

“Transforming Elementary-Level Music
Instruction: An Integrated Approach to
Comprehensive Musicianship”

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Bibliography: Books and Articles

1. Bluestein, Eric. *The Ways Children Learn Music: An Introduction and Practical Guide to Music Learning Theory*. Chicago: GIA, 1995.
2. Camp, Max. *Teaching Piano: The Synthesis of Mind, Ear and Body*. Los Angeles: Alfred, 1992.
3. Ester, Don. *Sound Connections and Sound Connections Resource Binder*. See donester.weebly.com
4. Gordon, Edwin E. *Learning Sequences in Music: Skill, Content, and Patterns*. Chicago: GIA, 1997. (there is a 2003 edition)
5. Hoffman, Richard, William Peltó, and John W. White. "Takadimi: A Beat-Oriented System of Rhythm Pedagogy." *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 10 (1996): 7-30.

Resources: Music and Teaching Aids

1. *Musikgarten Music Makers: At the Keyboard* Lesson Book and Teachers Guide.
2. Hal Leonard Student Piano Library All-In-One Piano Lessons Book B.
3. E-Z notes boards – Lucy Chu, www.e-znotes.com
4. Major-Minor Sliders – Gaye Rumsey-Riggs: gayerumseyriggs@mac.com (\$1.25 each or 10 for \$10 last time I ordered)
5. *Movements in Rhythm* – A piano collection composed by Ball State University students that covers all 16th-note patterns in simple & compound meters. It also provides information about Takadimi and the *Sound Connections* learning process. To order: <https://www.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/music/about-us/community-outreach/piano-pedagogy-program>

Music Learning Process: Sound Before Sight Before Theory

- Rooted in theories of Johann Heinrick Pestalozzi (1746-1827)
- Formulated into curriculum for the Boston public schools by Lowell Mason in the 19th century
- Outlined in the Bluestein book and *Sound Connections* by Dr. Don Ester, Ball State University

Core Principals for Music Literacy

- Begin with hearing and experience
 - Sound before sight, experience before explanation
- Traditional teaching:
 - sight before sound, explanation before experience.

Core Principals for Music Literacy

- Teach only one thing at a time before asking a student to attend to all at once
 - Example: rhythm and tonal patterns are learned separately at first.
 - Sightreading and practice plans employ various steps before playing
- Sequence curriculum concepts and skills
 - Require mastery of one step before progressing to the next.

Core Principles for Music Literacy

- Students should experience concepts and skills in a variety of settings before adding new ones. Camp – Six Stages of Development
- Relate new concepts and skills to previous understanding or experience for greater success
- Give principles and theory after practice
 - Tendency is to do this first!

Edwin Gordon's Musical Instruction Hierarchy

- Develop audiation skill, the ability to sing in tune, and the ability to move in a coordinated manner
- Build a vocabulary of tonal and rhythmic patterns through audiation and performance
- Read and write music notation with comprehension
- Understand and learn music theory

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Audiation: The first step to music literacy

“Although music is not a language, the process is the same for audiating and giving meaning to music as for thinking and giving meaning to speech. When you are listening to speech, you are giving meaning to what was just said by recalling and making connections with what you have heard on earlier occasions. At the same time, you are anticipating or predicting what you will be hearing next, based on your experience and understanding.”
(Bluestein)

Audiation: The first step to music literacy

- The larger a person's experience with a vocabulary of patterns in various tonalities and meters, the better one can audiate.
- Audiation comes before notation, and notation helps us audiate what we have already experienced.

Audiation Summary

- Audiation begins with listening – we hear and perform before we read and write.
- Audiation involves internalizing music, not just imitating it or memorizing it.
- Audiation includes more than just hearing music – it includes processing musical information.

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The Tonal Dimension of Music

● Singing

- Songs that outline the major triad in both duple and triple meters
 - *Musikgarten*: Mouse, Mousie and Listen for Bells

Mouse, Mousie

Mouse, mous - ie in the hous - ie, hur - ry, hur - ry, do.

Or the kit - ty in the hous - ie will be chas - ing you. Run!

Note: Play a right-hand ascending glissando for the word *run*.

Keyboard Patterns

Sol mi do. Sol sol mi do. Sol do. Do do do.

Do do do.

