

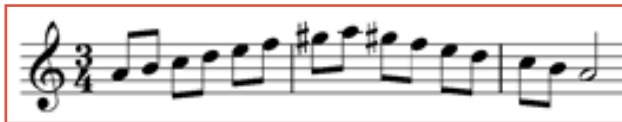
Composing worksheet 2: MELODY

Anitra's Dance from Peer Gynt Suite by Edvard Greig

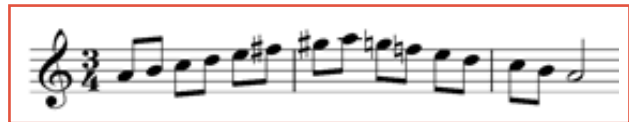
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Date: _____

'Anitra's Dance' is in the key of A minor. Here are the scales of A minor – get to know them!

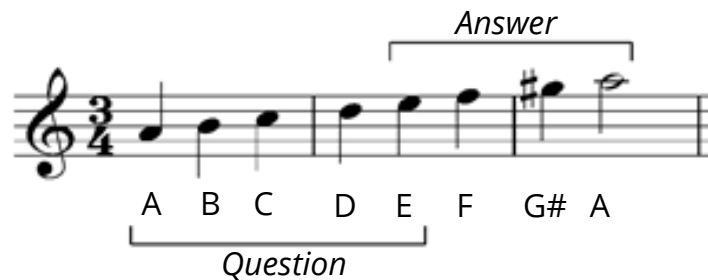


A harmonic minor



A melodic minor

On an instrument of your choice, **improvise** using the scale of A harmonic minor. Think about the balance of ideas and work to create question and answering phrases. Start with the plan below:



You could improvise on your own or work with a partner. Use the **first five** notes as shown to improvise your musical '**questions**'. Use the **last four** notes in the scale to improvise the musical '**answers**'.

TIP: Two important pitches in melody writing are the tonic and the dominant notes. In the key of A minor:

- **the tonic note is A**
- **the dominant note is E.**

It may be a good idea to use these pitches at the beginning and end of your phrases.

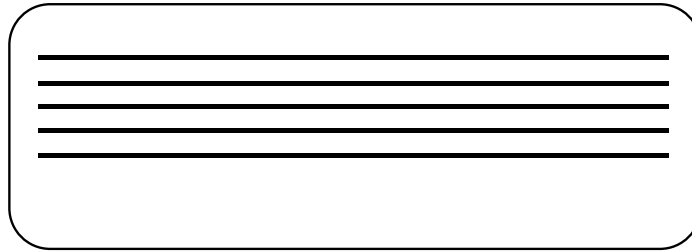
Can you record your ideas?

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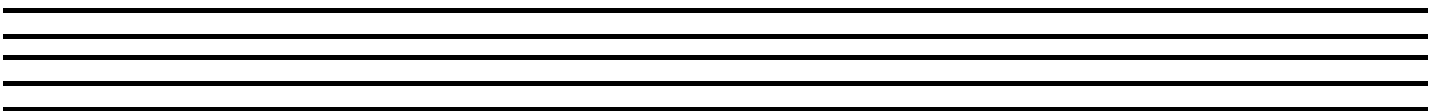
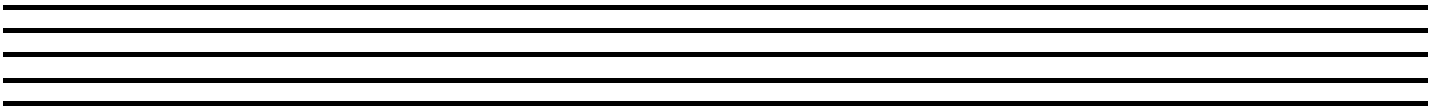
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Choose 4 notes from the scale of A minor.

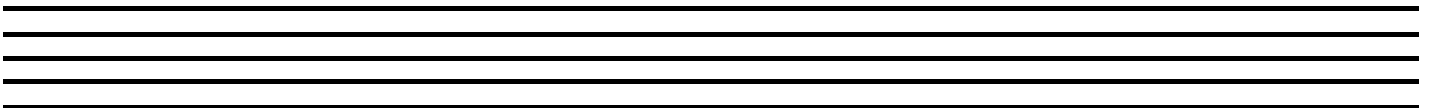
Write them here:



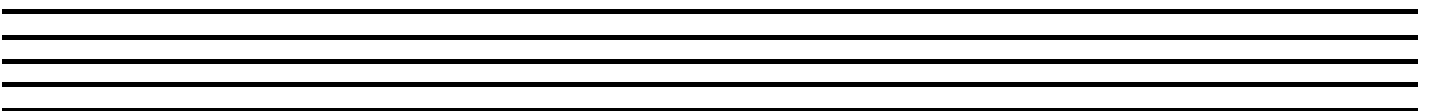
Now compose a succession of at least 16 pitches, using just these 4 notes and repeating them as you please [**Tip:** Start and end on the note of A].



