

MAMA THEORY BEE – Syllabus for 2024

Format

Entrants will be awarded a ribbon for each question they answer correctly and will be awarded a gold medal if they answer all six questions without missing one. If an entrant misses a question, their turn is over, but one pass is allowed for each of the six questions with no penalty. (The student must say, “pass” within 15 seconds). Once it is passed, a student may not return to the first question. An entrant must complete their answer before the judge calls time. Following are the types of questions, and the ribbon color for each:

- Question 1 True/False: 20-second time limit – WHITE RIBBON
- Question 2 Multiple choice: 20-second time limit – GOLD RIBBON
- Question 3 Fill-in the blank that requires a one-word answer: 20-second time limit - GREEN RIBBON
- Question 4 Aural perception: 30-second time limit – RED RIBBON
- Question 5 Longer fill-in the blank: 30-second time limit – BLUE RIBBON
- Question 6 Any type of question, including notation, may be asked: 1-minute time limit – MAROON RIBBON

Rules and Regulations

1. Students may enter any level appropriate for their age and level of training.
2. Contestants earning a Gold Medal must advance to a higher level the next year.
3. A complete syllabus for each level is published on the following pages.
4. Students might be asked questions that include information or skills from levels lower than the one in which they are entered.
5. Pencil and paper will be provided for the use of entrants during the Theory Bee, but entrants will not be allowed to carry any notes or references into the examination room.
6. Questions will increase in difficulty as the rounds progress: Round One questions will be very easy. Round Two questions will be a little more difficult, etc.
7. The Theory Bee is non-competitive. Students should not attempt to beat another student’s score, but instead should try to better their own score from year to year.

Study Syllabus

LEVEL ONE

Staff: Identify or notate the treble clef lines and spaces from middle “C” up through top line “F”.

Time Signatures: Identify, know the meaning of top and bottom numbers or distinguish aurally – 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4.

Note Values: Identify and know the value of whole, half and quarter notes or rests.

Rhythm: Level one and above - be able to add bar lines or write in counting to a rhythm using the required values and meters.

Key Signatures and Scales: Identify key signatures or spell scales of major keys C, F and G.

Level one and above - know the right hand fingering on the piano of the required scales.

Triads and Chords: Identify or spell major triads C, G, and F in root position.

Intervals: Identify or distinguish aurally minor or major seconds (half and whole steps).

Scale Degrees - Level one and above:

1. Recognize or notate the Roman numerals of the required scale degrees.
2. Know the quality of triads or chords built on any of the required scale degrees.

Level one scale degrees: Tonic and dominant in C and F.

Aural Perception:

1. Be able to recognize a tonic or dominant triad after hearing a I-V-I cadence.
2. Identify the time signature of a simple passage of music played with the downbeat strongly accented.

Terms and Symbols - Level one and above:

1. Know the Italian pronunciation, English names, abbreviations, and/or symbols of the required terms.
2. Know the order of loudness of the required dynamic marks.
3. Know the meaning and relative speed of the required tempo marks.

Level one terms: Staff, measure, *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *rit.*, tie, legato, staccato, bar line, slur, pentachord, tetrachord, Allegro, Moderato.

Forms/Styles - Level one and above:

1. Know the required forms and associated terms.
2. Be able to describe or recognize the sections or movements of the required forms in a piece of music.

Level one forms: Binary, ternary, folk music (not composed).

LEVEL ONE (Continued)

Composers: Bach, Beethoven and Mozart.

Level one and above: Know the historical period and nationality of the required composers. Reference books (levels 1-7) for composers/history are "Meet The Great Composers" books one and two (Alfred 11756 and 16887).

Miscellaneous: Know and understand the voices in four-part singing. (Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass).

LEVEL TWO

Staff: Bass clef bottom line "G" up through middle "C".

Know the meaning of and be able to notate sharp, flat and natural signs.

Time Signatures: Identify, know the meaning of the symbol or distinguish aurally – Common Time.

Note Values: Dotted half notes or rests.

Rhythm - Level two and above be able to:

1. Name the single note/rest that is the equivalent to a given number of note/rest values.
2. Complete a measure with the correct note or rest value(s) in any of the required meters.

Key Signatures and Scales - Level two and above:

1. Know the right and left hand fingering on the piano of the required scales.
2. Be able to identify or spell the required scales in tetrachords with correct sharps/flats.
3. Understand the placement of whole and half steps in a tetrachord.

Level two keys: Major keys D, A and E.

Triads and Chords: Major triads D, A and E in root position. Know the meaning and placement of root/third/fifth in a triad.

Intervals: Minor or major thirds.

Scale Degrees: Tonic and dominant in G, D and A.

Aural Perception: Recognize which degree of a major scale is played wrong.

