Major Scales and Key Signatures

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

PRACTICE: Major Scales

Write each of the fifteen major scales using the blank staves below. Remember to choose a clef. Think of the whole and half steps in each scale and write the accidentals beside the notes instead of using a key signature.
PRACTICE: Sharp Key Signatures

Use the grand staves below and practice writing sharp key signatures (all 7 sharps on each staff) until you can do it accurately and quickly. Be PRECISE!
PRACTICE: Flat Key Signatures

Use the grand staff below and practice writing flat key signatures (all 7 flats on each staff) until you can do it accurately and quickly. Be PRECISE!
PRACTICE: Circle of Fifths

Using the diagram below, fill in the blank spaces around the circle of fifths with the names of the major keys. You may want to print out multiple copies of this worksheet to perfect your knowledge of this information.
PRACTICE: Name Keys

Below each key signature, write the name of the major key.
PRACTICE: Write Key Signatures

For each of the keys named below, write the key signature on both staves of the grand staff.

1. A, major  B major  C major  F# major
2. D major  D, major  G major  E major
3. G major  E, major  F# major  B major
4. G, major  A major  C, major  F major
5. A, major  C# major  E, major  B, major
Guido of Arezzo and the Development of Solmization

Guido of Arezzo was a Benedictine monk, teacher, and music theorist who lived from c. 991–1050. He taught his students to sing Gregorian chants, but discovered that the students had difficulty learning them. This difficulty stemmed from the ambiguity inherent in neumatic notation. To aid his students, he developed a system of teaching that associated the notes of the scale (mode) with standard syllables. This system was known as solmization.

The syllables came from a chant hymn tune that was widely known during Guido’s lifetime, *Ut queant laxis*. Each phrase of the hymn started with a distinctive syllable of text as follows: *ut–re–mi–fa–sol–la*. By associating the sound of the syllable to the sound of a particular scale note, students were able to learn new chant tunes more efficiently, and Guido gained reknown as a music teacher. He described his teaching process in his theoretical writings.

In modern day, this system has been modified to use the syllable *do* in place of the original *ut*. The system is also known as *solfège* or *solfeggio*. A similar technique is featured in the song “Do Re Mi” from *The Sound of Music*.

“Ut queant laxis,” (*Liber Usualis*, p. 1504)
Compose Pentachord Melodies

Use these staves to create your own melodies. Use a different pentachord for each staff and make your melody five or six notes in length. Use any clef and label each pentachord that you use. Typically, melodies end on the name of their scale or pentachord (do).