Add rhythms in a time signature of your choice to create at least 8 bars of music. Play your ideas, or record into Sibelius (or similar) to hear what they sound like.



Now write the pitches out again, with different note values and in a different time signature. You can repeat any of the pitches.



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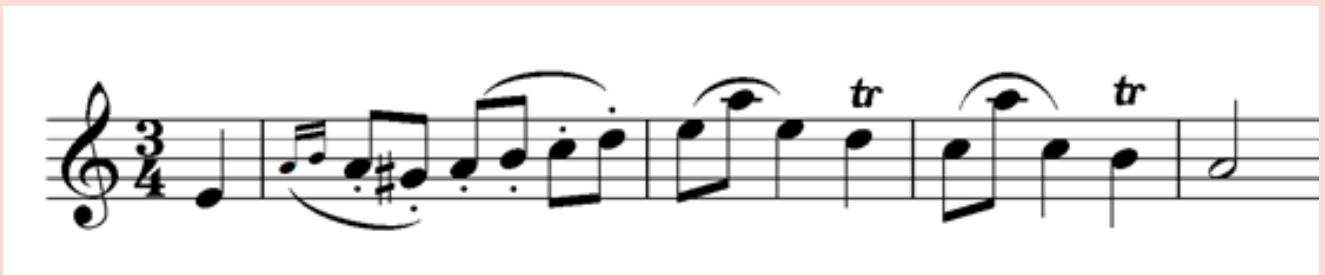
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Next, create some different melodic ideas in the same way, using a different combination of notes, with different rhythms [You could start on an A or an E, and end on an A or an E].

Let's examine some of Grieg's melodic ideas a little more closely.

The pitch range of these melodic ideas is varied, but often **high** – remember that the melody in this piece is played mostly on a violin. The instrument (or voice) that you are composing for must be taken into consideration.

The first idea (bars 7-10) is the main theme and is really important. It contains a number of melodic features of interest, even though it is rhythmically quite simple.



- Starts with an anacrusis (up-beat) which is the dominant note of E.
 - This up-beat → 1st strong beat (tonic A) gives interval of a Perfect 4th.
 - Ends on the tonic note of A, with scalar movement down to the tonic, i.e. 3→2→1 of the scale.
 - Includes staccato and legato movement.
 - Very closely centred around the notes of the tonic chord.
 - Includes conjunct movement in bar 1 and more disjunct movement in bars 3 and 4.
 - The 2nd bar of the theme includes another interval of a perfect 4th; in the 3rd bar the interval in the same position is a major 6th.
 - Note the use of ornaments (mordent on bar 1¹, trill on bars 2³ and 3³).
- (*Bar numbers here refer to the quote above)*

