

# LCM Exams

## Specimen Jazz Aural Tests: Grade 3

### Rhythm and Improvisation Exercise No. 3: Syncopation

Syncopation is achieved by emphasising the off-beat instead of the strong beat; for example by putting rests on the strong beats, or by holding notes over the strong beat through the use of a tie or a dot.

A jazz waltz is an excellent example of syncopation.

A traditional waltz rhythm is quite straightforward:

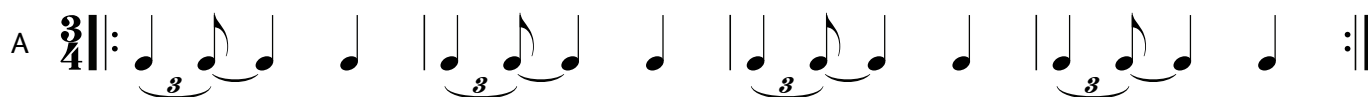


In a jazz waltz, beats 2 and 3 are often syncopated in a  $\text{quarter note} = \text{eighth note} + \text{eighth note}$  swing style.

e.g.



These sound as follows:



A slightly more complicated rhythm is used a lot by jazz players.

1 + 2 + 3

It sounds like this:

1 2 3

and may be thought of as:

Doo - waah - Do - wap

It can also be visualised as:

Many famous standard and popular waltzes have been given jazz interpretations,

- e.g.
- The Beatles *Norwegian Wood*
- The Gravy Waltz*
- 'My Favourite Things' from *The Sound of Music*

Try to listen to a recording of a jazz waltz. They are often played at a very fast tempo with what is called 'one in a bar' feel. In other words, there is not time to count 1 2 3 beats per bar; only the first beat is pronounced.

## Rhythm

Refer to *Rhythm and Improvisation Exercise No.3: Syncopation* in the Handbook [reproduced above].

The examiner will play, on one note, either Example A, Example B or the example indicated as 'a slightly more complicated rhythm'. If required, the examiner will play it twice. Candidates will be asked to:

- 1(a) identify which example was played. Candidates may refer to the Handbook. [2 marks]
- 1(b) clap one of the other two patterns, as selected by the examiner. Candidates may refer to the Handbook. [2 marks]

Using the same example, candidates will be asked to:

- 1(c) sing, hum, whistle or play an improvised melody based on the rhythmic pattern of the example. Candidates may refer to the Handbook. [2 marks]

Following are some ideas. Try to be creative.

### Example A



### Example B



The phrase need not be repeated, as indicated in the Handbook.

## Pitch

An interval will be played twice, once with the pitches sounded successively, and once with the pitches sounded together. The intervals will be restricted to the following: Major 2nd, Major 3rd, Perfect 4th, Perfect 5th. Candidates will be asked to:

- 2 identify the interval, by numerical value only (2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th). [1 mark]

The test will be repeated, using a different interval. [1 mark]



3rd                      4th                      2nd                      5th