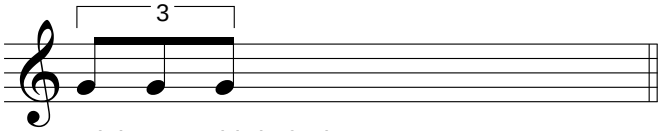
GRADE 6 Sight-Reading Building Blocks

(This page gives information new to Grade 6. Please see earlier Grades for information given previously)

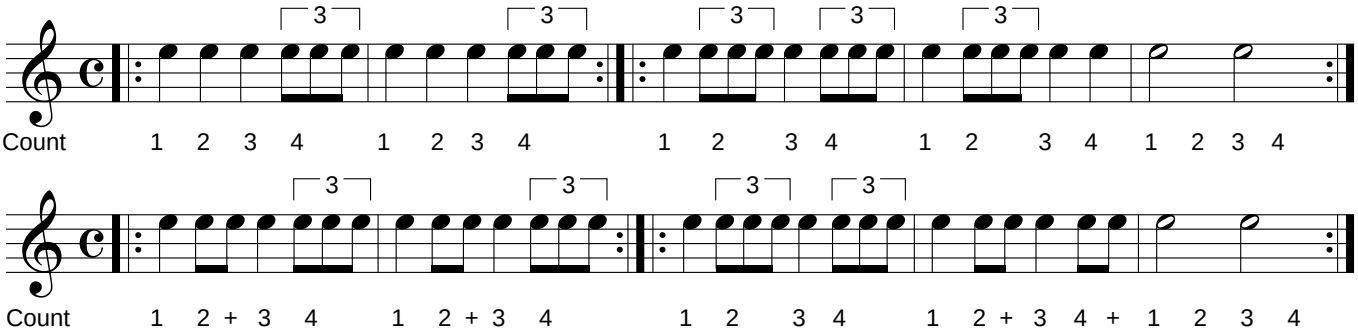
New note & rest values;



Triplets = a third of a beat

Rhythm patterns

Clap or play these rhythms, repeating each individual short phrase by itself then the whole line.



Texture;

Three note chords are now quite frequent. Four note chords are play played very ocassionally, usually containing several open strings or based around a common chord shapes. There are also ocassional half barres.

Position;

1st position and 2nd position passages with shifts to 3rd, 4th & 5th positions becoming more frequent.

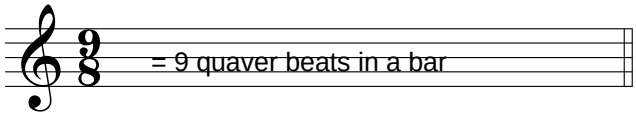
New dynamics;

There are no new dynamic markings.

New speed & expression markings;

dolce = play towards the fretboard to produce a sweet sound
pont = play nearer the bridge to produce a more metallic sound
allarg = broader, slow down
a tempo = back to the original speed

New time signature;



Approximate length of examples;

2/4 3/4 4/4 3/8 6/8 = 8 to10 bars 6/4 9/8 = 8 bars

New key signatures;

There are no additional key signatures to those used in previous Grades.

Tips;

Most of the four note chords here contain several open strings or are based around common chord shapes. It is helpful to recognise/play these chords before starting.
A double bar near the start of an example indicates the end of the introduction and the beginning of the melody - try to reflect this in your playing.
There is more contrapuntal part writing, try identify which part the melody/subject is in and try to balance the music accordingly.
As the frequency of shifts into higher positions increases remember to follow these indications as closely as possible. It is helpful to identify difficult passages, such as ones in higher positions or with fuller chords, and make it a priority to play through these sections in the preparation time. Although it is best to adher to position indications as much as possible, in the time allowed, don't be enslave to them. At the end of the day the priority is to play the notes.

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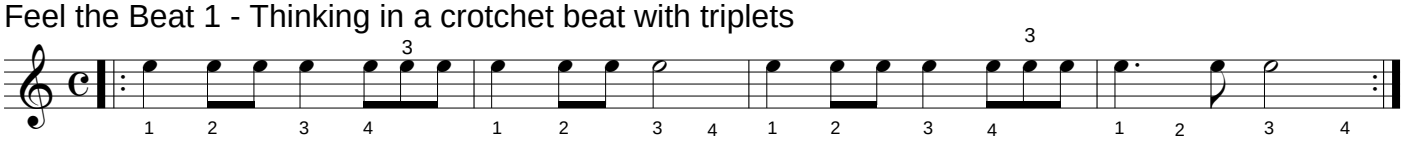
GRADE 6 Sight-Reading Exercises