Music Makers: At The Keyboard ©2001, MUSIKGARTEN

Listen for Bells

Lis - ten for bells in the steep - le to ring:

Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding.

- Sing the song in a stately tempo, tapping the macro beat.

Keyboard Patterns

Do do do sol sol sol. Do do do sol. Sol mi do sol mi do. Sol sol sol do.

Keyboard Song Process (See the Keyboard Introduction in the Guidebook.

The process is repeated here to demonstrate the application.)

Keyboard Patterns four-step process:

- Teacher sings the first pattern;
- Children echo by singing;
- Teacher sings and plays the first pattern;
- Children echo by singing and playing.

Repeat all four steps for each keyboard pattern.

Music Makers: At The Keyboard ©2001, MUSIKGARTEN

The Tonal Dimension of Music

- Learn songs in various meters and modes
 - Mi-Re-Do
 - Folk songs such as Hot Cross Buns, Mary Had a Little Lamb, Hal Leonard: My Dog Spike
 - Major pentascale
 - *Musikgarten*: Down Comes Johnny
 - Minor pentascale
 - *Musikgarten*: Wild Horses, Debka Hora
 - Full octave scale
 - Marvin Blickenstaff: Ebenezer Sneezer
 - *Musikgarten*: Follow Me

The Tonal Dimension of Music

Ebenezer Sneezer (Marvin Blickenstaff)

Ebenezer sneezer,
Topsy-turvy man,
Walks upon his elbows,
Every time he can,
Whistles Yankee-Doodle,
Every time he snores,
Dresses up in paper,
Every time it pours.
Oh Ebenezer what a man!

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- Understand and learn music theory

The Rhythm Dimension of Music

- How do we move in a coordinated manner?
 - Move while singing songs
 - Move while listening to music
 - Clap or tap on drums while singing
 - Clap or tap on drums while listening to music
 - Use both macro and micro beats
 - Resource: *Musikgarten* CD or other musical examples

The Rhythm Dimension of Music

● Moving

- *Musikgarten* Listening CD #1
- Listen for Bells – steeple pulls
- Wild Horses – “ride” the beat
- Any song – clapping or tapping macro and micro levels of the beat

● Drumming

- *Musikgarten* Listening CD #1
- Renaissance Dance
- Drum Song

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The Rhythm Dimension of Music

- “Children understand the rhythm dimension of music when they become aware, through movement, of their own physical symmetry, and begin to relate that symmetry to reiterated beats, rhythm patterns, and phrases.” (Bluestein)

The Rhythm Dimension of Music

- Rhythm must be connected with movement.
- To play rhythmically requires coordination, and coordination involves movement.
- Fundamental elements of rhythm:
macro beats, micro beats, and melodic rhythm

