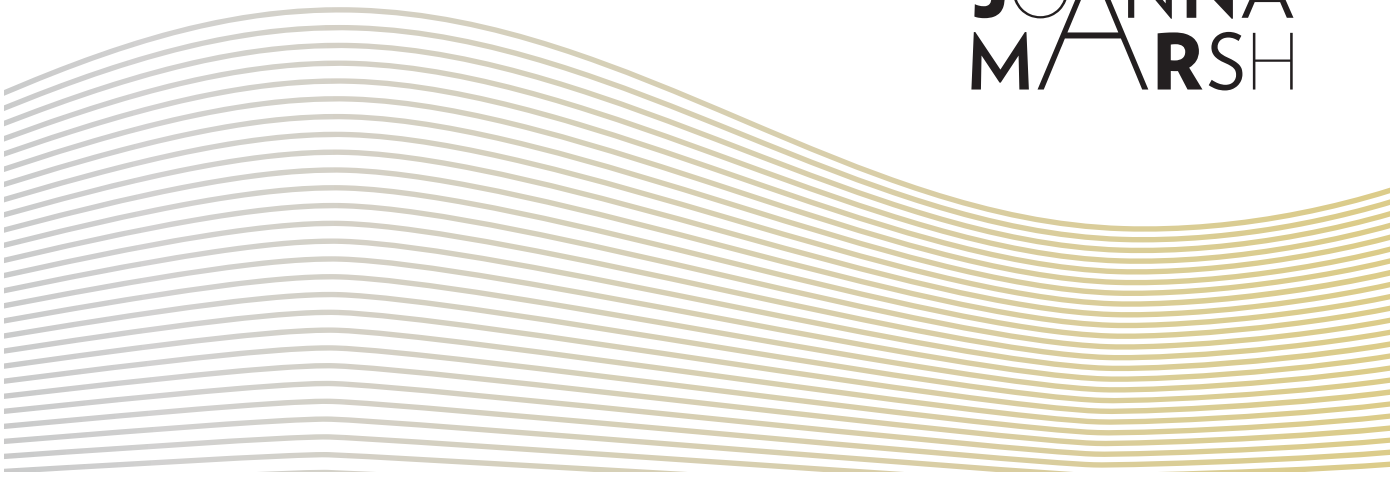
Joanna Marsh

Word

SSAATTBB

JOANNA MARSH



Joanna Marsh

Word **(July 2024)**

SSAATTBB

Duration c.7'

Word, a setting of the poem of the same name by Patience Agbabi, was commissioned by the National Youth Choir 18-25 for their Summer Course Concert, Saturday 27th July 2024, at Ely Cathedral. The commission was kindly funded by Dorico and The John S Cohen Foundation.

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Word

Patience Agbabi

Give me a word
any word
let it roll across your tongue
like a dolly mixture.
Open your lips
say it loud
let each syllable vibrate
like a transistor
Say it again again again again again
till it's a tongue twister
till its meaning is in tatters
till its meaning equals sound
now write it down,
letter by letter
loop the loops
till you form a structure.
Do it again again again again again
till it's a word picture.
Does this inspire?
Is your consciousness on fire?
Then let me take you higher.

Give me a noun
give me a verb
and I'm in motion
cos I'm on a mission
to deliver information
so let me take you to the fifth dimension.
No fee, it's free,
you only gotta pay attention.
So sit back, relax,
let me take you back
to when you learnt to walk, talk,
learnt coordination
and communication,
mama
dada.
If you rub two words together you get friction
cut them in half, you get a fraction.
If you join two words you get multiplication.
My school of mathematics equals verbal acrobatics
so let's make conversation.

Give me a word
give me a big word
let me manifest
express in excess
the M I X
of my voice box.
Now I've eaten the apple
I'm more subtle than a snake is.
I wanna do poetic things in poetic places
Give me poetry unplugged
so I can counter silence.

Give me my poetic license and I'll give you metaphors that top eclipses
I'll give megabytes and megamixes.

Give me a stage and I'll cut form on it
give me a page and I'll perform on it.

Give me a word
any word.

Give me a preposition
give me an interjection
give me inspiration.
In the beginning was creation
I'm not scared of revelations
cos I've done my calculations.
I've got high hopes
on the tightrope,
I just keep talking.
I got more skills
than I got melanin
I'm fired by adrenaline
if you wanna know what rhyme it is
it's feminine.
Cos I'm Eve on an Apple Mac
this is a rap attack so rich in onomatopoeia
I'll take you higher than the ozone layer.
**So give me Word for Windows*
**give me 'W' times three*
cos I'm on a mission
to deliver information
that is gravity defying
and I'll keep on trying
till you lose your fear of flying.

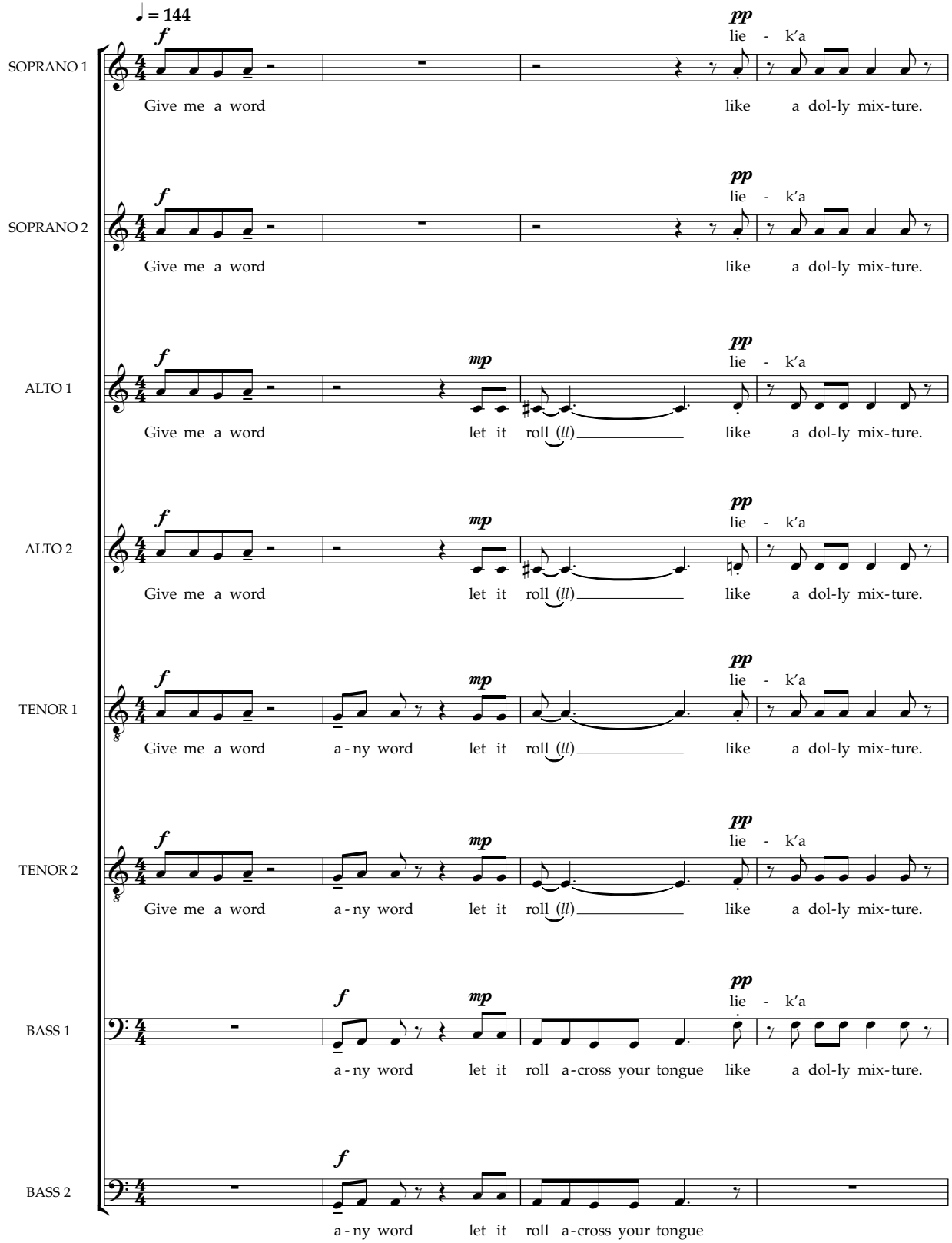
Give me a pronoun
give me a verb
and I'm living in syntax.
You only need two words to form a sentence.
I am I am I am I am I am
bicultural and sometimes clinical
my mother fed me rhymes through the umbilical,
I was born waxing lyrical.
I was raised on Watch with Mother
The Rime of the Ancient Mariner
and Fight the Power.
Now I have the perfect tutor in my postmodern suitor,
I'm in love with me computer.
But let me shut down before I touch down.