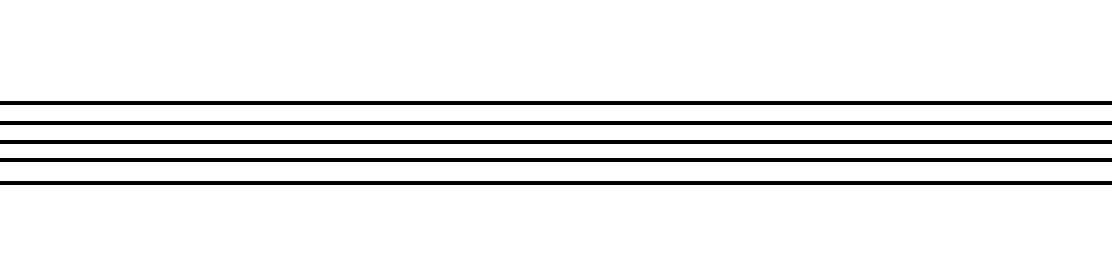
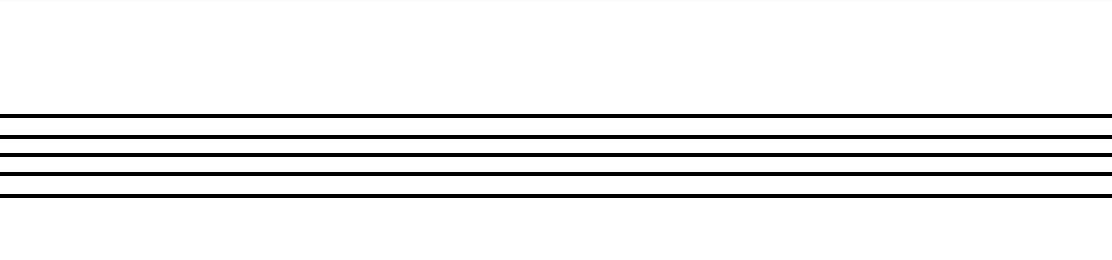
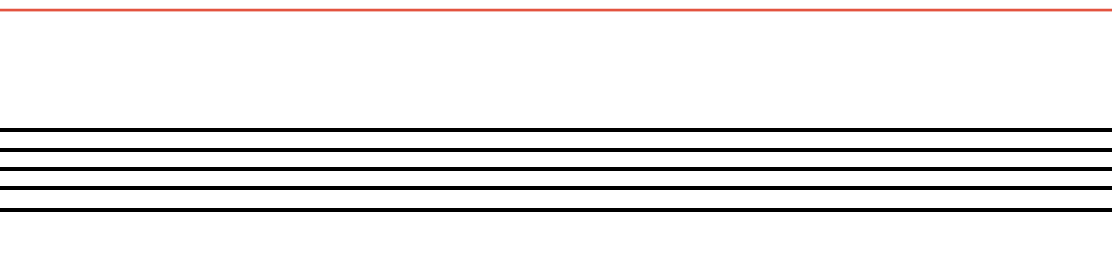
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Finishing phrases

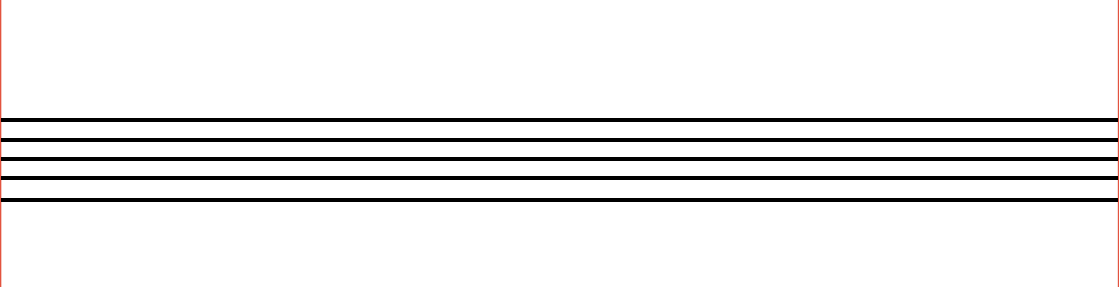
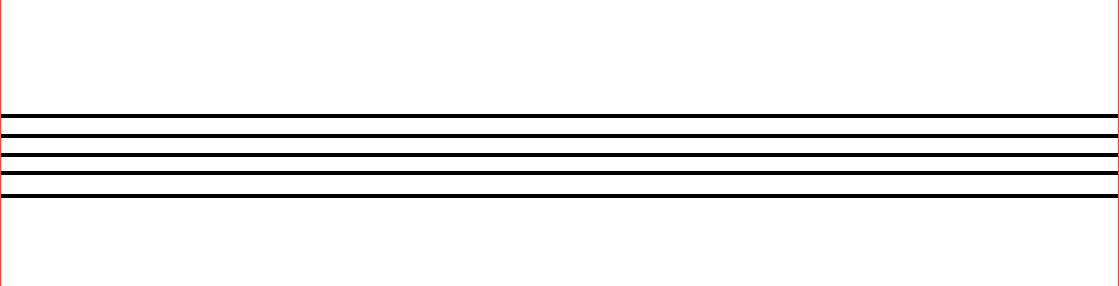
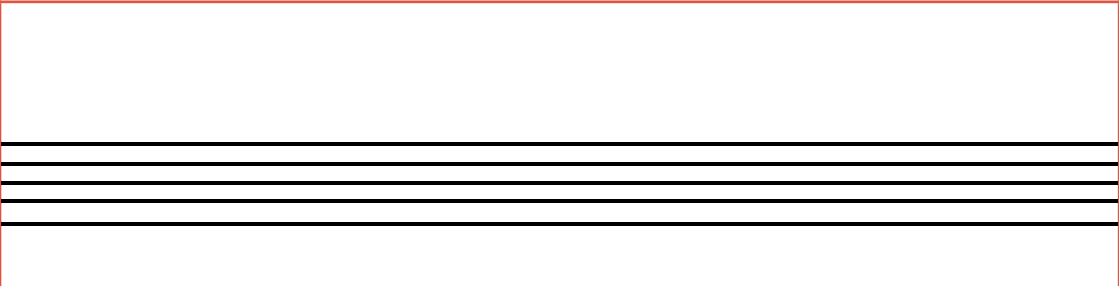
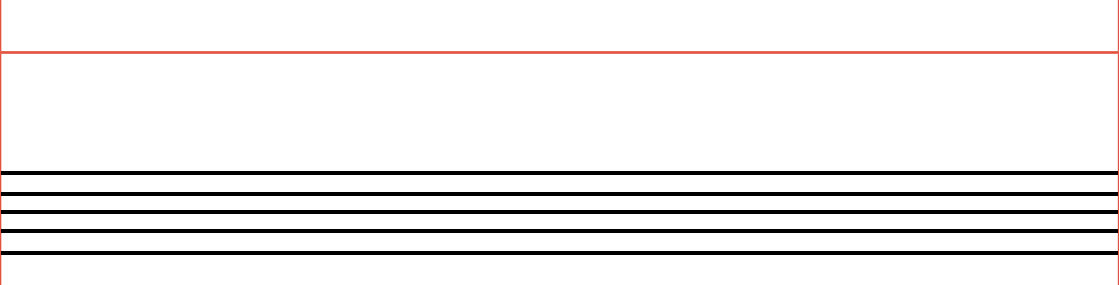
a)	b)	c)
		
