



Turning the Corner on Teaching Creativity

BY JEREMY SISKIND

FULLERTON COLLEGE

Two Parts



- ▶ Some ideas and tools for teaching improvisation/composition online
- ▶ “From Scales to Melodies”:
Transforming Common Knowledge
into Creative Potential

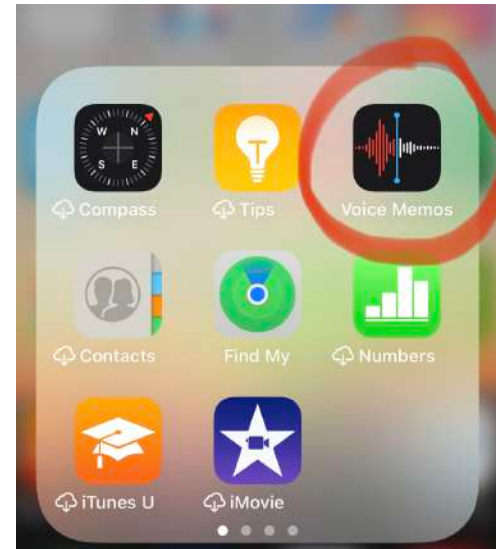


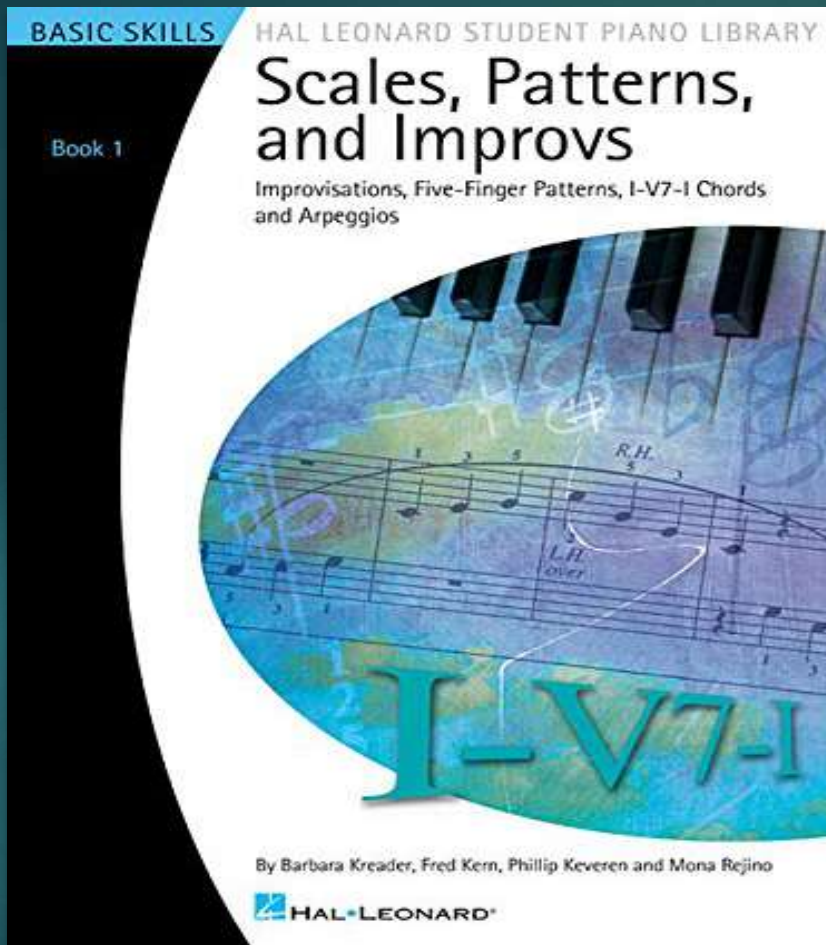
Problem:

I can no longer play along with or accompany students in real time.

