Chestatee 2022 Font Ensemble Audition Packet

The following is the audition material for the 2022 season of the Chestatee High School Drumline. All persons auditioning will be held responsible for the exercises in the packet as well as the technique used to play each individual exercise. This packet will contain a technique breakdown to provide each potential member with the necessary technique needed to play at the highest and most consistent level. Thank you so much for your interest in the 2022 season and the best of luck to all of you.

Matt Young

Director of Bands

Chestatee High School

Technique Breakdown

Sound production is a very important aspect for every percussionist and for the front ensemble to be successful a unified and consistent approach to the keyboard will produce a high quality of sound at all dynamic levels. Here at Chestatee High School, the approach that we use is a velocity approach that we like to call a “piston stroke” approach to playing. In other words the player will use the weight of the arm and hand to bring out the sound that the mallet keyboard produces by striking the instrument from the “up” position and pulling it back as fast as possible. The breakdown of the technique is fairly simple and should be as follows:

Body Position

When you first approach the instrument, the instrument should be at a comfortable height. Simply rotating your arms upward towards the board would leave you in a comfortable (almost 90° angle); parallel with the board. Your arms should feel like they are at a natural “falling” point. Your stance should be shoulder width apart with toes pointed slightly out from your body, while maintaining about a hand’s width away from the board. Take some time in front of a board and find a relaxed natural position based around this description

Set Position

Mallet heads are aligned equally at full wrist extension above the keyboard, which is also the top of the Piston Stroke. Distance between mallet heads will change depending on the interval to be played. Mallet heads should angle in and create an “A” shaped frame that is maintained as we move around the keyboard. Keep the wrists low and do not use your arm to raise the mallets. Stay relaxed at all times

2 Mallet Technique

Divide the mallet shaft into thirds. Place the bottom third in the palm of your hand gripping the mallet with your pinky and ring fingers. Your index finger and thumb should line up directly on the third division of the mallet leaving approx. 2” of the mallet sticking out of the back of your hand. The thumb and index finger should connect with the mallet at your first knuckle. A natural space should occur between the first and second and the thumb and index fingers. At most tempos we will encounter (for the exception of very brisk tempos) the front and back of your grip should be relatively relaxed. The back should be a tad more stable to create a solid foundation, but the front between the thumb and index finger should be relaxed until very fast tempos.

The “middle fulcrum” makes use of the weight of your arm with the added benefit of more dexterity and more moderate to brisk tempos as in front fulcrum. Ninety-five percent of the stroke should come from the wrist so it is important that the technique in the hand is solid. The back fingers should remain closed into the palm and the index finger can be slightly relaxed (but not pointed). The other five percent should come from the arm as an extension of a full wrist stroke. There will be exceptions at times but this will be the standard. A marimba or vibraphone played with mallets does not have rebound so this approach allows us to create our own rebound for the Piston Stroke. The mallets should feel heavy in your hands. Be sure that most of the weight that you feel is in the middle of your grip. Not the front or back.

4 Mallet Technique: Stevens Grip

Stevens grip, named after its creator Leigh Howard Stevens, is the most commonly-used 4 - mallet grip in the United States and in the marching percussion world.

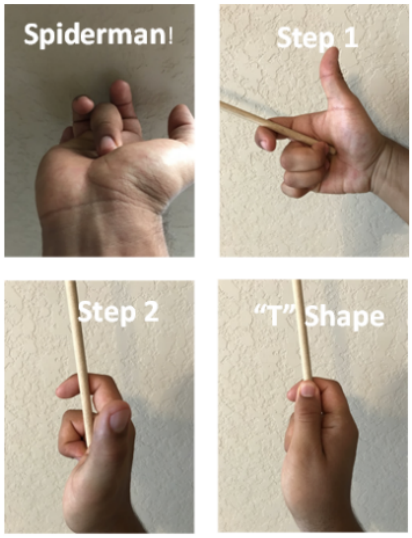
GENERAL CONCEPTS:

- The wrists move in a “chopping” motion rather than the “patting” motion used in 2-mallet technique
- Palms face each other
- Knuckles are stacked vertically
- Thumbnails are facing the ceiling

OUTSIDE MALLET:

Grip the mallet with your pinky and ring finger. The pinky is our “anchor” and must wrap all the way around the mallet providing the foundation for the grip. There should be about an inch to an inch and a half of mallet protruding behind your pinky. (NOTE: this is actually a modified Stevens grip, many online resources will say to have only a half inch of mallet behind the pinky. This modified grip provides a bit more stability and power for the high demands of marching applications). The outer mallet should go up at about a 45 degree angle in relationship to the forearm. This will ensure the mallets will hang evenly when the inner mallet is added to the grip.

INSIDE MALLET:

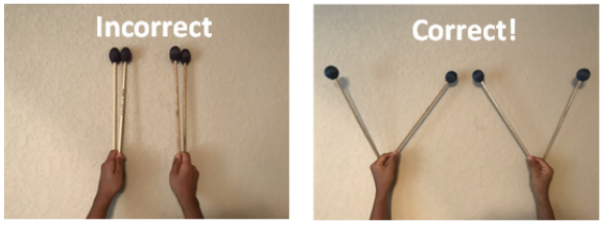


Place the mallet in the center palm of your hand just under your thumb muscle. Your middle finger is wrapped around the mallet, holding it into your palm/thumb muscle with the fingertip (similar to Spider-Man's web shooting action!) Your index finger now acts as a shelf for the inside mallet, and the mallet should be able to rest without any pressure in your hand. We will call this the "bridge". Just like any real bridge, it must never falter or bend. The index finger must always stay out and never curl into your hand at any time.

SETUP:

Finally, place your thumb on the inside mallet directly over the first knuckle of your index finger. The thumb rests on top of the mallet and applies only the minimal amount of pressure to keep it in place. The thumb contacts the mallet with the fleshy part of the thumb, not the tip of the thumb (as seen right). Do not bend your thumb and introduce extraneous pressure. This will allow you to freely change intervals as well as maintain a relaxed grip.

With two mallets in each hand, hold the mallets firmly in the "chopping" position. The mallets should naturally rest in the interval of about a fifth. Lower your hands to the instrument (or the floor if an instrument is not available) and press down so the mallets become even horizontally. Lift the wrist using the "chopping" motion and keep the mallets aligned.



DYNAMIC LEVELS

p — *piano* — 3”
0 degrees
Sticks are parallel to the playing surface

mp — *mezzo piano* - 6”
22.5 degrees

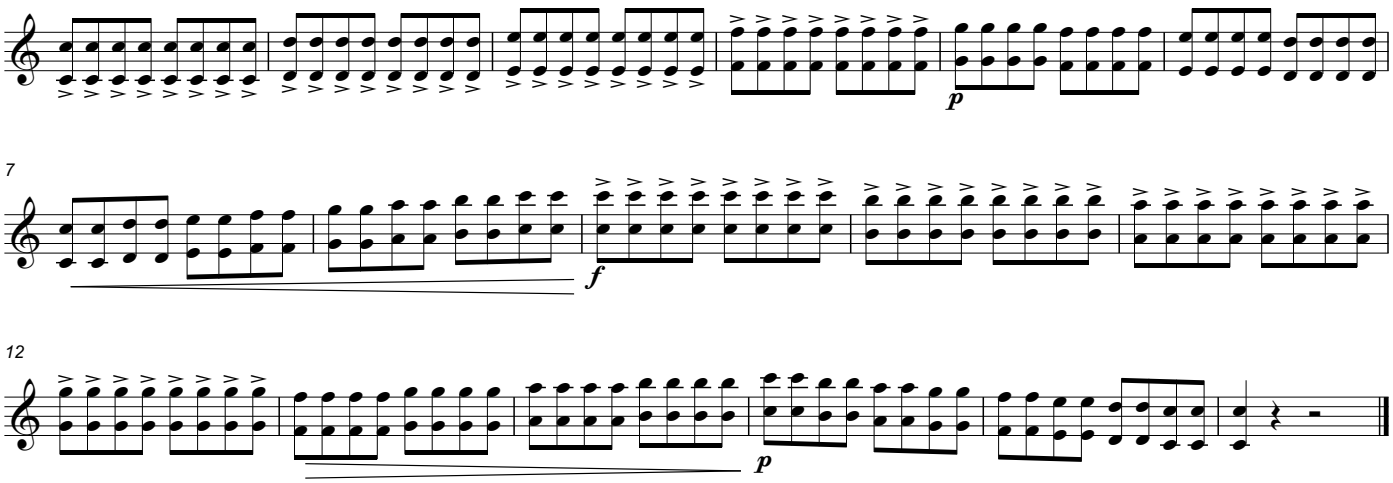
mf — *mezzo forte* - 9”
45 degrees

f — *forte* - 12”
67.5 degrees

ff — *fortissimo* - 15”
90 degrees
Sticks are fully extended, perpendicular to the playing surface

