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**First Edition**

# Composing with Sibelius

A Composition Project for Secondary Band,  
Orchestra, or Choir  
Using Sibelius 3



## Teacher Manual

Bellevue   
Music Department

## Introduction

Welcome to ***Composing With Sibelius 3!***

This composition project, originally named *The Beethoven Project*, was first piloted at Tyee Middle School by Mark Wilbert, Jack Halm, and Aaron Faletto in April 2005.

It was extremely successful for two reasons:

- The students were well prepared. Students came into the lab with a four-measure melody already written on staff paper for their instrument, and were excited to use new technology.
- The teacher and assistants were familiar with the Sibelius program and had a clear idea of what they wanted the students to learn. The resultant learning went well beyond the musical concepts taught! One student said, "I knew we played difficult music, but I didn't know I could write it, too!"

As an outcome of piloting this project in Band, we realized some accommodations would need to be made for it to work for Choir and Orchestra. Though many of the instructions are similar, the unique changes for Choir and Orchestra are included here.

Upon completion of the project, Mark found that not only did the students experience success, they returned to rehearsal excited, energized, and making connections from their own composing to the music they were playing in Band.

## Accompaniment Chart

For Orchestra

We will use 3 chords built from the Concert D scale to create accompaniment parts.

### I = The Tonic Chord

<u>D</u> 1 <sup>st</sup> Note of the scale	F# 3 <sup>rd</sup> Note of the scale	<u>A</u> 5 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale
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### IV = The Subdominant Chord

G 4 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	B 6 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	<u>D</u> 8 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale
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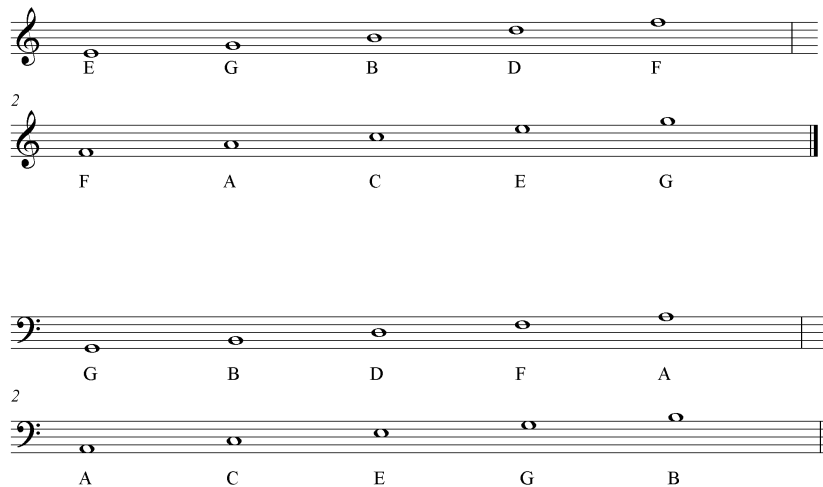
### V = The Dominant Chord

<u>A</u> 5 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	C# 7 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	E 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 9 <sup>th</sup> Note
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Each of these chords contains three notes that compliment each other. Find your melody note in the chart, and pick one of the other three notes to create your bassline or counter-melody.

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## Note Names



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Though this project was originally piloted for band, it has been adapted in this manual for Choir and Orchestra as well.

\*Pages for student handouts

## Sibelius 3 Keyboard Shortcuts

### NOTES

Input/edit pitch - A - G

Add interval above/below - 2 - 9/Shift 2 - 9

Add pitch above - Shift/A - G

Repeat note - R

Up/down a second - up/dn (cursor keys)

Up/down octave - Ctrl+up/dn keys

### CREATE

Add bar at end - Ctrl + B

Crescendo/Decrescendo - H/Shift+H

Insert bar - Shift+Ctrl+B

Instruments - I

Key Signature - K

Slur (phrase mark) - S

Triplet - Ctrl+3

### TEXT

Expression text - Ctrl+E

Technique text - Ctrl+T

Lyrics (vs 1) - Ctrl+L

Rehearsal Mark - Ctrl+R

### EDIT

Copy - Ctrl+C

Paste - Alt+Right-click

Delete object - Delete or Ctrl+X

Undo - Ctrl+Z

Redo - Ctrl+Y

### PLAYBACK

Play (Pause) - P (P)