Solution:

- ▶ Pre-record your accompaniment





Solutions:

USE A METHOD
BOOK WITH PRE-
RECORDED
ACCOMPANIMENTS

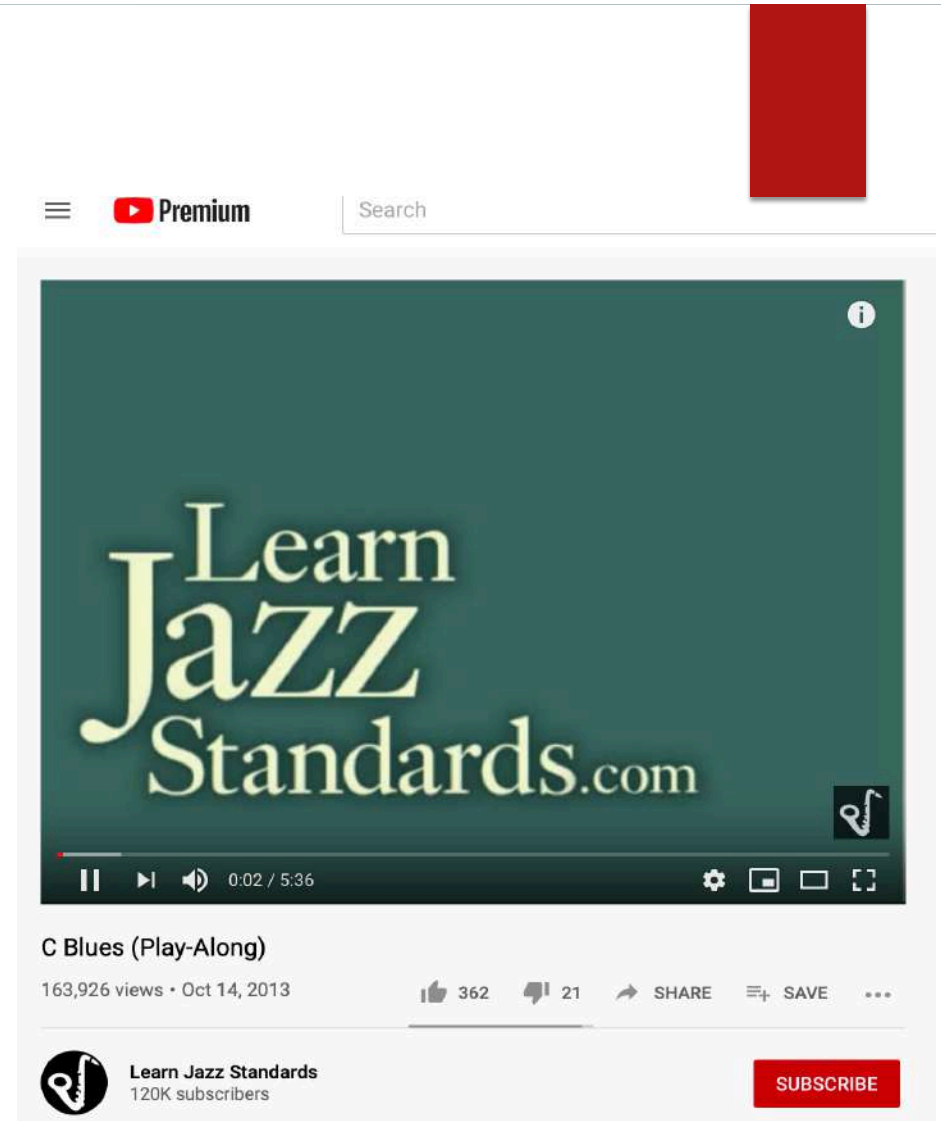
Solution:

► Use iRealPro app



Solution:

- ▶ Use the backing tracks on Youtube from www.learnjazzstandards.com



The image shows a YouTube video player interface. At the top, there is a red vertical bar on the right, a hamburger menu icon, the YouTube Premium logo, and a search bar. The video player itself has a dark green background with the text "Learn Jazz Standards.com" in a large, stylized font. Below the video, the title "C Blues (Play-Along)" is displayed, along with "163,926 views • Oct 14, 2013". The video is currently at 0:02 / 5:36. The channel name "Learn Jazz Standards" and "120K subscribers" are visible, along with a red "SUBSCRIBE" button.



Problem:

I want to demonstrate a new theory concept to my student that requires notation.

Justin Lesson 3-22-19

A

Musical notation for section A, measures 1-2. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Chords: Dm7, G7(b9#11). The melody consists of eighth notes in the right hand and eighth notes in the left hand, with triplets indicated.

B

Musical notation for section B, measures 3-4. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Chords: Dm7, G7(b9). The melody continues with eighth notes and triplets.

C

Musical notation for section C, measures 5-6. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Chord: Cm7. The melody continues with eighth notes and triplets.

D

Musical notation for section D, measures 7-8. Treble clef, 4/4 time. The melody continues with eighth notes and triplets.

