Advanced Sight Reading

Moving from Diatonic to Chromatic

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1yfZIKx7TcXFwZIWom3qYqGIg4W8D9jOZgCQ39O4Ez0Y/edit?usp=sharing

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From Diatonic to Chromatic

-Goal: to develop the tonal vocabulary to alter pitches in the diatonic set.

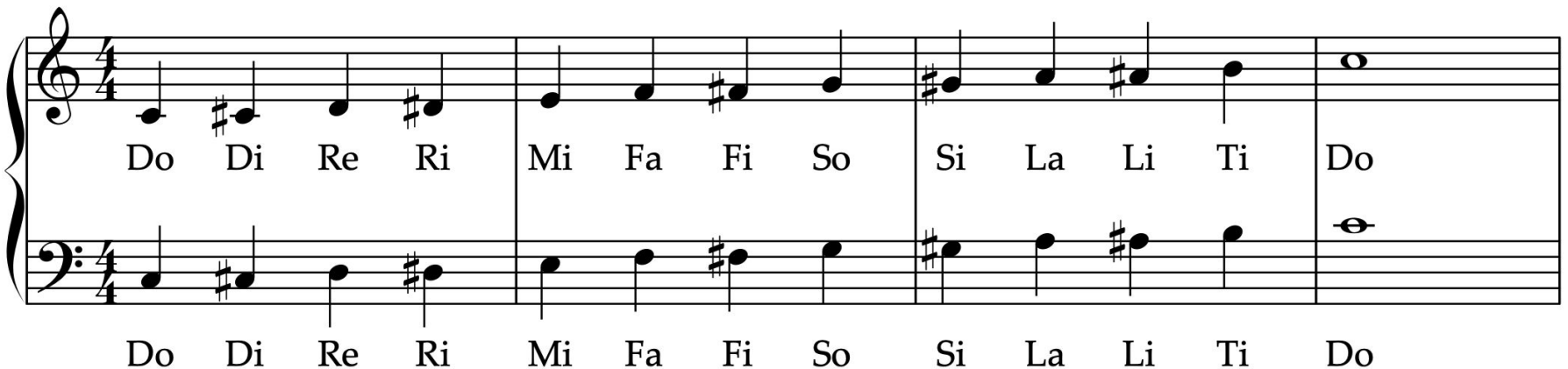
-Readiness: comfort navigating the Diatonic set (Do-Re-Mi-Fa-So-La-Ti-Do)

- The “Moveable Do” system of Solfege will be used, with examples in both La and Do-based minor.

The Chromatic Set Ascending

-The Chromatic set includes all twelve half steps within the octave.

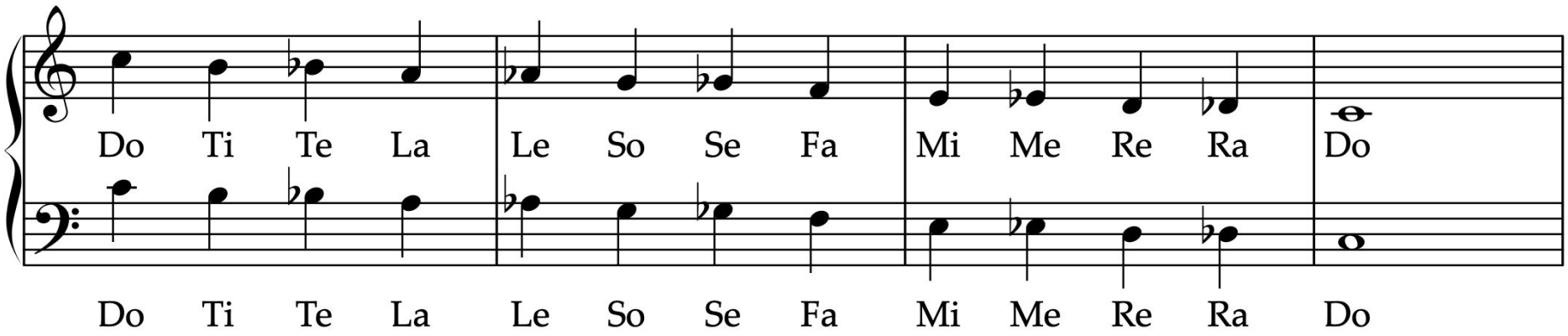
-Raised syllables use an “i” version of each syllable.



The Chromatic Set Descending

-Lowered syllables use an “e” version of each syllable

- Re is the exception, it becomes Ra.



Scales for Ear Training

-There are several types of scales beyond the most common major and minor.

-Reference the handout for examples:

-Major Scale

-Minor Scale in all three forms

-Chromatic Scale (all half steps)

-Whole Tone Scale (this one is tough!)

-Incorporate each of these scales into your warmup routine BEFORE you try and sight read with lots of accidentals.

-Having the vocabulary of these scales in each singer's ears will make altered syllables easier to negotiate.

