Musical Skills

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Music Education in Elementary School

The Benefits of Music Education in Elementary School:

Music education plays a vital role in the development of children in elementary school. It offers numerous benefits that contribute to their overall growth and learning experience. Research has shown that music education helps improve cognitive skills, enhance creativity, develop motor skills, and boost academic performance. Moreover, it promotes social and emotional development, encourages teamwork, and builds self-confidence. By participating in music activities, students learn discipline, patience, and perseverance.

Integration of Music into the Elementary School Curriculum:

To ensure the maximum impact of music education, it is crucial to integrate it into the elementary school curriculum. This can be achieved by providing regular music classes, offering opportunities for students to perform and participate in musical events, and incorporating music-related activities into other subjects. By incorporating music into their daily routine, elementary schools can create a well-rounded education that fosters creativity, engagement, and overall academic success.

By prioritizing music education in elementary schools, we empower students with the skills and qualities they need to thrive not only academically but also in their personal lives. Music education enhances their cognitive abilities, social skills, and emotional well-being, setting them up for a lifetime of success.

What research says to classroom teachers:

A large body of research literature now supports the importance of music in schools by providing evidence that:

1. Music is universal in every culture and time period.
2. All humans possess musical ability.
3. Fostering musical ability to its fullest requires early nurturing of musical potential, particularly during the years of rapid brain development!.
4. The study of music provides students with an understanding of important aspects of their culture that are unavailable through any other means.
5. There are strong links between learning in music and in other areas of the school curriculum—for example, aspects of musical note values and fractions in mathematics, and reading words and reading music.

In essence, increasing evidence supports the centrality of music in the education of all children and the importance of classroom teachers in ensuring that musical study is an integral part of the school curriculum.

https://blog.landr.com/how-to-read-music

Music Activities in Primary Schools

Music activities in primary schools play a crucial role in introducing and reinforcing musical concepts, developing musical skills, and fostering a love for music among students. These activities can include games, movement exercises, singing, playing instruments, listening exercises, and more. Here are some examples of music **activities that can be implemented in primary schools:**

Games and Musical Activities: Games and musical activities are a fun and engaging way to introduce and reinforce new musical concepts and develop musical skills like listening, singing, expression, coordination, and internalizing a sense of steady beat 1. These activities should keep the focus on music and integrate movement, listening, and active experience.

Rhythm Activities: Rhythm activities can aid motor coordination and facilitate a sense of group rapport. Engaging with musical rhythm activities from a young age can be beneficial to cognitive and social development 2. Teachers can incorporate rhythm games

and activities that involve moving together in synchrony, such as clapping or stepping to a beat.

Singing: Singing is an essential part of music education in primary schools. It helps develop vocal skills, musicality, and a sense of pitch. Teachers can introduce young children to simple rhythms found in familiar words and teach them songs that are age-appropriate and enjoyable.

Playing Instruments: Playing instruments allows students to explore different sounds, develop fine motor skills, and understand musical concepts. Teachers can provide opportunities for students to play simple percussion instruments or introduce them to basic keyboard or recorder playing.

Listening Activities: Listening activities help students develop an appreciation for different styles of music, improve their listening skills, and enhance their understanding of musical elements. Teachers can play various genres of music and encourage students to identify different instruments, rhythms, or melodies.

Creative Activities: Encouraging creativity in music is important. Teachers can provide opportunities for students to compose their own melodies, create simple rhythms, or improvise on instruments. These activities allow students to express themselves and develop their musical ideas.

Technology Integration: Technology can be used to enhance music education in primary schools. Teachers can incorporate online resources, music apps, or software that allow students to explore music theory, compose music, or practice their instrumental skills.

It's important for music activities in primary schools to be engaging, age-appropriate, and inclusive. These activities should cater to the diverse needs and interests of students, fostering a positive and enjoyable learning environment.

these are just a few examples of music activities in primary schools.

Singing in Primary Schools:

Singing in primary schools has been recognized as a valuable activity that offers numerous benefits to students. It can enhance learning outcomes, improve engagement and focus in the classroom, develop skills, understanding, confidence, and self-esteem.

Singing can also be integrated into the school curriculum, making it a part of the fabric of school life.

Benefits of Singing in Primary Schools:

Singing in primary schools has been shown to have several benefits for students. Here are some key advantages:

1. Improved Learning Outcomes: Singing can enhance learning outcomes by engaging students and making the learning process more enjoyable.

2. Development of Skills: Singing helps develop various skills, including musical skills, language skills, listening skills, and coordination.

3. Boost in Confidence and Self-Esteem: Singing can boost students' confidence and self-esteem, as they gain a sense of accomplishment and pride in their abilities.

4. Social and Teamwork Skills: Singing in groups promotes teamwork and collaboration, as students learn to work together, listen to others, and harmonize their voices.

5. Emotional Expression: Through singing, children can express their emotions and share their feelings in a creative and constructive way.

6. Mental and Physical Health Benefits: Singing has been proven to have mental and physical health benefits, such as reducing stress, improving breathing and posture, and boosting mood 3.

7. Promotes Inclusivity: Singing is an inclusive activity that can be enjoyed by students of all abilities and backgrounds, fostering a sense of belonging and unity.

Resources and Support for Singing in Primary Schools:

There are various resources and support available to facilitate singing in primary schools. One notable platform is Sing Up, which offers an online platform and resources designed to improve learning outcomes and engage students in the classroom. Sing Up provides a Song Bank with a wide variety of songs arranged for young voices, high-quality backing and performance tracks, notation, and interactive whiteboard mode. It also offers easy-to-use online resources for teaching music and cross-curricular topics, instant streaming and downloading, and the ability to create playlists.

Additionally, there are courses available to develop confidence, knowledge, and skills for teachers who lead young singers in primary schools. These courses aim to equip teachers with the necessary tools and techniques to effectively lead singing activities in the classroom.

Conclusion

Singing in primary schools offers numerous benefits to students, including improved learning outcomes, skill development, increased confidence, and social and emotional growth. With the availability of resources and support, teachers can incorporate singing into the curriculum and create an engaging and inclusive learning environment for their students.

The Elements of Music:

Music is a complex art form that consists of various elements. These elements work together to create a musical composition.

Here are the key elements of music:

Rhythm: Rhythm is the element of "time" in music. It refers to the pattern of movement in time and is created by the arrangement of notes and rests. Rhythm provides a sense of structure and groove to a piece of music .

Melody: Melody is the element of music that is created by a sequence of pitches. It is the part of the music that we often sing or hum along to. Melodies can be simple or complex and are usually the most memorable part of a song .

Harmony: Harmony refers to the combination of different pitches played or sung simultaneously. It adds depth and richness to the music. Harmony is created by chords and chord progressions.

Timbre: Timbre, also known as tone color, is the quality of sound produced by a musical instrument or voice. It distinguishes one instrument or voice from another. Timbre is influenced by factors such as the instrument's construction, the way it is played, and the materials used.

Dynamics: Dynamics refers to the variation in volume or intensity of a musical performance. It adds expression and emotion to the music. Dynamics can range from very soft (pianissimo) to very loud (fortissimo) .

Texture: Texture refers to the way different musical parts or voices are combined in a composition. It can be thick or thin, and it affects the overall sound and feel of the music. Common textures include monophonic (single melody line), homophonic (melody with accompaniment), and polyphonic (multiple independent melodies).

Form: Form refers to the overall structure or organization of a musical composition. It determines how different sections of the music are arranged and related to each other. Common forms include binary (A-B), ternary (A-B-A), and rondo (A-B-A-C-A) 2.

These elements of music work together to create a cohesive and expressive musical experience. They are essential for composers, musicians, and music enthusiasts to understand and appreciate the art of music.

Learning Science Through Music:

Integrating music into science education can be a creative and engaging way to enhance learning. Music has the power to captivate students' attention, evoke emotions, and aid in memory retention. Here are some ideas and benefits of learning science through music:

1. Engaging Activities: Incorporating music into science lessons can make learning more enjoyable and interactive. For example, activities like the cup activity can help students understand concepts related to sound and frequency.

2. Mnemonics and Memorization: Music can be used as a mnemonic device to help students memorize complex scientific facts and concepts. By setting scientific information to catchy tunes, students can easily recall and retain the information. This approach can be particularly useful for remembering things like the colors of the visible spectrum or the order of the planets.

3. Emotional Connection: Music has the ability to evoke emotions, and this emotional connection can enhance certain aspects of memory. When students associate scientific concepts with music, it can create a stronger and more lasting memory.

4. **Multisensory Learning:** Music engages multiple senses, such as hearing and rhythm, which can enhance the learning experience. By incorporating music into science lessons, students can experience a multisensory approach to learning, making it more immersive and memorable.

5. Bridging Art and Science: Music serves as a bridge between art and science. It allows students to explore scientific concepts through a creative and expressive medium. By combining the analytical

thinking required in science with the artistic elements of music, students can develop a deeper understanding of scientific principles.

6. Student Engagement: Music is often a popular and relatable medium for students. By incorporating music into science education, teachers can tap into students' interests and create a more engaging learning environment. This can help foster a positive attitude towards science and increase student motivation.

7. Long-Term Retention: The use of music in science education can lead to long-term retention of scientific knowledge. By associating scientific concepts with memorable melodies and lyrics, students are more likely to remember the information even after the lesson is over.

In conclusion, integrating music into science education can be a powerful tool for enhancing learning. It engages students, aids in memorization, creates emotional connections, and bridges the gap between art and science. By incorporating music into science lessons, educators can create a more engaging and effective learning experience for their students.

Music Note Names and Their Time Values

When playing music, a musician needs to know how long to play each sound for.

Composers tell them by using different note symbols.

Let’s take a look at some of the music note types you definitely need to know about when learning to read music.

Semibreve (Whole Note)

The first note is called a semibreve or in the US it’s called a ‘whole note’.

It’s like a small oval shaped zero or letter O which is a good way to think of it when you first begin writing music.

We call this oval-shaped part of a note ‘the note head’.

A semibreve has a value of four beats.

That means when we play a semibreve we count to four whilst holding the note.

Minim (Half Note)

The second note we'll look at is called a minim or 'half note'.

It's similar to a semibreve but has a line coming out of the right-hand side of its note head.

This line is called a stem.

The stem halves the value of the note and so a minim has a value of two beats.

