

1. l t d l r t m r d m l l l l si t l m

6. f f m si l m m d t t t si m m d f r t

choir



CANON IN C MINOR - HAYDN

USING THIS CANON

Compiled for the Presto project
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FOR DEVELOPING YOUR POLYPHONIC SKILLS

Complete a harmonic analysis of the canon in its full 5-part texture. Bring this harmonic awareness to bear on your sing-and-play activity: identify the role of each note that you sing within the context of each chord, and use this knowledge to help with tuning the sung note very precisely in relation to the other part.

WITH YOUR CHOIR OR SINGING GROUP

Notice that this melody is built almost entirely of crotchets. Bar 5 offers an opportunity for contrast. After the crotchet rest that opens the bar, create a beautiful shape on the minim, C. Enjoy hearing how this note emerges from the texture when singing in multiple parts.

Prepare for good tuning by using warm-up exercises that emphasise the first and fifth degrees of the minor key, la and mi, and encourage the singers to use their musical memory to tune these notes well and to tune other notes in relation to them.

Prepare for some of the distinctive melodic challenges of this melody by practising relevant triads in isolation. For example, familiarity with the triad of chord i in first inversion may help with secure singing in bar 3, while familiarity with its second inversion may help with secure singing in bar 7, providing a harmonic platform for the upward leap of a minor 6th, mi-do. Similarly, encourage the singers to use their knowledge of the triad of chord V in root position at bars 8–9, and the diminished triad of chord ii in the final bar, to help not only with tuning, but with understanding the melodic construction of this classical canon.

Experiment with different types of phrasing, such as legato or more detached treatment. Discuss which approach suits the music best. Sing a crescendo through the repeated notes of bar 13–14 to help create energy and momentum, and encourage the singers to enjoy the changing harmonies as they occur against this repeated C.

IN THE MUSIC LESSON

When the class group is secure in singing in 5 parts, stand in a circle with everyone facing inwards, to enhance the experience of performing this beautiful canon, and to notice the position of the melody's two crotchet rests and its only minim.

This canon may be used for teaching chord ii⁷ in the minor key (t-r-f-l). It appears here in first inversion (r-f-l-t). Listen closely for the clash between la and ti in this special chord.