Note this little stepwise descending figure at the end of the 1st melodic phrase. [3→2→1] The trill on the penultimate note is a common feature in lots of music!	Note this far more disjunct melodic idea when the music modulates to the dominant key. It is safe to include 'jumps' in the melody if all notes belong to the same chord. Here the little motif is based on the move to the dominant key of E minor at the end of Section A.	An upward conjunct (scalic) figure seen here in bars 21-2 completes the melodic phrase in E minor. Sometimes composers use an entire scale (or arpeggio) to lead up (or down) to the final resting note.

Now try writing some melodic patterns of your own, still in the key of A minor. Write some motifs and melodic ideas which may be useful to 'end' a phrase of music.

Type of idea	Sketches
Idea based on a scalic figure.	
Idea using stepwise movement and an interval of a 4 th .	
Ideas based on disjunct movement from the notes of one chord.	

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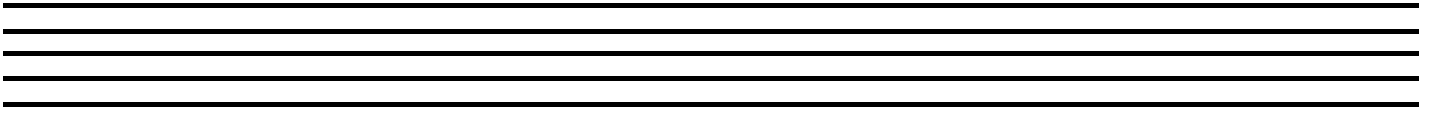
Type of idea	Sketches
A melodic pattern to complete a phrase.	
Melodic idea using a sequence.	
Melodic idea which has an ascending and descending shape (e.g. bars 1-3 of 'Anitra's Dance').	
Melodic idea which has a descending then ascending shape.	