That means that we count to two when playing a minim, half as long as a semibreve.

Crotchet (Quarter Note)

Next, we have a crotchet or 'quarter note'.

It's like a minim but, it has its note head filled in black.

This halves the value of the note again and so a crotchet has a value of one beat, half as long as a minim.

Quaver (Eighth Note)

This note is a quaver or ‘eighth note.’

It’s like a crotchet but, it also has a tail coming out of the side of its stem.

The note tail is also referred to as a flag or a hook.

The tail halves the value of the note again and so a quaver has a value of half a beat, half as long as a crotchet.

Semiquaver (16th Note)

Up next, we have a semiquaver or ‘sixteenth note.’

It’s like a quaver but has two tails coming out of its stem.

This means that it's half the value of quaver and so is worth one-quarter of a beat.

Demisemiquaver (32nd Note)

Here we have a demisemiquaver or '32nd note'.

You can see it has three tails (one more than a semiquaver).

A demisemiquaver is worth half the value of a semiquaver and so is worth one-eighth of a crotchet beat.

Musical Notes Chart

Here's a handy chart of all the different types of common musical notes with their US and UK names, an image and then the number of crotchet beats that they are worth.

Musical Notes Chart			
Name (UK)	**Name (US)**	**Symbol**	**Beats**
semibreve	**whole note**		**4 beats**
minim	**half note**		**2 beats**
crotchet	**quarter note**		**1 beat**
quaver	**eighth note**		**1/2 beat**
semiquaver	**16th note**		**1/4 beat**
demisemiquaver	**32nd note**		**1/8 beat**

Beaming Notes Together

When we have two or more notes with a tail (like quavers and semiquavers) next to each other, we join their tails together with a beam between the tops of their stems.

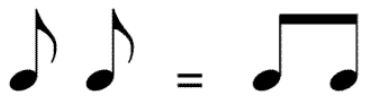
This is to help make it easier for musicians to read the notes.

Let's look at how to beam quavers.

Beaming Quavers (Eighth Notes)

When we beam quavers together we join the stems together using their note tails.

For example two quavers on their own become:



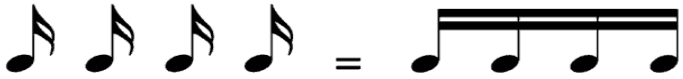
There are lots of rules and conventions about how many quavers we can beam together.

But I'll cover those in another post on grouping notes in different time signatures.

Beaming Semiquavers (Sixteenth Notes)

It works the same with semiquavers but instead of having one beam between their stems we use two beams.

This is because they have two tails.



Rests in music

Music isn't all about sound, sometimes not playing a note is just as important.

All the different types of musical notes we've learnt above have a corresponding symbol telling the musician not to play and to be silent.

We call these symbols rests.

Value in common time (4/4)

Notes		Rests
	Whole 4 Beat	
	Half 2 Beats	
	Quarter 1 Beat	
	Eighth 1/2 Beat	
	Sixteenth 1/4 Beat	
	Thirty-second 1/8 Beat	

How to read sheet music

When you first look at a piece of sheet music you'll see lines, spaces and different types of notes and markings.

I'll break down each element of music notation and explain how it works.

Staff lines and spaces

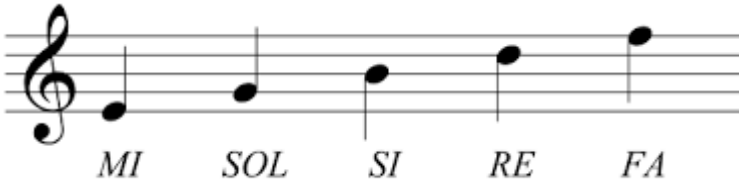
The musical staff is made up of five lines and four spaces.
The position on the lines and spaces tells you the pitch and letter name of a note on the staff.

How to find notes on the staff

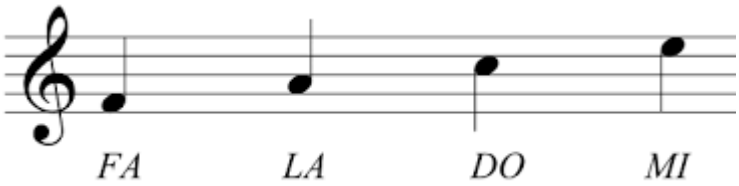
The names of the notes on the lines and spaces follow a set order that you can remember easily with a rhyme.

There are two for the treble clef:

- **Starting from the bottom line in the treble clef, the notes spell out: MI - SOL - SI - RE - FA**



- **Starting from the bottom space on the treble clef, the notes spell out: FA– LA – DO – MI.**



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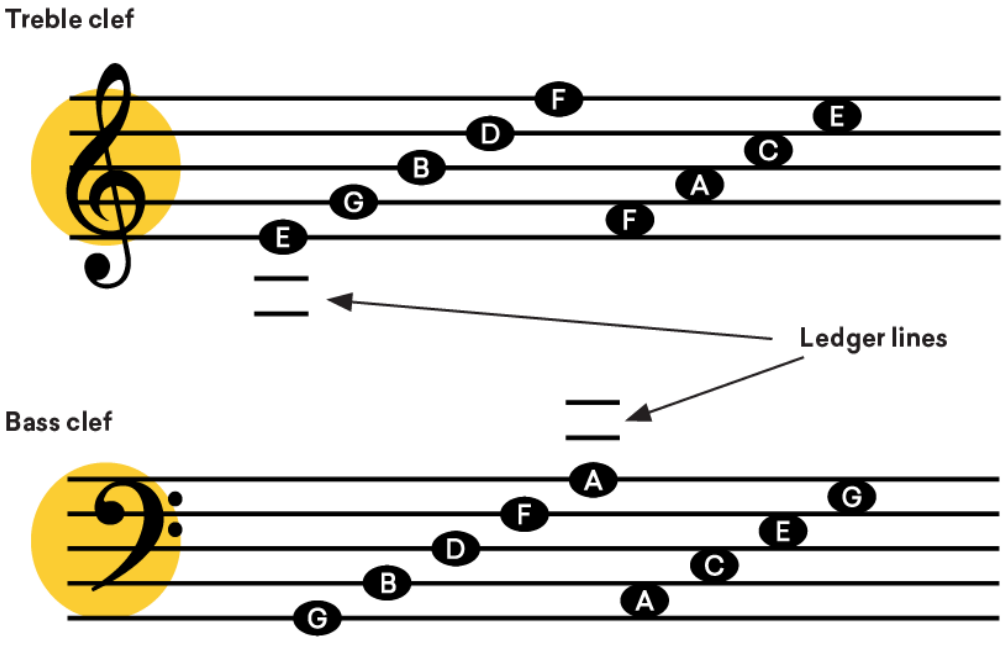
Treble Clef and Bass Clef

The staff marking at the start of each line tell you the register of the instrument and how to read the notes.

Notation for bass instruments is written in bass clef and notation for other instruments is commonly written in treble clef.



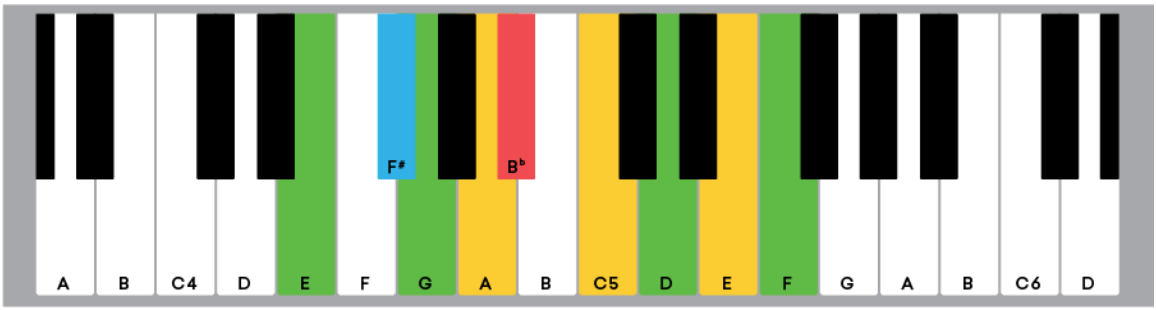
There are other clefs as well (like alto clef for viola music!) but they're used much less often, so I'll focus on bass and treble clefs here.

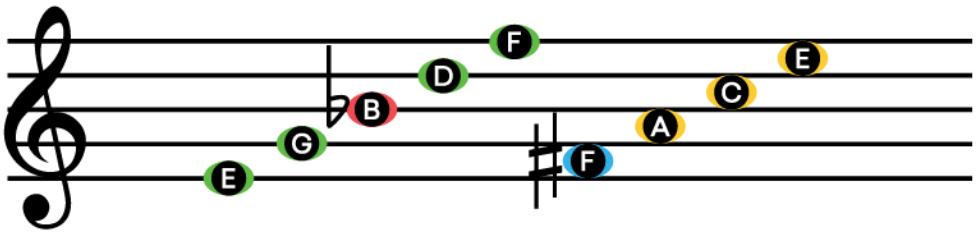
Sharps and flats: Music accidentals

The notes on the staff alone won't give you all twelve musical notes.

If you've been watching closely you might have noticed that the notes you've seen so far don't include the black keys on the keyboard.

To write the notes in between the white keys you'll need to modify the notes on the staff with accidentals.

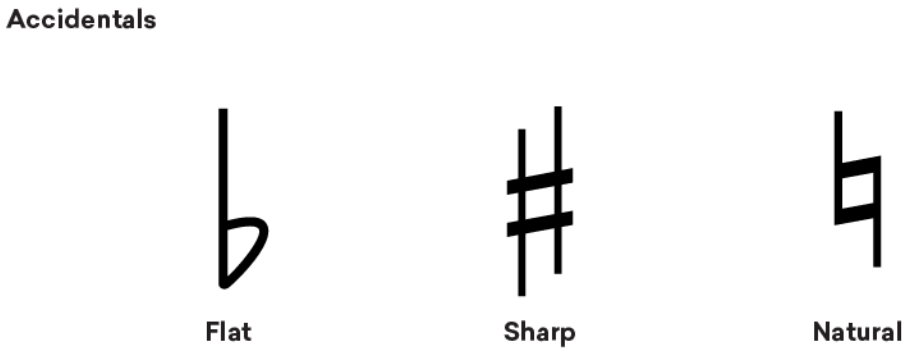




A sharp is written with the ♯ symbol. It tells you to raise the note one semitone higher.