Sound Connections Process

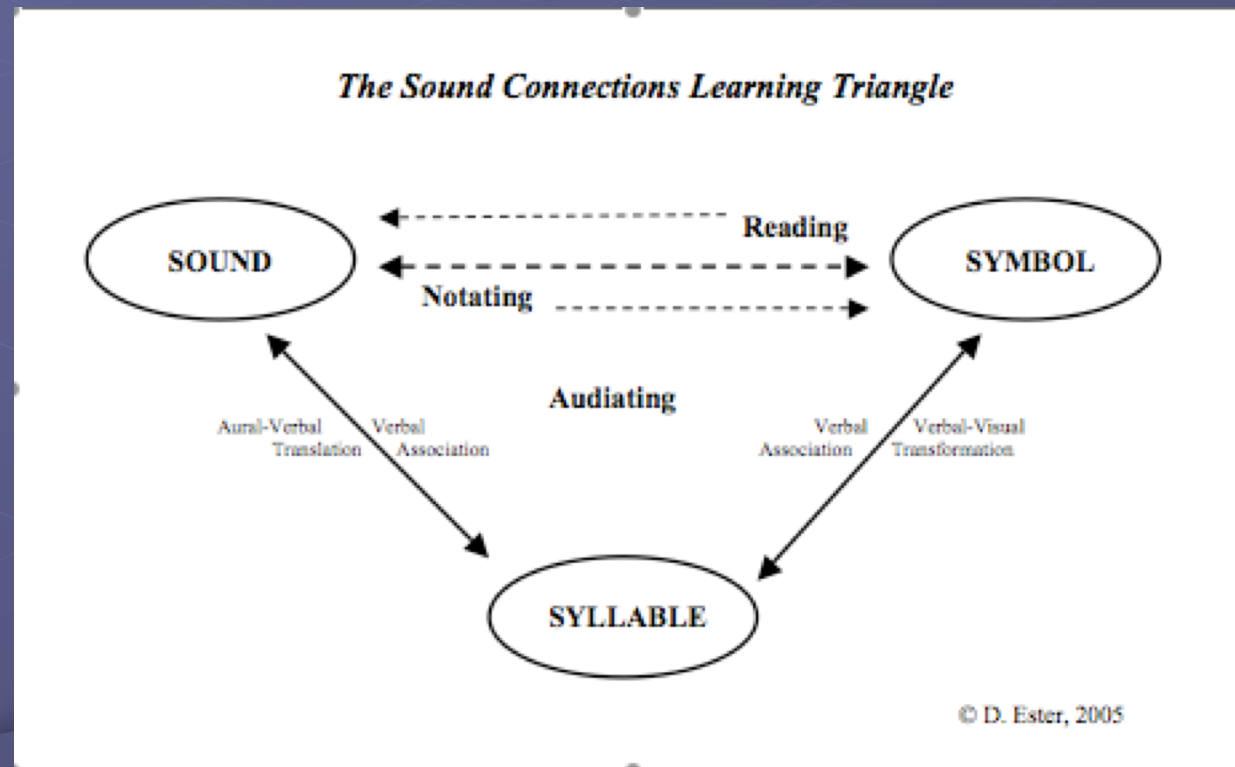
- Don Ester, PhD., Professor of Music Education, Ball State University
- *Sound Connections and Sound Connections Resource Binder* available as a digital download – see resource list for web address.

Sound Connections Process

- Connect the sounds and symbols of music to connect the ear and eye.
- Rhythm and tonal syllables serve as the mediator between sound and symbol to perform the key cognitive function of verbal association. They help students encode and store aural patterns.
- The resulting pathways make music reading possible.

Sound Connections Process

● The *Sound Connections* Learning Triangle



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Remember.....