-Handout Link

Accidentals

-A Flat lowers a note a half step.

-A Sharp raises a note a half step.

-A Natural cancels the effect of a sharp or a flat, so a natural can raise a note that was flat, or lower a note that was sharp.

-An accidental (whether sharp, flat, or natural) added to a note in a piece of music will indicate a solfege syllable change.

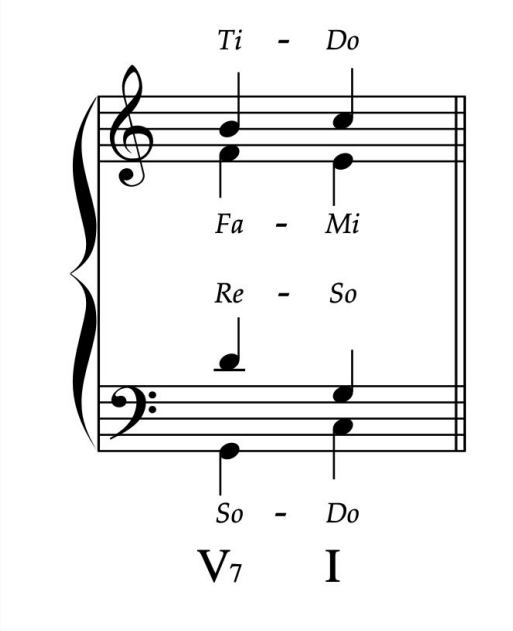
-Practice identifying notes that are altered within your choir sheet music with your teacher.

Half Step Charge

-Within the major scale, there are 2 half steps, between Mi-Fa and Ti-Do.

-The motion of these half steps are what create the sense of a tonal center toward Do. We call these leading tones.

-V7 to I is the strongest example of this pull, as both Fa-MI and Ti-Do are present in the chord progression.

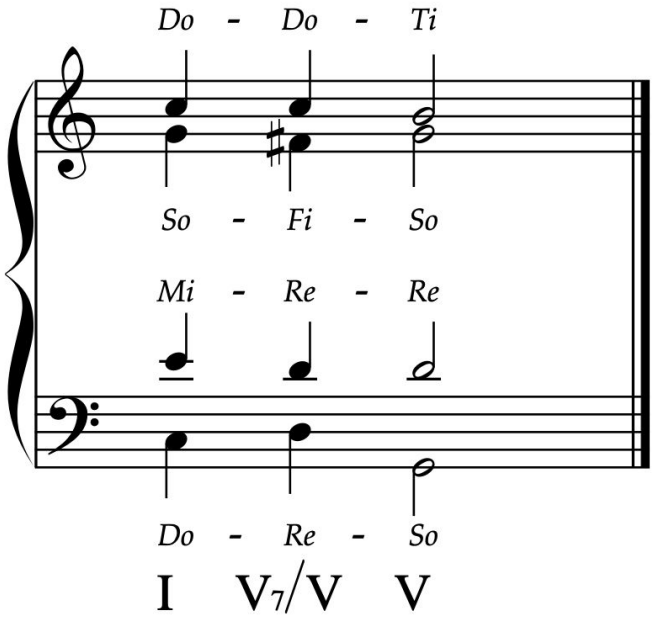


Moving the Resting Tone/New Tonal Area

-Altered pitches create new leading tones, and set up zones within music where a different tonal center is present. (tonicization)

-Fi, for example, creates a new leading tone toward So (V), and quickly helps our ears hear So as the resting tone (temporary Do)

-Sometimes we call the chord where the alteration occurs a *Secondary Dominant* chord, labelled here as V7 *of* V.



Intervals for Ear Training

-Introduce altered intervals one at a time. Develop a vocabulary.

-Here is a good sequence order of the most common alterations:

-Fa-Fi-So

-Do-Te-La

-Mi-Me-Re

-So-Si-La

-Do-Di-Re

-The less common ones are:

-So-Se-Fa

-La-Le-So

-Re-Ra-Do

Reference the Handout for Warmups that include alterations, or write your own!

-Develop comfort with each one pattern individually. Students will learn to audiate them and hear them internally like they can easily with the Diatonic set.

Unison Sight Reading Exercises

-Included in the Handout are short unison sight reading exercises to introduce each common alteration pattern.

-Composer your own similar examples and practice with each pattern before moving on to the next.

-Introduce alterations in Sight reading after singers have learned their sound in warmups.

In Practice: Bach Chorales

-several Bach chorale examples are listed in the Handout but all are easily available online.

-Use the harmonic context around you to help with tuning.

-Practice with the entire choir singing one vocal line and a piano playing the others at first.

-When you have chromatic alterations, listen vertically.

-Tonicization:

“The act of establishing a new key centre, or of giving a degree other than the first (Do) the role of the tonic.” -Oxford Music Online

“The treatment of a pitch other than the overall tonic as a temporary tonic in a composition.” -Wikipedia