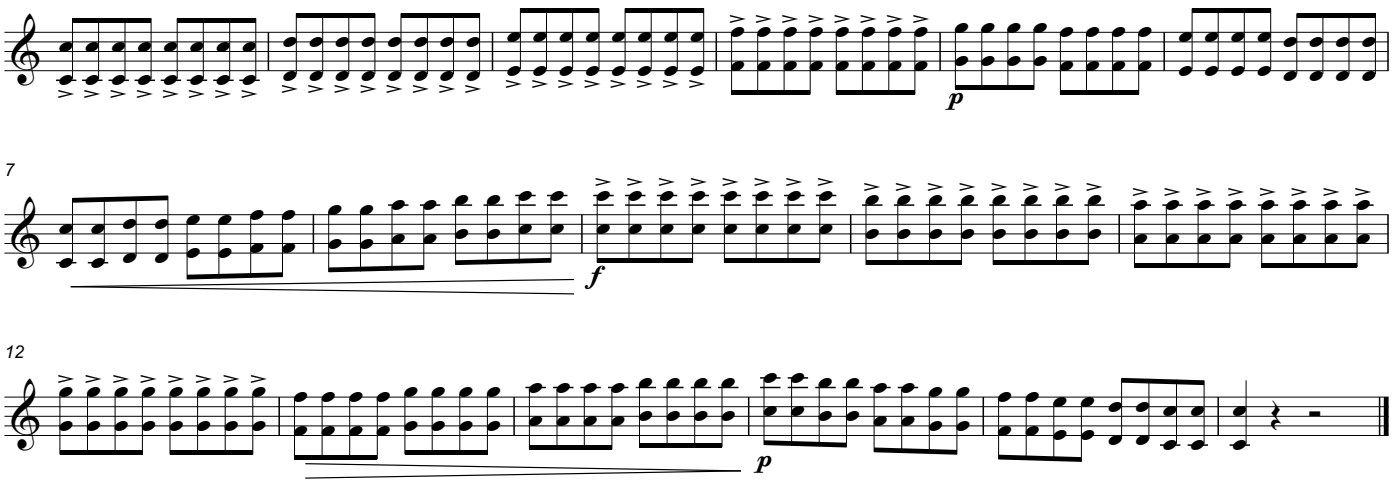
Vibes

Legatos



Marimba

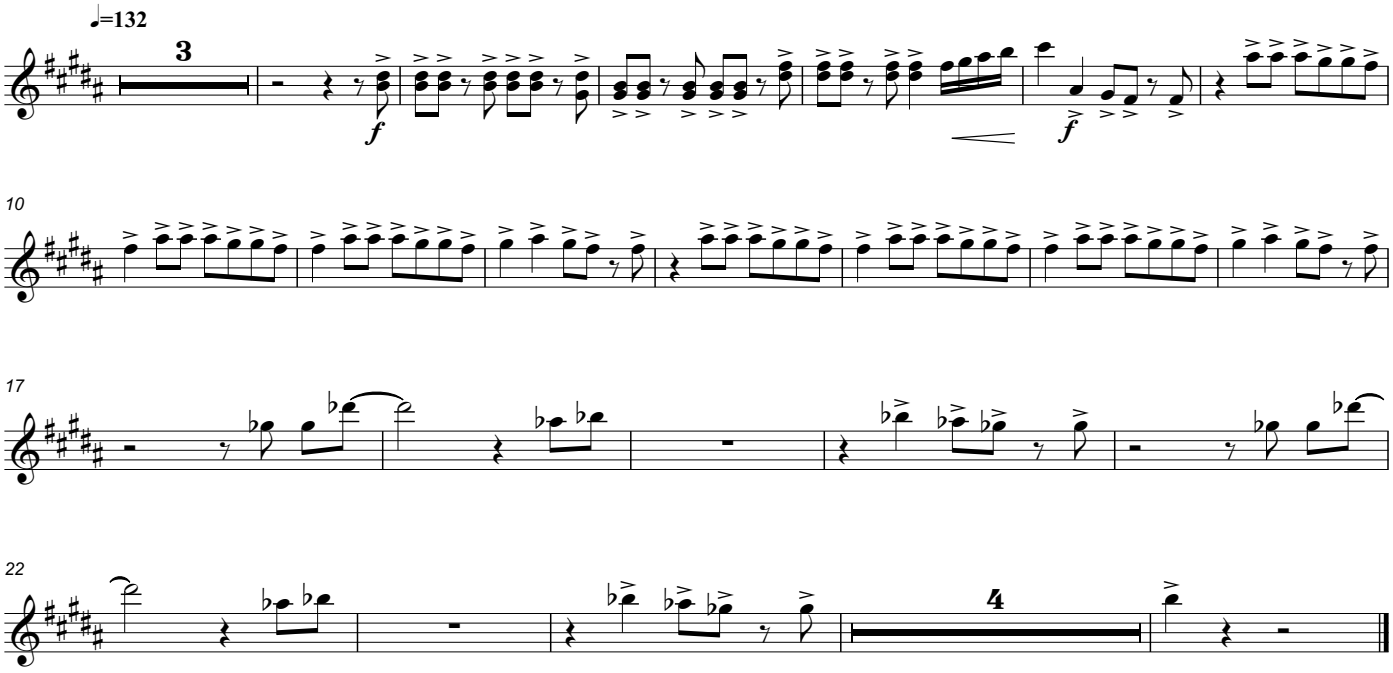
Legatos



Glockenspiel

TGIF

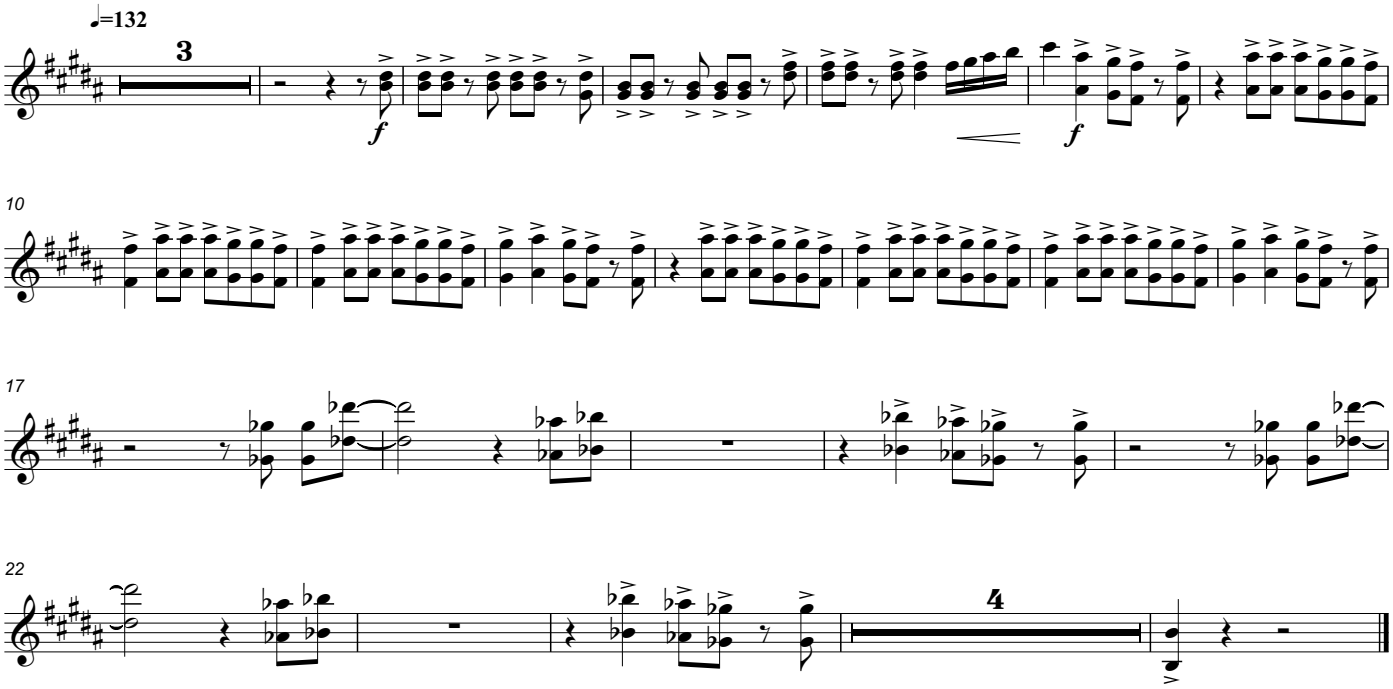
Arr. Matt Young



Vibe 1

TGIF

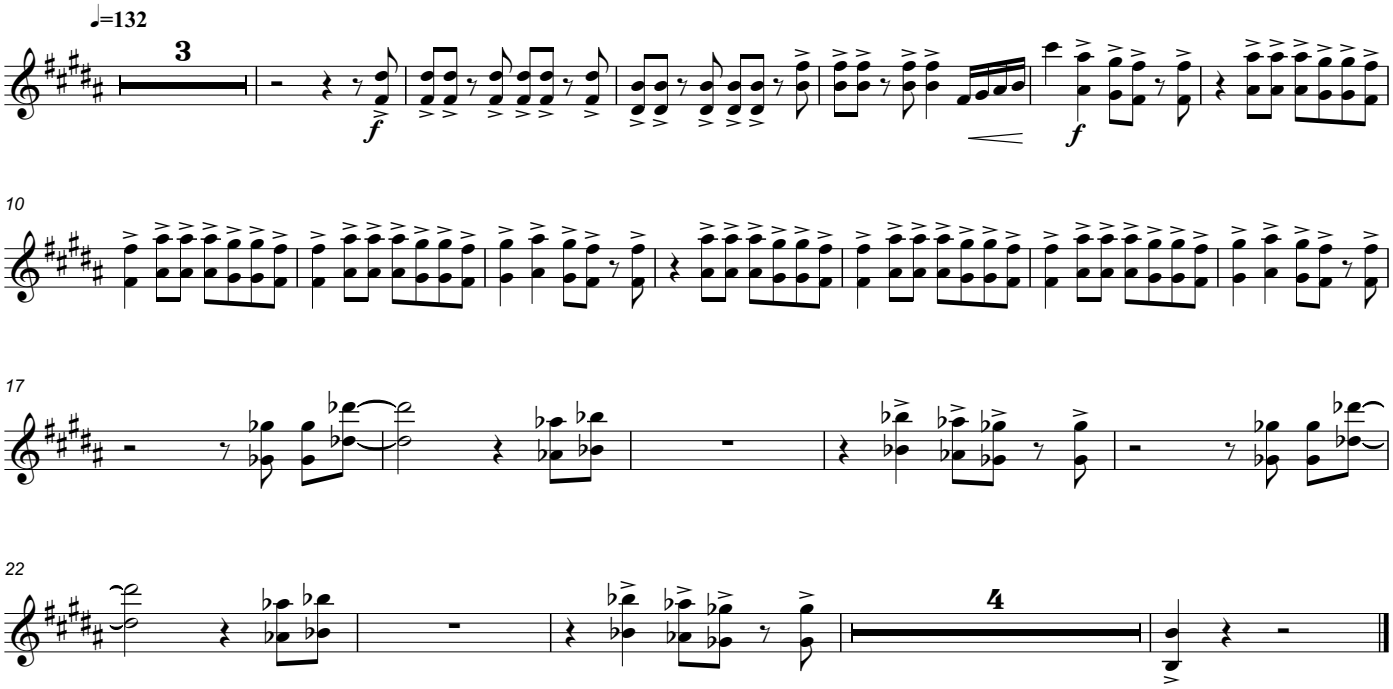
Arr. Matt Young