● SOUND

● SYLLABLE

● SYMBOL

The Rhythm Dimension of Music

- Beat-function system

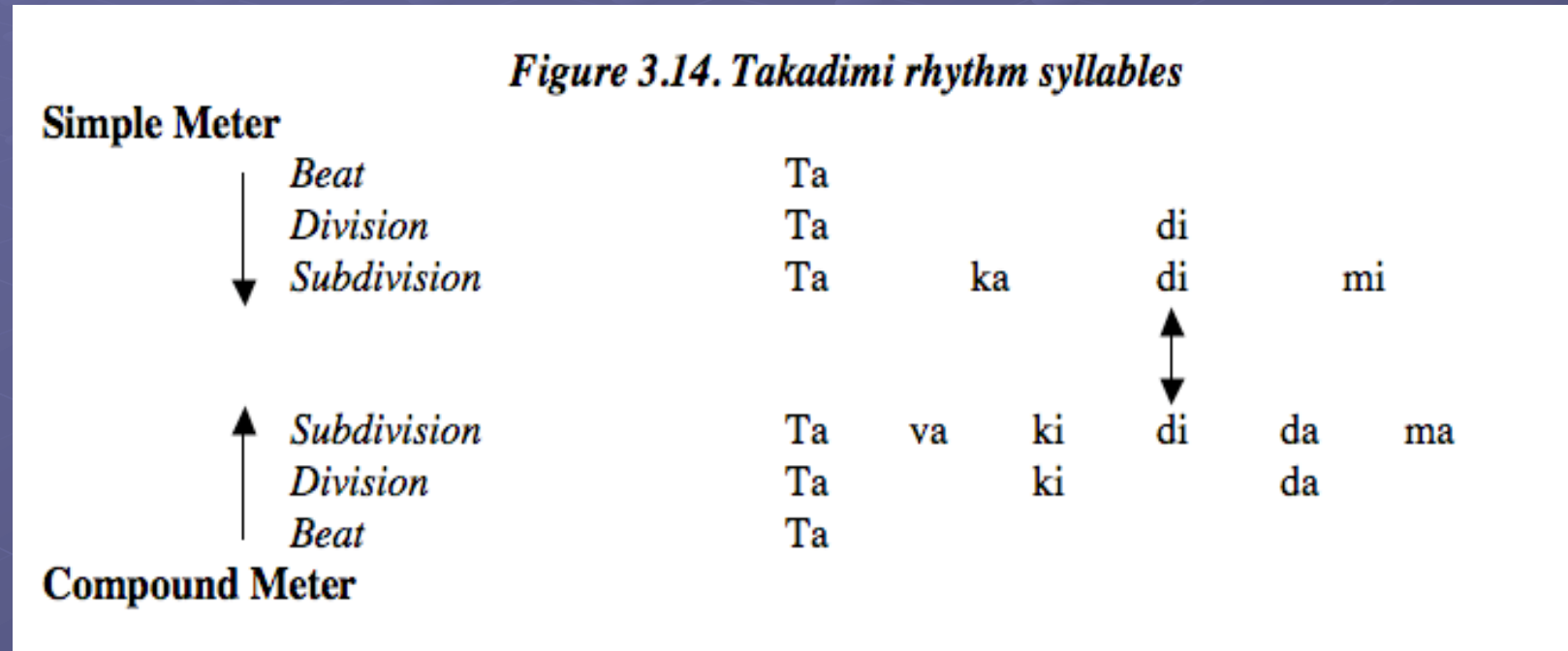
- Takadimi syllables

- Hoffman, Richard, William Pelto, and John W. White. "Takadimi: A Beat-Oriented System of Rhythm Pedagogy." *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 10 (1996): 7-30.

- Ta is always the beat

- NOT the same system as Kodaly, where Ta = quarter, TiTi = eighths, etc.

Takadimi: A Beat-Function Rhythm Syllable System



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Developing a Sound Vocabulary

- Neutral **sound** echoing of rhythm patterns
 - Teacher presents patterns on a neutral sound; students echo.
 - Establish beat first:
 - Simple meter: beat, beat, echo me
 - Compound meter: beat, beat, echo me now

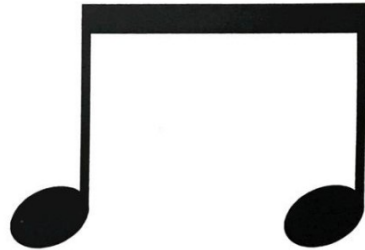
Developing a Sound Vocabulary

- **Syllable** echoing of rhythm patterns
 - Teacher presents patterns using rhythm syllables; students echo.
 - Establish beat first:
 - Simple meter: ta-di ta, echo me
 - Compound meter: ta-ki-da-ta, echo me now

Developing a Sound Vocabulary

● **Symbol** - music notation

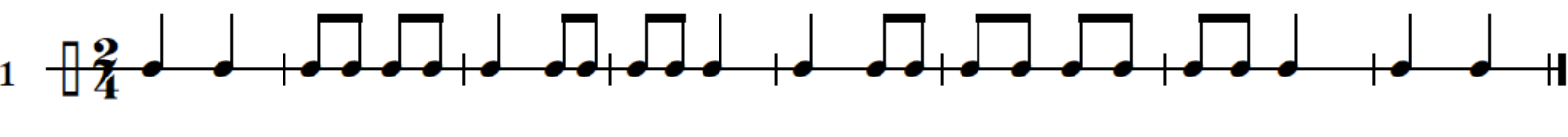
- Teacher speaks Takadimi patterns while showing the corresponding rhythm notation symbols.
- Remember to do this without any pitch connection at first.




Developing a Sound Vocabulary

- Echo translating of rhythm patterns
 - Teacher presents rhythm patterns on a neutral sound; students “echo translate” using rhythm syllables.
 - Short patterns are eventually combined to form series.
 - Establish beat first
 - Simple meter: beat, beat, echo translate
 - Compound meter: beat, beat, echo translate

Sample Rhythm Exercises

1 

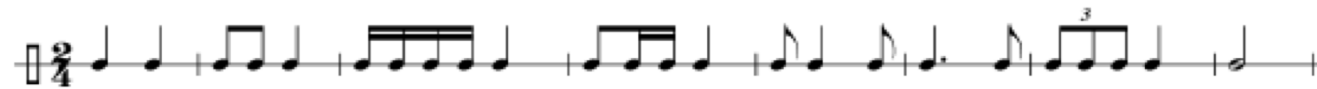
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Rhythm Patterns - Takadimi