*****These lines are omitted in the piece.

Word

Patience Agbabi

Joanna Marsh



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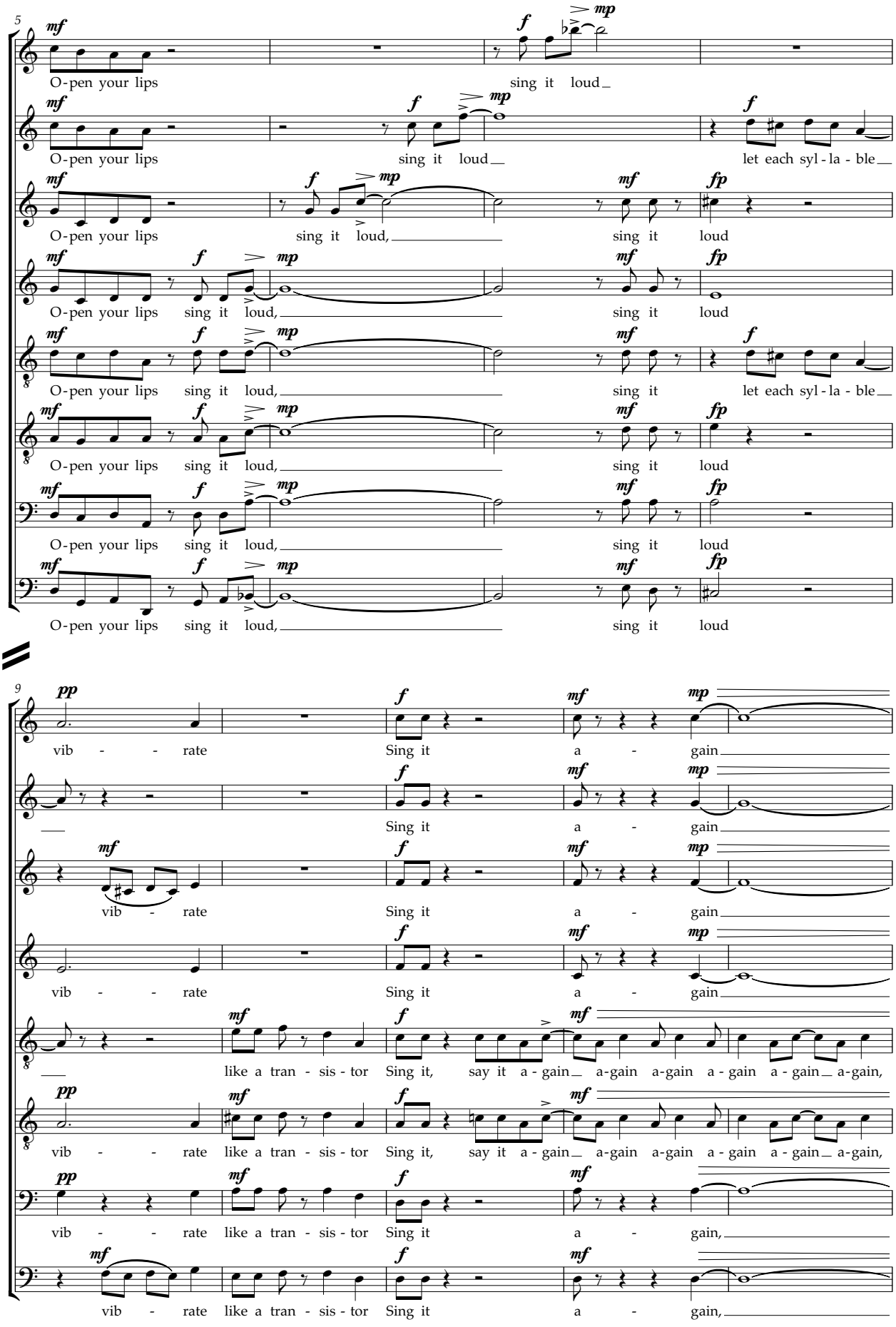
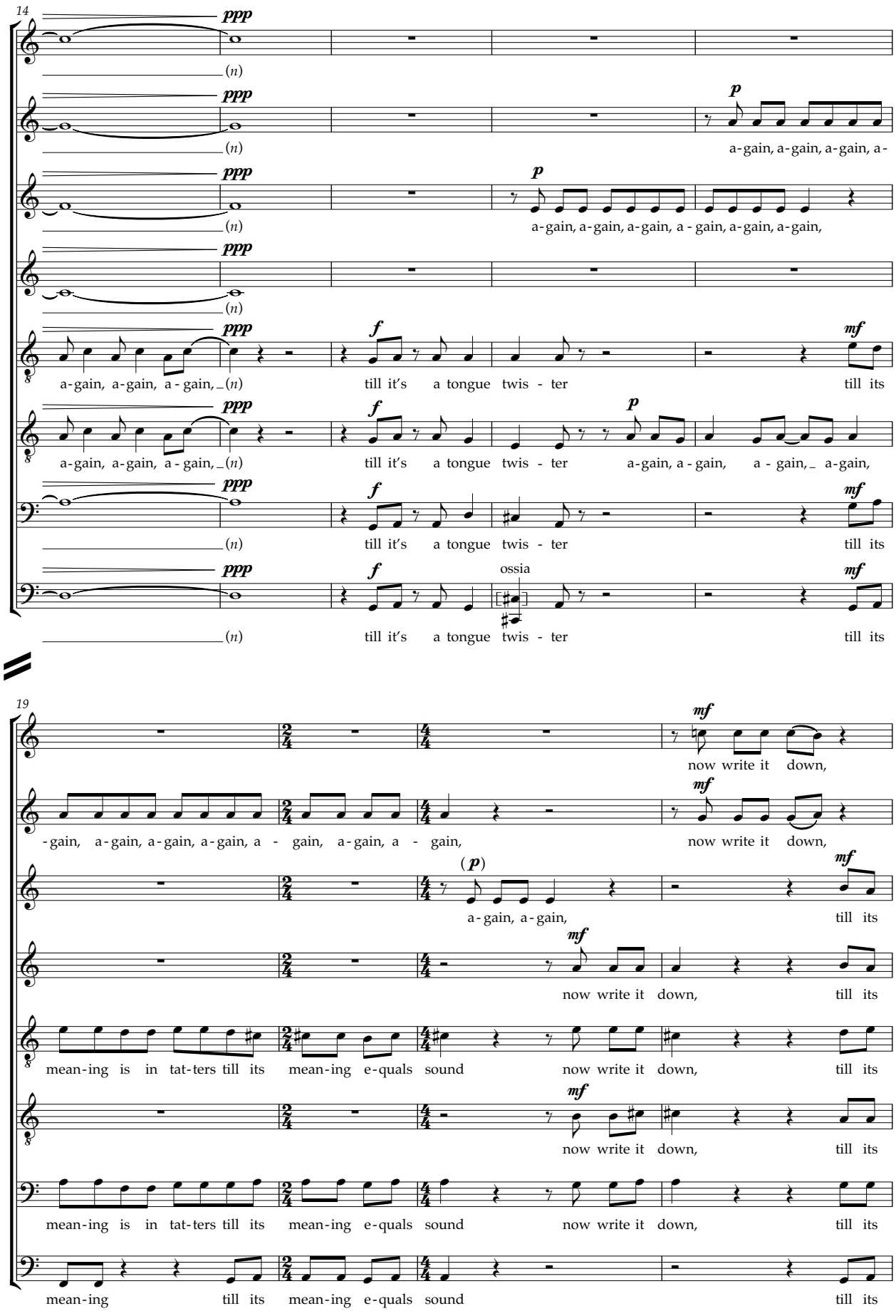
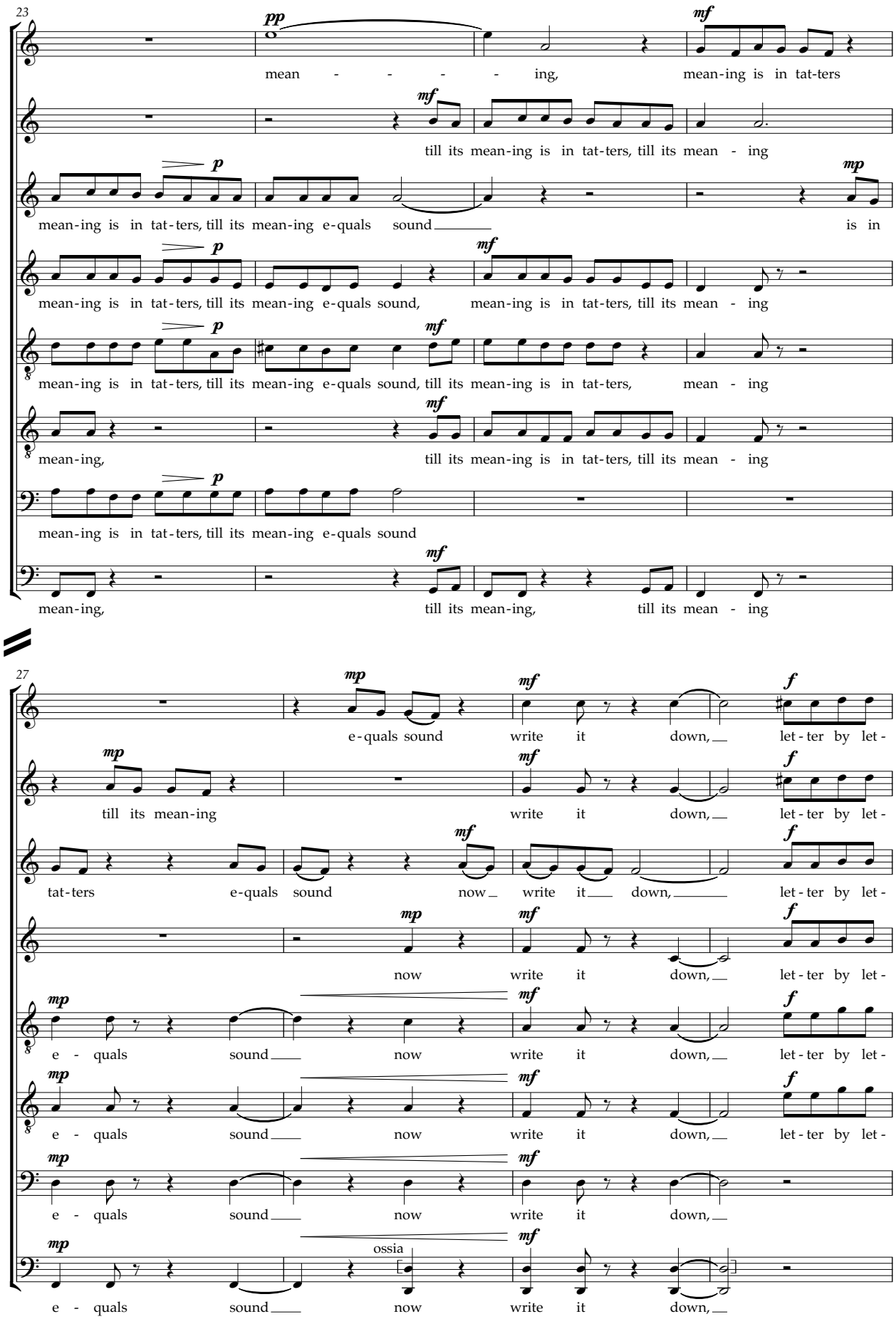
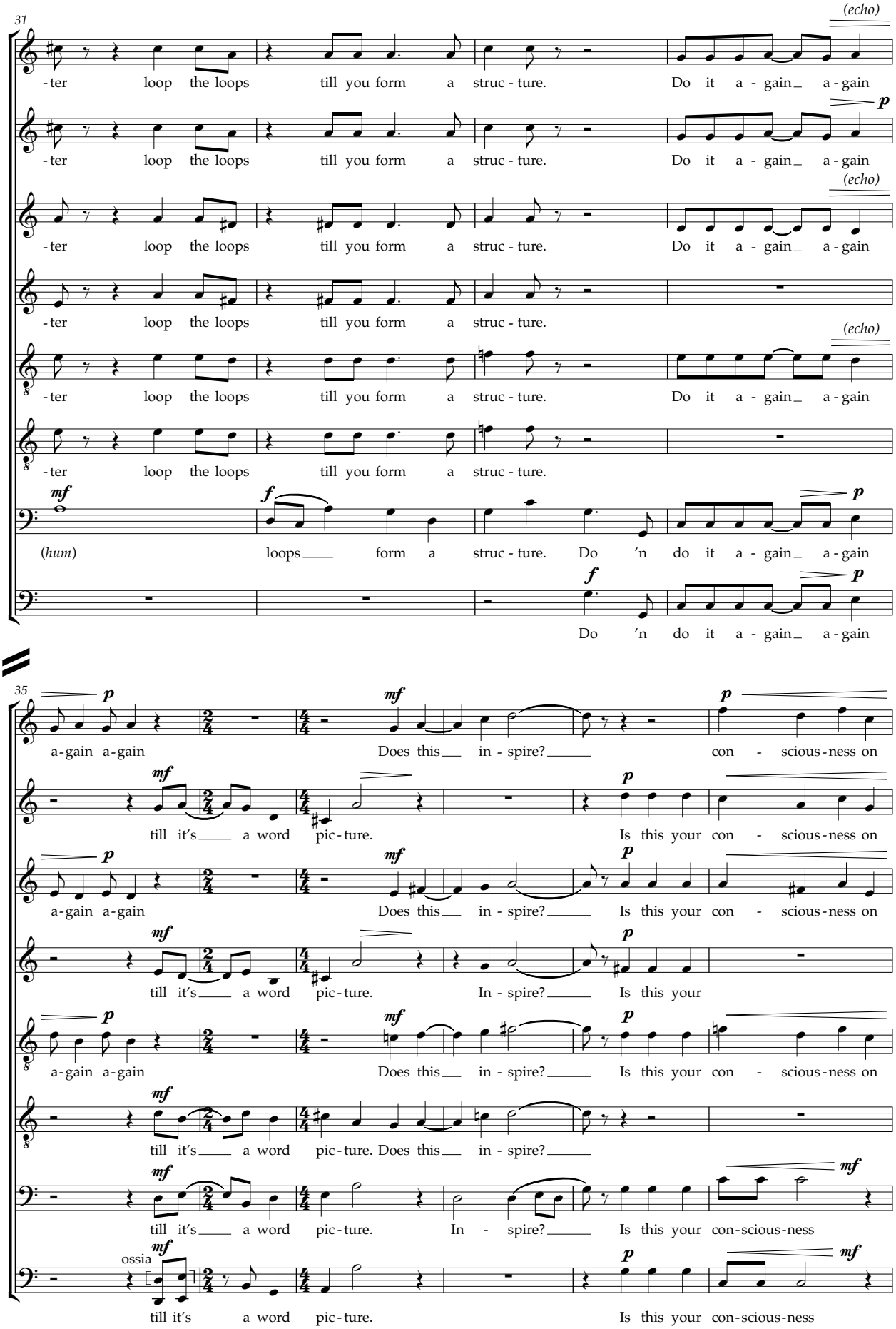
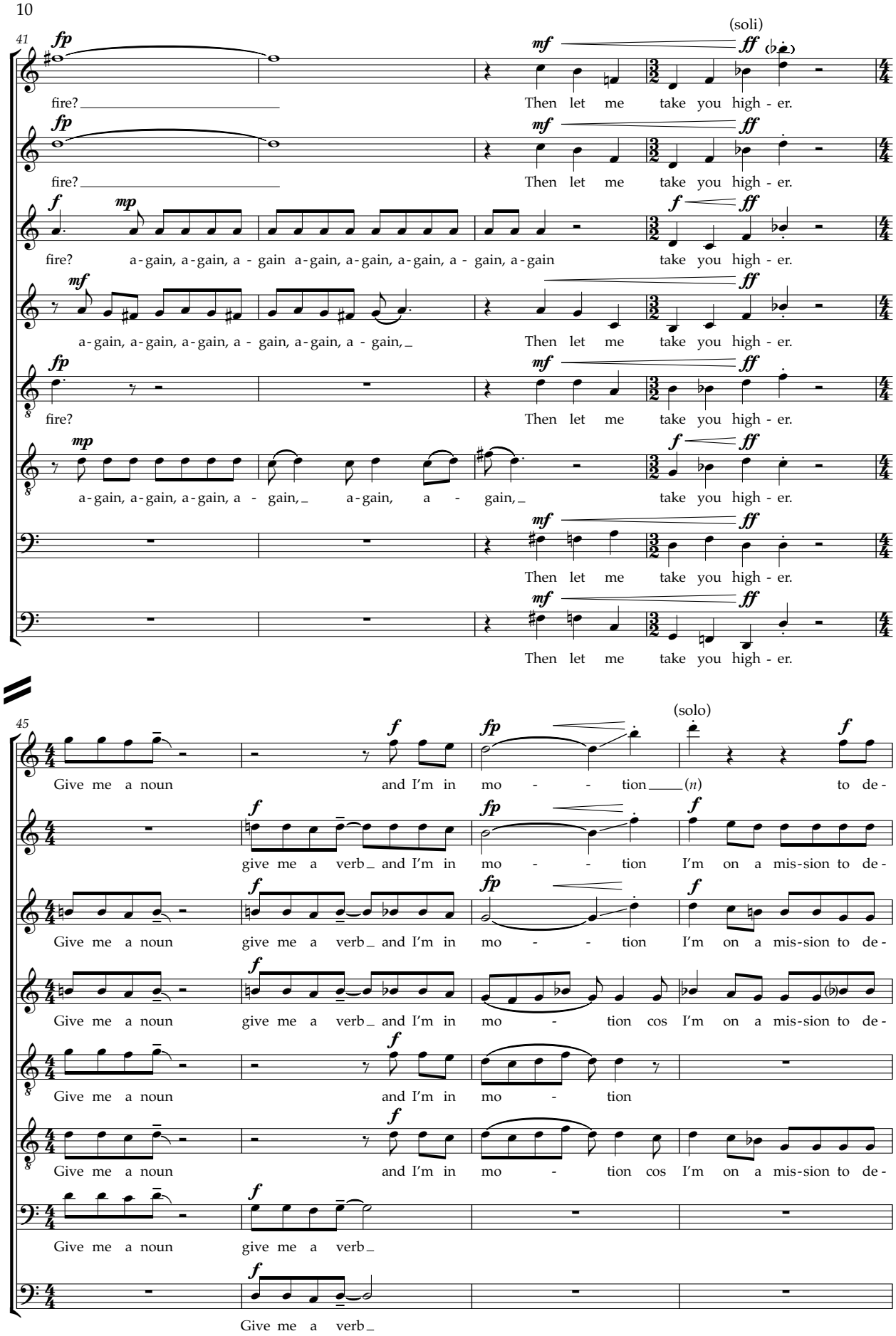
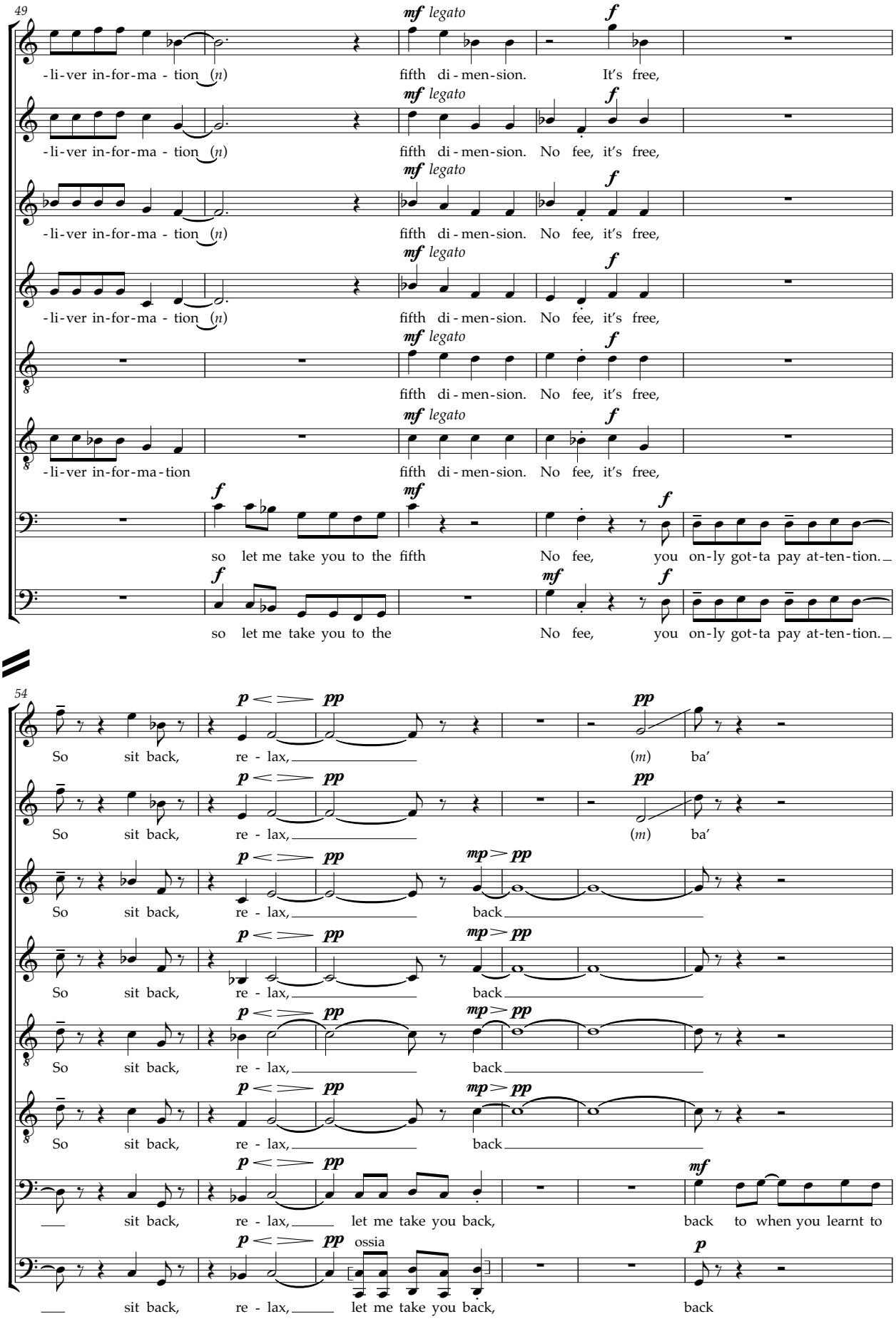

