Improve your sight-reading!

New edi

Piano
Level 5

Interme

A progressive, interactive approach to sight-reading

Paul Harris

FABER *ff* MUSIC

Grade 5 Level 5 Intermediate **Piano**

Improve your sight-reading!

Paul Harris

Stage 1 **Pianistic styles**

Stage 2 **C minor**

Stage 3 **F♯ minor**

Stage 4 **Thicker textures**

Stage 5 **More complex rhythms in $\frac{6}{8}$ and $\frac{3}{8}$**

Stage 6 **A♭ major, Syncopation**

Stage 7 **Mixing rhythms and triplets**

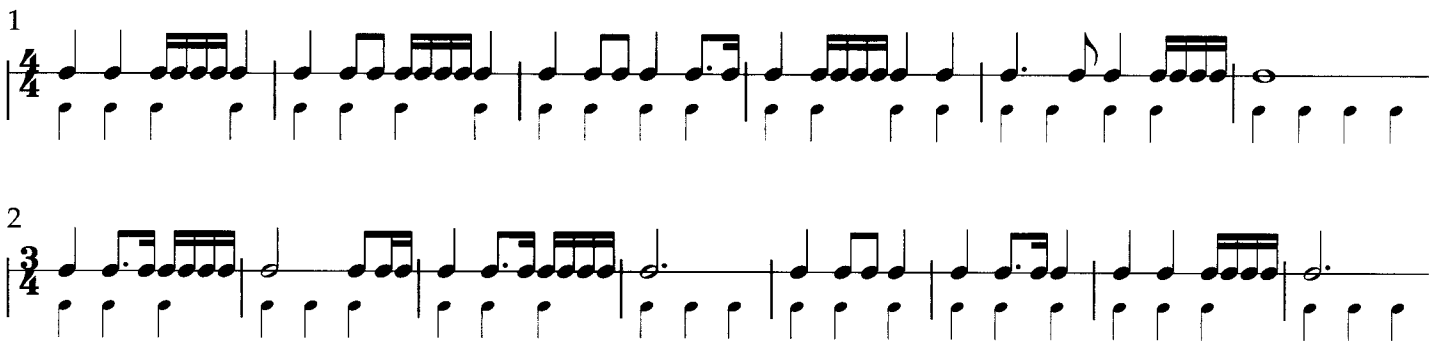
Stage 8 **E major, Revision and some reminders**

FABER *ff* MUSIC

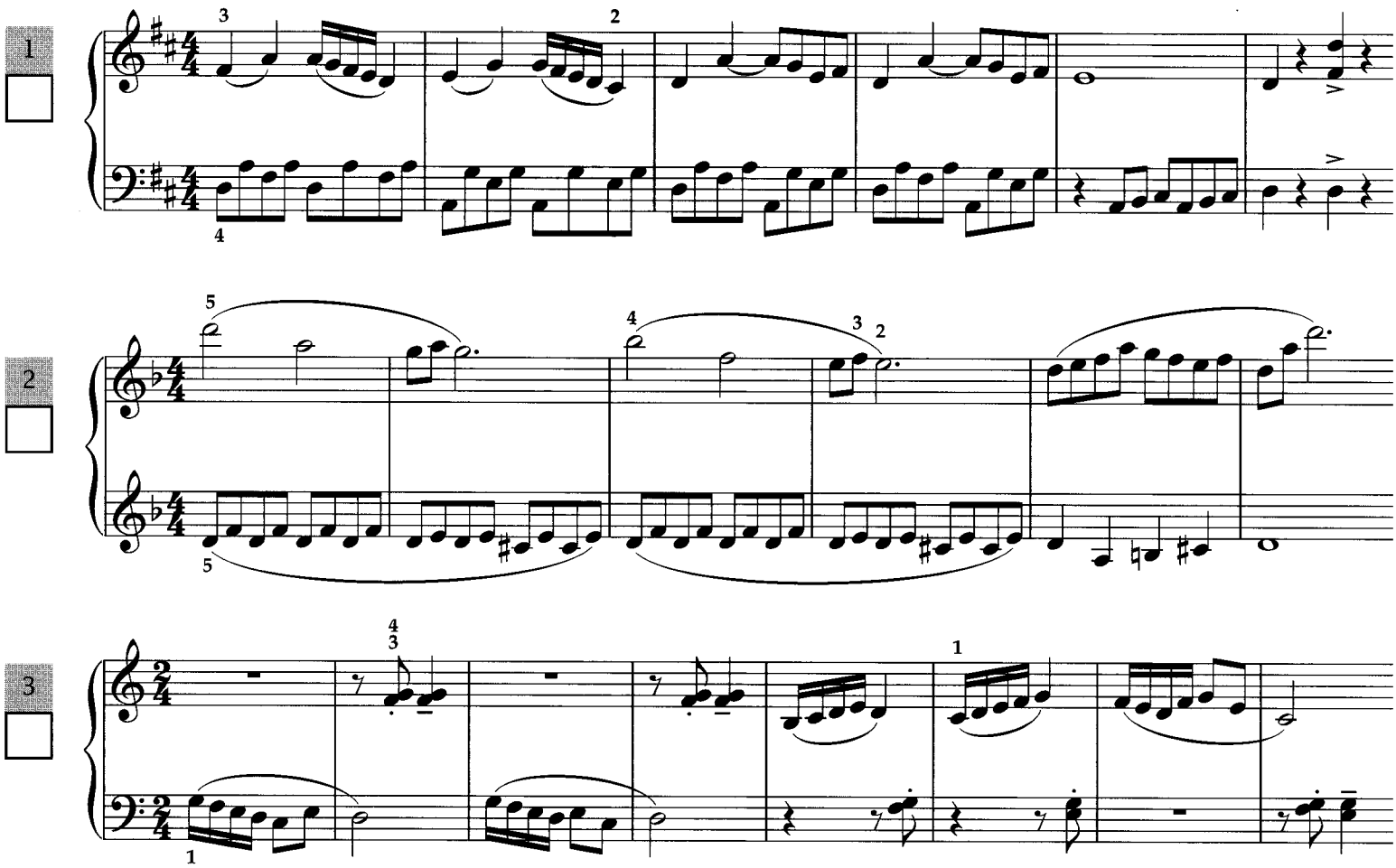
Stage 1

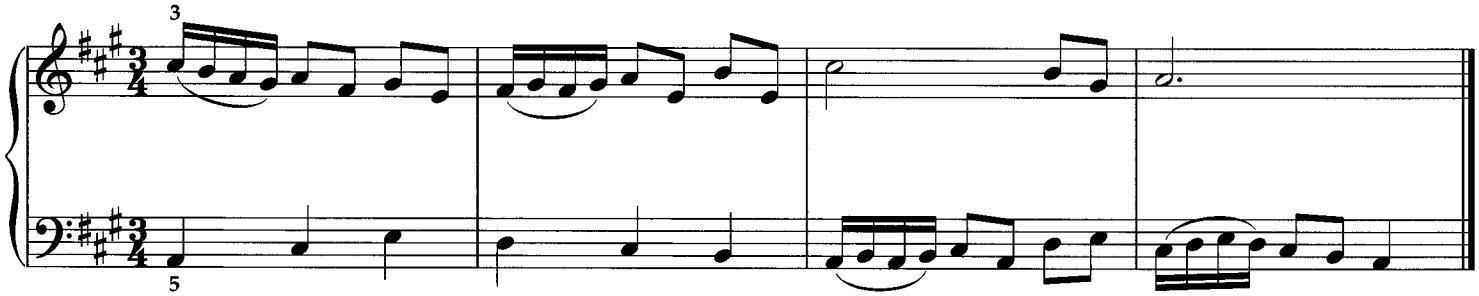
There are many different styles of writing for piano. There may be a melody in one hand with the accompaniment in the other. That accompaniment may be an Alberti bass or it may be chords or arpeggio patterns. The melody may pass from one hand to the other or there may be a 'walking bass' which you'll find in more jazzy pieces. Recognising these styles will help you to sight-read with character and more fluently.

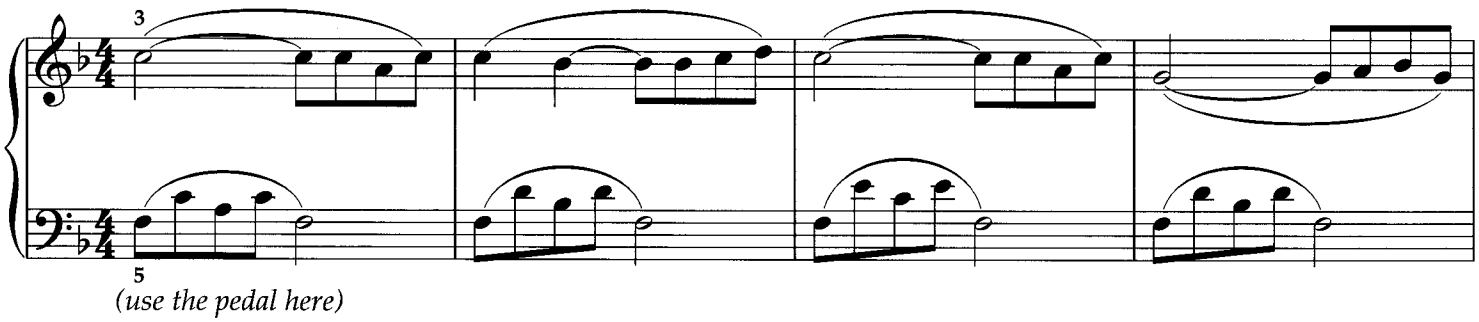
Rhythmic exercises



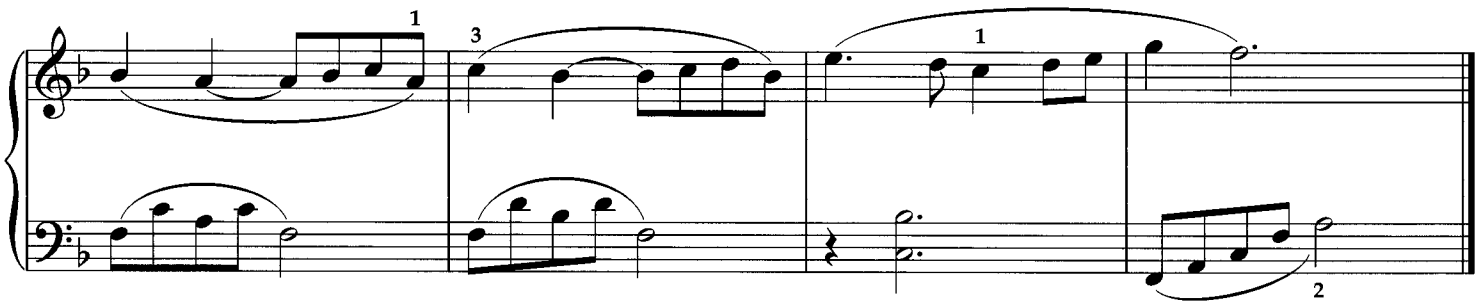
Melodic exercises



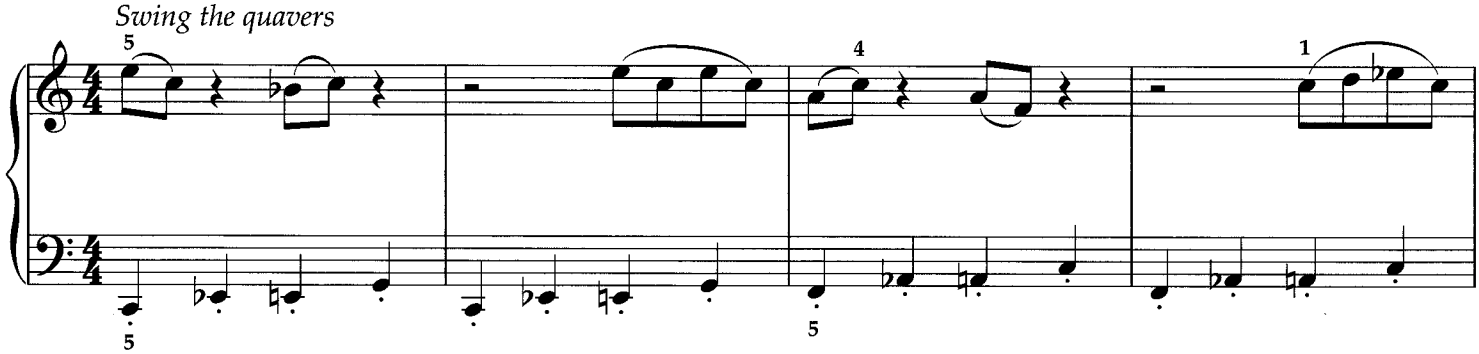


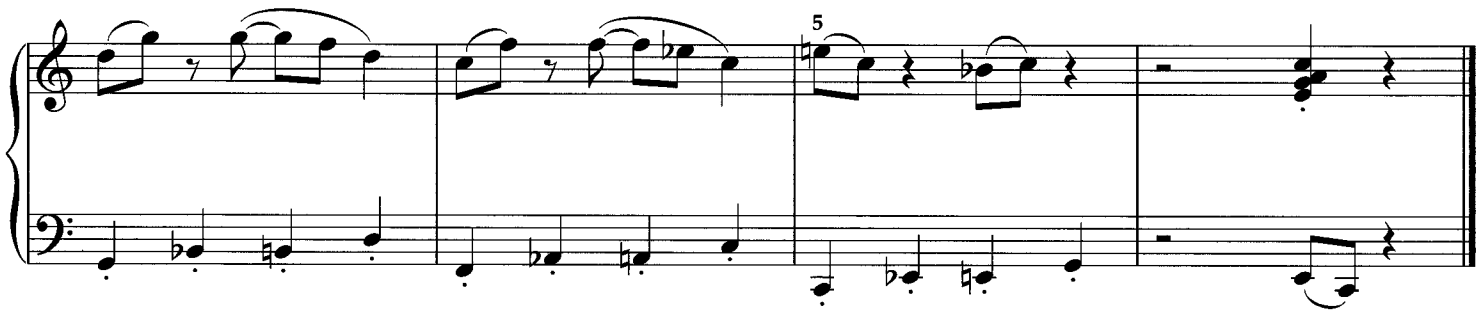


(use the pedal here)



Swing the quavers

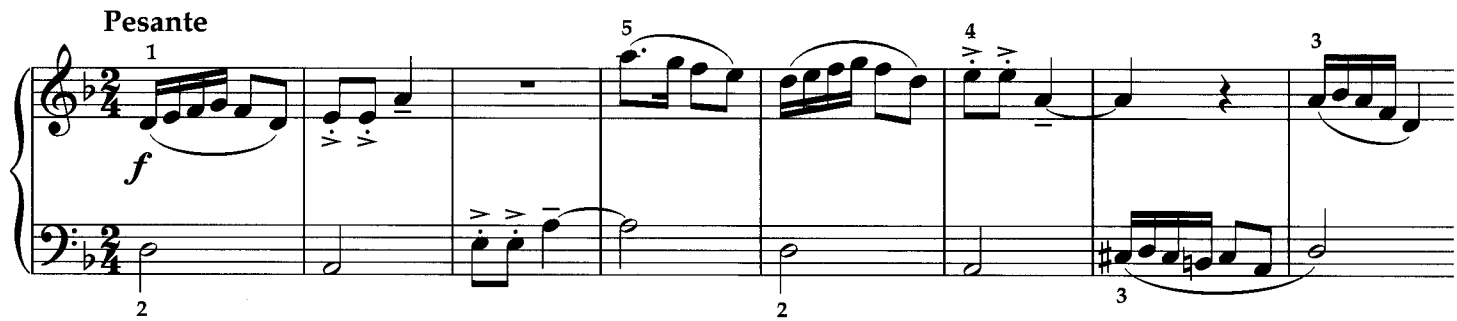




Prepared pieces

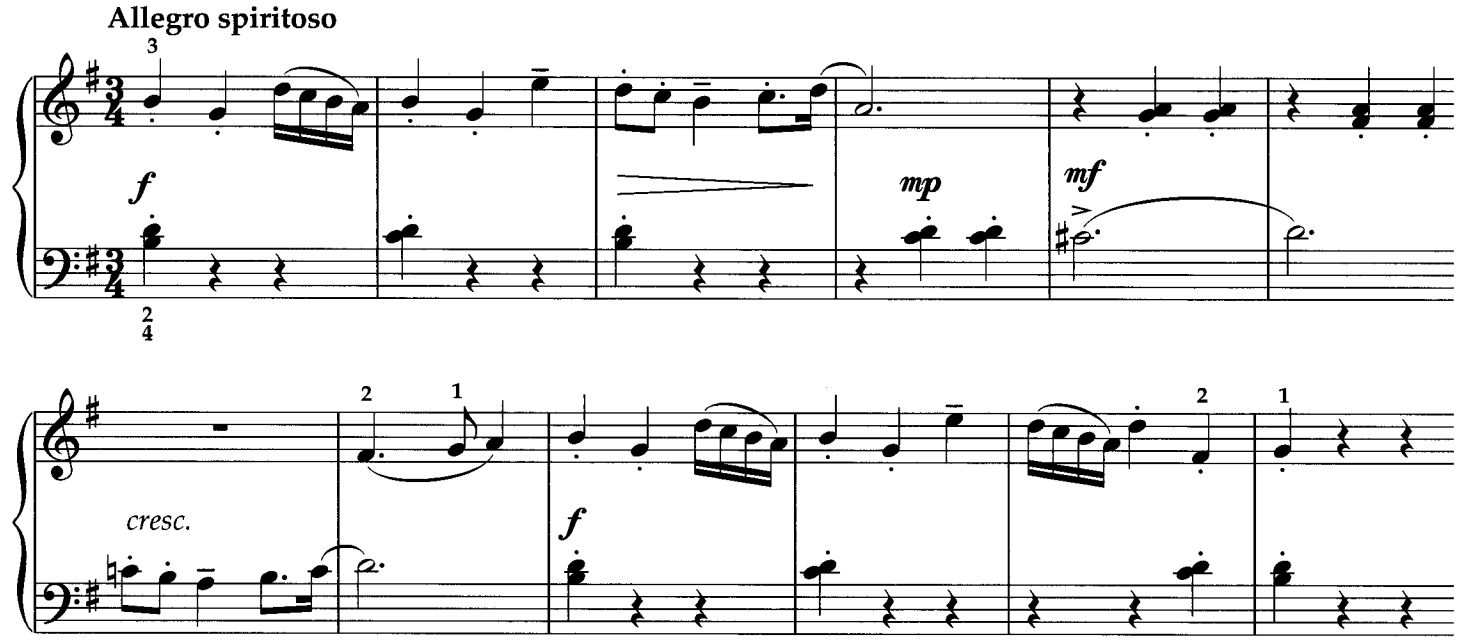
1 What are the clues to the character of this piece? What will your tempo be?
2 Are there any repeated patterns?
3 Where will you have to change hand position?
4 Follow the tune which begins in the right hand, and notice when it goes into the left hand.
5 Tap the rhythm of the piece, hands together.
6 Play the first note of each hand and then hear the piece in your head.

1



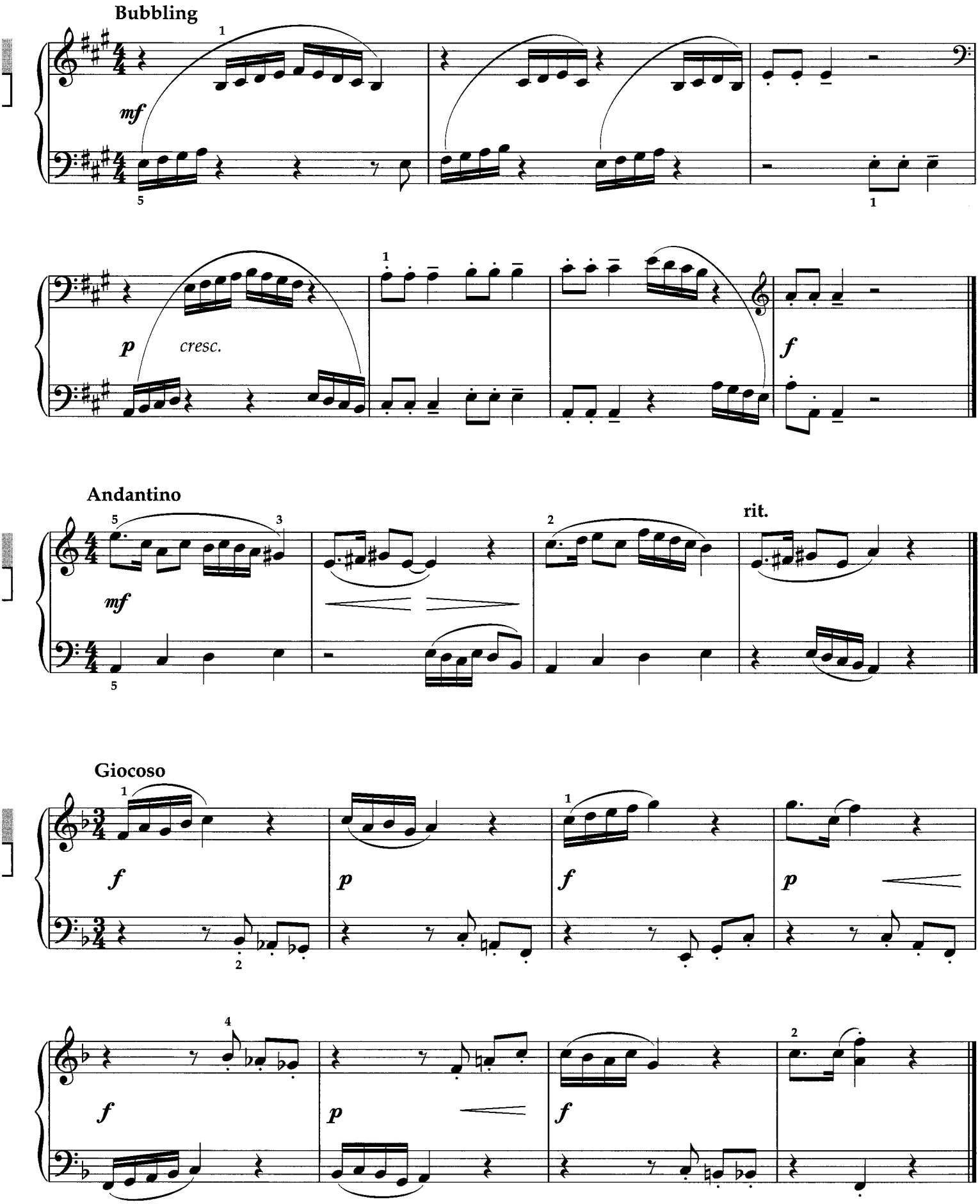
1 How will you bring the piece to life?
2 Is the tune ever in the left hand?
3 How many bars are based on scale and arpeggio patterns? Play the scale and arpeggio.
4 Look through the piece for changes of hand position.
5 Tap the rhythm of the piece, hands together on a table or the piano lid.
6 Play the first note of each hand and then hear the piece in your head.

2



Going solo!

Don't forget to prepare each piece carefully before you play it.