Feel the Beat

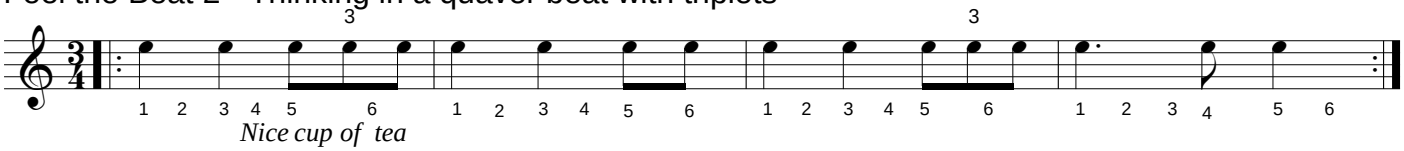
When playing or clapping these exercises try to feel the beats as marked. When doing this by, for instance, tapping a foot, it can be helpful to stress the first beats of the bars slightly. Sometimes it can also be useful to count the beats out loud. Some pieces require a crotchet beat, some require a quaver beat and some, with compound time-signatures, can be thought of with a dotted crotchet beat.

Feel the Beat 1 - Thinking in a crotchet beat with triplets



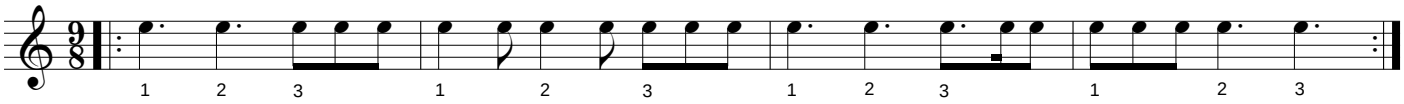
Try to tap and/or count in a crotchet beat while playing/or clapping this rhythm

Feel the Beat 2 - Thinking in a quaver beat with triplets



Saying the words, *'Nice cup of tea'* can help to get the 2 against 3 rhythm of playing triplets while thinking in a quaver

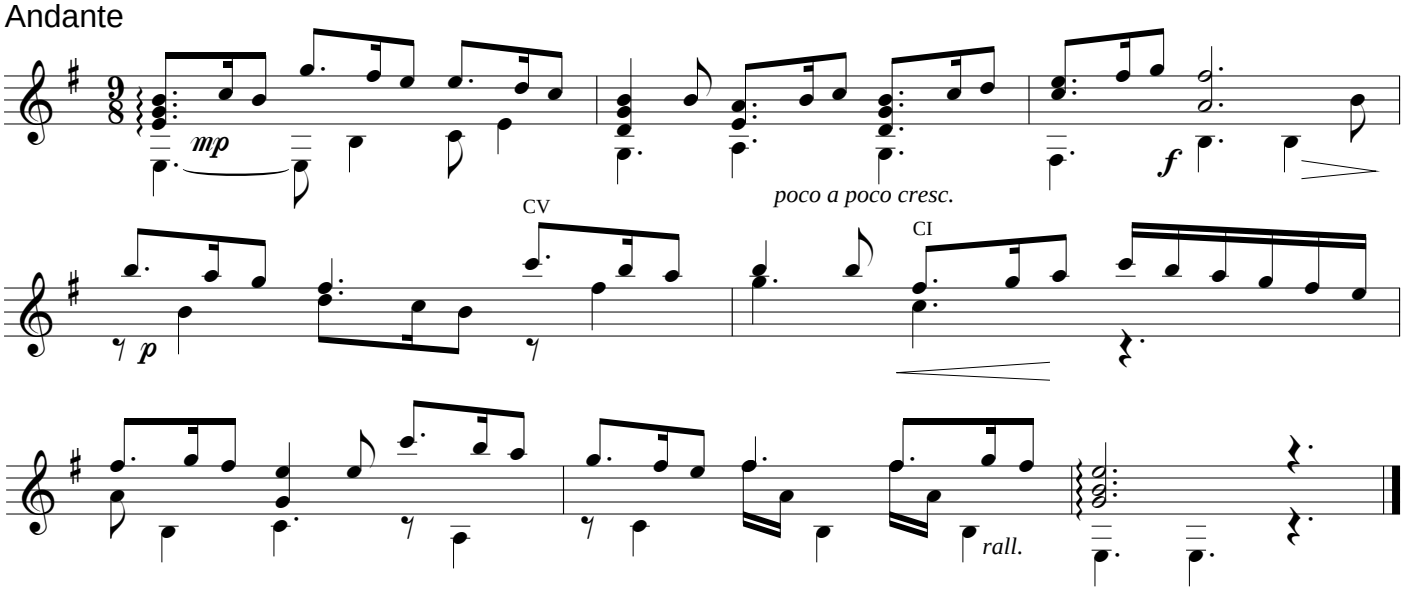
Feel the Beat 3 - Thinking in a dotted crotchet beat in 9/8



Grade 6 Trial Run

A Tragic Air **Burden**

Andante



BEFORE YOU START CHECK LIST

1. Take note of the key-signature and the notes that are affected by any sharps or flats, as well accidentals.

2. Take note of the time-signature and how this will affect what sort of beat to think in and try out any passages containing awkward/complex rhythms.

