MUSIC AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

&

The Modern Band Movement

Little Kids Rock Teacher Manual

v4.1

little kids ROCK ®

Transforming Children's Lives Through
Music & Creativity since 2002

MUSIC AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

&

The Modern Band Movement

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Table of Contents

Foreword

Music education has the power to transform children's lives, and yet music education has been triaged out of the budgets of public schools across the nation. Today, millions of children in the U.S. receive no music education whatsoever. This happens in spite of the fact that a mounting body of scientific evidence demonstrates the myriad benefits of music education. Ongoing funding cuts propel that dangerous trend forward.

Many concerned people are working hard to preserve what little remains of public school music programs and, for the sake of our kids, thank goodness they are! However, at a time when the conversation of concerned citizens and educators often centers upon the simple conservation of existing programs, Little Kids Rock is a bold nonprofit that is pushing the envelope by expanding these offerings and pioneering an entirely new kind of music program in our nation's public schools.

Our program focuses upon teaching children to play the popular music of the past fifty years. We are the first entity in the U.S. to both advocate for and launch such classes in our public schools on a national level. We refer to these classes as "Modern Band Programs" and we work in partnership with school districts across the country to build and expand music programs that are innovative and inclusive.

The positive response from teachers and school districts across the nation has been overwhelmingly positive and in the space of just one decade, Little Kids Rock has grown to become the largest, free instrumental music program in the country. More importantly we have sparked the movement to bring Modern Band into our schools.

The volume you are holding in your hands right now is the eleventh printing of our Teacher Manual and it contains the methods and materials that have empowered nearly five thousand public school teachers to bring music into the lives of over eight hundred and fifty thousand students since 2002. We hope that you will find it useful. In fact, we hope it rocks your world!

Our History

In 1992, the tiny city of East Palo Alto, California had just earned the dreaded distinction of being named the murder capital of the United States. It was also the year that an enterprising, guitar-wielding fellow named David Wish began his teaching career in the city's public school system. After teaching migrant school children as a bilingual teacher's aide for a few years, Wish became a first grade schoolteacher in a bilingual school. Over the next ten years, he would teach in some of the Bay Area's toughest districts.

"I loved it from the start," says Wish of his years as a teacher. "Although the schools that I taught in were rough and tumble and deprived of many of the resources you'd expect to see in wealthier districts, the kids were filled with all the same promise of kids anywhere and I quickly learned how easy it was to make a big difference in their lives."

However, Wish was frustrated by the lack of a music program at his school. This frustration grew and in 1996 he decided to take matters into his own hands. He found inspiration from a documentary film about French gypsy guitar legend Django Reinhardt. Reinhardt is a folk hero and role model to legions of gypsy children, many of whom emulate him by taking up guitar themselves. Wish was amazed at the skill these self-taught youngsters displayed and impressed with how the gypsy kids found creative expression and discovered hidden talent once presented with the proper motivator. He knew that his students possessed their own untapped musical abilities.

Equipped with only a small fleet of borrowed guitars and a passion for teaching kids to express themselves, Wish began giving free, group-lessons to kids after school. The after-school class was a hit and he was soon overrun by kids desperate to get into his music class.

Seeing that the need was so great, Wish enlisted the help of his peers; namely, other committed and passionate public school teachers who wanted nothing more than to help bring everything and anything they could to their own students.

Wish found that by training other teachers to run similar classes he could greatly increase the number of students that benefitted. In 2002, he left the classroom in order to devote all of his time to training other teachers to run similar programs. What began as a tiny grassroots movement of proactive schoolteachers has since catapulted onto the national stage as Little Kids Rock, a nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming children's lives through music.

In the space of 17 years, Little Kids Rock has recruited over 5,000 teachers who have taught over 850,000 students in over 400 school districts throughout 45 states how to express themselves through music. With their ceaseless dedication and drive, Little Kids Rock teachers have built the largest free instrumental program in the U.S. today. The work of Little Kids Rock teachers has been highlighted by many national media outlets such as CNN Headline News, The New York Times, Forbes, Time Magazine, MTV, A&E, The Dr. Phil Show and many others.

Founder David Wish has been awarded numerous honors for his work in the field, including prestigious fellowships from Ashoka and The Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation.

Where We Rock

Little Kids Rock supports transformational music programming in a diverse set of K-12 school districts across the United States. We work in partnership with thousands of school teachers who are committed to ensuring that all children receive the many benefits of music education, regardless of their personal circumstances.

We are proud to serve the following school districts:

Alaska
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
Petersburg City School District

Alabama
Auburn City Schools

Arkansas
Sheridan School District
Texarkana Independent School District

Arizona
Marana Unified School District
Tuba City Unified District

California
Anaheim Elementary School District
Brentwood School District
Burbank Unified School District
Cabrillo Unified School District
Carlsbad Unified School Dsitrict
Centinela Valley Union High School District
Compton Unified School District
Desert Sands Unified School District
East side Union High School District
El Monte Union High School District
Emery Unified School District
Evergreen Elementary School District
Fontana Unified School District
Gardena Public Schools
Garvey School District
Gateway Unified School District
Gilroy Unified School District
Glendale Unified
Hacienda La Puente Unified School District
Hesperia Unified School District
Inglewood Unified School District
KIPP Los Angeles
Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District
Long Beach Unified School District
Los Angeles Unified
Lynwood School District
Manteca Unified School District
Middletown Unified School District
Mt. Diablo Unified
Oakland Unified School District
Oxnard School District

Pacifica School District
Pasadena Unified School District
Pixley Union School District
Ravenswood City School District
San Bernardino City Unified School District
San Diego Unified
San Francisco Unified School District
San Jose Unified School District
Santa Ana School District
Santa Rosa City Schools
Simi Valley School District
Sonoma Valley Unified
Standard School District
Stockton Unified School District
Victor Elementary School District
West Contra Costa Unified School District

Colorado
Denver Public Schools
Poudre School District
Adams 12 Five Star Schools
Aurora Public Schools
Douglas County School District
Englewood Schools
Greeley School District
Jefferson County Public Schools
Mesa County Valley School District
Morgan County School District
Ridgway R-2 School District
St. Vrain Valley School District
Thompson School District
Walsh County Schools
Weld County School District
Wray School District

Connecticut
Hartford Public Schools
Bridgeport Public Schools
Ansonia Public Schools
Bolton Public Schools
Brookfield School District
Chaplin School District
Danbury Public Schools
Derby Public Schools
East Hartford Public Schools
East Windsor School District
Hamden Public Schools

Manchester Public Schools
Meriden Public Schools
New London Public Schools
New Milford Public Schools
Plainville School District
Plymouth Public Schools
Putnam Connecticut Schools
Ridgefield Public Schools
Rocky Hill School District
Stamford Public School District
School District of New Britain

Washington, D.C.
District of Columbia Public Schools
Center City Public Charter Schools

Delaware
Christina School District
Family Foundation Academy

Florida
Hillsborough County Public Schools
Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Mater Academy District
Pasco County School District
Pinellas County Schools
Polk County Schools
Weston City Schools
Georgia
Atlanta Public Schools
Cobb County School District
Gwinnett County Public Schools
Rockdale County Public Schools
Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools
Schley County School District
Walton County Schools

Iowa
Marshalltown Community School District

Idaho
Nezperce Joint School District #302

Illinois
Chicago Public Schools
Bensenville School District 2
District 133
Evanston/Skokie School District 65
Lansing School District

Indiana
Indianapolis Public Schools
Fort Wayne Community School
Metropolitan School District of Lawrence
West Clark School District

Kansas
Lawrence School District
Topeka Public Schools

Kentucky
Fayette County Public Schools
Jefferson County Public Schools

Louisiana
Caddo Parish School System
New Orleans Public Schools
Orleans Parish Schools

Massachusetts
Boston Public Schools
Burlington Public Schools
New Bedford Public Schools
Westford School District

Maryland
Baltimore City Public Schools

Maine
Auburn Maine School District
Maranacook Area School District
Medway Public Schools
Portland Public Schools
Maine AOS 92
Maine Regional School Unit 1
Maine Regional School Unit 13
Maine Regional School Unit 19
Maine Regional School Unit 21
Maine Regional School Unit 26
Maine Regional School Unit 29
Maine Regional School Unit 3
Maine Regional School Unit 4
Maine Regional School Unit 50
Maine Regional School Unit 64
Maine Regional School Unit 67
Maine Regional School Unit 71
Maine Regional School Unit 73
Maine School Administrative District 6
Maine School Administrative District 31
Maine School Administrative District 44
Maine School Administrative District 20
Maine School Administrative District 30
Maine AD 49
Maine School Union 122

Michigan
Ann Arbor Public Schools
Dearborn Public Schools
Detroit Public Schools
Rochester Community Schools
Taylor School District
Waverly Community Schools

Minnesota
Minneapolis Public Schools
Red Lake School District
St. James Public Schools, Dist. #840

Missouri
Kansas City Public Schools
Missouri Private School District

Mississippi
Louisville Municipal School District

Montana
Billings School District
Helena Public School District
Lame Deer Public School District

North Carolina
Guilford County Schools

New Hampshire
New Hampshire School Administrative Unit 16

New Jersey
Asbury Park Public School
Atlantic City Board of Education
Clifton Public Schools
East Orange Schools
Elizabeth Public Schools
Franklin Township Public Schools
Irvington Public Schools
Jersey City Public Schools
Montclair Public Schools
Newark Public Schools
Orange Public Schools
Paterson Public Schools
Riverside School District
Roselle Public Schools
Team Academy
Teaneck Public Schools
Woodbridge Township School District

New Mexico
Albuquerque Public Schools
Farmington Municipal School District

New York
New York City Department of Education
Bemus Point Central School District
Buffalo Public Schools
Candor Elementary School
Capital Preparatory Schools
Clarkstown Central School District
Dryden Central School District
Fredonia Central School District
Gowanda Central School District
Hannibal School District
Hastings-On-Hudson UFSD
Johnson City Central School District
Jordan-Elbridge Central School District
Medina Central School District
Mount Vernon City School District
Silver Creek Central Schools

Ohio
Columbus City Schools

Oklahoma
Durant Independent School District
Norman Public Schools

Oregon
Salem-Keizer Public Schools

Pennsylvania
School District of Philadelphia
Allentown School District
Butler County Public Schools
Conrad Weiser Area School District
Dallas School District
Ellwood Area City School District
Franklin Regional School District
Midland Borough School District
Northern Lebanon School District
Palmayra Area School District
Pittsburgh Public Schools
Richland School District
Rochester Area School District
Southern York County School District
Tulpehocken Area School District
Upper Dublin School District
Upper Merion Area School District
York City School District

Rhode Island
Central Falls School District
Warwick School District

Tennessee
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Capstone Education Group
Cheatham County School District
Franklin County School District
Hamilton County School District
Memphis City Schools
Rutherford County Schools
Shelby County School District
Warren County Schools

Texas
Dallas Independent School District
Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD
Grand Prairie Independent School District
Houston Independent School District
Katy Independent School District
Waxahachie Independent School District

Utah
Nebo School District

Virginia
Fairfax County Public Schools

Vermont
Bradford Schools

Washington
Edmonds School District
Highline School District
Seattle Public Schools
Toledo School District

Wisconsin
Chilton Public School District
Milwaukee Public Schools
School District of Waukesha

West Virginia
Mason County Schools

Wyoming
Unita County School District

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MUSIC AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Little Kids Rock Pedagogy *by David Wish*

A Note from the Author:

I went into teaching for the same reason that so many people are called to the profession. I believe in kids, in their amazing potential and that the future lies with them. By becoming a teacher, I hoped to make a difference in children's lives and, in so doing, make my own modest contribution to a better world for us all. The ten years I spent in the classroom were richly rewarding and only strengthened these beliefs.

Since the founding of Little Kids Rock, the media has often noted that I developed the pedagogy that guides our teachers while working as a first-grade, ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher. This is true. However, a more informative statement would be that I developed this new methodology precisely because I was an ESL teacher.

In the following article I explain how my formal training as an ESL teacher and the informal musical training I received as a youth outside of the public school system led me to the creation of a new, hybrid methodology that I call "Music As A Second Language." As with any pedagogy, "Music As A Second Language" is a tool for your teaching tool-belt, a spice for your instructional skillet. Please season your classes with it to suit your taste. My only hope is that you will find it useful as a means of bringing the transformational gift of music into your students' lives.

With my first ever guitar class at our first ever concert back in 1996.

Little Kids Rock approaches music as if it were a language, a second language. Why a second language? Because no one is born into a family where music is
the primary language.

Like spoken language, music can express the full range of human emotions and does so by using its own distinct grammar, meter, and vocabulary. Like language, it has both a 'spoken' and a written form.

There is certainly nothing new about likening music to a language. Poets, writers, and authors have been doing so for some time now...

"Music is the universal language of mankind."
      ~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

*"Music is the language of the spirit. It opens the secret of life bringing
 peace, abolishing strife."*
      ~Kahlil Gibran

*"Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and cannot
 remain silent."*
      ~Victor Hugo

"Music is well said to be the speech of angels."
      ~Thomas Carlyle

Many people say, 'music is a language,' but it is seldom taught as one."

**– Victor Wooten,
Bass Virtuoso**

Victor Wooten at a
Little Kids Rock School

Likening music to language is more than just an artistic flourish. The renowned and brilliant music educator, Dr. Shinichi Suzuki, had a language-based epiphany as he lamented the elitist nature of music education in his native Japan and how it prevented so many children from becoming music makers.

Suzuki marveled at the fact that virtually every child in Japan mastered the complex and challenging Japanese language by the tender age of five or six. He considered this commonplace occurrence a seminal cognitive accomplishment. If they could do this, he reasoned, why then couldn't they master the language of music since it was likely easier to do than learning to speak their native language? He believed this to be true for children the world over. If they could master their native language or mother tongue, they could certainly master the language of music.

Speaking at a festival in 1958, Dr. Suzuki succinctly summarized his feelings about the connection between language and music and how it impacted his methodology, which he referred to as "Talent Education." He said that he had:

> *"...realized that all children in the world show their splendid capacities by speaking and understanding their mother language, thus displaying the original power of the human mind. Is it not probable that this mother language method holds the key to human development? Talent Education has applied this method to the teaching of music: children, taken without previous aptitude or intelligence test of any kind, have almost without exception made great progress. This is not to say that everyone can reach the same level of achievement. However, each individual can certainly achieve the equivalent of his language proficiently in other fields."*

Suzuki was moved by the connection between language and music and was convinced that people's ability to master the complexities of speech was proof positive that all people had an innately musical nature. He employed some language-oriented techniques in his methodology (playing by ear, imitation) but did not take the analogy as far as we believe it can be taken.

Shinichi Suzuki

Taking "Music as a Language" Further

To explore how learning music might be akin to learning language it is worth asking a simple question: How is it that we all learn our native language in the first place? Luckily, linguists have studied this extensively and have a clear picture of how it all happens.

How We Acquire Language

Do you remember learning to talk as an infant? Probably not. That is because the process of speaking happens naturally and subconsciously for us. Here are the predictable stages that we all go through on the road to speaking:

> " *Art exists for the human species. I think that all of the people who love art, those who teach art... all of you should burn with the obligation to save the world."*
>
> **– Shinichi Suzuki**

Listening or "Pre-Production" (birth - 8 mos.)

We all begin life as a quivering, raw and inexperienced bundle of nerves. We can make noise to be sure (see figure A at right) and we do so at great volume at times. However, none of these primal wails or random body noises (ever burped a baby?) constitutes a true building block of language. At this point in our development we have only one linguistic skill...we can listen.

Infants spend their time listening to the language going on all around them and begin absorbing its sounds all the while. We typically listen for six to eight months to all the chatter going on around us. Infants begin to speak by simply listening to the people around them.

fig. A – Listening

Speech Approximation (8 months - 2 yrs.)

We leave the listening stage when we begin trying to imitate the sounds of the language that we hear all around us. Parents delight as their babies start to babble and to use "baby talk." This babbling is an approximation of true speech. What sound like "nonsensical" syllables are actually sounds derived from the language that the baby is trying to speak. As babies babble, adults babble back, completing the approximation of a conversation (and making the adults look pretty silly at the same time)!

Speech Emergence (2-3 years)

Many parents can remember the exact day and time that marked their own child's first word. Why? Because it is such an exciting event! We know intuitively that this marks a new stage for the child and also we know where the whole thing is headed.

fig. B – Approximation

Upon hearing that earth-shattering utterance (whether it be 'mama' or 'dada' or 'ball' or 'baby'), parents are likely to shout, "Eureka! She/he is talking!" That sounds a lot better than shouting, "She/he just entered the 'Speech emergence' stage of language acquisition!" However, that is precisely what happens when children start using single words.

After a while the single words are strung together in multiple-word strings like, "Mama, milk" or "Me go on." At this point the parents are likely to say, "She/he is speaking in sentences!" That sounds better than saying, "Wow!! Sally just crossed the threshold into a new stage of language acquisition known as 'Intermediate Fluency'!"

fig. C – Emergence

Intermediate Fluency (2.5 - 4 years)

During this stage of language development, children begin stringing words together in increasingly sophisticated ways and using language to communicate an expanding range of ideas, emotions, and needs.

Despite the fact that the child's speech may be replete with grammatical errors, adults generally focus on the meaning of the child's speech, recognize them for their communicative value, and are likely to offer much direct correction of speech errors. For example, look at the highly unlikely dialogue at right (figure D).

Why does the dialogue at right feel so "off"? Why do we feel uncomfortable for the child and perhaps feel annoyed by the adult? We understand what the child means and that is the purpose of language: communication. The adult in this fictitious scenario is belaboring points that are meaningless to the kid. Can't she just give the kid a break and give her some milk?

fig. D – Intermediate Fluency

Fluency (3-5 years)

During this stage of language development, children have developed what is commonly referred to as "native-like" proficiency. Their speech may still be a little rough around the edges and their vocabulary may be more limited than an adult native speaker's but the vast majority of grammatical rules and constructions have been internalized and the child is fully fluent.

It is important to note that the journey toward acquiring a first language lasts between three to five years and that the entire process is completely unconscious.

fig. E – Fluency

Reading and Writing (3-5 years)

The conscious "learning" of a native language begins as children are introduced to reading and writing. This happens for most children at the age of five or six. At this point they have mastered the spoken language and are ready to learn the much more abstract written components, and some years after that they begin to learn grammar. It is important to note that reading and writing are introduced only AFTER a child has achieved fluency in their native tongue.

fig. F– Reading and Writing

Second Language Learning and "Music as a Second Language"

We have covered how people start speaking their first language. However, music isn't anyone's primary language, so we need to now turn our attention to how people start speaking a second language.

I spent ten years working as a first and second grade teacher in some rough and tumble, low-income districts in California. I was trained as a bilingual schoolteacher. My students were native Spanish speakers and my job was to teach them to read and write in Spanish while at the same time helping them transition into English classes.

As a part of my training to teach non-English speakers, I studied the work of renowned linguist and educational researcher, Stephen Krashen, most notably his "Theory of Second Language Acquisition." As a bilingual person myself, I was blown away by his theories! They had a profound impact on my teaching and were the pedagogical foundation of my successes teaching early elementary bilingual classes.

Krashen's ideas also inspired me to teach music...in an entirely new way. To understand this we have to understand Krashen's theories.

A "Krash" Course on Krashen:
Theory of Second Language Acquisition

Allow me to paraphrase Krashen's five big ideas about second language acquisition.

Acquisition vs. Learning

There are two, separate ways for people to become bilingual. The first and most effective is the "acquired system" which is a natural, subconscious process similar to the way people pick up their primary language. It relies upon meaningful usage of the new language and natural communication. Speakers focus not on the "correctness" of their speech, but on the communicative act.

The second way of processing a second language is the "learned system." This relies on direct instruction and is a formal, conscious process. This results in academic knowledge about the language. For example, understanding specific grammar rules is taught. According to Krashen, the "learned system" is far less important and effective than the "acquired system."

The Monitor Hypothesis

The learned system is the one that consciously grapples with grammar and rules. It does so by means of what Krashen refers to as a "Monitor." Your Monitor is sort of like an internal language cop that gives you a pass or a ticket depending upon your use of grammar. If you have ever tried

Stephen Krashen

OUR METHOD

to speak in a second language and had a thought like, "The second person plural of the verb 'ir' is 'van,' but what would the command form of that be?" then you have had a run in with your own Monitor.

When a second-language learner attempts to speak he/she uses his/her Monitor to internally scan for errors, and uses the learned system to make corrections.

According to Krashen, the role of the Monitor should be minor, being used only to correct deviations from 'normal' speech and to give speech a more 'polished' appearance. Self-correction occurs when the learner uses the Monitor to correct a sentence after it is uttered.

Such self-monitoring and self-correction are the only functions of conscious language learning. Only the acquired system is able to produce spontaneous speech. The learned system is used to check what is being spoken. In other words, you can't rely on your internal Language Cop or Monitor to enable you to speak a second language.

The Natural Order Hypothesis

The acquisition of grammar follows a natural and predictable order. For a given language, certain grammatical rules tend to be acquired early while others are acquired late. This order is not independent of the learner's age. Krashen however points out that the implication of the natural order hypothesis is not that a language program syllabus should be based on the order found in the studies. In fact, he rejects grammatical sequencing as a means of language acquisition.

Input Hypothesis

According to Krashen, people acquire language when they receive "comprehensible input" or messages that they can understand. Put simply, if messages in a second language aren't consistently understandable to the learner, they cannot acquire a new language. Messages are understandable to second language learners when they are just one step beyond his/her current stage of linguistic competence. The input should be easy enough that they can understand it, but just beyond their level of competence. This is often referred to in ESL circles as "input + 1."

Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen claims that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a positive self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition.

A student's debilitating anxiety, low motivation, and low self-esteem can and often do combine to form a 'mental block' that prevents successful second-language acquisition. Krashen calls this mental block the "affective filter."

I call the "affective filter" every music teacher's worst enemy...

> "
>
> *Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drill."*
>
> **-Stephen Krashen**

but more on that later.

Krashen's insights and theories form the cornerstone of much English as a Second Language (ESL) programming for immigrant children in the U.S. today. School districts in cities like Los Angeles, New York, Dallas, and others provide extensive ESL offerings for the very significant portion of their students who are non-native English learners. Teachers who have been trained to teach ESL in these communities and others like them learn Krashen's theories and their implications on language instruction.

My English as a Second Language Classes

Back in 1996, I was deeply immersed in "teaching" English as a Second Language. I use quotation marks around the word 'teaching' because I had been trained in Krashen's Theories of Second Language Acquisition and my teaching was deeply informed by his ideas.

In my first-grade classroom there was no tedious study of grammar, no drills to elicit speech, no conjugation of irregular verbs, and the direct "teaching" of English was a rarity. There was constant and plentiful exposure to comprehensible input in my classroom. There was a boatload of realia, real world objects such piñatas, toys, coins, tools, etc., that successful second-language teachers use to illustrate and explore everyday living. Along with all the basics, culturally relevant and interesting topics were at the heart of our curriculum and conversations.

Here is what I mean by relevant conversations. In my classroom a student might say something like:

"My mam worg Buger Kin."
(misspelling included to emphasize pronunciation)

Translated into standard English this would read:

"My mom works at Burger King."

What a rich topic of conversation! "What is your mom's name?" "Which Burger King does she work at, the one nearby or one further away?" "Do you eat there sometimes?" "Does she like it?"

Other students would pursue these conversations with linguistic abandon, pointing, gesticulating, miming, and using English in ways that might give the folks over at Webster's Dictionary or Strunk & White a major coronary.

"I Buger Kin me!"
"I like, I like!"
"Me papá too, he go!"
"Me mom she not go. She have baby house. She have another."

Before you knew it, the kids and I could be fully engaged in conversations about employment, the neighborhood, their families

> **"**
> *I have thoroughly enjoyed watching my students grow musically, but just as importantly, in their own personal lives, through increased self-esteem, confidence, and creativity."*
>
> **– Toby Quarles, Herndon Magnet School; Shreveport, LA**

and the like: all from that simple sentence, "My mam worg Buger Kin." And all thanks to Krashen's "Acquired System" of language learning.

If I had wanted to focus on the "learned system" of language acquisition with my six-year olds (which would have been very a sadistic thing to do) I would have treated "My mam worg Buger Kin" not as a conversational treasure trove but as a problematic jumble, a tangle of errors and mispronunciations in desperate need of correction. Where would I begin with the "learned system"? My responses might look a little like these:

A Learned System Repsonse to "Buger Kin:"

"First of all, the word "mom" is pronounced (mäm) and the word 'work' ends with a "k" sound. More importantly, 'work' is the infinitive verb form and the student needs the second person singular form of the verb which is "works," as in, "My mom works." It is 'Burger' not 'Buger' and it's 'King' not 'Kin.' Also, your sentence is missing a preposition after the word "works." Does your mom work at, for, by or with Burger King?"

Wow. That would be six "corrections" or "interventions" for a sentence that has only five words. What kid learning English for the first time would want to speak next in class after a series of rebukes like these? Also, who would be able to even remember what we were all talking about in the first place? Conversation over!

Krashen once said:

"If the student isn't motivated, if self-esteem is low, if anxiety is high, if the student is on the defensive, if the student thinks the language class is a place where his weaknesses will be revealed, he may understand the input but it won't penetrate. It won't reach those parts of the brain that facilitate language acquisition."

In the "Learned System" response to "Buger Kin" example above, we would certainly create this kind of negative environment for the student. No self-respecting second language teacher who embraced Krashen's framework would teach like this because it would raise their students' affective filters. Directly correcting errors too early on in the process of language acquisition is a serious no-no as the Burger King example illustrates.

If we scrutinize the footnotes in the "Learned System" response to "Buger Kin" paragraph above, we will see that it violates all the basic precepts of second-language acquisition theory by emphasizing the conscious, direct teaching of grammatical rules and structures instead of allowing for free communication and the gradual, unconscious acquisition of language skills in the natural context of conversational exchange.

But what does all of this have to do with music?

Video of Krashen's Language Acquisition Theory:
http://www.littlekidsrock.org/language-acquisition/

Music as a Second Language: My Guitar Class and My "Eureka!" Moments

To become an English as a Second Language teacher I took all of the required college level coursework, completed my fieldwork and took all the state tests you might expect would be needed for a specialty degree. My training was rigorous, focused, structured, and very formal.

My training as a guitar player was anything but!

I grew up playing the guitar in high school the way most people do: with the help of friends, by reading guitar rags, by trying to copy the sounds coming from my favorite records (yes, records...I'm old!), by learning the names of curious shapes on the guitar fretboard known to musical cognoscenti by the name of "chords" and from lessons from long-haired guitar teachers in music stores. These lessons were highly infrequent and generally consisted of the teacher showing me how to play my favorite songs. I say, "showing me" because it was a physical demonstration of each tune, not a written transmission of the music.

Over time, I became more and more proficient on the guitar. By the time I began teaching my first-grade ESL classes, I had become a competent guitar "noodler" and was playing in rock bands and jazz combos by night. I adored music making and found it to be one of the most fulfilling parts of my life. My other great love was teaching kids. It is a passion that all committed teachers feel and share.

Little Kids Rock was founded when my love for teaching children and my formal schooling in Second Language Learning combined unexpectedly with my love for playing. Interestingly enough, my love for playing was born outside of a school setting and was decidedly informal.

It all started one day after school in 1996 when I watched a documentary film called, Gypsy Guitar and the Legacy of Django Reinhardt. Django Reinhardt was a French gypsy guitar legend who is considered to be one of the seminal geniuses of the instrument and one who famously never learned to read or write music. In fact, he never really learned to read or write in his native French.

Django is a folk hero to French gypsies and the film featured very young children emulating him. I was amazed at the level of skill these self-taught youngsters displayed. A guitarist myself, I believed my own first-grade students possessed their own untapped musical abilities. I resolved to teach my first-grade students how to play guitar. I called some musician friends to see if they had old beat-up instruments they could donate, and an early incarnation of Little Kids Rock was born.

My school had a vocal music teacher who came in once a week, but he only spent about 20 minutes with the kids and they would spend the time singing songs like "Polly Wolly Doodle." My students responded even to this limited program simply because children are naturally inclined to engage with music. But I knew this approach did not take advantage of my students' deeper interest in music and their capacity to learn more sophisticated material.

First Day of Guitar Class, First Frustration:
After I decided to teach my first-graders to play guitar, I went to the music store to try and find a method book and curriculum that I could use as a basis for my teaching. I was sorely disappointed by what I found. The books all focused on note reading and on theory. The repertoire consisted of tunes like "She'll Be Coming Around The Mountain" or even worse: inane musical etudes with titles like "The Old Green Turtle" or "Let's Play on the E String!"

Yuck.

On the first day of our new guitar class, I asked my students to tell me the names of all their favorite songs and all their favorite musicians. Their responses came swiftly and enthusiastically: "Selena! Ricky Martin! Bidi Bidi Bom Bom! Maria Maria! The Backstreet Boys!"

But exactly how had I been taught? Upon reflection my own musical education seemed so haphazard and random. It felt like a gradual, unconscious process. It was more like musical osmosis than straightforward "learning." I'd pick up a new chord here and there, a new song, a new rhythm, a new technique. "Well," I reasoned, "that seemed to work for me so we can try that."

I started by teaching the kids a few, simple chords which I called "shapes" since that was how I had thought of them when I first started. I immediately tied the "shapes" back to songs that they knew and loved. I knew that changing chords would be hard at first so I came up with simple ways of removing or minimizing that obstacle. I would divide the room into chord groups. During our first week of class we played whole songs that way: one chord at a time,

> *Music must not be approached from its intellectual, rational side, nor should it be conveyed to the child as a system of algebraic symbols, or as the secret writing of a language with which he has no connection."*
>
> **– Zoltán Kodály in 1929**

OUR METHOD

round-robin style.

I used almost no musical lingo. Instead of teaching kids note values, I would clap and stomp and wave my arms. Instead of talking about what a chords were, we would just play them. Instead of learning about melody, we simply sang ones we already knew.

As always happens, some kids progressed more quickly than the others. This proved only to be an asset to the group as a whole. Their increasing proficiency lifted and supported their peers. The kids who played with the greatest facility kept their eyes on me while we played. The other kids kept their eyes on those more advanced kids. It was a virtuous cycle.

If you could only have heard those earliest classes...what a messy, well-meaning mash up of sound it was! Some kids would play a chord one fret above where it should be played. Others would strum extraneous strings. Still others would strum but few of their fretted notes rang out. "Mistakes" were everywhere. But so were the smiles!
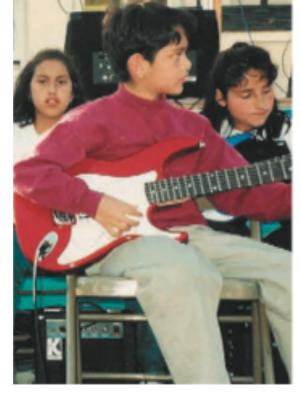
I felt intuitively that correcting kids in front of their peers would raise their anxiety levels. Because we would always play as a large group, it was very easy for me to walk around the room and discretely move a kid's finger up or down a fret, point to a place on the fretboard they should be heading to or encourage someone to curve their wrist more.

Any corrective cues I used were almost always non-verbal. Hand signals, slight adjustments of positioning and touching strings that needed to be deadened: simple interventions like these would go largely unnoticed by all save the student they were intended for. That's how I wanted it. I never went for 100% perfect from the kids: far from it. My corrections were aimed at small, incremental steps forward.

The kids progressed and their repertoires and proficiency grew. We gave concerts for the rest of the school and the parents and kids loved it. The kids and I were having a ball and the environment in the classes was motivating yet easy and relaxed.

A student named Sergio Betancourth came up to me with his mother. I could tell that he wanted to tell me something but was feeling a little bashful. With some gentle prodding from his mom he finally said, "Mr. Wish, I wrote a song. Would you like to hear it?"

"Of course!" I said, not knowing quite what to expect.
He sat down and played me a catchy tune that sounded like something the Rolling Stones might have written. It was called "Little Dinosaur" and by the time he was through performing it, *I was floored*.

"You wrote that?" I asked. "It's amazing!"

I was mightily impressed by Sergio's song. and we spent time recording it and getting the rest of the class involved in learning

Sergio Betancourth,
Composer at age 8

it and performing it. However, I didn't have much time to marvel over Sergio's singular brilliance because many of my other students began 'writing' their own, original songs too. I used quotation marks because there was no actual musical notation involved.

They'd come to class with lyrics and melodies in their heads and chord progressions and rhythmic figures in their fingers. We would sit around in class and exchange excited ideas about arrangements. "I will do this," one student would say, showing a riff or phrase, "while you do something else at the same time," inferring a bass line or some other part.

I was floored! These little guys were composing music and improvising but I had never shown them how. I had never asked them to write or to improvise. It just happened. But why?

It hit me like a ton of bricks. I was teaching music to my kids in the same way I was teaching them English as a Second Language. In fact, I was teaching Music as a Second Language. The evidence for this was everywhere. Everything about my quirky little program suddenly made sense when looked at through this lens.

Looked at Through This Lens:
Why did I teach kids to "play" music first and not to read it? Because we learn to speak our native language before we learn to read or write it. The same approach is best applied to the acquisition of a second language. Playing music while unencumbered by the conscious knowledge of rules and theory is the equivalent of speaking. Think of Krashen's Monitor hypothesis. The student who is acutely aware of the names of the notes they are playing, the written version of what they are rendering, and the theory guiding it may be likened to the struggling foreign language student who uses the conscious study of grammar as their gateway to speaking.

Why did I allow for, embrace, and even encourage sloppy approximations of the music the kids attempted to play? Because music, like language, is best learned in conversation with others who have already achieved some level of fluency and in such a way as allows for uncorrected "mistake making." I knew that too much direct correction too early in the process of speaking makes a learner feel self-conscious and judged and is sure to raise their affective filter.
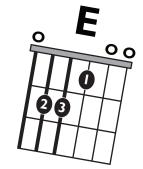
Why did I show kids how to play chords but not how to understand the theory behind them, the degrees of the parent scale, the harmony at work within the notes, the basic musical "grammar" at play? Because, as thinkers such as Krashen and Noam Chomsky note, grammar is not intended to be learned but rather to be acquired unconsciously through usage. The notion of comprehensible input is very much at work when we dole out the least possible amount of info with the greatest possible utility to a learner.
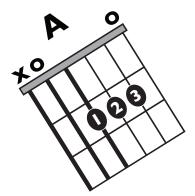
These linguistic insights along with others had all unconsciously

"
Country music is just three chords and the truth"

– Harlan Howard

informed the way I was teaching my guitar class. I only became consciously aware of what I was doing when the need to train other teachers became a pressing personal need.

Although I had started my guitar class solely for my first-grade students, many other students in the school wished to participate in my class. I opened section after section both before and after school, but ultimately the demand outstripped my schedule and I was forced to look to my peers, other musical, committed public school teachers, for help.

I began training other schoolteachers as a means of serving the children that I could not personally reach myself. The trainings forced me to consciously understand and explain the pedagogical underpinnings of my work in a manner that would be useful to other teachers. It also enabled me to share the curriculum I had developed with other educators.

The experiment of training other teachers worked! Soon there were other classes like mine, run by different teachers in different locals. The story of Little Kids Rock is essentially the story of how the Music as a Second Language pedagogy has been propagated across the country and how that has impacted teachers and students alike in their experience of public school music programs.

Conclusion:

Like spoken language, music expresses the full range of human emotions and does so by using its own distinct grammar, meter, cadence, and phonemes. It has both a spoken and written form. Music, like language, must be learned from others who have already achieved some level of fluency. Finally, both language and music are primarily vehicles for human communication.

Infants learn to speak by listening to the people around them. They begin copying the sounds they hear and in a few years time they are able to communicate. A typical three-year-old child knows how to say hundreds of nouns and verbs but is unable to read anything. Children are usually not formally introduced to written language until they reach the age of five. At this point they have mastered the spoken language and are ready for the much more abstract written component.

Visualize what it would look like if we reversed this process and began teaching children to read and write as a means of learning to speak. We would have to "teach" the child to speak through an abstract symbol system known as the alphabet. We would have to teach a child how to recognize the letters "m" and "a" before they could say and use the word "mama." Flash cards and grammar drills would have to take the place of natural conversation. Speaking and listening would take a backseat to direct, linguistic instruction. Would that feel strange to you, teaching an infant or very young child to speak through the use of reading and writing?

And yet this is exactly how music is taught to children in much of the West today. When students arrive at school, they usually have not had the opportunity to play with real musical instruments. Instead of first teaching children to produce music on instruments through imitation and approximation, students are immediately taught how to read music BEFORE they can play.

Consider the following table. It juxtaposes the trajectory of a public school student's language and music instruction

Stages of Language Acquisition	Stages of "Music Acquisition"
Listening Stage *(0 To 6 Months)* Child is in listening mode only. Sound production is limited to crying, sneezing etc.	**Listening Stage** *(0 To 5 Years)* Notice how much longer many children can spend without "making noise" on musical instruments.
Approximation *(6 Months to 2.5 Years)* Children start to use "baby talk" and individual words. Point where parents often say, "She/he is talking!"	**Approximation** *(6 Months to 2.5 Years)* Music is taught in a cursory manner. Focus is often on singing and clapping out basic rhythms).
Intermediate Fluency *(2.5 Months to 5 Years)* Child is stringing words together & increasingly uses language to get needs met. Parents hear utterances like "Mama... milk... now" & may say "He/she is speaking in sentences!"	**Intermediate Fluency** *(9 Years to High School +)* Formal instrumental instruction begins with technique and reading being taught simultaneously. Emphasis is placed upon playing through reading
Fluency *(3 to 5 Years)* Child has achieved "native-like" proficiency in their mother- tongue.	**Fluency** *(High School +)* Child has achieved "native-like" proficiency in their mother- tongue. Child is proficient on their instrument and can express
Reading & Writing *(6 Years +)* Child begins to read and put own thoughts into writing.	**Reading & Writing** *(High School +, or Never)* Child begins to read and put own thoughts into writing.

OUR METHOD

Notice how much longer it can take a student to acquire the requisite skills necessary for a level of fluency and self-expression on an instrument.

This comparison has implications for how we feel music can be taught. Insofar as it is possible, music instruction should emulate language instruction. Speech is not best learned as a series of discreet skills mastered out of context. Nor is it learned by mastering the alphabet and decoding words. Rather, it is acquired in a meaningful, context-rich environment and with the invaluable assistance of other "speakers."

The Music as a Second Language approach to music instruction is, at first, deliberately non-notational. By emphasizing performance and composition over reading and writing, students acquire musical skills in a natural way and oftentimes at an accelerated pace. This creates a context rich in musical experience for young learners. This is well facilitated in an environment that encourages and allows for Approximation and that keeps students' affective filters low.

Learning to play exclusively through the use of written music and the explanation of theory is akin to using the Learned System of Language acquisition. However, the research in second-language learning indicates that most people will not successfully acquire a second language using the Learned System. This is one of the reasons why so many people who study a foreign language in school for many years graduate unable to really speak the new language.

I believe that music education in our schools and in private lessons can suffer from similar failures. Many students will study music for years and still graduate unable to really play. Attrition becomes a problem as well because students may feel uninspired or dejected by their lack of progress. They may simply elect not to pursue music classes. This is caused, at least in part, by the Learned System that is at work in more traditional programs.

In no way do I seek to denigrate or belittle notation-based instruction because its value is self-evident and irrefutable. I simply hold that the teaching of reading and writing in music is better taught in a sequence that resembles the sequencing of the teaching of reading and writing that we experience in our native language.

Ideally a child has the opportunity to "speak" or "play" music for a few years before they are introduced to the written system. Once a child can play and feels competent on their instrument they will have established a base from which reading music will have a much more meaningful context.

Music as a Language VS. Music as Math
Spoken language has been with us for much longer than written

language. Writing, the use of abstract symbols as a means of preserving language and making possible its precise transport through time and space, has only been with us for the past 5,000 years. Written music is newer still.

Written language is not language itself. It is a code for the pronunciation of language. The simple act of reading words will not give you an understanding of their meaning, of their utility. You must come to the task of reading with some degree of linguistic fluency or else reading becomes mere code-breaking. Ask anyone who has learned to read German so that they could sing opera or learned to read Hebrew so that they could have a bar or bat mitzvah. Unless they speak those languages, they cannot understand the meaning of what they are reading. Even if their pronunciation is flawless, if you speak to them in German or Hebrew they will be entirely lost.

I call this "The Music As Math" approach to teaching music. Here, music is treated as an abstract code that must be cracked by the learner. It can and does produce virtuosic code-breakers, people who can take a complex, written piece and render it with great emotion and beauty. However, anyone who has spent time with folks who have learned using "The Music As Math" approach exclusively will know that many of the players it produces are completely unaware of the underlying language of music that is at work.

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{-x^2}\, dx = \sqrt{\pi}$$

Ask a person taught using The Music As Math approach what chord progressions are used in a piece, what scales are employed, what key a soloist would play in and they too are completely lost. They cannot improvise, cannot compose, and cannot explain what they are playing. In the most extreme cases, if you remove the sheet music from the stand in front of the musician, you literally remove the person's ability to play anything.

$$+ \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left(a_n \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} + b_n \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} \right)$$

But The Music As Math approach has much more dire consequences than simply limiting the learner's understanding of what they are playing or whether or not they can compose, improvise, etc. The Music As Math approach ensures that large numbers of people will never learn to play music at all. Think of the legions of people who have taken music lessons in school or privately and not "stuck with it" but either quit or left the lessons entirely unable to play. This is an almost archetypical outcome for many learners.

$$= \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

I believe that this unintended yet harmful fallout from The Music As Math approach derives as follows. In basic mathematics, each question has one right answer and an infinite number of wrong answers. Seven times seven is forty-nine. Period. No room for interpretation here. Learning music in an environment that reduces it to math removes the learner's ability to approximate and will certainly help raise their affective filters.

Remember the "Buger Kin" example from earlier in the chapter? Remember how many "corrections" we were able to insert into a conversational sentence? Well, what if I said that before you could

> "
> *For the child to develop literacy, the child has to assume that she's going to be successful"*
>
> **– Frank Smith**

touch a note on the piano you needed to know:

> How to read the treble clef
> How to read the bass clef
> How to tell the difference between a sharp and a flat
> How to tell the value of a note (8th, 16th, etc.)
> How to tell what key you are in
> How to use correct fingering

Can you see how this environment might raise a learner's anxiety level or affective filter? I believe that one of the main reasons that people who ARE exposed to music leave it or deem themselves to be "non-musical," "talentless," or "tone deaf" is simply because they are intimidated by the methodology they are exposed to and they become unable to process the information and learn. This is exactly why Krashen feels that learners get blocked when they are exposed to a second language; their affective filters kick into gear and they shut down.

Here I will paraphrase Krashen who, during a talk, asked his audience to picture the perfect second-language classroom. In this imaginary classroom, he said, if you can't understand what the teacher is saying, it is their fault, not yours. In this class there is no judgment, little "correction" and much meaningful conversation and the conversation consists of comprehensible input.

If we wish to teach children to "speak" the language of music, the process of making music has to be emphasized over and above the act of reciting music.

We as teachers are extremely powerful role models in this regard. If we denigrate or belittle our own musicality (or our own creativity, in general) we model an unhealthy attitude that kids will pick up on. Anxiety is a sure by-product of this. If however, we are comfortable with our own creative selves, the children learn from this as well. A comfortable teacher makes for a comfortable class.
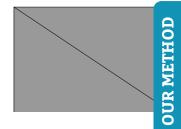
Music Education: Standing on Its Own Two Feet

The research regarding the value of music education is ample and conclusive. Children who receive music classes evidence positive growth in a number of areas. Their mathematical and scientific thought processes are enhanced and a general psychosocial gain is experienced. However, focusing on these well-documented facts might lead you to believe that music education was akin to oat bran: dull but good for you. We at Little Kids Rock know a secret that is often left out of conversations about the value of music education...

Playing Music is Fun!

Just like conversation is fun! This critical fact is much maligned by shortsighted budget cutters and ill-advised policy makers who confuse "fun" with "frivolous." This has had dire consequences indeed for music programs nationally. Today, a shrinking number of kids in our public schools receive any form of arts education. People who support music education are constantly coming up against the notion that an academic pursuit that is fun must be of little real

OUR METHOD

value to the students.

The "If-it's-fun-it's-frivolous" school of thought has had historical parallels in other areas of academia as well. Ellen Goodman of the Detroit Free Press wrote about the impact that Dr. Seuss had on reading programs nationally. "[Forty] years ago, Dr. Suess... turned out The Cat in The Hat, a little volume of absurdity that worked like a karate chop on the weary world of Dick, Jane and Spot." Today the idea that reading should be fun for children is widely accepted. We'd like to see that same wisdom inform people's take on music education as well.

> *Teach music and singing at school in such a way that it is not a torture but a joy for the pupil;instill a thirst for finer music in him, a thirst which will last for a lifetime."*
>
> **– Zoltán Kodály in 1929**

Wisdom Nugget

Laughing So Hard We Cry

As bilingual teachers, my peers and I would frequently marvel at how ineffective foreign language programs are in our public schools. Here is a popular joke we used to tell that shines a light on the abysmal outcomes of our nation's foreign language programs:

JOKE #1

What do you call someone who speaks *two* languages?

Bilingual.

What do you call someone who speaks *three* languages?

Trilingual.

What do you call someone who speaks *just one?*

An American?

JOKE
#2

After all, isn't the kid who takes four years of French or Spanish in high school but graduates barely being able to ask for the bathroom almost an archetype?'

MODERN BAND

MODERN BAND:
AN EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT

Modern Band Defined:

Most public school music performance programs fit neatly into one of four distinct categories: Concert Band, Jazz Band, Orchestra and Chorus; each of which has instruction that emphasizes prescribed canons played on instruments standard to a corresponding musical genre. At schools with robust music programs, all of these ensembles may exist harmoniously under a single roof. Other schools may offer fewer choices, due to a lack of resources, enrollment or budgetary constraints.

Modern Band is a new school based music program that utilizes popular music as its central canon. Modern band teaches students to perform the music they know and love and to compose and improvise. Styles that are studied include rock, pop, reggae, hip-hop, rhythm & blues, electronic dance music, and other contemporary styles as they emerge. Modern Band also utilizes (but is not limited to) the musical instruments that are common to these genres: guitar, bass, drums, piano, voice and technology.

Modern Band programming has been officially adopted into the music curriculum of rural, suburban and urban districts throughout the country. It has allowed districts to not only increase and diversity their offerings, but has also allowed them to increase participation in their music programs, especially where music serves as an elective at the middle and high school levels. Nearly 10 million students attend public school districts where Modern Band is offered.

"

Whether it's hot funk, cool punk, even if it's old junk it's still rock and roll to me."

– Billy Joel

Video about Modern Band at:
www.littlekidsrock.org/modernband

The History of Modern Band

The term "Modern Band" was coined a number of years ago by Little Kids Rock founder David Wish as a means of framing part of the national dialogue around music education. It's worth understanding how and why this happened.

Little Kids Rock began in 2002 as a small after school music program in a handful of public schools in the San Francisco Bay Area. All of the original Little Kids Rock teachers were general education teachers who volunteered their time to offer enrichment classes to their students at the end of the day. This was due to the fact that the district lacked funding for enough music teachers to adequately serve all students and Little Kids Rock was born in part to address this specific shortfall.

By 2007, the program had grown to serve nearly 20,000 students in a dozen cities. The profile of the average Little Kids Rock teacher had also changed significantly. Over half of all teachers were now full-time music teachers. They were running their Little Kids Rock classes during regular school hours, offering them alongside existing music classes such as Jazz Band and Orchestra.

As we evaluated our reach during regular school hours, we were surprised (and delighted) to learn that in schools with Little Kids Rock programming, 15–33% of the students were participating in the program. This led to an epiphany of sorts.

Little Kids Rock had become much more than just an "extra" add on to a district's music program. It was capable of serving as many kids as other established music performance programs. For example, we could look at a district and see that their Little Kids Rock programming was reaching as many children as their Jazz or Marching Bands.

It was a pivotal moment in 2008 when Melanie Faulkner, the Supervisor of Elementary Music at the School District of Hillsborough County commented on the growth of Little Kids Rock in her district, the nation's eighth most populous.

Faulkner explained how Little Kids Rock was creating a large-scale, alternative music program throughout her schools. She wanted to vertically articulate the program so that children in elementary, middle and high school could participate. For Little Kids Rock, this was a tipping point in the organization's vision for its programming. "Modern Band" should be offered to students from primary school to graduation, just like Chorus or Concert Band. Bringing this idea to other district leaders was met with an instant enthusiasm and readiness for change and the movement began just that simply.

By 2009, district leaders in cities like New York, Tampa, Los Angeles, Dallas, and Chicago had partnered with Little Kids Rock to facilitate successful, large-scale Modern Band programming in their schools. Around this time, the organization began working with these partner districts to consider the adoption of Modern Band as a

MODERN BAND

district-wide program designed to take an equal seat alongside of other existing music programs.

However, the term "Modern Band" did not become a part of the vocabulary until later in that year when these new insights led Wish to write an article on the subject. It was entitled, "Rock Their Worlds: On the Need for a Fifth Stream of Music" and in it Wish frames the state of U.S. public school music programs in a new and novel way:

"Traditionally, public school music performance programs have consisted of four distinct categories or 'streams': Concert Band, Jazz Band, Orchestra and Chorus. At schools with robust music programs, all four of these streams may exist harmoniously under a single roof. Other schools may have any combination of these offerings.

The most recent stream of music education to entrench itself in the U.S. public school system is Jazz Band which rolled out on a national level in the 1970s. Forward-thinking educators of the day saw that music education was in need of a refresh. This happened at a time when the commercial appeal of jazz music was waning but recognition of its importance as a cultural treasure was growing.

However, as it was initially being integrated into schools, the newness and novelty of [teaching Jazz to kids] led its proponents to call it by the less threatening (though more confusing) name of 'Stage Band.' Forty years have passed and jazz is no longer perceived as a threat."

The article goes on to propose the broad adoption of a "fifth steam" of music education by the U.S. public school system. It does so on the grounds of both modernizing curriculum and expanding access to music education while strengthening children's connection to school in general:

"In the sixty years since jazz was at the top of the U.S. charts, an awful lot has happened in the broader world of music.

The concept of a fifth stream of music education is so new that, like Jazz Band before it, it lacks a definitive name. I have taken the liberty of naming it 'Modern Band.' Modern Band can and does bridge the unnecessary chasm existing between the music that our children experience in schools and the music they experience in their communities.

Focusing on the music that is familiar to our students in their schools allows them to see themselves reflected in the curriculum. By validating and leveraging their cultural capital, we can forge stronger bonds between traditionally marginalized students and the schools that serve them."

It is further noted that the new stream of music education that Wish advocates for does not solely benefit students:

"Increasingly, music educators themselves feel the strain between their own experiences of music in the world and music as they have been trained to teach it. Such is the impact that popular music has had on our culture for more than half a century.

Newly minted (and not so newly minted) music teachers are also the

products of the same cultural shift that has transformed the face of music. Simply stated, they are part of one of the Rock 'N' Roll generations. I emphasize the word 'generations' because there are now at least three of them. Apologies to Roger Daltrey."

It was true that Little Kids Rock had started as an after-school program that established beachhead music programs at many schools with no music programs whatsoever. The organization accomplished this by training general education teachers who could play and who were passionate about music to teach Little Kids Rock classes after school. However, the brisk demand from music teachers and the size and scope of their Little Kids Rock programs was very substantial. For example, the average general education teacher at a school with no music program was serving 15–30 kids in an after school setting while our average full-time music teacher was serving between 120–200.

We started referring to our programs as "Modern Band" classes.

Modern Band Repertoire and Instrumentation

A Jazz Band may focus on the music of Duke Ellington or Count Basie and will likely use trumpets, saxophones, trombones, and a rhythm section. Orchestral Programs may focus on Beethoven or Mozart and will likely use violins, violas, cellos, wind instruments, and the like. A Modern Band focuses on the commercially relevant music of the past fifty years and uses this music's core instruments of guitar, bass, drum set, keyboard, voice, and technology to do so.

The repertoire of each of these types of music programs is complex and can be a little overwhelming at first. For example, jazz fans will likely feel that Louis Armstrong and Ornette Coleman are stylistically worlds apart and yet we accepted that their music is best addressed in a Jazz Band environment. Likewise, the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and Albert Schnittke feel similarly disparate. And how about the music of Chuck Berry, Lady Gaga and Metallica?

Popular music presents us with a dizzying and still-growing array of styles to consider. Rock, disco, reggae, heavy metal, rhythm and blues, hip hop, punk, country, reggaeton, pop, and electronic dance music are some of the names on the list of styles and many of these can be divided into sub genres. What does all this mean for

music education?

This brings to mind the words of famed piano man Billy Joel when he astutely pointed to the answer in a clever lyric from his classic tune, "Still Rock 'n' Roll To Me":

"Whether it's hot funk, cool punk, even if it's old junk it's still rock and roll to me."

Joel is saying that, despite the surface differences between these genres, they are all built on the same musical foundations. Though a Taylor Swift fan and a Metallica Fan might passionately argue that the music of these artists has nothing whatsoever in common, there is compelling evidence to the contrary.

The musical DNA of these styles is very close. Most pop songs:

- Are in 4/4 or 3/4 time
- Stick to a single key
- Use three to six chords at most
- Feature a melody from a major or minor scale
- Use diatonic chords (few altered or extended chords)
- Use a handful of standard song forms (eg. AABA, AA, ABAB, AABC)
- Are written by "untrained" musicians

The table on the facing page is an excellent illustration of many similarities that lend cohesion and credibility to the notion of a Modern Band "canon." You will see that a half-century of popular tunes listed in chronological order from the music of today all the way back to the 1950s.

At first blush, there are so man different styles of music here that it is hard to see how they might all be addressed in a single stream of music education. Doo-wop, disco, country, rock, punk and the like can't possibly have that much in common...can they? Yes, they can!

Notice that the last column of the table shows which chords are used in the composition (transposed to the key of "C"). The same four chords are the basic building blocks of all these tunes in all of these styles. Teaching these four chords can unlock a vast repertoire and other musical vistas for us as educators and for our students as learners.

"

"We are excited because we have been working with Little Kids Rock for many years and we've seen how effective the work is with our teachers... We hope that this becomes a model for other large school systems in the United States to follow."

– Paul L. King, Executive Director, New York City Office of Arts and Special Projects

What do the following songs have in common?

Artist	Song Title	Year	Modern Band Genres	Chords
David Guetta	"Titanium"	2010's	Pop Rock	C, Am, F, G
Lady Gaga	"Edge of Glory"	2010's	Pop	C, Am, F, G
Fun.	"We Are Young"	2010's	Pop Rock	C, Am, F, G
Alicia Keys	"Girl on Fire"	2010's	Pop Rock	C, Am, F, G
Justin Beiber	"Beauty and the Beat"	2010's	Pop	C, Am, F, G
Of Monsters and Men	"Little Talks"	2010's	Pop Rock	C, Am, F, G
Pink	"Try"	2010's	Pop Rock	C, Am, F, G
Eminem featuring Rihanna	"Love the Way You Lie"	2010s	Hip hop	C, Am, F, G
Adele	"Someone Like You"	2010s	Pop, Soul	C, Am, F, G
Train	"Hey Soul Sister"	2000's	Pop rock, Folk rock	C, Am, F, G
Akon	"Beautiful"	2000's	Rap	C, Am, F, G
3OH!3	"Don't Trust Me"	2000's	Pop rap, Dance-pop	C, Am, F, G
Lady Gaga	"Paparazzi"	2000's	Electronic dance	C, Am, F, G
Beyoncé	"If I Were A Boy"	2000's	Pop, Folk rock	C, Am, F, G
The Offspring	"You're Gonna Go Far, Kid"	2000's	Punk	C, Am, F, G
Lady Gaga	"Poker Face"	2000's	Synthpop, Dance-pop	C, Am, F, G
MGMT	"Kids"	2000's	Indie pop	C, Am, F, G
The Fray	"You Found Me"	2000's	Pop, Alternative rock	C, Am, F, G
Lighthouse Family	"High"	1990s	Soul, Pop	C, Am, F, G
Natalie Imbruglia	"Torn"	1990s	Pop rock	C, Am, F, G
Eagle Eye Cherry	"Save Tonight"	1990s	Rock	C, Am, F, G
The Smashing Pumpkins	"Bullet With Butterfly Wings"	1990s	Alternative rock	C, Am, F, G
Aqua	"Barbie Girl"	1990s	Bubblegum pop	C, Am, F, G
Blink-182	"Dammit"	1990s	Pop Punk	C, Am, F, G
Spice Girls	"2 Become 1"	1990s	Pop	C, Am, F, G
Andrea Bocelli	"Time To Say Goodbye"	1990's	Operatic pop	C, Am, F, G
Green Day	"When I Come Around"	1990s	Pop Punk	C, Am, F, G
Air Supply	"All Out of Love"	1980's	Rock Ballad	C, Am, F, G
Richard Marx	"Right Here Waiting"	1980's	Rock Ballad	C, Am, F, G
Billy Joel	"We Didn't Start the Fire"	1980's	Rock	C, Am, F, G
Michael Jackson	"Man in the Mirror"	1980s	R&B, Pop	C, Am, F, G
U2	"With Or Without You"	1980s	Electronic pop	C, Am, F, G
a-ha	"Take On Me"	1980s	Synthpop	C, Am, F, G
Alphaville	"Forever Young"	1980s	New Wave, Synthpop	C, Am, F, G
Toto	"Africa"	1980s	Rock	C, Am, F, G
Journey	"Don't Stop Believin'"	1980s	Rock	C, Am, F, G
Rasperries	"I Wanna Be With You"	1970's	Pop, Rock	C, Am, F, G
Led Zeppelin	"D'yer Mak'er"	1970's	Rock	C, Am, F, G
Barry Manilow	"Mandy"	1970's	Rock Ballad	C, Am, F, G
Elton John	"Crocodile Rock"	1970's	Pop Rock	C, Am, F, G
Nazareth	"Love Hurts"	1970's	Rock	C, Am, F, G
The Village People	"YMCA"	1970's	Disco	C, Am, F, G
Bob Marley	"No Woman No Cry"	1970s	Reggae	C, Am, F, G
John Denver	"Take Me Home, Country	1970s	Country	C, Am, F, G
The Beatles	Roads"	1970s	Rock ballad	C, Am, F, G
Dion	"Let It Be"	1960's	Rock	C, Am, F, G
Ben E. King	"Runaround Sue"	1960's	Rock Ballad	C, Am, F, G
Chubby Checker	"Stand By Me"	1960's	Rock	C, Am, F, G
Doris Troy	"Let's Twist Again"	1960's	Rock	C, Am, F, G
The Beatles	"Just One Look"	1960's	Rock	C, Am, F, G
Gene Chandler	"Octopus' Garden"	1960's	Doo-wop	C, Am, F, G
The Beach Boys	"Duke of Earl"	1960's	Surf Rock	C, Am, F, G
The Drifters	"Surfer Girl"	1960's	Doo-wop	C, Am, F, G
The Rolling Stones	"This Magic Moment"	1960's	Rock	C, Am, F, G
The Crew Cuts	"Tell Me"	1950's	Doo-wop	C, Am, F, G
The Penguins	"Sh Boom"	1950's	Doo-wop	C, Am, F, G
Todd Duncan	"Earth Angel"	1950's	Rock Ballad	C, Am, F, G
Frankie Lymon & The Teenag-	"Unchained Melody"	1950's	Rock Ballad	C, Am, F, G
ers	"Why Do Fools Fall In Love"	1950's	Doo-wop	C, Am, F, G
The Rays	"Silhouettes"	1950's	Doo-wop	C, Am, F, G
The Monotones	"Book of Love"	1950's	Doo-wop	C, Am, F, G
The Chordettes	"Lollipop"	1950's	Doo-wop	C, Am, F, G
Ricky Nelson	"Poor Little Fool"	1950's	Doo-wop	C, Am, F, G,

MODERN BAND

Although not all of these songs were composed in the key of "C," looking at them this way, arranged by decade, with a genre ascribed and with the basic chords that form the song (I-vi-IV-V), much can be gleaned. We can see:

That many diverse pop sub-genres rely on the same, simple harmonic structure

That many of the basic underpinnings of popular music have remained fairly consistent for the past 50 years.

That four chords make for a very potent musical tool kit.

That we should teach kids four chords as quickly as possible!

It is obvious that there are many affectations, adornments, rhythms, and the like that help differentiate disco from heavy metal or rock from country. However, grouping all these styles under the header of Modern Band makes sense as these disparate sub-genres have much in common and can all easily be explored and taught in the same setting.

How is Modern Band Different, Besides the Emphasis on Newer Genres of Music?

Existing categories of music education such as Concert Band and Orchestra each have pedagogical underpinnings and teaching techniques. These stem from both the cultural practices of each category's progenitors as well as the specific demands of the genres they embrace. Orchestral programs, for example, teach students the discipline and rigor necessary for large ensembles performing elaborate pieces with many precise parts. Jazz Band teaches improvisation as this is a central part of what constitutes jazz music.

What special benefits, skills, or values can Modern Band offer to our children, ourselves and our schools?

Modern Band Is Student-Centered

Reduced funding for music programs is often blamed for keeping children from participating in music programs. This is undeniable. However, lack of funding is not the only obstacle that holds our kids back. Music education has not sufficiently kept pace with the broad cultural and technological developments of the past fifty years, thus making music education less accessible to a broad swath of today's youth, especially youth in marginalized communities.

Music dominates youth culture and kids often define themselves by the music they listen to. Music is something around which they can socially engage and communicate with peers. Students seeking that cultural identity and relevance are not finding it in

many existing programs.

Modern Band programming takes a student-centered approach. It leverages students' cultural capital. This can forge stronger bonds between traditionally marginalized students and the schools that serve them. Because the repertoire is drawn from popular culture, it can change with the times and is thus more responsive to student's preferences.

Modern Band Increases Access by Integrating Beginners More Easily

Traditional music education programs have been likened to a train leaving a station. When the train leaves the station, some children are on the train, others are not. The children left behind will have a difficult time boarding that train in the future should they choose to do so.

For example, say that a ninth-grade child decides that they would like to join an orchestral program. If that orchestral program started preparing children in the fifth grade, it would be very difficult to integrate the new student who will now be four years "behind" and will lack the skills needed to participate in the Orchestra, most notably the ability to read parts. The same can be true for Marching Band or Jazz Band "Johnny or Janey-come-latelies." This is due to the sequential presentation of materials in these programs and to the more rigid arrangements necessitated by this approach.

If these more traditional programs may be likened to a train that leaves a particular station leaving certain passengers behind, then Modern Band might be likened to a carousel that invites all to enter while still being able to stay in motion. Children who have not participated in instrumental music programs in the past can be integrated more easily into Modern Band Programs. To understand why this is the case it is important to look at how people come to learn popular music outside of the school context, in the real world. The work of Lucy Green, the renowned professor of music education at the University of London, tells us much on this topic.

Green's research notes that outside of schools, pop music is learned in settings that are largely informal. Barriers to playing such as note reading, music theory and, to a lesser degree, technique, are not present at the beginning of a learner's journey. The result is that the novice is engaged in music making activities almost immediately. Green also notes that the students who learn in this way have an uneven and incomplete understanding of music. Nevertheless, they play music.

Modern Band repertoire and instrumentation invites what Green calls "informal learning techniques." This brings an inherent flexibility that allows the teacher to create everything from a small rock band to a large ensemble and to do so

> "
> *The result (of Little Kids Rock) has been a collaboration that has allowed a small community to form of guitarists on every level where everyone contributes. No one is ever left behind. Eventually, the songs will follow. Kids, of all sizes, rock!"*
>
> **– Ted Block, HS for Health Professions & Human Services; Manhattan, NYC**

for children at vastly different points in their own musical development. This adaptive approach is not solely dependent on one type of model.   Therefore, Modern Band allows the teacher to craft ensembles that are well suited to the needs of their students.

Modern Band Fosters Authorship

Popular musicians frequently compose or "write" their own music, and reinterpret the music of others. It is therefore appropriate for Modern Band teachers to also dedicate class time time to these practices. This empowers teachers and students to use music for its primary, inherent purpose: namely, as a communicative tool. Modern Band may integrate composition and improvisation at the beginning of children's educations as a means of ensuring that they experience the confidence building and self-esteem raising benefits that come with authorship.

Authorship is an area that is curiously absent in music education programs in the U.S. today and this is a strange anomaly. Why an anomaly? Picture a well-run school that fully embraces children's creativity. What would you expect to see adorning the walls? Paintings. Poetry. Drawings. Stories. Sculptures. And who would have produced these works of art? The students of course! Now, picture a school with an excellent music program that reaches most of the student body. Visualize the repertoire. Do original, student compositions factor in? Currently, all other fields of arts education afford authorship opportunities to young children - music education is often the sole exception.

Modern Band Sustains Outside of School

The instruments and styles used in Modern Band are broadly used outside of the public school system and therefore opportunities abound for a child to continue playing after their schooling ends. If we examine the experience of people engaged in Modern Band-like settings outside of the schools, we see that the activities that they engage in foster lifelong enjoyment of music-making.

This is not always the case for kids who study music in school. For example, students who participate in Marching Band may not find as many similar opportunities to play music in their communities outside of the school environment.

> *2.2 million school-age children currently attend schools in districts that offer Modern Band classes as a part of their standard in-school music programming.*

Modern Band is Flexible and Regionally Adaptable

Modern Bands take on many forms and rely on musical genres that are dynamic and changing. As a result, teachers enjoy great flexibility and portability in their music classes. Imagine a Marching Band missing a low brass section? The pieces of this type of ensemble are a puzzle and without that one piece, the picture cannot be completed.

The inherent flexibility of Modern Band programming allows the teacher to create everything from a small rock band to a large ensemble. This adaptive approach is not solely dependent on one type of model.

Furthermore, in a community where students are immersed in Country Rock, or another where Reggaeton is popular a teacher can tap into these genres using the same basic techniques. This means that a Modern Band Program in Atlanta, where Hip Hop is in vogue, may well look different in terms of repertoire than a program in Dallas where Rock en Español and Mariachi are popular with children.

A Lay-Person's Pedagogy

Drawing liberally from the teaching practices and learning dispositions of the rock 'n' roll laity, a Modern Band approach is replicated in public schools and yet maintains the core value of the "pop approach" to music making. Think of the longhaired guitar teacher at the back of the music store or the older sister in a band or the Beatles or Nirvana or the legions and legions of people who play, learn and/or teach contemporary music. How do they pass on the knowledge? They use a simple, direct, hands-on approach to teaching, one that eschews the abstract for the concrete and one whose highest virtues include immediate engagement and "customer satisfaction."
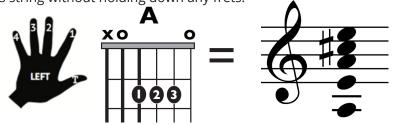
Modern Band and Iconic Notation

Modern Bands often use a combination of iconic and standard staff notation. Iconic notation is simply the representation of music using drawings, pictures, lines, numbers and other visual devices, all intended to help students play a piece of music. Iconic notation has been around since the middle ages. It was the preferred means of teaching the lute and vihuela, two older precursor instruments to the guitar. Today, iconic notation is broadly used in popular music education.

What follows is are brief examples of some of the iconic notation used in Modern Band for each instrument.

Guitar:

Chord Diagrams: The numbers refer to the left hand finger numbers used to press down the strings (for a right-handed guitar player). The X means "Do not play this string". The O means "play this string without holding down any frets."
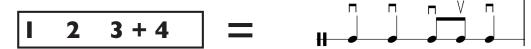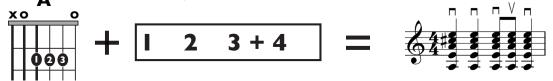
Rhythm Patterns: This is read left to right. The majority of the music in this book is in 4/4 time. We notate that with numbers. The black numbers indicate which beats to play on.
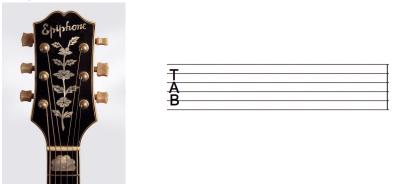
"+" signs between numbers are the upbeats between the downbeats. When performing these, it is typical for a guitarist to strum down on the downbeats and up on the upbeats.
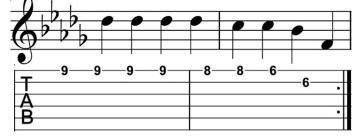
Here's what that chord and rhythmic notation would look like in tandem.

Guitar Tablature: Tablature is another way to write music. It is used to write melodies and riffs. It has six lines. Each line represents a string. The numbers on the string tell us which fret to play in. The thickest string on the guitar is the lowest line on the tab.
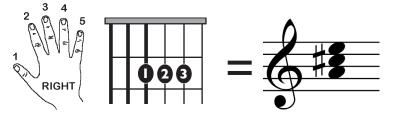
Here is a song example that is played on just strings 1 & 2.
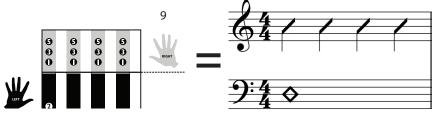
Keyboard:

Chord Diagrams:

The first graphic is a diagram of white and black keys. The keys that are shaded in are the keys that should be played to perform the labeled chord. You can press down at the same time to play a full chord or play them in different combinations to create various comping pattern, which we will discuss later in the book. This first graphic is the A chord. The numbers below each shaded key refers to your finger numbers.
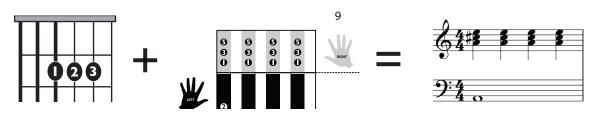
Rhythm Patterns: This notation is read left to right. We notate that with numbers and a grid. The black dots represent the three notes of the chord. The white dot represents a single bass notes.
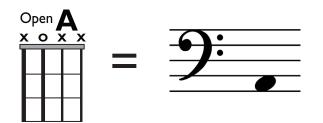
In the case of the A chord, for example, your right hand would play all three notes on every beat while your left hand only plays the note A on beat 1.

Here's what that chord and rhythmic notation would look like in tandem.
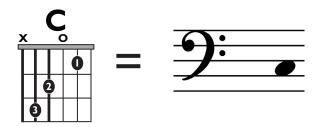
Bass:

Note Diagram: This picture shows you, using Os and Xs, which string to play. This first graphic, Open A, says to play only the second string down.

Open **A**

x o x x

=

Another version of this graphic has dots on the neck of the instrument. This shows you where to press down your finger on the neck of the instrument.

C

x   o

=
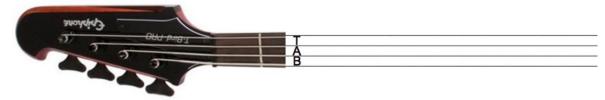
The bass uses the same iconic rhythm patterns as the guitar.

Here's what that note and rhythmic notation would look like in tandem.

Open **A**

x o x x

+

| **1** | 2 | **3** | 4 |

=
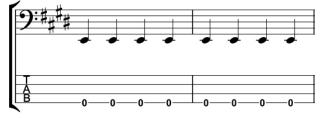
Bass Tablature:

Tab is another way to notate music.   It has with four horizontal lines, each representing a different string on the instrument. The bottom line of this tablature is also the thickest string on the bass:

Each 0 below means play that string without fretting the instrument. The bottom line is your low E string (the one closest to your nose, the thickest one).
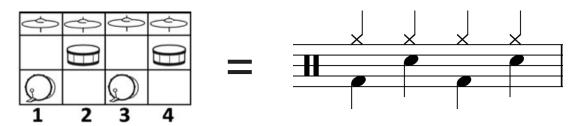
You can also use tablature to learn new riffs on bass. Numbers represent frets, not fingers. The first note here is on the 5th fret of the Lowest string, the E string.
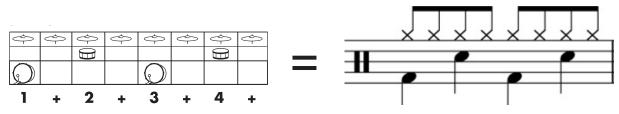
Drums:

Grid Notation: To show drum grooves, we will use grid notation. These are read left to right. The counting is written below. Anything that lines up in a vertical column happens at the same time, like the bass drum and hi-hat on beat one. Here is an example:

Here is another example where the grid shows an 1/8th note subdivision.

All standard notation used throughout the series will use the following drum key

| Bass | Floor Tom | Snare | Tom 2 | Tom 1 | Cross Stick | Flam | HH Foot | Ride | Ride Bell | Hihat | Close HH | Open HH | Crash |

Reciting In Modern Band

In a Modern Band recital, students' musical decision-making and musical agency are key parts of and can be actively taught and encouraged. Have you ever seen a band take a song request from the audience? They often jump and play a request without the use of any sheet music or song charts. How do the musicians even know what to play? The answer is simple: The band members know how to "comp" on their instruments.

Musicians comp when they make decisions about what to play during a performance as they support their fellow musicians. Comping is the term that is used to describe the spontaneous or practiced selection of rhythm patterns, chord voicings, and melodic riffs that musicians use to support a musical performance.

Comping can be as simple as varying a strum pattern on the guitar between the verse and chorus of a song, or, it can be far more complex, like making up complex drum fills, intricate bass lines, or horn riffs. With this in mind, let's consider how these simple patterns work together in the context of an actual tune.

Below is the first 6 bars of Let It Be by the Beatles, as it might appear
in a song book, with some highlighted features.

This score provides at least four invaluable insights on how musicians in a band might use comping as they performed the piece:

TEMPO

This gives clues to ALL the musicians on how they'll approach their comping choices. For example, the drummers may have a few beats they favor for slower tempo pieces like ballads. Harmonic instrumentalists might have comping patterns they prefer for ballads.

CHORDS

The chords are shown two ways here. First, they are named by letter above the staff. They are also spelled out on the staff in standard notation.

In a Modern Band setting, guitarists, ukulele players, and keyboardists might look at the chord names like "C" and "Am" and know how to play one or more forms of these chords (root position, inversions, barre chords, etc.). They will play the chords together in ways that make sense for their instruments and will try various strumming patterns and pick one or more that have the right sound and feel for the piece.

Although this arrangement is a piano score, the comping keyboardist might also rely on the chord names rather than the written piano part. This provides them the flexibility to adjust their performance based on what the musicians around them are playing.

BASS LINE

A bass player or keyboardist might use the bass line as written here but, more likely, they would look at the chord names written above the staff, the same ones used by players of harmonic instruments like guitars or pianos. From those chord names, a bass player would likely comp a bass line that centered around chord tones especially around the root of each chord, but also possibly the third and fifth.

It's worth noting that horn or string players might take the similar approach to the bass player by deciding to play certain chord tones (selected while looking at the chord names like "F" and "Am") throughout parts of the piece.

MELODY

In a band setting, this melody would almost always be sung by a vocalist who would likely know the melody by ear and from memory.

Throughout this manual we include lists of common comping patterns for each instrument which you and your students can

use to accompany the full band songs they want to learn.

Participation Versus Access in Music Programs

The Problem

Most schools offer only a style of music education based on a "conservatory" model, wherein concert band and choir and in some districts, orchestra and jazz band are offered as course electives in the middle and high school grades, subsequently driving pedagogies and curriculum that support these performance mediums. This makes sense because teachers of music education were themselves trained to support performance in these mediums in colleges that embraced a "European" model. Even in schools where these programs are offered, participation rates can remain low, often well below 20%. So even when students have access, they are choosing not to participate.

One of the reasons for this is that students in the schools of today come from communities and families that represent a broader, more diverse experience with music. For schools to provide a music education program that is only tailored to the conservatory model reduces access to learning that is equitable, well-rounded and personalized.

Dr. Joseph Abramo, of the University of Connecticut, states in his research proposal on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Music Education (2017) for the National Association of Music Education that "in music education research, there is much discussion about changing the music curriculum to be more inclusive of different types of music-making and of students of color, and how the current curriculum creates barriers to access."

What would a change in curriculum and pedagogy that removed barriers to music learning and was more inclusive of musical styles beyond those found in the conservatory model look like, given a teaching workforce that is trained in the conservatory model? Best practice in teaching informs educators to meet students at their current level of understanding, and for many of our students—even as young as kindergarten—their understandings about music come from popular music that has its roots in a vast and diverse cultural "soundscape."

In his blog posting on March 19, 2018, for the NAfME website titled Reaching All Students with Music Education: Professional Development Opportunities in Popular Music Pedagogy, Gareth Dylan Smith, Manager of Program Effectiveness at Little Kids Rock, President of the Association for Popular Music Education, and Visiting Research Professor at New York University, states that "popular music is not suitable for every music classroom. Similarly, pedagogical approaches commonly associated with popular music education (e.g., informal learning, non-

formal learning, improvisation) are not appropriate in all music education contexts. However, for teachers who wish to reach students beyond the relatively small number involved nationwide in traditional large ensembles in middle and high schools, or for some who may be seeking ways to revive arts programing in a district where funding cuts threaten to kill off music teaching altogether, popular music can provide myriad means to engage students in relevant, creative exploration of vital aspects of contemporary culture."

A Solution

The national music education non-profit organization Little Kids Rock offers a forward-thinking solution to interpolating a popular music approach in tandem with a conservatory approach, based on research-developed pedagogy and curriculum called Modern Band.

Modern Band programs leverage the cultural capital of the children and their communities. The program expands upon existing music programming such as Marching Band, Jazz Band and Chorus, making music available to children who might otherwise not participate in traditional music classes. It teaches kids to perform, improvise and compose using the popular styles that they know and love including rock, pop, reggae, hip hop, R&B and other modern styles. Modern Band classes feature guitar, bass, keyboard, drums, vocals, technology, and computers.

From the pedagogical perspective, Modern Band first and foremost nurtures a belief in educators and the power of teaching. To support this belief Little Kids Rock implements training in Modern Band by providing music educators with tools and resources to bring student-centered, culturally responsive, and inclusive music education to students.

Groundbreaking Modern Band Initiatives

Building on the success and popularity of Modern Band programs in New York City public schools, in 2014 the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) announced its intention to expand Modern Band programs to be in 600 of its schools by the end of 2016 with more than 60% of the district's certified music teachers offering it at their schools. After these three short years, more than 600 programs were launched, thousands of hours of hours of professional development were provided and over 10,000 instruments were distributed.

Following this landmark build out, Modern Band programs are quickly growing to scale in small to large districts throughout the country and even adopted by entire districts at one time such as Allentown, PA and Danbury, CT.

AMP UP
NYC

a partnership between:

In 2017, Little Kids Rock and the Maine Department of Education embarked on an ambitious project to launch Modern Band programs throughout the state with the ultimate goal of having Modern Band programs in every district.

Higher Education and Modern Band

Modern Band training is now included in dozens of music teacher education programs at colleges and universities. It is incorporated into existing methods classes, offered as a stand-alone course, covered in summer symposia, and is an ongoing topic of conversation in higher education classes around the country. A growing number of diverse public and private colleges and universities are part of an expanding pool of institutions that either currently utilize the frame of Modern Band in their teacher education programs, or are exploring its utility for the purpose of propagating and scaling popular music education within their teacher education offerings

Modern Band Summit

Modern Band Summit is an annual national convention of Modern Band stakeholders held in Fort Collins, Colorado. Hundreds of school music teachers, college and university professors, school district arts administrators, state arts education directors, and nonprofit organizations from across the country assemble with the goal of advancing Modern Band in US public schools. The conference features professional development sessions, workshops, an academic colloquium for colleges and universities, and other presentations focused on best practices from a diverse spectrum of Modern Band practitioners.