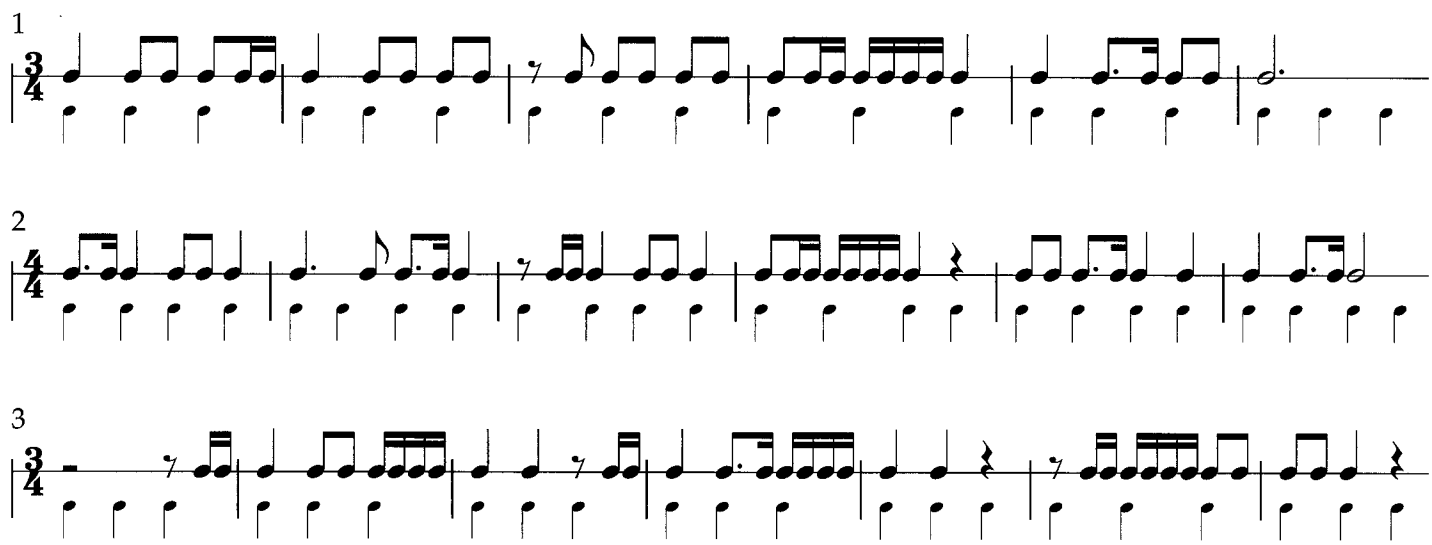


Stage 2

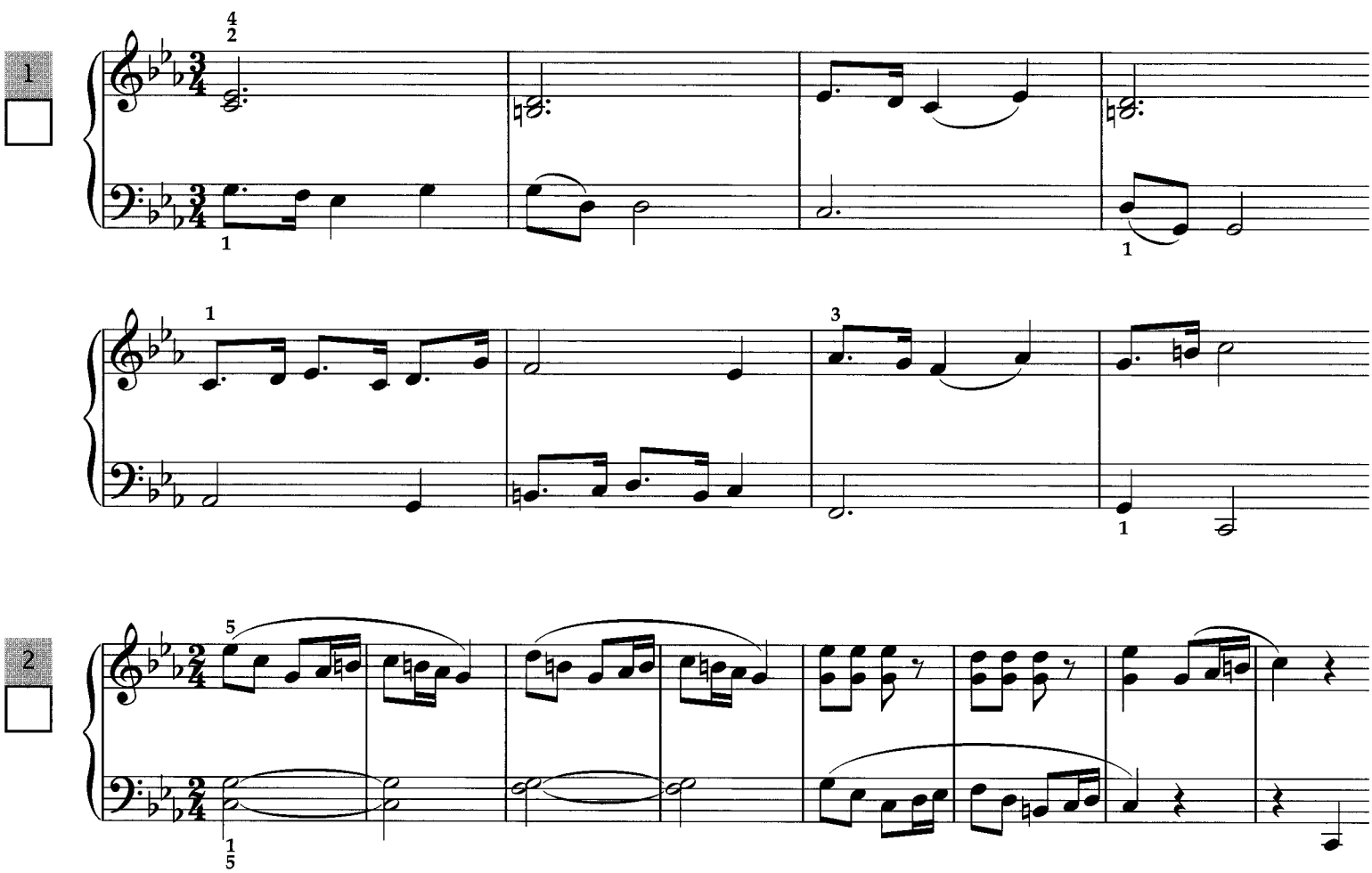
C minor

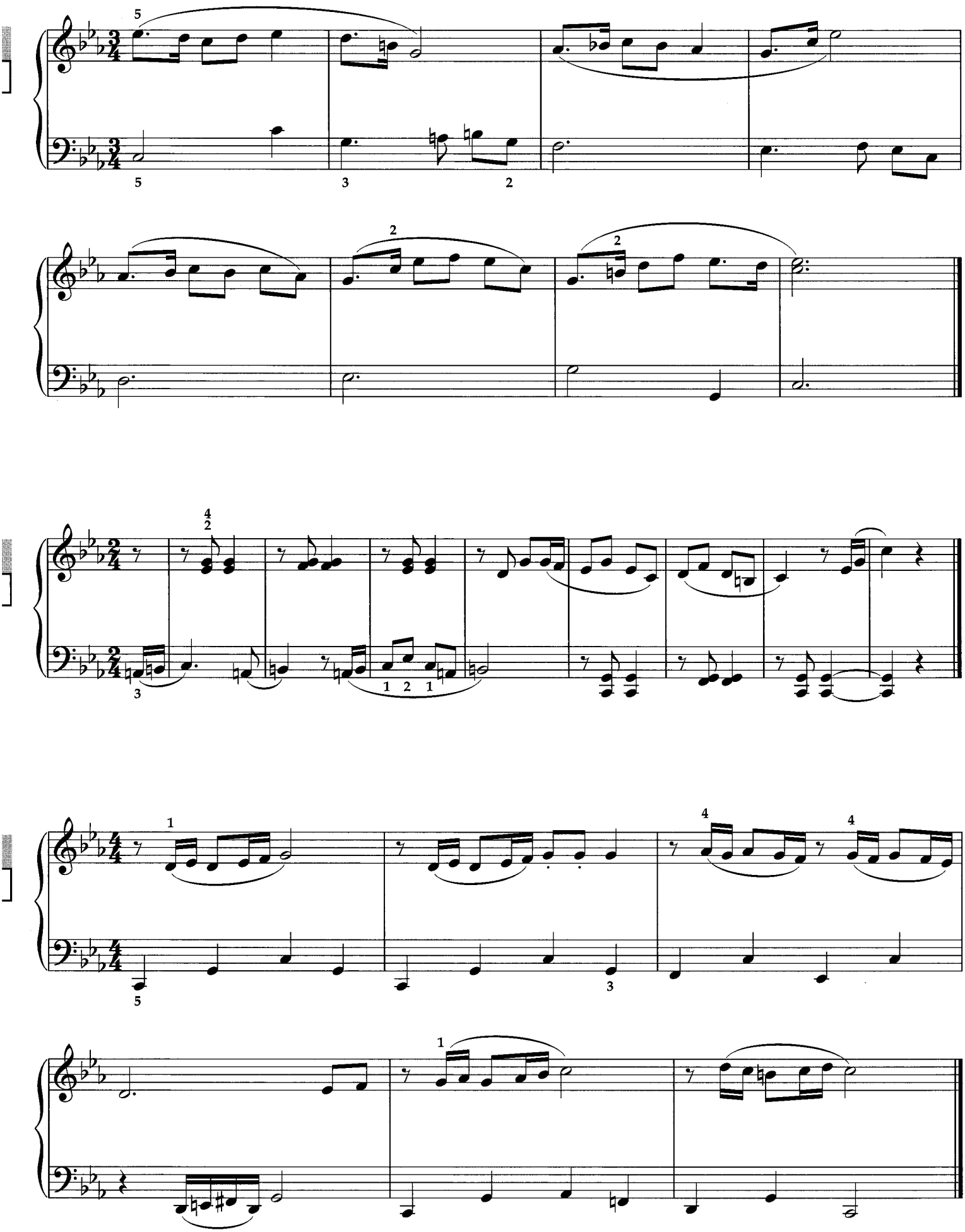
Rhythmic exercises

Always count two bars before you begin each exercise – one out loud and one silently.



Melodic exercises

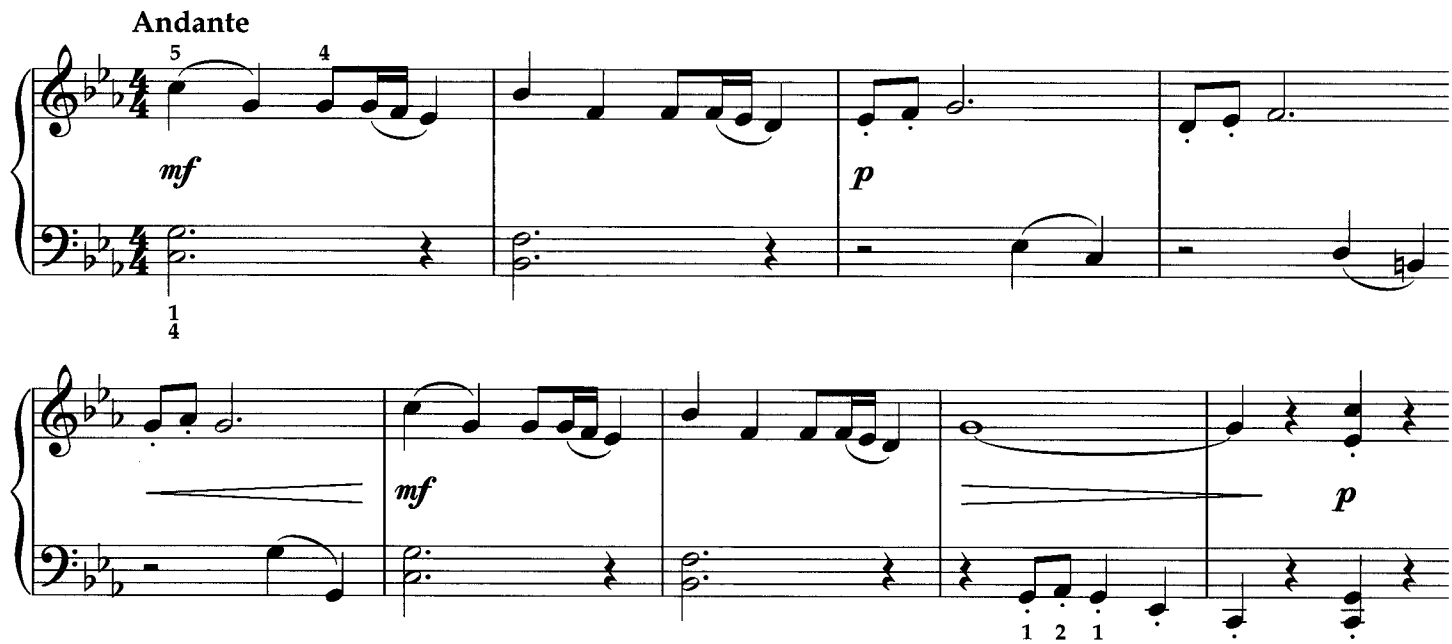




Prepared pieces

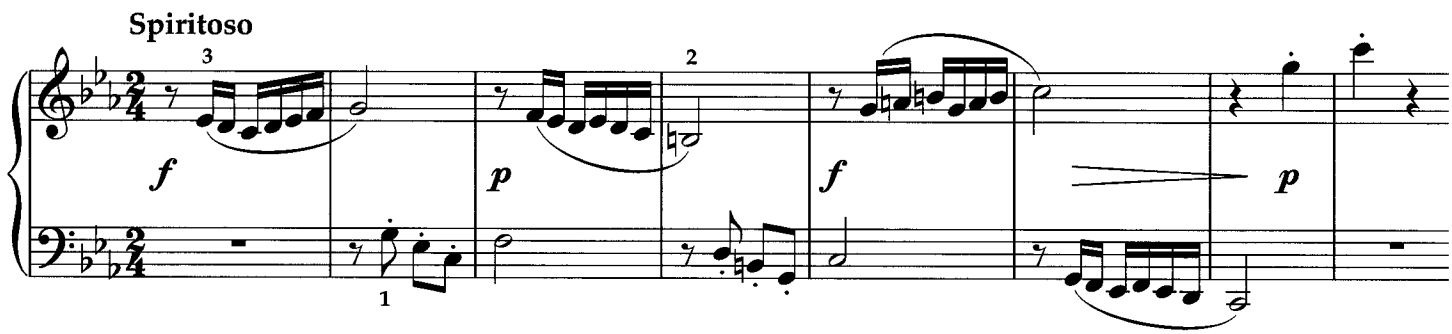
1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio.
2 What is the interval formed by the notes in bars 1-2 of the left hand? Does it appear again?
3 Are there any other repeated patterns?
4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately, then both together.
5 What is the chord in the final bar?
6 Play the first notes in each hand and try to hear the piece through in your head.

1

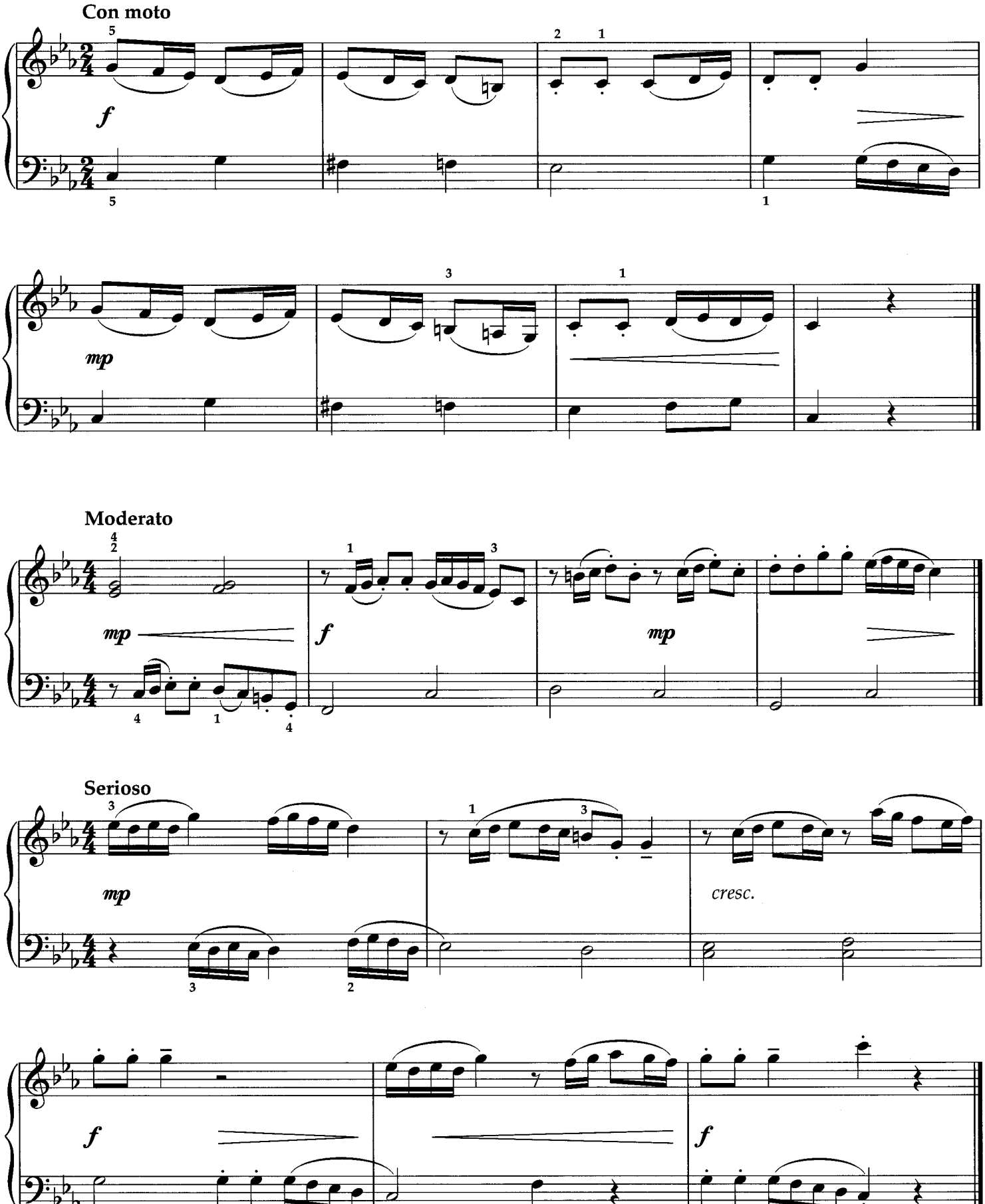


1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio.
2 Can you see any bars that are not based on scale or arpeggio patterns?
3 Do the dynamic markings suggest a serious or light-hearted piece?
4 Look for changes of hand position.
5 Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Then tap the rhythms of both hands together.
6 How will you bring this piece to life?

2



Going solo!