3. Take note of any dynamic markings.

4. Take note of fuller chords (three to four note chords) - it is best to try these before starting.

5. Take note of the tempo marking (the title of the piece can also give a clue as to the speed and 'feel' required).

6. Take note of the ocassional position/string markings and try to adher to them. However, if this is not possible make the playing of the notes, in whatever position comes to hand, the priority.

7. Decide on the speed to take the piece and the type of beat. Crotchets in simple time signatures or, particularly if there are semi quavers in the piece, it can be helpful to think in a quaver beat. A dotted crotchet beat or quaver beat can be used in Compound time signatures. Before starting count one bar in, taking care if there is an anacrusis.

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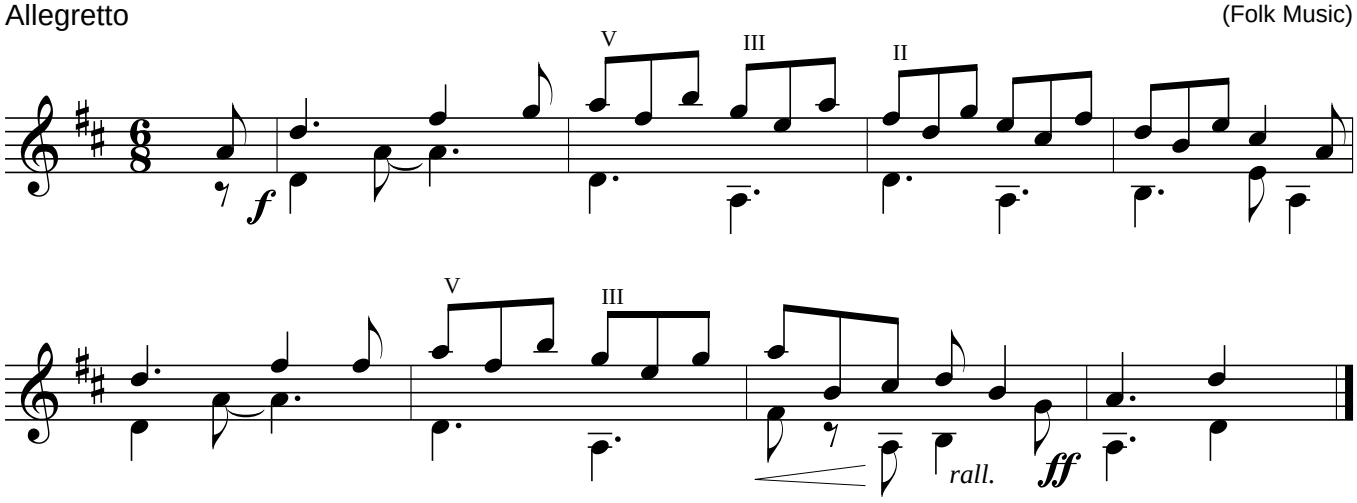
GRADE 6

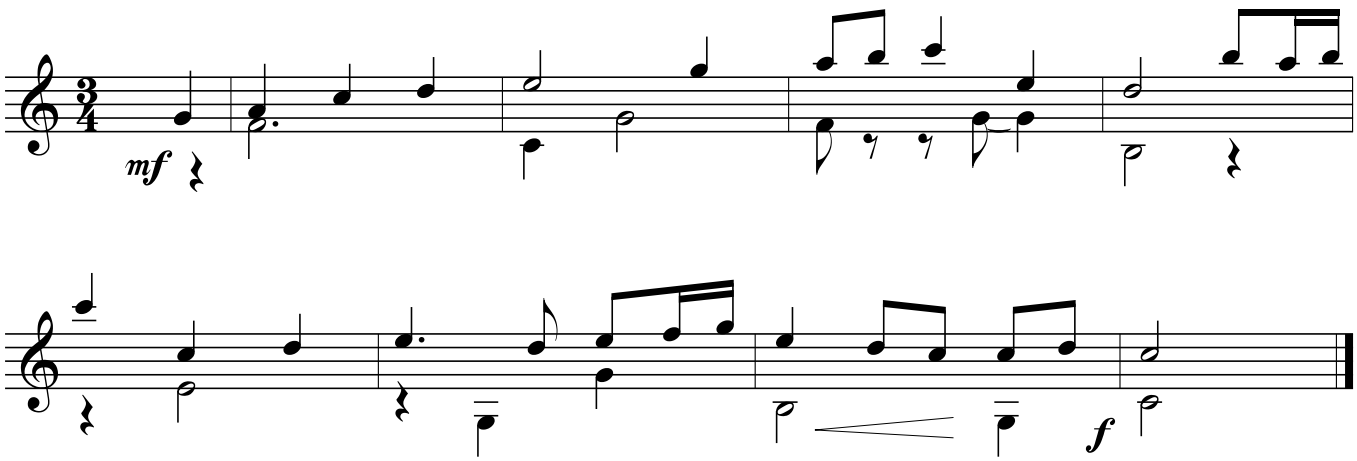
1. Cottey House **The Dancing Master**

Allegretto (Folk Music)



