

# From the Author

Hello fellow music teachers:

The following book was created to help my students understand a little bit more about composing, and that it's not just writing a bunch of notes on paper. Just as there is a process and understanding of things in constructing a house, there is a process and understanding of musical elements to create a song, whether that song is a simple four-measure recorder song, a five-minute pop song, or a symphonic movement.

The composing activities are straightforward and can be easily modified for your students' abilities. Even though the instructions are intended for recorder, the songs can, of course, be played on just about any pitched instrument. Feel free to add or remove allowed pitches and note values to adjust the difficulty for your classroom. And make sure you allow time for your students to play their songs for each other so they can enjoy each other's compositions!

D. Brian Weese

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# Beat Box Draft Page

Use this page to “experiment” with rhythms and pitches. Each box is a beat in your song. When you find something you like, transfer it to your staff.

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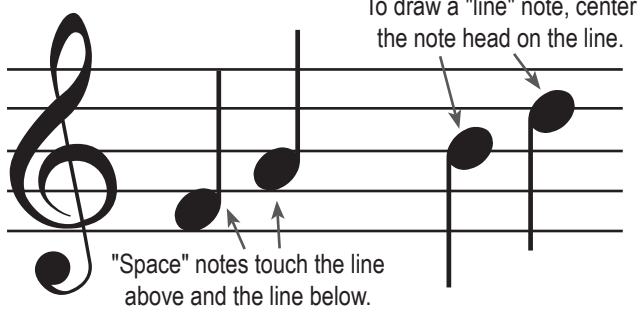
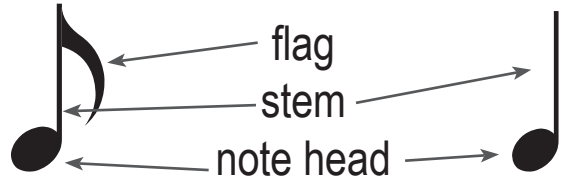
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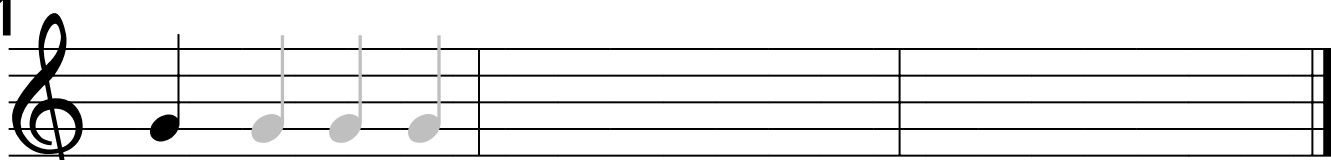
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# Notation Practice

 <p style="text-align: center;">To draw a "line" note, center the note head on the line.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Space" notes touch the line above and the line below.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Notes have 3 basic parts:</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Some notes do not have a stem. Some note heads are not filled in. And some notes have more than 1 flag.</p>
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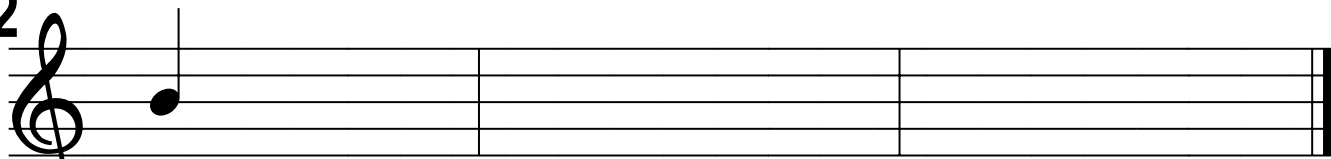
Copy the given quarter note into the measures below. Make sure each measure has exactly 4 quarter notes.

