

7.1 Fugues with Five Entries

We begin with a concise three-voice fugue, consisting of a three-entry exposition, an episode, and a two-entry final section (while the exposition must **always** include at least one entry for every voice, subsequent sections need not do):

subject answer subject episode answer subject

Observe the following points:

- The exposition entries occupy ranges that are as close together as possible.
- The opening subject recurs at the same pitch, but much later in the fugue and in another voice.
- No voice repeats itself.

This scheme of entries may be combined with accompanying material as follows:

exposition			final section		
S	CS	free	—	A	CS
—	A	CS	E	free—	S
—	—	S	E	CS	free

- As in two-voice fugue, a regular countersubject (CS) is assigned to the voice that has delivered the preceding entry.
- If a third voice is sounding, it completes the texture with free counterpoint.
- The episode (E) is for two voices only, and allows the voice that has been sounding the longest (in this case the highest voice) to rest for a few bars (—) before re-entering.
- Any voice that rests must have been sounding for longer than any other voice, and may re-enter only with a subject or an answer, nothing else.
- In the exposition, the voice with free counterpoint persists until reaching the cadence at the end of the third entry. Later in the fugue, however, the voice with free counterpoint has the option of dropping out early (free—), before the voices with the entry and countersubject reach their cadence.

The scheme realised:

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- Rests begin on minim 1, never on minim 2. Ideally, the last bar before a rest should contain a semibreve, but two minims are also acceptable.
- The simplest and most effective free part for the lowest voice is a pedal point (see bars 23–6 of the above fugue).
- At the final cadence, extra harmony can be obtained by dividing a voice in two (see bar 25). The division should develop from a Unison, and should involve no prohibited melodic activity.

At first, you will find it no simple matter to add a third, free voice to existing entries and countersubjects. Generally, the following principles apply:

- Similar motion between an entry and its countersubject must nearly always be accompanied by contrary or oblique motion in the third voice (in other words, all three voices may seldom move in the same direction simultaneously).
- Contrary and oblique motion between an entry and its countersubject allow the third voice to proceed in similar motion with either of the other two voices.
- The more contrary and oblique motion there is between subject and countersubject, the easier it is to add a third voice to them.

These principles do **not** apply, however, to pedal points. The only requirements are that they commence consonantly and persist for two or more semibreves. After the initial consonance, the other voices are free to do whatever they will without reference to the pedal—provided, that is, they observe the rules governing the upper voices of any three-voice texture, whereby perfect and augmented Fourths are treated as imperfect consonances.

The dominant pedal in the above fugue may thus be said to contain only three dissonances—one passing note and two suspensions—even though much else of the upper-voice activity is actually dissonant with the lowest voice:

A musical score for a three-voice fugue. The bass line features a long note labeled "disregarded". The upper voices have notes labeled "P" (passing note) and "S" (suspension). The score is in G major and 3/4 time.

With tonic pedals the principle is the same, and the effect is even grander:

A musical score for a three-voice fugue. The bass line features a long note labeled "disregarded". The upper voices have notes labeled "P" (passing note) and "S" (suspension). The score is in G major and 3/4 time.

Task 7.1.1—Using the first of the Set Two [subjects](#), compose a fugue similar to the foregoing one. Reuse the countersubject from your two-voice fugue on that subject (provided it does not contain too much similar motion).

Other schemes are possible for a three-voice, five-entry fugue. The following two, which secure optimal spacing and even distribution of entries, are recommended:

exposition				final section	
—	A	CS	E	free—	S
S	CS	free	—	A	CS
—	—	S	E	CS	pedal

exposition				final section	
—	—	S	E	CS	CS
—	A	CS	E	free—	S
S	CS	free	—	A	pedal

- Both schemes allow the voices to begin in ranges that are as close together as possible, and allow successive entries to take the lowest voice lower, the highest voice higher, and the middle voice either higher or lower.
- No voice repeats itself.
- In the second scheme, the final countersubject has to be transferred to the highest voice so that the lowest voice can deliver a pedal point.

Task 7.1.2—Using the first of the Set Two [subjects](#), compose a fugue according to each of the two schemes just given. Plan the entries on three staves (as shown above).

Task 7.1.3—Compose fugues according to all three schemes, on the remaining Set Two [subjects](#). Plan the entries.