

A MUSICAL RHYTHM TEACHING AID

This invention relates to a teaching aid suitable for teaching the concept of musical rhythm to small children.

For a little child, the difficult part of learning music is to grapple with the concept of rhythm. Many children, when confronted with the concept of rhythm when learning music have not even learned fractions at school at that stage, so counting and grouping of notes is very difficult to grasp.

It is an object of the invention to provide a teaching aid for assisting young children in grasping the concepts of musical rhythm.

According to the invention there is provided a musical rhythm teaching aid comprising a plurality of pieces each representing a duration of a note or rest, the relative sizes of the pieces corresponding to the relative durations of the notes or rests and wherein smaller duration pieces are combinable to form the shape of larger duration pieces.

Preferably the teaching aid further comprises a base for receiving the pieces, including a representation of a note, rest or number of beats, the pieces being fractions of the size of the representation on the base. Most preferably, the representation on the base is in the form of a square and the pieces are sub-divisions of the square, with a representation of each note being provided on a first side of a said piece and a representation of the corresponding rest being provided on the reverse side of the piece.

Most preferably the representation on the base represents four crotchet beats, each beat being represented by a square sub-division of the representation.

Further features of the invention may be found in the appended claims.

An embodiment of the invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1A - G illustrate the component parts of the embodiment of the teaching aid of the invention.

Figure 2 A' - G' show the reverse side of the components shown in Figure 1.

Figure 3 illustrates how the teaching aid is used to realise the value of each note or rest.

Figure 4 illustrates how the teaching aid is used to find the equivalent of a note or rest in terms of other notes or rests.

Figure 5 shows how the teaching aid is used to identify a time signature.

Figure 6 shows how the teaching aid is used to group a set of notes, beat by beat.

Figure 7 illustrates how the teaching aid is used to write beats below notes; and

Figure 8 illustrates how to complete a bar with a missing note or rest.

With reference to Figures 1 and 2, an embodiment of the invention is shown which comprises a plurality of pieces each representing the duration of a note or rest, the relative sizes of the pieces corresponding to the relative durations of the notes or rests with smaller duration pieces being able to be combined to form larger duration pieces. In Figure 1, the largest duration piece A shows a notation of a semibreve and forms a base of the teaching aid, upon which the smaller size pieces B - G are placed. The base A is formed from stiff

card or plastics material with the pieces B - G being formed from thinner more flexible cardboard or plastics material. The pieces A - G are shaded in contrasting colours for easy identification.

The piece B bears the notation of a dotted minim, three quarters the size of piece A, piece C bears the notation of a minim, half the size of piece A, piece D bears the notation of a dotted crotchet, three-eighths the size of piece A, piece E bears the notation of a crotchet, a quarter of the size of piece A, piece F bears the notation of a quaver, an eighth the size of piece A and piece G bears the notation of a semiquaver, a sixteenth of the size of piece A.

It will be noted that, where possible, smaller duration pieces are of the shape so that they may be combined with other such pieces to form a larger duration piece. For example, piece E representing a crotchet is equivalent in duration to one quaver F and two semiquavers G. One piece F and two pieces G may be combined to form a piece of the same size as piece E. Similarly piece B, a dotted minim, has the same duration as the combination of a minim C and a crotchet E and these pieces may be combined to form a piece of similar shape to piece B.

Figure 2 shows the reverse side of the pieces A - G in which the base A' is divided into four squares separated by dotted lines representing four crotchet beats, and can be used, for example, to represent a bar of up to four beats. B' - G' show rests of durations equivalent to the note durations of the pieces B - G shown in Figure 1.

When used as a teaching aid, the embodiment of the invention is employed as a puzzle to assist small children in understanding the concept of rhythm, beats and fractions as shown

with reference to Figures 3 - 8.

In Figure 3, use of embodiment of the invention is shown in realising the value of each note or rest. First, the side A' of the base is placed face upwards so that the dotted lines dividing up the four crotchet beats are uppermost. Any one of the pieces B - G is then placed, with the note value uppermost, on the base A and the number of squares obscured may then be counted. In example Figure 3a, a dotted crotchet is shown to be one and a half crotchet beats and the rest in Figure 3b is shown to be two crotchet beats.

