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INTRODUCTION

The electronic percussion unit would not come to life. I had been asked to play an "electronic toms" part on a song and using a drum machine sample was going to take care of business, but the device was having issues. As the rehearsal moved along, I suddenly thought about an app on my phone that might be the answer. I plugged my earphones into my iPhone 5C and opened the *iKaossilator* app. After a few minutes of experimenting, I settled on an appropriate patch. The electronic drum tones fit the vibe of the song and I tapped my way through two church services that Saturday—using my iPhone as my instrument. I had to wonder if anyone in the congregation thought I was texting. Later that evening, I decided that a touchscreen tablet would give me a bigger target so I drummed my way through three more services the next day using my iPad.

Performing and producing music with a touchscreen mobile device is not the wave of the future. It's now. And it is much simpler than the creation of electronic music with the analog synthesizer, reel-to-reel tape splicing, and tone generator of my grad school days.

The universe of apps can provide hundreds and hundreds of tone colors at your fingertips—in a device that weighs less than an acoustic guitar. A simple search of the web will turn up numerous examples of touchscreen ensembles displaying their chops.

Is your school part of the touchscreen revolution? Does your administration encourage you to include technology in your classes? Have you thought about your students performing electronic ensemble music? What about some activities that involve music-making technology?

***Give Me a Tablet* provides you with activities and ensemble music along with teaching tips, app suggestions, and recordings for study and inspiration. Choose an activity or an ensemble, fire up the tablets, download some apps, and get ready for some electronic music-making fun.**

ABOUT THE CD

The CD included in this product is enhanced and contains both audio tracks and digital files to assist you in presenting these activities and ensembles to your students.

The CD will play audio files like any regular CD in your CD player. The audio tracks can be used to give you and your students a taste of what is possible when using the score and apps outlined in the activities and ensembles.

To access the digital files, you will need a PDF reader, such as Adobe Reader, which you can download for free at https://get.adobe.com/reader/. Once you have installed a PDF reader, simply insert your CD into your computer's CD drive. When prompted, click on View Files to see all of the resources available to you. The data files include all of the scores seen in this resource, along with extracted parts for individual students when appropriate. You may project or print these scores.

BUZZ-A-ROUND

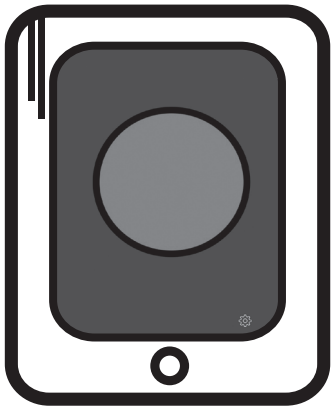
Track 1

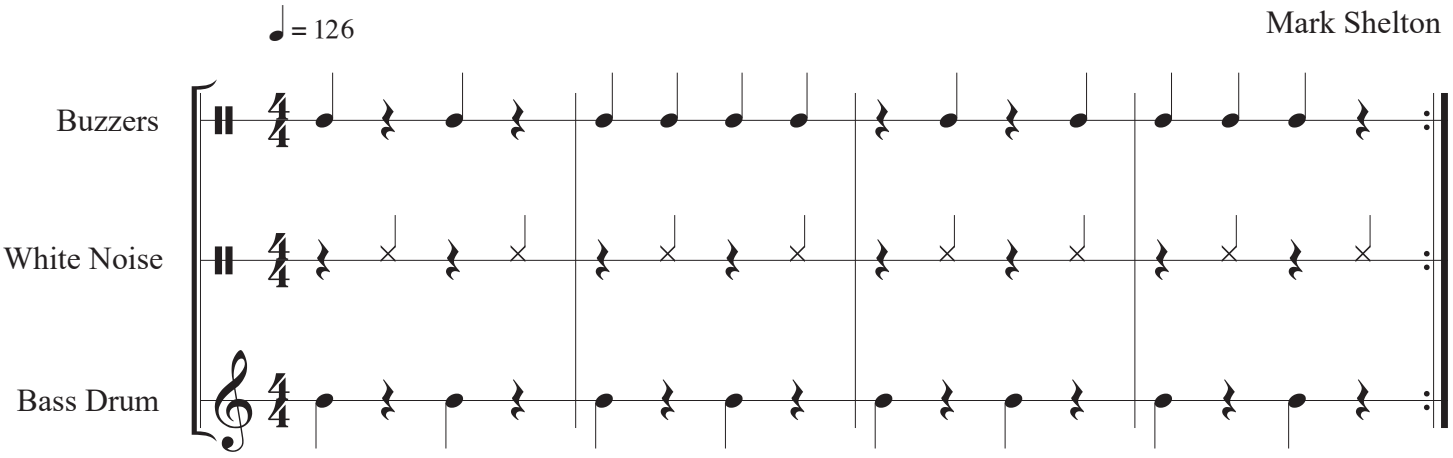
You will not find many apps easier to operate than *iBuzz.* Select a sound from the menu and the one big button controls the chosen tone. That's it! The response is very quick so that you can play some brisk rhythms. Introduce students to playing music on a mobile device with this easy round.