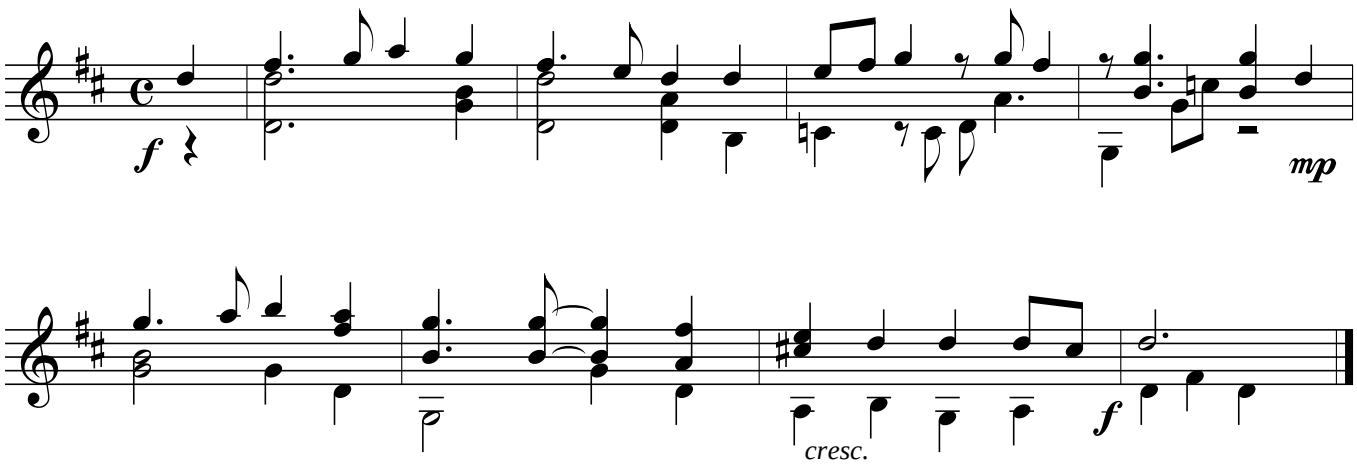
2. The Pickle Tow **Scottish Traditional**

Moderato (Folk Music)



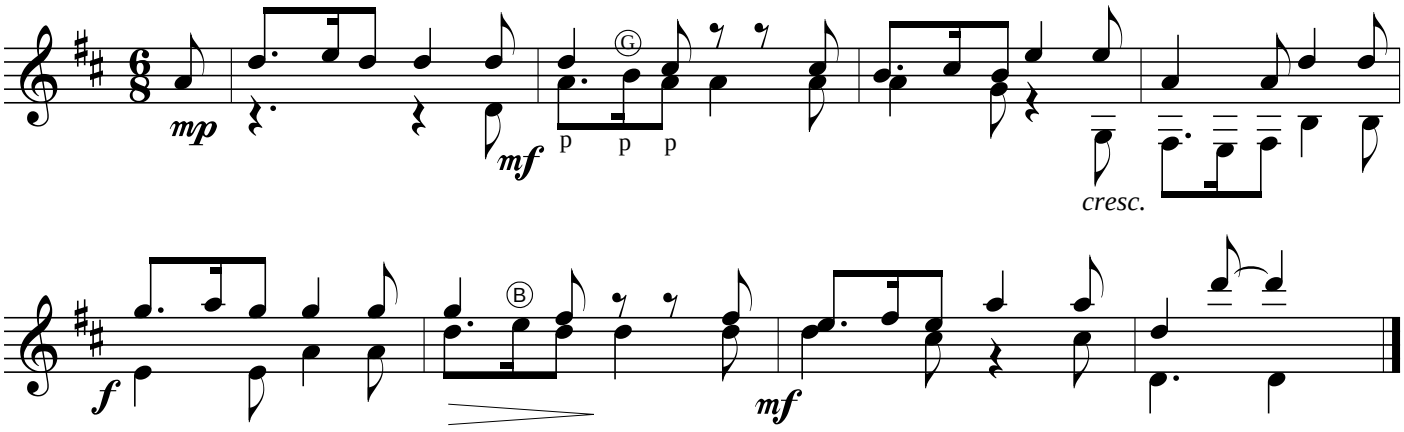
3. Almaine **Holborne**

Andante (Renaissance Period)



