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Most scholarship on video game music tends to focus on either their interactive or non-interactive elements, known as ‘gameplay’ and ‘story’. The music of Chunsoft’s *Pokémon Mystery Dungeon* series unites gameplay and story through the use of motives, silence, and shared modes and keys. This blending has important ramifications for the player’s gaming experience. The recurrence of musical elements links discrete tracks and scenes within the games, making the audio crucial for understanding the full meaning of the games.

“WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF POKÉMON!”: MUSIC AND THE PLAYER’S
EXPERIENCE IN CHUNSOFT’S *POKÉMON MYSTERY DUNGEON*

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As video games—both those intended for children and adults—have grown in complexity, so has their music. The greater sophistication of this music, in turn, has birthed a fledgling discipline studying audio in video games. Most scholarship on the subject tends to focus on either the interactive nature of games—so-called “gameplay”—or their narrative elements—“story.” Research on the former is predominant because interactivity is what sets games apart from cinema and theater. Some scholars focus on game composers’ attempts to create music that can change based on the player’s choices and actions, termed “adaptive audio;”¹ others focus on the ability of players to create a musical product—such as a song—through game interactions.² Narrative studies, by scholars such as Simon Wood and Zach Whalen, tend to play up the origins of video game music in film music.³ What is lacking is research that combines the elements of gameplay and story. One series loved by fans for its blending of these elements is

¹Elizabeth Medina-Gray has studied adaptive audio at length, including in her dissertation “Modular Structure and Function in Early 21st-Century Video Game Music” (Ph.D diss., Yale University, 2014).

²Some of these games center around making music (such as *Guitar Hero*); others incorporate it as one of many potential activities.

³One example of such scholarship is in Neil Lerner's essay, “Mario’s Dynamic Leaps: Musical Innovations and the Spectre of Early Cinema in *Donkey Kong* and *Super Mario Bros.*,” in *Music in Video Games: Studying Play*, ed. K.J. Donnelly, William Gibbons, and Neil Lerner (New York: Routledge, 2014), 1-29. Though this essay deals with the relationship between video game music and film music specifically, film music scholarship is still relevant to video game scholarship.

Chunsoft's *Pokémon Mystery Dungeon*, whose soundtrack is integral to its gameplay and story.

The *Pokémon Mystery Dungeon* games, which debuted in 2005 with the release of *Rescue Team*, constitute a so-called “spin-off series” to the widely successful *Pokémon* franchise, a franchise aimed primarily at children but enjoyed by gamers of all ages.⁴ Like most other *Pokémon* titles, this series was released for Nintendo's portable game systems.⁵ In *Mystery Dungeon*, the player controls a Pokémon character and the gameplay is centered around areas called dungeons. Dungeons are randomly generated, and as a result, their layout, enemies, and the collectible items within them change every time the dungeon is explored, although certain factors—such as the types of opponents or items that can be found in the dungeon and its number of floors—stay the same every time. The interactivity in the games lies in navigating the random dungeons and dealing with threats that come up accordingly. Many a *Pokémon* fan—children and adults alike—quickly fell in love with the *Mystery Dungeon* games because of their rather developed stories (by *Pokémon* standards), their elaborate art and animation which takes cues from cinema and theater, and their sophisticated music. If one plays the game with the sound off, there is a clear demarcation between interactive and noninteractive scenes. Playing the game with the sound on reveals that music from the interactive parts sometimes invades noninteractive cutscenes (and vice versa), resulting in a blending of gameplay

⁴Pokémon are highly intelligent animal-like creatures with a variety of elemental (fire, ice, electricity, etc.) and physical superpowers.

⁵There are five titles in the *Mystery Dungeon* series: *Rescue Team* (2005), *Explorers* (2007), *Adventure Squad* (2009), *Gates to Infinity* (2012), and *Super Mystery Dungeon* (2015). *Adventure Squad* was released exclusively in Japan by download only and does not have as much content as the other four titles, so it is not often considered by Western fans to be a “main” title in the series.

and story elements. The *Mystery Dungeon* games are unique in this regard: other games, like those of the *Mario* franchise, tend to use different music for gameplay and story elements. In *Mystery Dungeon*, the blending present in the music is important for coming to a full understanding of the story; without the music certain implicit connections may not be made clear to the player. These connections go a long way toward affecting the player's experience of the games.

The music of *Mystery Dungeon* abounds with motives, silence, and tracks used for a variety of purposes, all of which enrich the experience. Recurring motives that accompany large story arcs are transformed in complex ways, undergoing harmonic or rhythmic transformations and sometimes combining with each other. Motives primarily heard in connection with the plot are also occasionally heard in gameplay areas, resulting in a blending of gameplay and story. Prolonged silence adds tension and uncertainty to some key scenes. Some tracks that accompany dungeon gameplay—"dungeon tracks"—are used to represent both the environment of the dungeon they accompany as well as the characters' feelings during their dungeon adventures. In this thesis, I will demonstrate how these elements impact the player's interpretation of the game, in order to show how this kind of compositional approach toward video game music can have a significant effect on players' feelings about the game.⁶

⁶On the comments of the YouTube video for the track "Snow Refugees" from *Rescue Team* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxJTVTQ_vIc>, uploaded by "Bespinben," September 20, 2011, audio, 1:54, accessed June 24, 2018), the user "King Chill87" commented, "This Game is so epic and the Soundtrack and the Story fits so perfectly, love it so much ! it's one of my favorite Nintendo DS games ever..." His sentiments about the fitting soundtrack are very common among fans of the games.

I.A: Literature Review

I.A.1: Theories of Film and Early Video Game Music

Mystery Dungeon's cinematic cutscenes are typically accompanied by tracks that bear similarities to film music. James Buhler and David Neumeyer study the cinematic functions of music in "Music in the Evolving Soundtrack."⁷ Buhler and Neumeyer describe three functions of music in film and explain how certain archetypes for film tracks fall into these categories. Their categories are narrative (deepening the film's story through motifs, phrases, or cues), emotional (introducing or intensifying emotions), and referential (providing the audience musical codes that reinforce the film's setting, such as bagpipe music to invoke Scotland). Their essay also reviews the distinction between diegetic and non-diegetic music. Diegetic music is music that is present within the film universe and thus perceptible by the characters, while non-diegetic music is only heard by the audience. Both diegetic and non-diegetic audio are used in video games—though with games the role of film watcher is instead fulfilled by a game player—and in *Mystery Dungeon* specifically, diegetic sound effects contribute to its emotional valence. Viewers' emotions and reactions can also be affected by the use of leitmotifs, as Stan Link discusses in his essay "Persuasive Musical Narration."⁸ He explains how individual musical elements contribute to leitmotifs' effect, such as the stabbing sound of the *Psycho* theme or the crunching sound of the *Jaws* theme. Link also describes a reflexive effect

⁷James Buhler and David Neumeyer, "Music in the Evolving Soundtrack," in *Sound and Music in Film and Visual Media: A Critical Overview*, ed. Graeme Harper (New York: Continuum, 2009), 42-57.

⁸Stan Link, "Persuasive Musical Narration," in *Sound and Music in Film and Visual Media*, 180-193.

that leitmotifs can have: leitmotifs affect our understanding of characters, which in turn influences our perception of the leitmotif since a character's emotions or actions have become tied to it.

Although the *Mystery Dungeon* games rarely feature leitmotifs for specific characters or objects (with one notable exception in the second game, discussed in Chapter III), they do contain many motives that are used to represent concepts within the games. These motives often use the same tonic or mode in different tracks. In this way, *Mystery Dungeon's* motives serve an important purpose for the tonal connections they make between tracks. The idea of tonal unity in video games is not a new one: as Neil Lerner discusses in his essay "Mario's Dynamic Leaps," tonal unity as a feature of game music has been present since at least the early 1980's, with *Donkey Kong* and *Super Mario Bros.* both being early games to incorporate it.⁹ Lerner briefly discusses the history of music in video games and indicates how some games were ahead of their time in how musically unified and complex they were. Lerner explains how the music of video games evolved from previous traditions of film and television, but gained its own identity as the new medium began to take shape. He also describes how "mickey-mousing" was used in early games by Nintendo and how *Super Mario Bros.* used motivic associations as a key part of its musical framework.¹⁰ *Super Mario Bros.* and *Donkey Kong* were pioneers in

⁹Lerner, "Mario's Dynamic Leaps." *Donkey Kong* was released for arcades in 1981, and *Super Mario Bros.* for the Nintendo Entertainment System in 1985.

¹⁰"Mickey-mousing," a concept that has its origins in film, describes music that is closely synchronized with movement on screen.

their use of music and audio, and their innovations would strongly influence video games to follow.

I.A.2: Theories of the Functions of Video Game Music

As video games have gained their own identity, scholars have devised different ways to interpret the various functions of video game music in a way that is specific to the medium. Two such scholars are Simon Wood and Zach Whalen, whose typologies—along with Buhler and Neumeyer’s—are presented in **Figure 1**.

FILM	VIDEO GAMES	
	Wood	Whalen
Emotional	Narrative	Draw the Player into Gameplay
Narrative		Expand the World
Referential	Ambient	
	Event-Triggered Episodes	

Figure 1. Table of Functions of Music in Media

In his article “High Scores,” Simon Wood addresses the form and function of video game music, showing how film music scholarship can be applied to video games.¹¹ To explain how video game music differs from that of other media, Wood proposes that there are three types of game music: ambient music (usually accompanying gameplay), event-triggered episodes (short fanfares or sound effects accompanying a player’s action), and music for noninteractive cutscenes (story music). He describes the characteristics and

¹¹Simon Wood, “High Scores: Making Sense of Music and Video Games,” in *Sound and Music in Film and Visual Media*, 129-150.

typical composition of each of these types very generally. Cinematic scenes, for instance, tend to have music closely related to film music in that it is often synchronized with on-screen events, while ambient music is often less melodic and serves as background audio to accompany the players' actions in gameplay. Buhler and Neumeyer's function of referential music generally encompasses both Wood's event-triggered episodes and ambient tracks, and their emotional and narrative functions align with Wood's narrative function because most tracks with an emotional function in video games are contained within story elements of the game. In "Play Along," Zach Whalen uses case studies to show how video game music that reflects what is going on in the game world can help to draw the player into the game.¹² Like Wood, he suggests that video game music has two functions; unlike Wood, his functions are applicable only to music that accompanies gameplay. The functions of gameplay music, according to Whalen, are to encourage the player to move forward in the game through gameplay, and to expand on the lore of the game's world by providing musical portraits of areas or culture within it. As **Figure 1** shows, the former function is encompassed by Wood's narrative function and Buhler and Neumeyer's emotional and referential functions. The latter function contains elements of all three of Wood's functions as well as Buhler and Neumeyer's narrative and referential functions. Both of Whalen's functions are narrative because expanding the world often means presenting the characters' goal(s) in relation to the world, and encouraging the player to move into gameplay may take the form of something within the game revealing

¹²Zach Whalen, "Play Along: An Approach to Videogame Music," *Game Studies* 4, no. 1 (November 2004), accessed November 11, 2017, <<http://www.gamestudies.org/0401/whalen/>>.

to the player why the player needs to engage with the game to achieve their goals—in the *Mystery Dungeon* games, for instance, a character will tell the player’s avatar (and, by extension, the player) that Pokémon are struggling in the games’ dungeons, prompting the player to go on missions to rescue Pokémon and thereby advance the narrative.¹³ Whalen demonstrates how different types of games use different musical approaches to achieve their goals—for instance, *Super Mario Bros.* relies on sound effects to create the feeling of mickey-mousing that is appropriate for a cartoonish game, which in turn enhances the narrative experience. He also outlines how musical elements can be used to suggest certain emotions in conjunction with associated visuals, and how characters are viewed in different lights depending on the music that accompanies the scene. While most of *Mystery Dungeon*’s music falls neatly into the categories of ambient music or story music, some tracks possess qualities of both, which impacts the player’s gaming experience in that the link between gameplay and story elements of the game makes the game feel like one complete whole, rather than an arbitrary alternation between noninteractive and interactive sequences.

I.A.3: Adaptive Audio and Musical Composition

Music for cutscenes can either consist of a fixed track, analogous to movie soundtracks, or audio that changes according to the player’s actions during the scene. In his essay “Realizing Groundbreaking Adaptive Music,” Tim van Geelen seeks to explain how so-called “adaptive audio” can result in a more immersive experience.¹⁴ Van Geelen

¹³The method by which the player learns of her goals with the game may come in the form of dialogue with a character, a book or video source within the game that shows the player the goals, an introductory movie that establishes the setting, or there may be no exposition at all.

¹⁴Tim van Geelen, “Realizing Groundbreaking Adaptive Music,” in *From Pac-Man to Pop Music*:

discusses how a player's input might potentially cause the music to change course, such as when the tempo and harmonic rhythm of a track increases as a player approaches an enemy, and suggests that adding elements like these to more video games might result in more enjoyable experiences. He also admits that writing adaptive audio can be difficult and explains how it is not always feasible to use in the musical accompaniment of a video game, especially if the production team wants to use live instruments. Despite the challenges that such audio poses, van Geelen nonetheless describes some ways in which these barriers have been overcome and ends by explaining how typical musical archetypes used in games could be "taught" to a computer, which would allow adaptive music to be composed during gameplay.

While adaptive audio is absent from *Mystery Dungeon*, certain elements of *Mystery Dungeon*'s soundtrack simulate it. In some of the game's dungeons, the accompanying track changes as a player moves further into them, usually coinciding with changes in the characters' states, moods, or emotions. In *Mystery Dungeon*, these changes happen at a fixed time compared to games featuring adaptive audio, which respond in real time to decisions the player makes. In either case, the music reflects something about the characters' states.

Mystery Dungeon presents its tracks in a more or less fixed order, with noninteractive scenes always fixed in this respect. Even when the player has a choice of what to do next, the only options are to repeat something they've already done or to go a

Interactive Audio in Games and New Media, ed. Karen Collins (Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2008), 93-102.

single new location. *Mystery Dungeon* is not the only game in which the music can be considered linear: in her book *Game Sound*, Karen Collins cites Koji Kondo, Nintendo's best-known composer, as saying that he views each of his games as one large composition, with individual tracks being part of the larger work.¹⁵ Some of Kondo's compositions for games in *The Legend of Zelda* series reuse musical elements from other games in the series, connecting them musically.¹⁶ One game in the series, *Ocarina of Time*, is discussed in depth by Whalen.¹⁷ He shows how musical leitmotifs may be difficult to notice in one track but prominent in another, resulting in a déjà vu—and déjà entendu!—effect for the player.

I.A.4: Sound and Silence

All of these subtle musical effects used in video games are not experienced by the player if she turns the sound off, which is common when players are in the presence of other people. As mentioned before, the *Mystery Dungeon* games are portable, which changes the way that the player relates to them. On portable game consoles, which are entirely contained within an object held in the player's hands, the speakers are physically closer to a player's ears than on console games, where audio emerges from the television's speakers. Additionally, portable games are designed to be played outside the home, and many players playing them in public places use headphones so as not to

¹⁵Koji Kondo, "Painting an Interactive Musical Landscape," paper presented at the annual Game Developer's Conference, San Francisco (2007), cited in Karen Collins, *Game Sound: An Introduction to the History, Theory, and Practice of Video Game Music and Sound Design* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008), 90-91.

¹⁶Jason Brame, "Thematic Unity Across a Video Game Series," *Zeitschrift für Musik und Performance* 2011, no. 2 (July), accessed January 29, 2018, <http://www.act.uni-bayreuth.de/resources/Heft2011-02/ACT2011_02_Brame.pdf>.

¹⁷Whalen, "Play Along."

disturb others and to help themselves escape into the game world. Console games, on the other hand, often vie for attention with all sorts of household or environmental sounds, so they need to be louder and constantly noisy to compensate. As a result, silence in console games is a rare phenomenon, as Rob Bridgett observes in his essay “Dynamic Range: Subtlety and Silence in Video Game Sound.”¹⁸

I plan to show how *Mystery Dungeon* uses silence in effective ways. Even in other handheld games, such as the other entries in the *Pokémon* franchise, completely silent moments are rare, so *Mystery Dungeon* stands out by using them more frequently. Silent moments are also rare in video games in general because removing audio can have a detrimental effect on the player’s performance. Kristine Jørgensen and Karen Collins¹⁹ have studied how players perform in certain console and computer games when the audio is removed by comparing the results of players who had access to audio with those who did not. Both Jørgensen and Collins conclude that turning the music off makes a game both more difficult and less enjoyable for players. At the same time, however, Collins points out that portable games are designed to be played with or without audio. Although this would seem to have negative implications for the importance of *Mystery Dungeon*’s audio, I will nonetheless show how the music is still necessary for truly understanding the games. In addition to its music, *Mystery Dungeon* also makes use of sound effects that accompany battles and dialogue, in addition to the steady metronomic music. Between

¹⁸Rob Bridgett, “Dynamic Range: Subtlety and Silence in Video Game Sound,” in *From Pac-Man to Pop Music*, 127-134.

¹⁹Kristine Jørgensen, “Left in the Dark: Playing Computer Games with the Sound Turned Off,” in *From Pac-Man to Pop Music*, 163-176; Collins, “Gameplay, Genre, and the Functions of Game Audio,” in *Game Sound*, 123-138.

the music that urges the player to continue and the sound effects whose alignment with visual cues add to the game experience, *Mystery Dungeon* provides several reasons why the player should leave the sound on—but unlike other portable games, it then takes advantage of the player’s attention by using deliberate silence to communicate information to the player.

When silence is incorporated into the audio of video games, it can have a potent effect. In his essay “Wandering Tonalities,” William Gibbons analyzes the game *Shadow of the Colossus*, showing how the measured use of sound and silence helps the player become introspective in their interactions with the game.²⁰ He explains how music is only used to punctuate occasional moments of action and plot in *Shadow of the Colossus*, but otherwise the game is silent but for the diegetic sound (wind, a horse’s hooves) that accompanies the player’s travels over an effective wasteland. Gibbons explains that while silence is rare in video games, it is everywhere in *Shadow of the Colossus*, interpreting this to mean that silence is meant to unsettle the player and prevent them from emotionally detaching from the minimalist gameplay. With almost all the sound in the game being diegetic, the line between player and character becomes blurred, and the player cannot help but be introspective as the character is. Although he discusses *Shadow of the Colossus* exclusively, Gibbons’ observations can be generalized to apply to a wide variety of games. Sound and silence can be manipulated to subtly change the player’s interpretation of a scene or event, or even change its meaning—indeed, to transform the

²⁰William Gibbons, “Wandering Tonalities: Silence, Sound, and Morality in *Shadow of the Colossus*,” in *Music in Video Games*, 122-137.

meaning of an entire game. *Mystery Dungeon*'s silent moments are often used to blur the line between player and character in a similar fashion.

I.B: Overview of the Music of *Mystery Dungeon*

My case study will include the first two titles in the *Mystery Dungeon* series, *Rescue Team* and *Explorers*.²¹ Their music generally aligns with Wood's types of video game music: tracks that accompany a player's actions within the game are usually ambient, and music that accompanies noninteractive cutscenes is story music. These two general types of *Mystery Dungeon*'s music differ to accommodate their different purposes. Ambient tracks, which are mostly used for dungeons, tend to be both strongly rhythmic and repetitive. Tracks carrying narrative information typically are more rhythmically unstable and often feature distinctive melodies and motives. Despite the difference between the two types of music, there is some overlap between them. Both *Rescue Team* and *Explorers* feature dungeon tracks that use motives previously heard in narrative tracks. Both games also feature dungeon tracks whose music provides both an environmental accompaniment (gameplay-based) and a portrait of the two main characters' emotions when the dungeon is traversed (story-based), resulting in music for gameplay that incorporates aspects of story.

This thesis will devote one chapter to the music of each game. Within each of these chapters, I will analyze musical motives and individual tracks that blur the line

²¹*Rescue Team* was released as two titles, *Blue Rescue Team* and *Red Rescue Team*. For the purposes of this paper, they will be treated as one entity, since they contain the same music. *Explorers* was released as two titles, *Explorers of Time* and *Explorers of Darkness*, in 2007 in Japan and 2008 in North America. In 2009, a third title was released, *Explorers of Sky*. All three games share the same music, but *Sky* adds fifty new tracks for optional stories that were new for *Sky*. I will therefore study *Sky*.

between gameplay and story. My main point is to show how this blurring of functions affects the player’s understanding of the story. I will also discuss how the use of silence affects the meaning of some of the game’s more important moments. *Rescue Team* uses two motives that signify “adventure” during the game. Both motives return briefly in *Explorers* for the same purpose, linking the two games. (Apart from the use of these adventure themes, however, the games share little musical material.²²) In *Rescue Team*, both motives are heard in three tracks at the games’ beginning as well as in the closing credits music, bracketing the game. Both motives as heard in the beginning tracks are in an energetic compound quadruple meter and G Mixolydian. They both incorporate large intervallic leaps that musically portray a character bounding or confidently striding forward. **Example 1** shows the Team motive, which appears both in the introductory music and the game’s central town area, Pokémon Square.