A flat is written with the (♭) symbol. It tells you to lower the note one semitone lower.

The natural symbol cancels a sharp or flat and returns the note to its original state. It's written with the ♮ symbol.



Key signatures

The key signature is the collection of sharps or flats at the beginning of a line of sheet music that indicates the key of the song.

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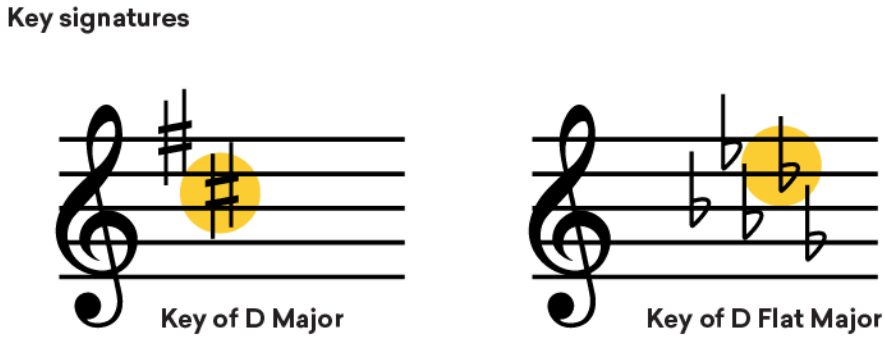
Unless the score tells you otherwise accidentally, maintain the sharps and flats on the lines and spaces written in the key signature throughout the song.

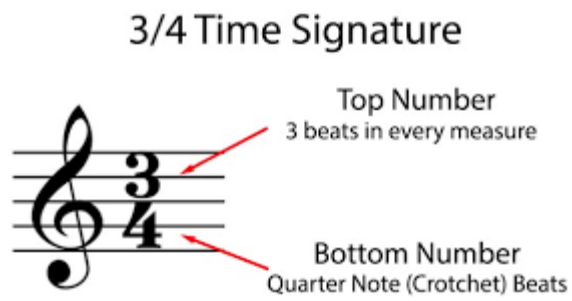


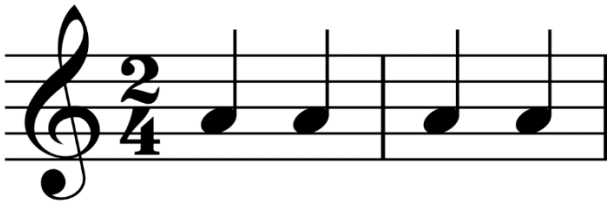
Time signature

Musical passages are divided into segments called measures. Each measure contains a set number of beats.

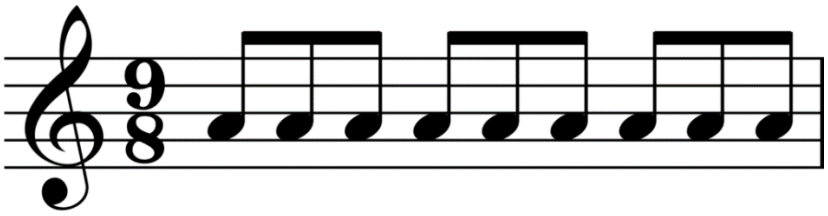
The time signature shows you how many beats are in a measure, and which note value is equal to one beat. It's written at the start of the piece with two numbers stacked on top of each other.

The top number indicates the number of beats in a measure and the bottom number tells you note value of a single beat.

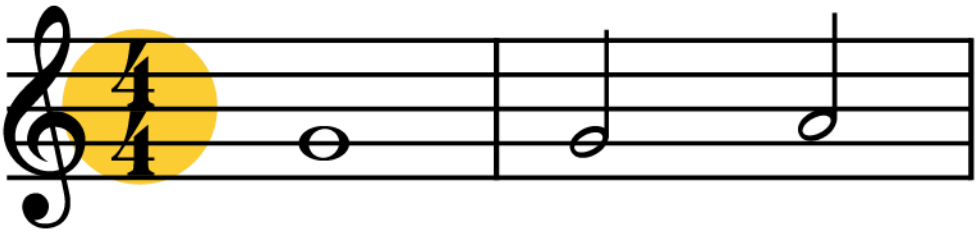


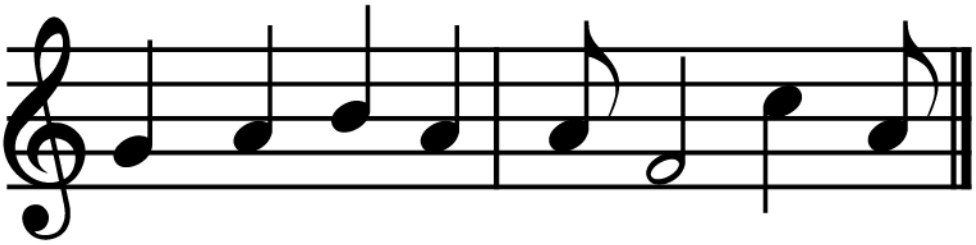


Let's try another one. In 9/8 time, you know that in every measure there are 9 notes in a 1/8 length.



The most common time signature is 4/4. In 4/4 time there are four beats in a measure and the quarter note is equal to one beat.





Above the time signature at the beginning of the music you will often see a tempo marking with a BPM range or an Italian term that describes the feel of the tempo.

This tells you how slow or fast to play during a performance.

How to read rhythm

Each note has a rhythm value that determines its duration in a piece of music.

Rhythms are written using the shape of the note heads, stems and the beams between connected notes.

Rhythms are written using the shape of the note heads, stems and the beams between connected notes.

Each rhythm value is a fraction of the total time in a measure.

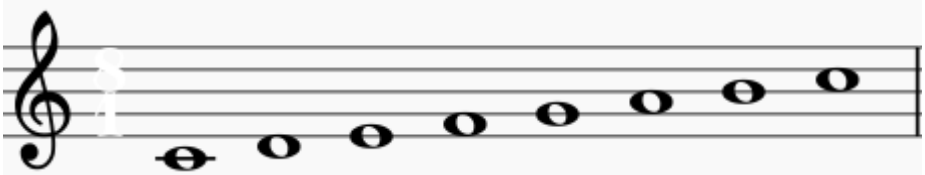
- A whole note lasts the entire bar. In common time (4/4) that means its duration is four whole beats. It's written using a hollow note head with no stem.
- A half note lasts half the bar or 2 beats. It's written using a hollow note head with a stem attached.
- A quarter note lasts for one quarter of a bar or 1 beat. It's written with a solid note head and stem.

- An eighth note lasts for half a beat. It's written with a solid note head and stem with a flag. When several eighth notes are written together, they're connected with a beam.
- A sixteenth note lasts for one quarter of a beat. It's written with a solid note head and stem with two flags. When multiple sixteenth notes are connected with a beam.

Music scales – Definition

A scale is an ordered sequence of notes. The most common scales in Western music contain seven pitches. For example: do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do… repeating this cycle. On this scale, we start with the do note and follow a well-defined sequence of intervals until the return to the do note again.

This sequence of distances was: tone, tone, semitone, tone, tone, tone, semitone… repeating the cycle. This scale is called the "**major scale**". We could use this same sequence (major scale) starting from a note that was not C, but for example: G. The scale would then be: sol, la, ti, do, re, mi, fa#, sol…



https://www.simplifyingtheory.com/music-scales/

Classroom Rhythm Instruments:

Rhythm and timing are the most fundamental of musical concepts as well as being fun and entertaining for young children to learn - two factors which together make them a natural fit for the classroom environment. Since classroom rhythm instruments are accessible even for kids still developing their fine motor skills they provide a beneficial head start that can become the foundation for a lifelong musical career or hobby. There are also a great many varieties to choose from including traditional percussion instruments and unique specialty ones so teachers can keep students interested with something fresh and exciting in each lesson.

The category of world percussion is particularly well-represented in classroom rhythm since it offers a wide palette of sounds and different playing styles for children to try. Drums such as the djembe or bongos are excellent options as are the various hand percussion instruments including claves sticks blocks shakers castanets and rattles. Equally versatile are the many types of tambourines and cymbals and for those wishing to equip a classroom with many rhythm instruments at once there are ready-made percussion sets available to provide an easy solution. These come from many of the leading brands such as Trophy Rhythm Bad Nino and Remo - all names which are known for building high-quality classroom instruments.

Xylophone musical instrument

xylophone is a musical instrument which consists of metal bars of different lengths arranged like the keyboard of a piano. You play the **xylophone** by hitting the bars with wooden hammers .

https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/glockenspiel

Xylophone: History and Origins

The xylophone is a percussion instrument consisting of a set of wooden/metal bars that are struck with mallets to produce sound. It has ancient origins and its exact origin is still debated. According to some theories, the xylophone originated in Southeast Asia and later spread to Africa around AD 500 when Malayo-Polynesian speaking peoples migrated there. This theory is supported by the comparison

of East African xylophone orchestras with Javanese and Balinese gamelan orchestras. However, other researchers argue for an independent origin of the xylophone in Africa, citing distinct features of African xylophones and a greater variety of xylophone types in Africa.

The earliest evidence of a true xylophone comes from the 9th century in Southeast Asia. A similar instrument, a type of harmonicon, is said to have existed in what is now part of China as early as 2000 BC.

Xylophone: Construction and Sound

The xylophone consists of a set of graduated, tuned wooden /metal bars that are supported at nodal points and struck with sticks or padded mallets. In its modern form, the Western xylophone usually has two rows of keys arranged like piano keys on a stand. To improve the tone, a hollow groove is cut along the underside of each bar. The bars are typically made of rosewood, but synthetic materials can also be used. Tube resonators may be provided to enhance the sound. The modern xylophone has a compass of either 4 octaves upward from middle C or 3 1/2 octaves from the F or G above middle C. Contemporary performers often use two sticks in each hand as the repertoire becomes more complex 2.

Xylophone: Uses and Variants

The xylophone is used in various musical genres and contexts, including orchestral music, chamber music, jazz, and popular music. It is also a popular instrument for music education and is often used in schools and music therapy.