Conferences That Feature Modern Band

The Association for Popular Music Education (APME) is an international organization devoted to promoting and advancing popular music at all levels of education. APME holds a national conference annually that features presentations, research, and workshops focused on popular music education. Since 2013, APME's national conference has featured presentations and workshops on Modern Band, including performances from K-12 Modern Band programs.

Musical Futures is an international organization that uses non-formal teaching and informal learning approaches in music education to allow teachers to develop new roles as mentors, coaches and guides. Musical Futures Australia hosts a multi-day conference that focuses on a variety of these instructional tools and

heavily incorporates Modern Band into their core curriculum.

Learn More or Get Involved

Visit www.modernband.org for links to teacher resources, information on professional development sessions, conferences, job postings, and a directory of schools and organizations that are involved in Modern Band programming.

National Core Arts Standards: Music

Creating, Performing, Responding and Connecting

MODERN BAND focuses on *performing* and *creating* music that leverages the cultural capital of today's youth, more specifically the music of the past 60 years, by engaging students through student-centered music, they immediately create a *connection* with the music that that they know and love.

MUSIC AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (MSL) embraces the aural tradition of music by focusing on approximation, improvisation and composition. This allows the student to actively *respond* by relating their knowledge and personal experiences to the act of creating music.

Being that music is a skill based competency, it requires the acquisition of information in a space that promotes learning. By creating an environment free of conflict and judgment, the classroom inherently becomes a safe space and therefore the students can maintain a low affective filter. Once this safe space is established, the acquisition of skills such as rhythms, chords and music literacy (iconic and standard notation) is done through the use of scaffolding techniques ensuring success for all.

Within these four artistic processes of creating, performing, responding and connecting are eleven Anchor Standards:

Anchor Standard 1:	*Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.*
Anchor Standard 2:	*Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.*
Anchor Standard 3:	*Refine and complete artistic work.*
Anchor Standard 4:	*Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.*
Anchor Standard 5:	*Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.*
Anchor Standard 6:	*Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.*
Anchor Standard 7:	*Perceive and analyze artistic work.*
Anchor Standard 8:	*Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.*
Anchor Standard 9:	*Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.*
Anchor Standard 10:	*Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.*
Anchor Standard 11:	*Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experience to make art.*

Within these Anchor Standards are Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions, as well as grade level specific descriptors for each standard. As demonstrated on the basis of Modern Band and Music as a Second Language, the anchor standards outline the key components for developing a fully articulated music education program.

In the teacher manual as well as the lessons plans contained within, you will find that the synergies between the music standards, Common Core and Music as a Second Language have all been outlined to demonstrate the natural connection between a student-centered Modern Band and the goals of a 21st century music education program.

The new National Core Arts Standards can be found at: http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/

GUITAR

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History of the Guitar in Modern Band

It would be difficult to overstate the role that the guitar has played in pop music over the past half-century. From the debut of pioneers such as Chuck Berry, Elvis Presley through the guitar heroes of the 60's and 70's and right down through today's music, the strum and blare of the guitar has left an indelible mark on the commercially dominant music of the past few generations.

Part of the instrument's appeal has been the accessibility of the methodology most people experience when learning to play. It is decidedly non-notational, hence the following joke:

QUESTION: How do you get a guitarist to stop playing?
ANSWER: Put sheet music in front of them!

There is a lot of truth in this quip. How else can you explain the fact that John Lennon, George Harrison, Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, Joe Walsh, and John Mayer never learned to read or write music? Were they simply musical geniuses that inhabit a different astral plane than us mere mortals? Perhaps.

But how do we then explain the millions of their imitators who also play guitar, but bypass written music altogether?

The answer lies in the way the instrument is taught and learned OUTSIDE of our schools. What follows is a method for bringing the joys, short-cuts, and successes that this approach offers INTO your school and your Modern Band Program.

Where I teach, the kids don't Have a lot of things that are theirs but when they hold that guitar…. there is just A certain power to it."

– Caitlin Shaw

How to Teach Guitar in Three Easy Steps:

The exciting journey of teaching your kids to play guitar in a Modern Band context is best begun by utilizing some of the basic ideas behind Language Acquisition Theory. Keep your students' anxiety levels low (see the Affective Filter in the Music as a Second Language section), ensure that you give them just the right amount of information, and that the information you give them is comprehensible. Doing this will make your classroom a "Creative Safe Space."

We've spent over a decade designing a quick, fun and easy way to get kids playing guitar, and have boiled it down to these three easy steps.

STEP 1

Use pictures of chords and scales to teach kids music they know and love (Chords and Arrangements).

STEP 2

Accept and embrace approximation (Music Acquisition).

STEP 3

Facilitate composition and improvisation ("Speaking" Music).

STEP 1: Using Pictures of Chords and Rhythms

We begin by teaching children how to play chords with the aid of pictures of chords and rhythms, using actual drawings of what the chords and rhythms look like. For decades this approach has been a dominant trend in informal guitar education, and the results have been fantastic. Millions of people have begun their mastery of guitar by first learning their chords.

All three pictures below each represent a "C" chord on the guitar. People with a more traditional music background may be puzzled by Figure 2 below. Some guitar players will find themselves equally confused by Figure 3.

Fig. 1   *Fig. 2*   *Fig. 3*

GUITAR
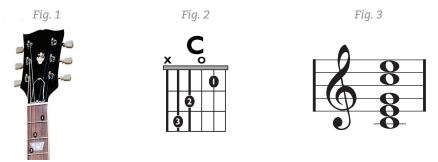
Figure 2 is a chord diagram. In other words, it is a drawing of the neck of the guitar with finger placements superimposed on specific strings and frets. These little drawings are super handy and help beginners see chord shapes in their minds.

If a student can learn how to use just a handful of these chord shapes, they can play a significant body of popular music. This helps explain why the guitar is such a hugely popular instrument.
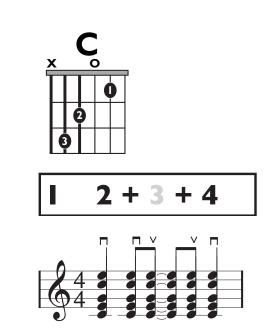
Figure 4 on the facing page shows pictures of what we like to call the "Fifteen Chords that Rocked the World." Taken as a group, they represent the bulk of the chords that many guitar players use in their repertoire.
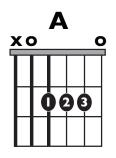
Step 1 Continued: Using Pictures of Chords and Rhythms
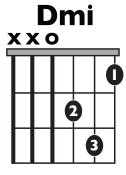
All that's needed in order to play any of these chords is the knowledge that the "x" at the top means "don't play that string" and the "o" means the string is played "open" (without any finger on it).
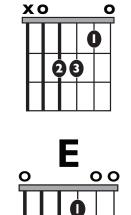
Rhythm is what turns chord shapes into music. The rhythms we use are what guitarists call "strum patterns". Just as playing chords can be simplified with the help of pictures, strumming chords is also much simpler using "pictures" of rhythms. Let's compare using the standard notation for strumming the C chord to a picture of that strum pattern.

To play the strum pattern using notation we need to know what the variety of symbols stand for. Alternatively, a picture of a strum pattern on the other hand gives all of the necessary information at a glance. All we need to know is that the player will strum down when a number is shown and up when a "+" is shown. Numbers in grey are "placeholders" for counts that are not strummed.
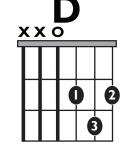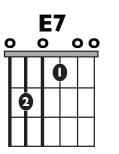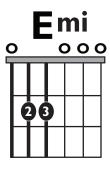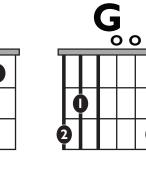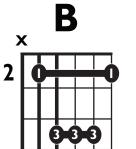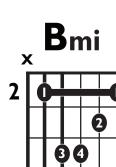
fig. 4 – 15 chords that rocked the world

> *Hmm... yes I think these are the ones I use most of the time.*

Playing rhythm guitar is as simple as counting to four!

When you play a chord on your guitar, it is called strumming. You can strum in two different directions: up and down.

The easiest rhythm is one where you play a single down stroke. Start by counting to four. Everytime you say the number "one," play a down stroke.

GUITAR

Most basic rhythm:

1	2	3	4

rhythm A

You say:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
You play:	**down**	rest	rest	rest

2nd most basic rhythm:

1	2	**3**	4

rhythm C

You say:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
You play:	**down**	rest	**down**	rest

The following page has more beginner rhythms. Here's how they work.
  • Say the numbers and play them with down strokes.
  • Say any "+" signs as "and." Play these with up strokes.
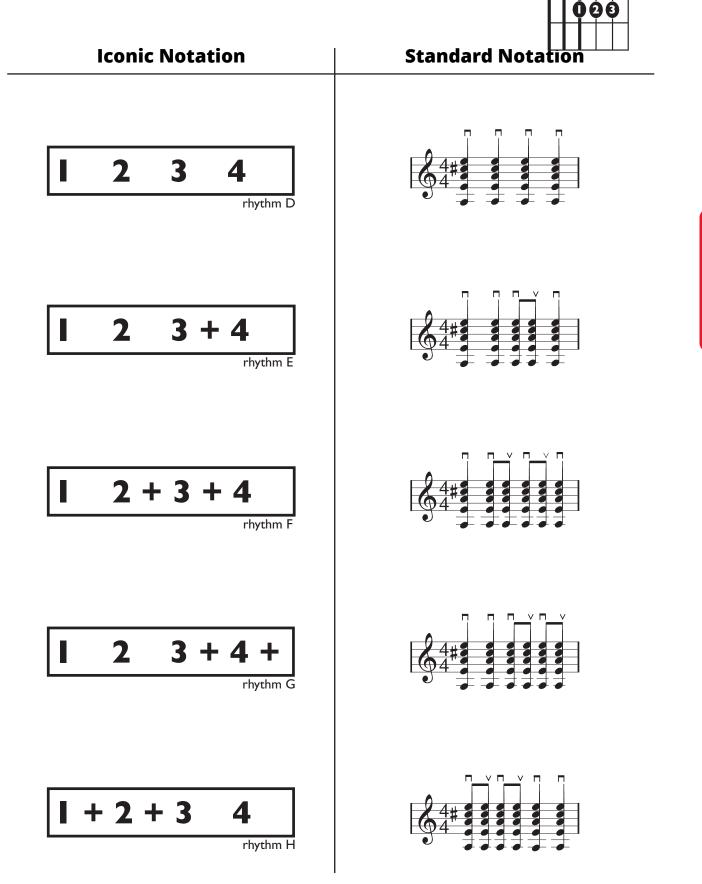
The patterns are simple to play and to learn when they are said and played together. This is a very important part of learning rhythms …if you can SAY IT, you can PLAY IT!

For example, look at rhythm D on the next page. You will SAY, " One, two, three and four. One, two, three and four…" while you PLAY down down down up down, down down down up down.

Basic Strum Patterns

The iconic and standard notations below use this "A chord"

A

Iconic Notation	**Standard Notation**

1 2 3 4

rhythm D

1 2 3 + 4

rhythm E

1 2 + 3 + 4

rhythm F

1 2 3 + 4 +

rhythm G

1 + 2 + 3 4

rhythm H

Basic Strum Patterns

A

The iconic and standard notations below use this "A chord"

Iconic Notation	**Standard Notation**

1 + 2 + 3 + 4

rhythm I

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

rhythm O

1 + 2   3 + 4

rhythm I

1   2 + 3 + 4 +

rhythm K

1 + 2   3   4

rhythm M

GUITAR
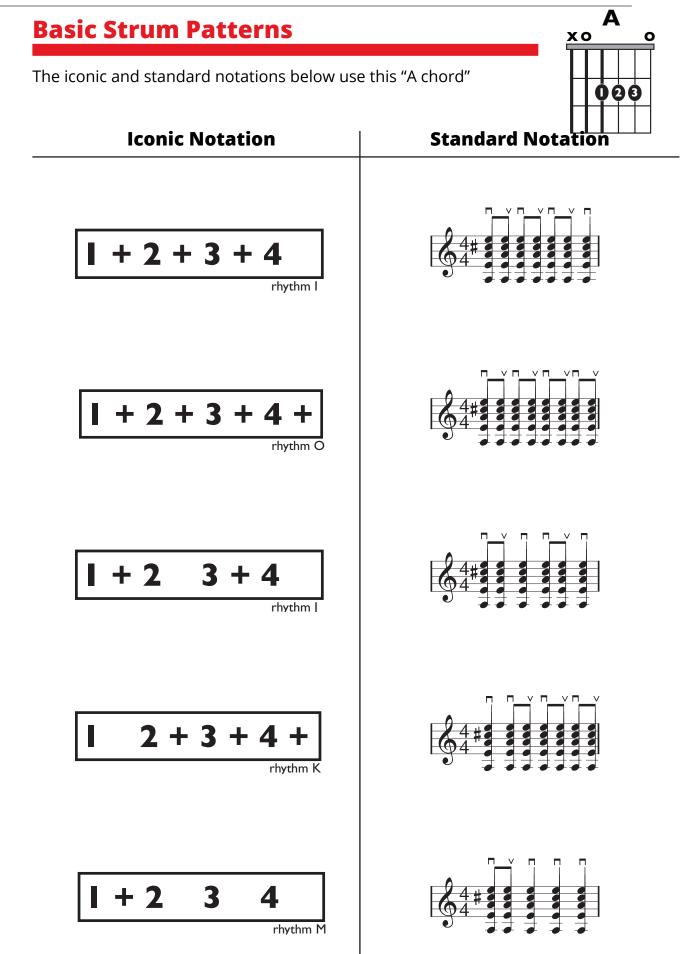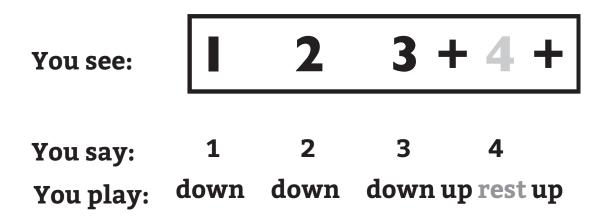
Syncopated rhythms are funkier and a little harder to play than simple rhythms. But if you like rock, funk, blues, rap, hip-hop, salsa, reggae, country or any other music whatsoever, you will understand how cool syncopation sounds. Try counting out syncopated rhythms as follows:

You see:

1	**2**	**3**	**+**	**4**	**+**

You say: 1   2   3   4

You play: **down**   **down**   **down up** rest up

Notice that the rhythm above has two up-strokes in a row. Also notice that we didn't say "4" when we were counting. Instead, we rested or "skipped" that down-beat. A syncopated rhythm is a rhythm that skips one or more downbeats and has two or more upbeats in a row.

On the next page, rhythms L through S are examples of syncopated rhythms. To say and play them, you simply leave out the gray numbers, resting on those beats.

Tips for Trying Syncopated Rhythms:
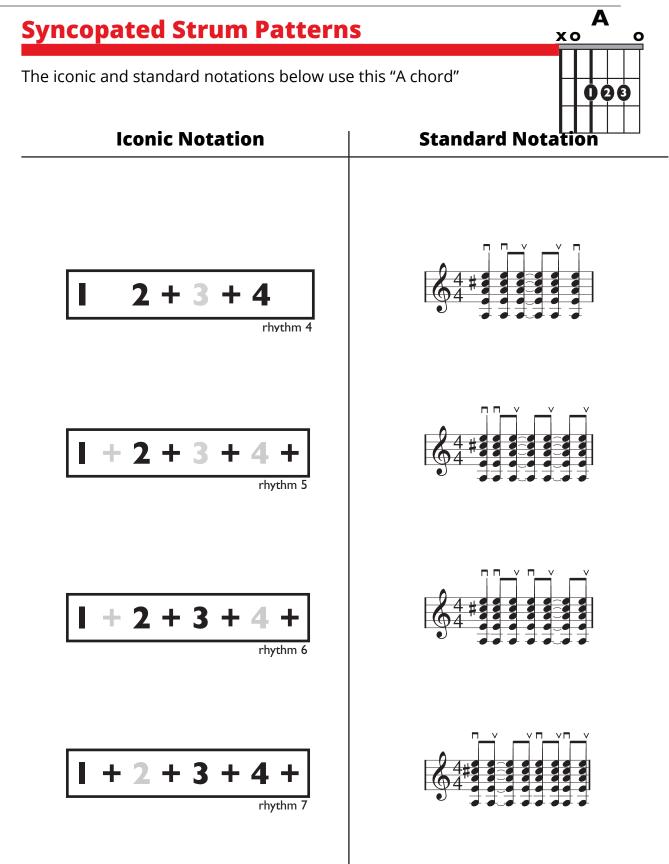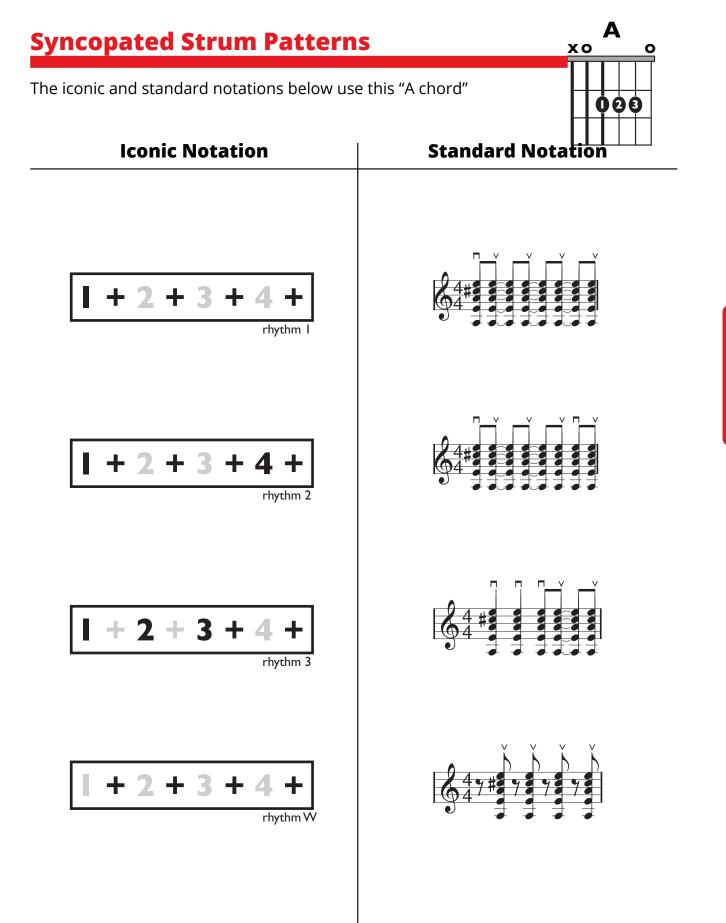
Try to "feel" the beat. The missing downbeat is still there, you just don't play it.

Playing a syncopated rhythm is like singing the kids' song "Bingo." Even when you don't sing the letters, you know they're there and you give them their space in the song. Remember: if you can SAY it, you can PLAY it!

Say the word "rest" on any gray number. For example on rhythm L: "One, two and rest and four. One, two and rest and four…"

Say the word "skip" on any gray number. For example on rhythm L: "One, two and skip and four. One, two and skip and four…"

Syncopated Strum Patterns

A

The iconic and standard notations below use this "A chord"

Iconic Notation	**Standard Notation**

rhythm 4

rhythm 5

rhythm 6

rhythm 7

GUITAR

Syncopated Strum Patterns

The iconic and standard notations below use this "A chord"

A

Iconic Notation | Standard Notation

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

rhythm 1

1 + 2 + 3 + **4** +

rhythm 2

1 + **2** + **3** + 4 +

rhythm 3

1 + **2** + **3** + **4** +

rhythm W
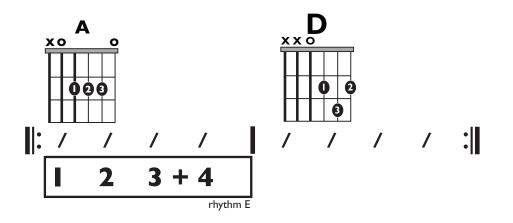
While standard notation communicates exactly and precisely what is to be played on an instrument, learning to "jam" is about improvising and using approximation along with our evolving ability. Therefore, using a system that provides guidance instead of requirements can go a long way toward helping students make choices that open the door to improvisation and composition. A strum pattern represents a generalization for the "feel" of a song—a guitar player may make it more exciting by adding to the rhythm or more laid back by playing less—the choice is his.
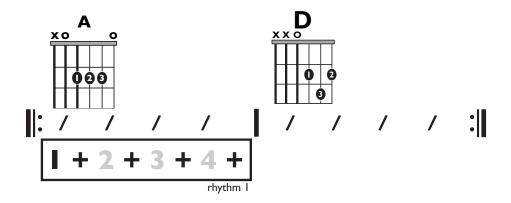
Let's look at the way chords and strum patterns come together in playing some of the most famous songs in popular music. These examples are from our songbook, and you'll notice that although many of them are using the same chords, it's the way that each strum pattern works that give every song its own personality. Keep in mind that the strum pattern is only pictured under the first measure, but should be played for the following measure as well.

To play in the style of "You Can't Always Get What You Want" by the Rolling Stones, this straight ahead rock strum pattern works great.
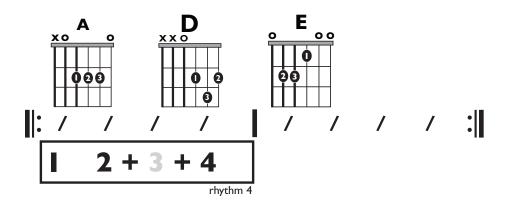
We're just strumming "down down down-up down" while counting and playing each of these two chords during the entire verse!

Although the song "Waiting in Vain" by Bob Marley has the same chord progression and can be played using the same two chords, it sounds radically different because of the strum pattern used.

58

A

x o   o

① ② ③

D

x x o

① ②
③

‖: /   /   /   / | /   /   /   /   :‖

1 + **2** + **3** + **4** +

rhythm 1
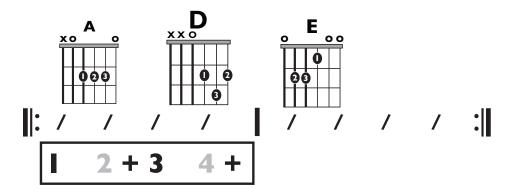
Here the strum pattern is mainly "up" because it happens on the "+" of the beat giving this reggae standard it's signature sound. The arm is still moving up and down just as steadily as it did in "You Can't Always Get What You Want", only this time we're only strumming the "up" (with the exception of beat one). This strum pattern is considered "syncopated" because of the way the upbeat is emphasized.

Sometimes syncopation happens in the middle of a strum pattern, like playing in the style of "Twist and Shout" by The Beatles.

A

x o   o

① ② ③

D

x x o

① ②
③

E

o   o o

①
② ③

‖: /   /   /   / | /   /   /   /   :‖

1   **2** + **3** + **4**

rhythm 4

Here the chord changes in the middle of the strum pattern. Nonetheless, the pattern continues with a steady arm "down down-up up-down". Playing a chord change during a strum pattern can take a little bit of practice and getting used to.

Sometimes in strum patterns, portions of beats are skipped altogether. This example uses the same chord progression to play in the style of "You Don't Know You're Beautiful" by One Direction.

GUITAR

For More Information Please Visit www.littlekidsrock.org   **59**

GUITAR
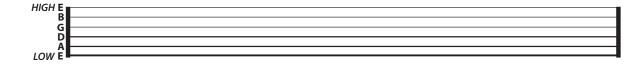
Although this strum pattern has spaces in it, the arm is still moving continuously—even when it isn't strumming the guitar. The grey numbers always represent a silent "down" strum. By developing the habit of strumming on these greyed numbers without making sound, you will be able to easily coordinate the chord changes as the swinging arm acts like a time-keeping metronome.
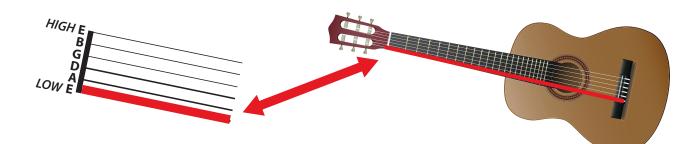
Rhythm is the foundation of music— through steady time it unites the chords and melodies into songs. Developing a good feel for keeping a steady strum pattern is one of the most important things we can do. If the full guitar chords in the examples above seem too difficult for your beginning students, check out our lesson plans on one chord songs and songs using 1 finger chords.

Tablature: Guitar Pictures for Melody
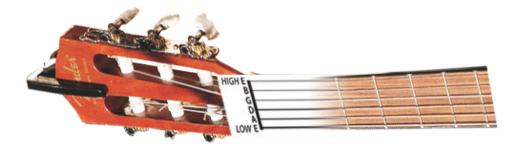
Tablature is another way that a picture is used to communicate music. It has six lines and each one represents a string on the guitar. When a number is placed on one of these lines, it represents which fret to play on that string. Keep in mind that the lines of a tab are represented as if you were looking down at the guitar strings. This means that the bottom line represents the low E string, and the top line represents the high E string.

Understanding Tablature
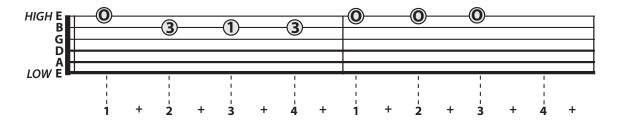
Tablature has the lowest sounding note on the bottom. It's like looking down at the guitar on your lap; your eyes see the low E string at the bottom of your field of view.

Tablature works the best when we already know how the songs sound. To get used to using it, let's look at some familiar melodies written out in TAB form.

The melody to "Mary Had a Little Lamb" would look like this written out in TAB:

In the beginning, the "0" at the top is telling us to play the high E string "open", followed by the 3rd fret of the B string (string #2), and so on.

This famous riff from the theme to the TV show Peter Gunn gets used in a lot of songs. If we were to write that riff out on the low E string using TAB it would look like this:
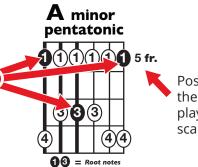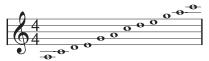
STEP 1: Teach Kids Music They Like Using Pictures Of SCALES

Learning scales is valuable to a beginning musician. Familiarity with even one scale enables a beginning player to improvise if they are shown direct application for the scale. Guitar scales can also be shown using pictures that look very similar to the pictures we use for chords, except that in this case each note is to be played one at a time.

Notes in black are the root of the scale, in this case note "A".

A minor pentatonic

5 fr.

Position the hand at the 5th fret in order to play the notes in this scale.

❶❸ = *Root notes*

Standard notation alternative

A guitar scale is a collection of notes that we can use to improvise a solo, when playing over the chords the scale fits with. This picture doesn't tell us in which order we should play the notes, that is entirely up to us and depends on the style of music.

Let's look at a couple of "licks" we might play using this scale over Blues in A to see some direct application. "Licks" are like small combinations of notes within a scale that sound good together, similar to the way letters make up words. Putting words together thoughtfully makes a sentence, and putting licks together can make a great solo!

Great guitar soloists often spend a lot of time listening to and figuring out licks played by other guitarists that they admire. It's a great way to help develop the kind of sound you want while exploring innovative ways to use the scales!

After just a class or two your students will be able to play (or approximate) a chord or two and should also be able strum some rhythms. Now what?

Children are moved by music and by the time they are adolescents they often use music to define the kind of people they are or aspire to be. By focusing classes on the music that kids know and love we can easily engage them in music making activities because of the children's intrinsic motivation. If we view music as a language, kids will want to "speak" the music that is appealing to them.

The benefits of a student-centered repertoire go beyond simple "crowd-pleasing." Music is part of a person's cultural capital. When we focus on the music our kids listen to, we validate and elevate their cultural backgrounds and experiences. When children see themselves reflected in the curriculum they often feel a stronger connection to their school and its community.

Once students have learned how to play a few chords they will be eager to find songs that they know and like that use the chords they know. Our song book contains everything from classic rock to contemporary favorites as requested by many of our teachers and the students we serve. Its table of contents allows us to quickly find songs by title, artist, number of chords, or type of chord progression.

Our "In the Style of" songbook gives popular chord progressions found in many pop songs in an easy-to-follow format. The songbook can be found at: http://littlekidsrock.org/wordpress2/teachersrock/guitar-songbook/

The sample songs at our site:

  Are linked to the original songs and lyrics that inspired them so that you can listen and gain familiarity.

  Are charted with chords, suggested rhythms (strum patterns) and suggested scales for soloing

  Have an accompanying drum track so that you or your students can play along
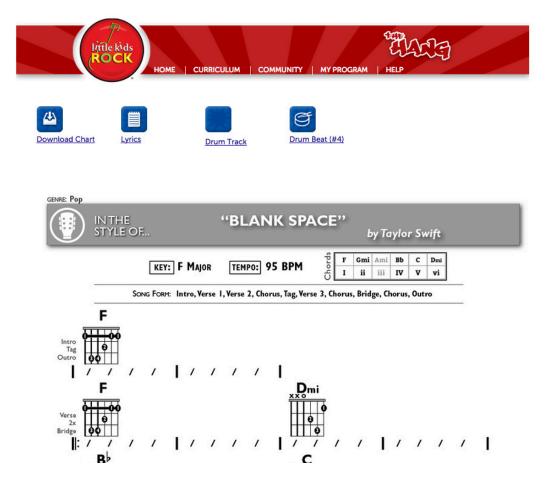
Beyond this site, there are literally hundreds of sites that break down pop songs and provide charts. Let's look at a couple that make invaluable resources. Our online song database is also an excellent source for finding material to help get kids approximating and playing the songs that they love.

> *"If you don't know what music your kids are listening to, the best thing to do is just ask them. They will gladly tell you!"*

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LITTLE KIDS ROCK
Guitar Song Book

Guitar Songbook

Title	Artist	Download SongChart	level	genre	number-of-chords	chords	key	chord-progression	decade
22 (Easy Version): In the Style of – Guitar	Taylor Swift	[PDF]	1-beginner		3	C, D, G	G	I-V-IV	2010s
22: In the Style of – Guitar	Taylor Swift	[PDF]	2-intermediate		4	C, D, G	G	I-V-IV-vi	2010s
A Change Is Gonna Come: In the Style of – Guitar	Sam Cooke	[PDF]	2-intermediate	R&B, Soul	5 or more	A, Ami, C, D7, Emi, G	Cmi, G	I ii II IV V vi	1960s
A Whiter Shade of Pale: In the Style of – Guitar	Procol Harum	[PDF]	3-advanced	Rock	5 or more	Ami, C, Dmi, F, G	C		1960s
Aiko Aiko: In the Style of – Guitar	Traditional	[PDF]	1-beginner	Folk Rock	2	A, D	D	i-V	Traditional
Aint It Fun (Easy Version): In the Style of – Guitar	Paramore	[PDF]	1-beginner	Pop, Rock	3	A, C#mi, E	Emi	VI-i-III	2010s
Aint It Fun: In the Style of – Guitar	Paramore		2-intermediate	Pop, Rock	3	A, C#mi, E	C#mi	VI-i-III	2010s

Below is a sample of a song chart you can find in our database:
http://littlekidsrock.org/wordpress2/teachersrock/guitar-songbook/

Great Resources to Teach Kids Music They Know and Like

Bridging the musical divide that can separate adults from kids has never been easier. If you don't know what music your kids are listening to, the best thing to do is just ask them. They will gladly tell you! Once you know what music excites them, the internet makes generating a student-centered repertoire easier than ever before. Here are three hugely helpful resources:

www.youtube.com

A search on YouTube.com usually yields amazing results for learning and teaching songs. Using quotation marks in YouTube's search field, enter:

a. A song title (e.g. "All Of Me")
b. An artist name, (e.g. "John Legend")
c. The term "how to play."

This can yield thousands of instructional videos to select from and nearly all of them will rely on pictures of chords or simply the naming the chords while they are being played.

After searching a few times, you will eventually find people who you prefer learning from and whose ideas you like best. By clicking on the name of their YouTube page you can see even more from this same user to get a better glimpse of more ideas that come from them. The YouTube page is to the right of the picture that comes from the lesson; the first one we see above is from "mahalodotcom", the second is from "Aaron Gallagher", etc.

A couple of favorite guitar teachers on YouTube with tons of great ideas and free resources are Marty Schwartz (YouTube channel "martyzongs") and Justin Sandercoe (YouTube channel "JustinSandercoe"). They provide lots of print materials and cutting edge teaching ideas that make them an invaluable resource to check out.

www.ultimate-guitar.com/

Search for songs at this website and you will find chord charts with lyrics. The free version of the site allows you to transpose the charts into other keys, display chord diagrams and has other handy features as well. The paid version has scrolling song charts that display tablature, play the song and change its tempo.

www.songsterr.com

Here you can play tablature versions of most popular songs for free. A pull-down menu allows you to choose from any instrument in the band, and a MIDI file of the song plays while you watch the tablature or song chart scroll before you. The song database is searchable by decade, genre, or specific search queries. An ad-free paid version allows for tempo control, looping, and printing from the site.

Visit the technology section for more info.

STEP 2: Embracing Approximation and the Beginner Guitarist
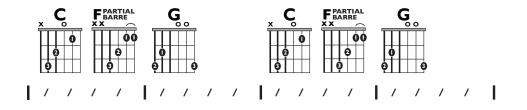
When children begin speaking, they use verbs, nouns, pronouns, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositional phrases and many more parts of speech long before they can name and explain them. Children can also learn to "speak" music long before they can explain it in academic terms. As teachers we become that link for them, facilitating a nurturing environment through which their tastes and personalities illuminate abilities that make their lives more beautiful.

Beginning to play the guitar can be inspiring—it can contribute positively to a student's sense of identity and self esteem. When we prioritize making the beginning fun and accessible to students, we're helping them connect to music in the personal and life-enriching way that has inspired us all. When students have the opportunity to play in groups and simplify material to make it accessible to them, they grow along their own lines through participation.

Let's look at an example from a familiar song to see what we mean. If we wanted to learn the song "La Bamba" by Ritche Valens, we might find a really specific guitar part that looks like this represented in TAB or notation:
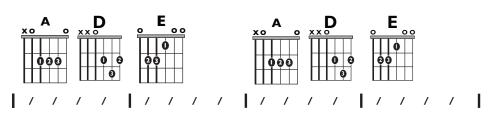
Even if a student isn't ready to play such a specific guitar line yet, they can still "approximate" the song by playing just the chords.

If playing these chords in the original key is still too difficult, it can be transposed to another key, in order to use chords that the students already know.
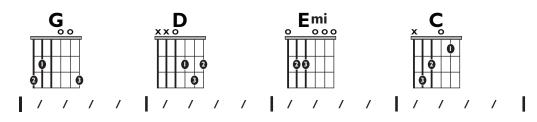
To draw again on the speaking metaphor, some children learn to speak fluently by age three and others by age five. By the time they're seven, everyone speaks fluently—how long it took anyone becomes irrelevant! We expect children to learn to speak as part of our culture and sooner or later everyone does. The same thing is possible in musical development by embracing approximation.
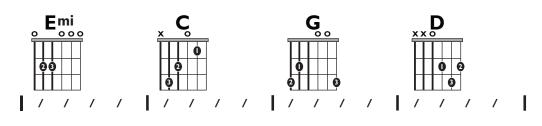
STEP 3: Facilitate Composition and Improvisation

We think of composition and improvisation as natural extensions of language. Anytime we have a conversation with a friend we're improvising with our use of language; every time we write a letter or an email we're composing. Children spend a lot of time imitating before they find their own voices in the way they use language. The same potential exists for every person learning to play music.

Visit the composition section for more info.

Every song contains a lot of great ideas to compose and improvise with. Think about the famous "4 Chords" progression presented in our teacher training. Using those same 4 chords in the same order, the band was able to play about 40 different songs!
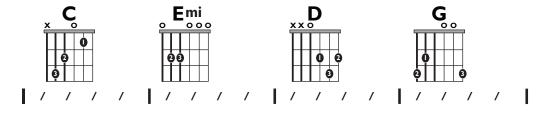
It would be simple to create an entirely new song just by starting on a different chord:

Or we could just as easily completely re-arrange these chords for another brand new song:

C   **E**mi   **D**   **G**

Even if we didn't change the order of the chords, just by writing new words we can make a new song—The Star Spangled Banner was originally a popular English tune called "The Anacreontic Song"; Happy Birthday was originally a song called "Good Morning To All". By re-working previously written music we're given insight into how music works as a language.

And this phenomenon isn't limited to popular music—Bach himself learned to compose by re-writing Vivaldi's music (among others) for different instruments.

Improvisation can also begin along the same simple lines that we all learned to speak—one word at a time until we feel comfortable or "fluent" with that much material. Every song chart that we put in our songbook or send to teachers in our weekly lesson plans contains a suggested scale for taking a solo. Helping students use it to make their own music is one of the most enjoyable activities in making music. Begin with just the notes on the first string. After that feels comfortable and reliable, expand to include the notes on the second string, etc.

By facilitating music as language through encouraging students to grow along a path that is inspiring and developmentally appropriate to them, we open the door to sharing the awesome gift of music with every student we have the honor and responsibility of guiding.

GUITAR LESSON PLANS

LESSON PLAN: Holding the Guitar

Objective:

Students will be able to pick up and move their guitars safely and hold them comfortably while learning to understand the cues the teacher uses for silencing guitars or putting them away.

GUITAR

Resources:
Guitar stands or cases, teacher demonstration, student demonstration.

Vocabulary and Terms:
"Quiet guitars", "Table Top", "Put guitars to sleep", "Playing position", strum, neck, body, headstock.

Procedures:

Tell students that musical instruments are fragile and sensitive—they need to be handled carefully so that many students can enjoy using them for years. It may be a good idea to number the guitars and assign students to numbers, making them responsible for the care of each one.

Ask students to watch you pick up your guitar and place it on your lap in playing position (Figure A)

Show students what it means to strum the guitar gently with fingers or a pick, not to pull hard on strings, etc. Tell them that breaking a string is easy if we're too hard on the guitars.

Tell them that when you say "Quiet Guitars" they have to place their strumming hand over all 6 strings to mute them (Figure B)

Next tell them that when you say "Table Top" you mean for them to place their guitars on their laps with the strings facing down (Figure C).

Demonstrate that when picking up and moving guitars around they need to watch the neck of the guitar so that it doesn't hit anyone or anything.

Fig. A

Fig. B

Fig. C

LESSON PLAN: Parts of the Guitar

Objective:

Students will be able to recognize and name the parts of the guitar.

Resources:
Teacher manual, guitars.

Vocabulary and Terms:
Body, neck, headstock, fret, tuners, bridge, nut, sound hole, fret board, position markers
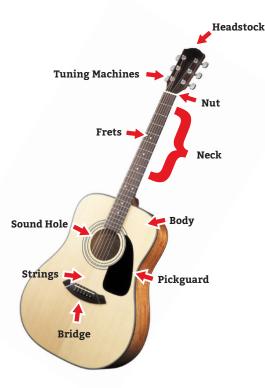
Procedures:

Ask students to repeat after you while you point to and name the different parts of the guitar. Remind students that they are never to touch the tuners on their guitars.

After several repetitions, ask students which part you are pointing to until you are confident they understand. Ask for volunteers from the class to quiz the rest of the class on the parts of the guitar.

A game of "Simon Says" is a fun way to reinforce this information once they've got it down. "Simon says touch the headstock with your left hand. Simon says touch the fret board with your left hand. Touch the bridge with your right hand. Who's out?!"

GUITAR

Headstock
Tuning Machines
Nut
Frets
Neck
Sound Hole
Body
Strings
Pickguard
Bridge

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr5.1.H Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.2 Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.

LESSON PLAN: Naming Guitar Strings

Objective:

Students will learn to identify by sight and sound the way strings are numbered while using various picking techniques to play them.

GUITAR

Resources:
Picks (if applicable), teacher demonstration, student demonstrations.

Vocabulary and Terms:
Strumming, picking, strings 1 through 6

Procedures:

Tell the class that strings are numbered 1 through 6 from "toes to chin". Demonstrate while playing them in this order and counting out loud. Demonstrate a couple of times to make sure this is clear in their understanding.

Point out to them that string number 1 has a "high" sound which you can imitate singing in a high voice, and string number 6 has a "low" sound which you can also imitate to make the point. Invite them to play along with you as you call out the numbers of each individual string. For fun you can invite them to sing the string number to the actual pitch of each string—this will of course result in students trying to sing notes that are outside of their vocal range, but help them to pay attention with their ears to the relative high and low sounds the strings produce.

Do the same thing in reverse, moving from "chin to toes" beginning on string 6 and naming out loud as you repeat for strings 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. Next ask students to play string 1 four times in a row. Then move to string 2, followed by string 3, etc. moving from "toes to chin".

Repeat this exercise moving from chin to toes playing strings in the order of 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1.

Extension:
Once the string numbers are obvious it's time to involve the ears. Just play and name string 1 and then string 6. Ask them which string you are playing while you play either one, allowing students to see what you are doing. After this becomes easy it's time to make the game harder by not allowing them to see what you're playing. Turn toward the wall, again asking them to name whether they are hearing string 1 or string 6. As they quickly learn to pay attention with their ears, compliment them on their progress and then invite volunteers from the class to "test" the other students. This "ear training" activity can be used every day as a warm up and can be expanded to include other strings, just be careful to move slowly enough that they always perceive doing this as easy. For example, if you add string 2 into the exercise along with strings 1 and 6, don't add another different string for a couple days or until it's obvious to you that everyone hears it.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.K a.With guidance, explore and demonstrate awareness of music contrasts (such as high/low, loud/ soft, same/different) in a variety of music selected for performance. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.Math.Content.K.G.A.1 Describe objects in the environment using names of shapes, and describe the relative positions of these objects using terms such as above, below, beside, in front of, behind, and next to.

LESSON PLAN: Guitar Technique

Objective:

Students will be able to play the guitar with good technique. This will allow them to feel more comfortable playing the instrument, give them more stamina, and set up habits that prevent repetitive stress injuries from playing a musical instrument.

Resources:
Guitars

Procedures:

Make sure students are sitting comfortably with their guitars in their laps. Show how if the guitar rests on your legs flat it will be more difficult to hold, wanting to slide off and being too low to play comfortably. Optional: Show that when you cross your legs (right over left) you can rest the guitar comfortably and securely on your lap, also raising it for better alignment with the arm.

Have students dangle their left arms at their sides completely relaxed. Notice how the wrist is in a straight line and the fingers all have a natural curvature to them. We want the hand and wrist to have this same basic shape when we bring it up to the guitar. Have them slowly bring their hand up in front of their faces, maintaining the straight wrist and rounded finger shape.

Have them hang their relaxed arm at their sides and then bring their hands directly to the guitar maintaining the level wrists and rounded fingers. Have them put their thumbs straight up and down on the back of the guitar neck while the rounded fingers in front tap the fret board on any strings or notes.

Check with students to see that they're holding their guitars at an angle that allows the wrist to stay "flat" when they're in a playing position. If their guitar necks are positioned too low, the wrist will feel strain and fatigue, causing the hand to feel tired quickly. The angle of the guitar neck may need to be adjusted to accomplish this.

Show that the same alignment is possible when using a guitar strap and playing from a standing position. The strap has to hold the guitar high enough so that the hand has access to the fretboard without having to bend the wrist.

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Present: Perform expressively, with appropriate interpretation and technical accuracy, and in a manner appropriate to the audience and context (NAfME). Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr5.1.H Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

LESSON PLAN: Holding a Pick

Objective:

Students will be able to hold a pick comfortably and begin using it to play guitar.

Resources:
Picks

Procedures:

Show students the way you place a pick on your index finger, with the point of the pick pointing toward the tip of your finger. (Figure A) Show how you gently clamp the thumb down on top of the index finger, pinching the pick between your index finger and thumb. (Figure B)

Notice if you are holding the pick correctly that your thumb looks a little bit like a chicken with the pick being it's beak. You can draw an eye on your thumbnail to make this silly point with younger children. (Figure C)

Pass out a bunch of thin picks to the students. They should be easy for you to bend, and if they don't say "thin" on them, use .50 millimeter or thinner. Thinner picks are easier to use in the beginning because they are more flexible and won't get dropped as often. Many guitar teachers recommend Dunlop "Tortex" picks for beginners because of their texture making them easier to hold onto.

Ask students to once again watch the way you place the pick onto your index finger and then clamp it down with the thumb. Ask them to do the same, switching back and forth between you modeling this for them and having them do it. After a couple of tries, ask who in the class understands it so that they can demonstrate for the others. Have the students who get it help the ones who don't. With a team effort like this you'll have everyone holding a pick successfully in no time. The other fingers should feel loose and relaxed, like they're just dangling off of the fingers holding the pick.

Once the pick grip looks secure, ask students to strum a chord you're working on. Have them play all down strokes in 4 steady beats over and over. You'll need to stop periodically to allow students to re-adjust their picks. Soon they'll be able to play for longer stretches of time without adjusting. Try integrating strum patterns that involve up strokes as well. This may be a good warm up to use for several days before using a pick to play a song, depending on the age and ability of your students. Keep reminding students that the strumming hand holding the pick should feel loose, relaxed, and free as it moves up and down.

Fig. A

Fig. B

Fig. C

LESSON PLAN: Fret Numbers / Positioning

Objective:

Students will be able to associate fingers to frets and understand how to use the fret markers to gain quick access to different positions. This lesson lays an important foundation for understanding how to use their fingers on the fret board.

Resources:
Handout on fret numbers and finger numbers

Procedures:

Show students that frets are the metal lines that run vertically along the fret board which allow us to change notes on the same string. Using the first string show them how notes played using frets near the head stock sound lower than notes played on frets closer to the bridge.

Walk around the room showing them that playing on the first fret means placing your finger in the first "box", 2nd fret in the 2nd box, etc. (thinking of the fret as a box where the finger plays can help them conceptually, while keeping them from putting their finger ON the fret which would result in a bad sounding or buzzing note)

Ask students to close their eyes and listen as you play low or high notes and to call out as a group whether the note you played was low or high.

Have students play low notes on their guitars using the 1st string, followed by high notes on the 1st string. Walk around the room or have students help each other with understanding what this means. Remind students that the thumb needs to be behind the fret board so the hand can feel grip motion that holds the note down easily.

Demonstrate using the 1st string what it means to be in "1st position" by playing the 1st fret with your 1st finger, 2nd fret with your 2nd finger, 3rd fret with your 3rd finger, and 4th fret with your 4th finger. Do the same thing in 2nd position, showing your 1st finger plays the 2nd fret, 2nd finger on the 3rd fret, etc.

Ask the students to look at their guitars and tell you what fret number the 1st fret marker is on. On typical nylon string student guitars this will be the dot located at the 5th fret. Play the notes on the 1st string in 5th position for them. Do the same thing for the 2nd fret marker, etc.

Have students play the notes in various positions you call out. Using a 6 or 12 side dice is a great way to do this. They can play each note one time or several times if you are combining this exercise with "alternate picking" or some other concept. Have student volunteers demonstrate to the class.

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Present: Perform expressively, with appropriate interpretation and technical accuracy, and in a manner appropriate to the audience and context (NAfME). Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr5.1.H Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

LESSON PLAN: Strum Patterns

Objective:

To teach students to play rhythmic patterns, which will increase their awareness of what they hear, improving their playing and making it fun.

Resources:
Handouts from teachers manual on Strum Patterns, guitars, picks.

Procedures:

If possible, show video footage of several guitarists playing together and strumming in sync with each other. There are lots of great examples on YouTube from various concerts. Point out as students watch that everyone's strumming hand is moving up and down together at the same time. A video of this concept in action is worth far more than words can describe.
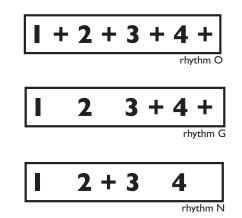
Ask the class to move their strumming arms up and down through the air steadily along with you while sitting with guitars in hand. While you all continue to do this count out loud "1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +"

Using either the open strings gently muted or a chord you are introducing to the class, lead students one at a time through the rhythms on the handout (or a projection of this handout if you've got a projector in class). The first rhythm is a strum on each beat while the arm is moving down.

After this feels easy for everyone and they can do it steadily, move to the second rhythm. Spend some time demonstrating for them first, that the arm strums an extra time on the "+" of 3 while the arm is moving in an upward direction. Have everyone do this with you as a group.

Repeat this process for the 3rd rhythm which is again slightly more difficult, adding an extra strum on the "+" of 2.

Review all 3 rhythms, playing them steadily without stopping in between. Depending on the ability of the students or how new a concept this is to them you may have them do each rhythm 4 times, twice, or just once. Eventually by working on this in classes with you they'll be able to run through all of the rhythms on the sheet one right after another while keeping steady time!

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

rhythm O

1   2   3 + 4 +

rhythm G

1   2 + 3   4

rhythm N

GUITAR

LESSON PLAN: Stickers and Guitar Mutes

Objective:

Students will be able to play several different chords on 3 strings using stickers that show them where to place their fingers.

Resources:
Paper towel guitar mute, small stickers, guitars, picks

Procedures:

Make a 3 string guitar mute for strings 4, 5, and 6 by placing a folded paper towel underneath these strings. You may also want to tie a rubber band around the paper towel so that it doesn't come off of the guitar, as can happen when new students are strumming hard against all of the strings. This will mute these strings allowing you to play simplified chords on strings 1, 2, and 3.

Place a sticker underneath string 1 at the 3rd fret. The sticker should be small enough so that it's clearly underneath of only the first string. Some teachers purchase tiny stickers of happy face circles that come in the ROYGBIV color scheme, using red for G and then following with the next color for the next note of the scale (orange for A, yellow for B, and so on). Other teachers use tiny stickers of fun images like frogs or bugs to place on the fret board. Whatever you choose can be turned into a fun beginner song chart made out of colors or the pictures of what's on your stickers.

Place a sticker at the end of strings 1, 2, and 3 just past the nut to represent the open E minor chord (using ROYGBIV, the color for E is indigo). Place another sticker underneath string 2 at the first fret for a 1 finger C chord (in ROYGBIV this is green).

Have kids play the different chords to get used to the sound. You can call out chord letter names, colors, or what is pictured on your stickers! Now you're ready to begin playing the songs from the Teachers Manual!

Extension:
Adding the D to this vocabulary of chords opens students up to THOUSANDS of songs. Mountains of music is written using the "Axis of Awesome" progression (G, D, Emi, C) or the "Ice Cream Changes" (or "50's) progression (G, Emi, D, C). Using this D chord is also a nice segue to using chords that are played on all 6 strings. Be careful not to introduce it until you see your students can play G, C, and Emi easily. The ROYGBIV color for the notes of the D chord is blue, the 5th color for the 5th note in the key of G. Using ROYGBIV this way is done in many popular music curriculums today including Boomwhackers Percussion Tubes and Music Mind Games.

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr5.1.H Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine.
Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: 3 String Emi - Get Up Stand Up

Objective:

Students will be able to play "Get Up Stand Up" by Bob Marley while using a reggae rhythm on the open E minor chord using 3 strings.

GUITAR

Resources:
Recording of "Get Up Stand Up" by Bob Marley, printout of the lyrics, graphic of the strum pattern, guitars, guitar picks

Procedures:

Play the recording of "Get Up Stand Up" while counting out loud "1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +". Emphasize when you say the "+". Begin making the arm motion that imitates the strum pattern, saying "+" as you swing the arm upwards.

Have students play this pattern on guitar, only strumming on the "up stroke" to get the reggae feel. Count out loud for them emphasizing the "+" as they strum.

Invite students to sing the chorus with you. The original song is played over a C minor chord and we're transposing it to E minor, so you may need to play the notes D E F# G as you sing "Get up, stand up" to help singers "hear" the new key.

Try playing along while singing. This may be difficult at first so you may want to divide the class into half singers and half guitar players, and then switch roles after a couple of repetitions until singing and playing becomes a possibility so that everyone can sing together.

Extensions:

Make up words to the songs that fit in with a current theme in class or academic subject the students are working on

Have some students in class designated to make the drum beat for this song by tapping their right foot on 1 and 3 and hitting their left hand on a piece of paper on 2 + and 4 to imitate both the kick and snare drum in the song.
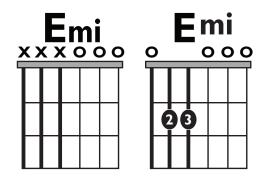
Have other students play a reggae bass line using the open low E string

Students can play along with the recording in the original key by using this 3 string C minor chord (Figure A) along with a bass line.

Fig. A

LESSON PLAN: Open Emi - Chain of Fools

Objective:

Students will be able to use the open E minor chord on 3 strings along with a bass line to play an arrangement of Chain of Fools by Aretha Franklin.

Resources:
Paper towel mute, guitar picks, guitars, recording of "Chain of Fools", printout of the lyrics

Procedures:

Play the recording of "Chain of Fools" by Aretha Franklin. After students have heard it and know how it sounds, count along with the recording asking students to join you saying "1 2 3 4" over and over. In the recording, both the snare hit and guitar strum are on beats 2 and 4, so have students clap on 2 and 4 once they are able to count along with the recording.

Have students get out their guitars and mute all the strings with their left hands while they strum down on 1, 2, 3, and 4. Once this is working, have them continue the downward strumming motion on 1, 2, 3, and 4 but only strum on 2 and 4 (the arm will still move down on 1 and 3 without strumming).

Ask the kids to sing the chorus along with you over an E minor chord to transition their ears to the new key so that they can use this easy chord (the original key is C minor). The melody begins on the note G when she says "Chain, chain, chain".

Invite everyone to sing and play along as they strum on 2 and 4 while singing this chorus together. Individual singers can be selected to sing different verses.

Extensions:

Make up words to the songs that fit in with a current theme in class or academic subject the students are working on
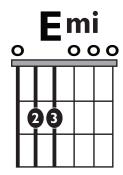
Students can play along with the recording in the original key by using this 3 string C minor chord (Figure A) along with a bass line.

Have some students in class designated to make the drum beat for this song by tapping their right foot on 1 and 3 and hitting their left hand on a piece of paper on 2 and 4 to imitate both the kick and snare drum in the song.
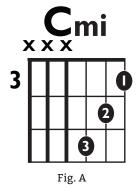
Have other students play a guitar bass line using the open low E string.

GUITAR

Emi

Emi

Cmi

Fig. A

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr5.1.H Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine. Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr6.1.H.Ia Perform with expression and technical accuracy, in individual and small group performances, a varied repertoire of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces, improvisations, and chordal accompaniments in a variety of patterns (such as arpeggio, country and gallop strumming, finger picking patterns), demonstrating sensitivity to the audience; Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Re7.2.H.5a Demonstrate and explain, citing evidence, the use of repetition, similarities and contrasts in musical selections and how these and knowledge of the context (social or cultural) inform the response. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.Math. Content.K.CC.B.4 Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality;CCSS.Math.Content.K.CC.B.4. Understand that each successive number name refers to a quantity that is one larger

LESSON PLAN: G and C Chords with 1 Finger

Objective:

Students will be able to play a classic chord progression used in hundreds of songs by using only one finger while keeping good musical time with a strum pattern

Resources:
Guitars, picks, lyrics for "Feelin' Alright", "Imagine", "Waiting in Vain", "Drive My Car", "I Can't Get No Satisfaction", "Glory Days", etc., handout from Teachers Manual on 3 String chords

Procedures:

Ask students to play the 1 finger G chord. Remember the tools available for simplifying the guitar as outlined in the lesson plan for beginner guitars. Then have them switch to the C chord. Switch back and forth a couple of times until finger placement is obvious.

Strum the G chord at the same time you begin counting "1 2 3 4". Do the same thing on the C chord counting evenly. Continue doing this until everyone can play along keeping time, only strumming on 1.

Ask everyone to strum down on every number, playing a G while you strum down on 1, 2, 3, and 4. Switch to the C chord quickly continuing to count and strum down on each number. Make sure everyone in class can watch your demonstration of this. Encourage them to continue steady strumming even if the left hand doesn't make it to the next chord perfectly on time— the steadiness of rhythm is more important than anything and will help this transition become successful.

While this continues, have the class or volunteers from the class sing along using the lyrics to one of the famous songs that use this classic chord progression.

Extensions:

Assign some students to play the bass notes to these chords, letting each note ring as a whole note underneath of the strum pattern.

Have a group of students play the backbeat to the song you're jamming over to make the arrangement more fun.

Use a more complex strum pattern while keeping the hand moving up and down (Figure A)

Make a song writing exercise out of these 2 chords, inviting the class to write

G
X X X O O
3

C
X X X O O
1

1   2 + 3 + 4
rhythm 4

Fig. A

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.3 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities, and identified performance challenges. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.CC.B.4 Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality.
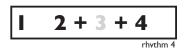
LESSON PLAN: 2 Chords, 1 Finger

Objective:

Students will be able to play the classic chord progression used in "Shout" by the Isley Brothers and "Hang Me Up To Dry" by the Coldwar Kids using 3 strings to play an open E minor chord and 1 finger G chord.

Resources:
Printout of the lyrics to "Shout", printout of the song chart to "Shout", guitars, guitar picks, a sticker to mark the G chord

Procedures:

Have students play the G chord on guitar, placing their finger over the sticker you've put on the fret board under the 1st string at the 3rd fret. Have them follow this by playing the open E minor chord.
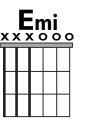
Count out loud "1 2 3 4" as they strum the G chord, then "1 2 3 4" as they strum the E minor chord. Encourage them to strum the next chord as you say the number 1. Once switching chords on beat 1 becomes easy, invite them to strum down on all 4 beats while continuing to switch chords on beat 1.

Invite students to sing the chorus with you as you play along. Since we're playing in a different key than the original you may want to play the notes E G E G E G E as you say "You know you make me want to".

In the verse section the chords last for 2 measures each. Coach them on this playing through it while you count "1 2 3 4" twice on each chord.

The pre-chorus stays on the G chord the entire time, and is held together by a bass line walking up and down the first 5 notes of the scale. Play this bass line on your guitar while the kids strum their G chords.

Now that all of the parts are laid out, try playing them all in a row without stopping in between sections. Some students can be designated singers, students can take turns, or you can have everyone sing together. On the final chorus try to emulate the getting softer and louder effect followed by the "call and response" using the entire group.

Emi   **G**

GUITAR
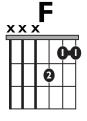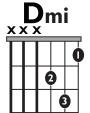
Extensions:

Have some students play this bass line to the song either on their guitars or a bass guitar

Have some students in class designated to make the drum beat for this song by tapping their right foot on 1 and 3 and hitting their left hand on a piece of paper on 2 and 4 to imitate both the kick and snare drum in the song.

Students can play along with the recording in the original key by using this 3 string F chord and D minor chord along with a bass line using these notes.

F   **Dmi**

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.3 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities, and identified performance challenges. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.CC.B.4 Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality.

LESSON PLAN: 1 Chord Song Arrangements

Objective:

Students will be able to play songs using only one chord and a good awareness of musical contrast.

GUITAR

Resources:
Lyrics and recordings from any 1 chord song; "Lowrider" by War, "Land of 1,000 Dances" by Wilson Picket, "We Will Rock You" by Queen, "Mannish Boy" by Muddy Waters, "Tomorrow Never Knows" by The Beatles, "Who Do You Love" by Bo Diddley (covered by George Thorogood), etc.

Procedures:

Pick a couple of 1 chord songs to listen to as a group in class. Tell students that while listening you would like them to pay attention to contrast, and how using only one chord a song can sound like it has different parts. Encourage them to listen for contrasting sections like a verse or chorus, contrasting rhythms between sections, instrumental vs. vocal sections, contrasting bass lines, etc.

Choose a song to play as a group. Listen together for the contrasts that make the song work using only one chord and come up with strategies for playing it while copying some of these ideas in your arrangement. If contrast is maintained using percussion sounds, bass lines, etc. you may need to assign a separate group of students to those parts.

Use this kind of exercise to learn new chords as your students become ready for more. This process encourages us to pay attention to arranging songs in ways that make them more fun to play, while making new information more interesting to learn! If you're using the 1 finger chords, this is a great exercise to do for introducing the D chord.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm , pitch , and form) in music selected for performance.

LESSON PLAN: E Minor With a Funk Groove

Objective:

Students will be able to play "Thank You" by Sly and the Family Stone using the E minor chord and a steady strum pattern.

Resources:
Recording of "Thank You" by Sly and the Family Stone, Lyrics, E minor chord handout.

Procedures:

Demonstrate playing an E minor chord

Direct students in playing the E minor chord on their guitars using the handout.

Use the strum pattern together as a group, making sure the arm continuously moves up and down.
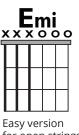
Listen to the song "Thank You" by Sly and the Family Stone as a group. Point out every time you hear the chorus. Discuss how the chorus is different from the verse. Practice singing the chorus along with the recording.
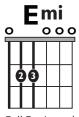
Perform the song along with the recording using the strum pattern.

Extensions:

Perform the song as a group without the recording, having some students sing verses and encouraging everyone to sing the chorus. Since the song stays on E minor the whole time, a bass line can be improvised by some students using the low E string.

Compose a one chord song using E minor as a group. Ask students to participate in writing lyrics relevant to them and the school!

Emi
x x x o o o

Easy version
for open strings

Emi
o o o o

Full E minor chord

| 1 | 2 + 3 | 4 |

rhythm N

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.3 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance. Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.3 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities, and identified performance challenges.

LESSON PLAN: E Minor with a Shuffle Feel

Objective:

Students will be able to play "On the Road Again" by Canned Heat using the E minor chord and a strum pattern in shuffle feel.

GUITAR

Resources:
Recording of "On the Road Again" by Canned Heat, Lyrics, E minor chord handout.

Procedures:
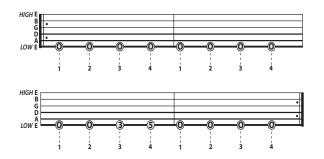
Review the E Minor chord with student (see lesson plan "E Minor With Sly and the Family Stone")

Demonstrate the difference between a regular up and down strum pattern and a "shuffle" feel strum pattern. (Figure A)

Coordinate playing the strum pattern as a group, playing only the down strokes on the numbers at first.

Perform the strum pattern along with the song "On The Road Again" by Canned Heat as a group. Say out loud "Down-up" to the shuffle rhythm of the groove they're all hearing.

Arrange the song to play as a band by assigning some students a percussion part (see lesson plan "Classroom As Drumset"). Have other students playing the bass line on their guitars using the low E string

Fig. A
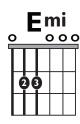
Extension:

This is a good opportunity to encourage improvisation. Invite students to take a solo using the basic instructions outlined in the lesson plans "Two Note Solos" and "Soloing with the G Extension".
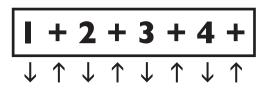
National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:Cr1.1.2 a. Improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns andmusical ideas for a specific purpose. Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for performance. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.3 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities, and identified performance challenges.

LESSON PLAN: The E Chord in 1 Chord Songs

Objective:

Students will learn to play the E Major chord on guitar and apply it to playing a one chord song.

Resources:

Any of the following recordings: "American Woman" by The Guess Who, "Hey Bo Diddley" by Bo Diddley, "Who do you Love" by George Thorogood, "Keep On Chooglin'" or "Graveyard Train" by Credence Clearwater Revival, "No Place to Go", "Smokestack Lightning", or "Spoonful by Howlin' Wolf", "High Time We Went" by Joe Cocker, "Coochy Coochy" by Ringo Starr, or "Whole Lotta Love" by Led Zeppelin, any lyrics, E chord handout.

Procedures:

Demonstrate playing an E chord

Direct students in playing the E chord on their guitars using the handout.

Use the strum pattern together as a group, making sure the arm continuously moves up and down.

Listen to the song you are going to play along with as a group. Point out every time you hear the chorus. Discuss how the chorus is different from the verse. Practice singing the chorus along with the recording.

Perform the song along with the recording using a strum pattern.
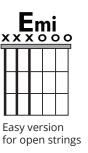
Extensions:
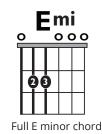
Perform a couple of the songs as a group without the recording, having some students sing verses and encouraging everyone to sing the chorus. Since the song stays the E chord the whole time, a bass line can be improvised by some students using the low E string.

Improvise solos over any of the song, taking turns, doing call and response, etc. (see lesson plan "Two Note Solo Open Position" or "G Extension")

Emi
x x x o o o
Easy version
for open strings

Emi
o o o o
② ③
Full E minor chord

| I | 2 | + | 3 | 4 | + |

rhythm P

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: General Music MU:Pr.6.1.6 a. Perform the music with technical accuracy to convey the creator's intent. Example: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Pr6.1.E.5a Demonstrate attention to technical accuracy and expressive qualities in prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire of music. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.

LESSON PLAN: D Chord in 1 Chord Songs

Objective:

Students will learn to play the D Major chord on guitar and apply it to playing a one chord song.

GUITAR

Resources:
Any of the following recordings: "Land of 1,000 Dances", "Jump into the Fire" by Harry Nilsson, or "One Chord Song" by Stoney Larue, lyrics to any of these songs, and the D chord handout

Procedures:

Demonstrate playing the D major chord

Direct students in playing the D chord on their guitars using the handout.
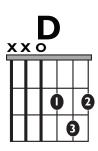
Practice playing the strum pattern that goes along with the song you choose together as a group.

Listen to the song you are going to play along with as a group. Discuss how the different parts of the song sound differently whether it's a verse, chorus, or instrumental bridge.
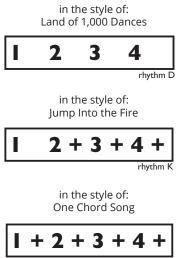
Perform one of the songs along with the recording using a strum pattern.

Extension:

Perform a couple of the songs as a group without the recording, having some students sing verses and encouraging everyone to sing the chorus. Since the song stays the D chord the whole time, a bass line can be improvised by some students using the D string (string #4).

D

X X O

① ②

③

D Major Chord

in the style of:
Land of 1,000 Dances

1	2	3	4

rhythm D

in the style of:
Jump Into the Fire

1	2 + 3 + 4 +

rhythm K

in the style of:
One Chord Song

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

rhythm O

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 6: Convey Meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: General Music MU:Pr6.1.(4-5) a. Perform music, alone or with others, with expression, technical accuracy, and appropriate interpretation. Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Re7.2.H.Ia (HS Proficient) Compare passages in musical selections and explain how the elements of music and context (social, cultural, or historical) inform the response.

LESSON PLAN: Learning the D7 Chord

Objective:

Students will learn to play the D7 chord on guitar and use it in playing "Feelin' Blue" by Credence Clearwater Revival.

Resources:
Recording of "Feelin' Blue" by Credence Clearwater Revival, lyrics, and the D7 chord handout

Procedures:

Demonstrate playing the D7 major chord

Direct students in playing the D7 chord on their guitars using the handout.
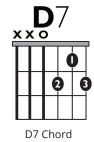
Play the strum pattern as a group
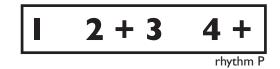
Use the strum pattern to play along with the recording of the song.

Perform the song as a group, assigning some guitarists to making a bass line on the open D string while others improvise a percussion part (see lesson plan "Classroom as Drumset")

D7
X X O

D7 Chord

| ⏐ | 2 | + | 3 | 4 | + |

rhythm P

GUITAR

Extensions:

Use the D blues scale to take solos over the song. For beginning soloists make a two note solo out of just the notes on the first string. After that feels easy add the two notes on the 2nd string, etc.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work Example: General Music MU:Cr1.1.2 a. Improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns and musical ideas for a specific purpose. Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.5 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy and expressive qualities to address challenges, and show improvement over time. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

LESSON PLAN: Playing A7 in Muddy Waters

Objective:

Students will be able to play the A7 chord in one of the most famous blues based songs in the history of rock and roll.

GUITAR

Resources:
Recording of Mannish Boy by Muddy Waters, lyrics, Handout of the A7 chord

Procedures:

Listen to Mannish Boy by Muddy Waters as a class. Point out the famous blues lick occurring over and over throughout the song as one of the most famous guitar riffs ever used. A YouTube lesson of this riff can be found at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHflDIkCYl0

Describe the shuffle feel rhythm heard in the song as being a "heartbeat". Imitate this sound tapping on a surface, then do it while counting.

TAP   TAP TAP   TAP TAP   TAP TAP   TAP
1 + a **2** + a **3** + a **4** + a

Demonstrate playing an A7 chord while playing the strum pattern as you count it out loud

Direct students in playing the A7 chord on their guitars using the handout.

Direct other students in playing the bass line for this song, staying on the open A string the entire time

Perform one of the songs as a group, having students improvise bass lines on the A string

Extension:
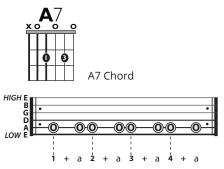
Re-write lyrics to this song based on ideas from the students or a topic the class or school is currently working with
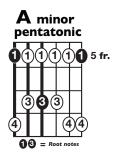
Take a guitar solo using the A minor pentatonic.

A7 Chord

A minor pentatonic

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr5.1.H.IIa (HS Accomplished) Perform with expression and technical accuracy, in individual and small group performances, a varied repertoire of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces, improvisations, and chordal accompaniments in a variety of styles, demonstrating sensitivity to the audience and an understanding of the context (social, cultural, and historical).Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.Example: General Music MU:Re7.1.4 a. Demonstrate and explain how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, purposes, or contexts. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: Dividing the Chords in Class

Objective:

Students will be able to play two different chords by focusing on one at a time while participating in a jam session over several classic rock tunes.

Resources:
Poster of A, poster of D, "playing the D chord, playing the a chord" handout, printout of lyrics to any of the suggested songs
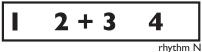
Procedures:

Lead students through an understanding of playing the A chord, based on the handout from the Teachers Manual "How to Play an A Chord". This may be a good opportunity to pair kids up for peer to peer instruction.

Repeat this same process with the D chord using the handout from the teachers manual "How to Play a D Chord".

Ask everyone to play the A chord with you using this strum pattern

1		2	+	3		4	

rhythm N

Encourage everyone to keep the arm moving steadily up and down even when it isn't strumming the guitar as this helps in playing and time keeping. Some teachers demonstrate this concept by holding an egg shaker in their strumming hand to show that the rhythm continues even when you're not strumming. After the strum pattern is working pretty well, repeat this process using the D chord.

Have students sing along with you to songs that use this progression ("Feelin' Alright", "Imagine", "Waiting in Vain", "Drive My Car", "I Can't Get No Satisfaction", "Glory Days", etc.). After everything is working well, switch the groups around so that everyone gets an equal amount of practice time on each chord

Extensions:

During some repetitions of the chord progression go around the room allowing kids to take a "2 note solo" (Teachers Manual handout)

Further divide the class into a group that you assign a bass line on the open A and D strings if you don't have a bass player in class.

Further divide the class into another group assigned to manufacture the drum beat to this song if you don't have a drummer.

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.5 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy and expressive qualities to address challenges, and show improvement over time. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1.B Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.

LESSON PLAN: Rock and Roll G to C

Objective:

Students will be able to use the "anchor note concept" to play a classic chord progression used in a lot of favorite songs.

GUITAR

Resources:
Guitars, picks.

Procedures:

Show students that you can play a G chord and a C chord both with your pinky and ring finger anchored to the 1st and 2nd strings. Demonstrate that this way you only need to move the notes on the 6th and 5th strings to the 5th and 4th strings. The sound we get from playing these chords this way is very distinct and used in a lot of music we hear.
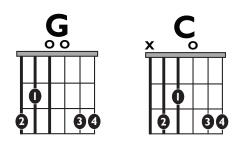
Have students put their 3rd and 4th fingers (ring and pinky) in position on strings 1 and 2. Have them play a light strum pattern on just these high strings while you play the chords on your guitar to get them used to the feeling of the "anchor" in this chord change.

Add the notes that complete the G chord and walk around to check that everyone understands how to play it. Since this chord uses fingers that spread across the entire fret board make sure they're playing it with their knuckles in front of the fret board. If not this stretch will feel impossible.

Extensions:

Listen to "Every Rose Has It's Thorn" by Poison and/or Wish You Were Here by Pink Floyd to hear these sounds in action.

Sometimes these same anchor notes are held over other chords played in this key (which is heard in "Wish You Were Here"). Encourage students who are interested to try playing this 1st and 2nd string anchor over the E minor chord, the A chord and even the D chord. It's special sound works well on all of these chords.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.4 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities, and address performance challenges. Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Re7.2.H.8a (Intermediate) Describe how the way that the elements of music are manipulated and knowledge of the context (social and cultural) inform the response. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing

LESSON PLAN: Hearing Chords

Objective:

Students will be able to hear the difference between chords based on hearing them as numbers related to a "1" chord. Music is a language made out of sound, and learning how to pay attention to it with our ears should always be our top priority.
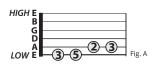
Resources:
Handout from the website showing chords related to each other in any of the keys you are with your students on. This lesson will focus on the key of G.

Procedures:

Tell students that chords are related to each other as numbers in every key, and that the "1" chord is the chord that usually begins and ends any song. Learning to hear chords this way allows us to figure out songs on our own.

Play the first 4 notes in a G Major scale while naming the notes as 1, 2, 3, and 4 (Figure A).

Fig. A

Next play just the first note and then strum the G chord telling everyone that since this chord is based on the 1st note it is called the "1" chord. Then play those first four notes again, and after playing the 4th note C, strum a C chord pointing out that since this chord is based on the 4th note it is called the "4" chord. Repeat all of this a second time to secure it in their ears.

Tell students you're going to play the "1" chord or the "4" chord and you'd like them to shout out as a group which one they heard you play. After each answer confirm it by saying it after them. Most students will be able to hear what you're playing right away, and those who don't yet will quickly get it too. It's alright if you introduce this to them where they can see your hands, but eventually you'll want to do this so that they aren't using their eyes to "see" the chords.

After students are able to name individual chords successfully by hearing them, make the game more interesting by playing several chords in a row and asking them to name the sequence of chords. For example, play the G chord, C chord, and G chord again and students will say "1, 4, 1"!

Extensions:

After students can hear the difference between these chords which will happen very quickly, add another chord. Either the "2" chord (A minor) or "6" chord (E minor) is a good idea since their minor sound makes a more obvious choice when playing one. Remember to preface any new chord by walking up to it's root using the scale so it's relationship to the key is obvious. Also try not to introduce new chords until you are completely confident that they are already successful at "hearing" the previously learned ones.

Use this exercise in different keys. Handouts showing which chords are related to each key are available in the Teacher Manual.

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 7 : Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example : Composition and Theory MU :Re7.2.C.Ia (HS Proficient) Analyze aurally the elements of music (including form) of musical works, relating them to style, mood, and context, and describe how the analysis provides models for personal growth as composer, performer, and/or listener. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.CC.B.4 Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality.

LESSON PLAN: Spanish Guitar

Objective:

Students will be able to use an E chord to play a traditional style of Spanish Guitar using Maleguena and Flamenco sounds by moving an E chord shape up and down the fretboard.

Resources:
Guitars, Picks.

Procedures:
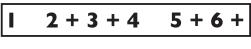
Show students that you can play a normal E chord and then move it up the fret board a half step to get a "Spanish" sound heard in a lot of traditional Spanish pop and classical music. Play each chord for 4 or 8 counts (Figure A).
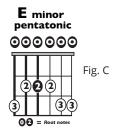
Ask students to play their E chord the way they normally would. Then have them "slide" the E chord up the fret board 1 fret again strumming all of the strings.

After Students understand how to move this E chord shape up and back, have them do it in time while you count. You can give them 4 counts on each chord, or to play this with a more traditional sounding rhythm count up to 6 on each chord since that is the type of "feel" music using this progression uses. (Figure B)
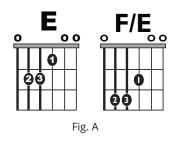
Fig. A

Extensions:

This same chord shape can also be moved up the fret board to the 4th fret as an additional chord in this "Spanish Music Jam Session" when students have got the basic chords down (Figure D).

Fig. D   Fig. E

Fig. B

Ask students to come up with a melody to play over this by adding some extra notes to the open E minor pentatonic scale (Figure C) These extra notes help the melodies sound more traditionally Spanish and can make some fun compositions!

Fig. C

Ask students to come up with a melody to play over this by adding some extra notes to the open E minor pentatonic scale (Figure E). These extra notes help the melodies sound more traditionally Spanish and can make some fun compositions!

You can also play this traditional bass line underneath their chord changes (Figure F)

Fig. F

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:Cr2.1.4 a. Demonstrate selected and organized musical ideas for an improvisation, arrangement, or composition to express intent, and explain connection to purpose and context. Anchor Standard 10: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding. Examples: General Music MU:Cn10.1.(PK-8) a. and Harmonizing Instruments MU:Cn10.0.H.(5a-IIIa) Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or underlined performing technical tasks.

LESSON PLAN: Anchor Chords

Objective:

Students will be able to change chords easily using the concept of "Anchor Notes" to move to a new chord.

Resources:
Handout in teacher manual of the C chord.

Procedures:
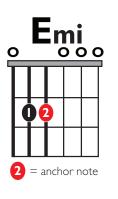
Ask students to watch you play an E minor chord changing to a C chord over and over. "Hurricane" by Bob Dylan, "Eleanor Rigby" by The Beatles, and "Show Me The Way" by Peter Frampton are all classic songs that use this progression.
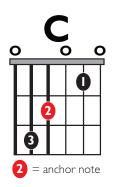
Have students see if they can identify which finger is not moving as you change chords. It will be your 2nd finger located on the 4th string in the 2nd fret. After this is obvious to the students, tell them that finger never leaves the guitar as you change chords—it's an "anchor finger" to help you switch between chords really easily.

Ask students to play a C chord on their guitars. (This is a complicated chord to play for a beginner, so you will want to have spent enough time with this chord by itself before using it in this lesson plan). After they play the C chord, have them lift the 1 and 3 fingers off of the guitar, leaving the 2nd finger anchored on the 2nd fret of the 4th string. Then play the full C chord again, followed by lifting everything except the "anchor finger".

Once they've gotten the concept of the "anchor finger", have them switch to the E minor chord and then strum that. Go back and forth between these two chords several times, taking as much time as necessary to feel a secure and comfortable transition between chords.

Eventually you'll be ready to have students switch chords, one right after the other with a couple of seconds between each chord. Just like with other chord switching lesson plans, make a fun exercise out of trying to switch between chords faster and faster.

Emi

2 = anchor note

C

2 = anchor note

Extensions:

Make a medley out of the chords E minor to C using the songs listed about and others you can find. The book "Money Chords" by Richard Scott lists dozens of classic chord progressions and the most famous songs that use them making it an outstanding resource for jam sessions like this.

Apply this same concept to the chords C to A minor. A medley of this progression could be made from "All my Loving" by The Beatles, "Shout" by the Isley Brothers, and the instrumental section to "Wish You Were Here" by Pink Floyd.

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr5.1.H.5a (Novice) Apply teacher-provided criteria to critique individual performances of a varied repertoire of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces, and chordal accompaniments selected for performance, and apply practice strategies to address performance challenges and refine the performances. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

LESSON PLAN: G and C Using Target Notes

Objective:

Students will be able to change chords easily using the concept of "Target Notes" to move to a new chord

Resources:
Handouts in teacher manual of the G and C chords.

Procedures:

Have students play the G chord on their guitars. Spend a moment to make sure that everyone has it, maybe even pairing students together or having them work in small groups so that they can help each other.

Ask students which finger plays the note closest to their chins. This will be on the 6th string in the 3rd fret and may be either the 1st finger or the 2nd finger, depending on how you decide to teach this chord.

Tell them to remove their hands from the guitar, and then find the chord again using a "target note" by first placing this note on the 6th string and then allowing the other fingers to get into their positions. This target note is the first note the pick will strike, and is also the "root" of the chord making it the most important one to hear.

Repeat this same procedure with the C chord, playing the note on the 5th string with the 3rd finger and then allowing the 1st and 2nd fingers to find their homes afterward.