Example 1. Team Motive from *Rescue Team* in “Pokémon Square”

In the introductory music, only the first two measures are heard, as part of transitional material, so it may not initially sound like a motive. However, its later appearance in

²²*Rescue Team*’s soundtrack was composed by Arata Iiyoshi. *Explorers*’ soundtrack was composed by the returning Arata Iiyoshi and the new composers Hideki Sakamoto, Keisuke Ito, Ryoma Nakamura, and Ken-ichi Saito, with a sixth composer Yoshihiro Maeda replacing Nakamura in the composition of the tracks unique to *Sky*. (Although Iiyoshi’s appearance in the credits may simply be because his music was used or altered for *Explorers*, it is more likely that he was actively involved in the game’s composition, as he does not appear in the credits for later *Mystery Dungeon* games even as those games use his compositions or motives.)

“Pokémon Square” is likely to be vaguely familiar to the player, resulting in a déjà entendu effect.

Example 2 transcribes the second motive, Rescue, which is first heard on the game’s title screen but is also part of the music used for the main menu screen, giving it a place of prominence as a “main theme” for *Rescue Team*. The Rescue motive is performed *forte* and with brass instruments that double the melody over three octaves, in contrast to the quieter and more contrapuntal music that precedes it.



Example 2. Rescue Motive from *Rescue Team*

These motives together form a significant part of the game’s musical composition. Their use in the ending credits specifically serves to remind the player of all that they have accomplished over the course of the game. The way in which they are used in the credits additionally intimates that the game is not over.²³ Although prominent in the game’s music, the Rescue and Team motives are not the only motives used to convey important information. The game is full of musical elements that, when used in unexpected contexts, combined with one another, or altered, can change the way the scenes featuring them are interpreted by the player. The flexibility of these elements

²³I will discuss the implications of the presence of these motives in the credits music more thoroughly in Chapter II.

underscores both games with a degree of subtlety that contributes to their appeal and longevity among fans.²⁴

²⁴In Chapters II and III, I occasionally reference YouTube comments by fans on videos of the games' tracks that support my arguments about the impact of the audio on players' experiences.

CHAPTER II

THE MUSIC OF *RESCUE TEAM*

In this chapter, I will discuss the music of the *Rescue Team*, the first of the *Mystery Dungeon* games to be released. I will begin by providing an overview of the game's soundtrack. Following this overview, I will give a brief summary of the game's plot and connect some of the game's tracks to specific events within the plot. I will then go into detail about the game's musical elements, beginning with a discussion of the game's four most common motives: the adventure motives Rescue and Team (discussed briefly in Chapter I), and the "refugee" motives Fugitive and Truth.²⁵ In discussing these motives, I will introduce the tracks that use these motives and explain their relevance to the plot. I will also highlight differences in harmonic accompaniment, rhythm, or melodic intervals that may occur in two tracks featuring the same motive. I will continue with a discussion the use of silence as a narrative tool within the game and conclude with an analysis of three specific dungeon tracks, highlighting their referential and narrative qualities. In all these analyses, I will discuss the effects that the aforementioned uses of audio have on the player's experience of the game, occasionally citing fans' comments to show how the connections I make in my analyses relate to players' reactions to the game's music.

²⁵The names used for all the motives discussed in this chapter are given by me. They have a variety of fan-given names, but there is no generally accepted terminology for them.

Rescue Team contains 73 tracks as well as a variety of sound effects and short fanfares. **Figure 2** divides the game’s tracks into four categories I describe below.²⁶

Track type	# of tracks	% of entire soundtrack
Plot	21	28.8%
Dungeon	21	28.8%
Optional	20	27.4%
Other	11	15%
Total	73	100%

Figure 2. Division of Tracks in *Rescue Team*

Plot tracks are those that play during cinematic cutscenes as well as during certain boss battles.²⁷ After the game is finished, these cutscenes become unavailable, and thus the tracks are not encountered again unless the player chooses to start from the beginning, erasing her progress within the game. As a result, plot tracks, unlike the other types, occur a finite number of times in each playing of the game.²⁸ Dungeon tracks are those which play exclusively during dungeons; there are 21 dungeon tracks in *Rescue Team*, although two of them are inaccessible until after the game has been completed. Optional tracks are those associated with specific areas accessible to the player but not mandatory

²⁶Specific information on individual tracks can be found in Appendix A.

²⁷A “boss” is an enemy in a video game who is much more powerful than standard enemies, and who usually must be defeated in order to progress the game (whereas standard enemies may not need to be beaten). A fight with a boss is traditionally referred to as a boss battle. A game’s final boss battle usually coincides with its climax. In *Mystery Dungeon*, certain boss battles use tracks that are unique to that fight; I consider these to be plot tracks because these battles are required and thus an element of the plot.

²⁸Some plot tracks occur once while some occur many times.

to finish the game; their purpose has to do with an optional element of gameplay I will not be discussing.²⁹ The “Other” category encompasses all types of tracks that do not cleanly fall into one of the above categories. These include overworld tracks, introductory music, triumphant tracks that follow missions, and music that accompanies certain random events that may befall the player during a dungeon journey.³⁰ As a rule, tracks loop: the three exceptions include two tracks from the game’s beginning, “Intro” and “Title,” and one that accompanies the post-credits scene, “Time of Reunion.” I will focus primarily on plot and dungeon tracks, as plot tracks provide most of the game’s motives, and dungeon tracks are unique among track types in that they typically have both referential and narrative qualities, giving them a place of importance in the game’s musical framework.

II.A: Plot Overview

Upon starting the game for the first time, the player is asked to complete a personality test. This test is used to decide which Pokémon character the player’s avatar will be, out of several possibilities. After the test is complete, the player chooses another Pokémon character to be the partner character. The avatar and partner—the heroes—are the two central characters of the story, and the only characters who are involved in every dungeon experience up until the game is completed. **Figure 3** diagrams the main story of the game, with the first appearances of tracks given in word balloons.

²⁹During the game, the player can add other Pokémon to their team. These Pokémon reside in wilderness areas that have unique tracks, but since no part of the game requires the player to add Pokémon, the player may never hear these tracks.

³⁰The name “overworld” likely comes from early games, where the game map was seen from an overhead view. In more modern games, it usually refers to general hub areas outside of gameplay.

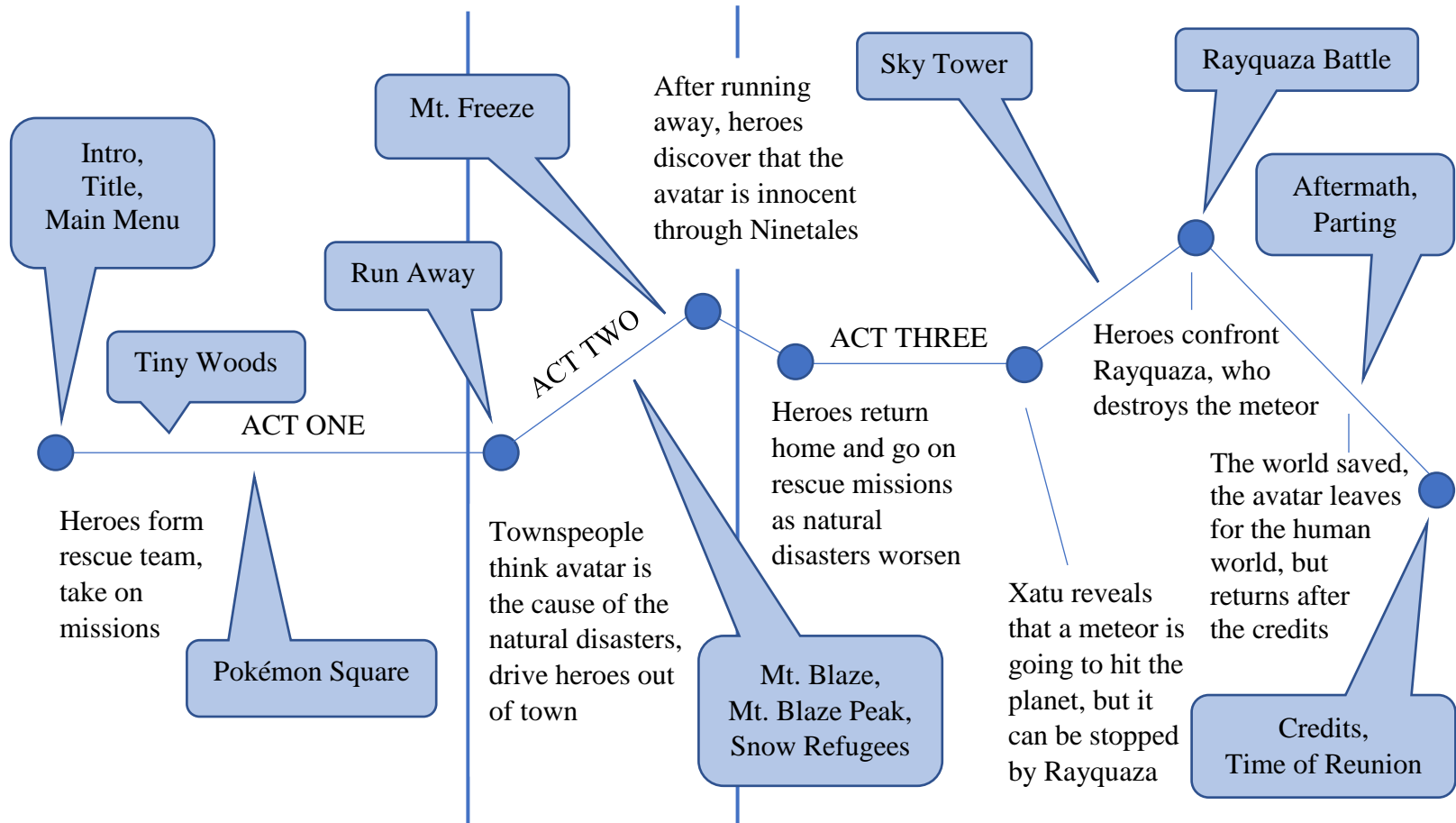


Figure 3. Plot Diagram of *Rescue Team*

When the game proper starts, the player witnesses a noninteractive cutscene in which the avatar is woken up by the partner in an unfamiliar forest. Upon awakening, the avatar discovers that she has amnesia and the only things that she can remember are her name and the fact that she is supposed to be a human, not a Pokémon.³¹ The avatar's state as a Pokémon in an unfamiliar locale conflicts with her knowledge of herself, forming the central goal of the game—she desires to find out how and why this has happened to her. The game is roughly divided into three acts, shown in **Figure 3**. In the first act, the avatar and partner decide to form a rescue team with the goal of helping Pokémon who are suffering from the increasing amount of natural disasters affecting their area. In the course of their rescue work, they come into contact with the antagonist Gengar and his team, who desire world domination and whom the characters must battle. At the end of the act, the avatar, through talking with the psychic Xatu, discovers that there is some connection between her transformation and the natural disasters. Xatu further explains that if the disasters are not stopped, they will soon bring complete destruction to the world. Gengar overhears this, unbeknownst to the heroes, and suggests (in a statement heard only by the player) that he will use this knowledge for nefarious purposes. In the second act, Gengar riles up the townspeople against the heroes and convinces them that killing the avatar will stop the natural disasters and save the world. Believing his words, the townspeople chase the heroes out of town, and they are forced to go on the run as fugitives. The “fugitive arc,” as it is called by fans, takes up the rest of the second act.

³¹In both *Rescue Team* and *Explorers*, the player can choose the gender of their avatar. I have chosen to use female pronouns, in part because that is reflective of my experience with the games, and in part to facilitate easier reading since all but one of the other characters referenced in this thesis are male.

After fleeing through four dungeons, the heroes—as well as some of their pursuers, who catch up to the heroes at the end of the fourth dungeon they flee through, Mt. Freeze—meet with a mythical Pokémon named Ninetales who tells them that the avatar is not responsible for the natural disasters. Vindicated, and with the pursuers' eyewitness account proving that the heroes are not making up the story, the heroes return home and are able to resume their rescue work.

In the third act, the heroes encounter escalating threats as the natural disasters continue to worsen. After several missions where the heroes try to stop the effects of the disasters, Xatu alerts the townspeople that a meteor is hurtling toward the earth, but it can be stopped if they can convince the dragon Rayquaza to destroy it. The heroes take up the challenge of traversing the Sky Tower to reach Rayquaza. The day before they leave, a spirit comes to the avatar, revealing that the avatar was turned into a Pokémon by herself and other unknown forces to save the world from the meteor. She states that if Rayquaza stops the meteor, it will be time for the avatar to return to the human world. The following day, the heroes make their way up Sky Tower. At the top, they meet Rayquaza, who misunderstands the reason for their arrival and battles them; this battle is the game's climax. After defeating him, they make him understand that they need his help, and he destroys the meteor and saves the world. Following the successful destruction of the meteor, the spirit comes to the avatar and prepares her to return to the human world. The game ends with the avatar turning into a ball of light and disappearing over the horizon, leaving a distraught partner and townspeople behind. After the avatar's disappearance,

the credits roll, but the post-credits scene features the avatar returning to the Pokémon world and reuniting with the partner.

The common thread running through the game is the idea that the heroes consistently help Pokémon suffering from natural disasters. Their rescue work permeates many of their explorations (Act Two notwithstanding) and turns out to be the ultimate reason why the avatar was transformed into a Pokémon. Associated with the rescue work of the heroes are the two adventure motives, Rescue and Team, which were briefly discussed in Chapter I.

II.B: Modality in *Mystery Dungeon*

The music of *Mystery Dungeon*, though it regularly makes use of diatonic pitch-class collections, does not embody the characteristics common to music classified as ‘tonal.’ V-I progressions and cadences are uncommon, and pure triadic harmonies are rare. Some tracks use non-diatonic pitch-class collections, such as the whole-tone or octatonic scales, as well as mixtures of multiple types. In most cases, the tonic—if present—and modality must be determined by criteria other than those that are used for traditionally tonal music. In order to define tonic or pitch center, I mostly follow the guidelines outlined by Joseph Straus in his book *Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory*.³² Although it is usually easy to identify the pitch center of a melodic passage or harmonic accompaniment, some tracks in *Mystery Dungeon* feature conflicts between the pitch center and mode implied by the melody and those of accompaniment. One such track is

³²Joseph Straus, *Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory*, 4th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016), 228-261.

“Sky Tower,” shown in **Example 18** (p. 61). In this track, a melody is initially presented in B Dorian, and its accompaniment features an oscillation between A major and B minor triads over a B pedal, also suggesting B as a central pitch class. Later in the track, a slight variation on the same melody appears, transposed down a fourth from its initial B Dorian appearance into F# Dorian. The oscillating accompaniment, on the other hand, is transposed down a fifth and the pedal is removed, giving the F# Dorian melody an accompaniment implying D Lydian. Although the harmonic accompaniment usually assimilates the melody when conflicts such as these occur—as it does in the later track “Treeshroud Forest” in *Explorers*, which features a melody implying C# Aeolian assimilated into the A Lydian accompaniment—in some cases in *Mystery Dungeon*, such as with “Sky Tower,” I choose to honor the conflict between the two parts. “Sky Tower” and the four tracks in *Explorers* that present the Sacrifice motive (shown in **Figure 9** on p. 78 and **Example 28** on p. 84) are the only tracks where I honor this conflict. In all five cases, the reason is because the melody that is part of the tonal conflict appears elsewhere in a different setting, giving it a “native” or “standard” mode that the accompaniment actively contradicts.

II.C: Recurring Motives

II.C.1: Rescue and Team Motives

Upon beginning the game, the player views an introductory cinematic movie that leads into the title screen. The opening movie is accompanied by a track called “Intro” while the title screen is accompanied by “Title.”³³ Although they are two separate tracks

³³There is no official listing of names for the games’ tracks. The tracks have been successfully

in the game’s programming, the “Intro” track leads directly into the “Title” track with only a two-second pause between them, so I will analyze them as one whole. Both tracks begin in the same mode (G Mixolydian) and have the same meter type and tempo.

Example 3 transcribes the last three measures of the “Intro” track, which feature an Eb-Bb-F progression, an off-tonic ending. The opening of “Title” supplies a G tonic chord after the brief pause, tying the two tracks together.



Example 3. Off-Tonic Ending in “Intro” (mm. 7-10)

Collectively, the two tracks present both of the Rescue and Team motives, which are heard in several other tracks during the game. In this sense, the opening music functions as a sort of overture. The lilting dance-like tune in compound quadruple meter sets the mood for an exciting and fun adventure through an unfamiliar world. The title screen music—“Intro” and “Title” together—thus serves an emotional function in that its purpose is to excite and energize the player in preparation for gameplay. **Figure 4** shows how the Rescue and Team motives are used in the three opening tracks.

pulled from the game’s data, hence my assertion that “Intro” and “Title” are separate tracks, but the names of the files containing the tracks are not public knowledge. The names I use are primarily drawn from the names given to them in a YouTube playlist:
 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CEz01xcelTw&list=PL4D8DE6BFAD3A151A>> (uploaded by “Bespinben,” accessed June 18, 2018).

	“INTRO”	“TITLE”	“MAIN MENU”
<i>Motives used</i>	Part of Team	Rescue, part of Team	Part of Rescue, Team
<i>Dynamics</i>	Soft	Loud	Soft
<i>Tonic and mode</i>	G major/Mixolydian		
<i>Ending</i>	Pause following F-major triad	Modulation to and cadence in C major/Mixolydian	None; the track loops
<i>Notes</i>	On the first time playing through the game, the player cannot skip “Intro.” On subsequent playthroughs, she can skip the “Intro” scene by pressing a button, beginning with “Title.”	This music accompanies the game’s title screen. To advance past the title screen, the player needs to press a button. The game will not respond to a button input for about 10 seconds, enough time for the player to hear more than four measures of the Rescue motive but not the Team motive or ending cadence.	This track serves as background music while the player chooses how she wishes to engage with the game. Depending on how long she takes to press a button, she may hear the whole track, or not hear any of the Team motive.

Figure 4. Uses of Rescue and Team Motives

The Rescue and Team motives themselves are shown in **Examples 1** and **2** (pp. 14-15). Rescue stands out in the musical texture during its appearance in “Title” due to its placement at the beginning of the track and its contrast with the preceding material, featuring loud brass and strings moving in octaves. Team, on the other hand, is played in “Intro” by a solo flute with a harp accompaniment that almost overshadows the motive, due to the harp’s similar register and faster rhythmic motion. Both motives are heard

again immediately after the player progresses past the title screen to the main menu screen. Though the menu music's soft and sparse musical texture contrasts noticeably with the title screen music, the motives are immediately recognizable—the menu music simply alternates between them without adding any new ones. The Team motive especially stands out here because the menu music marks the first time it is heard in its entirety. **Example 4** transcribes the two measures of “Intro” in which the Team motive appears.



Example 4. Truncated Team Motive in “Intro” (mm. 5-6)

The motive appears during a phrase and is “interrupted” by the move to the E \flat harmony; as a result, it is not very prominent. When it appears later in the menu music, it is complete and occupies a more central position in the musical texture.

The next time these motives are heard in the game is when the heroes go to Pokémon Square for the first time, which occurs shortly into Act One (see **Fig. 3** on p. 20). Pokémon Square is the village center, a place where the player spends a lot of her time when not exploring dungeons. The Pokémon Square music is also in a compound quadruple meter and uses quarter-eighth patterns frequently in the accompaniment,

giving it a dance-like quality as well. Using the Rescue and Team motives here cements Pokémon Square as a “base of operations” for the game: every time the player prepares for a mission, she goes to Pokémon Square and hears its music, whose motives remind her of the tasks the game has set before her. According to Whalen’s typology, Pokémon Square’s music serves multiple functions. It expands the game world by painting a musical portrait of life in the village—happy, light-hearted, and generally energetic—and simultaneously encourages the player to continue playing by using the “adventure” motives.³⁴ The motives are still in G, but in “Pokémon Square,” the Rescue motive uses F♯ in place of F as part of its melody. This change makes the formerly Mixolydian melody Ionian, likely making the track sound happier to the listener, a change that fits the carefree nature of the village.³⁵ The first and last measures of the Rescue motive are missing from “Pokémon Square.” The first measure contains a leap between scale degrees $\hat{4}$ and $\hat{7}$. When the mode is G Mixolydian, this interval—between C and F—is a perfect fourth; in Ionian F is raised to F♯, resulting in a tritone. The first measure may have been omitted to preserve the consonance of the motive—further suggesting the peaceful nature of Pokémon Square.

The Rescue and Team motives, as well as some other less prominent motives heard in the game, return during the game’s ending credits sequence, as part of the “Credits” track. The track begins a minute before the credits themselves scroll. The track

³⁴Whalen, “Play Along.”

³⁵According to at least one recent study, listeners perceive the Ionian mode to be happier than the Mixolydian mode, with a statistically significant difference between Ionian and Mixolydian. See David Temperley and Daphne Tan, “Emotional Connotations of Diatonic Modes,” *Music Perception: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 30, no. 3 (Feb. 2013): 237-257.

starts as the avatar's spirit rises into the sky, accompanying the avatar's reflections on what is physically happening to her. This part of the track is slow, with long, sustained harmonies and little rhythmic motion, which is surprising since many video game credits tracks—and certainly the others in the *Pokémon* franchise—usually begin energetically. As the credits draw closer, the track speeds up and rhythmic ostinatos provide a steady pulse. When the credits finally begin, a variation on the Rescue motive serves as transitional material into the main part of the “Credits” track, which presents both the Rescue and Team motives in full. Here they are transposed to Eb Mixolydian and are noticeably louder than the accompanying material. Rescue is also reharmonized: whereas in “Intro” it was accompanied by a sustained tonic and in “Pokémon Square” by harmonies lasting two measures each, in “Credits” the harmonies instead change every measure. Rescue and Team are both repeated several times over the course of the credits sequence.