5
mf f mp
O-pen your lips sing it loud
let each syl - la - ble
sing it loud,
fp
9
pp
vib - - rate
Sing it
a - gain
like a tran - sis - tor
say it a - gain
a-gain a-gain a - gain a - gain a-gain,

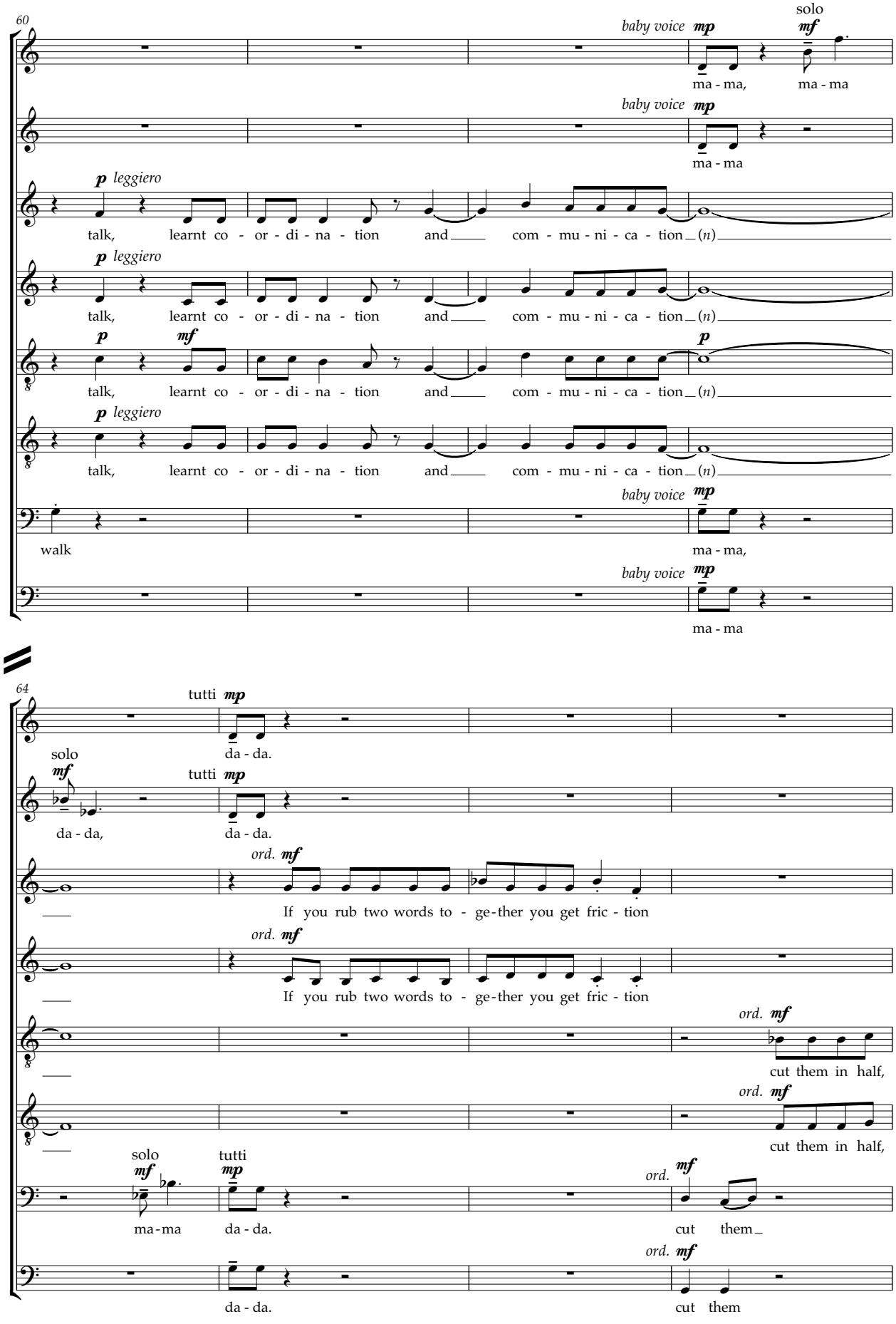

14
ppp
(n)
p
a-gain, a-gain, a-gain, a-
a-gain, a-gain, a-gain, a - gain, a-gain, a-gain,
f
mf
till it's a tongue twis - ter
till its
ossia
19
now write it down,
-gain, a-gain, a-gain, a-gain, a - gain, a-gain, a - gain,
(p)
a-gain, a-gain,
mean-ing is in tat-ters till its mean-ing e-quals sound
mean-ing till its mean-ing e-quals sound