Stop - O

### WINDOWS Shortcut Keys

Copy - Ctrl+C

Paste - Ctrl+V

Cut - Ctrl+X

New file - Ctrl+N

Select All Ctrl+A

## Orchestra Instructions

- Follow the same steps as outlined in Day 1, except choose Key of D (two sharps).
- For Day 2, use:
  1. Log on to your student account.
  2. Open the Sibelius file containing your melody.
  3. Hit **ESC** twice to make sure nothing is highlighted, then hit the letter **I** (shortcut for add instrument).
  4. Highlight Orchestral Instruments, then choose Strings from the lower left-hand box.
  5. Highlight a string instrument and then click **Add to Score**, then click **OK**. You should now see your melody and an empty staff.
  6. If you choose a Viola, you will need to click the **Transpose** button.
  7. The **Accompaniment Chart** will help us create a Harmony part. For the following steps please refer to the Accompaniment Chart. We will start by using only half notes for our Harmony Part. *Don't worry, you can change the rhythm later.* Look at the first note of your melody. Find that note on the accompaniment chart, and pick a note from the same chord for your Harmony part. *(The first note listed in each chord will always sound good!)* For the second half note of each measure (count 3 & 4), you can either repeat the same note, or choose a different note from the Accompaniment Chart that will compliment your melody. Try changing the notes and listening to it. **Use your ear and decide what you like best!** Repeat this process for each measure in your melody.
  8. Try changing the rhythm to your Harmony part. Use quarter notes, or dotted quarter notes and eighth notes. When you use quarter notes, you can either repeat the same note twice, or try using different notes to create a smooth line.
  9. Return to the Band instructions and follow from Step 10 onward.

## Teacher Preparatory work

- **Become familiar with Sibelius.** Practice doing the kind of project your students will do. Practice using Sibelius on your teacher presentation station. You can do this in your classroom prior to going into the lab when you introduce Sibelius.
  - **Decide whether to use keyboards.** Keyboards are one more thing you have to teach students to use, but the advantage is that students can "play around" on the keyboard which is good for developing ideas prior to entering notation. For singers, the project works best when using keyboards, so that they can play their parts. This means teaching them a keyboard unit prior to going into the lab to compose.
  - **Know what your students already understand about notation.** Students need to be able to write their melody on staff paper prior to going into the lab. Notation can be taught in increments all year long.
  - **Have your projector, speakers, and your computer on a cart (or easily portable).**
  - **Consider using a seating plan to assign students to a specific computer.** When you have more students than computers and have to 'double-up,' consider whom you want paired together and their location in the room.
  - **Have all handouts printed and ready.** They should be divided by Day 1, Day 2, etc.
- Have a practice Sibelius melody written and in your teacher file on the server for students to experiment with prior to creating their own.**

## Computer Lab Preparatory work:

Involve your Tech Assistant for these tasks. They may have much of the equipment you will need, like speakers, Memory Keys, and extension cords, and can also help troubleshoot problems.

- Reserve computer lab months in advance.
- Load Sibelius on all student computers at least a week in advance. We suggest you load Sibelius on 4-5 laptops so that after you are through in the lab, you can check out those computers for follow up in your classroom.
- If you are using keyboards, load the software and test each keyboard with Sibelius.
- Locate power sources for laptop computers.
- Determine where the teacher presentation screen (or SmartBoard) will be located, so that students can all see the teaching station easily.
- Test Sibelius by logging in as a student and saving a project in a student folder.
- Figure out how to save the final composition in a teacher folder on the School Server. This is so the teacher has both an electronic copy and a hard copy.
- Have a Memory Key (also known as a Memory Stick or Jump Drive) ready for emergency saves. This will happen!
- Solve sound issues ahead of time. Consider:
  - Computer on mute?
  - Volume icon in the lower right corner?
  - Windows mixer (Start menu – Control Panel – Settings – Sounds and Audio Devices – Volume tab – Advanced)?

Make sure all computers are set up to print to the appropriate printer.

## Accompaniment Chart

For Choir

We will use 3 chords built from the Concert C scale to create accompaniment parts.