Play the G chord by finding it's target note first followed by the other fingers, then strum. Stop and repeat this process with the C chord. Stop and go back to the G chord. Always target note first followed by other fingers.

Try switching between the chords slightly faster, spending about 2 seconds on each chord and increasing the speed until you can change in 1 second or less!

Extensions:

Have students play along with medleys of songs that use this chord progression over and over, like "Imagine", "Waiting in Vain", etc.

Play the C chord being aware of playing the target note in a way that simultaneously "mutes" the 6th string. Since the root of this chord is on the 5th string, that note will sound the strongest. Good guitar players learn how to place fingers on notes to not only get notes they want, but mute notes they don't want. The difference is just a millimeter or two in finger placement, having the finger placed in a way that it holds down the note on the 5th string while gently touching up against the 6th string so that it can't make any sound.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr5.1.H.5a (Novice) Apply teacher-provided criteria to critique individual performances of a varied repertoire of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces, and chordal accompaniments selected for performance, and apply practice strategies to address performance challenges and refine the performances. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

LESSON PLAN: Changing Chords (Chord Grip)

Objective:

Students will be able to change chords easily by becoming aware of what guitar players refer to as the "chord grip"

Resources:
Handout in teacher manual showing E minor and A chords.

Procedures:

Have students play an E minor chord on their guitars. Spend a moment to make sure that everyone has it, maybe even pairing students together who can help each other.

Ask students to "freeze" the fingers in the shape they made when playing the E minor chord and then slide the guitar out from the "grip" the hand made when playing this chord. Model this for them, showing that the result has both fingers in the shape of the chord you made, but also the thumb going straight up and down parallel with the playing fingers like it would be behind the neck to support playing the chord.

Have students put this "chord grip" back onto the guitar to play the E minor chord again. Repeat this process several times to help develop the muscle memory associated with playing chords this way. You can tell students that some guitarists call this a "chord grip" because of the feeling in the chord hand of "gripping" a chord.

Do the same procedure using an A chord, playing the chord successfully and then freezing that grip in the air to pay attention to how the fingers are holding it and the way the thumb supports it.

Play the E minor chord on one strum, stop, make the grip for the A chord and strum. Do the same thing going to E minor and continuing to go back and forth between these two chords.

Try switching between the chords slightly faster, spending about 2 seconds on each chord and increasing the speed until you can change in 1 second or less!

Extension:

Use these two chords in a song or over a jam track that plays this type of progression over and over, like "Breathe" by Pink Floyd, "Oye Como Va" by Santana, or "Chameleon" by Herbie Hancock.

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:Cr2.1.6 b. Use standard and/or iconic notation and/or audio/video recording to document personal simple rhythmic phrases, melodic phrases, and two-chord harmonic musical ideas.
Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

LESSON PLAN: Changing Chords From A to D

Objective:

Students will be able to use the A and D chords to play one of the most popular chord progressions in today's music.

Resources:
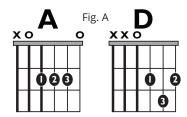
Handout for the A chord, handout for the D chord, song charts for Home by Phillip Phillips, You Can't Always Get What You Want by the Rolling Stones, and Imagine by John Lennon.
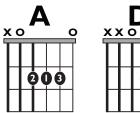
Procedures:
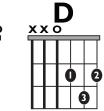
Choose a fingering you prefer for the A chord. Both choices are used by lots of guitarists; one of them makes playing the A chord easier while the other one makes switching chords easier... (Figure A)
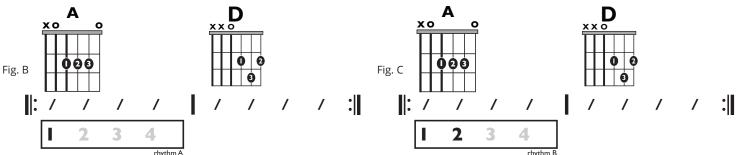
Practice switching chords. Use a stop watch and ask students to see how many times they can switch in one minute.

Leave early to arrive on time: strum the A chord on beat one then put the fingers in position for the D chord while counting beats 2, 3, and 4. Strum the D chord on the next beat 1 and put the fingers in position for the A chord while counting beats 2, 3, and 4 (Figure B). Repeat going back and forth.

Fig. A

Fig. B

Fig. C

rhythm A

rhythm B
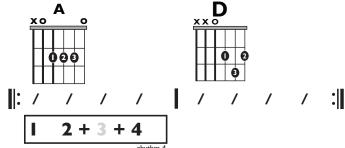
Strum on beats 1 and 2 leaving beats 3 and 4 to change to the next chord.

rhythm 4
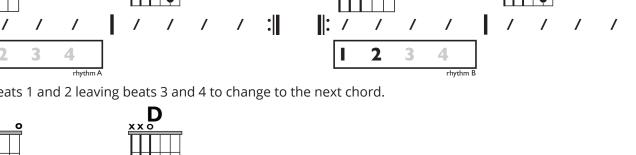
Try playing a rock strum pattern while changing chords after students feel it is getting easier.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:Cr2.1.6 b.Use standard and/or iconic notation and/or audio/video recording to document personal simple rhythmic phrases, melodic phrases, and two-chord harmonic musical ideas. Anchor Standard 6: Convey Meaning through the presentation of artistic work. General Music MU:Pr6.1.2 a. Perform music for a specific purpose with expression and technical accuracy. (applies PK-5) Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

GUITAR

LESSON PLAN: 1, 4, 5 (I IV V) Progression with A, D, and E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the A, D, and E chords to play a 1, 4, 5 (I, IV, V) chord progression enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

Resources:

Handouts for the A, D, and E chords, handout for chords in the key of A, song charts and lyrics for "You Don't Know You're Beautiful" by One Direction, "Twist and Shout" by The Beatles, "Hang On Sloopy" by The McCoys, and "Wild Thing" by The Troggs.

Procedures:

Practice being able to play and switch between the A, D, and E chords. Students who are new to doing this may want to strum only on the first beat of each chord and spend the other counts getting the hand into the next position, while more experienced students can maintain a strum pattern while switching chords.

Play the 1st A, D, and E progression to the songs "You Don't Know You're Beautiful" and "Twist and Shout". Since the chord progressions are the same, what makes them different is the melody and use of rhythm.

Play the 2nd A, D, and E progression to the songs "Hang On Sloopy" and "Wild Thing". This time the progression is a little bit different adding an extra D chord. Here again, the chords are the same making the only difference being the melody and rhythm.

Extensions:

Discuss chord progressions as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 4 5" (I IV V) progression by musicians because A is the 1st chord in the key, D is the 4th, and E is the 5th. Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name these three chords in different keys. "What chords would make a '1 4 5' (I IV V) progression in the key of G? How about in the key of D?"

in the style of "You Don't Know You're Beautiful"

1	2 + 3	4 +

in the style of "Twist and Shout"

1	2 + 3 + 4

rhythm 4

Fig. B

in the style of "Hang on Sloopy"

1	2 + 3 + 4

rhythm 4

in the style of "Wild Thing"

1	2 + 3	4 +

1 E	2mi F#mi	3mi G#mi	4 A	5 B	6mi C#mi	♭7 D
1 D	2mi Emi	3mi F#mi	4 G	5 A	6mi Bmi	♭7 C
1 G	2mi Ami	3mi Bmi	4 C	5 D	6mi Emi	♭7 F

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. (applies 1-5) Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.2 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic and melodic patterns using iconic or standard notation. (applies 1-4)
Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Music Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Re7.2.E.5a (Novice) Identify how knowledge of context and the use of repetition, similarities, and contrasts inform the response to music. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.C Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially).

GUITAR

LESSON PLAN: 1, 4, 1, 5 (I IV I V) Progression with A, D, and E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the A, D, and E chords to play a 1, 4, 1, 5 (I IV I V) chord progression enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

Resources:
Handouts for the A, D, and E chords, handout for chords in the key of A, song charts and lyrics for "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" by The Tokens, "Brown Eyed Girl" by Van Morrison, "Free Falling" by Tom Petty, and "American Pie" by Don McLean

Procedures:

Practice being able to play and switch between the A, D, and E chords. Students who are new to doing this may want to strum only on the first beat of each chord and spend the other counts getting the hand into the next position, while more experienced students can maintain a strum pattern while switching chords.

Play the 1st A, D, and E progression to the songs "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" and "Brown Eyed Girl". Since the chord progressions are the same, what makes them different is the melody and use of rhythm.

Play the 2nd A, D, and E progression to the songs "Free Falling" and "American Pie". This time the progression moves twice as fast spending only 2 counts on each chord. Here again, the chords are the same making the only difference being the melody and rhythm.

Extensions:
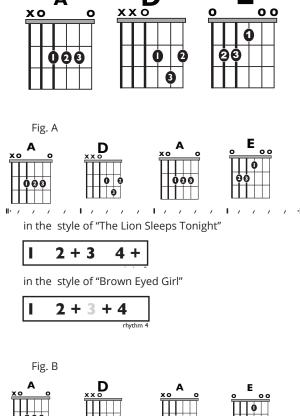
Discuss chord progressions as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 4 1 5" (I IV I V) progression by musicians because A is the 1st chord in the key, D is the 4th, and E is the 5th. Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name these three chords in different keys. "What chords would make a '1 4 1 5' (I IV I V) progression in the key of G? How about in the key of D?"

A   D   E

Fig. A

in the style of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight"

| **I** | **2 + 3** | **4 +** |

in the style of "Brown Eyed Girl"

| **I** | **2 +** | **3 + 4** |

rhythm 4

Fig. B

in the style of "Free Falling"

| **I** | **2 + 3** | **4** |

in the style of "American Pie"

| **I** | **2 +** | **3 + 4** |

rhythm 4

1 E	2mi F#mi	3mi G#mi	4 A	5 B	6mi C#mi	♭7 D
1 D	2mi Emi	3mi F#mi	4 G	5 A	6mi Bmi	♭7 C
1 G	2mi Ami	3mi Bmi	4 C	5 D	6mi Emi	♭7 F

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. (applies 1-5) Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.2 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic and melodic patterns using iconic or standard notation. (applies 1-4) Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. General Music MU:Pr6.1.2 a.Perform music for a specific purpose with expression and technical accuracy. (applies K-7)
Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.C Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially).

GUITAR

LESSON PLAN: 1, 5, 4, 5 (I V IV V) Progression with A, D, and E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the A, D, and E chords to play a 1, 5, 4, 5 (I V IV V) chord progression enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

Resources:

Handouts for the A, D, and E chords, handout for chords in the key of A, song charts and lyrics for "Twenty Two" by Taylor Swift, "Jack and Diane" by John Cougar Mellencamp, "Crimson and Clover" by The Shondells, and "My Heart Will Go On" by Celine Dion.

Procedures:

Practice being able to play and switch between the A, D, and E chords. Students who are new to doing this may want to strum only on the first beat of each chord and spend the other counts getting the hand into the next position, while more experienced students can maintain a strum pattern while switching chords.

Play the A, D, and E progression to all of the songs listed above. Since the chord progression is the same, what makes each song sound different is the melody and rhythm

Extensions:
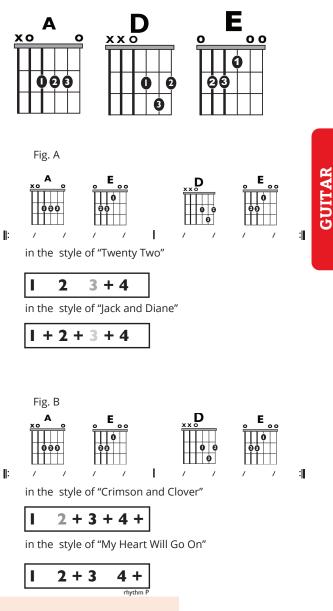
Discuss chord progressions as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 5 4 5" (I V IV V) progression by musicians because A is the 1st chord in the key, D is the 4th, and E is the 5th. Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name these chords in different keys. "What chords would make a '1 5 4 5' (I V IV V) progression in the key of G? How about in the key of D?"

1 E	2mi F#mi	3mi G#mi	4 A	5 B	6mi C#mi	♭7 D
1 D	2mi Emi	3mi F#mi	4 G	5 A	6mi Bmi	♭7 C
1 G	2mi Ami	3mi Bmi	4 C	5 D	6mi Emi	♭7 F

GUITAR

Fig. A

in the style of "Twenty Two"

1	2	3 + 4

in the style of "Jack and Diane"

1 + 2 + 3 + 4

Fig. B

in the style of "Crimson and Clover"

1	2 + 3 + 4 +

in the style of "My Heart Will Go On"

1	2 + 3	4 +

rhythm P

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. (applies 1-5) Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.2 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic and melodic patterns using iconic or standard notation. (applies 1-4) Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: General Music MU:Pr6.1.2 a. Perform music for a specific purpose with expression and technical accuracy. (applies PK-7) Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Music Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Re7.2.E.5a (Novice) Identify how knowledge of context and the use of repetition, similarities, and contrasts inform the response to music. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.C Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially).

LESSON PLAN: 1, 4, H7, 4 Progression with A, D, and E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the E, A, and D chords to play a 1, 4, H7, 4 (I IV HVII IV) chord progression enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

GUITAR

Resources:
Handouts for the E, A, and D chords, handout for chords in the key of E, song charts and lyrics for "Let's Go Crazy" by Prince, "ROCK in the USA" by John Cougar Mellencamp, "What I Like About You" by The Romantics, and "The Tears of a Clown" by Smokey Robinson and the Miracles.

Procedures:
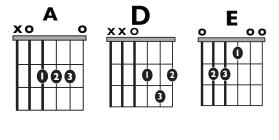
Practice being able to play and switch between the E, A, and D chords. Students who are new to doing this may want to strum only on the first beat of each chord and spend the other counts getting the hand into the next position, while more experienced students can maintain a strum pattern while switching chords.

Play the E, A, and D progression to all of the songs listed above. Since the chord progression is the same, what makes each song sound different is the melody and rhythm.

Extensions:

Discuss chord progressions as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 4 H7 4" (I IV HVII IV) progression by musicians because E is the 1st chord in the key, A is the 4th, and D is the H7th (D# is the normal 7th in the key of E making the D chord a "rule breaker"). Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name these chords in different keys. "What chords would make a '1 4 H7 4' (I IV HVII IV) progression in the key of G? How about in the key of D?"

A   D   E

Fig. A

E   A   D   A

in the style of "Let's Go Crazy"

| 1 | + | 2 | + | 3 | + | 4 | + |

in the style of "Rock in the USA"

| 1 | | 2 | + | 3 | | 4 | + |

rhythm P

Fig. B

E   A   D   A

in the style of "What I Like About You"

| 1 | | 2 | + | 3 | | 4 | + |

rhythm P

in the style of "The Tears of a Clown"

| 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | |

rhythm D

1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	♭7
E	F#mi	G#mi	A	B	C#mi	D
1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	♭7
D	Emi	F#mi	G	A	Bmi	C
1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	♭7
G	Ami	Bmi	C	D	Emi	F

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. (applies 1-5) Example: General Music MU:Pr.4.2.2 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic and melodic patterns using iconic or standard notation. (applies 1-4) Anchor Standard 6: Convey Meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: General Music MU:Pr6.1.2 a. Perform music for a specific purpose with expression and technical accuracy. (applies PK-7) Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example: Music Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Re7.2.E.5a (Novice) Identify how knowledge of context and the use of repetition, similarities, and contrasts inform the response to music.Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.C Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially).

LESSON PLAN: E and E Minor Chords

Objective:

Students will be able to hear and play both E major and E minor chords by moving 1 finger on and off of the fretboard.

Resources:
E Chord Handout
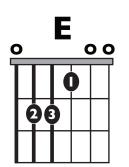
Procedures:
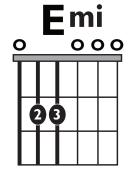
Using the handout for the E Major chord, ask students to play the chord the way they learned it in "E Chord" lesson. Pick one string at a time to make sure that the fingers are pressing down hard enough without muting any strings.

Lift the index finger off of the E chord, instantly making an E minor chord. Practice strumming once on each chord.

Ask students to describe the difference between the sound of the E Major chord and the E minor chord. Major has a happier sound while minor is a more serious or sad sound.

Turn your back to the class so that they can't see your fingers. Ask students to call out weather you're playing major or minor. Go around the room inviting other students to take turns doing this while the class uses their ears to hear the difference.

E

Emi

GUITAR

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
Example: General Music MU:Cr1.1.2 b. Generate musical patterns and ideas within the context of a given tonality (such as major and minor) and meter (such as duple and triple).Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.C Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially).

LESSON PLAN: Switching Chords - C to Ami

Objective:

Students will be able to hear and play both E major and E minor chords by moving 1 finger on and off of the fretboard.

Resources:
Handout for the C Major Chord, Chord charts of songs using both C and A minor chords.

Procedures:
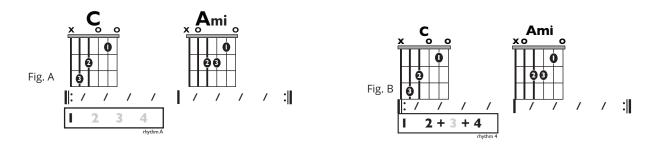
Have students play the C major chord from the handout, making sure the fingers press down hard enough on the strings to make a sound while being careful not to mute other strings. The 6th string isn't used in this chord and can be muted by placing the 3rd finger so that it touches string 6 or by hanging the thumb over the top of the fretboard so that it gently touches string 6.

Move the 3rd finger from the 5th string where it is in the C chord to the 3rd string on the 2nd fret. The 1st and 2nd fingers never leave the guitar. Now we're playing an A minor chord.

Practice switching between these two chords while counting steady time. Strum only on beat 1 then move the 3rd finger during beats 2, 3, and 4. (Figure A)

Once the switch between chords feels easy try playing a standard rock and roll strum pattern. (FIgure B)

Fig. A

Fig. B

LESSON PLAN: D and E with a Finger Slide

Objective:

Students will be able to change between the D and E chords by sliding the 1st finger between the 1st and 2nd fret.

Resources:
Handout for the D chord, handout for the E chord.

Procedures:
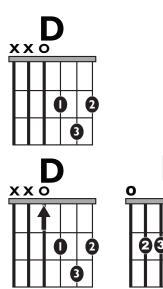
Ask students to play the D chord making sure the fingers are pressing down hard enough to make a sound while not muting other strings. Try not to strum strings 5 and 6 when playing this chord.

Have students keep the 1st finger on the guitar while lifting off only fingers 2 and 3. Slide the 1st finger into the 1st fret and move the 2nd and 3rd fingers into position for the E chord.

Play the E chord strumming all 6 strings. Lift fingers 2 and 3 off of the guitar leaving the 1st finger on and then slide the 1st finger back to the 2nd fret for the D chord.

Practice switching between the D and E chords paying attention to the way the index finger slides back and forth between the 1st and 2nd frets depending on the chord.

GUITAR

LESSON PLAN: Open Pentatonic Scales

Objective:

Students will be able to play a pentatonic scale using open strings and notes in the first position to take solos and develop their understanding of the guitar.

Resources:
Handout from Teacher Manual titled "Scales to Jam by"

Procedures:

Review the lesson plan on finger numbers and positions, using notes only in the 1st position as the example.

Work out which fingers play the notes in the G Major/E minor pentatonic scale. Start with the 1st string and work your way toward the lower notes. Since guitar solos use mostly higher notes (so they can be heard over the bass notes and chord notes) it's a good idea to teach kids the notes they will be using in their solos in this order. A lot of times we teach students how to play scales beginning with their lowest notes, but this can be problematic when they try to take a solo playing the notes in the order they learned them. If they're familiar with the higher notes first, beginning soloists will gravitate toward using these more useful notes first.

Proceed one string at a time from highest sounding to lowest sounding, strings 1 to 6. If you're teaching them to relate finger numbers to fret numbers in positions this process will reinforce that. After adopting both the open and fretted note on each new string, review all of the strings learned thus far playing the down and back up over and over. Continue this process until the scale uses all 6 strings. Depending on the age and level of the students in your group this may take 1 lesson or several.
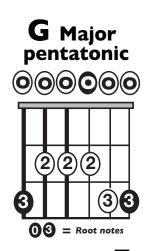
Extensions:
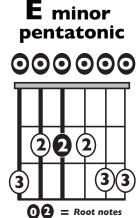
Using one note at a time, have students repeat rhythmic phrases back to you. This is a good way to reinforce the concept of alternate picking (for more information check out the lesson plan "Alternate Picking")

Using both notes on the 1st string, make up a phrase that is both melodic and rhythmic

G Major pentatonic

0 3 = *Root notes*

E minor pentatonic

0 2 = *Root notes*

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:Cr1.1.2 a. Improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns and musical ideas for a specific purpose. Example: Music Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Cr1.1.E.5a (Novice) Compose and improvise melodic and rhythmic ideas or motives that reflect characteristic(s) of music or text(s) studied in rehearsal. Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Example: Music Composition and Theory MU:Cr2.1.C.Ia (High School Proficient) Assemble and organize sounds or short musical ideas to create initial expressions of selected experiences, moods, images, or storylines. Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example: Music Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Re7.2.E.8a (Intermediate) Describe how understanding context and the way the elements of music are manipulated inform the response to music. Common Core Correlations: CCSS. ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: Guitar Solo With 1 Finger

Objective:

Students will be able to take a guitar solo using one finger to play two notes, while associating rhythm to speaking.

Resources:
Guitars, picks.

Procedures:

Have students play the open 1st string (the note E). Then have them play the 1st string 3rd fret (the note G) using any finger. Reverse the order, having them play the the 3rd fret note first, and then the open string. Depending on where your students are in relationship to picking, you may ask them to use alternate picking or not give any instructions for picking at all.

Get a rock strum pattern going on your guitar using a G chord and ask students to say their names while you strum. Go around the room doing this, having the child say his or her name first, and then repeat the name as a group leading them to associate the rhythm of their name to the rhythm of the strum pattern you are playing.

Go around the room again, this time having them "play" their name using the two notes you taught them in the beginning of the class. Encourage them by letting them know that everything they create is OK, they can use just one of the notes the whole time, switch between the two notes, whatever! Just like we all have different fingerprints on our hands and we all like different foods to varying degrees, we all like to do things a little bit differently with the music we make. This is their opportunity to begin discovering what sounds good to them by trying things out.

Play alternate chords behind the 2 note solo to notice how these same note choices sound differently based on the chord being played. Beside the G Major chord you could also use E minor or E7.

If you begin to use different chords, ask students to listen to the notes in their two note solos to hear which one sounds better over the chord you're playing. Tell them that note becomes like the subject in a sentence that other words can describe (like adjectives) but the sentence is still about the main word. Give examples saying things like "the fast blue car"; since the sentence is about a "car", this is like the note you think sounds best while the other note just helps describe it!

Play a chord progression behind them, like G going to C, E minor going to A minor or an 12 bar blues in E. The personality of these 2 notes will change as kids hear them over different chords.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:Cr1.1.2 a. Improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns and musical ideas for a specific purpose. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4 Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

GUITAR

Objective:

Students will be able to use a "box shape" on guitar to take a solo. This will help them learn to change strings as well.

Resources:
Guitars, Picks.

Procedures:
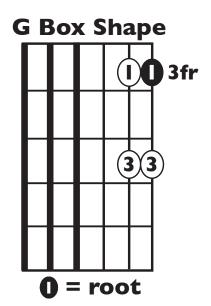
Demonstrate for students by playing the 4 note "box shape" that extends the open position G pentatonic scale. This box shape is easy to use for smaller hands and gives more note choices to students learning to solo. Use the 1st and 3rd fingers on frets 3 and 5 on the 1st and 2nd strings. Spend a few moments playing the notes on each string over and over to make sure everyone has seen you do this.
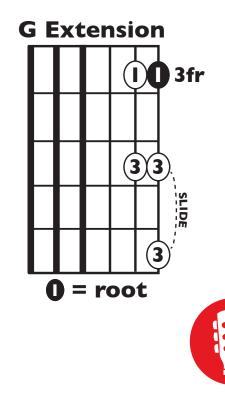
Have students place their hand on the 1st string in 3rd position (index finger on the 3rd fret). Play the 1st finger on the 3rd fret four times, "alternate" picking if possible). Switch to the 3rd finger on the 5th fret, playing it 4 times as well. Go back and forth between these two notes until they're learned and easy to find. Check with students making sure the thumb is straight up and down behind the guitar neck so that it can support what the fingers are doing.

Play these same two frets on the 2nd string using the same two fingers. This will be a little more difficult because the pick now has to play on a string that is in between two other strings. Remind students not to

Extension:
To play the 'slide' note, pluck first and then right away slide the 3 finger to the 7th fret.

G Box Shape

G Extension

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:Cr1.1.2b Generate musical patterns and ideas within the context of a given tonality (such as major and minor) and meter (such as duple and triple). Common Core Correlation: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.5.G.A.2 Represent real world and mathematical problems by graphing points in the first quadrant of hte coordinate plane, and interpret coordinate values of points in the context of the situation.

Objective:

Students will be able to use a pick to play in both directions, resulting in more control over the instrument and the ability to play faster notes

Resources:
Handouts in teacher manual titled "Simple Rhythms".

Procedures:

Demonstrate for students that picking can happen on the "down stroke" (picking toward your toes) or the "up stroke" (picking toward your chin). Use the 1st string for the demonstration. Walk around the room with your guitar making sure that every student gets a good look at this as you do it.

Show students that using a "pinky anchor" can help keep your hand in one spot so that you don't have to worry about your hand drifting up to other strings. Demonstrate that without a pinky anchor your hand drifts far and wide from the string you are trying to alternate pick, but with a pinky anchor your pick stays so close to the string you're picking that you could even close your eyes and do it!

Ask students to volunteer to demonstrate for the class, using the open 1st string and a good "pinky anchor".

Have students do this together as a group, in smaller sub groups, or in pairs, making sure everyone gets the alternate picking idea and the pinky anchor concept.

Demonstrate that when these ingredients are working together you can play a lot faster than if you only picked in one direction, or picked without a pinky anchor. Alternate pick for them a bunch of notes as fast as possible.

Ask the students to do the same seeing how fast they can play notes using alternate picking on open strings.

Extensions:

Use the strum patterns from Teachers Manual 121 as picking rhythms.

Try alternate picking the same rhythm on several different strings, moving from the 1st string, to the 2nd string, etc.

If students have already done the lesson on fret numbers and hand positions, have them apply alternate picking or a picking pattern to various fingers in different positions along the fretboard.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.4 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy and expressive qualities, and address performance challenges. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.5.C Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms). ("up stroke" and "down stroke" as opposites)

Objective:

Students will be able to play and recognize the chord progression used most often in popular music today.
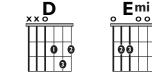
Resources:
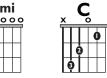
Any song charts and/or lyrics to the following songs: Where is the Love by The Black Eyed Peas, I'm Yours by Jason Mraz, She Will Be Loved by Maroon 5, Edge of Glory by Lady GaGa, With or Without You by U2, Don't Stop Believing by Journey, etc. More song titles are available in our online songbook by clicking on "Chord Progression" and looking for "Axis of Awesome" songs.

Procedures:
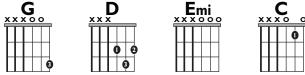
Make sure students are able to play all 4 of the chords used in this famous chord progression.
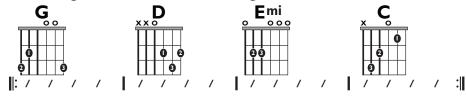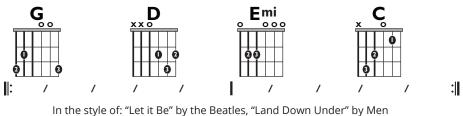
Beginner students may prefer to use the 1 easy versions of these chords. The only chord requiring more than one finger will be the D chord.

In a lot of songs the chords are 4 beats long.

Other songs make the chords change quicker by having two chords per bar.

In the style of: "Let it Be" by the Beatles, "Land Down Under" by Men at Work, "When I Come Around" by Green Day

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.3 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

GUITAR

Objective:

Students will be able to play the B power chord in songs by finding the root note of the chord and building a power chord from it.

Resources:
Guitars, picks

Procedures:

Press down the note B with the index finger (5th string, 2nd fret). Place the finger so that while it is holding down the B note it is also touching against the 6th string to mute it. The rest of the hand should be muting all the other strings by lightly touching them.

Strum the entire guitar to check that only the B string makes noise even when you strum across all six strings. Adjust the hand as necessary to accomplish this only applying pressure to the note B.

Add the note on the 4th string, 4th fret using either the pinky or ring finger depending on the size of the hand (this is the 5th of the chord, in this case the note F#). Again trying to position the hand so that all other strings are muted. "Power Chords" can be used for major OR minor chords.
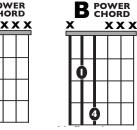
Some guitar players also add the note on the 3rd string, 4th fret. This note isn't necessary since it's just another root note (B), but can be added for a slightly fuller sound.

This chord can be used anytime B or B minor is called for in a progression. If playing the "power chord" is too difficult at first, simply use the B "root note"; this will sound fine and get us used to placing the hand for eventually using the chord.

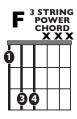## National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.5 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy and expressive qualities, to address challenges, and show improvement over time. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

Objective:

Students will be able to recognize and play songs that use a standard chord progression popularized in the 1950's and still in use today.
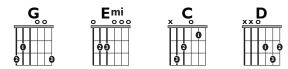
Resources:

Chords or lyrics from any of the following songs: "We Are Young" by FUN, "Baby" by Justin Bieber, "Girl on Fire" by Alicia Keys, "D'yer Mak'er" by Led Zeppelin, "Crocodile Rock" by Elton John, "Stand By Me" by Ben E. King, "Octopus's Garden" by The Beatles, "Duke of Earl" by Gene Chandler, "Earth Angel" by The Penguins, etc. More songs using this classic chord progression can be found in our online songbook by clicking on "Chord Progression" and looking for songs with "Ice Cream Changes" in the chord progression box.

Procedures:
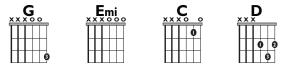
Make sure students can play the following chords:
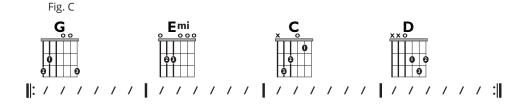
Beginning students may want to use the easy versions of these chords:

For (in the style of) "We Are Young" by FUN or "Baby" by Justin Bieber play each chord for 2 measures before changing to the next chord (Figure A). This will be easiest as it gives you plenty of time to get ready for the next chord.
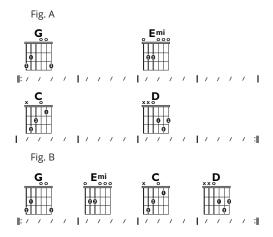
For (in the style of) "Girl on Fire" or "Octopus's Garden" the chords change every measure (Figure B).

A lot of songs from the Do-Wop era (the 1950's) play these chords with 6 beats per measure to give that classic feel to the groove, like in the style of "Earth Angel" by The Penguins (Figure C).

Fig. A

Fig. B

Fig. C

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.3 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance. Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr6.1.H.IIa (HS Accomplished) Perform with expression and technical accuracy, in individual and small group performances, a varied repertoire of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces, improvisations, and chordal accompaniments in a variety of styles, demonstrating sensitivity to the audience and an understanding of the context (social, cultural, and historical). Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Objective:

Students will be able to play the F "power chord" in songs by finding the root note of the chord and building a power chord from it.

Resources:
Guitars, picks

Procedures:
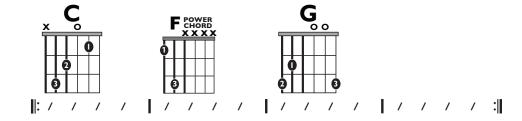
Press down the note F with the index finger (6th string, 1st fret). Place the finger so that while it is holding down the F note it is also touching against all of the other strings to mute them.

Strum the entire guitar to check that only the F string makes noise even when you strum across all six strings. Adjust the hand as necessary to accomplish this only applying pressure to the note F.

Add the note on the 5th string, 3rd fret using either the pinky or ring finger depending on the size of the hand (this is the 5th of the chord, in this case the note C). Again trying to position the hand so that all other strings are muted. "Power Chords" can be used for major OR minor chords.
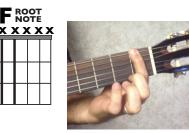
Some guitar players also add the note on the 4th string, 3rd fret. This note isn't necessary since it's just another root note (F), but can be added for a slightly fuller sound.
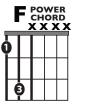
This chord can be used anytime F or F minor is called for in a song. If playing the "power chord" is too difficult at first, simply use the F "root note"; this will sound fine and get us used to placing the hand for eventually using the chord.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.5 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy and expressive qualities to address challenges, and show improvement over time. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

Objective:

Students will be able to play three popular songs using a standard chord progression using only 1 finger on a guitar with muted strings.

Resources:
Song charts and lyrics for "I Gotta Feeling" by The Black Eyed Peas, "Open Your Eyes" by Snow Patrol, and "Without You" by David Guetta, paper towels to mute guitar strings, optional pencil and rubber bands for capo

Procedures:

Fig. A

Make sure strings 4, 5, and 6 are muted with a paper towel for guitars using the easy version of these chords. Stickers can be placed on the fretboard to mark where to place the fingers for chords (FIgure A).

Practice strumming these simplified chords making sure everyone understands the difference between them.

Practice playing this progression with the indicated strum pattern, strumming "down" on each number for "I Gotta Feeling". (Figure B)

Fig. B

Use this strum pattern for "Open Your Eyes", strumming down on the numbers and up on the "+". The arm will constantly be playing "down up down up down up down up" in steady 8th notes the entire time.

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1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +
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Use the same strum pattern for "Without You". Since this song is in the key of D (using the chords D, G, and Bmi) you can use the same chords with a pencil capo on the 7th fret. (Figure C)

Fig. C
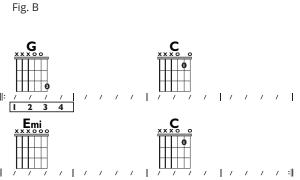
National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.5 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy and expressive qualities, to address challenges, and show improvement over time. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.Math.Content.3.NF.A.1 Understand a fraction 1/b as the quantity formed by 1 part when a whole is partitioned into b equal parts; understand a fraction a/b as the quantity formed by a parts of size 1/b. (fractions as subdivision of beat)

Objective:

Students will be able to recognize the parts of a song by listening the classic tune "Shout" by the Isley Brothers. They will also be able to identify some of the musical ideas used to make this song interesting.

Resources:
A recording of "Shout" by the Isley Brothers, the handout describing where the parts of the song are, student participation

Procedures:

Listen to the song "Shout" as a group. Point out the different parts of the song as you listen noting that the song begins with the chorus, then 46 seconds in the verse (with the words "I still remember"), followed by the pre-chorus at 1:15 (with the words "I want you to know"), the 2nd chorus at 1:45, the bridge at 2:11 (with the words "Now wait a minute"), and the 3rd and final chorus at 2:41.

Point out during the 3rd and final chorus which lasts almost 2 full minutes they keep the music interesting by using a couple of different musical tricks. At one point they get quieter and quieter while saying "A little bit softer now" followed by getting louder and louder while saying "A little bit louder now". They also use a "call and response" on the word "yeah" at 3:46.

Listen again, asking the students which part they are on as you get to the various parts. During the final chorus you can have students crouch down to the floor as it gets quieter and then stand up tall as it gets louder, followed by everyone doing the call and response together.
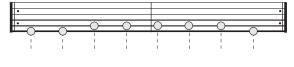
Extension:

You can point out that the chords change differently in each section. Demonstrate that the chords change every measure during the chorus (every time you count 1 2 3 4) and every 2 measures during the verse (counting 1 2 3 4 twice). The pre-chorus doesn't change chords at all, staying on the F chord over a repeated bass line that plays up and down the scale (F, G, A, Bb, C, Bb, A, G over and over), while the bridge section has no chords at all.

GUITAR

> **National Core Arts Standards (Music):**
> Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
> Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.3 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance. Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work
> Example: General Music MU:Re7.2.2 a. Describe how specific music concepts are used to support a specific purpose in music. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.5 Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.5 Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.

GUITAR
CONSUMABLES
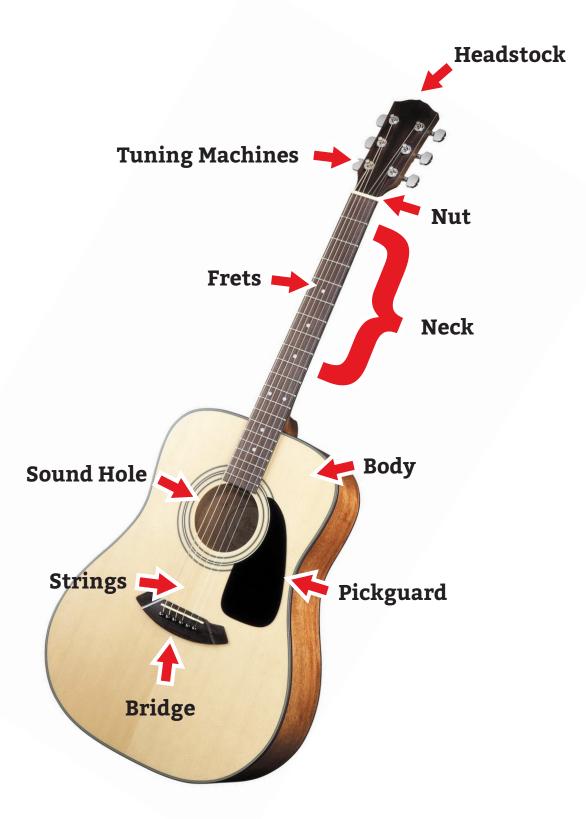
Parts of the Acoustic Guitar

GUITAR

Headstock

Tuning Machines

Nut

Frets

Neck

Sound Hole

Body

Strings

Pickguard

Bridge

Parts of the Electric Guitar

Headstock

Tuning Pegs

Nut

Frets

Neck

Pickup

Strings

Pickguard

Body

Volume Knobs

Bridge

Tone Knobs

Output

Links to *Les*
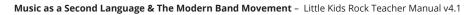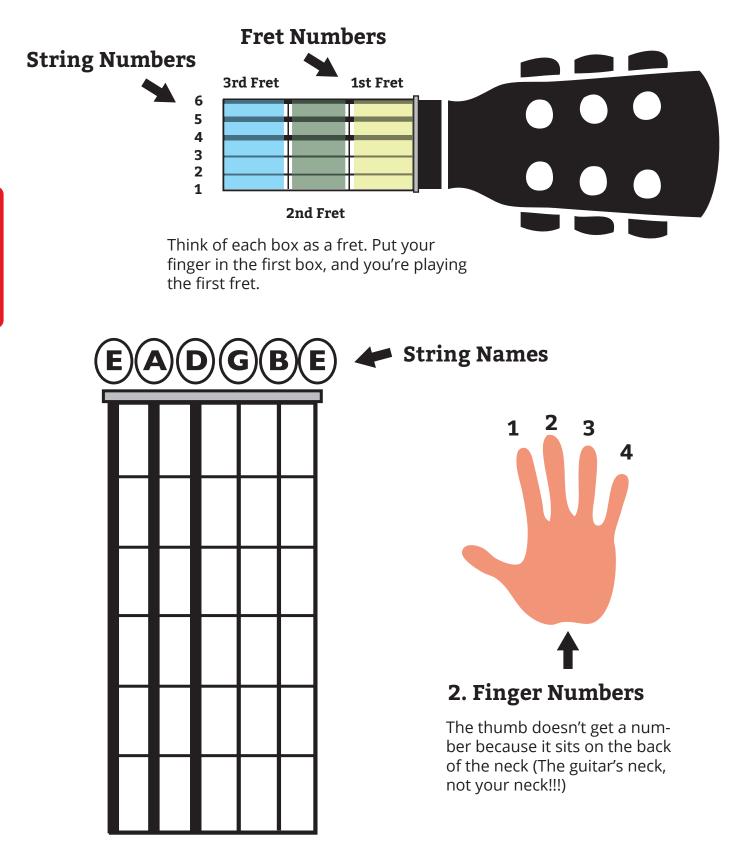
Les Paul is widely considered to be the inventor of the electric guitar.

http://jamzone.littlekidsrock.org/links-to-les/
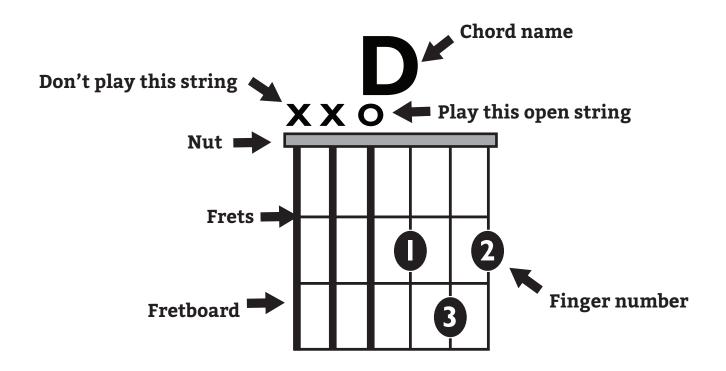
Some of the Basics

String Numbers

Fret Numbers

3rd Fret   1st Fret

6
5
4
3
2
1

2nd Fret

Think of each box as a fret. Put your finger in the first box, and you're playing the first fret.

GUITAR

E A D G B E ← **String Names**

1 2 3   4

2. Finger Numbers

The thumb doesn't get a number because it sits on the back of the neck (The guitar's neck, not your neck!!!)

Chord Diagrams

A chord diagram is just a drawing of what a chord looks like when you play it on your guitar. Look at the chord diagram and key below.
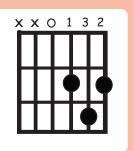
Here are tips for Reading Chord Diagrams:
  The black dots with numbers in them are where you place your fingers. The numbers tell you which finger to use. Play strings that have black dots.
   Any string that has an "O" above it is supposed to be played, even though there is no finger on it.
   Any string that has an "X" above it is NOT supposed to be played.
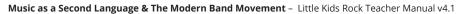
Note

Lots of song books that you will find in music stores use chord diagrams like this one to the right. The drawing is simpler and there are either no finger numbers, or they are shown above. That's because after awhile people begin to remember chords by their shapes. Once you are familiar with a chord's shape, your fingers will find their places automatically!
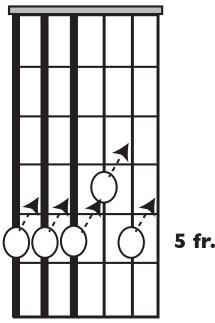
Tuning a Guitar... ARGH!

Tuning your guitar can be VERY frustrating! The good news is that just because you can't tune doesn't mean you can't start playing. When you are just getting started on guitar, the BEST way to tune it is by using an electronic tuner. This is a machine that will tell you when each string is in tune. You can get an electronic tuner for about $20. The NEXT BEST way to tune your guitar is to get someone else who already knows how to do it for you. However, here's how to tune your guitar if no one else is around and you have no tuner.

When you press down on the 5th fret of a string, it should sound like the string right next to it. For example, when you press down on the 5th fret on the "E" string, it should sound like the open "A" string just next to it. If they don't sound alike, try adjusting the tuning machine of the "A" string up or down until both strings sound the same.
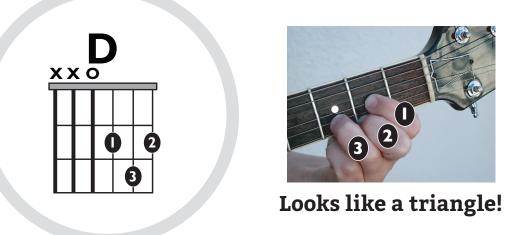
Next, when you press down on the 5th fret on the "A"string, it should sound like the open "D" string just next to it. Continue across the strings like that, but when you go to tune the "B" string, press down on the 4th fret of the "G" string, NOT the 5th fret.

This drawing shows how to tune. The white circles show where to press and the red lines show which string the fretted note should sound like.

5 fr.

Learning to tune a guitar today is easier than ever, thanks to the internet. Little Kids Rock provides an online tuner through our website at www.LittleKidsRock. org/thehang/tuner and there are lots of other great tools for learning how to do this out there as well. If you search 'how to tune a guitar' on YouTube you can scroll through mountains of video demonstrations. Watch several of them to get a couple of opinions and figure out which way of thinking about tuning appeals to you most. Just by watching videos alone our ears begin to get a great perspective on how tuning works and sounds.

I Got a "D", But my Mom is so Proud

Looks like a triangle!
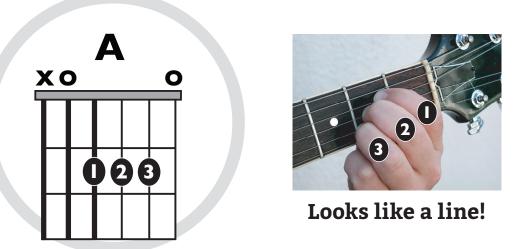
A good first shape to learn is the "D" chord. If you look at the picture below, you'll see it looks ike a triangle. Use the tips below to help you make the shape. Strum the chord with a pick, then play one string at a time to check the sound. Play only the bottom four strings. Don't play strings with an "x" above them.
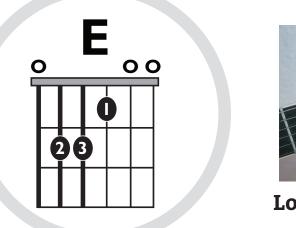
Tips for Chord Fingering

✔ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✔ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✔ Each finger touches just one string.

✔ Place fingers close to the frets.

✔ Press hard enough to get a sound.

A is for Amplify

A

X O   O

① ② ③

Looks like a line!

GUITAR

Use the tips below to help you make the shape. Strum the chord with a pick, then play one string at a time to check the sound. Play only the bottom five strings. Don't play the top string, the one with the "x".

Tips for Chord Fingering

✔ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✔ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✔ Each finger touches just one string.

✔ Place fingers close to the frets.

✔ Press hard enough to get a sound.

E is for Electric

Looks like a car seat!

GUITAR
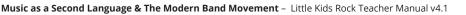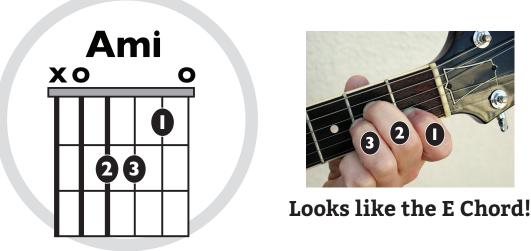
Use the tips below to help you make the chord shape. Strum the chord with a pick, then play one string at a time to check the sound. Play all six strings.

Tips for Chord Fingering

✔ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✔ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✔ Each finger touches just one string.

✔ Place fingers close to the frets.

✔ Press hard enough to get a sound.

Make it Minor, Make it Sad: Ami Chord

Ami

X O   O

Looks like the E Chord!
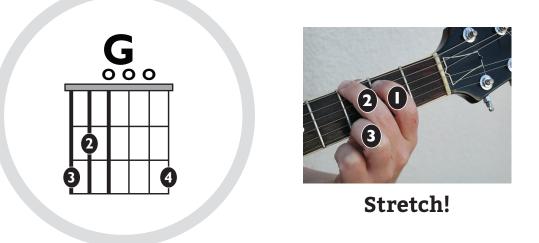
The fingering is just like the E chord, but starts one string higher on the fretboad. Use the tips below to help you make the shape. Strum the chord with a pick, then play one string at a time to check the sound. Play the bottom five strings.

Tips for Chord Fingering

✔ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✔ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✔ Each finger touches just one string.

✔ Place fingers close to the frets.

✔ Press hard enough to get a sound.

GUITAR

Gee, There are Two Ways to Play G

G

Stretch!
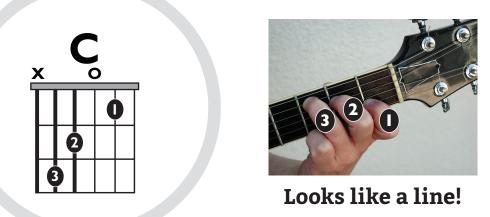
There are two different ways to finger a "G" chord. The chord diagram below shows one, the photo shows another. Both rock in their own way...try them both and see which one is easier for you. Use the tips below to help you make the shape. Strum the chord with a pick, then play one string at a time to check the sound. Play all six strings.

GUITAR

Tips for Chord Fingering

✔ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✔ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✔ Each finger touches just one string.

✔ Place fingers close to the frets.

✔ Press hard enough to get a sound.

The C Chord

Looks like a line!

Use the tips below to help you make the shape. Strum the chord with a pick, then play one string at a time to check the sound. Play the bottom five strings.

GUITAR

Tips for Chord Fingering

✓ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✓ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✓ Each finger touches just one string.

✓ Place fingers close to the frets.

✓ Press hard enough to get a sound.

First Chord Progressions

A chord progression is just two or more chords played one after the other. Most pop songs are made up of three to six chords that repeat in some sort of a pattern.
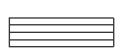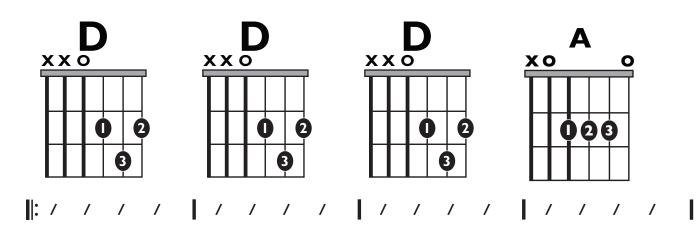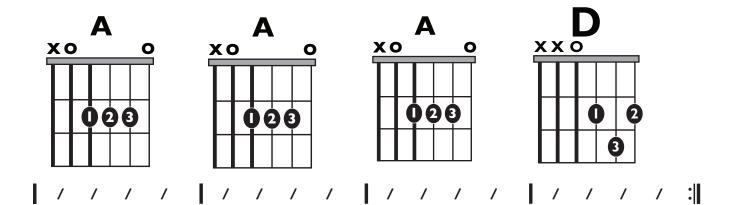
The chord progression below uses just two chord, "D" and "A." that appears at the end of the progression is called a repeat sign. It is there to tell you to start over again from the beginning of the progression.

The bars to the left here are called a measure. Each measure gets four beats which we count as "1, 2, 3, 4." You will see that there are eight measures in this song that get repeated many times.

127
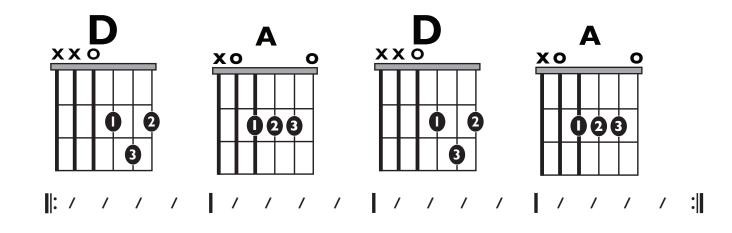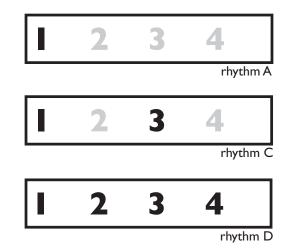
First Chord Progressions
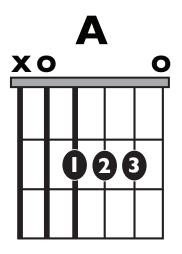
The chord progression below uses the same two chords as the last one ("D" and "A") but this time they are in a different order.

Try this Chord Progression with the following rhythms.
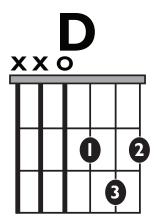
rhythm A

rhythm C

rhythm D

The Key of A

A

X O O

1 2 3

D

X X O

1 2 3

E

O O O

1 2 3

Curve your fingers like cat claws.

Thumb looks like a fret on the back of the neck.

Each finger touches just one string.

Place fingers close to the frets.
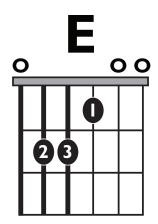
Press hard enough to get a sound.

GUITAR

The Key of D
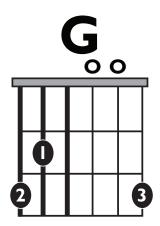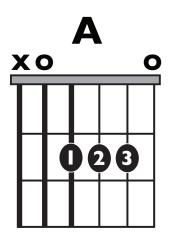
GUITAR

D
x x o

G
o o

A
x o o

Curve your fingers like cat claws. ✔

Thumb looks like a fret on the back of the neck. ✔

Each finger touches just one string. ✔

Place fingers close to the frets. ✔

Press hard enough to get a sound. ✔

The Key of C

C

x   o

F

G

o o

Curve your fingers like cat claws. ✔

Thumb looks like a fret on the back of the neck. ✔

Place fingers close to the frets. ✔

Press hard enough to get a sound. ✔

The Key of G

G

Curve your fingers like cat claws. ✓

Thumb looks like a fret on the back of the neck. ✓

C

Each finger touches just one string. ✓

Place fingers close to the frets. ✓

D
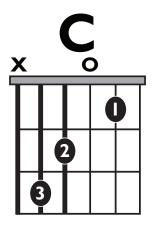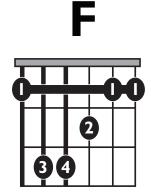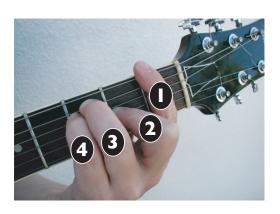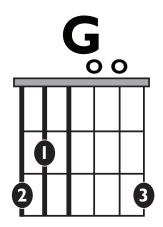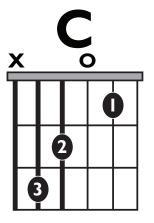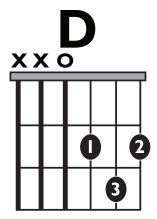
Press hard enough to get a sound. ✓
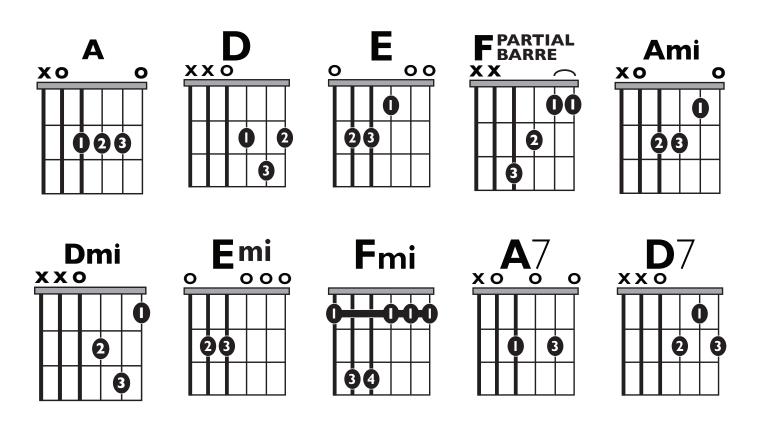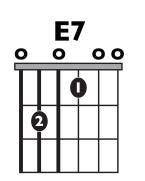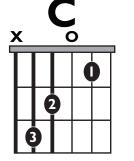
15 Rockin' Chords
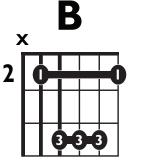
You have already learned six of the chords below. try learning the rest of these...you will be surprised by how much of the music you listen to will be within your reach once you have these chords mastered.

Easy Chords Using Three Strings
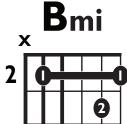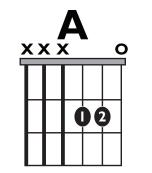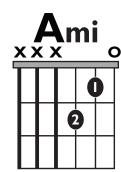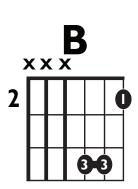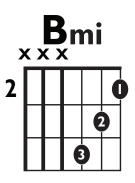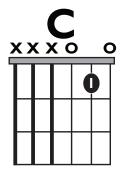
These chords are extremely easy for beginners to play, and sound almost as good as their six string counterparts. Practice these before tackling the full chord fingerings.
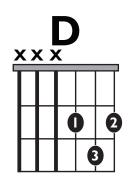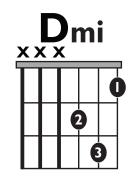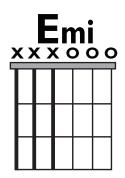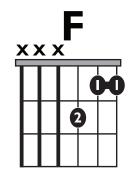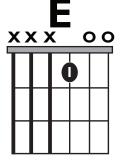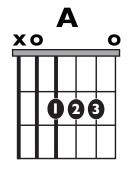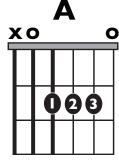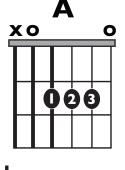
Blues in A

The chord progression below uses three chords, the "A," "D, " and "E" chords. This is one of the most famous progressions in the world and it appears in blues, rock, country, hip-hop, reggae...everywhere! This particular arrangement is a blues. People call it the "twelve bar blues" because it has 12 measures.

GUITAR

Another Way to Play 12 Bar Blues in A

A

D

E
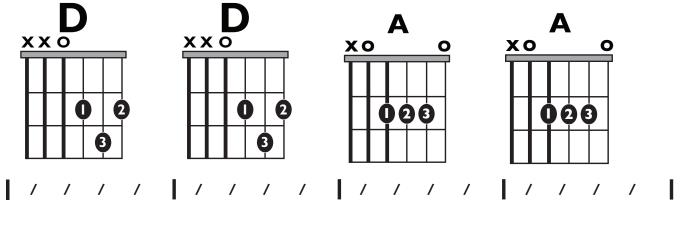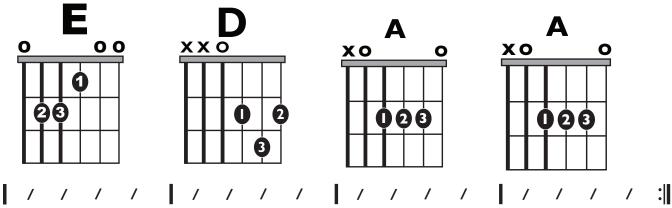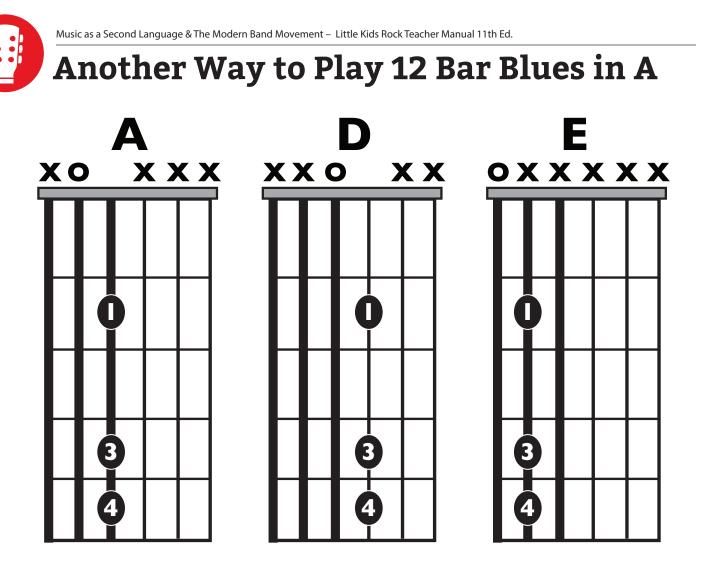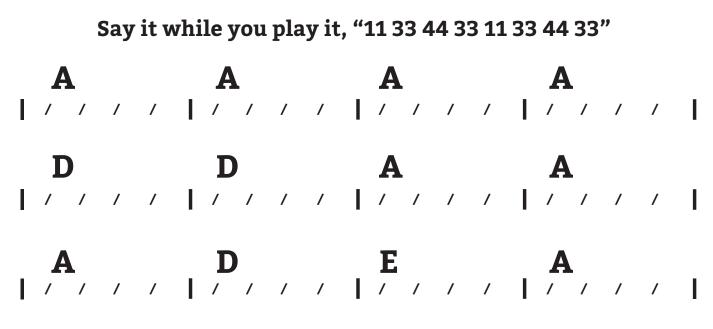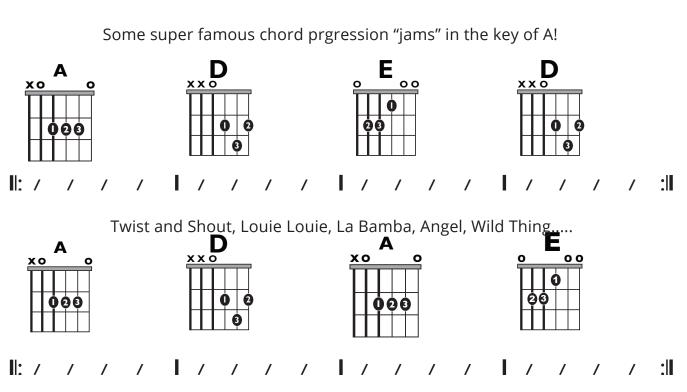
Again, the "A" is played on the 4th and 5th strings. The "D" is played on the 3rd and 4th strings. The "E" is played on the 1st and 2nd strings. Be careful to only play both strings at the same time.

Say it while you play it, "11 33 44 33 11 33 44 33"

A	A	A	A
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /

D	D	A	A
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /

A	D	E	A
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /

The Key of A and E

Some super famous chord prgression "jams" in the key of A!

Twist and Shout, Louie Louie, La Bamba, Angel, Wild Thing.....
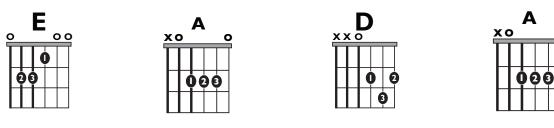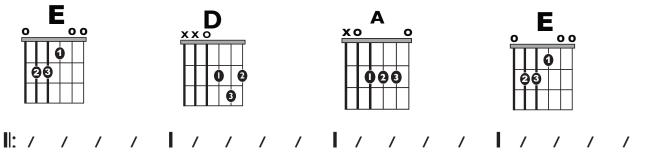
The Lion Sleeps Tonight, Brown Eyed Girl, Free Fallin'.......

Re-arranging these same chords puts us in the key of E with another couple of famous chord

What I Like About You, R.O.C.K. in the U.S.A., On the Darkside.....

Hey Jude (ending), You and I, Sweet Home Alabama......

GUITAR

137

Reggae in A

Reggae music has a very syncopated feel. Most of the emphasis is on the "up" beats. That is the opposite of rock where most of the emphasis is on the downbeats. Look at this rhythm:

1st rhythm:

| I | + | 2 | + | 3 | + | 4 | + |

rhythm W

Notice that all the strums are upstrokes. If you mute the strings after each upstroke, it will have a real reggae feel. Here's the progression with the rhythm written below. Be sure to squeeze both the "D" and "E" chords into the second measure.

| I | + | 2 | + | 3 | + | 4 | + |

rhythm W

| I | + | 2 | + | 3 | + | 4 | + |

rhythm W

The next rhythm is trickier. This strum pattern uses both "down" and "up" rhythms. Give it a try, keeping in mind that the arm swings "down" on the numbers, and "up" on the +. If the number is grey, your arm still swings down, but doesn't strum the strings. Getting good at this turn the arm into a sideways metronome, helping keep time with the steady up and down!

| I | + | 2 | + | 3 | + | 4 | + |

rhythm W

| I | + | 2 | + | 3 | + | 4 | + |

rhythm X

Rock in A

Below you will see a very popular chord progression. You will hear this progression in many very popular tunes. Notice that each measure has two different chords. All strumming for this one involves downstrokes. The final thing to notice are the rests. Don't strum any chord where you see "(rest)."

A	D	E	D
/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /
1 2	3 (rest)	1 (rest)	3 4

I Got the Power!

Below you'll find two very cool chords. They are called power chords and everybody from Jimi Hendrix to Nirvana has used them. They are barre chords. That means that wherever you play them, they will sound good.

Starting on the "Low E String" (String #6)

Starting on the "A String" (String #5)

A5

5fr.

Use the length of your fingers to mute.

Try these on an electric guitar!

Curve your fingers like cat claws.

Place fingers close to the frets.

Press hard enough to get a sound.
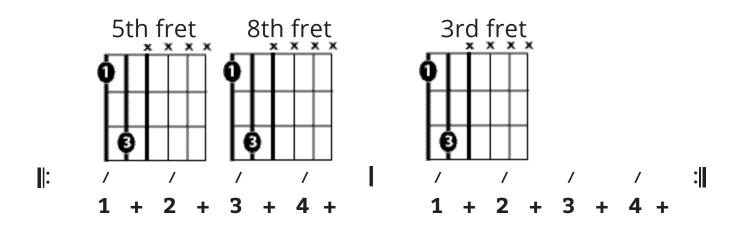
Power Chord Progression

Power chord progressions are heard in many different styles of music including heavy metal, rock, rap and punk. The cool thing about them is that once you master one power chord, you can move it up and down the neck to make different chords.

In the progression played during the video, a new kind of rhythm is played. It's called a sixteenth note rhythm because each measure has 16 different beats in it. To count it we say "one-e-and-a-two-e-and-a-three-e-and-a-four-e-and-a." This rhythm is played using all down strokes. It also sounds cool if you mute the strings slightly.

5th fret   8th fret   3rd fret

‖:   /   /   /   / | /   /   /   /   :‖

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +   1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +
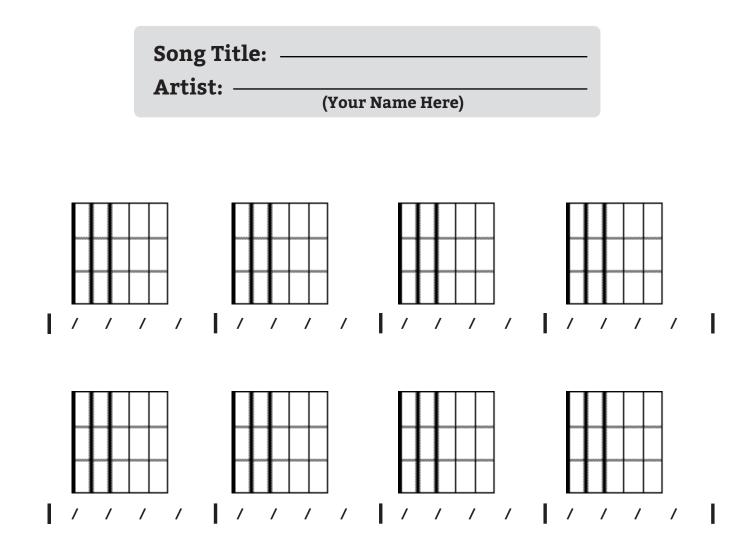
Say out loud

"1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +"

while playing all

down strokes with the

pic every time

Power Chord Scramble

When you scramble an egg, you don't worry too much about what part goes where. You just stir it up!
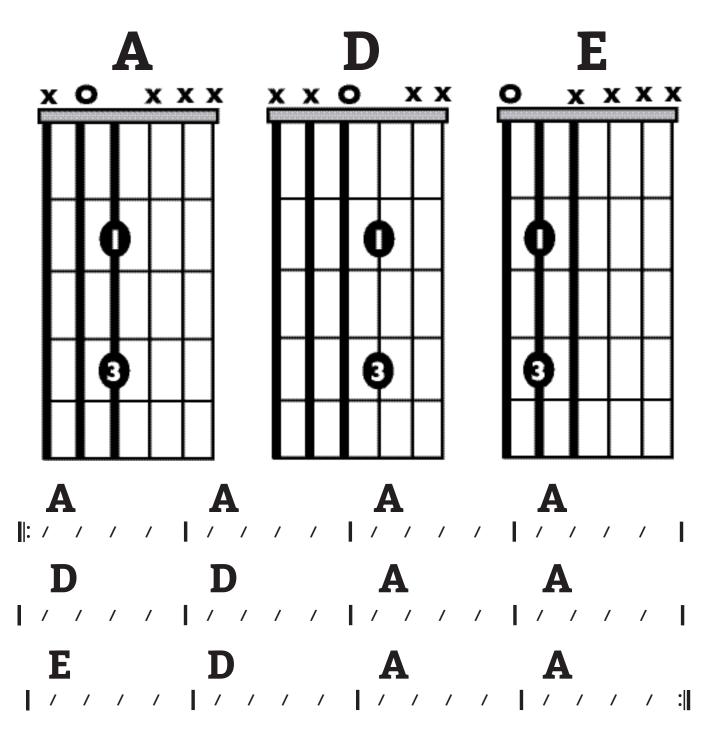
Well, this song writing exercise is similar. Pick ONE of the two power chord forms. Next pick three fret numbers between 1 and 9. Fill the measures below with the fret numbers you chose in any order you like. Play the chords and see how it sounds. Try using more or fewer fret numbers depending on what sounds good to you. After you've tried it with one chord form, try it with the other one too.

Song Title: _____

Artist: _____

(Your Name Here)

Shuffle Blues in A

It is amazing to think that playing just two strings at a time can sound sooooo good! Each of these three "chords" is played using just two strings at a time. The "A" is played on the 2nd and 3rd strings. The "D" is played on the 3rd and 4th strings. The "E" is played on the 1st and 2nd strings. Be careful to only play two strings at the same time. You play each chord by hitting the open string and first finger together twice, then hitting the open string and third finger together twice. The rhythm can be counted by the fingers: 11 33 11 33

A	A	A	A
D	D	A	A
E	D	A	A
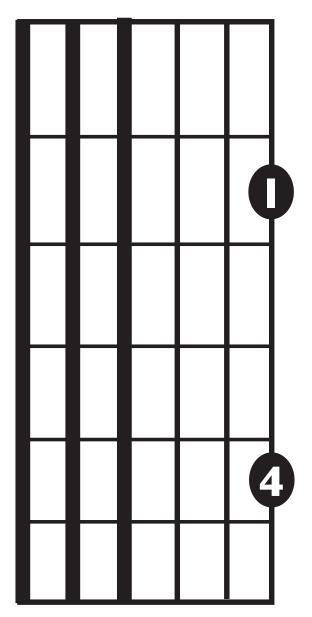
The Famous 2 Note Solo

Guitar solos are the kinds of things that can make an audience sit on the edge of their seats or stand up and yell for more. However, taking a guitar solo yourself is not as hard as you may think it is. We say, "Try to use just two notes…"

Look at the picture of the guitar neck. See the two black dots? Those are the two notes we'll be playing.We'll be playing them on the high "E" string which is also the thinnest string on the guitar.

TRY THIS!

✔ Play on the 5th fret with your **1**st finger

✔ Play on the 8th fret with your **4**th finger

✔ Play each note by itself.

✔ Play picking down.

✔ Play picking up.

✔ Play 1 first.

✔ Play 4 first.

5th fret

Let's Take Our First Solo!
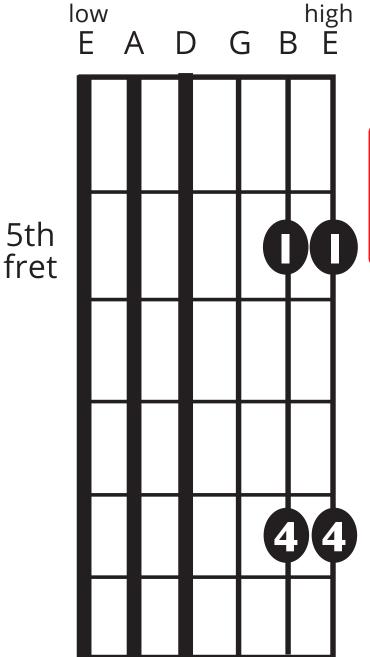
We will play it over "The Blues in A." You can play it over the jam track on the CD-ROM. You can also play it with your guitar teacher or pal. No matter what order you play these two notes in, they will rock!

The Four Note Solo

Playing a two-note solo can be cool. Playing a four-note solo can be twice as cool! Look at the drawing of the fretboard and look at the high "E" string. Those are the same two notes we just used in the two-note solo. Now, look at the "B" string and you'll see that we've added two more.

Do you notice any similarities between the two strings with notes? Each of the fingerings is identical. Therefore, once you learn to finger the two notes on the "E" string, fingering the notes on the "B" string will feel familiar.

Try to rock along with the Jam Track!

low   high

E A D G B E

5th fret

GUITAR

145
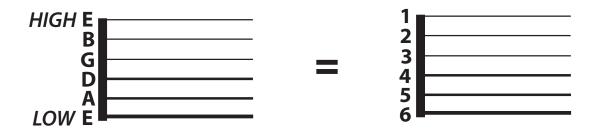
Tablature Explanation

TAB is cool way to read music for guitar or bass and we read it from left to right, just like a book!It tells us lots of things that we need to know to play songs.

HIGH **E**
B
G
D
A
LOW **E**

=

1
2
3
4
5
6
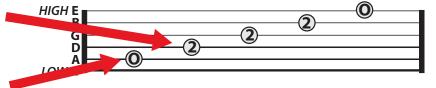
The six lines represent the six strings of a guitar.

GUITAR

The numbers show us what fret spaces to put our fingers.

A 2 written on String 4 tells us to play the 2nd fret of the D String.

HIGH **E**
B
G
D
A
LOW

A 0 means that we don't play any frets but play the open string.

TAB is great but there are some things that it does not tell us and we have to use our creativity, or a teacher's help, to figure out.
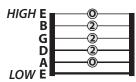
TAB does not tell us:
• how long or short the notes are.
• how fast or slow to play a song.
• which fingers to use to play the notes
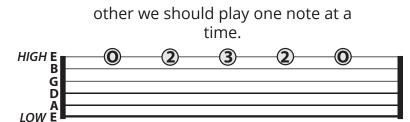
Remember that music is about expressing YOURSELF, so use whichever fingers feel most comfortable for YOU!

Tablature Explanation
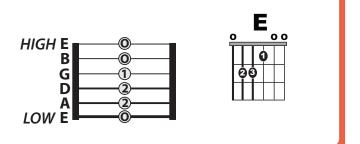
When fret #'s are written on top of each other, or stacked, we should play the notes at the same time.
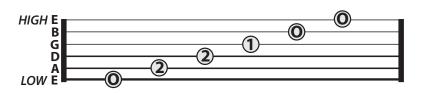
When notes are written next to each other we should play one note at a time.

Ordinary guitar chords are sometimes written in TAB. After some practice, you will begin to recognize the TAB chord as the same chord you already know.
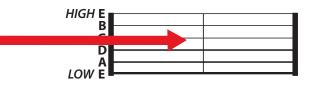
Sometimes that same chord may be written with the notes next to each other instead of stacked.
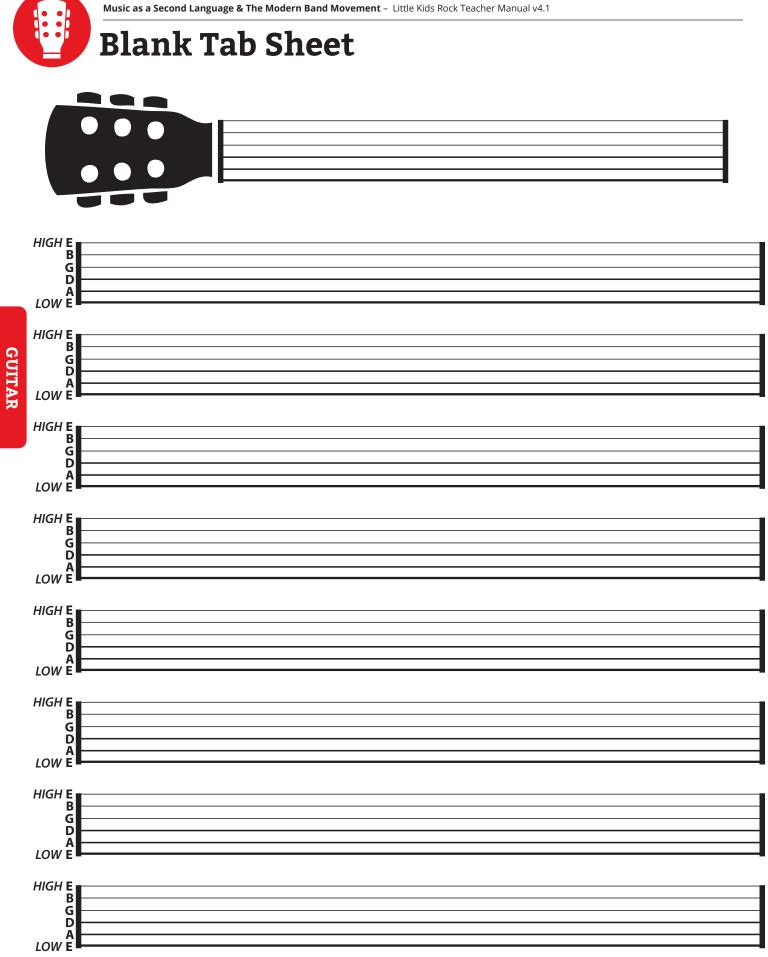
When this happens we play each note one at a time, but WE KNOW that it's really just an E chord in disguise!

Fun Fact:
A chord that is played one note at a time is called an arpeggio (ar - peh - jee - oh)
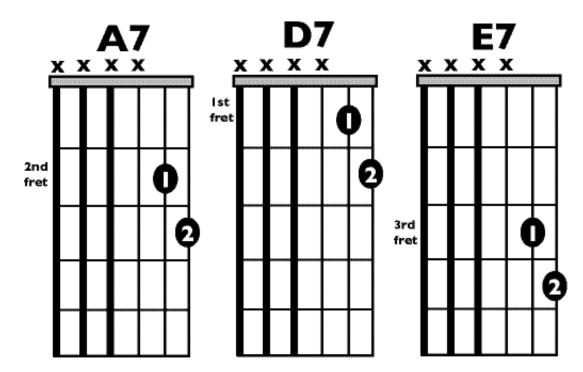
A measure is a group of beats. Songs have lots of these groups and they are separated by lines called Measure Lines.
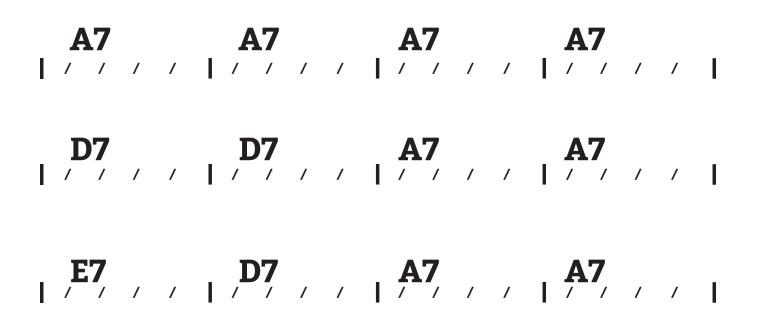
When we listen to a song and count 1,2,3,4 – 1,2,3,4 we are actually counting measures!Many songs have 4 beats but songwriters often use 2, 3 and 6 beats in each measure. Some songs even have 5 or 7!
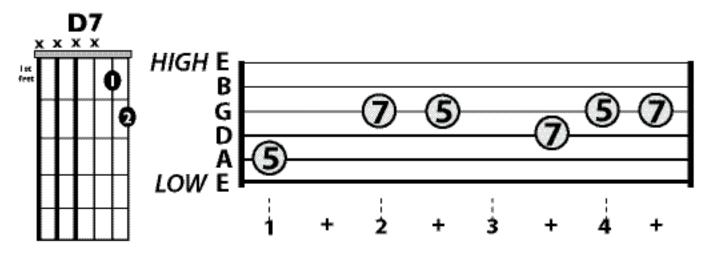
GUITAR

Blank Tab Sheet

GUITAR

HIGH **E**
B
G
D
A
LOW **E**

HIGH **E**
B
G
D
A
LOW **E**

HIGH **E**
B
G
D
A
LOW **E**

HIGH **E**
B
G
D
A
LOW **E**

HIGH **E**
B
G
D
A
LOW **E**

HIGH **E**
B
G
D
A
LOW **E**

HIGH **E**
B
G
D
A
LOW **E**

HIGH **E**
B
G
D
A
LOW **E**

The Three Fret Funk
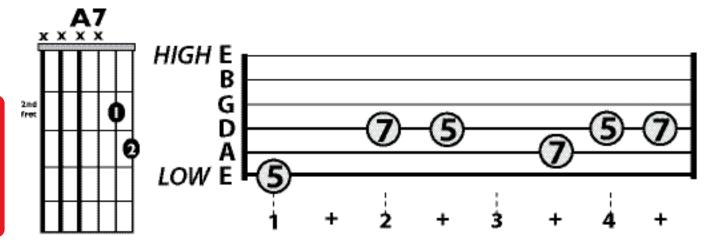
Look at the 3 chords above. What do you notice? They all have the same shape and they are all played the same way...just on different frets! You can play a very funky tune with these chords. Try using this rhythm:

The Three Fret Funk

GUITAR
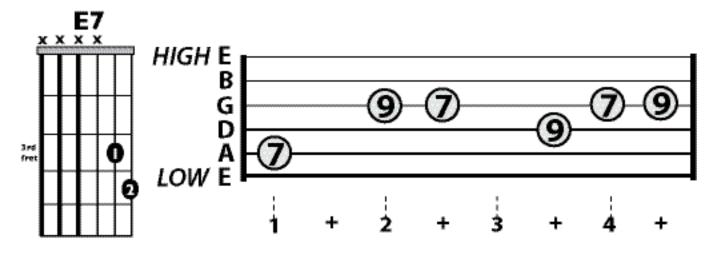
(The bass line on your guitar!)