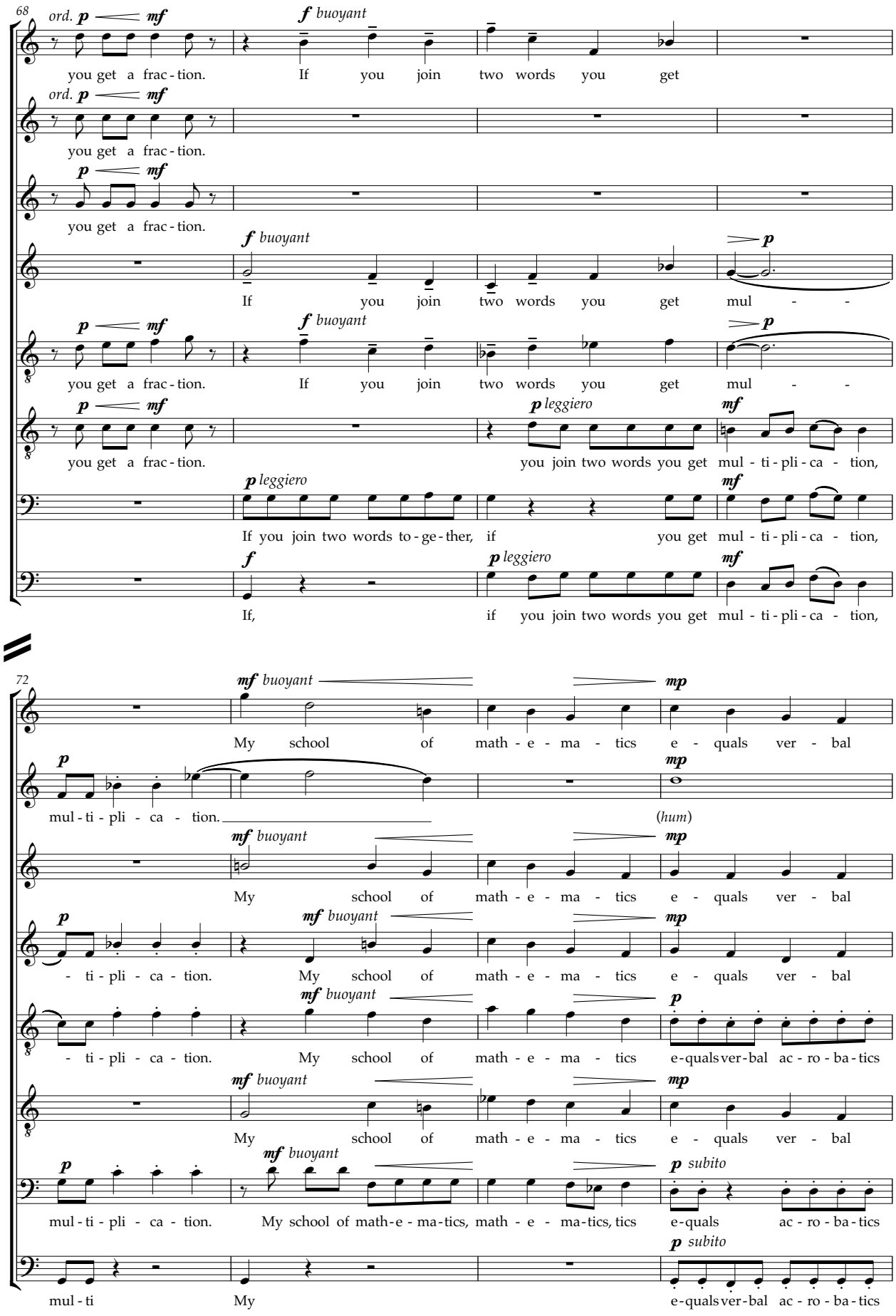

23
pp
mean - - - - ing,
mf
mean-ing is in tat-ters
mf
till its mean-ing is in tat-ters, till its mean - ing
p
mean-ing is in tat-ters, till its mean-ing e-quals sound
mp
is in
p
mean-ing is in tat-ters, till its mean-ing e-quals sound,
mf
mean-ing is in tat-ters, till its mean - ing
p
mean-ing is in tat-ters, till its mean-ing e-quals sound,
mf
till its mean-ing is in tat-ters, mean - ing
mf
mean-ing,
till its mean-ing is in tat-ters, till its mean - ing
p
mean-ing is in tat-ters, till its mean-ing e-quals sound
mf
mean-ing,
till its mean-ing,
till its mean - ing
27
mp
mf
f
e-quals sound
write it down,
let-ter by let-
mp
mf
f
till its mean-ing
write it down,
let-ter by let-
mf
f
tat-ters e-quals sound now
write it down,
let-ter by let-
mp
mf
f
now
write it down,
let-ter by let-
mp
mf
f
e - quals sound
now
write it down,
let-ter by let-
mp
mf
f
e - quals sound
now
write it down,
let-ter by let-
mp
mf
e - quals sound
now
write it down,
mp
ossia
mf
e - quals sound
now
write it down,

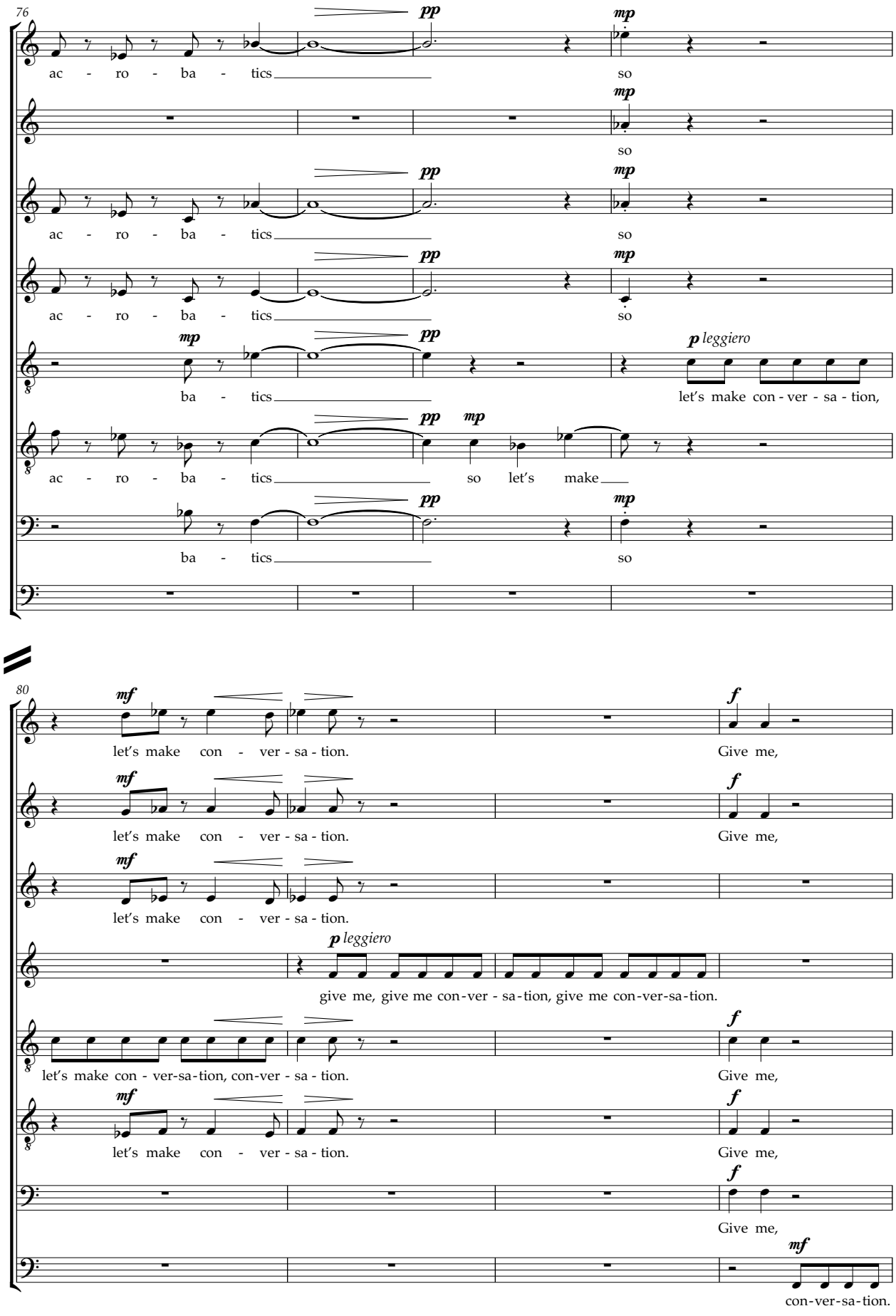

31
(echo)
-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture. Do it a - gain_ a - gain
p
(echo)
-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture. Do it a - gain_ a - gain
-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture.
(echo)
-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture. Do it a - gain_ a - gain
-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture.
mf
f
p
(hum) loops form a struc - ture. Do 'n do it a - gain_ a - gain
f
p
Do 'n do it a - gain_ a - gain
35
p
mf
p
a-gain a-gain Does this in - spire? con - scious-ness on
mf
p
till it's a word pic - ture. Is this your con - scious-ness on
p
mf
p
a-gain a-gain Does this in - spire? Is this your con - scious-ness on
mf
p
till it's a word pic - ture. In - spire? Is this your
p
mf
p
a-gain a-gain Does this in - spire? Is this your con - scious-ness on
mf
till it's a word pic - ture. Does this in - spire?
mf
mf
till it's a word pic - ture. In - spire? Is this your con-scious-ness
ossia
mf
p
mf
till it's a word pic - ture. Is this your con-scious-ness

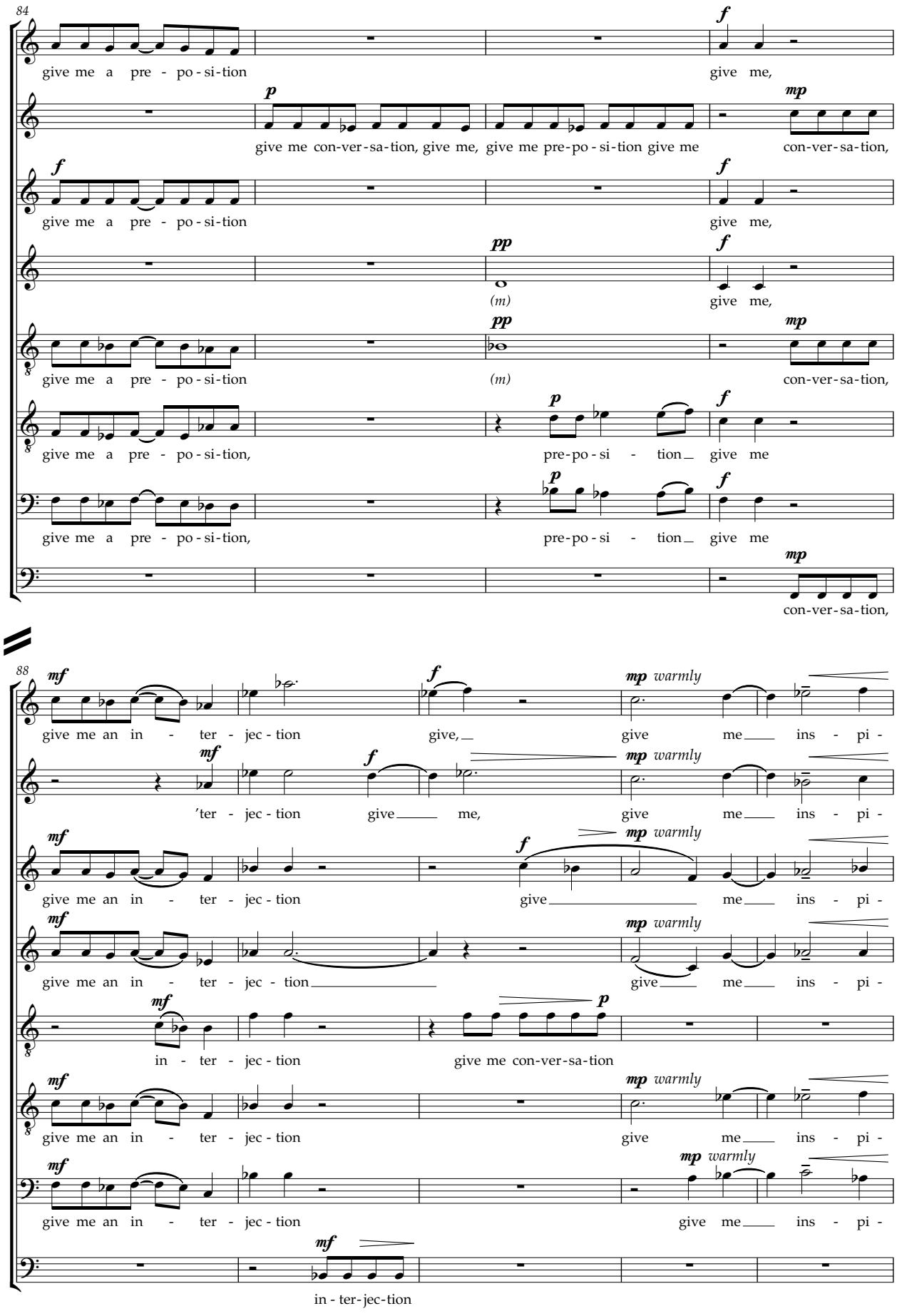

41
(soli)
fp
mf
ff
fire? Then let me take you high - er.
f
mp
a - gain, a - gain, a - gain a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain
a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain,
45
(solo)
Give me a noun and I'm in mo - - - tion (n) to de -
give me a verb and I'm in mo - - - tion I'm on a mis - sion to de -
Give me a noun give me a verb and I'm in mo - - tion cos I'm on a mis - sion to de -
Give me a noun and I'm in mo - - tion
Give me a noun and I'm in mo - tion cos I'm on a mis - sion to de -
Give me a noun give me a verb
Give me a verb

