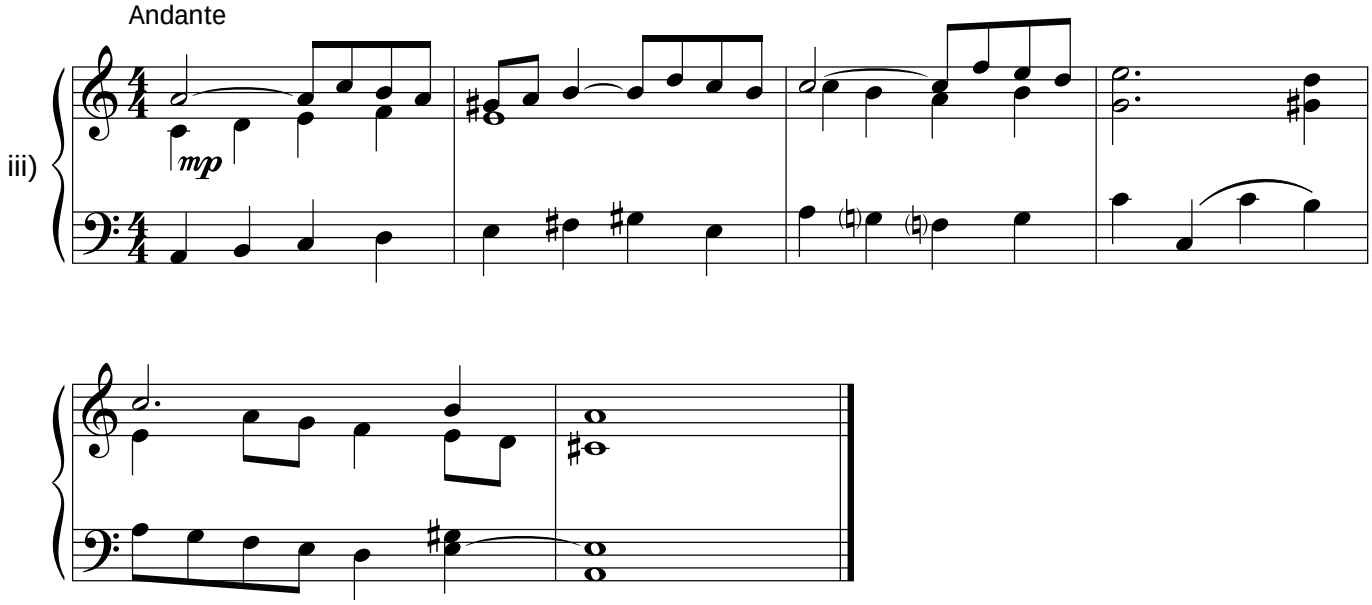


ii)



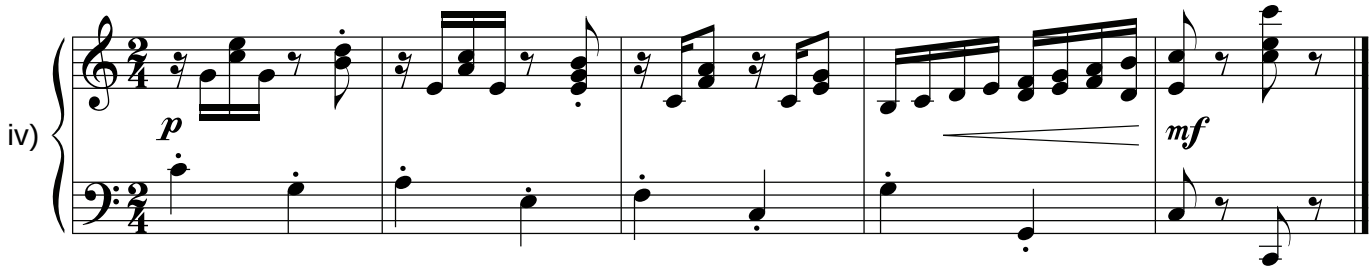
Andante

iii)



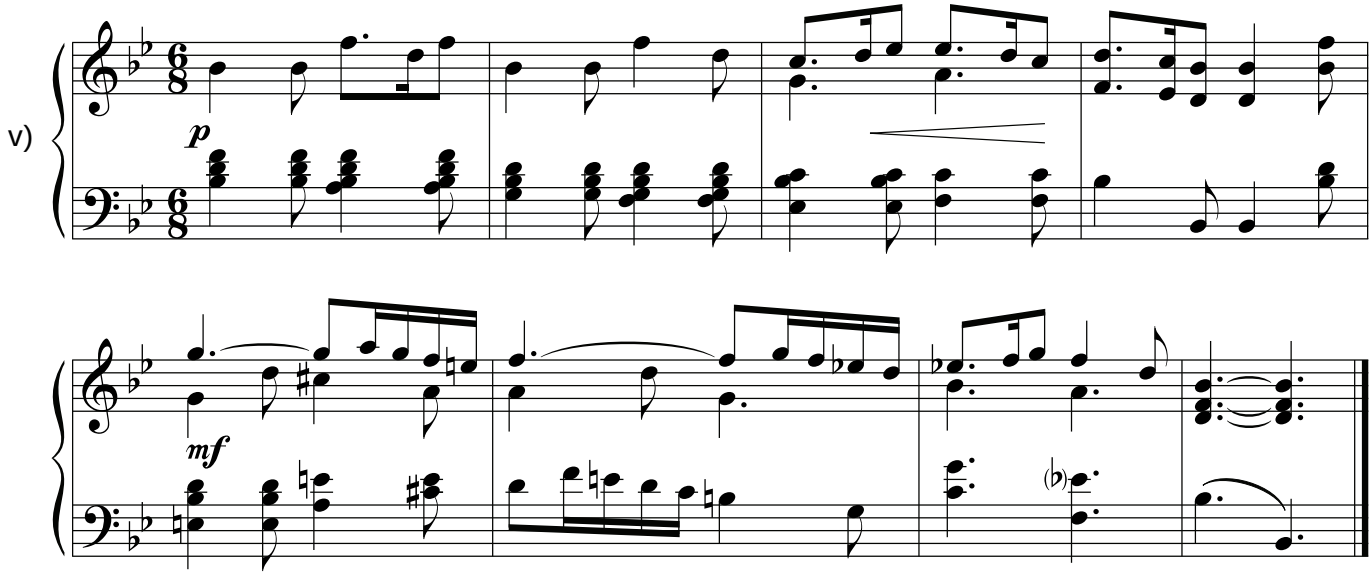
Scherzando

iv)



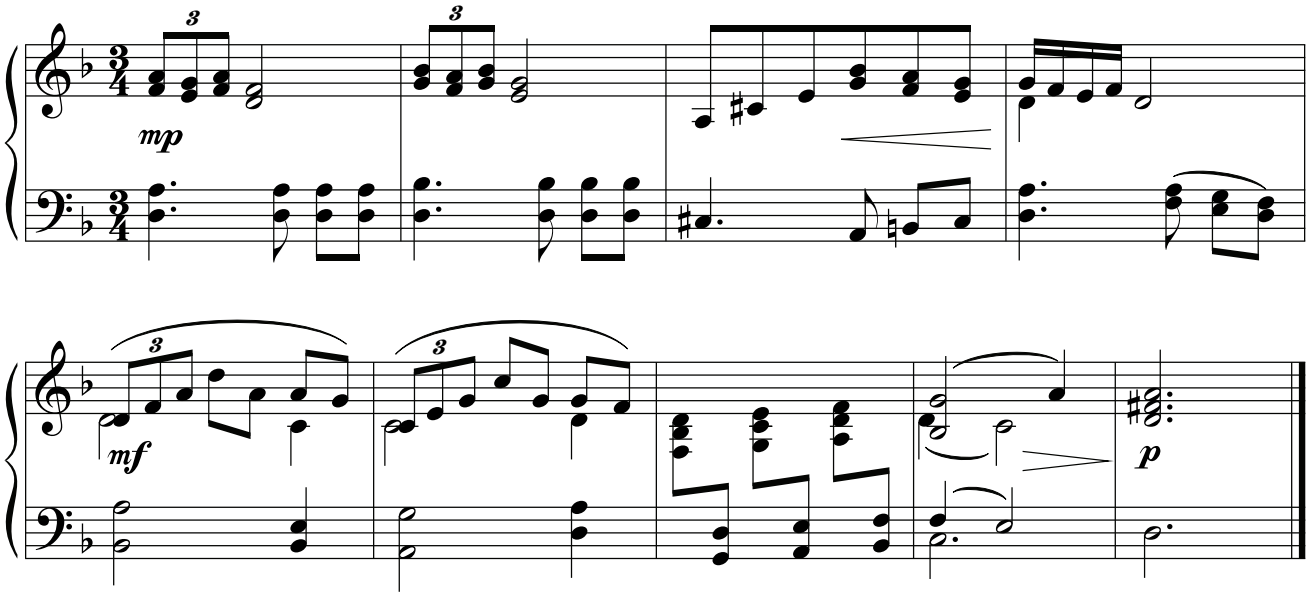
Sostenuto

v)



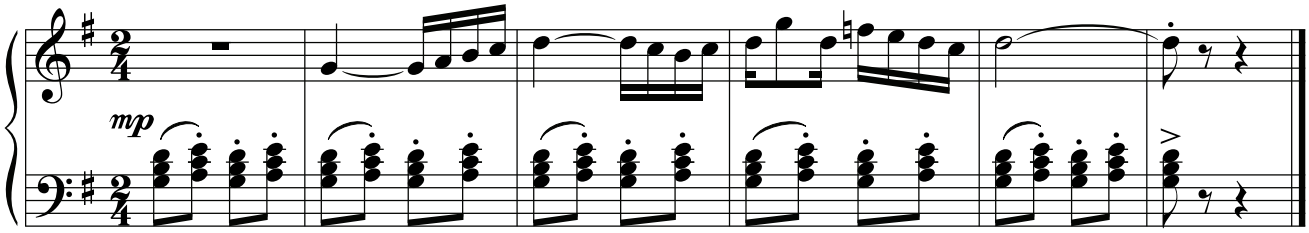
vi)

Moderato con espress.



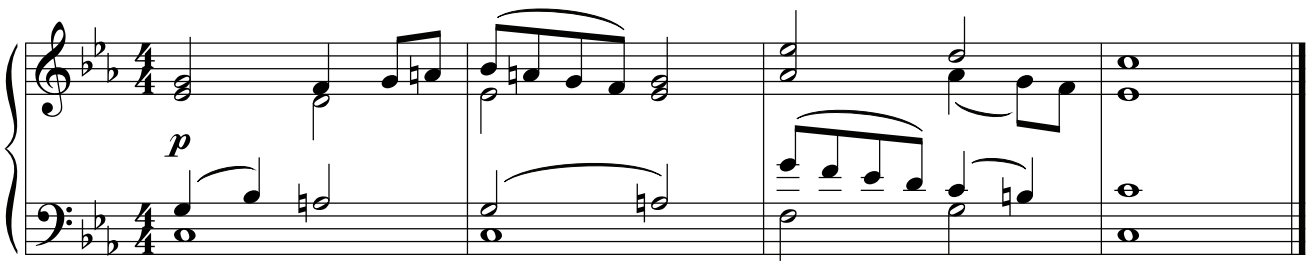
vii)

Moderato con moto



viii)

Poco lento



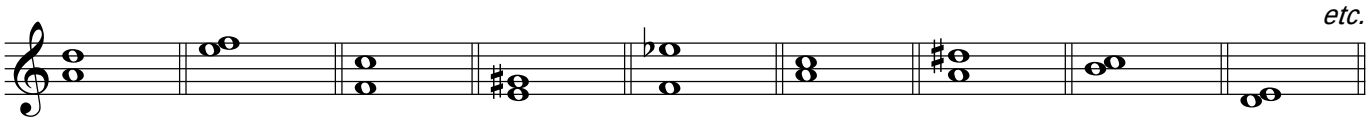
Test 1b [2 marks]

Identify and describe the note values (rhythmic values of the notes) in a two-bar phrase taken from the above test (crotchet, quaver, etc.). The phrase will be played twice, in an unharmonised version.

Pitch

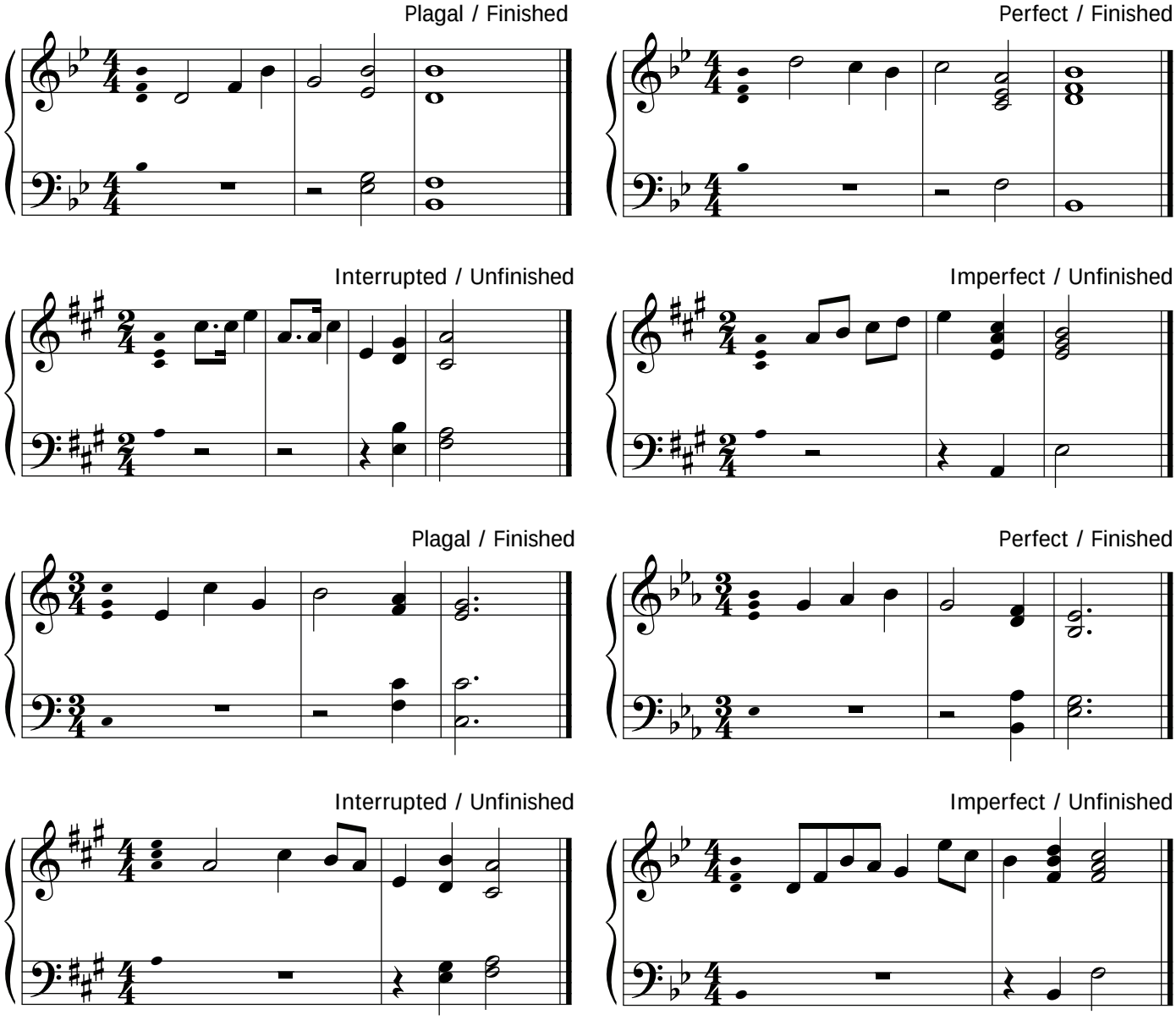
Test 2a: Intervals [2 marks]

Identify any major, minor or perfect interval within an octave, including the augmented 4th / diminished 5th, by numerical value and type. The interval will be played twice with the pitches sounded together. (2 examples.)



Test 2b: Cadences [2 marks]

These will be played as two chords at the end of a short unaccompanied melody of approximately 2 bars in length. They may be identified as **'finished'** (perfect and plagal) or **'unfinished'** (imperfect or interrupted) or by their conventional names. (Two examples.)
The key-chord will be sounded before each example.



Grade Six

Rhythm and Pitch

Test 1 [6 marks]

A harmonised passage in simple time of not more than six bars, containing some syncopated patterns, will be played, twice.

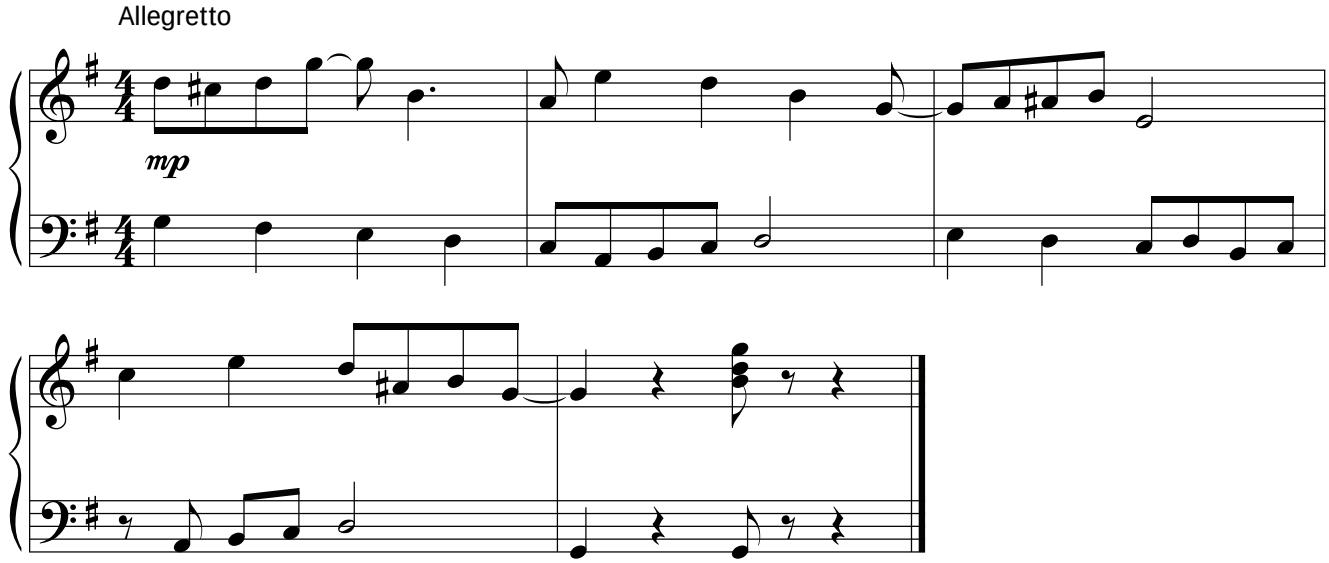
Candidates will be asked to:

1(a) identify the time signature (1 mark).
1(b) identify whether the passage is in a major or minor key (1 mark).
1(c) identify, by number and type, any interval within the octave, occurring in the melody-line between two succeeding notes. These pitches will be played again, first as occurring in the melody, and then with the pitches sounded together (1 mark).

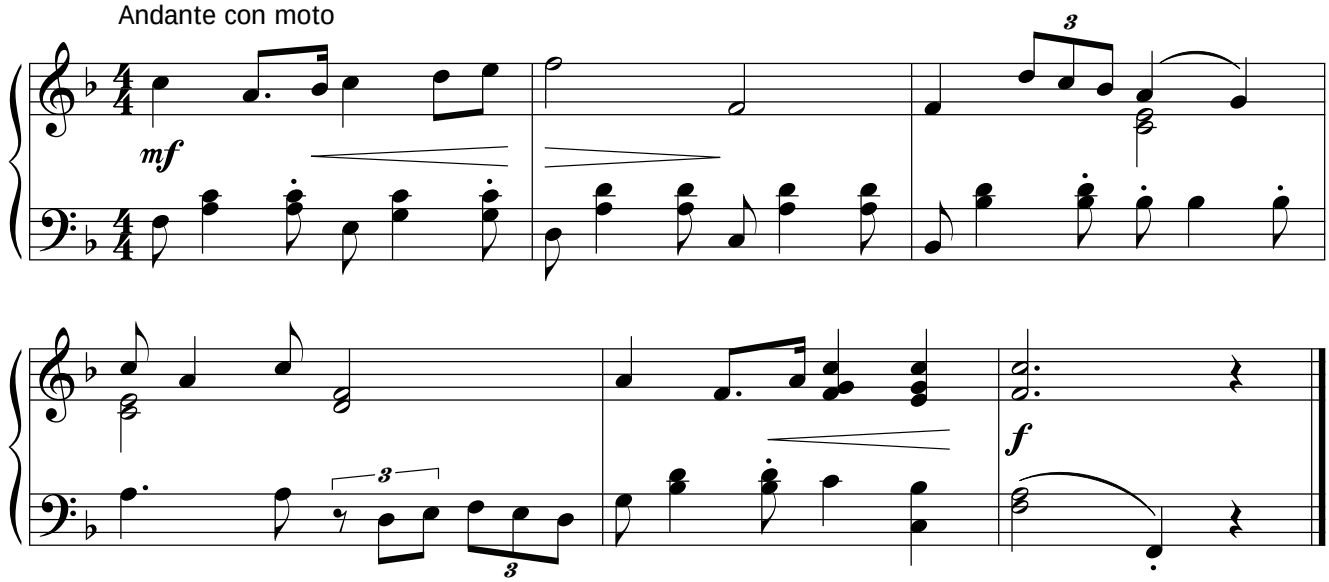
A short phrase from the passage, of 1-2 bars in length, will be played again in an unharmonised version. Candidates will be asked to:

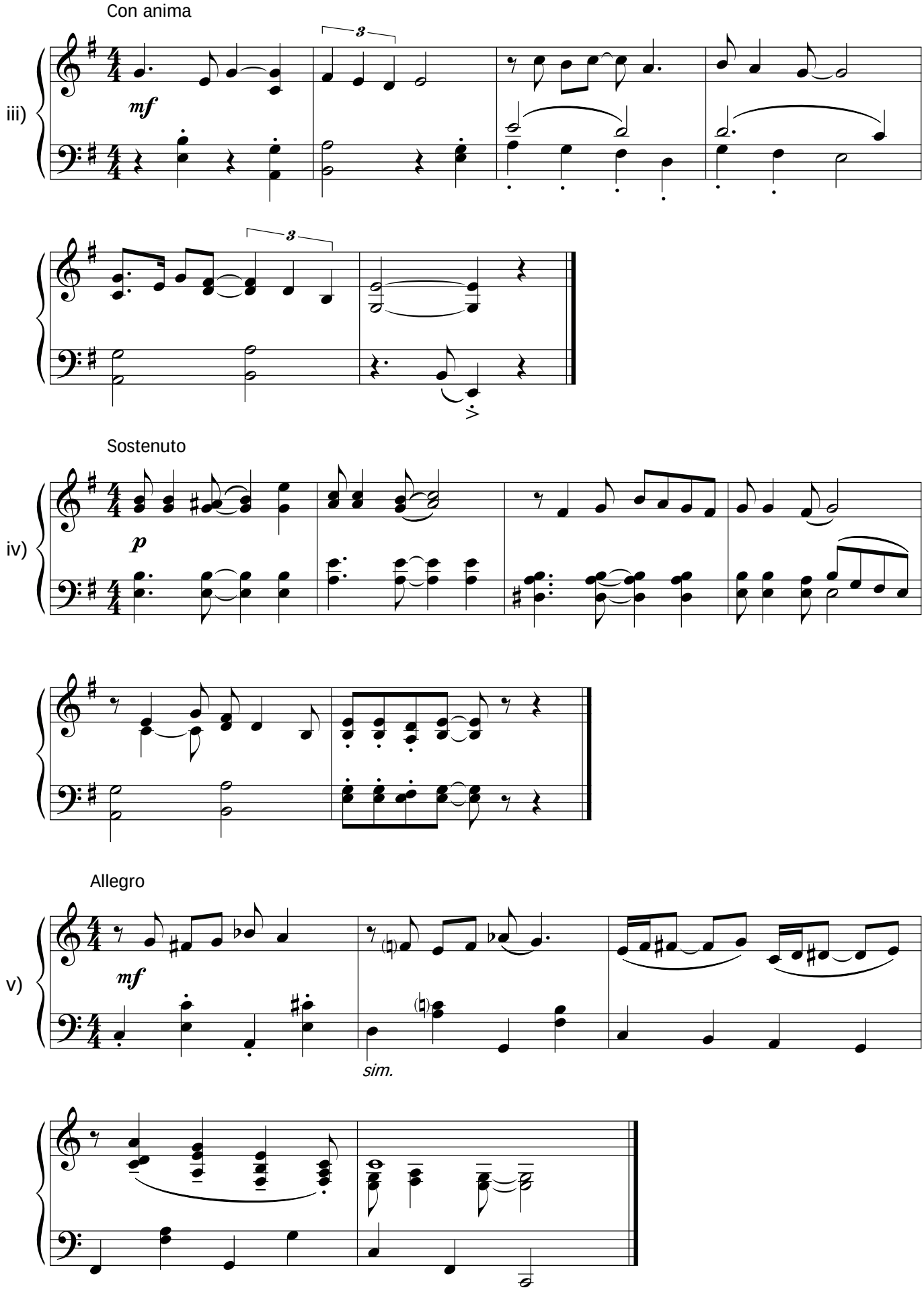
1(d) clap or tap back the rhythm of the phrase (1 mark).
1(e) identify and describe the note values (rhythmic values) in the phrase (2 marks).

i)



ii)

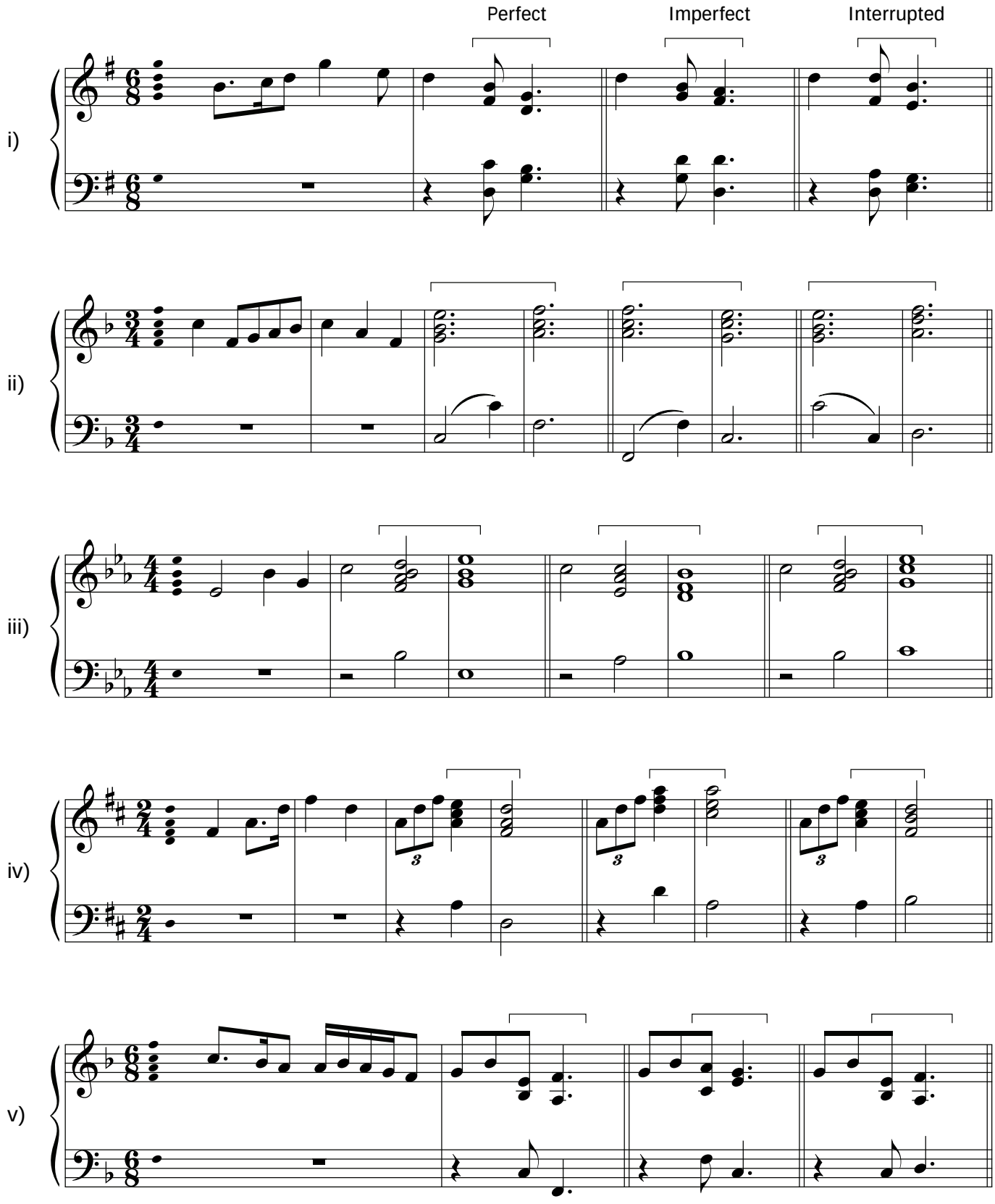


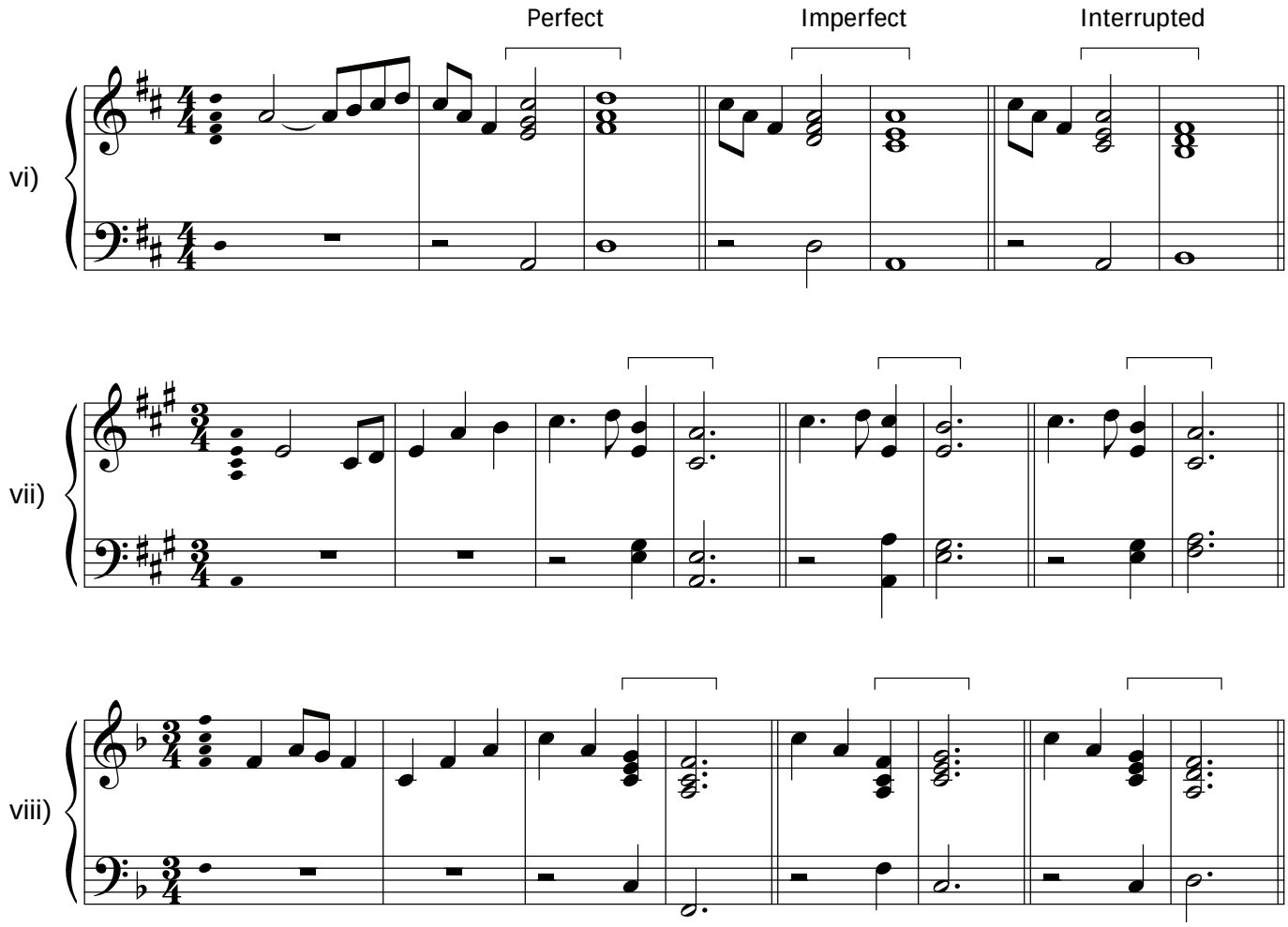

Con anima
iii)
mf
3
3
Sostenuto
iv)
p
Allegro
v)
mf
sim.

Pitch

Test 2a [1 mark]

Identify a perfect, imperfect or interrupted cadence by name. This will be in a major key and in the form of two block chords at the end of a short melody.
(The key chord will be sounded before the test.)

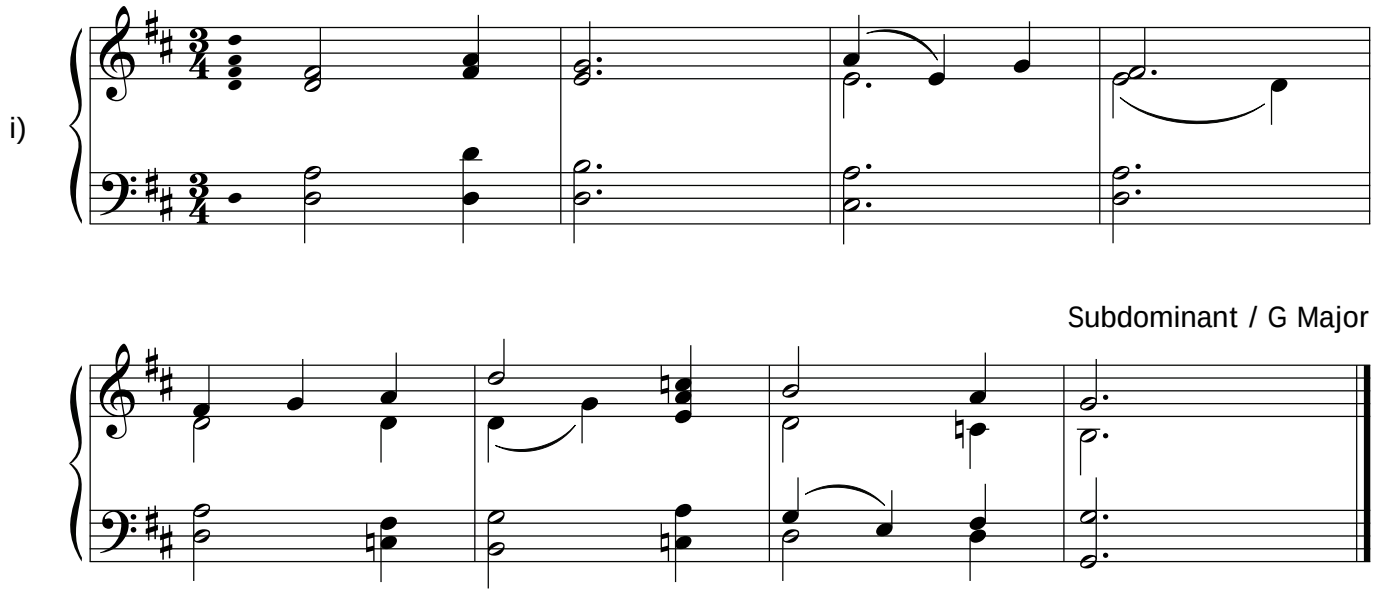




Test 2b [1 mark]

Identify the key into which a passage has modulated, either by name or by relationship to the home key. Modulations will be restricted to subdominant, dominant and relative minor from a major key opening.

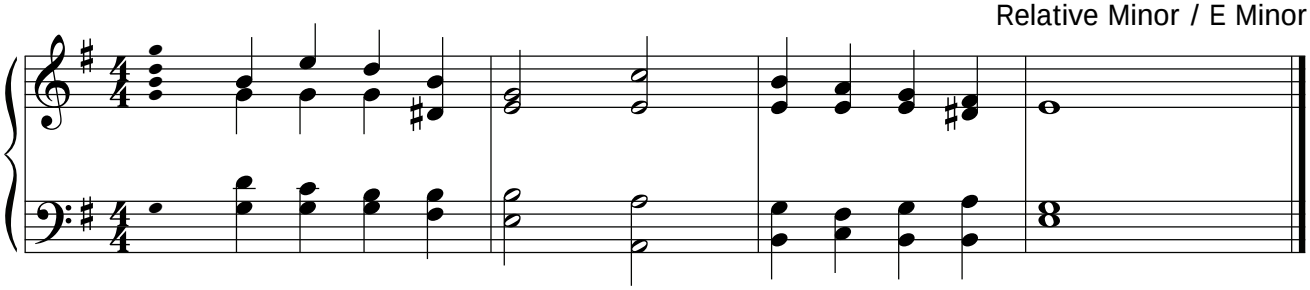
The key chord will be sounded and named before the test.



Subdominant / G Major

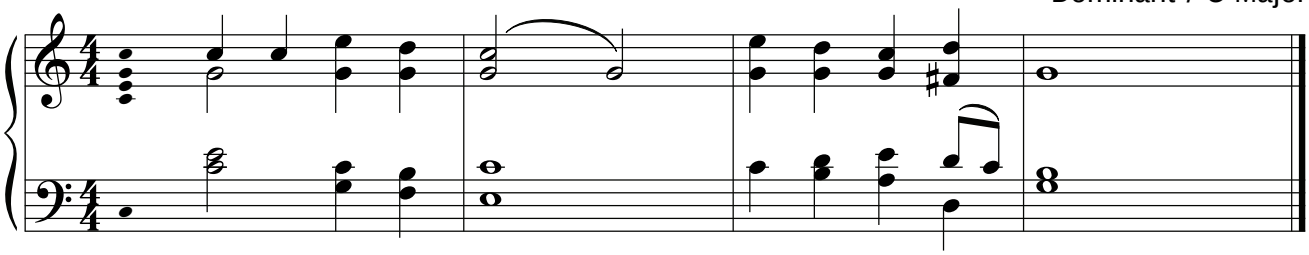
Relative Minor / E Minor

ii)



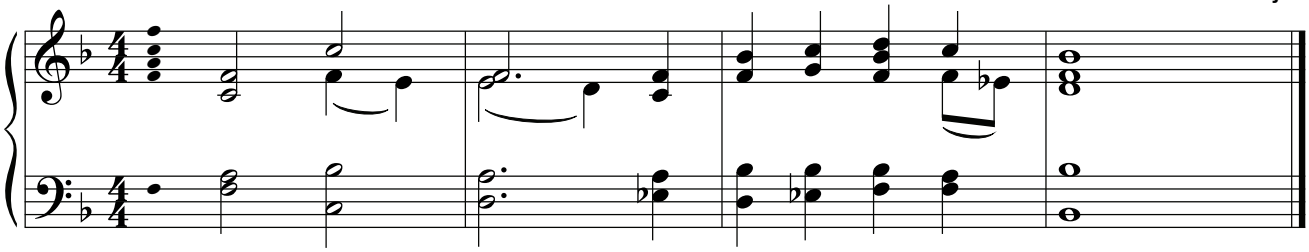
Dominant / G Major

iii)



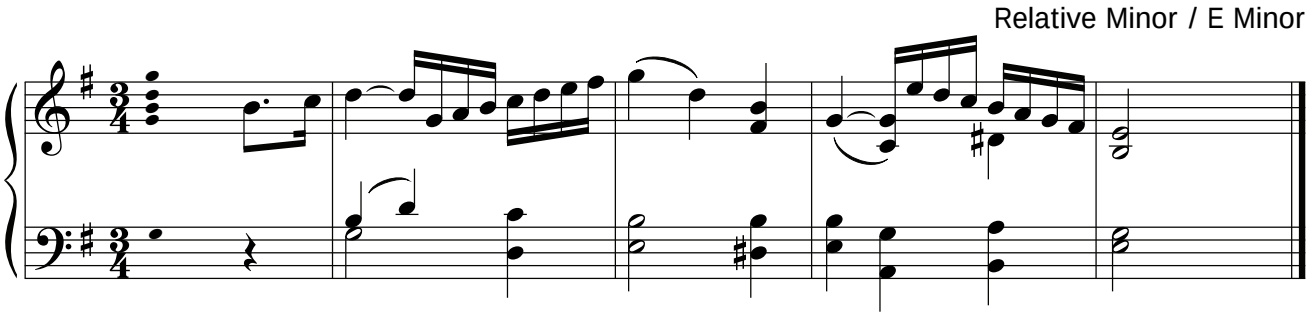
Subdominant / B♭ Major

iv)



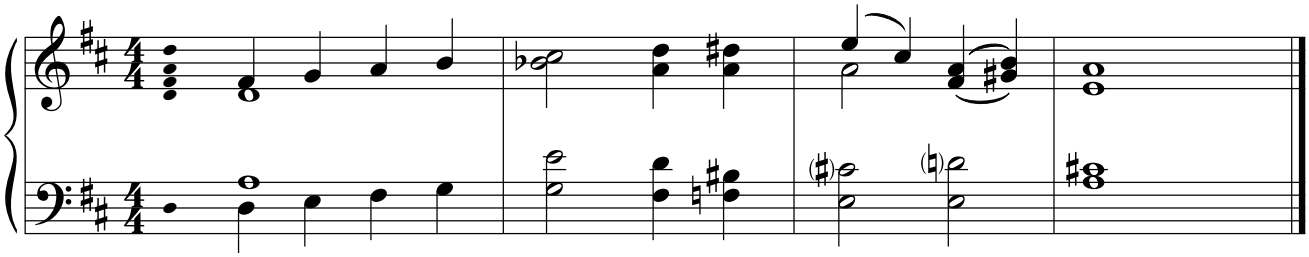
Relative Minor / E Minor

v)



Dominant / A Major

vi)



Grade Seven

Rhythm

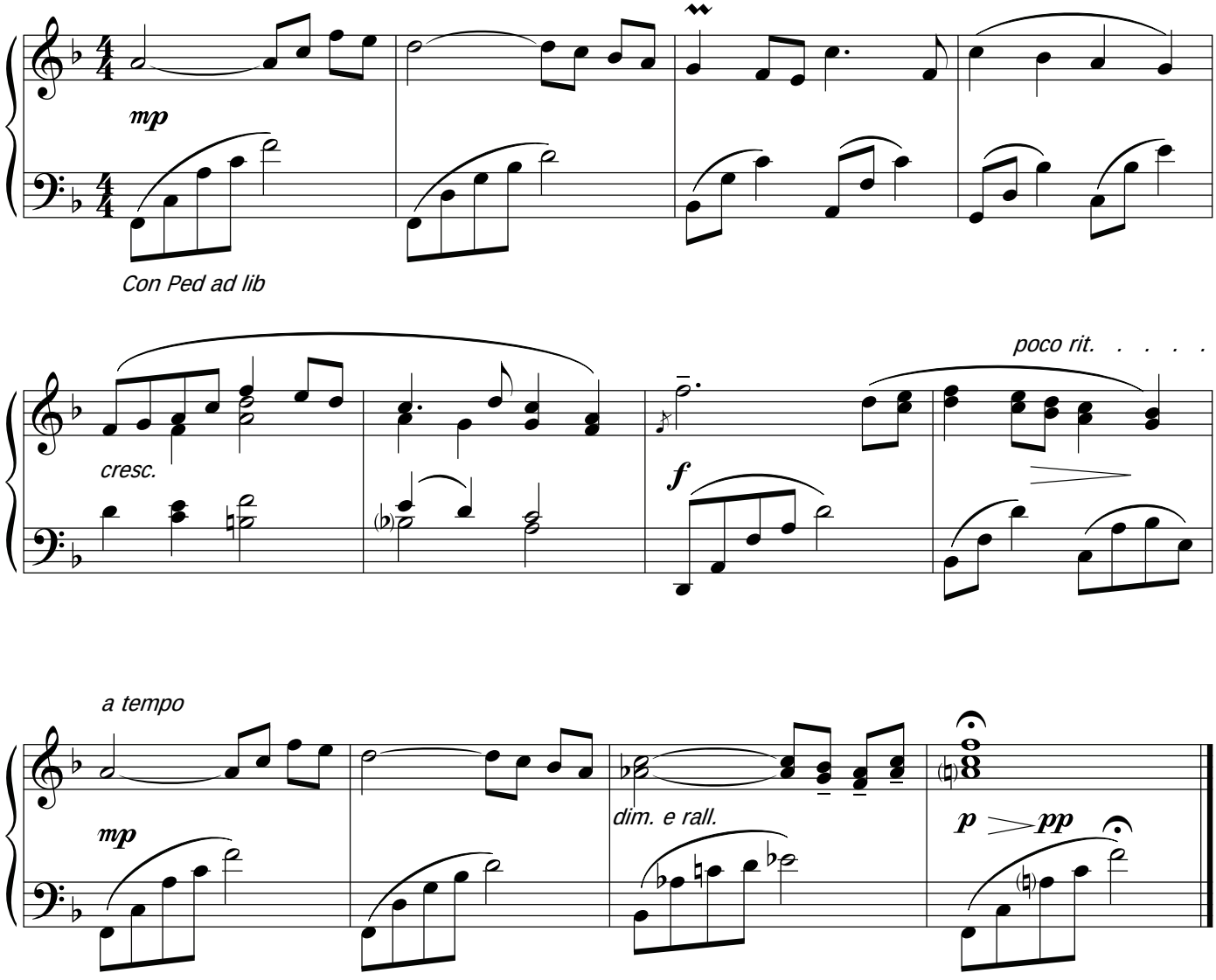
Test 1a [2 marks]

A harmonised passage of approximately 12 to 16 bars, in either simple or compound time, will be played, once.

