Analysis in terms of counterpoint: Fourth species

Fourth species allows for the inclusion of dissonant suspensions in the analysis, and also for ties across the barline between two consonant half notes. In the simplest cases, dealt with here, the cantus firmus is the bass voice, and the motion of the tied note in the middle of the measure takes place within the duration of a single chord. (We'll deal with the more complex cases later.)

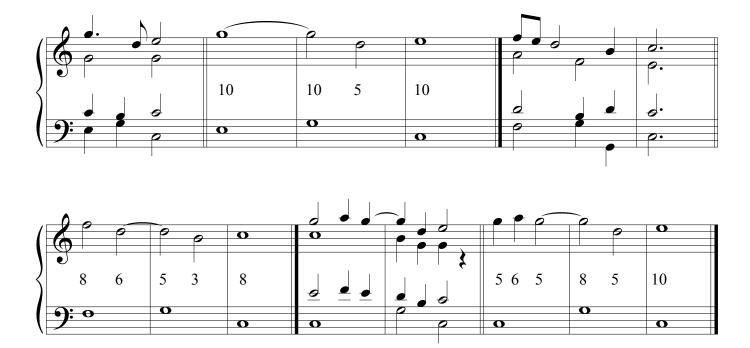
1) Rhythm

Because it is common to switch species from measure to measure in an analysis, the analytical use of fourth species will resemble the use of fourth species in fifth-species exercises.

There are three possibilities for the measure in which the tie over the barline begins.

- It may contain a single whole note that is tied over
- It may contain two half notes, the second of which is tied over
- It may contain two quarters and a half, with the half note tied over

The examples below illustrate these possibilities. In the final example, the neighboring 6/4 chord in the music justifies the use of third species, but the analysis and the reduction have the opposite rhythm – this is because the note initiating the tie must be either a whole note or a half note.



There are also three possibilities for the measure in which the tie over the barline concludes. Note that in each, as in both fourth and fifth species, dissonant suspensions must resolve on beat three.

- There may be two half notes
- The tied-over half note may be followed by two quarters. <u>For dissonant suspensions</u>, the first of the quarters must resolve the dissonance down by step.
- Only in the case of a tie between two chord tones, the measure that is tied into may be a third species measure containing three or more quarter notes with a tuplet indication as needed.

The first case has already been seen above. The two examples below illustrate the second two cases. In the first example, note that while the actual music has equal note values in the third measure, the resolution of the dissonant suspension on the third beat requires the rhythm of the reduction.





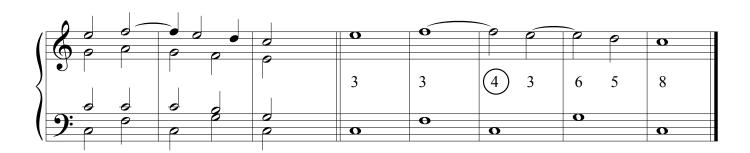
2) Intervals

The suspension should fit the rules of species counterpoint. In harmony 1, you learned that the term 'suspension' may describe any chord tone that is held over into a new chord, becoming a non-chord tone, and that then resolves by step to a chord tone. This definition results in many more suspensions than the standard types used in counterpoint exercises; for example, you may find a dissonant suspension that resolves upward.

In making contrapuntal reductions, you should use suspensions (and half notes tied across the barline more generally) more restrictively. There are two cases:

A) The equivalent of the dissonant suspension.

Recall that in doing analysis using species counterpoint, the rules involving consonance and dissonance become rules about chord tones and non-chord tones. If you want to represent a suspension in the music with a suspension in the reduction, it should resolve downward by step, and it should follow the interval patterns of fourth species: 9-8, 7-6, and 4-3. In an exception to the usual correspondence between non-chord tones and dissonances, you may also represent suspensions involving non-harmonic tones using interval patterns from consonant suspensions, e.g. 6-5. The example below illustrates both possibilities. Note that with the second suspension, the normal correlation of consonance with chord tones would lead us to expect that both the sixth and the fifth were chord tones, because both are consonant; but in this case the sixth is a non-harmonic tone that is consonant against the bass.



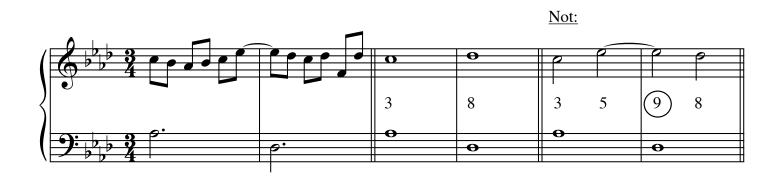
B) The equivalent of the consonant tie.

In some cases you may want to represent the main melodic tones of a chord in second species (or possibly third), and it happens that the first of the main melodic tones repeats the last main melodic tone from the previous chord. In such cases you may tie across the barline as in fourth or fifth species. This has already been shown in the second example of the cadential 6/4 from the notes on second species and in several of the examples of rhythm above: both examples from the first page, and the second from p. 2.

3) When to include a suspension in the reduction

Music that you are analyzing may contain many suspensions, and not all of them are necessarily worth including in the reduction. Here are some criteria to use.

The preparation and the suspension itself should both receive a decent amount of weight and prominence. A suspension that is prepared just before the change of chord and that resolves almost immediately is probably a surface decoration that is not worth including in a reduction. (The passage immediately below illustrates one possible example of this.)



But this sense of weight must be gauged based on the implied underlying motion of the voices, as the second example illustrates. Even though the preparation and the suspension are both quite brief as notes on the musical surface, the motion of the melody into an inner voice leads us to understand the resolution of the suspension as occurring where it normally would, in the middle of the duration of the chord, even though the melody doesn't return to the true upper voice and to this note until the chord is almost over.

