

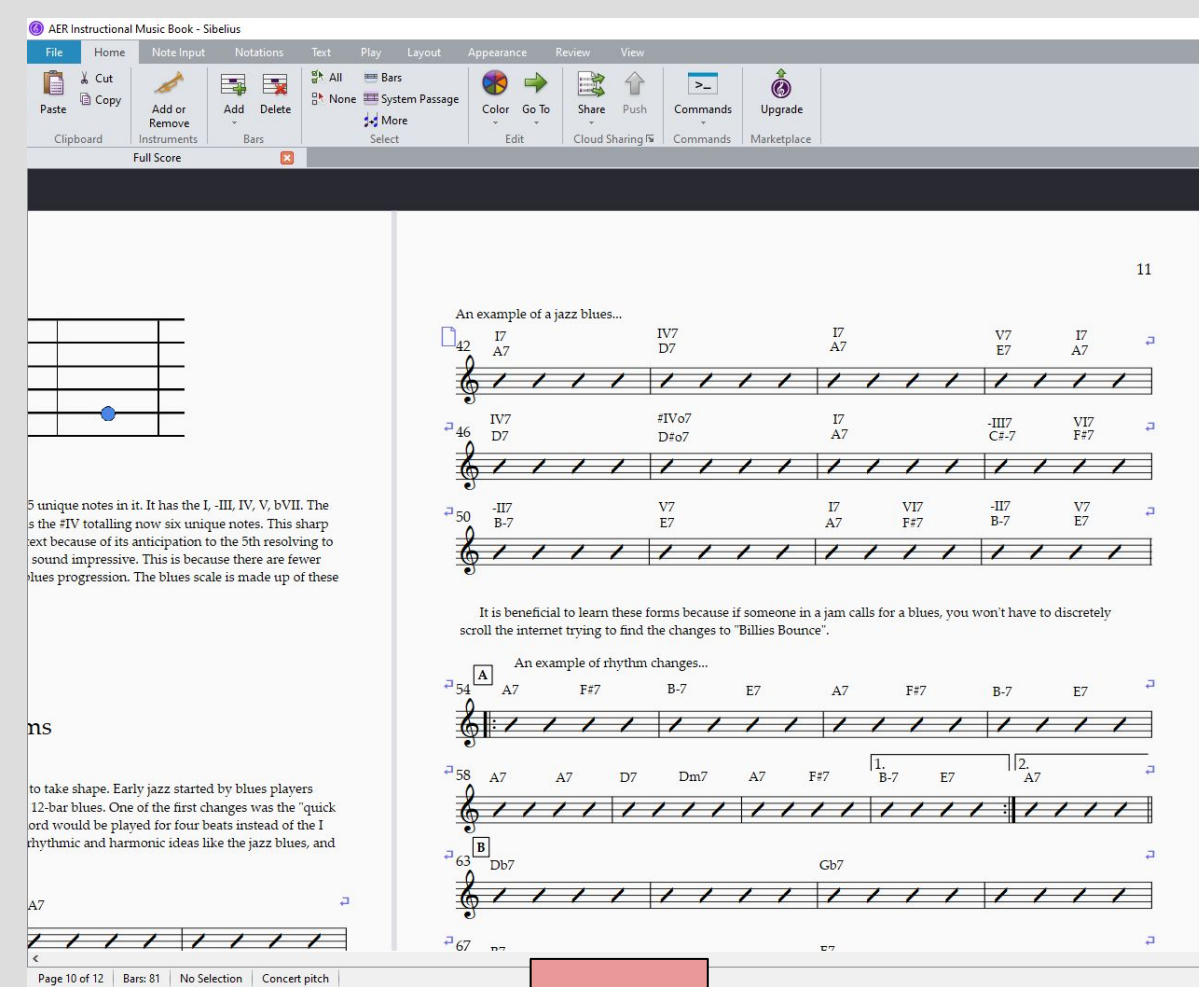
## INTRODUCTION

My action project focuses to create a concise yet effective music theory book to allow guitarists to quickly grasp essential concepts. In my experience of learning and teaching guitar is that everybody learns certain topics differently. I wrote this book to give guitar players another perspective on various topics I deemed crucial to understand. I have observed too many musicians unable to communicate musically when jamming because they do not have any background in music theory. While my project is intended to help guitar players, it also helps me reach complete understanding as I write out these foundational skills on paper.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