Vibe 2

TGIF

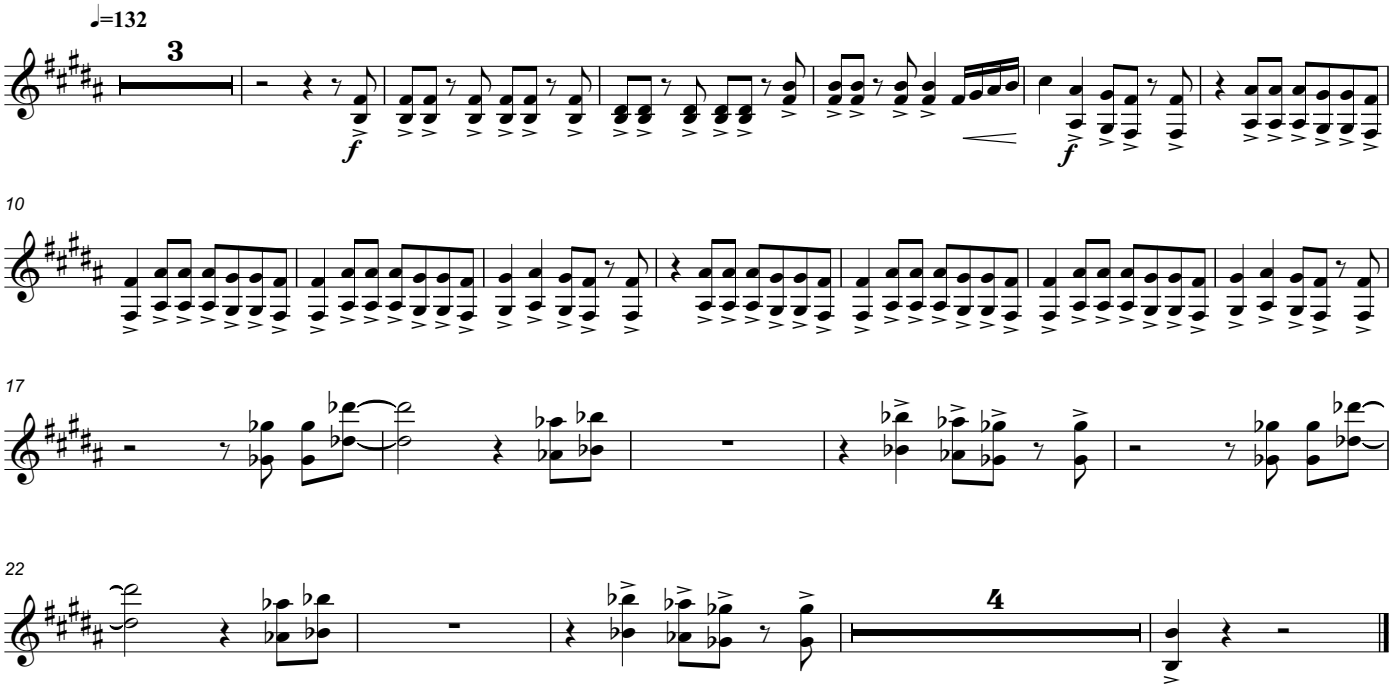
Arr. Matt Young



Vibe 3

TGIF

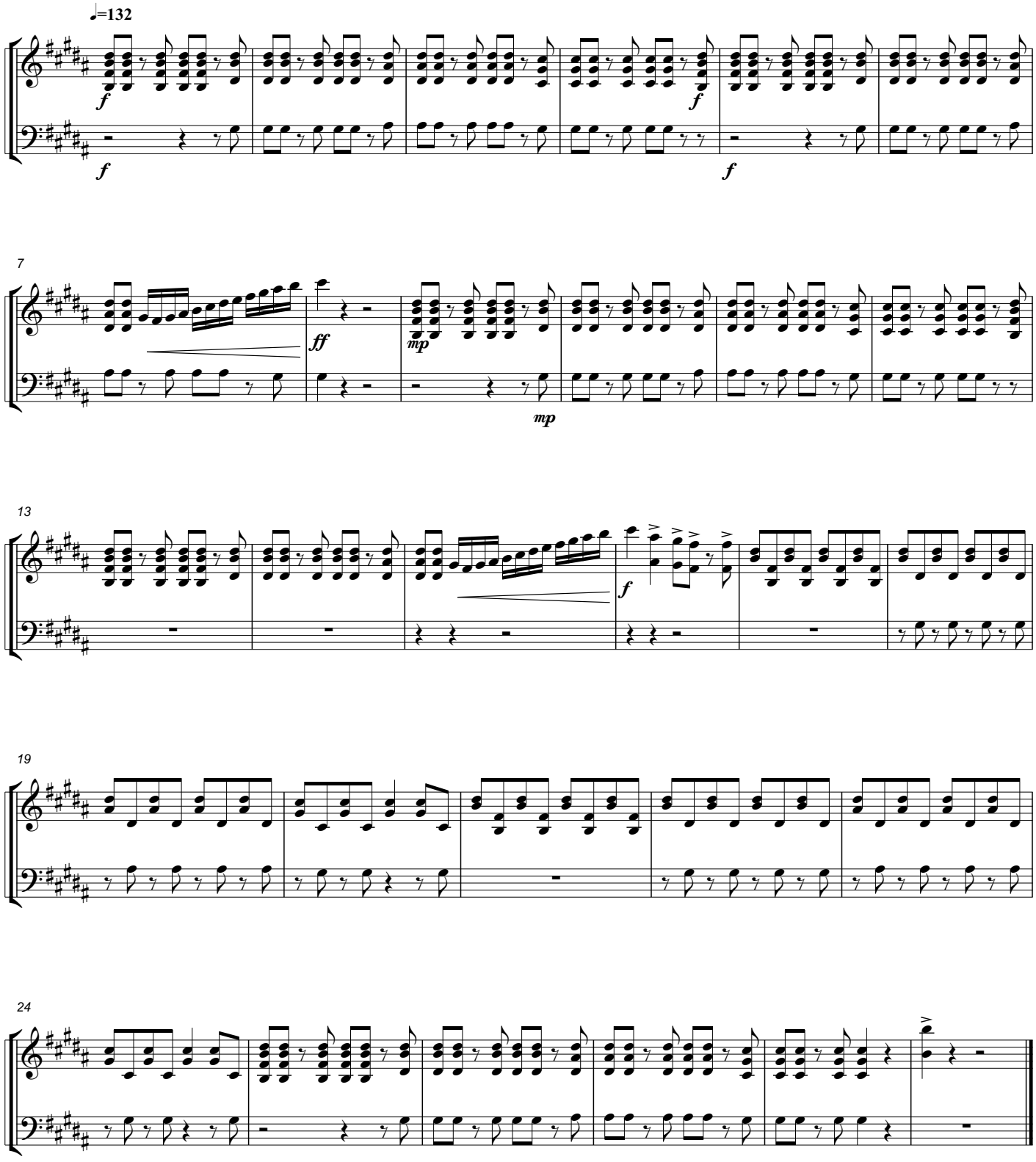
Arr. Matt Young



Marimba 1

TGIF

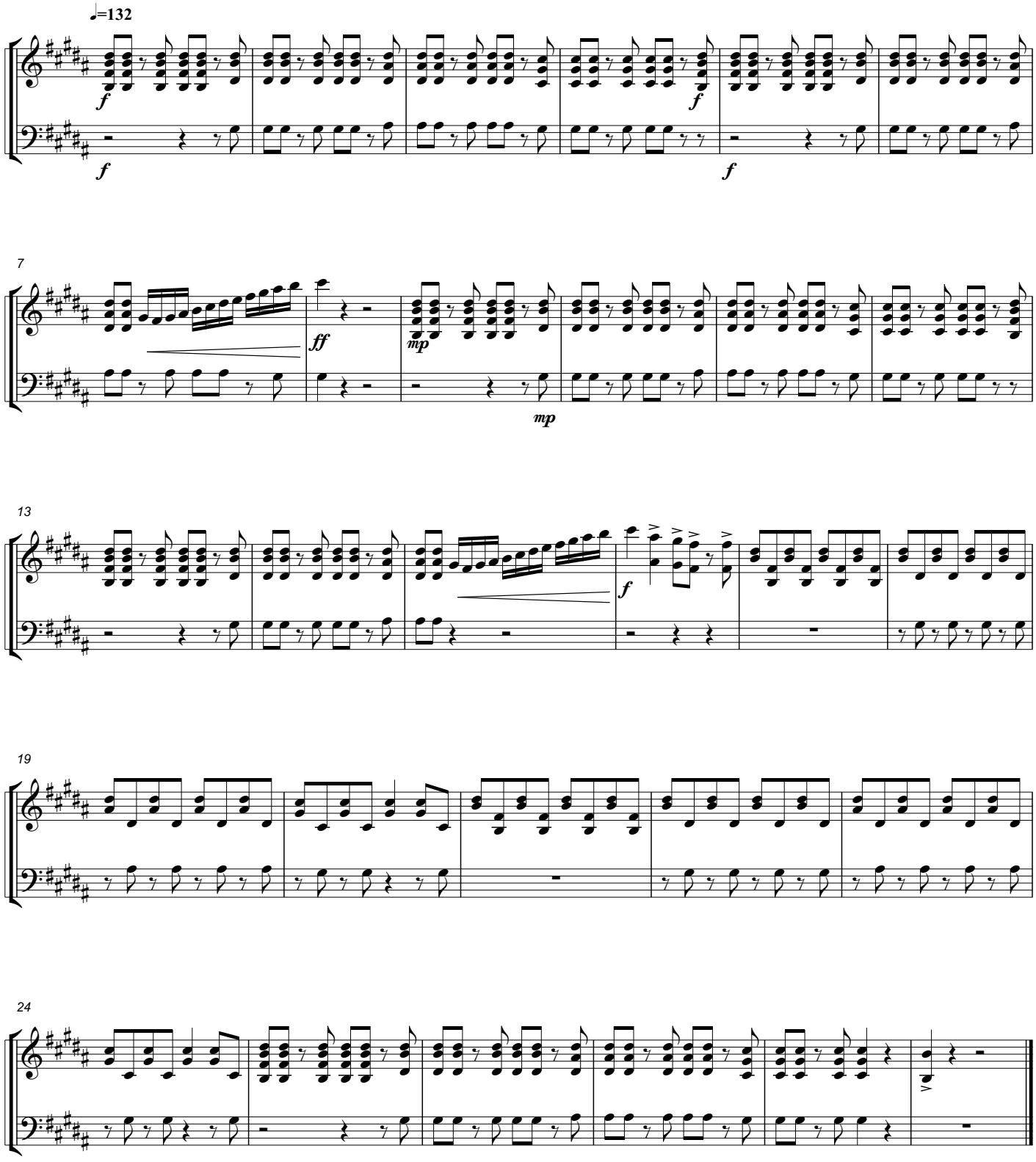
Arr. Matt Young



Marimba 2

TGIF

Arr. Matt Young