The buzzer part may be played by three individual buzzer players or three separate groups. Divide the buzzer players into High, Medium, and Low. The players should select their assigned buzzer tone from the menu.

The white noise player(s) can find that sound on the *iBuzz* menu.

The bass drum tone will have to come from a percussion app, such as *Rhythm Pad Free.*



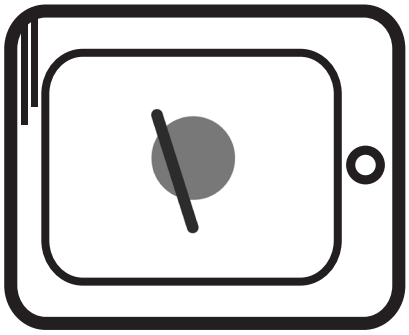


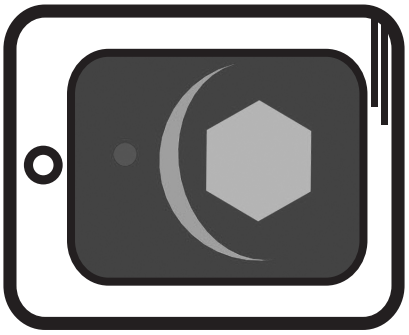
Teaching Suggestions

1. Display or distribute the score. Make sure the students know where to look for their part.
2. Have the bass drum and white noise lay down the simple quarter-note pattern. Point out how these parts complement each other.
3. After a few bars of the percussion pattern, any one of the buzzer sounds can start the round. Once the round begins, entrances should be one-measure apart.
4. Repeat the "buzzer melody" as many times as desired.
5. If you wish, have students create their own arrangements to perform for each other. You can use my version (heard on the CD) as an example. Point out how I also begin with the bass drum and white noise parts. Then, I have the high buzzer state the theme before beginning the round with the other buzzer voices. I also dropped the percussion groove towards the end to expose the buzzers.
6. Once everyone is comfortable with this easy warm-up activity, the class can move on to "BuzzerEZ" and "Buzzer Bop."

FREE IMPROV

Track 2





Patatap **is a portable animation and sound kit. With the touch of a finger, you can create melodies charged with moving shapes. Students will enjoy making music while simultaneously producing images with each new contact of the touchscreen.** ***Patatap*** **is not limited to an iOS touchscreen. You can also use a desktop or laptop computer to access** ***Patatap*****. Simply go to the website (www.patatap.com) and use your computer's alphabet keys and space bar to trigger the audio and optics.**

Upon launching the app on your mobile device, you will see a blank screen. As you tap (or slide) your finger(s) on the screen, both sounds and images will emerge.

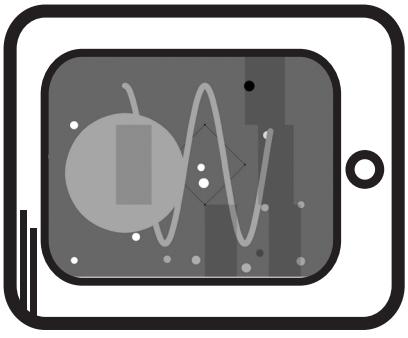
Every area on the screen will produce sound upon contact except the lower right corner (landscape orientation). This spot allows you to change between the different screens. Each screen features different configurations of animation and timbres. (On a computer keyboard, the space bar activates the screen selection.)