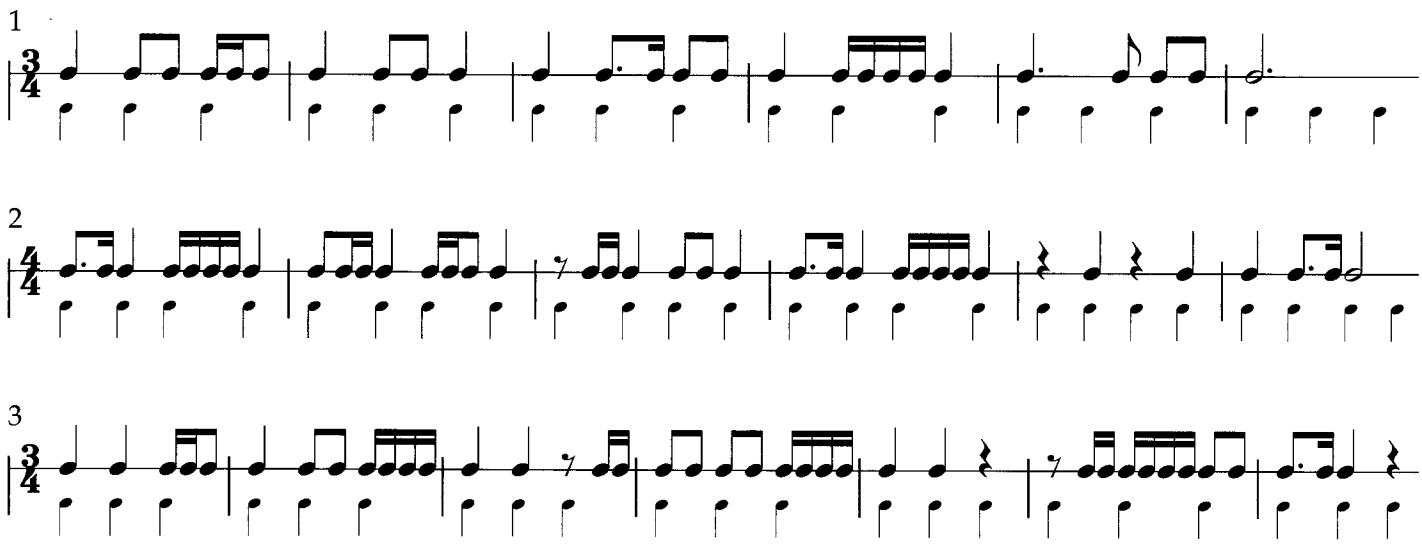


Stage 3

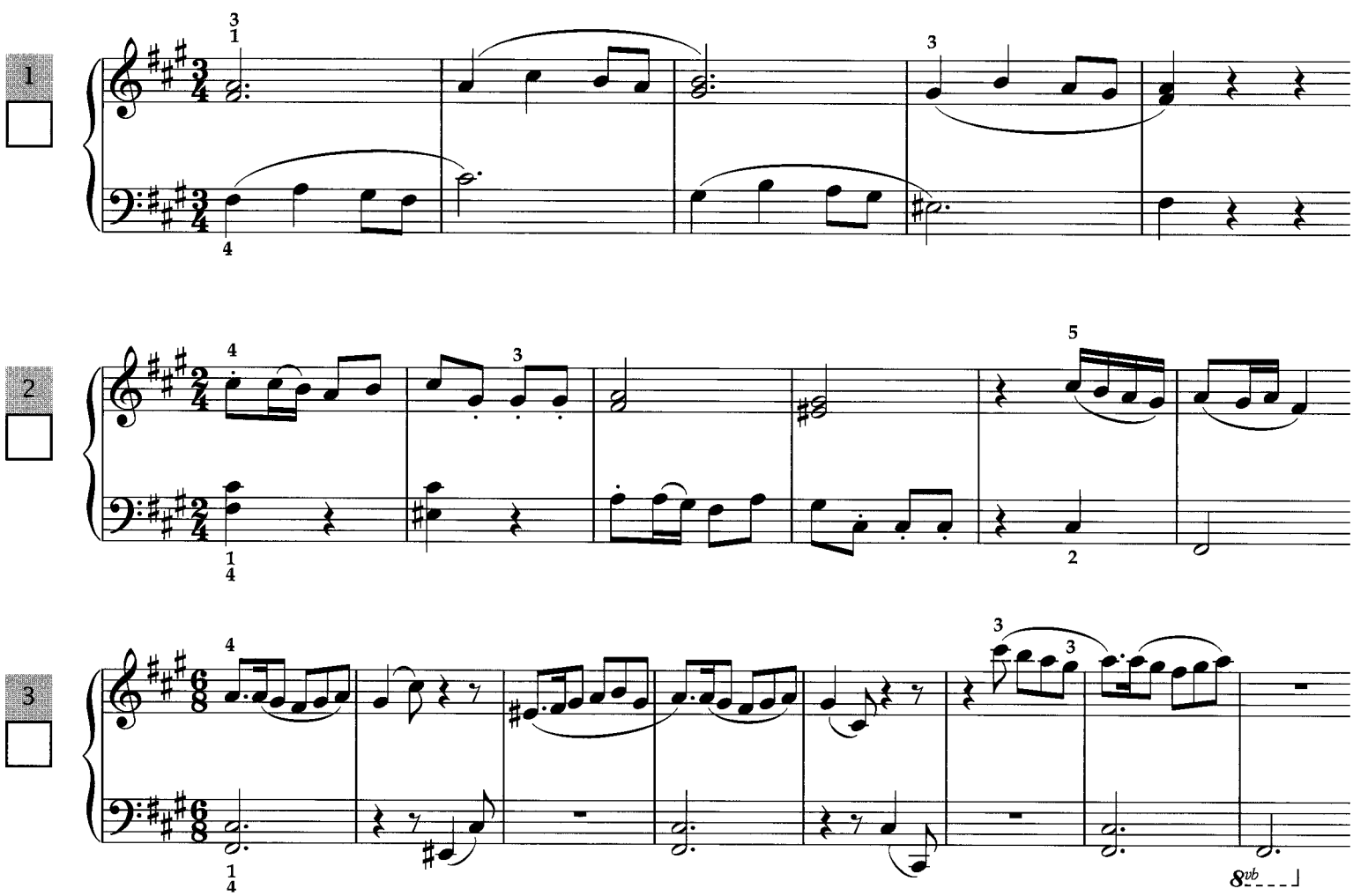
F♯ minor

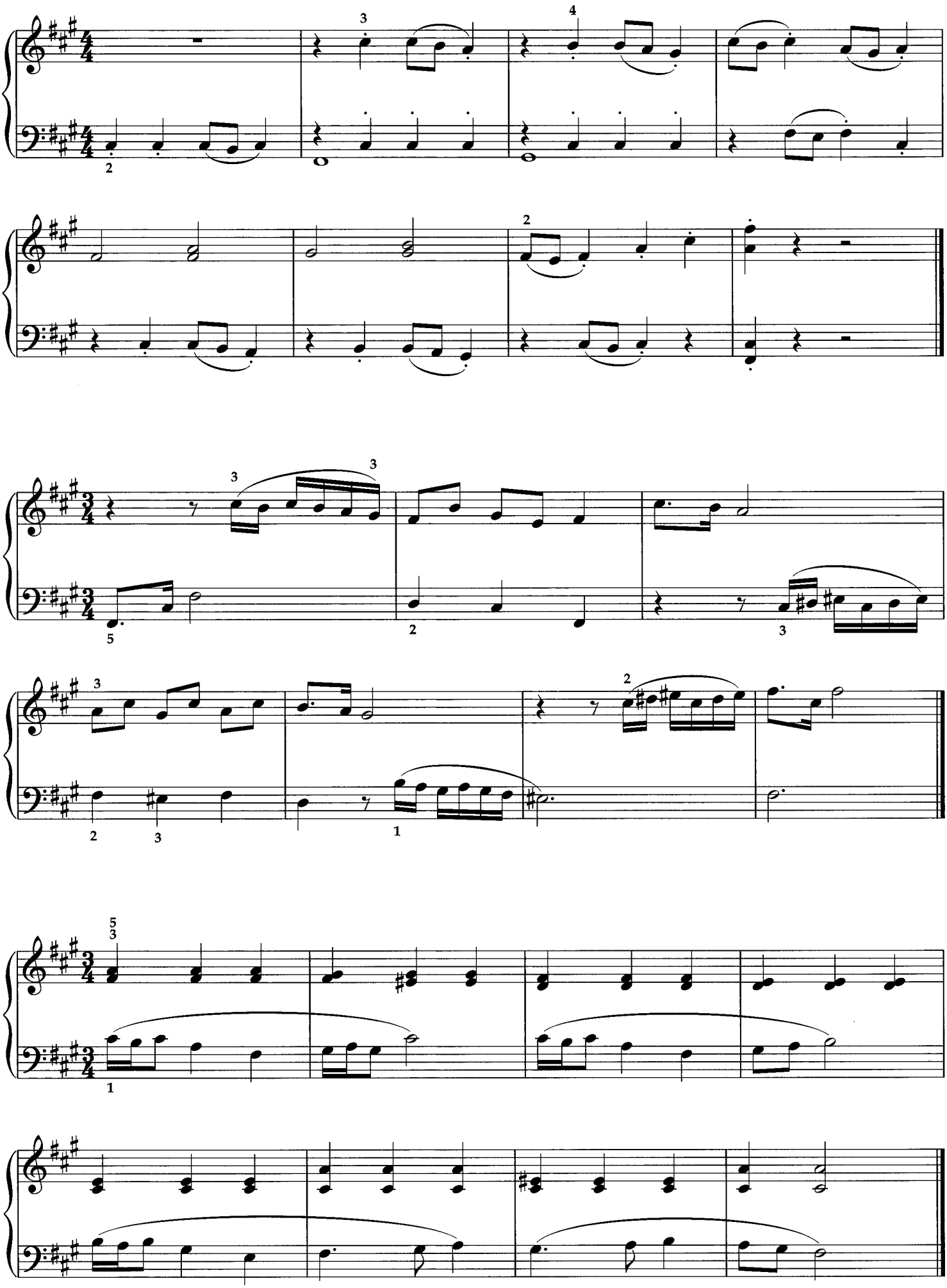
Rhythmic exercises

Always count two bars before you begin each exercise – one out loud and one silently.



Melodic exercises

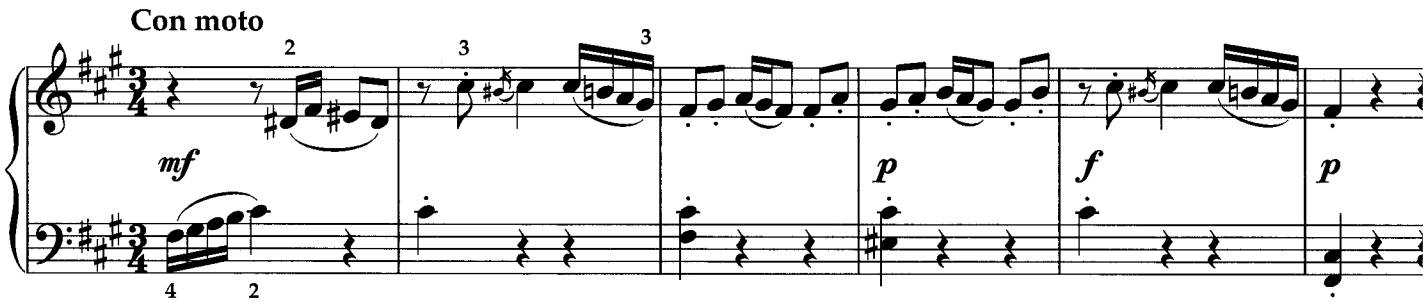




Prepared pieces

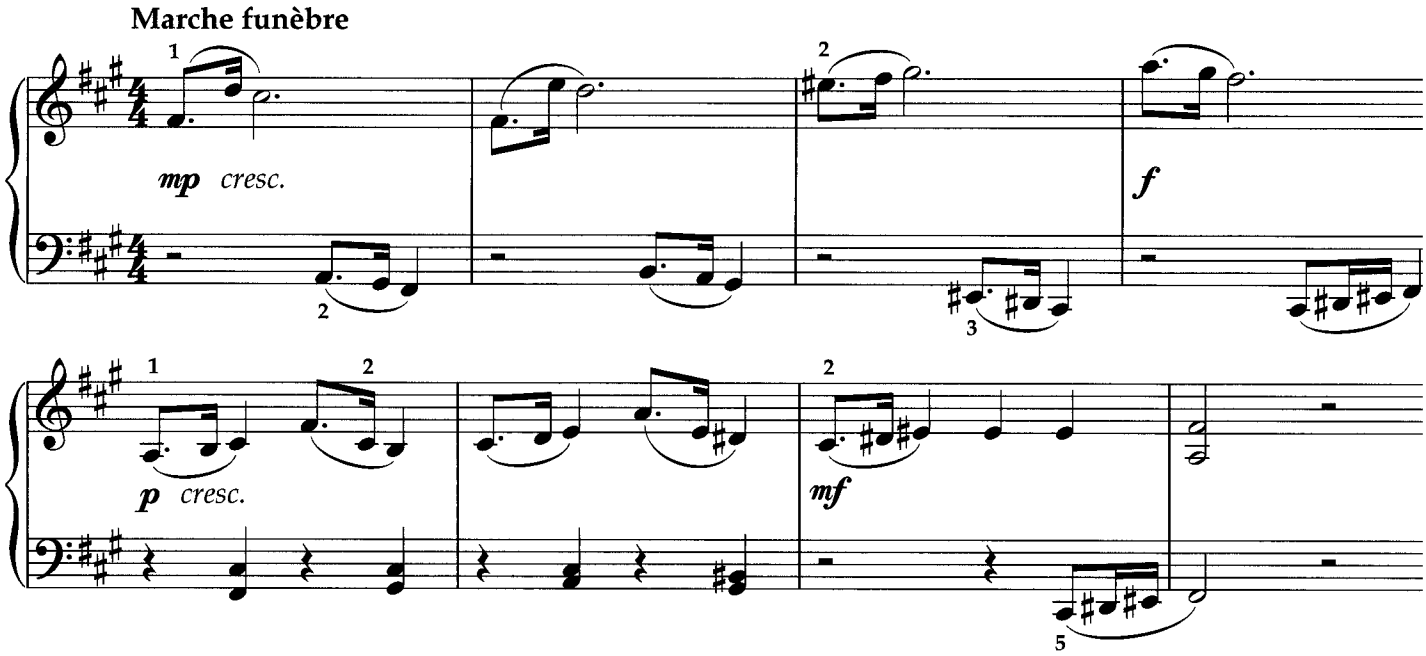
1 Study this piece carefully for a few minutes. Do you think you understand it?
2 What key is it in? Are there any scale patterns? Play the scale and arpeggio.
3 Is it serious or humorous?
4 Think the rhythm through in your head.
5 Play the first note of the left hand and then hear the piece through in your head.
6 What are the important ingredients that will help you give character to the performance?

1



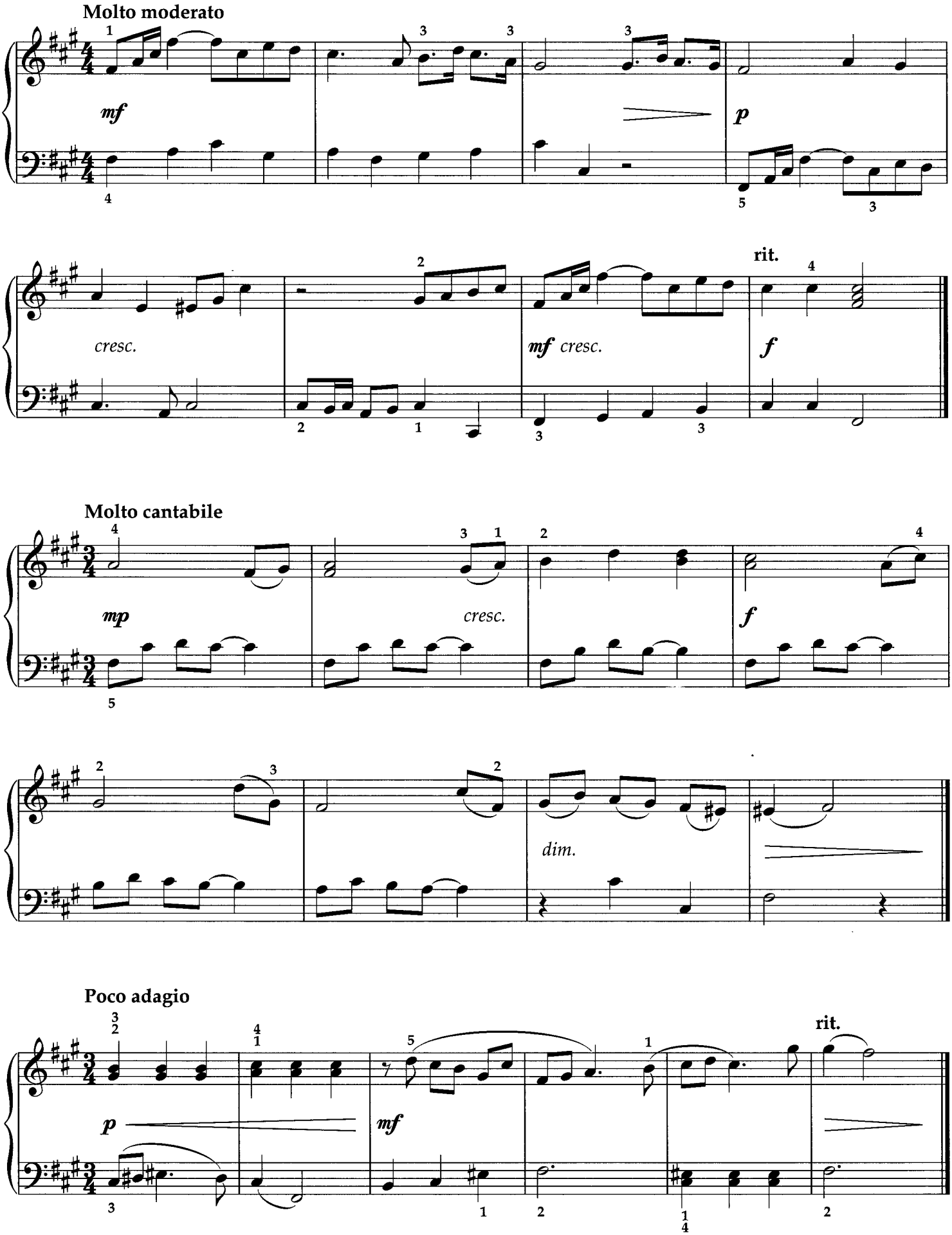
1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio.
2 How many bars are based on the first bar?
3 Can you see where you'll have to change hand position?
4 Think about the fingering of the chords in the left hand bars 5 and 6.
5 Study the piece carefully until you feel you completely understand it.
6 What character will you try to convey?

2



Going solo!

Don't forget to prepare each piece carefully before you play it.

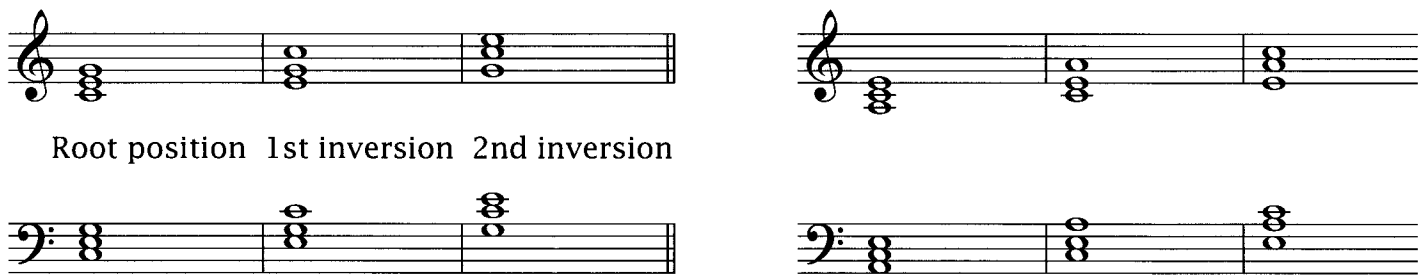


Stage 4

Thicker textures

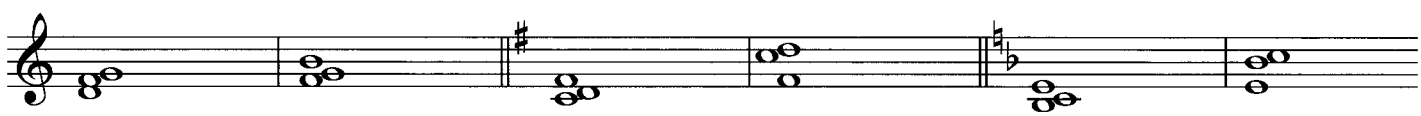
Don't panic when you find that there are many notes to read at the same time. Often these note combinations are part of a simple chord pattern. Think of them as similar to reading a slightly longer word.

Knowing all the basic triads in each key is a very useful starting point. Play the following, describing them in your head as root position, first inversion and second inversion.



Root position 1st inversion 2nd inversion

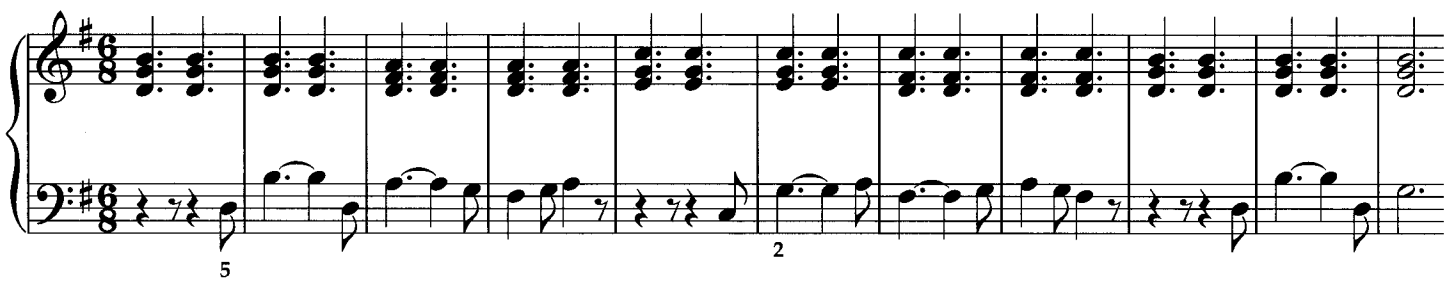
Think about dominant 7th chords too. Here are some examples:



In C In G In F

Melodic exercises

1



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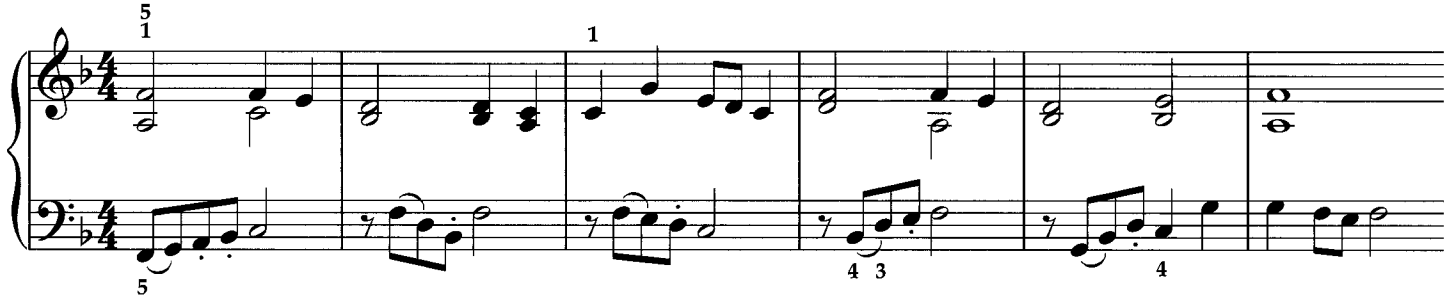
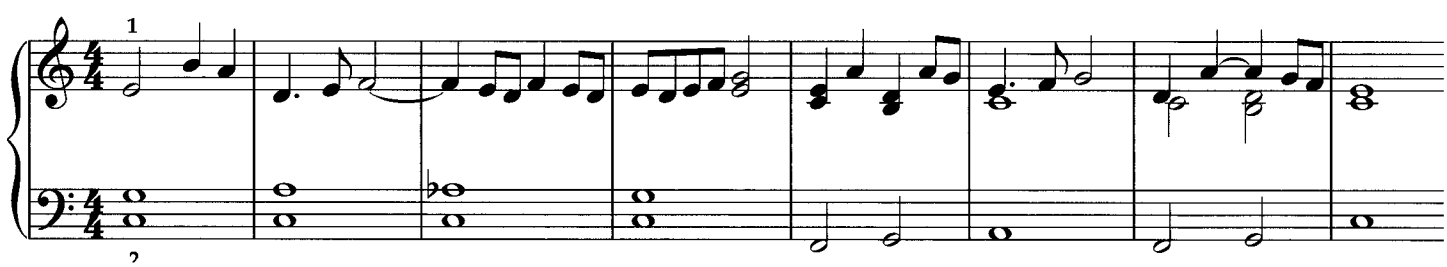
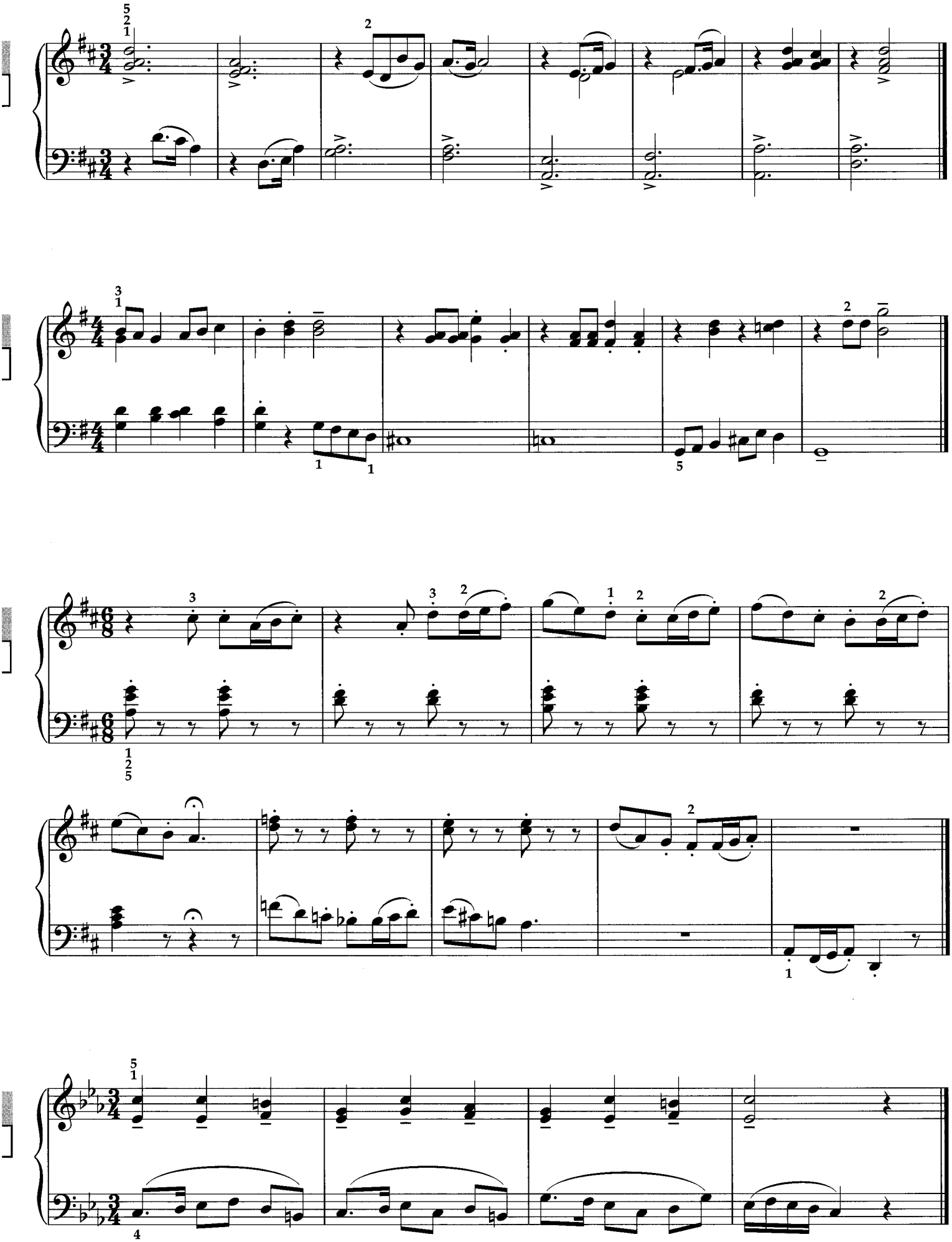