In other video games, including the other entries in the *Pokémon* franchise, credits usually serve as a way of recapping an entire game, often making musical reference to tracks within the game or using familiar motives. In *Rescue Team*, the use of the Rescue and Team motives in “Credits” fulfills this latter expectation, but surprisingly, the game's other prominent set of motives—the fugitive motives—do not appear. “Credits” also subverts expectations for video game music in that it does not end with a definite cadence, despite the fact that the credits themselves are fixed in length.³⁶ Instead,

³⁶Some video games allow the player to change the speed at which the credits progress; *Mystery Dungeon* does not.

“Credits” loops twice and then, shortly after the beginning of its third iteration, fades out. The expected cadence appears in the music accompanying the unexpected post-credits scene, in which the avatar returns to the Pokémon world and reunites with her partner. The lack of cadence and looping of the credits music—which also results in further repetitions of the Rescue and Team motives—both frustrates the player’s expectations and intimates that the game’s seeming conclusion, in which the avatar appears to return to the human world, is not the end of the player’s experience of the game.

Example 5 transcribes an excerpt from the track that accompanies the post-credits scene, “Time of Reunion.”

The image displays a musical score for two motives from the track "Time of Reunion". The tempo is marked as quarter note = 84. The first system, labeled "Rescue", spans measures 15 to 22. It features a treble clef with a melody and a bass clef with accompaniment. Chord symbols [A] E D G E, (C) D C B, and C are placed above the staff. The second system, labeled "Team", spans measures 19 to 22. It features a treble clef with a melody and a bass clef with accompaniment. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a "3" above it. The score concludes with a double bar line and a common time signature.

Example 5. Motives Used in “Time of Reunion” (mm. 15-22)

As mentioned, this track is the only other one in the game besides “Intro” and “Title” that has a definite ending. Both adventure motives appear in “Time of Reunion,” though they

are heavily altered. The first motive to appear is Rescue in an incomplete form; the letter names given above the staff in **Ex. 5** show pitches of Rescue transposed to start on A. Despite the change in meter type from compound to simple, the first five pitches of the motive still occur on the beat, so the rhythm of the motive's first measure is effectively preserved. The motive begins on G, as usual, but its first interval is expanded from a fifth to a sixth, transposing the rest of the motive up a step. The expected C is omitted, and the next four notes (DCBC) occur in mm. 17-18. The rhythmic setting of these notes is changed as well to fit into a simple meter, although the relative durations of the notes are roughly preserved. Because all but the first note of the motive is transposed up a step, the last three notes presented are CBC, which lightly support a C Ionian interpretation of the motive. This hearing is further strengthened when the Team motive enters in measure 19, transposed up a fourth from its appearance in G in "Pokémon Square" (see **Ex. 1** on p. 14). The ending measures, not shown, contain a clear cadence in C, albeit Mixolydian. The repeated notes in the original version of the Team motive are deleted in this setting. Measure 21 is an elaboration of the third measure of the original motive, but the fourth measure is absent; instead the presentation of the Team motive ends on the tonic C and is followed by a cadential tag.

The Team motive is also syncopated in this appearance, which it has not been before. In this simple meter setting, and with the Team motive not containing any repeated pitches, the motives lose the lilting feeling they possess in their prior settings, a change fitting the solemn nature of the post-credits scene. Compared to previous settings of the Rescue motive, the bass line accompanying the motive in "Time of Reunion" is

different. In “Title,” the bass is static and presents tonic; in Pokémon Square, Rescue is accompanied by a repeating I-IV progression. In contrast, the bass line in “Time of Reunion” accompanying Rescue does not include the tonic chord at all. Instead, it outlines a descending third from F to D (which is followed by C after the Rescue motive concludes). Overall, the alterations to the motives in this track give them a softer and calmer feeling than their previous iterations. The harmonic changes accompanying the motives are more frequent (one harmony per measure) compared to the rate of harmonic change used in previous iterations of the motive, resulting in a feeling of tentativeness. “Time of Reunion” accompanies the scene that features the emotionally stirring moment of the avatar and partner’s reunion, but simultaneously uses the adventure motives as a sign that more gameplay will come; the subdued nature of the motives fits the scene better than the powerful and lilting versions of the motives heard before. Indeed, multiple players report being very touched by this scene.³⁷

Both “Time of Reunion” and “Title” end in C Mixolydian. The Rescue motive in “Time of Reunion” begins on G and the track ends in C, mirroring the movement from G to C in “Title.” *Mystery Dungeon* is far from the first game to use relationships such as these between tracks; as Neil Lerner discusses, early Nintendo games such as *Donkey Kong* and *Super Mario Bros.* use a common key for a variety of related musical cues.³⁸ Unlike the games Lerner discusses, *Mystery Dungeon* does not stick solely to one key; its

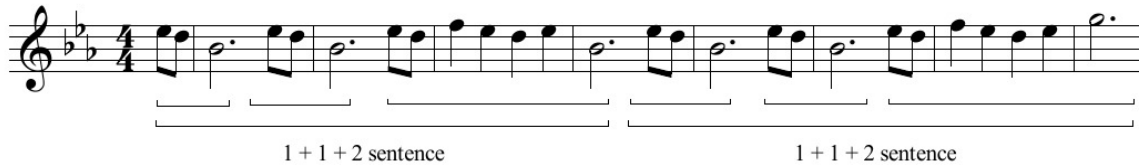
³⁷Some comments on a YouTube upload for “Time of Reunion” (<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uHT1pb-xTA>>, uploaded by “Bespinben,” September 21, 2011, audio, 0:55, accessed June 23, 2018) include “Im not ashamed to say that i cried at this part either” by “Jason Carey,” and “Oh god, the tears!” by “Doctor4077.”

³⁸Lerner, “Mario’s Dynamic Leaps,” in *Music in Video Games*, 1-29.

tracks use a wider palette of keys, modes, and scale types. Some motives appear in multiple tonics and modes during the game. It is striking, then, that despite the chromatic nature of *Mystery Dungeon*'s soundtrack, the opening and closing tracks both end with clear cadences indicating the same tonic.

II.C.2: Fugitive and Truth Motives

Most of the game uses the Rescue and Team motives to represent the heroes' rescue work and their eventual quest to save the world. However, during the game's second act—the so-called fugitive arc—the heroes are unable to continue their rescue work and their priorities shift to keeping themselves alive as they flee from angry townspeople. The heroes are unable to return to Pokémon Square, and the adventure motives no longer accompany the heroes' travels. In their place, the refugee motives, known as Fugitive and Truth, are the dominant motives during this act. My names for these two motives are meant to represent the slightly different connotations each motive carries. The Fugitive motive, shown in its basic form in **Example 6a**, serves specifically as a musical representation of the fugitive arc, and more generally represents goodbyes and leaving familiar situations—and people—for the unknown. It is divided into two subphrases, each 4 measures long, which are both sentence structures. The Truth motive, transcribed in **Example 6b**, is mostly used at the end of the third act, when the heroes learn about the avatar's role in saving the world and stopping the natural disasters; its name reflects this “truth” about the avatar's identity.



Example 6a. The Fugitive Motive in Eb Ionian



Example 6b. The Truth Motive in C Aeolian

Figure 5 lists all tracks in which at least four measures of the motives appear, with the tracks’ first appearances listed chronologically from left to right.³⁹ The first track to feature them is entitled “Run Away,” which appears close to the beginning of Act Two (see **Fig. 3** on p. 20). On the day before the heroes flee, they are approached by another rescue team led by a wise psychic named Alakazam. Alakazam and his team members initially prepare to attack the heroes, but then decide to grant them mercy, allowing them the chance to flee Pokémon Square the following day. He tells them that they must “run until [they] uncover the truth,” suggesting that he may know more about the avatar’s role in the natural disasters quest than he is revealing. The following morning, when the heroes are prepared to leave, they think back to Alakazam’s words, and it is precisely at the moment of this flashback that “Run Away” begins to play.

³⁹The track “Aftermath” contains some statements of the first three notes of Fugitive. Because such a small amount of the motive is used, and because another motive (not discussed in this thesis) is more prominent, I don’t analyze “Aftermath” in my discussions and therefore don’t include it in Figure 5.

	ACT TWO		ACT THREE	
<i>Track title</i>	Run Away	Snow Refugees	Rayquaza Battle	Parting
<i>Motives used</i>	Fugitive, Truth	Fugitive	Truth	Fugitive, Truth
<i>Tonics and modes</i>	E-flat Ionian, C Aeolian (respectively)	D-flat Ionian	G Dorian/Aeolian	D Ionian, B Dorian (respectively)
<i>Corresponding plot events</i>	When the heroes are about to leave Pokémon Square, and again when Ninetales proclaims the avatar's innocence	In the second half of Act Two, as the heroes trek through a snowy wasteland and prepare to meet Ninetales	When the heroes fight Rayquaza at the climax of Act Three	When the avatar is saying her goodbyes to the partner after the heroes defeat Rayquaza

Figure 5. Uses of Fugitive and Truth Motives

Even after the flashback, the music continues to play, growing in intensity, as the heroes' friends come to wish them well on their journey. "Run Away" thus represents the bittersweet mood of the scene in which the heroes say goodbye to their friends. The music accompanies the heroes' recognition that the entire world is not, in fact, out to get them. The "Run Away" track is therefore soft, slow, and peaceful, rather than agitated, as a player might expect considering the circumstances surrounding the heroes at this point. At the end of the fugitive arc, when the heroes meet Ninetales on the top of Mt. Freeze and learn that the avatar did not cause the natural disasters, a delighted partner embraces the avatar, overjoyed and full of emotion at the knowledge that his friend is not a bad

Pokémon. The partner’s emotional outburst is set to the “Run Away” track. Here, the track’s use of the well-established Fugitive motive recalls the arc, but the Truth motive, which has not been heard as often, still does not have an obvious connotation at this point. It is only later, when it appears more often in conjunction with the natural disaster quest, that it gains meaning.

The second track to feature both motives is called “Parting,” which accompanies the avatar’s goodbyes as she leaves the partner to return to the human world. Given the events of this scene, the use of the Fugitive motive, a motive formerly associated with the heroes’ refugee journey, might seem out of place. Despite its seeming irrelevance, the use of the Fugitive motive in this track is nonetheless meaningful in two ways. First, it emphasizes the scene’s similarity to the beginning of the fugitive arc, where the heroes’ friends bid them farewell as they leave Pokémon Square. Second, it results in a mirror across Acts Two and Three. As **Figure 5** shows, Act Two starts with one track featuring both motives and contains a later one featuring Fugitive. Act Three starts with “Rayquaza Battle,” which presents one motive—in this case Truth—and then “Parting,” which contains both motives. The first track of Act Two and the last track of Act Three, respectively, are the *only* tracks to present both motives, bracketing the acts.

Example 7 transcribes the motives and accompanying material in “Run Away.” Both motives are eight measures long.⁴⁰ Fugitive can be divided into two four-measure phrases, both of which are 1+1+2 sentence structures (shown in **Example 6a** on p. 34). Although Fugitive and Truth are separate motives, they are harmonized similarly.

⁴⁰In “Run Away,” Truth only takes up seven measures, but it uses eight in other appearances.

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Run Away" (mm. 1-18). The score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 80 beats per minute. It features two main motifs: the "Fugitive motive" and the "Truth motive".

- Measures 1-5:** The "Fugitive motive" is introduced in the right hand, starting with a rising progression from $A\flat$ to $B\flat$. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment.
- Measures 6-10:** The "Truth motive" is introduced in the right hand, mirroring the initial rising progression of the Fugitive motive. The left hand continues with a similar accompaniment.
- Measures 11-14:** The left hand features "ascending & descending arpeggios" in the bass line, with fingerings 7, 1, and 5 indicated.
- Measures 15-18:** The left hand features a "stepwise descent from 5 to 1" in the bass line, with fingerings 5 and 1 indicated.

Example 7. Fugitive and Truth Motives in “Run Away” (mm. 1-18)

The first two measures of the Fugitive motive feature a rising progression from $A\flat$ to $B\flat$, which is seen again in the first two measures of the Truth motive. Although their settings diverge harmonically in their respective third measures, the $C/E\flat$ dyad on beat 4 of m. 5 mirrors the C minor harmony in m. 13.

Example 8 is a transcription of “Parting,” where the motives are transposed down a half step to D major and B Dorian, respectively. Both motives and their accompaniments are altered in comparison to their appearances in “Run Away.”

The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of four systems of staves. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 80. The score is divided into two main sections: the 'Fugitive motive' (measures 16-24) and the 'Truth motive' (measures 25-33).
 - **System 1 (measures 16-20):** Labeled 'Fugitive motive'. The right hand begins with a sustained chord (B-D-F#) and a half note G. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. A bracket spans measures 16-20.
 - **System 2 (measures 21-24):** Continuation of the 'Fugitive motive'.
 - **System 3 (measures 25-28):** Labeled 'Truth motive'. The right hand features a melodic line with notes G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, G. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. A bracket spans measures 25-28. Below the staff, there are annotations: '4' under the first measure, '5' and '1' under the second measure, and 'ascending & descending arpeggios' under the third and fourth measures.
 - **System 4 (measures 29-33):** Continuation of the 'Truth motive'. A bracket spans measures 29-33. Below the staff, there is an annotation: 'stepwise descent from 5 to 1' under the second measure.

Example 8. Fugitive and Truth Motives in “Parting” (mm. 16-33)

The entrance of the Fugitive motive is displaced by an eighth note, an effect first heard in the earlier track “Snow Refugees.” In “Run Away,” the sustained pitch at the end of each part of the 1+1+2 sentence is the dominant; in “Parting” it is instead the mediant. More

notably, the harmonic accompaniment to Fugitive is altered in “Parting” to feature a stepwise ascent over three measures instead of two, mirroring the accompaniment to the Truth motive in “Run Away” and tying the motives together. In “Parting,” the accompaniments to both Fugitive and Truth are changed to be more similar. In “Run Away,” Fugitive is accompanied by arpeggios and Truth by arpeggios plus a rhythmic bass; in “Parting” both motives are accompanied by arpeggios and a sustained bass pitch that changes every measure.

The Truth motive in “Parting” is also changed compared to its appearance in “Run Away.” It is transposed down a half step to B; this new tonic is still the relative minor of the Fugitive motive, but the mode used is Dorian rather than Aeolian. The change in mode stems from an alteration to the first half of the motive: each instance of $\hat{1}-\hat{5}$ in the first three measures of “Run Away” is changed to $\hat{5}-\hat{1}$ in “Parting,” with all other intervals remaining the same. In mm. 13-14 of “Run Away,” the scale degrees of the first four pitches are $\hat{5}-\hat{1}-\hat{3}-\hat{2}$, with a half step between $\hat{3}$ and $\hat{2}$ stemming from the track’s Aeolian mode. In mm. 27-28 of “Parting,” the equivalent pitches are instead scale degrees $\hat{1}-\hat{5}-\hat{7}-\hat{6}$. Using a half step between $\hat{7}$ and $\hat{6}$ results in the raised $\hat{6}$ characteristic of the Dorian mode. Both tracks end with $\hat{1}-\hat{5}-\hat{4}-\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$. In “Run Away” this figure begins on the second pitch of m. 15; in “Parting” it begins on the second pitch of m. 30—a measure later compared to “Run Away”—and $\hat{4}$ is additionally extended four beats. The result is that the second half of the motive is three measures in “Run Away” and five in “Parting.” These extended melodic pitches accommodate the slower harmonic rhythm of the second

half of the motive in “Parting,” which features one harmony per two measures, as opposed to one harmony per measure in “Run Away.”

In addition to changes in harmonic rhythm, the harmonies themselves are altered in the version of Truth presented in “Parting.” Measures 11-13 of “Run Away” outline an Aeolian progression ending with a minor *i*; the parallel *mm.* 25-27 of “Parting” also present an Aeolian progression, although the *i* chord is in first inversion and is extended to a minor seventh chord. The two tracks diverge further following this progression. In both tracks, the fourth measure of the motive outlines a descending arpeggiated triad. Due to the swapping of $\hat{1}$ and $\hat{5}$, the two melodic triads—while both major—contain different scale degrees: in “Run Away” the melody features scale degrees $\hat{2}$, $\hat{7}$, and $\hat{4}$, accompanied by $\hat{5}$ in the bass to create a v^7 harmony; in “Parting” it is melody outlines $\hat{6}$, $\hat{4}$, and $\hat{1}$ over a $\hat{4}$ bass—a root position IV chord. The fourth measure of the motive—the end of the first half—is harmonized in both tracks by VI^7 . Although both tracks use the same harmony in this measure, the material that follows it differs—as does the harmonic rhythm, as discussed earlier. Starting with the fourth measure, in “Run Away” the rest of the motive is harmonized with VI^7-v^7-IV , whereas in “Parting” it is harmonized with $VI^7-VII-VI$. A *i* chord would be expected at the end of “Parting” to follow VII, creating an Aeolian cadence. Despite the frequency of VI-VII progressions over the course of the accompaniment to the motive, a root position VI-VII-*i* progression at the end of a phrase never occurs. Following the unexpected VI at the end of the phrase, an oscillation between VI (G major) and D major in first inversion spans several measures and transitions back to the track’s opening in D Ionian. Although the Truth motive clearly

suggests B as a tonic and the stepwise descent to tonic has a strong air of finality, the harmonic accompaniment is more evasive and less conclusive. This is reflective of the scene that “Parting” accompanies, where the avatar leaves the partner to return to the human world. As mentioned in the discussion of “Credits,” this is not the true ending of the game, as the avatar eventually returns to the Pokémon world. Just as the use of the adventure motives and the lack of a cadence in “Credits” foreshadowed that return, so too does the evasion of the Aeolian cadence in “Parting,” which frustrates the player’s expectations and serves as a subtle clue that the game is not over yet despite the seeming finality of the avatar’s disappearance.

“Run Away” and “Parting” are the only two tracks to feature both motives.

However, as **Figure 5** (p. 35) shows, other tracks in the game contain one of the two. The first of these that the player will experience is named “Snow Refugees,” which plays approximately midway through the fugitive arc (as **Fig. 3** on p. 20 makes clear). This track is so called because it plays as the heroes are walking through an icy wasteland, and it shares several musical elements with an ice-themed dungeon the heroes traverse during this time, Frosty Forest.⁴¹ “Snow Refugees” primarily uses staccato percussion, most prominently an instrument that sounds like a glockenspiel, whose high pitch and light timbre calls to mind icicles. The first seven and a half measures consist of oscillations of E \flat minor 7th and F minor 7th harmonies.⁴² Whereas in “Run Away” harmonies changed

⁴¹It is common in video game parlance to refer to areas or levels as having “themes,” such as “fire-themed,” “sky-themed,” “water-themed,” etc.

⁴²A bass D \flat enters on the second measure of each Fm7 harmony. An alternate way of analyzing this chord progression would be to say that the oscillation is between E \flat m7 and D \flat M9.

on the beat of the following measure, in “Snow Refugees” the rhythm is halved and each harmony lasts two measures. **Example 9** shows the entrance of the “Fugitive” motive, in D_b, in measure 8.

The image displays a musical score for three systems of music, corresponding to measures 7, 8-9, and 10-12. The score is written in D-flat major (three flats) and 4/4 time. A tempo marking of quarter note = 82 is present at the beginning of the first system. The notation includes a treble clef, a piano (p) dynamic marking, and various musical symbols such as slurs, ties, and rests. The bass line features a prominent harmonic structure with a sustained chord in the left hand and a melodic line in the right hand. The melody in the right hand consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some measures containing rests. The overall texture is characterized by a steady accompaniment and a clear melodic line.

Example 9. Fugitive Motive in “Snow Refugees” (mm. 7-12)

The motive enters one eighth earlier than its expected entrance, which corresponds with the displacement present in “Parting” later in the game (though it first appears here in “Snow Refugees”). In this context, the displacement adds urgency to the otherwise peaceful track. Its presence serves as a musical reminder that, although they are in a remote, harsh wasteland, they are still being chased by the townspeople and must always stay one step ahead of them, just as the melody stays one step ahead of its “expected” entrance. The oscillation between E_bm7 and Fm7 harmonies is present through the whole track and represents the heroes’ worries—voiced in the partner’s dialogue—that they may not actually be making progress through the icy wasteland.

Although the Fugitive motive is more common in tracks introduced in Act Two, Truth is more common in tracks presented in Act Three, as shown in **Fig. 5** (p. 35). Following its appearance in the “Run Away” track, the next version of the Truth motive is at the end of the third act, when the heroes are fighting Rayquaza—the climax of the game, indicated by the peak in **Fig. 3** (p. 20). The track that accompanies the fight with Rayquaza is unique to his battle, though it does draw musical material from previously-heard tracks, most prominently incorporating an up-tempo variation on the Truth motive. The fact that the motive chosen for the last boss battle is the Truth motive—last heard when “Run Away” played at the top of Mt. Freeze—is significant: the Rescue or Team motives could have been used to summarize the adventure—which, as discussed before, happens later in “Credits”—but instead, the player is treated to a reprise of the Truth motive. The Truth motive reflects the heroes’ ultimate quest: defeating Rayquaza in battle will allow the heroes to get his help to destroy the meteor and save the world, so

the battle is the definite climax of that quest and the game. In the Rayquaza battle, the Truth motive finally takes center stage at the same time that the natural disasters are being dealt with most directly. **Example 10** transcribes mm. 3-8 of “Rayquaza Battle,” which contain the first appearance of the Truth motive.

