CHAPTER 10

## CHECKLIST FOR DIAGRAMMING PERIODS AND SENTENCES

1. Write in brackets to show each phrase; add beginning and ending measure nos.
2. Add cadences labels.
3. Add phrase letters (a, a', b, etc.).
4. Is the example "repeated" or not? (Does the second half match the first?)
5. Is there immediate repetition of material? Add x, x' and brackets.
6. Determine the type (period, sentence, double period, repeated period, repeated sentence).

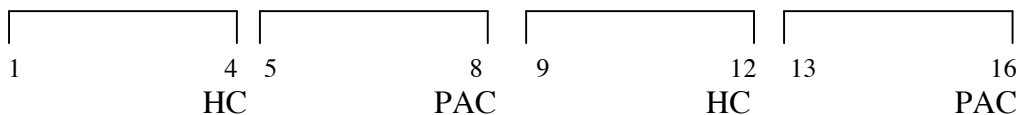<u>If period, double period, or repeated period:</u>
7. Add brackets and labels for antecedent and consequent.
8. Is the period parallel or contrasting?

9. Review your work.

Let's look at how this process works with a repeated sentence (a sentence with a written-out repeat). In the process, I'll expand on the items in the checklist.

A1. Draw as many brackets as there are phrases in the example. Write the beginning and ending measure numbers for each phrase beneath the ends of the brackets.
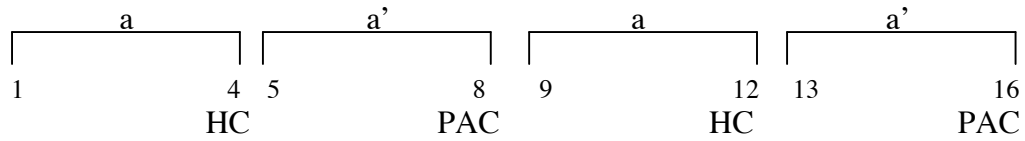
```
┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐
1          4  5          8  9         12  13         16
```
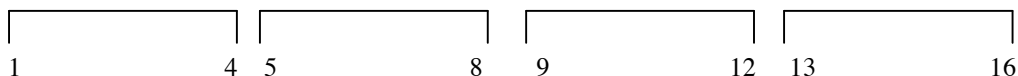
A2. Label the cadences under the appropriate measure numbers.

```
┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐
1          4  5          8  9         12  13         16
           HC            PAC           HC            PAC
```

A3. Add phrase letters showing the relationships between phrases.
   —Different letters (for example, a and b) imply contrasting phrases.
   —The same letter (for example, b and b, or a' and a') implies that the phrases are either identical or contain only insignificant changes (embellishments, re-orchestration, textural changes). The harmonic and basic melodic structure should be the same in both phrases.
   —The same letter in different versions (for example, a, a', a'', etc.) implies that the phrases are similar. The most common reason to use a "prime" label would be that a phrase largely repeats an earlier phrase, but features a different ending, allowing for a different cadence. A prime label might
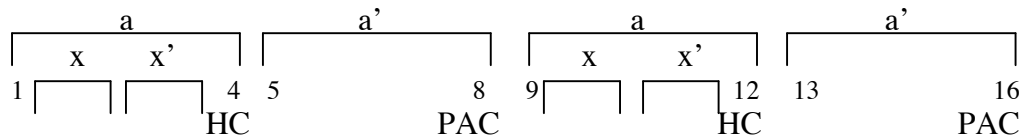
also be used if the same motivic material were used with a different harmonic background.

```
        a                    a'                    a                    a'
 ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
 1            4   5            8   9           12  13           16
              HC               PAC              HC               PAC
```

A4. Now we can start to determine what theme type is being used. Look first at the pattern of cadences. If there are four phrases, is the cadence pattern of the last two phrases identical to that of the first two phrases? If so, do the phrase letters for each half also match? If this is also true, then the example is "repeated." In the following steps, *analyze only the part of the excerpt before the repeat*, then add "repeated" to the type label ("repeated period" or "repeated sentence").
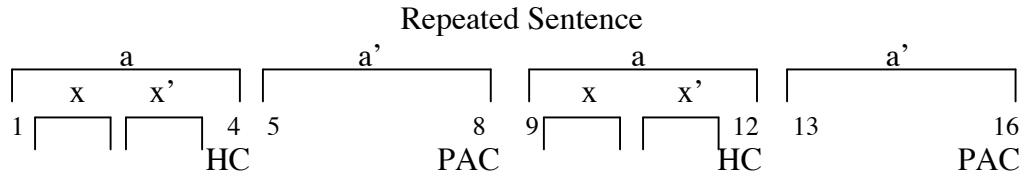
(The example above is a repeated theme type, since the cadence pattern HC-PAC in phrases 1-2 is repeated in phrases 3-4, as is the phrase letter pattern a-a'. We can now analyze phrases 1-2 alone to identify the type and add "repeated" to the label.)