3

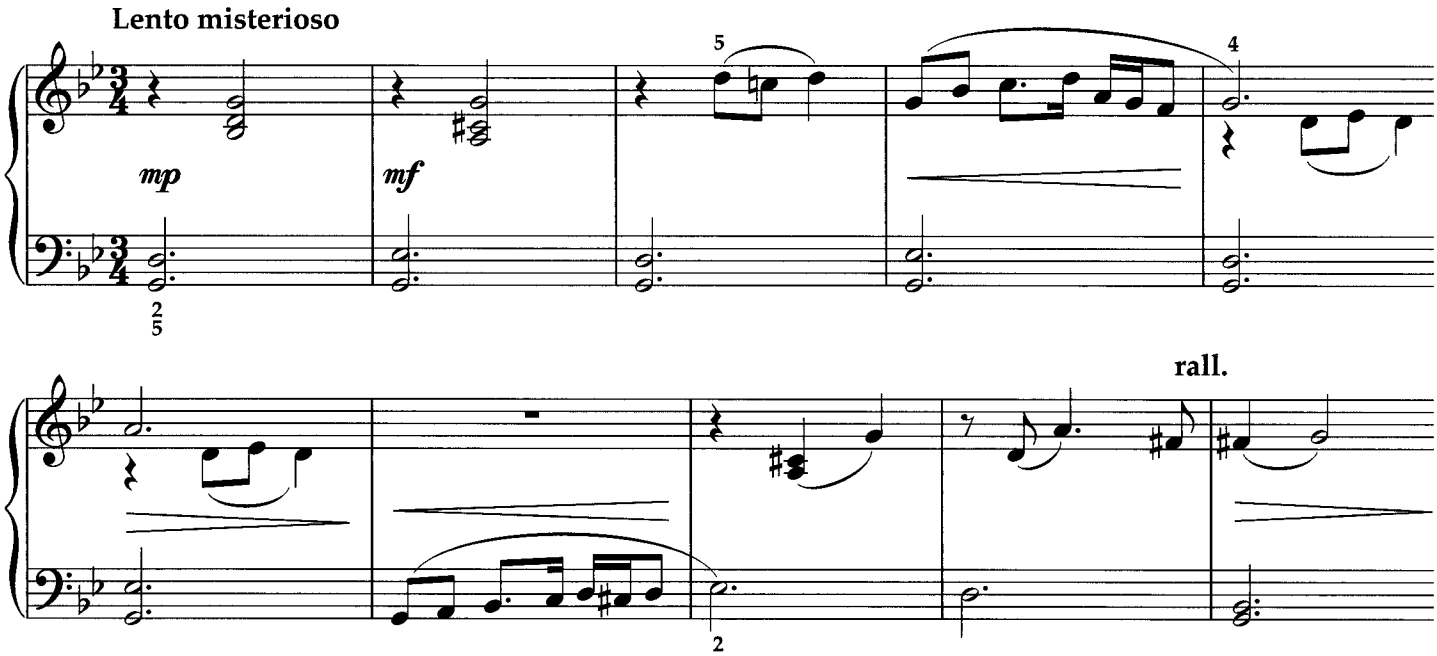




Prepared pieces

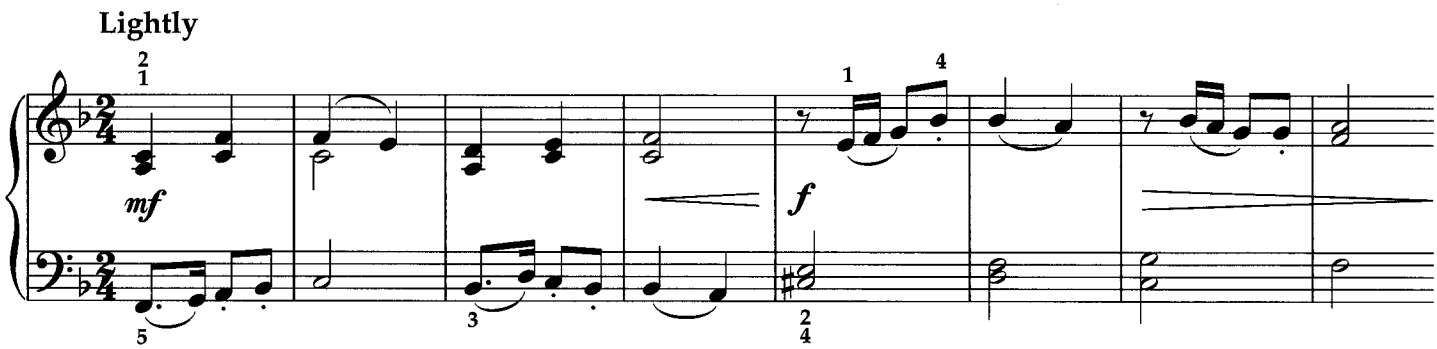
1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio.
2 Describe the chord both hands play in bar 1.
3 Think about the fingering you will use in the right hand bars 3-6.
4 Can you spot any repeated patterns?
5 Are the right-hand notes with downward stems in bars 5-6 melody or accompaniment?
6 Play the first note in each hand then hear the piece through in your head.

1



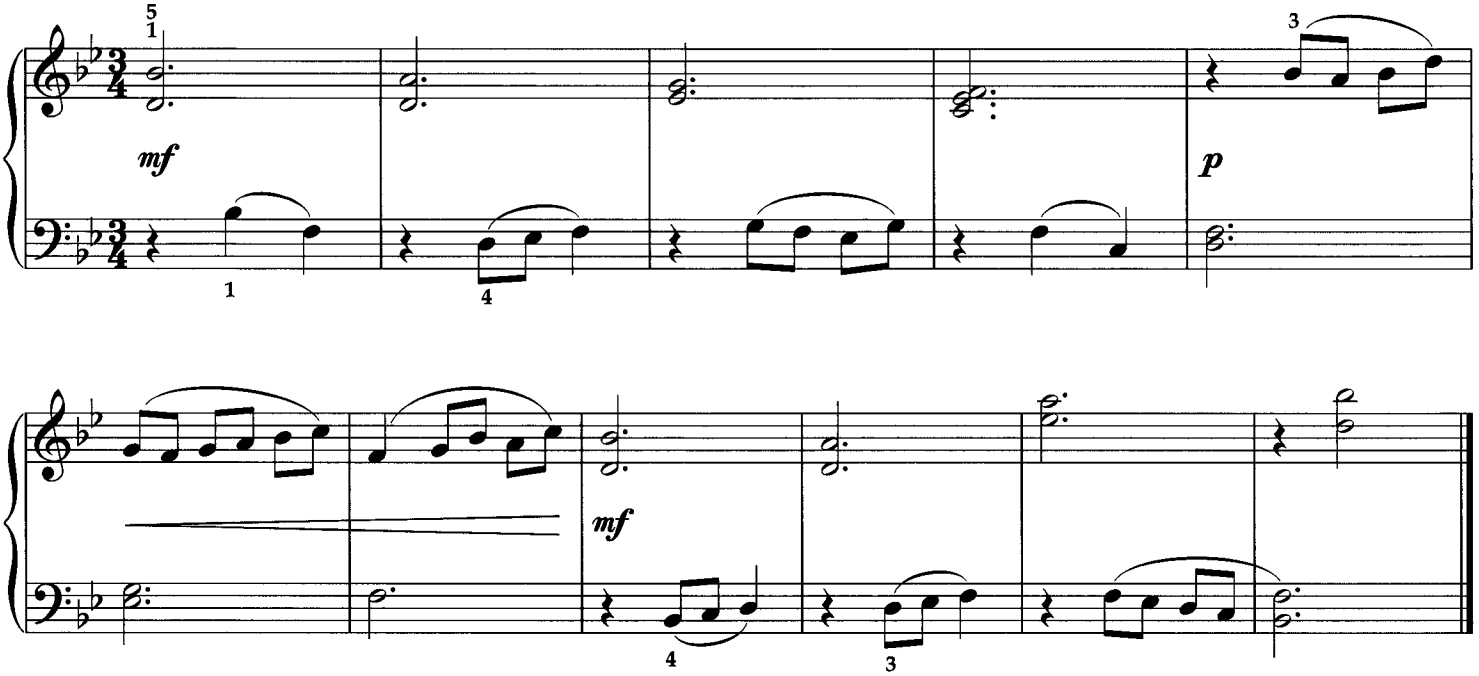
1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio.
2 What is the character of this piece? How will you convey it?
3 To which chord do the notes in the first bar of the right hand belong?
4 Can you spot any repeated patterns?
5 Tap the rhythm of both hands on a table or the piano lid.
6 Play the first note in each hand then hear the piece through in your head.

2

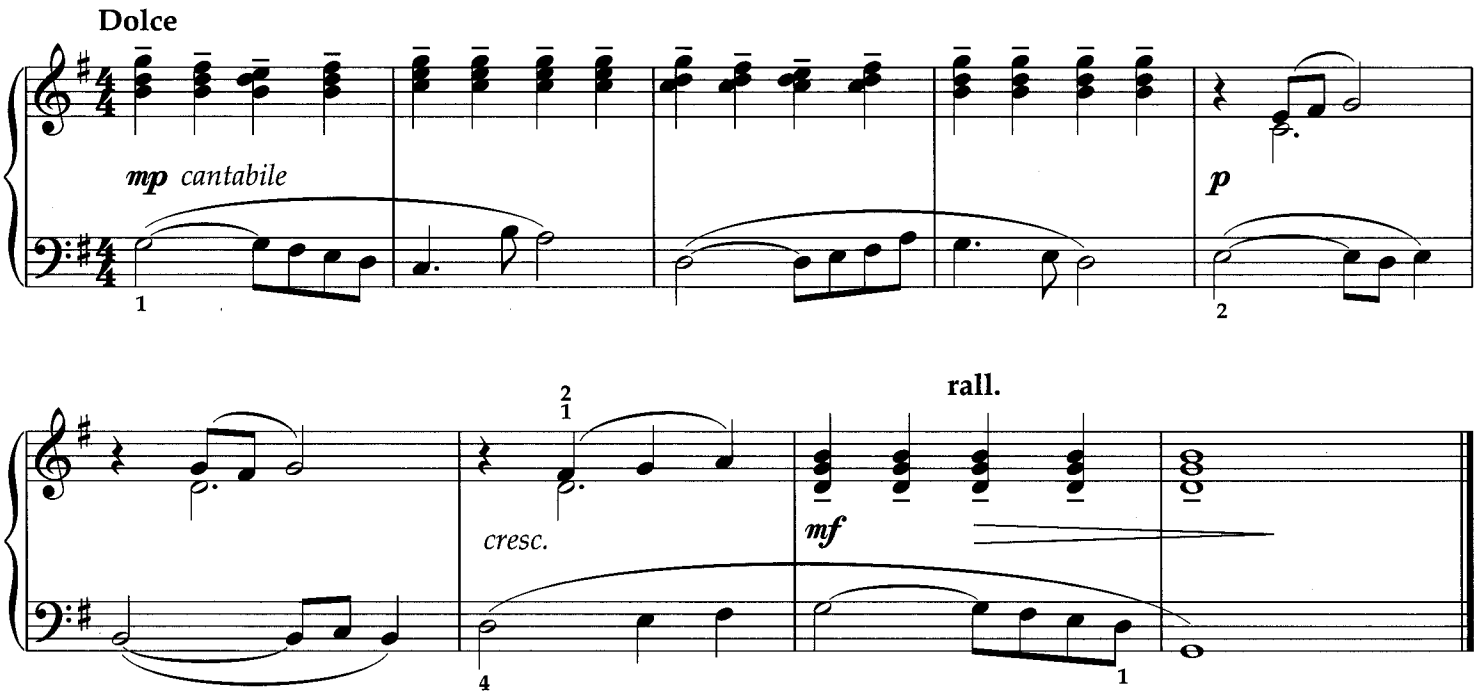


Going solo!

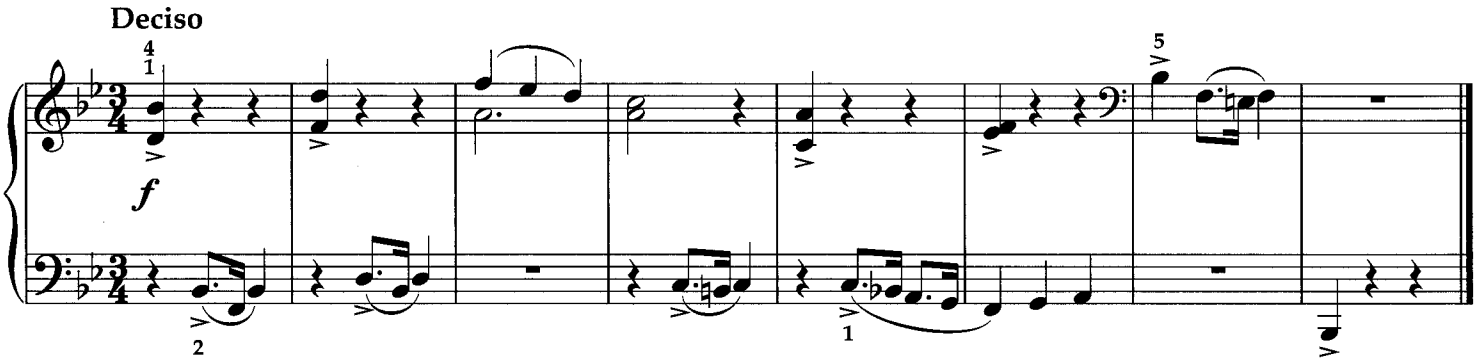
Andante con moto



Dolce



Deciso

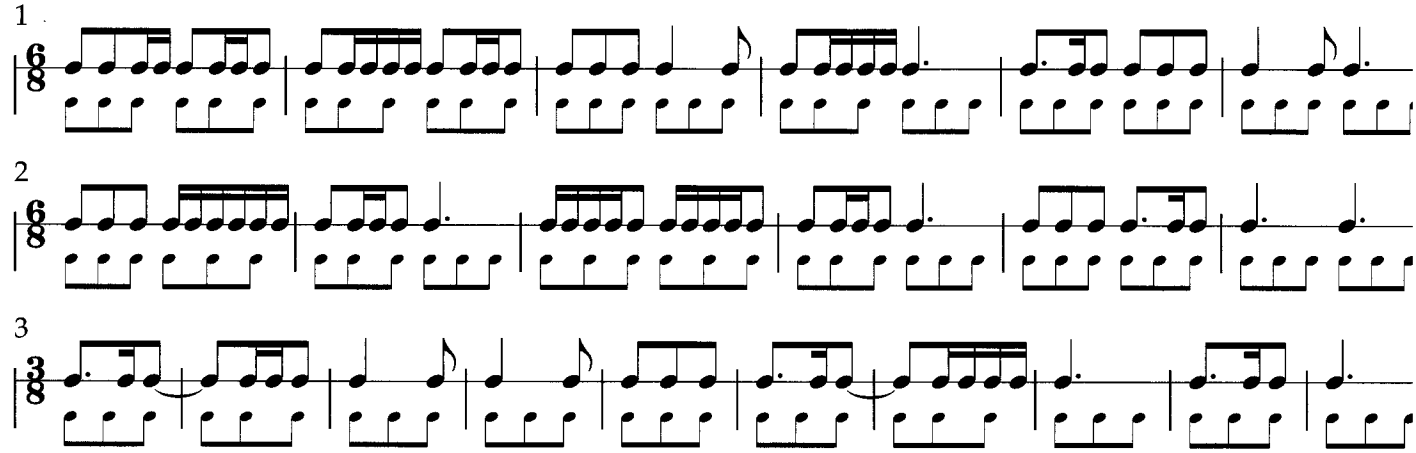


Stage 5

More complex rhythms in $\frac{6}{8}$ and $\frac{3}{8}$

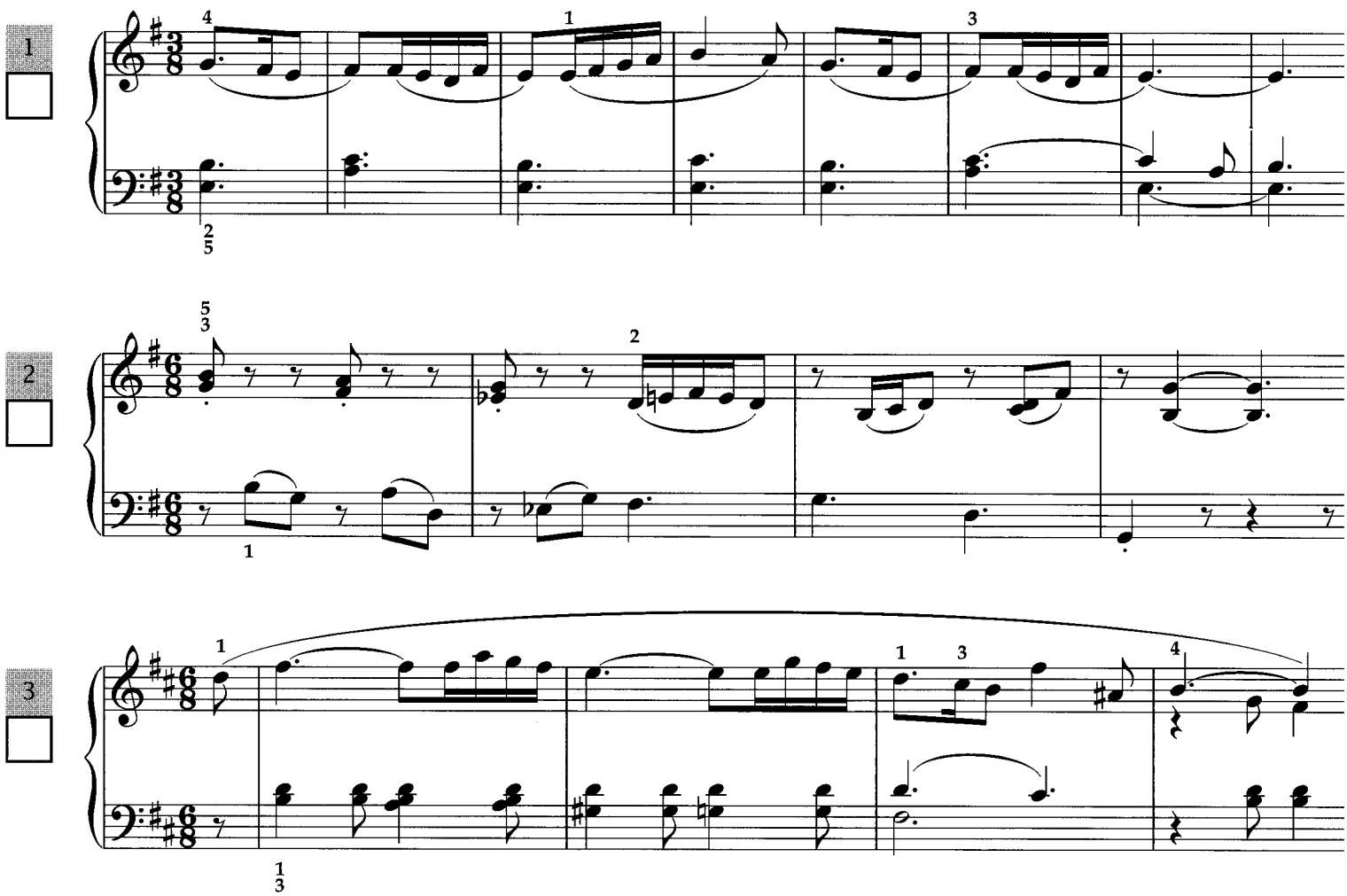
Rhythmic exercises

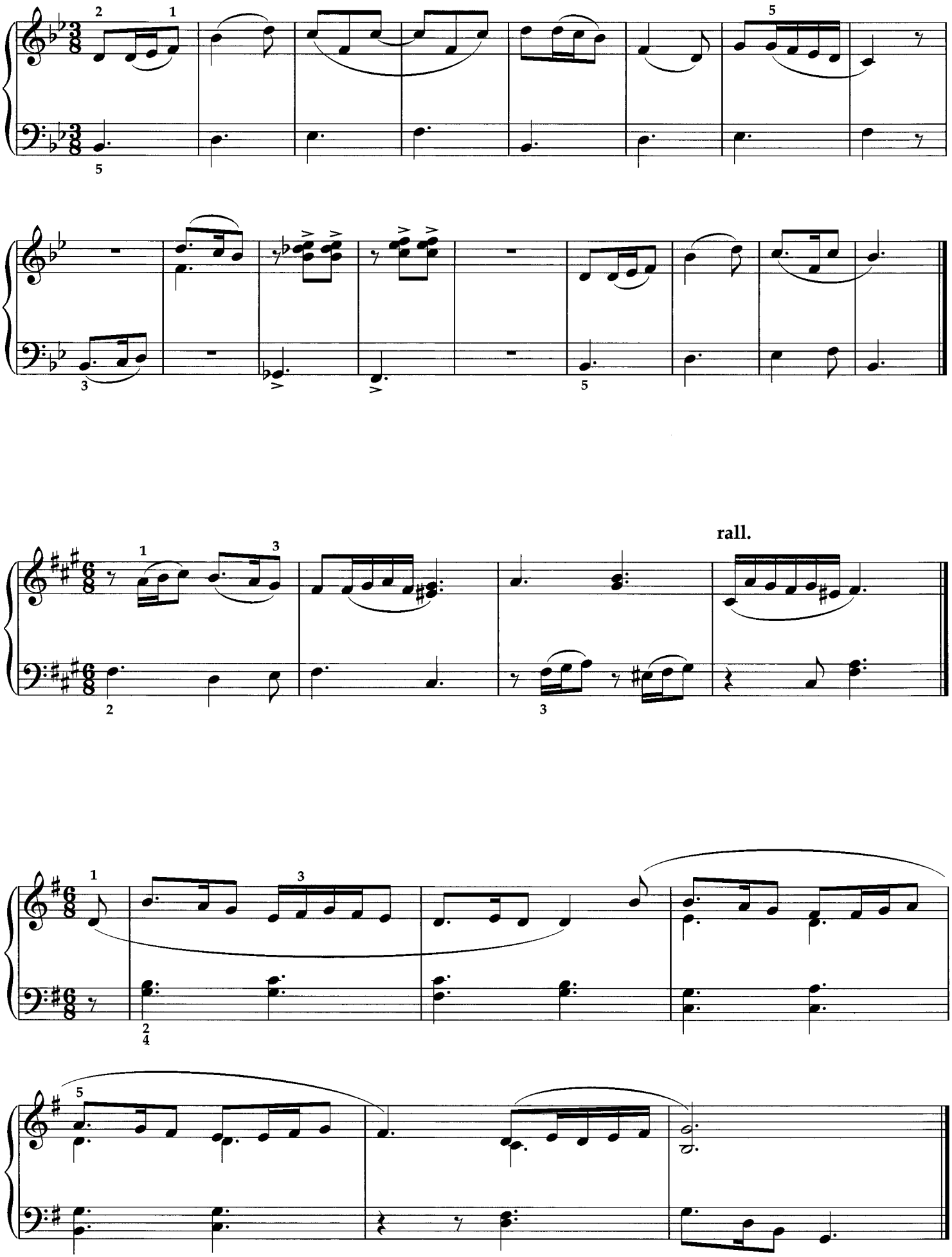
Always count two bars before you begin each exercise – one out loud and one silently.



Melodic exercises

And don't forget to count two bars before you begin each melodic exercise as well.

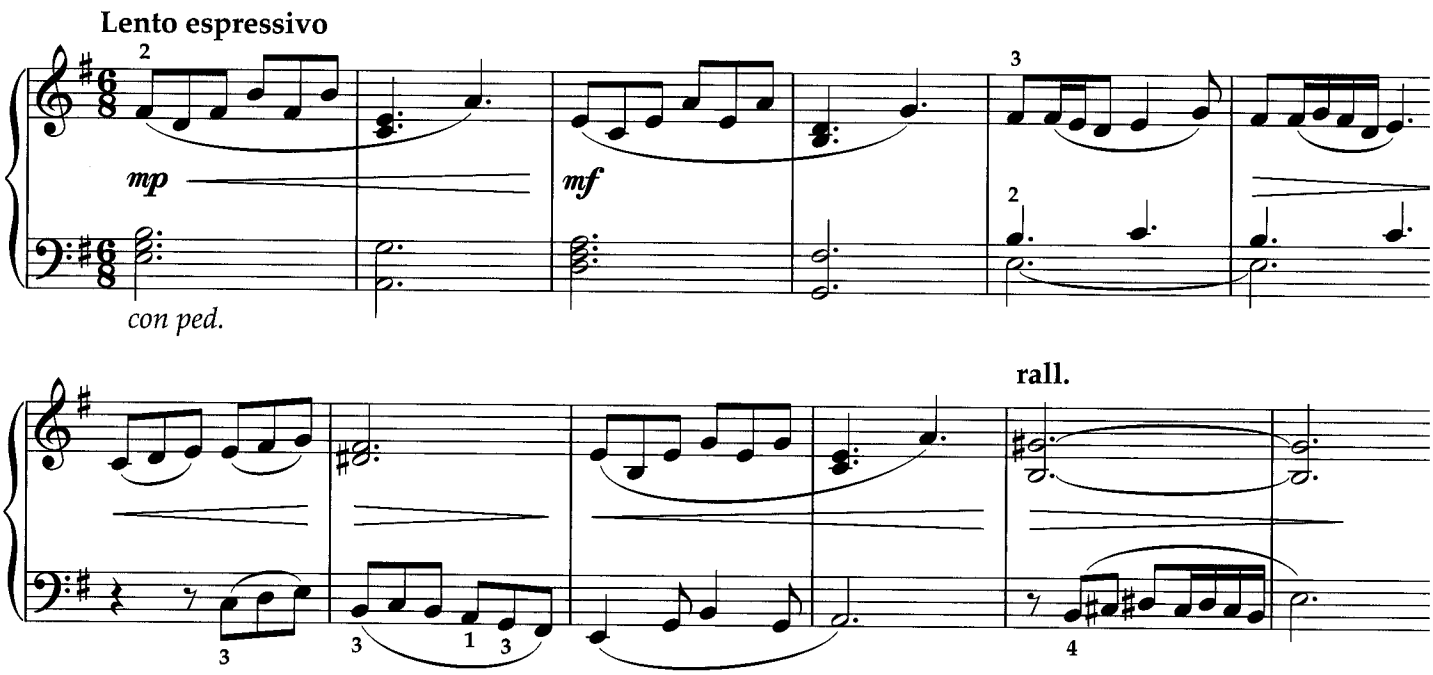



rall.