Marimba 3

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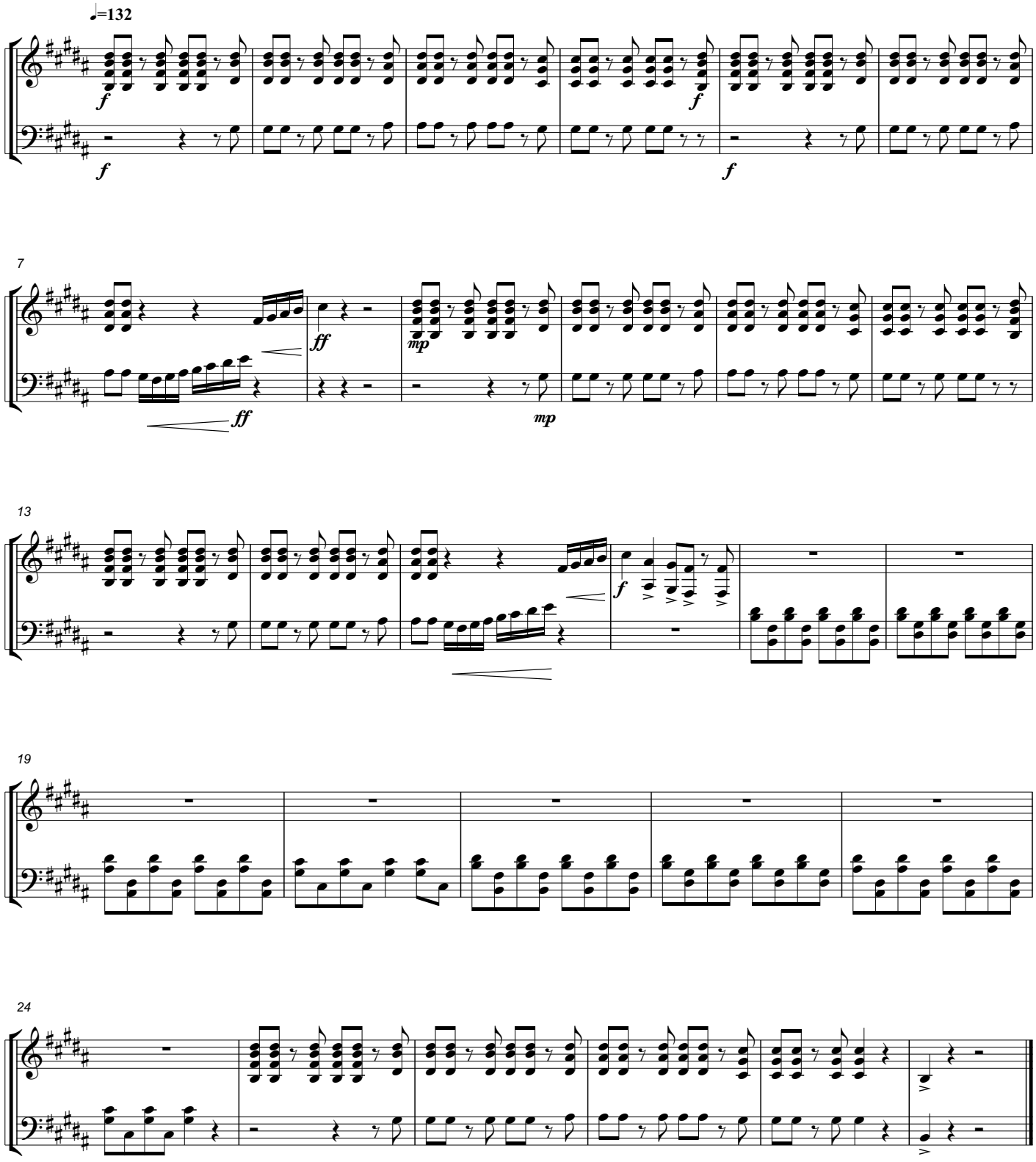
Arr. Matt Young



4-string Bass Guitar

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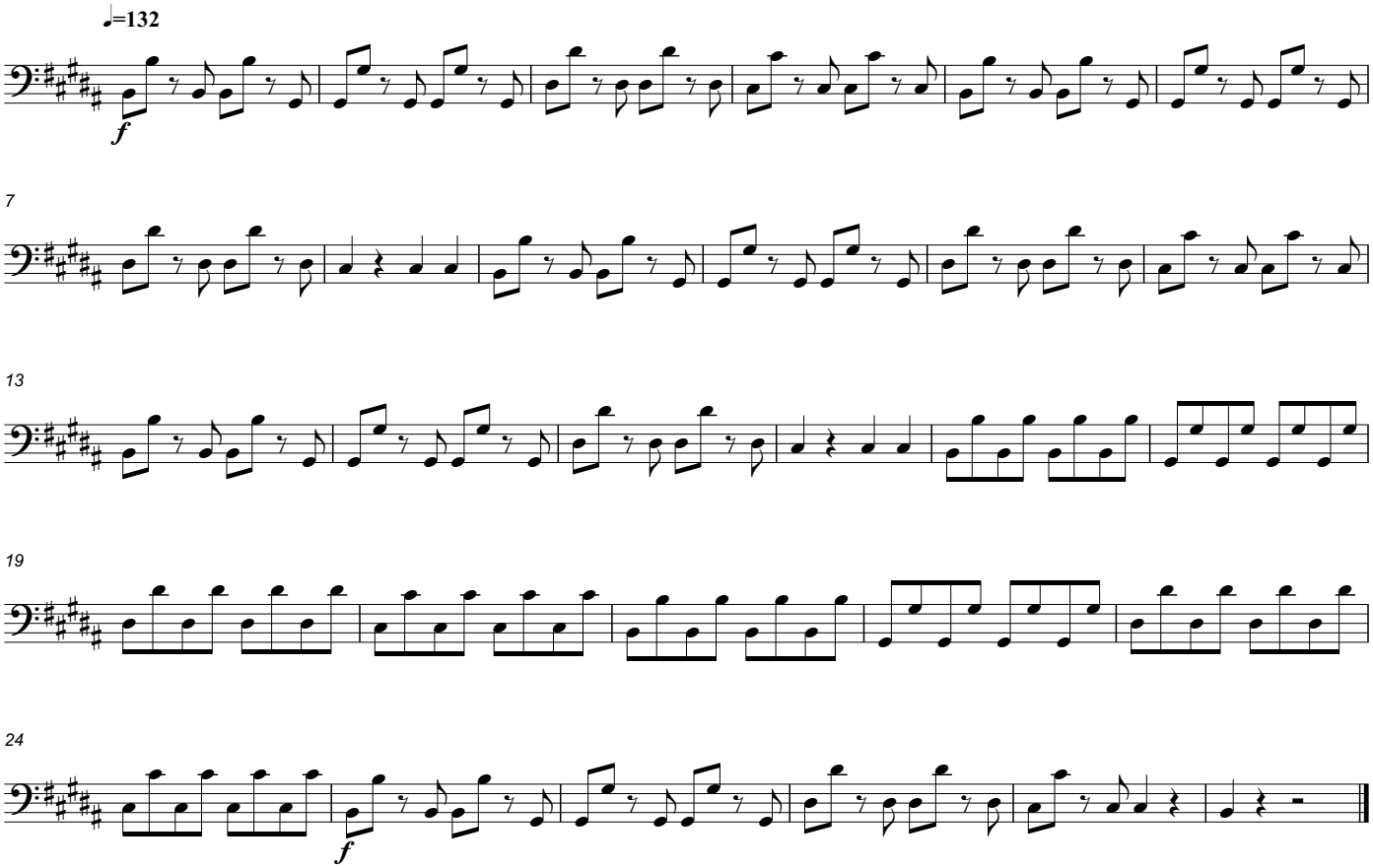
Arr. Matt Young