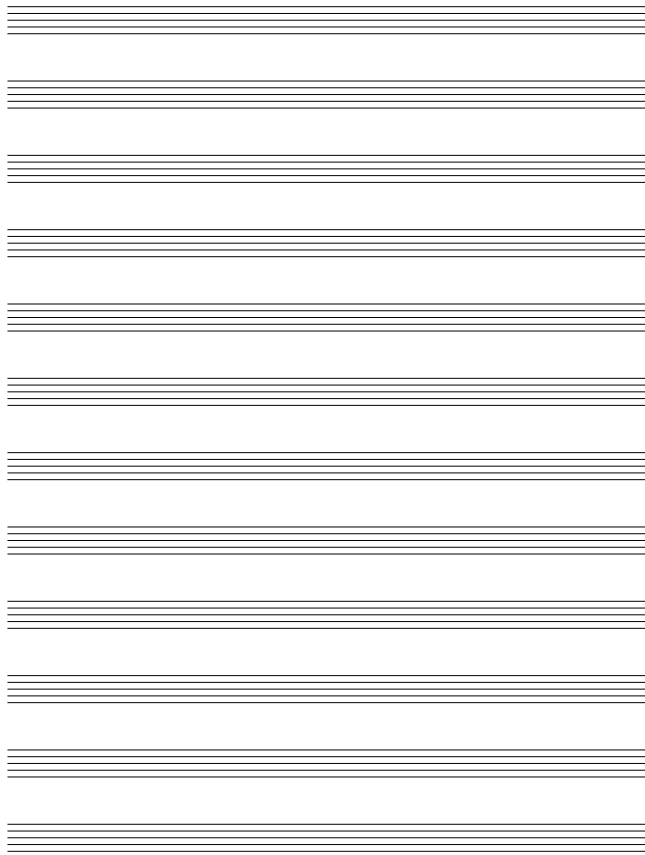
E

Musical notation for section E, measures 9-10. Treble clef, 4/4 time. The melody concludes with eighth notes and a final whole note.


Solution:
Create a pre-
lesson pdf



Solution:
Lessons become
epistolary.



Free Music Notation Staff Paper from <http://incompetech.com/graphpaper/musicstaff/>



Solution:
Use manuscript
paper (via
ForScore?)
+ share screen

Project Ideas/Resources



- “epistolary compositions”
- Keep a quarantine “musical journal” of one miniature composition (16 measures?) each day
- Record a video of an improv each week
- Create a transcription (piano arrangement)
- Watch a Facebook live concert from Fred Hersch (every day at 1 EST) or Chick Corea (every evening – times seem to change)

(More) Project Ideas/Resources



- Start taking jazz lessons from Jonny May (pianowithjonny.com) or Peter Martin (openstudiojazz.com)
- watch a video from jazz pianist/vocalist Aimee Nolte's Youtube Channel each day
- Subscribe to John Mortensen's Patreon page ("Improv Planet") and learn about classical improvisation [www.patreon.com/ImprovPlanet]
- Watch a video from Jazz at Lincoln Center (new releases on Youtube from "the vaults" each Wednesday), www.youtube.com/user/JazzatLincolnCenter



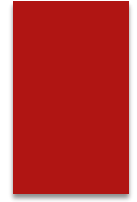
From Scales → to Melodies

BY JEREMY SISKIND

FULLERTON COLLEGE











Thirds

Fourths

Intervals



Triads

Musical notation for a triads exercise on a single treble clef staff. The exercise consists of two measures. The first measure contains four groups of three eighth notes, each with a '3' above it, indicating a triplet. The notes in each group are G4, A4, and B4. The second measure contains four groups of three eighth notes, each with a '3' below it, indicating a triplet. The notes in each group are G4, F4, and E4.

Seventh Chords

Musical notation for a seventh chords exercise on a single treble clef staff. The exercise consists of two measures. The first measure contains four groups of eighth notes, each with a '3' above it, indicating a triplet. The notes in each group are G4, A4, B4, and C5. The second measure contains four groups of eighth notes, each with a '3' below it, indicating a triplet. The notes in each group are G4, F4, E4, and D4.

Chords



Up a Fourth, Back Down



Up a Fifth, Back Down



Turnbacks







Faster



Trickier Key/Scale



More Complex





JEREMY SISKIND'S WORLD-FAMOUS SCALE GAME

The Rules



Play only notes of a given scale



Play consistent quarter notes without missing a beat for 1 minute



No patterns or repeated notes

Look for:



Legato (don't repeat a finger)



Use cross-overs and cross-unders (no crabs!)

