

Musithink 107 Work out the Pitches for “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”

You'll learn to get better at working out the notes in a tune by using the pitch ladder, including measuring a biggish jump

You need a pitch ladder with at least 6 rungs – 1 to 6 – there's one on Musithink 103. You need to be confident about numbering the pitches in “Frère Jacques” before you tackle this. The answers for each question (a – r) are on Using a Keyboard 107. Check each answer as you go if you are not very confident, so you don't go astray.

1. The first thing is to get an overview of the tune. In music we use the term “phrase” for a section of a tune.

a. How many phrases are there in “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”? You tend to take a breath after a phrase. Sing through “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” and count the phrases.

2. b. Are any of the phrases repeated? If that's tricky for you, think about the words:

Twinkle twinkle little star, *How I wonder what you are.*

Up above the world so high, *Like a diamond in the sky.*

Twinkle twinkle little star, *How I wonder what you are.*

c. Does the structure of the music reflect the structure of the words?

3. d. How many notes are there in phrase 1? You are helped by the words, because this song, like “Frère Jacques” has one note for each syllable.

e. How many notes are there in phrase 2?

f. What do you notice about the number of notes in each phrase?

4. Focus on the first phrase (first line of the words). The tune starts on note 1.

g. How many different rungs of the ladder are you going to need for this phrase?

h. What do you notice about how the notes are arranged?

5. i. There's a big jump to work out between the two *twinkles*, from note 1 to ? To work it out, sing up the scale – 1 2 3 and so on, until you get to the note for the second *twinkle*. Once you are sure about the note for the second *twinkle*, work out the notes for “*little star*” (**j**)

6. Think about the music for “*how I wonder what you are?*” **k.** Do the notes go in pairs again?

l. Do the notes jump around or do they go by step?

m. Which direction do they go in?

n. How does the note for “*how*” compare with the note for “*star*”?

o. Now you can work out the pitches of phrase 2.

7. Think about the music for “*Up above the world so high*”. **p.** Which of the two phrases you've already worked out is it most similar to? **q.** Is it a note higher or a note lower than that phrase?

r. That will help you to work out the pitches – what are they?

8. Your analysis of the phrases has told you that phrase 4 is the same as phrase 3 and phrases 5 and 6 are the same as phrases 1 and 2 – so you've worked out the whole tune. Practise singing it pointing to the rungs on the ladder and then singing the numbers of the pitches – 1 1 5 5 and so on.