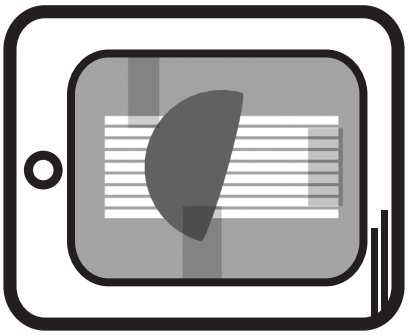
Consider connecting your touchscreen device to a projector so that the entire class can listen to the music and watch the animation as a student demonstrates a composition or improvisation. Quality speakers capable of good bass response will allow you to hear the thumping low frequencies on ***Patatap*****.**

Since all the sounds are either percussion or pitched sounds that are "consonant," ***Patatap*** **allows for some free improvisation with no fear of "wrong" notes. Allow students to experiment and discover some of the possibilities on each of the different screens. Instruct students to choose their favorite set of sounds and present an in-the-moment composition for the class. This activity can be enjoyed by a variety of grade levels.**

You can share the audio examples on the CD with your students to demonstrate what is possible with this app.

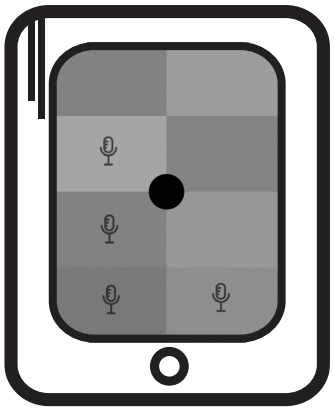
Another app that works well for free improvisation is ***Bebot*****. Since the app "locks in" a pitch set, your young musicians can create spontaneous melodies without concern of venturing outside the selected scale or chord. There are some basic directions to get you started with** ***Bebot*** **on page 17 in the text for "Ambient Improv." A detailed user manual for** ***Bebot*** **is available at www.normalware.com/bebotmanual.**





SIMPLE SAMPLING

Track 3



A sampler is a digital device that allows the user to record a sound and play the sampled sound back with rhythmic precision using a trigger such as a keyboard or touchscreen. A sampler can be a complex stand-alone piece of equipment or a simple app that runs on a mobile device.

Sampled sounds are frequently heard in popular music, such as hip-hop, rock, and country, as well as television and movie scores. Many electronic instruments, including digital keyboards and electronic drum sets, produce their basic sounds using samples.

The *Keezy* app not only records onto the individual tiles to create samples, but it also has a built-in recorder so that it is easy to capture your creations and even share those gems through email, text message, or *Air Drop*.

There are some tutorials online for *Keezy*, but I found that operating the app is very intuitive—and believe me, I am the judge of intuitive. If you would prefer the comfort of an online demonstration, check out either (or both) of these YouTube videos: https://youtu.be/ePL3nleeuls or https://youtu.be/5TIQHEuZO48.

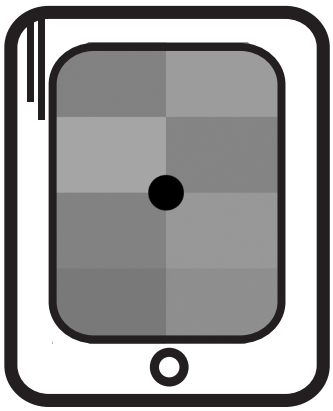
A soundboard consists of eight colored rectangular "tiles." When touched, the black dot in the center will take you to the menu with a handful of icons. Open a new soundboard by touching the plus sign (+).

Any tile on a soundboard with a microphone icon is ready for recording a sample. Simply touch the tile with a finger at the same moment you begin to produce your sound. Maintain contact until you conclude your sound. When finished, lift your finger from the tile, the recording stops, and a sample is created on that tile. The tile will then play back the sample when touched.

The curved arrow is an "undo" feature and the "X" will take you back to the soundboard and allow you to erase sound from tiles. After you touch a tile with an "X," you will need to hit the checkmark to confirm. A microphone will again appear on the tile and you are ready to re-record.

After a soundboard is created, it can be named and saved by using the icon with three horizontal lines.

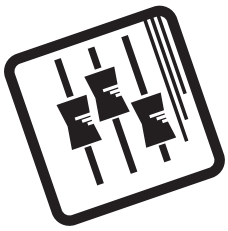
This activity gives your students a chance to get familiar with sampling on *Keezy*, use their creativity, and use the recording feature on the app. It will be interesting and fun to hear the same rhythm performed with the various sampled sounds.