Drum Set

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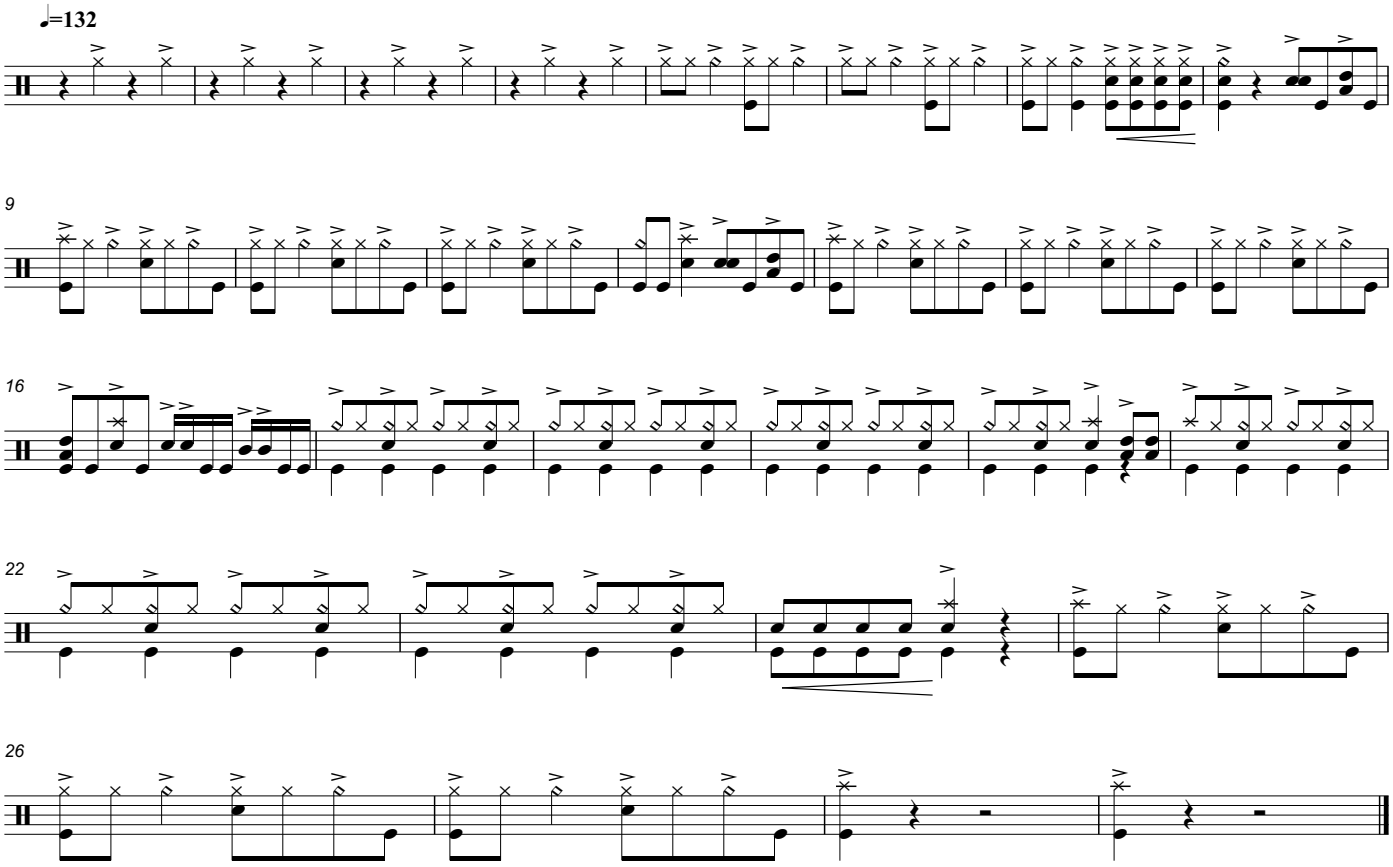
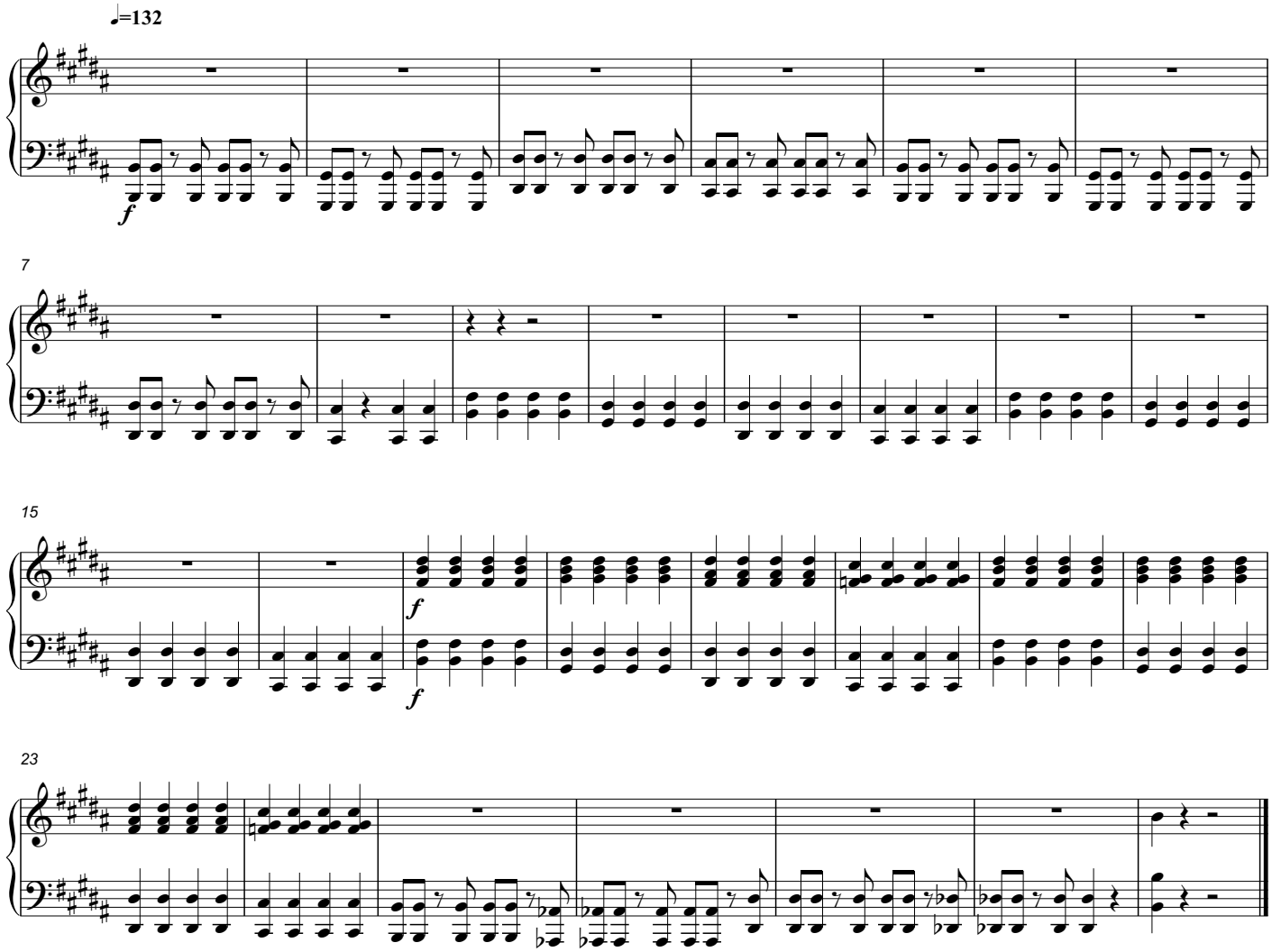
Arr. Matt Young



Pad 3 (Polysynth)