Example 10. Truth Motive in “Rayquaza Battle” (mm. 3-8)

The motive is more prominent than any other part of the music, and when a second melodic figure enters at measure 7 it repeats mm. 5-6 an octave lower. The use of the Truth motive in Rayquaza’s theme has not gone unnoticed by players: in the comments for a YouTube upload of “Run Away,” the user “BigDaddyPizza” commented: “[...] Just realized that the melody at 0:29 is also the melody for the final battle VS

Rayquaza. Wow... each [Mystery Dungeon] game[...] has its final battle repeat a motif from an earlier track. That's brilliant. Another reason why I love the [Mystery Dungeon] series." While the use of the Truth motive represents the fact that Rayquaza's battle is the end of the natural disaster quest, its relationship to earlier tracks also helps to relate the battle back to earlier events in the game, resulting in experiences such as "BigDaddyPizza's" above.

II.D: Silent Moments

Although certain tracks or motives are often used to accompany powerful scenes in which the characters express intense emotion, silence can at times set the mood of a scene in a way that music may not be able to, as it often does in film.⁴³ Gibbons mentions in his article on *Shadow of the Colossus* that silence in video games is often used for introspective purposes.⁴⁴ *Mystery Dungeon* is an example of a series that uses silence this way; in the games, silence accompanies moments where one or more characters are reflecting upon their situation or goals, or where both the heroes and player are uncertain as to what is coming next. Silence has no innate connotations (either in the context of the game or in the context of audio in general), so the lack of audio prevents the player from gleaned information about the current situation. Though a variety of scenes in *Rescue Team* incorporate silence, there are three places at which it is especially notable: when the heroes are preparing to flee at the beginning of the fugitive arc, just before the

⁴³A recent example of a movie enriched by its use of silence is *A Quiet Place*, as Jeannette Catsoulis discusses in her 2018 review for *The New York Times*:
<<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/04/movies/a-quiet-place-review-john-krasinski-emily-blunt.html>>
(accessed June 3, 2018).

⁴⁴Gibbons, "Wandering Tonalities," in *Music in Video Games*, 122-137.

characters learn if Rayquaza's attempted destruction of the meteor was successful, and immediately after the avatar leaves for the human world.

Just before the heroes flee Pokémon Square at the beginning of Act Two, the player has a chance to go to the square and prepare for the journey, as is the case before every dungeon expedition. The morning they flee is one of only two times in the game in which traveling to Pokémon Square, surprisingly, does *not* result in its music being played; instead, Pokémon Square is completely silent. In fact, the entire morning is silent up until the point when "Run Away" begins to play, accompanying the flashback to Alakazam's words. The only sounds that occur until then are the beeps that always accompany dialogue between characters. Here, the silence serves to emphasize the seriousness of the issue that the heroes are facing. They are being forced to flee their home and instead seek safety in unfamiliar environments. When the heroes awaken that day, there is no joy in what they are about to undergo, so the music of the team's rescue base is inappropriate. The silence also serves to tap into the player's imagination regarding the hostile townspeople. The heroes are not yet being pursued, so using a "scary" track would be unwarranted; however, that does not mean the pursuers don't exist—perhaps they are lurking in the shadows, waiting for the heroes to leave the safety of the base. Since their pursuers are their former friends and fellow townspeople, the Pokémon Square music would sound insincere as well, because the townspeople have turned on them. The silence in the square represents the alienation and hostility the heroes are dealing with.

As a result of the lengthy silence, “Run Away” is especially salient when it enters, accompanying the flashback to the heroes’ meeting with Alakazam the day before. When thinking back to Alakazam’s words, they reflect on how his merciful actions toward them indicate his belief in the avatar’s innocence. The entry of “Run Away” also coincides with the first time that the heroes have shown emotion this morning; up until this point, they have been stoic and frank in their remarks regarding fleeing Pokémon Square. Following this scene, the heroes’ friends—a few Pokémon who didn’t believe the allegations against the avatar—come to wish them well on their journey. These two scenes are bittersweet and wistful, and “Run Away” begins to take on those qualities as well, indicated by its sustained harmonies and repeated melodic fragments that stall a sense of forward motion.

Silence also plays a large role in the game’s ending. After defeating Rayquaza, the player sees an image of Rayquaza blasting the meteor with powerful energy, but before the outcome of his attack is revealed, the visual fades to white and the heroes awaken on the ground far below with the townspeople around them. When they wake, the world is silent. At first, they do not know if Rayquaza’s attack was successful. Their fears are only put to rest when Xatu uses his psychic powers to confirm that the meteor is destroyed. The lack of music preceding Xatu’s confirmation reflects the heroes’ uncertainty: celebratory music would be premature, as would ominous music indicating that Rayquaza had not succeeded. The next track begins when the player has a vision of the safe and prosperous Pokémon Square,⁴⁵ confirming that all is well. The lack of music

⁴⁵This vision is not commented on by the Pokémon, suggesting it only exists for the player’s

adds to the emotional valence of the scene by frustrating the player's expectations for some sort of resolution until Xatu provides it.

After the avatar's spirit disappears, the player views a short scene of the avatar's Pokémon friends—and especially the partner—mourning her disappearance, set to silence. The avatar has already said her goodbyes, set to “Parting,” which fades out as the avatar disappears. The silence that follows “Parting” adds to the significance of the scene in three ways. First, it indicates the avatar is gone. While her disappearance is sad, it is in the past, and there is nothing that can be done to change her fate at this point. Second, it represents the introspective nature of the dialogue, aurally imparting to the player that the characters, while sad, are reflecting on their interactions with the avatar. Third, it suggests to the player that this may be the end of the game. Though another event could still occur following the avatar's disappearance, the lack of music—either old or new—effectively halts the narrative progress of the scene. It is only when the “Credits” track begins—bringing with it the adventure motives, signifying gameplay—that the game suggests that there may be further material to follow this apparent ending.

II.E: Musical Elements of Dungeon Tracks

II.E.1: Dungeon Track Overview

Though uncertainty and introspection are primarily conveyed in noninteractive scenes through silence, they are also conveyed through musical elements in other areas of the game—primarily within dungeon tracks. Each dungeon features a constant background track, several of which serve a dual purpose. First and foremost, each

benefit.

dungeon track is referential (per Buhler and Neumeier) or meant to expand the game world (per Whalen). Each dungeon's name, location on the map, Pokémon inhabitants, and physical appearance are meant to evoke certain elements of a landscape (such as a volcano, a frozen forest, a tower of clouds in the sky, or the ocean), and the accompanying music also suggests these elements. For instance, Sky Tower uses soaring flute melodies to evoke the sky and wind, and Frosty Forest uses high-pitched percussion such as the glockenspiel to give an "icy" sound to the music. The tracks that have a dual purpose also contain musical elements that reflect the emotional state of the characters at the time they traverse the dungeon, thereby relating the dungeon to noninteractive plot-based scenes.

Most dungeon tracks are in two contrasting sections. The first section introduces a theme that is subject to slight alterations in pitch, rhythm, texture, or harmony upon repetition. The second section typically differs in meter type, scale, mode, and/or pitch-class collection. Following the presentation of both sections, the music often features some transitional material to return it to the first section, and then the music repeats from the beginning in a loop.

Examples 11a and **11b** present Mt. Freeze's two themes. The notes in parentheses in **Example 11a** indicate pitches that are heard on the second, fourth, and sixth iterations of the melody. The first theme oscillates between A major and B \flat major melodies and harmonies over a B and C bass, respectively, and is stated six times in a row.⁴⁶

⁴⁶A major triad played over a bass one whole step higher is called the "soul dominant" by Mark

Example 11a. “Mt. Freeze,” A Section (mm. 2-4)

Example 11b. “Mt. Freeze,” B Section (mm. 26-28)

Over the course of these six iterations, the register, accompaniment, and instrumentation may change, but the melody and underlying harmonies stay the same. The second theme begins at measure 26, 1:03 into the track. Mm. 26-29 feature oscillations between G major and A major over an A and B bass, recalling the oscillations of the first section, although now the harmonies are related by whole step instead of half step and start on the new harmony of G. In the second section, the A over B harmony, which was the strong-hyperbeat harmony in the first section, is now the weak-hyperbeat harmony. The second

Spicer in his 2016 article, “Fragile, Emergent, and Absent Tonics in Pop and Rock Songs,” <<http://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.17.23.2/mto.17.23.2.spicer.html>>. I refrain from using his term in my analysis of Mt. Freeze because he uses the term to refer to IV chords over a $\hat{5}$ bass, hence the “dominant” in the term; in Mt. Freeze every harmony has this sonority regardless of function.

section also further diverges from the first in that, after the first four measures of oscillating harmonies, the bass begins to rise by step instead of continuing the oscillation, beginning with B \flat major over C in m. 30, instead of the expected A major over B. Mm. 31-33 continue the half step ascent to C \sharp major over B, finally culminating in the D bass accompanying the final measure that precedes the return to the A section.

Six of the game's thirteen dungeons are divided into two parts. After traversing a specific number of floors, the heroes reach a "midpoint" that allows the player to save her progress (an action which is otherwise forbidden to the player during dungeon gameplay).⁴⁷ The two parts of the dungeon, though they have names suggesting they are the same dungeon (such as "Mt. Freeze" and "Mt. Freeze Peak"), have slight differences in appearance and possible enemy encounters. Each part uses its own track; these tracks often use the same melodies, or at least share small but salient melodic fragments. The mode or tonic may be changed; in the case of the latter, the interval between the tonics is typically a half or whole step. **Example 12** shows these similarities in the case of "Mt. Blaze" and "Mt. Blaze Peak." The two main melodies from "Mt. Blaze" are used in "Mt. Blaze Peak," though set in a simple triple meter as opposed to a compound quadruple meter. Despite the change in meter type, both versions of the melodies use the same durations, except for the last pitch of the "main" theme (as it is called in **Example 12**). The change in meter type means that the main theme appears syncopated in "Mt. Blaze Peak," in contrast to "Mt. Blaze;" syncopated pitches are circled in **Ex. 12b**.

⁴⁷"Saving the game" or "saving [one's] progress," as it is referred to by gamers, is the action of telling the game (through an option within the game) that the player wishes to continue from this point the next time they turn on the game. It is the gaming equivalent of putting a bookmark in a book.

Example 12a. The Main Melodies of “Mt. Blaze” (mm. 8-12)

Example 12b. The Main Melodies of “Mt. Blaze Peak” (mm. 9-17)

“Mt. Blaze Peak” also incorporates a constant tonic pedal, in contrast to the changing bass accompanying changes of harmony in “Mt. Blaze.” These two factors make the track generally sound “off” in comparison to “Mt. Blaze.” Other two-part dungeons also feature similar contrasts between their two tracks. The first part’s track—as heard in “Mt. Thunder,” “Mt. Blaze,” and “Sky Tower”—often features a prominent rhythmic accompaniment, whether in the form of an actual rhythm section or consistent bass motion. This use of rhythm gives the track a feeling of forward motion, befitting the experience of traveling through the dungeon. The music of the second part of all three

aforementioned dungeons features a drastically reduced rhythmic accompaniment and little or no bass compared to the first part. The rhythm and bass have a grounding effect on the player as they traverse the dungeon, so when these elements are lessened or removed in the dungeon's second part, it disorients the player. As most two-part dungeons feature a boss at the end, the lack of grounding is in part reflective of the apprehension and fear the heroes and player feel as the end of the dungeon draws closer. Many players, when discussing the music of the game, report that the music of the second part of such a dungeon seems to be building up in preparation for the end of the dungeon compared to the first part.⁴⁸ The two-part dungeons—in part because of the boss fights they feature—are some of the more significant dungeons in the game, so the changing music has a greater impact on the player's response to the game.

II.E.2: Tiny Woods

I will focus on three representative dungeons in my analysis, one from each of the game's three acts: Tiny Woods, Mt. Blaze, and Sky Tower. Tiny Woods and Sky Tower are the first and last dungeons in the game, giving them a place of prominence. Tiny Woods is the shortest dungeon in the game; accordingly, it has a short accompaniment track, lasting only 45 seconds before repeating (if the player has not finished the dungeon). Remember that in the game's opening, the avatar is disoriented and confused;

⁴⁸Examples: In the comments of a YouTube upload of the track "Sky Tower Summit," the user "Flyne" says "This a song of worry and trepidation, in comparison to Sky Tower's main theme. It's not rushing into the battle full force, but instead is trudging along, with a fear set in your mind, in your body, in your heart." (<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CyBWIIIdys>>, uploaded by "Bespinben," September 21, 2011, audio, 4:51, accessed June 3, 2018) In the comments of "Mt. Thunder Peak," the user "RedLuna" says "This music gives off such an intimidating vibe, and it fits very well! :D?" (<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqIIITNZgudw>>, uploaded by "Bespinben," September 20, 2011, audio, 3:39, accessed June 3, 2018)

she has just woken up in an unfamiliar land, in an unfamiliar body, with no memory of how she came to arrive there. Before she is able to get her bearings, she and the partner are sent out on a mission to a dungeon. Both before and after Tiny Woods, the avatar wonders if what she is experiencing is a dream, a theory the avatar believes until she awakens the following day. Tiny Woods's music reflects this state of uncertainty and dreaminess through use of the whole-tone scale, which divides the chromatic scale evenly, making it difficult to identify a tonic from intervallic relationships. A study by Bernd and Daniela Willimek assessing participants' interpretations of a variety of musical objects found that the whole-tone scale is often perceived as "dreamy" or "floating,"⁴⁹ a perception that fits nicely with the avatar's perception of her situation as she traverses Tiny Woods. The use of the whole-tone scale is surprising in that most of the rest of the game's music uses the diatonic modes. It is only with the following dungeon's track—by which point the avatar has finally realized she is not dreaming—that diatonic frameworks return.

Example 13 transcribes mm. 2-3 of "Tiny Woods," whose melodies mostly move by steps and thirds. Melody notes are consistently harmonized at a tritone below. The constant dissonances, which represent the avatar's state, are unsettling. While the A section consists of disjunct, separate melodic fragments, these fragments are sometimes related; an example is shown by bracketed pitches in the example. M. 3 repeats the F#-E-G# segment from m. 2, adding a prefix A#.

⁴⁹Bernd and Daniela Willimek, "Feelings Which Strike a Chord, and Chords Which Strike a Feeling," *Open Journal of Acoustics* 7 (2017): 10-17, accessed March 1, 2018, <https://file.scirp.org/pdf/OJA_2017020616172871.pdf>.

♩ = 85

2

F# E G#

F# E G#

Example 13. “Tiny Woods” (mm. 2-3)

The contrasting B section contains longer subphrases featuring even more conjunct melodic motion and is characterized by its use of a new timbre—a synthesized vocal sound—compared to the A section. In general, the whole track reflects the nature of the forest that the heroes are trekking through. The woods are typically calm and peaceful, home to Pokémon living in harmony, but the recent natural disasters have made the Pokémon agitated and aggressive. The fast sixteenth-note figures in the bass—present through the whole track—and the use of the whole-tone scale help to reflect the disaster-stricken forest.

II.E.3: Mt. Blaze

Later in the game, during the fugitive arc, the heroes must climb Mt. Blaze, a volcano with lava actively flowing down its sides that is home to the powerful fire bird Moltres. When the heroes make the choice to head toward the volcano, the townspeople—who are right on their tails—can be heard saying that “no one has ever come this far before” and “Mt. Blaze is doomed desolation.” Several of the pursuers balk

at the thought of following the heroes into the volcano and turn back. Mt. Blaze is the point at which the heroes’ journey becomes truly dangerous: the previous dungeon was easy and short, but now the heroes are being forced to go through more inhospitable terrain—here the volcano Mt. Blaze, and afterward the icy areas Frosty Forest and Mt. Freeze. The music within Mt. Blaze reflects the heroes’ uncertainty. Mt. Blaze’s theme is in a somewhat slow compound quadruple meter, just like the Rescue and Team motives. As **Example 14** shows, it opens with a series of low parallel perfect fifths beginning on the C tonic and rising through dyads suggesting the Dorian mode until reaching the F/C dyad, at which point the rising pattern is repeated—a typical “vamp” figure.

♩ = 104

Example 14. Opening Vamp in “Mt. Blaze” (mm. 1-6)

Following the second repetition of the vamp, the melody enters. This vamp aptly depicts determination on the part of the heroes as they climb Mt. Blaze and escape the pursuers that remain.

The excerpt of Mt. Blaze used in **Example 12a** (p. 52) shows the main melody used in that track. The melody is characterized by long durations (typically 2 or 3 beats long). I hear this melody as representing both the slow-flowing lava that surrounds the heroes as they make their way up the mountain as well as the heroes’ slow plodding toward their unknown destination.⁵⁰

As shown in **Example 15**, the second subsection of the A section uses the same melody as the first subsection, now doubled in a higher octave with a different harmonic accompaniment: $\flat\text{VI}-\flat\text{VII}$ -open fifth based on tonic, an Aeolian cadence.⁵¹



Example 15. Cadential Progression in “Mt. Blaze” (mm. 17-19)

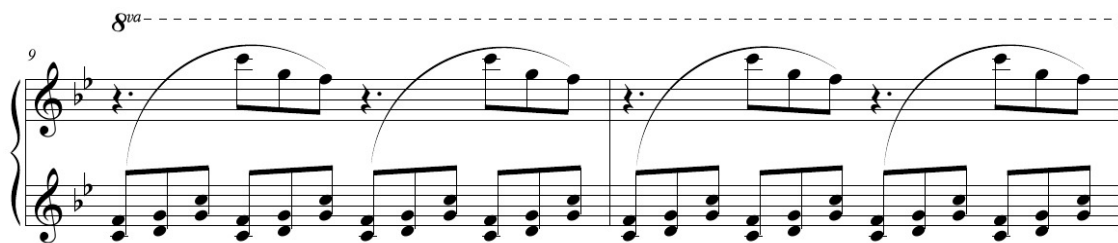
In most of the track, the heroes’ uncertainty about the outcome of their quest is suggested by the interplay between Dorian and Aeolian modes. The heroes are in a bleak situation, but the raised $\hat{6}$ —characteristic of major modes—suggests hope, which the heroes must

⁵⁰Long notes are commonly used for the music of lava-themed levels in video games. Examples include the ostinato part in “Lethal Lava Land” from *Super Mario 64* and “Lava Landing” from *Kirby’s Epic Yarn*.

⁵¹The name of this cadence was given by Frank Lehman in his 2013 article “Hollywood Cadences: Music and the Structure of Cinematic Expectation” (<<http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.13.19.4/mto.13.19.4.lehman.pdf>>), where he describes this progression with a major tonic as a “Picardy-aeolian” cadence.

cling to as they continue their climb.⁵² The raised $\hat{6}$ is not always present, however, suggestive of the heroes' wavering feelings about how their quest will end.

Once the main melody enters, there is a near-constant backing of eighth notes, presented by two voices. Together, they create an arc-like melodic motion, as shown by the slurs in **Example 16**.



Example 16. Ostinati in “Mt. Blaze”

The constant eighth-note motion underneath the slow melody musically indicates the urgency of the heroes' journey. Their movement up the mountain is slow and difficult, but they must not rest, as the pursuers that remain may catch up to them and kill them.

II.E.4: Sky Tower

Much later, near the end of Act 3 (see **Fig. 3** on p. 20), the heroes must climb through Sky Tower to save the world. Sky Tower is significant for being the longest dungeon in the main game, as well as for having the longest dungeon theme: it is 3:45 in length before its loop point, more than a minute longer than the next longest dungeon theme. **Figure 6** provides the form of Sky Tower's track, which includes a lengthy introduction whose melody, texture, accompaniment, and style are similar to those of the

⁵²Temperley and Tan, “Connotations of Diatonic Modes.” In their study, Dorian was perceived as happier than Aeolian, though less happy than the major modes.

B section. The A and B sections, with their vastly different characters, are indicative of two different perspectives on the final mission.