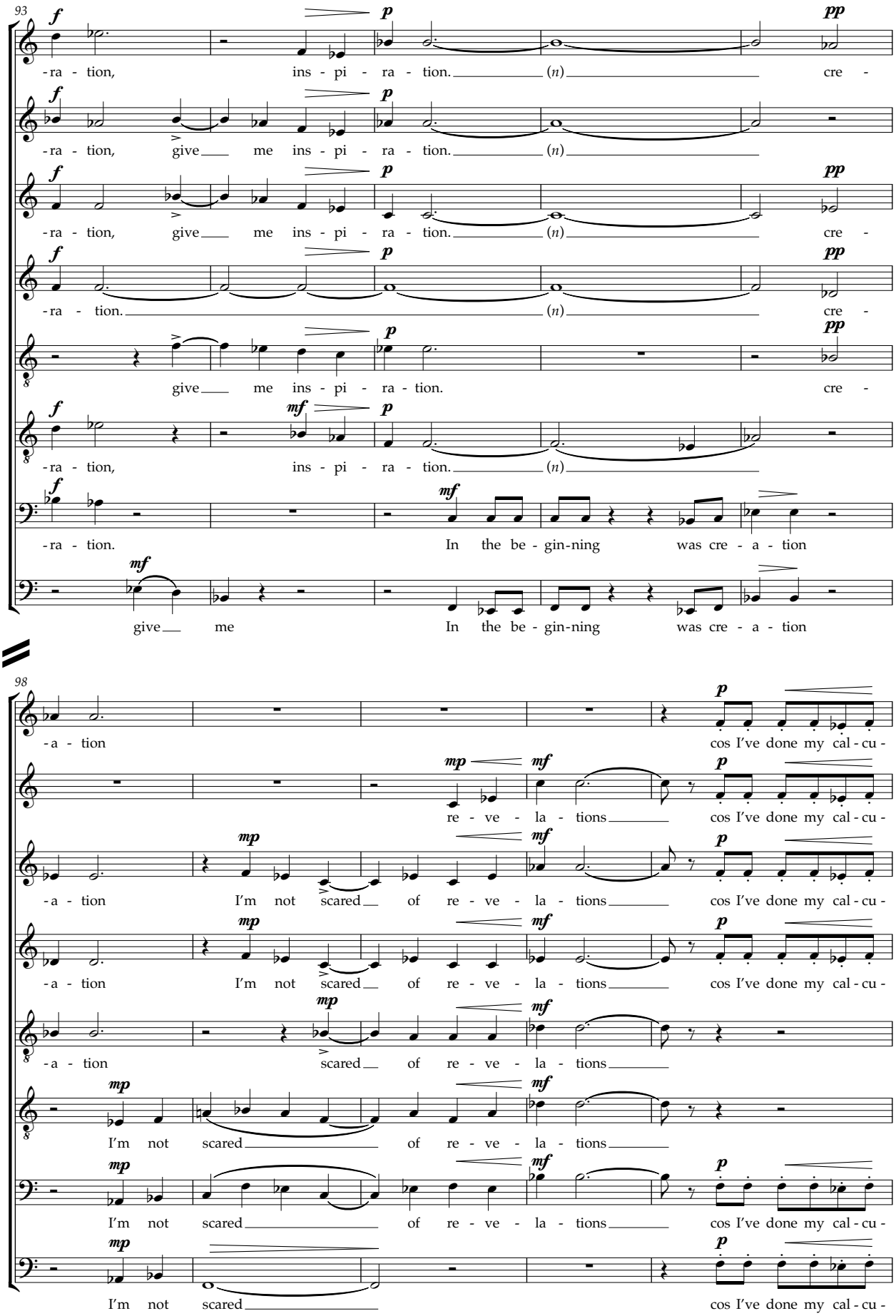

49
mf legato
f
-li-ver in-for-ma - tion (n)
fifth di - men-sion. It's free,
fifth di - men-sion. No fee, it's free,
-li-ver in-for-ma-tion
so let me take you to the fifth
No fee, you on-ly got-ta pay at-ten-tion.
so let me take you to the
54
p < pp
mp > pp
So sit back, re - lax, (m) ba'
back
let me take you back, back to when you learnt to
ossia
let me take you back, back

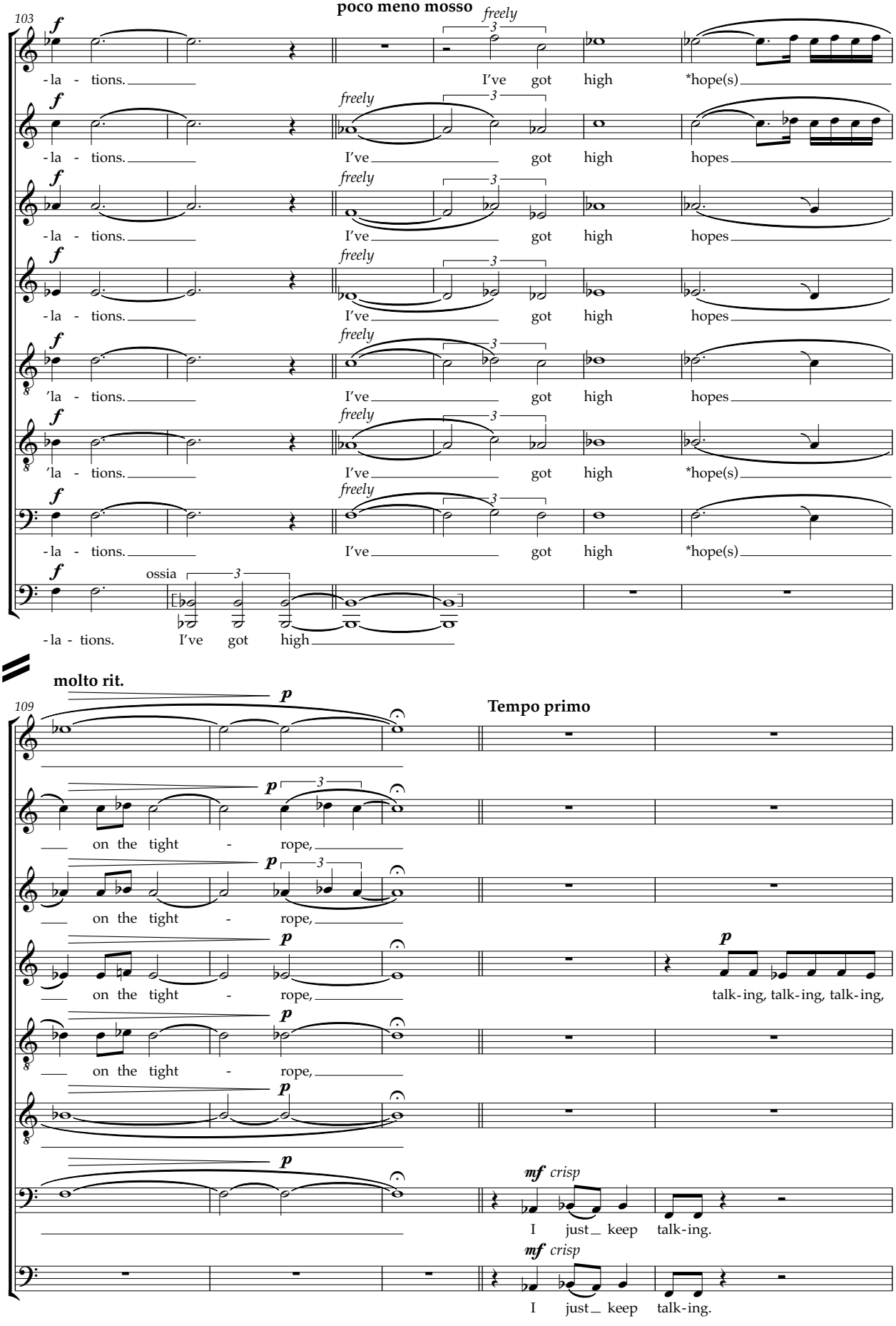

60
baby voice mp
solo
mf
ma - ma, ma - ma
baby voice mp
ma - ma
p leggiero
talk, learnt co - or - di - na - tion and com - mu - ni - ca - tion (n)
p leggiero
talk, learnt co - or - di - na - tion and com - mu - ni - ca - tion (n)
p mf
talk, learnt co - or - di - na - tion and com - mu - ni - ca - tion (n)
p
p leggiero
talk, learnt co - or - di - na - tion and com - mu - ni - ca - tion (n)
baby voice mp
walk
ma - ma,
baby voice mp
ma - ma
64
tutti mp
solo
mf
da - da.
da - da,
tutti mp
da - da.
ord. mf
If you rub two words to - ge-ther you get fric - tion
ord. mf
If you rub two words to - ge-ther you get fric - tion
ord. mf
cut them in half,
ord. mf
cut them in half,
solo
mf
tutti
mp
ord. mf
ma-ma
da - da.
cut them
ord. mf
da - da.
cut them


68
ord. p mf
you get a frac - tion.
f buoyant
If you join two words you get
ord. p mf
you get a frac - tion.
p mf
you get a frac - tion.
f buoyant
If you join two words you get mul - -
p
p mf
you get a frac - tion.
f buoyant
If you join two words you get mul - -
p
p mf
you get a frac - tion.
p leggiero
you join two words you get mul - ti - pli - ca - tion,
mf
p leggiero
If you join two words to - ge - ther, if you get mul - ti - pli - ca - tion,
mf
f
If,
p leggiero
if you join two words you get mul - ti - pli - ca - tion,
mf
72
mf buoyant
My school of math - e - ma - tics e - quals ver - bal
mp
p
mul - ti - pli - ca - tion.
mp
(hum)
mf buoyant
My school of math - e - ma - tics e - quals ver - bal
mp
p
- ti - pli - ca - tion.
mf buoyant
My school of math - e - ma - tics e - quals ver - bal
mp
- ti - pli - ca - tion.
mf buoyant
My school of math - e - ma - tics e-quals ver-bal ac - ro - ba - tics
p
mf buoyant
My school of math - e - ma - tics e - quals ver - bal
mp
p
mul - ti - pli - ca - tion.
mf buoyant
My school of math-e - ma-tics, math - e - ma-tics, tics
p subito
e-quals ac - ro - ba - tics
p subito
mul - ti
My
e-quals ver-bal ac - ro - ba - tics