Here is a bass line for each of the three chords in "Three Fret Fun." Groovy!
These are written out in "tablature."

A7

D7

E7
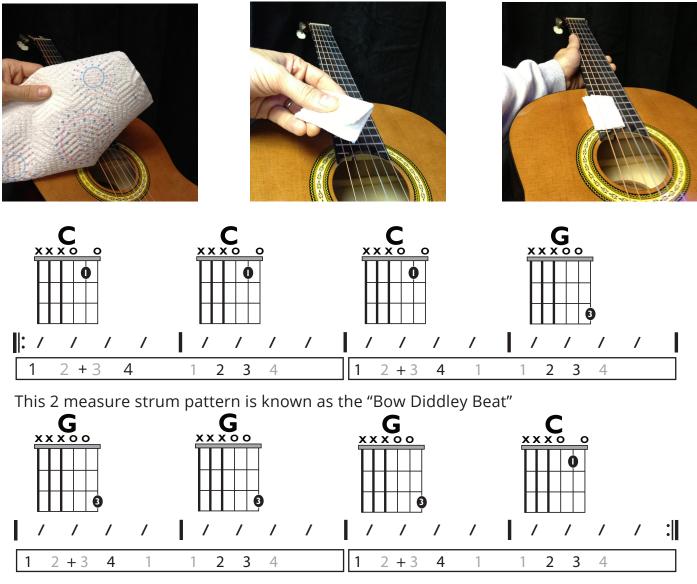
Songs for One Finger!

Using only ONE finger you can play MOUNTAINS of songs! Play on strings 1, 2, and 3 only (the skinniest strings) and start rockin'!

It may be helpful to use a "paper towel mute" for strings 4, 5, and 6 by placing a folded papertowel underneath strings 4, 5, and 6!

C   C   C   G

```
‖: /   /   /   /  |  /   /   /   /  ‖  /   /   /   /  |  /   /   /   /  ‖
   1  2 +3  4       1   2   3   4       1  2 +3  4   1   1   2   3   4
```

This 2 measure strum pattern is known as the "Bow Diddley Beat"

G   G   G   C

```
|  /   /   /   /  |  /   /   /   /  ‖  /   /   /   /  |  /   /   /   /  :‖
   1  2 +3  4   1   1   2   3   4       1  2 +3  4   1   1   2   3   4
```

In the style of The Women Are Smarter, Un Elefante, Aiko Aiko, Jumbalay, They All Asked For You, The Dreidle Song, Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, etc....

More One Finger Chord Songs
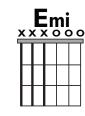
G   **C**   **G**   **C**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

In the style ofFeelin' Alright, You Can't Always Get What You Want,
Imagine, Friend of the Devil, My Girl, Take a Walk on the Wild Side,

G   **Emi**   **G**   **Emi**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

In the style of Shout, Wish You Were Here, Hang Me Up To Dry (Cold War Kids)

G   **C**   **Emi**   **Emi**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

In the style of I've Got a Feeling (Black Eyed Peas), Without You (David Guetta)

G   **Emi**   **C**   **G**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

In the style of One by U2, Just the Way You Are by Bruno Mars

GUITAR
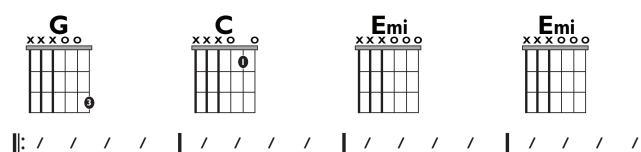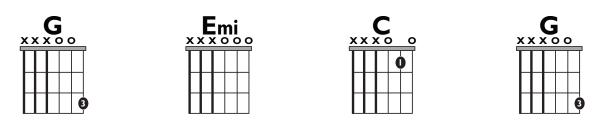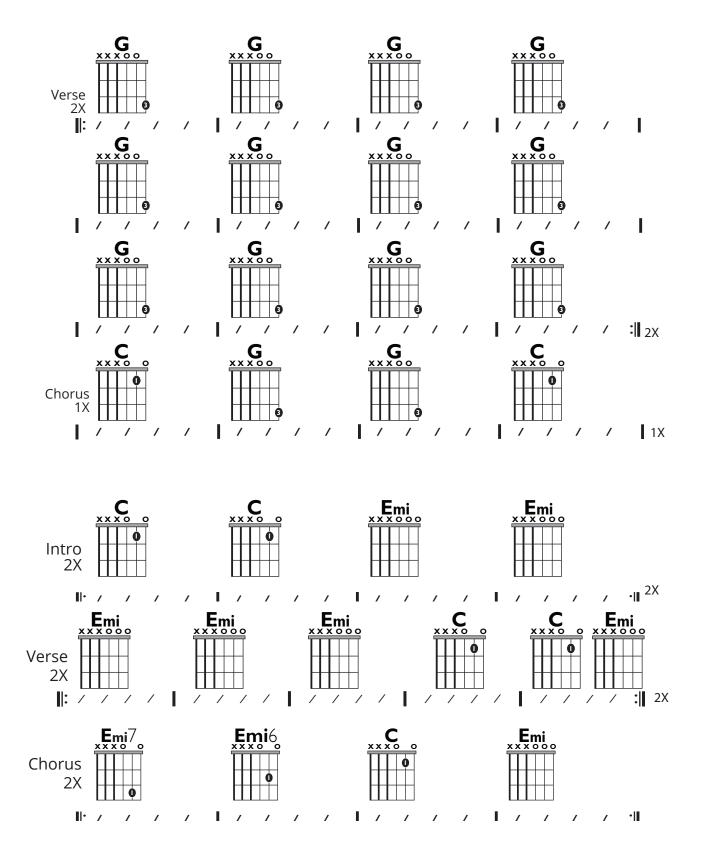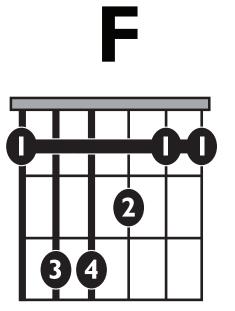
The Beatles One Finger Classics

In the style of Paperback Writer

E-Style Barre Chord

F
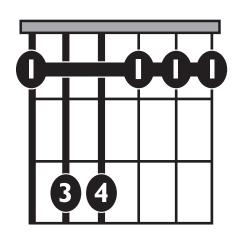
The chord to the left is called a barre chord. If you look carefully at the six black dots, you will see that they look like an "E" chord. That's why this is called an "E" style barre chord. This chord gets around and likes to be moved up and down the neck.
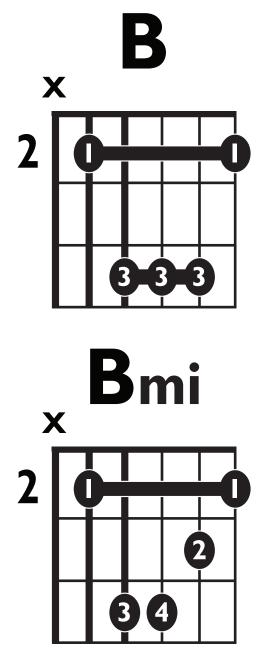
By playing a barre chord your index finger is a substitute for the end of the guitar, allowing you to play any chord in the musical alphabet by using the same "E" chord shape. The hardest part about playing a barre chord is the finger that acts as a barre. Experiment with the position of this finger for the most comfortable fit. Barre chords are easier to play up the neck; the hardest position is in the first and second frets where the frets are the furthest apart.

Fmi

The "minor" version of this kind of barre chord involves one less finger! The shape is that of an "E minor" chord.

A-Style Barre Chord
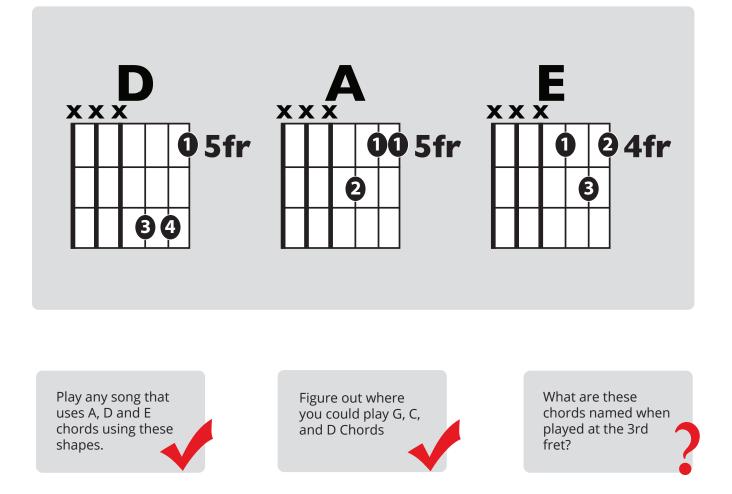
This is a tough chord to play! If you look carefully at the four black dots, you will see that they look almost like an"A" chord. That's why this is called an "A" style barre chord.This chord gets around and likes to be moved up and down the neck!

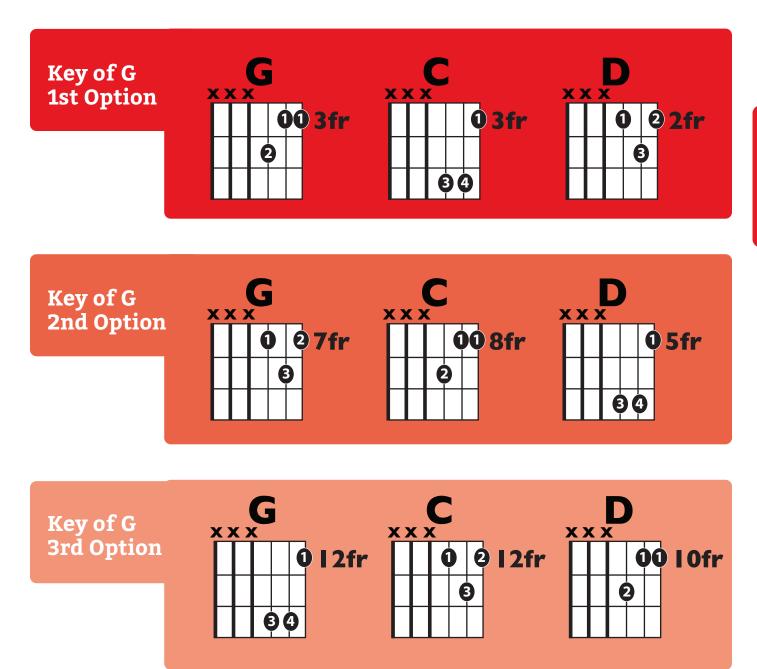The minor chord version of this chord looks like an A minor chord next to the barre!

Get Movin'!

Below you'll find three very cool and useful chords. These are called closed-position triads, and are moveable chords just like your barre chords. This means that you can move them anywhere on the neck without having to change the shape of the chord.

D 5fr

A 5fr

E 4fr

Play any song that uses A, D and E chords using these shapes. ✔

Figure out where you could play G, C, and D Chords ✔

What are these chords named when played at the 3rd fret? **?**

More Triads

Below you'll find three new ways to play G, C and D.
Once you feel comfortable with these, try A, D and E or
F, Bb and C or B, E and F#. There are lots of possibilities!

**Key of G
1st Option**

G   C   D

**Key of G
2nd Option**

G   C   D

**Key of G
3rd Option**

G   C   D

Minor Pentatonic Scale

The minor pentatonic scale has five notes and is probably the most popu-lar scale in music today. It has a sad sound.

GUITAR

Ready to Rock?!

✔ Place your fingers one at a time.

✔ Place each finger close to the fret just below it.

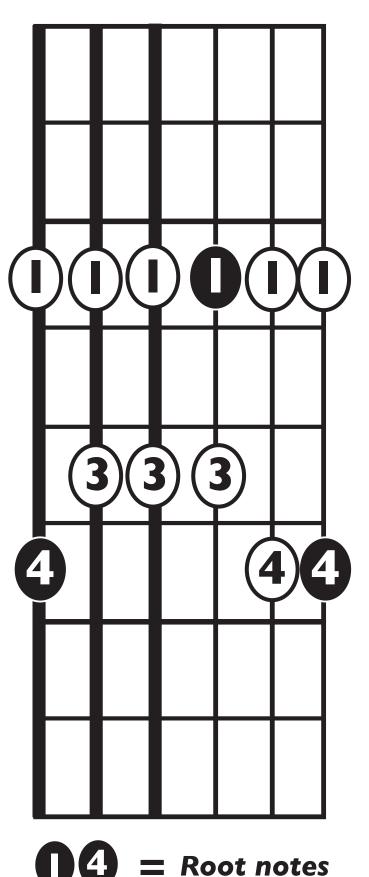✔ Pick with the following pattern: down, up, down, up,down, up, down, up....

✔ While you play it, say "down, up, down, up..." This will help you correct your own mistakes.

✔ Make sure that you use the right finger for each note. For example,on the first string, use fingers 1 and 4.

✔ Use as little finger movement as you can with your picking hand.

1 **3** = *Root notes*

Major Pentatonic Scale
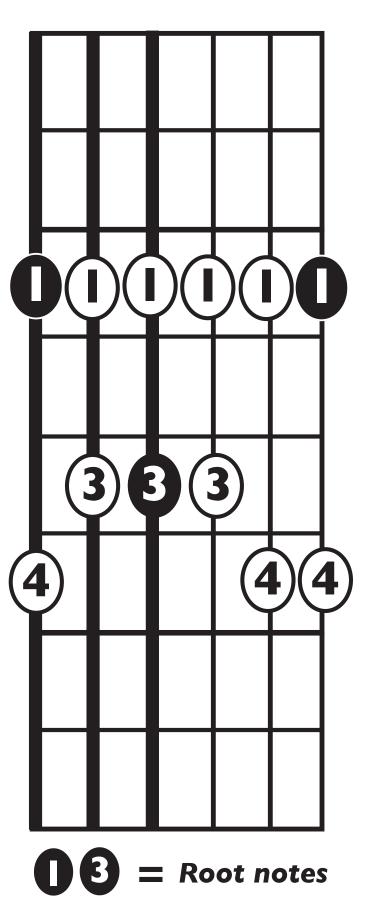
The major pentatonic scale also has five notes and is another really popular scale in music today. It has a happy sound. It looks the same as the minor pentatonic but the root is in a different spot.

Ready to Rock?!

✔ Place your fingers one at a time.

✔ Place each finger close to the fret just below it.

✔ Pick with the following pattern: down, up, down, up,down, up, down, up....
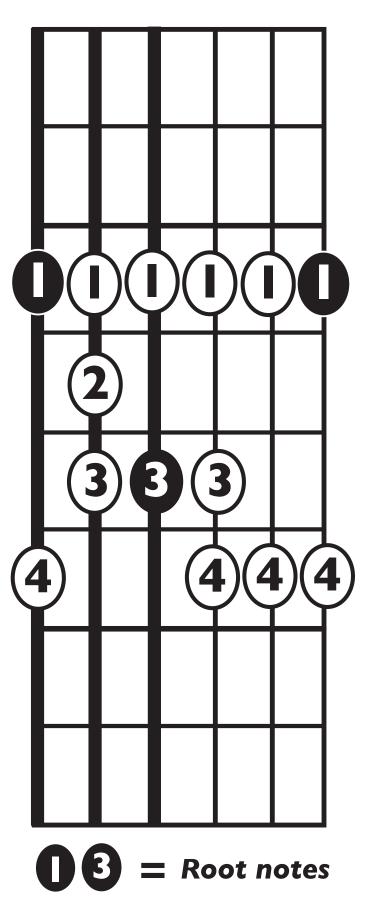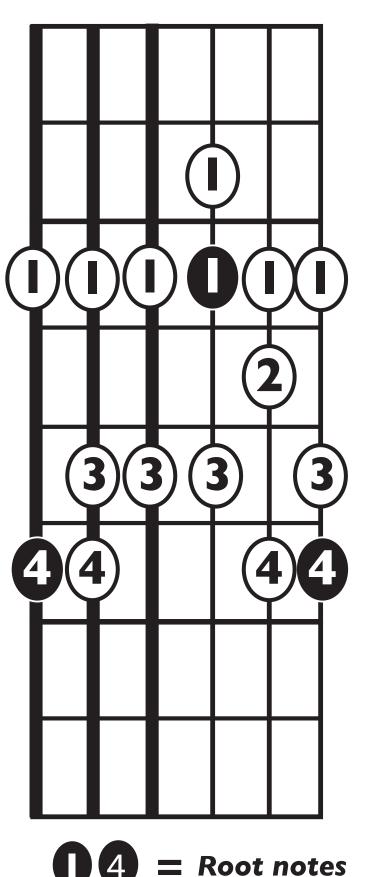
✔ While you play it, say "down, up, down, up..." This will help you correct your own mistakes.

✔ Make sure that you use the right finger for each note. For example,on the first string, use fingers 1 and 4.

✔ Use as little finger movement as you can with your picking hand.

GUITAR

1 4 = Root notes
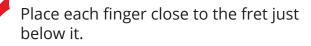
Blues Scale

The blues scale has six notes and is used in many different styles of music including blues, rock, pop, rap, funk and others. It looks a lot like the pentatonic scale but with an extra "blue note" thrown in.

Ready to Rock?!

✔ Place your fingers one at a time.

✔ Place each finger close to the fret just below it.

✔ Pick with the following pattern: down, up, down, up,down, up, down, up....
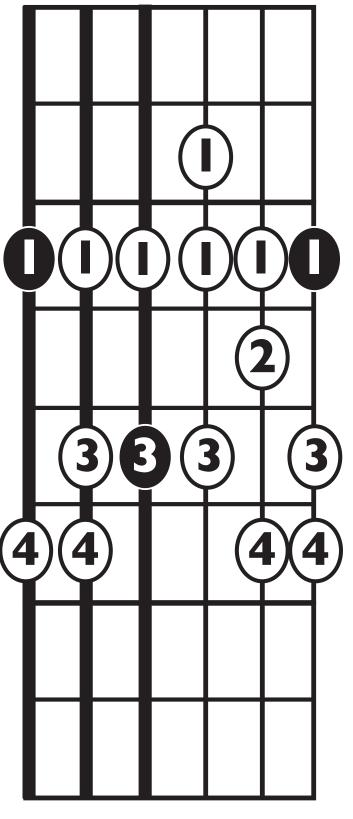
✔ While you play it, say "down, up, down, up..." This will help you correct your own mistakes.

✔ Make sure that you use the right finger for each note. For example,on the first string, use fingers 1 and 4.

✔ Use as little finger movement as you can with your picking hand.

① ③ = *Root notes*

Major Scale

The major scale has seven notes. It has a happy sound. Can you see another scale hidden inside the major scale?

Ready to Rock?!

✔ Place your fingers one at a time.

✔ Place each finger close to the fret just below it.

✔ Pick with the following pattern: down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up....

✔ While you play it, say "down, up, down, up..." This will help you correct your own mistakes.

✔ Make sure that you use the right finger for each note. For example, on the first string, use fingers 1 and 4.
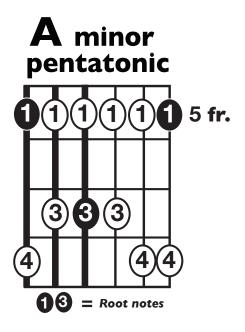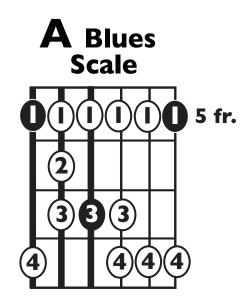
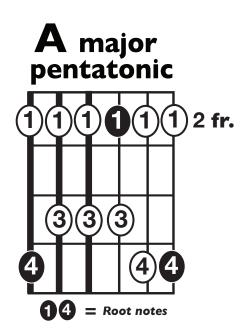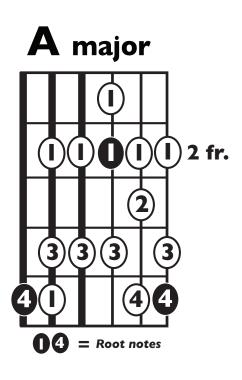✔ Use as little finger movement as you can with your picking hand.

GUITAR

① ④ = *Root notes*

Minor Scale

The minor scale also has seven notes. It has a sad sound. Can you see another scale hidden inside the major scale?

Ready to Rock?!

✔ Place your fingers one at a time.

✔ Place each finger close to the fret just below it.

✔ Pick with the following pattern: down, up, down, up, down, up, down, up....

✔ While you play it, say "down, up, down, up..." This will help you correct your own mistakes.

✔ Make sure that you use the right finger for each note. For example, on the first string, use fingers 1 and 4.

✔ Use as little finger movement as you can with your picking hand.

① ③ = *Root note*

Scales to Jam By

A minor pentatonic

5 fr.

❶ ❸ = *Root notes*

A Blues Scale

5 fr.

A major pentatonic

2 fr.

❶ ❹ = *Root notes*

A major

2 fr.

❶ ❹ = *Root notes*

GUITAR
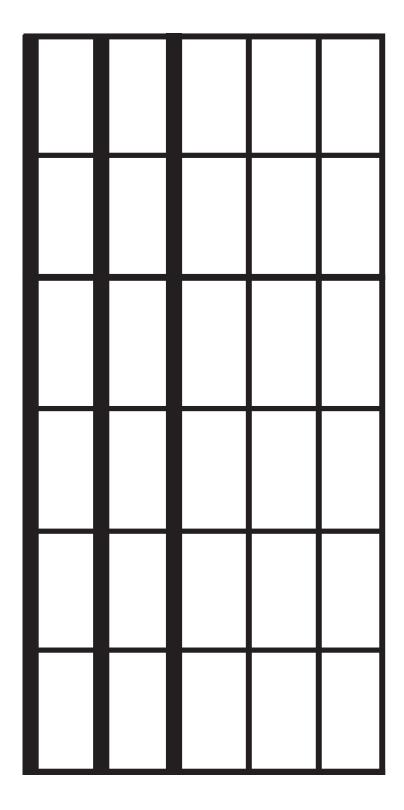
Blank Guitar Neck

_____
Fret

Blank Chord Boxes

Blank Progressions

Blank Progressions

GUITAR

KEYBOARD
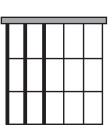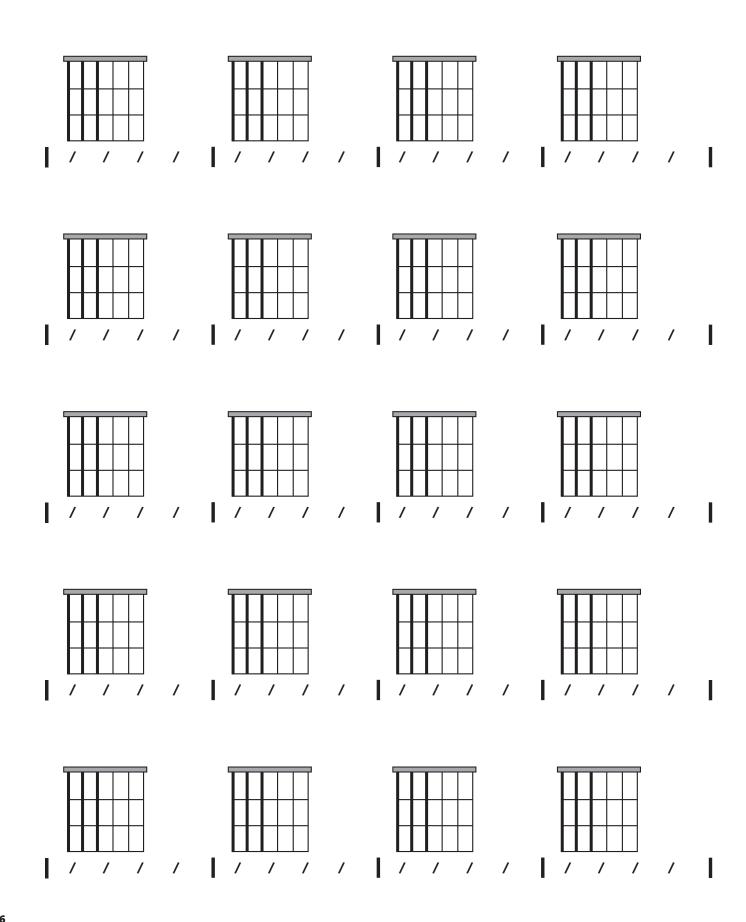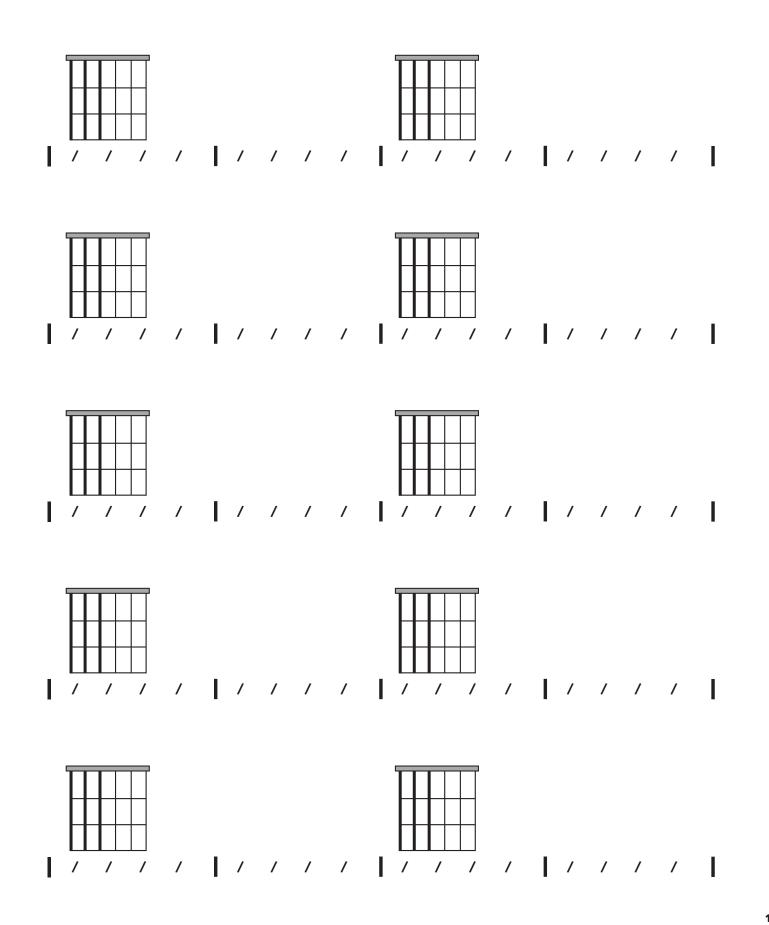
KEYBOARD

"I Took Piano Lessons as a Kid and Hated it!"

It is a sad but an undeniable fact that piano lessons often have the opposite effect we'd like to see them have in a young person's life. If you do a Google search using the phrase "I hated piano lessons" you get about 146,000 results. A search for "I hated guitar lessons," yields a paltry 670 results.

What are we to make of this?

Both the piano and the guitar factor mightily into the Modern Band and both are wonderful instruments to listen to and play. However, it seems that people who study these instruments have radically different experiences. This is due to the fact that piano and guitar are taught using radically different methodologies!
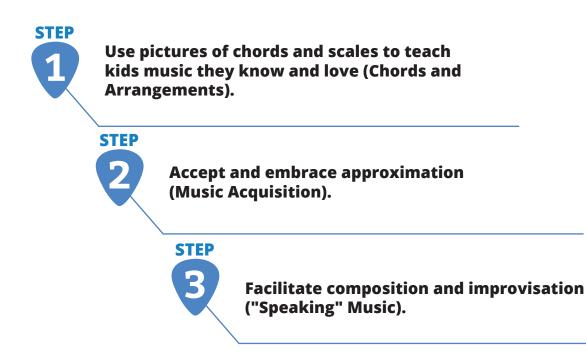
Guitarists generally learn without the use of standard musical notation as we noted in the previous section of the manual. More often than not, guitar teachers choose repertoire based on the musical tastes of their students. Technique may be taught, but always in the context of a song.

Music Acquisition Theory draws heavily on techniques and methods that are commonly used by guitar teachers: an immediate focus on chords, a non-notational approach to teaching, and the use of pictures.

> *That one guitar really blew him away."*
>
> **- "Juke Box Hero" by Foreigner**

Guitar-i-fying the Piano

The same simple steps to teaching beginners how to make music on the guitar transfer seamlessly to the piano or keyboard. Here they are again:

STEP
1 — Use pictures of chords and scales to teach kids music they know and love (Chords and Arrangements).

STEP
2 — Accept and embrace approximation (Music Acquisition).

STEP
3 — Facilitate composition and improvisation ("Speaking" Music).

Step 1 above is a radical departure from a traditional approach to teaching piano and is a paradigm shift for people who learned and/or teach piano using such methodology. Many classically trained pianists spend years on their instruments before they begin to focus on chords. Consider the following two examples to get a sense of how and why this can happen and how we can approach the task differently as teachers:

Example 1

In order to play a "C" chord, a student might be taught all of the following information to prepare them for the task:

The difference between the treble clef and the bassclef

How to read notes on both clefs

How to properly finger each note on the written   page

How to understand time signatures.

How to read key signatures.

Even after processing this impressive amount of information and

then learning to read and execute the "C" chord, the student usually doesn't learn how to use the "C" chord but rather just to read it.

The student will play a "C" chord when they see it written in a score but they will not likely experiment with the chord or use it outside of a written piece of music. Even after all this, they may not even recognize a "C" chord if it is arpeggiated, in first or second inversion or divided among the treble and bass clefs.

Example 2

What if we simply taught the "C" chord as a "shape" that appears on the piano? We could illustrate it with the following picture and tell a child, "See the drawing of the piano and the three keys that are colored grey? Find them and press down on all three of those keys at the same time."

A beginning student could play a "C' chord immediately with the visual aid of a picture. Even if the finger numbers suggested seem too difficult for a beginner this chord can still be played using any fingers that work for them—even using two hands! Insisting on perfect fingerings and techniques ahead of playing music puts the em-PHA-sis on the wrong syllable—suddenly we're back to those old, dreaded piano lessons again.
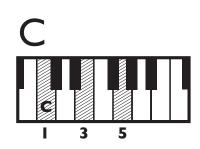
This isn't to say that good fingering habits and technique aren't important or useful, but they can be integrated as a student progresses, instead of being required before a student begins. When children are first learning to speak, we don't insist on hearing "mother" instead of "mama"! We encourage them to grow and develop along the lines of their own ability and we show enthusiasm towards their progress. It's possible to exhibit this same positive encouragement for each small step children take on their musical journeys.

Jamming is a form of musical conversation that requires listening to what other musicians are doing on their instruments while we use rhythm, chords, and sometimes solo scales on our own. This manual is about providing simple and effective tools for playing an instrument without the necessity of having to devote years to memorizing a symbol system to do it. It is for every music student, not just the "talented readers". By learning to play the songs we love through approximating rhythms, chords, and melodies on our instrument the language of music opens before our ears.

Using a "Chord Shape" to Play Songs

By using pictures to teach pianists to play chords, we are directly mimicking the method used to teach popular guitar. Guitarists often think of chords as "shapes" that they put their fingers in to get a nice sound. They use the chords they know as building blocks to help them play the songs they know and like.

For example, let's say a student loves the song "Imagine," by John Lennon. If that student knows how to play a "C" chord and they are told that most of the song toggles between the "C" and the "F" chord, they will be motivated to learn the "F" chord which looks like this:

C

1   3   5

KEYBOARD

Both the C and the F chord have the same shape! Mastering this second chord is a simple task and NOW the student can start using the two chords they know to pursue a repertoire that consists of songs that they know and love. This is motivational!

Mountains of songs are made from the same chord progression used in "Imagine". A partial list includes "Candle in the Wind" by Elton John, "You Can't Always Get What You Want" by the Rolling Stones, "Love Me Do" by The Beatles, "Waiting in Vain" by Bob Marley, "Sunshine on my Shoulders" by John Denver, "Glory Days" by Bruce Springsteen, "Angel of Harlem" by U2, and "Home" by Phillip Phillips. Recognizing this means we're beginning to pay attention to music as language. Since this same chord progression is used in all of these songs, it's time to look at how rhythm gives each song it's own individual personality...

Comping Patterns

Comping Patterns give us an easy way to approximate rhythm on the keyboard using chords. They're very similar to the strum patterns used by guitar players. Here we'll apply them to a couple of the songs mentioned above to see how they work.
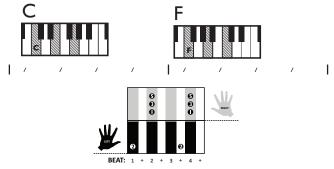
If we were to play in the style of "Imagine" by John Lennon, traditional notation would look like this:

The incredible amount of memorized information needed to play this simple keyboard pattern over these two chords is baffling! In addition to the list of needs to read a C chord listed above, we would also need to know

> What a measure is
> That we're counting 4 beats per measure
> That each beat is given the value of a quarter note
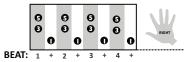> How to count 8th note subdivisions against a quarter note pulse

How long would it take the average music student to acquire the knowledge and skill necessary to play this? Now let's look at the same example using pictures of chords and a comping pattern.

C   F

This is literally a picture of what you do to play this pattern requiring far lesson explanation than the notation example. The counting isn't "inferred" with a symbol for it and neither is the rhythm of the notes we play. This way of applying rhythm and patterns to chords is a lot like the "strum pattern" graphics that guitar players use. Once we get used to playing them they can easily be applied to jamming on hundreds of songs! Let's break it down.

The top half of the comping pattern is for the right hand to play using the notes of the chord from the picture.

C

To play this pattern we need to know that notes on top of each other are played together. Fingers 5 and 3 (the top two notes of the chord) are always played together, followed by finger 1 (the bottom note of the chord "C") over and over. It's also important that we keep a steady beat, counting evenly "1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +" while lining the counting up with the pattern that we're playing. If using these fingers to play this pattern feels too difficult at first, substitute by using fingers that feel easier. The sound we're going for is more important than any of the other details.
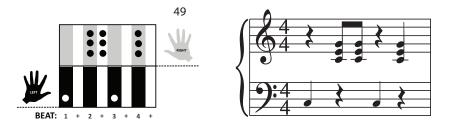
The left hand part of this pattern is just the "root" note of the chord (in this case "C"). We're only asking the left hand to play ONE note, not the whole chord. This note is optional, but adding it gives the pattern a fuller sound by providing a bass note.

Using standard notation to play the keyboard pattern used in "Imagine" is a little bit like trying to eat a hot dog with the tools of a surgeon! It simply isn't supposed to be that complicated. The standard notation system is a highly sophisticated tool intended to communicate lots of very specific things. It's the wrong tool for learning to jam and improvise as it takes all choice away from the performer, leaving him with too many exact details. Jamming isn't about being exact—it's about the way individual taste, personality, and choice manifest through live experience.
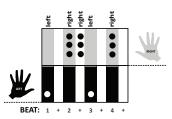
One of the greatest things about using comping patterns is that they get us playing right away. That means we're using rhythm and getting used to keeping time, we're focusing right away on how the instrument works, we're beginning to understand chords while hearing the way they're related to each other, and we're beginning to build the physical skills necessary to play the keyboard. We're focusing on the experience of playing music as our starting point, and choosing tools that make that a reality as quickly as possible.

Applying a different comping pattern to these same two chords completely changes the personality of the music. Let's try a few more from our list that use this famous rock and roll chord progression!
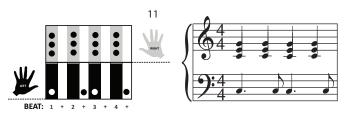
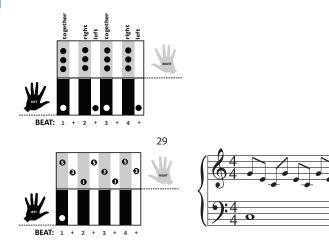In the Style of "Love Me Do" and "Waiting in Vain"

In this pattern, the right hand is playing the notes of the chord all at the same time on beats 2, the "+" of 2, and on beat 4. The left hand is playing a single bass note, just the root of the chord on beats 1 and 3. This kind of keyboard pattern never has the hands playing at the same time and may be easier to think of as "left, right right, left, right". This pattern mimics what the drummer is doing by imitating the kick and snare hits.

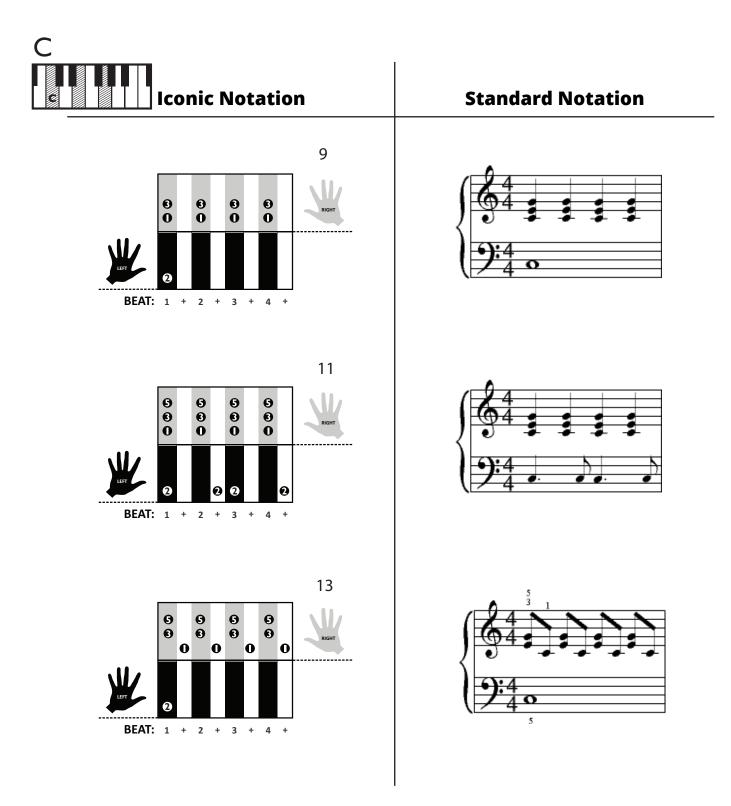In the style of "Candle in the Wind" and "You Can't Always Get What You Want"

In this pattern, the right hand is again playing all three notes of the chord at the same time, but in some places the hands are together and in others they are separate. A useful way of thinking about playing a pattern like this is "together, right, left, together, right, left". Patterns like this provide a steady rhythm while adding a more independent sounding bass part.
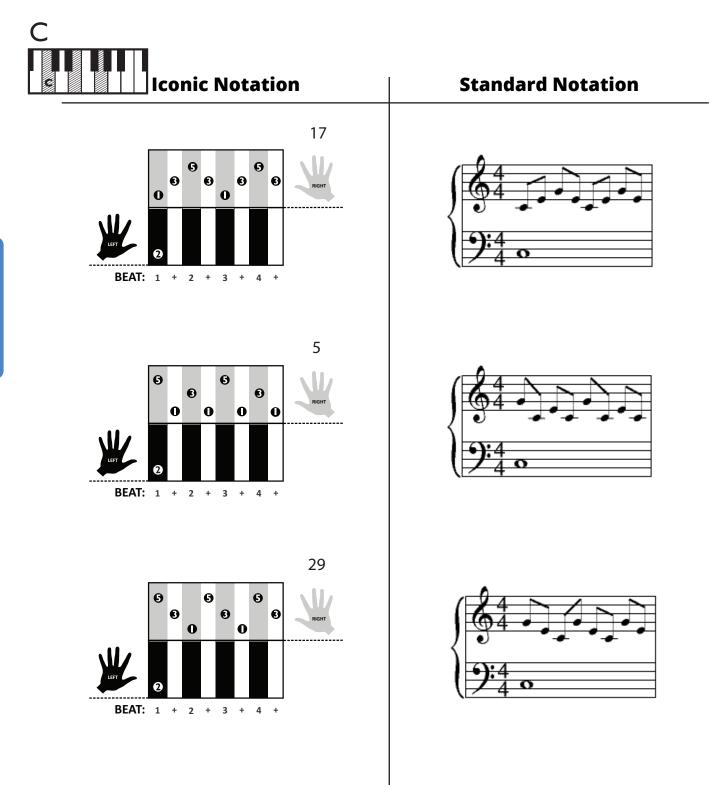

"Grenade" by Bruno Mars and "Clocks" by Coldplay
Some songs break up the chords by playing the notes one at a time (what we call an "arpeggio"). This way of playing chords sound a lot like fingerpicking patterns used by guitar players. In this case the right hand is going to play the top note of the chord by itself, followed by the middle, and then the bottom. The left hand is optional and just provides a bass note for a fuller sound. Patterns like this give us a steady stream of both rhythm and harmony.
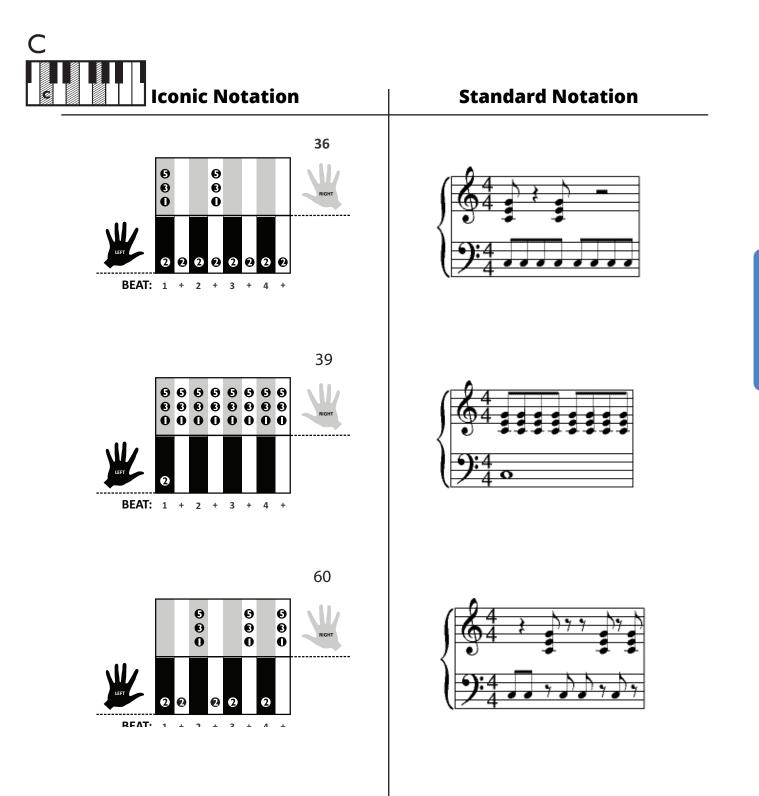
KEYBOARD

Ballad Pattern Examples

To see video demonstrations of these comping patterns visit:
http://www.littlekidsrock.org/thehang/lessons/keyboard-pattern-N/
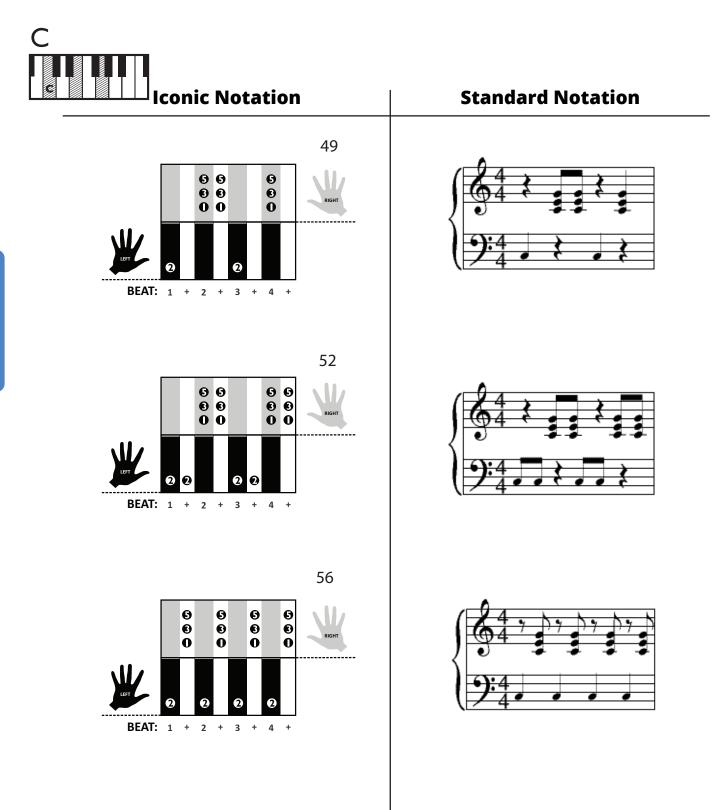but replace the N at the end with the corresponding rhythm number!

C

Iconic Notation
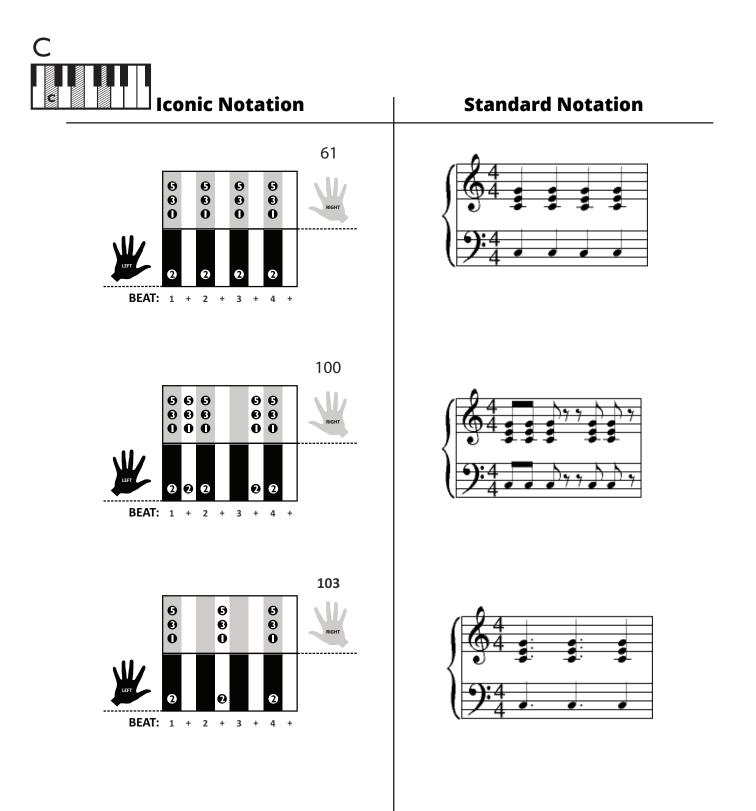
Standard Notation

KEYBOARD

Broken Chord Patterns

(When using the iconic notation, apply the C chord graphic)

C

Iconic Notation | Standard Notation

17

5

29

Rock Pattern Examples

(When using the iconic notation, apply the C chord graphic)

C

Iconic Notation	Standard Notation

KEYBOARD

Reggae Chord Patterns

(When using the iconic notation, apply the C chord graphic)

C

Iconic Notation

Standard Notation

49

52

56

Unison Pattern Examples

(When using the iconic notation, apply the C chord graphic)

C

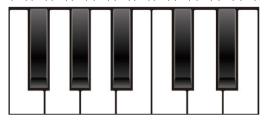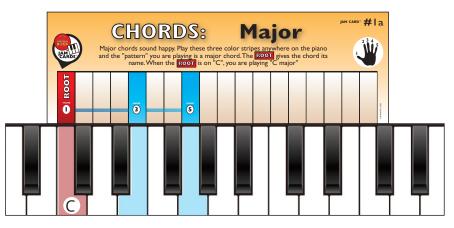| Iconic Notation	Standard Notation

KEYBOARD

The Jam Card Revolution

Jam Cards take musical concepts like chords, chord inversions, and scales and make them moveable so that they can instantly be played anywhere on the keyboard. This is because the width of a key is the same where the key joins the instrument.

Using the Jam Card #1 "Major Chord" we can easily see the notes contained in any chord we line the root note up to.
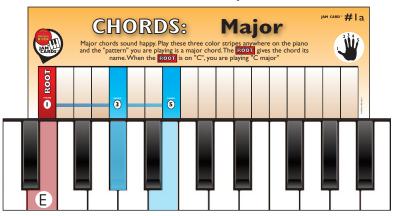
Black and White keys are approximately the same width.
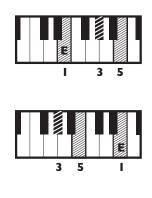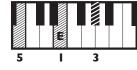
C Major Chord

The Jam Card easily points out the black key located in the middle of this E Major Chord.

Using the Jam Card 2a "CHORDS: Major in 3 ways" we can easily see that the E chord also has three possible shapes.
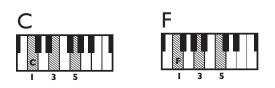

Jam Cards can also help us combine different shapes to play a chord progression more easily. By applying Jam Card 3a to any of the songs listed above we can see that moving from the C chord to the F chord is just a matter of moving the top two notes.

Jam Cards work just as easily with scales. Learning which notes go together when taking our first solos can be a lot to remember. Simply lining up a Jam Card to the root note of the first chord in most songs will give us great sounding notes to take solos with.

The finger on the C key does not move for this progression.

C Major Pentatonic

C major pentatonic

It works just as well when starting on a black key.
Eb Major Pentatonic

Eb major pentatonic

Objective:

Students will be able to memorize the way fingers are numbered in keyboard playing.
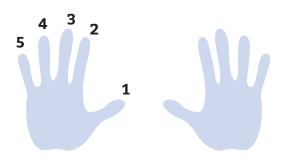
Procedures:

Ask students to hold both of their fists in the air. Opening your fists one finger at a time, stick up your thumbs together saying out loud "one", followed by the index finger "two", the middle finger "three", the ring finger "four", and the pinky "five", until every finger of the hand remains open.

Repeat the same procedure in the reverse order, beginning with closed fists and opening pinkies first saying "five", followed by ring fingers "four", etc.

Hold your hand open in front of the class and ask them to call out as a group which finger you are pointing to using your other hand.

Switch hands and repeat, making sure everyone understands that on both hands the thumb is finger number 1 and the pinky is finger number 5.

Ask students to play specific notes with specific fingers. "When I say 'go' I want everyone to use the right hand to play C with the 2nd finger....ready....GO!"

KEYBOARD

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
A Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.3 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities, and identified performance challenges. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.Math.Content.K.CC.B.4 Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality. CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.CC.B.4.A When counting objects, say the number names in the standard order, pairing each object with one and only one number name and each number name with one and only one object.

LESSON PLAN: Chopsticks and Forks

Objective:

Students will be able to use the black keys to recognize any note on the keyboard.

Resources:
Only a keyboard!

Procedures:

Describe the group of 2 black keys as "chopsticks". Ask students to find as many pairs of chopsticks on their keyboards as they can.

Describe the group of 3 black keys as a "fork" and have students find all of the forks on their keyboard.

Play groups of chopsticks or forks going from high to low or low to high.

Indicate that since C stands for "chopsticks" it is the name of the white key to the left of the chopsticks. Ask students to find all of the C's.

Explain the same about the fork. The word begins with F and that is the note located to the left of every fork. Have students find all of the F's.

Relate other letters from the musical alphabet to the C and F, locating each one everywhere it appears on the keyboard.

Extensions:

Younger students will enjoy placing a small object on notes you ask them to find. Be careful not to use something small enough to slip between the keys.

Older students can be paired up to make a set of musical alphabet flash cards to test each other from.

KEYBOARD

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.3 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities, and identified performance challenges. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Objective:

Students will be able to use the put note letter names and finger numbers together to make good keyboard habits.

Resources:
Keyboards

Procedures:

Demonstrate playing a C position using your right hand by placing your thumb on C and then playing D, E, F, and G with the next fingers (finger 2 for D, finger 3 for E, etc.)
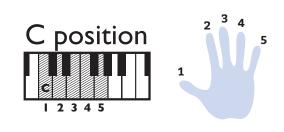
Identify which fingers play which notes in discussion with students. "If I'm in a C position, which finger number plays the F? Which finger number plays the D?" etc.
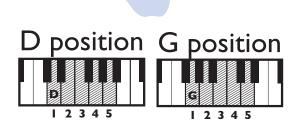
Pair students up having them take turns playing the notes of the C position with the right hand. Ascending will be easiest because it starts with the thumb. Descending patterns that go up and down can come later after they're more comfortable using their fingers on the keyboard like this.

Have students call out notes for each other that are under the hand position. "Play the note E!" the student will have to use the 3rd finger, etc.

Apply this idea to starting in different positions, not worrying about including any black keys; placing the thumb on the note D puts the D, E, F, G, and A under the five fingers, etc.

Teach the left hand with this idea. Keep in mind that now the 5th finger (pinky) will be on the starting note and this is much more difficult for a beginning keyboard player.

KEYBOARD

C position

D position   G position

C position
for left hand

LESSON PLAN: Two Note Chords

Objective:

Students will be able to use a 2 note chord to play a chord progression used in many rock and roll songs. This will reinforce their knowledge of where notes are on the keyboard while providing fingering habits which allow them to eventually play larger chords more easily. By integrating the left hand these

Resources:
Keyboards

Procedures:

Make sure the students know their finger numbers by clenching 2 fists and opening one finger at a time simultaneously in both hands while saying "1, 2, 3, 4, 5".

Help students use the right hand to play a "mini C chord" using the 1 and 3 fingers on C and E in the middle of the keyboard. Having student pair up with each other to help one another is often a good idea to reinforce what they're learning and free up keyboards! Repeat this process with a "mini F chord" using fingers 1 and 3 on the notes F and A.

Have students find these chords quickly when you call them out, resting their hands on their laps in between so that they have to rely on their eyes to find them.

Have them play the C chord in 4 steady beats (quarter notes) followed by the F chord in 4 steady beats, and repeat until they can play this progression steadily without stopping.

Continue playing this steady rhythm while you sing the parts of songs that use this famous chord progression; "Feelin' Alright", "Imagine", "Waiting in Vain", "Drive My Car", "I Can't Get No Satisfaction", "Glory Days", etc.

Next we're going to begin preparing the left hand to play bass notes by learning to "feel" the keyboard. Tell students they can find C by feeling the group of 2 black keys and F by feeling the group of 3 black keys. Spend a couple of moments asking students to close their eyes and feel for the C or F depending on which note you call out. Remind them that since our eyes can only look at one hand at a time, learning to "feel" the notes of the keyboard can allow us to play with two hands much more easily.

Ask students to place their left hand 5 finger (pinky) on a low C. This is the finger responsible for playing that bass note.
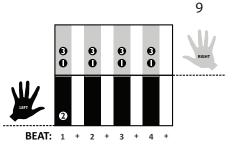
Have them play the C chord and bass note together, and then while holding the bass note repeat the chord 3 more times. Do the same thing with the F chord, keeping the bass note as a C so that they don't have to worry about both hands moving to new notes. Remind them to keep their eyes on the right hand which is moving from a C chord to an F chord while "feeling" the left hand pinky playing the C. Once this 2 handed coordination is up and running steadily try singing one of the songs that fits this progression.

Mini C

Mini F

9

RIGHT

LEFT

BEAT: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

KEYBOARD

LESSON PLAN: Piano Power Chords

Objective:

The student will be able to chords more easily, using only the thumb and pinky to play the root and fifth of a chord. This builds both the feeling of the 5th in the hand for playing chords while strengthening the pinky.

Resources:

Use any song chart that you are currently working on with your class or that the class chooses. This lesson plan will be based on the "Axis of Awesome" chord progression in C Major, using the C, G, Ami, and F chords

Procedures:

Play the root and 5th of a C chord for the class with your right hand, using your thumb for the C and pinky for the G. This is a "piano power chord", because just like in guitar power chords it is using only the root and 5th. Demonstrate how your hand is covering 5 notes and your thumb and pinky easily plant themselves on these two notes. You can also talk about the hollow sound this produces.

Ask students to try on their keyboards. It's always a good idea to pair students up for "peer to peer instruction", having them help each other. Walk around checking that everyone can make a "C Power Chord" (Figure A)

Demonstrate to students the way you play a "G Power Chord" (Figure B), moving your right hand thumb up to the note G and then feeling five white keys under your five fingers play the thumb and pinky on G and D.
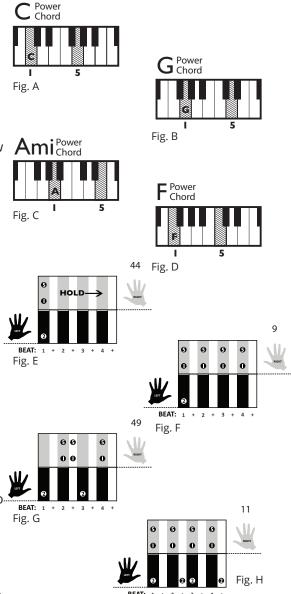
Do the same thing with the "A Power Chord" (Figure C) and then with the "F Power Chord" (Figure D), moving slowly one chord at a time and making sure everyone gets the concept before applying it to a song or jam session. By doing this simple exercise they're receiving great ear training by focusing on the root movement of the chord while getting used to where notes are located. They're also training their bodies in fundamental keyboard muscle habits by getting the pinky and thumb involved in "feeling" this primary keyboard interval.

Try applying this idea to these chords sequentially playing whole notes on each chord. If you're working with beginners have students play the "bass note" of the chord on the low half of the keyboard while others play the "piano power chords" in the middle register. After getting around the keyboard this way feels easy, use quarter notes while keeping steady time playing 4 counts on each chord. Remember to have students switch roles if some are playing chords and others bass. (Figures E & F)

Apply this idea to using both hands in an easy keyboard comping pattern or the pattern that comes from the song you're working on in class (Figures G & H).

Fig. A — C Power Chord

Fig. B — G Power Chord

Fig. C — Ami Power Chord

Fig. D — F Power Chord

Fig. E

Fig. F

Fig. G

Fig. H

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.2 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic and melodic patterns using iconic or standard notation. (applies 1-4) Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: General Music MU:Pr6.1.2 a. Perform music for a specific purpose with expression and technical accuracy. (applies K-5) Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Re7.2.E.5a (Novice) Identify how knowledge of context and the use of repetition, similarities, and contrasts inform the response to music. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: Keyboard Comping Patterns

Objective:

Students will be able to hear and play keyboard comping patterns while successfully learning to integrate both hands in their playing.

Resources:

Handout "Keyboard Comping Patterns With Block Chords" and "Keyboard Comping Patterns With Broken Chords". Hint: You can also create a handout easily by using Teacher Manual Keyboard Consumable "Keyboard Rhythms" and circling all the block chord comping patterns (the ones with three black dots aligned vertically).

Procedures:

Play students recordings of "When I Was Your Man" by Bruno Mars or "Let it Be" by The Beatles to hear "block chord" comping patterns on the piano. Then play them the beginning of "Someone Like You" by Adele and "Clocks" by Coldplay to hear "broken chord" comping patterns (note: in "Someone Like You" the chorus uses a "block chord" pattern to create contrast in the song—a great thing to point out before starting this lesson.

Demonstrate the difference between block chord and broken chord comping patterns. Explain that "comping" is just the word "accompanying" in a shortened form for keyboard players, and stands for the way we play chords in a song with different patterns of rhythms and notes.

Go through the keyboard comping patterns one at a time making sure that the students understand the rhythm in each one. After you can see that they can play them, repeat each one four times as a group.

After students are able to play any of the patterns on this sheet (which may take more than one lesson depending on the age and ability of your students) lead them through playing all of the patterns from column A in a row.
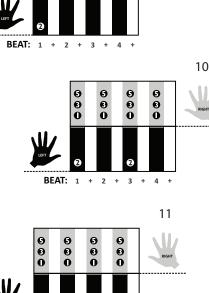
Repeat this process for the patterns in column B which contain more complicated rhythms but don't involve the hands playing together. Go one pattern at a time until they've got each one, then play the entire column in a row.

Try playing both columns without stopping.

Use the handout "Comping Patterns With Broken Chords" to repeat the same process.

KEYBOARD

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.2 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic and melodic patterns using iconic or standard notation. (applies 1-4) Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: General Music MU:Pr6.1.2 a. Perform music for a specific purpose with expression and technical accuracy. (applies K-5) Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Re7.2.E.5a (Novice) Identify how knowledge of context and the use of repetition, similarities, and contrasts inform the response to music. Common Core Correlation: CCSS. ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style. (structure of comping patterns instead of text)

LESSON PLAN: White Key Chord Shapes

Objective:

Students will be able to play chords anywhere on the keyboard using a chord shape.

Resources:
JAM CARD #1a (Major Chord)

Procedures:

Ask students to place Jam Card #1a on the keyboard, lining the start arrow up to the note C.

Discuss what notes the jam card points to. Lead students in a discussion of this as a "chord shape" where each note in the shape skips a white key (Figure A).

Play this chord by pushing down all three notes at the same time. Students can use any fingers they want or two hands just to hear the chord. (the finger numbers on the card are easier after doing lesson plans "2 Note Chords" and "Piano Power Chords")

Have students play this chord shape beginning on other white keys, choosing any note and then playing a chord by skipping a white key in between each note of the chord (Figures B & C)

Construct a "chord progression" by playing the C chord 4 times and then a chord the student chooses 4 times, going back and forth between the chords.
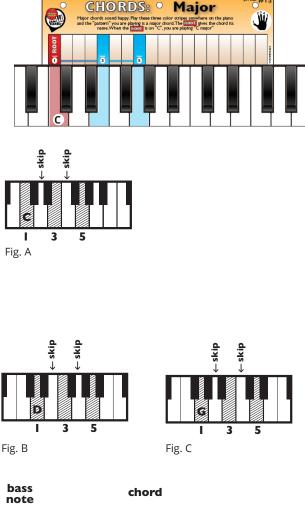
Ask for volunteers from the class to pick another chord to go to and teach the entire class to play it. Dedicate some students to play the "bass note" of each chord by playing only the root note low on their keyboards (Figure D)
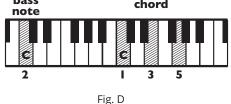
Write a song using this chord shape with choices that come from the students. Write words about a current event relevant to the students or school.

KEYBOARD

Fig. A

Fig. B

Fig. C

Fig. D

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
Example: General Music MU:Cr2.1.6 b.Use standard and/or iconic notation and/or audio/ video recording to document personal simple rhythmic phrases, melodic phrases, and two-chord harmonic musical ideas. Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.2 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic and melodic patterns using iconic or standard notation. (applies 1-4)
Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

LESSON PLAN: Songs Using the F and G Chords

Objective:

Students will be able to play several songs using two major chords

Resources:
Recordings and song charts for any of the following songs: "Call me Maybe" by Carly Rae Jepson, "Jane Says" by Jane's Addiction, "Dreams" by Fleetwood Mac,
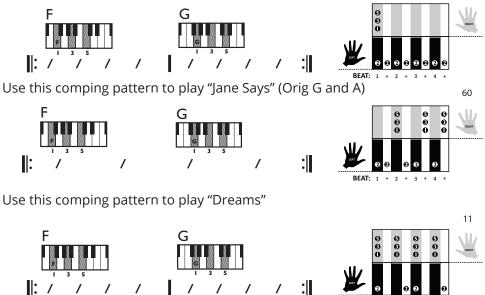
Procedures:

Place Jam Card #1a on the note F and play the F chord.

Move the Jam Card to the note G and play the G chord.

Practice slowly moving between these two chords without the Jam Card. NOTE - Some of these songs are transposed from their recorded key!

Use this comping pattern to play "Call Me Maybe" (orig. C and D)

Use this comping pattern to play "Jane Says" (Orig G and A)

Use this comping pattern to play "Dreams"

KEYBOARD

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Re7.2.E.5a (Novice) Identify how knowledge of context and the use of repetition, similarities, and contrasts inform the response to music. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: Songs Using the Ami and G Chords

Objective:

Students will be able to play several songs using a major and a minor chord

Resources:

Recordings and song charts to any of the following songs: "Somebody That I Used to Know" by Gotye, "Conga" by Miami Sound Machine, and "Break on Through" by The Doors.

Procedures:

Place Jam Card #1b on the note A and play the A minor chord.

Place Jam Card #1a on the G and play the G major chord.

Discuss the difference between major and minor—how many black and white notes are between each note in the chord? How do they sound different from each other?

Practice slowly moving between these two chords without the Jam Cards.

Use this comping pattern to play "Somebody That I Used to Know". (orig Dmi and C)
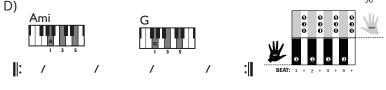
Use this comping pattern to play "Conga" (orig Emi and D)

Use this comping pattern to play "Break on Through" (orig Emi and D)

KEYBOARD

CHORDS: Minor — JAM CARD #1b
Minor chords sound sad. This minor chord "pattern" is the same as the major chord "pattern" except for the middle note. The ROOT gives the chord its name.

CHORDS: Major — JAM CARD #1a
Major chords sound happy. Play these three color stripes anywhere on the piano and the "pattern" you are playing is a major chord. The ROOT gives the chord its name. When the ROOT is on "C", you are playing "C major"

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: General Music MU:Pr6.1.2 a. Perform music for a specific purpose with expression and technical accuracy. (applies K-5) Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Re7.2.E.5a (Novice) Identify how knowledge of context and the use of repetition, similarities, and contrasts inform the response to music. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: Songs Using Two Minor Chords
Objective:

Students will be able to play several songs using two minor chords

Resources:

JAM CARD 1b (Minor Chord), Recordings and song charts to any of the following songs: "Pom Poms" by The Jonas Brothers, "Grenade" by Bruno Mars, "Fallin'" by Alicia Keys

Procedures:

Place Jam Card #1b on the note A and play the A minor chord.

Move the Jam Card to the note E and play the E minor chord.

Practice slowly moving between these two chords without the Jam Card.

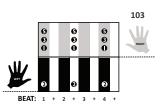Use this comping pattern to play "Pom Poms" (Orig G#mi and F#mi)

Use this comping pattern to play "Grenade" (Orig Dmi and Ami)

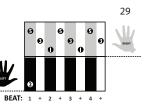Use this comping pattern to play "Fallin'" (Orig in 12/8)

<div style="float:right">**KEYBOARD**</div>

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:Cr1.1.2 b. Generate musical patterns and ideas within the context of a given tonality (such as major and minor) and meter (such as duple and triple). Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: Songs Using the C and F Chords

Objective:

Students will be able to play several songs using two major chords from the most famous chord progression in Rock and Roll!

Resources:

JAM CARD 1a "Major Chord", Recordings and song charts to any of the following songs: "Ho Hey" by The Lumineers, "Home" by Phillip Phillips, "Angel of Harlem" by U2, "You Can't Always Get What You Want" by The Rolling Stones, "Waiting in Vain" by Bob Marley
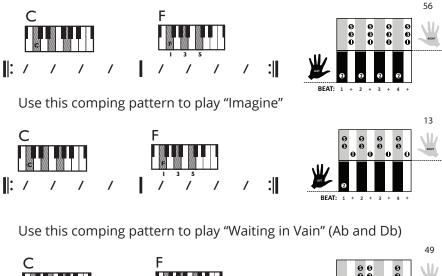

Procedures:

Place Jam Card #1a on the note C and play the C chord.
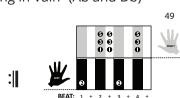
Move the Jam Card to the note F and play the F chord.

Practice slowly moving between these two chords without the Jam Card.

Use this comping pattern to play "Home"

Use this comping pattern to play "Imagine"

Use this comping pattern to play "Waiting in Vain" (Ab and Db)

LESSON PLAN: Songs Using the C and G Chords

Objective:

Students will be able to play several songs using two major chords in a chord progression borrowed from classic New Orleans and folk songs.

Resources:

JAM CARD #1 "Major Chord", Recordings and song charts to any of the following songs: "Jumbalaya" by Hank Williams, "Aiko Aiko" by The Grateful Dead, "They All Asked For You" by The Meters, "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" by Jonny Marks, "The Dreidel Song" by Samuel Grossman

Procedures:

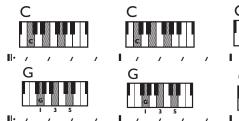Place Jam Card #1a on the note C and play the C chord.

Move the Jam Card to the note G and play the G chord.

Practice slowly moving between these two chords without the Jam Card.
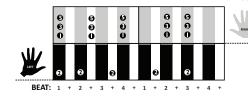
Use this comping pattern to play "Jumbalaya", "Aiko Aiko", or "They All Asked For You"
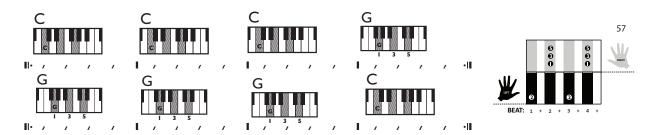
Use this comping pattern to play "Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer" or "The Dreidel Song"

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr6.1.H.5a (Novice) Perform with expression and technical accuracy in individual performances of a varied repertoire of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces, and chordal accompaniments, demonstrating understanding of the audience and the context. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

KEYBOARD

LESSON PLAN: 4 Chord Songs in C Major

Objective:

Students will be able to play and identify songs that use the most common chords in popular music today.

Resources:

The "Axis of Awesome" 4 Chords video, recordings and song charts for "I Knew You Were Trouble" by Taylor Swift, "Someone Like You" by Adele, "Edge of Glory" by Lady GaGa, "With Or Without You" by U2, and "Don't Stop Believing" by Journey, JAM CARD #6 (Scale Chords)

Procedures:

Show students the "Axis of Awesome" video from our website.

Practice finding these four chords in the key of C Major; the C chord, G chord, A minor chord, and the F chord in that order. They all use the same shape.

Add bass notes in the left hand by playing only the root of each chord down low on the keyboard at the same time you play the chord with your right hand.

Use this comping pattern to play "I Knew You Were Trouble" (Orig F#)

Use this comping pattern to play "Someone Like You" (Orig F#)

Use this comping pattern to play "Edge of Glory" (Orig A)
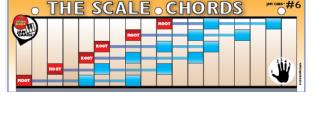
Use this comping pattern to play "With Or Without You" (Orig D)

Use this comping pattern to play "Don't Stop Believing" (Orig E)

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.3 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate informationpresented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks. CCSS.MATH. CONTENT.4.OA.C.5 Generate a number or shape pattern that follows a given rule. Identify apparent features of the pattern that were not explicit in the rule itself.

LESSON PLAN: 4 Chord Songs: "Doo Wop"

Objective:

Students will be able to play and identify songs that use a classic chord progression in popular music from the last 7 decades

Resources:

The "Ice Cream Changes" Doo-Wop progression video, recordings and song charts for "We Are Young" by FUN, "Baby" by Justin Bieber, "Fall For You", "Crocodile Rock" by Elton John, "Octopus's Garden" by The Beatles, "Earth Angel" by The Penguins, JAM CARD #6 (Scale Chords)
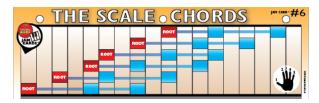

Procedures:

Show students the "Ice Cream Changes" video from our website.

Practice finding these four chords in the key of C Major; the C chord, A minor chord, F chord, and the G chord in that order. They all use the same shape.

Add bass notes in the left hand by playing only the root of each chord down low on the keyboard at the same time you play the chord with your right hand.

Use this comping pattern to play "Baby" (Orig Eb)

Use this comping pattern to play "Crocodile Rock" (Orig G)

Use this comping pattern to play "Octopus's Garden" (Orig E)

Use this comping pattern to play "Earth Angel" (Orig Ab)

KEYBOARD

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr6.1.H.IIa (HS Accomplished) Perform with expression and technical accuracy, in individual and small group performances, a varied repertoire of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces, improvisations, and chordal accompaniments in a variety of styles, demonstrating sensitivity to the audience and an understanding of the context (social, cultural, and historical). Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: Spelling Chords and Naming Notes

Objective:

Students will be able to spell chords starting on any letter of the musical alphabet while reinforcing their knowledge of the notes of the keyboard.

Resources:
Major Chord Jam Card, Minor Chord Jam Card

Procedures:

Review the musical alphabet with your students (see lesson plan "Chopsticks and Forks"). We want them also to get used to the idea that in the musical alphabet "A" comes after "G". You can sing the "Musical Alphabet Song" with them (which sounds just like the regular alphabet song except you keep using the letters A B C D E F G over and over, never going to H). You can also sing the "Backward Musical Alphabet Song" with them singing "G F E D C B A, G F E D C B A," etc. These songs easily teach the seven note musical alphabet and provide a fun opportunity to memorize that A comes after G.

Tell them that chords are built by skipping letters and then playing notes at the same time. Run through an example with them by writing A on the board, and then telling them to skip B and then writing C on the board above the A. Tell them that they next have to skip D and then write E on the board above the A and C. Label the top of this chord "A chord" (later in the lesson plan we'll use Jam Cards to "discover" that it's an A minor chord—for now it's enough for them to understand that this process of skipping and combing letters results in some form of an "A chord"). Have them play these notes on their keyboards.

Repeat this same procedure starting on B, leading them through a discussion of the letters that would build a chord on that note (B, D, and E). Continue up through the notes of the musical alphabet, discussing and building chords on each one until you've built all seven (Figure A).

Ask students to go through the chords again with the "Major Chord" Jam Card and the "Minor Chord" Jam Card. Have kids play each one and line the jam card up to the start note. For example, they'll play the chord starting on A and then see which Jam Card lines up to those notes and discover that it is a minor chord. The only one that won't work is the chord starting on B because that chord is diminished and rarely used.

Fig. A

chord built on A	chord built on B	chord built on C	chord built on D
E	F	G	A
C	D	E	F
A	B	C	D

chord built on E	chord built on F	chord built on G
B	C	D
G	A	B
E	F	G

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.2.F Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words.

LESSON PLAN: Using C, F and G Chords

Objective:

Students will be able to play the C, F, and G chords along with comping patterns to quickly play a lot of songs. Using a Jam Card they can easily see how voice leading works. This lesson further defines music as language in the way it overlaps with the keyboard lesson using the A, D, and E chords to play the

Resources:
Song charts that use the I, IV and V chords in C (the Little Kids Rock website allows you to sort songs in the keyboard songbook section by chord progression by clicking on the title of the chord progression column)

Procedures:

Demonstrate how the C, F, and G chords can be used to play lots of songs. Play selections that are familiar to them. Everything from "Twenty Two" by Taylor Swift to "You Don't Know You're Beautiful" by One Direction uses this classic progression.

Help students find these notes on their keyboards. Play one of the songs you've selected by having students use only the root of each chord. This lays an important foundation for them being able to find notes quickly without getting bogged down by trying to get their hands to play chords.

If the students are new to playing chords, have some of the students use "piano power chords" while others use "2 note chords" (see lesson plans "Piano Power Chords" and "2 Note Chords" for more info). After a few minutes have the groups switch. Playing simplified chords this way is easy for any size hand to do and builds the muscle memory required for playing a three note chord.
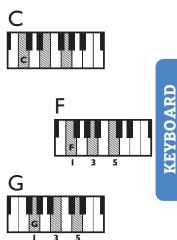
Have students play the chords using three fingers. The best fingering for these root position chords is to use the thumb (1), middle (3), and pinky (5) for each one. A good alternative fingering that keyboard players use depending on the situation and that is easier for beginners is thumb (1), index (2), and ring (4).

Apply the necessary comping patterns to your song selection. Most comping patterns rely on a coordination that uses two hands at the same time. If your students are double up on keyboards, you may need to divide the comping pattern so that one student plays a "bass line" while the other uses the rhythm of the chords.

After students are familiar with the idea of moving this major chord shape around the keyboard from C to F and G, try playing these same three chords with "voice leading" by using Jam Card 7a. Voice leading makes a smooth connection between chords by only moving the necessary notes. While this is a more sophisticated way to play the keyboard, it is important that it isn't introduced until the students are capable of moving the "root position" chord shape around. Otherwise the logic of how chords work and the ear training that naturally comes along with that gets left behind.

KEYBOARD

C

F

G

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr6.1.H.IIa (HS Accomplished) Perform with expression and technical accuracy, in individual and small group performances, a varied repertoire of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces, improvisations, and chordal accompaniments in a variety of styles, demonstrating sensitivity to the audience and an understanding of the context (social, cultural, and historical). Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: Define The Groove

Objective:

Students will be able to use comping patterns to give different songs individual personalities while using the same two chords.

Resources:
Song charts and recordings for "Home" by Phillip Phillips, "Love Me Do" by The Beatles, "Imagine" by John Lennon, and "Waiting in Vain" by Bob Marley.
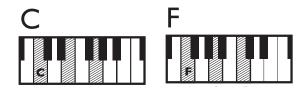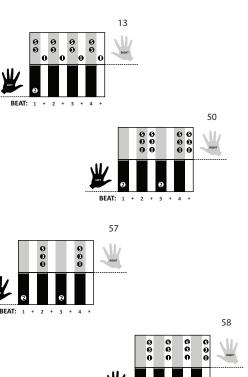
Procedures:

Listen to recordings of the songs listed above. Point out that although the songs each sound completely different from each other, they are based on the same chord progression and sound different because of the way they use rhythm.

Since all of the songs use two chords and the comping patterns involve both hands, make sure students know how to find the bass notes in the left hand using a "hand position" so they don't have to look at this hand to play the notes. They're going to want to keep their eyes on the right hand which is playing 3 notes and harder to manage. Take a moment to make sure students can find these two left hand notes with their eyes closed.

Run through the four comping patterns one at a time making sure students can manage the rhythms and chord change in each one. Stay with each individual pattern until they can play it over and over without stopping.

Sing the songs as a group and then try playing along with the singing! These songs can be performed individually or strung together in a medley.

KEYBOARD

C

F

13

50

57

58

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.2.F Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words.

LESSON PLAN: 1, 4, 5 (I IV V) Progression with A, D, & E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the A, D, and E chords to play a 1, 4, 5 (I IV V) chord progression enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

Resources:

Handouts for the A, D, and E chords, handout for chords in the key of A, song charts and lyrics for "You Don't Know You're Beautiful" by One Direction, "Twist and Shout" by The Beatles, "Hang On Sloopy" by The McCoys, and "Wild Thing" by The Troggs

Procedures:

Practice being able to play and switch between the A, D, and E chords. Students who are new to doing this may want to play only on the first beat of each chord and spend the other counts getting the hand into the next position, while more experienced students can maintain the comping pattern while switching chords.