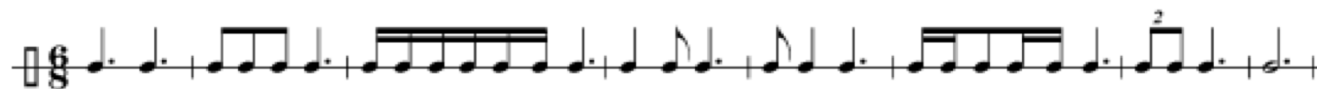
Basic Rhythm Patterns Using Takadimi Syllables



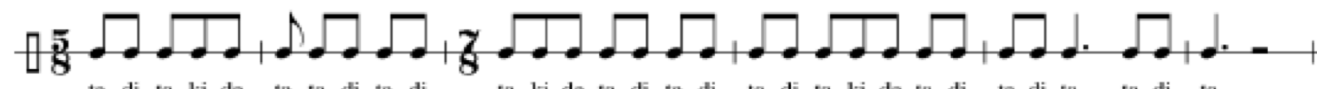
ta ta ta di ta ta ka di mi ta ta di mi ta ta di di ta (a) di ta ki da ta ta (a)



ta ta ta di ta ta ka di mi ta ta di mi ta ta di di ta di ta ki da ta ta (a)

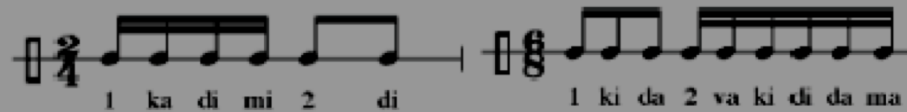


ta ta ta ki da ta ta va ki di da ma ta ta da ta ta ki ta ta va ki da ma ta ta di ta ta (a)



ta di ta ki da ta ta di ta di ta ki da ta di ta di ta di ta di ta di ta di ta ta di ta

Beat-Numbering: Substituting beat numbers in Takadimi



The Tonal Dimension of Music

- “Children understand the tonal dimension of music when they learn to organize pitches into tonal patterns that relate to a tonal center.” (Bluestein)
- Children do not audiate intervals – they audiate functional and tonal patterns that are made up of intervals.
- Patterns need to be audiated within the context of tonality.

The Tonal Dimension of Music

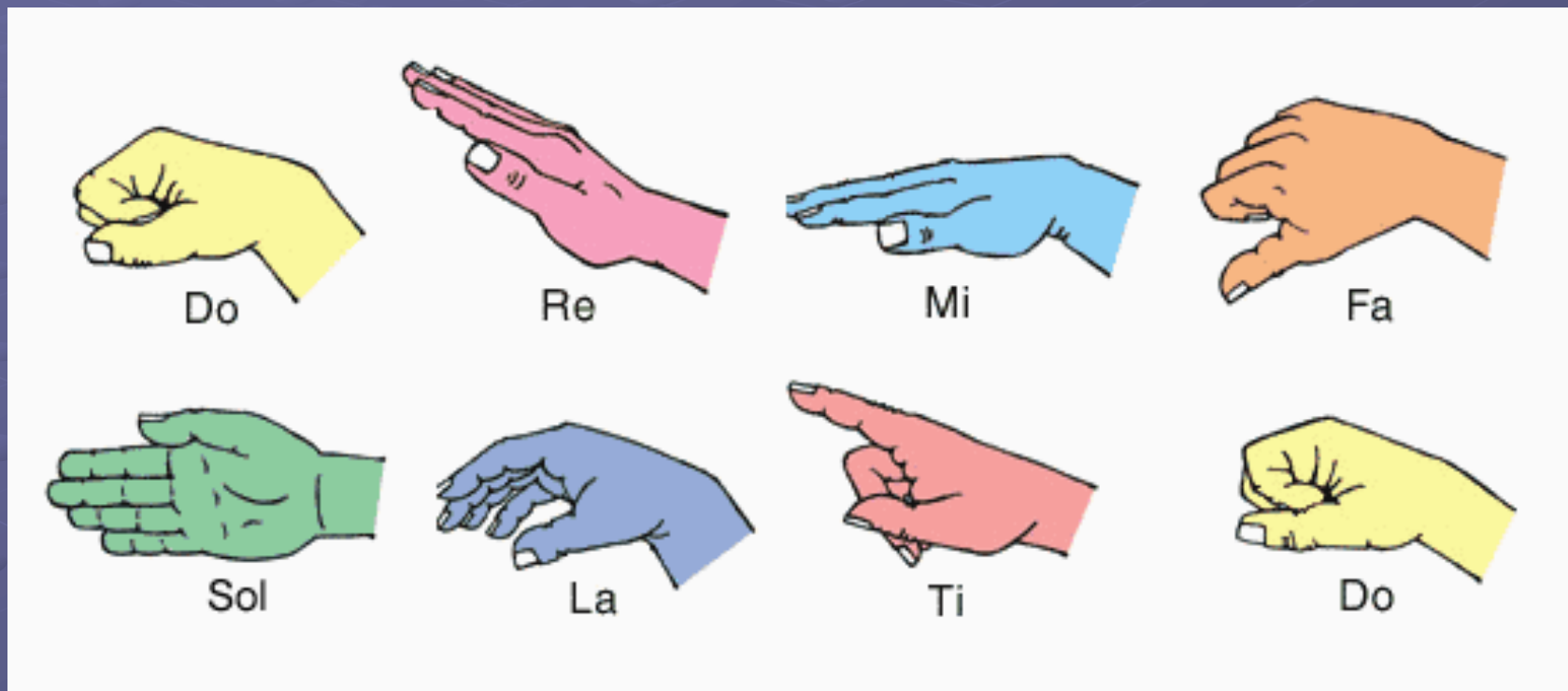
- Tonal Syllables – solfege
- Movable Do
- La minor
- Curwen hand signs

