

Compose a short phrase (or partial phrase) for keyboard that is based on a harmonic sequence.

Select one of these common sequence types:

- a) root motion by descending fifth, or
- b) root motion by descending fourth alternating with ascending second, creating an overall descending thirds sequence (the “Pachelbel” sequence), or
- c) root motion by ascending fifth

Choose a key and a time signature, and choose the inversion pattern you want to use.

Write out the bass line and roman numerals for your sequence, and end your chord progression with a full or a half cadence (the cadence may break out of the harmonic sequence pattern).

Compose an upper-voice melodic motive that fits the sequence pattern. You can write intuitively, or you can sketch out an outer-voice counterpoint framework that fits the chords of the harmonic sequence, and then elaborate the upper line with embellishments that give it a satisfying melodic profile. If you use the descending-fifth-alternating-with-ascending-second sequence (option b) make your melodic pattern length equal to the duration of two harmonies (one complete cycle of the pattern). If you use the descending-fifth sequence, your melodic pattern may be as long as one harmony (in which case the melody also sequences down a fifth or up a fourth) or as long as two harmonies (in which case your melody will sequence down by step); similarly for ascending-fifth sequences.

Once you’ve written your melodic motive, sequence it appropriately. Make sure your melody comes to an appropriate closure at the cadence. Just like the harmony, the melody may break out of the sequence pattern to cadence effectively.

Be sure that your piece is playable on keyboard. Each hand should be able to play its part. Don’t stretch more than a ninth or a tenth, though you may use large leaps if you like, such as between a bass note and a mid-register chord in the left hand.

Fair warning: I will play your piece at the start of class. You must be able to recognize your piece. If you don’t recognize it, you don’t get credit for it.

Computer or hand notation is acceptable. Either way it must be neatly and correctly notated. No odd or tiny paper sizes: everything within one inch (in both dimensions) of 8.5 x 11".