

LCM Exams

Specimen Jazz Aural Tests: Grade 7

II-V-I Sequences

The II-V-I (or II7-V-I) sequence is one of the most common chord progressions in jazz. In the key of C major the sequence could be indicated as Dm7-G7-C. Block chords in C major would look like this:

II
V
I

Dm7
G7
C^Δ

The scale patterns based on a II-V-I sequence in a major key are:

II Dorian Mode

V Mixolydian Mode

I Ionian Mode

Although Dm7 and the Dorian mode, G7 and the Mixolydian mode are all drawn from the C major scale (Ionian mode), it is important to recognise the tonality of the chord foundations. The most obvious indicators are that Dm7 (II7) has a minor sound and G7 (V7) is major and pulling towards a V7-I cadence.

Tests

The examiner will name and play a major chord on any note.

(a)
(b)
(c)

D
F
C

The tonic note will be named and repeated. The examiner will then play either the Minor II7 chord or the V7 chord.

D
II7 (Em7)
V7 (A7)

F
II7 (Gm7)
V7 (C7)

C
II7 (Dm7)
V7 (G7)

Candidates will be asked to:

1(a) identify whether it is the Minor II7 chord or the V7 chord. [2 marks]

1(b) name the notes in the chord. [1 mark]

When inverted, the tonality variations can be subtle. Listen carefully to the given tonic chord and tonic note.

The examiner will name and play a root (tonic) note, followed by either a Dominant 7th chord, a Major 7th chord or a Minor 7th chord.

C Dominant 7th Major 7th Minor 7th

D Dominant 7th Major 7th Minor 7th

These chords will not be inverted.

Candidates will be asked to:

2 identify the chord type. [2 marks]

3 identify the notes in the chord. [1 mark]

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:

4 identify the cadence by its conventional name. [1 mark]

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

Refer to the cadence examples at Grades 5 and 6. Further examples are given below:

E^b/F D/E D^b/E^b C/D G7

(a)

Key: C major

Latin feel D^ø G7(Alt) C9

(b)

Key: C major

(c) Musical notation for example (c) in B-flat major, 4/4 time. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a dotted quarter note G4, and a quarter note A4. The bass line consists of a whole note chord B-flat major in the first measure, followed by a half note G2 in the second measure, and a whole note chord B-flat major in the third measure. The label "Plagal" is on the right.

Key: B \flat major

(d) Musical notation for example (d) in G major, 4/4 time. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a dotted quarter note G4, and a quarter note A4. The bass line consists of a whole note chord A \emptyset in the first measure, followed by a half note G2 in the second measure, and a whole note chord Em7 in the third measure. The label "Interrupted" is on the right.

Key: G major

Jazz Waltz Musical notation for example (e) in C major, 3/4 time. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a dotted quarter note G4, and a quarter note A4. The bass line consists of a whole note chord Dm in the first measure, followed by a half note G2 in the second measure, and a whole note chord C Δ 9(13) in the third measure. The label "Perfect" is on the right.

Key: C major

(f) Musical notation for example (f) in E-flat major, 4/4 time. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a dotted quarter note G4, and a quarter note A4. The bass line consists of a whole note chord B-flat(Alt) in the first measure, followed by a half note G2 in the second measure, and a whole note chord Cm in the third measure. The label "Interrupted" is on the right.

Key: E \flat major

Jazz Waltz Musical notation for example (g) in C major, 3/4 time. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a dotted quarter note G4, and a quarter note A4. The bass line consists of a whole note chord Em7 in the first measure, followed by a half note G2 in the second measure, and a whole note chord C in the third measure. The label "Plagal" is on the right.

Key: C major

Rock feel. Straight

(h)

Dm Gm Dm A

Key: D minor

Imperfect

Detailed description: This musical score is for example (h). It is in 4/4 time and D minor. The melody starts with a Dm chord, followed by a Gm chord, then another Dm chord, and ends with an A chord. The bass line consists of block chords for each measure. The final chord, A, is marked as 'Imperfect'.

(i)

Cm Fm7 G7 Cm C

Key: C minor

Perfect

Detailed description: This musical score is for example (i). It is in 3/2 time and C minor. The melody starts with a Cm chord, followed by Fm7, G7, Cm, and ends with a C chord. The bass line consists of block chords for each measure. The final chord, C, is marked as 'Perfect'.

(j)

Cm Fm G Am

Key: C minor

Interrupted

Detailed description: This musical score is for example (j). It is in 6/8 time and C minor. The melody starts with a Cm chord, followed by Fm, G, and Am. The bass line consists of block chords for each measure. The final chord, Am, is marked as 'Interrupted'.

Slow. Straight

(k)

Em F#m A7 E

Key: E minor

Plagal

Detailed description: This musical score is for example (k). It is in 4/4 time and E minor. The melody starts with an Em chord, followed by F#m, A7, and ends with an E chord. The bass line consists of block chords for each measure. The final chord, E, is marked as 'Plagal'.

* Occasionally, pieces in a minor key end with the tonic chord altered to major. In classical music this is often referred to as a *Tierce de Picardie*.