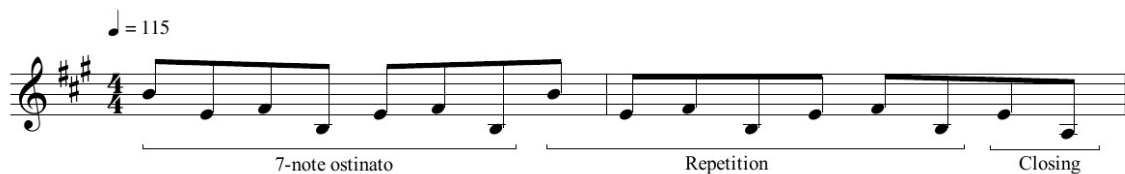
SECTION	Introduction	: A	B :
MEASURES	1-16 (16 mm.)	17-60 (44 mm.)	61-108 (48 mm.)
TONICS AND MODES	B Dorian	B Dorian	Oscillation between Dmaj9 and Emaj9; melody suggests F# Dorian
CHARACTERISTICS	Uses a similar texture and melody as section B	Upbeat, driving sound; prominent bass part; uses a full complement of strings	Uses a solo flute and thinner texture (like other two-part dungeons); doesn't use the rhythm section as much

Figure 6. Table Outlining “Sky Tower’s” Form

The A section, with its driving percussion, strong bass, and syncopated rhythms, propels the player through the dungeon, encouraging gameplay. The heroes are moving forward in their final mission to save the world, and the music is driving them—and the player—through their last adventure together. For the partner, this is a time of excitement; he has no way of knowing that this is going to be the last mission he undertakes with the avatar. The music is more upbeat and excited to reflect the partner’s state of mind here. The second section, in contrast, does not have the driving rhythm section and moving bass; instead, harmonies are presented in long durations and a seven-note ostinato, first used in the introduction, establishes the tempo. The melody here is played by what sounds like a solo instrument, in contrast to the strings moving in octaves that perform the first section.

This solo instrument reflects the avatar’s perspective on the mission, as she must face her own fate alone and in silence.

As mentioned, the introduction begins with an ostinato of seven eighth notes that presents a B tonic. This ostinato, transcribed in **Example 17**, is grouped into two-measure units: the seven pitches of the ostinato are presented twice, then followed by two ‘extra’ eighth notes to fill the rest of the measure.



Example 17. Ostinato in “Sky Tower”

In measure 5, the ostinato continues, but new musical material appears in the form of a four-measure A major-B minor progression over a B pedal. G# is used as a neighbor to A, suggesting B Dorian specifically. During the second measure of this progression—measure 7 overall—a seven-measure flute melody enters. After the flute finishes its melody, a further three measures of the ostinato are presented simultaneously with drums, transitioning into the A section. The A section is louder, its theme played by what sounds like a full string section with the accompaniment of a rhythm section. At 2:06, the B section begins. In contrast with the A section, the B section uses only a solo flute (recalling the introduction) instead of a complement of strings, sustained bass pitches instead of the driving eighth-note patterns used in the A section, and a less prominent rhythm section.

Example 18 compares the introductory melody with the main melody of the B section; in both cases, Arabic numerals below the staff represent harmonic intervals between bass and melody.⁵³

Example 18a. Introduction of “Sky Tower” (mm. 7-13)

Example 18b. B Section of “Sky Tower” (mm. 61-67)

The harmonies are also labeled above the staff; both harmonizations consist of a whole-step oscillation between harmonies that each last two measures. In both **18a** and **18b**, this oscillation begins two measures prior to the melody’s entrance. The melody of the B section—shown in **Example 18b**—is largely transposed down a fourth from **18a**, resulting in a new tonic of F# for the B section’s melody. The harmonies of the B section, on the other hand, are transposed down a *fifth* from those of the introduction, resulting in a harmonic oscillation of D major-E major, with the pedal removed. The different

⁵³The beginning of the B section features an eight-measure melody whose intervals and durations are similar to those of the introductory melody. This melody is only repeated once, whereas the following melody—which is the one most parallel to the introductory melody—is repeated multiple times, hence my labeling of the second melody as the “main” melody.

intervals of transposition result in different harmonic intervals between melody and bass, as shown in **Example 18**. While the first pitch of the introductory melody creates a consonant perfect octave with the bass, the parallel interval in the B section is instead a dissonant 9th. The last pitch of the B section's melody is also dissonant against the bass as well, in contrast to the perfect consonance employed by the introductory melody. Although C# is part of the Dmaj7 harmony that accompanies this measure, the introduction employs a consonant triad for the ending of the melody, causing the ending of the B section's melody to sound dissonant in comparison. The B section also features a conflict between the implied F# Aeolian of the melody and the D Lydian of the accompaniment, whereas the introductory melody and accompaniment were both in B Dorian. Both the dissonance of the B section and the modal conflicts result in a destabilizing effect in the B section, which is reflective of the avatar's thoughts during this mission: while she knows it is her fate to climb Sky Tower and save the world, she also knows that her disappearance after the successful mission will devastate her partner.

In summary, the musical elements used in *Rescue Team*'s tracks serve to strengthen the story and enrich the players' experience with the game. The Rescue and Team motives not only signify adventure, encouraging the player to continue the game, but also are used to foreshadow the avatar's return at the end of the game. Fugitive and Truth are the main motives used during Act 2 and, to a lesser extent, Act 3 to depict the heroes' quest to learn the truth about and stop the natural disasters. Silence is used to convey uncertainty or introspection at the beginning of the fugitive arc and in the game's ending, its rarity among video game soundtracks making its use in *Rescue Team*

especially salient. Finally, the dungeon tracks for Tiny Woods, Mt. Blaze, and Sky Tower represent the heroes'—more specifically, the avatar's—state of being at the time that the dungeons are traversed, in addition to providing a musical portrait of the environment of the dungeon. All of these uses of audio come together to greatly enhance the player's experience with the game, as demonstrated in the selection of YouTube comments I have included. Many players report becoming very emotionally invested in the games' plot. In the comments of "Time of Reunion," the YouTube user "Snivy von Derp-Phuck I" says of that track, "It is absolutely beautiful...just incredulous how amazing of a creation this. [...] I don't know who wrote the story for this game, but to that person no player can ever fathomably give enough thanks. I've never said this about a book, nor have I said this about a movie, or anything else...the idea of this[...] series wasn't necessarily a recipe for success, but I can't believe how it turned out in the end...I have no more words." This user's feelings are echoed in other comments on the *Mystery Dungeon* games (both on YouTube and on online discussion boards dedicated to video games or *Pokémon* specifically), and especially their music. The recurrence of motives in multiple tracks gives the soundtrack a feeling of being one interwoven whole. Subtle musical effects within dungeon tracks, like those I discuss in this chapter, tie them back to the story and facilitate smooth transitions from interactive to noninteractive parts of the game. In the following chapter, I continue my analysis of *Mystery Dungeon* with the music of *Explorers*, which uses motives, silence, and dungeon tracks similarly. *Explorers*, however, is unique in that one of its motives refers directly to a physical object rather

than a concept, and one of its adventure motives is an altered version of a motive from *Rescue Team*.

CHAPTER III

THE MUSIC OF *EXPLORERS*

As in Chapter II, I will begin by providing an overview of *Explorers*' soundtrack, followed by a brief summary of the game's plot. I will then discuss two important motives, "Sacrifice" and "Time Gear," that are introduced in *Explorers*, as well as the return of Rescue in an altered form. I will also discuss the use of silence as a narrative tool at key moments in the game, concluding by analyzing two dungeon tracks, "Hidden Land" and "Treeshroud Forest," that are especially important to the game's story.

Explorers contains nearly twice as many tracks as *Rescue Team*.⁵⁴ **Figure 7** groups these 142 tracks into the categories described in Chapter II. Compared to *Rescue Team*, *Explorers* features a greater percentage of plot and dungeon tracks, and a much lesser percentage of optional and other tracks. The difference results from *Explorers*' longer story, which provides many more opportunities for both plot and dungeon tracks. *Sky* in particular also features additional content in the form of five side stories, which provide additional context and backstory for some of the characters the player meets

⁵⁴As mentioned in the Chapter I, there were three games released under the *Explorers* title: *Time*, *Darkness*, and *Sky*, with *Sky* being the focus of this chapter. *Time* and *Darkness* contain 92 tracks; *Sky* adds another 50. However, the music that was added was all for locations and side-plots that are outside the main story; in other words, they do not affect the musical fabric of the game's basic plot.

during the game—*Rescue Team* has no such extra content.⁵⁵ The number of “other” tracks in both games is roughly equivalent, though due to the greater number of tracks overall in *Explorers* the “other” tracks occupy a much smaller percentage of the track distribution.

Track type	# of tracks	% of entire soundtrack
Plot	51	35.9%
Dungeon	69	48.6%
Optional	10	7%
Other	12	8.5%
Total	142	100%

Figure 7. Division of Tracks in *Explorers*

The optional areas mentioned in the discussion of **Figure 2** (p. 18) in Chapter II are not present in *Explorers*, hence the reduction in percentage. As with *Rescue Team*, I will focus primarily on plot and dungeon tracks, since plot tracks present most of the game’s motives and dungeon tracks have important referential and narrative qualities, which are even more prevalent in *Explorers*’ soundtrack than *Rescue Team*’s.

⁵⁵These five side stories are accessed from the game’s main menu, meaning the player has to actively choose whether to engage with the main story or a side story when she turns on the game. Once accessed, any given side story will involve the player moving through a predetermined sequence of events with dungeon gameplay separating plot-important cutscenes, much as in the main story. Although the side stories are optional, once accessed, all of the tracks within the story are mandatory as the player progresses through the story. Because of this, I have decided to split these tracks into the plot, dungeon, and other categories rather than the optional category.

III.A: Plot Overview

As with *Rescue Team*, the game opens with the partner stumbling across the unconscious avatar, who is amnesiac and has been inexplicably transformed into a Pokémon. The avatar's main objective during the game is to identify the reasons behind her mysterious transformation and inexplicable amnesia. As in *Rescue Team*, the heroes are also involved in exploring dungeons and rescuing Pokémon; in *Explorers* their dungeon adventures instead result from the heroes' involvement as apprentices in an exploration guild.

Figure 8 diagrams the plot of the game. The main story revolves around mystical items known as Time Gears, which are said to regulate time in the regions they are located. During the heroes' time, a location called Temporal Tower is collapsing; when it collapses, time will stop for the world, resulting in it becoming an effective wasteland. Temporal Tower—and time in general—is lorded over by a godlike Pokémon named Dialga; the collapse of the tower is driving Dialga into a state of insanity where he seeks only self-preservation. No Pokémon in the time world of the heroes is aware of any of these facts, or that the way to stop the tower's collapse is to bring the Time Gears to Temporal Tower. The only three characters who possess this knowledge travel from the future, where the planet is paralyzed due to the stopping of time, to the heroes' time. These characters include Grovyle and his human friend, who is the avatar. The two of them travel back in time with the goal of collecting the Time Gears and saving the world. As they travel to the past, they have an accident—seen in the game's opening—that results in the avatar's transformation into a Pokémon and amnesia.

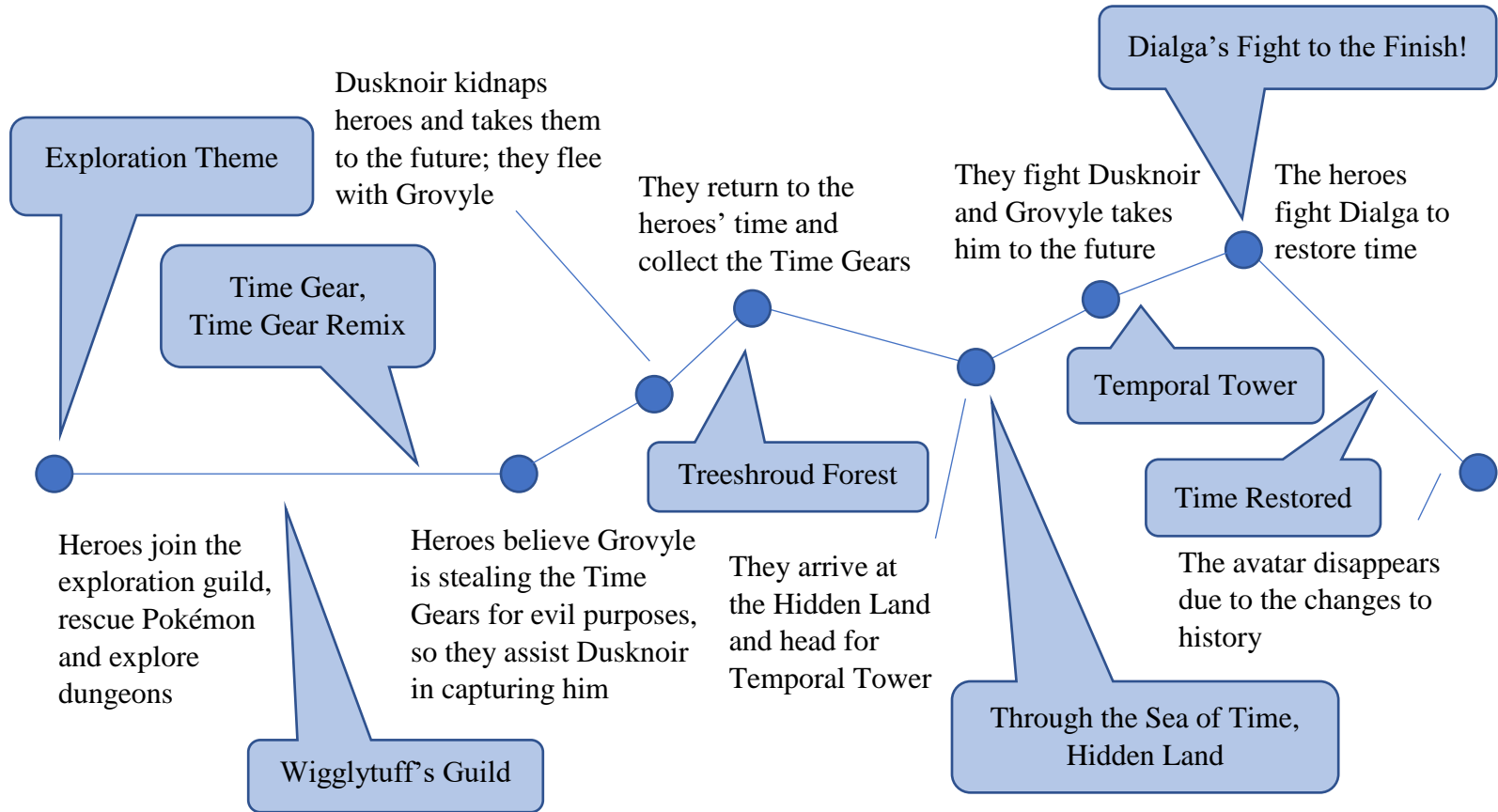


Figure 8. Plot Diagram of *Explorers*

The accident also separates them, leaving Grovyle alone to collect the Time Gears. The other character who comes from the future is Dusknair, who is sent by the insane Dialga to prevent Grovyle and the avatar from changing history.

When the heroes first learn of Grovyle and Dusknair, they—and all other Pokémon—are misled into believing that Grovyle is a wicked criminal trying to unravel rather than restore time, and that Dusknair is the hero who will save the world from Grovyle. Due to this misconception, many Pokémon, including the heroes, assist Dusknair in his plans to capture Grovyle. During the heroes' interactions with Dusknair, he learns that the avatar was Grovyle's human partner, but the player and the heroes are not made aware of the avatar's true nature. When Dusknair captures Grovyle and takes him to the future to execute him, he kidnaps the heroes as well in order to get rid of the avatar. Grovyle and the heroes flee from Dusknair and successfully return to the past. On the way, the heroes learn that the avatar was Grovyle's human partner and that Grovyle is the good guy while Dusknair is the villain. Back in the heroes' time, they assist Grovyle as he resumes his quest of collecting the Time Gears. After acquiring all of them, the three Pokémon head to Temporal Tower—located on an island called the Hidden Land—with the help of a seafaring Pokémon named Lapras, whose back they ride on. En route to Temporal Tower, they are accosted by Dusknair, who has come from the future again to stop their efforts. The heroes and Grovyle successfully defeat him in battle, and Grovyle grabs him and prepares to take him back to the future—leaving the heroes to finish the quest alone. Suddenly, Dusknair reveals that, if the future is changed, all Pokémon from the future (including Dusknair, Grovyle, and the avatar) will disappear due to the changes

to the timeline, meaning that they never existed in the first place. Grovyle has come to terms with this outcome since he has nothing to lose, but now the avatar must deal with the pain of leaving the partner. As Dusknair attempts to attack again, Grovyle drives himself and Dusknair through the time-travel portal to the future, presumably erasing them both from existence.

At the top of Temporal Tower, the heroes defeat Dialga in battle, and then put the Time Gears in place, which halts the tower's collapse. With the world saved, they head back down the tower, but because they have changed the future, the avatar begins to disappear into a ball of light—just as in *Rescue Team*—leaving the distraught partner alone. After the credits roll, the partner is shown to be incredibly upset over the avatar's disappearance even months later. Sensing his sadness, the newly sane Dialga uses his supernatural powers to bring back the avatar, setting up the post-credits material, which continues with both heroes present.

III.B: Old and New Motives

III.B.1: Rescue and Team, Exploration and Guild Motives

When starting up *Explorers of Sky*, the player is greeted by an opening movie, just as in *Rescue Team*.⁵⁶ Unlike in *Rescue Team*, however, the player is not forced to sit through the entire movie. If the player should choose to watch the movie, she hears an upbeat compound quadruple musical introduction whose melodies incorporate versions of motives from the opening of *Rescue Team*. As **Example 19** shows, the music that

⁵⁶The opening movie for *Time and Darkness* is different from that of *Sky* and contains different music. I will not be covering the opening movie for *Time and Darkness*.

accompanies *Explorers*' opening movie (named “Pokémon Exploration Team Theme,” per its title within the game; I will shorten it to “Exploration Theme”⁵⁷) begins with the first two measures of the Team motive from *Rescue Team* in the motive’s original mode of G Mixolydian.

The musical score for Example 19 is presented in a grand staff with a 12/8 time signature and a tempo marking of quarter note = 130. The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating G Mixolydian mode. The score is divided into two sections: 'Team motive in G' (measures 1-2) and 'Rescue motive in G' (measures 3-4). The Team motive consists of a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes in the right hand and half notes in the left hand. The Rescue motive consists of a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes in the right hand and half notes in the left hand. The bass line is marked with an 8va symbol and a dashed line below it.

Example 19. Team and Rescue Motives in “Exploration Theme” (mm. 1-4)⁵⁸

These measures are immediately followed by the first two measures of the Rescue motive, also in G Mixolydian. The use of Team and Rescue in this order mirrors the presentation of these motives in the introductory music (“Intro” and “Title” together) for *Rescue Team*, albeit without the intervening material and subsequent pause. Following two partial statements of Team and Rescue, the full Team motive is presented. As in *Rescue Team*, the presentation of Team—though it is a full statement in *Explorers* as opposed to the partial statement of *Rescue Team*—is interrupted by the stepwise descent shown in **Example 3** (p. 25). In “Exploration Theme,” however, the harmonies

⁵⁷*Explorers of Sky* contains an option, accessible from the game’s main menu, where the player can choose to listen to the game’s tracks individually. Thus, unlike *Rescue Team*, each track has a title within the game itself.

⁵⁸The credits for *Explorers* list five composers: Arata Iiyoshi, Hideki Sakamoto, Keisuke Ito, Ken-ichi Saito, and Yoshihiro Maeda. It is not known how these composers assembled the game’s soundtrack.

accompanying the descending line are A \flat M and G \flat M, as shown in **Example 20**. Both stepwise descents—mm. 15-16 of “Exploration Theme” and 7-8 of “Intro”—are followed by an F harmony.



Example 20. Stepwise Descent in “Exploration Theme”

In *Rescue Team*, this harmony is the last harmony of the “Intro” track, and is followed by the G tonic that begins “Title.” In *Explorers*, this F harmony instead functions as the dominant in B \flat , resolving to B \flat major in measure 18. The track continues in B \flat Mixolydian, ending with a cadence in this mode. *Explorers* is meant to be a follow-up to *Rescue Team*, and the reuse of the two adventure motives—as well as other musical elements such as the descending stepwise motion and turn to an F harmony—helps to cement the connection between the games. For those who have played *Rescue Team*, using the motives of that game immediately informs the player that they will be undertaking the same kind of grand adventure that they had in the earlier game. Despite the shared motives and general style of the game, however, *Explorers* is not a true sequel to *Rescue Team*, and this relationship is reflected in several ways in “Exploration Theme.” The first way is in the changing focus of the music as the introductory movie continues. The use of the F harmony to move to a new tonic is unexpected; *Rescue*

Team's introductory music was primarily in G, the change of tonic to C not occurring until close to the end of the track. The F harmony in *Explorers* also coincides with the introduction of another motive, which I shall call the Guild motive. **Example 21** presents the single measure of the Guild motive that is found in "Exploration Theme."

