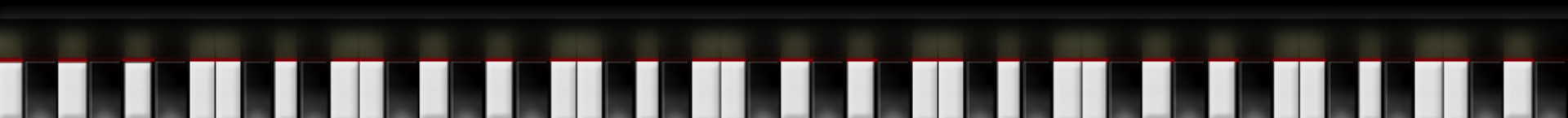


Area of Study Two

Harmony and Tonality



Definition of Key Terms

Key Word	Definition
Harmony	The sound created by two or more notes being played at the same time
Tonality	Refers to music that is written in a particular key
Diatonic	Music written using major or minor keys; a major or minor scale, or the notes from such a scale
Chromatic	Music written using both the black and white notes of the piano; a scale which moves always by semitone; the alteration by a semitone of the notes of a diatonic scale
Consonant	Sounds which fit well together
Dissonant	Sounds which clash when played together
Pedal	A sustained or repeated note played underneath changing harmonies
Drone	Sustained note, or notes at a fixed pitch (as on bagpipes)
Cadence	A progression of (usually) two chords which end a musical phrase
Perfect Cadence	Dominant to tonic chord
Plagal Cadence	Subdominant to tonic
Imperfect Cadence	Tonic, or another chord, to dominant; an incomplete cadence
Interrupted Cadence	Dominant to (usually) submediant rather than the expected tonic
Tierce de Picardie	Where the final chord of music in a minor key has a major third instead of the expected minor



Definition of Key Terms

Key Word	Definition
Chords	Two or more notes sounded together
Triad	A three-note chord made up of the root, 3 rd and 5 th notes
Major	Music based on a major scale
Minor	Music based on a minor scale
Dominant 7th	A chord build on the fifth note of the scale containing the 3 rd , 5 th and 7 th notes
Key signature	Sharp(s) or flat(s) placed at the beginning of the music and at the beginning of each subsequent line, to indicate the scale used and, therefore, the key of the music
Key	The tonal centre of the music, indicated by the presence of one or more sharps or flats (if there are no sharps or flats, the music is in C major or A minor)
Scale	A pattern of notes, played up or down
Modes	Early form of scales
Modulation	Moving from one key to another
Modulation to dominant	Where the key moves from the tonic (I) to the key of the fifth (dominant/V) note of the scale
Modulation to relative minor/major	Where the music in a major key moves to the minor key that shares the same key signature or the music of a minor key moves to the major key that shares the same key signature



Diatonic

- # Diatonic harmony uses only notes that belong to the scale or key that the music is written in
- # For example, if a piece of music is in the key of C major, it will mainly use the notes of the C major scale:

C D E F G A B C

Diatonic harmony will only use notes from the same scale



Chromatic

- # Chromatic harmony uses other notes as well
- # For example, in the key of C major any sharps or flats which are used in the harmony do not belong to the scale or key of C major
- # They are chromatic notes
- # Chromatic means 'colour', and these notes are used to add colour to the harmony, helping to enhance the emotional effect of the music



Consonant

- # When you listen to a piece of music you might think the harmony sound pleasant, or you might think it clashes and sounds uncomfortable, even painful to listen to
- # The first, pleasant kind of harmony is consonant – it sounds agreeable
- # Dissonant harmony really clashes
- # It is often used to create suspense or tension in a composition and feels as if it needs to move towards more pleasing consonant harmonies to sound finished



Pedal

- # A pedal note is sustained (held) or repeated, while the harmonies change
- # It can be 'doubled', adding the same note an octave higher or lower
- # You need to listen carefully to the harmony, because this must change to at least one other chord
- # If the harmony does not change, it is not a pedal note
- # Pedal notes are usually in the bass, but sometimes they are higher than the melody; this is called an **inverted pedal**



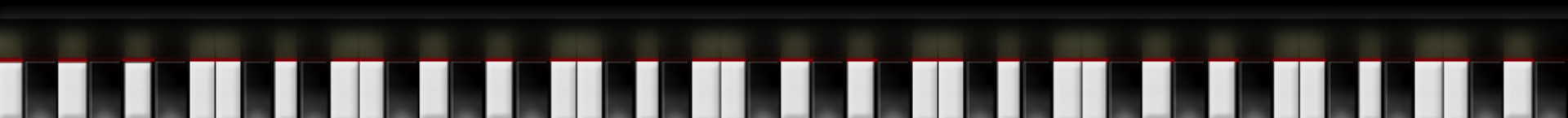
Drone

- # A drone is played in the bass
- # It can be just one note, like a pedal, but often has two notes played at the same time
- # These two notes are usually a fifth apart and are played in the bass, below the melody
- # They may be sustained or repeated
- # Drones are often used to accompany melodies in folk music or medieval music, particularly dance music



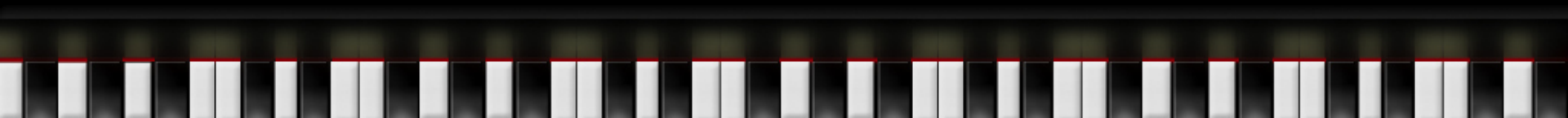
Cadences

- # A cadence is formed by the two chords that come at the end of a musical phrase
- # Cadences are a kind of ‘musical punctuation’, like full stops or commas
- # There are four main types of cadence – perfect, plagal, imperfect, interrupted



