



Harps North West
Charity number 1093441

Bite size Composition - Day 3

THEME - Improvising (noodling in a mode)

Carrying on from yesterday's exercise of improvising/noodling in a minor key, we are now going to noodle in a **mode**.

Little Bit of Theory

There are 7 modes that we can use, but all you need to work them out is the Major scale.

Instead of 1 being the tonal centre, we now treat **2** as the most important note/the **tonal centre**.

From the Major C = C D E F G A B C

Dorian 2 = D E F G A B C D

You can do this starting on any note of the Major scale, each one will give you a different mode with its own distinct character. See crib sheet for a full list of modes, their names and character.

. Starting on the 2nd note of the Major is known as the **Dorian Mode**. This mode has a good sea shanty feel to it, Dorian mode in action = *What shall we do with the drunken Sailor*

Exercise

- Set your harp into any major key, or if unsure start in C Major with me.
- Choose any note from the scale to be the new tonal centre. The most commonly used are 2 (Dorian) and 5 (Mixolydian)
- In my demo I will use 5 (my favourite) which means with the harp set in C Major the new tonal centre is G.
- Choose a tempo and set a pulse and a count (3, 4, 6 etc) .
- As before LH plays a repeating bass note on the first note of your mode. Which in this example will be G, whilst RH noodles on top.

Try it out in different modes, they all have their own sound, starting on 7 (Locrian) is by far the weirdest!

Try it out in different keys, set your harp into any major and choose a mode.

Remember

- Keep it **simple** to start, walking up and down the scale then start to experiment.
- Keep coming back to note 1 of your modal scale.
- If you're struggling to keep an idea of a pulse use a **metronome** (At a friendly comfortable pace) to help.

As always if you have any questions or want more info on anything feel free to get in touch with me at online@harpsnorthwest.org.uk

Happy noodling!

Susan @ HNW