Play the 1st A, D, and E progression to the songs "You Don't Know You're Beautiful" and "Twist and Shout". Since the chord progressions are the same, what makes them different is the melody and use of rhythm. The chords are represented in "root position", each one having it's "root" as the bottom note.

Play the 2nd A, D, and E progression to the songs "Hang On Sloopy" and "Wild Thing". This time the progression is a little bit different adding an extra D chord. Here again, the chords are the same making the only difference being the melody and rhythm.
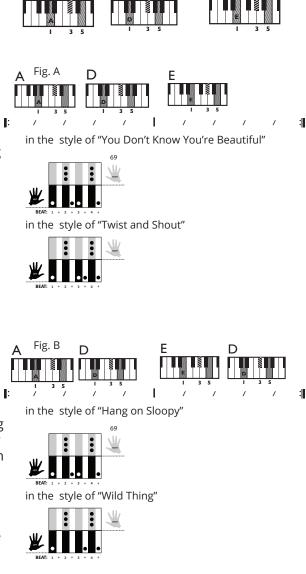
Extensions:

The chords are represented in "root position" which makes playing a 2 handed comping pattern a lot easier. It also helps train the ear to hear the movement of the chord. After a student is familiar with using root position chords to play this progression, try using Jam Card 7b which puts some of the chords in shapes that are easy to reach without having to move the hand.

Discuss chord progressions as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 4 5" progression by musicians because A is the 1st chord in the key, D is the 4th, and E is the 5th. Ask students to use the musical alphabet and

in the style of "You Don't Know You're Beautiful"

in the style of "Twist and Shout"

Fig. B

in the style of "Hang on Sloopy"

in the style of "Wild Thing"

KEYBOARD

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. (applies 1-5) Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.2 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic and melodic patterns using iconic or standard notation. Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Music Traditional and Emerging Ensembles MU:Re7.2.E.5a (Novice) Identify how knowledge of context and the use of repetition, similarities, and contrasts inform the response to music. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.C Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially).

LESSON PLAN: 1, 4, 1, 5 (I IV I V) Progression with A, D, & E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the A, D, and E chords to play a 1, 4, 1, 5 (I IV I V) chord progression enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

KEYBOARD

Resources:
Major Chord Jam Card 1a, Scale Chords Jam Card 6b, Jam Card 7b, song charts and lyrics for "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" by The Tokens, "Brown Eyed Girl" by Van Morrison, "Free Falling" by Tom Petty, and "American Pie" by Don McLean

Procedures:

Use the Major Chord Jam Card to form the A, D, and E chords. Notice that each chord has a black key in the middle. Practice switching between these chords to prepare for using them in songs.

Play the 1st A, D, and E progression to the songs "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" and "Brown Eyed Girl". Students who are new to doing this may want to play only on the first beat of each chord and spend the other counts getting the hands into the next position, while more experienced students can maintain playing the comping pattern while switching chords. Since the chord progressions are the same, what makes them different is the melody and use of rhythm.

Play the 2nd A, D, and E progression to the songs "Free Falling" and "American Pie". This time the progression moves twice as fast spending only 2 counts on each chord. Here again, the chords are the same making the only difference being the melody and rhythm.
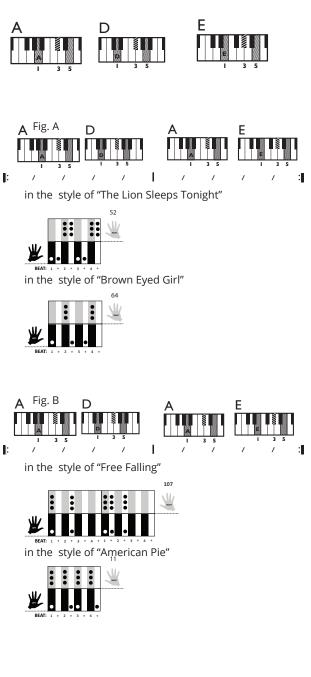
Extensions:

The chords are represented in "root position" which makes playing a 2 handed comping pattern a lot easier. This also helps train the ear to hear the movement of the chords and makes understanding chords a lot easier. After a student is familiar with using root position chords to play this progression, try using Jam Card 7b which puts some of the chords in other shapes (called inversions) that are easy to reach without having to move the hand.

Discuss chord progressions as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 4 1 5" progression by musicians because A is the 1st chord in the key, D is the 4th, and E is the 5th. Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name these three chords in different keys. "What chords would make a '1 4 1 5' progression in the key of C? How about in the key of G?"

in the style of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight"

in the style of "Brown Eyed Girl"

in the style of "Free Falling"

in the style of "American Pie"

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for performance. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. CCSS.Math.Content.K.CC.B.4 Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality. CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.G.B.4 Analyze and compare two- and three-dimensional shapes, in different sizes and orientations, using informal language to describe their similarities, differences, parts (e.g., number of sides and vertices/"corners") and other attributes (e.g., having sides of equal length). (Compare root position and inverted chord shapes)

LESSON PLAN: 1, 5, 4, 5 (I V IV V) Progression with A, D, & E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the A, D, and E chords to play a 1, 5, 4, 5 (I V IV V) chord progression enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

Resources:

Major Chord Jam Card 1a, Scale Chords Jam Card 6a, Jam Card 7b, song charts and lyrics for "Twenty Two" by Taylor Swift, "Jack and Diane" by John Cougar Mellencamp, "Crimson and Clover" by The Shondells, and "My Heart Will Go On" by Celine Dion.

Procedures:

Use the Major Chord Jam Card to form the A, D, and E chords. Notice that each chord has a black key in the middle. Practice switching between these chords to prepare for using them in songs.

Play the A, D, A, E progression to all of the songs listed above. Students who are new to doing this may want to play only on the first beat of each chord and spend the other counts getting the hands into the next position, while more experienced students can maintain playing the comping pattern while switching chords. Since the chord progressions are the same, what makes them different is the melody and use of rhythm.

Fig. A

in the style of "Twenty Two"

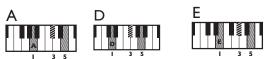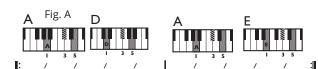in the style of "Jack and Diane"

Extensions:

The chords are represented in "root position" which makes playing a 2 handed comping pattern a lot easier. This also helps train the ear to hear the movement of the chords and makes understanding chords a lot easier. After a student is familiar with using root position chords to play this progression, try using Jam Card 7b which puts some of the chords in other shapes (called inversions) that are easy to reach without having to move the hand.

Discuss chord progressions as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 5 4 5" progression by musicians because A is the 1st chord in the key, D is the 4th, and E is the 5th. Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name these three chords in different keys. "What chords would make a '1 5 4 5' progression in the key of C? How about in the key of G?"
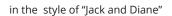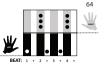

Fig. B

in the style of "Crimson and Clover"

in the style of "My Heart Will Go On"

KEYBOARD

LESSON PLAN: 1, 4, ♭7, 4 (I IV ♭VII IV) Progression with A, D, & E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the E, A, and D chords to play a 1, 4, H7, 4 (I IV HVII IV) chord progression enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

Resources:

Major Chord Jam Card 1a, Scale Chords Jam Card 6b, song charts and lyrics for "Let's Go Crazy" by Prince, "ROCK in the USA" by John Cougar Mellencamp, "What I Like About You" by The Romantics, and "The Tears of a Clown" by Smokey Robinson and the Miracles.

Procedures:

Use the Major Chord Jam Card to form the E, A, and D chords. Notice that each chord has a black key in the middle. Practice switching between these chords to prepare for using them in songs.

Play the E, A, and D progression to all of the songs listed above. Students who are new to doing this may want to play only on the first beat of each chord and spend the other counts getting the hands into the next position, while more experienced students can maintain playing the comping pattern while switching chords. Since the chord progressions are the same, what makes them different is the melody and use of rhythm.

Extensions:

The chords are represented in "root position" which makes playing a 2 handed comping pattern a lot easier. This also helps train the ear to hear the movement of the chords and makes understanding chords a lot easier. After a student is familiar with using root position chords to play this progression, try using Jam Card 7b which puts some of the chords in other shapes (called inversions) that are easy to reach without having to move the hand. Because of the atypical b7 chord, place the start arrow on A instead of E to reach all of the chords using inversions.

Discuss chord progressions as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 4 b7 4" progression by musicians because E is the 1st chord in the key, A is the 4th, and D is the b7th (D# is the normal 7th in the key of E making the D chord a "rule breaker"). Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name these chords in different keys. "What chords would make a '1 4 b7 4' progression in the key of G? How about in the key of D?"

in the style of "Let's Go Crazy"

in the style of "Rock in the USA"

in the style of "What I like About You"

in the style of "The Tears of a Clown"

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-Literacy. CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. CCSS.Math. Content.K.CC.B.4 Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality. CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.G.B.4 Analyze and compare two- and three-dimensional shapes, in different sizes and orientations, using informal language to describe their similarities, differences, parts (e.g., number of sides and vertices/"corners") and other attributes (e.g., having sides of equal length). (Compare root position and inverted chord shapes)
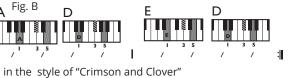
LESSON PLAN: A Shortcut to Change Chords
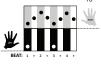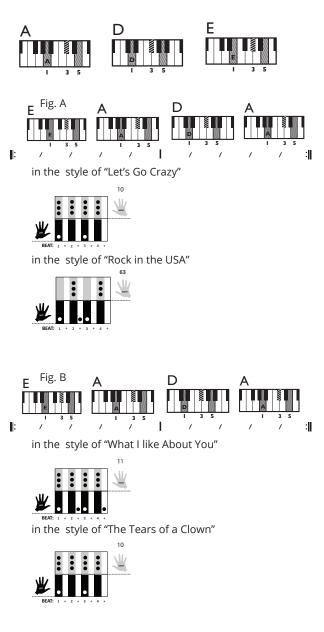
Objective:

Students will be able to use a chord inversion as a "shortcut" in getting from one chord to another.

Resources:

Keyboard, JAM CARD 3a Changing Chords

Procedures:

Have students play the C chord. Ask them what notes are in it; by now they should be able to identify the notes on the keyboard (see lesson plan "Spelling Chords and Naming Notes")
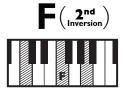
Next have students name the notes in the F chord. Ask them if there are any notes that both chords have in common. Guide them toward noticing that the note C occurs in both chords.
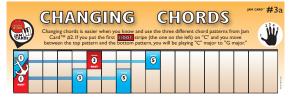
Demonstrate using the right hand to move from a C chord in root position to an F chord also in root position. Point out that this movement is easy for the brain, but hard for the body—the same chord shape on C makes a C chord and on F makes and F chord, but the arm has to move that chord shape up and down the keyboard. Next demonstrate how they can change from the C chord to the F chord without moving their thumb off of the note C and changing the E and G to the notes F and A. Changing chords this way is easy for the body and harder for the brain; the hand doesn't have to move anywhere to change chords but it's more difficult to understand why the 2nd chord is still called an F chord when it's using a different shape without an F on the bottom.

Ask everyone in class to try this. They can use two hands at first if it's easier, playing the C note with the left hand while the right hand changes the E and G to the notes F and A. Have them repeat a few times until the concept is easy. If you want to, tell them that the C chord is in "root position" because the root note C is on the bottom, while the F chord is in an "inversion".

Have students get out the Jam Card called "Changing Chords" and line the "Anchor" up with the note C. This Jam Card will further reinforce the idea of which notes change and which note stays the same.

KEYBOARD

C

$F \left(\begin{smallmatrix} \text{2nd} \\ \text{Inversion} \end{smallmatrix} \right)$

CHANGING CHORDS JAM CARD™ #3a

Changing chords is easier when you know and use the three different chord patterns from Jam Card™ #2. If you put the first ROOT stripe (the one on the left) on "C" and you move between the top pattern and the bottom pattern, you will be playing "C" major to "G major."

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques for presentation.

Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.2 b. Rehearse, identify, and apply strategies to address interpretive, performance, and technical challenges of music.

Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.   CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.G.B.4 Analyze and compare two- and three-dimensional shapes, in different sizes and orientations, using informal language to describe their similarities, differences, parts (e.g., number of sides and vertices/"corners") and other attributes (e.g., having sides of equal length). (Compare root position and inverted chord shapes)

LESSON PLAN: 1-4 Chord Shortcut Anywhere

Objective:

Students will be able to use play a chord progression using an inversion anywhere on the keyboard.

Resources:
Keyboard, JAM CARD 3a Changing Chords

Procedures:

Review lesson plan "A Shortcut to Change Chords," in which the students changed from a C chord to an F chord using inversions.

Have students play the G chord. Ask them what notes are in it (G, B, D); by now they should be able to identify the notes on the keyboard (see lesson plan "Spelling Chords and Naming Notes").

Next have students name the notes in the C chord (C, E, G). Ask them if there are any notes that both chords have in common. Guide them toward noticing that the note G occurs in both chords.

Demonstrate using the right hand to move from a G chord in root position to a C chord also in root position. Point out that this movement is easy for the brain, but hard for the body— the same chord shape on G makes a G chord and on C makes and C chord, but the arm has to move that chord shape up and down the keyboard. Next demonstrate how they can change from the G chord to the C chord without moving their thumb off of the note G and changing the B and D to the notes C and E. Changing chords this way is easy for the body and harder for the brain; the hand doesn't have to move anywhere to change chords but it's more difficult to understand why the 2nd chord is still called a C chord when it's using a different shape without a C on the bottom.
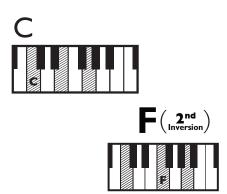
Ask everyone in class to try this. They can use two hands at first if it's easier, playing the G note with the left hand while the right hand changes the B and D to the notes C and E. Have them repeat a few times until the concept is easy. If you want to, tell them that the G chord is in "root position" because the root note G is on the bottom, while the C chord is in an "inversion".

Have students get out Jam Card #3a called "Changing Chords" and line the anchor up with the note G. This Jam Card will further reinforce the idea of which notes change and which note stays the same. Try this with other chords, noting that some will include black keys (try A and D, for example).

KEYBOARD

C

F (2nd Inversion)

CHANGING   CHORDS   JAM CARD #3a

Changing chords is easier when you know and use the three different chord patterns from Jam Card™ #2. If you put the first ROOT stripe (the one on the left) on "C" and you move between the top pattern and the bottom pattern, you will be playing "C" major to "G" major."

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.2 b. Rehearse, identify, and apply strategies to address interpretive, performance, and technical challenges of music.
Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.   CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.G.B.4 Analyze and compare two- and three-dimensional shapes, in different sizes and orientations, using informal language to describe their similarities, differences, parts (e.g., number of sides and vertices/"corners") and other attributes (e.g., having sides of equal length). (Compare root position and inverted chord shapes)

LESSON PLAN: Keyboard Solo on Black Keys

Objective:

Students will be able to use the black keys on the keyboard to improvise melodies and a keyboard solo in different rhythmic styles.

Resources:
Only a keyboard!

Procedures:

Make sure students are consciously aware of the visual pattern made out of the black keys. If this is their first keyboard lesson, initiate a conversation asking them if they see any patterns on the keyboard. Guide them through playing the notes in the group of two black keys and the group of 3 black keys using an awareness of low, middle and high. "Play the highest group of 3 black keys...now play the lowest", etc.

Demonstrate that the black keys can be played going up the keyboard or going down the keyboard playing one note at a time. Ask students to practice this concept.
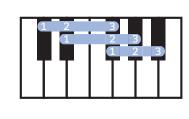
Demonstrate that a pattern can be made out of any group of 2, 3, or 4 notes. Demonstrate playing 3 note patterns using the three black keys in a row, then three note patterns using three black keys that aren't next to each other. Demonstrate a 4 note pattern where the notes go down and back up. Demonstrate patterns that involve a repeated note, etc.
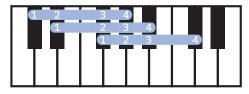
Use the metaphor of a picture of a house to explain where things are expected to be seen. Ask the students "What would we see in the lower portion of the picture? Yes! The ground, the driveway, rocks, etc. What would we see in the middle area of the picture? The house itself, the doors and windows, the trunk of a tree, etc. What would we see up high? The sun, birds, clouds, the roof of the house, etc." The point of this exercise is to point out that we expect to see certain things in certain places. Explain that the same is true in music; we expect to hear bass notes down low, notes of chords in the middle, and the notes of a solo or melody up high.

Play a groove behind the students to improvise over using the black keys. "Superstition" by Stevie Wonder is a really fun groove to use; the original recording is in Eb minor so the black keys sound great soloing on it. You can also play a blues progression in Eb to get the same effect. To have these notes sound like a solo in a major key use the "Axis of Awesome" progression in Gb. (See handout "Great Sounding Grooves For Black Key Solos")

KEYBOARD

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:CR1.1.2 a. Improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns and musical ideas for a specific purpose.Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Cr1.1.H.Ia (HS Proficient) Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for improvisations, compositions (forms such as theme and variation or 12-bar blues), and three-or-more-chord accompaniments in a variety of patterns (such as arpeggio, country and gallop strumming, finger picking patterns). Common Core Correlation: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.OA.C.5 Generate a number or shape pattern that follows a given rule. Identify apparent features of the pattern that were not explicit in the rule itself.

LESSON PLAN: 2 & 3 Note Solos on Keyboard

Objective:

Students will be able to improvise a keyboard solo using a step by step procedure that simplifies the process.

Resources:

JAM CARD 4a (Major Pentatonic)

Procedures:

Ask students to take Jam Card 4a and place the "start arrow" behind the note C. Have them play all of the notes that the Jam Card is pointing to.

Ask students how they can remember where those notes are located if they take the Jam Card away. They may need to compare the jam card to the keyboard several times before this becomes obvious. Lead them in a discussion about how the group of two black keys is in the center of the three white notes in a row (C, D, and E), and that the group of three black keys has the group of two white keys in it's center (G and A). (Figure A)

Using the group of 2 black keys as a marker, have them play the three white keys (C, D, and E) up and back down the keyboard in different octaves.

Demonstrate how you can use these three keys to take a solo using your own name. Make up a rhythm to saying your name as you improvise a solo. You can do this in different octaves with different rhythms if you wish.

Play a piano comping pattern over a classic progression and invite the students to do the same exercise using their own names as the basis of their three note solos.
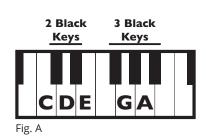
Repeat this same process for the two white keys, G and A. Practice associating them with the group of three black keys, find them up and down the keyboard, and then make a solo out of them using a name. For fun you can use the name of their favorite athlete or movie star.
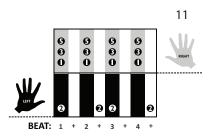
Use the group of three notes (C, D, and E) or the group of 2 notes (G and A) to improvise solos made by call and response, where you play a short melody and they make something up as an answer. Ask for volunteers from class to lead the call and response.
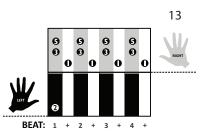
After students feel comfortable with the groups of notes that make this scale lead them into using all of the notes in their solos.
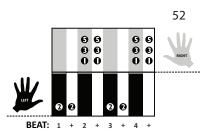

Fig. A

11

13

52

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:CR1.1.2 a. Improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns and musical ideas for a specific purpose. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Cr1.1.H.Ia (HS Proficient) Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for improvisations, compositions (forms such as theme and variation or 12-bar blues), and three-or-more-chord accompaniments in a variety of patterns (such as arpeggio, country and gallop strumming, finger picking patterns). Common Core Correlations: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.OA.C.5 Generate a number or shape pattern that follows a given rule. Identify apparent features of the pattern that were not explicit in the rule itself. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.1.2 Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4 Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

KEYBOARD

LESSON PLAN: The Blues Scale

Objective:

Students will be able to take a solo over a blues, a minor key, or a major key using a pitch collection (scale) that allows for fast fingerings and great mobility across the keyboard.

Resources:

JAM CARD 5b (Blues Scale)

Procedures:

Demonstrate how easy it is to play a C Major blues scale. Although these are the same notes used in the typical A blues scale, we recommend starting on the note C because of how easy the fingering is to explain. When this scale begins on a C it is sometimes called the "C Major Blues Scale" or the "Country Music Scale". Unfortunately there isn't a standard name for it when it's used in a major key as often as this happens. Regardless, play the thumb(1) on C, index (2) on D, middle (3) on Eb, then cross the thumb under the middle finger to put it on E, followed by index (2) on G, and finally middle (3) on A. This fingering makes playing this scale REALLY FAST once you get used to it. This "C Major Blues Scale" can be played so much faster than a C pentatonic scale because of the way that having the extra note (Eb) fits under the hand. Guitarists say the exact same thing about using the blues scale on guitar— the extra note gives you more to grab on to and go faster when you want (Figure A).

Coach students on playing this scale one "finger group" at a time. In other words, have everyone play the C, D and Eb (1, 2, and 3 fingers) in different octaves of the keyboard. This way they get used to finding C in any octave and instantly know how the other fingers and notes relate to that "finger group". Practice with this group of notes in an ascending order up the keyboard (C, D, and Eb) and then a descending order down the keyboard (Eb, D, and C using the fingering order 3, 2, and 1). Pairing students into groups to help each other is always a good idea with new skills like this (Figure B).
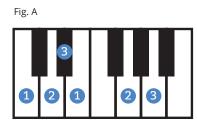
After the students have the first "finger group", begin to work on the second without making any attempt to link them together yet. They're just going to play E, G, and A with fingers 1, 2, and 3. Repeat the same procedure used in teaching the first finger group, having them play ascending and descending all over the keyboard (Figure C).

Teach the thumb crossing. This means that when they're playing this scale in an ascending order, after the 3 finger plays the Eb the thumb will reach under the hand to play the next note E. Now the fingers are in position to play the next finger group! (see lesson plan "Teaching Thumb Crossings in scales").
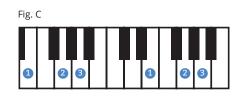
Now they're ready to play the descending version of the scale. Play 3, 2, and 1 on A, G, and E. Next have the 3 finger cross over the thumb to play the Eb. Now the fingers are lined up to the first finger group.

Fig. A

Fig. B

Fig. C

KEYBOARD

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:CR1.1.2 a. Improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns and musical ideas for a specific purpose.Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques for presentation.Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.2 b. Rehearse, identify, and apply strategies to address interpretive, performance, and technical challenges of music. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks. Visualize relationships between two-dimensional and three-dimensional objects: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.HSG.GMD.B.4 Identify the shapes of two-dimensional cross-sections of three-dimensional objects, and identify three-dimensional objects generated by rotations of two-dimensional objects. (Images of piano keyboard and chord shapes)

LESSON PLAN: Thumb Crossings

Objective:

Students will be able to play scales on the keyboard easily by establishing a technique allowing this otherwise difficult skill to feel secure.

Resources:

JAM CARD 5b (Blues Scale)

Procedures:

The first step begins with a level wrist and relaxed fingers gently touching the notes they are about to play. When you play 2 the wrist comes up slightly and the thumb is directly under the 2 finger, and when you play 3 the wrist comes up slightly more while the thumb is directly under the 3 finger (Figure A). Help students get good at this basic 1st step in coordination.

Fig. A

The second step is just playing the thumb on the next note E. The moment this happens the wrist simultaneously comes back to being level as the fingers spread out to cover the notes they will play next, in this case 2 on G and 3 on A (Figure B) Practice this maneuver until it feels easy.

The third step is a repeat of the first step except that as you play the fingers that come after the thumb, the elbow moves away from the body to prepare for the fourth step. As you play 2 the wrist comes up slightly with the thumb underneath it and the elbow moves slightly away from the body (Figure C). The same things happens as you play 3 with the wrist coming up further with the thumb underneath it again.

Fig. B

The fourth and final step was prepared for in the third step as the elbow moved out to the right. The arm moved out to the right allowing the thumb to be lined up to playing C in a new octave. Now the hand is ready to repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 (Figure D). Playing a scale comfortably involves a lot of working parts; we're preparing the thumb to cross under by putting it "behind" the other fingers when they play, we're raising the wrist to make it easier for the thumb to pass under, and we're moving the elbow out as we prepare for the thumb to cross a bigger distance.

Fig. C

In descending right hand scales, the middle finger will have an easy feeling of draping over the thumb as it crosses to it's note. This motion is so much simpler than the ascending thumb crossing that it doesn't demand much more attention than that. Remember that the most important ingredient in all of this is "modeling" for the students. Besides the resources available on this subject on the Little Kids Rock website, the global authority on all things piano technique related is the work of Dorothy Taubman. Her understanding of the physical ingredients in playing the piano are explored all over the world by master teachers and concert artists who meet annually at Princeton University to further develop their understanding (this 2 week annual seminar is called "The Golandsky Institute"). Lots of material can be viewed on YouTube for good visual examples and descriptions.
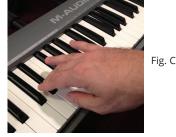
Fig. D

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.2 b. Rehearse, identify, and apply strategies to address interpretive, performance, and technical challenges of music. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY. RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

KEYBOARD

LESSON PLAN: Call and Response (ECHO)

Objective:

Students will be able to use the notes in a hand position to do call and response, encouraging a deeper connection to music through the ears by using a combination of melodic and rhythmic ear training.

Resources:
Only a keyboard!

Procedures:

Have students place their right hand in a C position (this lesson plan can be applied to any 5 finger position you're currently teaching students to use in the future). Have them warm up by playing each note in the position with each finger going up a couple of times and then going down (Figures A & B)
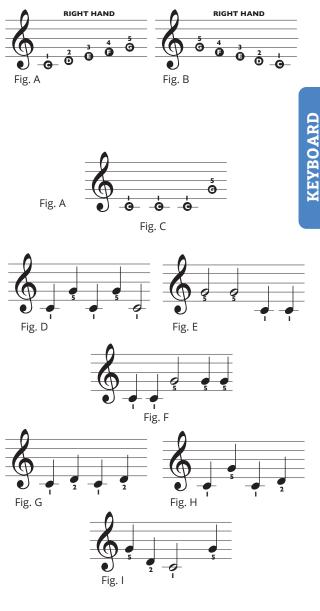
Have students play just fingers 1 and 5 (thumb and pinky) on C and G back and forth. These will be the only notes used at first in this exercise, the same notes used in the lesson plan "Piano Power Chords".

Tell students you're going to play a pattern for them using only these two notes, C and G and that you want them to try and only use the fingers that are on these notes to play them. After you play the pattern you want them to play it back to you. Demonstrate a couple of easy examples; play C C C G (Figure C) and then tell the students what you played and that they would play that back to them. Give three or four examples using only these two notes in very simple quarter and half note rhythms (Figures D, E, & F)

Ask students to try playing back to you exactly what you play for them, but have them do it as a group so that no-one gets singled out for being wrong. This exercise encourages everyone to reach out with their ears. You'll quickly be amazed at how well students are able to make these distinctions. Keep a slow steady beat as you play each example so they keep time with you in their responses. At first use lots of repeated notes and slow rhythms.

When it becomes obvious to you that they're able to repeat any pattern you play for them, add another note in the hand position that will be easy to hear and manage. I recommend going next to the 2 finger (index), so for the next several "call and response" patterns they will hear patterns made out of C, D, and G. Keep expanding the exercise to include other fingers as they get good at it. Rhythms can also become faster or more complex as the exercise progresses (Figures G, H, & I)

When you feel they are ready, do the same thing for a hand position in the left hand using bass notes. This helps them pay attention to notes in different frequency ranges, allowing them to more clearly hear what a bass player is doing versus the vocal or guitar part in music they listen to.

Fig. A

Fig. B

Fig. A
Fig. C

Fig. D

Fig. E

Fig. F

Fig. G

Fig. H

Fig. I

KEYBOARD

LESSON PLAN: Hearing Beats With Chords

Objective:

Students will be able to understand rhythm and beat position by using an ear training activity that helps them focus on this musical fundamental.

KEYBOARD

Resources:
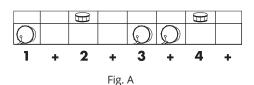
JAM CARD 5a (Major Scale)

Procedures:

Have students manufacture a back beat for you (Figure A), either using the kick and snare sounds on their keyboards or using their right foot and left hand (see lesson plan "Classroom as Drumset"), or even on a drumset!
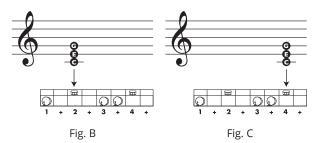
While the beat continues, play a C chord on one of the beats. Do it at least two times in a row, asking students afterward what beat you played the chord on.
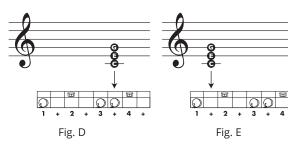
Continue the activity playing your chord on different beats until you're confident they can recognize when the chord is played on any one of the four beats in a measure. After you're confident they have it, ask other students to play a chord on one of the beats for the rest of the class to guess. Have them do it two times in a row before allowing anyone to answer to make sure that they're choosing a beat on purpose.

After it is obvious that they can hear when a chord is played on any beat, talk about playing a chord on the "up beat" with them. Demonstrate several times what it would be like to play a chord on the "and" of 3 (Figure D), or the "and" of 1 (Figure E), etc.

Get the back beat going again, and this time your chord can happen on a beat or on the "and" in between beats. As before, invite other students to participate by playing their chords on beats or up beats if they choose while the rest of the class guesses.

Fig. A

Fig. B

Fig. C

Fig. D

Fig. E

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.Math.Content.3.NF.A.1 Understand a fraction 1/b as the quantity formed by 1 part when a whole is partitioned into b equal parts; understand a fraction a/b as the quantity formed by a parts of size 1/b. (division of the beat into equal parts; division of a measure into four beats)

LESSON PLAN: Playing By Ear

Objective:

Students will be able to play by hear after being exposed to a step by step approach to focused listening using chords.

Resources:
Only a keyboard!

Procedures:

Play the 7 chords in the key of C for the students. Name them as you play them "1 chord (C), 2 chord (Dmi), 3 chord (Emi), 4 chord (F), 5 chord (G), and 6 chord (Ami)". Explain that the 1, 4, and 5 chords have a major or happy sound and that the 2, 3, and 6 chords have a sad or serious sound because they're minor.

Next you are going to play a chord for them and have them tell you which one you played. Ask the class to answer together so that no one is singled out for being wrong; you'll quickly see how easy this is for them to do. Tell them that there are only two choices, the "1 chord" (C) and the "2 chord" (Dmi). Play either of these chords in root position in the middle of your keyboard and ask "which chord was that?" They will excitedly answer "1!" or "2!" Encourage them for their correct answers. Pretend to trick them by doing the same chord over and over. This is providing them with a valuable ear training opportunity.

After you feel certain that they all understand how to hear the difference between the 1 chord and the 2 chord, add the 3 chord to the set of choices after telling the students that the game is getting more challenging. Play any one of these chords. After each answer right or wrong, play all the chords in order from the 1 chord to affirm the correct answer. For example, if you play the 3 chord, after everyone shouts the answer play the 1 chord, 2 chord, and finally the 3 chord to affirm that was the choice. Playing these other chords that lead up to what the answer was helps students build a "listening structure" in their imaginations that we call the "inner ear". It gives them a way to compare sounds in their minds allowing them to play by ear successfully.

Continue building the exercise, eventually adding the 4, 5, and 6 chords. This is an excellent exercise to do with students as a warm up, at the end of class, or as a break between other activities. This will help them be able to identify the chord progressions used in their favorite songs. It also increases their authentic love of music as they find ways to make what they're hearing more concrete and meaningful to them.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Re7.2.C.Ia (HS Proficient) Analyze aurally the elements of music (including form) of musical works, relating them to style, mood, and context, and describe how the analysis provides models for personal growth as composer, performer, and/or listener. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.CC.B.4 Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality.

KEYBOARD

KEYBOARD
CONSUMABLES

How to Use Jam Cards

Playing the keyboard or piano is fun and easy. in fact, you can start playing in two simple steps using JAM CARDS.

Here's how:

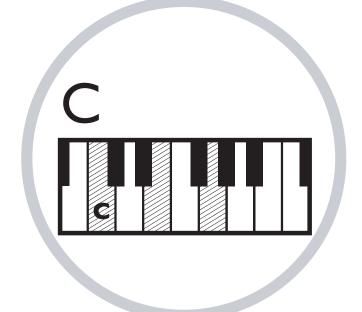Take any JAM CARD and "jam" it down BEHIND the black keys of your piano or keyboard.

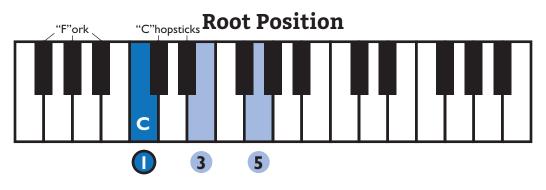Line up the color bars on the JAM CARD directly above the keys so that they line up perfectly.

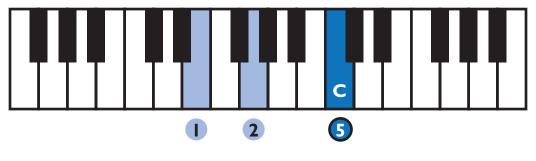Press down on the color bars according to the directions on the JAM CARD.

The C Chord

C

Match your finger numbers with the numbers on the keyboard.

5 4 3 2 1

Root Position

"F"ork   "C"hopsticks

C

1   **3**   **5**

1st Inversion

C

1   **2**   **5**

2nd Inversion

C

1   **3**   **5**

The G Chord

G

G
1 3 5

5 4 3 2

1

Match your finger numbers with the numbers on the keyboard.

Root Position

"F"ork   "C"hopsticks

G

1 3 5

1st Inversion

G

1 2 5

2nd Inversion

G

1 3 5

The F Chord

F

F

I   3   5

5   4   3   2

1

Match your finger numbers with the numbers on the keyboard.

Root Position

"F"ork   "C"hopsticks

F

I   3   5

1st Inversion

F

I   2   5

2nd Inversion

F

I   3   5

The D minor Chord

Dmi

I   3   5

Match your finger numbers with the numbers on the keyboard.

Root Position

"F"ork   "C"hopsticks

D   **I**   **3**   **5**

1st Inversion

I   **2**   **D**   **5**

2nd Inversion

I   **D**   **3**   **5**

The A minor Chord

Ami

Match your finger numbers with the numbers on the keyboard.

Root Position

"F"ork   "C"hopsticks

1st Inversion

2nd Inversion

223

The D Chord

KEYBOARD

D

I   3   5

Match your finger numbers with the numbers on the keyboard.

5 4 3 2 1

Root Position

"F"ork   "C"hopsticks

D

I   3   5
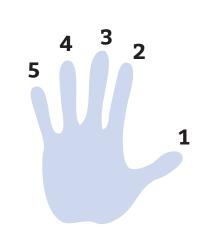
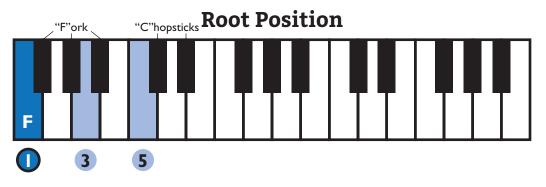## 1st Inversion

D

I   2   5

2nd Inversion

D

I   3   5

The A Chord

A

Match your finger numbers with the numbers on the keyboard.

Root Position

"F"ork   "C"hopsticks

A

I   3   5

1st Inversion

A

I   2   5

2nd Inversion

A

I   3   5

More Piano Chords

A

Ami

A♭

A♭mi

B

Bmi

Bb

C

Cmi

C#mi

D

Dmi

Db

E

Emi

E♭

F

Fmi

F#

G

KEYBOARD

BEAT: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BEAT: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BEAT: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BEAT: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BEAT: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BEAT: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BASS
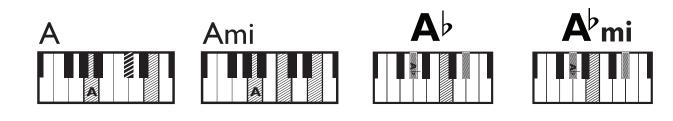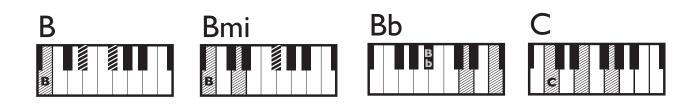
BASS

It's been said that the bassist's job is the most important one in rock and roll. The bassist plays the foundational note of every chord in a song, while "locking in" with the drummer to create a groove that tells us whether we're hearing rock, reggae, or country! Adding bass to any song is easy and sounds great.

The Foundation

One day a girl who wanted to learn how to play the bass went to a great bass teacher who showed her how to play all of the notes on the E string. The following week the teacher showed her how to play all of the notes on the A string. On the third week when the girl didn't show up at her bass lesson the teacher called her father to find out where she was. "She's got a gig tonight" the father replied!

This joke points to the fact that bass players are doing BASS-ic things that give music a strong foundation. Just like the foundation of a house is big, strong, and supports everything on top of it, bass notes do the same thing for music. Bassists play notes that are so low and strong that they must be played one at a time, unlike chords on guitar or piano which are made by playing many notes at the same time.

STEP

1

Learn where the notes are.

STEP

2

Get down a couple of "bass grooves".

STEP

3

Play along with your favorite songs.
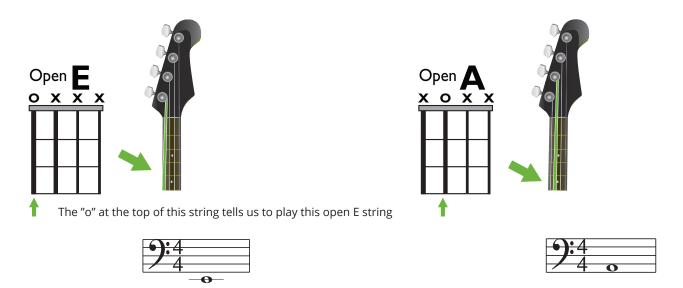
STEP 1: Learning Where the Notes Are

Finding the notes on the bass is easy using pictures. Just like the way we use pictures for guitar chords and keyboard chords, bass notes will work the same way. The main difference is that on the bass we're only playing one note at a time. Some notes are played "open" (by letting the string ring without putting a finger on it) and other notes are fretted. Plucking the string can be done with a pick for a brighter sound, or with fingers for a warmer round sound. Most bass players seem to prefer "finger style", using the index and middle fingers to pluck upwards toward their body while the thumb anchors the hand by hanging on to the edge of one of the pickups.

BASS

Here are some examples of bass notes that use open strings:

The "o" at the top of this string tells us to play this open E string

Play the notes pictured above and switch between the two. You'll notice that if you let them ring at the same time the sound is muddy. It's important that when we play the next note that we "mute" the previous one. When playing the A string, muting the E string is easy because the right hand can rest on the E string. When playing the E string you may want to use the left hand to gently touch the A string to mute it as this may be easier in this case.

Other notes require us to press our finger down on the fretboard. Be sure to press down close enough to the fret so that the note doesn't buzz.

Using Pictures of Rhythms to Play Bass

Playing rhythms on the electric bass is as easy as switching between your 1st and 2nd fingers – also known as your middle and index fingers.

The easiest rhythm is a single stroke.

Start by counting to four, and pluck with your 1st finger every time you say the number "one".

index   middle

You see:	○			
You say:	one	two	three	four
You play:	index	hold	hold	hold

You see:	●	●		
You say:	one	two	three	four
You play:	index	middle	rest	rest

BASS

The following page has more easy rhythms. Here's how they work.

Say the numbers and play them by switching or alternating between your INDEX and MIDDLE fingers.
Say any "+" signs as "and". Play these in between the numbers.
Your INDEX and MIDDLE fingers will now be abbreviated as i & m.
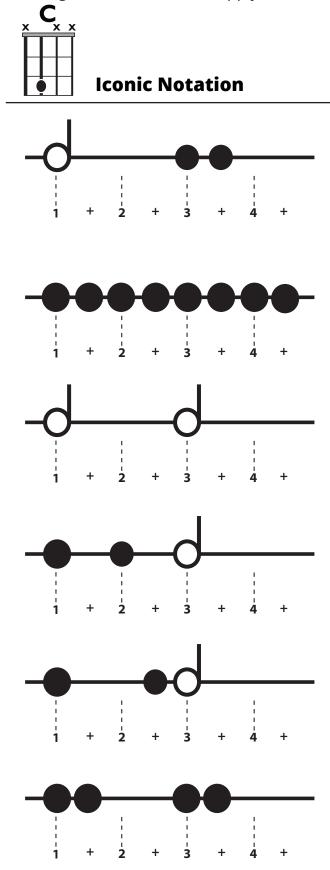
The patterns are easiest to play and to learn when they are said and played together. This is a very important part of learning rhythms: if you can SAY it, you can PLAY it!

For example, look at the first rhythm on the next page. You will say:
"One, Three and...   One Three and..." while you play i - m - i, i - m - i ...

Bass Rhythm Examples
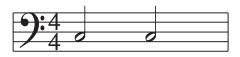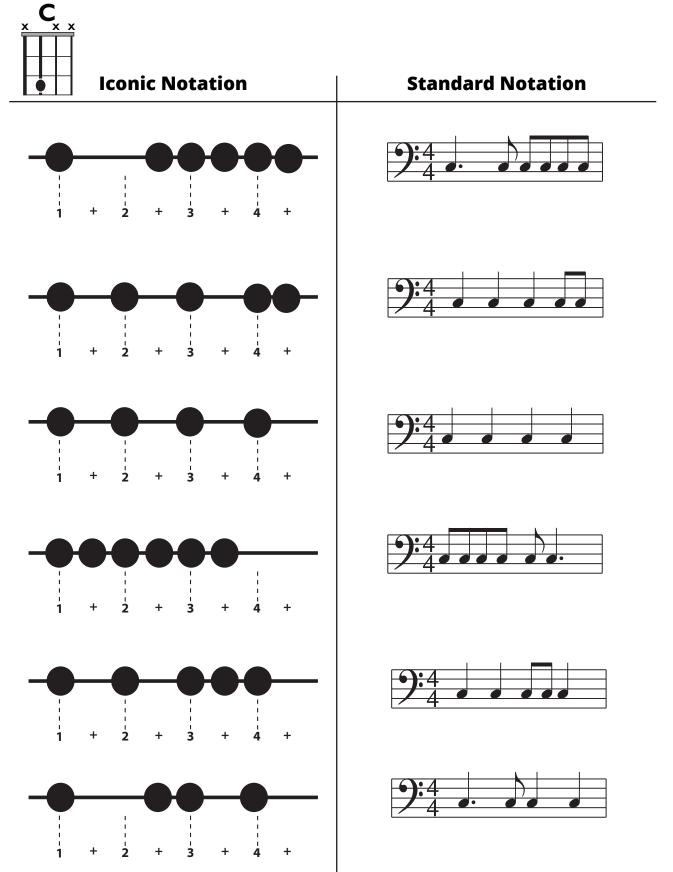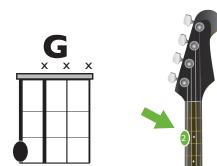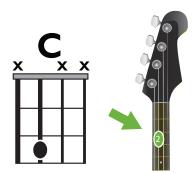
(When using the iconic notation, apply the C chord graphic)

Iconic Notation	Standard Notation

Bass Rhythm Examples

(When using the iconic notation, apply the C chord graphic)

| **Iconic Notation** | **Standard Notation** |

BASS
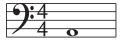
The "o" at the top of this string tells us to play this open E string
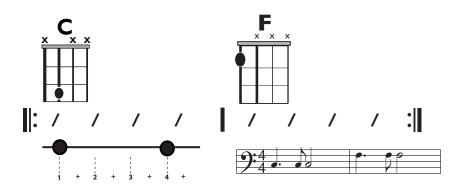
Just like guitarists use pictured strum patterns to understand how rhythm works, we're going to use pictures of bass rhythms. Just as we've seen on other instruments throughout this book, pictures of notes and rhythms do a better job of communicating right away to a beginning student than notation which requires lots of experience to interpret. Let's compare notation and pictures by playing the note C with a common bass rhythm.
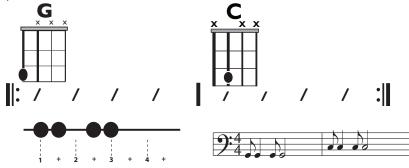
While the notation example requires us to know the notes of the bass clef, the meaning of the time signature, the length of the notes, etc, the picture example shows us exactly where the note is located on our instrument while telling us when to play it. As long as we count a steady "1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +" we easily see and understand exactly how to play that rhythm. This helps us focus right away on the fun part—playing our instrument.

Playing Our First Bass Grooves

The rhythm described above can be used to play in the style of "Imagine" by John Lennon simply by applying it to the bass notes used in the song.
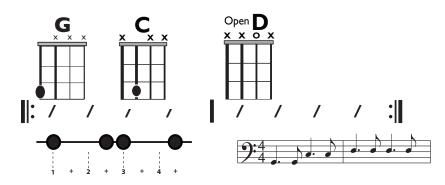
Playing bass in this ballade rock style means we want to let the notes ring out as long as possible before changing notes so the bass can give a strong foundation to the chords played on other instruments. Playing a reggae groove has a completely different sound. Here in the style of "Waiting in Vain" by Bob Marley we're going for a shorter and punchier sound with our bass rhythm.

Since this bass rhythm is a little bit busier, we can keep the playing simple by alternating between index and middle finger on each note.
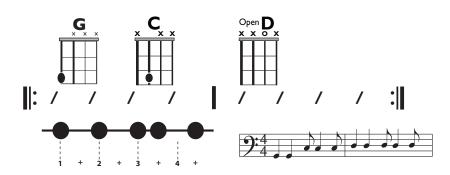
Sometimes the bass note can change in the middle of a rhythm, as in this example in the style of "You Don't Know You're Beautiful" by One Direction.

This bass rhythm often imitates the type of pattern the drummer would be playing on the kick drum. Listening for the kick drum is essential, as very often we play in unison with its rhythms.

Exciting and upbeat songs often feature rhythms that involve a lot of

notes, as in this example in the style of "Twist and Shout" by The Beatles.
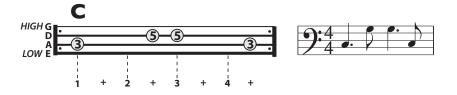
Bass Lines with More than One Note and Tablature

Sometimes a bass line calls for more than one note while staying on the same chord. This is difficult to illustrate using the types of pictures we've been describing so far. Using tablature for bass can be just the solution we need.
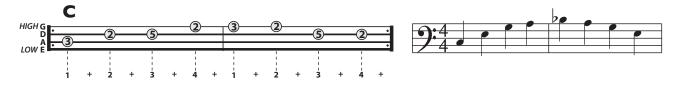
Bass tablature works exactly the same way guitar tablature does. It is literally a picture of the bass strings as if you were looking down at them, with numbers to let you know which fret to play on that string.

Bass lines that use different notes while on the same chord are usually playing chord tones other than the root to help reinforce the sound of the chord. These bass lines are typical features of certain styles of music.

A typical latin bass line for playing on a C chord would look like this in Tablature:
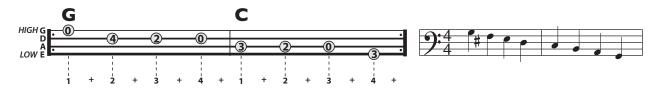
We're playing the 3rd fret of the 3rd string (C), followed by the 5th fret of the 2nd string (G) in a "bossa-nova" style bass line (heard at the beginning of (in the style of) "Ricky Don't Lose That Number" by Steely Dan).

Another bass line that stays on the same chord while playing lots of different notes is one typically used in blues:

This bass line walks up and down a "blues 7th chord" and is heard throughout the classic "Rock Around The Clock" by Bill Haley and His Comets.

A final bass line that applies different notes to the same chord is the famous bass "walk down". Starting on the root of the first chord, this bass line "walks down" until it reaches the root of the next chord:

This famous bass line drives the song (in the style of) "Friend of the Devil" by The Grateful Dead, but is also featured prominently in "Whiter Shade of Pale" by Procol Harem, "Piano Man" by Billy Joel, "Our House" by Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, and "All The Young Dudes" by Mott The Hoople to name a few.

Adding bass to your band is as easy as it is fun. Just like with all of the instruments we talk about in this book—embrace approximation, continue to listen for what sounds good to you personally, and enjoy expanding your love of music!

LESSON PLAN: Guitar as Bass

Objective:

Students will be able to understand how to play a bass line using their guitars to re-enforce the bass line. Understanding this allows more than one student to play the bass line, also allowing guitars to be used for bass lines in classrooms that don't have a bass guitar and amp.

Resources:

Any song chart you're currently working on and handout showing which bass strings are the same as the guitar, such as "Some of the Bass-ics" from Bass Consumables, as well as handout "Simple Rhythms" from Bass Consumables.

Procedures:

Demonstrate the sound of a bass line on a bass guitar for the class. If you don't have one, demonstrate the way you can use the lower strings on the guitar for a bass line.

Show the students the "Simple Rhythms" handout illustrating which strings on the guitar are the same strings on a bass guitar. Have them play only these strings one at a time, either finger style or with a pick.

Lead students through the jam session on the handout "Simple Rhythms" using it's various bass rhythms. Once they get the hang of using their guitars this way, transition them over to reading an actual bass chart on their guitars. This will help them participate in cooler sounding arrangements while providing more insight into how to play guitar.

In future song arrangements, assign a number of guitar players to the bass part. Using this technique along with "Classroom as Drum Set" can turn any song into a really fun sounding and interesting arrangement, even when you've only got nylon string beginner guitars in your classroom!

BASS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.K a. With guidance, explore and demonstrate awareness of music contrasts (such as high/low, loud/soft, same/different) in a variety of music selected for performance.
Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, and form) in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

LESSON PLAN: Ballad Rhythm With A & D

Objective:

Students will be able to play bass using the open A and D strings using one of the most common rhythms played on bass.

Resources:
Bass songs using the notes A and D. The Little Kids Rock song database can be searched by chords and chord progressions for material to use.
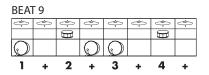
Procedures:

Demonstrate playing the open A string with this rhythm. Draw attention to the way you are plucking the string with your index and middle fingers. Demonstrate the same thing on the D string, showing how when you switch to the new string the old one has to be muted (either with the fretting hand or the plucking hand).

As you play the bass line, draw attention to the way long notes are allowed to ring as long as possible before being interrupted by changing notes or rhythms. In general, bass notes "sustain" through their entire value, providing music with a strong foundation. Demonstrate the difference between cutting the note off too quickly and letting it ring.

Have your drummer or students from your class using "Classroom as Drumset" (see lesson plan) manufacture this beat:

BEAT 9

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Draw attention to the way the bass rhythm lines up to the kick drum rhythm. Encourage bass students to focus on this powerful aspect of playing bass to "lock in" with the drummer.

Open **A**

x o x x

Open **D**

x x o x

BASS

LESSON PLAN: 1, 4, 5 (I, IV, V) Progression with A, D, and E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the A, D, and E root notes to play a 1, 4, 5 (I, IV, V) chord progression enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

Resources:

Song charts and lyrics for "You Don't Know You're Beautiful" by One Direction, "Twist and Shout" by The Beatles, "Hang On Sloopy" by The McCoys, and "Wild Thing" by The Troggs.

Procedures:

Practice Playing the A, D, and E root notes using open strings. Practice switching between these notes to prepare for using them in songs, keeping in mind that when you start a new note the previous one has to be muted. These bass notes can also be played on guitar if your classroom doesn't have a bass. Even if you do have a bass, doubling the bass line on guitar always sounds cool and tightens up the groove!

Play the 1st A, D, and E progression to the songs "You Don't Know You're Beautiful" and "Twist and Shout". Students who are new to doing this may want to play each note as whole notes, while more experienced students can try using the bass rhythms. Since the chord progressions are the same, what makes the songs different is the melody and use of rhythm.

Play the 2nd A, D, and E progression to the songs "Hang On Sloopy" and "Wild Thing". This time the progression is a little bit different adding an extra D. Here again, the notes are the same making the only difference being the melody and rhythm.

Extensions:

The bass notes are represented using open strings which can help us understand the instrument quickly. After this feels easy for students, try playing the same three bass notes beginning with the A located at the 5th fret on the lowest string to expand understanding how the instrument works (Figure C).

Discuss bass notes as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 4 5" progression by musicians because A is the 1st chord in the key, D is the 4th, and E is the 5th. Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name these three notes in different keys. "What bass notes would you use in a '1 4 5' progression in the key of D? How about in the key of G?"

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. CCSS.Math.Content.K.CC.B.4 Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality.

BASS

Guitar

Open **A** Open **D** Open **E** **E A D G B e** Bass

E A D G

Fig. A

Open A   Open D   Open E

in the style of "You Don't Know You're Beautiful"

Open A   Open D   Open E

in the style of "Twist and Shout"

Fig. B

Open A   Open E   Open D   Open E

in the style of "Hang on Sloopy"

Open A   Open D   Open A   Open E

in the style of "Wild Thing"

Fig. C

A x x   x **D** x x   x **E** x x

0 5fr   0 5fr   0 7fr

1 E	2mi F#mi	3mi G#mi	4 A	5 B	6mi C#mi	♭7 D
1 D	2mi Emi	3mi F#mi	4 G	5 A	6mi Bmi	♭7 C
1 G	2mi Ami	3mi Bmi	4 C	5 D	6mi Emi	♭7 F

LESSON PLAN: 1, 4,1, 5 (I, IV, I, V) Progression with A, D, and E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the A, D, and E root notes to play a 1, 4, 1, 5 (I IV I V) chord progression, enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

Resources:
Song charts and lyrics for "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" by The Tokens, "Brown Eyed Girl" by Van Morrison, "Free Falling" by Tom Petty, and "American Pie" by Don McLean

Procedures:

Practice Plaing the A, D, A, E root notes using open strings. Practice switching between these notes to prepare for using them in songs, keeping in mind that when you start a new note the previous one has to be muted. These bass notes can also be played on guitar if your classroom doesn't have a bass. Even if you do have a bass, doubling the bass line on guitar always sounds cool and tightens up the groove!

Play the 1st A, D, A, E progression to the songs "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" and "Brown Eyed Girl". Students who are new to doing this may want to play each note as whole notes, while more experienced students can try using the bass rhythms. Since the chord progressions are the same, what makes the songs different is the melody and use of rhythm.

Play the 2nd A, D, A, E progression to the songs "Free Falling" and "American Pie". This time the progression is a little bit different having only 2 counts on each chord instead of 4.

Extensions:

The bass notes are represented using open strings which can help us understand the instrument quickly. After this feels easy for students, try playing the same three bass notes beginning with the A located at the 5th fret on the lowest string to expand understanding how the instrument works (Figure C).

Discuss bass notes as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 4 1 5" progression by musicians because A is the 1st chord in the key, D is the 4th, and E is the 5th. Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name these three notes in different keys. "What bass notes would you use in a '1 4 1 5' progression in the key of D? How about in the key of G?"

Guitar / Bass

Fig. A

in the style of "The Lion Sleeps tonight"

in the style of "Brown Eyed Girl"

Fig. B

in the style of "Free Falling"

in the style of "American Pie"

Fig. C

1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	♭7
E	F#mi	G#mi	A	B	C#mi	D
1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	♭7
D	Emi	F#mi	G	A	Bmi	C
1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	♭7
G	Ami	Bmi	C	D	Emi	F

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
National Core Arts Standards (Music) Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for performance. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.Math.Content.3.NF.A.1 Understand a fraction 1/b as the quantity formed by 1 part when a whole is partitioned into b equal parts; understand a fraction a/b as the quantity formed by a parts of size 1/b. (division of the octave into numbered scale degrees)

BASS

LESSON PLAN: 1, 5, 4, 5 (I, V, IV, V) Progression with A, D, and E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the A, D, and E root notes to play a 1, 5, 4, 5 chord progression enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

Resources:
Song charts and lyrics for "Twenty Two" by Taylor Swift, "Jack and Diane" by John Cougar Mellencamp, "Crimson and Clover" by The Shondells, and "My Heart Will Go On" by Celine Dion.

Procedures:

Practice Playing the A, D, and E root notes using open strings. Practice switching between these notes to prepare for using them in songs, keeping in mind that when you start a new note the previous one has to be muted. These bass notes can also be played on guitar if your classroom doesn't have a bass. Even if you do have a bass, doubling the bass line on guitar always sounds cool and tightens up the groove!

Play the A, D, and E progression to the songs listed above. Students who are new to doing this may want to play each note as whole notes, while more experienced students can try using the bass rhythms. Since the chord progressions are the same, what makes the songs different is the melody and use of rhythm.
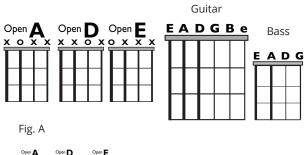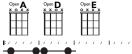
Extensions:

The bass notes are represented using open strings which can help us understand the instrument quickly. After this feels easy for students, try playing the same three bass notes beginning with the A located at the 5th fret on the lowest string to expand understanding how the instrument works.

Discuss bass notes as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 5 4 5" progression by musicians because A is the 1st chord in the key, D is the 4th, and E is the 5th. Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name
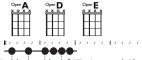
BASS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. CCSS.Math.Content.K.CC.B.4 Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality.
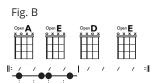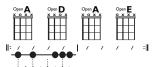
Guitar

Open **A** Open **D** Open **E**   **E A D G B e**   Bass

E A D G

Fig. A

Open **A** Open **E** Open **D** Open **E**

in the style of "Twenty Two"

Open **A** Open **E** Open **D** Open **E**

in the style of "Jack and Diane"

Fig. B

Open **A** Open **E** Open **D** Open **E**

in the style of "Crimson and Clover"

Open **A** Open **E** Open **D** Open **E**

in the style of "My Heart Will go On"

Fig. C

A   **D**   **E**

1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	♭7
E	F#mi	G#mi	A	B	C#mi	D
1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	♭7
D	Emi	F#mi	G	A	Bmi	C
1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	♭7
G	Ami	Bmi	C	D	Emi	F

LESSON PLAN: 1, 4, 5, 1 (I, IV, V, I) Progression with A, D, and E

Objective:

Students will be able to use the E, A, and D notes to play a 1, 4, b7, 4 progression on bass enabling them to play and recognize this in dozens of songs.

Resources:

Handouts for the E, A, and D bass notes, song charts and lyrics for "Let's Go Crazy" by Prince, "ROCK in the USA" by John Cougar Mellencamp, "What I Like About You" by The Romantics, and "The Tears of a Clown" by Smokey Robinson and the Miracles.

Procedures:
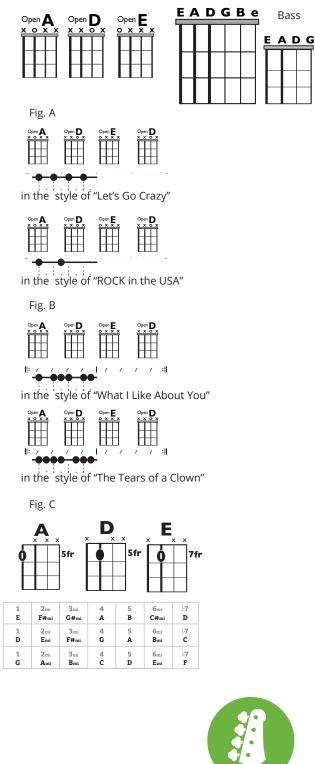
Practice being able to play and switch between the A, D, E, and D notes on bass, guitars, or both. Students who are new to doing this may want to play only on the first beat of each note and worry about the specific rhythm after they feel more comfortable. Remember always to mute the previous note when switching to the next.

Play the A, D, E, and D bass notes and grooves to all of the songs listed above. Since the chord progression is the same, what makes each song sound different is the melody and rhythm.
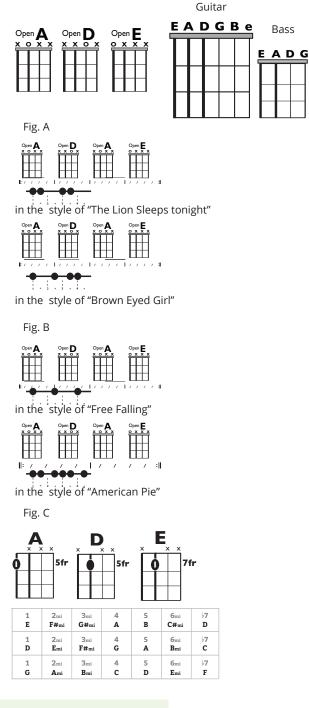
Extenions:

The bass notes are represented using open strings which can help us understand the instrument quickly. After this feels easy for students, try playing the same three bass notes beginning with the A located at the 5th fret on the lowest string to expand understanding how the instrument works (Figure C).

Discuss bass notes as numbers related to the key you are in. This chord progression is typically called a "1 4 1 5" progression by musicians because A is the 1st chord in the key, D is the 4th, and E is the 5th. Ask students to use the musical alphabet and name these three notes in different keys. "What bass notes would you use in a '1 4 1 5' progression in the key of D? How about in the key of G?"

Guitar

Open **A** Open **D** Open **E**   E A D G B e   Bass

E A D G

Fig. A

Open **A** Open **D** Open **E** Open **D**

in the style of "Let's Go Crazy"

Open **A** Open **D** Open **E** Open **D**

in the style of "ROCK in the USA"

Fig. B

Open **A** Open **D** Open **E** Open **D**

in the style of "What I Like About You"

Open **A** Open **D** Open **E** Open **D**

in the style of "The Tears of a Clown"

Fig. C

A 5fr   **D** 5fr   **E** 7fr

1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	b7
E	F#mi	G#mi	A	B	C#mi	D
1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	b7
D	Emi	F#mi	G	A	Bmi	C
1	2mi	3mi	4	5	6mi	b7
G	Ami	Bmi	C	D	Emi	F

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

National Core Arts Standards (Music) Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for performance. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.5 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance. Common Core Correlation: CCSS. Math.Content.3.NF.A.1 Understand a fraction 1/b as the quantity formed by 1 part when a whole is partitioned into b equal parts; understand a fraction a/b as the quantity formed by a parts of size 1/b. (division of the octave into numbered scale degrees)

BASS

BASS
CONSUMABLES

Parts of the Electric Bass

Tuning Machines

Headstock

Nut

Frets

Neck

Body

Strings

Pickups

Pick Guard

Volume Knob

Tone Knob

Bridge

Output Jack

Some of the BASS-ics

1 2 3

4

This is how you number your fingers on your fretting hand. You don't count your thumb.

BASS

1st Fret ➡

2nd Fret ➡

3rd Fret ➡

4th Fret ➡

don't play this string

G

x x x

frets ➡

String Names ➡ **E   A   G**

Holding Your Electric Bass

There are 2 basic ways to hold your electric bass: Standing & Sitting.

The main rule when playing bass sitting down is to be comfortable. Find a comfortable seat, preferably one where your feet touch the floor. Have the curve of the bass body rest on your right knee.

Have your right arm extend over the front of the bass with your right elbow supporting the body.
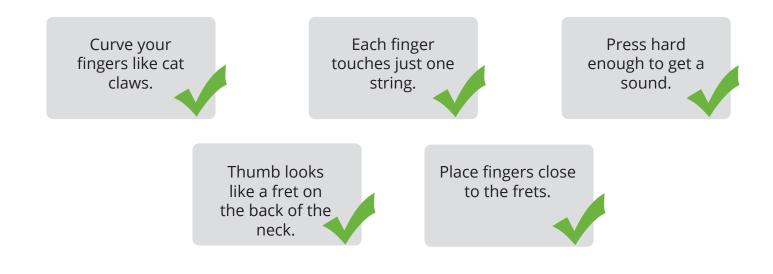
To hold the bass while standing up, you will need a strap connected to your bass.

You want to adjust the height so that you can move your fretting hand aroud the neck comfortably.

You will know if the strap is at a good height if, when you sit down, the bass stays at the same height.

Holding Your Electric Bass

Curve your fingers like cat claws. ✓

Each finger touches just one string. ✓

Press hard enough to get a sound. ✓

Thumb looks like a fret on the back of the neck. ✓

Place fingers close to the frets. ✓

BASS

Plucking in 3 Easy Steps

Rest your thumb slightly above the lowest string, about halfway between the bridge and neck and let your fingers drop down. (Try using the pickup as a resting point.)

Extend your 1st finger down onto a string and gently pull it up towards your palm. (Think of your finger as a paintbrush.)

Have your second finger copy the first. Alternate between both fingers.

BASS

Tuning Your Electric Bass

Tuning can be frustrating BUT that doesn't mean you can't start playing now!

Press down on the 5th fret of a string, pluck and listen. It should sound like the string below. For example, the 5th fret of the"E" string should sound like the open "A" string just below it. If not, adjust the tuning head of the "A" String up or down, until both strings sound the same.

Next, when you press down on the 5th fret of the "A" string, it should sound like the open "D" string below.

Continue across the other strigs just like that!

BASS

Top 3 Shortcuts for tuning the bass

Get an electric tuner – this is an electronic device that tells you when each string is in tune.
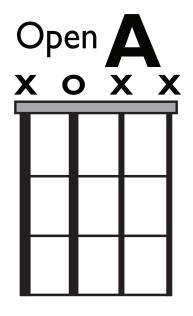
Use an internet tuner – you can use one online for free at www.littlekidsrock.org
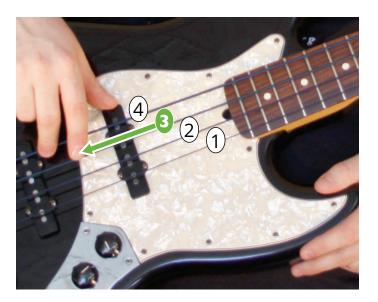
Ask for help – Find a friend, relative or teacher that already knows how to tune.
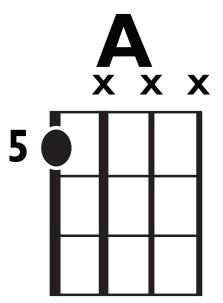
I Got an A in 2 Different Ways
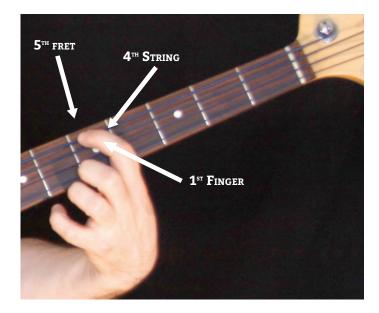
Playing the A is easy! Just pluck the 3rd string without touching the neck! When we play it this way, it's called an Open A.

Open **A**

X O X X

We can also play an A by using our 1st finger on the 5th fret of the 4th string.
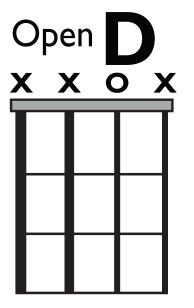
A

X X X

5 ●

5TH FRET

4TH STRING

1ST FINGER

Remember your 1 2 3s!

1. String Number
2. Finger Number
3. Fret Number
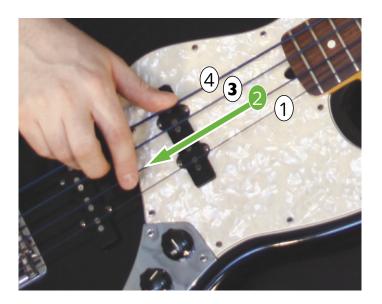
Playing an E will sound great when guitar and keyboard players are playing A chords!
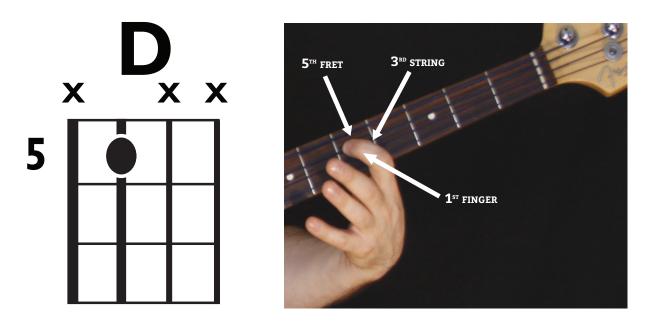
Gettin' a D Ain't So Bad!

Playing a D is just like playing an Open A. This time, pluck the 2nd string without touching the neck for an Open D.

Open D
X X O X

We can also play a D by using our 1st finger on the 5th fret of the 4th string.

D
X   X X

5

5TH FRET   3RD STRING

1ST FINGER

Remember your 1 2 3s!

1. String Number
2. Finger Number
3. Fret Number
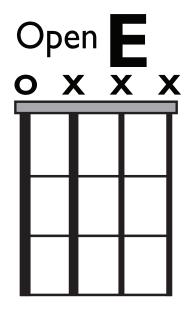
Playing an E will sound great when guitar and keyboard players are playing D chords!

BASS

257

E is for Easy
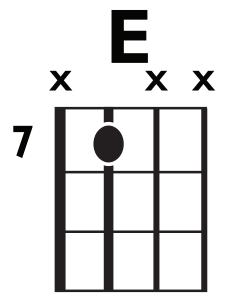
As the title says, playing the E is easy! This time, just pluck the 4th string. You guessed it, we call it an open E.
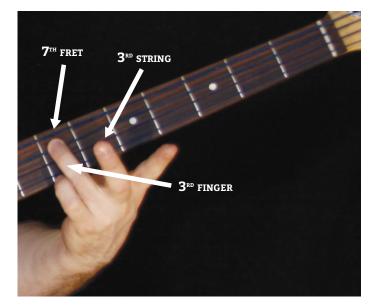
Open E

O X X X

We can also play an E by using our 3rd finger on the 7th fret of the 3rd string.
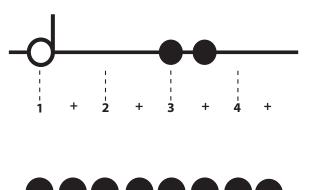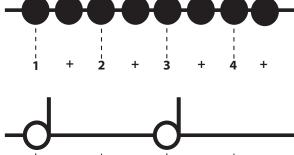
E

X X X

7

7ᵀᴴ FRET   3ᴿᴰ STRING

3ᴿᴰ FINGER

Remember your 1 2 3s!

1. String Number
2. Finger Number
3. Fret Number

Playing an E will sound great when guitar and keyboard players are playing E chords!

BASS
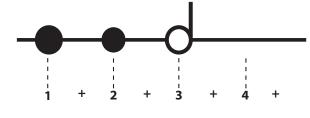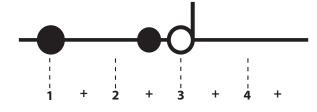
Simple Rhythms
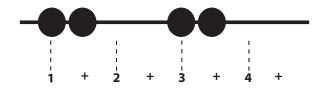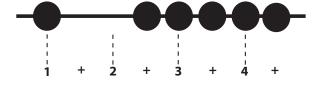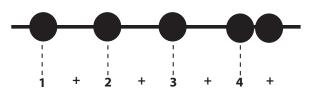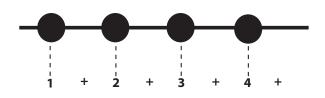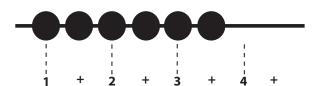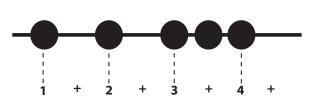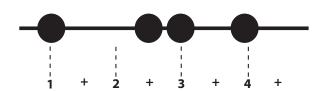
First Chord Progression

Chords are just a few notes played together that guitar and piano players play all the time. Bass players do too, but we'll get to that later! Most songs are made up of 2 to 6 chords that repeat in some sort of a pattern. That pattern is called a CHORD PROGRESSION.

The chord progression below uses just two chords – D and A.

The :‖ that appears at the end of the progression is called a repeat sign> It is there to tell you to start over again from the beginning of the progression.

These lines: | / / / / | are called a measure. Each masure gets four beats which we count as 1, 2, 3, 4. You will see that there are 8 measues in the song below that get repeated many times.

Progression 1
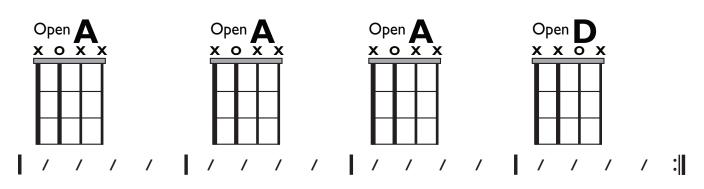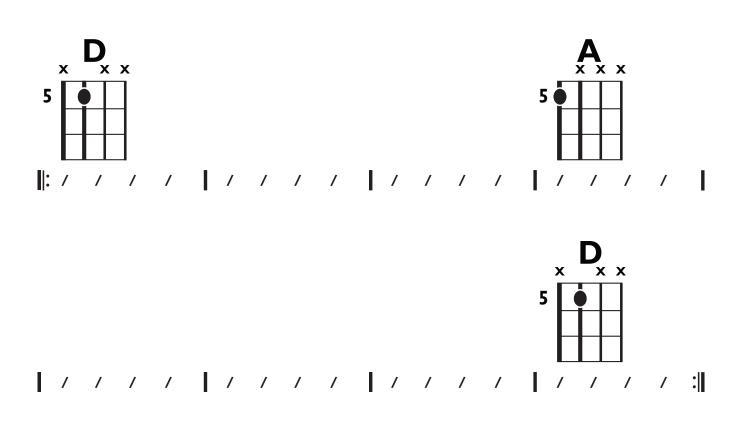
First Chord Progression Another Way
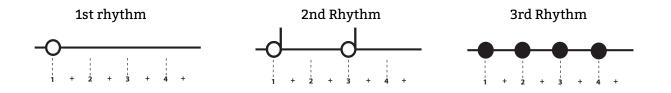
Progression 1

This time, when you see a D, play it on the 5th fret of the 3rd string.
When you see A, play it on the 5th fret of the 4th string. Try to play
this version using the 3 rhythms at the bottom of the page.

When a D Chord is shown, a D will always sound great on your bass. This ist rue with any chord. For
example, and A will always sound great iwth an A chord. We call this the root note.

Try playing a D on every number, and then switch to A when a new note is shown, using the rhythms
below.

1st rhythm

2nd Rhythm

3rd Rhythm

BASS
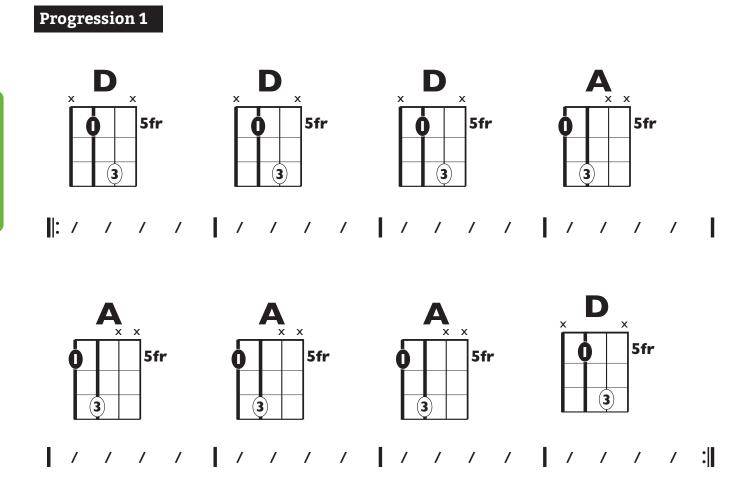
Chord Progressions a Third Way

There are many ways to play chord progressions. In the chart below, you will see that 1 extra note has been added to each root note.

This extra note is called a 5th and will sound great with any kind of chord.!

Progression 1
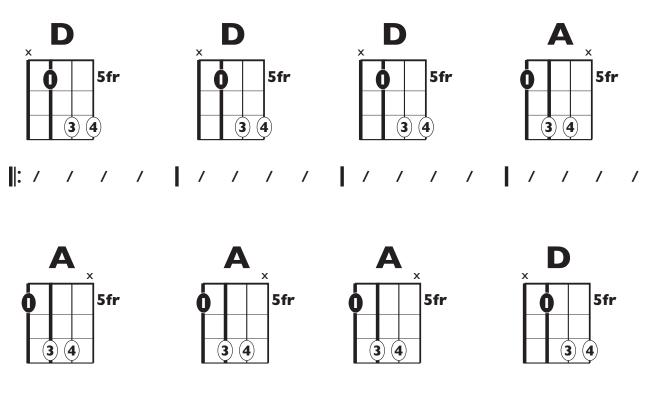
Chord Progressions a Fourth Way

This time you will see that we added a 3rd note each time we play with a chord.

This extra note is called the octave and will sound great with any kind of chord!

Listen to how the octave sounds the same as the root note, but higher!
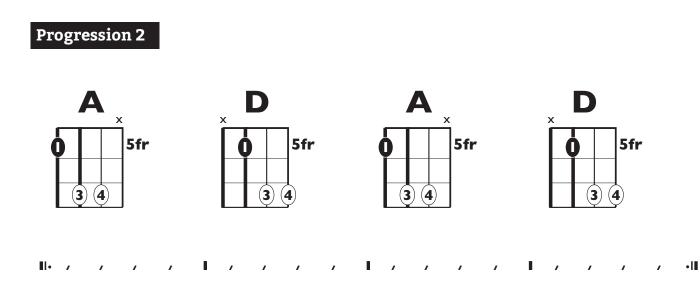
Progression 1

Same Chords, New Progression

This progression uses the same 2 chords, but this time they are in a new order.

Progression 2
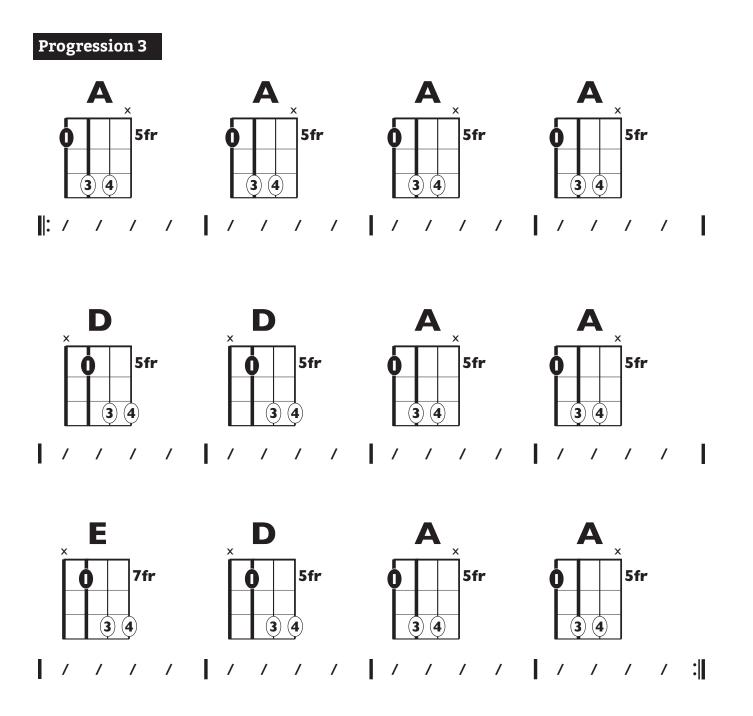
Try our different combinations of notes with different rhythms!

REMEMBER: If you are having trouble getting your pinky to reach the octave, you can just lift up your 3rd finger and use it again!

New Progression: Blues in A

The chord progression below uses three chords: The A, D, and E chords. This is one of the most famous progressions in thew orld and it appears in blues, rock, country, hiop-hop, reggae, everywhere!