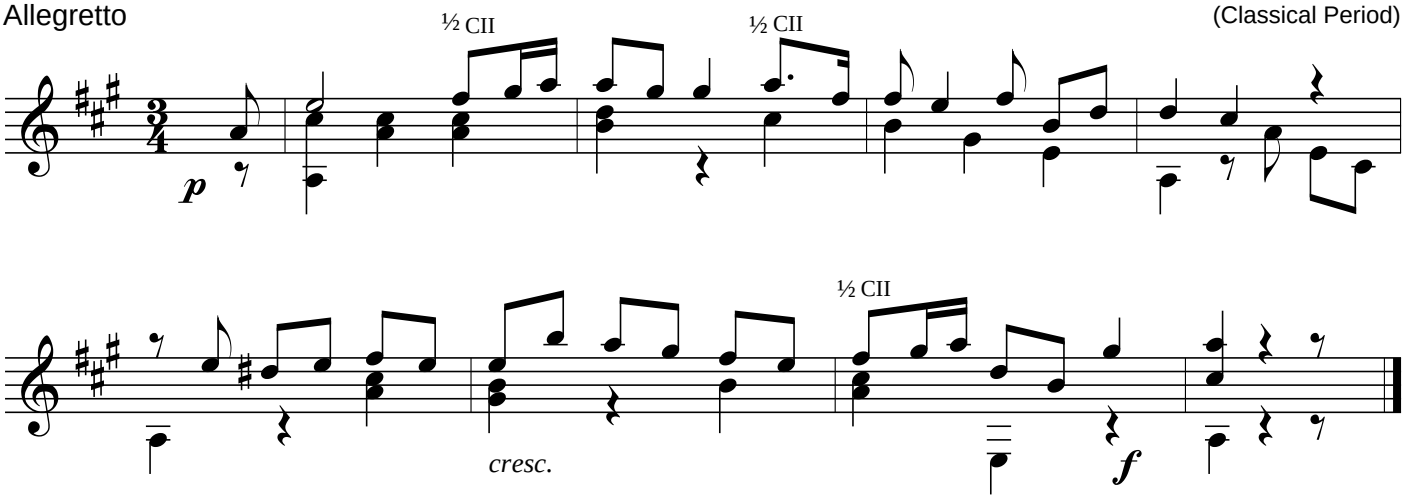
4. Siciliana **de Fesch**

Lento (Baroque Period)



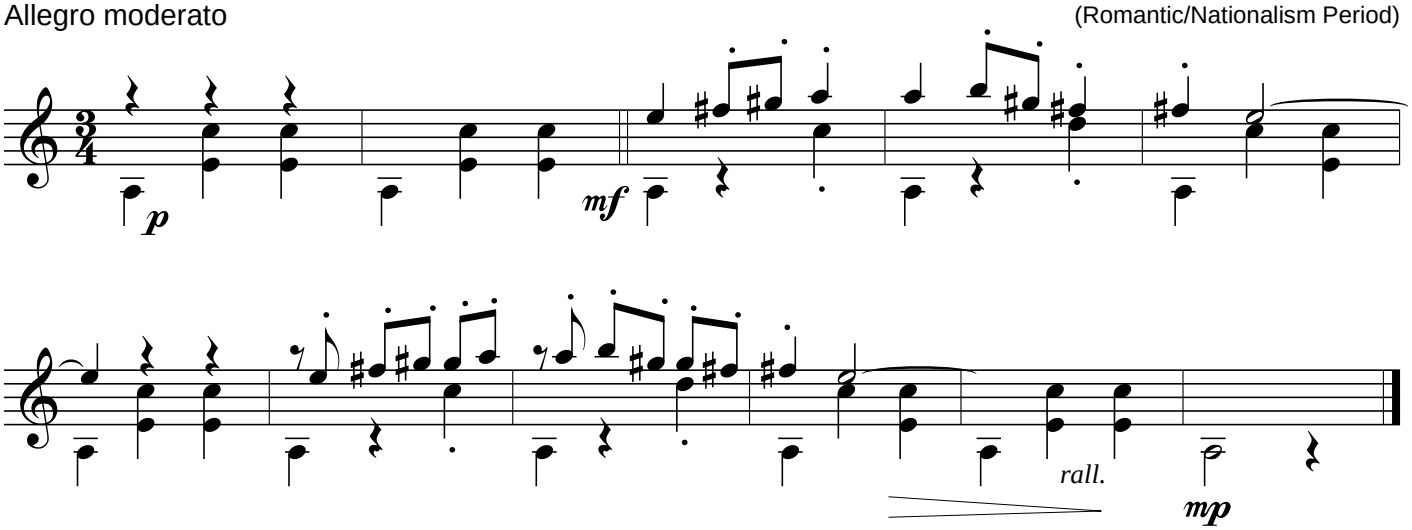
5. Minuet from Variations on a Theme of Salieri (K180) **Mozart**

Allegretto (Classical Period)



6. Waltz **Grieg**

Allegro moderato (Romantic/Nationalism Period)



