

Hello banjo friends,

Another class in the bag--hooray! I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to work with all of you in this way. As my banjo hero Walt Koken likes to say, "if you're having half as much fun as I am, I'm having twice as much fun as you are." I really can't think of a more enjoyable way to spend a Tuesday evening. The only thing better would be if I could hear everyone playing along!

Keep practicing the space-fillers, both the more common one on fully-open strings as well as the one that delivers a V7 chord, orienting around the open fourth string and including the second fret of the third string. As you have seen in two out of three tunes so far, I use these motifs a great deal.

Here are some renditions of "Henry Reed's Breakdown" that I like a lot (note the differing treatments of the third scale degree that we briefly discussed--some more major, others more minor, still others somewhere in between--and the various melodic and rhythmic approaches to the B part, which Henry Reed himself played in more ways than just the one that we learned):

-Henry Reed's original recorded setting from 1967: <https://www.slippery-hill.com/content/untitled-number-4>

-Alan Jabbour fiddling a very nice single pass: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-BriqBNK4A>

-Tina Bergmann on hammered dulcimer and Bryan Thomas on upright bass in an unlikely but wonderful duet, playing it here as the second half of a medley: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8L8OrT5uX8>

-the popular contra dance band Notorious: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_BZ024nX87E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_BZ024nX87E)

...and here are a few nice takes on "Twin Sisters":

-Sidna Myers' original recorded setting from the early 1960s, as both a banjo solo and a duet with brother Fulton Myers on fiddle: <https://fieldrecorder.bandcamp.com/album/frc-504-sidna-and-fulton-myers-recordings-from-the-collection-of-peter-hoover>

(Although the Bandcamp site is handy for previewing tracks and purchasing digital formats, the entire Field Recorders' Collective library is well worth exploring through their own website, <https://fieldrecorder.org>, as well as through Bandcamp.)

-Doc and Merle Watson on guitar and banjo, respectively, from their 1984 "Down South" album (also featuring Sam Bush on fiddle): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sX06bB3hYFo>

-Russ Carson in open-G tuning, leaving the first fret of the second string engaged virtually throughout to mimic the Sawmill tuning. In addition to being a fine clawhammer banjo player, Russ is also the current bluegrass banjo player with Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mY4gwTpnm3Y>

Please don't be shy about reaching out with any questions, comments, or suggestions, particularly as you review the class video or work your way through the tabs in the Google Drive folder.

I'm already counting the days until seeing you all again next Tuesday!

Cheers,  
Adam