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## From the Authors

We are delighted to present this book to fellow educators, as we collectively promote the inclusion of high-quality music experiences in children's lives! For the novice teacher, we see this resource as a framework for developing a strong, sequential path to music literacy from childhood to early adolescence. For mid-career and veteran educators, we offer this content as a complementary tool to augment your existing curriculum.

We approach music literacy through the listen-speak-read-write continuum. In music classes, "speak" becomes singing and/or playing instruments. In this continuum, writing music is not only the act of copying notation, but also arranging and composing, the very aim of this resource. As you progress through the sequence of activities in this book, you will notice the scaffolding of Bloom's Taxonomy. For example, students will initially learn to define and replicate the steady beat (identified as *remembering* in the new Bloom's criteria); later lessons will assess students' ability to *apply* this knowledge and skill to performing on instruments/singing teacher-given and self-composed songs. Likewise, music literacy skills replicated in early music experiences will later be *analyzed* and *evaluated* when students *create* their own rhythmic and melodic compositions. Formative assessments are included to help you evaluate student learning. If your students are struggling, we've also included suggestions for providing assistance. This resource is divided into the following sections:

**Steady Beat Activities:** In this section, students will sing, move, and play instruments with little emphasis on music reading. Through active listening exercises we hope that the students will progress from external demonstration of the steady beat to the development of the internal rhythmic pulse. Since internalization of the pulse is the foundation for future proficiency in music (and other academic areas), we offer examples in duple, triple, and compound meters.

**Improvisation:** These activities encourage your students to explore their creativity by making up rhythm and melody patterns to fit within our original compositions. Improvisation activities allow your students the chance to begin to "speak" music through singing and playing. Teachers can initiate this experience through call and response; then encourage children to try out their own ideas! These exercises have been carefully crafted to provide risk-free opportunities for your students to be successful in their improvisations. They also provide teachers with the support we often hear is needed in the area of improvisation.

**Rhythm and Melody:** Now we begin the transition from listening and speaking (singing/playing) rhythm and melody patterns to actually reading and writing music notation. Initially, we use manipulatives to facilitate learning and assessment. We progress to pencil and paper when students show confidence and independence in their abilities to read and manipulate notation. Tips for teaching students to draw notation correctly are also included. Time signatures are introduced to help students understand the grouping of notation based upon the steady beat.

**Mission Composition!:** Students *love* to compose their own music when given the knowledge and tools to feel confident doing so! The activities presented in this section are intended as learning experiences which reflect the synthesis of the music literacy skills we've covered throughout this resource. It is crucial that your students have the opportunity to perform their compositions. Not only will this allow you to assess their abilities, but it allows students the chance to express themselves and take ownership of their work.

We hope you find this collection to be a valuable resource as you continue to share the joy of music with your students!

In spirit and song,



Jennifer Lee Alden

# Keep the Beat and To Market

## Materials

- 1 Keep the Beat Perf. Track
- 2 Keep the Beat Acc. Track
- 3 To Market

With minimal prompting and support, students will:

- Demonstrate non-locomotor movements (patting) to the steady macrobeat.
- Sing or speak expressively while maintaining a steady beat.
- Aurally identify a familiar melody in a new song.

*Both "Keep the Beat" and "To Market" focus your students on the half-note pulse (macrobeat). Teach these pieces separately, but following the Lesson Suggestions listed on page 7 for both. Be sure to repeat each piece in subsequent classes. Your students will be more comfortable and able to succeed as the repertoire becomes more familiar to them.*

## Lesson Suggestions

1. Invite your students to listen and watch while you share a new song/chant. Sing/speak the selection with or without the recording as you pat the macrobeat (half-note pulse) on your chest (like your heartbeat) or with another movement of your choice.
2. Ask the students what movement you performed while you were singing/speaking. Ask, "Was the movement pattern even or uneven?" If they are not sure, perform again, directing the class to watch more closely.
3. Explain how performing a movement pattern evenly while listening to music is known as keeping the steady beat.
4. Instruct the students to keep the beat while you again sing/speak the piece for them. You should continue to keep the beat, as well. Do a quick visual assessment of student achievement, repeating the piece, if necessary, so you can check each student. You may want to quickly note students who can't keep a beat on your seating chart.
5. Teach the lyrics by phrase, using the call and response method (echoing).
6. End the lesson by singing/speaking the selection as a class with the recording while keeping the beat using the movement chosen at the beginning of class.

## Tips and Extensions

- In subsequent classes, practice the songs, offering students choices in changing the non-locomotor movements for keeping the beat.
- When teaching "Keep the Beat," be sure to ask students if they know the melody of the song by a different name. ("Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star;" "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep;" or "The Alphabet Song")
- In "To Market," add the sound effects included in the recording. To promote independence, choose individual students to speak one of the sound effects as a solo.
- When the singing/speaking and steady beat is secure, offer rhythm instruments for students to play the macrobeat. Advanced students may try playing the microbeat (quarter note) while others stay on the macrobeat (half note). Video record the class performing the song/chant, focusing on the instrument players. Watch the recording at a later time and keep a running record to note student improvements in this skill.
- If students are struggling with this skill (steady beat is nonexistent or inconsistent), see What if They Can't? on page 14.