There are also variants of the xylophone, such as the xylorimba, which has an extended range downwards to include pitches normally found in the marimba. The written staff notes for the xylophone and glockenspiel differ from their actual pitch, with the xylophone sounding an octave higher than written and the glockenspiel sounding two octaves higher.

Xylophone: DIY Xylophone

If you're interested in making your own xylophone, you can follow these general steps:

Gather the necessary materials, including wood for the bars, a frame or stand, and mallets.

Cut the wooden bars to the desired lengths and shape them to produce the desired pitch.

Tune the bars by adjusting their length or thickness until they produce the correct pitch.

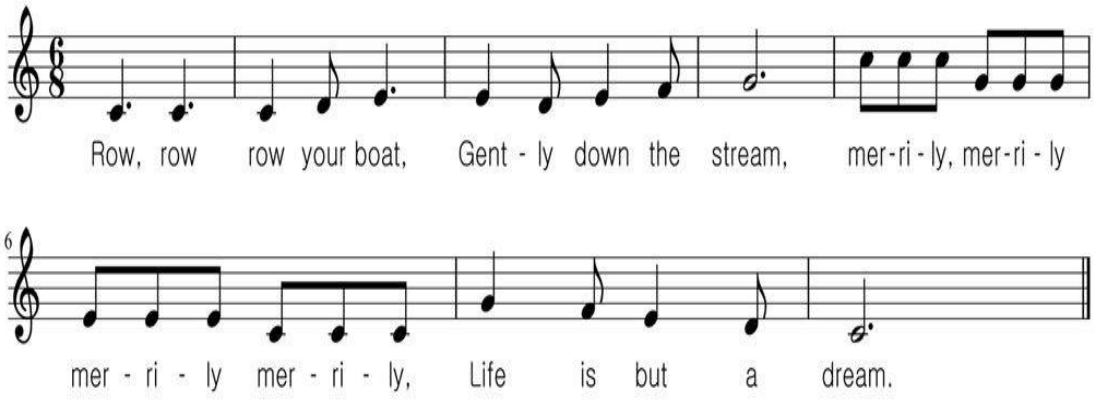
Set the bars onto the frame or stand, ensuring they are securely attached.

Make or acquire mallets suitable for striking the bars.

Test and adjust the xylophone as needed to achieve the desired sound quality.

ROW, ROW, ROW, YOUR BOAT

TRAD.



2. Row, row, row your boat,
Gently down the stream,
If you see a crocodile,
Don't forget to scream

3.Row, row, row your boat,
Gently to the shore,,
If you see a Dinosaur,
Don't forget to roar!!

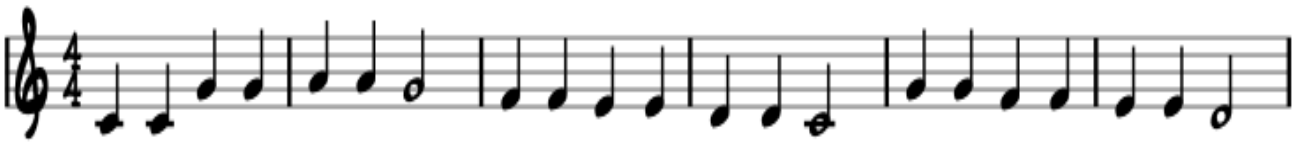
EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS & ACTIVITY IDEAS:
HTTP://WWW.LETSPLAYKIDSMUSIC.COM/ROW-ROW-ROW-YOUR-BOAT/

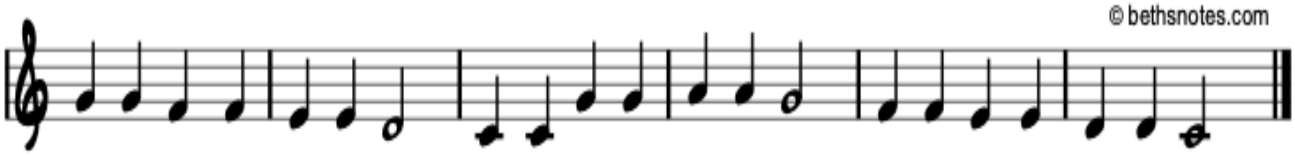
LET'S PLAY MUSIC

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Jane Taylor, 1806

English Folk song
French melody "Ah! vous dirai-je, Maman"





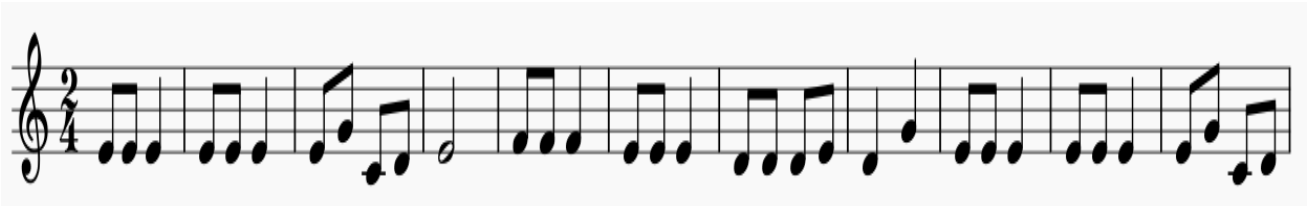
When the blazing sun is gone,
When he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

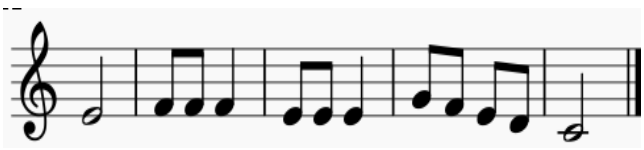
Then the traveller in the dark,
Thanks you for your tiny spark,
He could not see which way to go,
If you did not twinkle so.

In the dark blue sky you keep,
And often through my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye,
'Till the sun is in the sky.

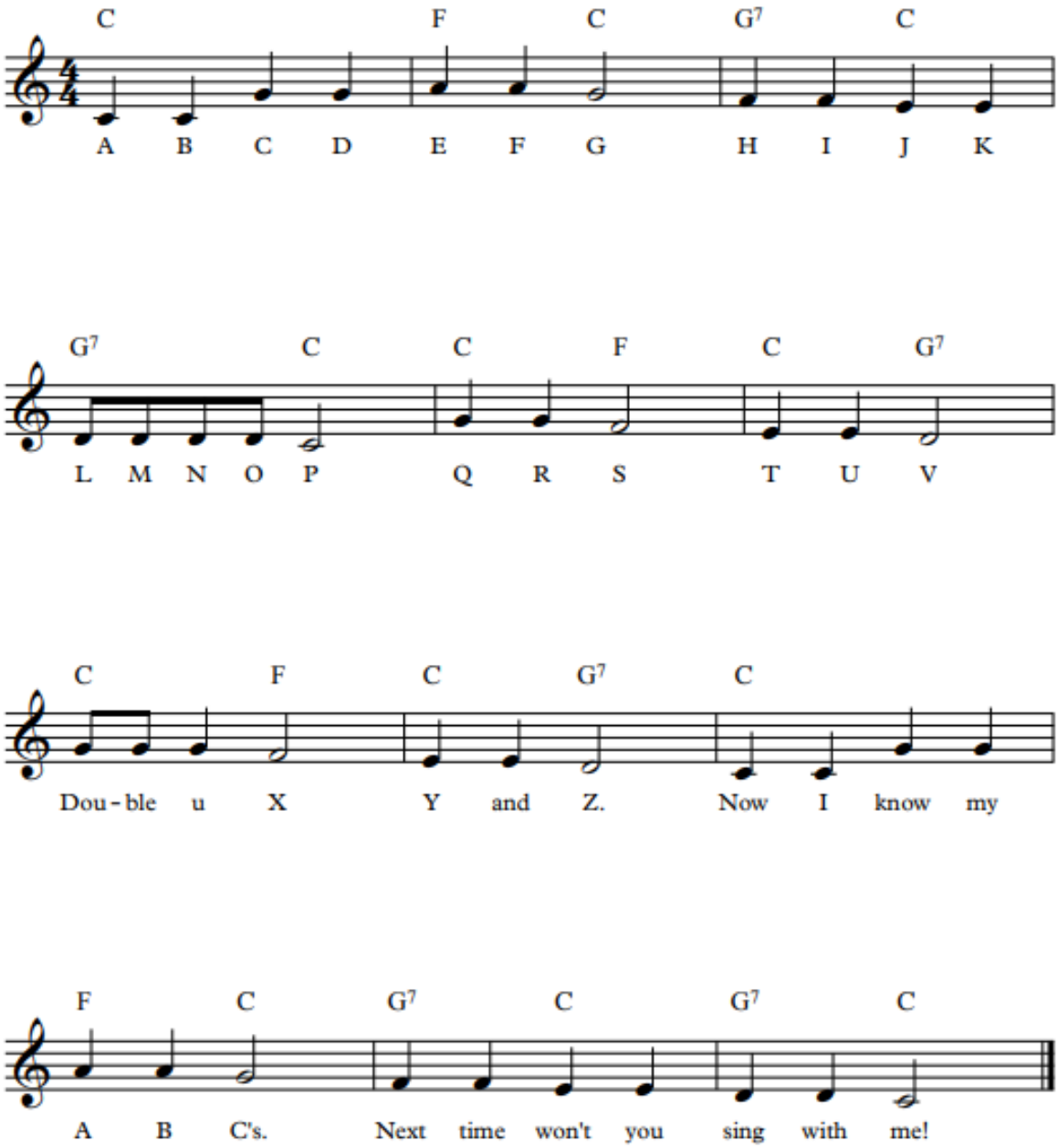
As your bright and tiny spark,
Lights the traveller in the dark.
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