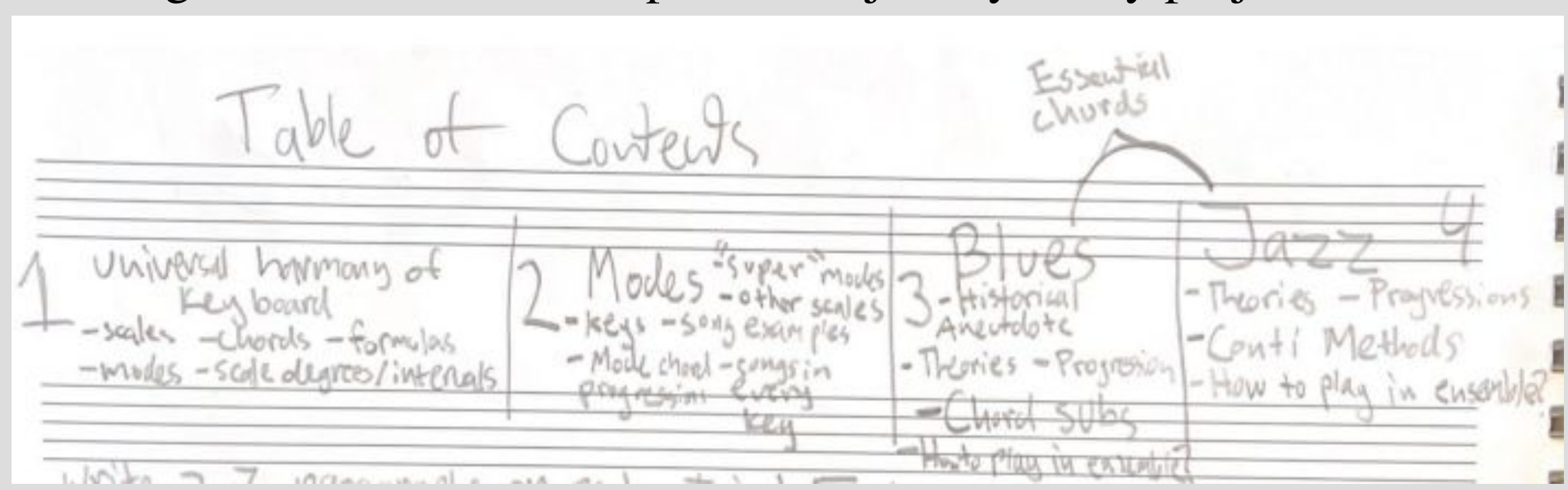
### Step #1

- Establishing on how you will write the book
  - Interviewed John Heussenstamm who explained how he uses the music software, Sibelius, to write all of his books
  - This app allows you to notate music on a staff, type text, and upload images to a blank page, which is exactly what I was looking for.
  - The cost was free, but there is a version that costs money which allows for more freedoms like adding more instrumentation



### Step #2

- The next step I took was creating a table of contents
  - In the interview with John, he explained to me the importance of the table of contents
  - Creating a table of contents outlines the entire book and it allows for much more organization and a clear separation between sections within the book
  - In this step I was able to interview Wolf Marshall which provided me with general advice that shaped the trajectory of my project



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

\*\*\*Special thanks to John Heussenstamm and Tommy Benson for making this project possible **Works Cited:**



## DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION

### 1. ADVICE WOLF MARSHALL GAVE

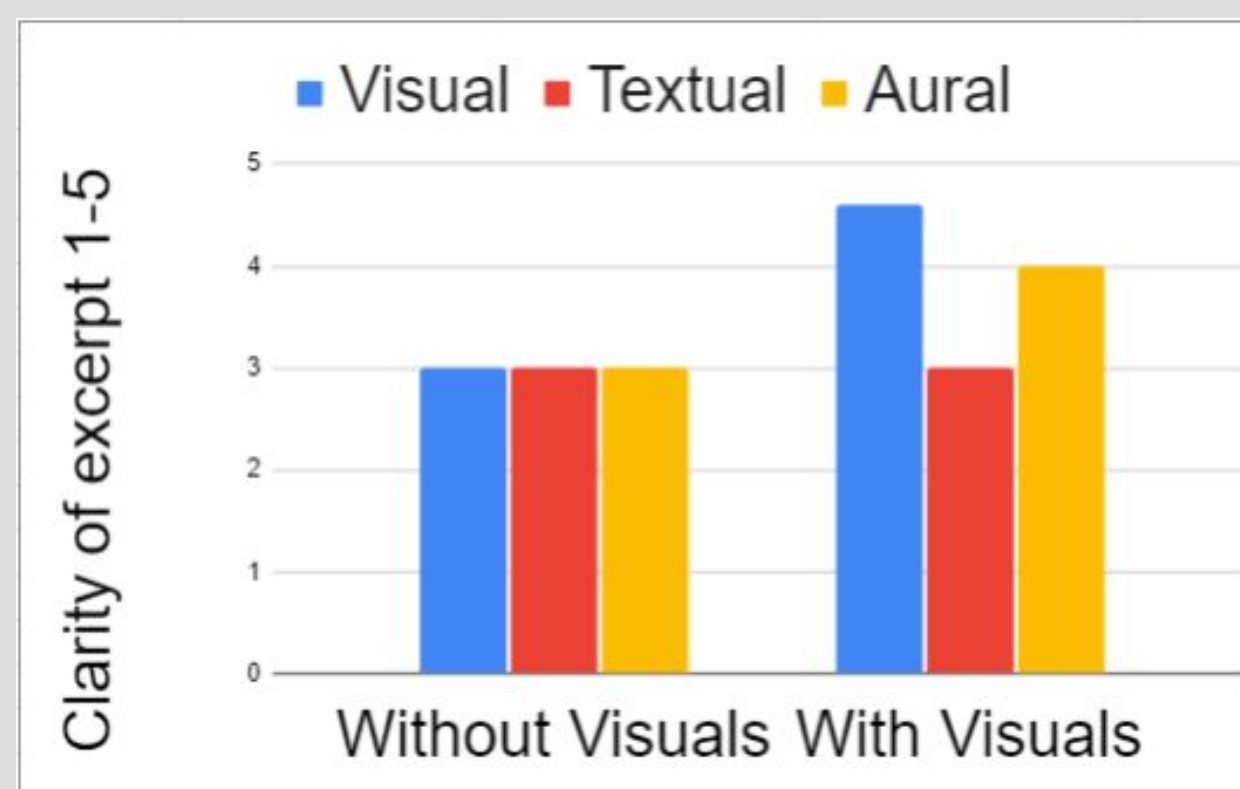
- Stressed that my book “try to [have] a conversational tone”
- Use musical examples and phrases to connect teachings to application

### 2. ADVICE FROM JOHN HEUSSENSTAMM

- Advised to use the music composition program Sibelius because of his experience with it
- Stressed the importance of diagrams because very few guitarists know how to read sheet music

### 3. SURVEY RESULTS

- Results as expected; Group 1 ranked the passage higher in the clarity score than Group 2
- There were less visual learners in Group 1 but it still scored higher
- The sample size was too small and not that random so the findings cannot be generalized to a greater population