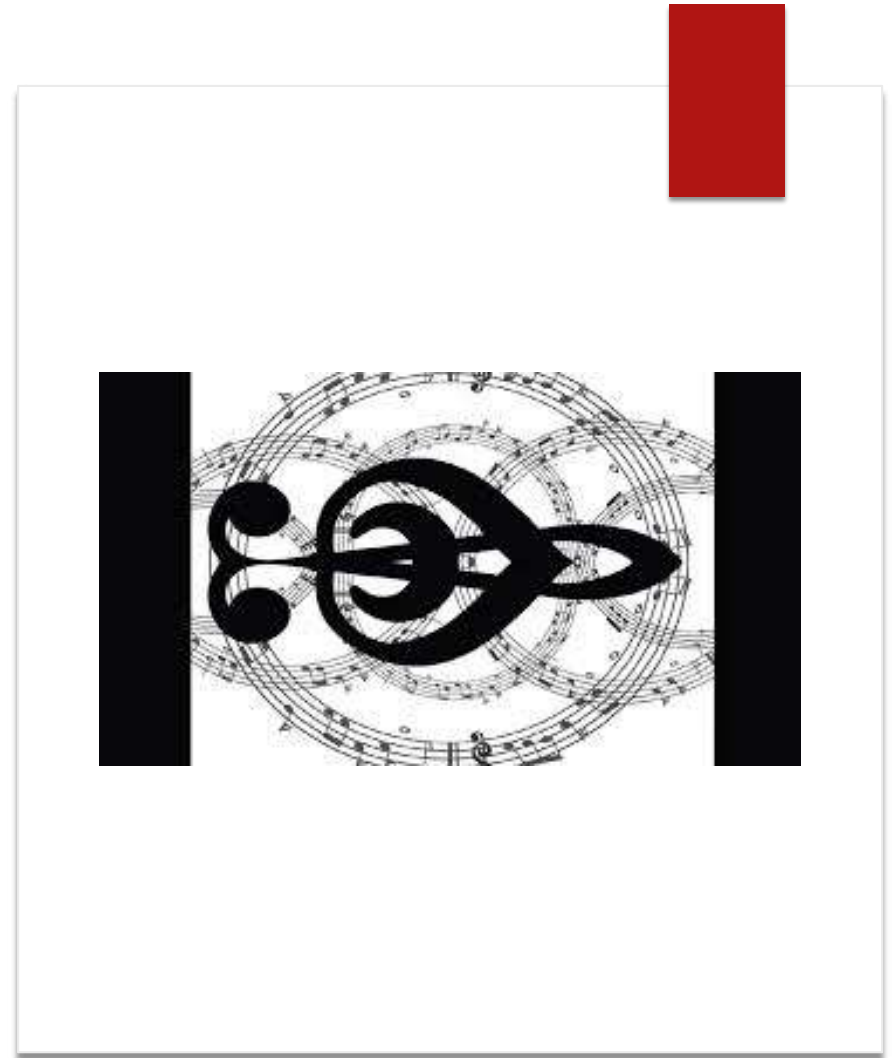


Include a wide variety of intervals



Making a Melody

- ▶ Singable
- ▶ Logical
- ▶ Expressive
- ▶ Clear





Singable





HEAR A MELODY



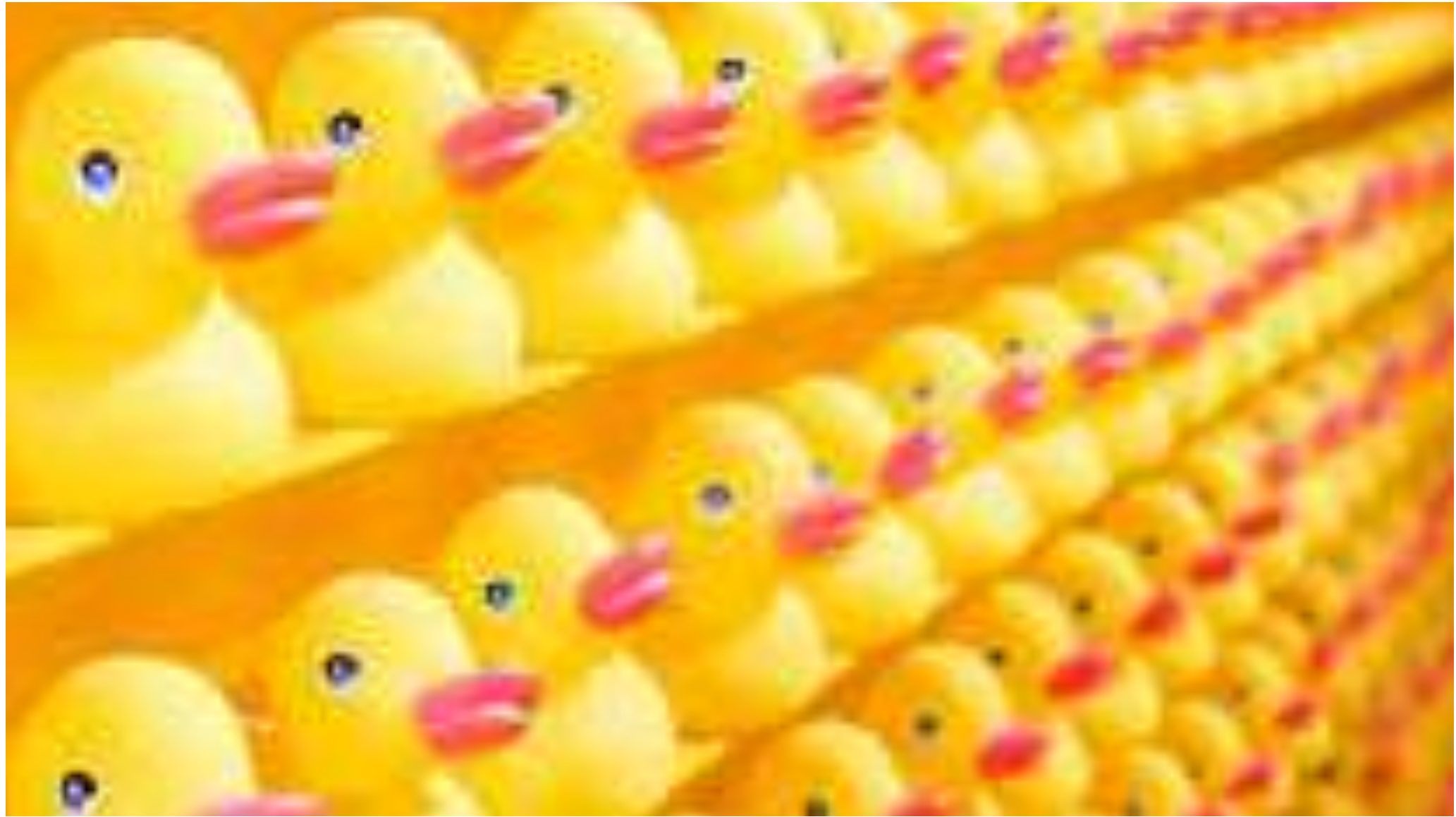
SING THE MELODY



PLAY THE MELODY



Logical





Measure 1: original / **Measure 2: free**

Measure 1: down a step / **Measure 2: free**