This particular arrangement is a blues. People call it the "twelve bar blues" because it has 12 measures.

Progression 3

How Does Tablature Work?

Tablature or TAB is a cool way to read music for guitar or bass. We read it from left to right, just like a book! It tells us lots of things that we need to know how to play songs.

The four lines on TAB staff represent the four strings of an electric bass.
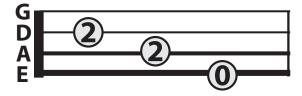
The numbers written on the lines tell us which frets to place our fingers.

A 2 written on String 1 tells us to play the 2nd fret of the G string.

A 2 written on String 2 tells us to play the 2nd fret of the D string.

And a 0 means that we don't play any frets, but play the open string.

TAB is great but there are some things that it does not tell us and we have to use our creativity- or a teacher's help- to figure it out.

TAB does NOT tell us:
• How long or short the notes are
• How fast or slow to play a song
• Which fingers to use to play the notes
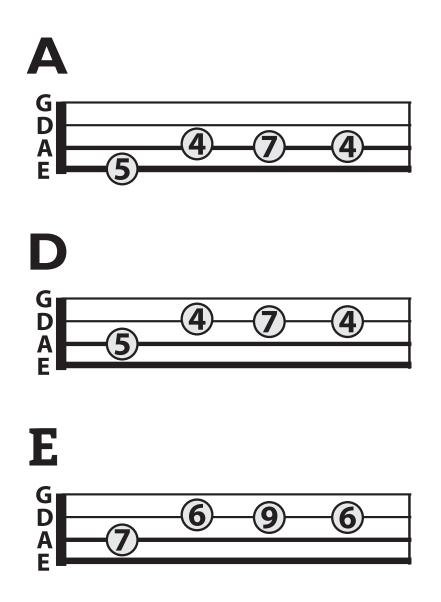
Remember: Music is about expressing YOURSELF, so use whichever fingers feel most comfortable for YOU.

One Way to Play the Blues in A
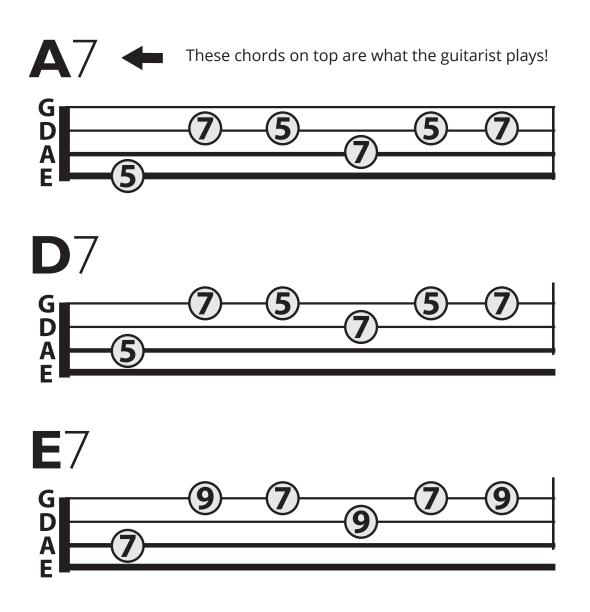
Try using this pattern with the Blues in A chord progressions.

A

```
G |————————————————————————————————|
D |————————————————————————————————|
A |————————(4)————(7)————(4)————————|
E |——(5)———————————————————————————|
```

D

```
G |————————————————————————————————|
D |————————(4)————(7)————(4)————————|
A |——(5)———————————————————————————|
E |————————————————————————————————|
```

E

```
G |————————————————————————————————|
D |————————(6)————(9)————(6)————————|
A |——(7)———————————————————————————|
E |————————————————————————————————|
```

Three Fret Funk: The Bassline
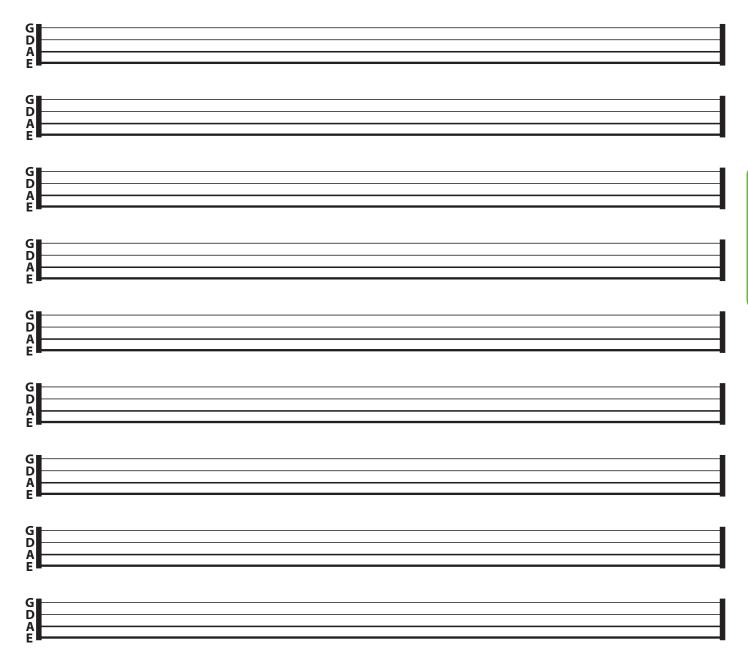
The bassline is the part of the song that the bass player plays!

A7 ← These chords on top are what the guitarist plays!

D7

E7

Blank Bass Tab
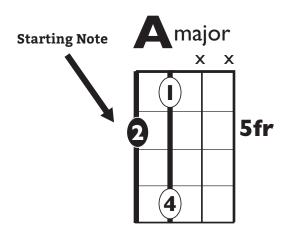
Chords

A chord is a combination of notes that sound great together! When playing guitar & piano, we play chords all the time, but guess what... bass players use chords too!
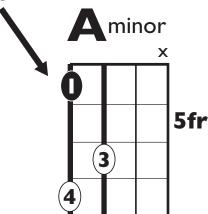
When bass players play chords, we usually play one note at a time using different combinations, so for example... when we see an A chord (also known as the A major Chord) we find the A note on the string 4 and play any notes in the pattern of notes, or shape below.
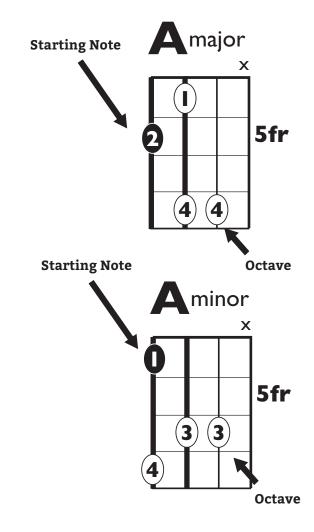
For example, the A Major chord looks like this:

To play the chord, just line up your pointer finger with the starting note and follow the pattern below, in any order, one note at a time. These chord patterns will sound great, een if you start on a different fret, on the 3rd or 4th string. Whichever note we use as our starting note is the name of the chord.
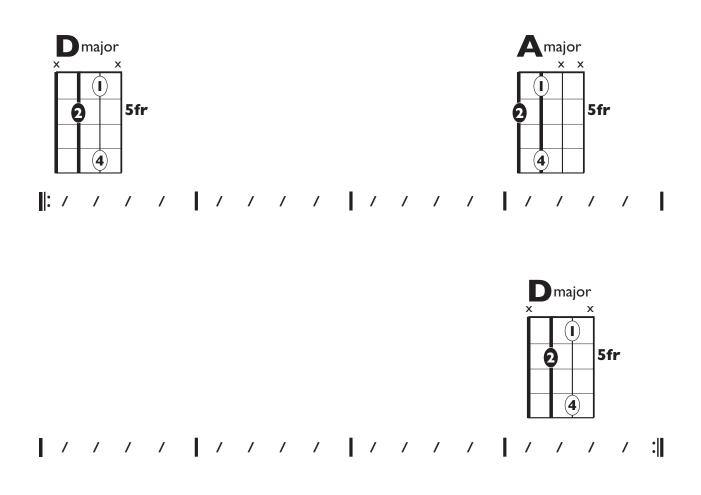
Chords in Practice

Try playing progression 1 again, but this time use hte notes from our new MAJOR CHORD SHAPE.

Progression 1

D major
x   x
①
②   5fr
④

A major
x   x
①
②   5fr
④

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / |

D major
x   x
①
②   5fr
④

| / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

BASS

Remember your 1, 2, 3s!

1. **String Number**
2. **Finger Number**
3. **Fret Number**
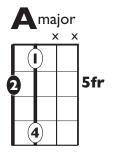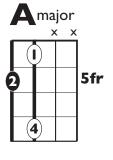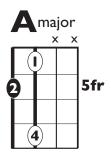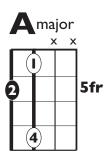
Blues With Major Chords

Try playing Blues in A again, but this time use the notes from our new MAJOR CHORD SHAPE
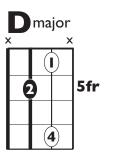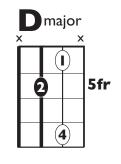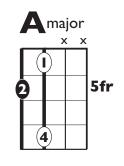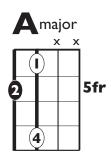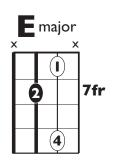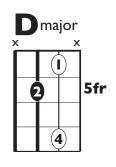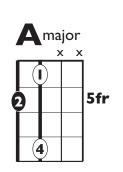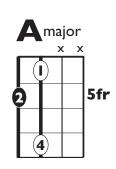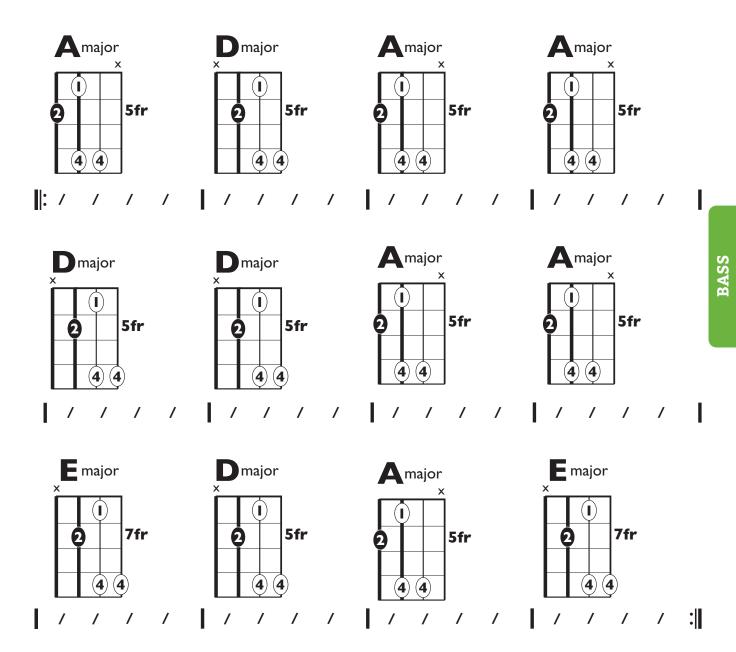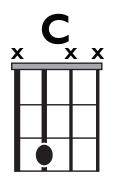
Blues with Major Chords

Adding the octave to the major scale shape gives us antother note that sounds great with blues basslines.

Key of C

C

Bass-ically, when we say the "key" of a song, we are talking about the most important note of that song. Usually, it's the first and last note played. In the key of C, C is the most important note, but F and G are also important.

Remember your left hand fingers need to follow 5 basic rules:
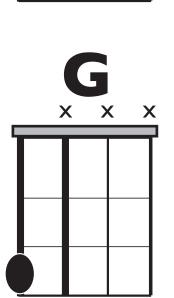
Curve your fingers like cat claws.

Thumb looks like a fret on the back of the neck.

Each finger touches just one string.
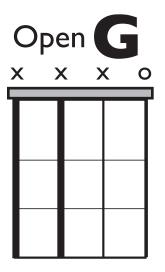
Place fingers close to frets.

Press hard enough to get a sound.

F

G

Open G

OR

BASS

Syncopated Rhythms
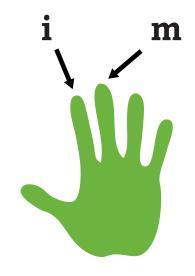
A syncopated rhythm is a rhythm where the accent is on the unexpected beat. They are funky, and slightly harder to play than simple rhythms. But if you like rock, funk, blues, rap, hip-hop, salsa, reggae, country or any other music whatsoever, you will understand how cool syncopation sounds.

Try counting out syncopated rhythms as follows:
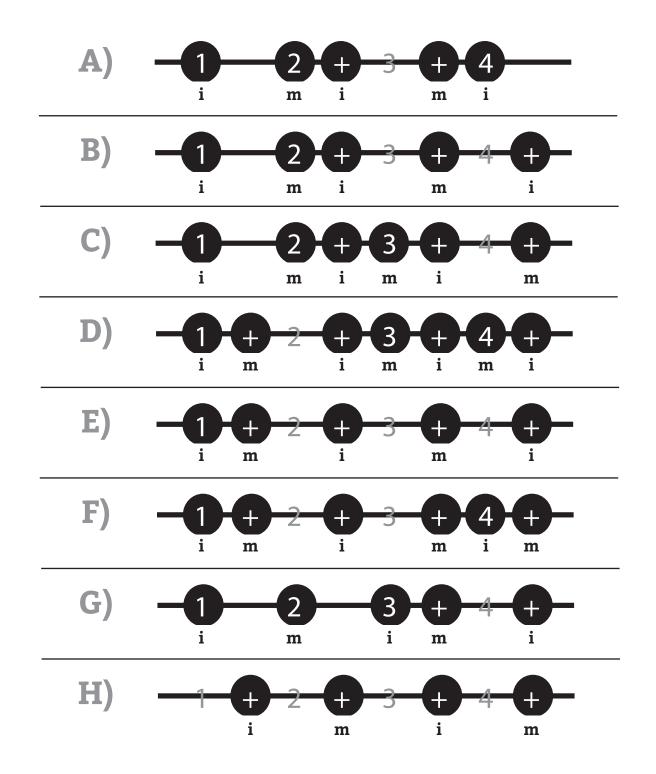
A SYNCOPATED RHYTHM								
You See:	**1**		**2**		**3**	**+**	**4**	**+**
You Say:	one		two		three	and		and
While you play:	i		m		i	m		i

Tips for trying syncopated rhythms:

- Try to feel the beat . The missing down bat is still there, you just don't play it.

- Playing a a syncopated rhythm is like singing the kids' song Bingo. Even when you don't sing the letters, you know they're there and you give them their space in the song. Remember: If you can SAY it, you can PLAY it!

- Another way to practice is to say the word "rest" on any gray number. For example on rhythm A: "One, two and rest and four. One, two rest and four..."

- Another way to practice is to say the word "skip" on any gray number. For example, on rhythm A: "One, two and skip and four. One, two and skip and four..."

i   m

BASS

275

Syncopated Rhythms

A)

B)

C)

D)

E)

F)

G)

H)

The Major Scale

The MAJOR SCALE is a series of noes that sound great when played one after another. Every Major Scale works great with the chord that has the same name- so if your guitarist or pianist friends play in a G Major Chord, you should play a G Major scale by playing the pattern starting on the G (3rd fret of the 4th string).
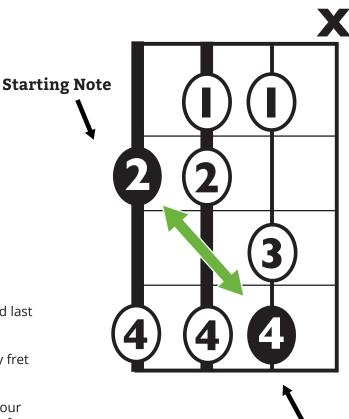
A few cool things about the MAJOR SCALE:

- The MAJOR SCALE has a happy sound.

- The MAJOR SCALE has only 7 notes. The first and last note are the same, but an octave apart..

- The MAJOR SCALE can be played starting on any fret number starting on strings 3 & 4.

- Learning to play the MAJOR SCALE is easier as your fretting hands get closer to the bridge, since the fret spaces are smaller.

Starting Note

Octave

BASS

When playing scales, REMEMBER:

- Place your fingers on the frets one at a time.
- Make sure that you use the correct finger for each note on your fretting hand.
- Alternate between your first and second plucking fingers

The Minor Scale
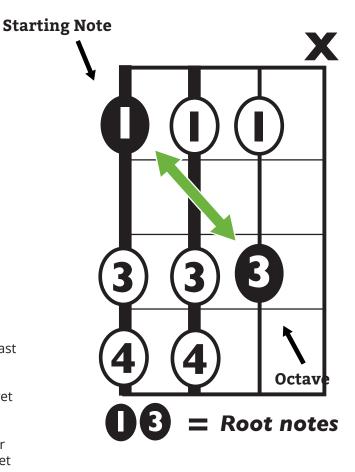
The MINOR SCALE is similar to the Major Scale except that it has a slightly different pattern and sound. Just like with the Major Scale, Minor Scales sound great with their equivalent chords, so a C Minor Scale sounds great with a C Minor chord.

A few cool things about the MINOR SCALE:

- The MINOR SCALE has a sad sound.

- The MINOR SCALE has only 7 notes. The first and last note are the same, but an octave apart..

- The MINOR SCALE can be played starting on any fret number starting on strings 3 & 4.

- Learning to play the MINOR SCALE is easier as your fretting hands get closer to the bridge, since the fret spaces are smaller.

Starting Note

X

1 1 1

3 3 3

4 4

Octave

1 3 = *Root notes*

When playing scales, REMEMBER:

- Place your fingers on the frets one at a time.
- Make sure that you use the correct finger for each note on your fretting hand.
- Alternate between your first and second plucking fingers
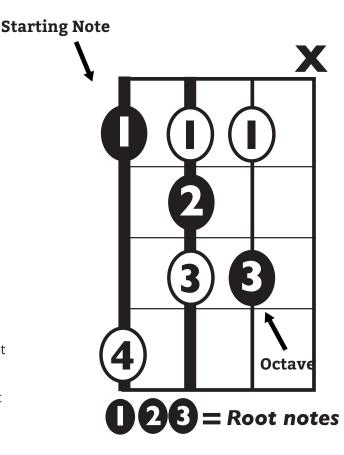
BASS

The Blues Scale

The BLUES SCALE is a scale that sounds great when playing - you guessed it - the Blues. Try playing the "blue note" and then immediately switching to the next fret for a very bluesy sound.

Starting Note

X

A few cool things about the BLUES SCALE:

• The MINOR SCALE has a sad sound.

• The MINOR SCALE has only 6 notes. The first and last note are the same, but an octave apart..

• The MINOR SCALE can be played starting on any fret number starting on strings 3 & 4.

• Learning to play the MINOR SCALE is easier as your fretting hands get closer to the bridge, since the fret spaces are smaller.

Octave

1 2 3 = *Root notes*

BASS

When playing scales, REMEMBER:

• Place your fingers on the frets one at a time.
• Make sure that you use the correct finger for each note on your fretting hand.
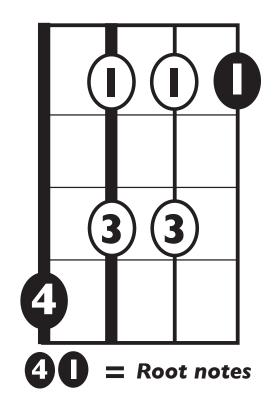
• Alternate between your first and second plucking fingers

The Major Pentatonic Scale

The MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE is a musical scale with only 5 notes and sounds great with major chords. The coolest thing about this scale is that if you play the notes in order, from lowest to highest, you're playing the bassline to My Girl.

A few cool things about the MAJOR PENTATONIC SCALE:

- The MAJOR PENTATONIC SCALE has only 5 notes. The first and last note are the same, but an octave apart..

- The MAJOR PENTATONIC SCALE can be played starting on any fret number starting on the fourth string.

- Learning to play the MAJOR PENTATONIC SCALE is easier as your fretting hands get closer to the bridge, since the fret spaces are smaller.

4 1 = *Root notes*

When playing scales, REMEMBER:

- Place your fingers on the frets one at a time.
- Make sure that you use the correct finger for each note on your fretting hand.
- Alternate between your first and second plucking fingers

The Minor Pentatonic Scale
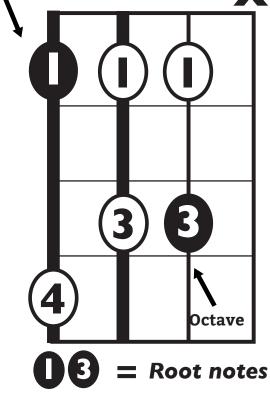
The MINOR PENTATONIC is a 5 note scale similar to a major pentatonic but this one works great with minor chords. Notice that it looks and sounds just like the Blues Scale, but without the blue note.

Starting Note

X
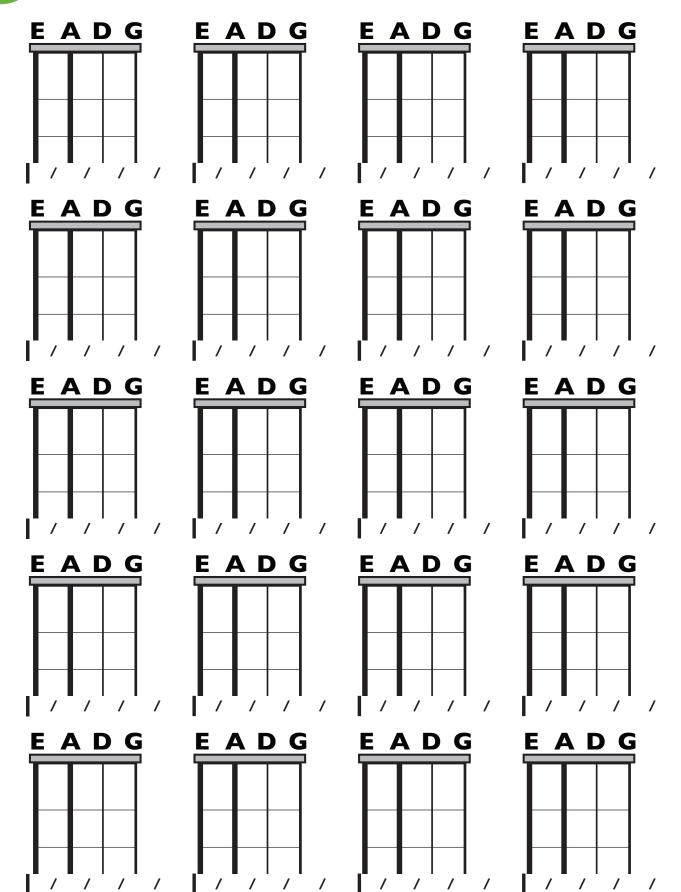
A few cool things about the MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE:

- The MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE has only 5 notes, the first and last note are the same, but an octave apart.

- The MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE has 5 notes. The first and last note are the same, but an octave apart..

- The MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE can be played starting on any fret number starting on strings 3 & 4.

- Learning to play the MINOR PENTATONIC SCALE is easier as your fretting hands get closer to the bridge, since the fret spaces are smaller.

Octave

1 3 = *Root notes*

BASS

When playing scales, REMEMBER:

- Place your fingers on the frets one at a time.
- Make sure that you use the correct finger for each note on your fretting hand.
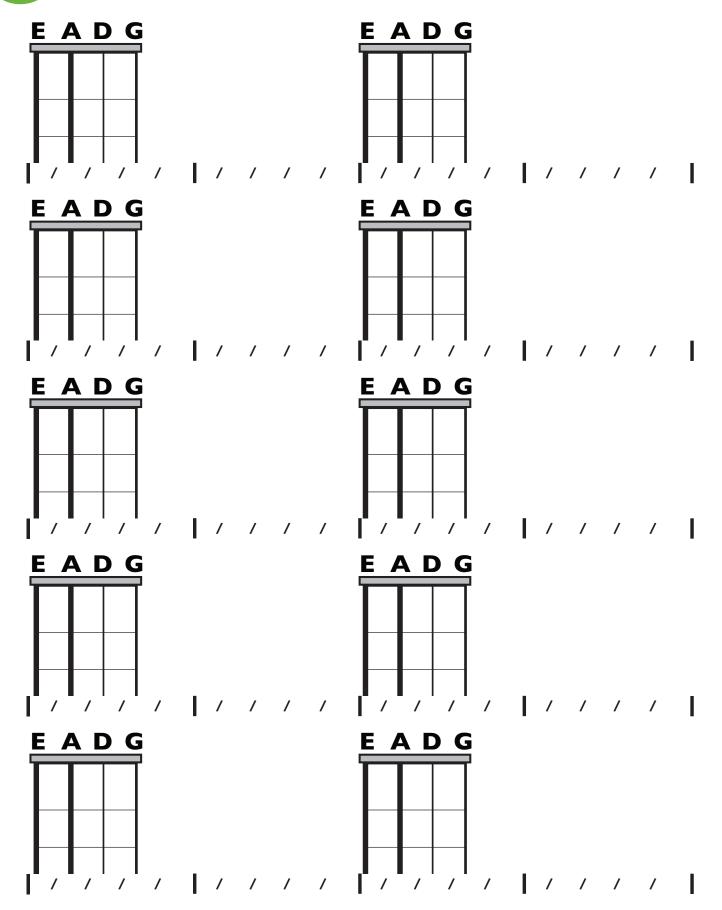
- Alternate between your first and second plucking fingers

Blank Notes

Blank Notes

BASS

DRUMS

DRUMS

The popular music of the past 50 years has been has been propelled by the pounding pulse of the modern drum set. We say "modern drum set" because although drums have been around for thousands of years, the drum set as we know it wasn't introduced until the 1930's. Since that time it has become the engine that drives modern popular music. Whether it's the Beatles, Jay Z, the Bee Gees, Garth Brooks or Led Zeppelin the drum set lays down the foundation of the music.

From behind the drum set, drummers provide the groove that the rest of the band relies upon. We hear the different sections of a song more clearly because of what the drummer is doing—changing the feel or using a different part of the drum set can give each section of a song a distinct personality. Together with the bass, the drums define the groove—acting like the railroad tracks a train rides on.

Getting Started

To the uninitiated, a drum set can look like a complicated and confusing array of round objects to bang on. The drum set in Figure 1 shows how intricate (and intimidating) a drum set can be. Figure 2 shows the three most important pieces of a drum set and the best ones for beginners to focus on.

A traditional percussion program often starts students working on rudiments1 on a drum pad or on a snare drum. This is a proven way of building technique and facility. However, it can be difficult for a student to equate playing on a practice pad with the energy and excitement that come out of a real-life drum set and this can adversely impact a learner's motivation.

Fig 1: Wow! That's a LOT of stuff!

Fig 2: Let's start with this!
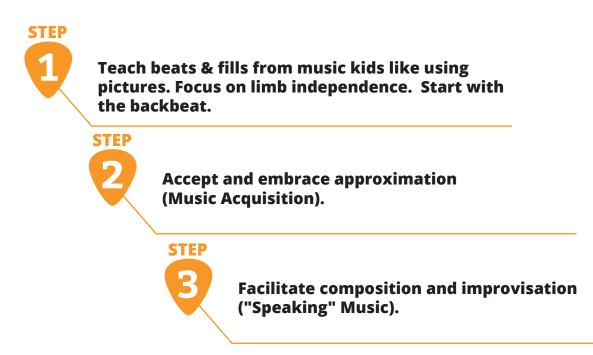
Here's a little exercise. Visualize yourself as the drummer in a rock 'n' roll band. Now look at the two pictures to the right.

Which of the two instruments would you prefer to flail away on in your imaginary band?

There is time and a place for rudiments and drum pads but kids will want to get behind a kit right away. We recommend getting them started that way. As the saying goes: "Life is uncertain. Eat your dessert first."

With our focus on the three, core components of the drum kit (the hi hats, snare drum and kick drum) we can begin teaching the drums using three simple steps that mirror the approach we take on guitar and keyboard:

STEP 1
Teach beats & fills from music kids like using pictures. Focus on limb independence. Start with the backbeat.

STEP 2
Accept and embrace approximation (Music Acquisition).

STEP 3
Facilitate composition and improvisation ("Speaking" Music).

A "Music As A Language" approach to drum instruction puts children on a drum throne right away so that they can begin to feel like drummers with as low a bar to entry as possible.

STEP 1: Teach Beats Kids Know and Like Using Pictures

Whether they know it or not, any child who listens to popular music is familiar with the "backbeat." Chuck Berry introduces aspiring pop drummers to this grandparent of all pop beats in his classic tune, "Rock And Roll Music" where he says:
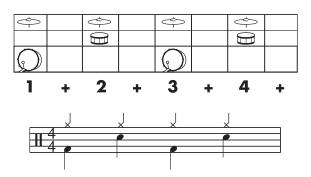
"Just let me hear some of that rock and roll music
Any old way you choose it.
It's got a backbeat, you can't lose it
Any old time you use it.
Gotta be rock 'n' roll music
If you wanna dance with me."

The backbeat is the name given to the most commonly used beat in modern music. It can be adorned and altered in many ways but this seminal sound crops up in song after song after song across the many sub-genres that constitute the repertoire for any Modern Band program. So we will use it to illustrate how to use pictures as a means of teaching beats.

Reading a Drum Chart

When you look at a drum chart, you see it has three rows, and a different number of columns depending on the beat.
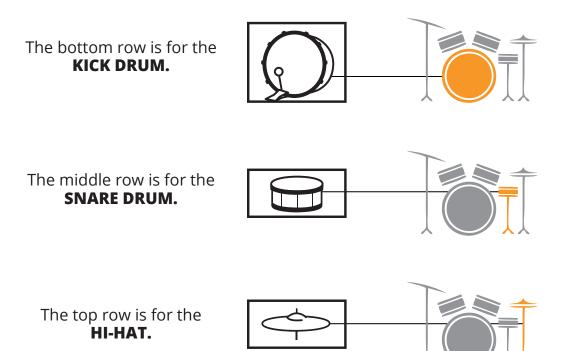
The numbers on the bottom of the drum charts are the beat counts.

You count: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4, then start over again with 1 - 2 - 3 - 4. ... There is no 5!

Let's try to count together: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - and so on.

Unlike other musicians, drummers only need to worry about the spacing of notes.

The bottom row is for the **KICK DRUM.**

The middle row is for the **SNARE DRUM.**

The top row is for the **HI-HAT.**
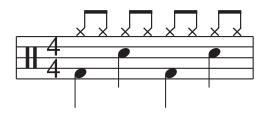
The eight columns collectively represent a measure that has been divided into eighth notes. There are numbers and "+" signs under each column tohelp clarify which drum is played on each beat.

In the backbeat example above:

• The hi hat is played on all four beats.
• The snare drum is played on beats 2 and 4.
• The kick drum is played on beats 1 and 3.

Figure 4 below shows what the backbeat looks like in standard musical notation:
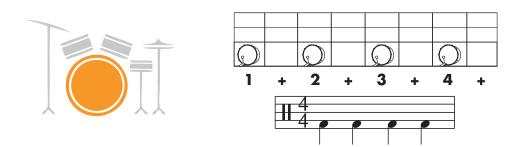
FIGURE 4: The backbeat in standard notation
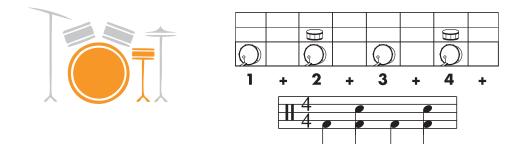
The differences between the picture-based, tablature system and standard notation are subtle. The picture based drum notation may however be an easier first step for students who may otherwise struggle with the notation system. Once they've established a basic familiarity with some patterns transitioning over to notation will be easier from a learning acquisition standpoint.

When you see a drum over a number, it means to play that drum on that beat.

Here we play the kick on beats 1, 2, 3 and 4.
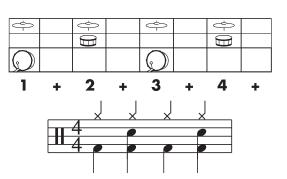
On this chart, we play the kick on beats 1, 2, 3, 4 and the snare on 2 and 4 only.
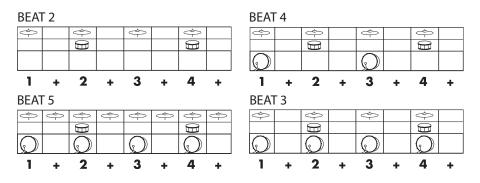
On this chart, we play the kick on beats 1 and 3, snare on 2 and 4, and the hi-hat on 1, 2, 3, and 4.

DRUMS

Look at the four beats below and see how they are all just slight alterations of the basic backbeat pattern. The picture-based notation makes the variations very clear and easy to follow

BEAT 2

BEAT 4

BEAT 5

BEAT 3
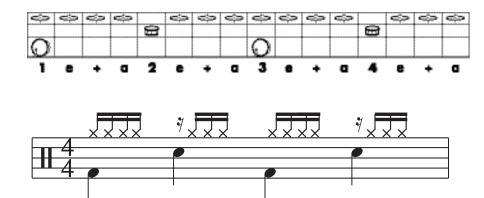
Tablature Standard Notation
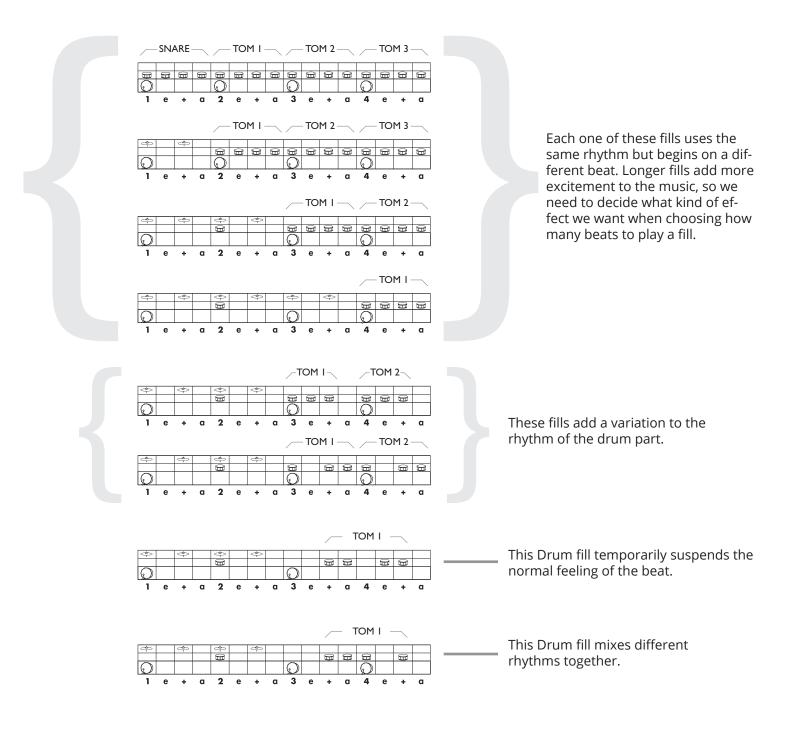
This same drum tablature can be used to teach 16th note grooves as well as the following example illustrates:

Anything aside from playing the basic beat of a song is called a "drum fill." Fills usually come right before the beginning of a new section in a song. For example, as a the band leaves the verse of a song and begins to play the chorus, the drummer will likely use a fill and a cymbal crash to help separate the parts and add excitement. The cymbal crash usually occurs on the first downbeat of the first measure of the new part of the song.
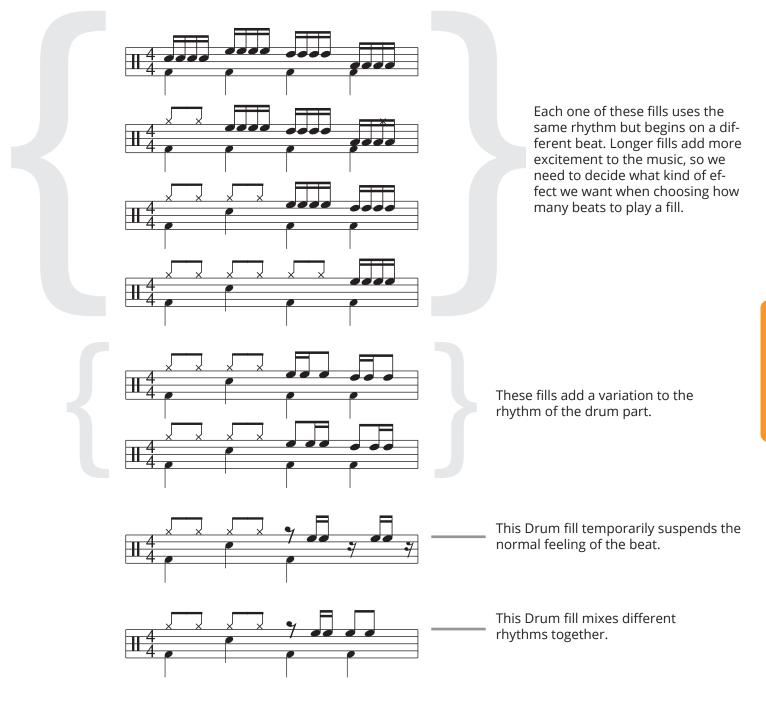
Drum fills usually can be made using just the snare, just the toms or any combination of the two. They don't have to be a certain length. They can be several measures or can consist of just a few sixteenth notes. Fills are part of what a drummer uses to propel the band forward and to add variety and spice to the music.

Drum Fills

Each one of these fills uses the same rhythm but begins on a different beat. Longer fills add more excitement to the music, so we need to decide what kind of effect we want when choosing how many beats to play a fill.

These fills add a variation to the rhythm of the drum part.

This Drum fill temporarily suspends the normal feeling of the beat.

This Drum fill mixes different rhythms together.

Here are the same fills shown in standard notation.

Each one of these fills uses the same rhythm but begins on a different beat. Longer fills add more excitement to the music, so we need to decide what kind of effect we want when choosing how many beats to play a fill.

These fills add a variation to the rhythm of the drum part.

This Drum fill temporarily suspends the normal feeling of the beat.

This Drum fill mixes different rhythms together.

DRUMS

Fills can also be depicted using basic drum tablature. Here are some examples of simple fills.

Let's look at the way drum fills are used in the classic song "Imagine" by John Lennon. When the drums first enter, they begin with fill #8 from our examples.

Later when this same section of music repeats in the song, he uses fill #7 to help us hear that a different part of the song is about to begin.

Some fills can be tricky to notate in simple drum tablature. For example, fills using triplets are or very syncopated sixteenth note figures can be impossible to render or difficult to read. Thus simple drum tablature is not always the best tool for teaching fills. However, where simple tablature leaves off, the aural tools of "Music As A Language" can kick in. After hearing more complex fills, students will be able to copy them even if they are unsure of how the fills would appear in notation or tablature.

STEP 2: Accept and Embrace Approximation

Approximation on a drum set is bound to happen with little need for guidance from you as a teacher. Once kids know how to play a few basic beats, they will try those out in a wide variety of contexts and, in so doing, find themselves approximating. For example, say a student wants to play a Michael Jackson song and the drummer knows a few beats and can play them at different tempos. The drummer will experiment with the beats to see whether any of them "fit" the song. Chances are that one or more of the beats they know will work for the purposes of providing drums for the tune.

Chances are also high that the beat that they choose will NOT be the exact same one used on the recording of the tune by the original drummer. In this sense drummers "feel their way" through a tune in the same way that guitarists might try out a familiar strum pattern. These "approximations" are invaluable because they facilitate all of the following:

DRUMS

Accessibility: Some tunes whose original beats are too complex are put in reach of the beginner. By using a more simplified version of the beat, they can gain access to the music that motivates and inspires them. This motivation is key in any program that utilizes the "Music As A Language" approach.

Ear Training: As students apply what they already know in new contexts, they are learning to rely upon and trust their ears. Their ears tell them, "Yes! That sounds good here," or, "No, that's not what I think belongs in the tune." By applying what they already know in new situations, they also begin acquiring new musical skills in a fashion that resembles the unconscious nature in which people acquire language.

Experimentation: A wise person once noted that improvisation is simply the systematic reapplication of everything you already know. Think about language; when you speak extemporaneously you are improvising. However, you aren't making up new words! You are using the words you already know in a new context. When we experiment with beats and fills behind a drum set, it quickly opens the doorway to musical improvisation and composition. Which brings us to...

STEP 3: Facilitate Composition and Improvisation

Improvisation on the drums usually begins with applying familiar beats in new contexts as described above. Students will naturally begin making "mistakes" or may consciously change a beat to create a new one. In this fashion they take their first tentative steps into the broad world of improvisation. The more beats a student learns, the more opportunities they will have to mix and match and make new discoveries. Fills only add more and more options for a student to continue experimenting.

Fuel may be added to the improvisational fire through the study of rudiments and their application in context on a drum kit. However, the study of rudiments without near immediate application on a kit is akin to the study of grammar over the actual use of a language in context and for meaning. Just as natural language acquisition occurs most easily in free conversation, it is the same with the acquisition of musical skills. Drilling a student on rudiments without context can be like conjugating verbs in a foreign language class. It is likely to raise anxiety levels and may not result in any lasting or applicable skills. More on this in the lesson plans that follow.

Once students feel comfortable "making things up" on the drum kit, they are at the gateway of composition. When student while experimenting creates a new beat or fill and decides, "Hey! I like that!" and then tries to replicate the figure, they become composers. In this fashion countless garage band drummers have composed the drum parts that drive their band's music.

DRUMS

DRUM LESSON PLANS

LESSON PLAN: Rhythms With Words

Objective:

Students will be able to play complicated rhythms by associating them to commonly used words.

Resources:
None required!

Procedures:

Establish a back beat. You can use the Little Kids Rock website to play a basic back beat or have the class manufacture one (see lesson plan "Classroom As Drumset").

While the beat continues ask students to join with you in playing the rhythm of words you say. Start with "Dis-co" saying it over and over in as 1/8th notes: "dis-co dis-co dis-co dis-co" (you'll say the word 4 times in one measure. If you prefer, you can substitute the word "coun-try")

Again with the continuing beat say the words "hea-vy me-tal". We're using these words as 16th notes, so you'll say it four times in a row to complete one measure: "hea-vy me-tal hea-vy me-tal hea-vy me-tal hea-vy me-tal".

The word "rock" will stand for a full beat quarter note. Mix this alternately with the other two rhythms saying "rock dis-co rock dis-co" or "rock hea-vy me-tal rock hea-vy me-tal". Using this word for a quarter note while contrasting it with words we're using for 8th and 16th notes will help students focus on these rhythms while developing a good awareness of time keeping.

Do call and response by mixing up these words and rhythms in various ways. You might do "rock dis-co dis-co hea-vy me-tal" or "hea-vy me-tal dis-co hea-vy me-tal rock". Repeat a few patterns until this feels easy for everybody. Invite other students in the class to lead the call and response.

Continue as before except this time use your hands to play the rhythms on your desk or on your lap. Alternate right and left hand for each rhythm, but make sure to start each rhythm with the right hand.

DRUMS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:Cr1.1.3 b. Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms and melodies) within a given tonality and/or meter. Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.5 b. Rehearse to refine technical accuracy and expressive qualities to address challenges, and show improvement over time. Anchor Standard 11: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. Example: General Music MU:Cn11.1.(PK-8) a. Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.Math.Content.3.NF.A.1 Understand a fraction 1/b as the quantity formed by 1 part when a whole is partitioned into b equal parts; understand a fraction a/b as the quantity formed by a parts of size 1/b. (fractions as subdivision of beat)

LESSON PLAN: Drum Fills and a Crash

Objective:

Students will be able to play complicated rhythms by associating them to commonly used words.

Resources:
Any song recording

Procedures:

Listen to the recording of a song you're working on in class, or a favorite of one of the students. Notice where the cymbal crashes are in the song. They almost always occur at the beginning of a verse or chorus, or the repeat of a part of the chorus. After observing this in a couple of songs, point out that a cymbal crash is a way for the drummer to say "We're at the beginning of a new section!"

Listen to a progression that repeats over and over, like the "Axis of Awesome" progression. This is a really good one to use because there is a different chord in every measure before it repeats, therefore making the return to the beginning more obvious. You can play this progression for them on a guitar, keyboard, or use a jam track. If you have a student who can play a chord progression over and over while you teach this concept that would be even better.

Tell students that when it comes back to the beginning each time you'd like them to use their right hands to hit an imaginary crash cymbal in the air while saying "crash". As the progression continues cycling around to the beginning, imitate this exaggerated crash cymbal motion while saying "crash" each time you get back to the first beat of the first measure. Repeat until it's obvious they are aware of where this is.

Describe a fill as something that leads to a crash, helping "build up" to the crash. Use words from the lesson plan "Rhythms Made Easy With Words" and imitate what a couple of fills might sound like leading to a crash. For simplicity begin each fill on beat 2 of the last measure in the progression, and just like in the other lesson plan use the right and left hands on the desk or your lap to "play" the fill.

Invite volunteers to make up their own "drum fill" using these words. At this point you can invite the entire class to do "Classroom as Drumset" (see lesson plan) in accompanying the fills your students create. This activity is great ear training, as it makes everyone who participates aware of fundamental structures happening in music.

DRUMS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: General Music MU:Cr1.1.3 b. Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms and melodies) within a given tonality and/or meter. Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, and form) in music selected for performance. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr4.2.H.Ia Identify and describe important theoretical and structural characteristics and context (social, cultural, or historical) in a varied repertoire of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces, improvisations, and chordal accompaniments in a variety of patterns (such as arpeggio, country and gallop strumming, finger picking patterns). Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5 Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

LESSON PLAN: Drum Fills Accompanied

Objective:

Students will be able to use "call and response" to communicate a drum fill from either guitar or keyboard to the drum set.

Resources:
Only a drum kit!

Procedures:

After completing the lesson plans "Rhythms Made Easy With Words" and "Drum Fills That Lead to a Crash", students will be aware of using these rhythms. Review them with your guitar or keyboard students having them play them with strum patterns or piano chords using "call and response".

Similar to what we did in "Drum Fills That Lead to a Crash", the drum fill will be in the same place—the last measure of a four measure chord progression. Only this time, the guitar or keyboard player will play the fill first on his instrument in the third bar while the drummer listens and then attempts to play the same fill he just heard in the fourth bar! It's a good idea when starting this exercise to have the students say the names of the rhythms as they use them so that communication is very clear. As a teacher you can hear if they're having a problem with a particular rhythmic concept, and at the same time the words allow students to not take themselves so seriously when trying this.

Once students get the hang of this, have the drummer end HIS/HER fill with a cymbal crash. If this is difficult the first couple times you can add it later, but keep in mind that fills almost always lead to a cymbal crash. Any one of us would be hard pressed to find an example of one that doesn't. In this exercise the cymbal crash will always correspond with beat one of the first measure, "announcing" the beginning of the repeat—which is what cymbal crashes are SUPPOSED to do!

Tell the guitar or keyboard player to reinforce the rhythm of the fill by playing it along with the drummer in the fourth bar. This helps exaggerate the sound of the fill, giving music a sense of tension that MUST resolve with a cymbal crash and then two measures of CALM! This exercise uncovers one of the things about instrumental music that draws us in—the constant cycle between tension and resolution—two measures of boringness followed by two measures of chaos, injecting music with the illusion that it MUST continue! We've got to hear more and we have no idea why! What fun!

DRUMS

LESSON PLAN: Classroom as Drum Set

Objective:

Students will be able to play a drum set by learning the fundamental coordination involved in playing it. This gives a teacher more resources in arranging songs by allowing more students to participate in the percussion part. It also allows classrooms without a drum set to add these sounds with improvised instruments.

Resources:
Sheets of paper, cardboard boxes, shakers or home-made shakers, handout titled "Drum Patterns"

Procedures:

Demonstrate playing several of the drum patterns from the handout. Place a piece of cardboard underneath of your right foot to imitate the sound of a kick drum and a piece of paper on your lap over the right leg to imitate the sound of the snare. When you demonstrate these patterns, use only the kick and snare part, no cymbals. Therefore you'll only be using your right foot and left hand.

Ask students to put a piece of cardboard underneath their right foot and a piece of paper on their desk or lap on the left leg.

Count everyone in with a subdivided beat, saying "1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +" over and over. Play a couple of the patterns on the handout using just the kick and snare parts. Repeat each pattern at least four times to help everyone get the hang of this simple coordination.

If you have a drum set, go over to it and demonstrate playing these patterns they are all now familiar with using your right foot for the kick drum and left hand for the snare. Invite a couple of students to come up and try out playing some of these basic patterns as well, to see how easy it is now that they've got the basic coordination down.

Once they're comfortable playing patterns this way, run down all of the patterns on the handout, playing each one twice.

Adding a cymbal (high hat or ride cymbal) with the right hand to this patterns is difficult at first. It's a good idea to divide the class for this, having one half play the cymbal part (on a shaker, a home-made shaker, or by tapping their guitar picks or pencils on the metal leg of their desk or chair) while the other half does the kick and snare part. This is an outstanding listening activity for them to coordinate with each other.

Have kids try playing the cymbal, kick and snare parts altogether. You may want to break this down by adding one beat at a time in the first pattern you try this. After they can play their first pattern this way, the rest will be easy. Everything they've learned to do here will easily transfer over to the actual drum set, allowing students to take turns playing the drums on different songs.
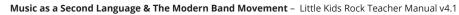
National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
Example: General Music MU:Pr4.2.4 b. When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation.Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Example: General Music MU:Pr5.1.3 a. Apply teacher-provided and collaboratively-developed criteria and feedback to evaluate accuracy of ensemble performances.
Common Core Correlation: Generate and analyze patterns. CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.OA.C.5 Generate a number or shape pattern that follows a given rule. Identify apparent features of the pattern that were not explicit in the rule itself.

DRUMS

DRUM
CONSUMABLES

Parts of a Drum Kit

DRUMS

Ride Cymbal

Cymbal Stand

Drum Head

Toms

Shell

Hi-Hat

Floor Tom

Snare Drum

Kick Drum

Floor Pedal

How to Hold the Sticks

Stick to the basics!

1 Hold your hand out like you would to shake someone's hand.

2 Curl your pointer finger.

3 Place the stick between the 2nd and 3rd knuckle of your pointer finger. Then clamp it with your thumb.

4 Extend your other three fingers around the stick. Remeber to keep them loose. They are only to provide support.

DRUMS

Bonus Tips!

• Let about an inch of the stick hang below your hand.

• Only hold the stick with your thumb and pointer finger. Wrap the other fingers very loosely, so the stick can bounce.

How to Play the Drum Kit

1

Imagine the snare drum is a clock.

2

Place your sticks into the position of 4 and 8.

3

Keeping your sticks in the same position, lift your right hand over the left. Now your right stick is over the hi-hat and your left is over the snare.

4

Place right foot on the bass drum foot pedal.

Now You're Ready to Play!

Drum Rudiments

What is a Rudiment and why do I care?

Rudiments will help you make you an amazing drummer, just like the pros! You can practice on pillows at home, on a book, a drum pad, or on your lap. All pro drummers know their Rudiments.

When you look at a Rudiment, you'll see the letters R and L. They stand for Right and Left. The first Rudiment is the single stroke.

Basic Drum Rudiments:

#1: Single Stroke

RLRL RLRL RLRL RLRL:

#2: Double Stroke

RRLL RRLL RRLL RRLL

#3: Paradiddle

RLRR LRLL:

Bonus Tips!

A colon: means to repeat from the beginning.
When playing a Rudiment, start slow. Keep a steady speed for at least one minute without speeding up or slowing down. When you can do that very easily, then try it faster...

Just remember, maintain your tempo (speed)!

Accent Beats

Accent Beats:

Accent beats are louder than other beats.

When you look at a Rudiment, you'll see the letters R and L. They stand for Right and Left. The first Rudiment is the single stroke.

Accent on the 1st Beat:

>   >   >   >

RLRL **R**LRL **R**LRL **R**LRL:

Accent on the 2nd Beat:

>   >   >   >

R**L**RL R**L**RL R**L**RL R**L**RL:

Now try accenting other beats:

     >   >   >   >

RL**R**L RL**R**L RL**R**L RL**R**L:
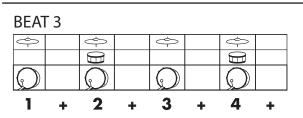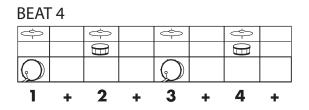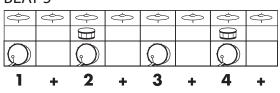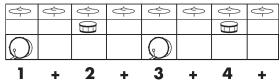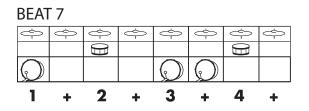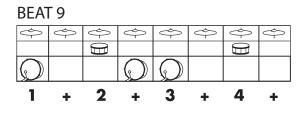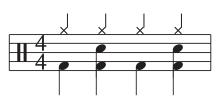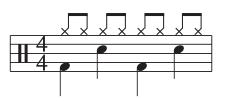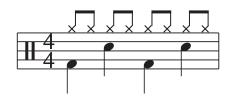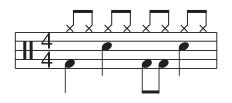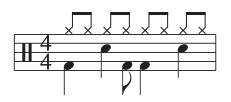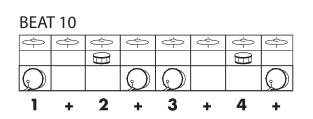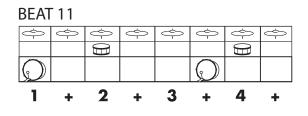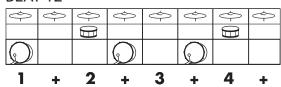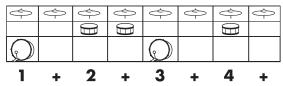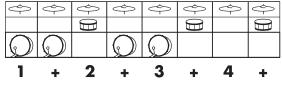
     >   >   >   >

RL**R**L RL**R**L RL**R**L RL**R**L:

     >   >   >   >

RL**R**L RL**R**L RL**R**L RL**R**L:

     >   >   >   >

R**L**RL R**L**RL R**L**RL R**L**RL:

     >   >   >   >

RLR**L** RLR**L** RLR**L** RLR**L**:

DRUMS

Drum Chart Library

Iconic Notation	Standard Notation

BEAT 3

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BEAT 4

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BEAT 5

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BEAT 6

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BEAT 7

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

BEAT 9

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

DRUMS

Drum Chart Library

Iconic Notation

Standard Notation

BEAT 10

BEAT 11

BEAT 12

BEAT 18

BEAT 24

BEAT 37

DRUMS

Drum Chart Library

Iconic Notation

Standard Notation

BEAT 55

BEAT 58

BEAT 71

BEAT 72

BEAT 77

DRUMS

Drum Chart Library

Iconic Notation

Standard Notation

BEAT 81

BEAT 82

BEAT 83

BEAT 84

BEAT 85

DRUMS
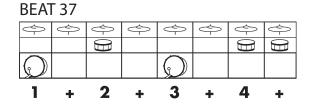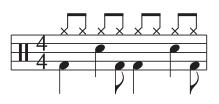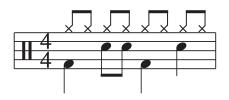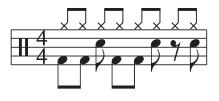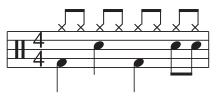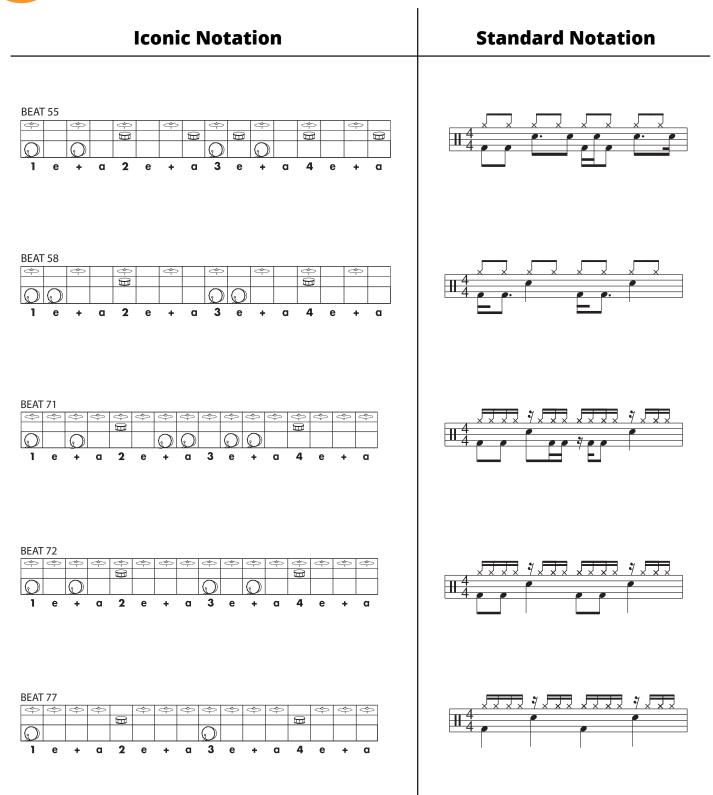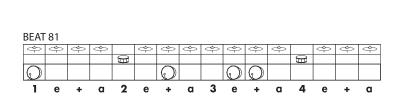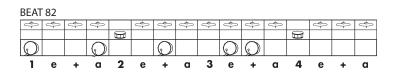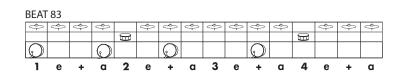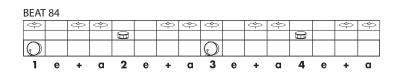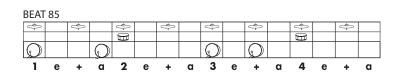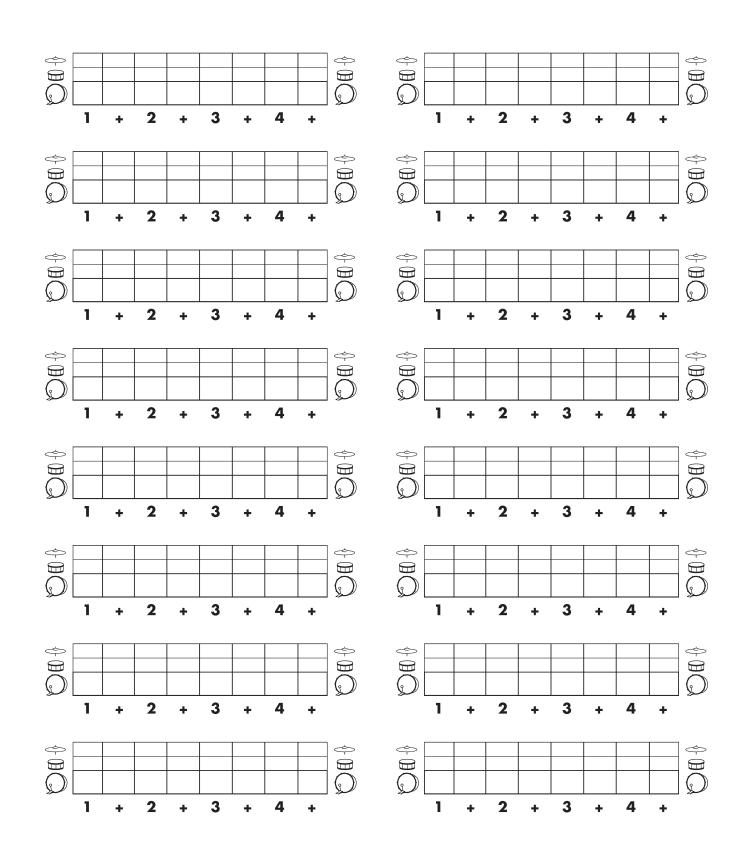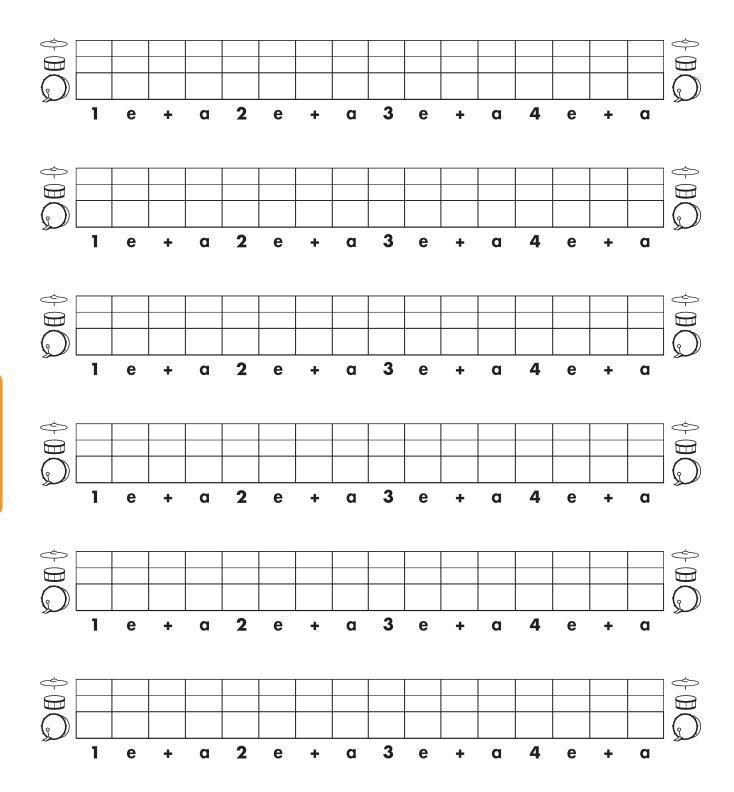
Blank Beats (8th Notes)

Blank Beats (16th Notes)

1   e   +   a   2   e   +   a   3   e   +   a   4   e   +   a

1   e   +   a   2   e   +   a   3   e   +   a   4   e   +   a

1   e   +   a   2   e   +   a   3   e   +   a   4   e   +   a

1   e   +   a   2   e   +   a   3   e   +   a   4   e   +   a

1   e   +   a   2   e   +   a   3   e   +   a   4   e   +   a

1   e   +   a   2   e   +   a   3   e   +   a   4   e   +   a

DRUMS

VOCALS

VOCALS

"If you can talk, you can sing,
 If you can walk, you can dance"

-Proverb from Zimbabwe
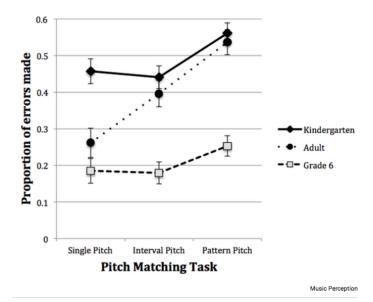
The voice is the most personal means of musical expression. Coming directly from inside our bodies, singing requires us to be at our most vulnerable and exposed - there is no hiding! For this reason, we must be extremely careful with our students and strive to create a classroom community of unconditional support and acceptance. With the proverb above in mind, one should aim for a non-competitive "no judgment zone" where every student is equally entitled to the joyful experience of singing. One should focus on "singing for expression" rather than "singing for perfection," and on the process over the product.

One of the central tenets of Music as a Second Language is that if students feel judged and their "Affective Filter" is high, they will not retain information and will perceive an experience negatively. Furthermore, a perceived failure with singing often leads students to abandon music completely, believing that they are simply not musical. Contrary to their belief, studies have shown that struggling to match pitch is mostly a neurological control issue and not an issue of perception. Sean Hutchins of BRAMS (International Laboratory for Brain, Music and Sound Research) conducted a research study where non-musicians were able to use both physical sliders to match pitch as well as their voices. While only 40% were able to match pitch with their voices, 100% were able to do so with the sliders. "People were hearing the right notes," explains Hutchins, "While the trained musicians were quicker, all of the participants could accurately match the notes." He calls this an Imitative Deficit where the perception of the tone is correct, and the right message is sent to the brain, but the

brain's ability to recreate it is lacking. He also explains that subjects can improve with practice (Dziezynski, 2014, p. 1). This was confirmed in a study by the research of Steven Demorest and Peter Pfordreshe, showing that on average, 6th graders matched pitch far better than both kindergarteners and college students (Khazan, 2015, p. 1). This demonstrates that practice is key to improving, while there is also an element of "use it or lose it" to singing, as with all physical skills!

In light of this fact, it is deeply saddening how many people think that they are not able to sing or play music because of a single negative experience in their youth. Perhaps a choral teacher said they were tone deaf, had a bad ear, or they sounded too nasally. Perhaps, in a culture where singing is seen as an act reserved only for professionals, a child was made fun of by their peers or even a family member. We believe that until students feel completely at ease and naturally drawn to the process of singing, one should not yet begin to address technique and quality. This will send the "monitor" (see chapter on Music As a Second Language) into overdrive and distance many students for not only their days under your direction, but even a lifetime.

Long before the Rock and Roll belting of Little Richard and Steven Tyler or the catchy rapping of Eminem and Jay Z, people were using their voices to express themselves musically as part of everyday life, throughout the world. Long before the Grammy Awards, Hollywood, American Idol and Choral Competitions, singing provided a way for all people to come together, share an experience, and be a part of something larger than one's self. Although we may still sometimes experience this at an occasional sporting event, religious service or special holiday, we have a long way to go to undo much of this false perception that music making is reserved for a select few. We hope the cultural shift we need will begin its tilt in public school classrooms just like yours!

Errors Made While Singing

From *The Atlantic* (Khazan, 2015, p. 1)

1. Dziezynski, J. (2014, June 23). Can't Sing? Blame Your Brain. Discover, 1. Retrieved from: http://discovermagazine.com/2014/julyaug/11-singing-in-the-brain

2. Khazan, O. (2015, Feb, 10). Everyone Can Sing. The Atlantic,1. Retrieved from: http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/02/everyone-can-sing-385340/

Garth Brooks or Led Zeppelin the drum set lays down the foundation of the music.

From behind the drum set, drummers provide the groove that the rest of the band relies upon. We hear the different parts of a song more clearly because of what the drummer is doing—using a different feel or part of the drum set in different parts of a song give them a distinct personality. Together with the bass, the drums define the groove—establishing the all-important rhythmic foundation...

Vocals in Modern Band

GETTING STARTED

To the uninitiated, a drum set can look like a complicated and confusing array of round objects to be banged on. The drum set in Figure 1 shows how intricate (and intimidating) a drum set can be. Figure 2 shows the three most important pieces of a drum set and the best ones for beginners to focus on.

Figure 1: Wow! That's a LOT of stuff!
Figure 2: Let's start with this!
"hi hat"   "snare"   "kick drum"

A traditional percussion program often starts students working on rudiments on a drum pad or on a snare drum. This is a proven way of building technique and facility. However, it can be difficult for a student to equate playing on a practice pad with the thrill and excitement that come out of a real-life drum set and this can adversely impact a learner's motivation.

Here's a little exercise. Visualize yourself as the drummer in a rock 'n' roll band. Now look at the two pictures below:

FIGURE A   FIGURE B

Which of the two instruments would you prefer to flail away on in your imaginary band?

There is time and a place for rudiments and drum pads but kids will want to get behind a kit and on a throne right away. We recommend getting them started that way. As the saying goes: "Life is uncertain. Eat your dessert first."

With our focus on the three, core components of the drum kit (the hi hats, snare drum and kick drum) we can begin teaching the drums using three simple steps that mirror the approach we take on guitar and keyboard.

Singing, Rapping and Beatboxing

In addition to singing, the voice may be used in Modern Band for rapping, making sound effects, and beatboxing. Each of these uses has its own set of techniques and challenges, a young but rich history, and is an art form that can continue to be developed over the course of a lifetime! It is important that we do not avoid these topics because of our inexperience with them. Oftentimes a simple introductory experience can be the only thing a student needs to embark on his or her own path.

Singing Voices Are As Individual As Our Fingerprints

Take a listen to singers as diverse as Aretha Franklin, Elvis, Jack White, Enrique Iglesias, Courtney Love, and Beyoncé. Among these popular singers heard on our radio stations during the last half-century or so, you will immediately discover that each possesses a very unique voice used to express their individuality. Some of the characteristics that make them differ from each other are tone, diction, and style, but what sets them apart the most is their personality! This is something that we cannot give to a student, but can only help to draw out.

Imitate; Then Innovate!

Another challenge that music educators face is in helping young singers to find and embrace their "natural" singing voice. Anyone who has worked with children or young musicians will agree that much of what they learn comes through imitation. As master imitators, they will gravitate towards sounding like their favorite artists, even if it is physically unnatural and in some cases even detrimental. However, this is a normal bridge to self-discovery, and it is our job to celebrate these efforts while also reminding them of the importance of sounding like themselves. This approach to teaching singers fosters individuality and also promotes healthy technique and good habits right from the start.

Sing It, Then Play It

Singing helps us become aware of issues like tuning and timing in a way that playing an instrument just cannot. It also allows us to connect to sound on the most visceral level. The voice is guided by the ear, mind and heart all at once with no middleman. The playing of an instrument is often only guided by a technical knowledge of what buttons to press and finger motions to make at what time. Even college students who major in instrumental music have to spend several semesters singing in different ensembles because of this fundamental insight that only singing can provide. There are lots of great singers who could not tell you a single thing about how they do what they do or what they are even doing. Their relationship to music is completely intuitive. To foster this deep physical connection to music, it is important that we provide opportunities to sing for all music students!

VOCALS

A New Model

In traditional choral ensembles, a large group of students sing in unison or a specific part within their section (altos, sopranos, tenors, etc.). Often times the appropriate goal of the music teacher is to get all students to sound the same so that together they will be as one. This means that their diction is consistent, that notes are held for the same duration, that no liberties are taken with the melody such as bending up or down into a note or reinterpreting the rhythm, and that there is an ideal tone. Students will usually stand tall and straight with arms to their sides and not break pose through the duration of the song. There are many great things to be said for this kind of musical setting, for both its participants and the audience, and its power is undeniable.

However, the goals for a singer in a Modern Band setting will be very different than in a traditional choral ensemble. The reasons become apparent when we reflect on the way people sing in popular music groups of the past few decades: they belt, they wail, they growl, they whisper, they scream, they bend, they improvise, they are sometimes nasally, sometimes guttural, other times smoky, always emotional, often out of tune, and they exude individuality and charisma. Some of the most celebrated singers in popular music may have a voice that couldn't pass a chorus audition, but are celebrated for qualities such as authenticity, intention, passion and honesty. Modern Band backup singers, similar to members of a traditional choral ensemble, must be in sync and as one, but often may be dancing or doubling up on percussion, keyboard, or guitar!

Bringing together a Modern Band ensemble with a traditional chorus can yield amazing results! You may have the chorus sing the refrain, while a lead singer, or a small core of lead singers handle the verses in a way that is free of the restrictions that come with large group singing.

Approximation, Scaffolding, and Differentiation – 7 Tips

At their core, popular songs have only two components: a melody, and lyrics. Although it may offend many instrumentalists, the chord structure, riffs and other musical components are considered almost incidental, even in copyright law. The great thing about this is that it allows popular songs to so easily be reinterpreted while remaining recognizable! As long as you include the melody and words, you can complicate it or simplify it however you wish! You can play it with just one guitar or a 15-piece band but if the melody and words are there, the song remains the same! This makes it extremely easy to differentiate to the abilities or stylistic interests of instrumental Modern Band students. However, if the melody is the core of the song and what makes it recognizable, then there is the

least room for differentiation with singing, right? Not true. By using the knowledge of your students and taking a student-centered approach, vocals can become as easily differentiated as guitar or keyboard.

Here are seven ways to help all of your students succeed:

Proximity: Many students can match pitch only when singing along with a song or by listening to another classmate. They need a "reference." Others may struggle to project their voices. Remedy this by surrounding these students with your most independent and confident singers. Position the strong ones directly behind and to the sides of those that need a reference or a sense of safety. Stand in a tight circle whenever possible to create a sense of unity.

Choice of Repertoire: Although your students should play a large role in choosing your repertoire, take into account the range between the lowest and highest note of the song, and the range of the student(s) that will be singing it (more on this later).

Transposition: Transpose the song to the ideal key for the student(s) singing it, taking into account the lowest and highest note. See our tech section for details on how to transpose audio files to a new key.

Modify the Melody: If there are a few notes that are outside of the range of your students, you can change them without making the song unrecognizable!

Approximate Other Parts: Create simple "ooos" or "aghs" using the root notes of the chords that students can sing in the background. You can also find a guitar or keyboard riff in the song that your singers can imitate.

Solo and Choral Singing: For the more advanced singers, give them a lead role on more difficult repertoire or during a song's verses, while the rest of the group joins in for the chorus. You can also split up the singing roles within a song based on each section's difficulty or range. If it fits, allow non-singer students to create a rap section.

Harmonizing: Many of your students will struggle with harmony and as a multi-tasking Modern Band teacher you might not have the time to dedicate to developing harmonized vocal parts. However, some of your more advanced singers can work on this challenge independently or in small groups with the help of an audio recording or notated transcription that you create, or by picking out harmonies on their own.

> *In the circle, I dissolves into we.*
>
> *In the circle, there is no cause, no reason, no place to go. We are just one because we are.*
>
> **-Tzvi Freeman**

Creating a Safe Space for Singing – 7 Tips

Although it is important to create a joyful, inviting and low anxiety environment as a foundation for music making on all instruments, it is especially important when it comes to the voice. Singing is the most personal musical expression a student can make. Unlike strumming a guitar, pressing keys or hitting drums, it involves the direct production of sound from their body and it requires the expression of their emotions. Consequently, many students avoid singing because of the vulnerability it makes them feel. Here are some tips for creating a safe space and minimizing their affective

VOCALS

filters:

Don't call it singing at first. Saying, "We are going to sing now," makes it seem like a big deal and often creates unnecessary anxiety. Simply saying "repeat after me" will get most students to follow. Non-pitched chanting is another way to make the transition from speaking to singing more seamless.

Celebrate approximation, especially with new singers. For a student to try is a big successful leap forward! If you say it's not good enough, it will be perceived by them as a failure and can undermine their confidence, in some cases, for a lifetime.

Focus on expression instead of perfection. "You guys are really getting into this song and enjoying yourselves, which makes me so happy!" as opposed to, "Wow, listen to how those three girls in the back are able to hit that high note without going flat!"

Avoid trying to force a student to sing, which is more or less corporal punishment! Instead, encourage them to sing. You should reward participation but avoid giving negative consequences for a student refusing to sing.

Try to use positive narration with individuals and the group. During a singing activity, verbally acknowledge students displaying desirable behaviors, instead of giving attention to those who are not.

Create and enforce classroom rules of engagement that foster mutual support and acceptance. Example: "No one ever has to apologize for an honest mistake," "Critique is only welcomed when it is asked for," "Applause is mandatory whenever someone sings a solo."

Do lots of warm ups and singing games to loosen up the body, voice, and spirit, and bridge the gap between not singing and singing. See below for some great examples!

> " *Sometimes a singer cannot reach the higher notes. Another man comes to his aid and sings in a loud tone. This gives to the first man, also, the ability to raise his voice. It is a result of the communion of two spirits, wherein each becomes a partner in the other's strength.*
> **– The Koretzer**

Sing Close Together and In a Circle

Singing in a circle and close together allows the weaker singers to better hear, and be lifted by the stronger ones. It is also the best way to experience the togetherness that makes singing in groups so wonderful! This will help create a community that celebrates music as a process to be shared and not as a product to be judged! In addition, it is a student centered approach that does away with the teacher as leader or judge, and allows all to feel of equal importance. "In the circle," says Tzvi Freeman, " I dissolves into we."

Song Selection

Like it or not, your class's opinion of you as a music teacher mostly revolves around the repertoire you select for them to perform. While every music teacher can recall a vast library of songs from their own personal journey, they should also recall what it was like to be in their students' shoes. The songs students choose to sing reflect their emerging identities and are also an outward expression of their emotions. That being said, it's highly recommended that every Modern Band teacher consult the following checklist when considering songs for their students:

___ Does the song **leverage their cultural capital**?
___ Is the song **relevant** to their lives?
___ Is the song in a **good key** for everyone in the band?

VOCALS

___ Are the **lyrics** of the song appropriate?
___ If the song is older than the students, do they understand **why** they are learning it, and do they **want** to play it?

Leveraging the cultural capital of our students doesn't have to be as complicated as it sounds. Culture implies more than just ethnicity. It encompasses community, age, beliefs, trends and customs. For example, just because a teacher works in a Hispanic community doesn't mean the students will have an intrinsic interest in Hispanic music. One is missing the mark by basing song selection on historic cultural contributions of his or her students' ethnic backgrounds. The best way to be student centered is to learn about the student as an individual in the here and now, which will in turn teach you many things about the culture with which they identify.

Determining the relevance of a song is easier to do when a teacher involves his or her students. At the start of the school year, music teachers everywhere can expect to get approached by students who are eager to share new song ideas. Listening to their suggestions is a great way to get into their culture, gauging the general direction they would like to go in. Listening to a popular radio station for a day or consulting an Internet "Top 40 Playlist" are two additional ways to sample the popular culture. However, it goes without saying that it is also the job of the teacher to screen how much of that culture is allowed into the classroom.

Picking good keys for songs is the most important aspect of song selection for a Modern Band. The teacher not only considers a key that is good for the instruments, but the notes of the song must also be comfortable for the singers. Part of this process involves avoiding difficult keys for guitarists, including keys that involve playing too many barre chords (consider getting a classroom set of capos to alleviate this challenge). For keyboard players, avoiding keys that require too many sharps and flats is the goal. Most importantly, teachers must consider the vocal range of the singers and how it fits in with the highest and lowest note of the song and where the majority of the notes fall. If it doesn't fit, do not be afraid to change the key of song!

Screening a song's lyrics can be one of the most challenging aspects of directing a Modern Band. On one hand, students enjoy selecting songs that are contemporary and relevant. On the other hand, children are not always aware of the meaning of the lyrics they are busy memorizing. While there are certain circumstances in which the removal of a word can make a song appropriate, there are just as many instances whereby the inappropriate meaning of a song is embedded in too many lyrics to be revisable. Teachers must be careful to listen to songs in advance, screening the inappropriate lyrics and looking further into the meanings of new catch phrases.

Lastly, when teachers are presenting new music to students, they often forget to explain why they have chosen the music. Instead of beginning a lesson by saying "today we are learning a song that I liked when I was your age," a teacher may want to begin by saying "today we are going to learn a song that will teach you a Punk Rock

VOCALS

drum pattern." When students know why they are doing something and why it is important, they are more likely to become emotionally invested.

Connecting the Voice With Instruments

Other instruments can aid in helping to find and match pitch, create a vocal melody, or write a song. On the other hand, singing can help instrumentalists form a deeper connection with their instrument and play in a more lyrical way. Here are some ways to combine instruments and other Modern Band resources with singing:

Visit the Guitar, Bass, and Keyboard sections for more info.

Guitar and Bass

Singers can try to play notes in a scale chart and individual notes in a chord diagram while singing them at the same time. This connection will serve to make their playing more lyrical and expressive while also helping them with pitch matching and internalizing diatonic harmony. Many great guitar and bass soloists are known to often play what they sing, and sing what they play, at the same time (George Benson, Jimi Hendrix, Esperanza Spalding)! Have your students create or learn simple licks that they can sing and play at the same time! This will get them seeing the instrument as an extension of singing and not just a bunch of lines, frets, and boxes.

A "Capo" is a clamp that attaches onto your guitar neck and presses down on all the strings, changing the location of the first fret of your guitar. It is an essential tool for any singer who also plays guitar and every classroom that combines guitar with singing should have them. With just a simple slide of the capo up or down a fret, a singer can play the same chords but be in a key better suited for his or her voice. See the guitar section for an explanation on how to use them.