Christmas music





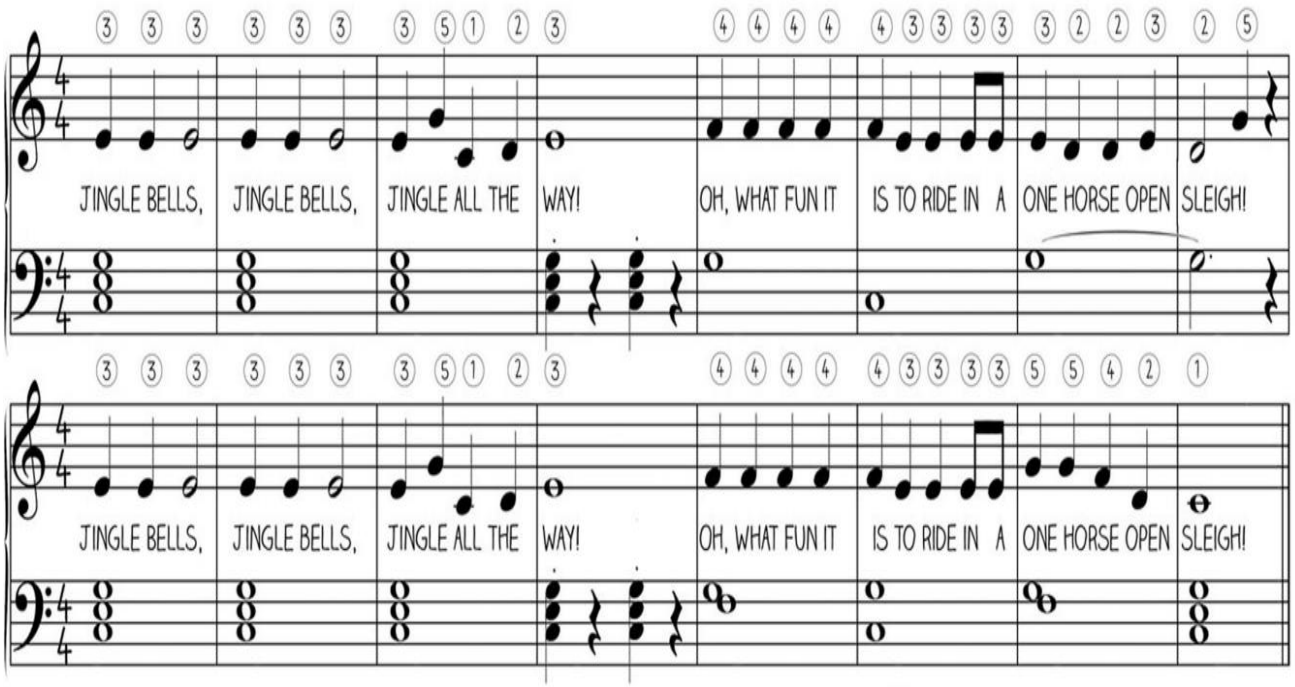
Alphabet Song



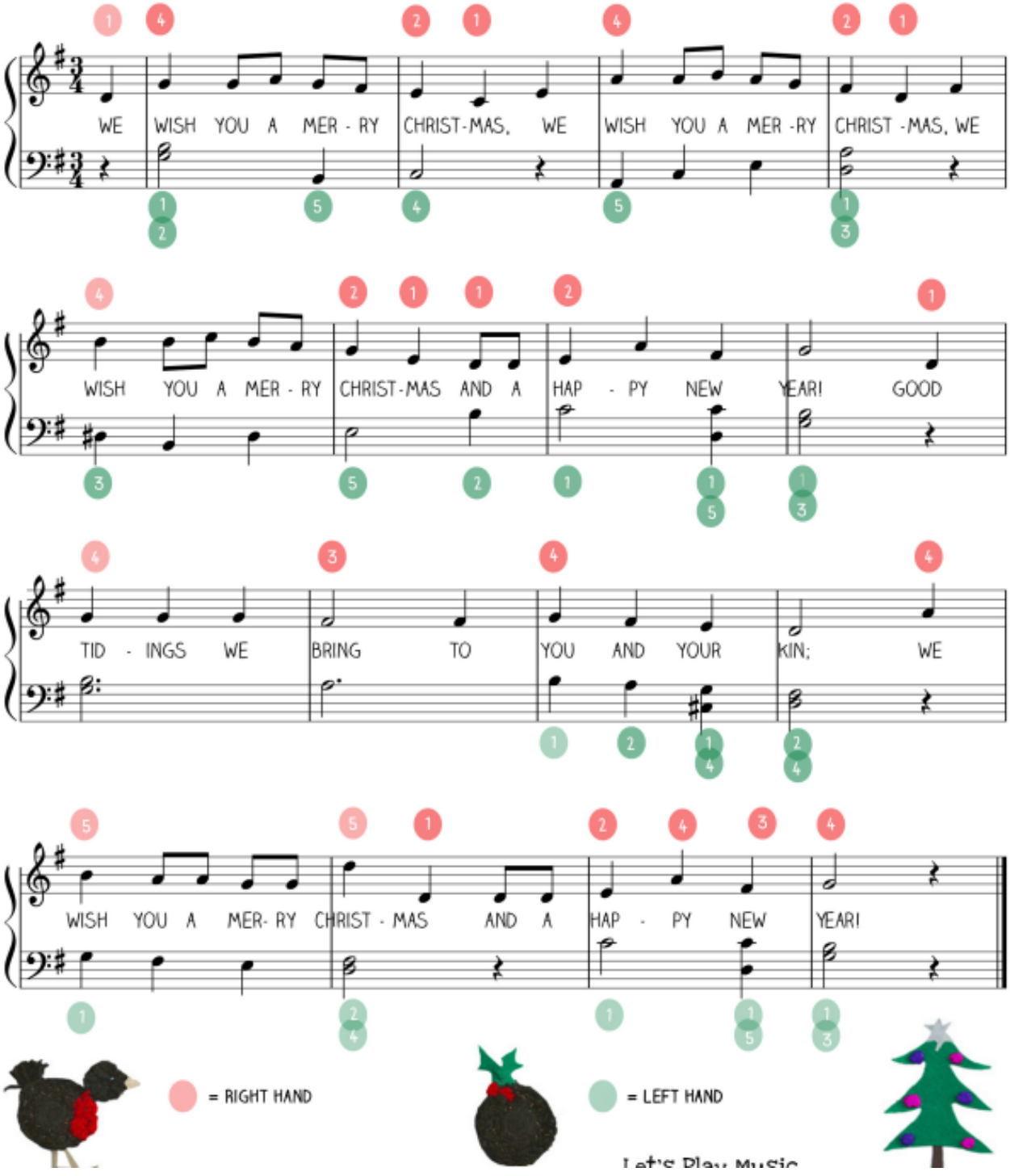
LET'S PLAY MUSIC

Jingle Bells

TRAD.

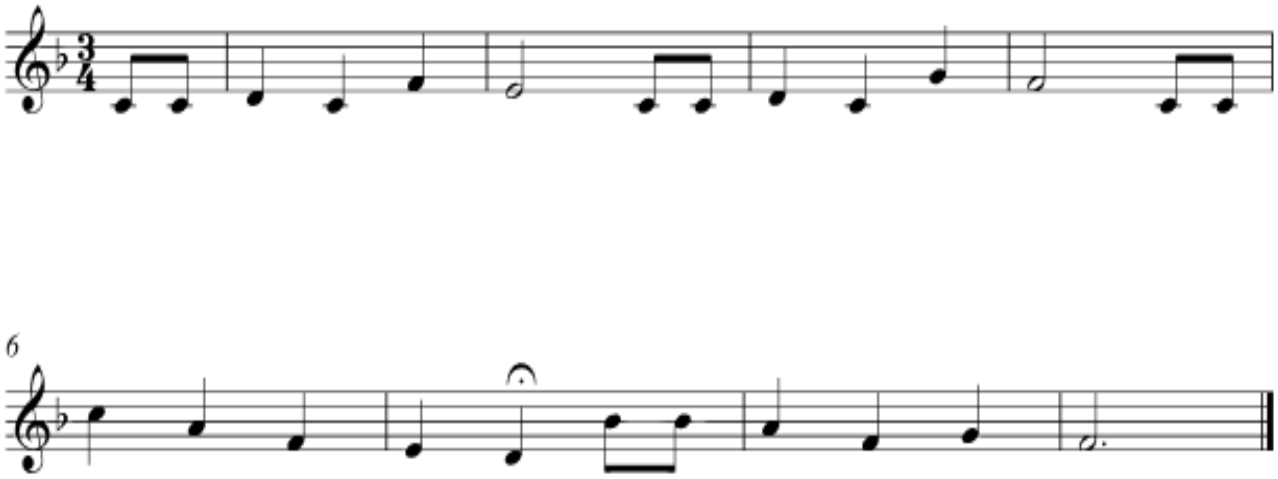


We wiSh You A Merry ChristmaS



Happy Birthday

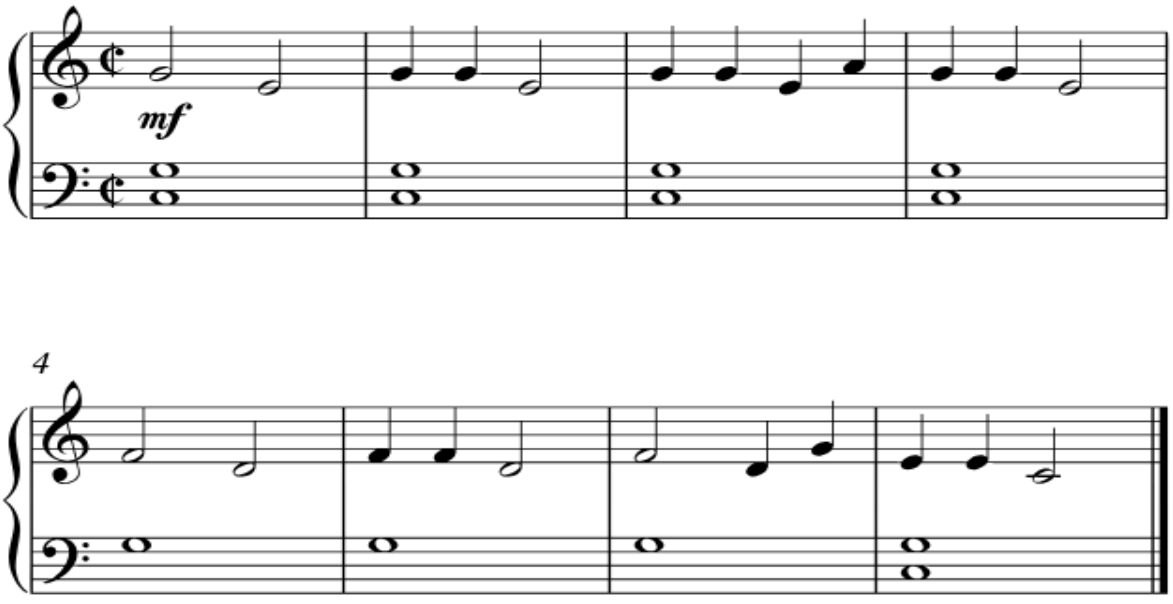
trad.