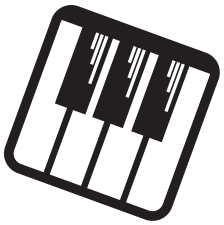


If students are recording their samples simultaneously, there will likely be some unintended sounds captured in the sample from the background. Unless you're planning on using the samples in a performance setting, you might just have to roll with the extraneous sounds. Instruct the students to place the microphone area near the desired sound source to minimize recording undesired sounds from others in the room.

The recording includes a few examples of the "Simple Sampling" rhythms being played using different soundboards. Feel free to share the audio with your class to help them get started.

SIMPLE SAMPLING CONT.





Teaching Suggestions

1. Once students are secure in recording samples on the tiles, instruct them to fill the grid with sounds. Any sounds (within the bounds of classroom decorum) can be sampled, such as vocals, instruments, or found sound objects, but for this activity, one short sound per tile works best.
2. After each student has collected eight sounds, display the “Simple Sampling” score. You can use the one seen above or write one that fits the level of the class. Practice clapping and speaking the rhythm together.
3. Instruct the students to play the rhythm on their devices, using as few or as many of the tiles as desired. Stress creativity.
4. Instruct the students to use the recorder feature (the icon resembles a reel-to-reel tape recorder) to record their orchestration.
5. When everyone is finished, students may take turns playing their recorded creations for each other or send them to their friends, families, teachers, etc. through the built-in sharing platform in the app. You could even ask students to send it to you so that you can evaluate them and retain the file for assessment purposes.