### I = The Tonic Chord

<u>C</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>G</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> Note of the scale	3 <sup>rd</sup> Note of the scale	5 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale

### IV = The Subdominant Chord

<u>F</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>C</u>
4 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	6 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	8 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale

### V = The Dominant Chord

<u>G</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>D</u>
5 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	7 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	2 <sup>nd</sup> or 9 <sup>th</sup> Note

Each of these chords contains three notes that compliment each other. Find your melody note in the chart, and pick one of the other three notes to create your Harmony part.

## Choir Instructions

- Follow the same steps as outlined in Day 1, except choose Key of C (no sharps or flats)
- For Day 2, use:
  1. Log on to your student account.
  2. Open the Sibelius file containing your melody.
  3. Hit **ESC** twice to make sure nothing is highlighted, then hit the letter **i** (shortcut for add instrument).
  4. Highlight All Instruments, then choose Singers from the family in the lower left-hand box.
  5. Highlight either a Soprano, Alto, Tenor, or Baritone and then click **Add to Score**, then click **OK**. You should now see your melody and an empty staff.
  6. The **Accompaniment Chart** will help us create a Harmony part. For the following steps please refer to the Accompaniment Chart. We will start by using only half notes for our Harmony Part. *Don't worry, you can change the rhythm later.* Look at the first note of your melody. Find that note on the accompaniment chart, and pick a note from the same chord for your Harmony part. *(The first note listed in each chord will always sound good!)* For the second half note of each measure (count 3 & 4), you can either repeat the same note, or choose a different note from the Accompaniment Chart that will compliment your melody. Try changing the notes and listening to it. **Use your ear and decide what you like best!** Repeat this process for each measure in your melody.
  7. Try changing the rhythm to your Harmony part. Use quarter notes, or dotted quarter notes and eighth notes. When you use quarter notes, you can either repeat the same note twice, or try using different notes to create a smooth line.
  8. **Save As...** to your student folder.
  9. **Print** a copy and give to your teacher.
  10. If your teacher has established a Drop Folder, **Save** a copy there, too

**If you reach this step ahead of time, see your teacher for Extension Activities.**

## Student Preparatory work:

- **Know their ID and password to login.**
- **Have their melody already finished and written on staff paper.**
- **Have the option to bring in their own headphones.**

### Sibelius-Specific issues:

For this project to be successful, teachers need to have every student's attention when giving instruction. No hands on keyboards, eye contact with the instructor, etc. Try to minimize the number of interruptions during the class period so that when you *do* interrupt, students know that it is essential that they listen to instructions.

- **Know *which* specific instrument they need from Sibelius' list of choices when students choose their instrument/voice.** For instance, Clarinets should know to choose 'Clarinet in Bb,' and voice should choose soprano, alto, tenor, or bass. Create a list of appropriate choices on a handout.
- **Know what to do when the Keypad or Navigator in Sibelius disappears.** Just go to the Window menu and select the one you need.

- Click the **Transpose** button. The key signature should change to the key signature you are familiar with for the concert Bb scale. The transpose button should remain lit up.



***STOP!!! Do not go on until a teacher has checked that everyone is OK at this point.***

- Save your work!
  - Go to **File** and then **Save As...**
  - Save the document to your student folder as you would any other document.
- Enter your 4 measure melody into Sibelius:
  - Click on the note value of the first note in your composition. Now click on the first beat of the bar.
  - If the second note is a different rhythmic value, click on the new note value first before you enter it on the staff.
  - To deselect a note (to un-highlight it), hit **ESC** twice.

**Continue entering your melody until it is all entered in Sibelius. When you are done, raise your hand and have a teacher check it.**

**Save your work!**

## Day 2

### **Part 1: Adding a bassline to your melody**

- Log on to your student account.
- Open the Sibelius file containing your melody.
- Hit **ESC** twice to make sure nothing is highlighted, then hit the letter **i** (shortcut for add instrument).
- Highlight Band Instruments, then choose the family from the lower left-hand box (brass, woodwind, or pitched percussion).
- Highlight a *low-sounding* instrument and then click **Add to Score**, then click **OK**.
  - Good choices for bass clef include tuba, baritone, trombone, and bassoon.
  - Good choices for treble clef include bass clarinet, baritone sax, and tenor sax.

You should now see your melody and an empty staff.

- For the next steps, it is important to make sure your score is in *Concert Pitch* (like a piano). If your instrument transposes (**clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, French horn**), we will need to change your score back to *Concert Pitch* by clicking the **Transpose** button. ***If your instrument is not one of these, you can skip this step.***
  - Make sure both of the staves have 2 flats
  - Double check that the **Transpose** button is not lit up.