TGIF

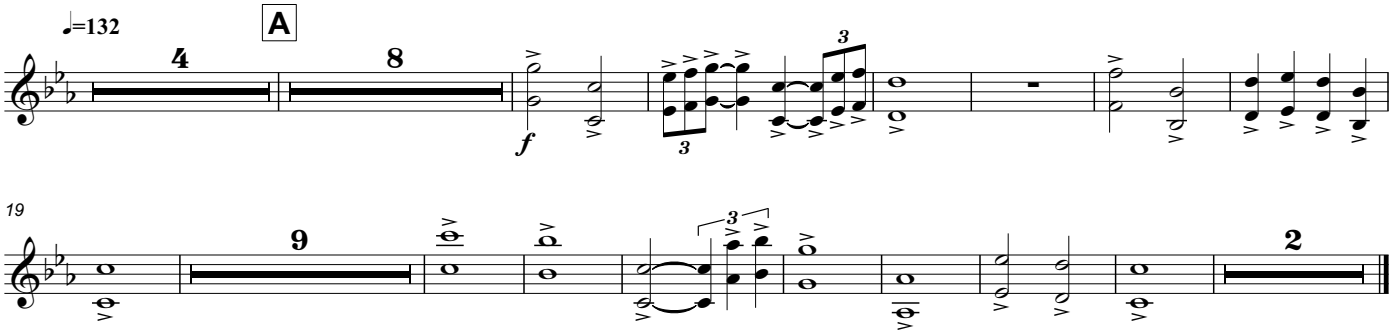
Arr. Matt Young



Glockenspiel

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

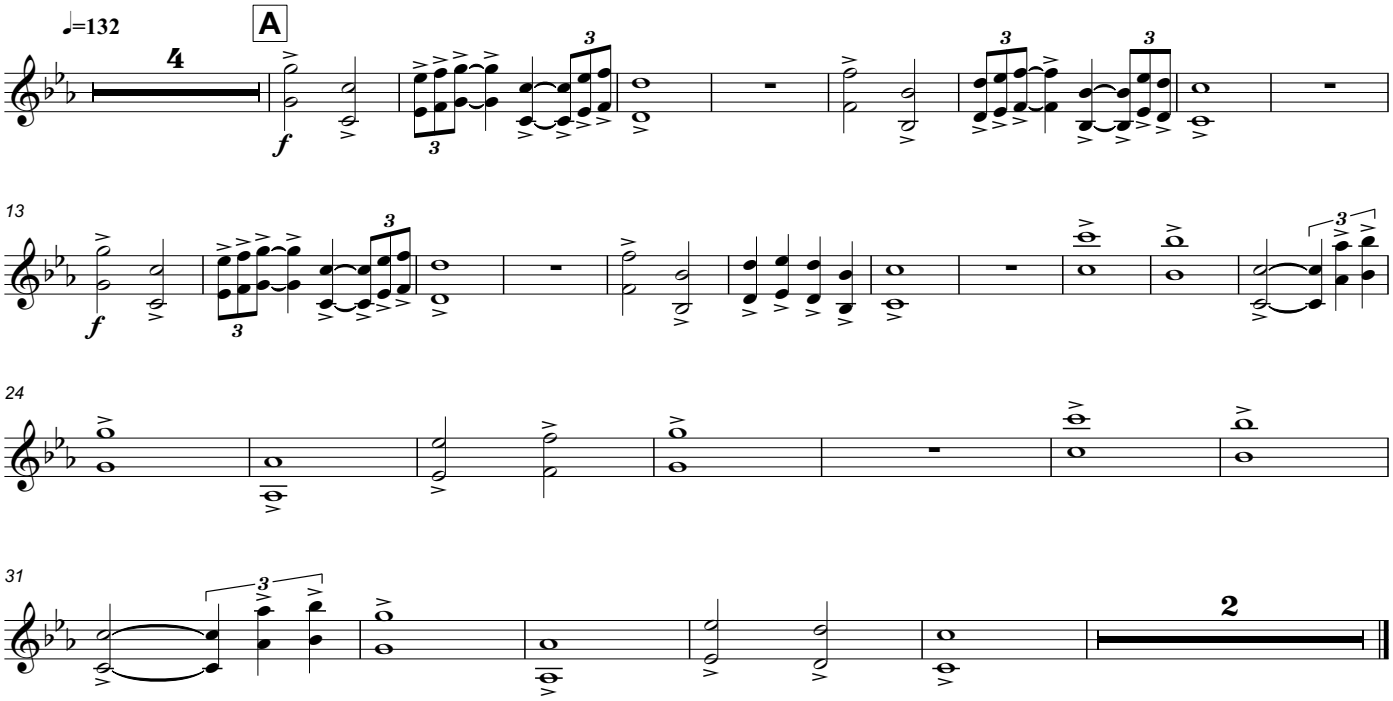
Arr. Matt Young



Vibe 1

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

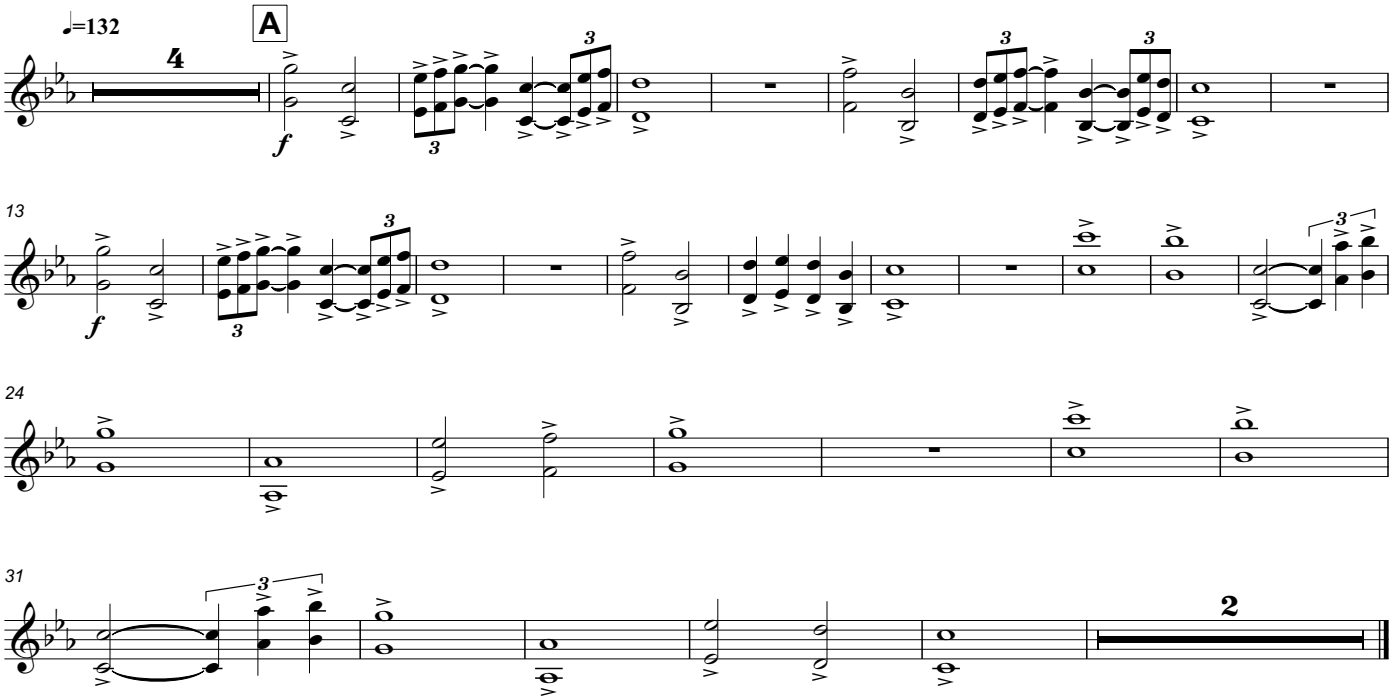
Arr. Matt Young



Vibe 2

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

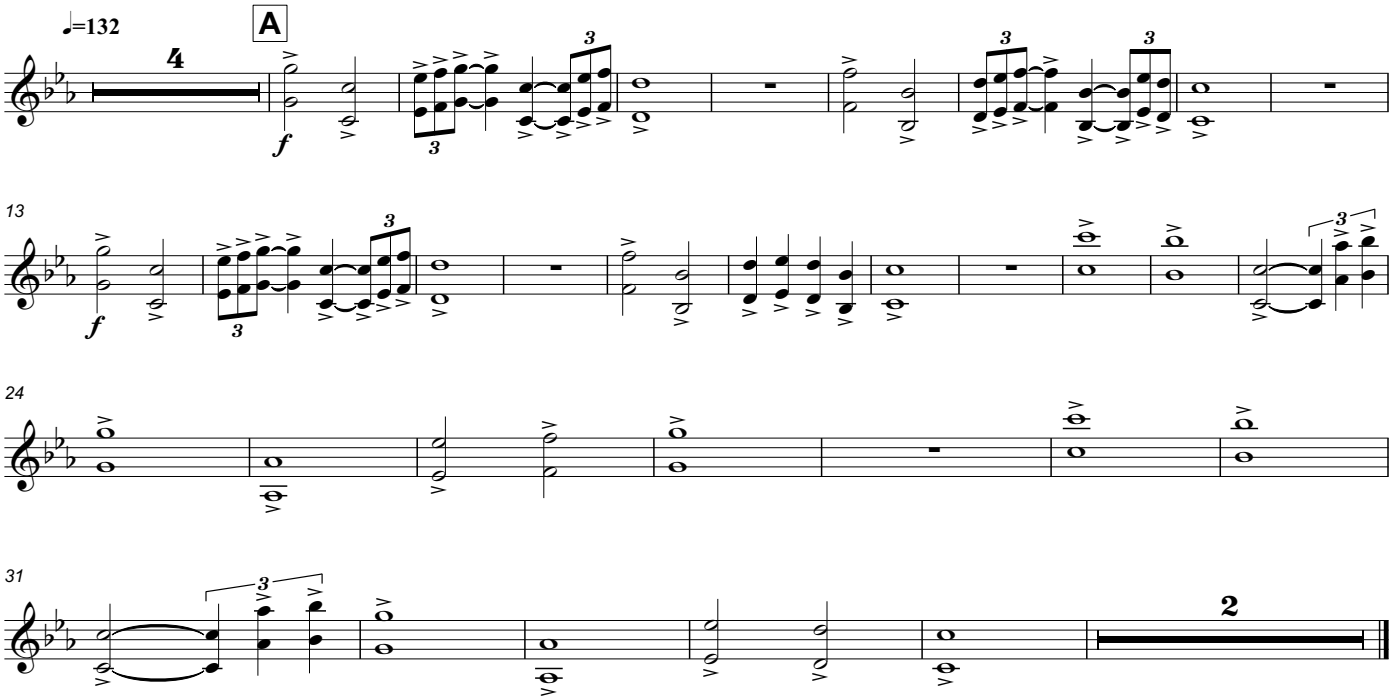