**1**

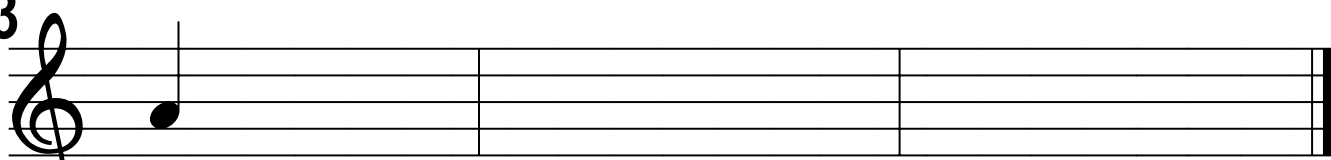


*When drawing "line" notes, the note head should be centered on the line, NOT touching the line above or below.*

**2**

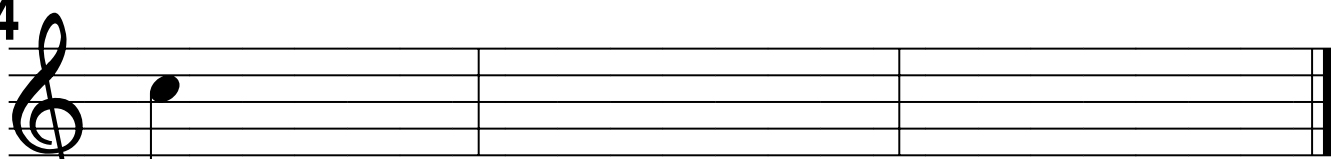


**3**



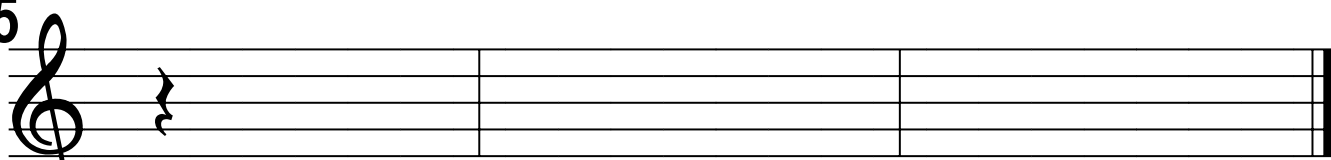
*When drawing "space" notes, the note head should be in the space between the lines, just touching the line above and below.*

**4**



*If a note head is above the 3<sup>rd</sup> line (middle line), draw the stem pointing down. Notice the stem is on the other side (left side).*



**5**



*To draw a rest draw a "z" with a "c" tail.*

# Composition #1

**Directions:** Using the pitches and rhythm values below, write your song in the staff provided.

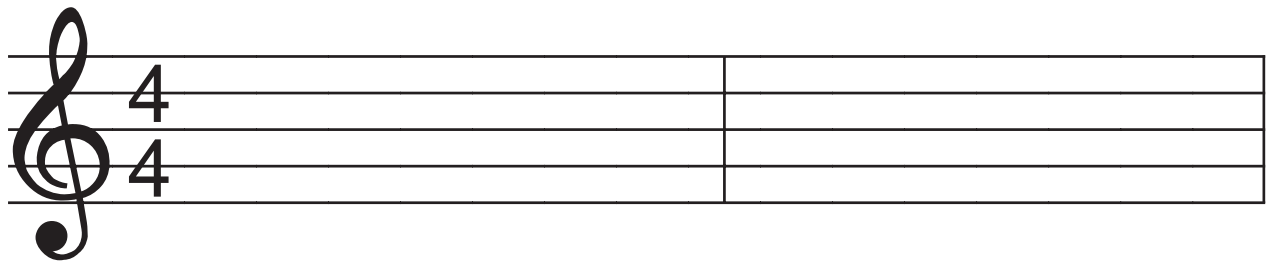
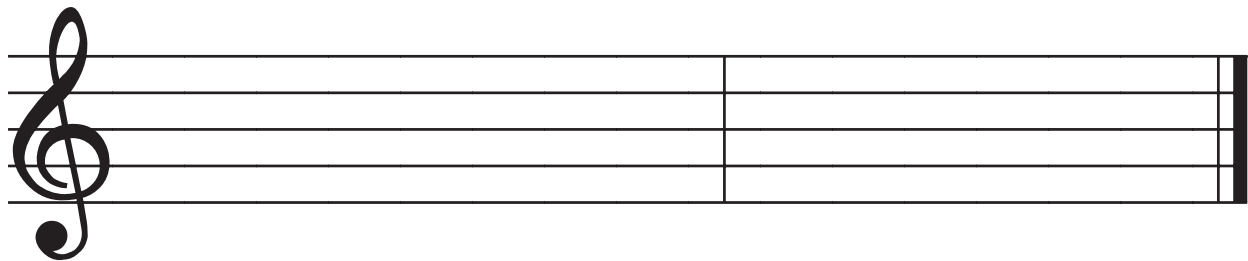
<p>Pitches:</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">B      A      G</p>	<p>Rhythm Values:</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">name:      quarter note      quarter rest # beats:      1                              1</p>
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\_\_\_\_\_