Some of the above pieces have been adapted from their original form

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7. Regret

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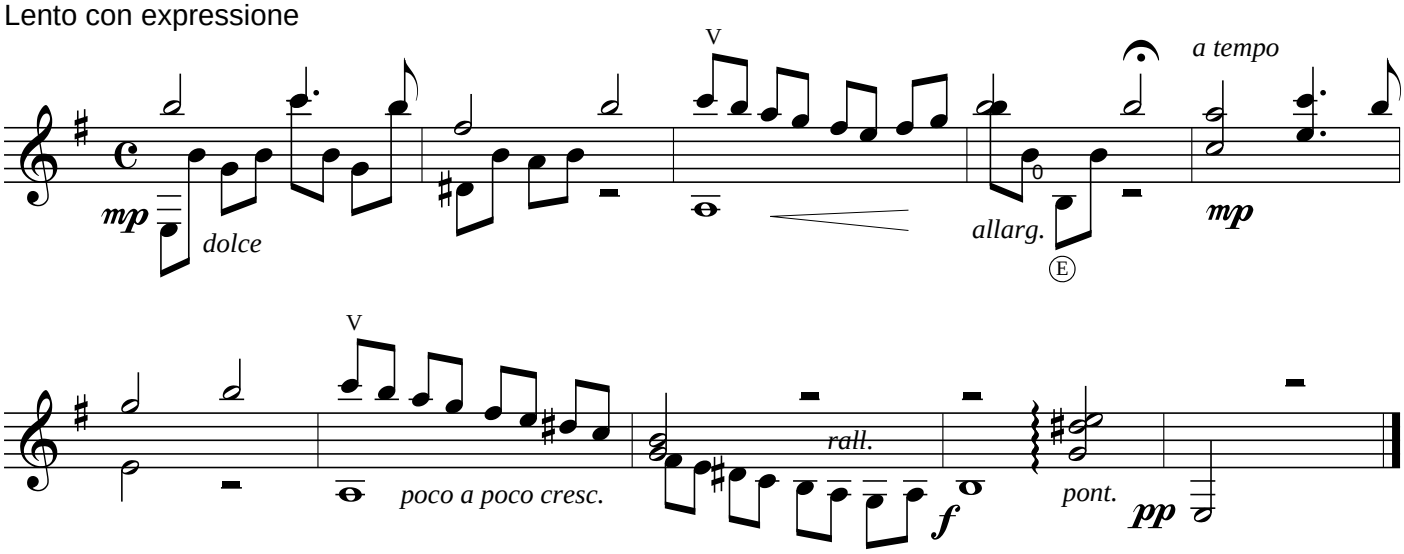
Lento con expressione