Prepared pieces

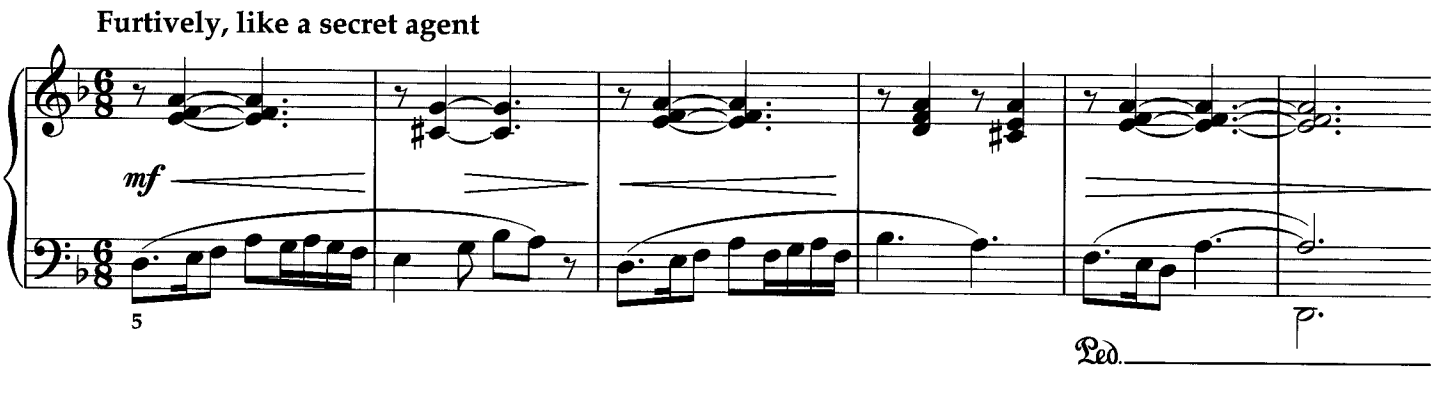
1 Describe the left-hand chords in bars 1 and 3. How are the chords in bars 2 and 4 related?
2 How many times is the melodic pattern in bars 1-2 repeated?
3 Is the final chord of the right-hand part (bars 11-12) major or minor? What is the chord?
4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately, then both hands together.
5 Do you think you understand the piece? What ingredients give you clues to the character?

1



1 How does the opening phrase differ on its return?
2 Study the chord in bar 1 (right hand). Now play it, listening to its character.
3 Think about the rhythm of bar 1 – when exactly do you play the right-hand chord?
4 Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Then tap the rhythms of both hands together.
5 What key is the piece in? Play the scale and arpeggio.
6 Play the first notes of each hand and then hear the piece through in your head.

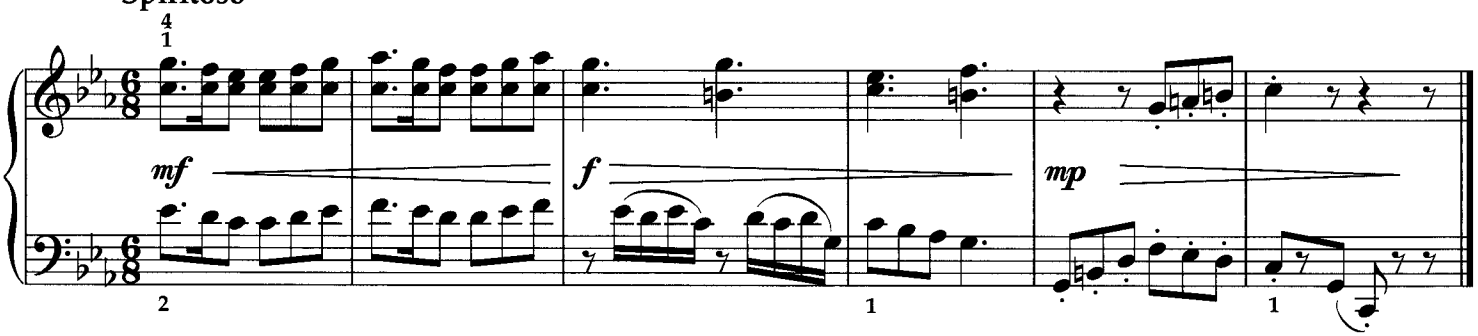
2



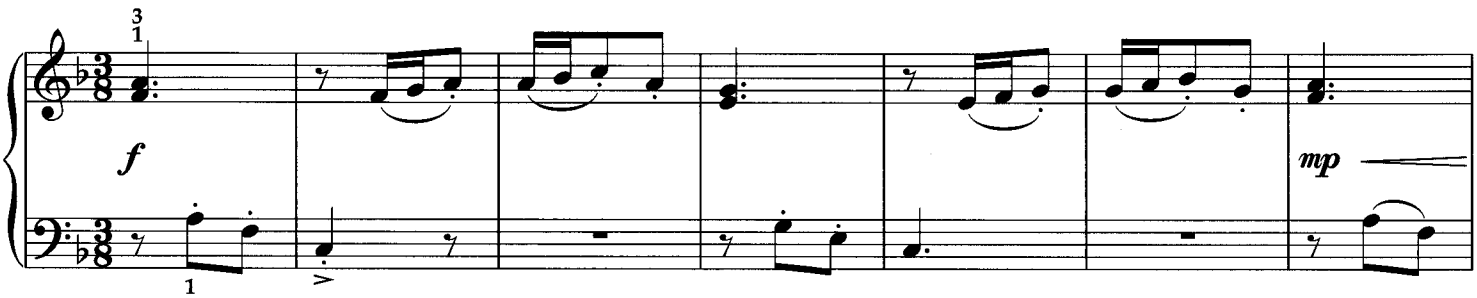
Going solo!

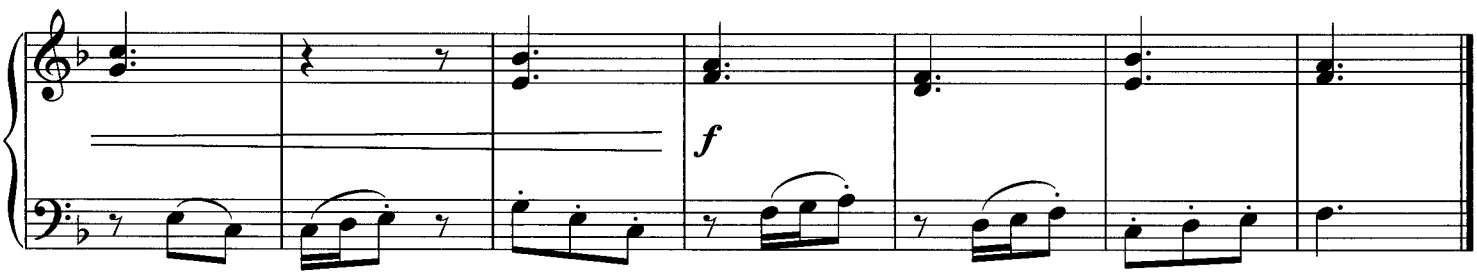
Don't forget to prepare each piece carefully before you play it.

Spiritoso

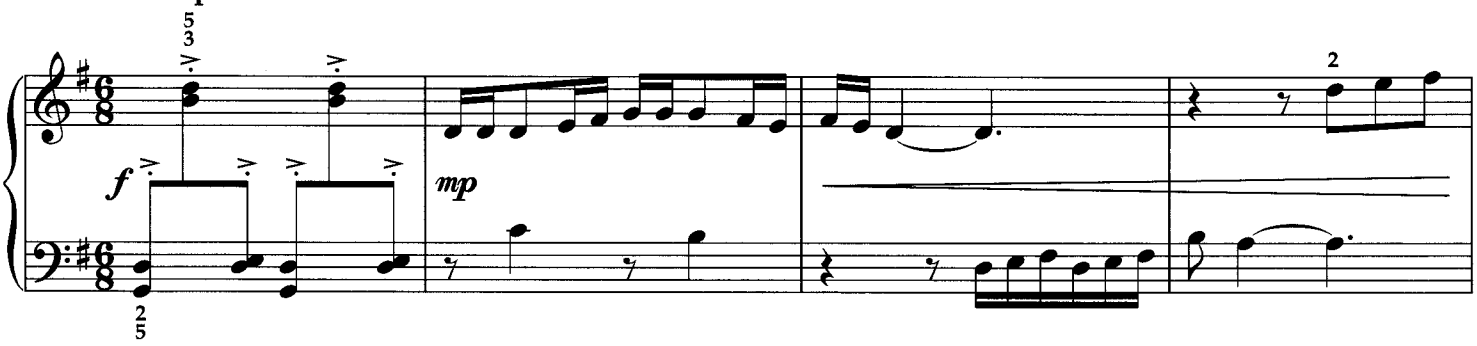


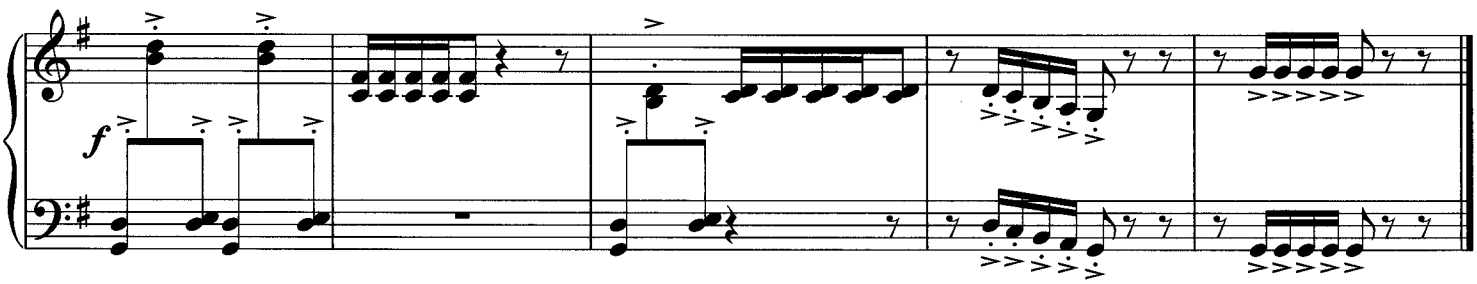
Con moto





Alla España!



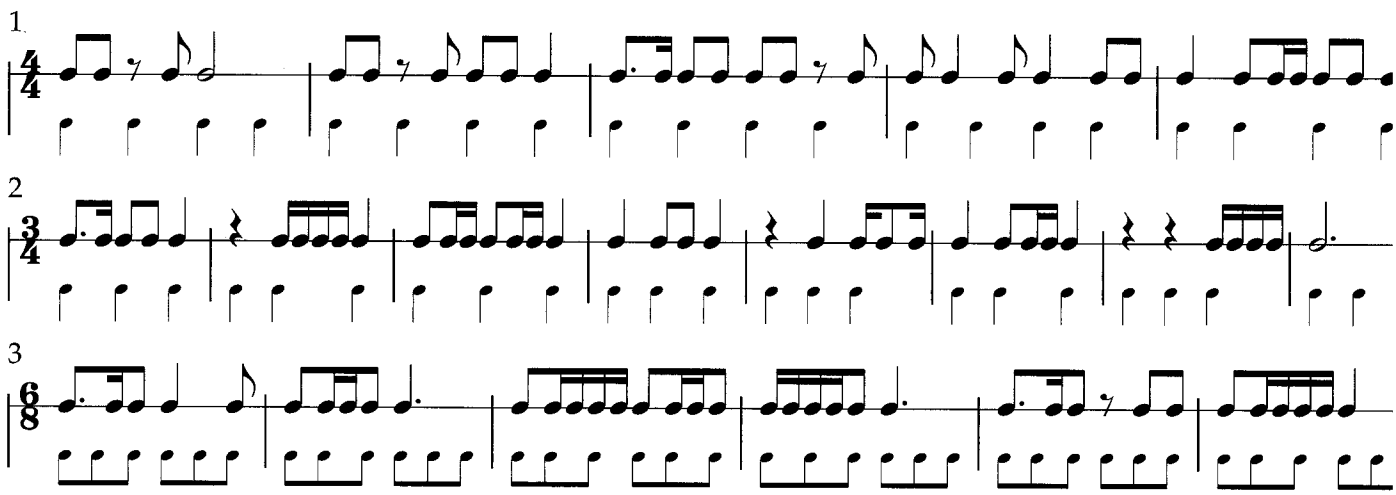


Stage 6

A♭ major
Syncopatio

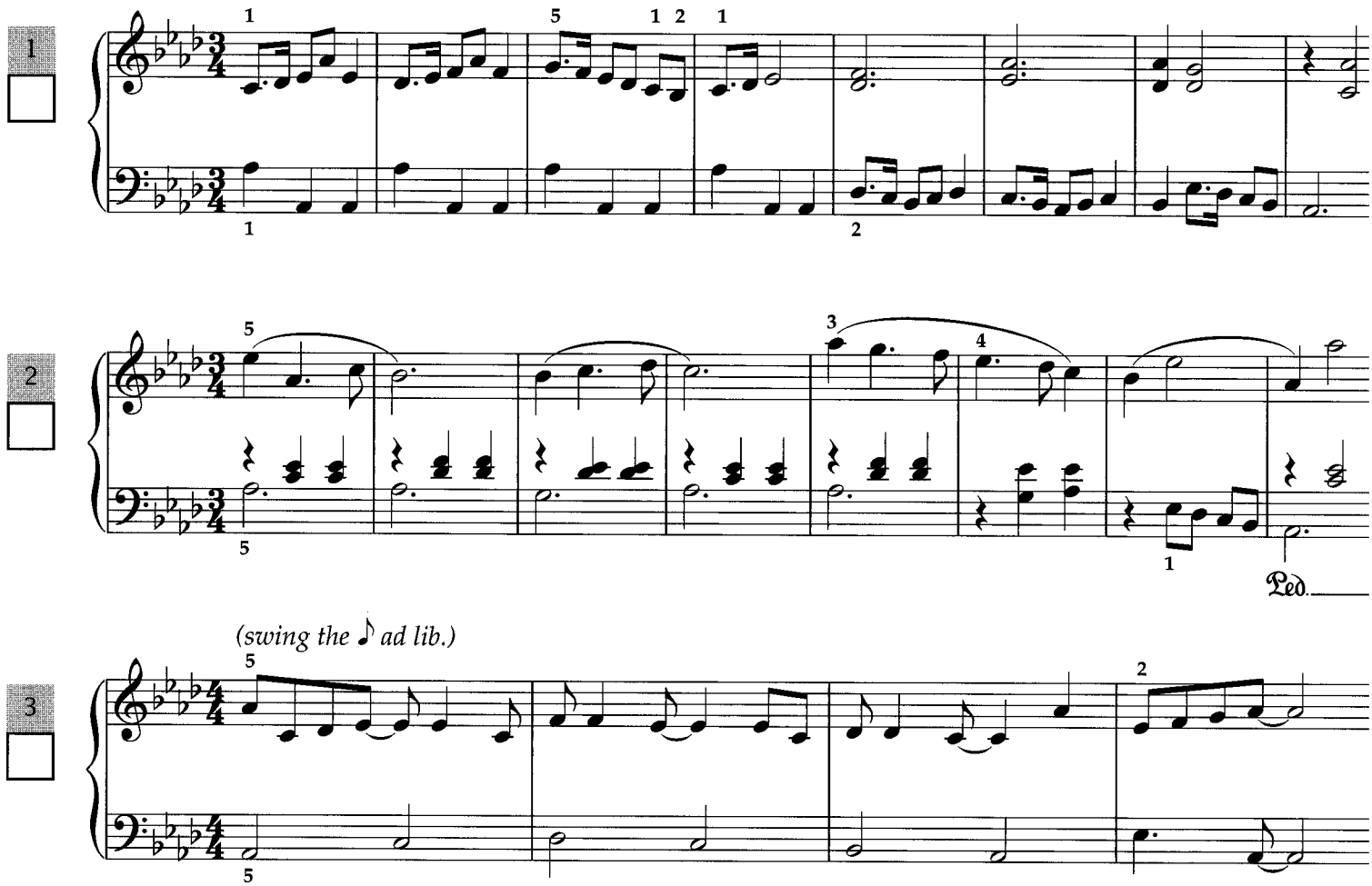
Rhythmic exercises

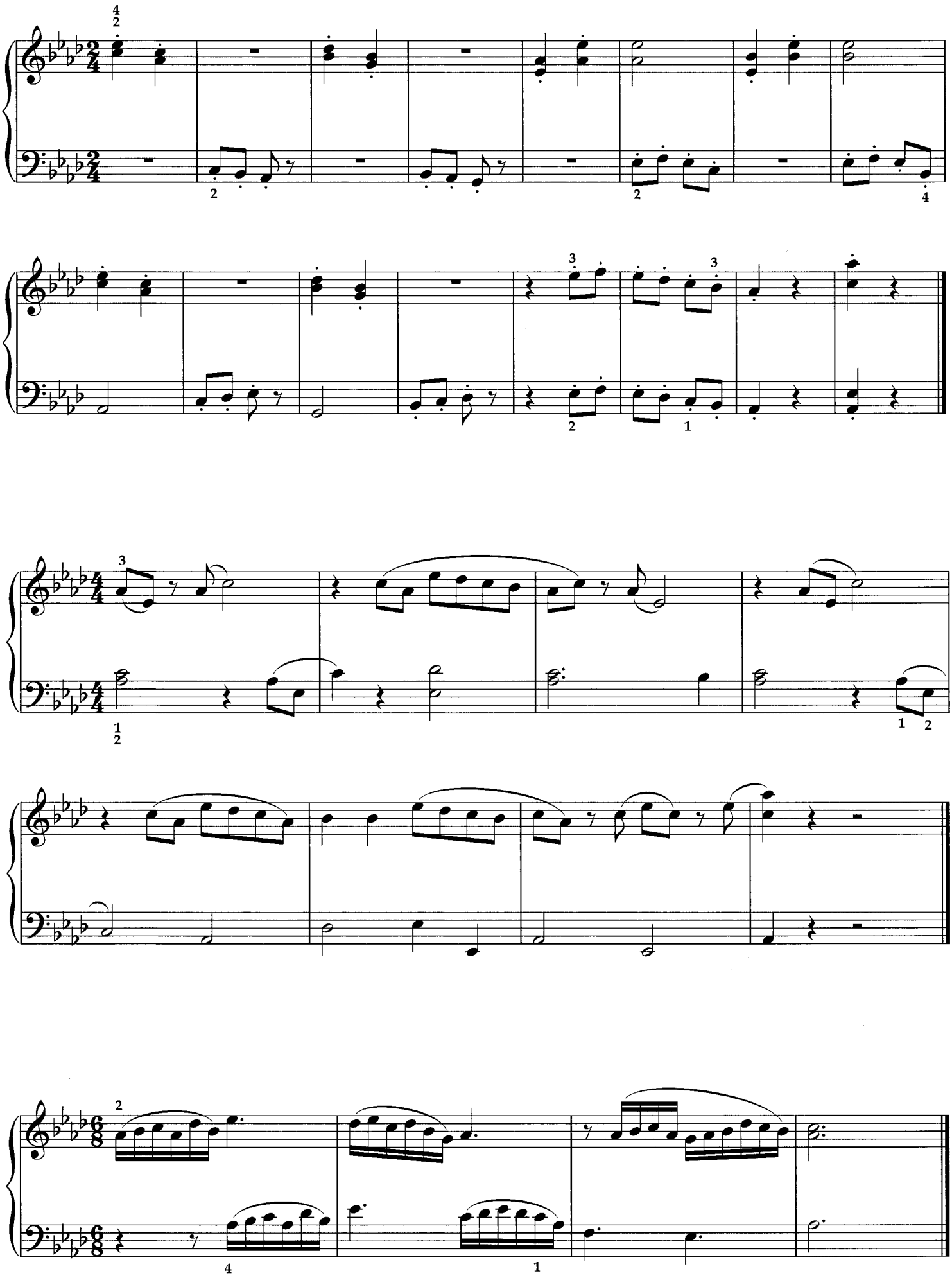
Always count two bars before you begin each exercise – one out loud and one silently, then continue to feel the pulse strongly.



Melodic exercises

Play the scale and arpeggio before you begin each piece and think carefully about the pattern of fingering you will need to use.

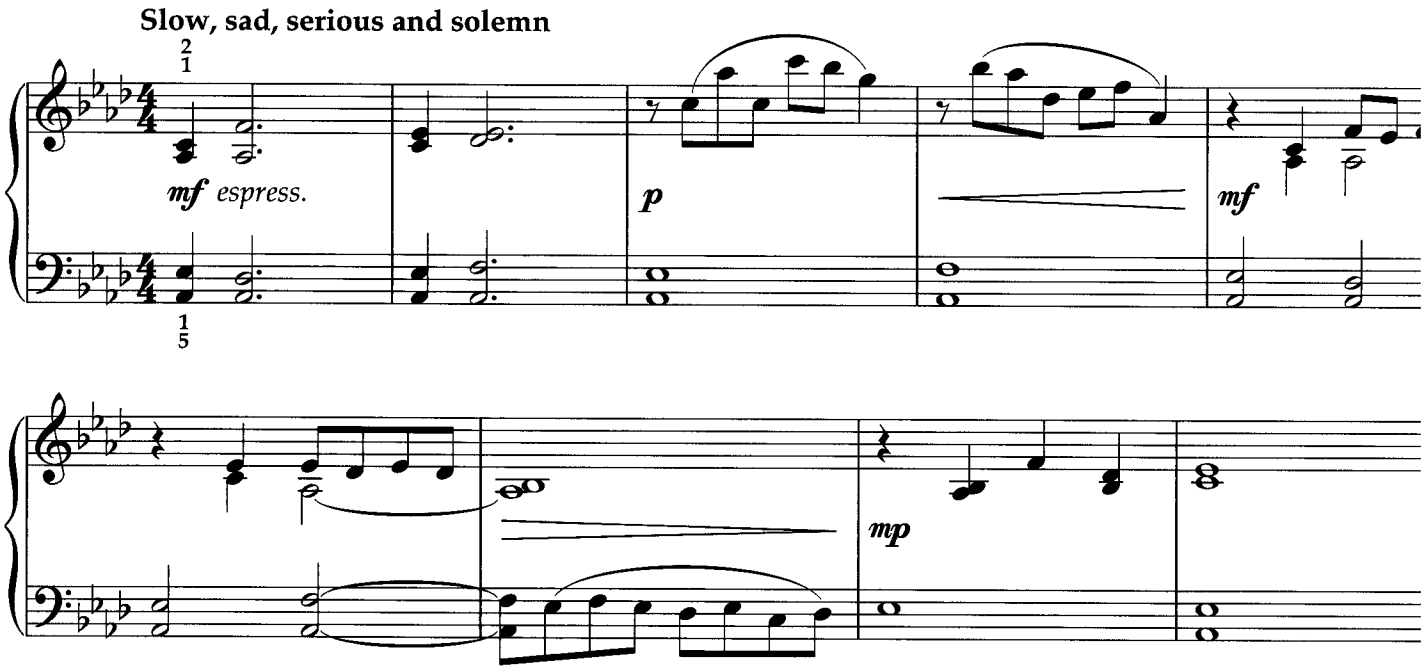




Prepared pieces

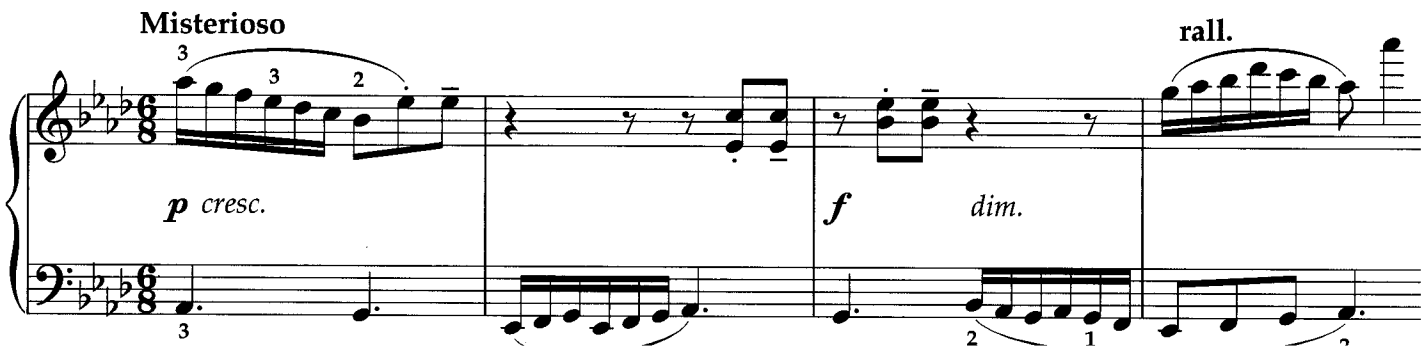
1 Is there any connection between bars 1-2 and bars 5-6?
2 Are there any changes of hand position? Think about the fingering you will use.
3 How will you convey the character of the piece?
4 What key is this piece in? Play the scale and arpeggio, and look at the chords carefully.
5 How does the texture in bars 1-2 differ from bars 3-4?
6 Play the opening chords and then hear the piece through in your head.

