

LESSON 11

Date: _____

Simple Time ~ Meters where the principle subdivision of the beat is by two. The top number of the time signature will be 2, 3, or 4.

Compound Time ~ Meters where the principle subdivision of the beat is by three. The top number of the time signature will be 6, 9, or 12. In theory, the top number can be any multiple of 3 (excluding 3), however, any number larger than 12 is rare.

Meter ~ A recurring pattern of stresses or accents that provide the beat of music. The most common meters are duple (2), triple (3), and quadruple (4).

Pulse ~ We will reserve this term for the subdivision of beats. In simple time there are two pulses per beat. In compound time there are three pulses per beat.

Note: The terms time/meter and beat/pulse are often used interchangeably. Time is a complex topic with many subtleties and layers.

In Level 4, you will study examples of compound and complex time signatures that can be organized into duple, triple, and quadruple meters. Together with simple time signatures, they are the most commonly used time signatures used in music.

In compound time signatures, the bottom number indicates which type of note is designated as the pulse.



In compound time, half notes are rarely designated as the pulse. As such, only time signatures with 4, 8, and 16 as the bottom note will be studied.

COMPOUND DUPLÉ TIME (**STRONG** WEAK: **S** W W **W** W W)

6 6 pulses in a bar: 2 beats in a bar, 3 pulses in a beat

4 the quarter note gets one pulse

Two musical staves illustrating the levels of division in compound duple time. The first staff shows a 6/4 time signature with a half note, two quarter notes, and six eighth notes. The second staff shows a continuous stream of eighth notes. Labels indicate 'Multiple Level', 'Beat Level', 'Principle Division (compounding) Level', and 'Subsequent Division Levels'.

- 6** 6 pulses in a bar: 2 beats in a bar, 3 pulses in a beat
- 8** the eighth note gets one pulse

Multiple Level

Beat Level

Principle Division (compounding) Level

Subsequent Division Levels

- 6** 6 pulses in a bar: 2 beats in a bar, 3 pulses in a beat
- 16** the sixteenth note gets one pulse

Multiple Level

Beat Level

Principle Division (compounding) Level

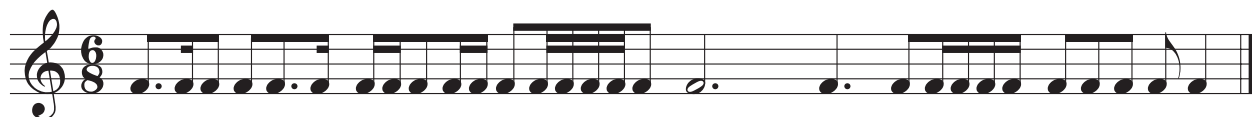
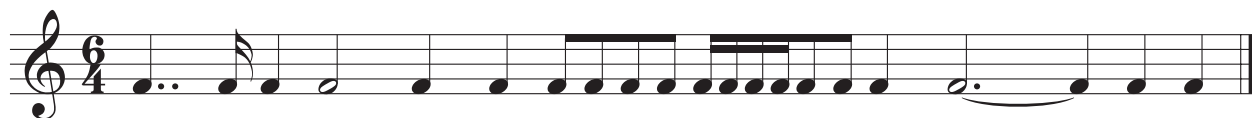
Subsequent Division Levels

DOTS

A dot lengthens a note by half of the value of the note. Subsequent dots continue to lengthen the note by half of the value of the previous dot. It is rare to see notes that have more than two dots. A note that has two dots is referred to as a double dotted note.

PRACTICE

1. Add bar lines to the following musical excerpts.



2. In each of the following one-bar rhythms, circle each beat where possible. A beat in simple time will have 2 pulses and a beat in compound time will have 3 pulses. Then, add time signatures that reflect your groupings to each musical excerpt. Note: This question will involve both simple and compound time signatures.

