

# Motive Variation Techniques

Variation techniques are applied below to illustrate melodic and rhythmic developmental processes, which are frequently combined.

**Phrase, Motives, Fragments**

Musical staff in G major, 4/4 time. It shows two motives: Motive A (measures 1-2) and Motive B (measures 3-4). Fragments are labeled: Frag X (measures 1-2), Frag Y (measures 1-2), and Frag Z (measures 3-4).

Motive A

Motive B

Frag X

Frag Y

Frag Z

**Sequence** (Repeat Transposed Fragments)

Sequence example showing Frag Y repeated transposed. The first two measures show Frag Y, and the third measure shows a transposed version of Frag Y.

Frag Y

Frag Y

Frag Y

**Inversion** (Mirror Image of Interval Direction)

**Fragment** (Repeat Motives)

Fragment example showing Motive B repeated. The first two measures show Motive B, and the third measure shows a transposed version of Motive B.

Motive B

Motive B

**Interval Change** (Expand or Contract)

**Interversion** (Reorder Motives)

Interversion example showing Motive B followed by Motive A. The first two measures show Motive B, and the third measure shows Motive A.

Motive B

Motive A

Frag Z

Frag Y

**Retrograde** (In Reverse, Right to Left)

**Ornament** (Embellish)

Ornament example showing embellishment. The first measure shows a simple fragment, and the second measure shows the same fragment with additional eighth-note grace notes. A '3' is written below the staff.

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**Extension** (Add notes at the end)

**Expansion** (Add notes in the middle)**Contraction** (Delete notes in the middle)**Thinning** (Delete some notes)**Rhythmic Changes** (Alter Note Values)**Syncopation** (Offset Accented Notes)**Diminution** (Cut Note Values in Half)**Augmentation** (Double Note Values)