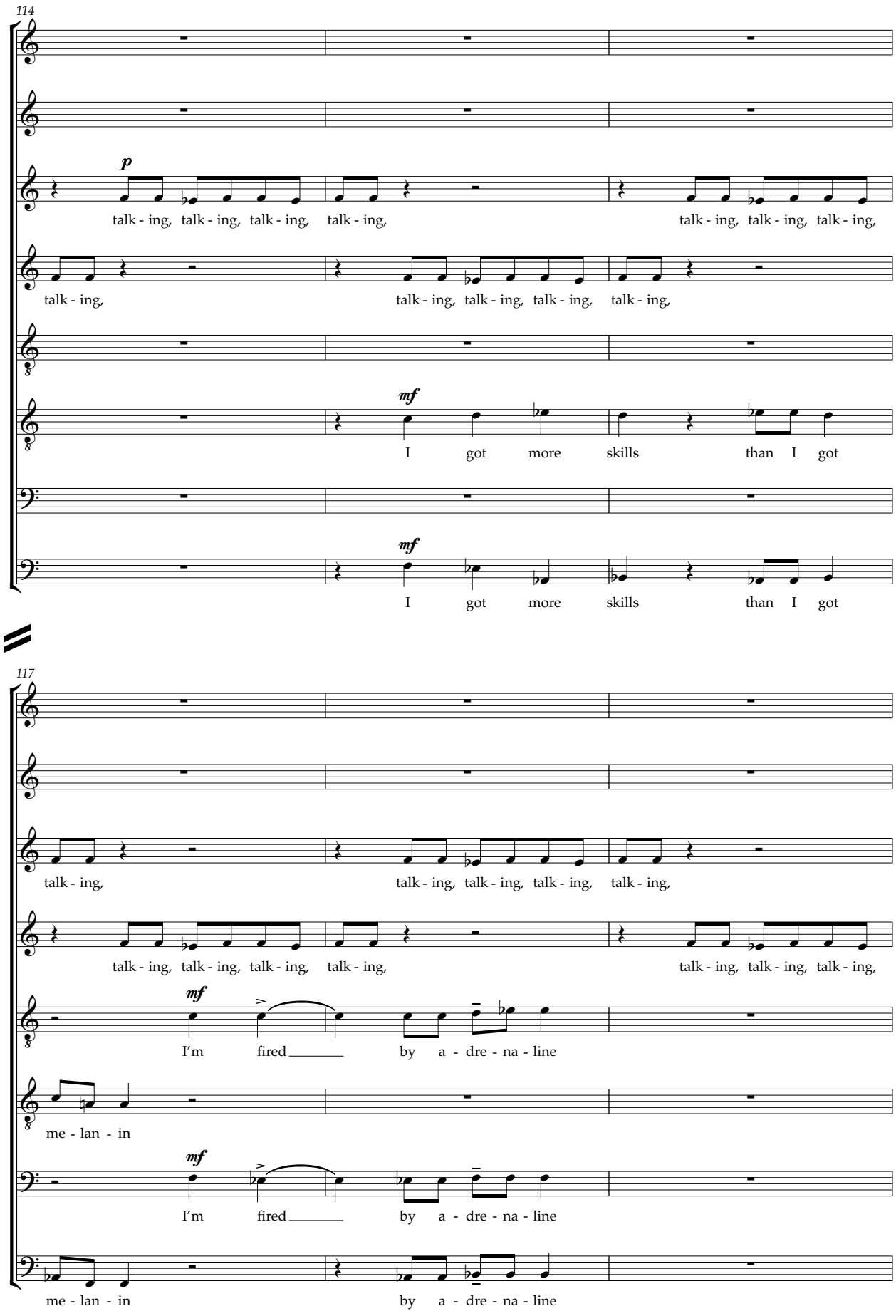

76
pp
mp
ac - ro - ba - tics
so
p leggiero
let's make con - ver - sa - tion,
80
mf
f
let's make con - ver - sa - tion.
Give me,
give me, give me con-ver - sa-tion, give me con-ver-sa-tion.
con-ver-sa-tion.

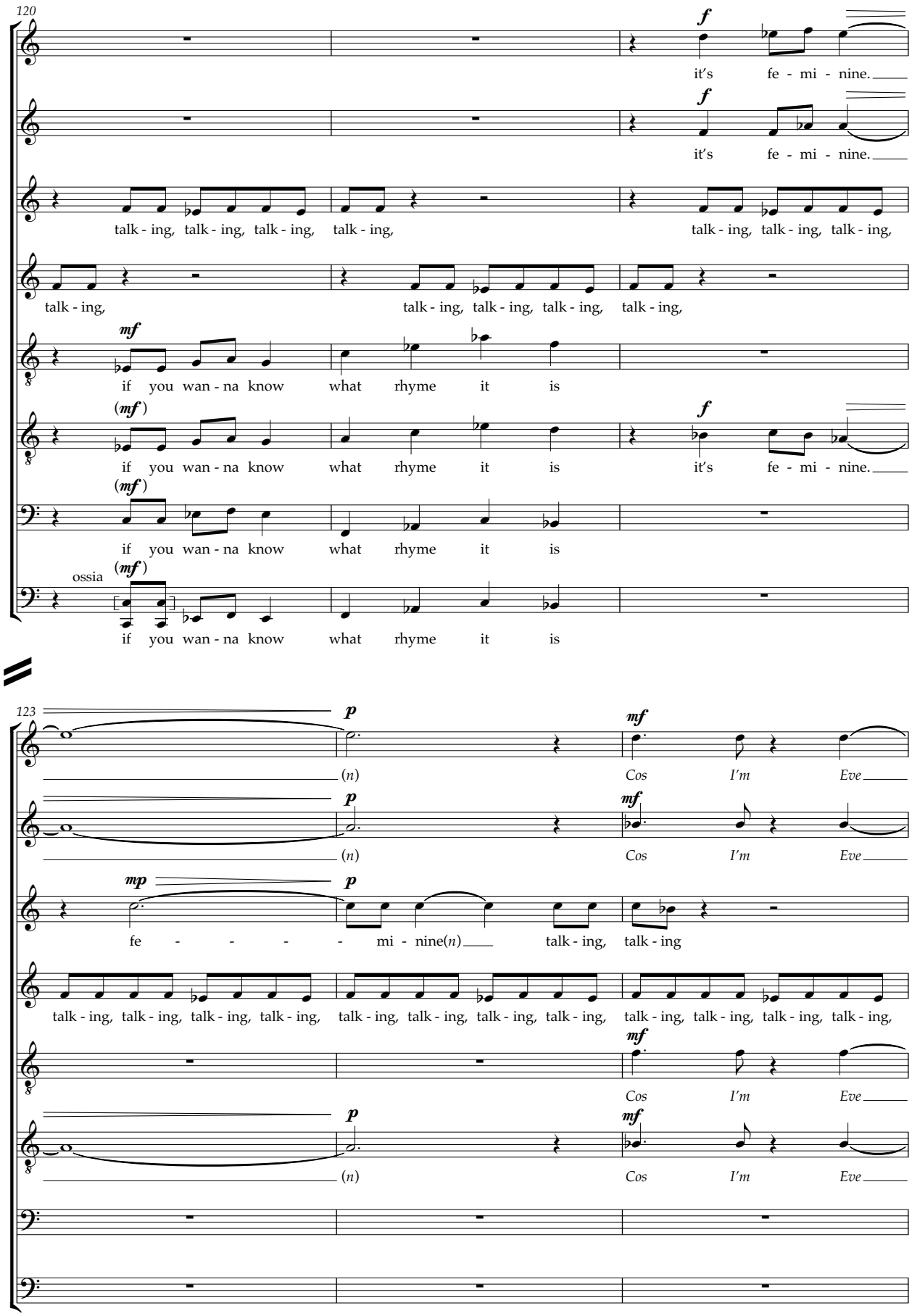

84
give me a pre - po - si-tion
give me,
give me con-ver-sa-tion, give me, give me pre-po - si-tion give me
con-ver-sa-tion,
give me a pre - po - si-tion
give me,
(m)
give me,
give me a pre - po - si-tion
(m)
con-ver-sa-tion,
give me a pre - po - si-tion,
pre-po - si - tion_ give me
give me a pre - po - si-tion,
pre-po - si - tion_ give me
con-ver-sa-tion,
88
give me an in - ter - jec - tion
give,_ give me_ ins - pi -
'ter - jec - tion give_ me, give me_ ins - pi -
give me an in - ter - jec - tion
give_ me_ ins - pi -
give me an in - ter - jec - tion_
give_ me_ ins - pi -
in - ter - jec - tion
give me con-ver-sa-tion
give me an in - ter - jec - tion
give me_ ins - pi -
give me an in - ter - jec - tion
give me_ ins - pi -
in - ter-jec-tion
warmly

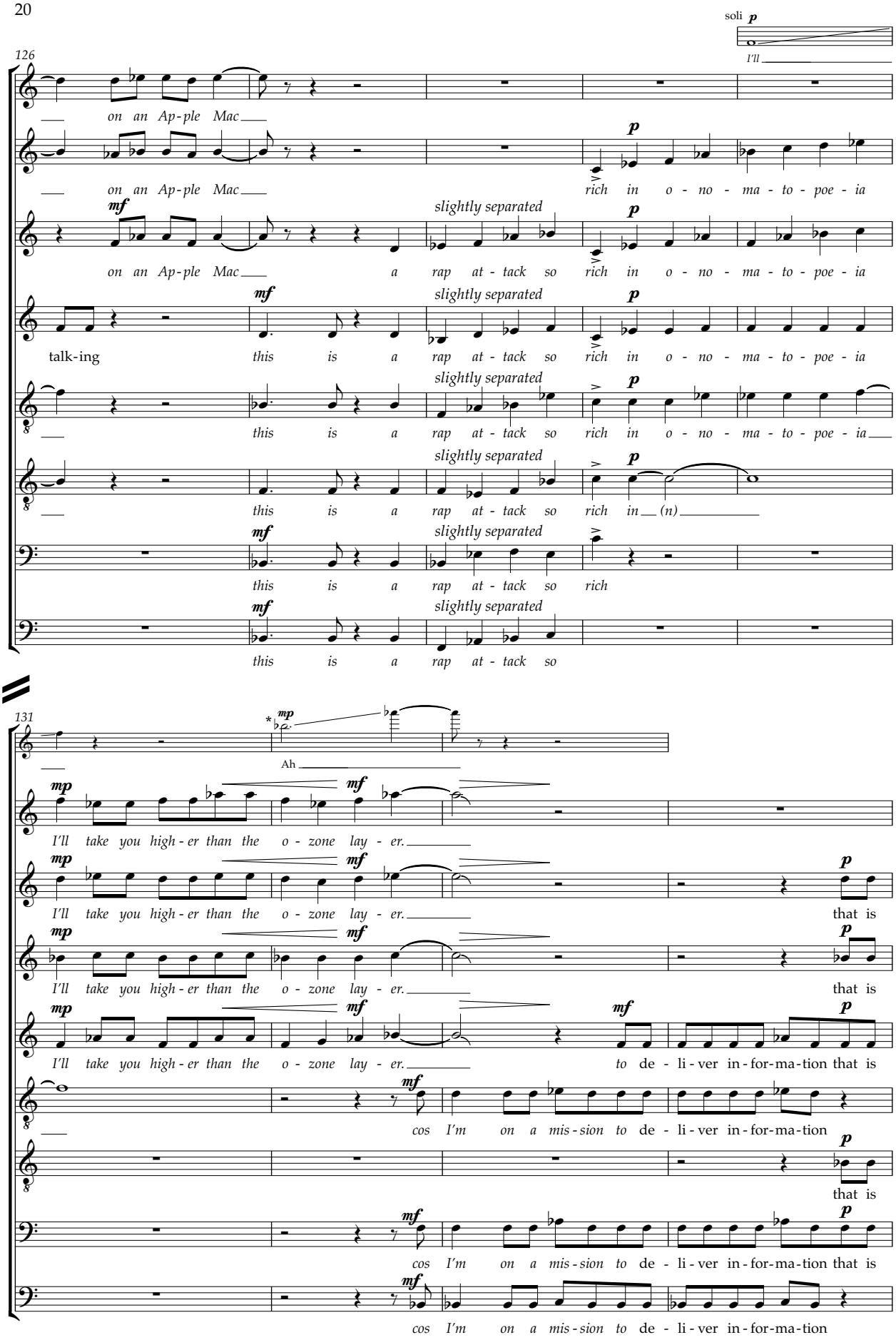

93
-ra - tion, ins - pi - ra - tion. (n) cre -
-ra - tion, give me ins - pi - ra - tion. (n)
-ra - tion, give me ins - pi - ra - tion. (n) cre -
-ra - tion. (n) cre -
give me ins - pi - ra - tion. cre -
-ra - tion, ins - pi - ra - tion. (n)
-ra - tion. In the be - gin-ning was cre - a - tion
give me In the be - gin-ning was cre - a - tion
98
-a - tion cos I've done my cal - cu -
re - ve - la - tions cos I've done my cal - cu -
-a - tion I'm not scared of re - ve - la - tions cos I've done my cal - cu -
-a - tion I'm not scared of re - ve - la - tions cos I've done my cal - cu -
-a - tion scared of re - ve - la - tions
I'm not scared of re - ve - la - tions
I'm not scared of re - ve - la - tions cos I've done my cal - cu -
I'm not scared cos I've done my cal - cu -



