

# **Eclectic Styles Tune-Writing Handout: A Worksheet for Classes and New Composers**

By Julie Lyonn Lieberman

Even though these worksheets were designed to be used in the classroom, they can also be used by individuals who are new composers as a support system at home,

The following **Melodic Variations Worksheets** illustrate melodic, rhythmic, and expressive variations as applied to the first two measures of the opening melody of *The Green Anthem* by Julie Lyonn Lieberman. *The Green Anthem* is an international community environmental project that was launched in 2010 by Julie Lyonn Music and Music Educators National Conference. You can download mp3 support files, all seven lesson plans, as well as a student kit from [www.greenanthem.org](http://www.greenanthem.org) if you are interested in working with more of the materials.

You can use mp3 #1 (see the Materials page at [www.greenanthem.org](http://www.greenanthem.org) for a free download) to listen to the core melodic line.

If you prefer, you can also use a piece of music from your current repertoire — particularly if it exemplifies a theme and its variation for the exercises described below. First locate the main melodic theme and try to identify any variations the composer has created.

Fill in your own variations in examples four, five and six on the handout (a melodic, a rhythmic, and an expressive variation). Try playing your variations and analyze the features of each. (Teachers: If you have a large class, call on enough students to demonstrate a range of possibilities rather than calling on every single students in the class.)

Before you use the following worksheets for practice. It might be helpful to choose the style you or your class will be working with for the contest, but it isn't necessary. You can always circle back and apply the practice material as you work on your entries.

If you are a teacher and your class is new to American and world styles, this process can give you an opportunity to introduce your students to a handful of recordings and tunes first, to familiarize them with options available to them. Alfred Publications offers a wide range of scores in their *Alternative Styles for Strings* series (58+ titles), and you can use the annotated bibliographies and discographies in *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum* by Julie Lyonn Lieberman as a support option.

## Worksheet: Melodic Variations for beginners — page 1 of 3 pages

It takes some practice to create an original melody and then invent melodic variations on it. These worksheets will give you some tips and an opportunity to develop your skills.

Here are the first two measures of the melody from ***The Green Anthem*** by Julie Lyonn Lieberman.

A musical score for the first two measures of 'The Green Anthem'. It consists of three staves: Treble clef (top), Bass clef (middle), and Bass clef (bottom). The melody is written in the Treble clef staff. The first measure contains four quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, and C5. The second measure contains four quarter notes: D5, E5, F5, and G5. The bass lines in the middle and bottom staves provide accompaniment with various note values.

To make the melody more interesting as it repeats you can create a variation on the melody. Here is a variation on ***The Green Anthem*** melody. Circle the notes that have changed and explain how they are different. Notice how you can still recognize the original melody line within the variation.

A musical score showing a variation of the first two measures of 'The Green Anthem'. It consists of three staves: Treble clef (top), Bass clef (middle), and Bass clef (bottom). The melody in the Treble clef staff is a variation of the original. The first measure contains four quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, and C5. The second measure contains four quarter notes: D5, E5, F5, and G5. The bass lines in the middle and bottom staves are identical to the original score.

Here is a second variation on the melody. Circle the notes that have changed and explain how they are different:

A musical score showing a second variation of the first two measures of 'The Green Anthem'. It consists of three staves: Treble clef (top), Bass clef (middle), and Bass clef (bottom). The melody in the Treble clef staff is a variation of the original. The first measure contains eight eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, and G5. The second measure contains four quarter notes: G5, F5, E5, and D5. The bass lines in the middle and bottom staves are identical to the original score.

What's different in this third variation?

A musical score showing a third variation of the first two measures of 'The Green Anthem'. It consists of three staves: Treble clef (top), Bass clef (middle), and Bass clef (bottom). The melody in the Treble clef staff is a variation of the original. The first measure contains four quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, and C5. The second measure contains four quarter notes: D5, E5, F5, and G5. The bass lines in the middle and bottom staves are identical to the original score. Dynamics markings are present: *mf* (mezzo-forte) is written below the first note of each measure, and *p* (piano) is written below the last note of each measure. Slurs connect the notes in each measure, and a hairpin symbol indicates a crescendo from *mf* to *p* across each measure.

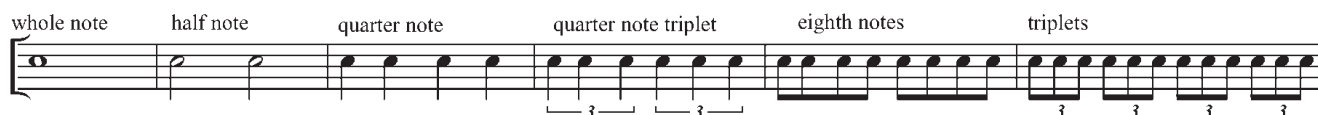
## Worksheet: Melodic Variations for beginners — page 2 of 3 pages

When you write your own, original melody, you will first need to choose a key to write that melody in. Then, you will need to decide on what type of scale you wish to use. These choices will depend on the style (see **Eclectic Styles Tune-Writing Handout: An Overview**). Each style has its own unique series of key and scale preferences (major, minor, mixolydian, and so on).

**The Green Anthem** melody is based on the C mixolydian scale, a major scale with a flatted seventh. Once you choose the key for your melody, write out the scale so that you can clearly see the notes you will be working with as illustrated below.:



Here are examples of some of the basic rhythms that you can use as you write your own melody and variations. Again, each style tends to show a preference for certain rhythms over others. You will need to listen to and analyze your favorite style in order to determine those details.:



Don't forget to practice using dynamics. Composers use some of the following symbols to help musicians hear the composition as close as possible to the composer's imagination. You can look up musical symbols on Wikipedia ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern\\_musical\\_symbols](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_musical_symbols)) for more details.



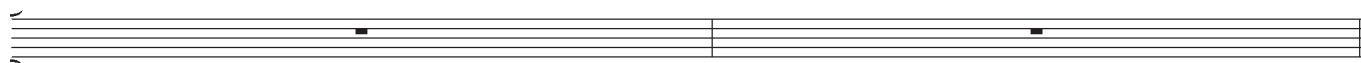
Use the staff provided on the next page to write your own melodic variation, rhythmic variation, and dynamics to the example from **The Green Anthem** or any melody you choose. Start by adding your clef and the time signature. If you need help, ask your private or school teacher.

## Worksheet: Melodic Variations for beginners — page 3 of 3 pages

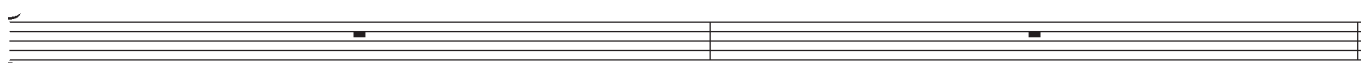
### Melodic Variation



### Rhythmic Variation



### Dynamic Variation



Now that you've had an opportunity to practice creating variations on a short melody, you are ready to start writing your own tune:

- 1) choose the style
- 2) study the keys, rhythmic figures, and types of scales used in the style you have chosen by listening to examples on CD, the radio, or iTunes. You can also search the Internet for famous players in that style and listen to examples on their web sites.
- 3) choose a key, time signature, and type of scale for your piece
- 4) create an opening melodic phrase that is the same length as is typical to the style you have chosen. This will either be 2 bars (measures), 4 bars, or 8 bars long. Think of it like creating a conversation that starts with a question and then responds with an answer. Study how this is done in recorded examples in the style of your choice to support yourself through this process. It will also help to play a few pieces in that style.

And most importantly, have fun!