Measure 1: original rhythm, change notes / **Measure 2: free**

Measure 1: free / **Measure 2: original**



Expressive



Right hand: *"How are you today, my friend?"*

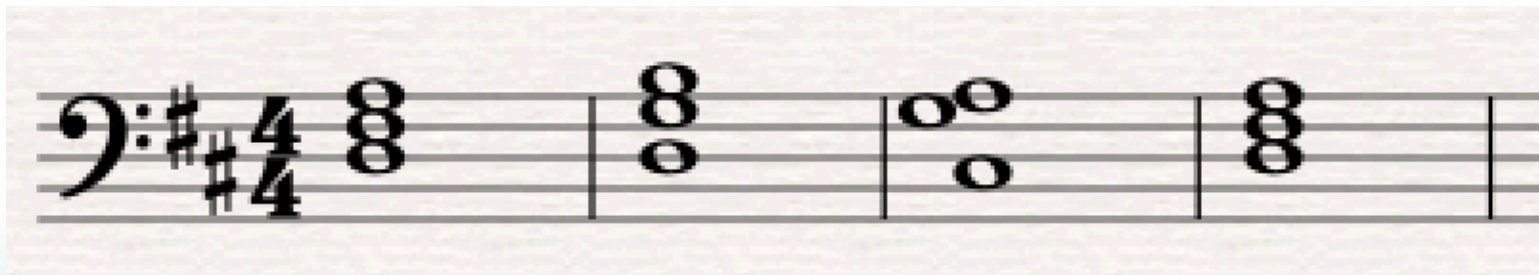
Left hand: *"I'm feeling very sleepy."*

Right hand: *"You should eat a great big steak!"*

Left hand: *"Wait, hold on, I've got to take this call."*



Clear



Thank you!

BY JEREMY SISKIND

JSISKIND2@GMAIL.COM