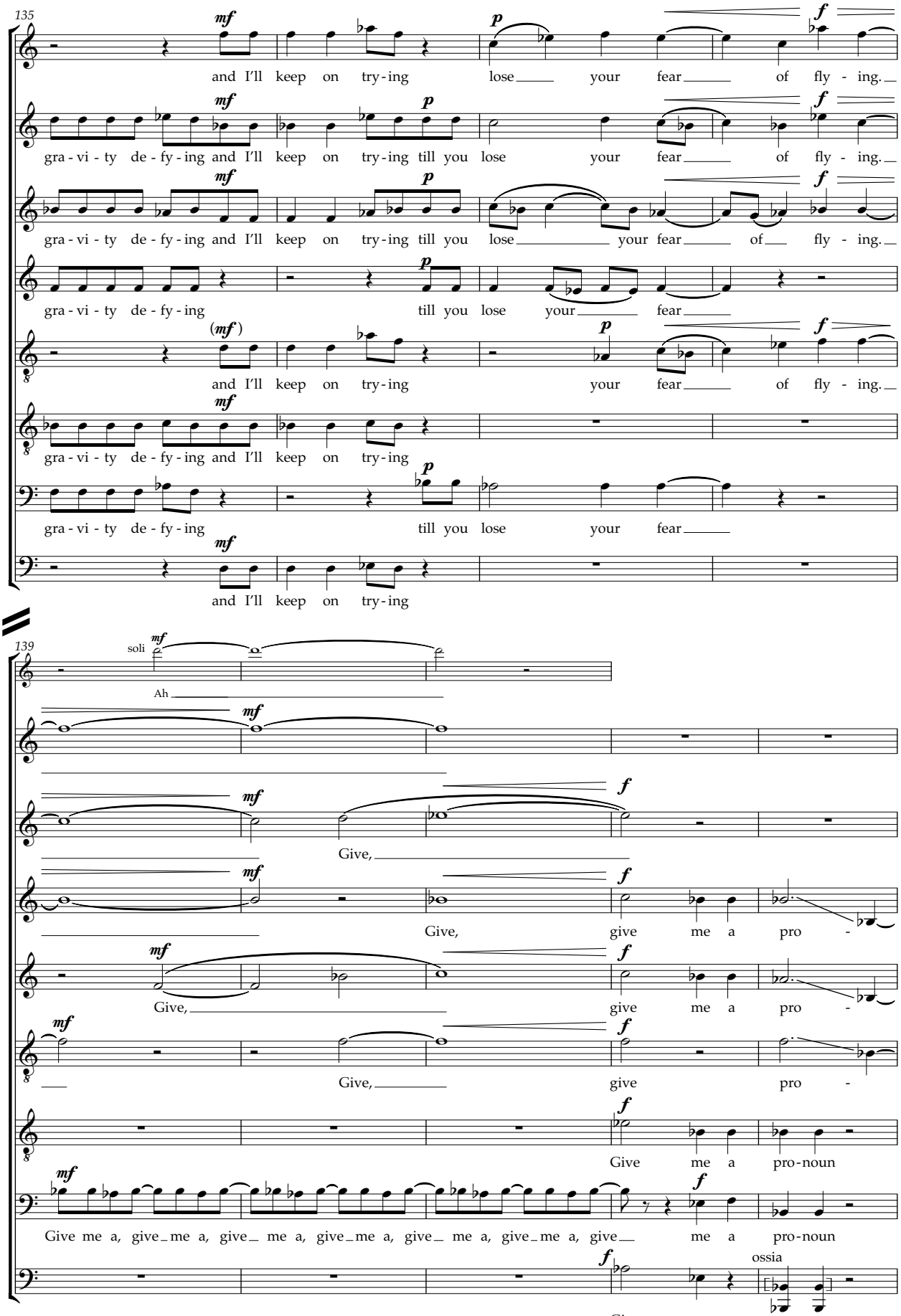
*omit the 's' and sing 'hope'.


114
p
talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,
talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,
mf
I got more skills than I got
mf
I got more skills than I got
117
talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,
talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,
mf
I'm fired by a - dre - na - line
me - lan - in
mf
I'm fired by a - dre - na - line
me - lan - in by a - dre - na - line

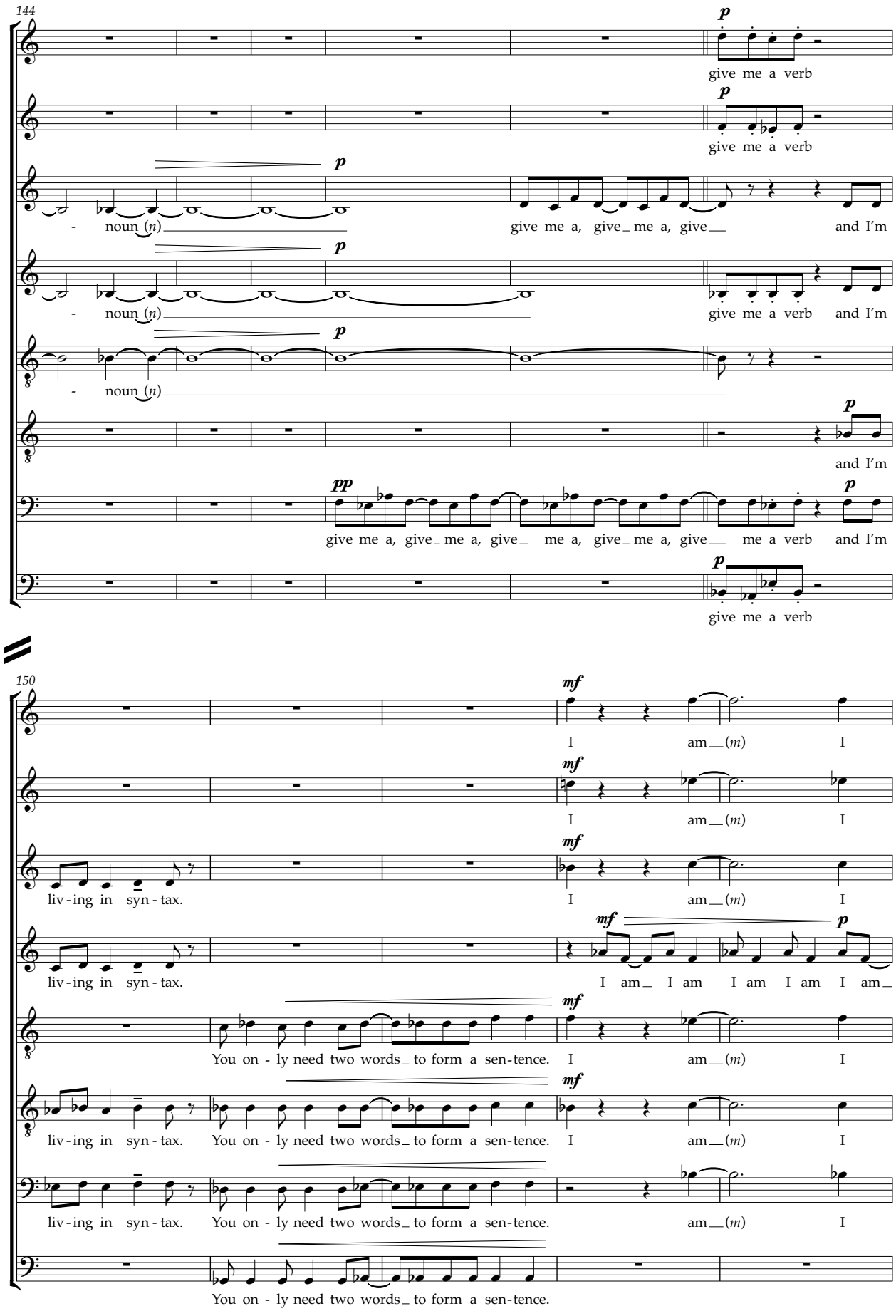

120
f
it's fe - mi - nine.
f
it's fe - mi - nine.
talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,
talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,
mf
if you wan - na know what rhyme it is
(mf)
if you wan - na know what rhyme it is
f
it's fe - mi - nine.
(mf)
if you wan - na know what rhyme it is
ossia
(mf)
if you wan - na know what rhyme it is
123
p
mf
(n) Cos I'm Eve
p
mf
(n) Cos I'm Eve
mp
p
fe - - - - - mi - nine(n) talk - ing, talk - ing
talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,
mf
Cos I'm Eve
p
mf
(n) Cos I'm Eve