Candidates will be asked a selection of the following:

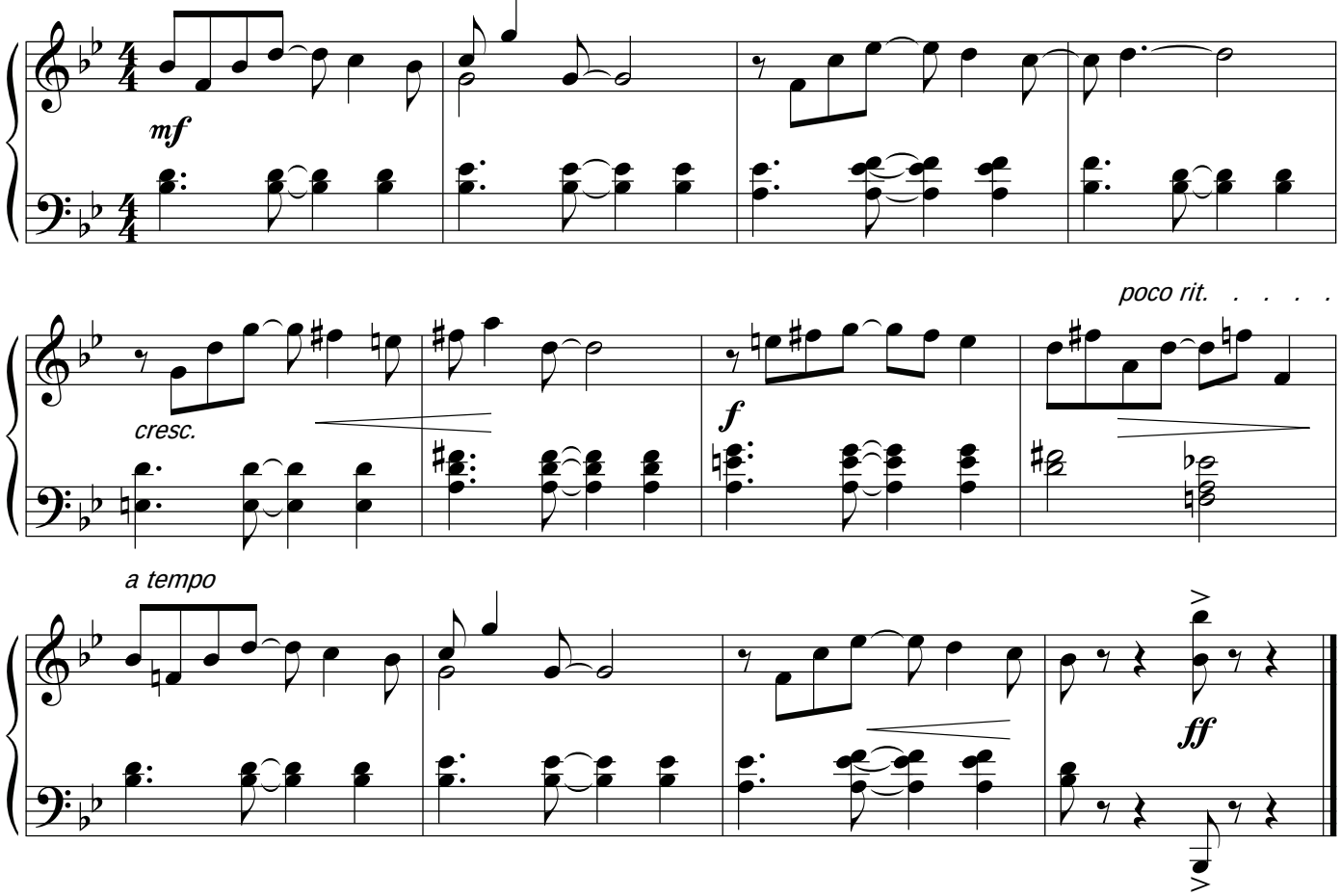
- to identify the time signature
- to identify whether the passage is in a major or minor key
- to describe the overall form (this will be limited to AB, ABA, AAB, ABAB, AABA)
- to describe the overall dynamics

i) Andante con espress. ♩ = 96



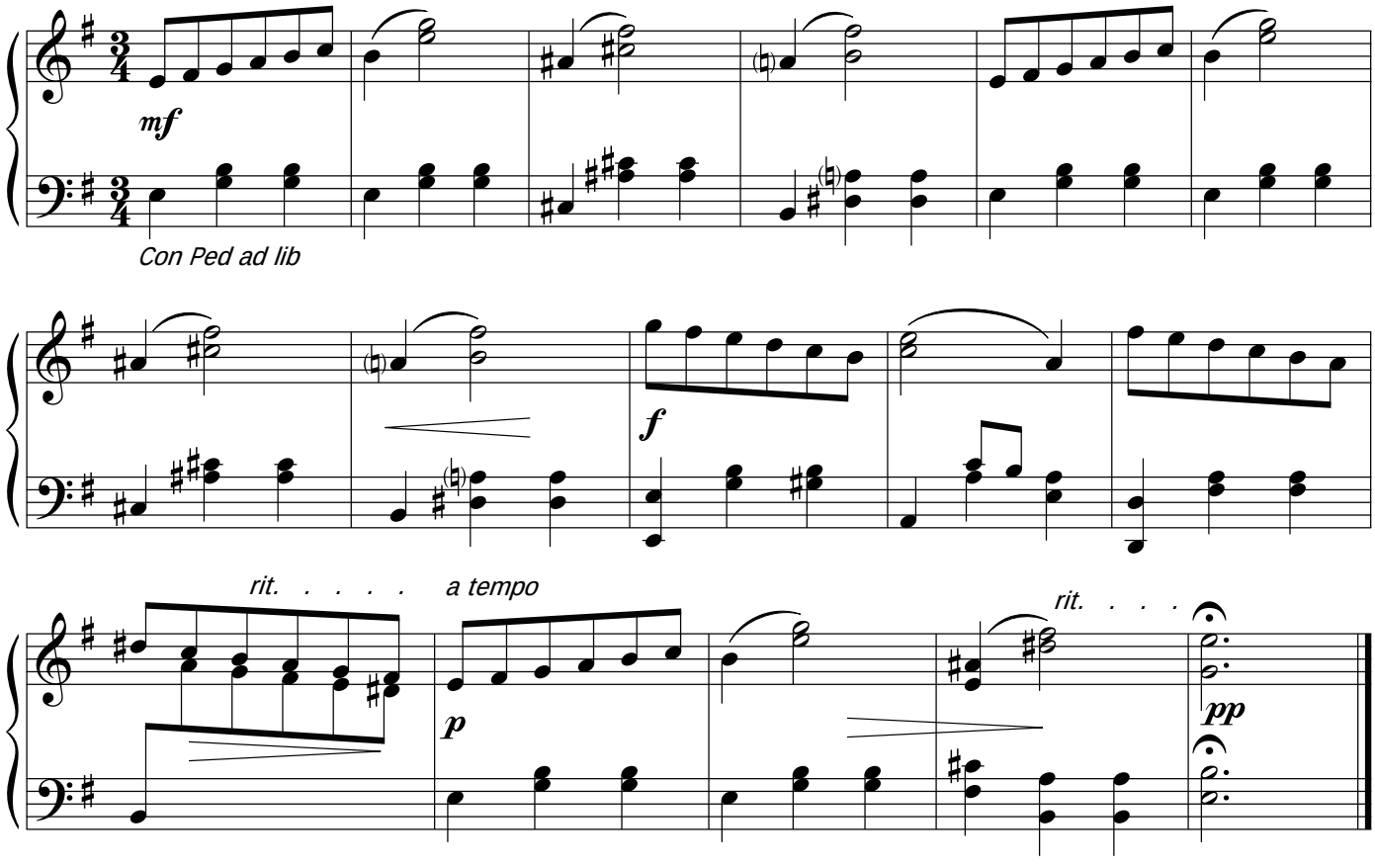
[Form: ABA (or ABA')]

ii) Allegro ♩ = 120



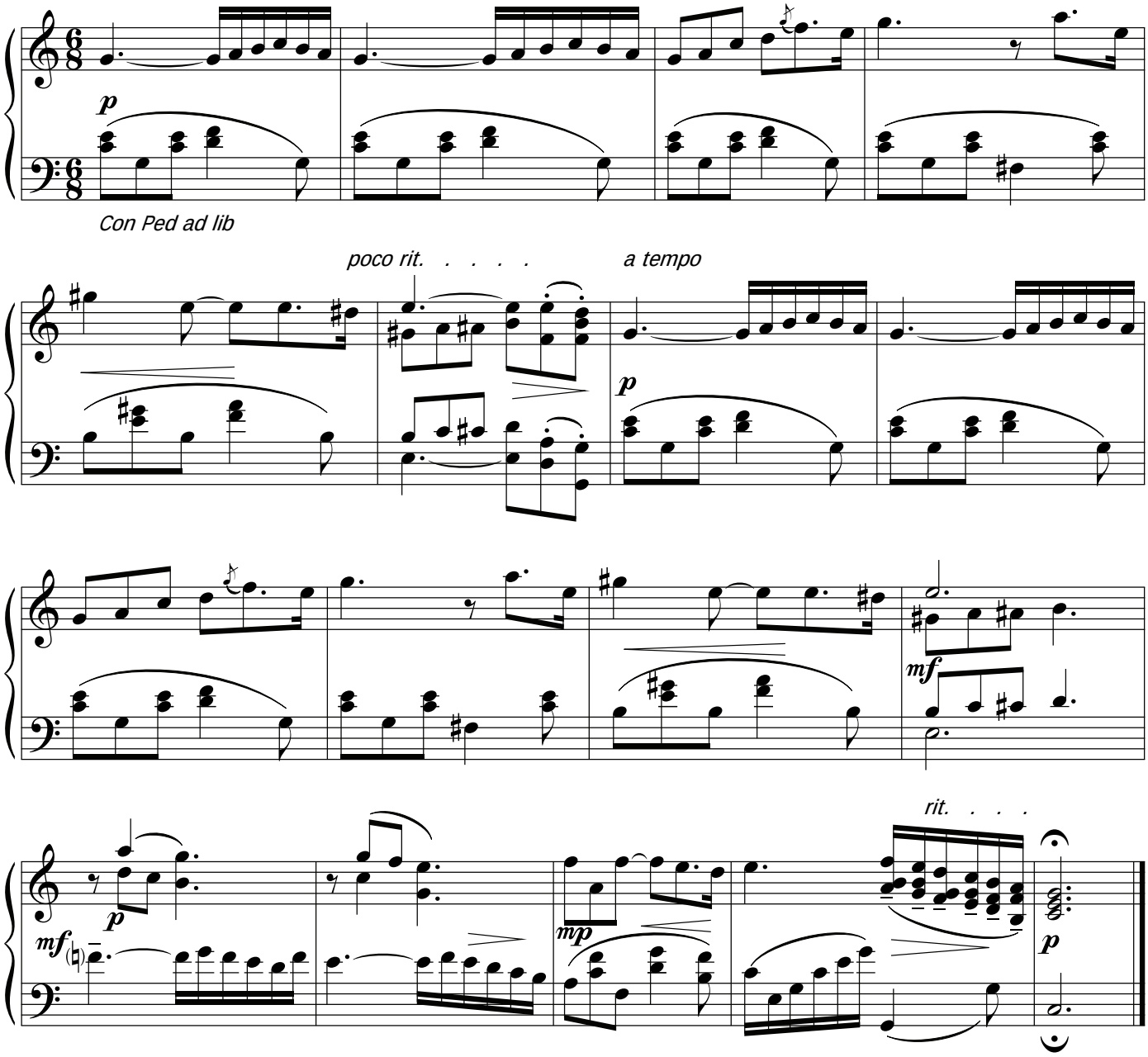
[Form: ABA]

iii) Moderato



[Form: AABA]

iv) Rubato con espr. ♪ = 108



[Form: AAB]

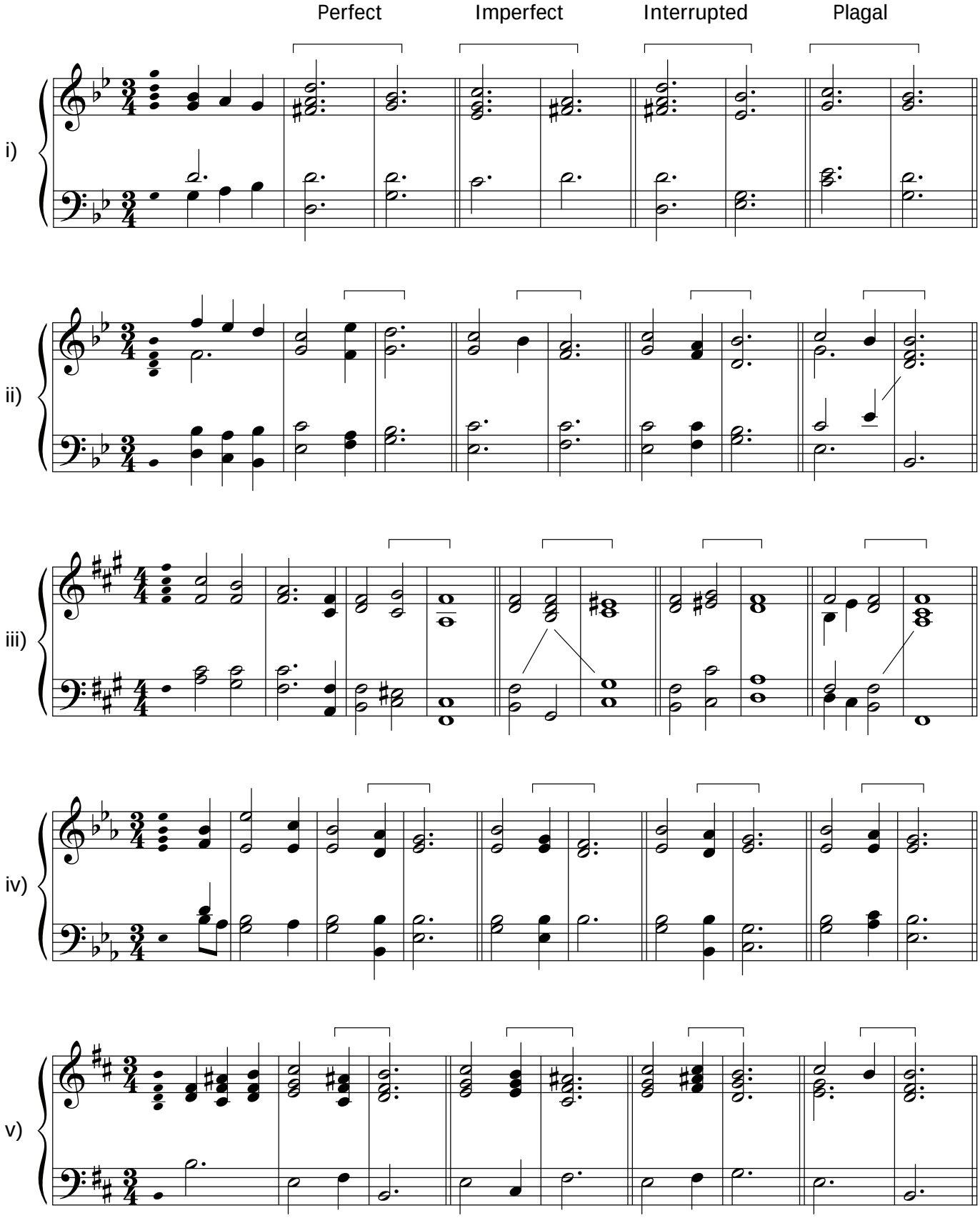
Test 1b [4 marks]

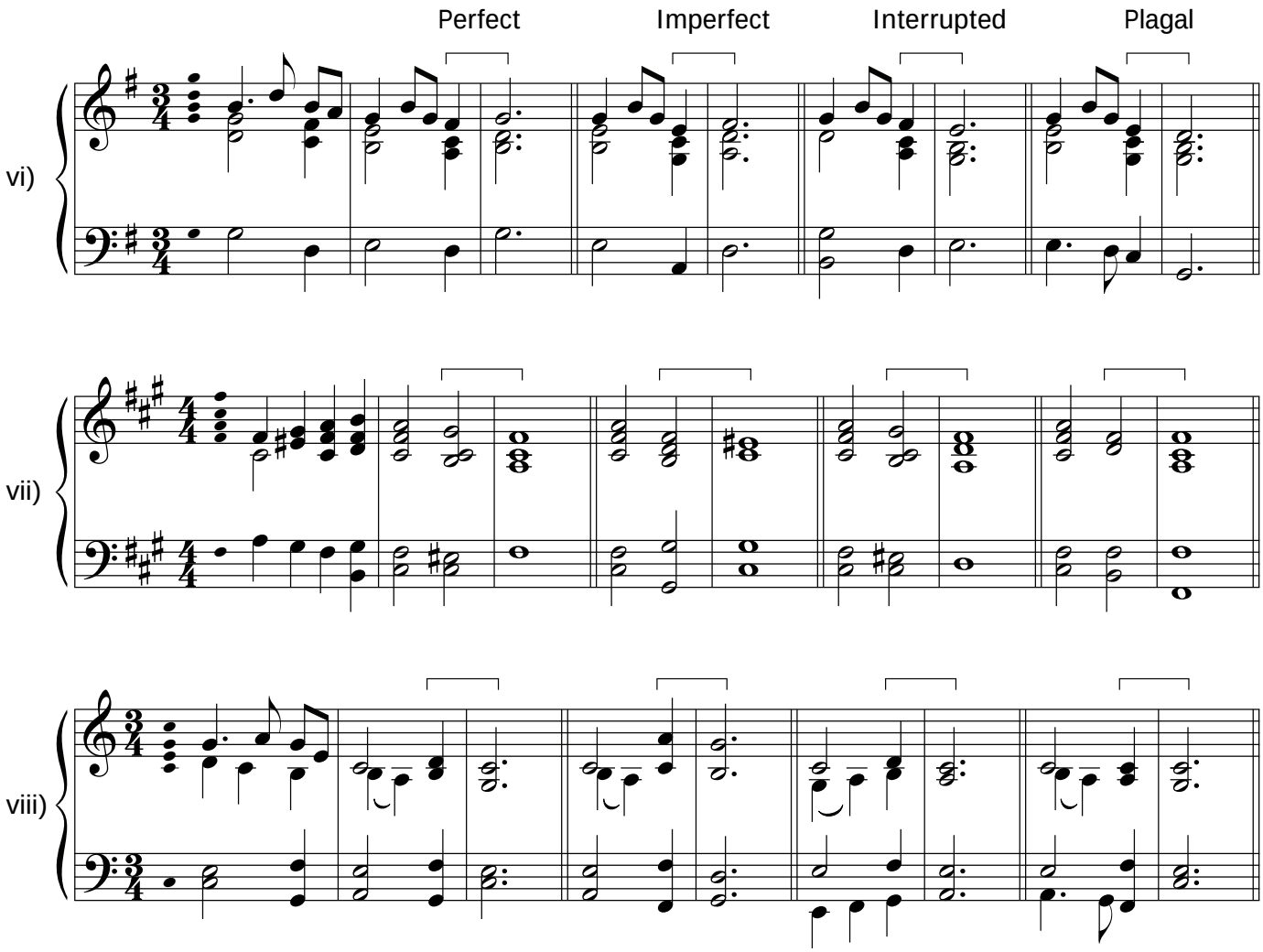
The candidate will be given a copy of the score, without phrasing, tempo, articulation or dynamic markings. The passage will be played once again in full; further shorter sections may also be played again. Candidates will be asked a selection of the following:

- to suggest an appropriate tempo marking
- to describe changes in tempo
- to name the key
- to describe phrasing patterns
- to describe dynamics
- to describe articulation
- to identify modulations
- to identify ornaments
- to confirm their description of the form.

Test 2 [2 marks]

The key-chord of a major or minor key will be sounded. A short harmonised passage in the same key, of approximately 2 bars in length, will be played, finishing with a harmonised cadence (perfect, imperfect, plagal or interrupted) in the home key. Candidates will be asked to identify the cadence by its conventional name.
(2 examples.)