Do-Minor or La-Minor?

The image displays a musical score for a melody in C minor, presented on two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The melody starts on middle C (G4) and proceeds through the notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, Bb5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, Bb6, C7. The second staff begins with a measure rest labeled '5', indicating the fifth measure of the first staff. The melody continues from the previous staff: D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, Bb6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, Bb7, C8. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Used by permission of Dr. Don Ester

Curwen Hand Signs



Developing a Sound Vocabulary

- Neutral **sound** echoing of tonal patterns
 - Teacher presents tonal patterns on a neutral sound; students echo.
 - Short patterns are eventually combined to form series.
 - Establish tonality first:
 - pa,pa,pa,pa,pa echo me

Developing a Sound Vocabulary

- **Syllable** echoing of tonal patterns
 - Teacher presents tonal patterns on tonal syllables; students echo.
 - Establish tonality first:
 - Do-Mi-So-Mi-Do echo me

Developing a Sound Vocabulary

- **Syllable** echoing of tonal patterns (continued)
 - Students audiate and sing patterns from Curwen Hand Signs.
 - Short patterns are eventually combined to form series.

Developing a Sound Vocabulary

- Echo translating of tonal patterns
 - Teacher presents tonal patterns on a neutral sound; students echo using tonal syllables.
 - Short patterns are eventually combined to form series.
 - Establish tonality first:
 - pa,pa,pa,pa,pa echo translate

The Tonal Dimension of Music

- Transfer of Do-Mi-So to the keyboard
 - Play blocked Do-So open 5th to accompany songs.
 - Play and improvise blocked / broken chord Do-Mi-So patterns in C.
 - Echo translate Do-Mi-So patterns and play on piano.
 - Play songs with Do-Mi-So patterns by ear.

The Tonal Dimension of Music

- Teacher echoes patterns for songs using tonal syllables followed by echo translating
- Listen for Bells = Do-Mi-So patterns
 - Do-Do-Do, So-So-So, Do-Do-Do-So, So-Mi-Do, So-Mi-Do, So-So-So-Do

The Tonal Dimension of Music

- Pentascale pattern by ear
 - Play pentascale on C, one or both hands
 - Transpose to G
 - Transpose to other keys by ear (ideally) or with major/minor slider
 - Teacher may guide to “like” groups, such as scales starting on a white note with one black note first (D,F,A).

The Tonal Dimension of Music

- Pentascale pattern transfer to the staff with no clef signs (symbols)
 - Do-Mi-So = all line or space notes, anywhere on the staff. (magnetic boards)
 - Do-Mi-So = skipping a finger in 5-finger patterns
 - Do-Re-Mi-Fa-So = consecutive line to space notes anywhere on the staff.
 - Do-Re-Mi-Fa-So = consecutive fingers in 5-finger patterns.