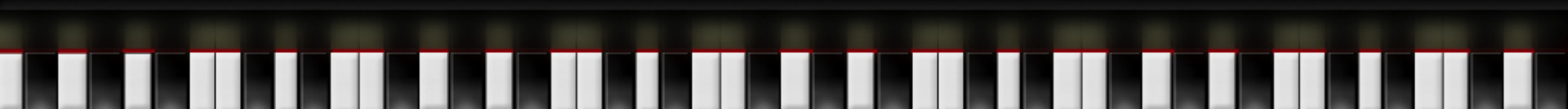
Perfect cadence

- # This is made up of two chords: the dominant (chord V), which is the chord built on the fifth note of the scale, followed by the tonic (chord I), built on the first note of the scale
- # A perfect cadence is like a full stop – it gives the music a sense of completion



Plagal cadence

- # This has the subdominant chord (chord IV) followed by the tonic (chord I)
- # It is another example of a 'full stop', but is not as strong as a perfect cadence
- # It is sometimes called an 'amen' cadence, because it is often used to harmonise this word at the end of hymns



Imperfect cadence

- # This cadence has the opposite effect to perfect and plagal cadences
- # It acts as a musical comma: the music must move on after it
- # An imperfect cadence is made up of any chord – but typically chord I, II or IV – followed by the dominant chord (V)



Interrupted cadence

- # This is sometimes called a 'surprise cadence' and it is quite easy to recognise
- # It starts with chord V, but, instead of being followed by the expected tonic chord (I), it goes to the submediant chord (VI)
- # Chord VI is a chord of opposites: in a major key it is a minor chord, in a minor key it is a major chord – that is where the surprise comes from
- # It is another example of a musical comma; the music must move on to finish



Tierce de Picardie

- # A *tierce de Picardie* is a very special kind of cadence
- # This is when the final chord of a piece or movement in a minor key is a tonic major chord instead of the expected tonic minor chord
- # For example, if a piece or movement is in C minor, the last chord, unexpectedly, would be C major



Chords – major and minor

- # A chord has two or more notes of different pitch sounded together
- # The most common type of chord has three different notes, known as a triad
- # Triads can be built on any note in a scale
- # The lowest note is the one that gives the chord its name; it is called the 'root'
- # Above it we add notes a 3rd and 5th above the root – you have to count the root as number 1 when working out the notes above it



Dominant seventh chords

- # A special four-note chord can be built on the dominant – chord V
- # Instead of doubling one of the triad notes we add a new notes seven notes about the root
- # For example, in C major, chord V is G, B and D
- # When you add the 7th you get G, B, D and F
- # This is an example of a seventh chord because it is made up of notes a 3rd, a 5th and a 7th above the root
- # A seventh chord built on the dominant is called a **dominant seventh** (V₇) and is an alternative to chord V



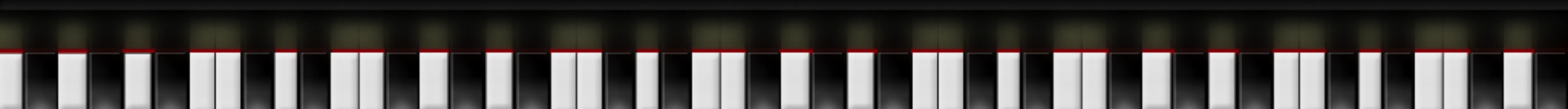
Tonality

- # Tonality means that the music belongs to a key – it is built mainly from the notes of a particular scale
- # The strongest note in any scale is the **tonic** (the note the scale starts and ends on)
- # This has an effect on the other notes in the scale; in tonal music there is always the feeling that the music needs to end on the tonic
- # This also applies to the harmony, since chords are built on notes of the scale
- # Chord I is the **tonic chord**



Major and minor scales

- # Scales are made up of tones and semitones
- # In a major scale the semitones always occur between the 3rd and 4th and the 7th and 8th notes of the scale
- # In a minor scale, the most important difference is that the 3rd note is lowered by a semitone



Key signatures - major

- # Because a major scale must have semitones between the 3rd and 4th and 7th and 8th notes of the scale, C major is the only major scale which can be played only using the white notes of a keyboard
- # If we start a major scale on any other note we will have to use the black notes – sharps and flats – to make the semitones occur in the right place
- # In notation, instead of writing the sharps or flats each time they occur, they are written at the beginning of each stave, after the clef
- # This is called a **key signature**



Key signatures - minor

- # Minor keys also have different key signatures, depending on their starting note
- # For each major key there is a minor key that shared the same key signature
- # In this case the minor key is called the **relative minor**
- # Relative minors are always a 3rd lower than their relative major key
- # In a minor scale the 7th note (leading note) is often raised by a semitone, but this is not part of the key signature



Modes

- # Modes are ancient scales, and are very distinctive
- # Each mode has a different structure of tones and semitone, unlike major and minor scales – though they sometimes sound like a mixture of the two
- # Unlike major and minor scales, where there is a semitone between the 7th (leading note) and 8th (tonic) notes of the scale, most modes have a tone between the 7th and 8th notes
- # This gives the music a distinctive character which you should listen for
- # In ancient Greece, the modes were identified and given names



Modulation

- # Modulation is when the music changes key
- # In the examination you may have to recognise modulations from the tonic key
- # These will be either to the dominant (the key a 5th above the tonic) or to the relative major or minor

