

## Monteverdi's Gloria for 8 voices M 11

**Start to understand the Aeolian mode as the ancestor of the minor scale, and find out how the 7<sup>th</sup> note of the minor scale was modified**

Refer to the keyboard diagram in Activity 2, and have a keyboard to hand to play the modes and variants

1. Activities 9 and 10 were designed to help you come to terms with the idea that tunes can be based on scales other than major or minor ones. Learning about the pattern of tones and semitones in the Dorian and Aeolian modes will help you understand the minor key. You've found out another very useful thing too, that's relevant to the Gloria. We'll pick that up in Activity 18.

2. Write in the tones and semitones between the notes. Check your result – you need to have the correct version to do the rest of this activity.

Note number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Dorian Mode:	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D
Aeolian Mode:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A

3. The gaps between the first 5 notes are the same in both modes. There's a tone between notes 7 and 8 in both. It's the gaps between notes 5, 6 and 7 that are different. Clear about this?

4. Composers a few generations before Monteverdi really liked the sound of those first 5 notes in these two modes, especially the position of the third note, a tone and a half above the key note. It was a good contrast to the other mode they liked a lot – the Ionian, now called the major. There the third note is two tones above the key note.

Take a look at Activity 8 again. You learned about an important difference between major and minor there. This is it. It came from the Dorian and Aeolian modes.

5. So the first 5 notes of these modes were great. The bit composers of the time felt just didn't work in the sort of music they wanted to write was that tone at the top. They really enjoyed using the semitone that the major scale had. Going from note 7 to note 8 in the major scale made a great finish. It wasn't as convincing when the jump was a tone.

The solution was easy – take the semitone gap of the major scale and transplant it onto these modes. That means raising the 7<sup>th</sup> note by a semitone.

Here are the notes when you raise the 7<sup>th</sup> one in each mode:

D	E	F	G	A	B	C#	D
A	B	C	D	E	F	G#	A

Play these patterns, and sing them too. They are minor scales. The minor scale had been born. On balance, composers preferred the Aeolian version – that poignant 6<sup>th</sup> that was lovely if you were going down and made the scale feel even more minory.

That left them with a problem, though. If you go on up the scale it's a bit odd singing the big gap from F to G#. Activity 13 explores that, so you can understand what Monteverdi was up to. Meanwhile, go onto Activity 12 to explore a tune that avoids the questionable area.

Dorian Mode:	D	tone	E	semitone	F	tone	G	tone	A	tone	B	semitone	C	tone	D
Aeolian Mode;	A	tone	B	semitone	C	tone	D	tone	E	semitone	F	tone	G	tone	A