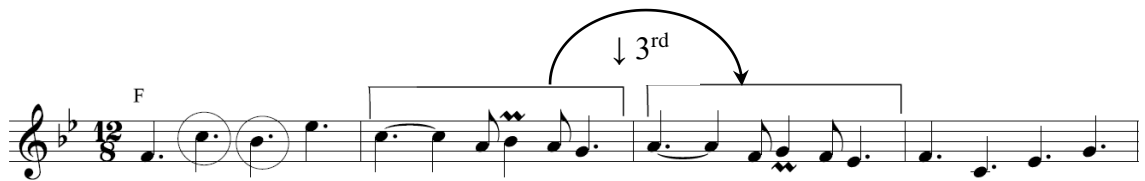


Example 21. The Guild Motive in "Exploration Theme" (mm. 17-18)

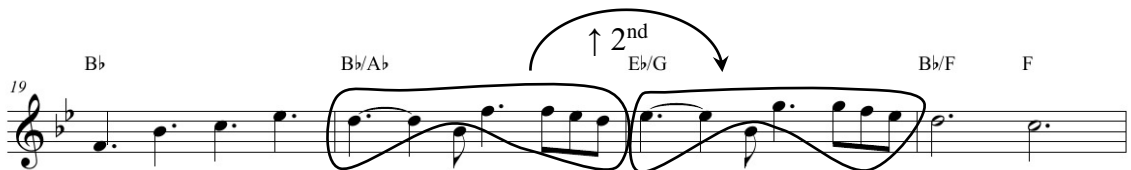
Although the first measure shown is always present as the opening of the motive, the material that follows differs in different tracks, so there is no "standard" form of the entire motive. The Guild motive is present in *Rescue Team* in the "Intro" and "Title" tracks, but it is never heard at any other point during the game, so it does not serve as a game-unifying motive in the way that the Rescue and Team motives do. In *Explorers*, however, it is one of the most prominent motives in the game's music. In *Rescue Team*, the descending stepwise motion (shown in **Examples 3** (p. 25) and **20**) is placed between the first instances of Team and Rescue; in *Explorers*, it is instead after Team and Rescue are first heard, but before the presentation of the Guild motive—the first of the two adventure motives of *Explorers*. There is also not a pause between Team and Rescue, as there was in *Rescue Team*. The pause between "Intro" and "Title," and the stepwise motion that separates the two motives, emphasizes both motives individually, establishing both of them as independent motives that were both important in the game. The lack of separation between them in *Explorers* causes them to lose some of that

independent feeling; instead they are placed together as “the adventure motives from *Rescue Team*” rather than individual musical ideas. The fact that they are presented so close together at the very beginning of the title sequence is also surprising, as *Rescue* did not appear until the title screen of *Rescue Team*. The rest of the title sequence of *Explorers* is instead taken up by the new adventure motives, establishing *them* as the prominent motives in *Explorers*.

The second motive introduced in the title sequence for *Explorers* is called Exploration. It is an alteration of *Rescue*, although the two motives’ relationship is apparent in their rhythmic structures and intervallic content. **Example 22** demonstrates the difference between the two motives, with *Rescue* transposed to begin on F.



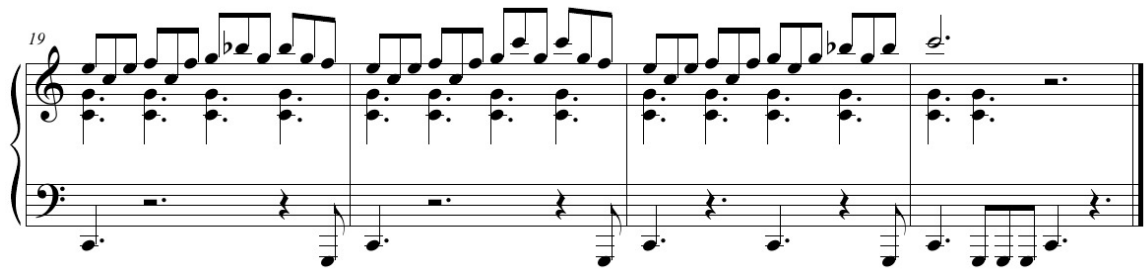
Example 22a. Rescue Motive in F Mixolydian



Example 22b. Exploration Motive in “Exploration Theme” (mm. 19-22)

The circled notes indicate the two swapped pitches in the motives’ first measures. Both motives also transpose the second measure to create the third measure—with one non-transposed note in the altered motive—albeit in different directions and by different

intervals. The initial presentation of Rescue, at the beginning of “Exploration Theme,” is the *only* time in the game that the original Rescue motive is heard. Thus, when the player begins the game, she hears the familiar Rescue motive serving as a call to adventure, but it is almost immediately deformed into a new motive. The Exploration motive is then used in the rest of the game, representing the similar-but-new adventure that the player will find in *Explorers*. Another similarity between the introductory music in *Rescue Team* and *Explorers* is in their respective cadences. **Examples 23a** and **23b** transcribe the last four measures of each track.



Example 23a. Ending Measures of “Title”



Example 23b. Ending Measures of “Exploration Theme”

Both tracks end with the same extension of the Guild motive—though *Explorers*’ is transposed down a whole step from *Rescue Team*’s—and feature a bass line that

alternates between tonic and dominant. Although not shown in this example, in both tracks the measures preceding the entrance of the Guild motive outline an Aeolian progression ending on the tonic that enters with the motive, connecting the tracks further.

The new Guild and Exploration motives form a large part of the musical framework for the game. They both appear in the menu music, confirming their status as the “adventure” motives for *Explorers*. They also both appear in the music of the guild that the heroes join. Like Pokémon Square in *Rescue Team*, the guild functions as a base of operations in *Explorers*. As a result, the guild’s music is frequently heard. **Example 24** transcribes the Exploration motive as it appears in the “Wigglytuff’s Guild” track.

Example 24. The Exploration Motive in “Wigglytuff’s Guild” (mm. 13-16)

The Guild motive is the same as in **Example 21** (p. 73), but with a neighboring motion elaborating the final pitch. These motives, in addition to the military topics used in the music—heavy use of brass and wind instruments as well as snare drum—help to draw the

player into gameplay, one of Whalen's functions.⁵⁹ The bass line accompanying the Exploration motive in "Wigglytuff's Guild" also provides a grounding effect by exclusively using diatonic harmonies, in contrast with the chromatic pitch A \flat used in the bass accompaniment to the motive in "Exploration Theme" (see **Example 22b** on p. 74).

III.B.2: Time Gear and Sacrifice Motives

While the Guild and Exploration motives are a large part of the game's music, they are by no means the most important motives in the game's many tracks. *Sky* contains at least ten distinct motives that appear in multiple tracks. Two of them, however, hold a place of prominence within the game's music as motives that represent some of the game's main plot events and themes; I shall refer to them as the Time Gear and Sacrifice motives. While they start out as distinct motives that appear regularly in separate tracks, they are gradually combined over the course of the game, culminating in simultaneous appearances in a track at the game's climax, "Dialga's Fight to the Finish" (see **Ex. 31** on p. 88). Some of the tracks that use these motives, as well as their respective tonics and modes, are listed in **Figure 9** in order of first appearance. The first of the two motives to be heard in the game is the Time Gear motive. It is the main musical element of the tracks "Time Gear" and "Time Gear Remix." "Time Gear" is primarily heard when characters come into physical contact with the Time Gears, while "Time Gear Remix" (henceforth "Remix") is more often heard when characters are discussing the Time Gears or time as an abstract concept.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Whalen, "Play Along."

⁶⁰While the avatar does not speak, some of the game's cutscenes feature conversations between

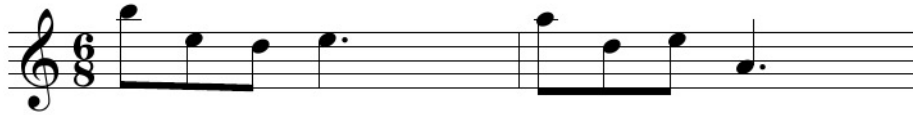
TRACK TITLE	MOTIVES	TONICS AND MODES
“Time Gear Remix”	Time Gear	E
“Time Gear”	Time Gear, Sacrifice	A Aeolian, E Aeolian
“Through the Sea of Time”	Sacrifice	Motive is A Aeolian; harmonies suggest F Lydian
“Temporal Tower”	Time Gear, Sacrifice	A Aeolian/Dorian, E Aeolian
“Dialga’s Fight to the Finish”	Time Gear, Sacrifice	E Aeolian (both motives)
“Time Restored”	Time Gear	G Ionian/Mixolydian

Figure 9. Tracks Featuring Time Gear and Sacrifice Motives⁶¹

The Time Gear motive is the only motive in either game to be connected to a physical object rather than an idea. In *Explorers*, Time Gears are objects that exist in nature for the purpose of keeping time flowing steadily (indicated in “Time Gear,” “Remix,” and “Time Restored” by a constant sixteenth-note motion). If they are left alone, they will regulate time; if they are moved from their original location, time will stop in that area, unless they are all taken to Temporal Tower, in which case they can be used to restore time to its proper state everywhere. The fact that they can be used as a force for good or evil drives the misunderstanding that Grovyle is a criminal when he is in fact trying to save the world. The motive associated with them, shown in **Example 25**, consists of eight notes and uses only A, B, D, and E, making it modally and tonally ambiguous.

other characters. These dialogues are often expository in nature. They are presented through written text on the screen with a portrait of the speaking character’s face to determine the speaker.

⁶¹Time Gear is additionally present in “A Grand Tale of Time and Darkness” and “Temporal Pinnacle,” while Sacrifice can be found in “In the Hands of Fate,” “Ending Theme,” “Vast Ice Mountain,” “Vast Ice Mountain Peak,” and “Life Goes On!” I have chosen not to discuss these tracks primarily because of space considerations, and because the named tracks feature only one of the two motives.



Example 25. The Time Gear Motive

The motive can therefore fit into different modes. Indeed, the tonic and implied mode of the accompaniment is different in different settings of the motive. It is therefore an appropriate musical analogue to the Time Gears, which float above the ground, seemingly unaffected by gravity.

Despite its malleability, the motive by itself does suggest two “native” modes. Within each measure, certain pitches are emphasized more than others. In the first measure, the fifth E-B emphasizes E as a center, which is further supported by a lower-neighbor D. In the second, A is made prominent through metrical accents and its placement at the beginning and ending of the measure; the fifth E-A at the end of the measure additionally supports A’s status as the central note. As a whole, the native progression for the motive is E to A, which could be $\hat{1}$ to $\hat{4}$ in E or $\hat{5}$ to $\hat{1}$ in A. In practice, A and E are the most common tonics used for the motive.

The second most prominent motive in *Explorers* is Sacrifice, so named because its most well-known usage is in the second appearance of “Through the Sea of Time,” which accompanies Grovyle sacrificing himself by pushing himself and Dusknair through the time-travel portal. It reappears later in several tracks between this point and the heroes’ placing the Time Gears in Temporal Tower, an act that the avatar knows will save the world but presumably kill her—another sacrifice. The motive, the harmonies

suggested by the melodic pitches, and its harmonizations in four tracks are presented in

Example 26, all transposed to E Aeolian and notated in simple quadruple meter.

Time Gear:	C (D on second iteration)			
Through the Sea of Time: D	Cmaj7(+6)		Gmaj7/B	
Temporal Tower:	Cmaj7		D9	Em
Dialga's Fight to the Finish:	Cmaj7	D	Em9/B	F#m/A
Suggested harmonies:	GM or Em	DM or Bm	Em	

Example 26. Sacrifice Motive and Harmonizations

Though the initial appearance of the motive in “Time Gear” is in compound duple meter, the motive appears more times in simple quadruple meter—including in the aforementioned “Through the Sea of Time.” Three of the four tracks to use the motive feature it in E Aeolian; the one outlier—“Through the Sea of Time”—transposes it up a fourth to A Aeolian. As shown in **Example 26**, the harmonic rhythm suggested by the motive is one chord per measure, with the second half of the motive prolonging the final harmony. However, all four tracks initially harmonize the motive with a chord built on C, with the B in m. 1 serving as the chordal 7th; the material to follow the CM7 harmony is different in each of the four tracks. In two tracks, “Temporal Tower” and “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish,” this CM7 harmony is followed by D major and E minor triads, suggesting an Aeolian progression. In the other two tracks, the material following the CM7 more strongly suggests a tonic and mode of C Lydian, causing a conflict between the C Lydian accompaniment and E Aeolian melody. In all four tracks, the motive is followed either by

a repetition of the motive with its last four pitches transposed up an octave, as in **Examples 28** (p. 84) and **29** (p. 86), or by a descent to tonic, as in **Example 30** (p. 87).⁶²

The first track introducing Time Gear is “Time Gear Remix.” Though this motive appears in five out of the six tracks mentioned in **Figure 9** (p. 78), only “Time Gear,” “Remix,” and “Time Restored” retain the original rhythm of the motive. All three tracks also harmonize the motive similarly. I will thus begin my discussion of the motive by comparing these three tracks.

Example 27 shows the motive with the harmonizations of the three tracks given below the music. The two measures shown in the example are nonadjacent in the tracks, and the harmonies are listed from the bass upwards.

Time Gear: AEB	GDA
Time Gear Remix: EF#A	DEG
Time Restored: Gadd6	Fadd6

Example 27. Time Gear Motive and Harmonizations

All three harmonizations feature an oscillation by whole step between the two constituent harmonies, which mirrors a transposition present in the motive itself. The first interval of the first measure of the motive is a descending fifth from B to E; the first interval of the second measure is transposed down a whole step. In “Time Gear” the motive is

⁶²Although Example 30 is the only excerpt to use the second version of the motive, this version also appears in “Vast Ice Mountain Peak.”

accompanied by a harmonic progression that oscillates between a tonic of A and a neighboring G. Since the two chords that make up the progression are each composed of two perfect fifths, the overall collection is pentatonic, using the pitch classes ABDEG. Another oscillation forms the progression that accompanies “Time Gear Remix;” however, this setting of the motive is altered to suggest E as a central pitch class (per my criteria in Chapter II). This setting of the motive uses the pitch class collection (EF#GABD), a mode of the diatonic hexachord.

The third track shown in **Example 27** is “Time Restored,” which is found much later in the game, after the heroes defeat Dialga and place the Time Gears in Temporal Tower (see **Fig. 8** on p. 68). Even after the Time Gears are put in place, the tremors accompanying the tower’s collapse do not stop right away. Injured from the fight with Dialga, the heroes pass out before the tremors cease. When they come to, the tremors have stopped, but the tower appears to be in bad shape; at that moment they have no way of knowing if their efforts were successful. Dialga, who has recovered from his madness, approaches them and uses telepathy to show them the world—a world where time is moving properly again everywhere. “Time Restored” accompanies this vision. It is unique among all the tracks featuring the Time Gear motive in that it places it in a major-mode context, specifically G major or Mixolydian. **Example 27** suggests a hearing of Mixolydian; not shown in that example is the accompaniment, which in the first measure features a rapid oscillation between F# and G that suggests a major mode. As Dialga’s theme—the track before “Time Restored”—is in E Aeolian (with occasional major dominants), the use of the relative major here connects the two tracks in that they share

the same pitch class collection. The motive's setting in a major mode suggests that the Time Gears have finally been used as a force for good in the end, in agreement with Temperley and Tan's finding that Ionian and Mixolydian melodies are "happier-sounding" than Aeolian and Dorian ones.⁶³ The whole-step oscillation between Gadd6 and Fadd6 harmonies mirrors the oscillations in "Time Gear" and "Remix" tracks heard much earlier in the game, tying all three together through the shared use of these oscillations.

The "Time Gear" track, in addition to containing the Time Gear motive, introduces the Sacrifice motive for the first time, in a compound duple meter and shortened relative to **Example 26** (p. 80) such that the motive takes up two measures instead of four. "Time Gear" is one of the tracks that repeats the motive. As shown in **Example 26**, each repetition of the motive has only one accompanying harmony—C for the first iteration and D for the second—and thus "Time Gear" has the slowest harmonic progression of all four tracks. The conflict between C Lydian and E Aeolian is especially strong in "Time Gear" due to the absence of harmonies built on E. In fact, although all four tracks begin with harmonies built on C, "Time Gear" is the only track to harmonize the motive exclusively with whole-step oscillations. In addition to strengthening a C Lydian interpretation, the whole-step oscillations recall those that accompany the Time Gear motive in the same track. The use of both motives in the same track harmonized with oscillations provides an early indication that the two motives are related. At the end

⁶³Temperley and Tan, "Connotations of Diatonic Modes."

of the game, putting the Time Gears into place becomes synonymous with making a sacrifice, justifying the use of the Sacrifice motive within “Time Gear.”

After the first entrance of “Time Gear,” it is a while before the player hears a new track to feature the motive. The next appearance of the motive—and the first time it is heard as the main melody of a track—is in “Through the Sea of Time,” first heard when the heroes and Lapras enter the Hidden Land (see **Fig. 8** on p. 68) and later, and more notably, when Grovyle prepares to sacrifice himself to get rid of Dusknair and save the heroes. Like “Time Gear,” the motive presented here is the eight-measure version, although—as discussed when the motive was first mentioned—changed to a simple quadruple context and transposed into A Aeolian/F Lydian. The full harmonization of the motive, untransposed, is shown in **Example 28**.

Example 28. Sacrifice Motive in “Through the Sea of Time” (mm. 4-12)

In this version, the first pitch is a 2nd lower than in other versions of the motive. As in “Time Gear,” the use of an F-based harmony—in this case Fmaj7 with an added 6th—suggests an F Lydian hearing of the accompaniment and creates a conflict with the A Aeolian motive. In the second iteration of the motive, however, the harmonic

accompaniment is altered slightly, with the expected Cmaj7/E at m. 10 instead replaced with an A minor chord. This new harmony coincides with the end of the repeated motive, emphasizing A as a central pitch and thus the A Aeolian interpretation. “Through the Sea of Time” is the only version of the motive to use a tonic and mode other than E Aeolian/C Lydian, and it is also the only track discussed here to contain Sacrifice but not Time Gear. It is the track most directly connected to the idea of sacrifice, being that it accompanies Grovyle’s own sacrifice to save the heroes, but Grovyle’s sacrifice is not caused by the act of taking the Time Gears to Temporal Tower. Grovyle is sacrificing himself to remove Dusknor from the picture before the characters even reach Temporal Tower; his sacrifice was not a planned part of his and the avatar’s quest to Temporal Tower. The transposition to A Aeolian and the fact that the Time Gear motive is not used distances “Through the Sea of Time” from the other tracks, indicating that Grovyle’s sacrifice has little to do with the planned Time Gear quest.

Following “Through the Sea of Time”, Sacrifice appears in the music of the next dungeon, Temporal Tower (as does “Time Gear,” discussed later). **Example 29** transcribes the motive as used in “Temporal Tower.” The durations of the first measure of the motive as transcribed in **Example 26** (p. 80) are halved, and the rhythms of the remainder of the motive are altered as well. The half-quarter-quarter rhythm of the second measure of the motive is changed into a 3+3+2 tresillo rhythm that, in “Temporal Tower,” occupies the second half of mm. 29 and 31.

Example 29. Sacrifice Motive in “Temporal Tower” (mm. 29-32)

The first pitch of the third measure is elongated to a half note and rearticulated with a dotted eighth note—not present in “Time Gear” or “Through the Sea of Time”—which is also the beginning of another tresillo rhythm. “Temporal Tower” is unique among presentations of the Sacrifice motive in that the ascending pickup to the motive is absent, and the final pitch of the first iteration of the motive corresponds with the first pitch of the second iteration. Like the other tracks, “Temporal Tower” begins on a C harmony, suggesting a C Lydian hearing. The chords that follow, however, outline an Aeolian progression, with the concluding E minor corresponding with the final pitch of the motive. **Example 30** shows the motive with the harmonic rhythm suggested by the melody, corresponding with the version shown in **Example 26**; the harmonic rhythm is twice as fast in **Ex. 26** due to the changes to the melody’s durations. As shown in **Ex. 29**, the harmonic rhythm of the motive as it appears in “Temporal Tower” is half as fast as expected. The D major triad enters half a measure late, at the beginning of m. 30—the point at which the motive reaches the tonic E.

Example 30. “Temporal Tower” with Normalized Harmonies

The E minor triad enters a measure late and thus corresponds with not only the final pitch of the melody but also the beginning of its repetition—just when another CM7 harmony would be expected if the Aeolian progression were to repeat. Thus, while an Aeolian progression is used to harmonize the melody, the harmonic rhythm is half the speed of the implied harmonies of the motive, weakening the impact of the progression and, as a result, the Aeolian interpretation. The progression as a whole is CM-DM-Em-DM-CM; C major and E minor both function as endpoints of a stepwise progression through D major, further weakening the Aeolian hearing.

Example 31 transcribes mm. 1-9 of “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish.” As with “Temporal Tower,” the first three measures constitute an Aeolian progression, although the arrival E minor harmony is in second inversion. As mentioned in the initial analysis of the Sacrifice motive, “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” is the only setting of the motive discussed to follow the motive with a descent to tonic rather than a repeat; this descent is present in mm. 4-5.

♩ = 150

Cmaj7 D

Em9/B F#m/A

8 8 7
6 - 5
VI - VII

9 8 7
6 - 5 4
VII i

Example 31. Motives in “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” (mm. 1-9)

The motive is followed in mm. 5-9 by a cadential tag that also descends to tonic, accompanied by another Aeolian progression using root position harmonies embellished with suspensions, shown on **Ex. 31** in figured bass. “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” is the only one of the four tracks featuring the motive to contain such a tag. The Aeolian progression accompanying the tag is longer than the previous one, with the C major 7th and D major harmonies each lasting two measures, and the concluding Em7sus4 lasting four. In general, “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” more strongly emphasizes E as a pitch center than any of the other three tracks. Later melodic material unique to the track strongly emphasizes both B and E as melodic pitches, and B major triads appear at the ends of some phrases, suggesting half cadences. Just like “Temporal Tower,” the rhythm of “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” is also altered with respect to “Through the Sea of Time.” Relative to the latter track, the first note is stretched half a beat, and subsequent short durations are halved. For the first three measures, the harmonic rhythm matches the version suggested by the motive shown in **Example 26** (p. 80), making “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” the only one of the four tracks to do so.⁶⁴ The E harmony concluding the Aeolian progression in mm. 5-8 also coincides with the final arrival of tonic in the melody. The use of the “ideal” harmonic rhythm for the motive, and the slow root-position Aeolian progression accompanying the following cadential tag, give the track an air of finality that earlier presentations of the Sacrifice motive do not possess. The battle against Dialga is the climax of the game; at this point it is up to the heroes to either save

⁶⁴The fourth measure features an F# minor triad over an A bass that connects the E minor triad in m. 3 with the C major 7th chord in m. 5.

the world—sacrificing the avatar in the process—or die trying; here the music supports the plot in making it clear that this is the game’s ending.

“Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” is notable among all four tracks to feature “Sacrifice” in its heavy emphasis on E Aeolian.⁶⁵ All four tracks feature conflicts between Lydian and Aeolian, but some are more indicative of one mode or the other. “Time Gear’s” harmonization of the motive features only oscillations between C major and D major. Since the C harmonies fall on strong measures, the accompaniment suggests C Lydian. In “Through the Sea of Time,” Lydian is suggested by the harmonies until the E minor triad of m. 10. As shown in **Example 28** (p. 84) this triad corresponds with the arrival of tonic in the second iteration of the motive, suggesting E Aeolian. Considering the prevalence of Aeolian progressions in establishing that mode in “Temporal Tower” and “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish,” and in harmonizations of the Truth motive in *Rescue Team*, the lack of an Aeolian progression to “prepare” the E minor harmony is marked. “Temporal Tower” and “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish,” on the other hand, both feature Aeolian progressions that prepare the arrival of the E harmonies, supporting an E Aeolian hearing—“Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” more so than “Temporal Tower” due to the descent to tonic in the motive and cadential tag and the duration of the E harmony supporting the former. Overall, the Sacrifice motive’s accompaniment seems to become “more Aeolian” as the game nears its end. This change in focus is reflective of the avatar’s feelings at this point in the plot. While “Time Gear” and the first appearance

⁶⁵As mentioned earlier, the four tracks shown in Fig. 9 are not the only four to feature the Sacrifice motive. However, the other tracks that contain it all occur after “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish,” so these four tracks effectively occur sequentially.

of “Through the Sea of Time” take place before the avatar learns about the sacrifice she must make to save the world, “Temporal Tower” and “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” take place just afterward; they play as the avatar reflects on how her disappearance will hurt the partner. Just as in *Rescue Team*, the avatar in the game’s final dungeon is resigned to her fate but unhappy about the emotional turmoil her disappearance will put the partner through. The transition from Lydian—a happier mode, according to Temperley and Tan—to Aeolian reflects this change in the avatar’s own feelings as the game progresses to its close.

Both “Temporal Tower” and “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” feature the Time Gear motive in addition to the Sacrifice motive. The interplay of the two motives in the game’s climactic tracks emphasizes the relationship between the heroes’ desire to bring the Time Gears to Temporal Tower and the sacrificial nature of such a mission. “Through the Sea of Time” presents the Sacrifice motive independently of Time Gear; that track is heard when Grovyle sacrifices himself—the same scene in which where the player learns that saving the world will have consequences for the avatar. Both “Temporal Tower” and “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish,” which play after Grovyle’s sacrifice, thus emphasize the nature of the mission by presenting both Sacrifice and Time Gear.

Example 32 shows mm. 13-16 of “Temporal Tower,” which present overlapping statements of Time Gear. The motive has been rhythmically altered in this track to fit a simple quadruple meter—recalling the changes in the Sacrifice motive in this same way. The rhythm of the motive is altered into a tresillo.

Example 32. Time Gear in “Temporal Tower” (mm. 13-16)

Although the first three pitches still take up the first half of the measure—as they do in the compound duple versions of the motive—their rhythmic transformation means they are no longer all the same length. Harmonic content that emphasizes A as a central pitch class recalls the “Time Gear” track in particular. Measures 15 and 16 present the Time Gear motive, transposed down a perfect fifth from mm. 13-14. The interval of transposition here matches the first interval of the Time Gear motive itself. The transposition by a perfect interval also allows the whole passage to remain modally and tonally ambiguous; the only new pitch class introduced in the transposition is G, which while not present in mm. 13-14 is heard in accompanimental material earlier in the track. When the heroes reach the pinnacle of Temporal Tower, they find that the Time Gears need to be placed into holes in a wall that perfectly match their shape, suggesting that the Time Gears originated in Temporal Tower. The use of the Time Gear motive in Temporal Tower, then, connects the Time Gears with their place of origin and confirms to the

player that this is the end of the Time Gear quest. Though it contains musical material referencing other tracks and motives, “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” is exclusively heard in his battle, and its chronological proximity to “Temporal Tower” highlights the two tracks’ similarities. The Time Gear motive in this track is transcribed on the middle staff of **Example 31** on p. 88. Both this track and “Temporal Tower” use a tresillo rhythm for presenting Time Gear, with the durations of mm. 2-4 of Sacrifice twice those of Time Gear. While in “Temporal Tower” the Sacrifice and Time Gear motives are presented separately, they are simultaneous in “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish”—as **Example 31** shows—tying the sacrificial element to the Time Gear quest even more firmly and suggesting that the sacrifice cannot be avoided at this point. In a direct response to the YouTube user “BigDaddyPizza”—whose comment on the use of the Truth motive in “Rayquaza Battle” was mentioned in Chapter II—the user “FroyZix” wrote: “Same for dialga’s battle [...] the great composers always ‘remix’ earlier track [sic] in the game to make this sort of epic and emotive music”, suggesting that the use of the motives in this track has a significant impact on the player’s experience with Dialga’s battle and the game’s plot as a whole. The simultaneous presentation of the motives also highlights their intervallic similarities. In this track, the middle staff—the Time Gear motive—features the melodic line EBAB (mm. 1-2 in **Example 31**). The same pitch classes can be found in mm. 3-4 of the top staff—Sacrifice. Time Gear is altered in this version compared with its earlier appearances; the first interval is now a fourth rather than a fifth. The second pitch of the interval is a B rather than the expected A; the presentation of a tonic-dominant opening interval as well as the fact that B is now the last pitch-class heard

in the first two measures of the motive helps to establish the E tonic even more strongly, tying into the finality argument discussed earlier. The change in interval is also the reason that this measure of Time Gear and mm. 3-4 of Sacrifice feature the same pitch-class content. While the motives are closely intertwined in their appearances during the game, the final battle is the point at which the Time Gear quest and its sacrificial nature are most inseparable, and the similarities between the Time Gear and Sacrifice motives in “Dialga’s Fight to the Finish” reflect that.

III.C: Silence, Dusknair, and Uncertainty

As indicated by my analyses above, many of the game’s important tracks occur close to the game’s ending. The game incorporates silent moments in addition to important tracks, and three in particular are noteworthy. The first of these is when the heroes and Grovyle cross the water on Lapras’ back to reach the Hidden Land. The other two both involve Dusknair; one such scene, which takes place after the heroes fight him, accompanies Dusknair’s revelation that he, Grovyle, and the avatar will die if the latter two continue their quest. In the other scene, much earlier in the game, the heroes, still thinking Dusknair is trustworthy, reveal to him the avatar’s status as a former human and her human name—information that Dusknair later uses against them.

When Lapras first appears to the heroes, the sun is setting behind the ocean; when the heroes and Grovyle set out with Lapras, it is night. After a brief conversation with Lapras about the Hidden Land, the game offers the player the opportunity to save their progress. Usually, save prompts in *Mystery Dungeon* are indicative of breaks in the narrative or the passing of time, akin to the divisions between chapters of a book. All

save prompts, including the one the player sees while heading to the Hidden Land, take place over a black screen. When the game returns after the save prompt, it is daytime. The change from night to day, as well as the fact that the partner immediately asks Lapras if he needs to rest, suggests that the heroes and Grovyle have been on Lapras' back for many hours. The music has also stopped, and the only sound is diegetic audio of the waves. As Gibbons points out,⁶⁶ the lack of music blurs the line between player and avatar. Both the player and avatar are headed to an unknown destination and they have no way of knowing if they will even make it to the Hidden Land. This uncertainty is partially conveyed through the characters' silence as they cross the sea, and also by the static water background in the game's visual art, which makes it unclear if the group is actually moving forward across the sea. The lack of music adds to this feeling of uncertainty. The waiting is likely excruciating for all members of the party involved—especially the extremely impatient Grovyle—and the silence reflects how frustratingly empty the trip to the Hidden Land is. When the heroes spot their destination, the energetic track “Through the Sea of Time” begins. This track is strongly rhythmic; at least one voice is always performing a constant stream of eighth notes, just as the characters must be feeling reinvigorated now that they are about to begin their journey to Temporal Tower under their own power once more.

Silence is also used in connection with the game's main antagonist, Dusknair. After the heroes and Grovyle have defeated Dusknair after traversing the Hidden Land, the lack of audio is quite noticeable. Immediately following the battle, as Dusknair is in

⁶⁶Gibbons, “Wandering Tonalities.”

agony over the wounds he has sustained in the battle and the heroes and Grovyle acknowledge their victory, no music plays. As the heroes and Grovyle have just defeated the game's main antagonist, securing their path to Temporal Tower, a player might expect some sort of triumphant music, as has been the norm during the game. The use of silence here suggests that Dusknair may not be as weakened as the heroes and Grovyle believe him to be—as he confirms mere moments later, when he gets back on his feet, strikes the heroes and Grovyle down, and charges another attack. At the second that Dusknair strikes the heroes and Grovyle, an ominous track used often in conjunction with Dusknair named “The Power of Darkness” begins to play, suggesting that the heroes and Grovyle are not finished dealing with Dusknair yet despite their victory in the battle.

The heroes manage to deflect his attack and weaken him further, to such a degree that it appears he will not be able to recover. With the battle apparently won—this time for good—a new track begins playing as the heroes approach the motionless Dusknair: “Hidden Highland,” which is the second track the player hears going through the Hidden Land dungeon. This is not a triumphant track—rather, it is slow and contemplative, with a long-lasting B-flat pedal under a minor-mode melody. However, its constant streams of eighth notes and connection to the dungeon the player has just finished give it a sense of motion that is present in neither “The Power of Darkness”⁶⁷ or the silent moments. The use of “Hidden Highland” here suggests that the heroes are finished with Dusknair and are about to head to Temporal Tower, fulfilling the mission they had in the Hidden Land before being interrupted by Dusknair.

⁶⁷Space does not permit a full exploration of this track.

The feeling of security provided by “Hidden Highland” turns out to be false: moments later, Dusknair informs the avatar that finishing the quest at Temporal Tower will erase Grovyle, the avatar, and Dusknair from existence, since the future they originated in will no longer exist. His revelation adds a weightiness to the final mission that had not been present before and makes the final mission into something sacrificial—just as the avatar’s mission to Sky Tower had been in *Rescue Team*. In *Explorers*, however, it has much more sobering consequences. In *Rescue Team*, the avatar disappeared because she was returning to the human world to resume life there. In *Explorers*, it is implied that finishing her mission will kill her. The avatar has much more reason to balk at this fate than did the avatar in *Rescue Team*, and Dusknair’s shocking revelation is accordingly accompanied by a sudden cut to silence as he speaks. The player may have assumed that the trouble with Dusknair was over after the heroes counterattacked him and the “Hidden Highland” track begins to play, but now Dusknair reveals something that colors the game and the last mission to Temporal Tower in a different light. Other than the typical beeping to indicate dialogue between characters, there is no new audio until Grovyle speaks up to confirm that what Dusknair has said is true—in other words, that Dusknair isn’t making it up with the intention of dissuading the avatar from her quest. The sudden silence reflects the avatar’s shock and disbelief at Dusknair’s revelation, as though her heart temporarily stops and she holds her breath in anticipation of what her trusted partner Grovyle has to say on the matter. In all of the scenes with Dusknair, silence serves to highlight the uncertainty of the heroes’ interactions with him.

Much earlier in the game, silence in a scene with Dusknor intimates that he is not the hero that he appears to be. Realizing that Dusknor possesses much knowledge about many things, the heroes decide to ask him about the avatar's transformation into a Pokémon and attendant amnesia. They take Dusknor down to the beach where the partner found the avatar and tell him about the avatar's (lack of) memories. At the time, the heroes don't yet know that Dusknor is not to be trusted, and revealing this information about the avatar to him turns out to be a costly mistake.

The conversation on the beach with Dusknor is set to silence; the only audio is the diegetic sound of the waves. Considering that the heroes have just completed a successful mission⁶⁸ and are in good spirits, the lack of music during the entire conversation does not fit the overall mood of the preceding events. Prior scenes taking place after successful missions use upbeat, energetic, joyous music. When the avatar tells him of her transformation, he acts extremely shocked, and asks the avatar her name.⁶⁹ When the avatar tells him, he seems contemplative—his response is “Ah! I see... You're... [name]...”—but tells them that the name means nothing to him. It is much later, only after Dusknor informs them that he kidnapped the avatar because she was Grovyle's partner, that the avatar realizes that he was lying about not knowing the avatar's name. Although it may not mean much to the player when she first witnesses it, the conversation with Dusknor and his reaction end up foreshadowing his true motives later in the game. The foreshadowing is also suggested by the fact that the avatar notices

⁶⁸This mission is not mentioned in the plot summary and has no bearing on the overall story of the game.

⁶⁹The names of both the avatar and partner characters are chosen by the player at the game's beginning, so neither character has an official name. The names of all other characters are fixed.

that Dusknair seems to smile when he initially denies knowing the avatar's name, and Dusknair's visual art actually does reveal a smile. The smile is detectable by both avatar and player, and the silence makes its meaning more salient.

III.D: Dungeon Tracks

Silence, as in *Rescue Team*, is used exclusively during noninteractive plot scenes. In dungeons, dungeon tracks provide a constant musical backing; the characteristics of the music are reflective of the dungeon itself. I have already analyzed the use of the Time Gear and Sacrifice motives in the music of Temporal Tower. This dungeon is the only one in the game's main story whose music is drawn from elements formerly heard exclusively in plot scenes.⁷⁰ Therefore, the music of the two dungeons I am about to discuss—Treeshroud Forest and Hidden Land—are not noteworthy for their references to other music, but rather their inherent musical characteristics.

III.D.1: Treeshroud Forest

Treeshroud Forest is the first location to have its Time Gear stolen by Grovyle; that theft is the first one discovered by the members of the guild. When the heroes and Grovyle return from the future, much later in the game (see **Fig. 8** on p. 68), the Time Gears have been placed back into their proper locations by Pokémon who still think Grovyle had wicked intentions. The heroes and Grovyle seek to take the Time Gears from their environments again, and the Time Gear from Treeshroud Forest is the first one

⁷⁰The tracks of the dungeon Vast Ice Mountain in one of the game's side stories also feature the Sacrifice motive. Space does not permit a full exploration of these tracks and that story; in essence, Vast Ice Mountain has much the same role in that story as Temporal Tower does in the main story, so the use of the Sacrifice motive is expected. See Chapter IV for a slightly more detailed explanation.

they take. When the three of them arrive at Treeshroud Forest, Grovyle comments that the forest feels different from the last time he was here, although he can't quite explain why. Upon reaching the end of the dungeon, they are shocked to realize that time is still frozen in the forest despite the Time Gear's presence. Grovyle takes this to mean that the collapse of Temporal Tower is coming much more quickly than they expected, requiring the characters to speed up their efforts.

Treeshroud Forest's music, like all the dungeon tracks from *Rescue Team*, is divided into two sections. Both sections generally use the same texture, which consists of a *legato* melodic line and an incessant sixteenth-note arpeggio accompaniment. The only passage that does not use this texture is the first three measures of the B section, which instead present the *legato* melody accompanied by block chord harmonies. The arpeggiated lines span several octaves and regularly rise above the range of the melodic line, obscuring it and making it difficult to follow.

Example 33 transcribes the first four measures of the track. The first two measures, which feature the accompaniment with no melody, suggest A Lydian. The characteristic A-E-A movement in the bass and presence of A on the first, third, and fourth beats suggest A as a central pitch class, and D#s suggest the Lydian mode. Though the melody by itself, with its emphasis on C#, suggests a C# Aeolian hearing, it is assimilated by the accompaniment figure, which continues unabated underneath it.

Example 34 transcribes mm. 7-8. The mode suggested here is Ab Lydian, a half step lower than A Lydian. The transposition down by half step "darkens" this passage, giving it a sinking feeling.

Example 33. A Lydian in “Treeshroud Forest” (mm. 1-4)

Example 34. Ab Lydian in “Treeshroud Forest” (mm. 7-8)

As the characters traverse the dungeon, they are aware of the fact that something seems to be wrong with Treeshroud Forest—although they do not identify the cause until they reach the Time Gear at the forest’s center—so the ominous nature of the track, and the pump-down in measure 7, fits their thoughts as they search for the Time Gear.

After three measures of Ab Lydian, the pitch-class collection returns to that of A Lydian, although the return to the A Lydian mode now features harmonies other than the one built on A that opened the track. Except for the three measures of Ab and a temporary

interpolation of the pitch class C natural (in the context of an F \sharp half-diminished chord) in measure 13, the rest of the A section is in A Lydian. The A section can thus be described as A Lydian with a brief transposition by half step to A \flat Lydian.

The B section is characterized by its departure from these pitch-class collections.

Example 35 shows mm. 30-31, where a different tonic is presented compared to the A section. Here the Lydian harmonic accompaniment that introduced the track is transposed up a major third to C \sharp (transcribed in D \flat for notational clarity).

Example 35. D \flat Lydian in “Treeshroud Forest” (mm. 30-31)

The melody that accompanies this transition, though it uses the same rhythm and neighbor-figure ideas as the melody of the A section, is not a direct transposition of any part of the A section. The tonics of the two sections are distantly related, emphasizing the contrast between the two sections; the B section is also substantially shorter than the A section. This section ends with transitional material that destabilizes its tonic and mode in preparation for the return of the piece’s opening. **Example 36** transcribes these measures.

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system, labeled '35', consists of a treble clef staff with a melody and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a complex accompaniment. A '8va' marking is present above the left hand. The second system, labeled '37', shows a continuation of the accompaniment pattern in the grand staff, with the treble clef staff containing a whole rest.

Example 36. Rapid Harmonic Changes in “Treeshroud Forest” (mm. 35-37)

The rapid harmonic changes shown in this example follow a consistent pattern: every beat outlines a Mm7 chord with chromatically lowered 5th. While these chords typically act as dominants in tonal music, in Treeshroud Forest, they are instead followed by further presentations of Mm7b5 chords—except for the fourth and final Mm7b5 chord, built on B \flat , which acts as a dominant to the A Lydian harmony that begins the track. The three measures of Mm7b5 chords are thus transitional material that destabilize the tonic and obfuscate the mode, moving the music away from the D \flat Lydian pitch-class collection and back to A Lydian. The instability caused by the rapid and unexpected harmonic changes in this passage is, like the “darkening” of the A Lydian harmony to A \flat in mm. 7-8, a reflection of the characters’ feeling that something is wrong with Treeshroud Forest as they traverse it. When they reach the end, they find that the Time Gear is not actually regulating time in the forest—a function which the Time Gears

innately possess—and it is here that all three characters truly realize that the stability of the entire world is being affected by Temporal Tower’s imminent collapse.

Although the D \flat Lydian section is much shorter than the A section, it is relatively stable in comparison, using only harmonies based on D \flat until m. 35. Much like Sky Tower in *Rescue Team*, the differences between the two sections of the track are representative of the heroes’—and Grovyle’s—thoughts as they traverse the dungeon. As discussed earlier, the unstable A section is reflective of Grovyle’s feeling—confirmed when he and the heroes reach the Time Gear—that something is wrong with Treeshroud Forest. The more stable D \flat passage in the B section is reflective of the heroes’ feelings. Having never seen Treeshroud Forest before, they don’t have any reason to inherently feel that something is wrong with the forest; it is only Grovyle who can compare his previous experience with the forest. To the heroes, it seems fine, but their trust in Grovyle’s words means that there may be something wrong with it that they can’t identify. At the end of the D \flat Lydian passage, before the last pitch of the melody finishes its full duration, the Mm7 \flat 5 sonorities destabilize the tonic, cutting the stable passage—and the B section—short, and reflecting the truth that the heroes and Grovyle will find at the end of the dungeon: time is still stopped in Treeshroud Forest when it shouldn’t be.

III.D.2: Hidden Land

After the heroes and Grovyle take the Time Gear from Treeshroud Forest, they retrieve the four remaining Time Gears from the other locations and then head for Temporal Tower. Before they reach the tower, they must cross through the Hidden Land.