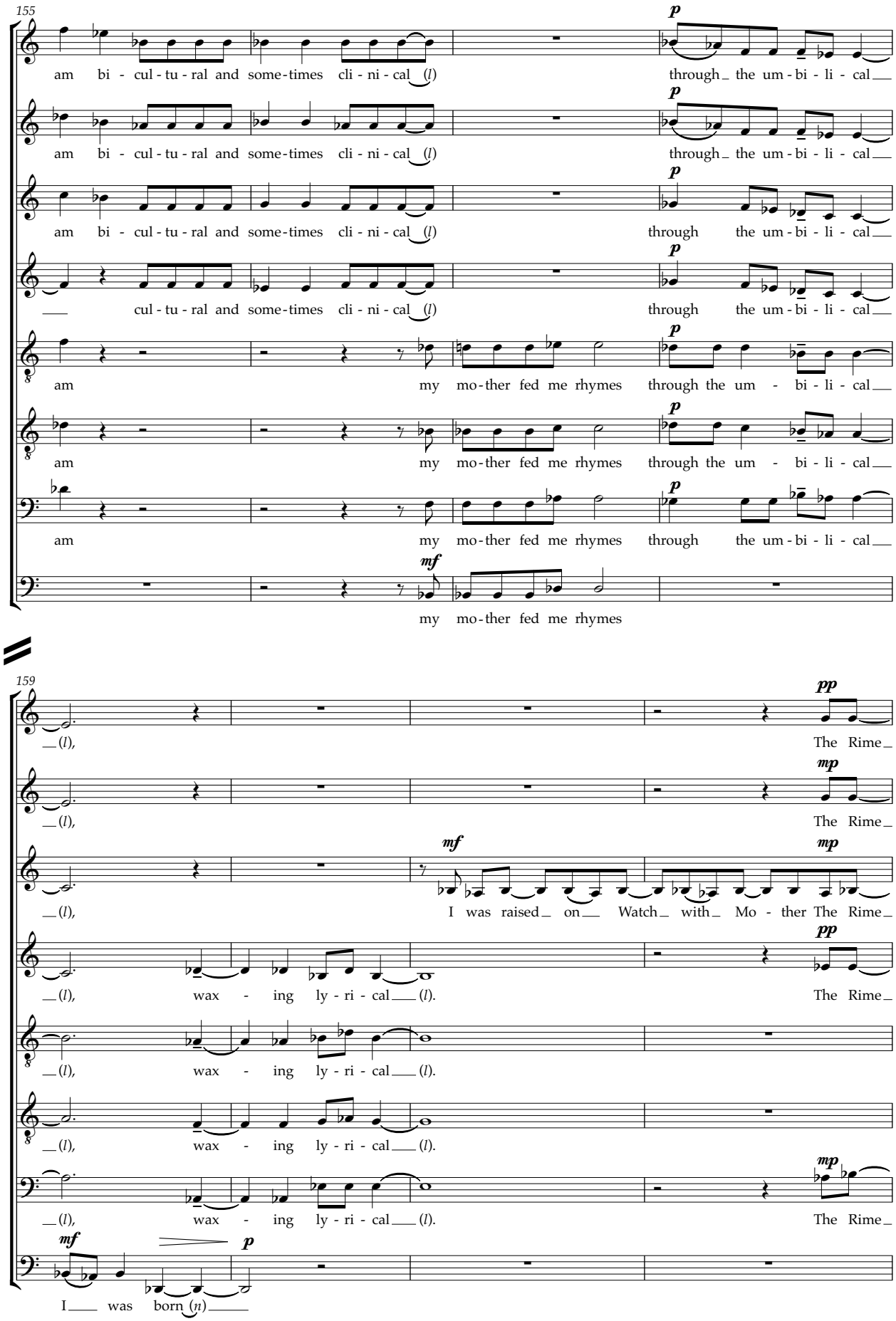


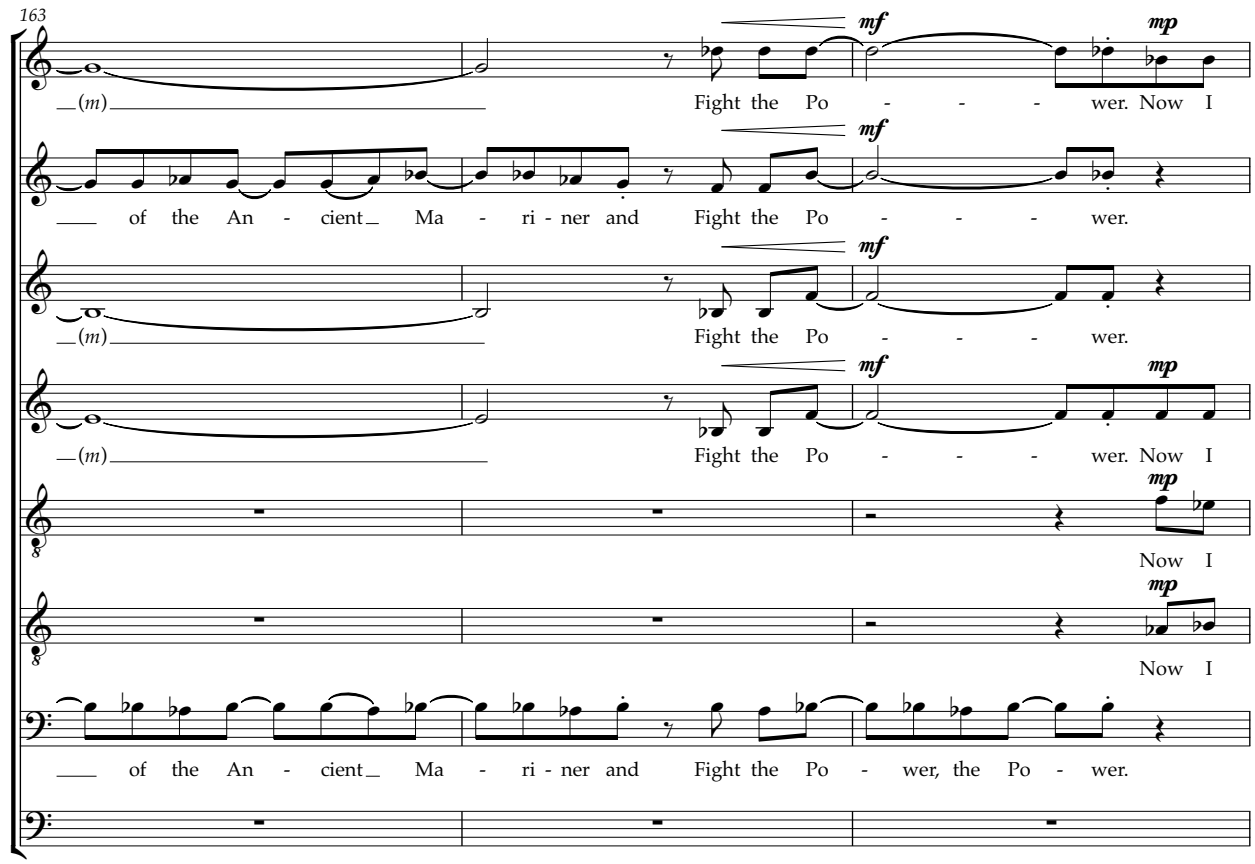
*the slide should be just audible landing with this pitch or one close.

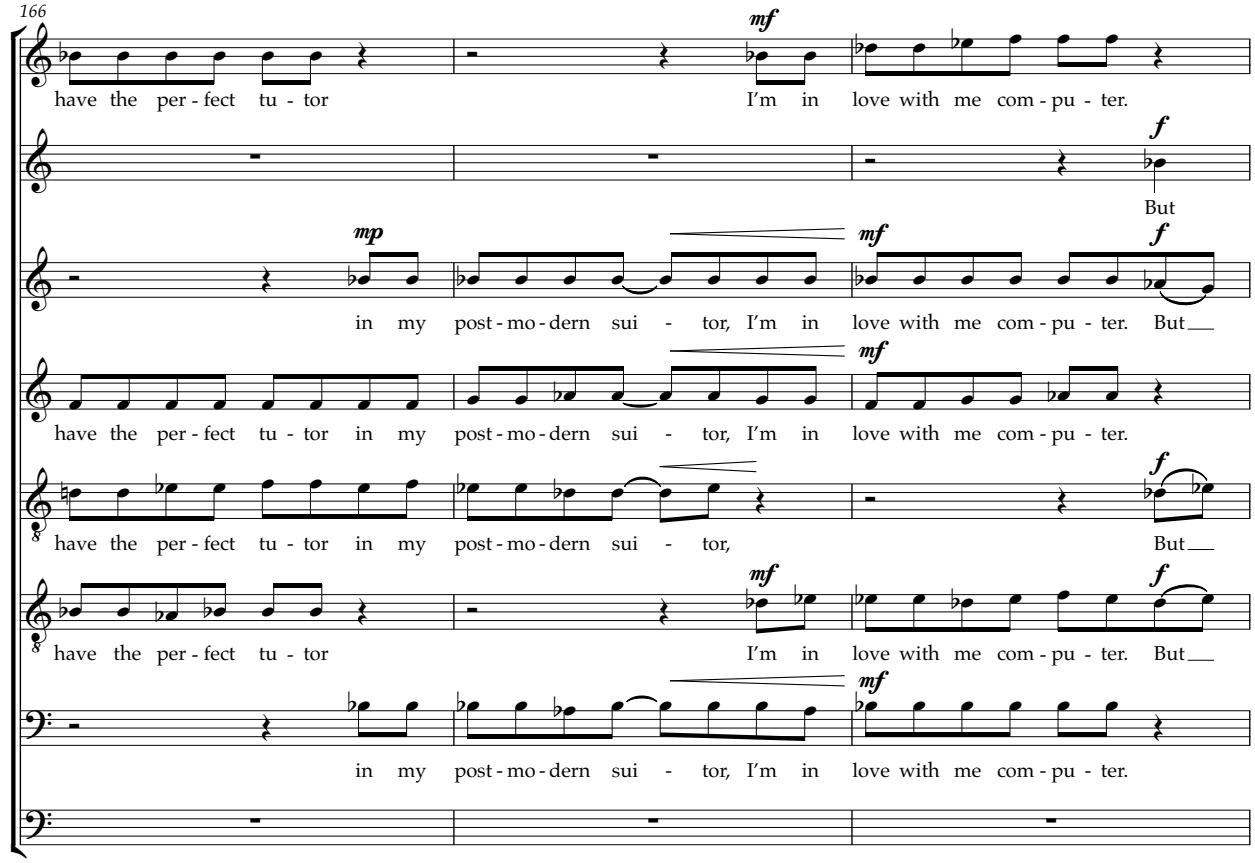


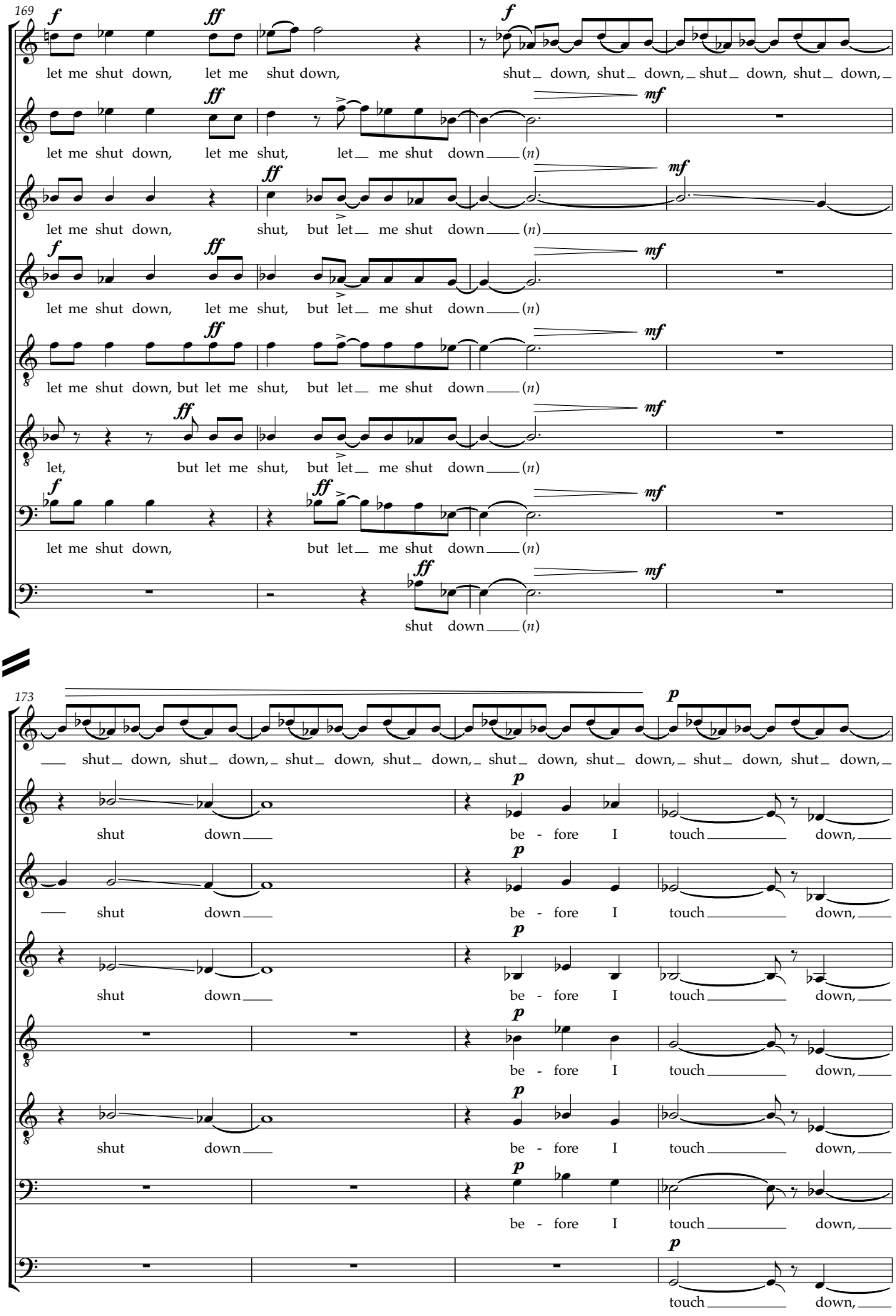
*omit if there is no singer that can sing this delicately.


144
p
give me a verb
p
give me a verb
p
- noun (n)
give me a, give_ me a, give__ and I'm
p
- noun (n)
give me a verb and I'm
p
- noun (n)
p
and I'm
pp
p
give me a, give_ me a, give_ me a, give_ me a, give__ me a verb and I'm
p
give me a verb
150
mf
I am__(m) I
mf
I am__(m) I
mf
liv - ing in syn - tax.
I am__(m) I
mf
p
liv - ing in syn - tax.
I am_ I am I am I am I am_
mf
You on - ly need two words_ to form a sen - tence.
I am__(m) I
mf
liv - ing in syn - tax.
You on - ly need two words_ to form a sen - tence.
I am__(m) I
liv - ing in syn - tax.
You on - ly need two words_ to form a sen - tence.
am__(m) I
You on - ly need two words_ to form a sen - tence.


155
am bi - cul - tu - ral and some-times cli - ni - cal (l) through the um - bi - li - cal
am bi - cul - tu - ral and some-times cli - ni - cal (l) through the um - bi - li - cal
am bi - cul - tu - ral and some-times cli - ni - cal (l) through the um - bi - li - cal
cul - tu - ral and some-times cli - ni - cal (l) through the um - bi - li - cal
am my mo-ther fed me rhymes through the um - bi - li - cal
am my mo-ther fed me rhymes through the um - bi - li - cal
am my mo-ther fed me rhymes through the um - bi - li - cal
my mo-ther fed me rhymes
159
(l), The Rime
(l), The Rime
(l), I was raised on Watch with Mo - ther The Rime
(l), wax - ing ly - ri - cal (l). The Rime
(l), wax - ing ly - ri - cal (l).
(l), wax - ing ly - ri - cal (l).
(l), wax - ing ly - ri - cal (l). The Rime
I was born (n)


163
mf
mp
(m)
Fight the Po - - - - wer. Now I
of the An - cient Ma - ri - ner and Fight the Po - - - - wer.
(m)
Fight the Po - - - - wer.
(m)
Fight the Po - - - - wer. Now I
Now I
Now I
of the An - cient Ma - ri - ner and Fight the Po - wer, the Po - wer.


166
mf
have the per - fect tu - tor I'm in love with me com - pu - ter.
f
But
mp
mf
f
in my post - mo - dern sui - tor, I'm in love with me com - pu - ter. But
mf
have the per - fect tu - tor in my post - mo - dern sui - tor, I'm in love with me com - pu - ter.
f
have the per - fect tu - tor in my post - mo - dern sui - tor, But
mf
f
have the per - fect tu - tor I'm in love with me com - pu - ter. But
mf
in my post - mo - dern sui - tor, I'm in love with me com - pu - ter.


169
let me shut down, let me shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down,
let me shut down, let me shut, let me shut down (n)
let me shut down, shut, but let me shut down (n)
let me shut down, let me shut, but let me shut down (n)
let me shut down, but let me shut, but let me shut down (n)
let, but let me shut, but let me shut down (n)
let me shut down, but let me shut down (n)
shut down (n)
173
shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down,
shut down be - fore I touch down,
shut down be - fore I touch down,
shut down be - fore I touch down,
be - fore I touch down,
shut down be - fore I touch down,
be - fore I touch down,
touch down,