A5. Now look at the first half of the example (for "repeated" examples, look at the first half of the phrases *before the repeat*). Does that half contain two versions of the same melodic or motivic material (immediate repetition)? If so, the example is probably a sentence. Add brackets and identify the two versions with x and x', respectively.

```
        a                    a'                    a                    a'
 ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
 │  x      x'   │  │              │  │  x      x'   │  │              │
 1 ┌──┐  ┌──┐ 4   5            8   9 ┌──┐  ┌──┐ 12  13          16
              HC               PAC              HC               PAC
```

(This example is a repeated type, so we only need to look at the first half of the non-repeated part. That would be phrase 1. We apparently saw two versions of the same melodic material here, so we wrote in the brackets and labeled them x and x'. Since this is a repeated type, we'll do the same thing with phrase 3.)

A6. Now we have all the information to determine the type of the example. Here are our choices:
a. **Period**: two or three phrases, no immediate repetition
b. **Sentence**: any number of phrases, immediate repetition in the first half of the example
c. **Double Period**: same as a., but with four or more phrases
d. **Repeated Period**: a period with a written-out repeat
e. **Repeated Sentence**: a sentence with a written-out repeat

Repeated Sentence

```
            a                   a'                    a                    a'
  ┌───────────────┐  ┌─────────────────┐  ┌─────────────────┐  ┌─────────────────┐
  │   x      x'   │  │                 │  │   x       x'    │  │                 │
  1 ┌────┐ ┌────┐ 4  5                 8  9 ┌────┐ ┌────┐ 12  13                16
    └────┘ └────┘                          └────┘ └────┘
             HC                 PAC                 HC                  PAC
```

(The example above is a repeated sentence. Phrases 1-2 have the same cadence and phrase letter pattern as phrases 3-4. Phrases 1-2 form a sentence, since there is immediate repetition in the first half of the unit—in this case, phrase 1.)

A7. If your answer was "period," "double period," or "repeated period," you need to show the location of the antecedent and consequent with another set of brackets. In each case, you're looking for how the period divides into two "halves." Usually, this involves looking for a weak-strong cadence pattern reinforced by similar material at the beginning of each "half." Sometimes, however, especially with two-phrase periods, there is no motivic similarity between the two "halves." Hints:

  a. For a period with two phrases: the antecedent will be phrase 1, and the consequent will be phrase 2

  b. For a double period with four phrases: the antecedent will probably be phrases 1-2, and the consequent will be phrases 3-4. However, it could be divided into (1-3) + 4, or 1 + (2-4). You would need to look for similar material at the beginning of phrases 2-4. Where does it appear to "start again"?— that's often the beginning of the consequent.
  (The same is true of three-phrase periods—the consequent can begin in either phrase 2 or 3, so look for where it "starts again.")

  c. For repeated periods with four phrases, the antecedent will be phrase 1—*and again in phrase 3, since it's a repeat!!* The consequent will be phrase 2 and again in phrase 4.

(The above example is not a period, so we'll skip this step.)

A8. If you answered question A7, you need to decide whether the period is parallel or contrasting (whether the consequent "begins again" with similar material or not). Compare the beginning of the antecedent to the beginning of the consequent. If the material is similar, the example is a **parallel period** (or **parallel double period,** or **repeated parallel period**). If the material is different, the example is a **contrasting period** (or **contrasting double period**, or **repeated contrasting period**.) Note that double period are typically not contrasting—it's too long to contain no similar material comfortably.

(Again, we'll skip this step here.)

A9. Review your work to see if the diagram makes sense of the music.

Now let's try the checklist again with a two-phrase period.

B1. Phrase brackets and measure numbers

```
 ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
 │1           4 │  │5           8 │
```

B2. Cadence labels

```
 ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
 │1           4 │  │5           8 │
          IAC              PAC
```

B3. Phrase letters

```
          a                 b
 ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
 │1           4 │  │5           8 │
          IAC              PAC
```
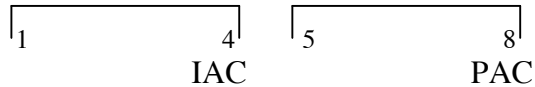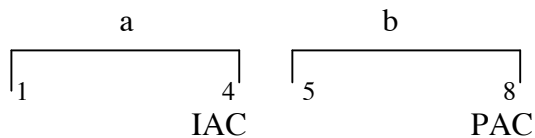
(Here we decided that the two phrases were distinctly different, so b was used for phrase 2.)

B4. "Repeated" or not?

(Phrase 2 is different from phrase 1 both harmonically and melodically, so this is not a phrase with a written-out repeat.)

