



Creating A Motif

A HOOK OR MOTIF

“Hooks” and “Motifs” are the exact same thing; short melodic segments that are easily repeated and altered to create a full melodic phrase. The only difference; one is a traditional compositional term, the other is what modern musicians tend to call it.

Make it super simple.

Start by making a very simple, short musical idea of 4 notes. But which notes? You can use this chart to create your first motif using your name. Pick four letters from your name (they can be your first name, your initials, or even your last name, it doesn't matter which four letters you choose). See which letter they align with at the top of the chart.

For example, with Mr. Windsor he might choose “Joel”, as that is his first name. **J** lines up with **C**, **O** lines up with **A**, **E** already works, and **L** lines up with **E**. So he will have chosen C-A-E-E to match his name.

In the space to the right of this chart, write which four letters you chose from your name, and then what they translate to based on this chart.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
H	I	J	K	L	M	N
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
V	W	X	Y	Z		

4 Letters From Your Name: _____

Translated on the Chart: _____

Brainstorm Here First

Now that you have the notes for your motif, let's put it to paper. Follow the steps on the right to write it out properly.

1. Write the clef in.
2. Write the 4-4 time signature
3. Write your motif in quarter notes
4. Write the right-most double-bar line.

Mr. Windsor's *Motif* example is below;



CREATE IDEAS ON MAKING YOUR MOTIF INTERESTING – BASIC COMPOSITIONAL DEVICES

It's now time to manipulate your hook or motif to make a full phrase. You should consider all the possible compositional devices below.

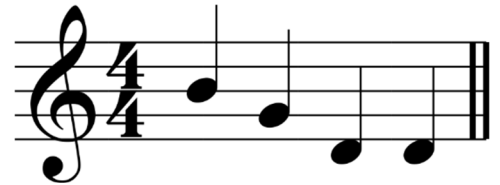
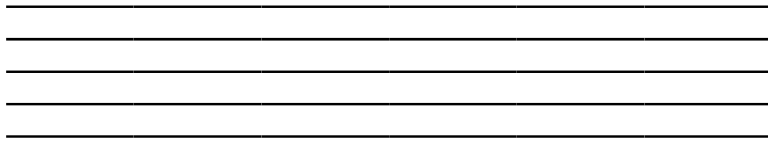
Repetition

The simplest of all the compositional devices, simply repeating your hook or motif. This can be used once or twice, but you should avoid using it too much for the fear of making your music boring.

Sequence

This is where you take your whole motif and move it either up or down one or more steps, giving you a new idea. **Using the motif you wrote on the first page, write a sequence.** See Mr. Windsor's example below, and compare it to his example on the first page. In his example, he moved his motif one step down. You can move your motif how you want.

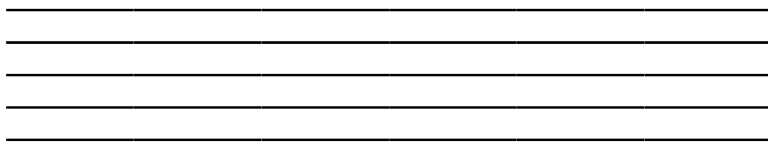
Mr. Windsor's *Sequence* example is below;



Retrograde

This is where you take your whole motif and write it backwards, giving you a new idea (*retro-* means backwards, like "back in time"). **Using the motif you wrote on the first page, write a retrograde.** See Mr. Windsor's example below, and compare it to his example on the first page. You can see the order of his notes are backwards from his original motif.

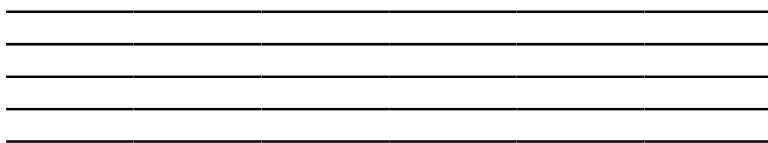
Mr. Windsor's *Retrograde* example is below;



Inversion

This is where you take your whole motif and write it upside down, giving you a new idea. **Using the motif you wrote on the first page, write an inversion.** See Mr. Windsor's example below, and compare it to his example on the first page. Notice how instead of skipping down, his motif skipped up.

Mr. Windsor's *Inversion* example is below;



THE ASSIGNMENT – MAKING A PHRASE BASED ON YOUR MOTIF

Your assignment is to create an 8-measure phrase using your motif. Each bar will be a different basic compositional device based on your motif. You need to have the following;

- The motif in your first bar.
- One bar with each a repetition, sequence, retrograde and inversion.
- One bar with at least two of those basic compositional devices combined.

You can complete this assignment either in Flat.io and get a **Private Shareable Link** to save in this assignment in **Opus**, or you can complete this assignment on paper and hand it in directly (or take photos and upload to Opus).