Keyboard

Use Jam Cards with keyboards to teach students how to find vocal harmony, and as a practice tool for singing. If a singer knows a chord progression in one key and wants to find the best key for his or her voice, give them Jam Card #6A and have them find the ideal key for their voice on any given song that they can play on piano in any other key!

VOCALS

I Can't Hear Myself!

Making Sure Your Singer is Heard Clearly

As was explained above, a vocal melody and the accompanying words are what define a song. For this reason, it should always be a priority to make sure your singers are heard loud and clear, above all else! This can often be a difficult task in an electric ensemble or with a loud drum kit!

In addition, if your singers cannot hear themselves, they will overexert their voice, which can irritate and damage their

vocal chords. They will also be out of tune, and may feel very uncomfortable, possibly leading to a traumatic experience. Being it is already such a vulnerable position for a young singer to be in, it is important that we do everything possible to prevent this from happening! If your musicians cannot hear themselves or each other, they will be off beat, feel detached, and may be playing the wrong notes or chords! Following are some tips to prevent these things from happening.

Using Microphones and a PA System

A PA System (Public Address System) is what provides amplification for microphones. The one we currently offer for our teachers is called the Fender Passport. Most have three components: A mixer (mixing console), an amplifier, and speakers. Many speakers today are already "powered" which means they are an amplifier and speaker in one. Although "mixers" are not necessary for all PA applications, they can allow for connecting multiple microphones along with electronic keyboards, bass guitars, acoustic electric guitars, MP3 players and computers. "Mixers" may also be "powered," eliminating the need for an amplifier.

The Problem With Standard School PA Systems

Many schools have a PA system, but the speakers are often mounted in front and off to the side of the stage so that the singers and musicians plugged into it will not be able to hear themselves! In addition to this, almost all school performance spaces are missing "stage monitors." These are the speakers that point at the performers.

There are a few solutions to this problem:

Stage Monitors (floor wedges, in-ear monitors, etc.). These are speakers that point the sound at the performers instead of at the audience. All serious live music venues have a few of these on stage so that everyone can hear themselves and each other. You can connect a stage monitor using your mixer's line out, auxiliary, or monitor output jack and we offer one in our instrument menu. When drum sets and amplifiers are involved, this is the only way for singers or anyone going through the PA system to hear themselves and each other. Usually during "sound check" musicians can request how much of which instrument they want to hear in the monitor (example: "less bass," "more vocals," "no guitar"). Microphones are usually placed in front of guitar amplifiers or drums so that the sound can then be transmitted through the mixer and into the monitors for both the audience and/or musicians to hear. Professionals with a bigger budget or on a larger stage will often use wireless "in-ear" monitors so that they can move around more freely or adjust levels from their beltpack.

Guitar or Bass Amp. Although not ideal for sound quality, you can use the line out, auxiliary out or monitor output jack from the mixer into the auxiliary input (1st choice) or instrument input of a guitar of bass amp and point it at your singers. Turn the amp on after the connection is made.

Speaker Placement. If you have a portable PA system such as

VOCALS

the Fender Passport that we offer, you can set up the speakers behind and off to the sides of the singer so that he or she, and the musicians can hear themselves as clearly as the audience. If the microphone is pointed at the speaker it may begin to cause feedback. It is best to test the limits of the setup to see how far you can push it before this happens.

Ear Plugs. If your singers are having trouble hearing themselves, wearing earplugs will allow them to hear the notes they are singing, as it resonates in their head. The downside of this is that they will have trouble properly hearing the rest of the band. They can also try wearing just one ear plug.

What To Do When the PA System Is Not Loud Enough

First make sure that your singers are using the microphone properly (see below). If you've reached the maximum volume of your speakers or monitors and your singers and musicians are still having trouble hearing themselves and each other, the answer is very simple: PLAY SOFTER! It is essential to stress the importance of the singer being heard by his or herself, and also by each musician. After all, they are there to accompany and support the singer. The accompaniment should always be a notch or two lower in the mix than the vocals in order for lyrics and vocal timbre to be heard clearly. Plenty of time should be spent practicing how to play together, adjust dynamics, and "fit into the mix."

In the sections for all other instruments we address ways of controlling volume such as playing drums with "rod" sticks or brushes, putting a t-shirt over drumheads, and using the volume and tone knobs on guitars.

The Art of Using a Microphone

The microphone works for the singer, not the other way around. Impress upon your students that they should move the microphone and position it to where they feel comfortable. What your students have to express is valid and important. The microphone is their tool to let their expression be heard.

Here are some tips to help your students learn proper microphone technique:
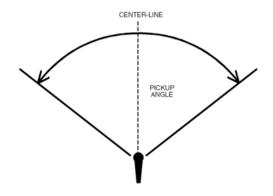
The microphone should point towards your mouth (Many beginners will point it at the ceiling while singing straight ahead). When singing at normal volume stay within an inch or two of the microphone. This will maximize the PA system without requiring more volume, which leads to the risk of feedback.
When singing louder notes, you can back off a few inches to keep volume consistent.
Bring the microphone up to you so that you can stand straight and look straight ahead. Do not lean down to the microphone.
Hold the mic firmly. Rubbing it with the hands will cause unwanted noise. Avoid touching where it connects to the XLR cable so that you do not risk disconnecting it.
Experiment with the pickup range. It is generally around 66 degrees on all sides of the center line, and the volume begins to become noticeably less around 33 degrees on all sides from the center line:

CENTER-LINE

PICKUP ANGLE

Explain to students that microphones are sensitive equipment. Teach them how to avoid accidents like stepping on cables and dropping microphones. Come up with safe and easy routines for how to care for take them out and put them away.

Teach children how to check if a microphone is on. Remind them that all they need to do is speak into the mic, not hit it or blow into it.

Stage Presence

In traditional vocal music programs, the more a singer can stand still and not draw attention to themselves, the better! This may indeed make perfect sense when trying to create a singular unified sound and visual effect, but it could not be any farther from the truth when it comes to a popular music ensemble! Many of us teachers might be working with students that already have this perception of how to sing, and on top of that are extremely self-conscious and shy! There is a lot of work to do to bring out their inner rock star! Here are some ideas:

Set an Example

If you are not having fun and strutting your stuff across the classroom floor, it will also be hard to get your students to. Try to break out of your own shell in service to your students! One of the true gifts of working with children is that it gives us an excuse to act like one! Practice your own imitation of Freddie Mercury, Beyonce, Jimi Hendrix or Kanye West. Share your progress with your students.

Lip Sync American Idol

Have your class act as a panel. Allow volunteers to lip sync a song of their choosing (that is pre-screened by you) and try their best to imitate the performer, or give it their own spin. Depending on your classroom environment, either you or your students can act as judge, but it is important that it is in the spirit of encouragement and not criticism.

Watch Videos of the Greats

Show students videos of great performances and not so great ones, too. Evaluate how each made them feel as a member of

VOCALS

the audience, and how impactful the presence and charisma of the performer can be for the audience member.

Silent Performance

Whatever song you are working on, perform it silently. Have students pretend to sing and play their instruments. This will make them want to express the music physically since they have no other means of doing so. Rate their performance based on presence only!

Practice Specific Moves

Sometimes students only need a few concrete suggestions to get them started and then the spirit will take over! Just like dancing, we often get on the floor and do a simple two step and then before you know it, we are sliding across the floor! Come up with a simple repertoire of moves that your students can use to get started.

Enlist a Choreographer and Panel

Allow one member of your Modern Band, or a few, to be in charge of movement in your performance. It can be their job to help choreograph moves for the song and work with each band member individually. Have students who are not involved in a particular performance become involved by providing feedback about stage presence. Again, the success of this will be contingent on your classroom culture and the group dynamic.

Exaggerate

Sometimes a student might be afraid to use the space of a stage when singing lead and it is as if they are glued to the floor. Instead of encouraging them to "try to move around a little" have them sing the song while walking around the entire stage like they were someone who lost their keys and was running late! After that, incorporating just a few steps here and there will be a breeze. Do the same kinds of exaggerated movements with all aspects of stage presence!

The Power of Auditions (Use it Wisely)

Depending on your situation, auditions may be necessary. Many people point to a negative audition experience as the nail in the coffin of their musical dreams. We must be very careful to use auditions in a positive way. Here are some ways that they may be valuable for all.

- Auditions can be used as an assessment tool, not a means of exclusion. Auditions can save teachers time because they will aid in locating the singers in a large population that already have singing experience. In turn, these experienced students naturally become leaders, or "extra teachers" in the room. With more teachers, increased learning is inevitable.
- They can benefit students as much as their teachers. Students get to watch and listen to the footage of themselves as many times as they like.
- Considering the nervousness that auditions can trigger, it is important that teachers emphasize that they are not mandatory, but just recommended. Teachers can allow students to come up with a partner to alleviate the pressure.

• Audition footage is a window into the classroom for family, friends and the school community in general. Outsiders who take the time to watch these videos will usually serve as vocal coaches to the students during after school hours.

Props and Tools for Teaching Vocals

Slide Whistle
You can warm up your students' voices by doing a few minutes of "repeat after me" using the slide whistle. You can use one hand to play it, and the other to show the melodic contour going up and down. Using a slide whistle to demonstrate melodic contour allows you to do so in a range that may be easy for a child but impossible for the teacher, especially for a male. It is also really fun and often funny to listen to and shows pitch contour as something continuous instead of separate points within a scale.

Melodica
A Melodica is a small handheld keyboard that you blow into, vibrating reeds like a harmonica. By holding it sideways and facing your students, it also allows them to visualize melodic contour, but as separate points within a scale. Its advantage over a keyboard or step bells is that is has a more vocal tone with a wide dynamic range and can sustain as long as you breath into it. It is usually within the higher octaves of a piano, good for matching kids voices.

Hand Puppets
Puppets can be magical for small children who perceive them to be as real as people! For older children, they may lighten the mood and grab their attention more than you can since they see you all the time! You can use different puppets to demonstrate different vocal tones. For instance,Princess Paula is a soprano opera singer and her husband Prince Peter is a bass. When a male teacher wants to demonstrate a falsetto tone without students thinking it weird, or jumping an octave above him, using a female puppet can work wonders!

Two Small Wood Shims and a String (puppet handle)
Singing is very hard to do if you are hunched over or have poor posture. It is also tiring. Tell your students to imagine a straight string going from the base of their spine up to the top of their head while they are singing. When students start to slouch instead of verbally directing them, you can get out your pretend puppet handle made of two small pieces of wood in a "X" and pretend to pull them up straight. You can also use this prop in the beginning to provide the visualization, and then just make a motion with your hand using an imaginary one.

Toy or Real Microphones
As Modern Band teachers we want to prepare our students for

VOCALS

singing into microphones. You can use a toy one or a broken one as a prop that you pass around the room, or you can use a real amplified microphone to give the actual experience!

Backing Tracks

Using drum tracks or backing tracks can make a mundane activity more relevant or exciting for your students. In order to hear the singing clearly, you can stick with just drum tracks, or keep the volume low if there is harmony. In our technology section we provide many ways of easily finding or making backing tracks for use in your classroom.

Visit the technology section for more info.

Warm Ups for Singing

Body Stretching

Having singers stretch can quickly relax their body and get them focused. Everyone can agree that there are many ways to stretch the human body. With limited time in the classroom, neck rolls and shoulder raises are two quick ways to combat upper body tension. If you have more time, you can add as much to this as you'd like. Playing music during a stretch routine can make it more pleasurable. You can also add light dance inspired calisthenics to get the blood flowing!

Face Stretching

Making animal faces (beaver, fish and roaring lion) is a fun way to relax the jaw, mouth and tongue. If animal faces don't go over well with older students you can say "show me your teeth" instead of the beaver, "pucker up" instead of the fish, or "look shocked" instead of the lion. Having students roll their lips and make "propeller" sounds is a great way to loosen the lips. You can also try having students pretend to be eating food or chewing gum in a really exaggerated way.

Stretch and Yawn

Objective: To stretch the upper body, loosen up the vocal chords and create a kinesthetic awareness of melodic contour.
Procedures:
Have students stand in a circle.
Say, "Let's stretch UP first and have a big yawn!" Model stretching your arms to the ceiling as you begin an exaggerated yawn on a very high pitch in your head voice. Slowly bring your arms down lowering the pitch of your yawn to the bottom of your chest voice, then rotate your shoulders, and wiggle your arms. You can also pretend like you're scratching your back against a pole behind you, loosening up the torso.
Repeat the process, and try to be as animated as possible.

VOCALS

Students of all ages will have fun with this!
Model planting feet firmly to the floor as you shake your
knees and legs, vibrating your vocal chords, and doing an
exaggerated vocal vibrato on a low tone.
Bring it back up to the upper body and swing your arms from
behind your back to straight up in the air, following the arc
with your voice.
Stop at the top and say, "Let's see who can hold out a yawn the
longest! Drop your arms only when you stop!" (Adapted from
Find Your Voice: a partnership between Musical Futures and
The Sage Gateshead UK)

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example:
MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and
identified performance challenges.

Shake, Shakity, Shake

Objective: To loosen the body and vocal chords and create a
kinesthetic awareness of melodic contour.

Procedures:

Form a circle.
Demonstrate the following chant and motions very slowly.

Up Shake, shake, shake, shakity shake

(Reach hands in the air, lean up, and shake loosely – either do
a non-pitched chant, or go higher in pitch)

And a down shake, shake, shake, shakity, shake

(Reach hands down toward the floor and shake loosely, either
do a non-pitched chant or go lower in pitch. Perform these
two measures twice before moving on.)

To the front, to the back, to the side side side

(Shake hands in front, shake hands in back, then shimmy to
the right. The second time shimmy to the left. Chant "to the"
on a lower pitch and "back, front, side side side" on a higher
pitch. Perform this measure twice).

And around, and around

VOCALS

(Students can choose how they represent going around, either by spinning, twirling their hands, etc. Either chant or go up and down with pitch)

Have students join in with you going slowly.
Repeat it faster and faster until they're going as fast as they can.

Note: If older students do not find this one appealing on its own, you can add a backing track or tempo adjustable drum track in the style that appeals to them – Hip-Hop, Rock, R&B, etc. (See our technology section for tips on finding/creating backing tracks)

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

(Adapted from Find Your Voice: a partnership between Musical Futures and The Sage Gateshead UK)

Vocal Exploration Activities:

Hide and Seek Game Using Pitch or Using Dynamics

Objective: Students will learn how high and low their voices can go, switching between their head and chest voices. With Dynamics, they will learn how loud or soft their voices can go while still retaining a pitch.
Resources: A small object to hide
Vocabulary: High, Low, Soft, Loud, Dynamics, Pitch
Procedures:

Explain directions: For pitch, students guide a classmate towards a hidden object by getting higher in pitch as he or she gets closer to the object and lower in pitch as he or she gets farther from the object. You can give the students a neutral syllable to sing, or allow them to use any syllables of their choosing. For dynamics, students sing softer on a melodic fragment of a song of your choosing, when a classmate is far away and get louder as they approach the object.
Demonstrate the process by placing the object somewhere and then walking close or far away from it, demonstrating what the class should do with their voices to help you find it.
Try it again, but this time don't join in, and see if the students can successfully guide you on their own, going closer and then farther away to test their understanding.
Choose a student to hide an object, and a student to search for it. The student searching can look away into a corner of the room, or sit on a chair facing the door, etc.
Tell students that you will be choosing those who are participating and trying their best to be the next hider or seeker.

Extensions: This activity can also be done using instruments,

body percussion, and vocal percussion.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Follow the Sound Partner Game

Objective: Students will create unique vocal sounds, explore the possibilities of the voice and expand their comfort zone. Students will also actively listen to differentiate between vocal sounds and timbres. Students will develop trust and camaraderie within your class.

Resources: Optional Chairs

Procedures:

In pairs, students will come up with a distinct vocal sound. You can also direct them to pick an instrument sound or a percussion sound.

One student leads the other around the room using that sound while the other has his or her eyes closed. At any given time there could be 10-15 different sounds filling up the room at once.

Stop after a minute or two and have partners switch roles or find new partners.

Variations: If this activity presents a danger in your teaching space due to room setup, space restrictions, or your student population, you can have a row of chairs for the students with their eyes closed to sit in, while their partners making vocal sounds walk around the chairs. When the students with their eyes closed hear their partner, they reach out and stop them and the student making sounds sits it front of the chair until everyone has found their partner.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context. Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. Example: MU:Re9.1.5a – Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, an explain appropriateness to the context, citing evidence from the elements of music.

(Adapted from Find Your Voice: a partnership between Musical Futures and The Sage Gateshead UK)

Follow Your Partner's Voice

This activity is much like the previous activity, "Follow the Sound" but partners all sing the same song or melodic fragment of a song while students with their eyes closed must differentiate between the unique timbres of each voice.

Extension: Have students that succeeded in following their partner describe the characteristics of their partners voice using their musical vocabulary.

National Core Arts Standards: Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria

to evaluate artistic work. Example: MU:Re9.1.5a – Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, an explain appropriateness to the context, citing evidence from the elements of music. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Singing Yo-Yos

If you can get a Yo-Yo and learn a few tricks such as "Stalling," "Walk the Dog" and "Around the World," great. If not, you can either show a video, or just use an imaginary Yo-Yo! Demonstrate how when the Yo-Yo goes down the voice goes down, and when it comes up, the voice comes up. Have students follow the Yo-Yo, real or imagined, with their voice.

Extension: Allow students to work individually with their own Yo-Yos, representing the movements it makes with their voices.

National Core Arts Standards: Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Singing Air Guitars

Objective: Students will lose singing inhibitions, warm up their voices, and have fun, by imitating guitar tones while playing air guitars!

Resources: A real guitar if possible, but teacher can also use an air guitar

Procedures:

Tell students to take out their air guitars, put them on and get them in tune.

Tell them they are going to repeat after you using their air guitars (you don't even have to mention the voice as they will automatically use their voice to make the sounds of the air guitar).

Start simple and play some short licks on the guitar, singing them at the same time (try to keep them all the same length – 4 beats long is perfect).

If you do not play guitar well enough to do this, you can also play air guitar, or hold a real guitar and pretend to play licks, using your voice only to make the sound.

When done, tell students to put them back in their imaginary cases, or on an imaginary stand.

Extension: Allow a student to come up and lead the class.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities

VOCALS

and identified performance challenges.

Sirens

Objective: Students will explore melodic contour and the transition point between head and chest voice.

Procedures:

Demonstrate two or three unique siren sounds using your head voice, or going in and out of your head and chest voice. One can be for a fire engine with a long and slow arc and an occasional honk, and one for a police car that has a fast oscillation. Have students imitate both sounds.

When you are sure that they know the difference, tell them they need to be either a police car or a fire engine depending on the emergency.

Tell them some emergencies, such as, "Oh no, there is a cat stuck in the tree!" They should then make a fire engine noise. You might also say, "Oh no, there's a burglar hiding behind the drum set!" In this case, they should then make a police car noise.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Common Core State Standards: Example: ELA/Reading - Key Ideas and Details. RI.4.2: Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Follow the Ball

Objective: Students will explore melodic contour and the transition point between head and chest voice. They will also practice making a kick drum sound.

Resources: A safe and lightweight ball

Procedures:

Find a safe and lightweight ball that you can easily catch, and can be easily seen.

When the ball is in the air, students follow it with their voice, ascending in pitch when the ball is going up, and descending in pitch when the ball is going down.

When the ball is caught or hits the floor, students should make a low boom sound or a kick drum sound with their voice.

Split the room into two groups: those that do the boom sound when it is caught or hits the ground, and those that follow the ball in the air with their voice. After a couple of minutes have them switch roles.

You can alternate between throwing the ball high in the air with pauses between each throw, and more of a constant smaller throw where you keep a tempo, catching it on the beat.

Extension: Invite a student to play catch with you or with another student, or have a student to come up and lead the group by him or herself. Use multiple balls. Have students imitate the timbre of specific instruments.

Rollercoasters

Objective: Using iconographic notation students will compose and perform melodic contours.

Resources: Whiteboard, giant pad or chalkboard, markers, chalk

Procedures:

Draw a rollercoaster track on your whiteboard. After counting yourself off, "one, two, ready, go, etc." follow it slowly with a pointer, ruler or drumstick, while ascending with your voice as it goes up, and descending as it goes down. Invite the class to join in with you.

Have a volunteer student come up and draw his or her own rollercoaster track. Have them conduct the class, counting them off and following it with the pointer at their own chosen speed.

Choose another volunteer and repeat the process.

Extension: Students can also do this in small groups, and rehearse their rollercoaster so that all group members are more-or-less making the same vocalization, and then the groups can take turns performing their rollercoaster.

Bubblegum Person

Objective: Students will use their bodies and storytelling to express and explore melodic contour and vocal sounds.

Procedure:

This vocal exploration story game gives your students a chance to get creative! First you will tell and demonstrate the basic story of bubblegum person using both words and vocal sounds. Here is the story:

a) You'll say, "One day I made a person out of bubblegum." Take imaginary bubblegum out of your mouth and shape it into a person.

b) "Then bubblegum person went for a walk." In a high voice that goes from high to low and back again, say, "do-ta, do-ta, do-ta, do-ta, do-ta, do-ta, do" as you use your first and second fingers on one hand to walk on the palm of your other hand.

c) "He then walked into a skyscraper and pressed the button for the elevator." Now say, "DING!" in a high head voice.

d) "He went all the way up to the top." Start at the bottom of your range and slowly go to the top of your head voice on the syllable "ooh" while your hand (bubblegum person)

VOCALS

goes from waist high to above your head.

   e) " He gets to the top," and then say "DING!" again in a high head voice.

   f) "Then he puts on a parachute." Come up with a few fun or unique vocal sounds and hand motions perhaps for the zipper, the strapping in, or putting on hooks, such as "Zip, Zip, clunk!"

   g) "Then he jumps out the window!" Now follow your hand from high above your head down to your waist as you say "Weeeeee," descending from the top of your head voice range to low into your chest voice range.

   h) "And when he gets to the bottom he goes, Splat!" Clap as you say splat!

After you go through the story, invite students to join in and narrate it one more time.

Now tell the story only with vocal sounds and without any narration!

Creative Extension:

Now ask for volunteers to add another step to the story, and an accompanying vocal sound, or to change parts of the story. The story will begin to evolve, challenging the memory and inspiring an exploration of new vocal sounds! Students can also work in small groups to create their own stories and then share out with the class.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #3: Present – Share creative musical work that conveys intent, demonstrates craftsmanship, and exhibits originality.

Lower the Recording, Raise the Voice

Objective: Students will learn to sing a song by performing it several times with a recording that gradually reduces in volume.

Resources: Song recording, accompaniment instrument, song lyrics

Procedures:

Distribute lyric sheets or project lyrics for the class to see.

When the ball is in the air, students follow it with their voice, ascending in pitch when the ball is going up, and descending in pitch when the ball is going down.

Repeat step 2 several times. Each time, gradually reduce the volume of the recording so that more of the singing responsibility is on the class. Teacher will check to see how well the class is keeping pitch and tempo by occasionally raising the level of the recording.

Conclude the class with a final run-through of the song with no aid from the recording. Teacher will provide accompaniment and lead the song.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

VOCALS

All Words to One Word

Objective: Students will sing a part of a song they know well and remove one word at a time until there is only one left, developing their ability to hear internally (audiate).

Procedures:

Have lyrics to the song section you are using on the board or a screen where you will be able to cross out words one at a time. You should use just part of a song so that this activity can be completed with 5-10 minutes.

Sing the song section with your class while you or a student keeps the beat with a metronome, drum track, or percussion instrument.

Without skipping a beat, cross out the first word and sing it again, hearing the crossed out word in your head, and coming in on the next word.

Cross out the first two words and sing it again.

Repeat until there is only one word left (the last word of the phrase)! Then for the final round sing all the words!

Extensions:

Try removing the last word of the phrase one by one, instead of the first.

Use a larger section, or an entire song, and remove entire sentences, one by one.

You could also do this with instruments using a chord progression or a riff, removing one chord at a time, or one note at a time.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #4: Analyze the structure and context of varied musical works and their implications for performance. Example: MU:Pr4.2.5a – Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in a music selected for performance.

Building a Vocal Groove

Objective: Students will replicate teacher created vocal ostinatos (small repeating musical patterns) by rote, and be able to maintain their own part while others are going on simultaneously. This will help them develop part independence as both a musician and singer.

Procedures:

For both the teacher and students, this activity can start extremely simple and be developed over the course of a whole year. You can begin with very simple four beat rhythms such as: and aim for only two simultaneous parts. In the beginning you can perform them with no pitch and just use percussive vocal sounds such as "Ka" or "boom", emulating a hi-hat, snare drum or kick drum.

Begin by bringing students into a circle. Stand in the middle and have students all keep a beat at a moderate tempo by patting or snapping.

Using your voice, create simple non-pitched 4 beat rhythms for students to echo. Use sounds that a drum set might make. Over the beat, you say a pattern such as "Boom Ka, Boom-Boom, Ka," and the students say it back to you.

After a minute or so, settle on a single phrase that students can repeat over and over as an ongoing ostinato (short repeating musical pattern).

Once the whole class can maintain this pattern without your

VOCALS

help, signal a line that splits the circle into two halves and do another "repeat after me" giving half the group a second pattern. You may want to emulate a hi-hat (ts-ts-ts-ts-ts-ts-ts-ts). If this is easy for your students, you may add a third or fourth part.

If it starts to fall apart, bring it back to a single part, and rebuild it.

If it comes together quickly, go back to the first group and start over with a new pattern.

Try having groups switch parts.

More Advanced Extensions:Add in pitched content such as bass lines or root notes of a chord progression. After this process becomes very comfortable for you and your students, you can do overlapping melodic ostinatos with lyrical content! Students may also be invited to lead this activity or break off into groups and compose their own vocal grooves.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr2.1.5a – Demonstrate selected and developed musical ideas for improvisations, arrangements or compositions to express intent and explain connection to purpose and context.

Jamming on One Note then More Notes

Objective: Students will be able to repeat and create one or two note vocal melodies while singing on pitch.

Resources: A stylistically relevant backing track or live accompaniment in a key best suited for you and your students. You can also combine live guitar or keyboard with a drum track. For the procedures below we suggest the key of G and a neutral progression such as the I chord (G) and the IV chord (C). (G for 2 beats to C for 2 beats).

Procedures:

Have the backing track or live playing going as the students enter the room.

Sing a G note on a neutral syllable (La, or lu, or ba, etc.) and hold it out, as you make eye contact with all of your students. Signal for them to join in with you.

Once you are sure that they've got this note in their head, start inventing easy rhythms as simple as   on one neutral syllable that are only 4 beats long, and signal for them to echo you.

Start simple and get more complicated with the rhythm.

Start adding different vowel sounds and scat syllables, being sure to not use actual words so that the focus is on the sound and tone.

Now that they've got the anchor pitch, add other pitches to the mix.

Experiment with different tones and volume levels. Get creative but be sure to stick on a single pitch!

Extension: Allow a volunteer student to be the leader.

VOCALS

Have students take turns inventing their own one note (or more) 4 beat melody, going around the room, 1 student per measure. Be sure to give them the option to pass. You could have students that don't want to go keep their hands down and those that want to go, raise their hands.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Jamming In 1 Key

Objective: Students will actively listen to and echo various vocal phrases by rote.

Resources: A backing track in a key of your choosing or self-accompaniment. You can also try using chord progressions to songs you are working on, or karaoke tracks to songs you are working on.

Procedures:

Play the track.

Starting simple, sing anything you like for students to repeat back to you in small 1 or 2 measure phrases. Be sure to keep them the same length so that it is clear when students should repeat you.

Experiment with dynamics and tone.

If you think they are ready, allow student volunteers to lead.

Extensions: If you played in a major key, change the track to the same tonic, but now a minor key (Ex: A major and then A minor). Have students note the difference.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.

Pitched Conversation

Objective: Students will improvise a melody using words and pitches, improving their ability to match pitch.

Resources: Optional stylistically relevant backing track or live accompaniment in a key best suited for you and your students. You can also combine live guitar or keyboard with a drum track. For the procedures below, we suggest the key of G and a progression of only the root chord (G) and the IV chord (C). (G for 2 beats to C for 2 beats).

Procedures:

Using one note only, sing to your students, "For the next few minutes everything you or I say, has to be said on this note! Our voices are stuck on this note! Can you say, 'OK', on this note please?" (Note: Feel free to add other pitches at the onset or as the activity develops)

You can begin telling a story using that pitch, trying to also stay in rhythm if using a backing track.

Begin to ask questions or leave the end of your sentences

blank and choose a volunteer to answer them such as "If I could travel to one place in the world it would be..." and with younger kids "What color is Susan's shirt?" or "2 plus 2 equals..."

After getting students comfortable with answering with single words, you can give them a chance to improvise by answering you in full sentences or telling you a story about something!

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.

If You Can Say it, You Can Rap It

Objective: Students will respond to questions by rapping their answers.

Resources: Hip-Hop backing track, or a drum track

Procedures:

Have drum track playing as students enter the room. Everything you say to the students must be "rapped". This means you are giving your wor¬ds a musical rhythm that is in sync with the backing track. You should try to fit words into groupings of 4 or 8 beats so that your lines have "meter." Sometimes this will mean stretching words out or big long pauses. That is ok! Eventually this will become intuitive for you and your students. Feel free to practice this in the car on the way to work, walking to school from the subway, or on the phone with loved ones!

Rap to them something like, "For the next ten minutes everything we say must be rapped, but do not worry, it doesn't have to rhyme, the only thing to think about is rhythm and time. That just rhymed because I got lucky. If you can answer my question with a rap in a complete sentence, raise your hand."

Start out very easy with questions like, "What is your name?" Students should answer in a complete rapped sentence: "My name is Susan." If they do not rap it, thank them for trying and ask if they would like to try again this time rapping it.

Move on to more open-ended questions such as, "What are you going to do this weekend?" or, "What has been the best part of your week?" These will require more creative rapping!

Extensions:

Allow students to have "rap conversations" with each other in small groups while a backing track plays in the background.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.
Common Core State Standards: ELA Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration. Example: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.B: Follow agreed-upon

VOCALS

rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.

Scattin' a Rap

Objective: Students will be able to echo and create 4 beat scatted rap phrases.

Resources: Hip-Hop Backing Track

Procedures:

Having fun, embracing absurdity, and going for it with no inhibitions is key to getting your students to follow.

Play backing track and initiate a "repeat after me."

Create a 4 beat scatted rap phrase, (Ex: "Booka baki doopa sabbady doo") and have students repeat you. While doing so, show the 4 count with your fingers so they understand the length of your phrases.

Once they are comfortable, allow volunteer students to lead the exercise.

Go around the room allowing each student to create a 1 bar scat rap. Students who do not want to participate can put a thumbs down so that you can skip them without a pause.

Repeat doing 2 bar phrases (8 beats). This will require deeper listening and be a bigger creative challenge!

Extension: Allow students to compose an entire rap using only scat syllables. Allow students to have scat rap conversations in small groups.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.

Activities for Already Comfortable Singers

All teachers know that establishing good routines is a common attribute of teachers who have successful classrooms. Vocal music teachers are not excluded. While routines in the music classroom can take on many forms, one thing remains constant: they help singers relax, focus, and feel confident before rehearsals and performances. In addition to the body and face stretching in the beginning section, the following are some warm-up routines to use with your more established vocal students:

Posture Check

Having students stand with their back against a wall is a fast and simple way to remind them of good singing posture. Four parts of the body (All b's) should touch the wall, including the back of the heel, butt, shoulder blades and back of the head. Once students step off the wall, they should maintain their straight posture, keeping their feet shoulder width apart with a slight bend in the knees. Singers that are seated should be reminded to sit on the

edge of their chair, feet flat on the floor, standing from the waste. A fun exercise that you can do to demonstrate the value of good posture is to have your students sing a pitch on "ahh" with their head straight. Then have them sing the same pitch while lowering and raising their head. Ask students what happened to the pitch. Another Little Kids Rock teachers swears by the phrase, "Show me an attitude," as confidence will naturally improve posture and strength of the body.

Breathing

One analogy that helps beginning singers to better understand the process of breathing is the image of waves breaking on a shoreline. After waves crash on the shore, they retreat back into the sea. Singers can use this analogy as a reminder to use up their entire breath before inhaling again. Fully grasping the process of singing involves a deeper understanding of breath support. Here are a few warm-up activities related to breathing:

Rhythmic Breathing

This is a simple warm-up intended to get students to start thinking about and feeling phrases through their breathing. Basically, this warm-up involves asking students to inhale and exhale for predetermined amounts of time. A good starting point is inhaling four beats and exhaling for eight. Using background music that students know and love is a great way to help students count the beats while they are breathing and keep it fun and relevant.

Alphabet Breath Song

This is a fun way to show students the power in taking a good breath. Students are invited to inhale fully and then sing the alphabet song as many times as possible on one breath. The game ends when the last person is out of air and stops singing.

Because I'm Happy, Happy, Happy, Happy

This fun activity is meant to show students how excessive breathiness can undermine the ability to finish a phrase, and should be used with care! The object is to exaggerate the "HAAAApy" and see how many times you can say the words before running out of breath. Being most kids love this classic song by Pharell, this is a fun one for all.

The Tongue

The tongue is one muscle that can easily be overlooked when teaching students about singing. Young singers usually don't spend enough time focusing on the tongue to understand that it can interfere with producing sound. By creating an awareness of its power, students' will immediately begin to enlist its help in their singing endeavours!

Three Tongue Positions Warm Up

One exercise that will immediately illustrate this point involves a demonstration of three tongue positions in the mouth.

VOCALS

Explain and demonstrate the three positions of the tongue:
a) First, we can press the tongue straight down so that it's pushing against the gums below our bottom teeth.
b) Second, we can let the tip of our tongue rest naturally against our bottom teeth.
c) Lastly, we can curl the tip of the tongue up so that it presses against the hard palate.

Have students repeat these three movements with their tongue while singing the same pitch.

Ask them to describe what they felt and heard. Everyone knows that muscles need to be warmed up before they get used.

Tongue Twisters

Seeing the tongue is the muscle, we should also give it time to warm up. Tongue twisters are a great way to get the tongue moving without bringing too much attention to it. They are also a fun way to stimulate the students' minds while getting them to focus on diction. Try to rapidly repeat the following phrases with your students. Be warned, they will eventually want to generate some of their own ideas.

- "Unique New York"
- "Red Leather Yellow Leather,"
- "Sally Sells Seashells by the Seashore"
- "Rubber Baby Buggy Bumpers."

Ear Training

Many music teachers often forget how connected ear-training is to the process of learning how to sing. Helping students develop their "ear" is a skill that will aid their musical journey, regardless of the path they choose. Here are a few examples of vocal warm-ups that focus on becoming aware of the diatonic scale, interval relationships and melodic patterns. For all of these examples you can experiment with using a drum track to bring more excitement or change things up!

Who Let the Bees Out

This is a catchy vocalise geared towards getting shy singers to produce their first sounds. First, the teacher hums an ascending scale up to the fifth step (tell the students it feels like a hive of bees swarming inside your mouth). The second time, invite them to try it with you. Next, demonstrate the addition of the descending notes on an open "ah" (letting the imaginary bees fly out). The fact that the mouth begins in a closed position gets students to focus on breathing and supporting a loud hum. When their mouths eventually open, they are typically surprised by how much sound they can produce. Continue the pattern, moving up or down chromatically by half steps or remain in the same key and experiment with changing syllables.

Mm Mm Mm Mm Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah

Ascending Thirds

This is a bona fide vocalise that works great for introducing

leaps. It can be sung on any vowel sound of your choice. It works well as a precursor to harmonizing since a third above is the most common harmonizing note, and students will get used to finding it!

The "Number Song"

This is a great warm up to use for many reasons. First, numbers are something that even non-singers can understand. Second, the song connects numbers and major scale tonality in a straightforward manner. As numbers go up, so does pitch. When numbers go down, again the pitch follows. Third, the number song is good for singers of all levels because it requires concentration to perform. Regardless of vocal ability, all participants must focus and work together to complete the numerical pattern. Finally, it should be noted that many other concepts can be linked to this warm up, including harmony, scales and improvisation.

The "Interval Song"

This tried and true standard also uses numbers to denote the pitches of the major scale. Unlike the "Number Song," this warm-up focuses on the intervals of the scale as opposed to the individual steps.

LESSON PLAN: Beginner Beat Boxing

Objective:

Students will understand that any and every vocal sound can be used percussively. Students will learn the basic building blocks of beat boxing.

Resources:
Optional YouTube video

Procedures:

Here is a great script to introduce the voice as percussion instrument:

a) "Everyone make a sound with your mouth." Some students will jump on the opportunity while other will want more direction.
b) "Even the word 'make' can act as a great vocal sound." At this point, begin making rhythms using the word 'make'.
c) "Ok, now let's hum! Did you ever eat something and think it's delicious? Pretend you just ate your favorite food." Lead the class in an "mmmmmm."

Ask students why it does not sound like beat boxing. The reason is that it does not emulate drum sounds.

Now show students how just these two sounds can be enough to create a cool rhythmic pattern! "Make, MakeMmm Make, Make, MakeMmmm." Do a 'repeat after me' having them echo a few sample patterns using 'make' and 'mmmm'.

Explain, "To make the sound of a kick drum or floor tom, close your lips and build up some air pressure. Then release. Try with tight lips, try with loose lips, try opening your mouth on the left, and then on the right. Try in the center. How does the sound differ?"

Explain, "To get the sound of a snare or a symbol, push air through your teeth with your lips open and your jaw relaxed. Try moving your tongue around – against your top palette, lower palette, in the back of your mouth, etc." Give students time to experiment

Explain, "Move your tongue around, Move your lips around. Hear the different timbres." Continue, "To get the sound of a hi hat, push your tongue against your top teeth, use it to block the air and then release the air." Give students a minute or so to experiment.

Initiate another call and response.

Extension:

Send students in small groups to compose their own rhythms using various beat box sounds. Parameters may vary depending on age group and allotted time.

Show a YouTube video so great beat boxers. There are so many!

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #3: Present – Share creative musical work that conveys intent, demonstrates craftsmanship, and exhibits originality.

LESSON PLAN: Hearing Notes in the Major Scale

Objective:

Students will be able to tell which note they are hearing from a Major scale through an exercise that guides the way they pay attention to it.

Resources:
Any pitched instrument like a piano or guitar

Procedures:

Play a one octave, ascending Major scale for your class. It doesn't matter which key you choose; some teachers may want a key that fits the vocal range of their students, while others may want one that the students can play on their instruments. For the sake of this example we'll use the key of C Major.

Ask the students to sing the scale in an ascending direction only. Use numbers to represent the pitches they hear while singing at a comfortably slow tempo "one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, one".

Tell students that you are going to play a pattern of notes from the Major scale and that you'd like everyone to say the sequence of numbers as a group. Be mindful at first to always begin on the lowest note of the scale (1) and only use ascending or repeated notes without any skips. For example you may play C D E E E and then as a group everyone will say "1-2-3-3-3." Then try another pattern C D D E F and everyone will repeat back "1-2-2-3-4."

After it is obvious to you that everyone has no trouble hearing ascending and repeated notes, incorporate a few descending examples.

Ask students to again sing the ascending scale with you. Now play just one of the notes and ask everyone to answer together which number they all heard (this way no-one gets singled out for answering incorrectly while everyone benefits from participating in the exercise). After everyone announces answers, play the scale up to the individual note you just played. Paying attention to music this way builds a foundation in musical perception for students that allows them to perceive notes in relationship to the "tonic" or starting note of any scale. As their skills improve you can mix in singing patterns that involve skips or descending patterns. Soon you'll be able to play a new song for your class and they'll be able to tell you which note of the scale the singer begins on!

Extension:
To expand on the ever-important skill of ear training, invite students to intentionally remove one note from the scale they are singing. For instance, when they arrive at the predetermined pitch, they may hear it in their mind and account for it rhythmically, but they are not allowed to not externalize the number or the pitch. Another extension activity is to repeat steps 1-5 on the minor or pentatonic scale.

VOCALS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Responding - Anchor Standard #7

LESSON PLAN: Re-Create A Song Using Only Vocals

Objective:

Students will be able to use their voices to approximate pitches, rhythms, and sounds contained within a song of their choice..

Resources:
Internet and visual source
Devices or computers with students chosen song
Headphones and headphone splitters
Paper and pencil
Projector

Procedures:

Play a video or song for the class which highlights the human voice in different capacities. Examples include a Bobby McFerrin performance, a beatboxer, a clip from the television show "The Sing Off," etc.

Explain to students that they are going to work in small groups and use their voices to imitate the sounds they hear in a recording of their choice.

Provide the class with several examples of how to recreate the sounds in a recording, demonstrating one instrument at a time.
  a) Play the recording and start by recreating the beat.
  b) Then, search for a bass line.
  c) Next, look for catchy riffs or ostinatos.
  d) Save the melody for last.

Allow students to divide into small groups to listen to their song (headphones and headphone splitters are a great way to convert a small classroom space into separate listening areas. Try to keep stronger singers in separate groups to ensure there will be a lead voice in each group)

Circulate the room to ensure students are listening to the recording and searching for parts.

Invite students to record their ideas so they do not forget them as they are layering.

Invite students to perform their finished product.

Extension:
More advanced students can try to translate figure out the key, chords or riffs of the song by ear using keyboards, guitars, JamCards, etc.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artist work. Anchor Standards #4: Analyze, interpret and select artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.

VOCALS

LESSON PLAN: Vocal Warm Ups From Our Favorite Songs

Objective:

Students will be able to use actual phrases, licks, and intervals that come from the music they love most as a vocal warm up to challenge and expand their range. This will help illuminate things they hear in the music the love.

Resources:
Recordings of the songs your class is working on.

Procedures:

Listen in advance to a recording of a song you are working on with your class. Find an element of that song, a phrase or a couple of notes that happen over and over that you can use to make a vocal warm up.

Play the recording for your class and point out the moment you have chosen to use as a vocal warm up. For this example we'll use "Diamonds" by Rihanna. She sings: "Shine bright like a diamond" up and down the interval of a 5th at a pretty rapid tempo, not an easy thing for a singer to do. Even though it's not the easiest vocal trick to do, students will have no problem because they already know how it sounds, coming from a song many are already familiar with.

Take this "vocal lick" and move it up chromatically using a guitar or a keyboard. Repeat moving up the scale until the vocal range of your students has been sufficiently challenged. You could also decide to move the vocal lick you choose down chromatically helping students become aware of using their lower registers.

Encourage your students to find vocal warm ups in the songs they like or other songs you're working on. Incorporate these ideas into your classes when you can. Honoring students this way increases buy in, validates their musical identity and gives them confidence!

VOCALS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #4: Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

LESSON PLAN: Using Jam Cards to Harmonize

Objective:

Students will use Jam Cards to learn sing the different notes of a chord.

Resources:
Little Kids Rock Jam Cards and keyboards.

Procedures:

Review the definition of a chord, reminding students that every chord is made of three unique notes.

Divide students into groups of three, providing each group with a keyboard or a xylophone.

Have groups practice naming the notes of different chords. For example, the teacher will say G Major and the groups will use their Jam Card to find the three notes in that chord. Repeat the process with several chords.

Next, each student will decide which of the three notes of the chord they would like to try to sing. Allow students time to see if they can each sing their note using the same neutral syllable like "la."

Finally, each group will be invited to perform their three-part harmony for the class or explain to the class what was challenging about trying to sing different notes simultaneously.

If possible, record the performance and play it back so they can evaluate themselves.

Extension:
Students can create a rhythmic pattern to use when performing their harmony. Students can also do this alternating between two chords and then record themselves and use it as a backing track!

VOCALS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.
Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

LESSON PLAN: Stairway to Singing

Objective:

Students will use a staircase for singing steps and leaps, harmonizing and vocal improvisation.

Resources:
A staircase and any pitched instrument

Procedures:

Teacher will play an ascending major scale on a pitched instrument and practice singing the pitches with the class, using numbers.

Depending on the amount of steps available, teachers will then sing notes as they ascend the staircase, with each step representing a step in the scale. Then they will descend the staircase and sing the same pitches in the opposite order.

In groups of 2-3, students will then try to ascend and descend the staircase while the teacher sings along or accompanies on an instrument.

Next the teacher will demonstrate leaps. For instance, the teacher can sing and step 1-3-5-3-1. Students will repeat while the teacher sings along or accompanies the leaps on an instrument.

Finally, the teacher will improvise a melody on the steps. For example, they will sing and step 1-2-3-2-3-4-3-4-5-4-3-2-1. Students will go next, improvising any combination of ascending and descending notes. For this task, having an accompaniment instrument is important so that the teacher can provide the student who is improvising with the correct pitches. Partners can observe, noting which pitches the student sang correctly.

Extension:
Many additional topics can be explored on the singing staircase, including harmonizing, pentatonic scale and major vs. minor scales.

VOCALS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

LESSON PLAN: Forbidden Rhythms & Pitches

Objective:

Students will rely on musical memory (audiation) and build ear-training skills through a series of rhythmic and melodic call-and-response examples.

Resources:
Pitched instrument and/or voice, drum

Procedures:

Forbidden Rhythm:
Explain the rules
a) The teacher will perform a forbidden rhythm. If you hear this rhythm you must be silent and freeze like a statue. If you hear any other rhythm you must clap it. If you make any sound in response to the forbidden rhythm you must sit down. If you hesitate in performing the 'allowed' rhythm you must also sit down!

Ask students to stand up and give them a forbidden rhythm of your choice (either 4 beats long or 8, depending on age and level). It helps to keep the beat with your foot while performing the rhythm so that students have a reference for timing.

Before the game begins allow them to clap it a few times to internalize it.

Begin the game. The closer your 'allowes' rhythms are to the 'forbidden rhythm' the harder the game will be. If it is too easy you may also make rhythms longer or more complicated the next round.

Forbidden Pitch:
Keep in mind that this game is not about pitch matching. It is about critical listening, and having fun singing. For this reason be sure that singing on pitch has no consequence for winning or losing!

The rules are the same but instead you will sing or play a succession of pitches or a melodic fragment that is 'forbidden'. This can be very difficult at first so start with just a couple of pitches! You can expand by letting kids know what the pitches are (1 – 3 – 5 – 3, etc.) However, do no say the names as you sing or else they will simply be responding to words and not sound!

Extensions:
Allow students to lead. Vary complexity to up to 4 measures or more!

Variations:
You may also refer to this game as "Poison" rhythm or melody with younger kids. Following this, you might play in a sitting circle and when they get 'poisoned' they go in the middle of the circle which is the "shark tank" and become shark meat. This adds some excitement to the game and makes losing more interesting and less boring for the little ones.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

VOCALS

LESSON PLAN: Vowels for Tone, Consonants for Diction

Objective:

Students will discover the roles of vowels and consonants when singing.

Resources:
Song recording, lyrics

Procedures:

Ask students to have a 'turn and talk' about the following: "Which is more important when singing the lyrics of a song, the vowels or the consonants?"

Play a recording of the song with the lyrics displayed so that everyone can become familiar with the lyrics and the tune. Repeat if necessary.

Next, try singing the song again with the removal of all consonants. (As the teacher, be prepared to model what each line sounds like in a "repeat after me" fashion, practicing one line at a time.)

Repeat step two, this time singing the entire song only using vowels while the recording plays.

Ask students to write a short reflection about their vowel-singing experience. Make sure they include some pros and cons of singing only vowels.

VOCALS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. Common Core State Standards: ELA-Writing: Text Types and Purposes. Example: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1 - Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3 -Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

LESSON PLAN: Rote-Singing Method

Objective:

Students will learn to sing a song by ear using one of the oldest and most reliable methods

Resources:
Song recording

Procedures:

Speak words one line at a time to a single verse and chorus, having students repeat you line by line. Go through it at first in very small snippets - just a few words at a time, then an entire phrase, then an entire stanza.

Speak words again rhythmically, establishing meter (add snaps or taps for additional pulse) Initiate another "repeat after me" going through the same process – snippets, then phrases, then whole stanzas
Sing words with pitch, establishing tonality.

Sing words with pitch this time, establishing tonality. Go through the same process.

Add musical accompaniment or an instrumental/karaoke recording to support early attempts of singing the song and initiate a sing along.

Students will be able to sing along with you to an entire verse and chorus!

VOCALS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

LESSON PLAN: Vocalizing and Pantomiming a Skit

Objective:

Students will explore the expressive capabilities of vocal tone and body movement, creating and communicate a story using vocalization and pantomime

Resources:
Youtube video

Procedures:

Watch a video from YouTube demonstrating pantomime. Have the students partner up and practice pantomiming a scene for their partner to guess.

Demonstrate different vocalizations to show students how versatile the human voice is. Invite students to demonstrate a few of their own.

Allow students the remainder of the period to work in small groups and create a short skit using only their voice and pantomime.

Each group will perform their skit for the class. The class will try to guess what scene their classmates have created

VOCALS

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artistic work.
Anchor Standard #6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
Anchor Standard #8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work
Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge an personal experiences to make art.

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"Come mothers and fathers throughout the land,
And don't criticize what you can't understand,
Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command,
Your old road is rapidly agin',
Please get out of the new one if you can't lend your hand,
For the times they are a-changin'."

-Bob Dylan ("The Times They Are A-Changin'" 1964)

Everywhere and Rapidly Changing
The words quoted above from Dylan's classic anthem of the sixties are as true today as they were when they were written! In the case of technology, they become truer with each passing year: products become outdated more and more quickly, as speed, memory and power double, and then double again – and then double again! It probably feels like yesterday when you bought that iPod and now it's just a glorified paperweight. Although this feeling may sometimes be frustrating, it is a small price to pay when we consider where these rapid innovations have taken us. There is a reason that toddlers are as tech savvy as many adults – technology is easier to use than ever before! If you are someone who has avoided diving into it until now, you picked the best time to get started! Never has technology been more accessible.

With only a small investment of learning time, tech know-how can drastically simplify our lives, saving us countless hours and dollars. Before mentioning what it can do specifically for music teachers and musicians, let's look at a few examples of how portable electronics

have revolutionized other aspects of modern life: With just a phone and our fingers, we can pay our bills, attend virtual work meetings, get a college degree, buy groceries to be delivered to our homes, find answers to many questions, pay for a cab, connect with anyone anywhere, create music and art, shop for anything, and find all kinds of entertainment.

Music in a Technological World

Students of all ages are using their devices to listen to and share music, view their favorite musical videos and performances, and to to compose, record, remix, and publish their own creations. Being able to make use of at least some of these production capabilities has become standard practice even among hobbyist music makers. Audio and video recording is now the first choice for documenting and communicating musical ideas and for many musicians, virtual instruments found in computer programs are taking the place of physical ones! What once required a complete recording studio with a vast array of instruments, years of study to be able to play each of those instruments, and thousands of dollars in labor rates, can now be done by any one person with a tablet, smartphone, or computer in every classroom in the country!
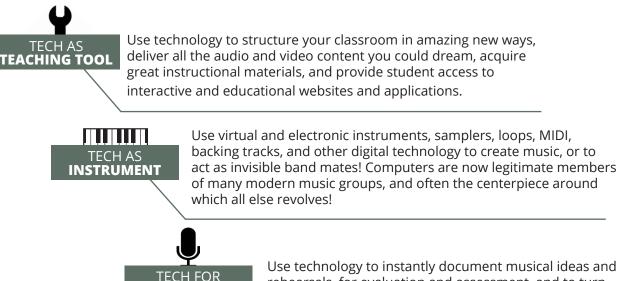
A New Classroom Experience

The instruments that make up the core of Modern Band (guitar, bass, drums, keyboard, vocals and computer) make it possible for you to structure your class in ways that cannot be done in traditional ensembles. By using the electric/electronic version of these instruments, students can all be playing in different mini-groups at the same time, without interfering with each other. This is accomplished by either plugging into a module or device that has a headphone jack or attaching headphones to the actual instrument. This unique allowance for student-centered small group and individual playing among a full classroom of students with instruments is just not practical in a room containing 30 students playing brass, woodwind, bowed strings, and acoustic percussion.

Real World Relevance and the Tools Our Students Know

By unlocking the capabilities of the tools already available to the vast majority of our students, we are empowering them to succeed far beyond the walls of our classrooms. It is important that we integrate technology into our practice so that the experiences we provide for our students in school will prepare them for the experiences they will encounter in their communities and in the world at large. Doing so also leverages a medium in which they are already fluent, feel comfortable, and to which they are attracted. In addition to the use of technology in the music room for recording and creating music, it can also completely transform the way you teach!

Three Types of Technology in the Modern Band Classroom

TECH AS TEACHING TOOL
Use technology to structure your classroom in amazing new ways, deliver all the audio and video content you could dream, acquire great instructional materials, and provide student access to interactive and educational websites and applications.

TECH AS INSTRUMENT
Use virtual and electronic instruments, samplers, loops, MIDI, backing tracks, and other digital technology to create music, or to act as invisible band mates! Computers are now legitimate members of many modern music groups, and often the centerpiece around which all else revolves!

TECH FOR RECORDING
Use technology to instantly document musical ideas and rehearsals, for evaluation and assessment, and to turn student compositions and performances into high quality productions!

Tech as Teaching Tool

A World of Music and Video at Your Fingertips

As long as you have an Internet connection, hundreds of millions of songs and videos, both popular and obscure, are at your fingertips. You can access them in two ways - downloading and streaming. Both have their benefits and limitations in relation to each other. However, both methods of acquiring and playing music are infinitely better than using CDs!

Say Goodbye to CDs

While DVDs contain a large amount of information that could be hard to "stream" or "download" without problems, CDs are quickly becoming obsolete. Apple has even discontinued offering CD drives on their laptop computers. Although you may enjoy collecting them, they will only waste the valuable time and space of which teachers always wish they had more. You can "rip" your CDs onto your computer using its CD drive and a program like iTunes or Windows Media Player. From iTunes, you

can transfer your music to your phone, tablet or iPod. For more information on how to do this, visit our "Tech Resources" section at littlekidsrock.org.

Downloading – Yours To Keep

Downloading means to transfer a file from the web to your personal device, while ***uploading*** is to transfer from your device to the web. The main advantage of downloading a file compared to "streaming" (explained below) is that it becomes available for you to use without an internet connection. The downside of relying on a downloaded music and video collection is that it can quickly fill up your hard drive space, and you must always use the device on which the files are stored to play them. The most popular download sites are **iTunes** and **Amazon**. Some streaming sites like **Spotify** or **Rhapsody** allow downloading with a subscription.

Streaming – Instant Access

Streaming means to instantly play a file without downloading it, directly from the website on which it is hosted. The advantage to this is instant access from any Internet enabled device and it doesn't require you to use any disk space. The downside is that without the Internet or a good Internet connection, you're left with nothing! Popular streaming sites for video include **YouTube**, **Netflix**, **Amazon Prime**, **Vimeo**, **TeacherTube**, and many more. Popular streaming sites and apps for music include **Spotify**, **Rhapsody**, and **Pandora**. Each of these also has an app for your phone or tablet.

Using Streaming Music Sites in Your Classroom

Spotify is the most popular free program or app that allows you to search and play millions of songs on demand! This includes everything from children's songs and your friend's self-released album to just about every title in your old CD collection and the latest top 40 chart toppers (visit spotify.com)! A $4.99 a month subscription removes the occasional ad and allows you to also download songs for offline playback!

The implications of this for the classroom are revolutionary. These are a few:

> Your phone or device becomes the most extensive musical library in the world!
> No need to prepare your song selections as they are always at your fingertips.
> Listen to dozens of versions of the same song, comparing musical features and genres.
> Whenever your student mentions a song, you can play it within seconds, for reference.
> Allow students in small groups or individually to explore the music of an artist or genre, using any Internet enabled device, headphones and headphone splitters.

TECHNOLOGY

Downloading Videos From YouTube
For Offline Viewing

There are many ways to save streaming videos from YouTube and other sites to your computer for offline viewing. By doing so, you won't have to rely on an erratic or non-existent Internet connection in school. One free and easy method explained below is the website keepvid.com. There are also a number of free apps and programs you can install to accomplish this task. Find them by doing a Google search for "download youtube video."

How to Use KeepVid.com

Highlight and copy the web address (URL) of the YouTube video you want to download.

Go to www.keepvid.com and "paste" the web address into the URL space (Note: DO NOT click the big download button. It is an advertisement!)

Click the grey download button and then download formats will appear. For Mac, right click on "MP4" and select Save As. For PC, simply click the download button and press allow if there are any warnings.

Save to the desired folder. Once it finishes downloading, you can open and play it.

This is an advertisement, do not click!

Please report any issues to: contact@keepvid.com

Downloading Audio From YouTube
Videos for Offline Listening

YouTube is full of great songs, karaoke tracks, backing tracks and other recordings that you do not need a video to listen to. You can download the audio only to play offline using either keepVid.com or VidtoMp3.com. The latter website is more reliable. With keepVid.com you will follow the same directions for downloading video but select mp3 instead of mp4.

TECHNOLOGY

How to Use VidtoMp3.com to Extract
Audio from YouTube Videos:

Copy the web address (URL) of the YouTube video you'd like to turn into an MP3, just like you did for keepvid.com.

Go to VidToMP3.com and paste it into the "Enter Video URL Bar." Click "download" and you will be taken to a new screen, where you should click the small letters that read "Click here to get you download link."

Conversion Complete. Preparing file for download...

Okay, thanks for your patience! We've finished converting the file for you and it's now being prepared for you to download. Just click on the link below and you'll be able download the converted MP3 file.

Click here to get your Download Link

You will be taken to a third screen to click on your final download link.

Thanks, here's your Download Link

Download MP3

Notice that there are many orange download buttons, which are advertisements, and avoid special offers.

Slowing Songs Down, Changing
Pitch and Looping Sections

By changing the pitch of a song, slowing it down, or looping small sections we can make it fit the needs of our students' voices and technical ability. We can help them master a part by playing it over and over (looping). There are many apps and programs that specialize in these functions, both for iOS, Android, PC and Mac. Most of them have a free version with limited functionality. In addition to those below, you can use a free program called "Audacity," which is explained in depth in the "Tech for Recording and Production" section.

Amazing Slow Downer - This is available for PC, Mac, Android and iOS. Each platform has a free version with limited functionality or a free trial. They have been improving their interface since the early 2000s and the program is extremely simple to use! You can loop, transpose, speed up and slow down songs. You can then "Export" the song to a new file with the changes!

Anytune - This is a highly rated app for iOS that also loops, changes the speed, and changes the pitch of songs. It also allows you to export the modified file. There is a free version with limited functionality.

AudioSpeedChanger - This highly rated Android app has the same functions as the others, but does not allow you to export. You can save within the program.

GAssistant

TECHNOLOGY

 This free computer program is for Mac Only but makes slowing down, tempo change and looping a breeze!

Connecting your Phone, Computer, MP3 player, or Tablet to an Audio or Video Source

Connecting to a Guitar or Bass Amp

Most of the amps on the Little Kids Rock instrument menu (Mustang, Champion, Rumble) and almost all currently produced solid state amplifiers have a 3.5mm (1/8") or RCA auxiliary audio input. These are meant to receive sound from the headphone jack of your device.

Here are some examples:

Mustang (3.5 mm aux)   Rumble (RCA Audio)   Champion (3.5 mm aux)

For example 1 above, you will need a 3.5mm (1/8") stereo male to male audio cable, pictured below. Attach one end into your device, and the other to the amplifier and you've turned your amp into a powerful sound system!

For example 2, you will need a 3.5mm (1/8th in.) stereo male to RCA audio cable, pictured here. Attach one end to your device, and the other to your amplifier, and you've got an amplifier/sound system combo.

If your amp does not have an auxiliary input, you can use an auxiliary cable plus a 3.5mm (1/8") stereo to 1/4" Mono converter on one end, and go straight into the instrument input! This is not recommended with tube amplifiers.

Going Wireless with Bluetooth or Wi-Fi!

By making our devices wireless, they act as the remote control and the media player at the same time. We are free to move around the room without dragging a cable that someone can trip on! In a Modern Band classroom, wires are everywhere and if we can get rid

TECHNOLOGY

of a few of them, it can really help to simplify our lives!

Connecting With Bluetooth

Bluetooth is a wireless technology used to exchange data over short distances. It is a standard feature on all new electronics including cell phones, computers, tablets and iPods. It allows you to pair your device with wireless Bluetooth speakers, Bluetooth receivers, wireless Bluetooth headphones or earpieces, and in your car. You can also use it to transfer files with nearby Bluetooth enabled devices. Visit littlekidsrock.org for a video demonstration of how to use this technology in the classroom.

Connecting with Wi-Fi

Just a few short years ago Wi-Fi was considered an unreliable way to at best send an emergency email! Now wired Internet has become the second choice and we can use Wi-Fi for all purposes, including playing music!

Apple TV

Apple TV allows you to either wirelessly "mirror" your Apple device to an HDTV, projector or SMART board, or to wirelessly connect to an audio source to play music from your device! By using Apple TV in your classroom, every Apple device can be mirrored for your entire class to hear and see. It allows you to seamlessly switch between your computer, iPhone, iPod, iPad, and any Apple device that a student may be using as long as you are on the same wireless network. There is no time wasted between unplugging and re-plugging, and transitioning between devices takes seconds! Using the "audio out" jack on the Apple TV allows you to use it just for music and sound, bypassing the projector. For a demonstration of how to use this technology in the classroom, visit littlekidsrock.org.

Connecting a Phone or Tablet to a Projector or Visual Source

If you want your whole class to see or hear what you are doing on your iPad or Apple device, all you need is a simple adapter, often referred to as a "Dongle". You plug one end into your device, and the other to the cable that goes into the projector or visual source.

To connect an older iPad or apple device to a projector you will need an Apple Dock Connector to VGA adapter.

To connect an older iPad or iPhone to an HDTV or HDMI input, you will need an Apple Dock Connector to HDMI adapter.

To connect a newer iPad or iPhone to a projector, you will need an Apple Lightning to VGA adapter.

To connect a newer iPad or iPhone to an HDTV or projector, you need an Apple Lightning to HDMI adapter.

Note: If you are using a VGA connection, you need to connect to an audio source using the headphone jack of your iPad or device and

Bluetooth receiver - connect to your guitar amp with RCA audio cable.

Bluetooth speakers - great sound with no wires!

Apple TV - wirelessly project the screen and audio of all your Apple devices.

an auxiliary cable.

Projecting Your Hands Using a Computer, Phone or Tablet

When teaching guitar or keys to 20-30 students, being able to show the entire class what your hands are doing can be very useful. You can use any video app on your device, or the built in camera on your computer to project the camera feed of your hands through your class projector, the classroom whiteboard or an HDTV.

Quicktime   Photobooth

While connected to a projector, interactive whiteboard, or HDTV, open the camera app on your tablet or phone, or a program like QuickTime or Photo Booth on a computer. You do not have to press record!
Point the camera toward what you would like your students to see, and it will show up on the screen.

Note: You might want a student volunteer to film you or set up a tripod if you are going to do this often! You can also sit you laptop on a secure music stand and adjust the height and angle accordingly.

Creating Silent Rehearsal and Learning Centers

The electric versions of Modern Band instruments are either silent or almost inaudible. This includes electric guitars, electric basses, electric keyboards, electric drum kits, computers, iPads and microphones! As explained in the introduction, by using silent rehearsal modules in conjunction with electric instruments, the music teacher is afforded the ability to separate his or her large class into small groups that can make music together without interrupting each other's sound space! This is not possible with acoustic instruments. Here is what you need to do it:

Headphones - It is ideal to have a combination of sound isolating headphones and regular headphones. The isolating ones are best when students are working alone or in small groups, while the regular ones will allow your students to hear you during instruction.

Student wearing isolation headphones

Headphone Splitters - These small adapters allow you to split a signal up to 5 ways, allowing multiple students to plug their device into one source. You can use these with computers, tablets, or when student are sharing instruments.

JamHub Or Other Silent Rehearsal Module - The JamHub (www.jamhub.com) is a silent rehearsal module that allows multiple students to plug their instruments into it. They then connect headphones to it, which allows them to hear each other. Each student can control how much he or she hears the other students. This also means that two separate rehearsals can occur at the same time with one JamHub. A mixer attached to a

Belkin Rockstar 5 way splitter

TECHNOLOGY

headphone amp can more or less accomplish the same thing at a lower cost, although it requires more wires and peripheral items. Roland recently released a product called the HS-5 Session Mixer that is also a wonderful silent rehearsal module, but higher priced. Silent Rehearsal Modules are most practical if they can stay set up in one place and not be moved! Using gaffer's tape to keep wires in place is always a good idea!

Guitar and Bass Amplifiers - Most entry level amplifiers, including all of the ones Little Kids Rock offers have a guitar input, an auxiliary input, and a headphone output. These can act as mini silent rehearsal modules, good for two people at once! You can hook up a keyboard to the auxiliary input, and split the headphone output!

Mini-Amps - Mini-amps are small pocket sized amplifiers that any electric instrument can plug into. They have a headphone jack so a student can listen to himself or herself without others hearing. They also have an auxiliary jack so that sound from a computer, device, or second instrument can be plugged into it. This allows students to watch a video lesson and play along, or to play along with a song or app. With a headphone splitter, two students can be plugged into one mini amp and share the headphone jack. This is perfect for a guitar player and keyboardist to work together.

1/4" Female Mono to Male Stereo Converters - The JamHub's inputs are "mono" which means that you will only hear the sound of your instrument from the left side of your headphones. First plug the keyboard or guitar into a mono to stereo converter.

3.5mm (1/8") Female Stereo to 1/4" Male Stereo Converter
Many headphone jacks on keyboards and other audio equipment have a large headphone jack (1/8") that works with professional level headphones. To plug headphones in with a smaller jack, you will need this simple converter.

3.5mm (1/8") Auxiliary Cables
These cables will connect all of your devices, and even your keyboards, and electronic drumsets into your modules, min-amps and guitar amplifiers, using headphone outputs and auxiliary or line inputs. Use them with the 1/4" adapter when necessary.

Websites and Computer Programs

TECH AS
TEACHING TOOL

Google Drive and Dropbox - If you want your students to view YouTube videos, either alone or in small groups on classroom devices, you can first download videos at home using KeepVid.com, and then upload them to Google Drive. Students will then be able to open them through a classroom Google account on any Internet enabled device. You will want to use a Google and Gmail account that you will create specifically for your music class. When you are in the classroom you can sign into this account on any device, locate your files and either view them

Google Drive

Dropbox

Photo courtesy of Musical Futures Australia.

on Drive, or download them to the new device. You can do the same thing using Dropbox. Contact us at program@littlekidsrock.org if you need help setting this up.

ClassDojo - ClassDojo is a fun way to encourage good behavior by awarding or subtracting points from a student's personal avatar. It's available for free at classdojo.com and as an app for your phone. Your account will automatically be synced between all of your devices.

Class Dojo tablet app

Ultimateguitar.com - This website has been the go-to play for all guitar tablature and chords for many years now. The site continues to improve and now allows you to transpose songs to any key. Quality control is achieved through a rating system. Always select transcriptions with 5 stars! There is also an app to go along with it called "Tabs," available in the app store.

Chromatik.com - This website allows free access to sheet music with chord diagrams for a vast array of popular songs.

Chromatik.com instrument seletion screen

HDPiano.com - This website features video piano tutorials for all of the most popular songs using the Synthesia program at its core. This is where the notes to be played scroll down over the keys. There are also some great tutorials about basic piano skills!

Theta Music Trainer - This awesome website has ear training games to figure our chord progressions, melodies and intervals! It uses genres like reggae and rock while most ear training games use classical music. Go to http://trainer.thetamusic.com/en/content/chord-progressions to start playing!

Theta Music Trainer chord progression game

Apps

TECHNOLOGY

TECH AS TEACHING TOOL

Guitar Tools - This is an all in one chord finder, scale finder, tuner, and metronome! (iOS only)

FourChords - This app allows your students to strum and sing along to their favorite songs! The words and chords are displayed on the screen in a way that shows you where you are supposed to be, and the midi tracks play the melody as a reference! (iOS and Android)

Blob Chorus - This is an excellent ear training game app that will have your students listening intensely to figure out matching pitches while also having fun!

Four Chords

(iOS and Android)

Octavian - This app is the perfect companion to Little Kids Rock's keyboard curriculum. It shows and plays you all of the chords and scales in every key in a way that appeals to visual learners. (iOS only)

Octavian

Staff Wars - Staff Wars is both an app and a program for Mac and PC that looks like an old Atari game but will have your students fighting to be the next to play! As notes go by on the staff students either click which one it is, or play it on an instrument into your devices microphone! As they get further along the notes begin to go by faster and the music becomes more and more threatening! (iOS and Android)

Staff Wars

Joy Tunes Piano Maestro - This is a notation based piano app that is constantly updated with new and popular songs! As the notes go by in the song, students try to play them correctly and in time. If they do, the notes light up green! It provides a fun way to improve piano reading skills. Hook up your Little Kids Rock keyboard using a USB cable! (iOS iPad Only)

Joy Tunes Piano Maestro

Ultimate Guitar Tabs - The app version of the UltimateGuitar website. It has a very easy to use interface and keeps you updated on new song additions. (iOS and Android)

Tech as Instrument

Finding and Using Backing Tracks and Karaoke Tracks

Using a backing track whenever possible brings more excitement and relevance to musical activitie. Backing tracks can be as simple as a drum groove, or could be a full band showcasing a style, or a chord progression. Many people use them to practice improvising, as a songwriting tool, or just as a glorified metronome for practicing.

Karaoke tracks, on the other hand, are instrumental versions of published songs. When used in the classroom they can motivate your students to sing out to the songs they know and love, and act as a great bridge to a cappella singing, or singing with a real band! They can also help your instrumentalists learn their parts without having to listen past the singer's voice!

Finding Drum Tracks

Littlekidsrock.org online resources
Stream or Download from YouTube. (Some YouTube channels that specialize in drum tracks are "Lumbeat," and "FreeDrumTracks." You can also find many genre specific tracks by typing in "Hip Hop Drum Track," "Latin Drum Track," or "drum play along," etc. Once you find the one you want, either stream it, or download it using www.vidtomp3.com for audio only, or www.keepvid.com for the audio and video.

Little Kids Rock Build a Beat

Lumbeat YouTube Channel

FreeDrumTracks YouTube Channel

Search on streaming apps/websites like Spotify, using similar search words.
Search for and purchase drum tracks on iTunes.
Go to drumbot.com to use their pre-made drum grooves and drum sequencer tool.

Drumbot.com drum groove library

Drumbot.com drum sequencer

Finding Full Band and Guitar Backing Tracks

Littlekidsrock.org online resources
Stream or download from YouTube (A great YouTube channel specifically for guitar but still applicable to all instruments is "GuitarMaps." They overlay the guitar scale or "map" onto the video. Other great channels for full band backing tracks include "BackingTrackWorld," "JamTrackschannel," and "MegaBackingTracks." Many of these have tracks specifically for certain chord progressions, in many different keys!)

TECHNOLOGY

GuitarMaps YouTube Channel

BackingTrackWorld YouTube Channel

Search on streaming apps/websites like Spotify, using similar search words

Search for and purchase drum tracks on iTunes

Websites and Computer Programs

Band-in-a-Box - This program, available for all platforms, allows you to create backing tracks using recordings of REAL award winning musicians in multiple genres. After generating a chord progression you can experiment with arrangements in all styles, and even record over them! You can then generate lead sheets, tab, notation and play along videos for your students! The possibilities are astounding! Please email us at program@littlekidsrock.org for an exclusive promotion for Little Kids Rock teachers.

Incredibox.com - This simple, free and fun website allows students to compose and record an arrangement by choosing accessories for a cartoon man to wear. Each accessory creates a different sound!

Drumbot.com - Drumbot has a library of drum loops with adjustable tempo to use as backing tracks. It also has an interactive 8 track "Drum Pattern Sequencer" that allows students to craft their own drum patterns using all parts of the set. In addition to this, there are interactive tools for guitar and piano!

Auxy - This free app is a loop based sequencer that allows you to create drum, bass and synth parts. It's very highly rated and easy to use. (iOS only)

Apps

TECH AS **INSTRUMENT**

Band-in-a-Box

TECHNOLOGY

TonePad - This free app is modeled after the "tonematrix" on audiotool.com. Students compose by selecting squares in a grid that are set to different pitches. The electronic sounds are very modern and pleasing to the ears! (iOS only)

AmpliTube - An extremely high quality free amp modeling and guitar effects app that goes hand in hand with the iRig and iRig pro! (iOS and Android)

TF7 Synth - This free app is a polyphonic synthesizer for the iPad that will open up a world of creative possibilities! (iOS only)

Tempo - This amazing metronome app is great to project on a screen and hook up to a sound system to teach your students about beats, measures, tempo and even rhythmic notation values! It is a very cool interface that you can refer to as the "beat machine." You can make the whole screen flash red on beat one of every measure. (iOS and Android)

Super Metronome - This app has a library of drum tracks in various genres and allows you to change the tempo! (iOS only)

TonePad   Tempo

Super Metronome

Tech for Recording
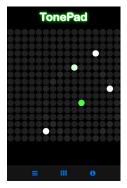
Making Informal Audio Recordings for Classroom Use

One of the most important aspects of learning music is the ability to listen, analyze and describe musical works. By using recording technology, you can document in class rehearsals and performances and play them back for reflection and discussion. If students are working in small groups they can use computers or portable devices to document their work to be shared with you or the class, or to record their ideas so that they will remember them next time. Just like how the photograph replaced the portrait artist, audio recording technology has made written methods of transcription lose their value in many circumstances. Once students know how to use these recording features, they can share with you at home or in class, through a classroom email address.

Informal Audio Recordings Using a Computer

All computers made in the past few years have an internal microphone. All that is required is that you open the program that can access it, and make a recording. A great one to use that is now available for Mac and PC is QuickTime. Here's how to do it:

Links to Les
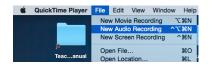
Les Paul was the inventor of multi-track recording.

http://jamzone.littlekidsrock.org/lessons/lespaul-003/

TECHNOLOGY

Open the program "QuickTime Player"
At the top, go to "File" and select "New Audio Recording"

Press the red button to record, and the grey square to stop

You can either play it right away, or save it by going to "File" and then "Save"

Informal Audio Recordings Using the iPad

The iPad does not come with a built in audio recorder app, but there are plenty available for free from the app store. The most versatile one, that allows for editing and exporting in multiple file types, as well as saving files with a photograph of your students, is "Recorder Plus." A simpler free app for audio recording is "Super Notes."

Informal Audio Recordings Using IPhone or iPod Touch

The iPhone comes with an app called "Voice Memos" that takes great sounding audio recordings, allows trimming, pausing a recording, and sharing through email or text!

To Record:
Open the app and press the red button to record!
Pause the recording by pressing the red square.
Stop the recording by pressing "Done"
The app will now prompt you to name and save your new recording.
Once it is saved, it will go to the top of the list of recordings.
Press it again to listen, edit, or export.

To edit:
Press edit to trim the recording if you have unnecessary audio
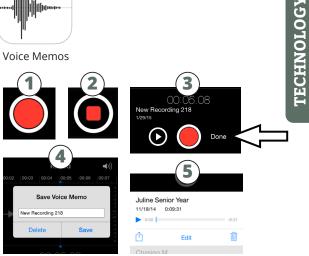
Recorder Plus

Super Notes

Voice Memos

in the beginning or at the end. Then press the blue "crop" square
Slide the red dots to control the start and end time of the recording.

To export:
To export to email or text message, press the "share" button, which is the blue square with the arrow pointing up.
Select message or mail, and compose your email or text to selected recipients
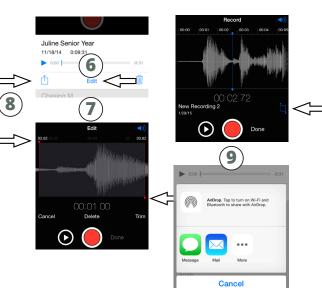
Informal Audio Recordings Using Android Devices
The majority of Android phones and devices come with voice recorder apps. Here is an example of the one that comes with the Samsung Galaxy.

High Quality Informal Audio Recordings Using a Field Recorder
Field recorders are the most convenient way to capture high quality audio recordings of student rehearsals and performances. These are handheld devices that have high quality microphones attached and adjustable settings depending on the volume or room setup. Most connect to a computer or have a removable memory card, and some even double as a recording interface. Using a simple video recording program like iMovie or Windows Movie Maker, you can overlay audio from your handheld field recorder to a video of a performance. The results will be far better than relying on the audio of your phone or video camera.

Android Voice Recorder App

Field Recorder Examples

Zoom H2N - has 4 microphones and records 2 tracks at the same time. After recording, choose which you like better.

Zoom H2N - also works as a multitrack recorder and an audio interface.

Making Informal Video Recordings For Classroom Use

Recording performance and rehearsal videos allows for instant reflection and feedback. Students can work in small groups or independently and video tape what they are doing for sharing or assessment purposes. If they are working on a dance, or playing something a certain way and they need to remember what their fingers or hands were doing, video technology will be an invaluable addition to your classroom!

Using Computers to Shoot Video

All Windows computers have a program called "Camera." Macs have "QuickTime" and "Phot Booth." By opening the program and selecting "video recording", the image will appear on the screen. Use the internal camera, or attach a webcam and point it at your students. Open the program, and press record!

Using iPads, iPhones, iPod Touch and Smart-phones to Shoot Video

Sometimes the video quality on these devices is TOO GOOD! As explained earlier, they all default to full 1080p HD, taking up a lot of precious space! A 10-minute video can take up 10% or more of your internal memory and this setting cannot be changed! Fortunately, the latest operating system (iOS 8), at the time of printing, is compatible with a free app called "Compressor." This allows you to compress videos down to 10% of their original size! When picture quality is not that important, you will want to have this option. Android devices also have built in cameras, some of which have size options. If they do not, there are many aftermarket apps that will have this feature.

Windows Camera App

Video Compressor App

Allows you to reduce video size by up to 90%

TECHNOLOGY

How To Upload Videos to YouTube from iPhone, iPad, or iPod Touch

Keeping video documentation on YouTube is a great way to show student growth, build your professional portfolio, share student work within your class, share videos for students to see outside of school, and if you have permission, share with the world! Your Apple device will take great videos that you can easily upload to YouTube without your computer! Here is how:

Create a YouTube account on YouTube.com using the sign in details of your new classroom Gmail account!
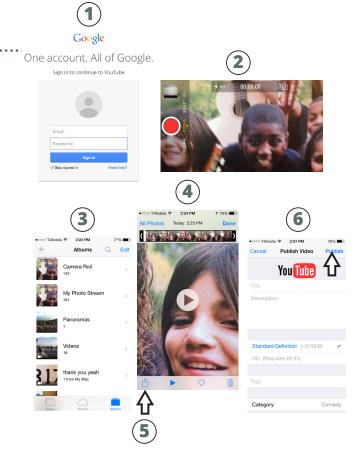
Use your camera to shoot the video

From your home screen, open "Photos"

Find the video in your "Camera Roll" and open it

Press the blue box with the arrow. This is the export button

Select the YouTube option, fill in all the details, and press PUBLISH.

Audacity

Audacity is an excellent and easy to use free audio editing and sound recording program available to both Mac and Windows users! There is no "catch" – no paid version that you will upgrade to and the program does not limit you in any way. You can use this program for many purposes such as informal live recordings, adding effects to recordings, changing the pitch or tempo of a recording, and much more. The first step is to download the program at audacity. soundforge.net, and install it onto your computer. In addition to the step-by-step print instructions below, visit our website for video tutorials on how to use this in the classroom.

Audacity

Easy 1-Step Recording with Audacity ....

Open Audacity.

Choose the sound source from the microphone icon. You can use the built in microphone or one that is connected through your USB drive, or an audio interface.

Click on the input meters to see sound levels. Adjust input volume (mic icon) so that the sound does not reach 0 db.

Click the record button once to record and again to stop.