Introduction to Music Reading – Method Books

- Assumes: previous introduction to keyboard playing and finger numbers through pre-reading and/or rote playing.
 - (De-emphasize pre-reading on white notes with names in note heads.)
- Association of notes on the keyboard with lines and spaces on the staff.

Introduction to Music Reading – Method Books

- Association of landmark notes to pitches on the keyboard
- Association of melodic seconds and thirds on the keyboard with solfege
- Association of melodic seconds and thirds in notation with solfege
- Interval maze on keyboard and notation (Marvin Blickenstaff)

Introduction to Music Reading – Method Books

- Hal Leonard Basic Piano Library All-In-One Piano Book B – introduction to staff reading
- Map reading approach: direction and distance
- Seconds and thirds in major & minor keys
- Tambourine Tune p. 21 – crosses treble and bass staves

Musical Examples – from Hal Leonard Basic Piano Library All-In-One Book B

Tambourine Tune Folk Tune

With spirit ♩

Accompaniment (Student plays one octave higher than written.)

With spirit ($\text{♩} = 150$)

HOW NOTES MOVE ON THE STAFF

REPEAT

Same Line Same Space

STEP (2nd)

Line to Space or Space to Line

Stepping Down Stepping Up

Title: _____

You already know how to play this song.
Do you know its name?

Steady

L.H. 2 down down

4 same up same up down down

THE BASS CLEF SIGN b_1

(The "F" Clef)

This sign comes from the old-fashioned letter F.

This is the F line The F line passes between the two dots of the Bass Clef sign.

You will usually play the low tones written on the Bass Staff with your left hand.

The note F is your reading guide for the Bass Clef. You can name any note on the Bass Staff by moving up or down from the F line.

Hide And Seek

Playfully

Hide and seek! I won't peek! Run and hide out - side.

I'll find you. Need no clue. I know where you'll hide! Boo!

(Play any F on the piano!)

Accompaniment

Playfully ($\text{♩} = 120$)

Hopscotch

Bouncy

R.H. 4

Hop - scotch on the walk. I won - der who will win.

Lines and spac - es drawn in chalk; now we can be - gin.

Accompaniment

Bouncy ($\text{♩} = 120$)

The *Sound Connections* Process

● Improvisation & Composition

- Students engage in improvisation throughout all stages of the sequence.
- Students can use known aural patterns to improvise, both responsively and independently.
- Students can use known symbol patterns to improvise to create their own compositions.

Music Reading / Practice Plan

- Students tap rhythmic patterns with each hand and speak rhythmic syllables (takadimi)
- Find starting position for each hand as related by interval to landmark notes
- Read intervals using “start” for first note, then following map-reading concept of direction and distance

Music Reading / Practice Plan

- Teacher identifies solfege syllable of starting note, students mark solfege syllables in books
- Students sing solfege syllables
- Students tap finger numbers on fallboard
- Students play piece with hands together, speaking rhythmic syllables as possible

My Current Eclectic Approach

- Combined approach based on core principles
 - A vocabulary of aural rhythm and tonal patterns introduced in class and reinforced at home through listening CD develops a system of understanding pitch and rhythm dimensions of music.
 - Movement to all types of music

My Current Eclectic Approach

- Sing songs with aural rhythm and tonal patterns, eventually performed by ear at the keyboard, paired with notation, and used later in aural dictation
- Keyboard repertoire: multiple method books and lots of supplementary repertoire to play patterns in multiple settings
- Engage in improvisation and composition using known patterns

Further Development

- Continue to introduce concepts and skills aurally before labels and explanations
 - Other examples: crescendo/diminuendo, articulation, arpeggios, full scales, all rhythms, etc.
- Practice echoing and echo translation of new rhythm and tonal patterns before they are introduced in the music repertoire using the *Sound Connections* process
- Connect aural patterns with notation via tonal and rhythmic syllables

Further Development

- Sing songs with a variety of patterns in major and minor keys as well as simple and compound meters
- Follow a well-sequenced curriculum of increasing difficulty of repertoire (Camp Six Stages of Development)
- Provide multiple books/pieces at each level of development. Don't move forward until the student has mastered each level.

Questions?

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