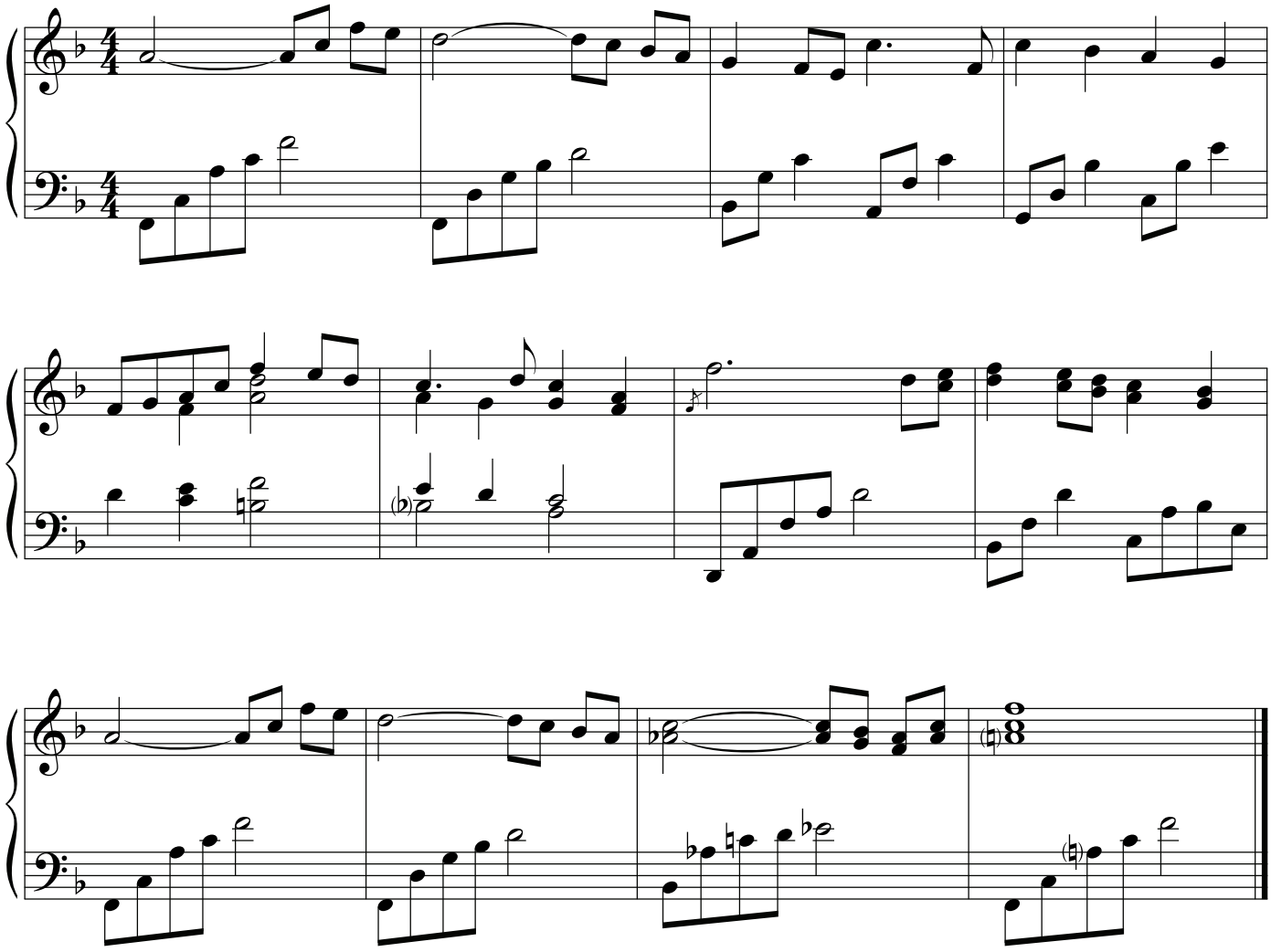



Perfect
Imperfect
Interrupted
Plagal
vi)
vii)
viii)

Candidate Copy: Grade Seven

Test 1b

i)



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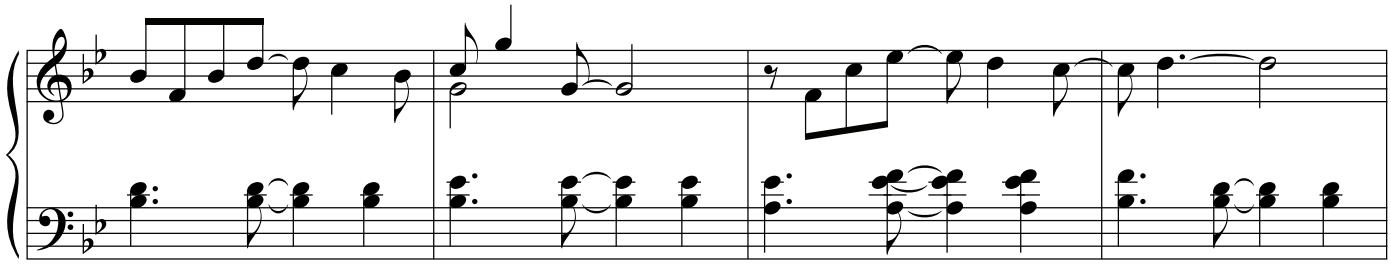
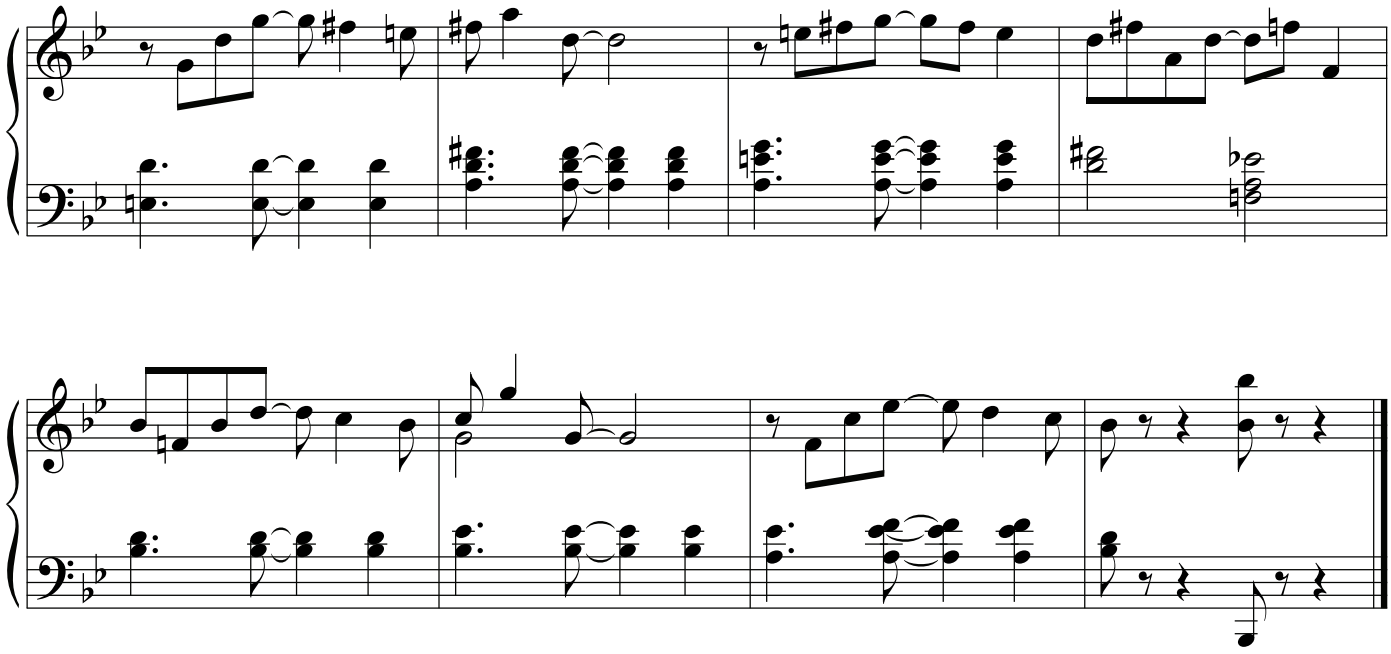
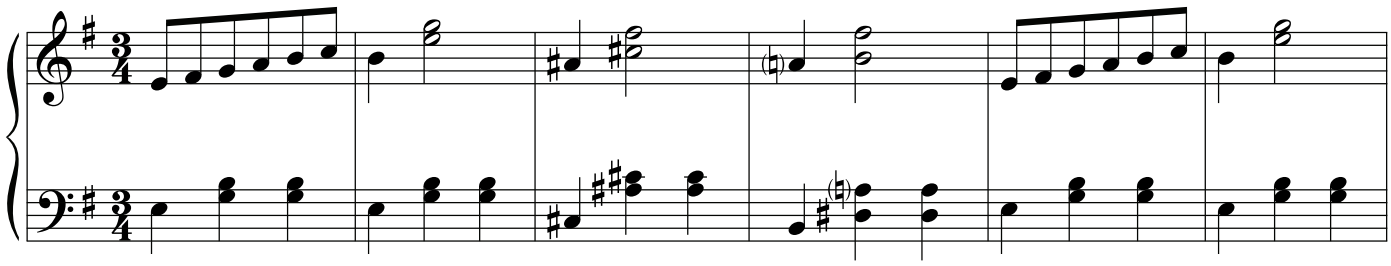
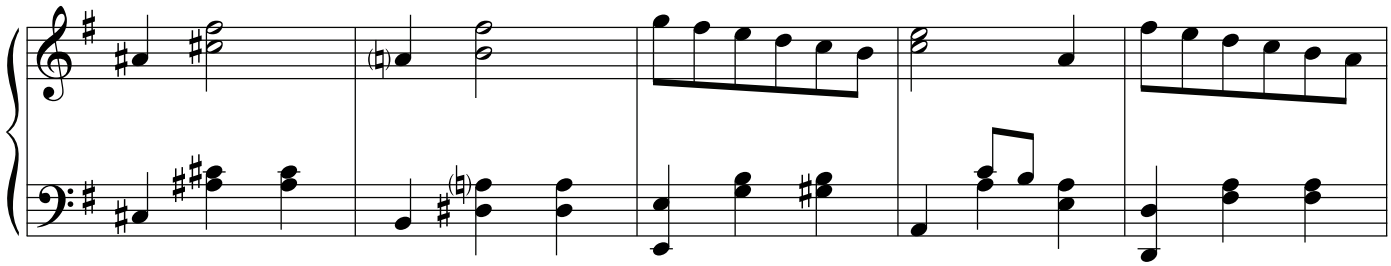
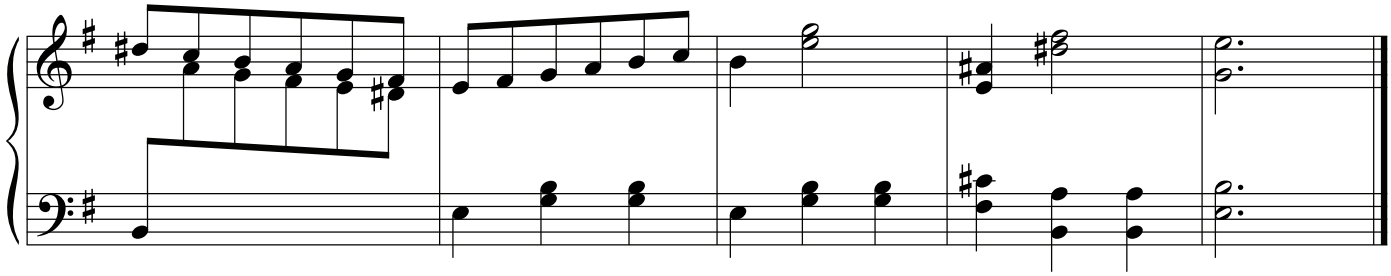




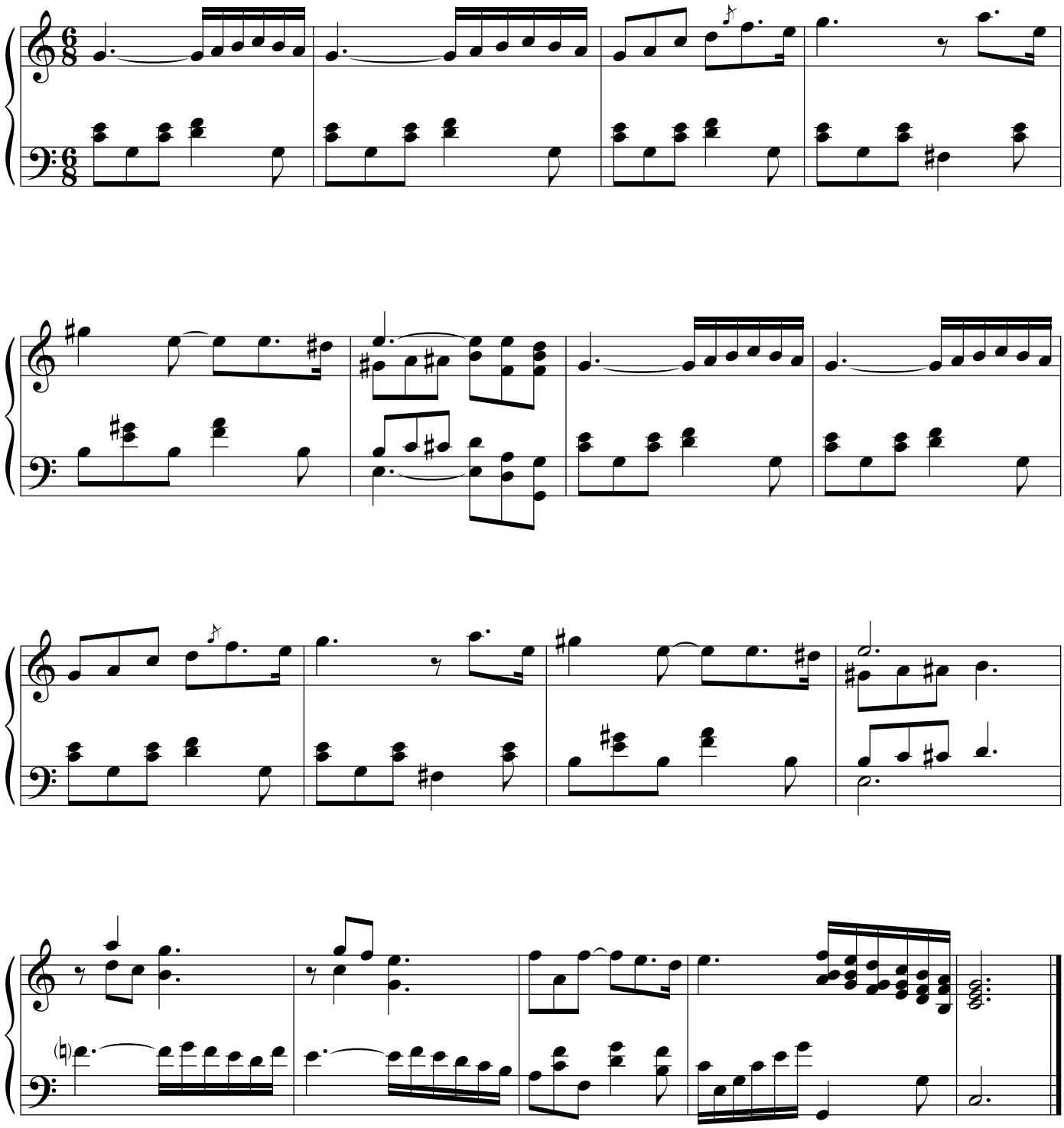
iii)







iv)



Grade Eight

Test 1 [4 marks]

A harmonised passage of approximately 12 to 16 bars, in either simple or compound time, will be played, once.

Candidates will be asked a selection of the following:

- to identify the time signature;
- to identify whether the passage is in a major or minor key;
- to suggest an appropriate tempo marking;
- to describe and identify any particularly noticeable aspects of the dynamics, phrasing, articulation, modulation, ornamentation, texture, etc. (examiners may play certain extracts from the passage again);
- to suggest a musical style (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Twentieth Century or Modern, Jazz / Popular);
- to identify any interval in the melodic line betwen two successive notes, up to and including a Major 10th (the two pitches will be played again, as occurring in the melody);
- to clap back, or identify and describe the note values (rhythmic values) of, a short phrase of 1-2 bars in duration, taken from the passage and played again in an unharmonised version;
- to identify a cadence, taken from the passage, played again by the examiner.

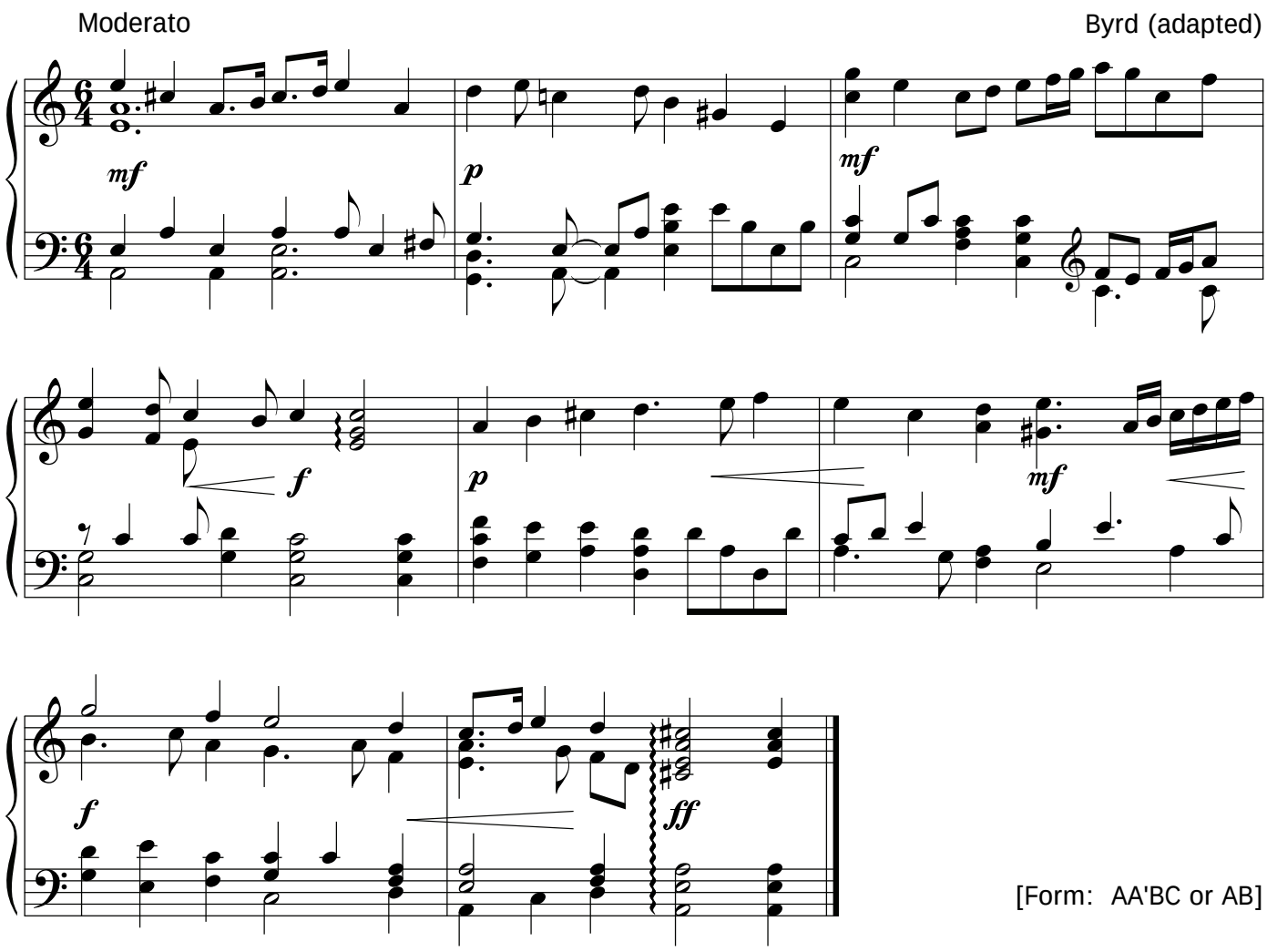
Test 2 [4 marks]

The candidate will be given a copy of the score, without phrasing, tempo, articulation or dynamic markings. The passage will be played once again in full; further shorter sections, of up to 4 bars in length, may also be played again, sometimes with changes in phrasing, tempo, articulation and/or dynamics.

Candidates will be asked a selection of the following:

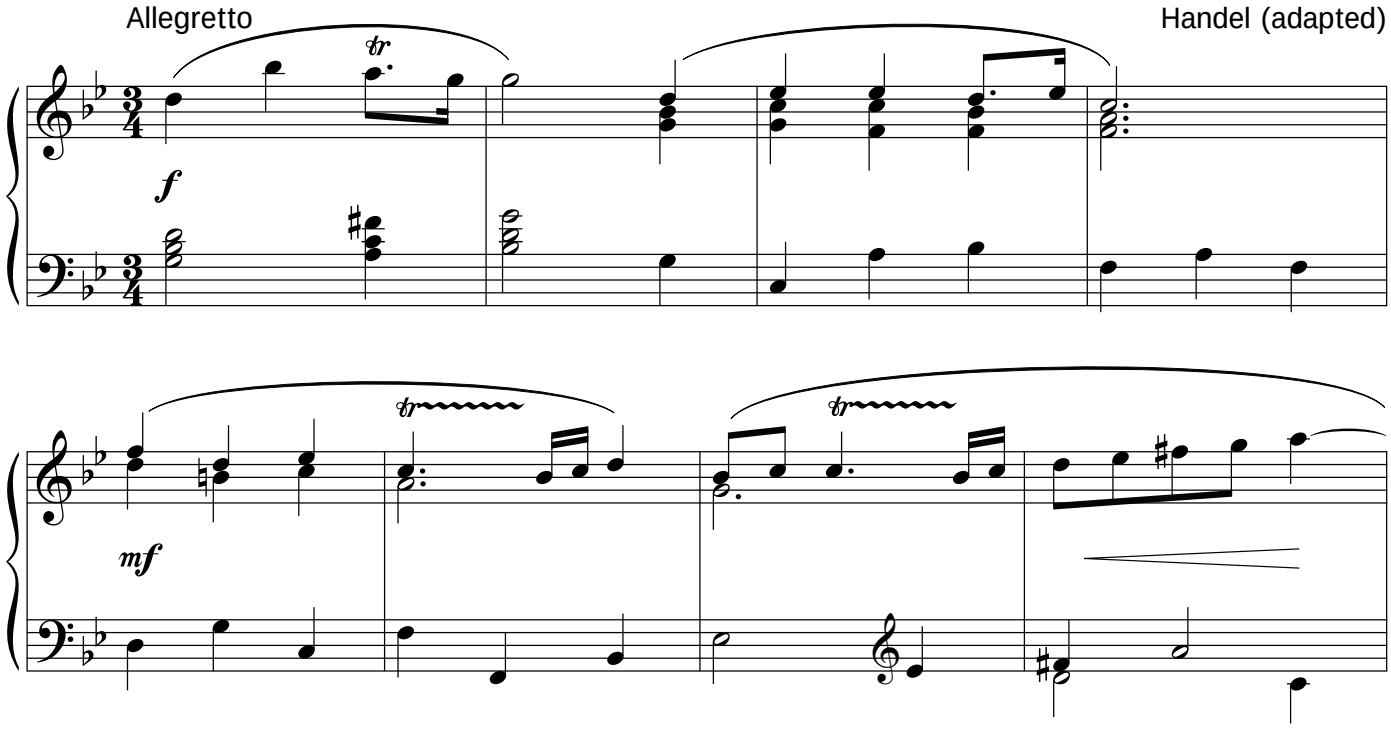
- to name the key
- to identify modulations
- to identify ornaments
- to describe the overall form (in addition to those specified for Grade 7, these may include ABCA, ABCBA, AA'BA, ABA'B, and similar structures, as well as more organic forms. or forms based on imitative or fugal structures);
- to identify simple melodic, rhythmic or harmonic devices, such as sequence, inversion, repetition, pedal points, augmentation/diminution, motivic development, etc.
- to identify changes in phrasing, tempo, articulation and/or dynamics, in short passages, of up to 2 bars in length, played in two different styles by the examiner.