Rain, Rain Go Away

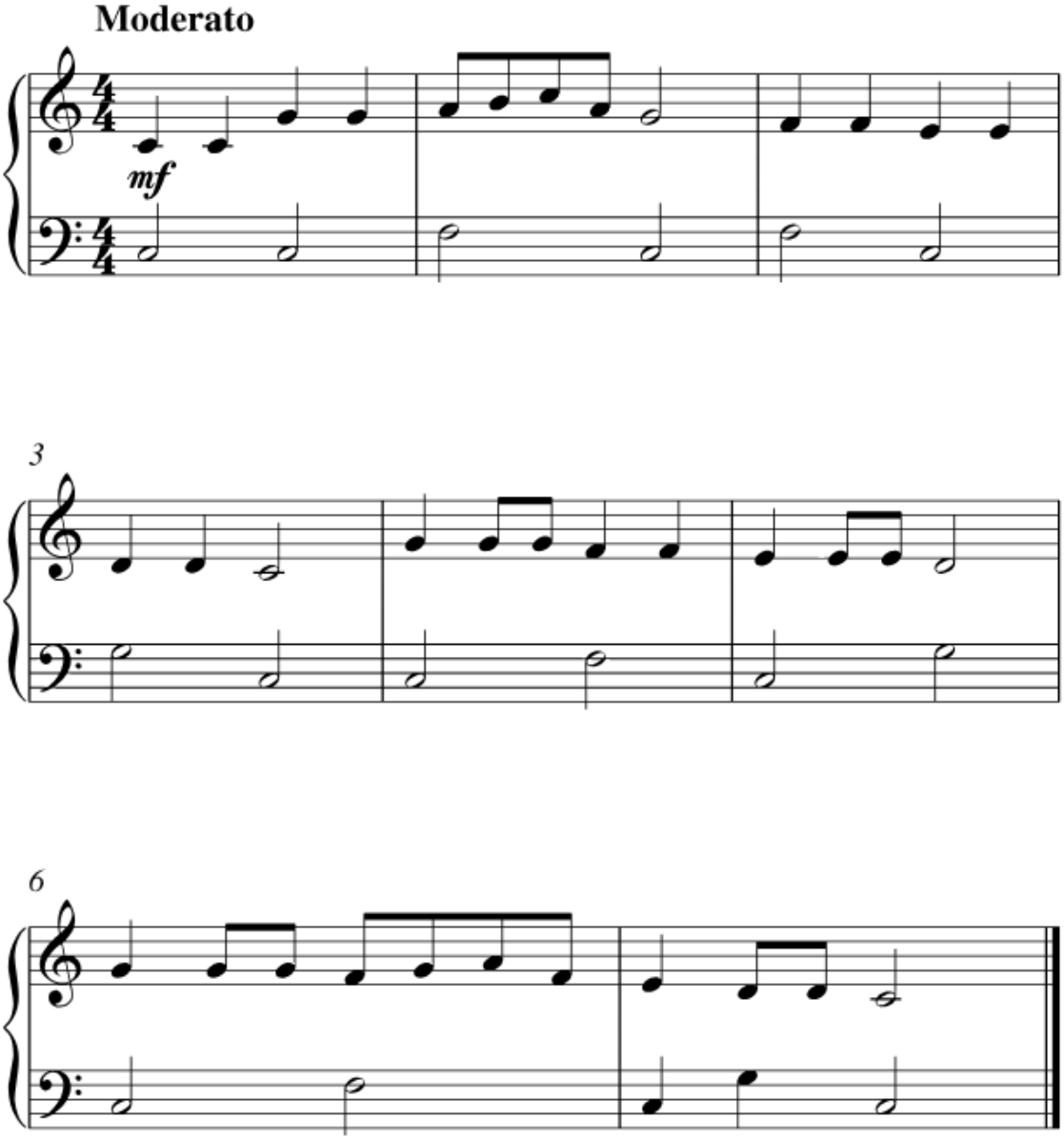
Trad.

Two in a bar 𝅗𝅥 **= c.90**



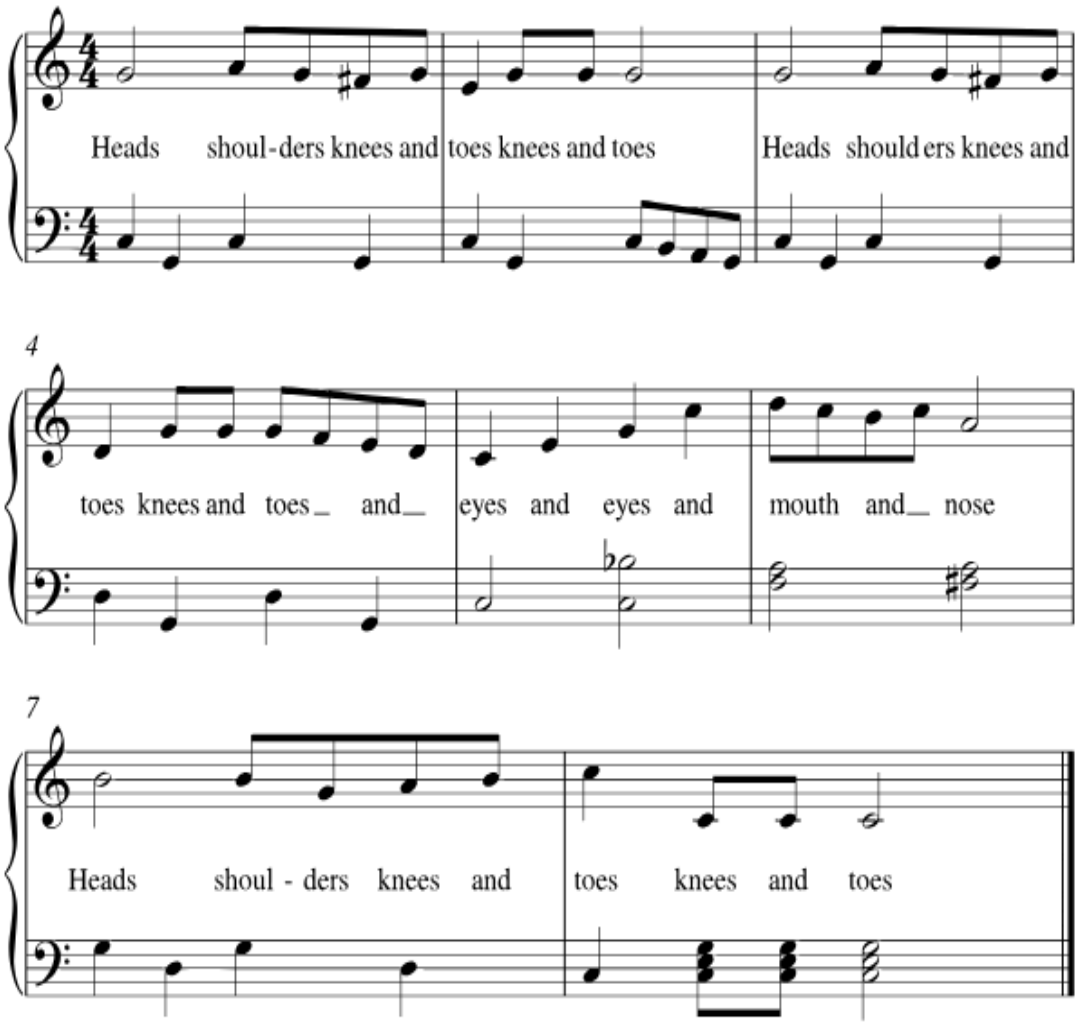
Baa, Baa Black Sheep

Trad.

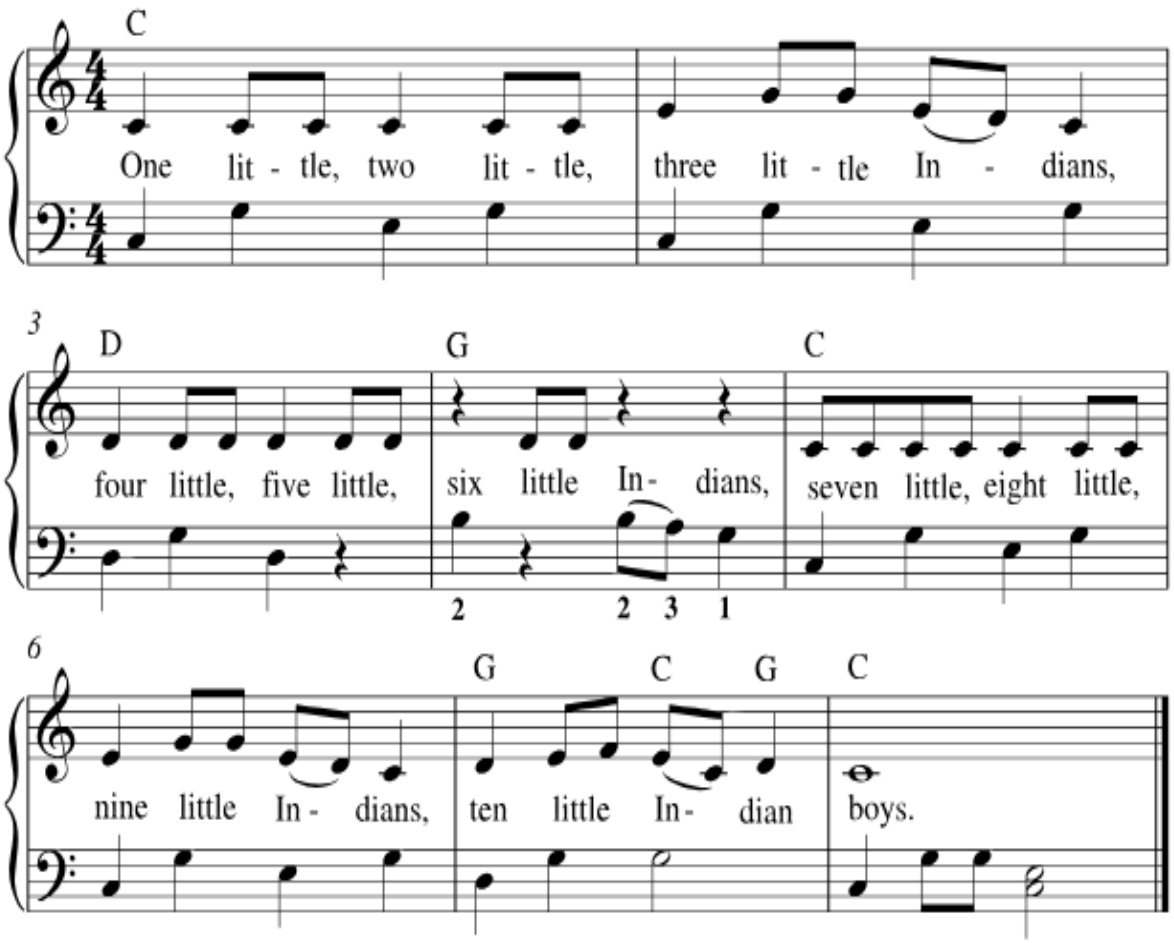


Heads Shoulders Knees and Toes

Trad.