# Keep the Beat

Text by M.C. Cremisio  
and J.Lee-Alden

♩ = 104

4

Keep the beat, here's

6  
how it goes: Pat your knees and

8  
tap your toes. Pat one for each

10  
beat and then we'll keep go - ing

12  
on, my friends. Keep the beat, here's

14  
how it goes: Pat your knees and

16  
tap your toes. 4



## Lesson Suggestions

### Session 1

1. Using quarter notes, rests, and paired eighth notes, and either syllables or rhythmic counting, perform four-beat patterns for your students to echo (clapping or playing instruments). Use rhythms from “Mission Improvisation” as well as others.
2. Expand the patterns to eight beats each.
3. Tell the class that you will play an audio track, and explain how they will echo eight-beat patterns. Emphasize that the goal is to repeat the phrase in tempo, with a steady beat. Play the “Mission Improvisation” track, performing the patterns as notated on the score.

### Session 2

1. Review the content of the first lesson. Choose a student to create their own two-measure pattern. Explain how you and the student will have a musical conversation. You will ask a musical question and the student will use his/her self-created pattern to answer you. Rotate students to build student independence. Explain how this process is sometimes called “exchanging licks.”
2. Place the students in pairs, and have them experiment with exchanging licks (take turns improvising eight-beat patterns). Emphasize that Partner 2 does not have to echo the pattern that Partner 1 performs.
3. As students demonstrate competence, play the “Mission Improvisation” track, allowing pairs to simultaneously trade licks over the track. If you have time and willing students, you might even select some to perform for the rest of the class.

### Session 3 and beyond!

1. Review the content of the last lesson, switching partners at your discretion.
2. Have students practice improvising with and without the recording.
3. Choose pairs of students to perform for the class with the recording.
4. Rotate pairs over several classes until all students have had the opportunity to perform for the class.

## Tips and Extensions

- Assess student mastery focusing on individuals’ abilities to create eight-beat patterns and perform them in tempo.
- Do not feel restricted to using the patterns we’ve notated! Create your own to replace ours. This is a great opportunity to focus a lesson on a specific rhythm pattern or new notation value.

# Adding Melody:

## Patterns of Sound Going Up, Down, and Repeating

As students continue to develop their rhythm reading skills, we can begin to build melody reading skills, using a similar listen-speak-read-write process. The following games are intended to be used after teachers have used their preferred aural-oral- method for introducing pitches in treble clef using solfège, numbers, or letter names.

### Who Has the Pattern?

Students will:

- Identify basic written solfège patterns in a major key.
- Develop pitch-matching skills.
- Further develop decoding and fluency in the reading process.
- Explore the process of composition writing in a large group setting.

This activity is tiered to fit the level of your students. Before the activity, be sure to introduce the patterns you will be using in a warm-up setting. Have students echo the patterns (aural) and review reading the patterns from the Solfège Cards. Each level presents opportunities for assessing individuals' singing skills. Keep a running record of student progress.

#### Level I (Key of C)

1. Affix six Solfège Cards to your interactive board or use magnetic clips on your chalkboard.
2. With the class, determine the first pitch (solfège syllable, letter, or number) for each pattern and write the name under the pitch.
3. Sing one of the patterns and then have the class echo the pattern as they search for the corresponding card.
4. Select one student to identify the corresponding card. Have the child sing the selected card and discuss/correct as necessary. You may select a new card to replace the card you have just identified.
5. Repeat the process.

#### Level II

Use the cards in a more traditional flash-card sense. Display a card, give the starting pitch and then select an individual student to sing the pattern.

#### Level III

Select two cards and display them side by side. Provide the starting pitch and then instruct the class to read the pattern in their heads while you keep the steady beat. Have the whole class (or an individual) sing the pattern.

#### Level IV

Follow the same process as in Level III, but use four cards to create four-measure patterns.

#### Level V

Display a C major scale with your corresponding labels. Play the game as outlined in Level I, but do not provide the starting pitch name or tone.

#### Level VI

Use the G major or E minor patterns for any of the activities outlined above.



# Rhythm and Melody Three in a Row

Working independently, students will use standard notational symbols to dictate music passages.

In this game, students will listen, speak, read, and write patterns. During the game, you have an opportunity to formatively assess student ability to draw the standard notation, as well as replicate the patterns of sound, silence, and pitch.

## Materials

- Rhythm/Melody Three in a Row Game Boards
- Pencils with erasers
- Bingo chips or other small items
- Rubric

## Lesson Suggestions

### Session 1

- Distribute a blank game board and pencil to each student.
- Explain and demonstrate how you will clap and count (sing) a pattern for the class to echo. Then, the students should write the pattern in one of the blank squares on their grid. If you are using a numeric system of counting, direct students to write the counting underneath (we use "+" for the "and"). For a melody game, have the students write the first letter of the syllable (S, M, L, D) under the staff. Then perform the same pattern again so students can check their work and make corrections.
- Repeat the process until all nine squares in the game board are complete. Students should be able to complete the game board in one class meeting.
- Collect the game boards. Before the next class, examine the boards for accuracy of the patterns, as well as the formation of the notes and rests. If you are using this activity for assessment, record the score, as indicated on the rubric, for future reference.

### Session 2

- Return the corrected game boards and give each child Bingo chips, pieces of paper, or pennies to use as markers on their game boards.
- Explain how you will perform a pattern and the class should echo the pattern. Then, they should look on their boards for the pattern and place a chip in the square. You should repeat the pattern once more so students can check their selection. Once someone has three in a row, they should raise their hand and have you check the board. To win, the student must accurately clap and count (or sing) the winning patterns for the class. We award small prizes (a music eraser, bookmark, etc.) to the winner.
- Play the game, repeating as many times as you wish.

## Tips and Extensions

- As students progress, challenge them to use what they have learned to notate two-measure patterns in each square.
- To differentiate for advanced students, add patterns that include whole, dotted half, and half notes/rests; dotted quarter/eighth combinations, or more advanced meters (i.e. 6/8).
- Have students choose four or eight of the patterns to arrange and write on staff paper. Students can sing/play their composition for the class.