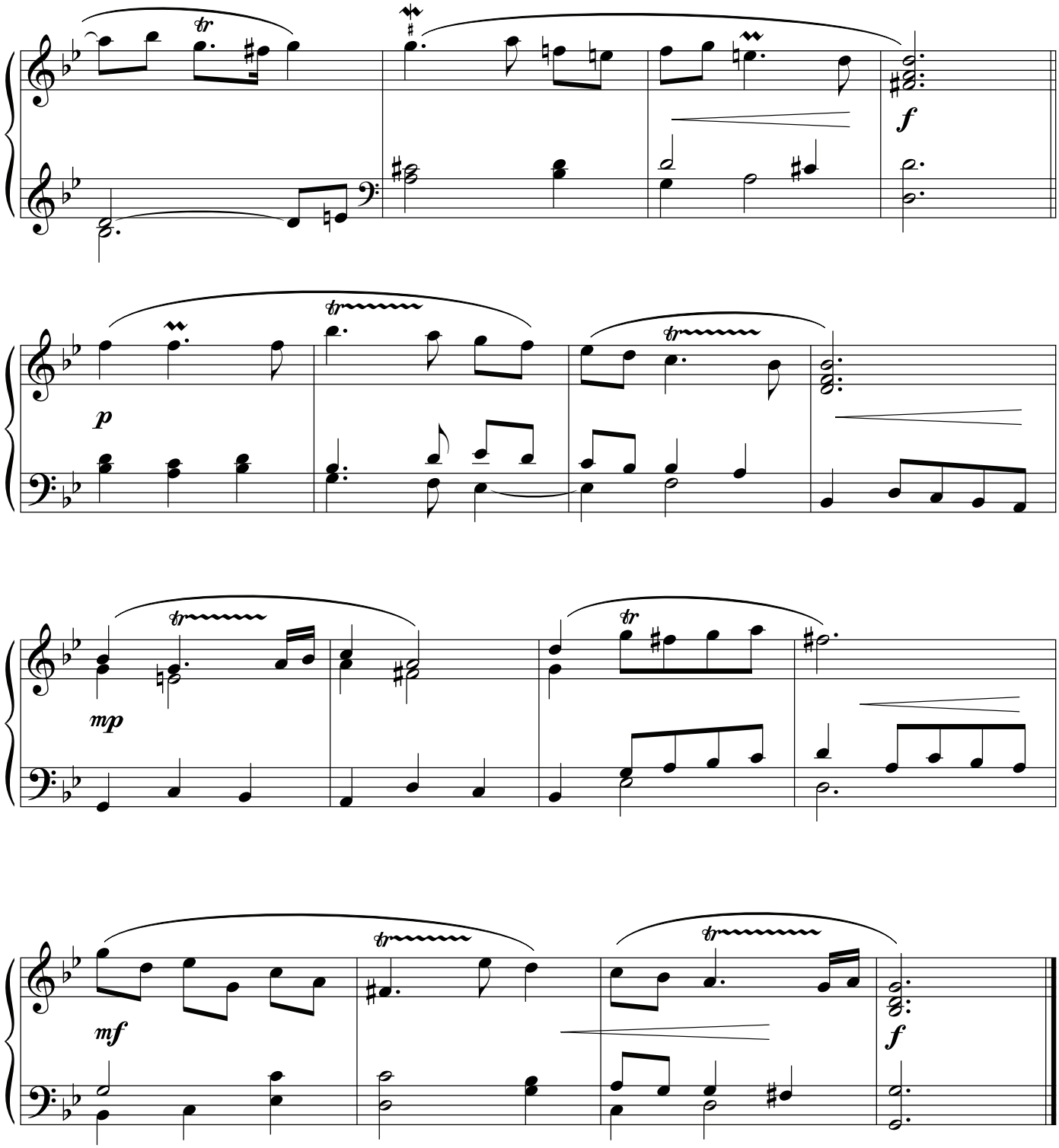
Example 1: Renaissance



[Form: AA'BC or AB]

Example 2: Baroque



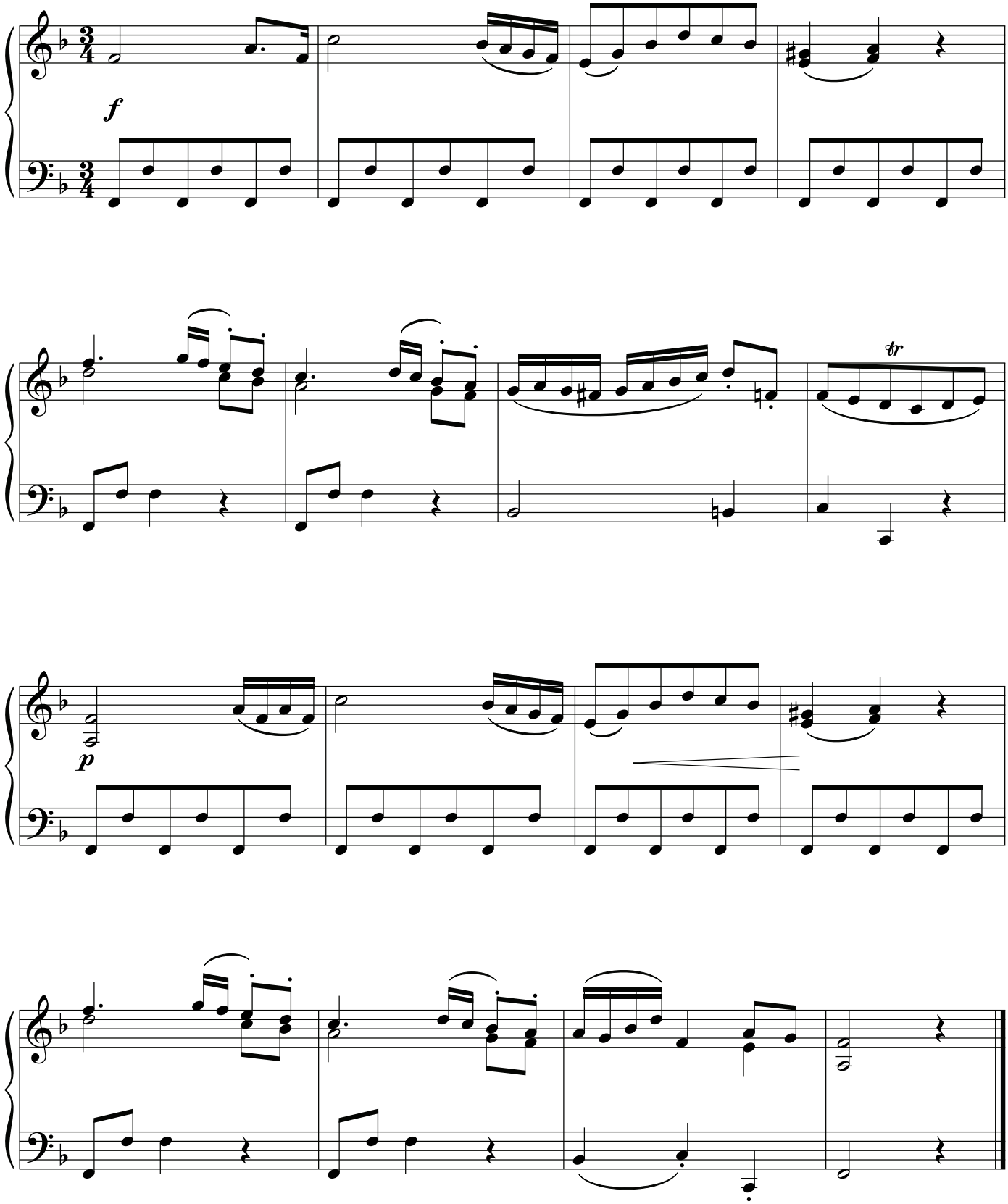


[Form: AB (Sarabande)]

Example 3: Classical

Clementi (adapted)

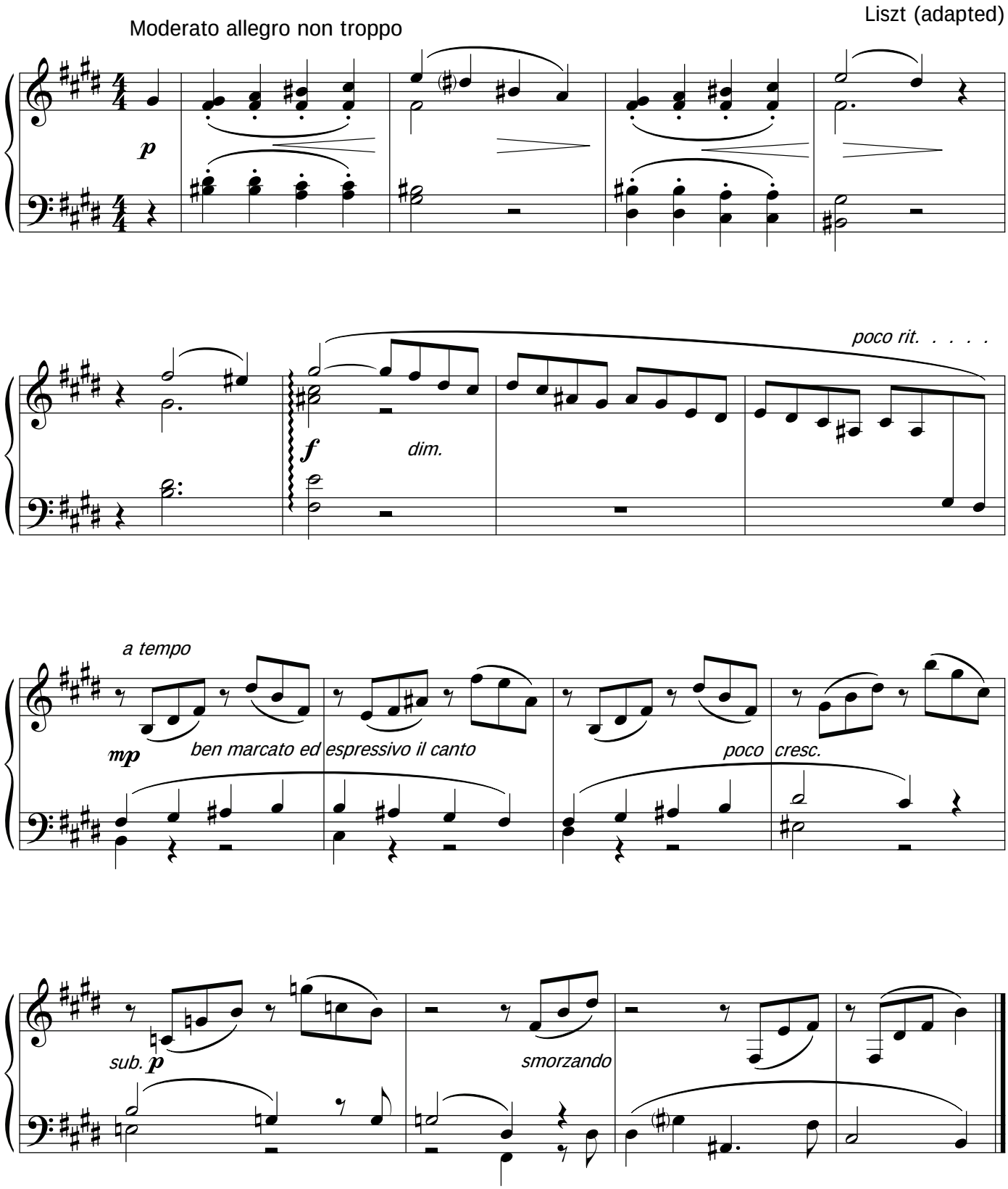
Con spirito



[Form: ABAB]

Example 4: Romantic

Liszt (adapted)

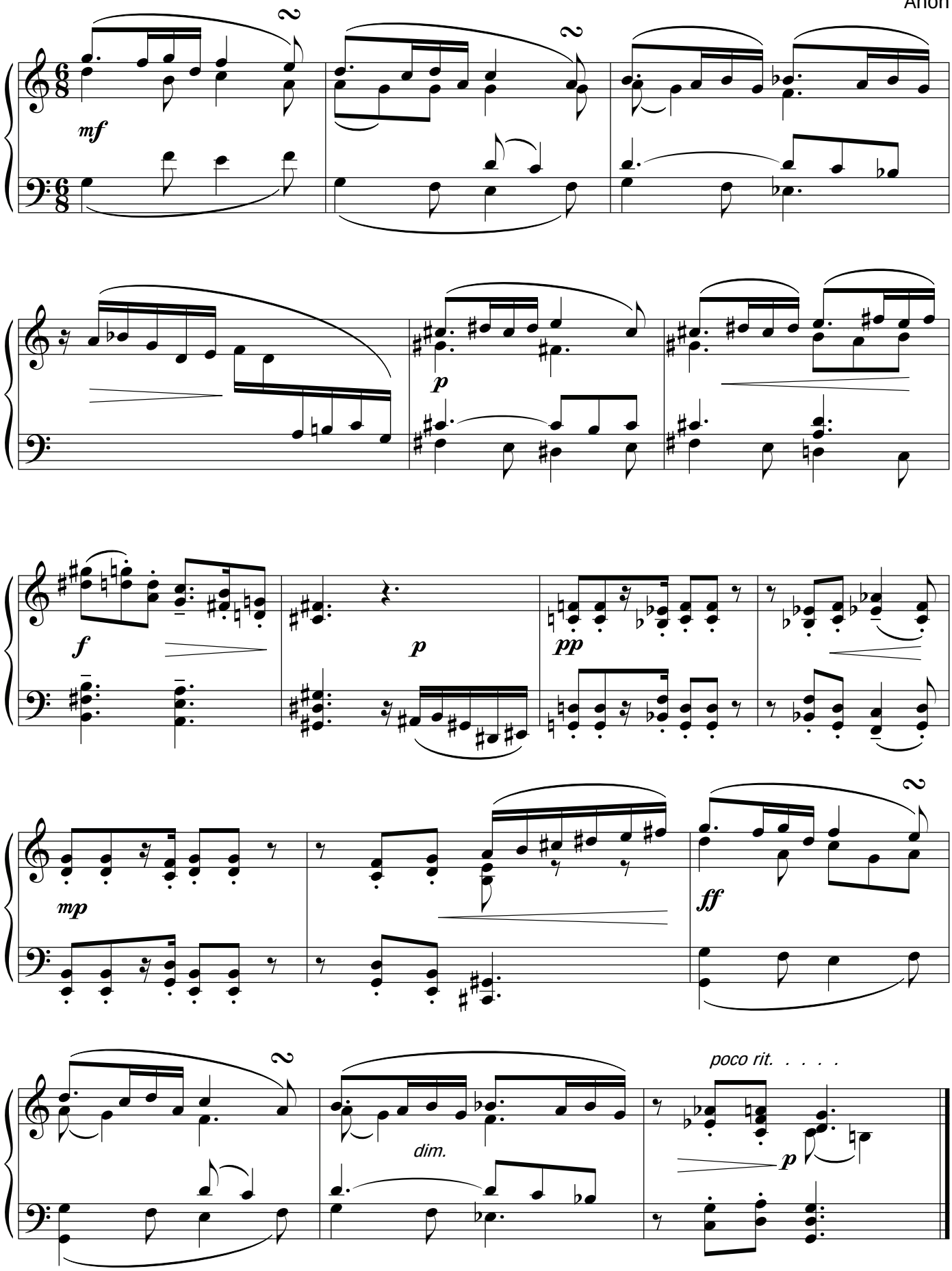


[Form: AB]

Example 5: 20th Century

Alla danza

Anon

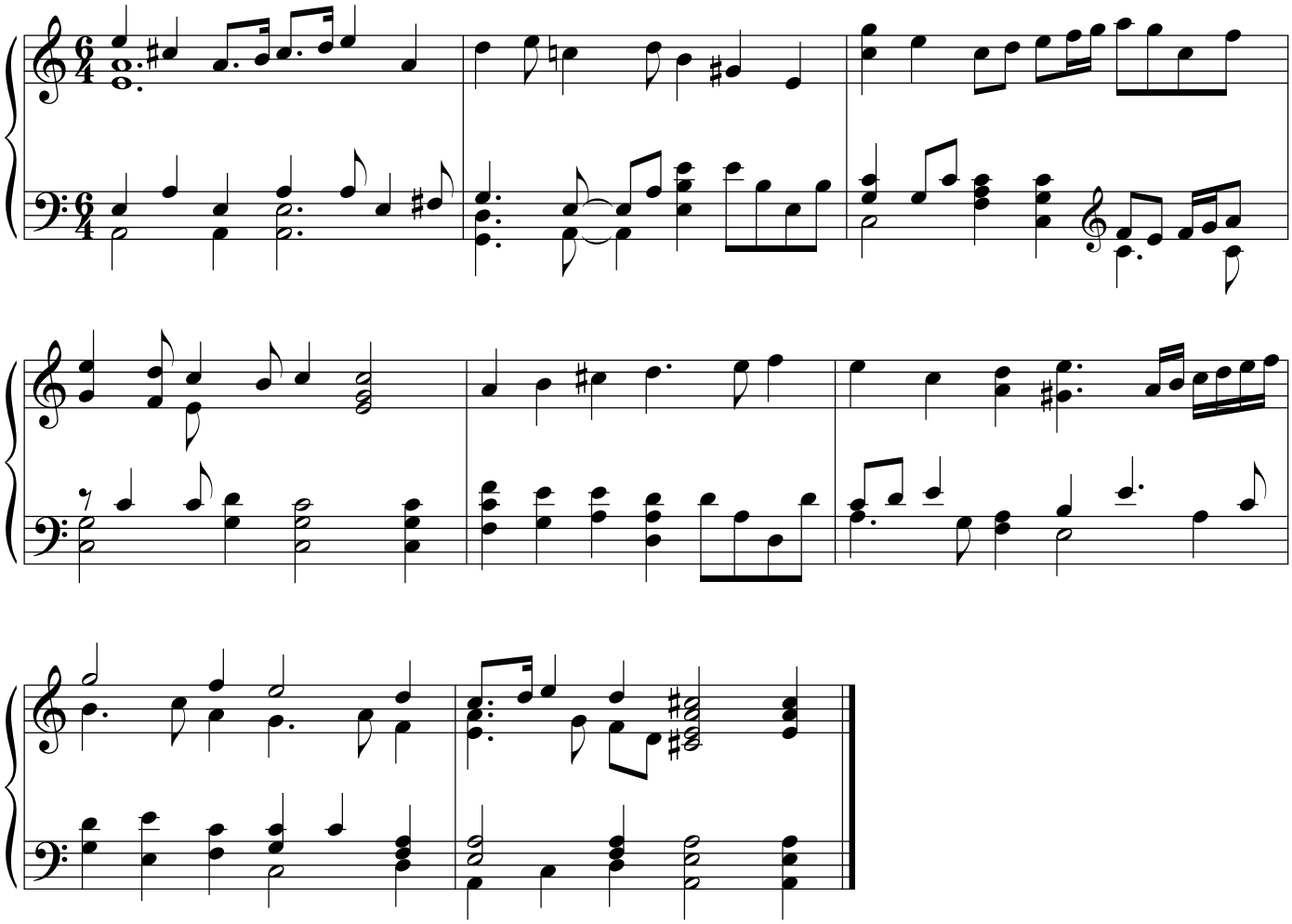


[Form: AA'BA]