FABULOUS FRITTER

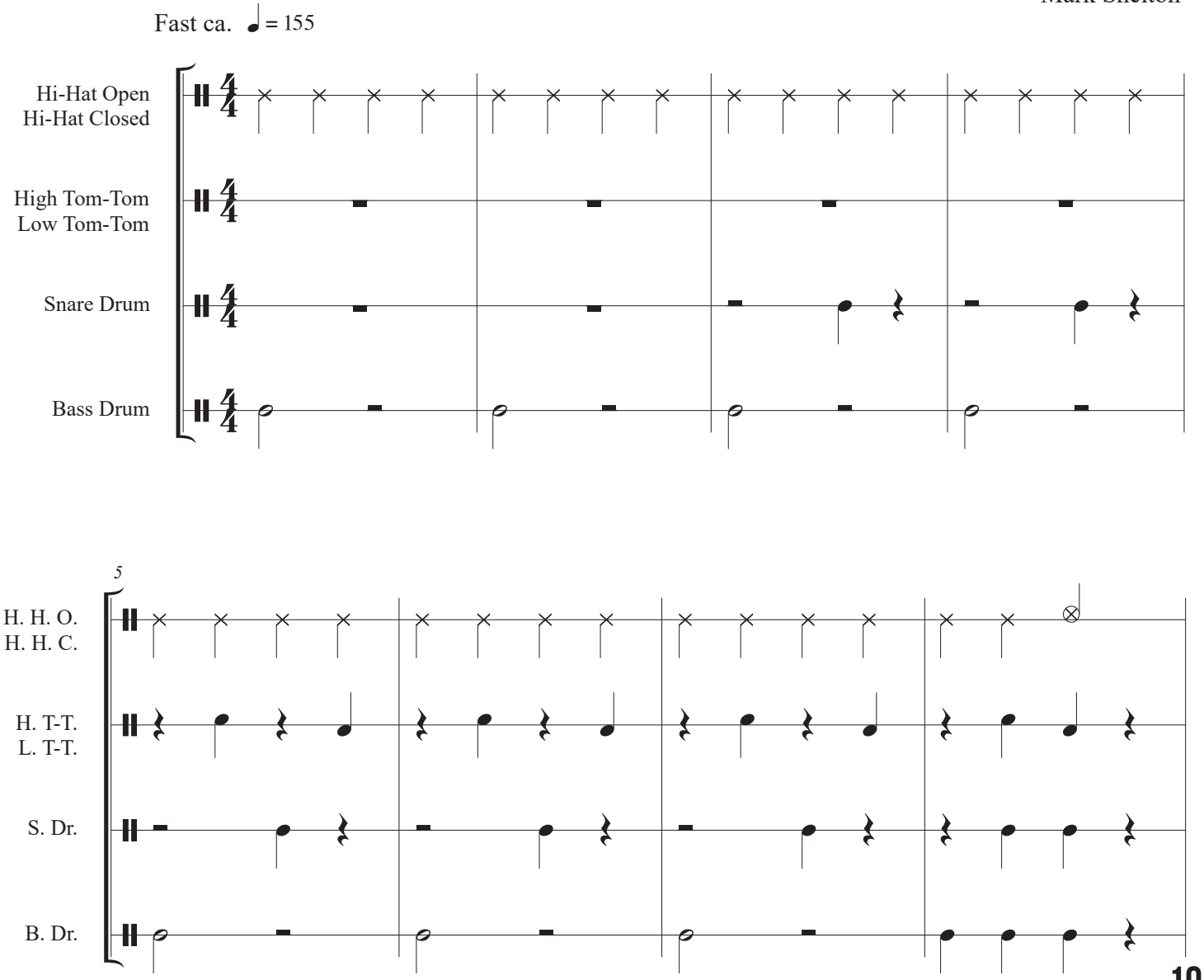
Track 12

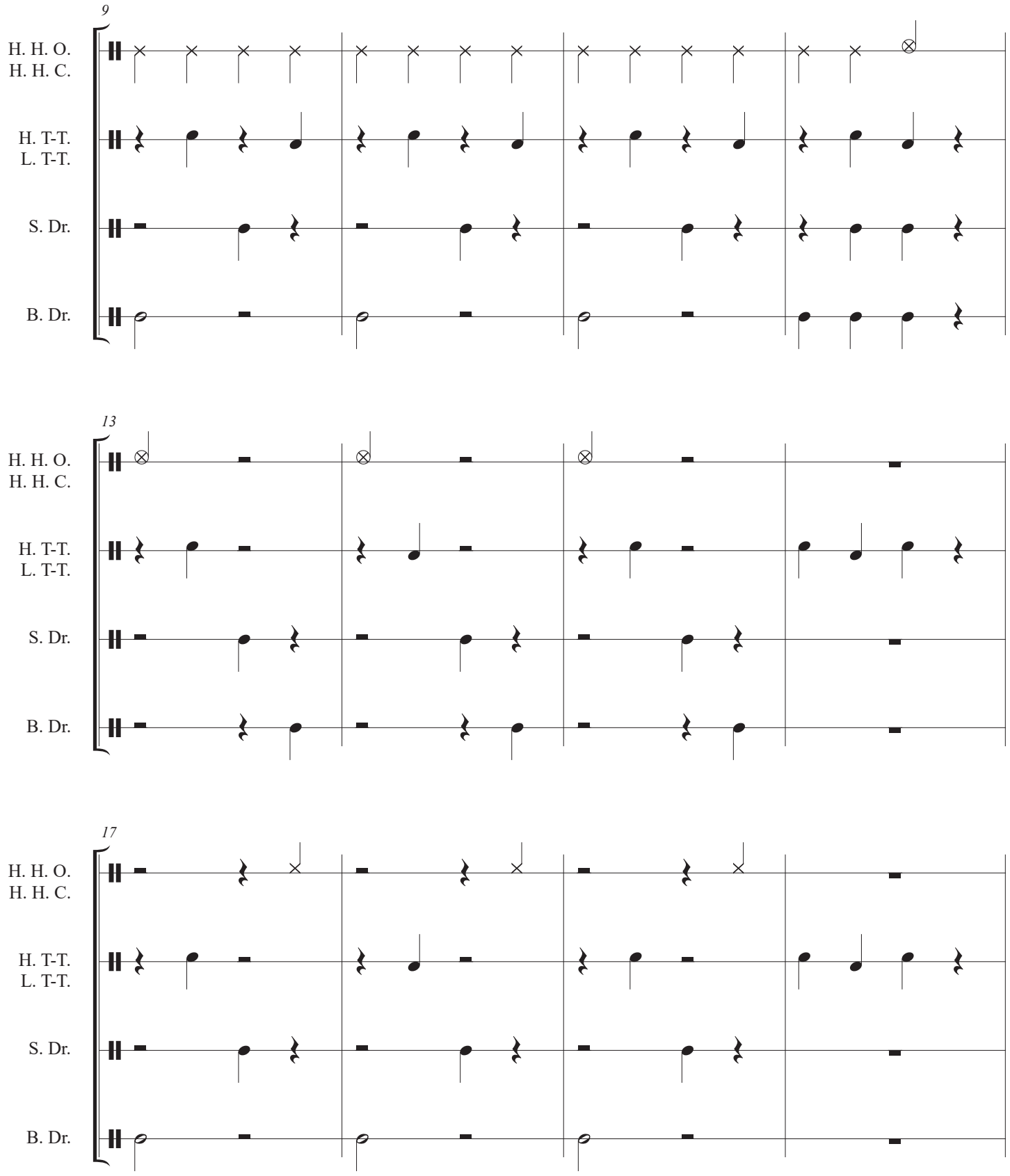
Simplicity was my goal in composing "Fabulous Fritter." I wanted to include some music for the "Rhythm Reading Rookies." Although the parts might look sparse on the score, the four lines combine to create some "dance-able" drum beats.

