

1. 2.

The bell doth toll, its ech - oes roll, I know the sound full well. I
 5 love its ring-ing, for it calls to sing-ing with its ding dong ding dong bell.
 9 Ding dong ding dong bell.

choir



THE BELL DOTH TOLL USING THIS CANON

Compiled for the Presto project
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FOR DEVELOPING YOUR POLYPHONIC SKILLS

Compare the rhythmic and melodic content of phrases 1 and 2. Observe that the rhythm is identical, and their melodic shape is also the same, but with phrase 2 a 3rd lower than phrase 1. Take particular care when singing phrase 3: the sustained do notes need shape and momentum to maintain good tuning and to ensure a precise connection with the other phrases; and the lower so should be placed securely to function as the basis for the 6/4 (Ic/second inversion) and 5/3 (V, root position) chords which it creates in conjunction with the notes of phrases 1 and 2 at that point.

While phrases 1 and 2 begin with an upbeat, the first note of phrase 3 begins on a downbeat. Take care not to start phrase 3 too soon.

WITH YOUR CHOIR OR SINGING GROUP

As the entries are quite far apart in this canon (4 bars), use it to emphasise the importance of waiting the appropriate length of time and entering accurately, inner hearing the starting pitch before singing it aloud.

Help achieve good tuning by ensuring that longer notes in particular are well shaped and that the phrases are sung with momentum and tonal feeling throughout.

In your conducting, pay attention to the upbeats at the start of phrase 1 and phrase 2, and note the difference at the start of phrase 3. Give a clear cue at each of these points, encouraging the singers not to start phrase 3 too early.

IN THE MUSIC LESSON

Use *The Bell Doth Toll* to explore concepts such the upbeat, parallel 3rds, and pedal notes/drones.

To guide your students in discovering the upbeat, ask them to conduct a '4' pattern and count the beats out loud: 1-2-3-4. Then, sing phrase 1 and figure out which beat it starts on. Reinforce the concept of the upbeat using notation, other pieces of music that begin with an upbeat, and tailored exercises such as sight-reading or a short dictation that include an upbeat. Make sure to observe what normally happens at the end of a phrase that has started with an upbeat.

To draw attention to parallel 3rds, divide your class into two, with one group singing phrase 1 of the canon, and the other group singing phrase 2. Ask the students to 'paint the shape of the melody' in the air, and discover that the melodic shape is the same for both phrases, but one begins higher than the other. Then, add the sustained 'do' of phrase 3 and notice its purpose and its pleasant sound as it underpins the other parts.

LEARN MORE

To help guide your singers in learning to conduct a '4' pattern, see the 'Fundamental Conducting Technique' section of the Presto Choral Resources.