1

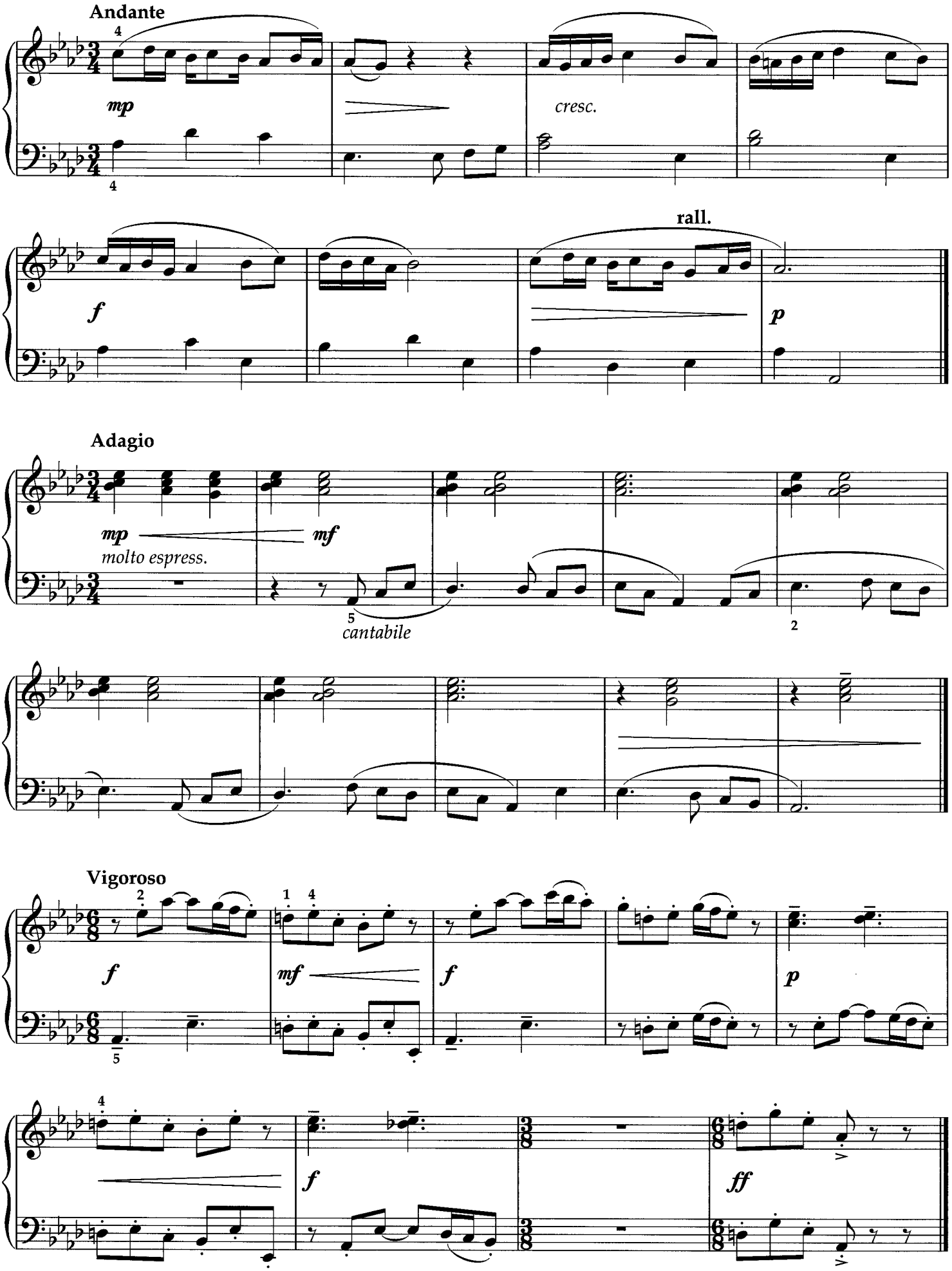


1 Look carefully at the whole piece for a few moments. Do you feel you understand it?
2 How many passages are based on scale patterns? Which version of the scale is used in bar
3 Does the left hand change position?
4 Think about the tempo you will use.
5 Hear the rhythm through in your head, then the melody as well.
6 What character will you try to convey?

2



Going solo!

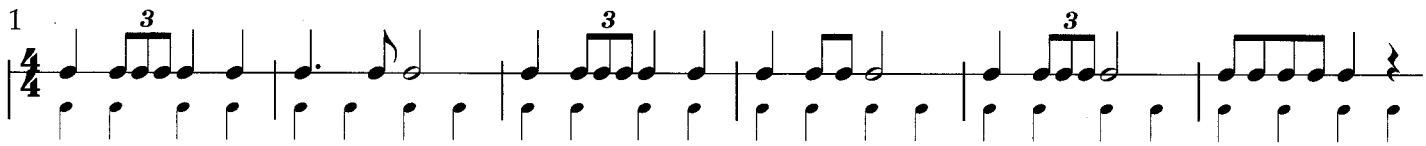

Andante
mp
cresc.
f
rall.
p
Adagio
mp
molto espress.
mf
cantabile
Vigoroso
f
mf
f
p
f
ff

Stage 7

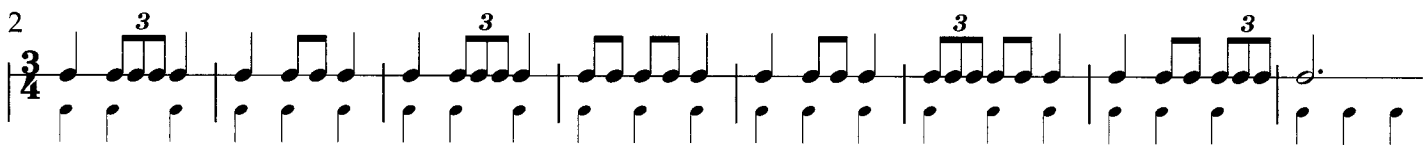
Rhythmic exercises

Think of a word to help you with the rhythm of a triplet, such as 'sausages' or 'pineapple'!

1



2



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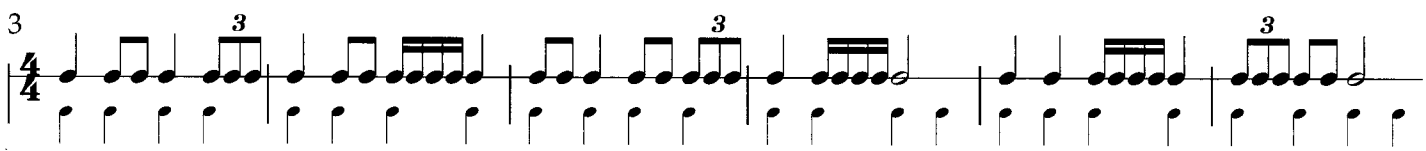
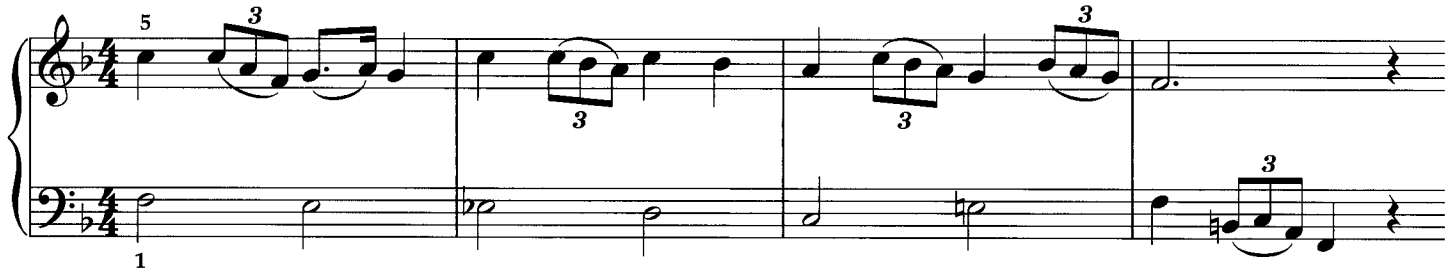


Melodic exercises

1



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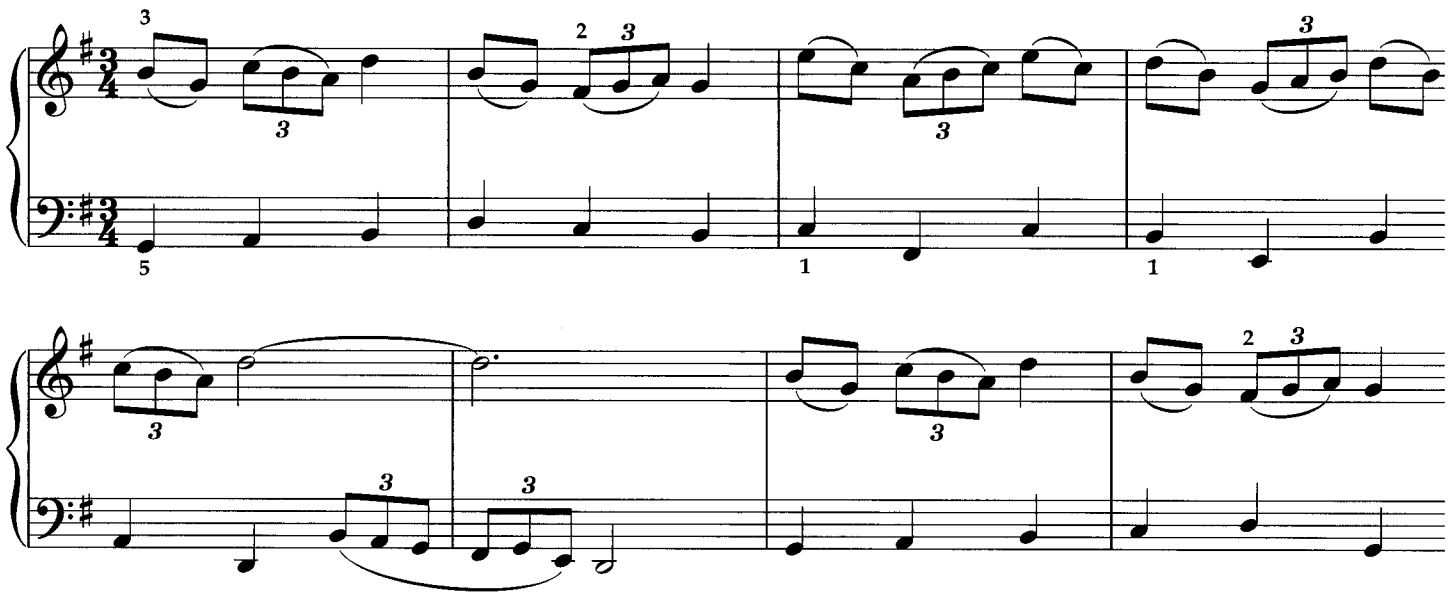
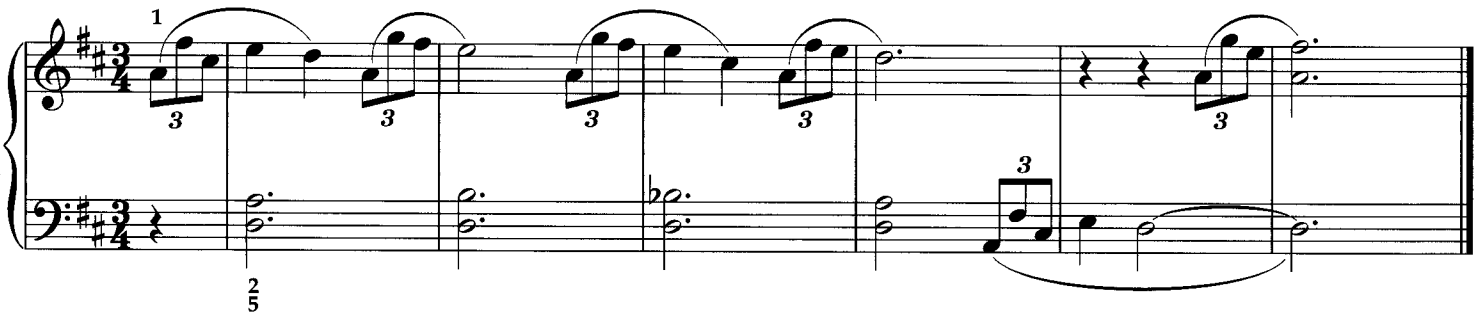
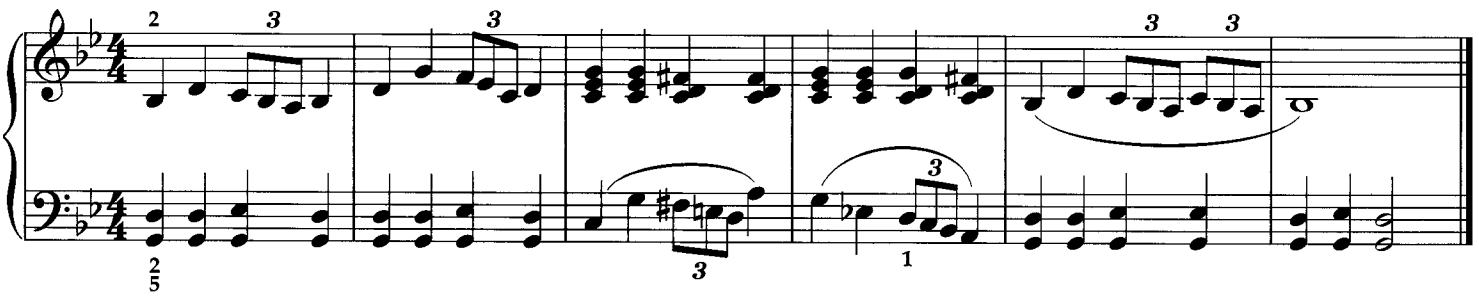
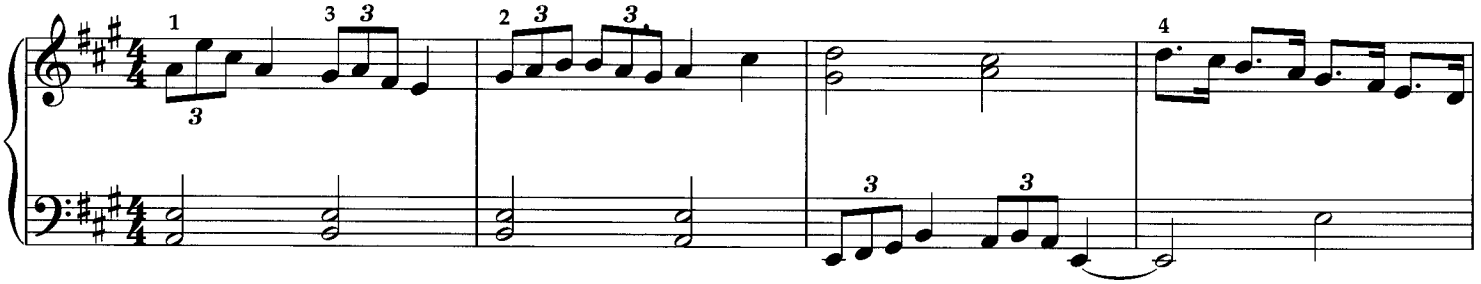
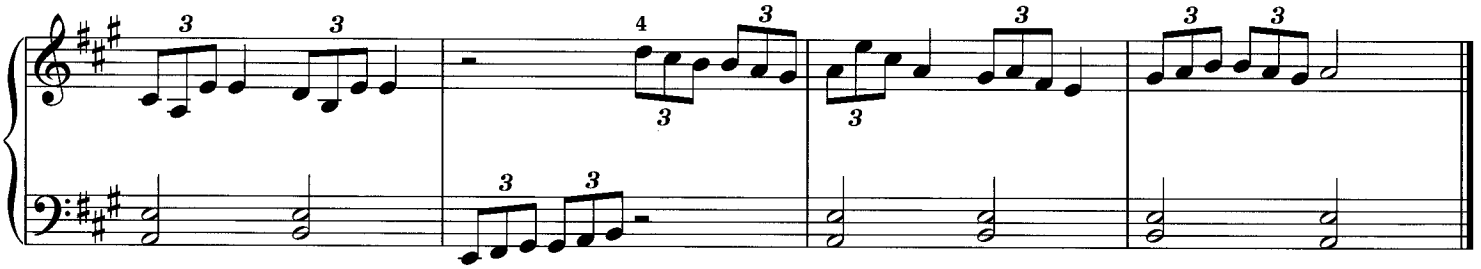


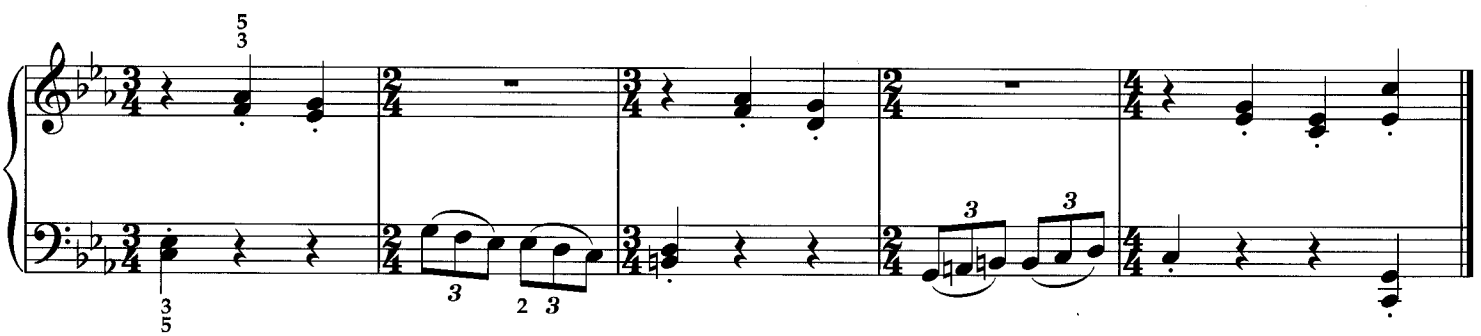




Norwegian song of the hills



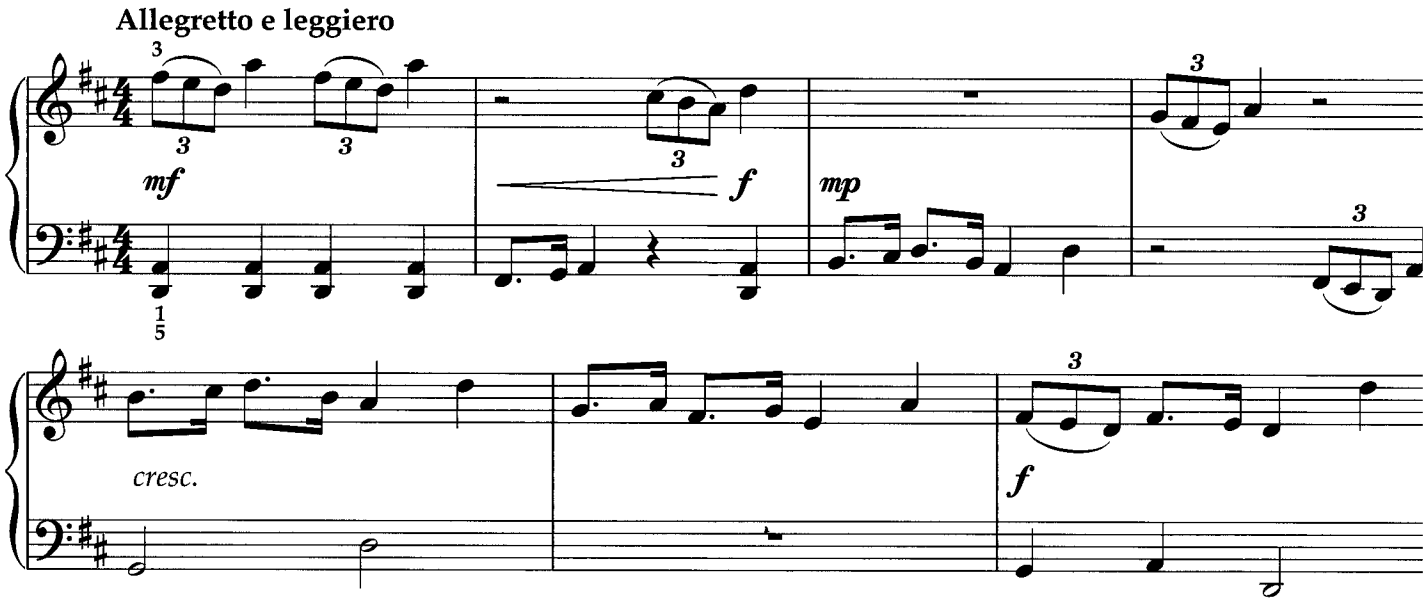




Prepared pieces

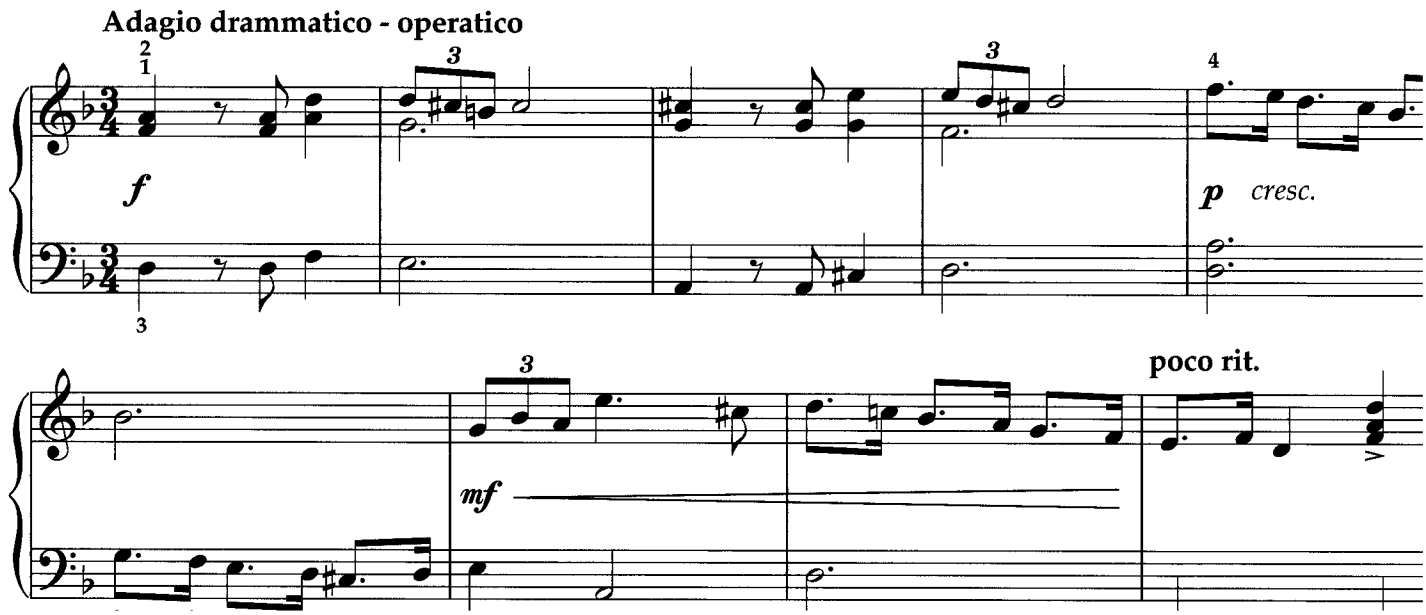
1 In which key is this piece? What does the tempo mark suggest about the character?
2 Does the left-hand chord in bar 1 return anywhere? What is the chord? Play it.
3 Are there any repeated patterns? Tap the rhythms of both hands.
4 Play the first note and try to hear the piece through in your head.