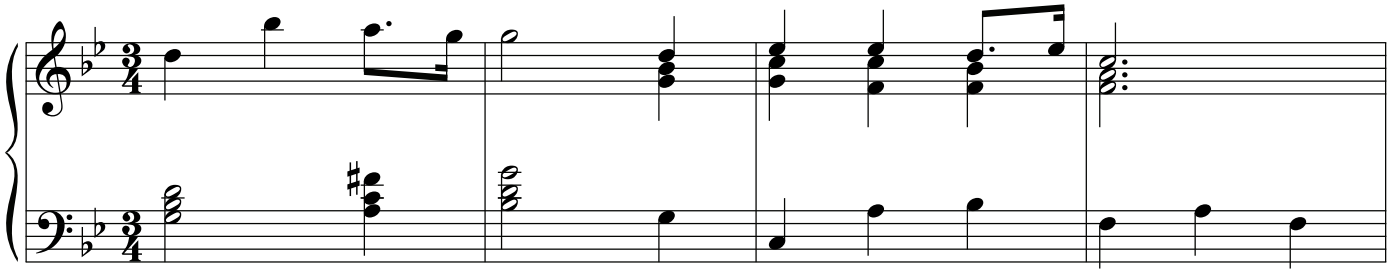
Candidate Copy: Grade Eight

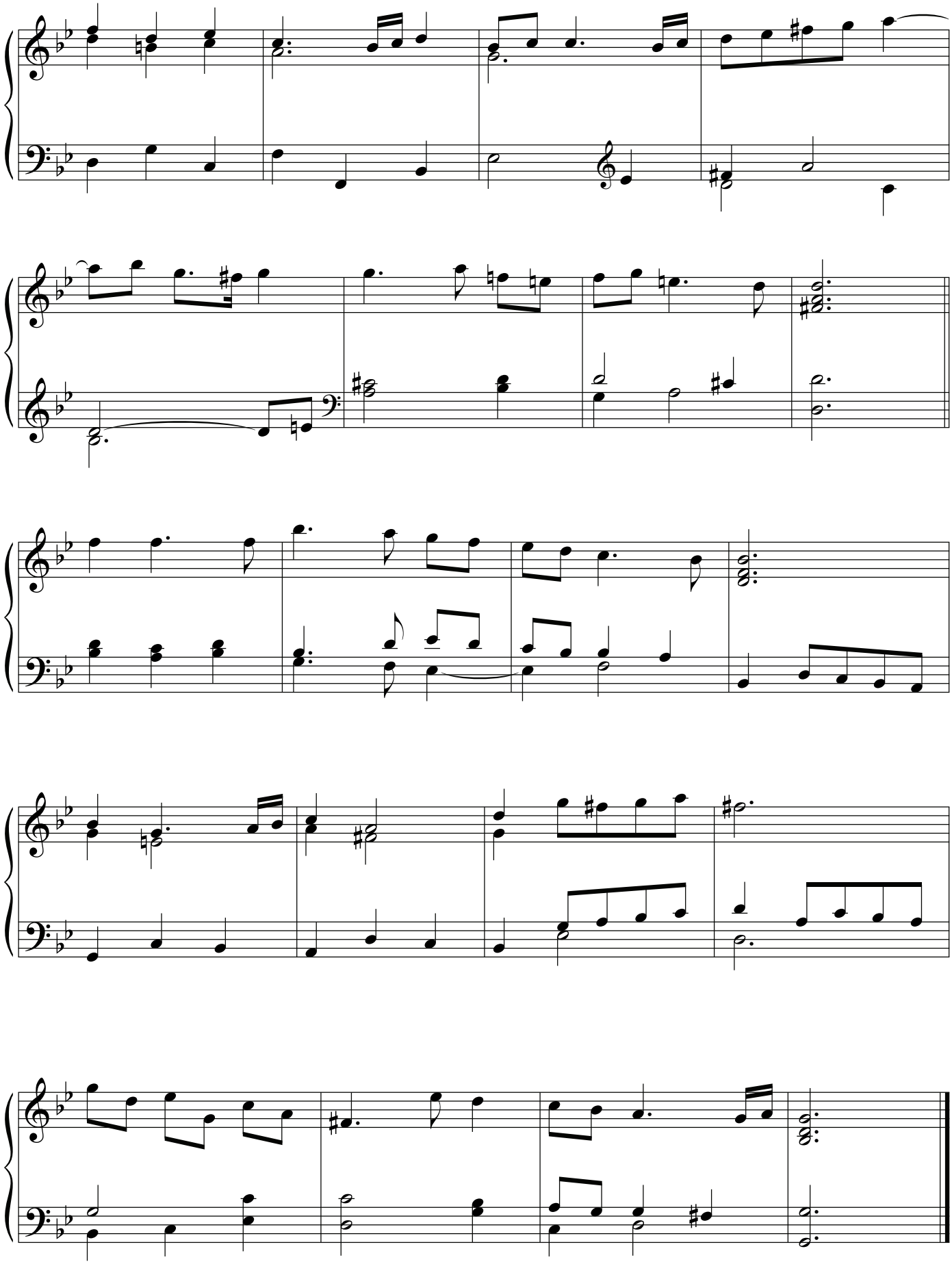
Test 2

Example 1

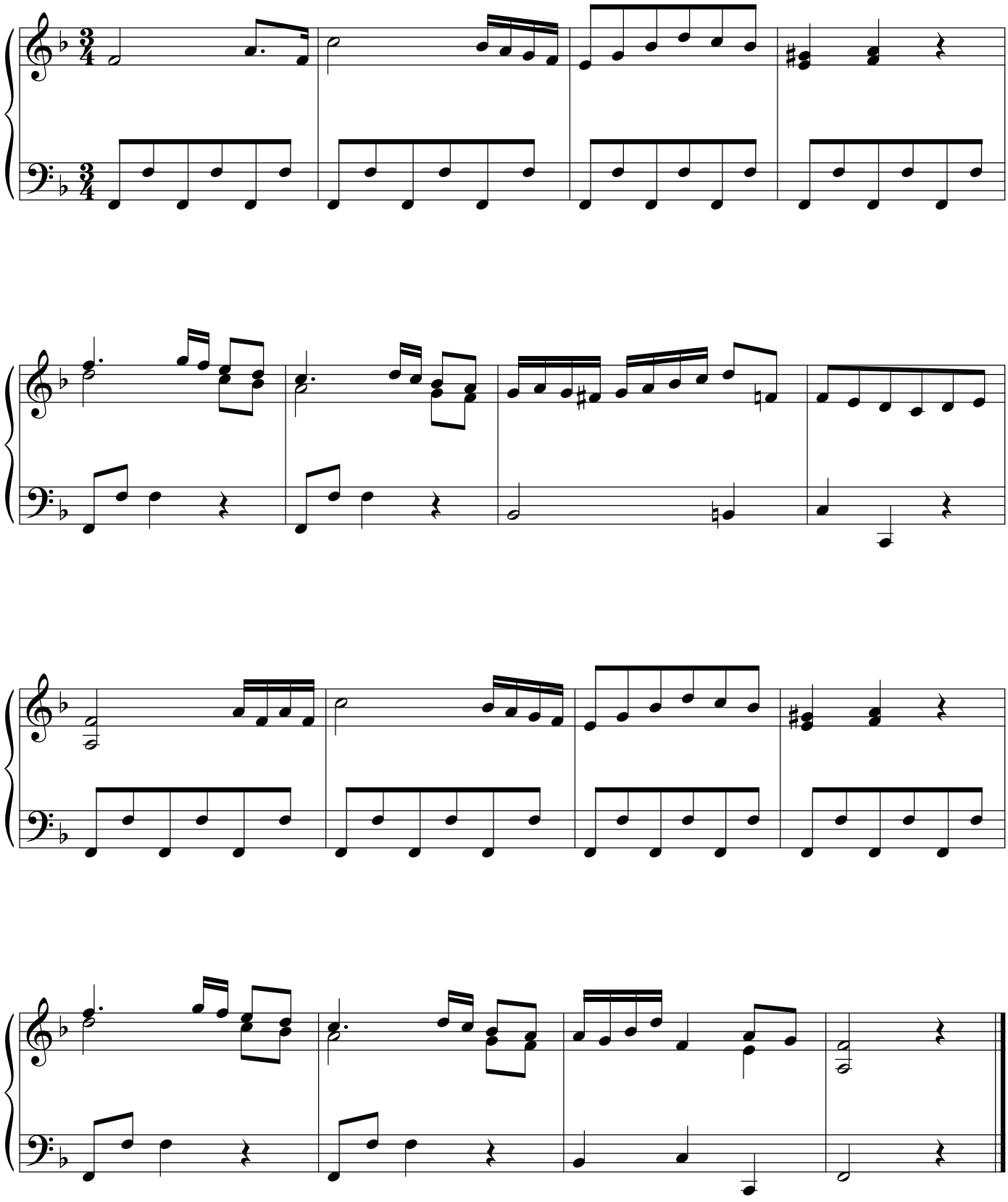


Example 2

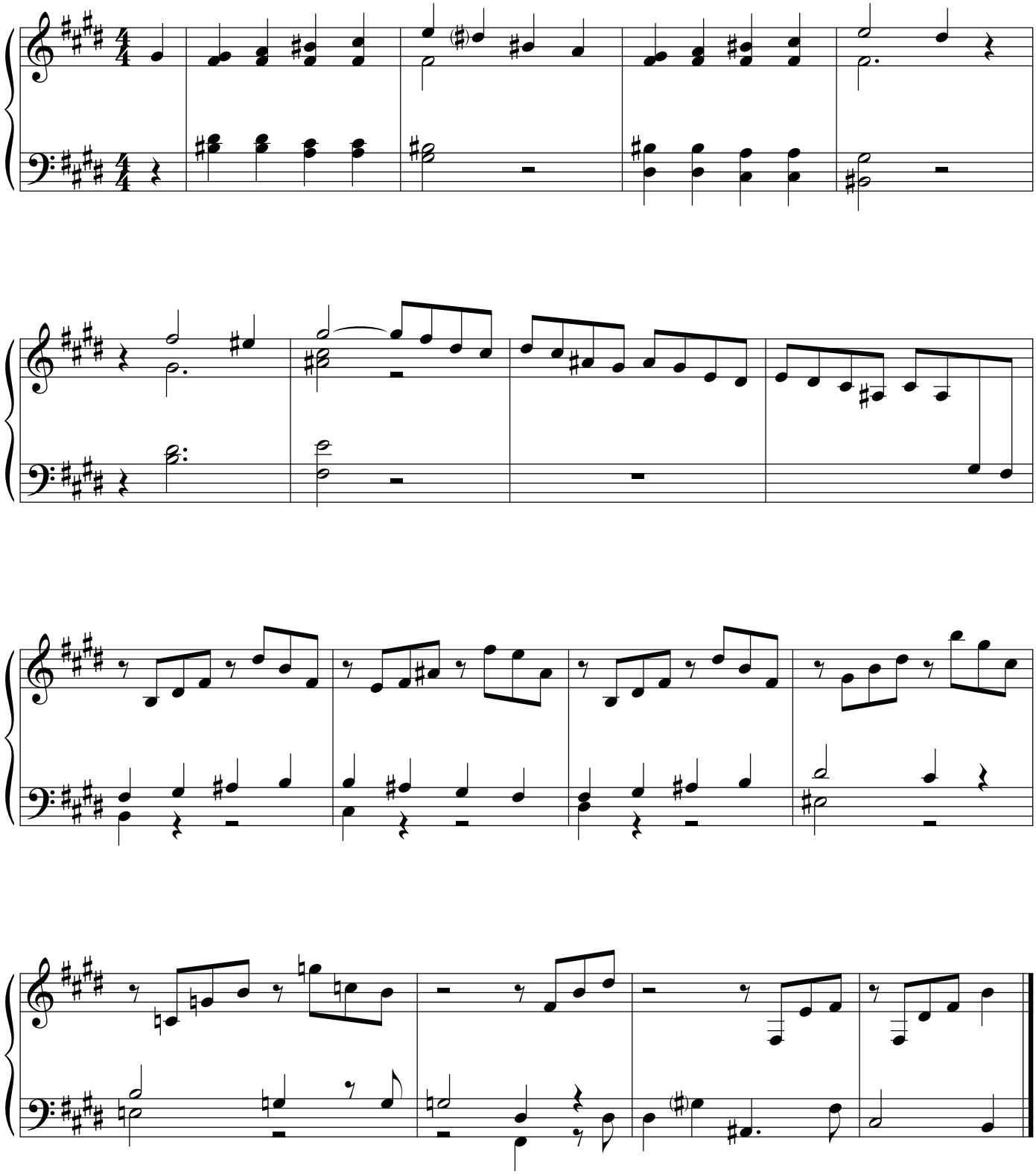




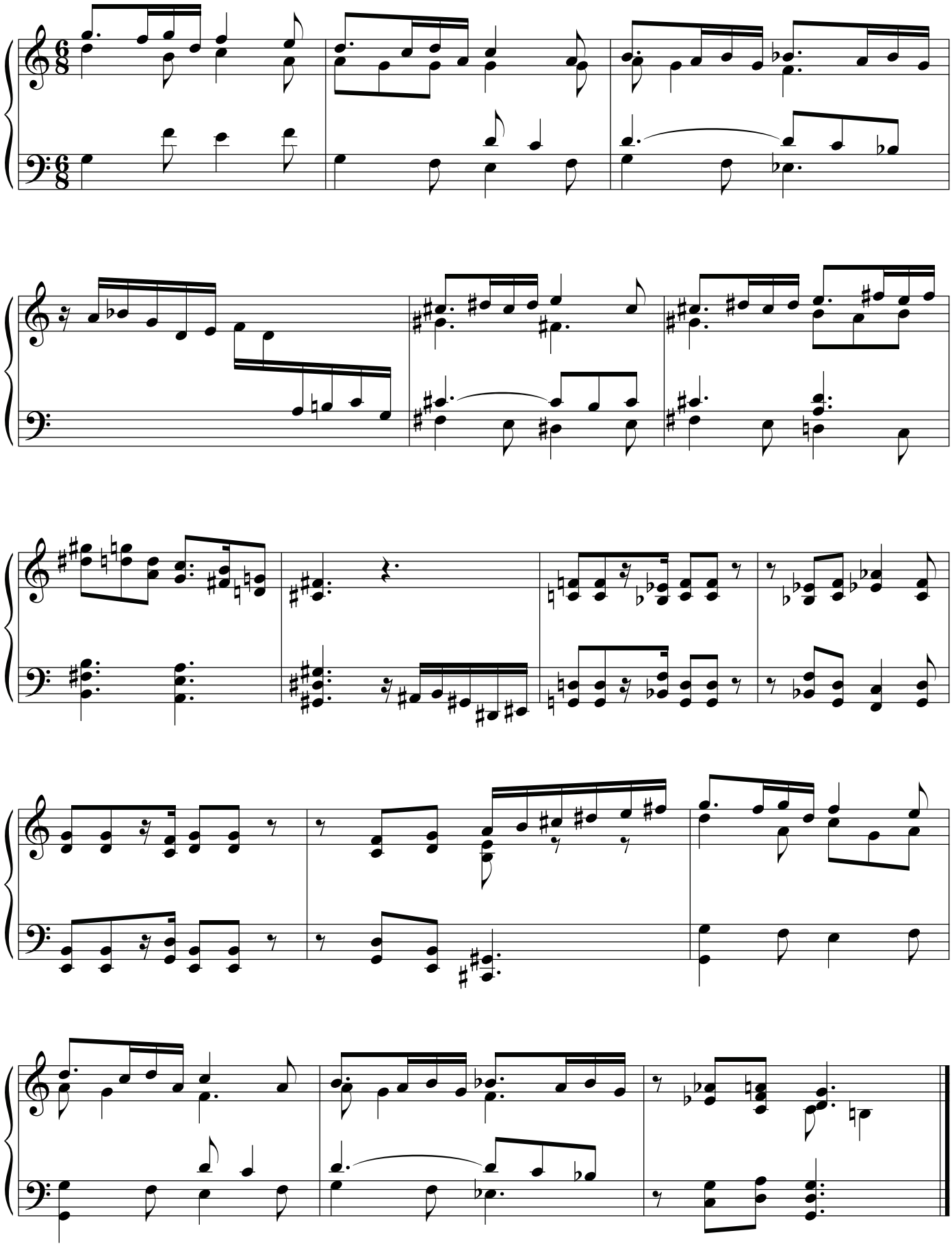
Example 3



Example 4



Example 5



ALCM

Test 1: Cadences [2 marks]

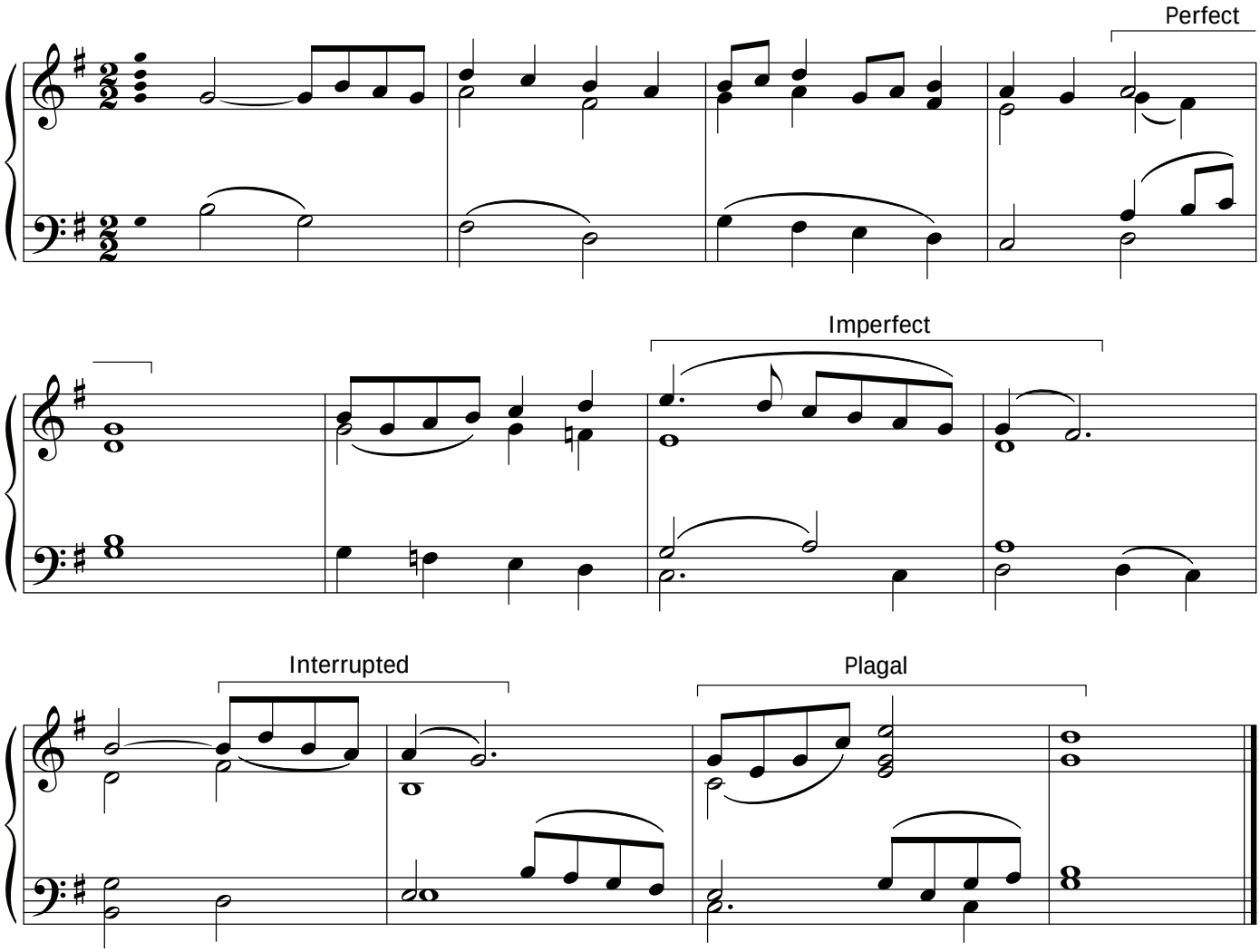
The key-chord of a major or minor key will be played, followed by a continuous harmonised passage in the same key, of approximately 8-12 bars in length, containing four cadences. The examiner will then indicate which two of the four cadences the candidate will be required to name. The examiner will play the key-chord and the passage again, and pause at the first of the two cadences indicated. The candidate will be asked to:

1(a) name the cadence (1 mark).

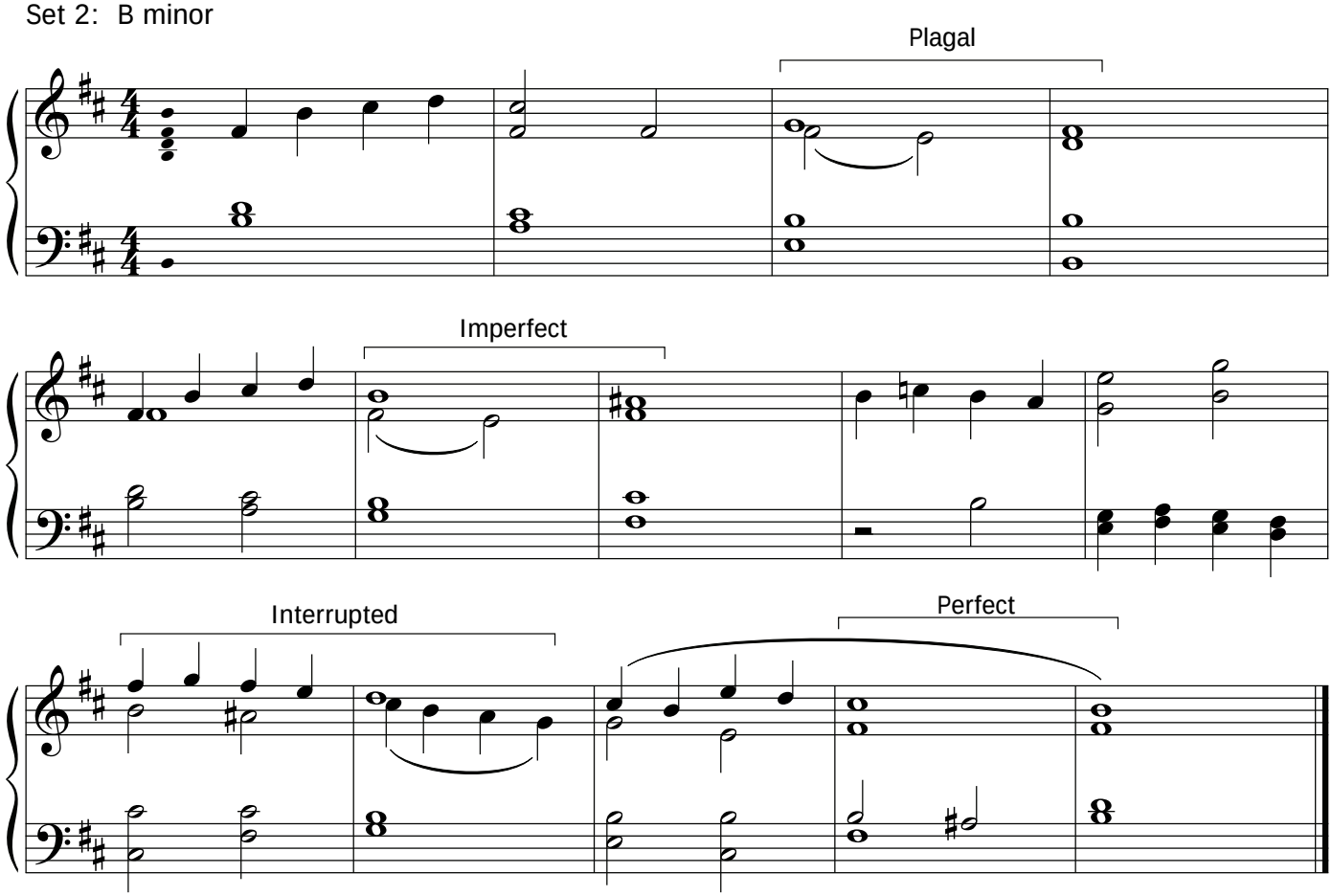
The examiner will continue the passage, pausing at the second of the indicated cadences. The candidate will be asked to:

1(b) name the cadence (1 mark).