B5. Immediate repetition?

(Here we would look at the first half of the example. Phrase 1 does not consist of two similar sub-phrases, so a sentence label is not appropriate.)

B6. Determine type

(This theme is not a sentence and it's not a "repeated" phrase, so a two-phrase **period** is the most likely option. It does feature the weak-strong cadence pattern typical of the period, in this case IAC-PAC.)

B7. Antecedent and consequent

```
       a (ant.)           b (cons.)
 ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
 │1           4 │  │5           8 │
          IAC              PAC
```

(For a two-phrase period, the locations of antecedent and consequent are obvious—phrase 1 and phrase 2, respectively.)

B8. Parallel or contrasting?

(Here we compare the beginning of the antecedent with the beginning of the consequent. Looking at the phrase letters, we see that the two are quite different, so this example is a **contrasting period**.

Finally, let's use the checklist to analyze a double period.

C1. Phrase brackets and measure numbers

```
┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐
1          4  5          8  9         12  13         16
```

C2. Cadence labels

```
┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐
1          4  5          8  9         12  13         16
          HC            HC            HC            PAC
```

C3. Phrase letters

```
       a              a'             a             a''
┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐
1          4  5          8  9         12  13         16
          HC            HC            HC            PAC
```

(In this hypothetical example, all the phrases are roughly similar. The first and third phrases are essentially the same, though the latter is ornamented differently. The second and fourth phrases, though they use similar melodic material to phrases 1 and 3, contain different harmonic progressions (not shown), so they should be labeled with "primes". Phrases 2 and 4 are very similar to each other except for their different cadential endings—this is sufficient for phrase 4 to receive an a'' label instead of a'.)

C4. "Repeated" or not?

(Here the cadence pattern is HC-HC, answered by HC-PAC. Obviously these two patterns are not the same, so phrases 3-4 do not simply repeat phrases 1-2. If the pattern had been HC-PAC, HC-PAC, we would have needed to compare the

phrase letters to see if their patterns were also identical. As it is, this example is not a repeated type.)

C5. Immediate repetition?

(Since this example isn't repeated, we need to check the first half of the entire excerpt—phrases 1 and 2. Although there is similar material between phrase 1 and phrase 2, we probably don't want to call this example a sentence. Why not? Because there's an even stronger parallelism in phrase 3, suggesting a period. Combined with the weak-strong cadence pattern between phrases 2 and 4, we'd prefer the period label to the sentence label here.)

NOTE: This example shows that double periods with similar phrases (a a' a a'') can look very similar to a four-phrase sentence (where phrases 1 and 2 are a(=x), a'(=x')). To decide between them, consider the following two points:

a. Which two phrases are more similar: phrases 1 and 2, or phrases 1 and 3? If phrases 1 and 2 are more similar, the example is likely to be a four-phrase sentence. If phrases 1 and 3 are more similar, the example is likely to be a double period.

b. Would it be better to consider phrases 3 and 4 as one longer phrase? If so, the example is likely to be a *three*-phrase sentence.

(In the above hypothetical example, phrases 1 and 3 are more similar, and phrases 3 and 4 clearly separate into two phrases with strong cadences, so the double period label seems most appropriate.)

C6. Determine type

(We know this is neither a repeated type nor a sentence, so some kind of period is most likely. It's either a period of asymmetrical length (3 phrases + 1 phrase or vice-versa) or a double period. We'll have to wait until step 7 to work this out.)

C7. Antecedent and consequent

(Here we're looking for a weak-strong cadential pattern, but since the first three phrases all end with HCs, the antecedent could end after any of them. We need to look for another way to distinguish the start of the consequent. In many double periods, strong melodic parallelism is the way to achieve this. Here we see the strongest parallelism between phrases 1 and 3 (they're both labeled with **a**), so the consequent should begin with phrase 3. Do you see why contrasting double periods are rare?

```
          antecedent                              consequent
   ┌──────────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────────┐
   ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐        ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐
        a              a'                    a              a''
   ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐        ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐
   1           4  5           8        9          12  13          16
               HC              HC                  HC              PAC
```

C8. Parallel or contrasting?

(We've already seen that we needed the parallelism in phrases 1 and 3 to
distinguish the antecedent and consequent in this example. So, this example is a
parallel double period.)

Sometimes there will be more than one right answer. For example, different analysts
might label a phrase a' or b, depending on their judgment of how similar a phrase
should be to another to be called a'. Likewise, a two-phrase example might contain
both immediate repetition (like a sentence) in phrase 1, and a weak-strong cadence
pattern combined with parallelism in phrase 2 (like a parallel period). In this case, the
"extra" repetition at the sub-phrase level might make it hard to distinguish between the
two types. This is not a failure of the labeling system, but a reflection of the endless
variety of musical forms.