Terms and Symbols: Adagio, Andante, *8va*, *a tempo*, *dim.*, loco, poco, accent, crescendo, tempo, meter, chromatic, downbeat.

Forms/Styles: Phrase, motif (motive).

Composers: Haydn, Brahms, Chopin.

Miscellaneous: Know conducting patterns and be able to conduct 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 meter.

LEVEL THREE

Staff: Understand the placement of braces, clef signs, key signatures, time signatures, bar lines, double bar lines and repeat dots.

Time Signatures: Know the meaning and understand the placement of upbeat (pick-up notes).

Note Values: Eighth notes or rests.

Rhythm: Level three and above be able to recognize or notate a rhythm after hearing it clapped or played on a keyboard twice.

Key Signatures and Scales: Major keys Db, Eb, and Ab.

Understand the placement of half and whole steps in a major scale.

Triads and Chords: Db, Eb, and Ab in root position.

Intervals: Perfect octaves.

Scale Degrees: Tonic and dominant in E, Db, Ab and Eb.

Terms and Symbols: Allegretto, Maestoso, poco a poco, fermata, ledger (leger) lines, decrescendo, moto, con, e (and), double bar line, *sf*, *sfz*, *pp*, *ff*.

Forms/Styles: Theme, main theme, secondary theme(s).

Composers: Scarlatti, Handel, Robert Schumann, Liszt.

Miscellaneous: Know the time frame and characteristics of the four major periods of music history.

LEVEL FOUR

Staff: Inner and outer ledger (leger) lines and spaces up to two above or below treble and bass staff.

Know the direction of stems on the staff and the placement and order of performance of 1st and 2nd endings.

Note Values: Dotted quarter, sixteenth notes/rests and eight-note triplets.

Key Signatures and Scales: All major keys.

LEVEL FOUR (Continued)

Level Four and above:

1. Know the order and understand the placement of sharps and flats in the key signature.
2. Be able to notate the required key signatures and scales in treble or bass staff.

Triads and Chords: All major triads in any inversion.

Intervals: Perfect fourths and fifths.

Scale Degrees: All major keys – I, IV, V and viio.

Aural Perception: Recognize the tonic, dominant or sub-dominant triad after hearing a I-IV-V-I cadence.

Terms and Symbols: Inversion, cadence, Lento, Largo, Con Brio, Con Moto, Animato, tenuto, accelerando, enharmonic, cantabile, grazioso, poco moto, simile, arpeggio.

Forms/Styles: Question and answer phrases, contrasting and parallel.

Composers: Clementi, Kuhlau, Bartok and Kabalevsky.

Level four and above know the compositional styles of the required composers. (Clementi composed sonatinas).

Miscellaneous: Know the families and familiar instruments of the symphony orchestra.

Know the terms ascending and descending and the difference between consonance and dissonance.

LEVEL FIVE

Staff: Inner and outer ledger lines and spaces up to three above or below treble and bass staff.

Understand the placement and know the symbols for Da Capo, Dal Segno, Coda and *fine*.

Time Signatures: 3/8, 6/8 and 2/2. Know the meaning and symbol for alla breve.

Note Values: Dotted eighth, thirty-second notes/rests.

Key Signatures: All minor keys. Know the meaning and be able to identify relative/parallel major and minor.

Triads and Chords: All minor triads any inversion. Distinguish aurally major and minor triads in root position.

Level five and above be able to notate all required triads and chords.

Intervals: Identify, know or distinguish aurally all major, minor or perfect intervals.

Scale Degrees: All scale degrees of the major keys.

Level five and above:

1. Notate notes or triads in root position on the required scale degrees.
2. Identify major or minor triads in any inversion and be able to name the scale degree of the root.

Terms and Symbols: Circle of Fifths, Vivace, Presto, Prestissimo, meno mosso, modulation, primo-secondo (duet), espressivo, transposition, *rall.*

Forms/Styles: Minuet and Trio, Sonata, Sonatina, Invention.

Composers: Debussy, Joplin, Ravel, Prokofiev, Rachmaninoff.

Level five and above know the major works of the required composers.

Miscellaneous: Understand contrary/parallel motion. Know the names of and understand the usage of the three pedals on the piano. Know the meaning of una corda, tre corde and damper.

LEVEL SIX

Staff: Inner and outer ledger lines and spaces up to four above or below treble and bass staff.

Know the meaning and symbols for double sharps and flats.

Time Signatures: Know the difference between simple and compound meter.

Scales: Identify, name or distinguish aurally the three forms of the minor scale. Spell harmonic minor scales.

Triads and Chords: Diminished or augmented triads in root position. Distinguish aurally all triads in root position.

Intervals: Be able to notate any of the required intervals.