Arr. Matt Young



Vibe 3

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

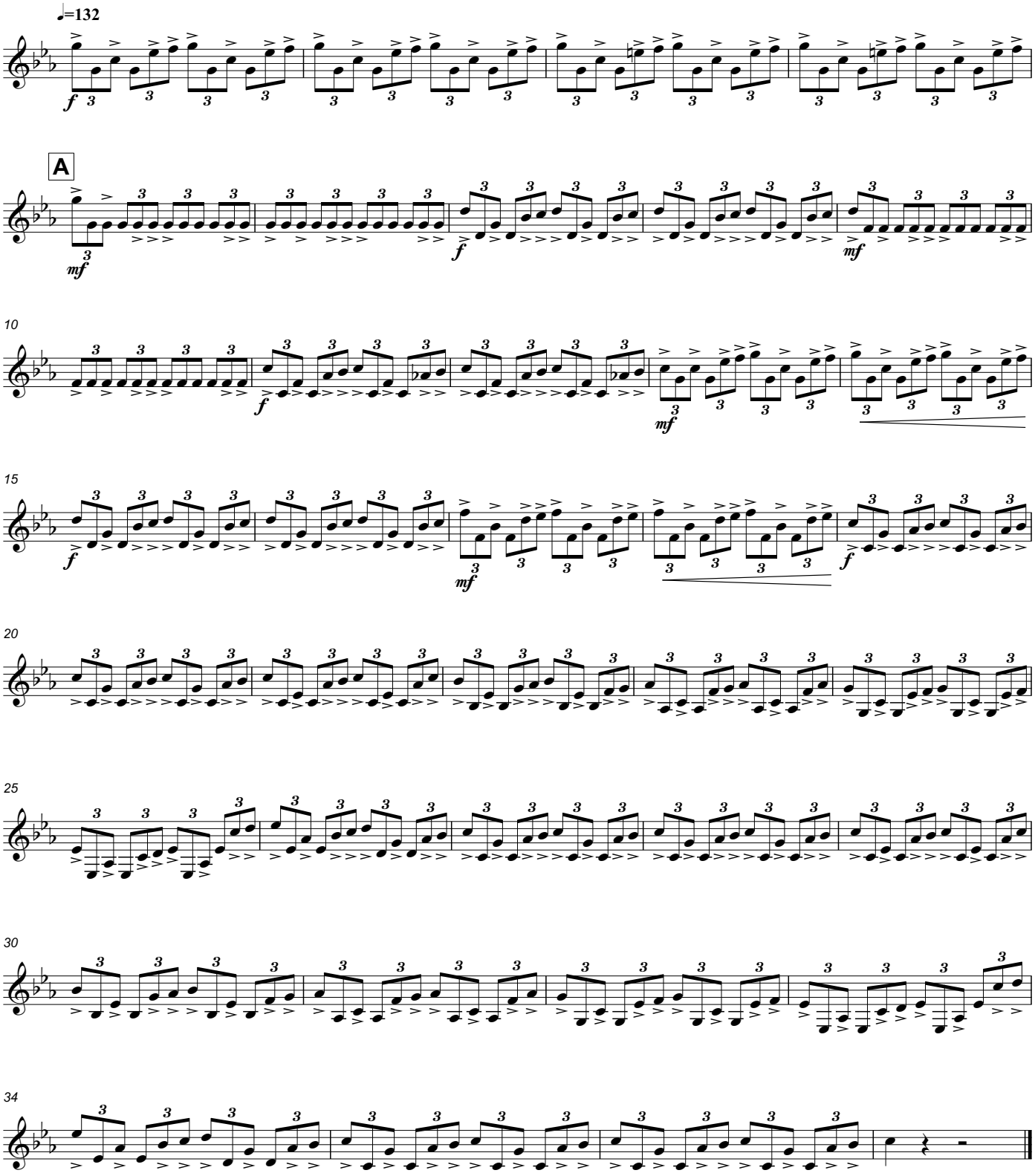
Arr. Matt Young



Marimba 1

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

Arr. Matt Young



Marimba 2

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

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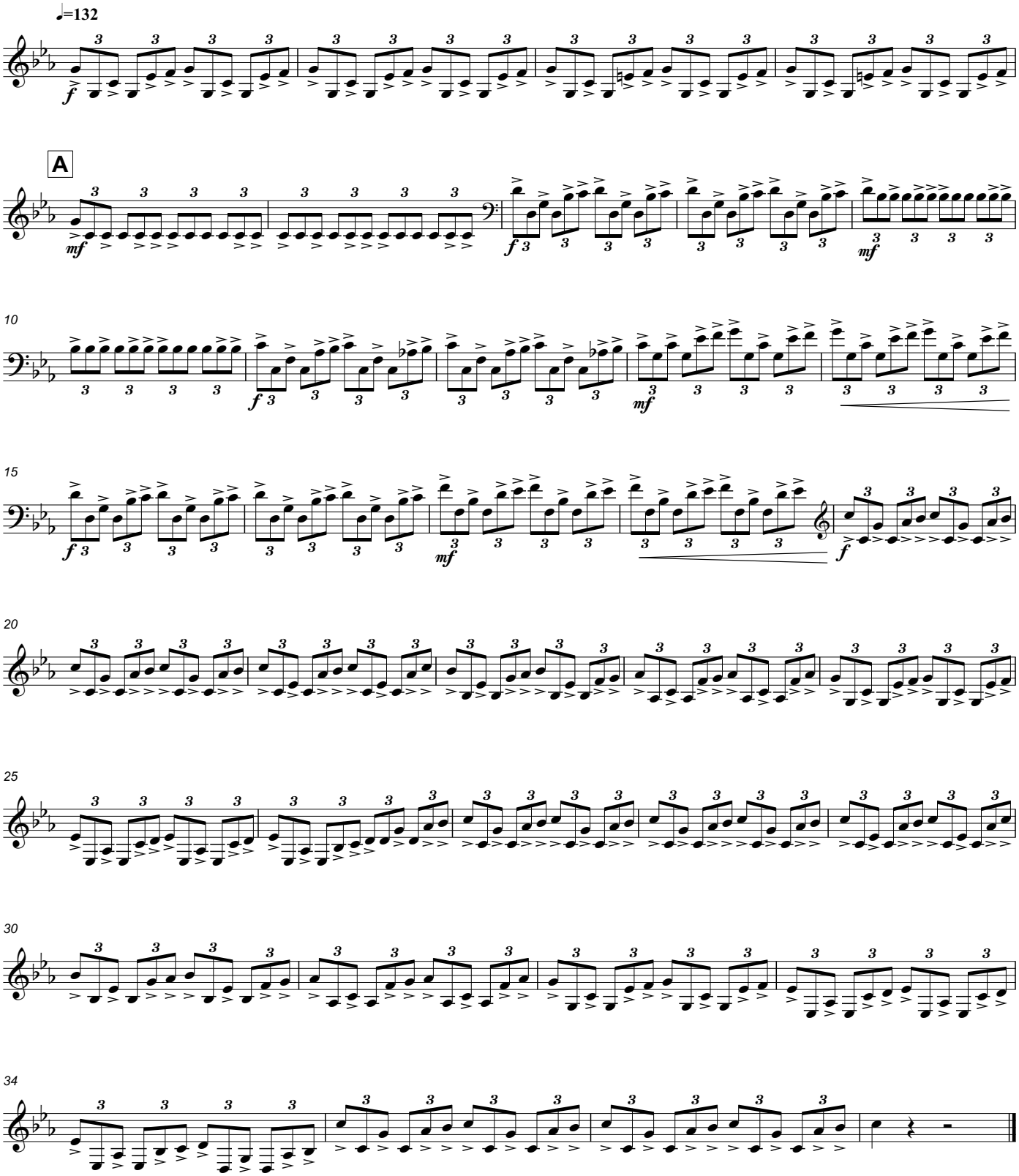
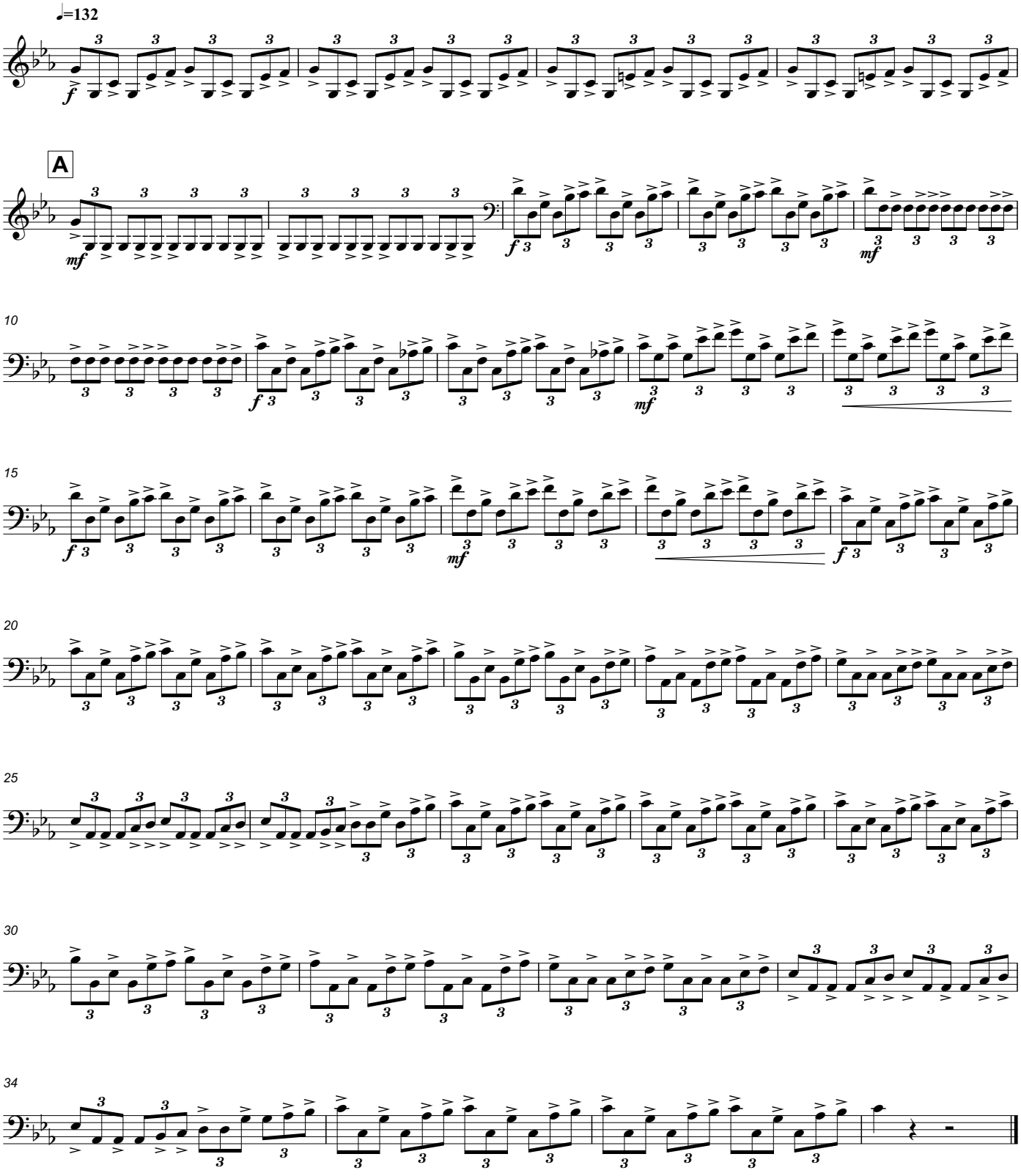


