

LESSON PLAN: A Shortcut to Change Chords

Objective:

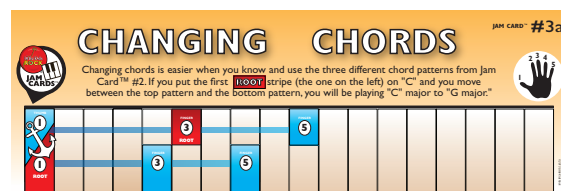
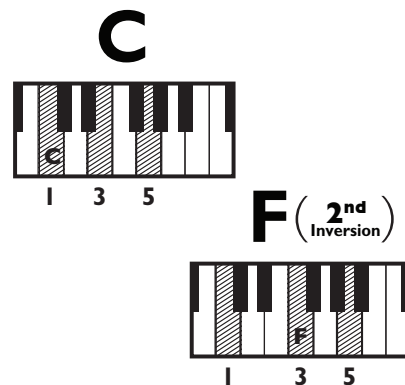
Students will be able to use a chord inversion as a “shortcut” in getting from one chord to another.

Resources:

Keyboard, **JAM CARD** 3a Changing Chords

Procedures:

- 1 Have students play the C chord. Ask them what notes are in it; by now they should be able to identify the notes on the keyboard (see lesson plan “Spelling Chords and Naming Notes”)
- 2 Next have students name the notes in the F chord. Ask them if there are any notes that both chords have in common. Guide them toward noticing that the note C occurs in both chords.
- 3 Demonstrate using the right hand to move from a C chord in root position to an F chord also in root position. Point out that this movement is easy for the brain, but hard for the body—the same chord shape on C makes a C chord and on F makes an F chord, but the arm has to move that chord shape up and down the keyboard. Next demonstrate how they can change from the C chord to the F chord without moving their thumb off of the note C and changing the E and G to the notes F and A. Changing chords this way is easy for the body and harder for the brain; the hand doesn’t have to move anywhere to change chords but it’s more difficult to understand why the 2nd chord is still called an F chord when it’s using a different shape without an F on the bottom.
- 4 Ask everyone in class to try this. They can use two hands at first if it’s easier, playing the C note with the left hand while the right hand changes the E and G to the notes F and A. Have them repeat a few times until the concept is easy. If you want to, tell them that the C chord is in “root position” because the root note C is on the bottom, while the F chord is in an “inversion”.
- 5 Have students get out the Jam Card called “Changing Chords” and line the “Anchor” up with the note C. This Jam Card will further reinforce the idea of which notes change and which note stays the same.



National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques for presentation.

Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.2 b. Rehearse, identify, and apply strategies to address interpretive, performance, and technical challenges of music.

Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.G.B.4 Analyze and compare two- and three-dimensional shapes, in different sizes and orientations, using informal language to describe their similarities, differences, parts (e.g., number of sides and vertices/“corners”) and other attributes (e.g., having sides of equal length). (Compare root position and inverted chord shapes)