8. Neapolitan Serenade

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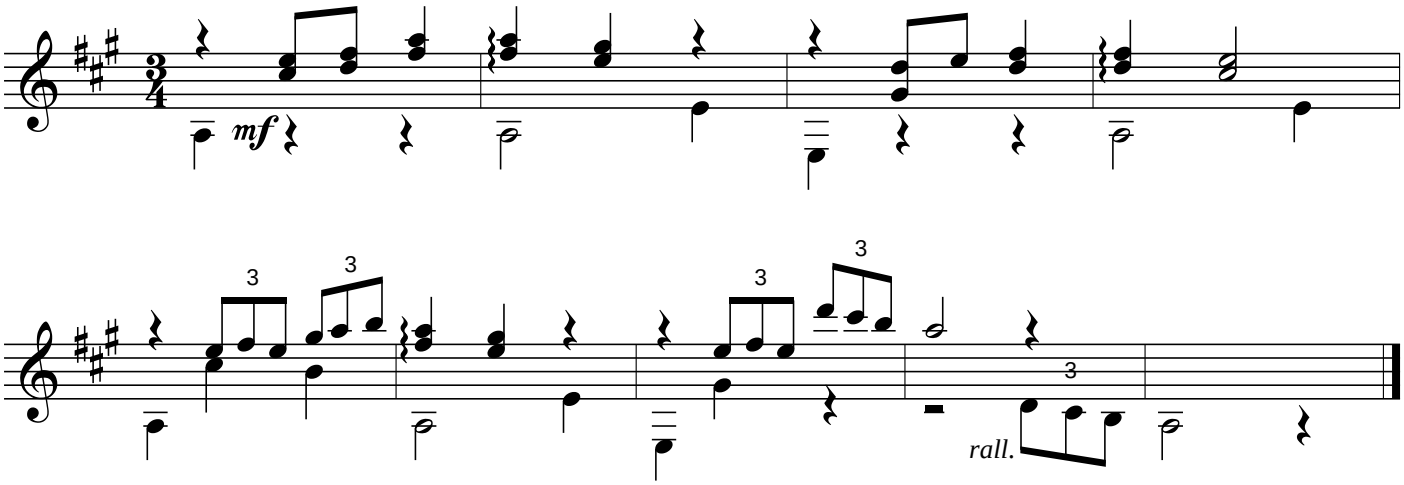
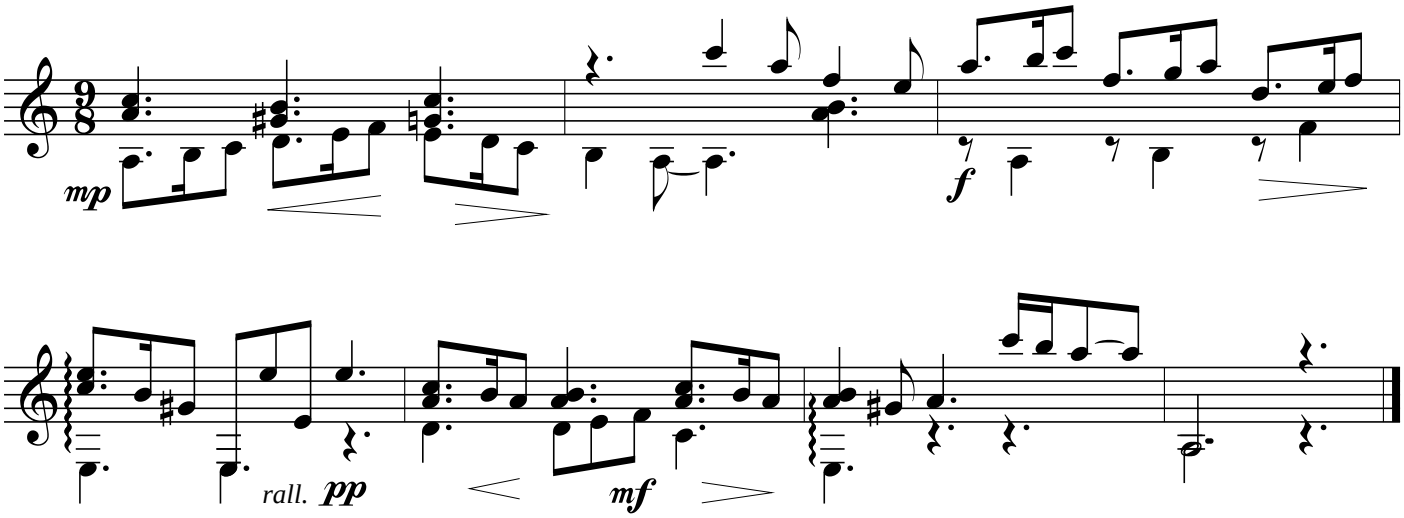
Moderato