As the heroes and Grovyle traverse the Hidden Land, they deal with unexpected challenges, culminating in a confrontation with Dusknair after they finish the dungeon. No Pokémon in the heroes' time had been to Hidden Land, and thus they had no idea what the Hidden Land was actually going to be like. Its name suggests an air of mystery that is not present in other dungeons in the game. The track that accompanies their trek through the Hidden Land contains three distinct instrumental parts: a slow, *legato* melody beginning on C, an accompaniment of oscillating thirds that *crescendos* and *decrescendos* consistently, and a low bass part with a driving ostinato initially outlining a B♭m7 chord. This low bass part additionally features a *sostenuto* effect where each pitch—except for those occurring just prior to beats—is rearticulated as a sort of grace note to the next pitch. This rearticulation results in a sort of blending effect between pitches that seem to obfuscate the bass line, adding to the sense of mystery provided by the dungeon. These instrumental parts are transcribed in **Example 37**. The upper voices center around C as a central pitch, which is part of a B♭m11 harmony; the melody enters on the chordal 9th. The B♭ based harmony continues for the first eight measures. For the first six measures, the mode implied is either Aeolian or Dorian due to the lack of $\hat{6}$; in measure 6 a G natural confirms the mode of the first 8 measures as Dorian. As discussed in the analysis of Mt. Blaze in Chapter II, the raised $\hat{6}$ of the Dorian mode is indicative of hope in *Mystery Dungeon*. As the heroes and Grovyle cross the Hidden Land, they are facing a new challenge—neither the heroes nor Grovyle know anything about what the Hidden Land is actually like—but they have to keep pressing forward and reach Temporal Tower in order to save the world.

The musical score for Example 37 is written in 3/2 time with a tempo marking of quarter note = 56. It consists of three systems of staves, each with a treble clef and a bass clef. The key signature has four flats (B-flat major/C minor). The first system (measures 1-3) features a melody in the right hand starting with a half note, followed by quarter notes. The left hand has a steady eighth-note bass line in the bass clef and chords in the treble clef, some marked with an 8va symbol. Dynamics include *mf*, *pp*, and *mp*. The second system (measures 4-6) continues the melody and accompaniment. The third system (measures 7-9) shows the melody moving to a half note, with the accompaniment continuing its pattern.

Example 37. Ostinato in “Hidden Land” (mm. 1-9)

In measure 8, the harmonic accompaniment changes to $E\flat m7$, which includes $G\flat$ —suggesting Aeolian and the fears that the heroes and Grovyle have about whether or not they will be able to make it to Temporal Tower in time. The entrance of the $E\flat m7$ chord also coincides with the entrance of a prolonged $B\flat$ in the melody. This tonic is

approached by a stepwise descent from the dominant. The motion to B \flat seems to resolve the extended harmony—of which the C is part—to a more consonant triad, but the unexpected juxtaposition of the melodic B \flat with a new harmony frustrates that expectation. It is only in mm. 15-16, shown in **Example 38**, that the listener finally hears a $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{1}$ melodic motion in B \flat minor that is supported by a tonic chord.

Example 38. Resolution to B \flat in “Hidden Land” (mm. 15-16)

The frustrated expectations are reflective of the way the Hidden Land itself evades all attempts at discovery. No Pokémon—not even Grovyle, who has done much research into the world of the heroes’ time—is able to pinpoint the location of the Hidden Land. It is only with the help of Lapras, who is the sole Pokémon apart from Dialga who knows where the Hidden Land is located, that the heroes and Grovyle are able to find it. Before they meet Lapras, the mysterious and possibly mythical Hidden Land continually eludes the heroes and Grovyle. After its cadential B \flat in measure 16, the melody drops out, and the bass ostinato and accompanying oscillations continue for an additional three measures. Measures 19-22 are transcribed in **Example 39**.

Example 39. Transition Between Sections in “Hidden Land” (mm. 19-22)

In measure 19, the Bb ostinato and accompaniment figure in thirds continue, though in the last beat of the measure the tempo slows down. The following measure is approximately 42 bpm, and the music returns to 56 bpm on measure 20’s last quarter note. Alterations to tempo, however brief, are uncommon in dungeon tracks in *Mystery Dungeon*, as the tracks often provide consistent rhythmic accompaniments to encourage the player to keep playing. Although the former tempo is shortly resumed, the alteration in tempo—and simultaneous removal of the bass ostinato—is enough to disorient the player.⁷¹ The texture and tempo changes in measure 20, in addition to heralding the beginning of the track’s B section, are representative of the characters’ state in the dungeon. Up until the Hidden Land, the heroes have always had the support of their exploration guild, whose collective knowledge and mere presence was enough to help the heroes through struggles in the past. Grovyle, in his quest to collect the Time Gears, had

⁷¹One transcription of this track in 6/4 time places mm. 21-22 in 5/4 and 7/4, respectively, a transcription choice I believe to be due in part to the tempo alteration and change of texture. The arrangement in question, by Joel Hands-Otte, can be found at <http://www.ninsheetmusic.org/download/pdf/1542> (accessed June 18, 2018).

an advantage in that he had researched them and discovered where each one was hidden before he even traveled to the past, which made collecting them easier. Now, both the heroes and Grovyle are on their own in their journey; the heroes cannot expect to rely on the guild's knowledge or strength here, and Grovyle cannot use his own knowledge to his advantage in the Hidden Land due to his unfamiliarity with it. The B section does not provide a steady rhythmic accompaniment—which, as discussed in connection with other dungeon tracks, helps provide a grounding effect—until the return of the ostinato at measure 28, as part of transitional material. Until then, the whole texture is in a high register; measure 22's "bass" pitch is a B \flat 5. The generally high register of these measures gives the B section a "floating" feeling, appropriate for the characters' lack of support as they traverse the Hidden Land.

Starting in measure 23—two measures after the beginning of the B section—there is a shift to a new pitch-class collection, transcribed in **Example 40**. The sustained C \sharp of m. 28 and the bass ostinato based around the same note—transposed up an enharmonic minor third from the ostinato at the track's beginning—suggest C \sharp as a central pitch class and Aeolian as the mode. Connecting the tonics of B \flat and C \sharp is a descending fifths progression in mm. 23-24. This progression begins on B major and terminates on the downbeat of measure 24 with a DM(7) harmony: \flat II in B \flat and \flat II in C \sharp , respectively. Prior to the establishment of C \sharp in both melody and bass at measure 28, the pitch-class collection is clear—apart from D natural, no chromatic pitches are used—but the tonic is not. The melody revolves around C \sharp , but the sequential bass and subsequent harmonies do not conform to this tonic until the ostinato enters at m. 28.

Example 40. Descending 5ths Progression in “Hidden Land” (mm. 23-28)

This uncertainty about the tonic, coupled with the sequential modulation, gives the section a feeling of floating or being suspended. The section as a whole loses some of the grounding that was present in the B \flat Aeolian A section; in addition to the unclear tonic, the B section is also in a high register and does not have the rhythmic bass characteristic of the A section. This lack of grounding is reflective of the heroes’ own lack of certainty going into the Hidden Land and their unfamiliarity with the challenges that this part of their quest holds for them—including their impending fight with Dusknair at the end of the dungeon.

These two dungeon tracks, which both occur close to the game's ending, help to add to the tension that accompanies the characters' quest to save the world by reaching Temporal Tower. The music of Temporal Tower itself also uses motives to connect the Temporal Tower quest with plot tracks heard elsewhere in the game. In *Explorers*, the Time Gear and Sacrifice motives—as well as Exploration and Guild—unify several tracks and the game itself. Moreover, the game is musically connected to *Rescue Team* through its introductory music, which uses the familiar Rescue and Team motives from *Rescue Team*. Rather than using them as game-spanning adventure motives in the same vein as *Rescue Team*, *Explorers* uses them to introduce its adventure, which is similar to that of *Rescue Team* but featuring a new story. The adventure motives used within the rest of *Explorers* include an altered version of Rescue and a new motive called Guild, both of which have their origins in *Rescue Team* but are repurposed here for the adventure of *Explorers*. During the game, the Time Gear motive is used to represent the Time Gears themselves and the Temporal Tower quest as a whole, and its occasional intertwining with the Sacrifice motive foreshadows the sacrifices made by the heroes and Grovyle at the game's end. Silence, mostly used in connection with the game's antagonist Dusknair, is used to paint scenes with uncertainty—just as in *Rescue Team*—as well as to suggest that the characters' impression of Dusknair may not be accurate. Just as in *Rescue Team*, a variety of musical elements create a complete experience for the player.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Within the *Mystery Dungeon* games, many musical elements are used to blend gameplay and story. This blending effect makes connections between tracks and scenes which strengthen the total experience of the game; without these elements, the player cannot fully appreciate the game. Motives are used to link discrete tracks and to foreshadow future events. In *Explorers* in particular, motivic relationships link the heroes' Time Gear quest with the sacrifice that the avatar must make in order to complete the quest. In addition to motives that represent elements of the plot—such as the Fugitive, Truth, Time Gear, and Sacrifice motives—other motives (Rescue, Team, Guild, and Exploration) are used to draw the player into gameplay and indicate the adventures she will have. Dungeon tracks blur gameplay and story by both portraying a dungeon's environment as well as the characters' thoughts or feelings at the time they traverse the dungeon, linking them to the overall story. Finally, silence is used to make key moments in the story even more salient—most prominently at the end of both games.

The music of *Mystery Dungeon* is notable for its complexity compared to the music of other *Pokémon* games. The tracks of both games incorporate many tonics, modes, scale types, and pitch collections, as well as meters and rhythmic patterns, of which this thesis has analyzed only a relatively small part. Connections between independent tracks—most notably between *Rescue Team*'s introductory music and “Time

of Reunion,” as well as the introductory theme and “Exploration Theme” in *Explorers*—cause the music of the individual games to be seen more as a whole, akin to the compositions of Koji Kondo for *The Legend of Zelda*. The YouTube comments referenced within this thesis indicate that, even a decade after the games’ release, many players still have a great deal of nostalgia for them and seek out their music to listen to. A common thread running through comments on *Mystery Dungeon* is that the music plays a large part in the games’ emotional impact; many players comment on how they cried when they finished the game, in part because of its music, and how they cry listening to the same tracks years later due to the associations the music had with the scenes in which the players cry. With a story-heavy game such as those of the *Mystery Dungeon* series, music plays an important role, and it is important for video game music composers and scholars alike to understand how subtle musical effects—such as motivic repetition and the use of silence—affect players’ experiences with the story and the game as a whole. For *Mystery Dungeon*, one needs to look no further than the dozens of YouTube remixes and arrangements of the games’ tracks to see how deeply they have affected musically-inclined players within the fan community.

My thesis is by no means exhaustive: there are undoubtedly further connections to be made within the games’ music. One of the side stories in *Sky*, for instance, features the travels of Grovyle after he returns to the future with Dusknair; they are still alive, and during this side story Grovyle must fight to prevent Dusknair and Dialga from going back to the heroes’ time to kill the heroes. This side story, in addition to using the Sacrifice motive, makes significant use of two other motives—one introduced in the main story,

one unique to the side story—that serve as “themes” for it. Even within the main story of both games, motives I have not discussed are present in multiple tracks and link tracks not mentioned in my thesis—such as the ostinato of “Sky Tower,” which is shared with a track heard just before the Sky Tower mission called “World Calamity.” Exploration of the other three games in the *Mystery Dungeon* series, *Adventure Squad*, *Gates to Infinity*, and *Super Mystery Dungeon*, may yet yield further connections within the whole *Mystery Dungeon* series. The menu music for *Super Mystery Dungeon*, for instance, uses a variation on the familiar Team motive, connecting this game with *Rescue Team* and *Explorers*. The compositional approach to *Mystery Dungeon* is significant for the effect it has had on fans, and is a definite reason why fans still discuss and get emotional over the games, even over a decade later.

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APPENDIX A

TRACKS IN *RESCUE TEAM*

Tracks listed in boldface are discussed in Chapter 2.

Track title	Type of track
1. Intro	Other
2. Title	Other
3. Main Menu	Other
4. Personality Test	Plot
5. Awakening	Plot
6. There's Trouble!	Plot
7. Tiny Woods	Dungeon
8. At the End of the Road	Plot
9. Happiness	Other
10. Rescue Team Base	Other
11. Insert Title	Plot
12. Thunderwave Cave	Dungeon
13. Dream	Plot
14. Pokémon Square	Other
15. Field	Optional
16. Steppe	Optional
17. Forest	Optional
18. Wilds	Optional
19. Swamp	Optional
20. Pond	Optional
21. Mt. Steel	Dungeon
22. Boss Battle	Other
23. Lab	Optional
24. Makuhita Dojo	Other
25. Sinister Woods	Dungeon
26. Danger! There's Trouble!	Plot
27. Silent Chasm	Dungeon
28. Mt. Thunder	Split Dungeon part 1
29. Mt. Thunder Peak	Split Dungeon part 2
30. Great Canyon	Dungeon
31. The Legend of Ninetales	Plot
32. Run Away	Plot
33. Lapis Cave	Dungeon
34. The Mountain of Fire	Plot

35. Mt. Blaze	Split Dungeon part 1
36. Mt. Blaze Peak	Split Dungeon part 2
37. Kecleon Shop	Other
38. Stop! Thief!	Other
39. Snow Refugees	Plot
40. Frosty Forest	Split Dungeon part 1
41. Frosty Grotto	Split Dungeon part 2
42. Gardevoir Appears	Plot
43. Mt. Freeze	Split Dungeon part 1
44. Mt. Freeze Peak	Split Dungeon part 2
45. Magma Cavern	Split Dungeon part 1
46. Magma Cavern Pit	Split Dungeon part 2
47. Monster House!	Other
48. World Calamity	Plot
49. Dream Eater	Plot
50. Sky Tower	Split Dungeon part 1
51. Sky Tower Summit	Split Dungeon part 2
52. Rayquaza's Domain	Plot
53. Rayquaza Battle	Plot
54. The Other Side	Plot
55. Aftermath	Plot
56. Parting	Plot
57. Credits	Plot
58. Time of Reunion	Plot
59. Oceanic	Optional
60. Rainbow Peak	Optional
61. Caves	Optional
62. Cryptic Cave	Optional
63. Southern Island	Optional
64. Final Island	Optional
65. Stormy Sea	Dungeon (in post-game)
66. Buried Relic	Dungeon (in post-game)
67. Legendary Island	Optional
68. Deep-sea Current	Optional
69. Healing Forest	Optional
70. Seafloor Cave	Optional
71. Volcanic Pit	Optional
72. Stratos Lookout	Optional
73. Enclosed Island	Optional

APPENDIX B

TRACKS IN *EXPLORERS*

Tracks listed in boldface are discussed in Chapter 3.
Tracks listed in italics were added for the *Sky* version of *Explorers*.

1.	<i>Pokémon Exploration Team Theme</i>	<i>Other</i>
2.	Top Menu Theme	Other
3.	Welcome to the World of Pokémon!	Plot
4.	On the Beach at Dusk	Plot
5.	Beach Cave	Dungeon
6.	In the Depths of the Pit	Other
7.	Title Theme	Other
8.	<i>Wigglytuff's Guild</i>	<i>Other</i>
9.	Guildmaster Wigglytuff	Plot
10.	Goodnight	Plot
11.	Wigglytuff's Guild Remix	Plot
12.	Drenched Bluff	Dungeon
13.	Job Clear!	Other
14.	Treasure Town	Other
15.	Heartwarming	Plot
16.	Growing Anxiety	Plot
17.	Oh No!	Plot
18.	Mt. Bristle	Dungeon
19.	Boss Battle!	Other
20.	<i>Time Gear Remix</i>	<i>Plot</i>
21.	The Gatekeepers	Optional
22.	Outlaw!	Optional
23.	I Saw Something Again...	Plot
24.	Waterfall Cave	Dungeon
25.	Kecleon's Shop	Optional
26.	Team Skull	Plot
27.	Spinda's Café	Optional
28.	Ludicolo Dance	Optional
29.	Apple Woods	Dungeon
30.	Craggy Coast	Dungeon
31.	Cave and Side Path	Dungeon
32.	Mt. Horn	Dungeon
33.	Foggy Forest	Dungeon
34.	Steam Cave	Split Dungeon part 1
35.	Upper Steam Cave	Split Dungeon part 2

36.	Amp Plains	Split Dungeon part 1
37.	Far Amp Plains	Split Dungeon part 2
38.	Monster House!	Optional
39.	Rising Fear	Plot
40.	Northern Desert	Dungeon
41.	Quicksand Cave	Split Dungeon part 1
42.	Quicksand Pit	Split Dungeon part 2
43.	Crystal Cave	Dungeon
44.	Crystal Crossing	Dungeon
45.	At the End of the Day	Plot
46.	In the Future	Plot
47.	Planet's Paralysis	Plot
48.	Chasm Cave	Dungeon
49.	Dark Hill	Dungeon
50.	Sealed Ruin	Split Dungeon part 1
51.	Sealed Ruin Pit	Split Dungeon part 2
52.	Dusk Forest	Split Dungeon part 1
53.	Deep Dusk Forest	Split Dungeon part 2
54.	The Power of Darkness	Plot
55.	Treeshroud Forest	Dungeon
56.	Brine Cave	Split Dungeon part 1
57.	Lower Brine Cave	Split Dungeon part 2
58.	Hidden Land	Split Dungeon part 1
59.	Hidden Highland	Split Dungeon part 2
60.	Battle Against Dusknair	Plot
61.	Time Gear	Plot
62.	Through the Sea of Time	Plot
63.	In the Hands of Fate	Plot
64.	Temporal Tower	Split Dungeon part 1
65.	Temporal Spire	Split Dungeon part 2
66.	Temporal Pinnacle	Other
67.	Down a Dark Path	Plot
68.	Dialga's Fight to the Finish!	Plot
69.	Time Restored	Plot
70.	Don't Ever Forget...	Plot
71.	Have to Get Home	Plot
72.	Farther Away...	Plot
73.	A Wish for Peace	Plot
74.	Memories Returned	Plot
75.	Ending Theme Intro	Plot
76.	Ending Theme	Plot
77.	Epilogue Theme	Plot

78.	Mystifying Forest	Dungeon (in post-game)
79.	Do Your Best, as Always!	Other
80.	<i>Shaymin Village</i>	<i>Optional</i>
81.	<i>Sky Peak Forest</i>	<i>Dungeon (in post-game)</i>
82.	<i>Sky Peak Cave</i>	<i>Dungeon (in post-game)</i>
83.	<i>Sky Peak Prairie</i>	<i>Dungeon (in post-game)</i>
84.	<i>Sky Peak Coast</i>	<i>Dungeon (in post-game)</i>
85.	<i>Sky Peak Snowfield</i>	<i>Dungeon (in post-game)</i>
86.	<i>Sky Peak Final Pass</i>	<i>Dungeon (in post-game)</i>
87.	Blizzard Island Rescue Team Medley	Dungeon (in post-game)
88.	Surrounded Sea	Dungeon (in post-game)
89.	Miracle Sea	Dungeon (in post-game)
90.	Aegis Cave	Dungeon (in post-game)
91.	Defy the Legends	Other
92.	Concealed Ruins	Dungeon (in post-game)
93.	Mt. Travail	Dungeon (in post-game)
94.	In the Nightmare	Dungeon (in post-game)
95.	Palkia's Onslaught!	Plot
96.	Dark Crater	Split Dungeon part 1 (in post-game)
97.	Deep Dark Crater	Split Dungeon part 2 (in post-game)
98.	Random Dungeon Theme 1	Dungeon
99.	Random Dungeon Theme 2	Dungeon
100.	Random Dungeon Theme 3	Dungeon
101.	Marowak Dojo	Optional
102.	Pelipper Island	Optional
103.	<i>Sympathy</i>	<i>Plot</i>
104.	<i>Beyond the Dream</i>	<i>Plot</i>
105.	<i>Air of Unease</i>	<i>Plot</i>
106.	<i>Star Cave</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 1</i>
107.	<i>Deep Star Cave</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 2</i>
108.	<i>One for All, All for One!</i>	<i>Plot</i>
109.	<i>Murky Forest</i>	<i>Dungeon</i>
110.	<i>A Fun Exploration</i>	<i>Plot</i>
111.	<i>Fortune Ravine</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 1</i>
112.	<i>Fortune Ravine Depths</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 2</i>
113.	<i>It Can't Be...</i>	<i>Plot</i>
114.	<i>Defend Globe</i>	<i>Plot</i>
115.	<i>Defend Globe (Ending)</i>	<i>Plot</i>
116.	<i>Spring Cave</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 1</i>
117.	<i>Lower Spring Cave</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 2</i>
118.	<i>Spring Cave Depths</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 3</i>
119.	<i>Here Comes Team Charm!</i>	<i>Plot</i>

<i>120. Southern Jungle</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>121. Boulder Quarry</i>	<i>Dungeon</i>
<i>122. Illusion Stone Chamber</i>	<i>Other</i>
<i>123. Limestone Cavern</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 1</i>
<i>124. Deep Limestone Cavern</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 2</i>
<i>125. Team Charm's Theme</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>126. For a New Life</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>127. Barren Valley</i>	<i>Dungeon</i>
<i>128. Dark Wasteland</i>	<i>Dungeon</i>
<i>129. Spacial Cliffs</i>	<i>Dungeon</i>
<i>130. Dark Ice Mountain</i>	<i>Dungeon</i>
<i>131. Living Spirit</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>132. Icicle Forest</i>	<i>Dungeon</i>
<i>133. Proud Accomplishment</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>134. Vast Ice Mountain</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 1</i>
<i>135. Vast Ice Mountain Peak</i>	<i>Split Dungeon part 2</i>
<i>136. In the Morning Sun</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>137. A New World</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>138. It's Not a Miracle</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>139. Thoughts for Friends</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>140. A Message on the Wind</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>141. Life Goes On! (Ending)</i>	<i>Plot</i>
<i>142. A Grand Tale of Time and Darkness</i>	<i>Optional</i>