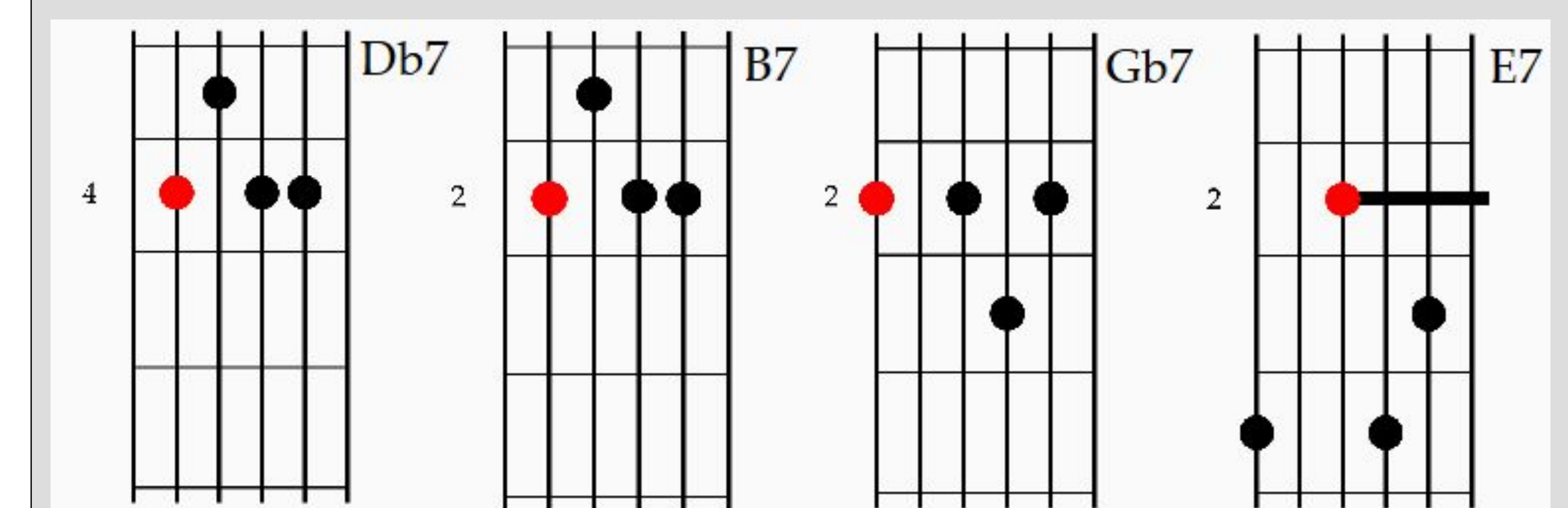


### SURVEY:

I asked two similar groups of people to read a passage from my book; one group (Group 1) was learning from a page with diagrams and the other group (Group 2) was without diagrams. They would select the medium in which they learn best, and how much they understood from a 1-5 scale.

### Step #3

- Creating diagrams and graphics
  - I initially thought I would grab fair-use images on the internet and edit them to fit my explanations
  - Realized these pre-existing photos were never exactly what I wanted, even if I tried editing them
  - Then, I tried to hand draw the diagrams which found some success
  - I was able to produce specifically what I needed but it was very time-consuming and when I messed up my eraser marks would leave ugly spots
  - Finally, the most effective method of making these graphics was to create them in a Google drawing
  - While I was content with my previous drawings, this method allowed for consistent neatness and it was convenient when I needed to copy and paste the same fretboard template.



## DATA AND FINDINGS

The findings were basically what I envisioned and what I would have hoped for. The group that had visuals in the explanation (Group 1) ranked the clarity score higher than the group that did not (Group 2). This leads me to believe that the diagrams that I created helped get the lesson across clearer for most people. Without the visuals all types of learners ranked the clarity score a 3. The group with graphics in the survey had visual learners ranked the clarity score higher than a 4, textual learners a 3, and aural learners at a 4. For the most part, visual learners benefited from the introduction of the diagrams while they did not affect text-based learners and it increased the clarity score for aural learners. To begin with, the increase in clarity score from aural learners was surprising because there was no audio in this experiment. This could be due to people not knowing how they truly learn best, or most probably, because of how small each sample size was. Each group was comprised of 10 people and with a sample size this small, one outlier has a lot of power to shift the findings in another direction. While the poll may not have been conducted with total academic rigor, the results bore the initial hypothesis that having visuals while studying music theory will generally help people understand topics better.

## CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

An important goal I had in mind when creating a music theory book was to help guitarists learn from another perspective, and teach musicians without much background in theory to get a grasp on how musicians may talk to each other. In my experience with learning music, I have had teachers who I thought explained certain musical concepts terribly which is why I was stuck stressing to find answers to my questions for a period of time. I kept searching for answers and eventually found great influences on my playing who I thought explained these difficult concepts with incredible clarity. Maybe my past teachers (those that I thought were not as good) were simply explaining it the way they understood it best, but I could not make sense of it yet. I remember my desperation for knowledge and that is why I wrote this book, in hopes of clearing up the fog that covers people’s understanding of music. I often find myself explaining music theory to friends when I am trying to get an idea across, and having a book to point at with my own explanations of these topics would be much more helpful. The next steps of the project would be to cover more areas of study and expand my book. At the very beginning of my project, my goals were way too ambitious; I wanted to cover many more topics but just one year was not enough to complete this, let alone with my already busy schedule. Another action that would be interesting to take would be the marketing and business aspects of publishing a book. This endeavor would command much more research and time that I did not have with only one school year to complete this project. In the future, I hope to use my project to teach my students and any musician that I jam with who is interested in learning more about what they are playing.