Part of the fun (and learning) is selecting the tones for the piece. Do you prefer an acoustic drum set sound? What about electronic samples or maybe a combination of acoustic and drum machine sounds? Open a drum set app, pass out the parts, and get ready to lay down a simple four-part groove with your students. You can choose from the many drum set apps available (such as *Rhythm Pad Free*) or use the drum and percussion sounds in *Garage Band*.

What about that title? Let's just say that the clerk at the neighborhood donut shop knows my preference in pastry.

Mark Shelton

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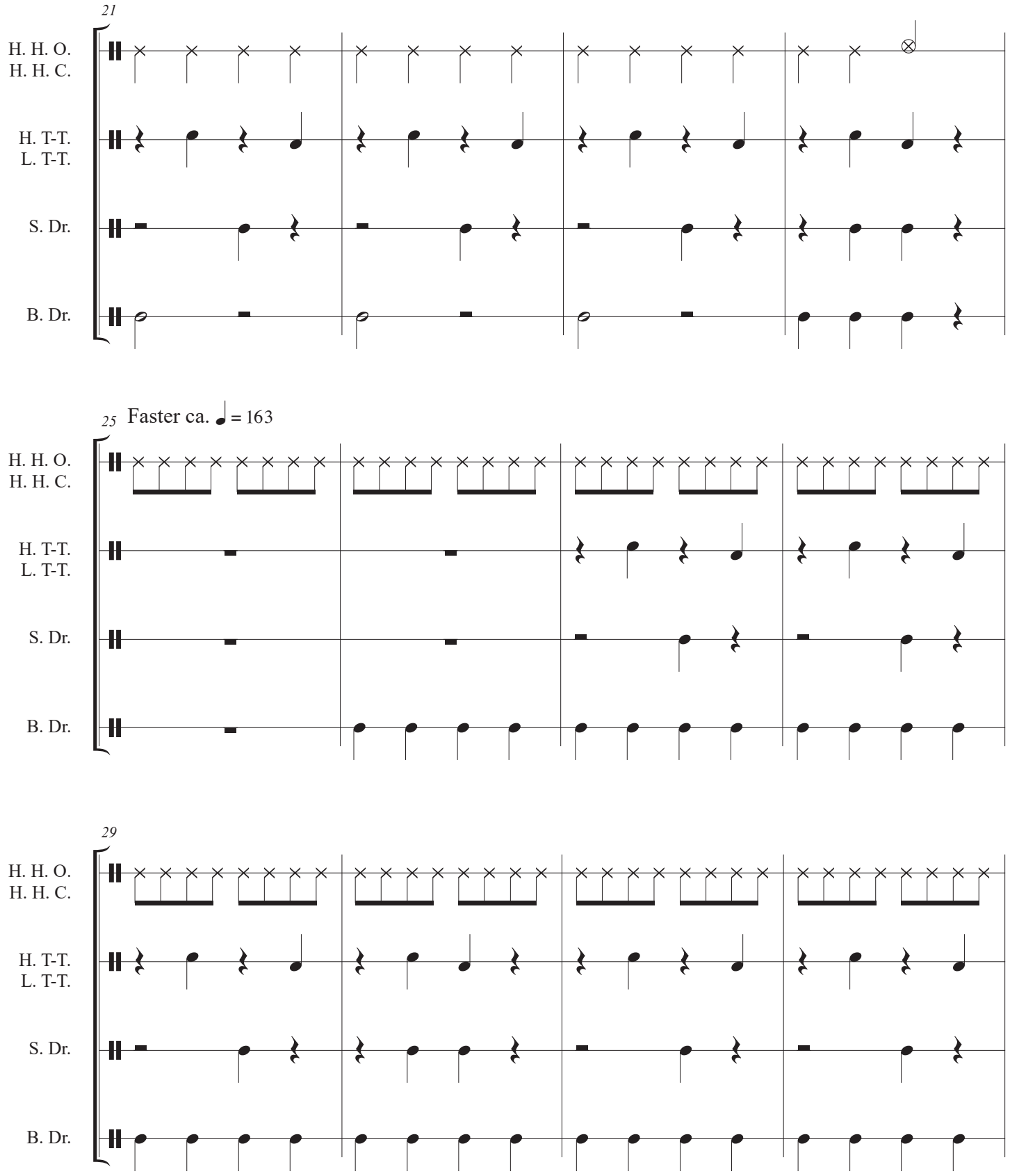
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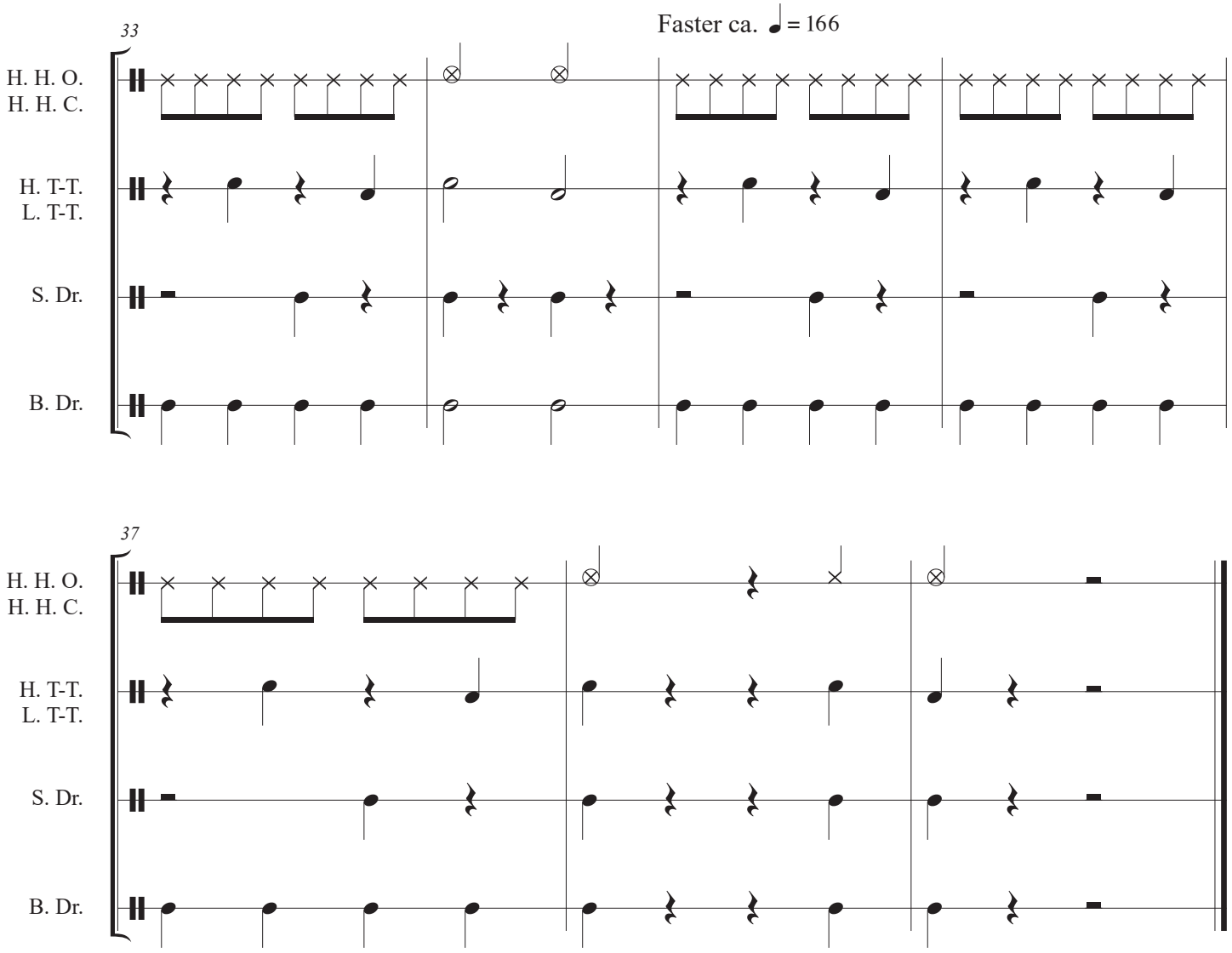
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