Cadences: Identify, know or distinguish aurally authentic, plagal, half or deceptive cadences. (Notation not required).

Terms and Symbols: Grandioso, Scherzando, canon, opus, marcato, allargando, piu mosso, scherzo, unison, piu, primary/secondary chords, giocoso.

Forms/Styles: Sonata Allegro, Rondo, Theme and Variations, Overture.

Composers: Schubert, Dvorak, Stephen Foster, Tchaikovsky, Felix Mendelssohn.

Miscellaneous: Know the history and characteristics of keyboard instruments - organ, harpsichord, pianoforte, modern grand piano and MIDI.

LEVEL SEVEN

Staff: Inner and outer ledger lines and spaces up to five above or below treble and bass staff.

Time Signatures: 9/8, 12/8.

Note Values: Quarter-note triplets and sixteenth-note triplets.

Scales: Spell natural minor and one octave chromatic scales, ascending and descending.

Triads and Chords: All triads in any inversion and V7 chords and resolution in root position. Identify or draw figured bass of triad inversions. (5/3 = root position, 6/3 = 1st inversion and 6/4 = 2nd inversion)

Intervals: Diminished and augmented intervals without double sharps or flats.

Scale Degrees: Identify the quality of the triads on the scale degrees of the harmonic minor.

Aural Perception - Level seven and above: distinguish the difference between a major scale and any form of the minor scale.

Terms and Symbols: Subito, dolce, sempre, cadenza, Alberti bass, senza, libretto, aria, recitative, morendo, tonal, atonal, rubato, a capella.

Forms/Styles: Concerto, symphony, opera, oratorio, Baroque Dance Suite. Level seven and above know the key structure of the various sections or movements of the required forms. (The second theme of the exposition of Sonata Allegro form usually modulates to the dominant when the movement is in a major key).

Composers: Amy Beach, Stravinsky, Gershwin, Grieg, Couperin, Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel, Granados.

Miscellaneous - Know the characteristics of Jazz: blue notes (flat third and seventh), syncopation, improvisation. Understand polyphonic, homophonic, monophonic and dodecaphonic (twelve tone).

LEVEL EIGHT

Staff: Identify, know or notate the lines and spaces of the alto (C) clef. (No ledger lines)

Time Signatures: 5/4, 7/4. Know the meaning of irregular (complex, hybrid, etc.) meter.

Scales: Spell melodic minor scales, ascending and descending.

Understand the placement of half and whole steps in all forms of the minor scales.

Triads and Chords: Major, minor, half diminished and fully diminished 7th chords in root position.

Intervals: All intervals including those using double sharps and flats.

Scale Degrees: Identify the quality of the triads on the scale degrees of the natural minor.

Terms and Symbols: Pizzicato, K numbers, segue, elision, tranquillo, trill, ritenuto, risoluto, pesante, leggero (leggiero), ostinato, hemiola.

Forms/Styles: Impressionism, Prelude and Fugue.

Composers: Clara Schumann, MacDowell, Satie, Barber, Copland, Telemann, Sousa, J. Strauss, Jr.

Levels 8-9 consult any standard reference for period, nationality, compositional styles and major works.

Miscellaneous - Level eight and above:

1. Understand these non-harmonic tones: passing tones, neighboring tones, appoggiature, suspension.
2. Be familiar with chord symbols as used in Jazz and other popular music: Gm7, Cmaj7, etc.
3. Know the names of Greek/Church modes (Ionian, Dorian, etc.)

LEVEL NINE

Staff: Be able to play on the piano, a pitch notated on the alto (C) clef in the correct octave.

Note Values: Double dotted quarter and double dotted eighth notes/rests.

Scales: Whole tone or pentatonic scales.

Triads and Chords: Seventh chords in any inversion. Identify or draw figured bass of seventh chord inversions. 20th century harmony: extended tertian and quatrals.

Intervals: Identify, know or spell inverted intervals.

Scale Degrees: Identify the quality of the triads on the scale degrees of the ascending melodic minor.

Terms and Symbols: C clef, subject, answer (in a fugue), counter-subject, episode, stretto, sequence, imitation, repetition, portato, polytonal, bitonal, mordent, augmentation, diminution, pedal point, secondary dominant.

Forms/Styles: Toccata, Serialism, 12-tone row and permutations. Know the meaning of inverted, retrograde and transposed as associated with the 12-tone row. Know the melodic elements and compositional devices of a fugue.

Composers: Verdi, Bizet, Puccini, Shostakovich, Schoenberg.

Miscellaneous:

1. Understand modulation between closely related major, relative and parallel minor keys.
2. Know the clues of modulation: secondary dominant, pivot chord, use of accidentals, etc.
3. Be able to provide a harmonic analysis of a simple piece. (Roman numerals and figured bass)