1



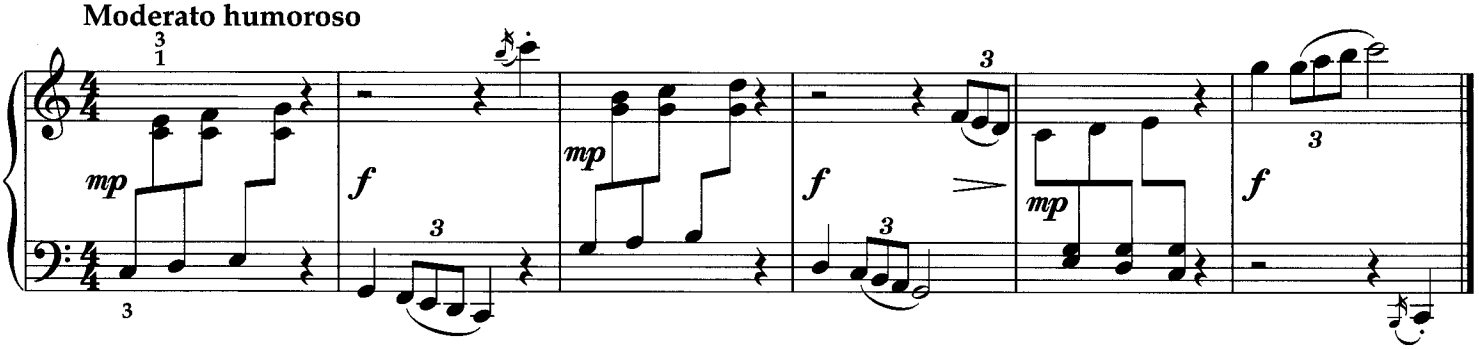
1 What does *Adagio drammatico – operatico* suggest about the character?
2 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately, then tap both hands togethe
3 What is the key of this piece?
4 Play the first note of each hand and hear the piece through in your head.

2

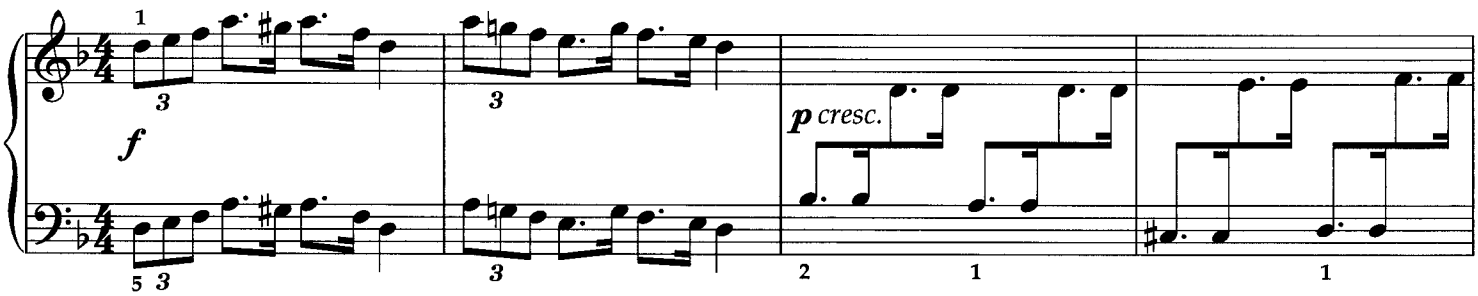


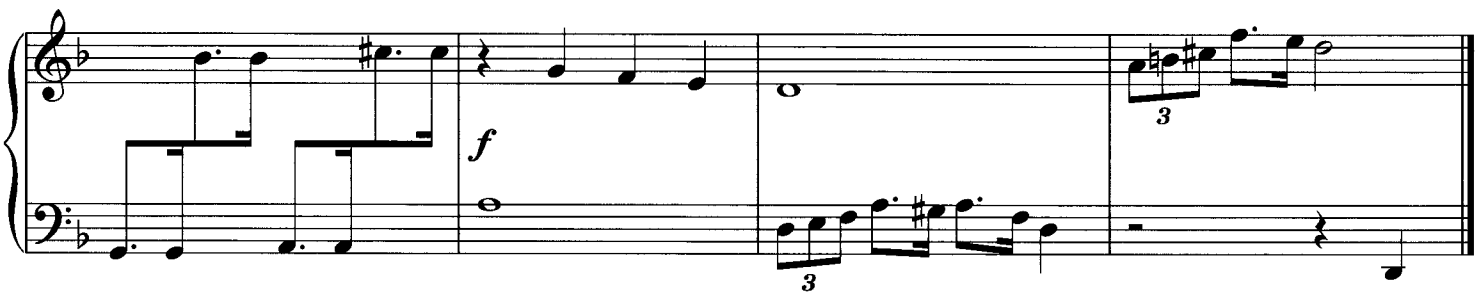
Going solo!

Moderato humoroso

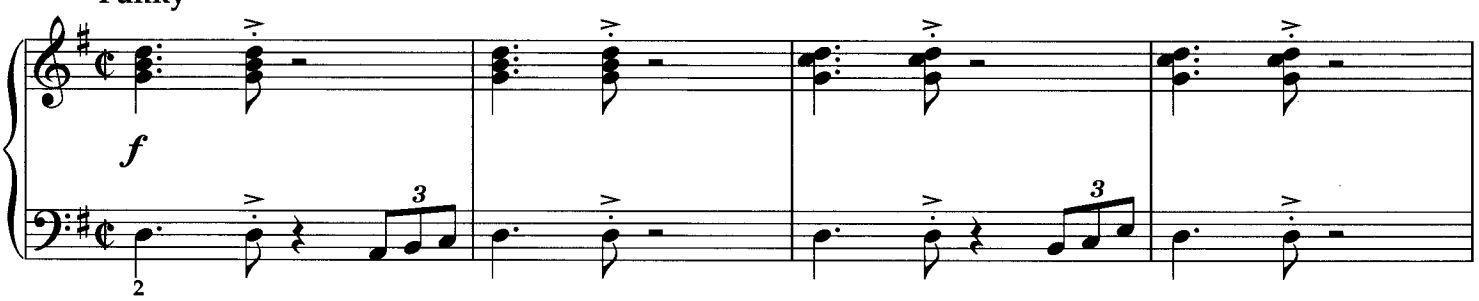


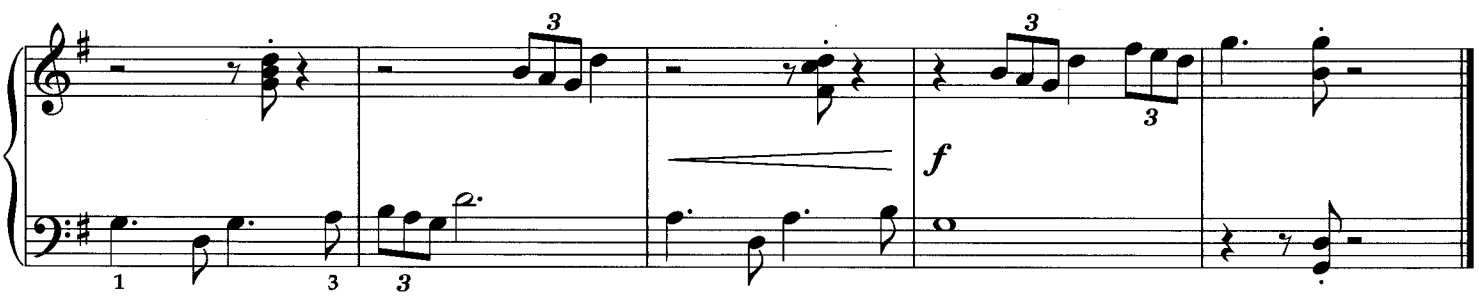
Maestoso





Funky



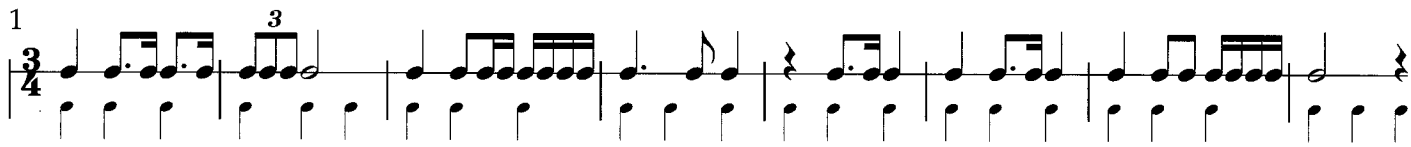


Stage 8

E major
Revision and some reminders

Rhythmic exercises

1



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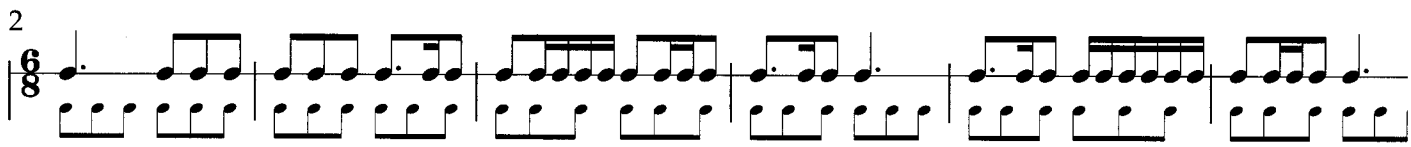


Reminders

Remember that sight-reading is really about understanding.

Are you nervous reading these words? Probably not. When you read music, at lessons, at home or in an exam it should be as straightforward as reading these words.

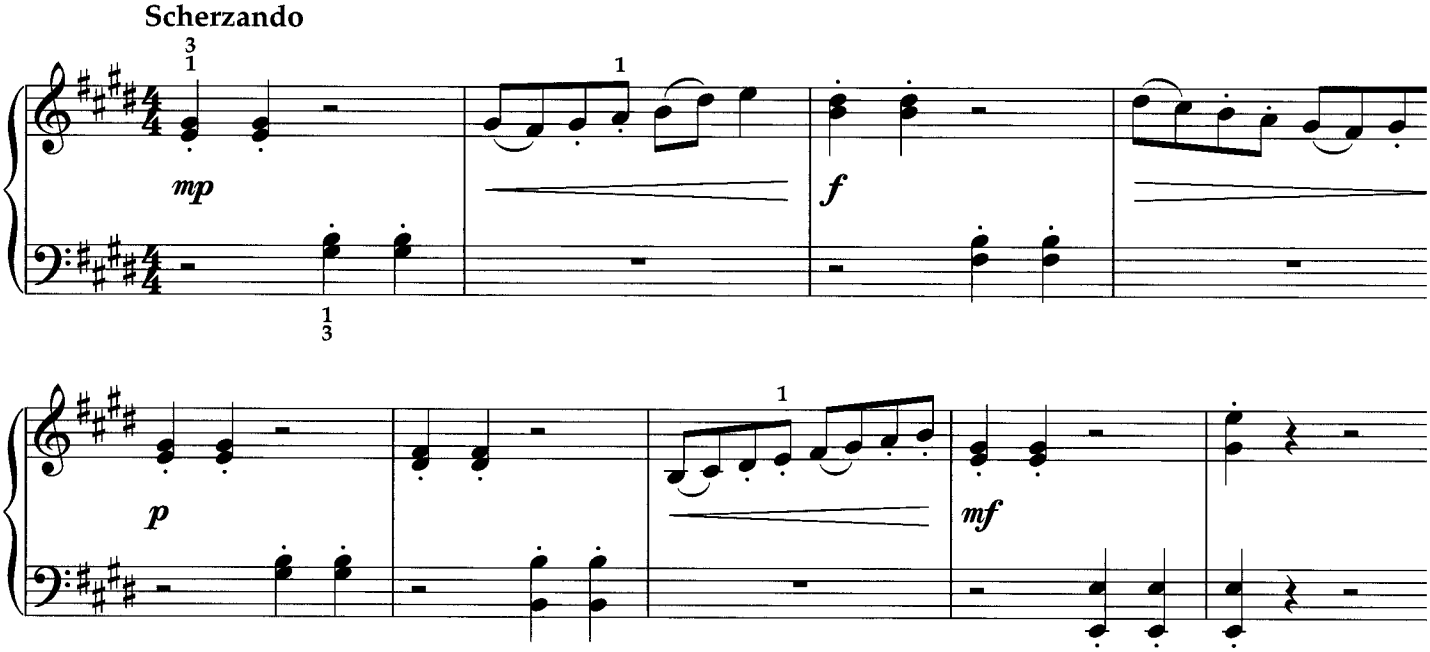
Here are a few tips to keep at the front of your mind:

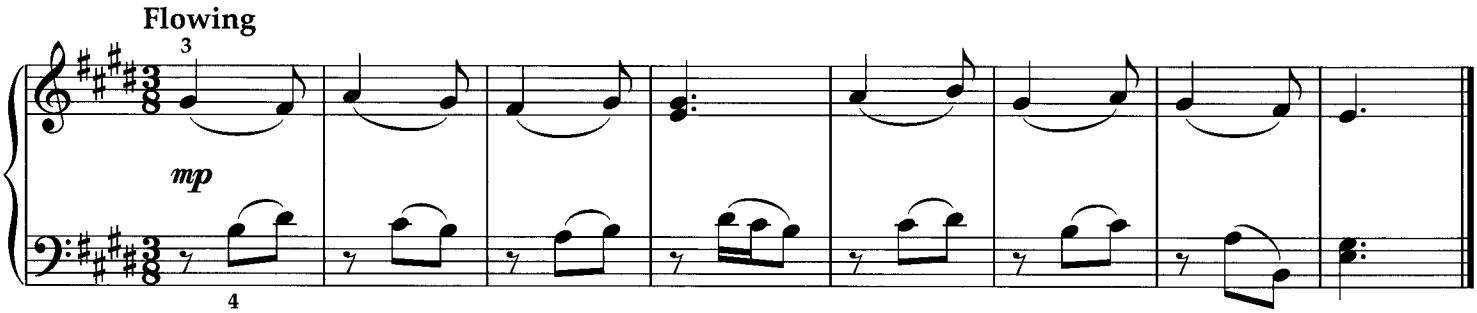
- Don't play too quickly and always keep a steady and even pulse.
- Look at the music with your musical brain switched on – feel that you are understanding what the music is saying, just like these words.
- Notice the key, patterns and changes of hand position. In time these will become second nature to you.