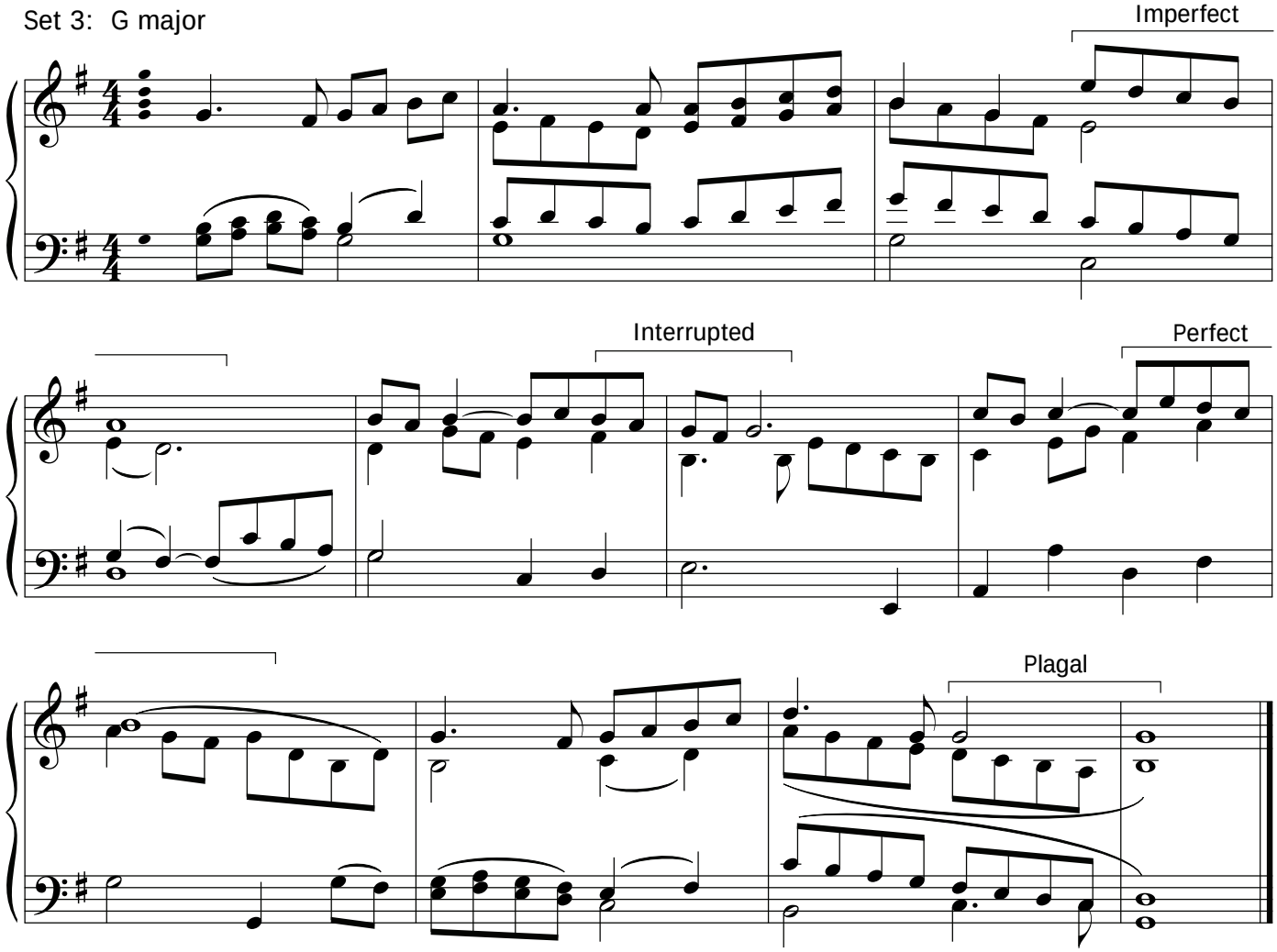
Set 1: G major

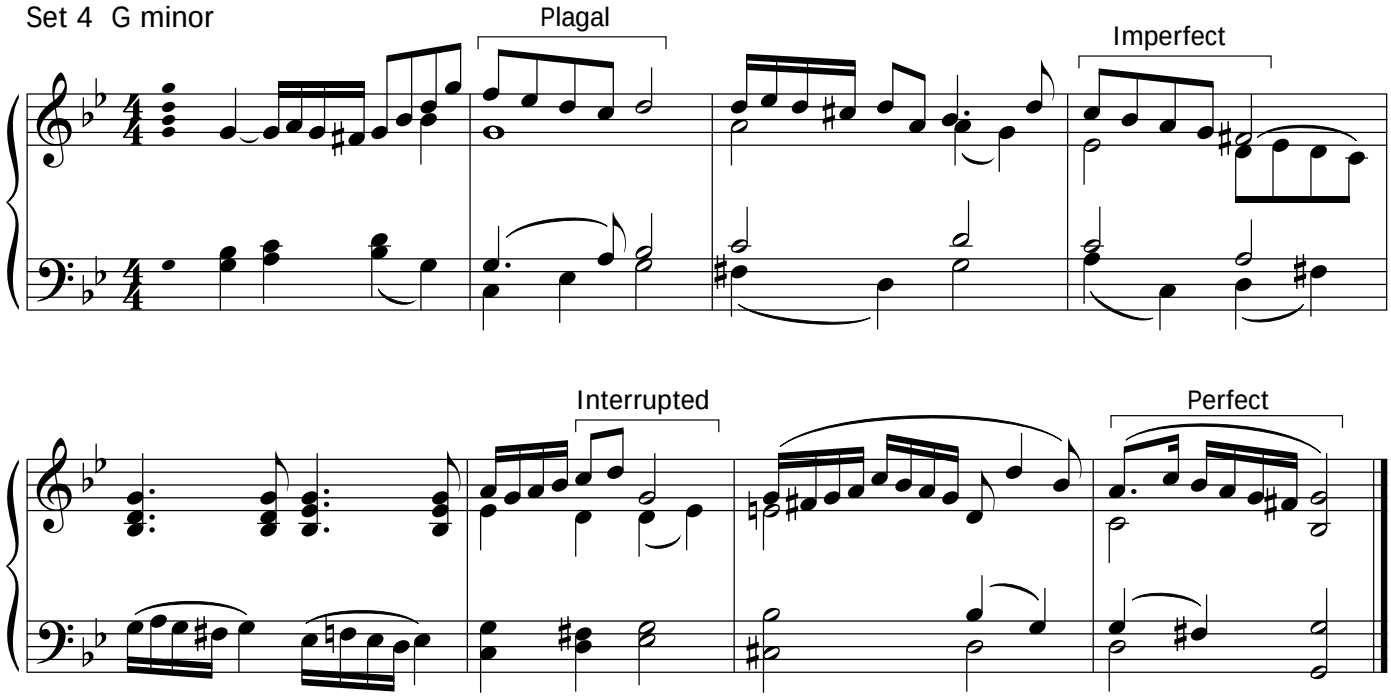


Set 2: B minor



Set 3: G major





Test 2: Modulations [2 marks]

The key-chord of a major or minor key will be sounded, and the key named. A short harmonised passage starting in the same key, of approximately 4-8 bars in length, will be played. The passage will contain one modulation to a related key, and will finish in this key.

The modulation will be to one of the following:

Major key:

- dominant
- subdominant
- relative minor
- relative minor of the dominant (mediant)
- relative minor of the subdominant (supertonic)

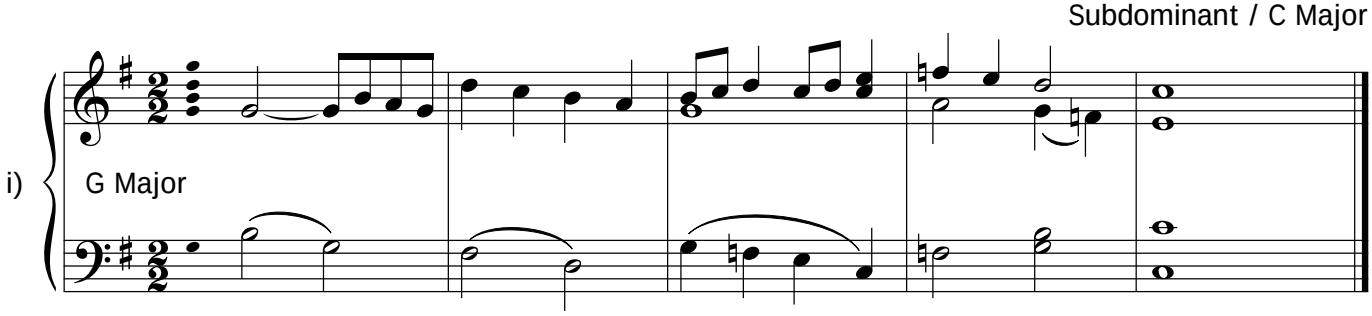
Minor key:

- dominant minor
- subdominant minor
- relative major
- relative major of the dominant (subtonic or flattened leading note)
- relative major of the subdominant ((flattened) submediant)

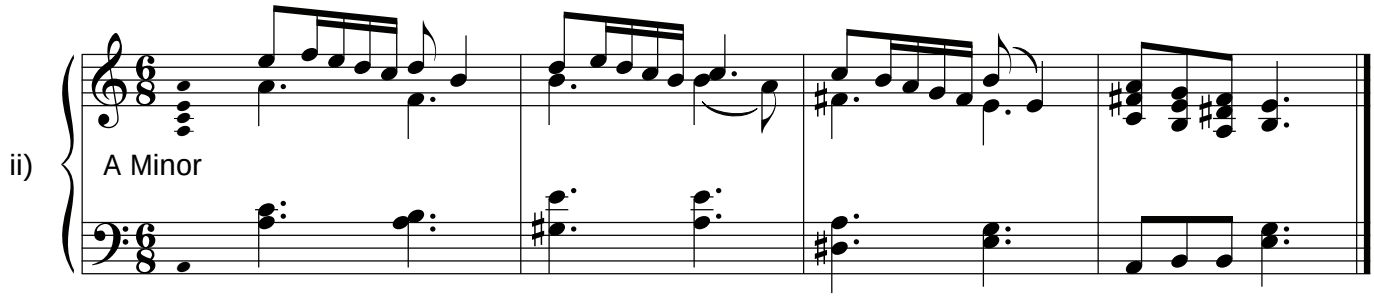
Candidates will be asked to:

2(a) name EITHER the key, OR the relationship to the home key (candidate's choice), in which the passage ends (1 mark).

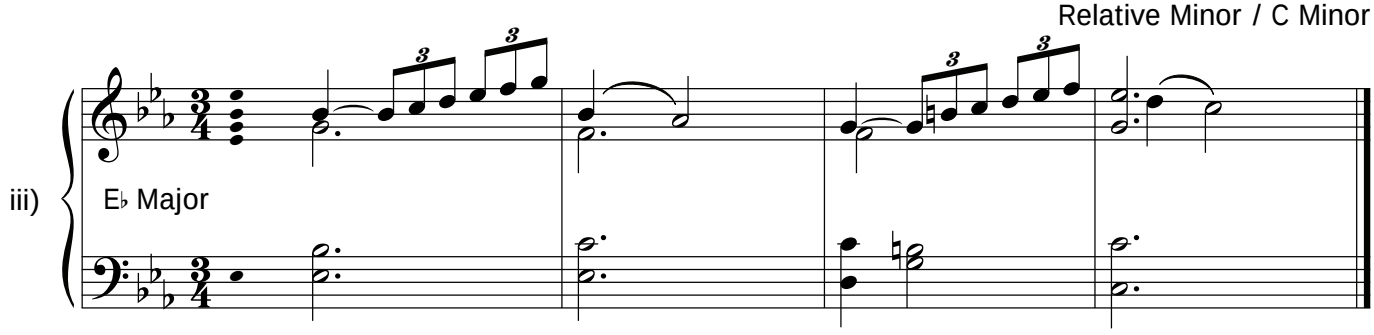
2(b) The test will be repeated, using a different example (1 mark).



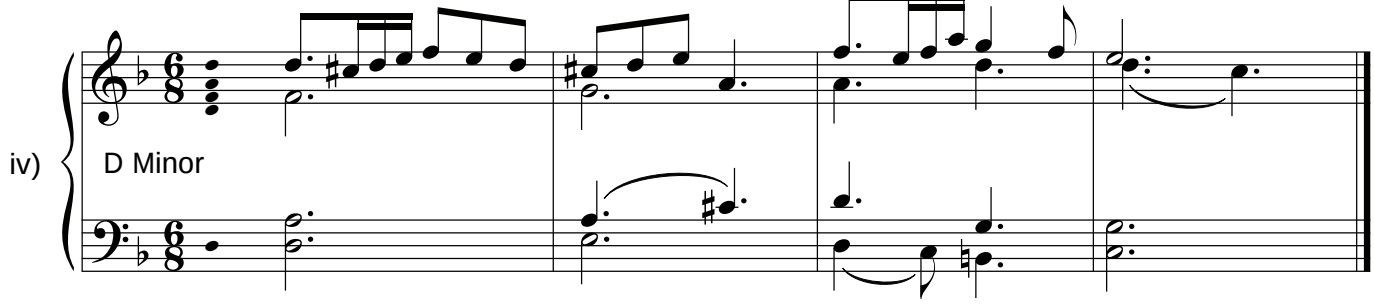
Dominant (minor) / E Minor



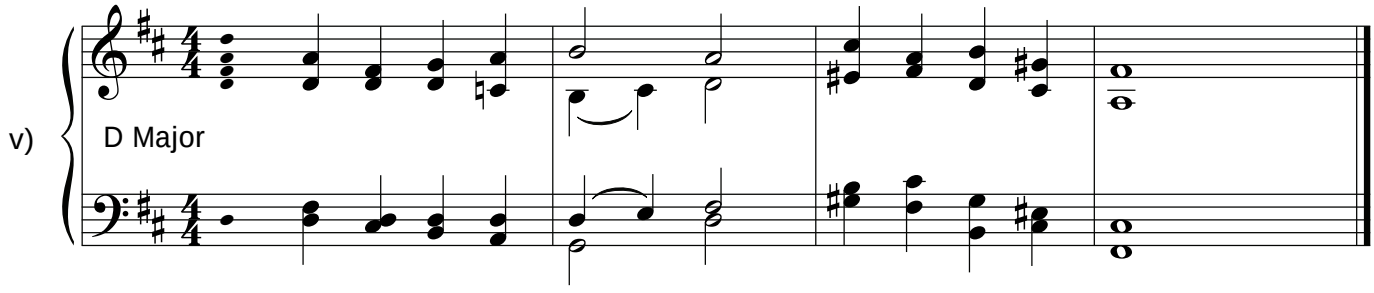
Relative Minor / C Minor



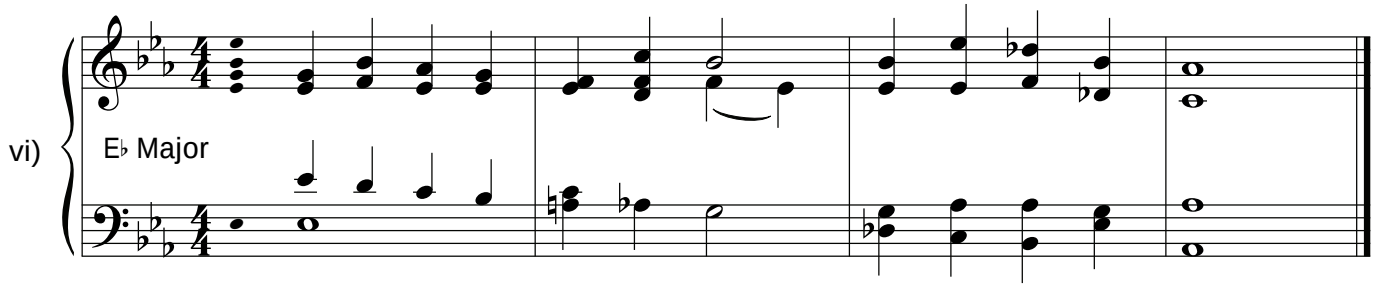
Relative Major of the Dominant / C Major



Relative Minor of the Dominant / F♯ Minor



Subdominant / A♭ Major



Relative Major / A♭ Major

vii) F Minor

viii) C Major

Dominant / G Major

Relative Minor of the Dominant / B Minor

ix) G Major

Relative Major of the Subdominant / E♭ Major

x) G Minor

Test 3: Rhythm, Tempo, Phrasing and Dynamics [4 marks]

A harmonised passage, of approximately 12-16 bars in length, will be played, twice. Candidates will be asked to:

3(a) name the time signature (1 mark).

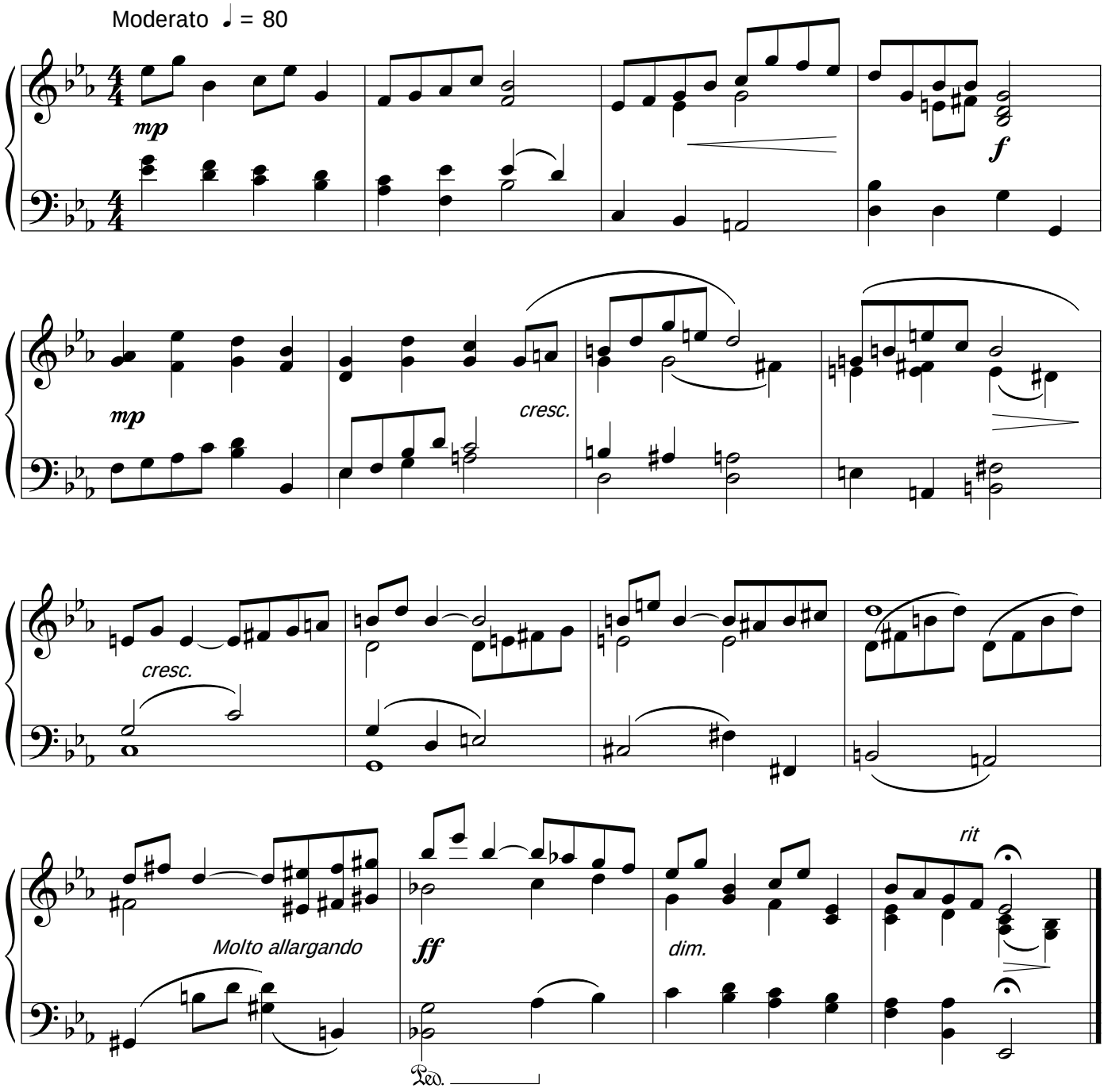
A two-bar phrase from the passage will be played again, in an unharmonised version. Candidates will be asked to:

3(b) identify and describe the note values (rhythmic values) in the phrase (1 mark).

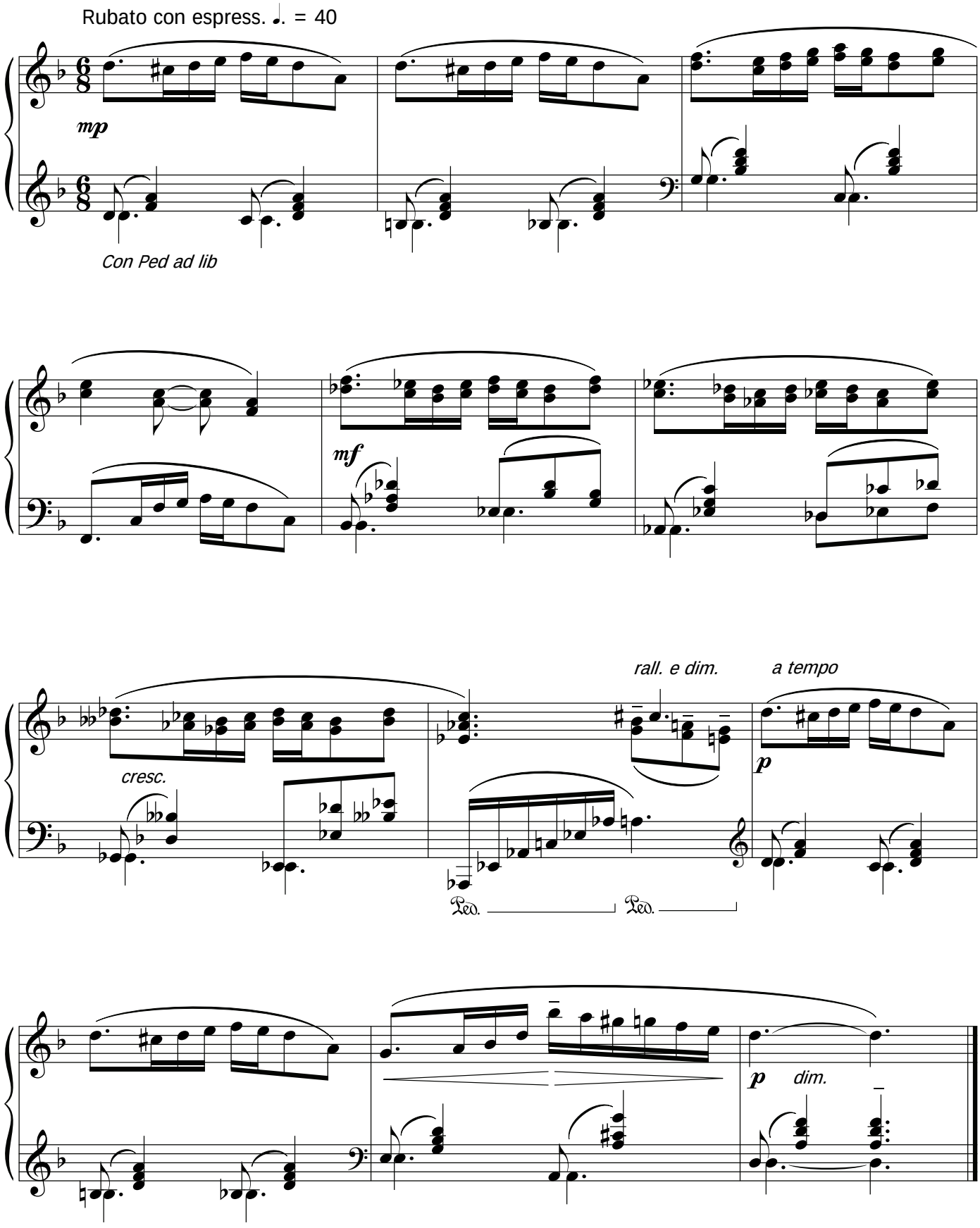
The candidate will be given a copy of the score, without dynamics, phrasing articulation or tempo markings. The examiner will play a four-bar section of the passage again, first in its original version, then in a slightly modified version. Candidates will be asked to:

3(c) identify differences in dynamics, phrasing, articulation and/or tempo (2 marks).