From now on we will all work in **Concert Pitch** so that we are using a common language.



***STOP!!! Do not go on until a teacher has checked that everyone is OK at this point.***



7. The **Accompaniment Chart** will help us create a bassline. For the following steps please refer to the paper you were given titled "Accompaniment Chart".
  - We will start by using only half notes for our bassline. *You can always change the rhythm later.*
  - Look at the first note of your melody. Find that note on the accompaniment chart, and pick a note from the same chord for your bassline. *(The first note listed in each chord will always sound good!!)*
  - For the second half note of each measure (count 3 & 4), you can either repeat the same note, or choose a different note from the accompaniment chart that will compliment your melody.
  - Try changing the notes and listening to it. **Use your ear and decide what you like best!**
  - Repeat this process for each measure in your melody.
8. When you have created a bassline using only half notes that you are satisfied with, have a teacher listen to it.
9. Try changing the rhythm to your bassline. Use quarter notes, or dotted quarter notes and eighth notes. When using quarter notes, you can either repeat the same note twice, or try using different notes to create a smooth line.

Use your ear, and find patterns that sound good to you!

10. **Save As...** to your student folder.
11. **Print** a copy and give to your teacher.
12. If your teacher has established a Drop Folder, **Save** a copy there, too.
13. If you reach this step ahead of time, see your teacher for other composition activities like adding percussion parts to your composition.

## **Part 2: Entering your four measure melody**

5. In the upper left hand corner click on **File** and **New**.
6. Under the Manuscript Paper page, highlight *Blank* (second from top), and then click on *Add Instruments...*
7. Find *your* instrument, and click *Add to Score*. You should see your instrument appear in the right-hand column below "Staves in Score".



***STOP!!! Do not go on until a teacher has checked that everyone is OK at this point***

8. Click **OK**, and then **Next**.
9. On the House Style page, click **Next**. Don't change the style.
10. On the Time Signature and Tempo page, just click **Next**. Don't change anything.
11. On the Key Signature page, click on **Bb major**, then click **Next**.
12. On the Score Info page, type the title of your piece in the Title box. In the Composer/Songwriter box, enter your name. Click **Finish**.
13. The empty score that appears in is **Concert Pitch**, like a piano. Instruments that transpose (**Clarinet, saxophones, trumpet, french horn**) need to do an important step to put the score in their correct key. ***If your instrument isn't one of the above, skip this step.***

On the toolbar is a round button with 2 flats on it. This is the **Transpose** button.

## Day 1

### Part 1: Practice using Sibelius

1. Log into your student account.
2. Open up the Teacher Folder. Find and open the folder you are told to. **Double click** on the Sibelius file titled "Sibelius Practice."
3. Explore with *adding*, *deleting*, and *changing* notes on Sibelius:
  - To *add* a note, **click** on any note value in the keypad. The arrow should turn blue. Try placing different notes on the staff, in any order you wish.
  - To *delete* notes, click on any note and hit **Backspace**.

-OR-

**The Undo button (CTRL-Z) erases the last thing you did.**

- To *change* a note, press **ESC** twice (to make sure nothing is highlighted). Then click on any note to highlight it. You can then use the arrow buttons to move the note up or down.
4. To play back the music so you can listen to it:
    - Press **ESC** twice to make sure nothing is highlighted.
    - Click the **Play** arrow or **Stop** button in your toolbar. These buttons work just like a CD player.

## Accompaniment Chart

We will use 3 chords built from the Concert B $\flat$  scale to create accompaniment parts.

### I = The Tonic Chord

<u>B<math>\flat</math></u>	D	<u>F</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> Note of the scale	3 <sup>rd</sup> Note of the scale	5 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale

### IV = The Subdominant Chord

E $\flat$	G	<u>B<math>\flat</math></u>
4 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	6 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	8 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale

### V = The Dominant Chord

<u>F</u>	A	C
5 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	7 <sup>th</sup> Note of the scale	2 <sup>nd</sup> or 9 <sup>th</sup> Note

Each of these chords contains three notes that compliment each other. Find your melody note in the chart, and pick one of the other three notes to create your bassline or counter melody.