*Song Title*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Composer Name*

**Required:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1. Use at least one of each pitch given.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Use at least one of each rhythm value given.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Use at least one <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> but no more than eight. Use them wisely!</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 4. Follow the time signature. The top number (<math>\frac{4}{4}</math>) tells how many beats each measure must have—no more, no less.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 5. CADENCE: Your song must end with a "G".</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 6. Play test your song and change anything you don't like.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 7. Give your song a title.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**Optional:**

- |                                       |                             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Use beat boxes to draft your song. | 2. Add lyrics to your song. |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|

# Melodic Repetition #1

**Directions:** Most songs contain some kind of repetition. Using repetition to compose a song is a very common tool of composers. Using crayons or colored pencils (no markers please), color the measures based on the contents of each measure. If the measures are the same, use the same color. If the measures are different, *even slightly different*, use different colors.

## Hot Cross Buns

English Street Cry



## See Saw

Traditional



## Button, You Must Wander

Traditional



## Hop Old Squirrel

American Folk Song



## Hammer Ring

American Folk Song



# Melodic Direction #1

**Directions:** Put a letter (R, S, K, L) in each “cup” between notes. A couple letters in the first song have been done for you. For each song, count the total number of each letter you wrote (R, S, K, L), and write those numbers in the boxes next to the song title.

**R** = Repeat

**K** = Skip - exactly 2 notes up or down

**S** = Step-wise motion - exactly 1 note up or down

**L** = Leap - more than 2 notes up or down

## Hot Cross Buns

Repeats = \_\_\_ Steps = \_\_\_ Skips = \_\_\_ Leaps = \_\_\_

English Street Cry

## Babylon's Falling

Repeats = \_\_\_ Steps = \_\_\_ Skips = \_\_\_ Leaps = \_\_\_

Traditional Spiritual

## Volga Boat Song

Repeats = \_\_\_ Steps = \_\_\_ Skips = \_\_\_ Leaps = \_\_\_

Russian Folk Song

## Westminster Chimes

Repeats = \_\_\_ Steps = \_\_\_ Skips = \_\_\_ Leaps = \_\_\_

15 Minute Chime

30 minute Chime

## Grandma Grundt

Repeats = \_\_\_ Steps = \_\_\_ Skips = \_\_\_ Leaps = \_\_\_

North Carolina Mountain Song

# Home Base Note #1

**Directions:** Not every song ends with “G”, in fact, many songs do not. The last note of the song usually tells what the home base note of the song is. Write the letter name of each note and circle the last letter name.

## Bow, Wow, Wow

Children's Rhyme



## Volga Boat Song

Russian Folk Song



## Grandma Grundt

North Carolina Mountain Song



## Lightly Row

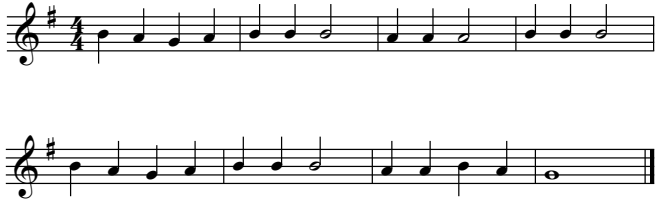


Traditional





# Composing Glossary

This page gives definition of musical words you need to know and some examples.

<p><b>Melody</b></p> <p>This is a set of combined pitches and rhythms that make up a pleasing musical “phrase” or “sentence.”</p>	
<p><b>Pitch</b></p> <p>This is the “low” or “high” of a note. There are only 7 letter names given to pitches: A, B, C, D, E, F, or G.</p>	
<p><b>Rhythm</b></p> <p>This is the short and long sounds and silences in music, such as...</p>	 <p>Eighth Note      Quarter Note      Half Note      Whole Note      Dotted Note      Quarter Rest</p>
<p><b>Melodic Contour</b></p> <p>This is the shape of a melody as if you were playing “connect the dots” with the note heads of the melody.</p>	