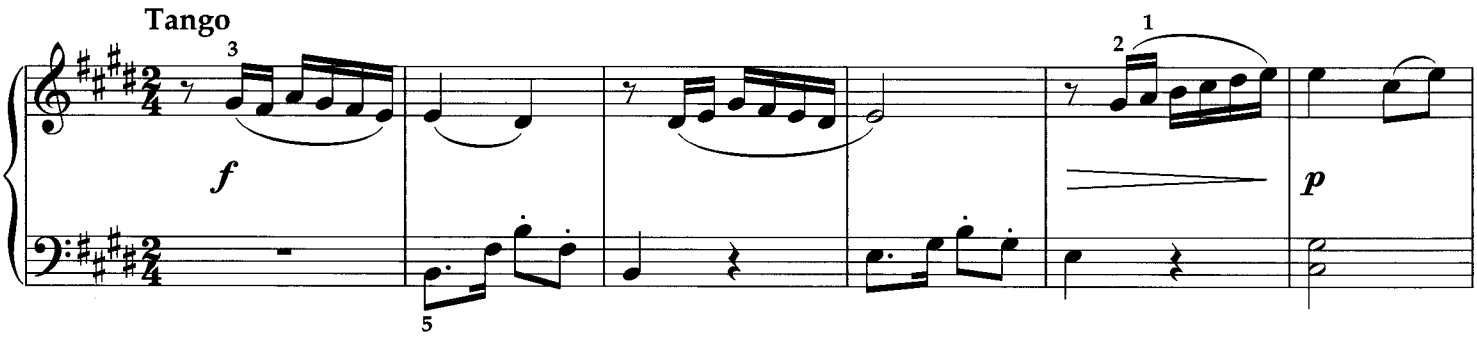
Melodic exercises

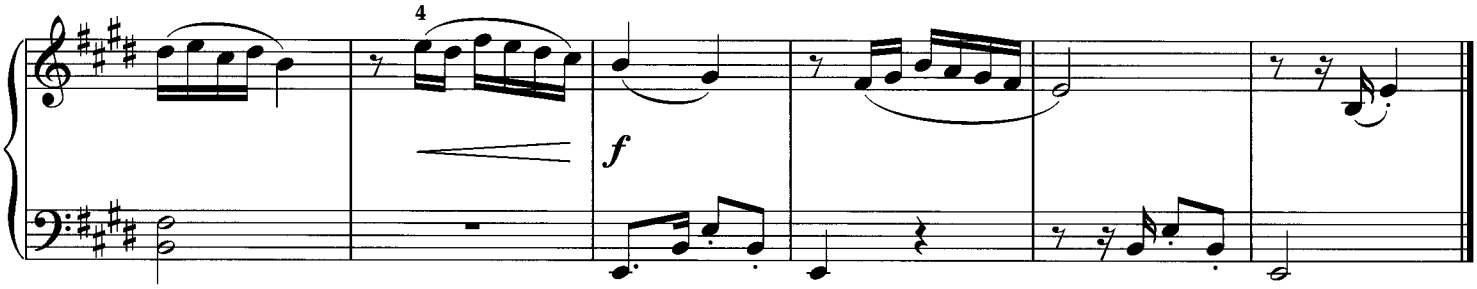
1

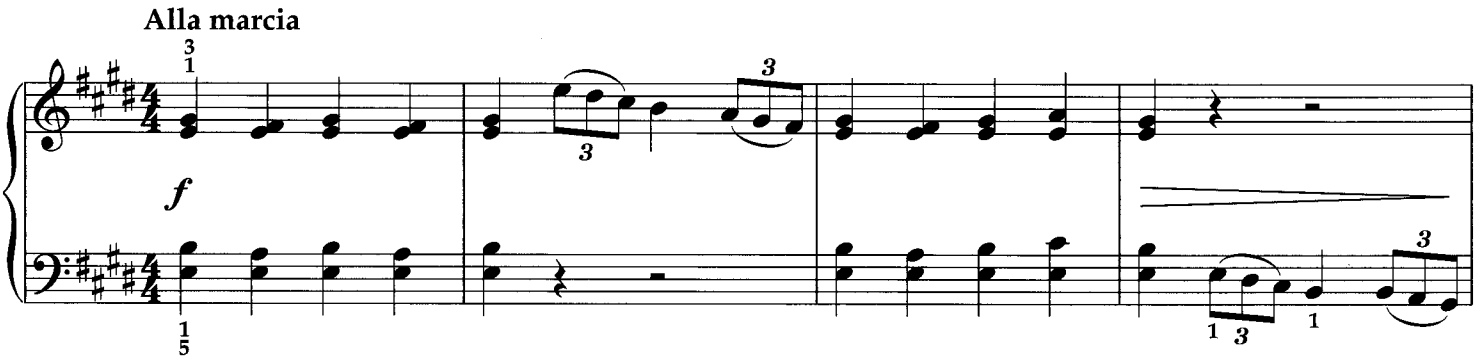
Scherzando

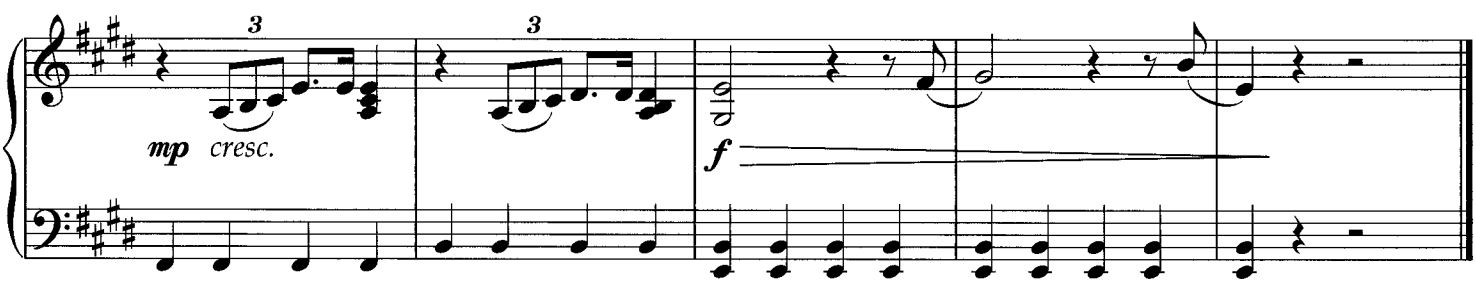



Flowing
mp


Tango
f
p


f

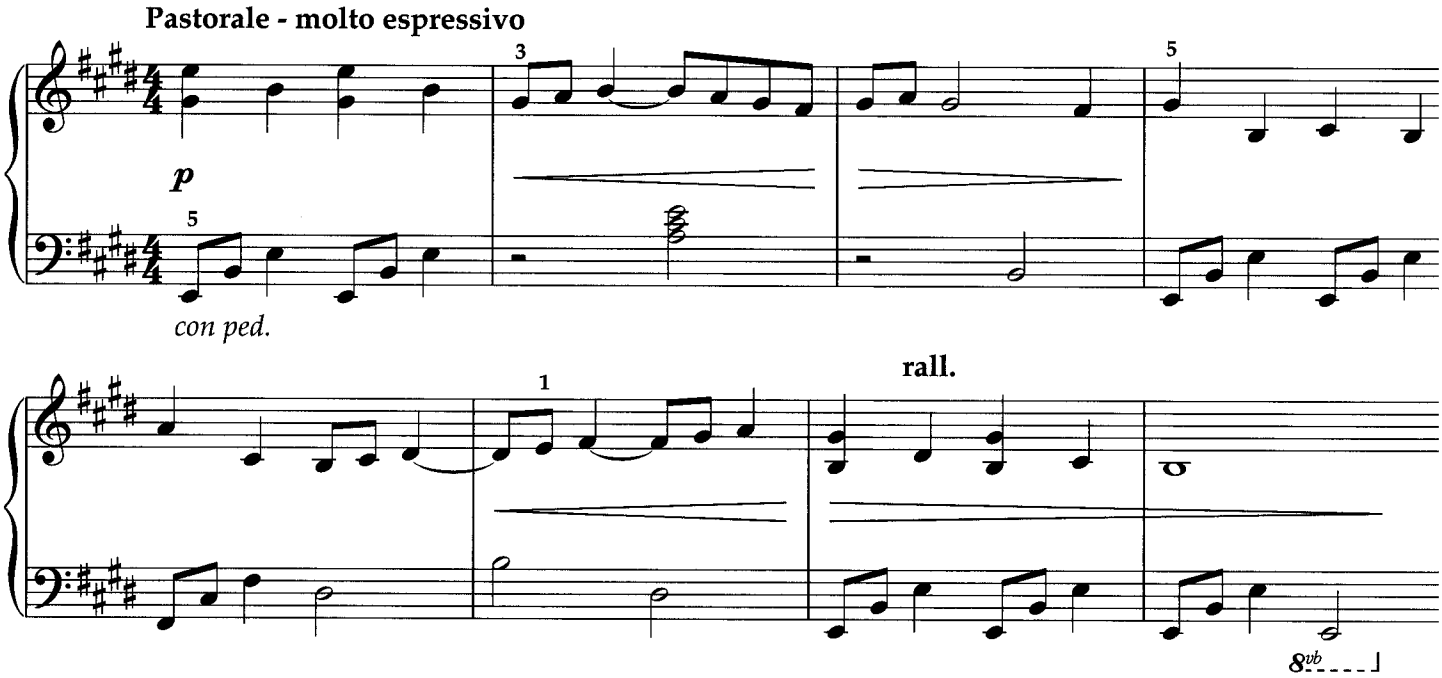

Alla marcia
f


mp cresc.
f

Prepared pieces

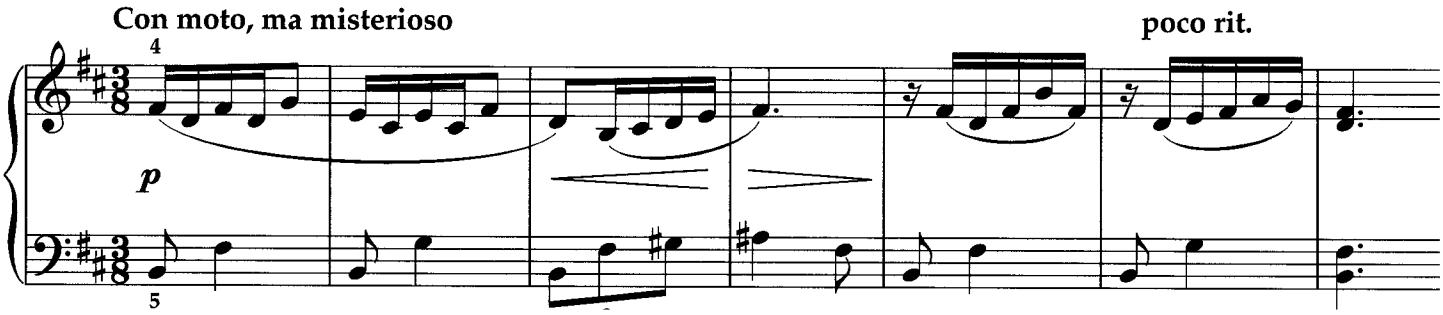
1. In which key is this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio. How many D sharps are there?
2. What does the tempo mark suggest about the character?
3. What is the chord in bar 2 of the left hand? Play it.
4. Study the rhythm in the right hand, bars 5-6, then play those bars.
5. Are there any repeated patterns? Tap the rhythms of both hands together.
6. Play the first note and try to hear the piece through in your head.

1



1. In which key is this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio.
2. What does the tempo mark suggest about the character?
3. What is the final chord? Play it.
4. What will you count? Tap the rhythms of both hands together.
5. Do you feel you understand the piece?
6. Play the first note and try to hear the piece through in your head.

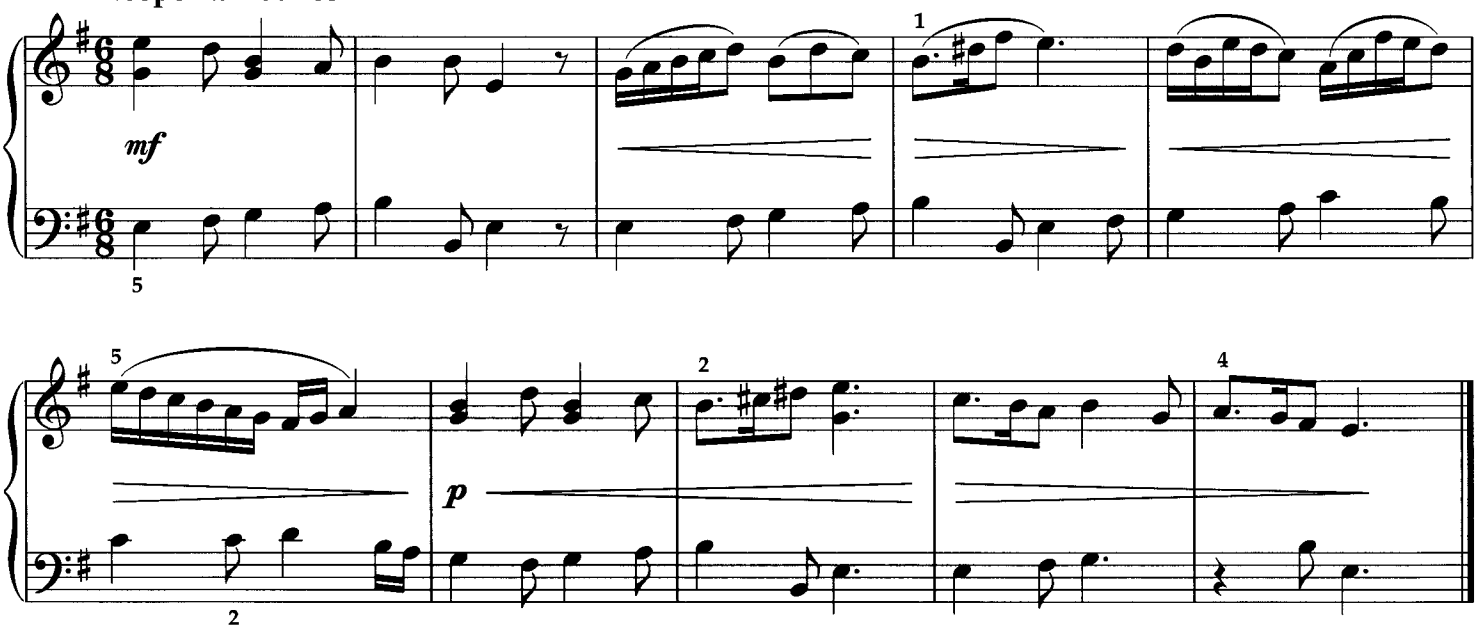
2



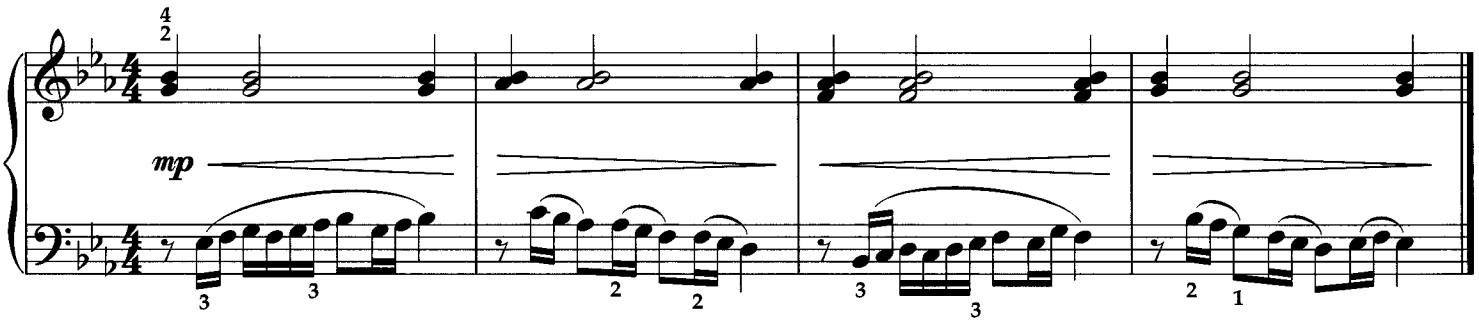
Going solo!

Don't forget to prepare each piece carefully before you play it.

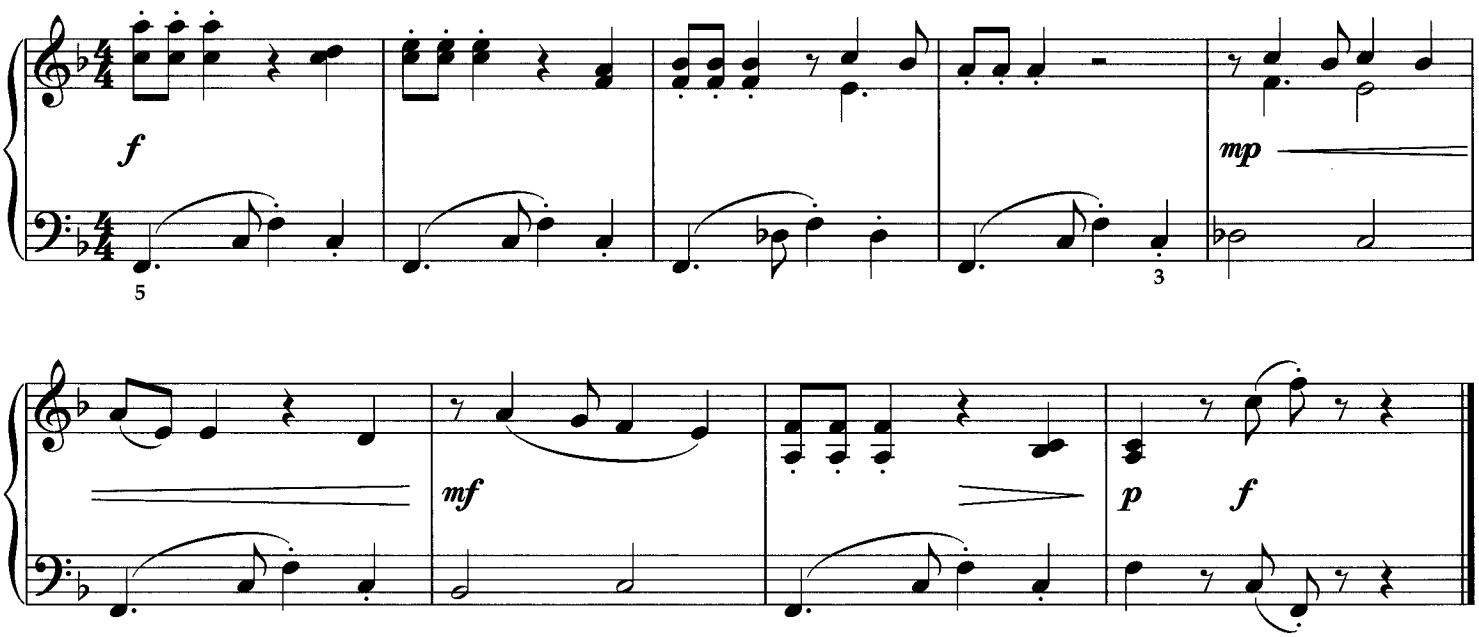
Neopolitan dance



Like a flowing river

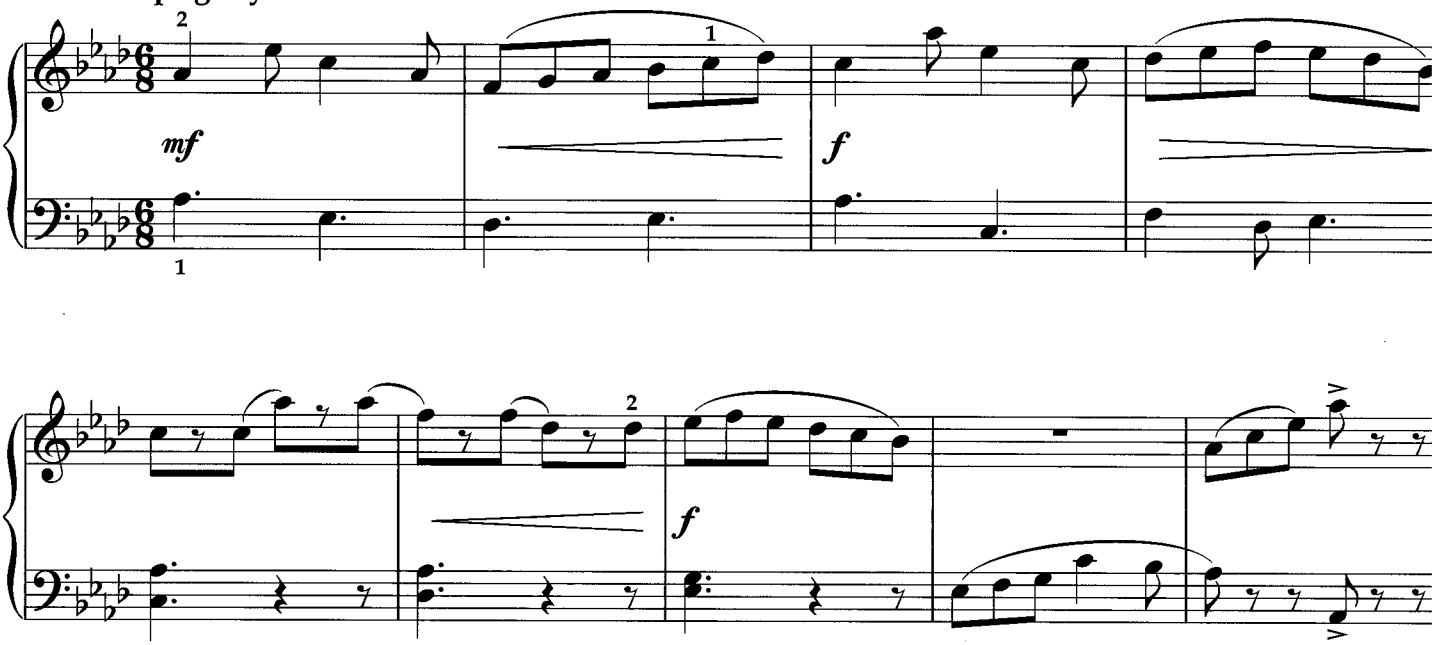


Alla Brazilia!



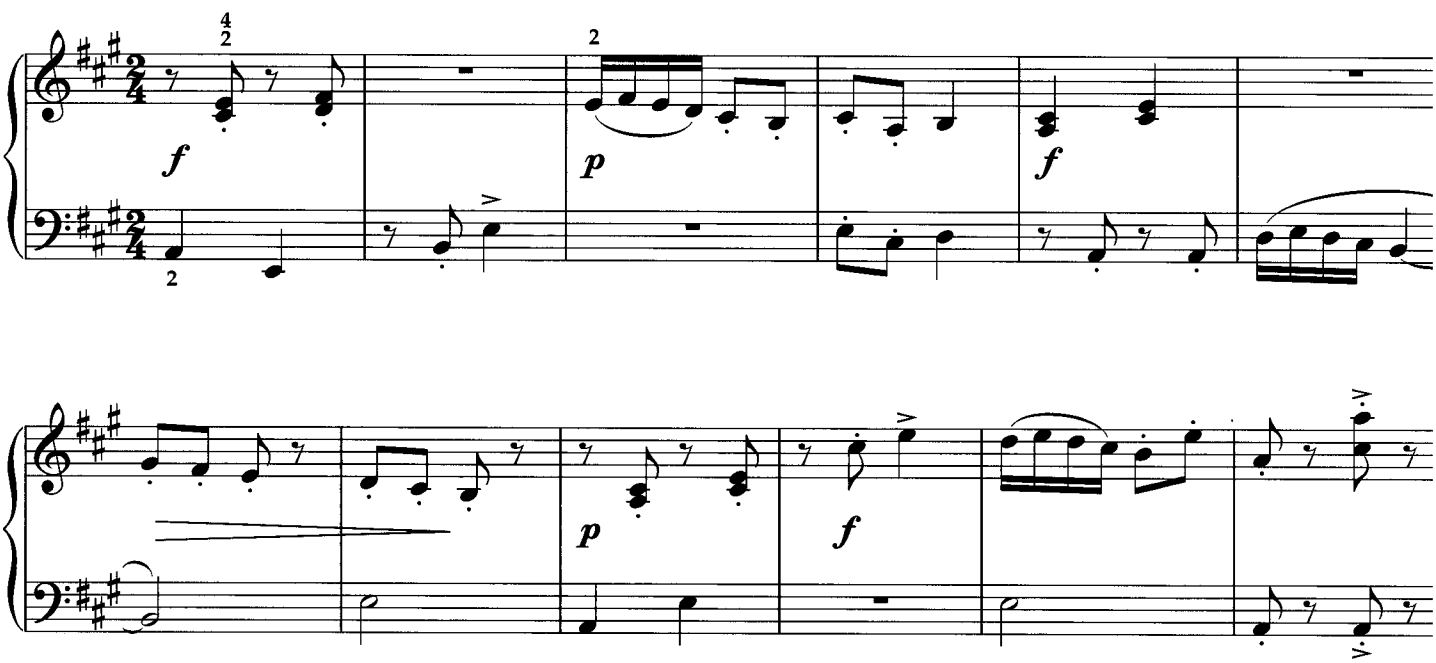
4

Sprightly

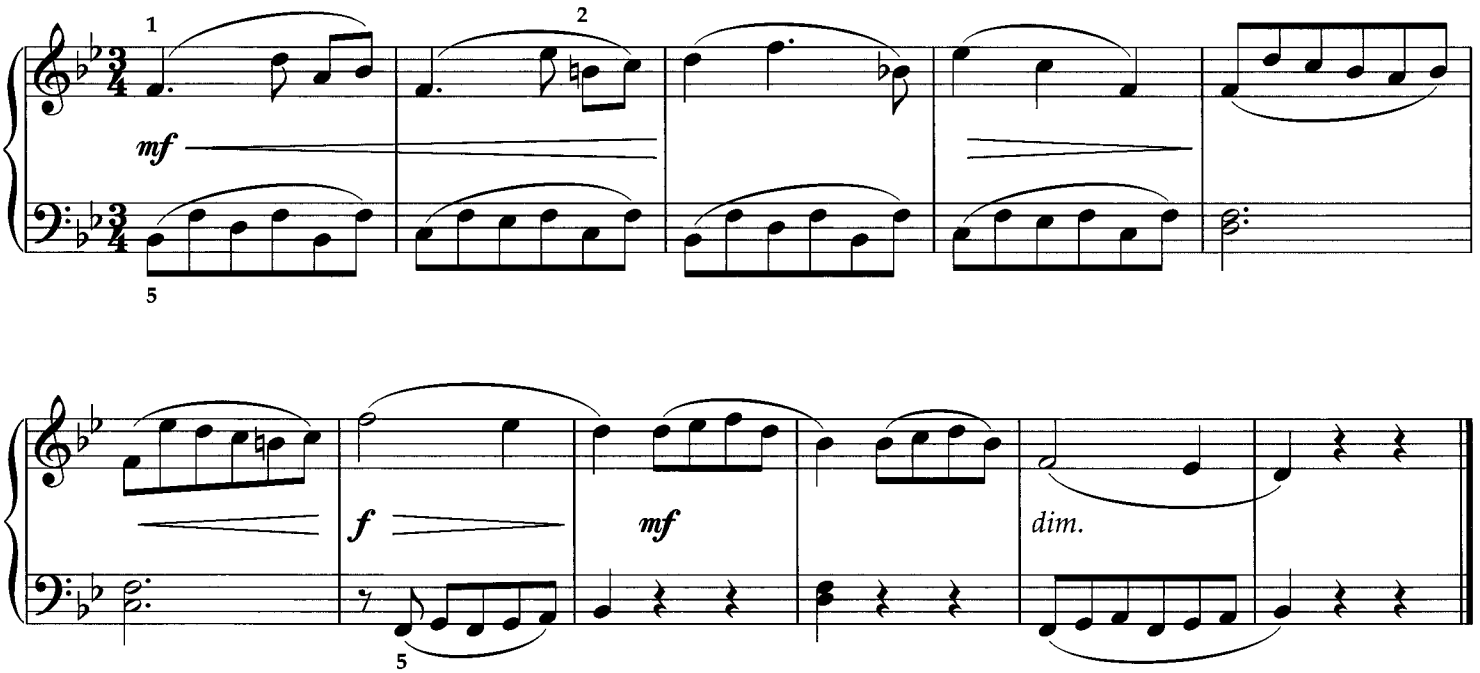
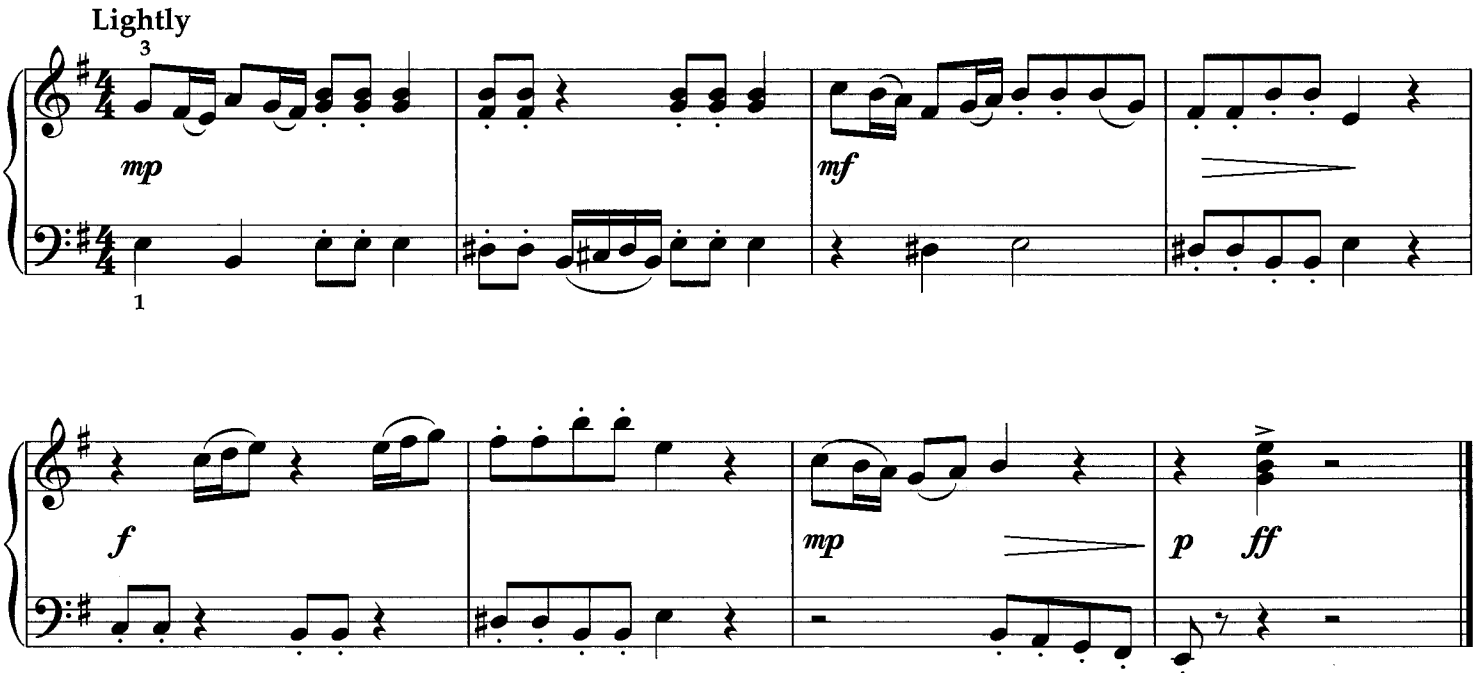


5

Giocoso



Minuetto



Lightly