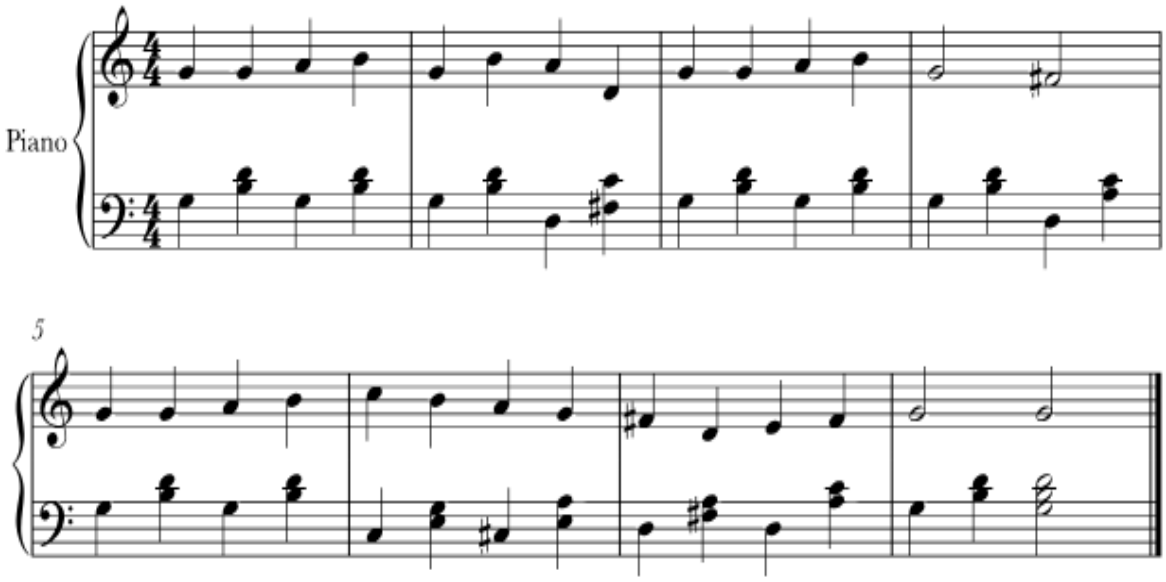


Ten little indians

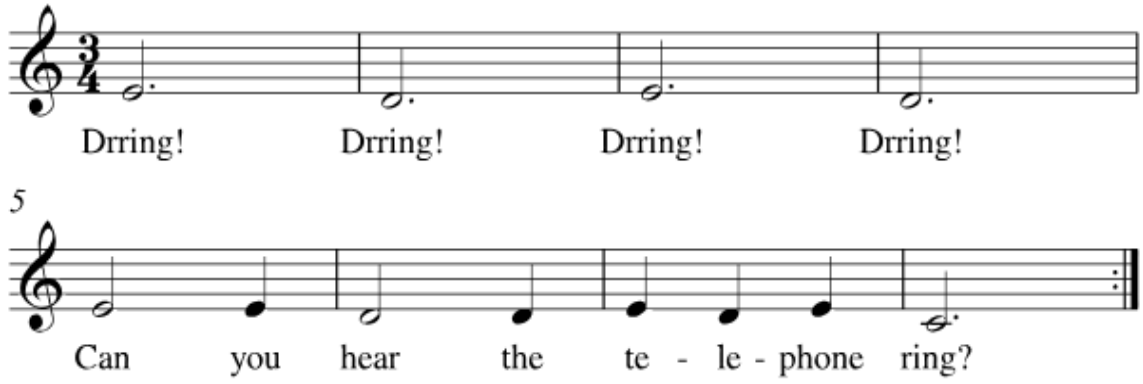


2. Ten little, nine little, eight little Indians,
Seven little, six little, five little Indians,
Four little, three little, two little Indians,
One little Indian boy.