9. Siciliana

Burden

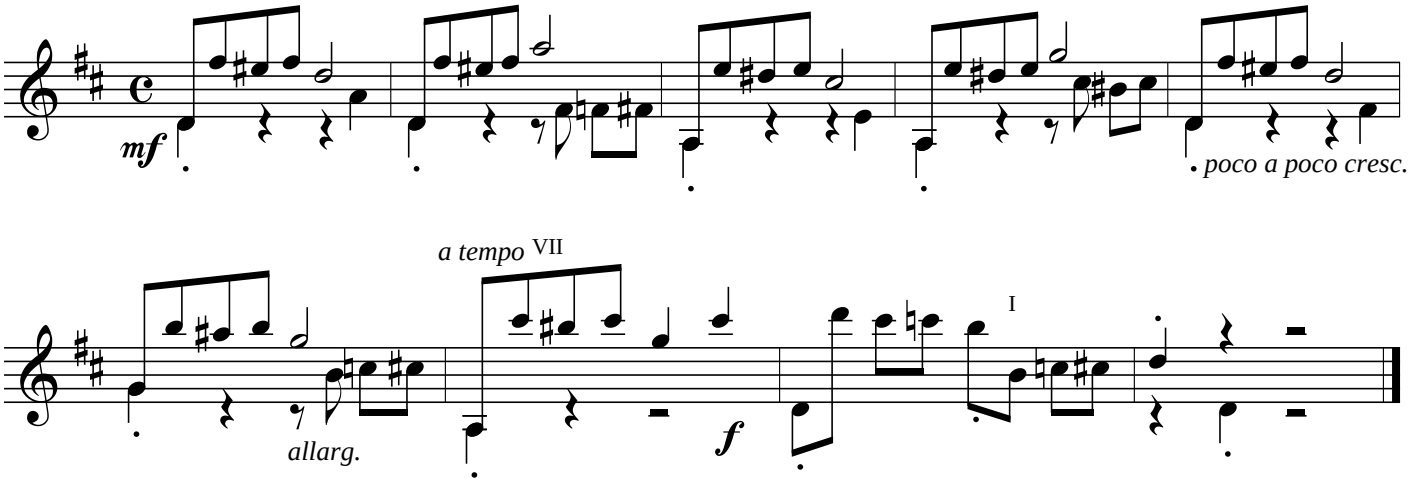
Lento



10. Chromatic Rag

Burden

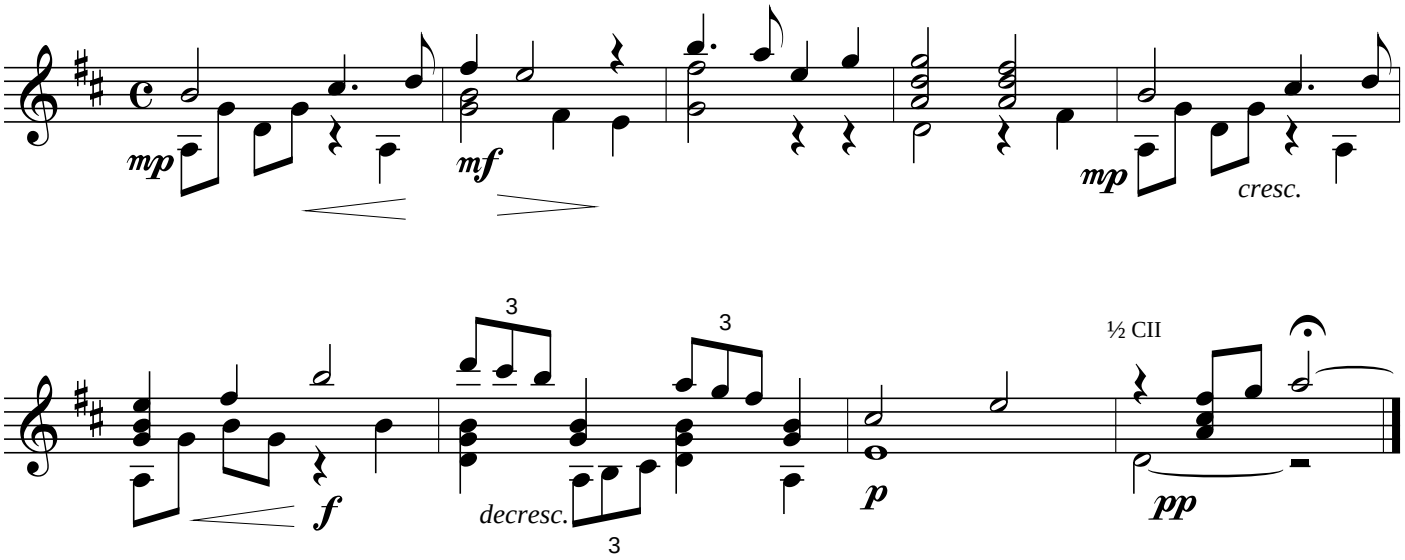
Allegretto con brio

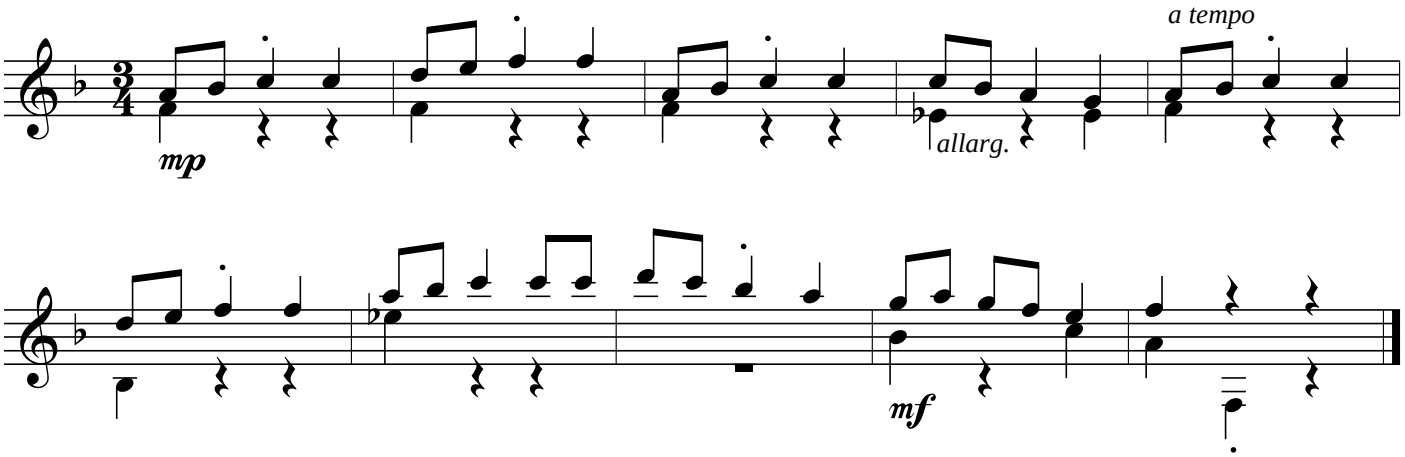


11. The Unspoken Question

Burden

Lento moderato



12. Waltz

Burden