

A, B form (statement/resolution also known as question/answer)

Example -

A - Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little lamb

B - Mary had a little lamb, its fleece was white as snow

Last 8 bars of "It Could Happen to You" (see chart)

A, A prime, B (statement, variation of statement, resolution)

Example - see chart for "It Could Happen to You"

A - bars 1 through 2

A prime - bars 3 through 4

B - bars 5 through 8

Statement/Transition - This form is essentially an A B form, however the B part functions as a transition into something different whether it's a different phrase, a different motive, or even a different sound/sonic territory. Straight up A B forms have a more resolved feeling in the B part, making the entire form complete in itself.

In the Statement/Transition form, though the B balances out the A, it doesn't resolve A until it leads to another idea where the beginning of that idea is the resolution for our preceding Statement/Transition form. Therefore Statement/Transition don't stand alone as a complete phrase.

Example -

Bars 9 through 16 function as a
STATEMENT/TRANSITION motive form

172.

IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU

BURKE-
VAN HUSEN

Handwritten musical notation for "It Could Happen to You" by Burke-Van Husen. The notation is written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 4/4. The notation includes various chords and melodic lines, with some sections circled and labeled A, B, and TRANSITION.

Section A: $E^b \text{Maj}^7$ $G \phi^7$ $C^7(b9)$ $F \text{mi}^7$ $A \phi$ $B^7(b9)$

Section B: $A^b \Delta$ $G \phi^7$ C^7

Section A: $F \text{mi}^7$ D^b7 $E^b \text{Maj}^7$ $D \phi^7$ G^7

Section B: $C \text{mi}^7$ $(C \text{mi}^7 \Delta^7)$ $C \text{mi}^7$ F^7 $F \text{mi}^7$ B^b7

TRANSITION: Maj^7 $G \phi^7$ C^7 $F \text{mi}^7$ $A \phi$ $B^7(b9)$

Section A: $E^b \Delta$ $A^b \Delta$ $G \phi^7$ C^7

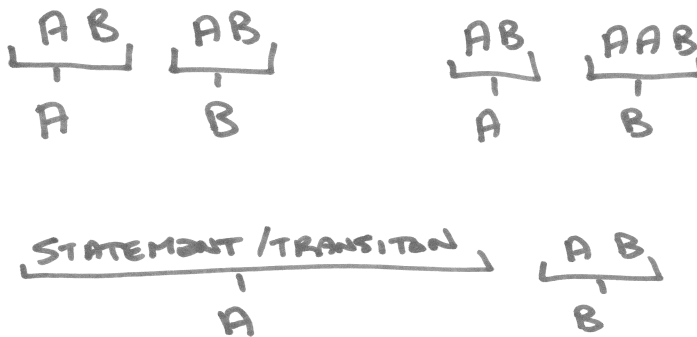
Section A: $F \text{mi}^7$ D^b7 $E^b \text{Maj}^7$ A^b7 $G \phi^7$ C^7

Section B: $F \text{mi}^7$ $F \text{mi}^7$ B^b7 $E^b \text{Maj}^7$ $(C \text{mi}^7$ $F \text{mi}^7$ $B^b7)$

MILES - "MILES DAVIS" J.J. JOHNSON - "THE EMINENT J.J. JOHNSON" (in C)

These little motive forms essentially make up the musical **sentence structure**. You can combine them to make larger, more complex motive forms (a form within a form). Taking this idea another step further, you can string these more complex motive forms into a **musical paragraph** (a form within a form within another form).

*see example below



Furthermore, you can take this way of thinking about form and apply it to ambient, sound/sonority improvisations AND more importantly, to how you think about the overall form of the piece.