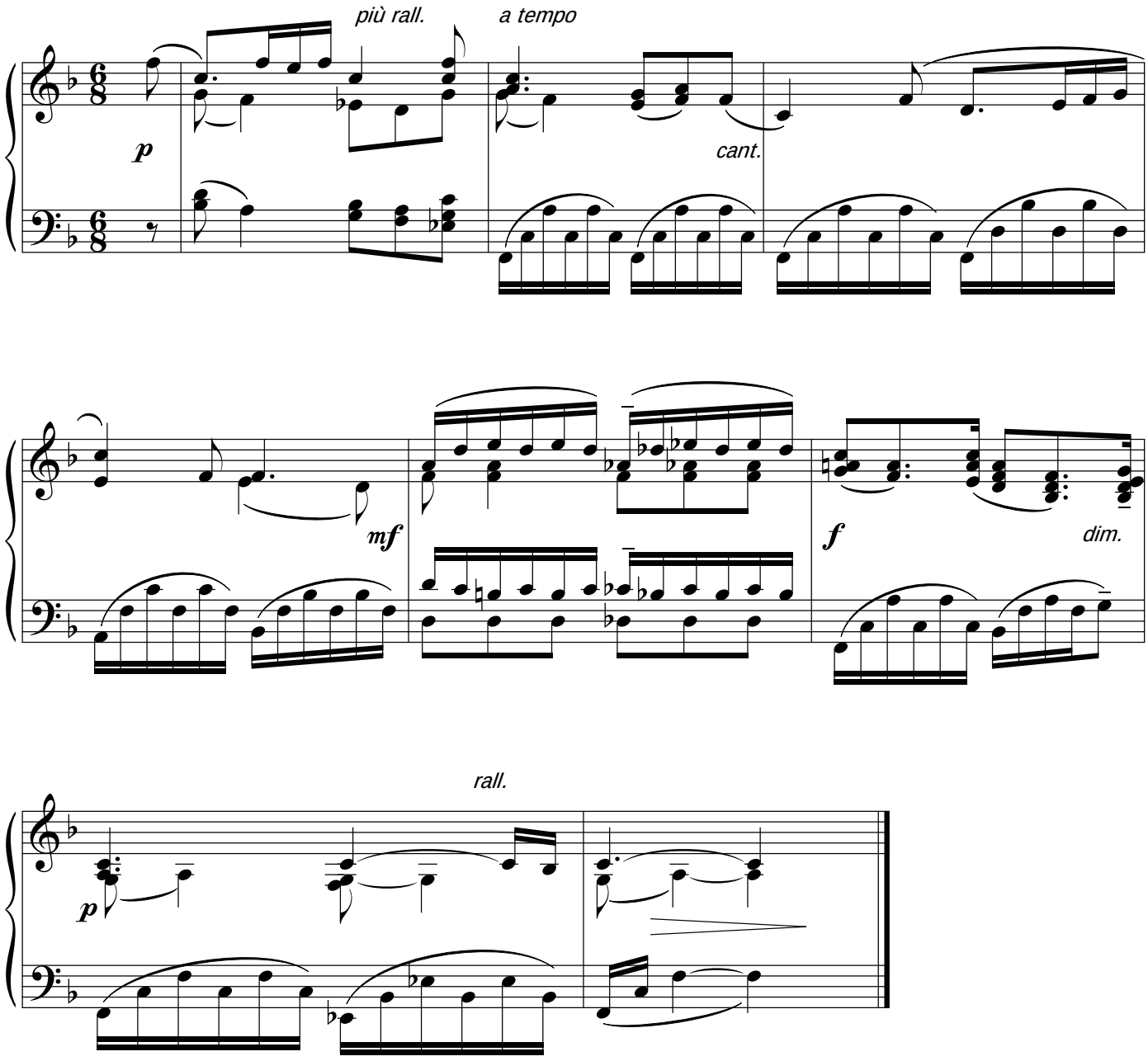
Example 1



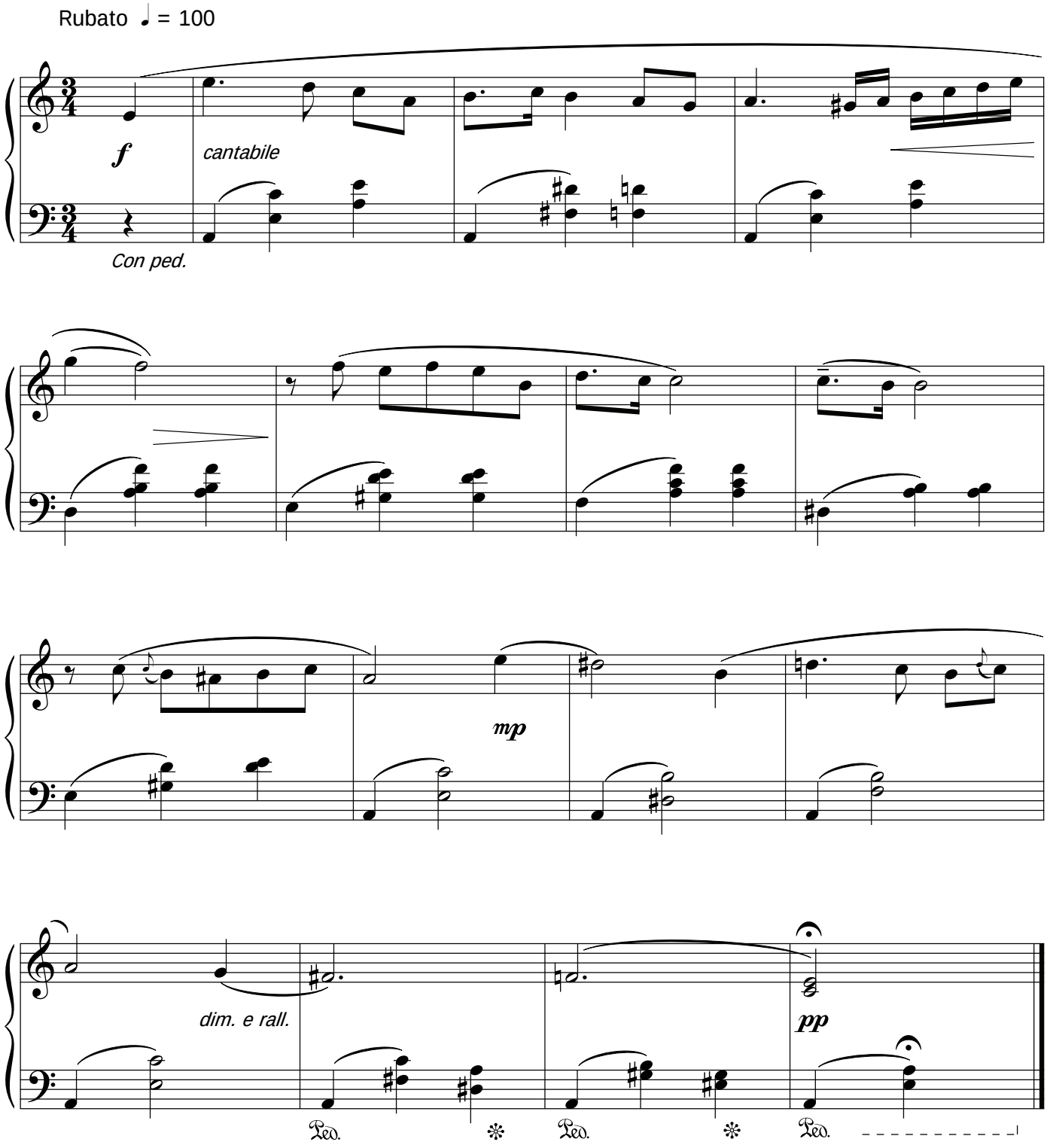
Example 2


Rubato con espress. ♩. = 40
mp
Con Ped ad lib
mf
cresc.
rall. e dim.
a tempo
p
Ped.
Ped.
p
dim.

Example 3



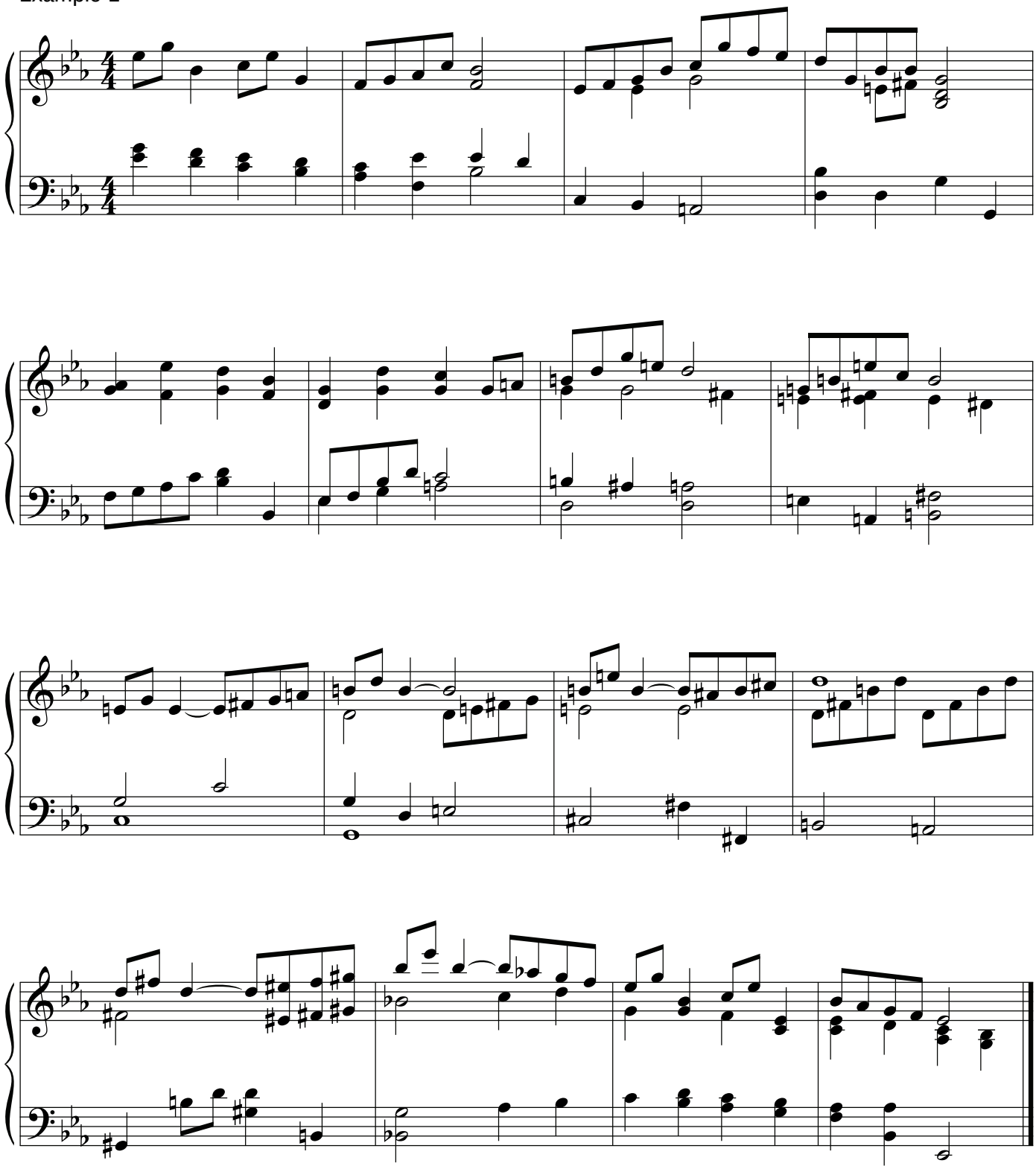
Example 4



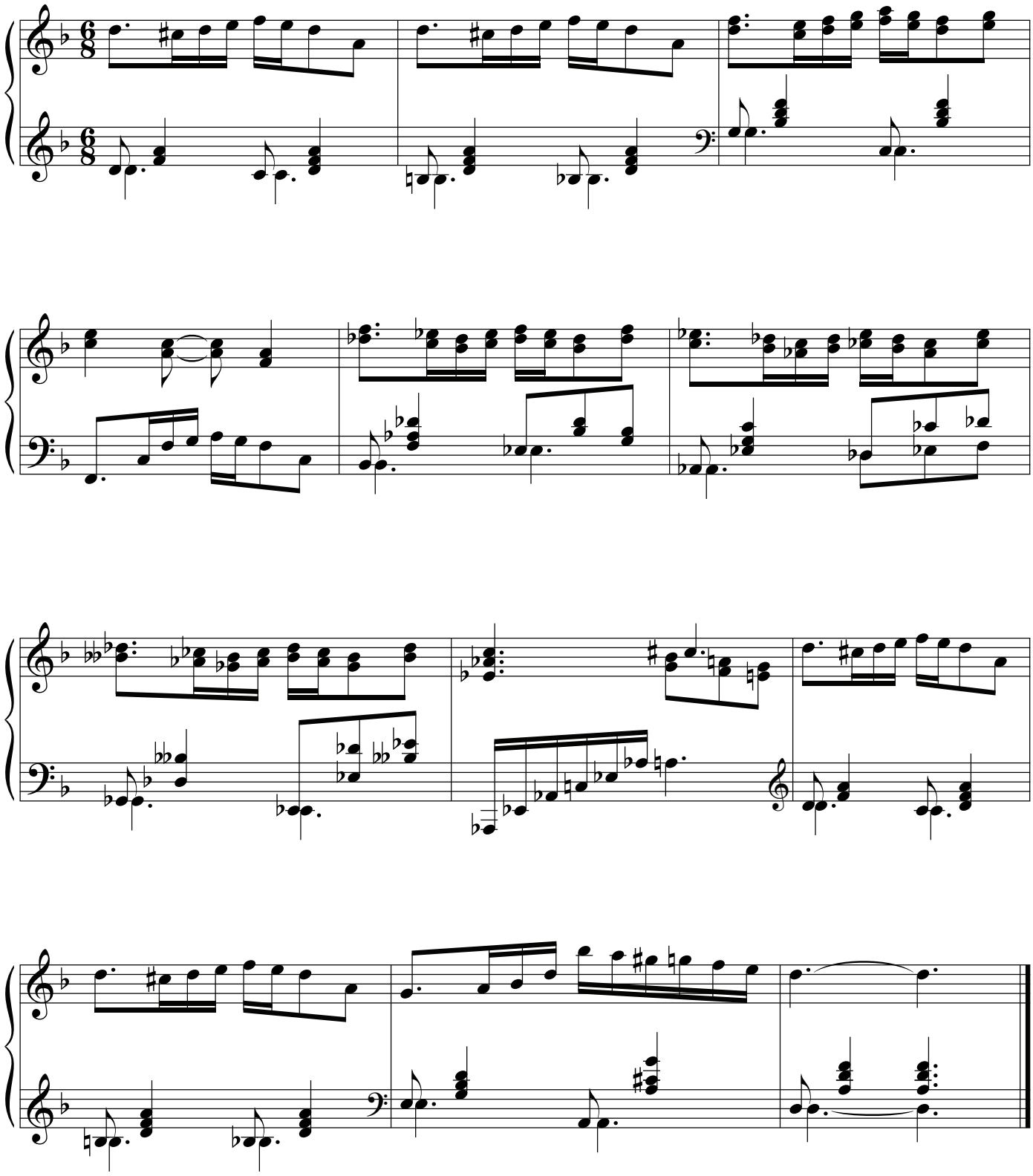
Candidate Copy: ALCM

Test 3c

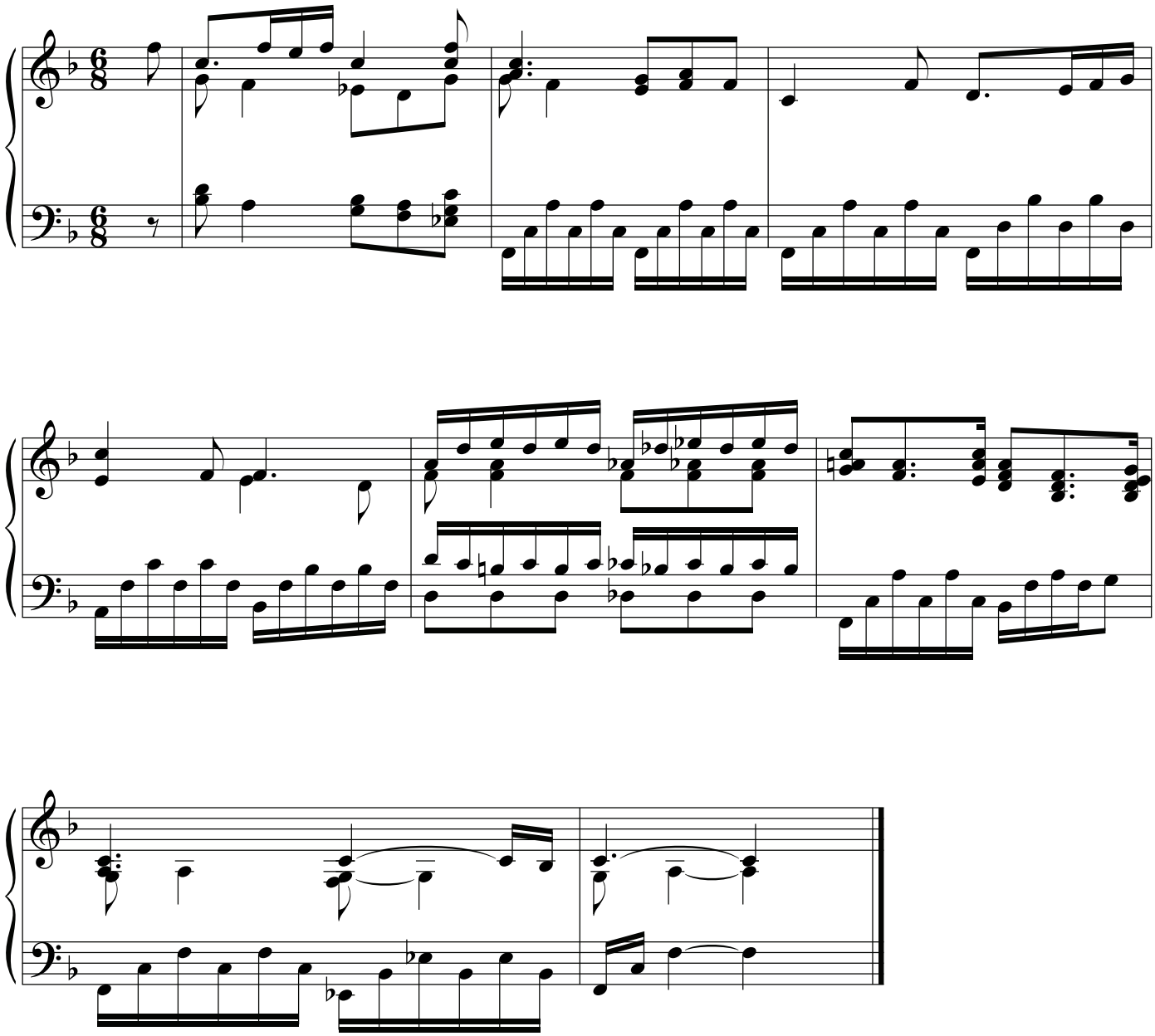
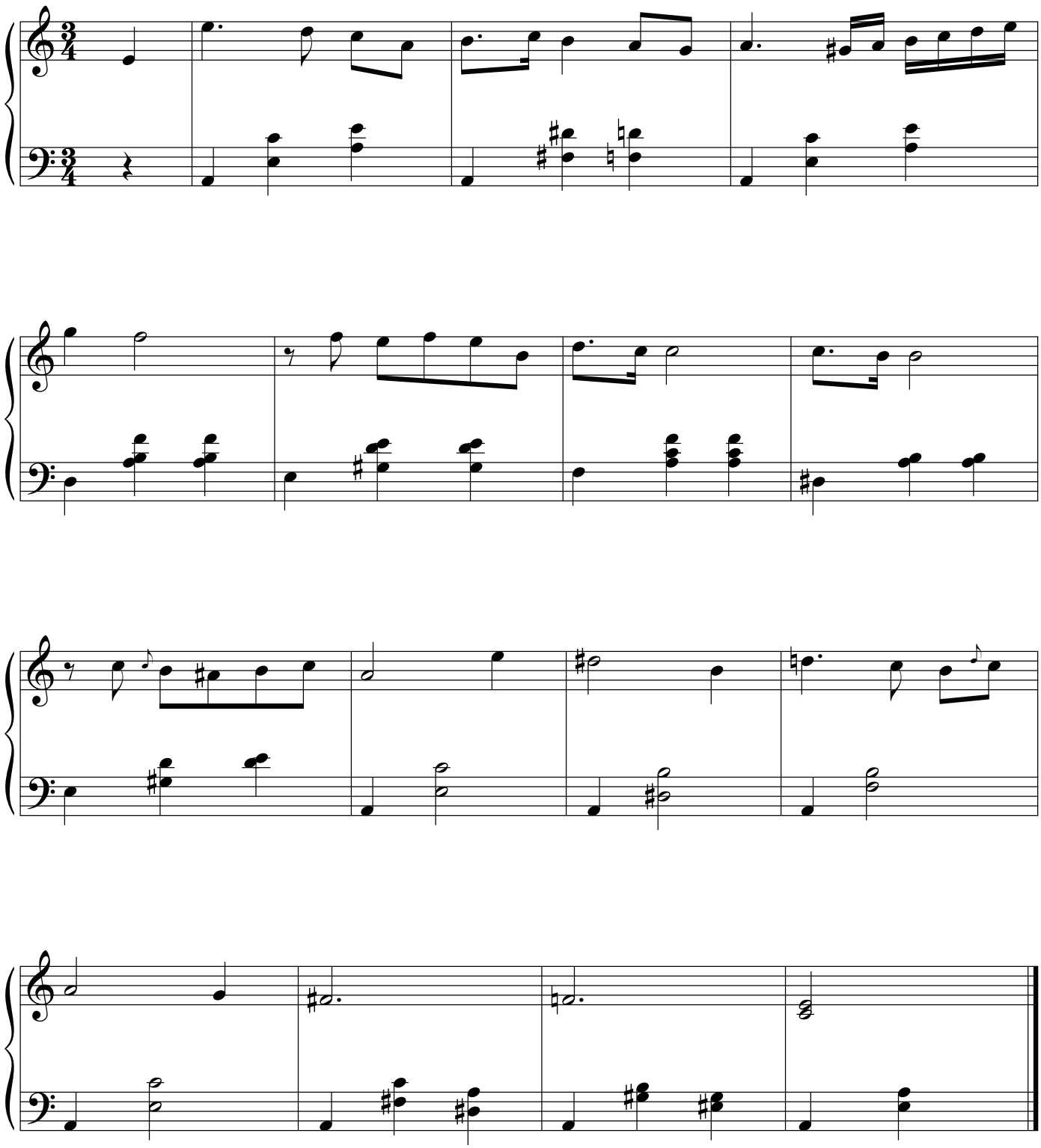
Example 1



Example 2



Example 3



Example 4