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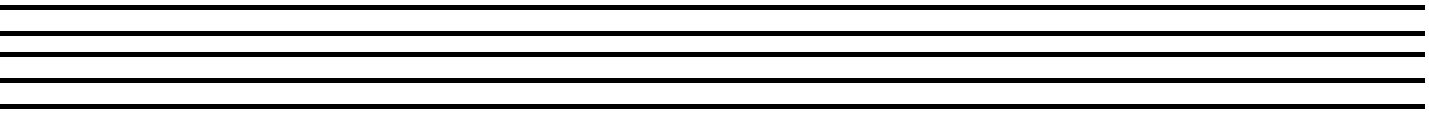
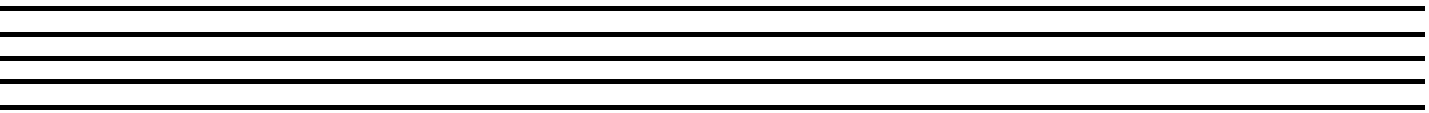
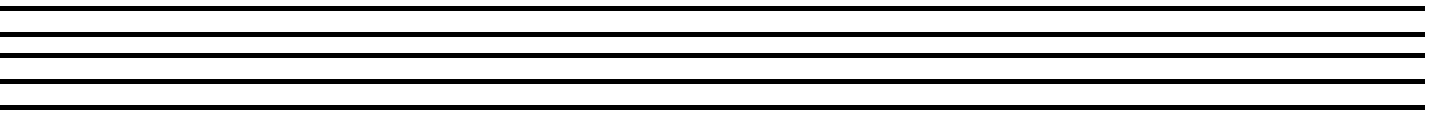
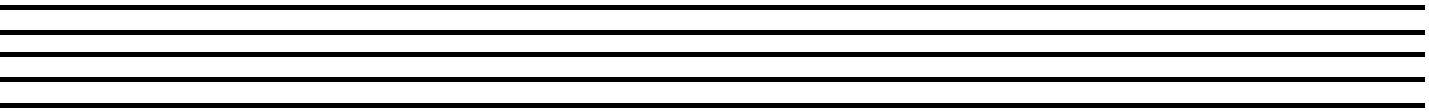
Further tasks

1. Still working in the key of A minor, compose a two-bar musical question.

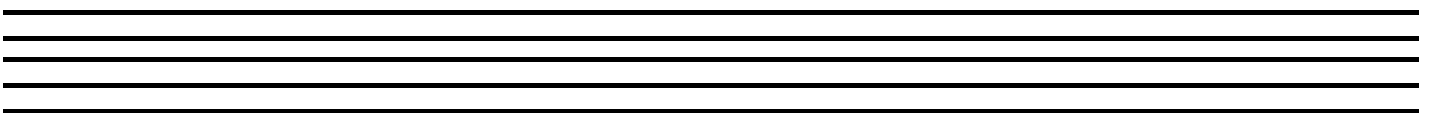
Four blank musical staves for composing a two-bar musical question.

Play it and refine it until you are happy with your 'musical question'.

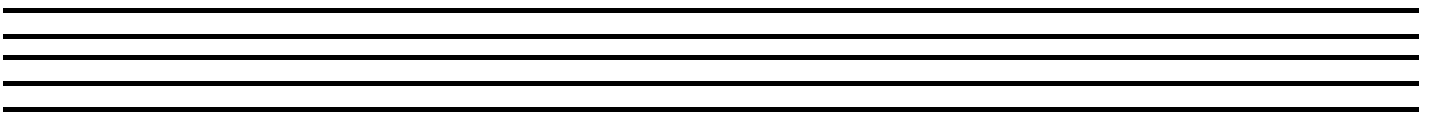
2. Now copy it out four times, and add a different 'musical answer' to each of the questions.

Four blank musical staves for copying the question and adding answers.Four blank musical staves for copying the question and adding answers.Four blank musical staves for copying the question and adding answers.Four blank musical staves for copying the question and adding answers.

3. Create a melodic idea which is completely conjunct / stepwise.

Four blank musical staves for creating a conjunct melodic idea.

4. Now adapt your idea to including a defining feature, e.g. interval of a 6th.

Four blank musical staves for adapting the idea with a defining feature.

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How can your ideas be ... adapted ... varied ... developed?

Choose a one-bar motif from one of your melodic lines (already composed above). Write it below, then continue the idea in two ways:

- As an ascending sequence.
- As a descending sequence.

5. Compose a melody which uses a mix of various intervals and stepwise movement.

6. Compose a melody which features one particular interval and stepwise movement.

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For consideration: What's 'wrong' with this melodic line in A minor?



Three blank musical staves for writing an 8-bar melody in E minor or E major.

Extension work

Compose an 8-bar melody in the key of E minor – or E major if you prefer!

[This is the dominant key of A minor – the home key of 'Anitra's Dance'].

E melodic minor scale (ascending and descending)



E major scale (ascending and descending)



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