Exercises 1a–d

Two-voiced phrases in major and minor keys

These four exercises each contain five examples of music harmonised by J. S. Bach, taken from the collection of chorale texts and music published by Georg Christian Schemelli in Leipzig in 1736, his *Musicalisches Gesang-Buch*, in which sixty-nine of these texts were complemented by melodies; most of these had been composed during the previous two hundred years, but some were possibly written by Bach himself.

The melodies chosen for these exercises exhibit the usual traits of chorale melodies in Bach's time: the principal note length is the crotchet and there are also occasional quavers, while the melodic line is generally shaped in **conjunct motion**. The bass lines are of Bach's own devising, and illustrate many of the melodic and rhythmic characteristics of his bass-line style as well as of the general style of Baroque bass lines: they employ much vocal-style conjunct motion, though there are elements of instrumental style as well, especially towards cadences where **disjunct motion** in the form of wider intervals and arpeggiated shapes appears more regularly. (Bach also indicated the harmonies he wanted for this music, using **Figured Bass** notation. For the purpose of these exercises, this aspect has been omitted.)

Listen to each of the phrases a number of times. Aim to become familiar with their sound world and particularly with the shapes and styles of the Soprano and Bass parts. Examine the minor-key examples closely and notice how leading notes tend to be raised except when they form part of a descending motion. In one of the examples, a rising leading note in the Bass affects the preceding submediant which is also raised to conform to the shape of a **melodic minor scale**.

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Now analyse the patterns of the melodic and harmonic intervals in all the phrases.

i) melodic intervals – how do bass lines differ from melodies in this respect?

ii) harmonic intervals – which are the consonant intervals and where do they tend to occur?

Then analyse each example in the following ways, in order to learn the stylistic features that are regularly found in Baroque chorale melodies and in their bass lines.

iii) Examine each bass line and identify all occurrences of the following general stylistic features:
passing notes, accented passing notes, auxiliary notes, arpeggiations

iv) Examine each melody and note any occurrences of these same stylistic features and also of the following types of specifically melodic decoration:
***notes échappées*, anticipatory notes**

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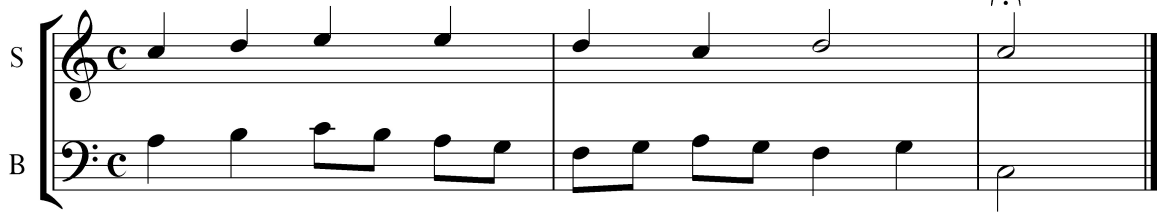
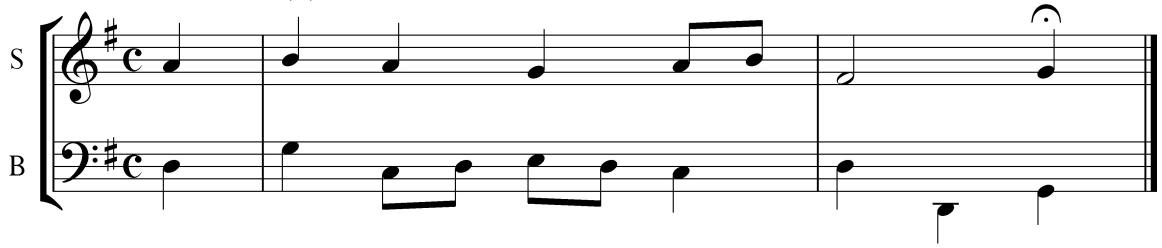
Exercise 1a

Phrases in major keys closing with a Perfect Cadence, with J. S. Bach's bass lines

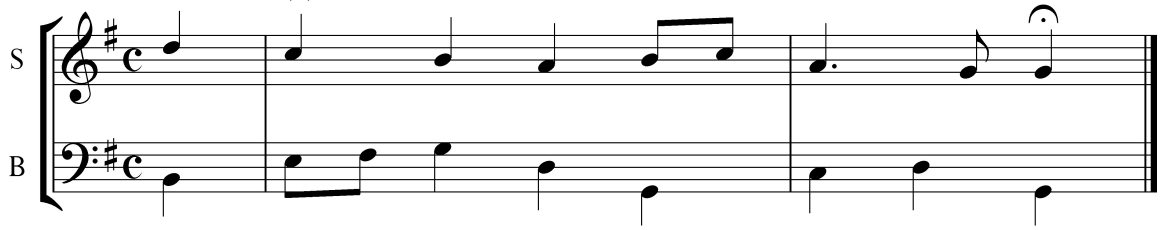
S.5 / BWV463(e)



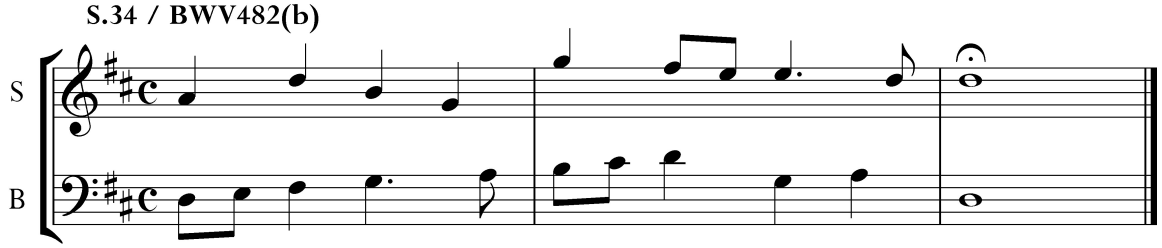
S.52 / BWV468(b)



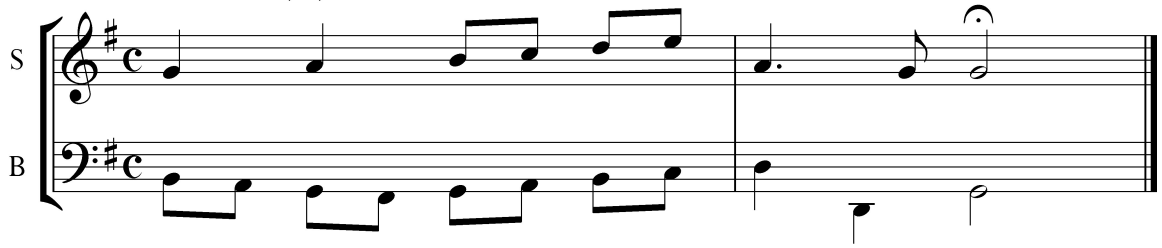
S.60 / BWV477(e)



S.34 / BWV482(b)



S.34 / BWV482(fx)



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