Marimba 3

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

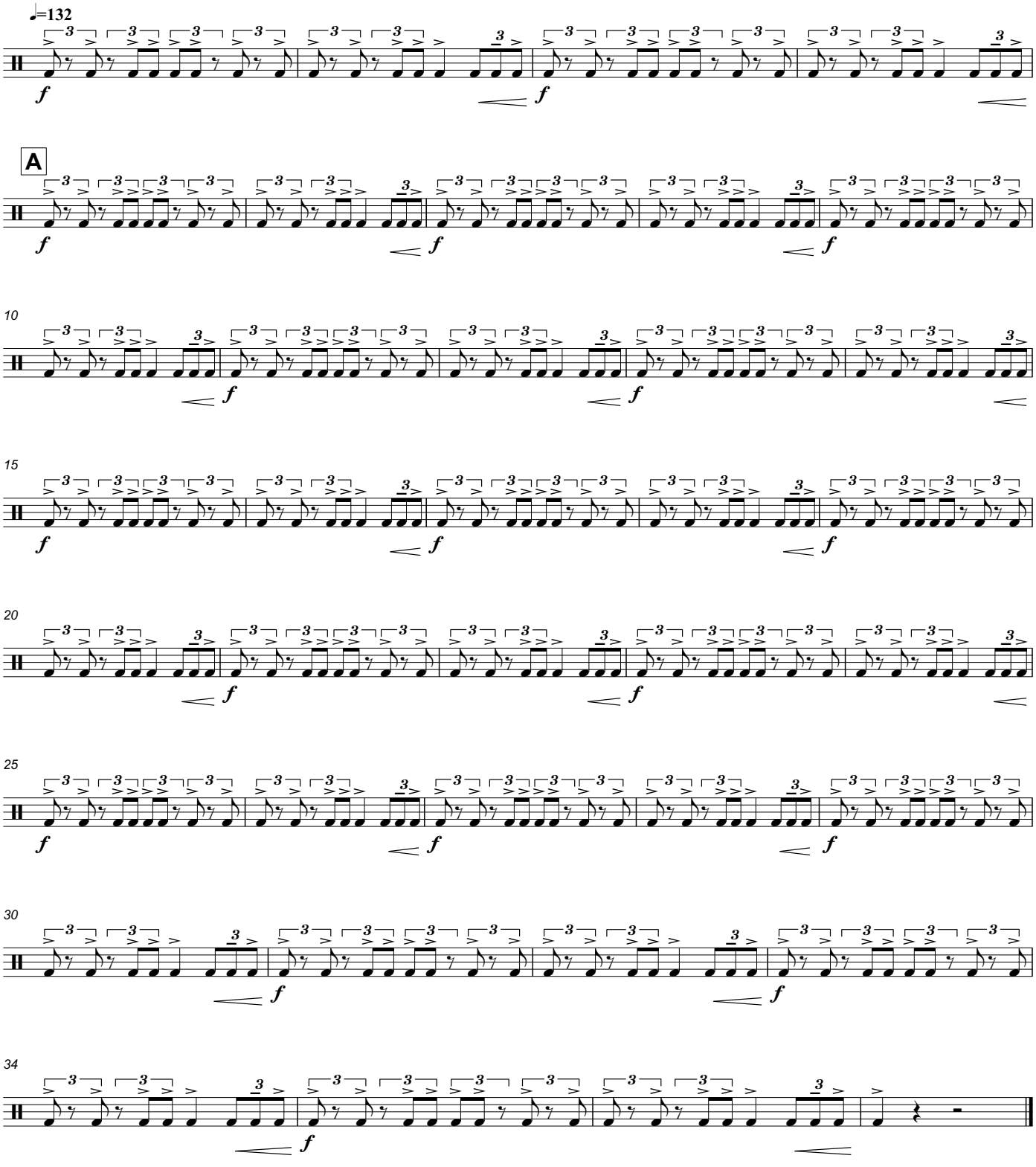
Arr. Matt Young



Aux 1

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

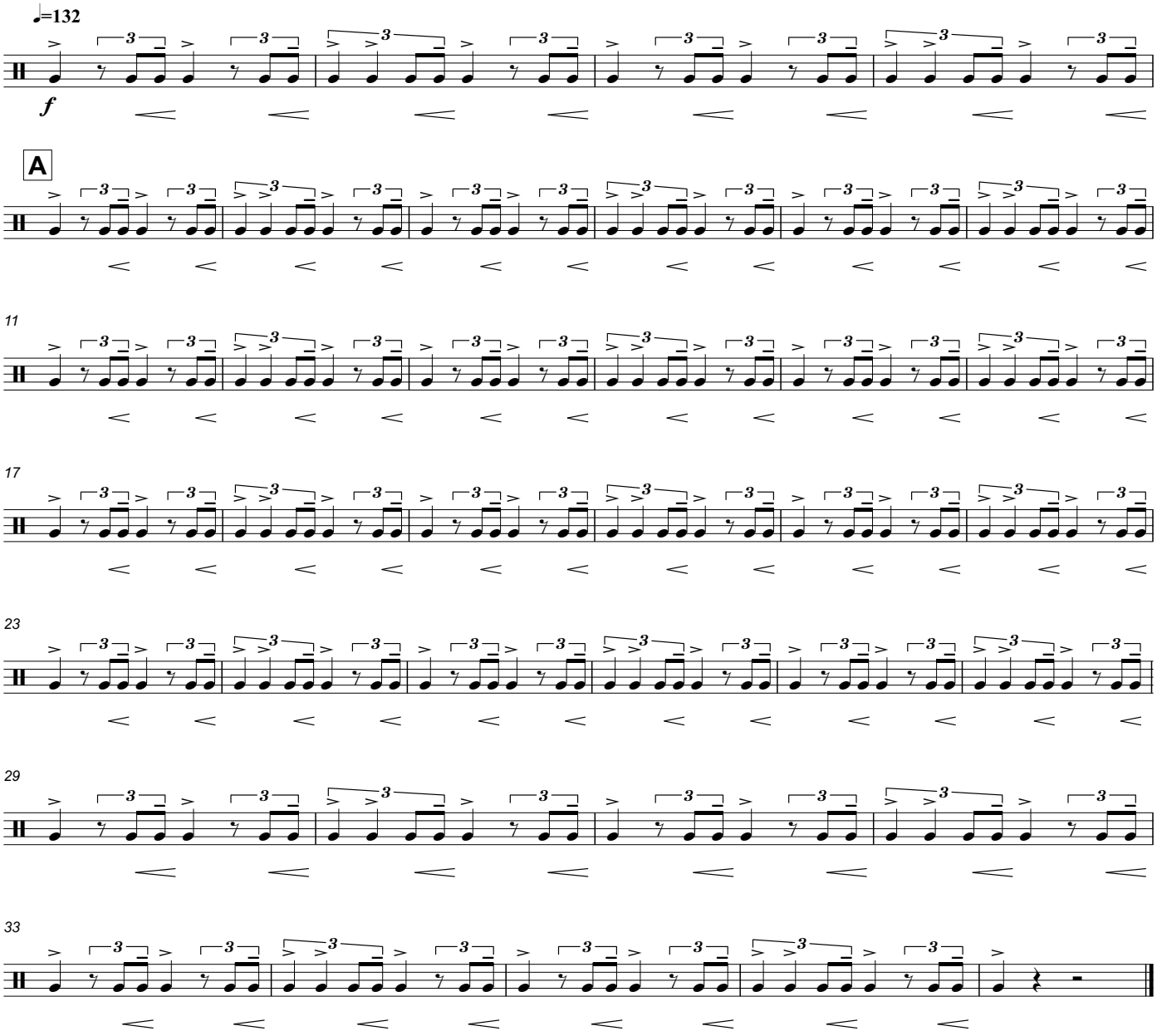
Arr. Matt Young



Aux 2

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

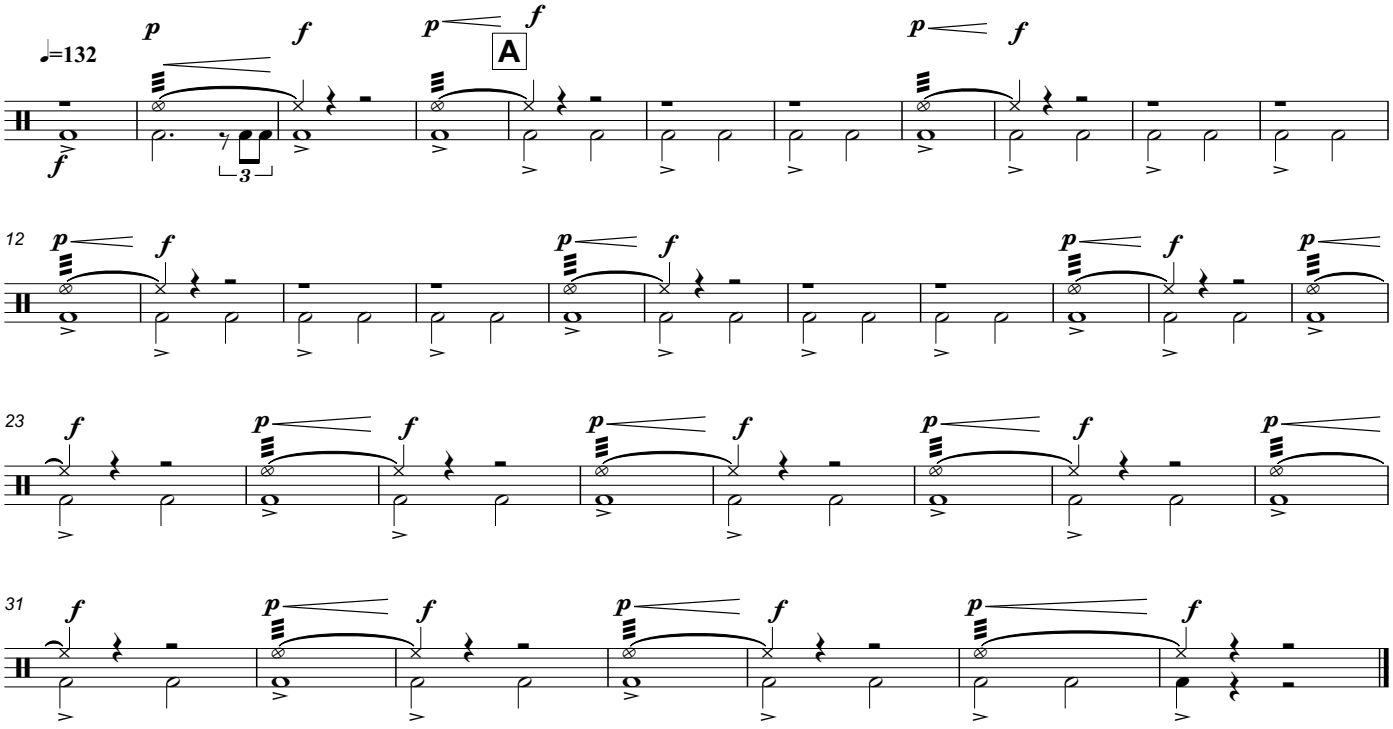
Arr. Matt Young



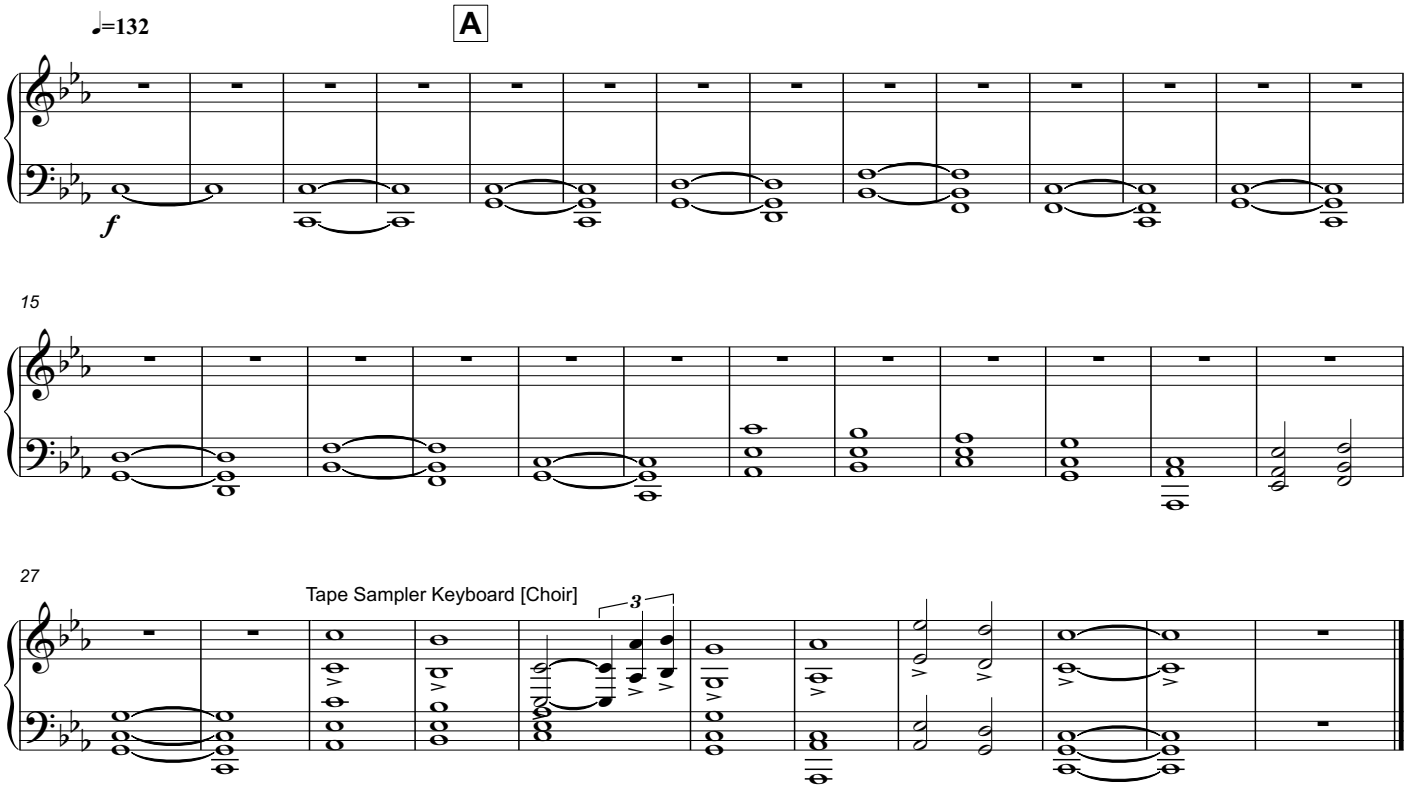
Aux 3

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

Arr. Matt Young



Tape Sampler Keyboard [Strings]
Tape Sampler Keyboard [Choir]

DOUBLE SHUFFLE (GOT)

Arr. Matt Young