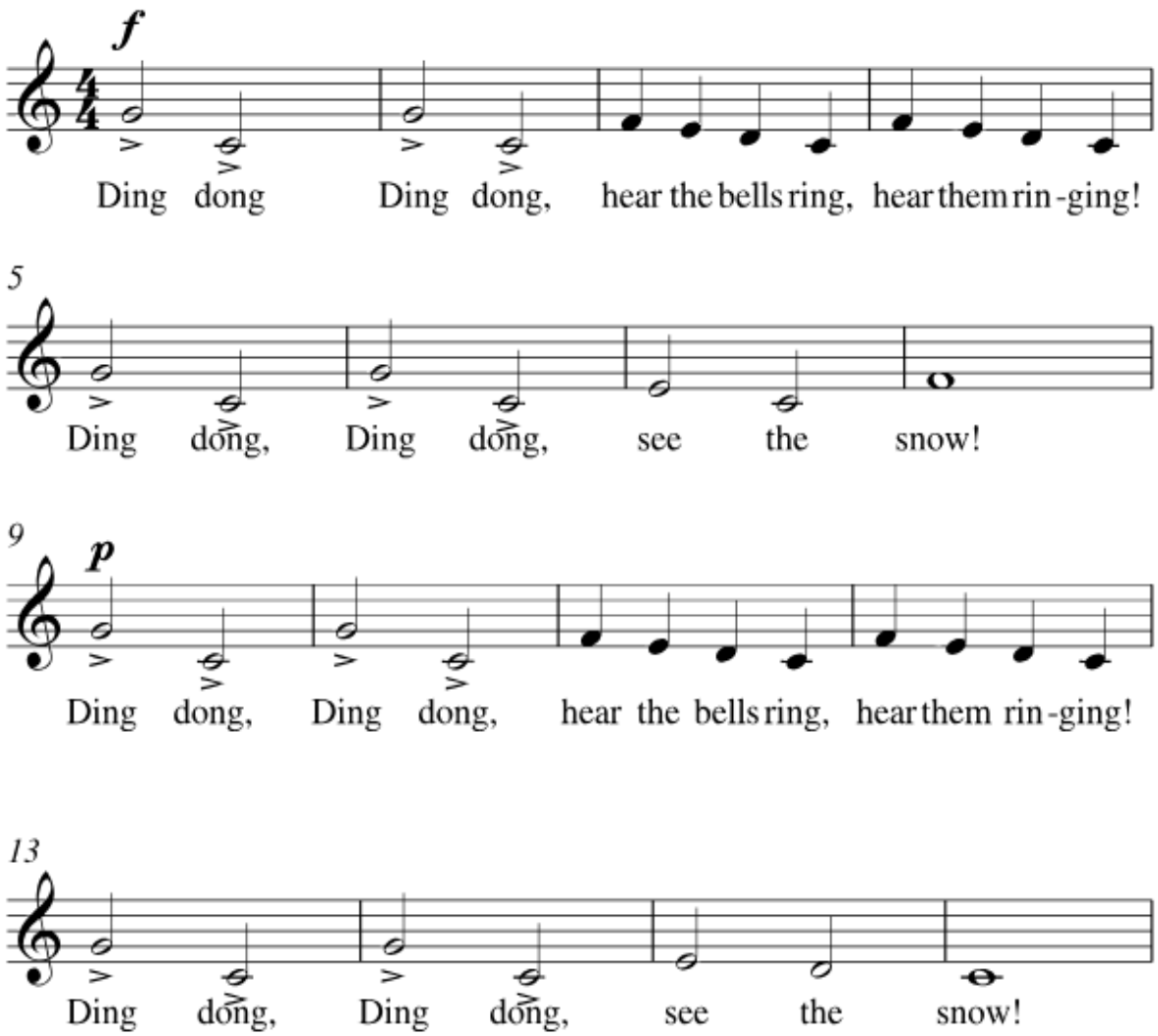
Yankee Doodle



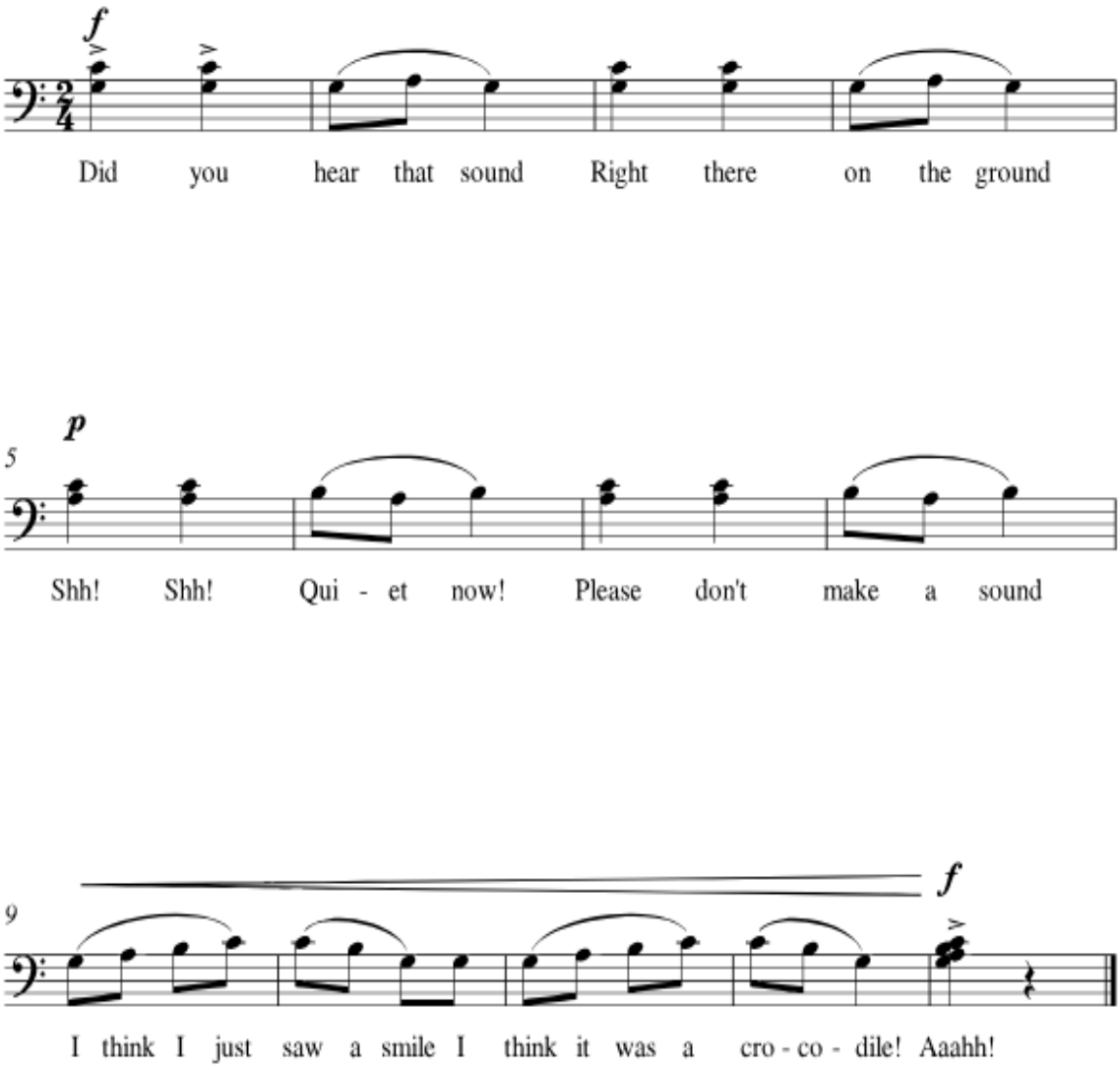
Telephone



Bells in the snow



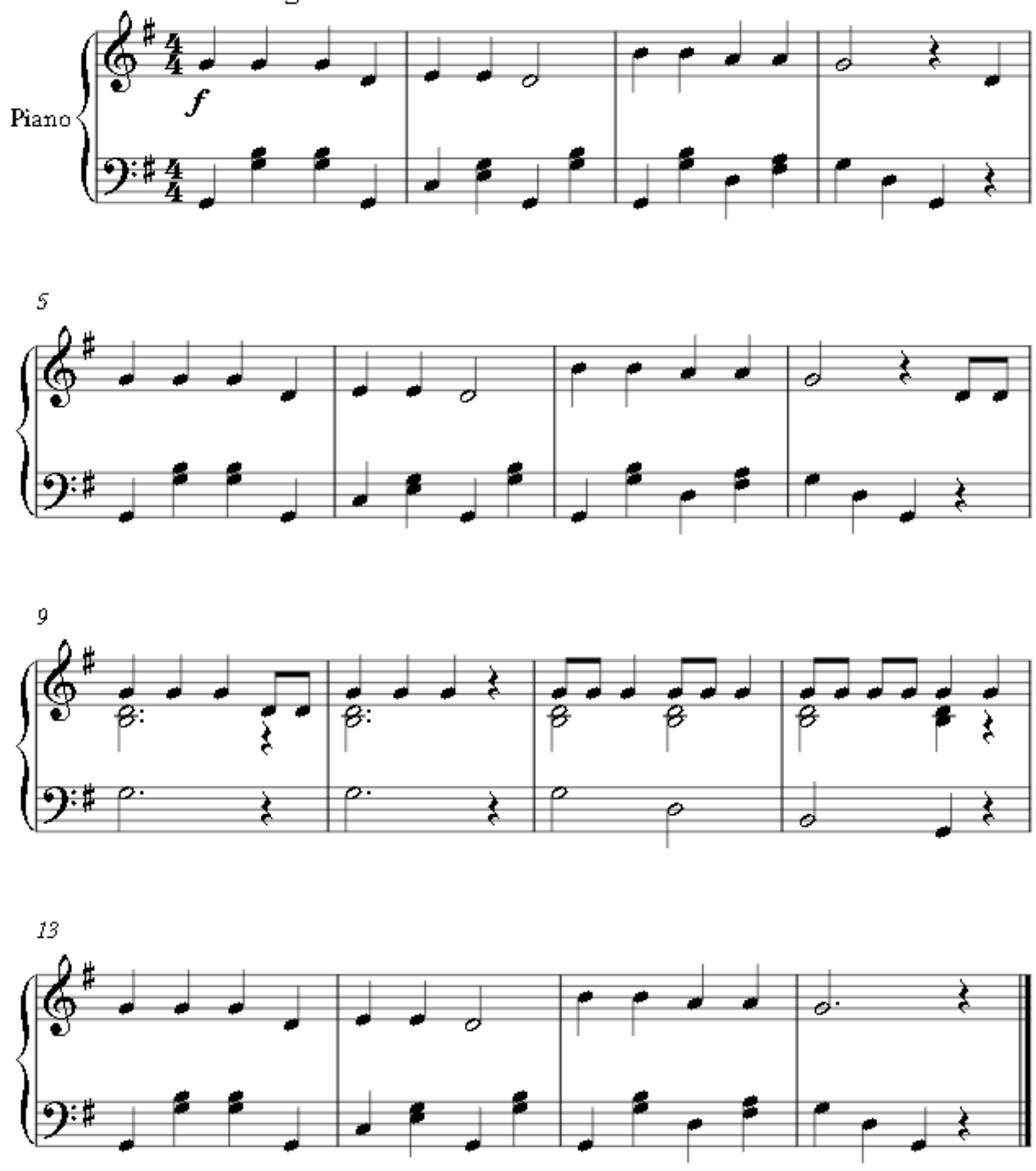
Crocodile



Old MacDonald

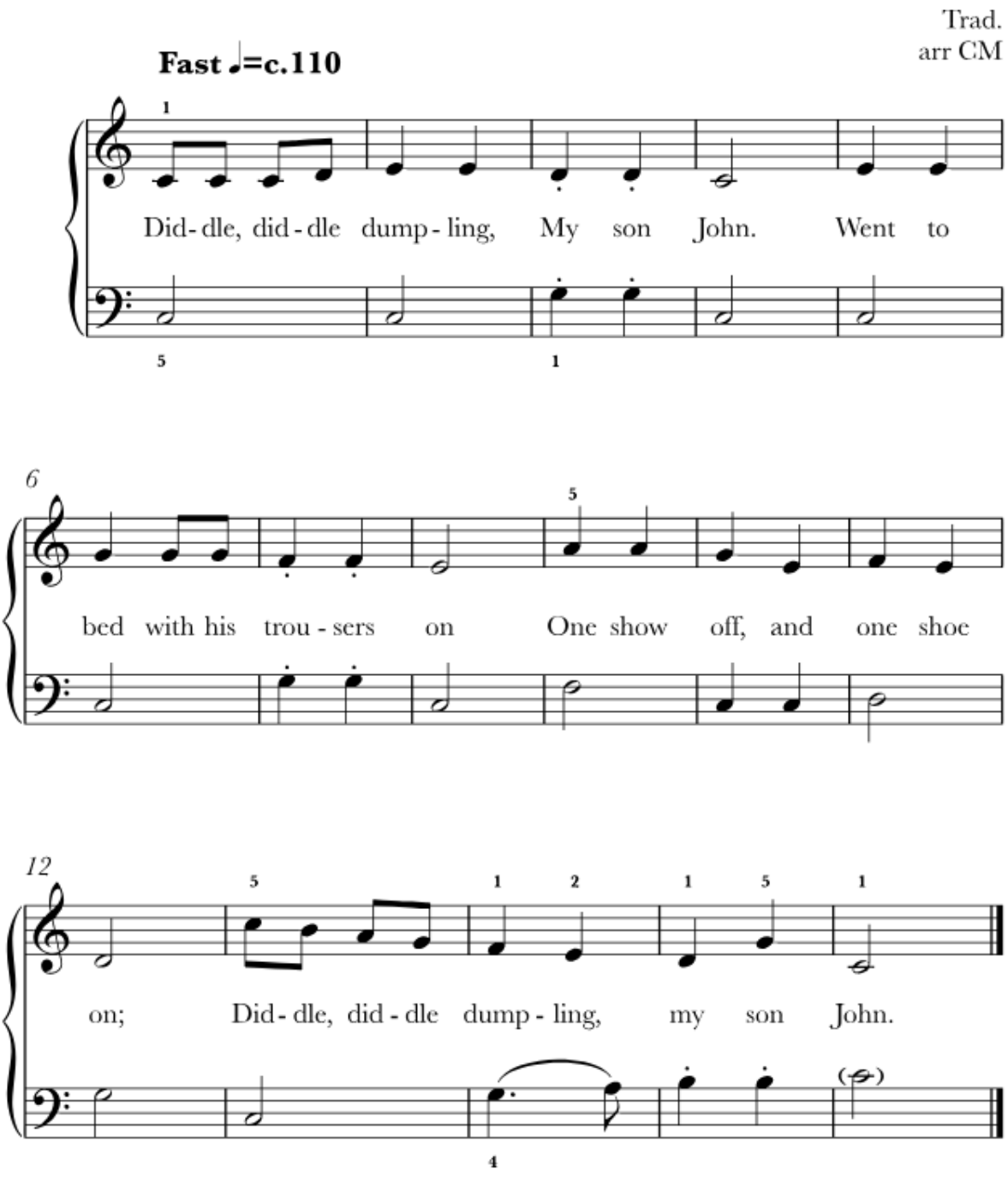
Trad.

Molto Allegro



Diddle Diddle Dumpling

Trad.
arr CM



The Cat Came Back

Swing

Harry S. Miller 1893