In Figure 4, the use of the teaching aid to find the equivalent of one note to others is shown. In this example, it is desired to find how many semiquavers are equivalent to a minim. The minim piece C is placed on the board A' and this is covered by the semiquaver pieces G until the minim C is obscured. The number of semi-quavers is then counted to show that one minim equals eight semi-quavers.

In Figure 5, the teaching aid is used to identify the time signature. In example 5a the beat pattern is that of a crotchet followed by two quavers followed by two quavers and this is placed on the board as shown in Figure 5b and the number of squares counted to give the time signature shown. In Figure 5c, the beat pattern of two semiquavers and a quaver, followed by a minim rest is shown. The corresponding pieces C', F, G are placed on the board A' as shown in Figure 5d and the number of covered squares is counted giving the time signature shown.

The use of a teaching aid to group a set of notes beat by beat is illustrated in Figure 6. The notes, two semiquavers followed by quaver followed by four semiquavers are placed, using

pieces F and G on board A'. The notes covering each beat square of the board A' are then joined together as shown.

The use of the teaching aid to write beats below notes is illustrated in Figure 7. The notes are assembled on the board in order and then the beats are placed below the first note of each beat square.

The use of a teaching aid in completing a bar with a missing note value or rest is shown in Figure 8. In Figure 8a, the time signature indicates two crotchet beats in a bar and the music notation is two quavers followed by two semiquavers. Pieces F, G are then placed on the board A' and a piece equivalent to the missing fraction of two of the beat squares is placed to make up the bar, in this case a quaver F. In Figure 8b, the time signature indicates three crotchet beats in the bar and the notation shows a crotchet followed by two quavers. These are placed on the board A' and the child may then count the number of beat squares (in this case one) which make up the bar but which are empty. The child then chooses the correct size rest E' to make up the bar.

While an embodiment of the invention has been described, this is not to be construed as limitative. For example, although the pieces have been shown as a square and sub-divisions thereof, the sub-divisions may be other shapes, for example starting at a triangle or rectangle.



Claims

1. A musical rhythm teaching aid comprising a plurality of pieces each representing the duration of a note or rest, the relative sizes of the pieces corresponding to the relative durations of the notes or rests and wherein smaller duration pieces are combinable to form larger duration pieces.
2. A teaching aid as claimed in Claim 1 further comprising a base for receiving the pieces.
3. A teaching aid as claimed in Claim 2 wherein the base includes at least one representation of a note, rest or number of beats, the pieces being fractions of the size of the representation on the base.
4. A teaching aid as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the representation on the base is square and the pieces comprise sub-divisions of the square.
5. A teaching aid as claimed in Claim 3 or Claim 4 wherein the representation on the base represents a semi-breve, a minim being represented by a rectangular said piece of half the size of the representation, a crotchet being represented by a square said piece a quarter the size of the representation, a quaver being represented by a triangular said piece an eighth of a size of the representation and a semi-quaver being a represented by a triangular said piece a sixteenth of the size of the representation.
6. A teaching aid as claimed in Claim 5 wherein the dotted minim is represented by a

said piece having a shape of the combination of the minim and crotchet and being three quarters the size of the representation and a dotted crotchet being represented by a said piece having a shape of the combination of quaver and crotchet and being represented by a piece three-eighths the size of the representation.

7. A teaching aid as claimed in any one Claims 2 - 5 wherein the representation on the base represents four beats, a two beat rest being represented by a rectangular said piece of half the size of the representation, a one beat rest being represented by a square said piece of a quarter the size of the representation, a half beat rest being represented by a triangular said piece of half the size of the one beat piece and a quarter beat rest being represented by a triangular said piece of a quarter the size of the one beat piece.

8. A teaching aid as claimed in Claim 7 wherein a three beat rest is represented by a said piece of a shape being a combination of the two and one beat rest shapes and the three eighth beat rest is represented by a said piece of a shape being a combination of the beat and half beat rest shapes.

9. A teaching aid as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein an indication of the note duration is provided on one side of each piece and an indication of the corresponding rest duration is provided on the other side.