From the menu's file tab, you can save project for future editing, or export to an MP3 or WAV file.

Name your recording, pick where you want it to save to, and choose WAV or MP3 as the format. (The first time you do MP3, it might ask you to download the "lame encoder." Follow the easy step-by-step directions and try again)

It will ask you to fill out the "Metadata," which is optional. Click "OK" to continue.

Locate the file in the folder it was saved to and enjoy your new recording!

Editing Songs and Recordings in Audacity

As teachers, we often need to modify songs we are working with by changing tempo, transposing to a new key, cutting out a section with foul language, re-arranging a song to cut down on its length, looping a small section, or repeating a section. All of this is easy to do in Audacity! Here's how:

Changing the Pitch

Import the MP3 song you want to edit by dragging it into the Audacity window.

Now we can change the pitch. "Select All", either in the Edit menu or by clicking to the left of the waveform below its name. The background of the waveform should get darker when it is selected.

On the top menu go to "effect > change pitch."

Choose the amount of semitones you would like to change it, and click "preview" to sample it or "OK" to save it.

Refer to steps 5 and 6 on the previous page to save your file.

Changing the Speed of Audio Files Without Changing the Pitch

To do this is Audacity follow the same steps but instead of going to "Effect > Change Pitch," go to "Effect > Change Speed! Simply enter the "percent change" you would like to make to the original tempo.

Looping Parts of a Song in Playback

This means to play a small section over and over without stopping! You can slow it down, and then loop it in Audacity to allow your musicians to work on just a small part until they get it! Here's how:

Highlight the section of music you would like to loop, just like you would highlight text in a word document. The selected area will be a darker grey color.

In the top menu, go to "Transport > Loop Play." Now, when you press play, only the highlighted section will play, and it will loop over and over!

Rearranging Sections of a Song Using Audacity
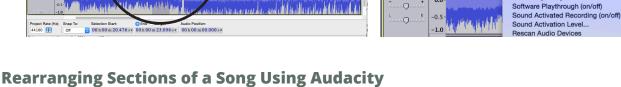
Perhaps you want to make a four minute song into a one minute arrangement, or cut out an inappropriate verse. Here is how you can rearrange a song:
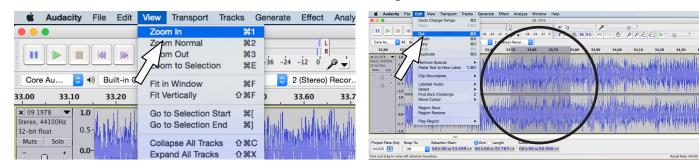
Zoom in to the waveform so that you can edit more precisely by going to "View > Zoom In." You can do this as many times as you'd like.

Select the section you would like to cut. Right click, and select "Cut" or go to "Edit > Cut". Once you cut a section the areas that are left will automatically merge together.

If you want to paste the cut section elsewhere, click your cursor to the point you would like to paste it, right click and select "paste" or go to "Edit > Paste."

Playback your new track, save it, and export it!

Classroom as Recording Studio

Recording with iPads, iPhones, and Tablets Using External Devices

Here are some of the essential items to turn your iOS device or tablet into a high-quality recording studio in conjunction with programs like GarageBand! Use them to plug in microphones and all of your electric instruments!

Lightning to USB adapter

Camera Connection Kit/Lightning to USB Adapter - Even though this item has the word "Camera" in the title, it allows you to connect any USB device to an iPad or iPhone, such as a USB MIDI keyboard (the Casio model that Little Kids Rock provides), or a USB microphone.

Camera Connection Kit for older Apple devices

USB Microphone - The Snowball or the AKG Perception are excellent all around USB mics to use with the camera connection kit and your iDevice. The quality will be much better than the internal microphone. It has three settings, making it ideal for recording speaking, loud singing, or a full rock band!

iRig2

iRig - The iRig attaches to the headphone jack of your iOS device and allows you to plug in a guitar or other instrument using a 1/4" instrument cable! This simple and inexpensive interface will turn your iOS device into an amplifier and guitar effects suite! Students can use it just to practice and play around with guitar sounds or you can run the audio from the iPad to an amplifier using an auxiliary cable! The iRig also allows you to record directly into GarageBand without a microphone. It also comes with an app called Amplitude that has many guitar processing capabilities. Note: If you cannot hear the sound you are playing while using the iRig with GarageBand, click the "Input" icon and turn on "Monitoring."

Blue Snowball Mic

Camera Connection Kit

iRig Pro - The iRig Pro has many more features than the iRig and does everything you need to record all instruments in GarageBand! You can connect microphones to an XLR input, midi controllers into a midi input, and any instruments that use a 1/4" cables, such as guitars, bass guitars, electronic drums or a keyboard. It also provides phantom power to microphones using a 9 volt battery. In addition, you can use it with a computer, with the included USB connector!

AKG Perception 220

Recording With A Computer

Although tablets and phones are the most portable recording devices, computers allow you to take the process to the next level! A professional quality multi-track recording can be made with almost any PC or Mac, some software, and a few peripheral devices! Here is what you need:

Pro Tools, one of many DAWs.

DAW Software (Digital Audio Workstation) - This is software that allows you to record, edit, and produce audio files on your computer. Some of the most popular ones are Logic, Pro Tools, Cubase, Ableton, and GarageBand.

A USB Recording Interface - In order to send audio from your instrument or a microphone directly into your DAW program, you will need a recording interface. Your instruments plug into the interface, and the interface plugs into your computer. These can be purchased for as little as $50-$100 dollars, and will be made available in our instrument menu to teachers that complete our recording workshop.

A USB Microphone - If you plan on recording with only a microphone, you do not need an interface. You will only need a USB microphone! A great and versatile entry level option that we offer is the AKG Perception, but there are dozens of others on the market!

Lexicon Alpha

Websites and Computer Programs

Soundation.com
Soundation is a website that offers anyone with an internet connection a free virtual recording studio. You can record live instruments or vocals, add effects, use a library of pre-recorded loops, and then share your creation with the world! This is an outstanding resource as both a creative tool and to teach students how different effects and audio processes work. Access it for free at soundation.com!

SoundCloud.com
SoundCloud is like the YouTube for audio! Users from all over the world can upload their music or any other audio recordings to the site. Programs like GarageBand have an option to directly upload to SoundCloud! Little Kids Rock uses this site to host all of the recordings for our annual "Songwriting Exhibition." The public is free to comment and "like" a track just like YouTube, although privacy can be modified. We recommend you create a SoundCloud account for your school as a way of hosting all student creations.

TECH FOR
RECORDING

Soundation.com

Apps
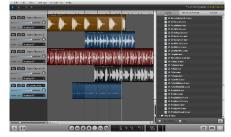
LoopyHD
LoopyHD - This app became popular when it was featured on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon with Billy Joel! It is a very simple and easy to use interface that allows you to record up to 12 simultaneous loops! Your students can create ostinato compositions or you can use it to experiment with harmony, beatboxing, or putting together different parts of a song! (iOS only)

TECH FOR
RECORDING

LoopyHD

TECHNOLOGY

GarageBand for iOS

All iPads and iOS devices now come with a free version of GarageBand! This is a wonderful and easy to use application that has many of the features of a professional recording suite! It also comes with an array of virtual instruments such as guitar, bass, drums, keyboards, synthesizers drum machines, orchestral instruments, and even a sampler that allows you to record sounds and change their pitch! You can also make use of professional quality pre-recorded loops from all popular music genres! Perhaps you want to make a backing track in which you can easily change the tempo and key! All of these features make GarageBand useful for all three categories of music technology: *Tech as Teaching Tool, Tech for Recording, and Tech as Instrument.*

Learning How To Use GarageBand

Although there are a plethora of instructional videos on the web, the first thing you should do when opening the app is click on the question mark icon. This will make descriptions of most of the features appear on the screen. All of the ideas below will be have video demonstrations at www.littlekidsrock.org in the teacher resources section.

GarageBand for iOS as Teaching Tool

TECH AS TEACHING TOOL

Here are some of the uses of GarageBand for iOS as a teaching tool:

Create backing tracks using virtual instruments or loops in any key or tempo. Change the key or tempo with the click of a button.

Teach instruments and instrument families using pre-recorded loops.

Teach form, tempo, key, meter, music theory.

Use it as a personal amplifier in conjunction with the iRig for students to practice silently with headphones.
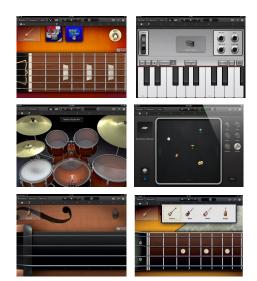
Teach music terminology in an interactive way: glissando, arpeggio, quantization, reverb, delay, decay, treble, bass, cutoff, attack, sustain, waveform, dynamics, etc.

GarageBand as Instrument

TECH AS INSTRUMENT

By hooking up the iPad to an amplifier using an auxiliary cable, suddenly the GarageBand virtual instruments can be played live! Each virtual instrument can be played like a real one with the fingers, one note at a time, or you can have it set so that one finger plays an entire chord. In addition to this each instrument has an autoplay feature, so that one press of a button creates a melody or rhythm! There are also drum sequencers that allow students to create beats by dragging percussion instruments onto a grid. The possibilities are endless!

From top left to right: Virtual guitar, virtual piano, virtual drums, smart drums, virtual drums, and virtual bass.

TECHNOLOGY

GarageBand for iOS for Recording: Without External Devices

An entire song with an array of instruments can be created in GarageBand using only the built in virtual instruments, loop library, and the "Audio Recorder" to add vocals or acoustic sounds. Following is a unit of study to introduce some of these features to your students.

Sample GarageBand Projects

The following two projects have a corresponding instructional video and PowerPoint available on our website in the teacher resources section.

Sample Project Unit 1

A Classroom Approach to GarageBand for iOS – Level 1

Unit Aim: Students will learn how to edit audio clips, create sections, modify tempo and key, and use the audio recorder, culminating in the creation of a "Loop Composition."

Day 1 Lesson 1: Open, Close, Save

Demonstrate How To:
Open GarageBand. (click "+" then "Create New Song")
Start a new project (select "Audio Recorder", then record a 5 second "scratch track", then go to "track view").
Save and name your project (click "My Songs," click the name of song and rename).
Close GarageBand.
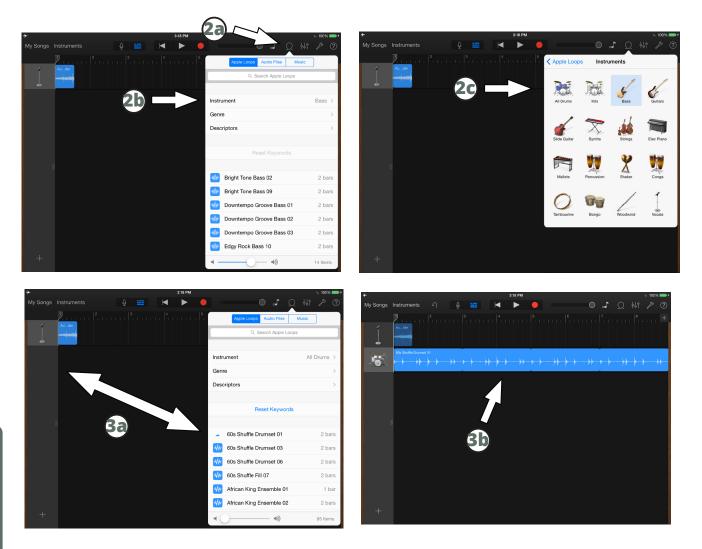
TECHNOLOGY

Day 1 Lesson 2: Selecting Loops

Demonstrate How To:

Open Track (click your song in the home screen).
Find and listen to loops from each instrument family (click the "rollercoaster", select instrument, click loop titles to listen)
Drag loops into "track area".

Day 1 Student Project – Using Loops

Students will:

- Create a "loop" composition
- It must have at least 4 loops
- Your loops must come from at least 3 instrument families
- Save your loop composition with your name, class, and a title

TECHNOLOGY
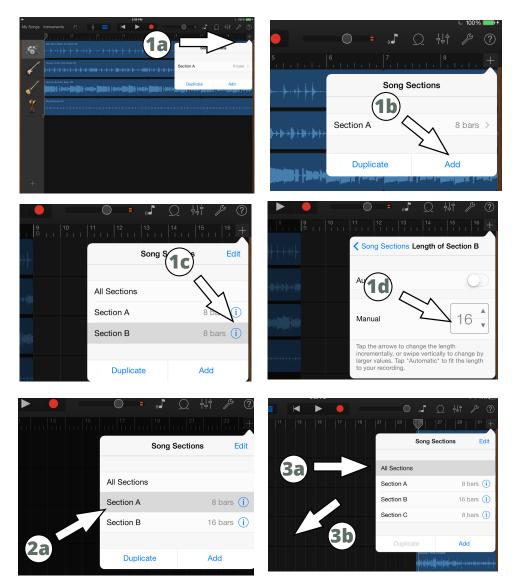
Day 2 Lesson: Measures and Sections

Demonstrate How To:

Add a 16 bar B section to your existing 8 bar A section, and make both of them play (Click the "+" on the right side of the measure counter, click "add" to create a new section, click the "i" to change measure count).

Make a C section that is a "duplicate" of your 8 bar A section (Select "Section A" and press "Duplicate").

View all sections or single sections (Select "All Sections" and then click outside of the song section area to go back to "Track View").

Day 2 Student Project: Adding Sections

Students Will:

• Make a sandwich: Your 8 bar project will become both your A and C sections (the bread).

• Create a 16 bar B section, choosing a new four loops from at

TECHNOLOGY
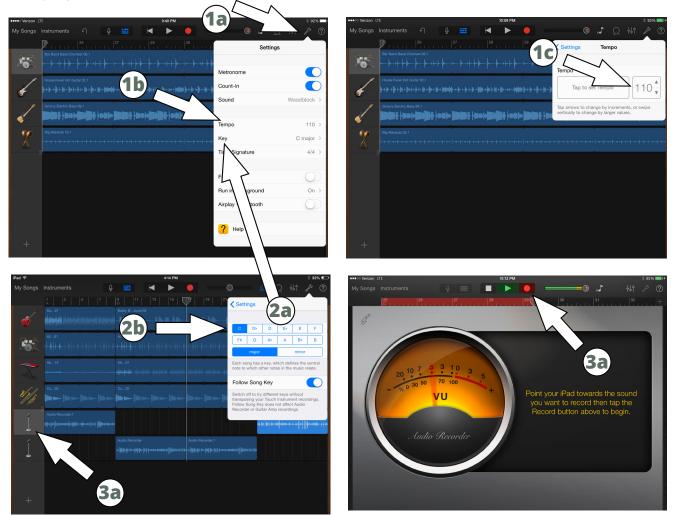
least 3 instrument families (the meat).

Day 3 Lesson: Tempo, Key, Vocals

Demonstrate How To:

Change the tempo of your loop project. (click the "tool symbol", select "tempo", adjust the number manually, or by tapping). Change the key of your loop project to best suit voice or other instrument. (Select "key", choose a new key) Record using the "voice recorder" and headphones.

Record using the "audio recorder" and headphones. (Double click on the vocal track you made at the start of the project, or select "Instruments" then choose "Audio Recorder." Click the red circle to record. The measures will turn red when recording is in progress.)

Day 3 Student Project: Adding Vocals

Students Will:

- • Record a vocal Part
- • Make A and C section the same. They can be either singing or chanting.
- • Make the B section a rap or poem that is said in time with the beat.
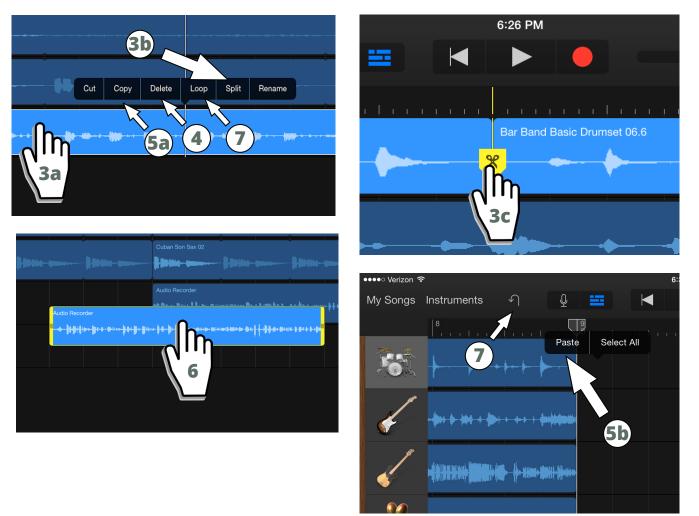
Day 4 Lesson: Editing

Demonstrate How To:

Select a clip (tap on a clip one time to select it)

Zoom in on a clip (place two fingers on the screen and push them away from each other)

Split a clip (double click on the clip and select split)

Delete a clip (double click on the clip and select delete)

Copy and paste a clip (double click on the clip and select copy, move the cursor to where you would like to paste, double click and select paste)

Drag a clip (hold one finger down on the clip and drag it)

Loop a clip (double click on the clip and select loop)

Undo an action (click the backwards bending arrow)

Day 4 Student Project: Switcharoo

Students Will:

- Drag your 8 bar A and 8 bar C section vocals to become your 16 bar B section vocals.
- Split your 16 bar B section vocals in half and move the first half to the A section and the second half to the B section.

TECHNOLOGY

For More Information Please Visit www.littlekidsrock.org **387**

Day 4 End of Class Lesson: Mixing

Demonstrate How To:

Slide over the mixer (drag the tab in the center of the tracks to the right).

Use the sliders (drag them to adjust volume)

Use the solo function (click the headphones to hear a track by itself).

Use the mute function (press the speaker button with a line through it to mute a track)

Day 4 End of Class Project Extension: Mix Your Song

Student Directions:

Take a few minutes to experiment with these functions using your track!

A Classroom Approach to GarageBand for iOS – Level 2

Unit Aim: Students will learn the various ways of using virtual instruments to create and record.

Day 1 Lesson: Virtual Drums

Demonstrate How To:

Use different parts of the drum (click the "?" to show all options)
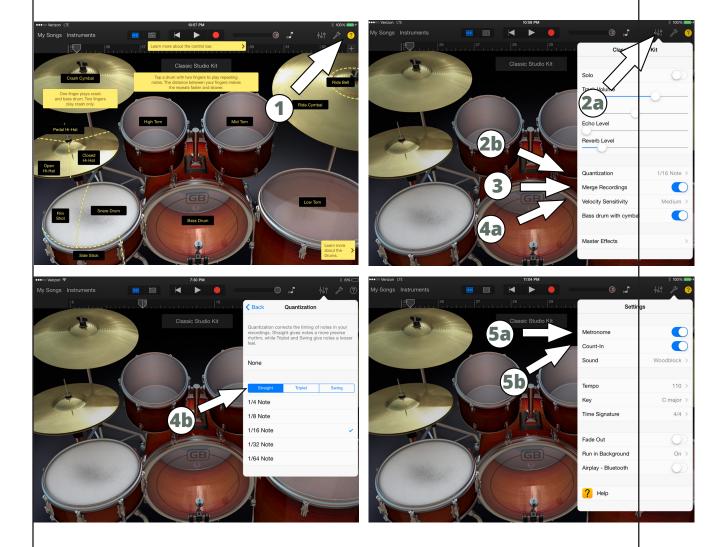
Adjust touch sensitivity (click the "levels" icon, then "velocity sensitivity)

Merge recordings (In the levels menu, click merge recordings for automatic overdub. This means that the track will repeat after its over and anything you play will be added to original run through)

Use Quantization (In the levels menu, select "quantization" and ¼ note, 1/8th note or 1/16th note. You can also change the "Feel" to straight, swing or triplet! These options will neaten up poor rhythm!)

Use metronome and count off (Click the tool bar to turn metronome and count off on or off.)

Day 1 Student Project: Creating a Drum Track

Students Will:
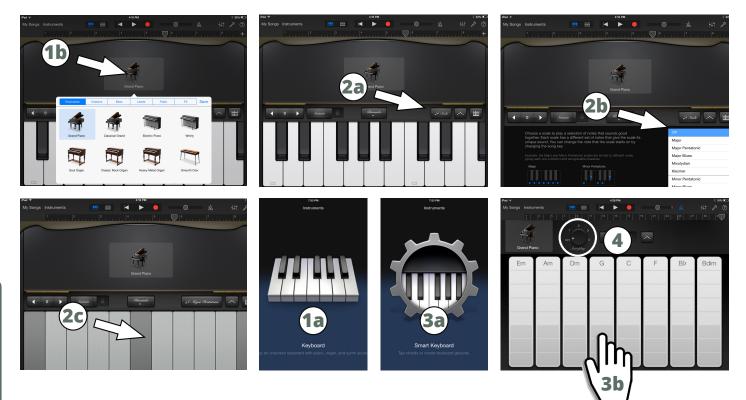
• Create a new project.

• Make an 8 measure drum beat, experimenting with the different features!

Day 2 Lesson: Bass, Strings, Keys, Guitar

Demonstrate How To:

Play virtual Guitar, Bass, Keys and Strings 4 different ways:

Like the real instrument (Select "Keyboard" from the instrument menu, pick the keyboard type you want)

Like real instrument but within a scale (Click the "scale" button, and choose which scale you want. All notes available will be within that scale. The gray stripes are the root notes).

One button plays a whole chord (Select "Smart Keyboard" in the instrument menu, press the chord you would like played)

One button initiates an "autoplayed" chord with a different rhythmic pattern (click the "Autoplay" knob and try different options)

Note: The photos below demonstrate these options on keyboard, but they apply to all virtual instruments.

Day 2 Student Project: Adding Instruments

Students Will:

Create three new tracks in your 8 measure drum project using Keys, Guitar, Bass, and/or Strings:

- One track using the virtual version of a REAL instrument (Scale feature is ok to use).
- One track using the chord buttons and no autoplay
- One track using the autoplay feature

Day 3 Lesson: Vocal Effects

TECHNOLOGY

Demonstrate How To:

Use the vocal effects on the recording screen (While playing vocal track, click different options to sample – small room, dreamy, chipmunk, etc.)

Access and change the reverb and echo effects in the "levels" menu (adjust level, and adjust type in "master effects" menu)

Use the track pan feature (also in the levels menu, this adjusts whether the sound comes from the left or right speaker)

Day 3 Student Project: Adding Vocals with Effects

Students will:

Create a vocal part over their 8 bar composition.

Add one effect from the record screen.

Modify the reverb and echo type and level in the "levels" menu.

Select left, right or somewhere in between for track pan.

GarageBand for Mac

GarageBand for Mac is a fully-loaded music creation studio that comes free with Apple computers. Built right into it is an enormous sound library of pre-recorded loops that can be used for song composition. Preset effects for guitars and voice will instantly transform your sounds to something new and exciting and there is a built in hard-hitting library of virtual instruments with which to play

and record your songs. You even have virtual session drummers to "hire" for your recording/jam sessions. Best of all, GarageBand keeps it easy and user friendly. Even with no experience, you can jump right in and be playing, recording, creating, and sharing music like a pro!

GarageBand Loop Library - GarageBand contains a loop library with hours of pre-recorded sounds for students to mix together to create compositions. They can also use them in conjunction with real instruments. Need a bass player but don't have one handy? Pick one of the many bass loops and drag it into your project. Want a full string or horn section? It is there too.

Drum Loops: Hire a Pro Drummer at a Moment's Notice - GarageBand features an instrument they call "Drummer." This instrument is a lifelike, realistic sounding session player that you can tell how you want it to play! Apple provided this amazing resource by hiring some of the industry's top session drummers and recording engineers to create the parts. "Drummer" can make practice exciting by providing a dynamic and accomplished musician for you or your entire class to jam with. Drummer has players in the genres of rock, alternative, songwriter, or R&B.

Using GarageBand With an Instrument

After plugging in your guitar, microphone, or MIDI keyboard you'll have a huge selection of tone pumping amps, effects, and instruments to use. Feeling in a Jimi Hendrix sort of mood? Bring up the Woodstock Fuzz preset and get ready to set your Strat on fire! Record a vocal and put the Epic Diva preset on it to sound larger than life. For you keyboardists just plug in a Little Kids Rock Casio keyboard with a USB cable and access sound after sound of synthesizers modeled after the greats, or a variety of classic instruments like Bosendorfer pianos and all the traditional orchestral instruments you might want.

GarageBand as Recording Studio

At its core GarageBand is a full-featured powerhouse recording studio. It is currently the most widely used digital recording workstation in the world. Like most Apple products, it was created with ease of use in mind. There are many simple but powerful recording and editing features at your fingertips that allow you to edit your sounds and add audio effects to finish your track like a top producer. For lessons on how to use GarageBand, visit the Teacher Resources section of www.littlekidsrock.org or explore the plethora of other online tutorials.

Sharing Your Project

Students can upload their project directly to a dedicated school SoundCloud or YouTube account!

Digital Audio Files Explained

Every audio and video file has a "type" or a "format." You might see options on the web and in music programs to "upload an .mp3" or "download a .WAV file." When you find these files on your computer, the "format" will be identified after the name of the song or file as an "extension." An example would be "LittleKidsRockSong.mp3" or "LittleKidsRockSong.wav". This is simply to denote the way that the digital information contained in the file was arranged. By knowing some of the terminology, you will be able to better understand the ins and outs of uploading, downloading, and editing music.

The biggest difference between file types is their size. A WAV file that plays the same 3 minute song as an MP3 file can be 20 times the size, taking up more space on your hard drive and taking more time to upload and download. This is because the MP3 is "compressed." The trade off is quality, but often the difference is hard to hear and is worth the time and space saved. Here are the common formats:

WAV and AIFF
These are the highest quality audio files and also take up the most space! They can be 10 times the size of a typical MP3 containing the same song. They are not "compressed" so there is no "loss" in fidelity from the original source recording. They sound identical to the way they were heard when recorded in a studio or on a CD. AIFF is specific to Apple but WAV is universal.

MP3, AAC, and WMA
These are compressed file formats that are smaller and more practical for everyday use. MP3 is the most common audio file type and the most universal. WMA is created in Microsoft programs like "Windows Media Player." AAC is less common.
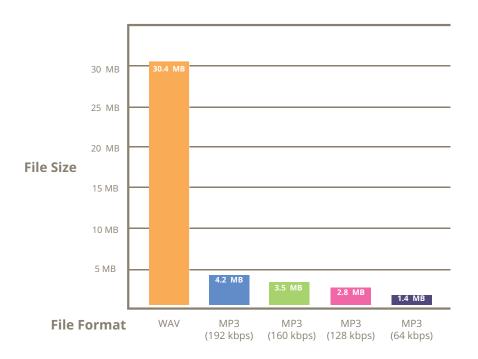
File Size and Sound Quality
When you are downloading or uploading music, you might see an option such as 128kbps, or 192kbps, etc. This denotes the size of the file (kilobytes per second). We recommend that you download or upload to at least 192kbps as there is a noticeable loss of quality around 128kbps or less. See the difference in file size for a three-minute song on the next page.

File Size

30 MB — **30.4 MB**

25 MB

20 MB

15 MB

10 MB

5 MB

4.2 MB **3.5 MB** **2.8 MB** **1.4 MB**

File Format

| WAV | MP3 (192 kbps) | MP3 (160 kbps) | MP3 (128 kbps) | MP3 (64 kbps) |

Digital Video File Types

Video files also come in many different formats that are listed below. The quality differences with "compression" are more noticeable with video since it changes the screen size and crispness. 720p HD and 1080p HD (high definition) will be full quality, taking up an entire screen without losing crispness. Anything below that will still be expandable to full screen, but will become blurry. When using video to film for more informal uses, you can save space on your drive and time with uploading and downloading by using smaller sizes such as 480p! Apple's iPhone, iPad and many Android devices default to full 1080p HD, taking up a lot precious space! There are many video apps available for download that will allow you to change the size.

Here are the most common video file types:

MP4 (Moving Pictures Expert Group 4)
This file type is used most often for sharing videos on the web. It is the preferred video type for uploading YouTube videos and is able to compress larger files to a smaller size without losing much quality!

AVI (Audio Video Interleave)
This is one of the oldest and most common formats and can be used by Mac, Windows and most video programs.

FLV (Flash Video Format)
This video type is used most often on websites. Unfortunately, they cannot be played by iPads or iPhones.

WMV (Windows Media Video)
This file type is created by Microsoft programs but is also compatible with many Apple programs. It is most often very

compressed and of low quality but small enough to send through an email.

MOV (Apple QuickTime Movie)
These files are native to Apple's QuickTime but this program is now available as a free download for Windows users. These videos are very high quality and usually quite large.

Essential Music Tech Vocabulary

When dealing with a lot of cables and connections, it is important to know the lingo of "signal paths" (how audio, video and other information travels) and the many devices and connections that are involved.

Analog vs. Digital: In analog technology, a wave form is recorded and transmitted in its original state. In digital, it is sampled and converted into a series of numbers. Digital information cannot be degraded over time. Ex: A tape is analog. An MP3 is digital.

Clipping: When a signal puts an amplifier at max capacity, it "cuts" or "clips" resulting in a distorted sound.

DAW: Digital Audio Workstation. This term is usually used to refer to recording programs like Logic, Pro Tools or GarageBand, but can also include all of the peripheral equipment used in conjunction with those programs.

EQ: This is short for "equalizer" and refers to the balance between bass (low), treble (high) and mid (middle) frequencies.

Gain, Volume and Level: You will often see these words used interchangeably but gain is an increase in power output, volume is an increase in decibels, and level is an increase in volume in relation to another sound source.

Female and Male: A male connection plugs into a female connection.

Hardware: A physical piece of equipment such as an interface, computer, or mixing board.

Headroom: The equivalent of having "money to burn." It is when an amplifier or speaker has plenty of power left if you want to turn it up.

Input: A female connection that receives a signal from a male connection. Ex: An amplifier's input is where the cable attaches from the guitar's output.

Jack: A fixed female connection attached to a piece of hardware.

MIDI: Short for Musical Instrument Digital Interface, it is a digital technology that allows a wide variety of electronic musical instruments, computers and other devices to connect and communicate with one another. Our current Little Kids Rock keyboards have a USB MIDI output for you to connect to your computer!

Mono: A single channel audio signal that you will only hear from one speaker or headphone.

Output: A female connection that sends a signal out, when a male connection is plugged into it. Ex: I plugged a cable into my guitar's output jack.

Pan: When you choose to put a sound in either the left side, right side, or center using a mixer or DAW you are panning that sound.

Phantom Power: You will often see this term on audio interfaces. Certain condenser microphones, not the kind you use for live singing (very sensitive ones), require extra power to transmit their signals. Phantom power accomplishes this task.

Plugin: An "add-on" to an existing software application, such as new sounds or a new feature.

Software: A digital program such as GarageBand, Microsoft Word, etc.

Stereo: A two channel audio signal that will play in both the left and right side.

TECHNOLOGY

LES PAUL AND HIS IMPACT ON MODERN BAND

One of the core differences between Modern Band and other streams of music education is the usage of electronics, from instruments such as guitar and bass to recording technology and effects. However, these crucial inventions that revolutionized music wouldn't have been possible without Les Paul.

If you've spent any time in a guitar shop, you've probably seen the name "Les Paul" inscribed in script on a Gibson or Epiphone guitar.

Though he is most famous for his iconic electric guitars, Les Paul has had a greater influence on modern music than a guitar headstock would have you know. Not only is he one of the most celebrated electric guitar players ever, he is also the inventor of the solid body electric guitar that he and thousands of other guitarists play. He began experimenting with electrifying guitars when he was just a child and although his first solid body guitar didn't look too much like a guitar, it functioned and sounded great.

Over time, Les Paul refined the design of his guitar to what it is today.

Log Guitar   Modern Les Paul Guitar

Les's perseverance in perfecting the design of his signature guitar can serve as a metaphor for how he persevered in overcoming adversity in his personal life. When Les was in his 30s, he was in a motorcycle accident that severely damaged his elbow and threatened to prevent his playing of the guitar ever again. So committed was he to his music and innovative in his thinking, Les requested his arm be set at an angle so that could continue to play the guitar, which he continued to do for many more decades.

In addition to being a renowned guitarist, Les Paul also made hundreds of inventions and innovations that moved music technology forward. Probably most widely used today is Les Paul's analogue multitrack recording technology. The digital version of which is the foundation of all our recording technology lessons at Little Kids Rock.

Home Studio: Getting to Know Your Gear

Building a studio at home is great way to record and produce your music! Victoria shows you some gear essentials for building a home studio!

HOME RECORDING
1. Home Studio: Getting to Know Your Gear
2. Recording Drums with a MIDI Keyboard
3. Recording Synths with a MIDI Keyboard
4. Recording Bass Directly with an Interface
5. Editing Bass Audio
6. Recording Vocals with a USB Microphone
7. Editing and Arranging Vocals

Check out our "Home Recording" series on www.jamzone.littlekidsrock.org/lessons/home-studio-getting-know-gear/

Les also invented controlled analogue uses of effects that you hear in virtually all the music you listen to today, such as reverb, delay, variable speeds, and phase shifting. Effects that producers and musicians add to recordings and performances, be they digital plugins or guitar pedals, are all descendants of Les Paul's inventions over the course of the 20th century. You can see Little Kids Rock students demonstrate all these techniques on the Jam Zone.

Your students may not know Les Paul beyond his signature, but they experience his influence and impact on music every time they play their favorite song. Modern music simply wouldn't be the same without Les.

To learn more about Les Paul and his influence, and to find further resources for teaching about the life and influence of Les Paul, check out the Links to Les on the Jam Zone.

Links to Les

Inspiring innovative and creative thinking by sharing the legacy of Les Paul.

Content developed with generous support from

THE *Les Paul* FOUNDATION
INSPIRING CREATIVITY · SUPPORTING INNOVATION

Multi-Track Recording   **Electric Guitar**   **Variable Speeds**

www.jamzone.littlekidsrock.org/links-to-les/

TECHNOLOGY

Mono T/S Connector: There are two connectors on this plug – the Tip (T) and the sleeve (S). It can carry one signal at a time. If you plug a mono-plug into a stereo jack you'll only hear one side of the signal. This comes in three sizes – ¼ inch like a guitar cable, 1/8th inch or 3.5 mm, and 2.5mm

XLR or Microphone Cable: Commonly used to connect microphones to a mixer or PA system. Can also be used to connect and amplifier to a mixer or a speaker to an amplifier.

VGA Cable: Carries analog video information from a computer to a monitor. Can also connect to LCD projectors, and many flat screen televisions.

Apple Thunderbolt Connection: Used as a data and video output on Mac computers for the past few years. Typically used as a video adapter for macs connecting to an HDMI or VGA connector. Can also be used for hard drives, Ethernet, or other peripheral connection, with the right adapter.

Micro USB: Used to connect a small peripheral device like a phone or camera into a computer or charging port.

Stereo T/R/S Plug: There are three connectors on this plug – the tip (T), ring (R), and the sleeve (S). It carries the left and right channels of a stereo signal. This comes in three sizes – ¼ inch, 1/8th inch or 3.5mm like a headphone cable, and 2.5mm.

RCA Composite Cables: The red and white cables carry left and right audio channels, and the yellow carries video. The three cables are identical, just color coded for convenience. If you needed to connect a DVD player to a TV and didn't have a yellow cable, you could connect it with another color as long as you were connecting video output to video input.

MIDI Cable: This cables connects a MIDI controller to a computer or MIDI processor.

USB A: Computer or power side plug. Used to carry data from a computer or device to another computer or device, such as an external hard drive, printer, phone, audio interface, etc.

RCA Audio Cable: Use this to connect a device's RCA audio output to another devices RCA audio input.

RCA to 3.5mm (1/8th inch) Auxiliary Audio Cable: Use these to connect your phone, tablet or computer's headphone jack to a speaker, amplifier or other device's red and white RCA audio input.

Instrument Cable: Use these mono ¼ inch cables to hook up your guitars, keyboards and bass guitars to an amplifier. They look almost identical to speaker cables but be sure to not use them for speakers. The wiring inside is very different.

Direct Box: Allows you to connect a ¼ inch cable to an XLR input. For example, connecting an acoustic guitar to a mixer. Comes in passive (unpowered) and active (needs batteries or to be plugged in) varieties.

Apple Lightning Connection: Used to power an iPhone/iPod or iPad or to use as a video or data output for these devices.

USB B: Used as an output on a device such as a computer, printer or hard drive to transfer data to a computer or other device.

Speakon Connector: Used to connect speakers to amplifiers.

Speaker Cable: Use these mono ¼ inch cables to hook up speakers. They are usually labeled "speaker cable" in fine print on the wire. They are often thicker than instrument cables. Be sure to not use them with instruments.

HDMI Cable: Used to connect digital audio/video devices together, for example, connecting your Apple TV or DVD player to your T.V. This single cable carries both digital audio and video signals.

Apple 30 Pin Connection: Used to power an older iPhone/iPad or iPad or to use as a video or data output for these devices.

Mini USB: Used to connect a small peripheral device like a phone or camera into a computer or charging port.

3.5mm (1/8th inch) Auxiliary Audio Cable: Use these to connect your phone, tablet or computer's headphone jack to a speaker, amplifier or other device's "aux" input.

TECHNOLOGY

COMPOSITION

COMPOSITION

Composing music is something that can be done by children or adults who have just started playing an instrument. In fact, playing an instrument and reading and writing music aren't prerequisites for composing music. Consider this passage from A.A. Milne's classic children's book, "Winnie The Pooh,":

"Pooh … had made up a little hum that very morning, as he was doing his Stoutness Exercises in front of the glass: Tra- la-la, tra-la-la, as he stretched up as high as he could go, and then Tra-la-la, tra-la--oh, help!--la, as he tried to reach his toes. After breakfast he had said it over and over to himself until he had learnt it off by heart, and now he was humming it right through, properly. It went like this:

"Tra-la-la, tra-la-la,
Tra-la-la, tra-la-la,
Rum-tum-tiddle-um-tum.
Tiddle-iddle, tiddle-iddle,
Tiddle-iddle, tiddle-iddle
Rum-tum-tum-tiddle-um."

This example comes from the world of make believe. Truth, however, can be stranger than fiction. Let's take a look at two very real and very well known composers: Paul McCartney and John Lennon. During a TV show, an interviewer asked Paul how it was possible that an enormously successful songwriter such as he couldn't even read or write music. Sir Paul's response was interesting:

"No, and as long as the two of us [John and I] know what we're doing, you know, what chords we're playing, and we remember the melody, we don't actually ever have the need to write it down or to read it."

In both the Pooh and Paul examples, the composers don't actually "write" their music down. They simply make it up. It's fairly safe to assume that Pooh couldn't read or write music given that his head was full of fluff and from the rest of the story we learn that he couldn't even read or write English. But what about the Beatles? Surely their approach to songwriting had to be more sophisticated than a stuffed bear, right?

Not really.

For the uninitiated, those who have never written a song before, or for those who do not play music themselves, this may seem perplexing. How is it possible to compose a song, to write music, if you don't know how to read or write it? Wouldn't that be almost an oxymoron? Yet those who are familiar with the world of pop music know that there is a near endless number of pop musicians, from globally known super stars to local folks busking on street corners, who "write" their own music despite the fact that they don't know how to read or write music.

It is helpful to look at the question of how people who can't read music can write it through the "Music As a Second Language" lens. People acquire their first language before they can read or write it. Linguists who study second language learning have found that this same sequence should be employed as we acquire a second language.

Pop musicians who compose without the aid of notation (and here we can safely say that we are speaking of the majority of pop musicians who compose) may be likened to people who have mastered the spoken form of their native tongue, but lack the formal schooling on reading and writing.

What can be especially confusing is that pop artists will often write down the lyrics and/or the chord progression to a song (see Figure A at right). However, this is very different from writing down music. Usually, no melodies, harmonies or rhythms are actually written out. Lyrics are often scrawled out in a hurry so that the composer won't forget the words. The actual music resides in the composers mind.

For example, the melody or harmony of a new composition are things that the pop composer feels confident that they will remember. If they feel that these things are also at risk of being forgotten, a pop musician will be more likely to record a rough take to revive their memory in the future than to write the information out in standard notation.

"
Playing an instrument and reading and writing music aren't prerequisites for composing music."
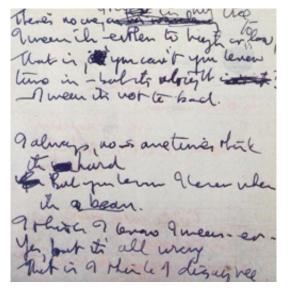
Fig. A - John Lennon wrote down the lyrics to "Strawberry Fields" [above] but he never wrote down the music for this or any other of his hundreds of compositions.

COMPOSITION

Empowering Your Students to Compose

Remember all the while how important it is to create a safe space in your classroom; one where your students feel comfortable to express themselves musically without judgment, and one where there anxiety levels or "Affective Filters" will be low. This will enable them to generate musical ideas that will quickly morph into music and songs. In some ways, this could be viewed as the musical equivalent of what linguists refer to as Speech Emergence.

Empowering your students to compose is simple and will help ensure that your kids can experience the thrills of songwriting. Here are three easy steps that make composition highly accessible.

STEP 1
Using chords and spontaneously generated lyrics and melodies, compose songs for them. You compose a song, they watch. (The song writing exercises in composition consumables are helpful)

STEP 2
Compose songs with them. Make it a team effort.

STEP 3
Facilitate improvisation and composition. Give students time and space to compose alone or in groups.

How Do I Use Chords to Write Songs?

By starting with a chord progression, students can use the notes within the chords to compose their melody. As students become comfortable with composition and improvisation, they will begin to hear the notes that work automatically.
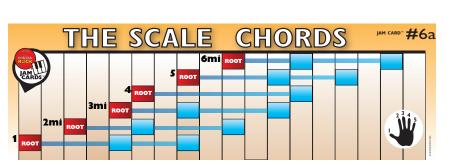
What Comes First, the Lyrics, the Chords, the Idea?

This is a great question and there is no correct answer. All of these are possible entry points and there are no true rules to follow. However, there are some very helpful building blocks that you can provide your students with.

COMPOSITION
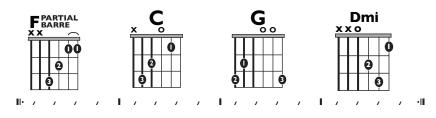
Composing On a Keyboard

Writing a song on keyboard is really easy to do especially when you have an idea of which chords sound good together. This information is easy to see instantly with the help of Jam Card 6a.

This Jam Card shows all the chords that are related to each other in a key at a glance, even if we have no idea what that means! Simply line the start arrow up to any note (C is the easiest because the shape of all the chords stays the same using only white keys) and try out the various chords. The really great thing about this is that these chords are meant to sound good together! That means you can compose a song by putting some of these chords in any order and the results will sound great. There are only six chords—try it using a six side dice—roll the dice to get any four chords and then write a song using the results! If singing over these chords puts your voice in a register that isn't natural or comfortable, simply move the start arrow of the Jam Card to a new starting note and play the chords there (keep in mind that any starting note beside C is going to involve black keys).

THE SCALE CHORDS — JAM CARD™ #6a

Visit the keyboard section for more info.

This idea of using chords that all come from the same key with the help of this jam card can be expanded. Changing the quality of one of the chords from major to minor or from minor to major can have a really cool effect. Let's say our randomly selected chords were F, C, G, and D minor. Our chord progression would look like this:
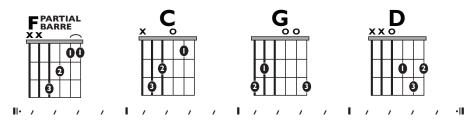
What if we changed the last chord from D minor to D major? Check out how unique and cool the sound of the progression becomes...

COMPOSITION

F PARTIAL BARRE   **C**   **G**   **D**

Let's try one more. What if we changed the G major to G minor? Once again we've got a chord progression that has a unique and expressive sound, and creating it was easy!

F PARTIAL BARRE   **C**   **Gmi** 3rd   **D**

Composing On Guitar

C   **Dmi**   **Emi**

F PARTIAL BARRE   **G**   **Ami**

Visit the guitar section for more info.

The same thing is true about chords that go together on the guitar (or any instrument for that matter). Chords that are in the same key can always be arranged in almost any order to sound great. Again we'll use the key of C for this example because most of the chords can be

played in open positions.

Mixing these chords up into any order results in good sounding music! The funny thing is that music is designed to work this way—by arranging these chords into compositions we're paying attention to it at the language level.

The only difficulty for new guitarists is playing some of these chords because unlike on keyboard each one requires a completely different shape in open position. The most notoriously difficult here is the F chord, which can be easily substituted in this key for FMaj7, which is a lot easier to play and sounds great. Also, chords that haven't been learned yet can be eliminated altogether, and compositions can be built from only the known chords! Think about the simplicity of some of the most loved songs over the decades—"Who Do You Love" by Bo Diddley (or George Thorogood) being entirely made out of an E chord—"Oye Como Va" by Santanta being only E minor and A—"I've Got a Feeling" by the Black Eyed Peas being G, E minor, and C the entire song. There are tons of great examples of cool songs that work with simple ingredients.

This brings up a very important point: what makes a song made out of the simplest ingredients work? A great first step into composition is listening to the most basic songs and hearing the way contrast is made using rhythm, lyrics, and song form. How are the chorus and verse different from each other in a one chord song like "Lowrider" or "Land of 1,000 Dances"? What does the band do in a simple song to make one section sound more exciting than another? Are some parts intended for vocals while other parts are instrumentals? Purposely using our ears to dig into our favorite music is often the best composition lesson.

Our own personal taste and love for music is illuminated by writing our own songs. Music becomes a language for us that we're learning to speak; composition has a personal an expressive power that is truly unique.

COMPOSITION
LESSON
PLANS

LESSON PLAN: Start With A Rhyme

Objective:

Students will create rhyming song lyrics and compose a melody for them, following specific guidelines.

Resources:
Start with a Rhyme Worksheet, pen, guitar or keyboard

Procedures:

Begin with a hook: "The words of a song are called lyrics." (Fun Fact: Lyric derives from the Greek word lyrikos, meaning "singing to the lyre". The lyre was a Greek string instrument much like the guitar) To help the students start writing lyrics, start with rhyming words.

Model the activity for the class. Have the students pick two pairs of rhyming words such as cat, hat.

"Now that we have all of our rhyming words, can anyone give me a sentence that ends with one of these words?" Repeat this process until you have four sentences.

Have the whole class read the four sentences aloud in unison. Add a beat to turn it into a rap.

Now add a simple chord progression. You can improvise a melody for the first line and ask students to echo you. Ask for volunteers to help you with the other lines.

Distribute the worksheet and have students work in groups of 2-4 to compose their own verse over a chord progression of their choosing, or that you assign. A single chord could work too!

Have students record and/or perform their ideas for review and assessment.

Extensions:
If all students use the same progression, combine each groups verse to make a class song!

Have students adhere to a topic either of your choosing, or of theirs.

Have students add a second section to their song with a new chord progression, melody and lyrics.

Differentiation:
Assign roles to the group members. All students can focus on lyrics, 2 on the singing, 2 on playing the chords, etc.

Allow students to stick with rap as opposed to adding melody

COMPOSITION

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artistic work.
Anchor Standard #6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
Anchor Standard #8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work
Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge an personal experiences to make art.

LESSON PLAN: Rap Talk

Objective:

Students will freestyle rap focusing only on the rhythm of their speech. They will speak to a beat.

Resources:
Hip-Hop backing track, or a drum track

Procedures:

Have drum track playing as students enter the room.

Rap to your students something like, "For the next ten minutes everything we say must be rapped, but do not worry, it doesn't have to rhyme, the only thing to think about is the rhythm of your words." Continue "rap talking" for a minute or so, so that the students get the idea. **Note**: Everything you say to the students from the moment they walk in the door should be "rap talked." This means you are giving your words a musical rhythm that is in sync with the backing track. Do not worry about rhyming.

Begin to involve the students with questions like, "What is your name?" Students should answer in a complete rapped sentence: "My name is Susan."

Move on to more open-ended questions such as, "What are you going to do this weekend?" These will require longer rapped responses.

Now, pair students, and allow them to have "rap conversations" while a backing track plays in the background.

Give them a topic, and pause the music every 30 second so that they can take turns rapping to each other. After every minute, change the topic about which they are to rap to each other.

Have student volunteers come up to "freestyle" for their classmates, to close the lesson.

COMPOSITION

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.
Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.
Common Core State Standards:
ELA Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration. Example: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.B: Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.

LESSON PLAN: End Rhymes

Objective:

1. Students will be able to phrase their rap lines within four beats.
2. Students will be able to freestyle a narrative that makes sense with given rhyming words.
3. Students will understand the role of a hype person.

Resources:
Start with a Rhyme Worksheet, pen, guitar or keyboard

Procedures:

Put 4 end rhymes on the board/projector.

Explain concept of hype person. They help create excitement for the rapper. One way is to say words at the same time.

Tell students you are going to put a beat on and that they will say each end rhyme on beat 4.

Count it off and rap so that the rhymes line up on the 4th beat, and everyone says them together.

Go through a few sets and ask for a volunteer to try.

Have students pair up and go through a few sets of end rhymes.

Close by having volunteers share with the class.

Extensions:
Allow students to come up with their own end rhymes.

Explain the difference between soft/slant/reach rhymes and hard rhymes and have students create examples of each.

Create complex multi syllable end rhymes, such as "hockey puck, my key's stuck"

After freestyling, have students compose raps with the end rhymes.

COMPOSITION

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context. Common Core State Standards: ELA Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration. Example: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.B: Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.

COMPOSITION

LESSON PLAN: Chord Tic-Tac-Toe

Objective:

Students will play through multiple semi-random combinations of chords, compare their sound, and pick a favorite. They may then use this chord progression as a basis for a song.

Resources:
Chord Tic-Tac-Toe Worksheet for guitars, keyboards, basses, etc.

Procedures:

Demonstrate the different ways you can play through the progressions. (Each row bottom to top, diagonal bottom to top, each row left to right, each row top to bottom, each row right to left, diagonal top to bottom).

Avoid playing all of the combinations so that students can explore on their own as well as make their own valued judgments without influence from the entire class.

Ask students to decide, of the sample progressions you play, which they like the best. Play through them a few times and have them vote.

After it is decided, ask them to turn and talk to their neighbor and explain why they like one better than the other. How does each feel? What does it make you think of? What is the mood?

Have students select either keyboard or guitar, and with a partner, play through ALL of the chord progressions.

After about 20 minutes, have volunteer students play through their favorite progression for the class.

Extensions:
Ear Training: Have students look away while volunteers play their chosen progression. Give other students 2 minutes to play though the progressions and see if they can guess the one that was played.

Advanced Ear Training: Have student look away while volunteers play their chosen progression. Ask other students which progression was played but don't allow them to play as they formulate their response.

Combine 2 different lines to make an 8 measure chord progression!

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. Example: MU:Re9.1.5a – Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and explain appropriateness to the context, citing evidence from the elements of music. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

COMPOSITION

LESSON PLAN: Hip Hop Hamburger

Objective:

Students will compose their own "Hook" and "Rap" around a chosen topic, while gaining an understanding of ABA structure, AABB rhyme patterns, and phrase length.

Resources:
Backing track, pen, paper, worksheet, checklist.

Procedures:

Create a completed project based on the worksheet directions that you can perform for your students as an example.

Perform your Hip Hop Hamburger at the beginning of the class session.

Distribute two worksheets. One that is completed by you, and a blank one.

Explain and model the ABA structure of the whole song.

Explain and model the rhyme scheme (AABB)

Explain and model 4 beats per line by counting with your fingers as you go through a few phrases. Show what it would sound like if you didn't fit them correctly.

Allow students to choose whether they want to focus on creating "hooks" or "verses". Group accordingly, having two hook writers and two verse writers per group, or 1 and 1 depending on your class.

> " *PARAMETERS ARE MEANT TO HELP STUDENTS TO GET STARTED NOT AS A LIMITATION."*

Differentiation:

Some students will not need as strict of parameters because of a familiarity or a natural understanding of the rhythm and structure of rap. Give these students more freedom if you believe they can benefit from it. Parameters are meant to help students get started, not as a limitation. Simplify the activity by cutting the hook to 4 measures and the rap to 8 measures.

COMPOSITION

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artistic work. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic works for presentation. Anchor Standard #8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work Responding - Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Common Core State Standards:
ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2 – 5.6

LESSON PLAN: Chord Tone Melodies

Objective:

Students will compose and transcribe a melody to sing by selecting chord tones from a given set of chords.

Resources:
Blank tablature, staff paper, and or regular paper, pencils, guitars

Procedures:

Have the entire class play one chord, such as "G".

Do a call and response rhythm on each note/string of the "G" chord, from the low E string to the high E string, singing and playing at the same time. This will be a good vocal exploration inviting students to go into their falsetto range.

Follow steps 1 and 2 using a second chord, such as "C".

Now have students strum the G chord for 1 measure, and then the C chord for 1 measure. While they are doing that, isolate the notes on the high E string for each chord, and sing and play them with a rhythm.

Now do the same thing on the B string, and then on the G string.

Explain to your students that you chose a string from each chord as your melody note. First you used the notes that were on the E string, then the notes that were on the B string, and the the G, etc.

Instruct students to finger each chord as if they were going to strum, but only play the high E string. Give them a rhythm to use, going from G chord to C chord. Now do the same with the B string, and finally the G string.

Now instruct them to sing and play those tones at the same time.

Improvise some simple lyrics to the resulting melody.

Independent Work:

Distribute tablature paper, staff paper, or blank paper.

With partners, Instruct students to compose a melody using any two chords of their choosing, but sticking to only one string of their choosing. (You can try also with two strings, or to add non chord tones. Differentiate accordingly)

One partner plays the chords and the other plays the single string, and then they switch roles.

Write down their melody, and try to give it some simple lyrics.

COMPOSITION

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.

LESSON PLAN: Colored Squares

Objective:

Students will combine the free write process with guided composition parameters to create song lyrics.

Resources:
Four 5"x5" colored squares made of construction paper, and stapled together for each student; pens

Procedures:

Distribute a colored square packet to each student.

Play a chord progression, riff, or song example and after a minute or two tell students to write down one word at the top of the first colored square, that the music makes them think of or feel.

Tell the students that they must now take 60 seconds to write about this word on the first square.

Tell students to take one word from the first square and to write it at the top of the second square.

Tell them that they now have 60 seconds to write about this second word on their second square.

Repeat the process until all four squares are filled.

Ask student volunteers to share.

Encourage students to use this material as the basis of a song.

COMPOSITION

LESSON PLAN: Ideas from the Class

Objective:

Students will use information from their history class to write a song

Resources:
Pencil, Paper and IDEAS!

Procedures:

Have the students tell you what topics they are learning about in their History class. Hint: Talk to the History teacher ahead of time to learn what topic they are covering. Ask if there are any terms that relate to the topic.

Pass out small slips of paper and have the students write down the words they are studying in relationship to the topic. (ex. Moon Landing-rocket, moon, astronauts, etc...) This is one way to get everyone to participate and the lesson is not dominated by one or two students.

Next have the students call out the terms and write them on the board. Form the words into rhyming words.

Use the rhyming words to form a poem.

Extensions:

If you pick a song that has an easy chord progression, have the students play along with the rhyming words.

Choose strum patterns from the teacher manual.

Just for FUN!

Have the students present their poems or songs to the history teacher.

COMPOSITION

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
National Core Arts Standards (Music) Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Cr1.1.H.5a (Novice) Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for simple melodies (such as two-phrase) and chordal accompaniments for given melodies. Anchor Standard 11: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. Example: General Music MU:Cn11.1.(PK-8) Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life. (also applies in other strands at the high school level) Common Core CorrelationCCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

LESSON PLAN: Everyone Likes Singing a Parody

Objective:

Students will create an educational parody based on a popular song they already know and like.

Resources:
Pre-screened recording of student's song choice, lyric sheet of their song choice, parody writing worksheet (see next page)

Procedures:

Divide students into small groups of 2-4 members.

Distribute Parody Writing Worksheet.

Review the worksheet with the students (see worksheet with directions below)

As soon as students choose their songs, if possible print them on the spot, or before the next class period

Allow students time to listen to the original song and replace the lyrics with new ones.

Circulate room and help groups as needed

Students will record or perform their parodies for their classmates.

Note:
This project may take up to 3 hours or more to complete.

Variation:
Grouping choices can either be made by the students or you can strategically place more advanced student with those that may struggle with such an activity. You can keep the rewrite loose, and treat it as a great way to make singing fun and appealing, or you can use it for its ELA connections. For the latter, you can have students match up every syllable in their rewrite, graphing out the connections!

Worksheet on next page.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artistic work.
Anchor Standard #4: Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic works for presentation. Anchor Standard #8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work
Responding - Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
Connecting – Anchor Standard #10

COMPOSITION

LESSON PLAN: Mystery Song

Objective:

Students will learn how to write a song based on the pattern of a known song

Resources:
Any Instrument

Procedures:

Have the students make a list of songs that they already know. This would be a great use of a "song suggestion box" in front of the room. You will always have ones to choose from and they will love being able to suggest songs.

Choose (5) songs from the list that the students provided.

Play the chord progression for the students and see if they can recognize the song from the list. You can make a game out of it like Bingo.

Once the students recognize the pattern, have them play it on their instrument.

Extensions:

Have one of the student's play the chord progressions and the others guess which song it is. This can be done in small groups or by rotating the student demonstrating the song.

Choose strum patterns from the teacher manual.

Just for FUN!

Make a challenge out of it and keep a class leaderboard for the students.

COMPOSITION

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
National Core Arts Standards (Music) Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work.
Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Cr3.1.H.5a (Novice) Apply teacher-provided criteria to critique, improve, and refine drafts of simple melodies (such as two-phrase) and chordal accompaniments for given melodies. Common Core Correlations: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1.b Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges.

LESSON PLAN: Mix and Match Chords

Objective:

Students will make artistic choices about chord combinations in order to compose a song.

Resources:
Pencil, Paper, Guitars, Keyboard.

Procedures:

Have the students write down all the chords they know. Hint: You can do this as a class with you writing them on each slip of paper or have the students do it.

Pick one of the chords and play it using one of the rhythms that the class already knows. Repeat this step until you have (4) chords chosen.

Once the students are comfortable with the chord pattern. Remove one of the chords and choose a new one.

Have the students compare the new one to the old one and ask which they liked better. Will it sound better in another part of your song?

Extensions:

Record the song using one of the devices available to you (i.e. Smartphone, PC or other recording device)

Make the rhythms more complex by trying something new like the Reggae rhythm from the teacher manual.

COMPOSITION

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
National Core Arts Standards (Music) Anchor Standard 1: Generate and Conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Cr1.1.H.Ia (High School Proficient) Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for improvisations, compositions (forms such as theme and variation or 12-bar blues), and three-or-more-chord accompaniments in a variety of patterns (such as arpeggio, country and gallop strumming, finger picking patterns).Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Cr2.1.H.5a (Novice) Select, develop, and use standard notation or audio/video recording to document melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for drafts of simple melodies (such as two-phrase) and chordal accompaniments for given melodies.Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1.1.b Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges.

LESSON PLAN: Composing With Chord Tones

Objective:

Students will improve their technique while composing short chord tone patterns and employing iconographic notation to document their creations.

Resources:
Guitars, Pencil, Paper

Vocabulary:
Arpeggio – playing chord tones in succession instead of all together.

Procedures:

Demonstrate some arpeggio patterns using one or more chords. Pretend to have poor technique preventing you from performing the intended pattern and show the steps necessary to fix it (press harder, closer to fret, fingertips at 90 degree angle to fretboard, thumb straight up and down on the back of the neck, etc.)

Tell students they will create their own patterns using a progression of chords or a single chord (differentiate according to age and level).

Patterns can be 1-2 measures long.

Students can transcribe their patterns using the following iconographic notation: Name of chord, followed by the string number played. (Ex. D 112 123) Represent space in sound, or lack of space by how close together you put the numbers.

Extensions:

You can do this with multiple instruments.

Students can also sing the arpeggio patterns while they play them.

Students can add words to the tones, and it can become a song!

COMPOSITION

LESSON PLAN: Composing a 12 Bar Blues Song

Objective:

Students will understand the phrase structure of a 12 bar blues lyric and the concept of AAB and Call and Response. They will demonstrate learning by composing an original blues lyric.

Resources:
Blues Lyric Worksheet, sample recording of "Hound Dog" by Big Mama Thornton and Elvis, whiteboard or projector to show lead sheet

Procedures:

Play both recordings of "Hound Dog" for your students and discuss differences.

Teach them how to sing the song and sing through it a few times. Stick with a couple of verses for ease and to save time. Accompany yourself and the class with a backing track or guitar or piano.

Explain the concept of "Call and Response" and AAB. The call of the first line is: "You ain't nothin' but a hound dog" and the response is "Been Snooping 'round my door." This whole line fits over the first 4 bars of the 12 bar form. It repeats for the second 4 bars. These are the two "A" lines. The call of the B line is "You can wag your tail" and the response is "But I ain't gonna feed you no more." This line fits over the last 4 bars of the 12 bar form.

You should write the lyrics under a lead sheet showing how they line up with the musical form.

Once you are sure students are familiar with the concepts, distribute the "Lyric Writing Worksheet."

Have students complete worksheet independently for Part A, and with a partner for Part B.

Have students perform their work either privately or for the class!

Extensions:

Record and submit to the Little Kids Rock Songwriting Exhibition!

Other good examples of 12 bar blues are "Crossroads" by Eric Clapton and "The Thrill is Gone" by B.B. King. There is an excellent version of Solange doing this as a duet with B.B. King on YouTube.

COMPOSITION

National Core Arts Standards (Music):
Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artistic work. Anchor Standard #4: Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic works for presentation. Anchor Standard #8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work
Responding - Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

LESSON PLAN: Rapping with End Rhymes

Objective:

Students will be able to improvise and/or compose a narrative using a given set of "end-rhymes".

Resources:
Hip Hop backing track, or live beat boxing, end rhyme sheet, pen and paper

Procedures:

Write down a few sets of end rhymes on the board.

Play a hip hop backing track a comfortable tempo and instruct students to say a word on every 4th beat. Ex: 1 2 3 Cat, 1 2 3 Hat, 1 2 3 Rat….

Eventually, add a narrative before each end rhyme. Ex: I walked across the street and saw a CAT, It was really cool with its backwards HAT, It was feeling really hungry and hunting for a RAT…

Ask for a student volunteer to do the same thing with a different set of end rhymes while the rest of the class says the end rhyme on the fourth beat.

Pair students up around the class and have them do this activity - one says the end rhymes and the other raps and then switch.

Sample End Rhymes

Cat	Ate
Hat	Date
Mat	Fate
Rat	Mate
Flow	Ate
Know	Date
Glow	Fate
Grow	Mate

Extensions:

Have students write out a narrative before performing, making it less of an improvisation and more of a composition.

Have students create their own end rhymes.

COMPOSITION

COMPOSITION
CONSUMABLES

WORSHEET: Parody Writing

Directions:

Work in small groups to create a parody about any topic you have learned about this school year in Math, Language Arts, Social Studies or Science. To make a parody, simply replace the original lyrics of the song with lyrics of your own. Each group will have two class periods to finish their lyrics. The following music class will be designated for practicing and performing the finished parody.

Step1: Choose a popular song that your group already knows.

Song Title: _____ **Artist**: _____

Step 2: Choose a topic from another school subject that you would like to make your song about.

Topic: _____ **Subject**: _____

Step 3: Write the new lyrics to your song, making sure they line up with the original song lyrics.

Original Lyrics	**Parody Lyrics**
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

COMPOSITION

WORKSHEET: 12 Bar Blues

Name: _____   Date: _____

Example from "Hound Dog" performed by Big Mama Thornton

Verse 1

(A) You ain't nothing but a hound dog,   been snoopin' round my **door**
       Call   *Response*

(A) You ain't nothing but a hound dog,   been snoopin' round my **door**
       Call   *Response*

(B) You can wag your tail,   but I ain't gonna feed you no **more**
       Call   *Response*

Verse 2

(A) You told me you was high class,   I could see through **that**
       Call   *Response*

(A) You told me you was high class,   I could see through **that**
       Call   *Response*

(B) And baby I know,   you ain't no real cool **cat**
       Call   *Response*

Part A – Independently

Complete the following blues verse. Write the third line of lyrics that is about the same length as the first two and includes a call and response. Make sure the last word of the third line rhymes with the last word of the first two lines ("**do**").
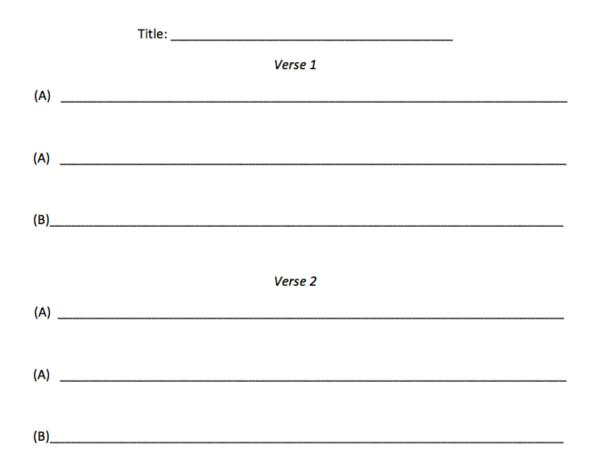
(A)   I feel so sad and lonely, don't know what I'm gonna **do**

(A)   I feel so sad and lonely, don't know what I'm gonna **do**

(B)   _____

COMPOSITION
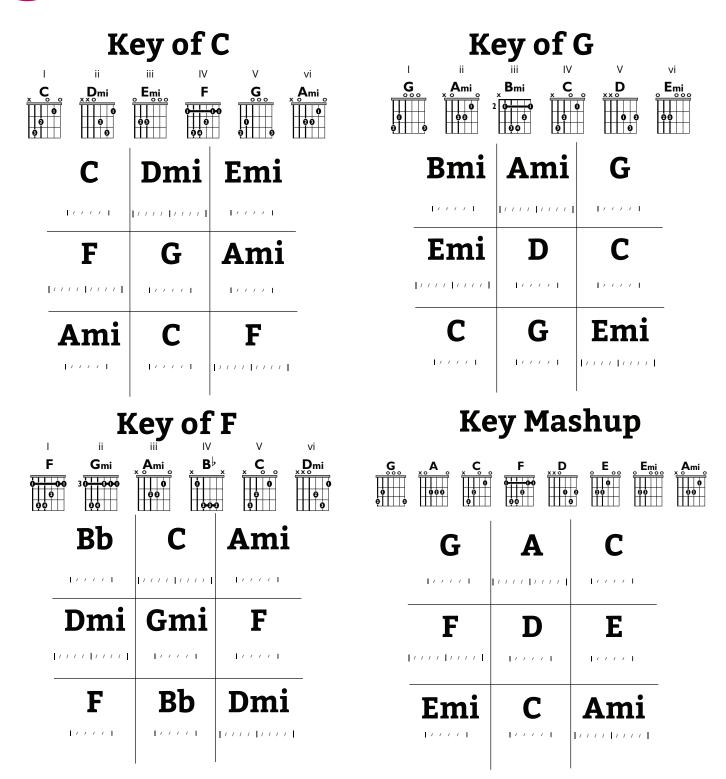
WORKSHEET: 12 Bar Blues

Part B – With a Partner

Now, with a partner, write your own blues lyrics. The words of the first two lines should be identical. The third line, however, should be different from the first two lines. Remember, the LAST WORD of the three lines of each verse should RHYME. Please do this for both verses. Lyrics must be school appropriate. *Each pair can perform their blues lyrics with the music.*

Title: _____

Verse 1

(A) _____

(A) _____

(B)_____

Verse 2

(A) _____

(A) _____

(B)_____

COMPOSITION

WORKSHEET: Chord Tic-Tac-Toe

Key of C

I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi
C	Dmi	Emi	F	G	Ami

C	Dmi	Emi
F	G	Ami
Ami	C	F

Key of G

I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi
G	Ami	Bmi	C	D	Emi

Bmi	Ami	G
Emi	D	C
C	G	Emi

Key of F

I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi
F	Gmi	Ami	Bb	C	Dmi

Bb	C	Ami
Dmi	Gmi	F
F	Bb	Dmi

Key Mashup

G	A	C	F	D	E	Emi	Ami

G	A	C
F	D	E
Emi	C	Ami

Directions
1. Pick a tic-tac-toe board!
2. Go in all directions to play each combination of 3 chord/4 measure progressions, and pick a favorite! ↑↖←↙↓↘→↗
   Note: Try to find the three bar pattern. How does it sound?
3. Try to combine 2 lines to make a longer 6 chord/8 measure progression!
4. Add lyrics and a melody to make a song.

WORKSHEET: Chord Tic-Tac-Toe

Directions

1. Go in all directions to play each combination of 3 chord/4 measure progressions, and pick a favorite! ↑ ↖ ← ↙ ↓ ↘ → ↗
   Note: Try to find the three bar pattern. How does it sound?
2. Try to combine 2 lines to make a longer 6 chord/8 measure progression!
3. Add lyrics and a melody to make a song.

COMPOSITION

WORKSHEET: Chord Tic-Tac-Toe

	i	ii	iii	IV	V	vi
Guitar	G	Ami	Bmi	C	D	Emi
Easy Guitar	G	Ami	Bmi	C	D	Emi
Keyboard	G	Ami	Bmi	C	D	Emi
Bass	G	Open A	B	C	Open D	Open E

Bmi	Ami	G
| ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ |	| ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ | ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ |	| ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ |
Emi	**D**	**C**
| ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ | ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ |	| ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ |	| ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ |
C	**G**	**Emi**
| ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ |	| ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ |	| ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ | ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ ⁄ |

COMPOSITION

Directions

1. Go in all directions to play each combination of 3 chord/4 measure progressions, and pick a favorite! ↑ ↖ ← ↙ ↓ ↘ → ↗
   Note: Try to find the three bar pattern. How does it sound?
2. Try to combine 2 lines to make a longer 6 chord/8 measure progression!
3. Add lyrics and a melody to make a song.

WORKSHEET: Hip Hop Hamburger

Name_____   Group Members _____

Topic:_____

TOP BUN: Hook/Chorus, 4 measures (A section)

A _____

A_____

B_____

B_____

MEAT/CHEESE: Rap/Verse, 8 measures (B section)

A _____

A_____

B_____

B_____

A _____

A_____

B_____

B_____

BOTTOM BUN: Hook/Chorus, 4 measures (A section)

A _____

A_____

B_____

B_____

WORKSHEET: Hip Hop Hamburger

Name_____ Group Members _____

Topic:_____ **TOP**

TOP BUN: Hook/Chorus, 8 measures (A section)

A _____

B_____

A_____

B_____

MEAT/CHEESE: Rap/Verse, 16 measures (B section)

A _____

B_____

A_____

B_____

A _____

B_____

A_____

B_____

BOTTOM BUN: Hook/Chorus, 8 measures (A section)

A _____

B_____

A_____

B_____

COMPOSITION

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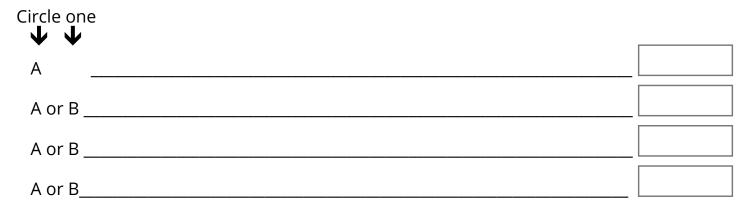
WORSHEET: Start With a Rhyme

Name _____ **Bandmates** _____

Directions:

1. Choose a rhyme scheme (AABB, ABAB, or AAAA)
2. Start by choosing rhyming words to put in the boxes. The "A" lines must rhyme, and the "B" lines must rhyme.
3. Now make sentences that end in those words (Tip: Keep each sentence about the same length)
4. Give your words some rhythm and melody to make it a song!

Circle one
⬇   ⬇

A   _____ ☐

A or B _____ ☐

A or B _____ ☐

A or B_____ ☐

COMPOSITION

A   _____ ☐

A or B _____ ☐

A or B _____ ☐

A or B_____ ☐

WORKSHEET: Ideas from Class
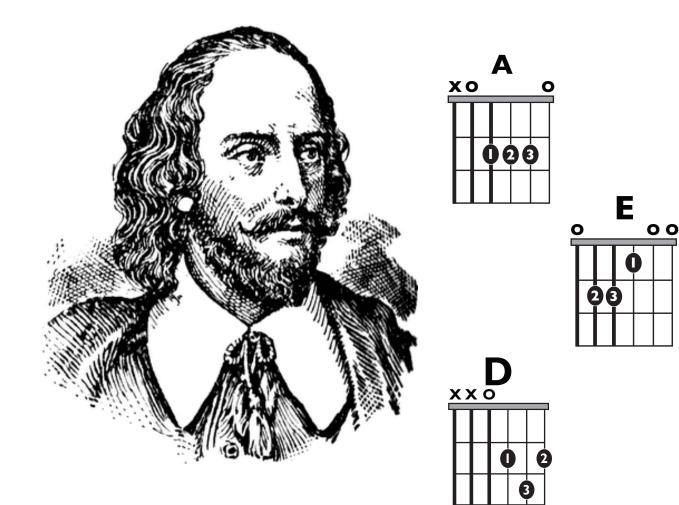
Pick something that you learned about in school that you thought was cool. Write a short poem about that topic. Can you set it to music?

The French Revolution

The Great Depression

We Reach The Moon

Geometric Shapes

Dinosaurs

Types of Weather

WORKSHEET: Pick a Rhyme

Pick a nice passage from a rhyming work
(maybe something by Shakespeare or even Dr. Suess).

Next, pick a chord progression. Try playing the
progression and singing the passage on top of it.

COMPOSITION
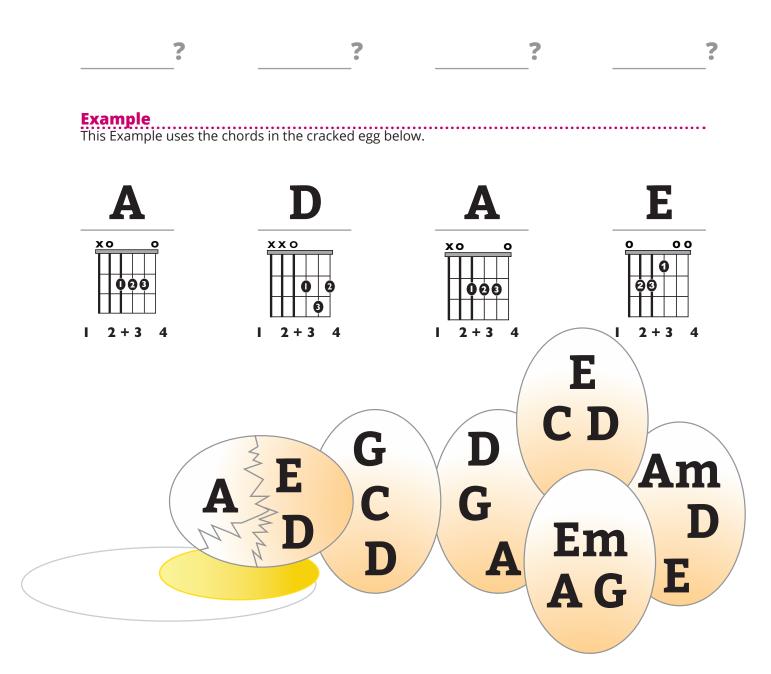
Scrambled Chords... Yum!
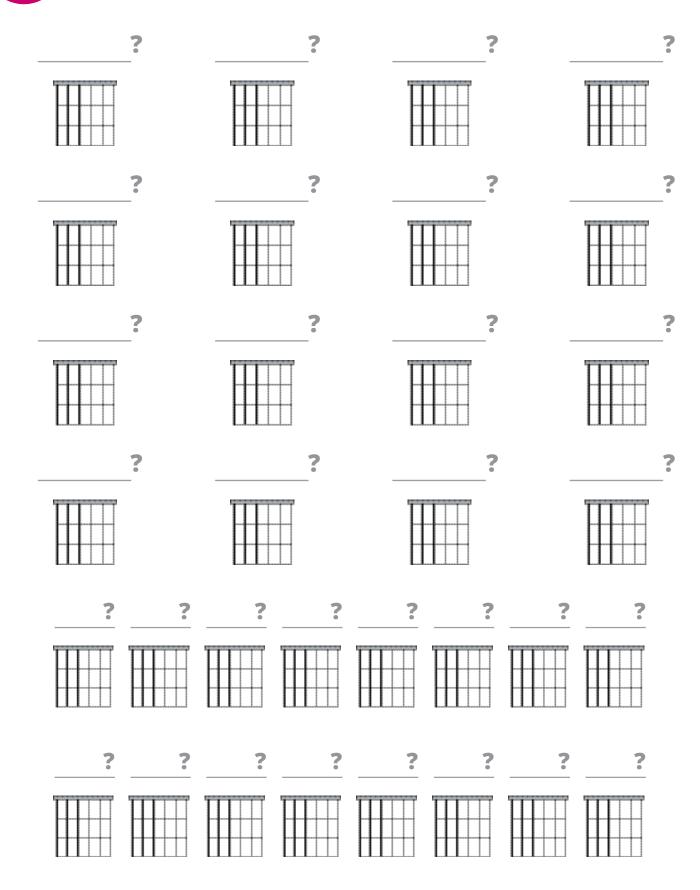
When you scramble an egg, you don't worry too much about what part goes where. You just stir it up!

Lots of rock, blues, metal, punk and country songs have just three chords. If you pick the right three chords, it doesn't matter what order you put them in. They will sound good.

Take a look at the eggs below. Each one has a set of three chords that go great together. Pick one egg and crack it open. Spread the three chords all over the next page in any order you like. Then play it with any rhythm you like. Fill in the blanks for the chords and rhythm. Try to think of 4 and 8 measure patterns.

_____ ?   _____ ?   _____ ?   _____ ?

Example
This Example uses the chords in the cracked egg below.

A   **D**   **A**   **E**

I   2 + 3   4   I   2 + 3   4   I   2 + 3   4   I   2 + 3   4
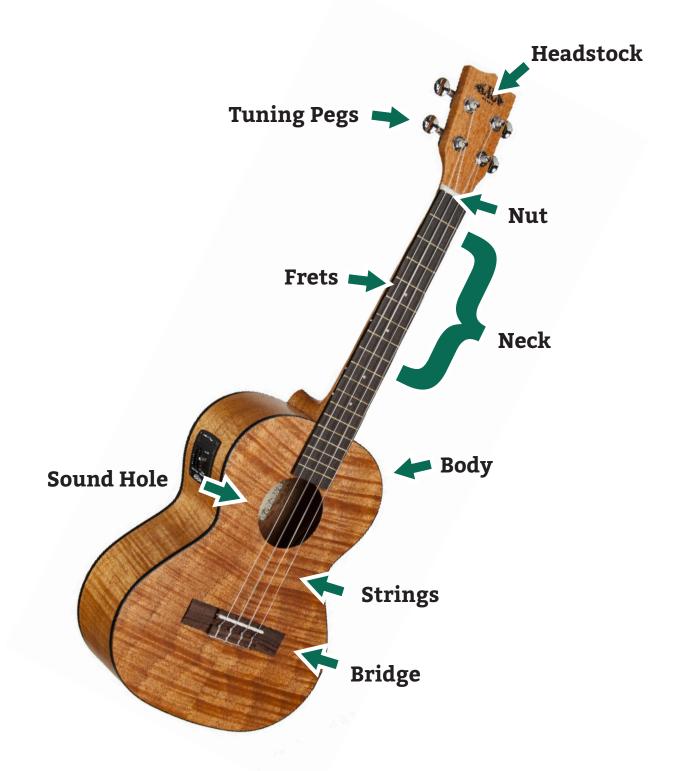
WORKSHEET: Scrambled Chords
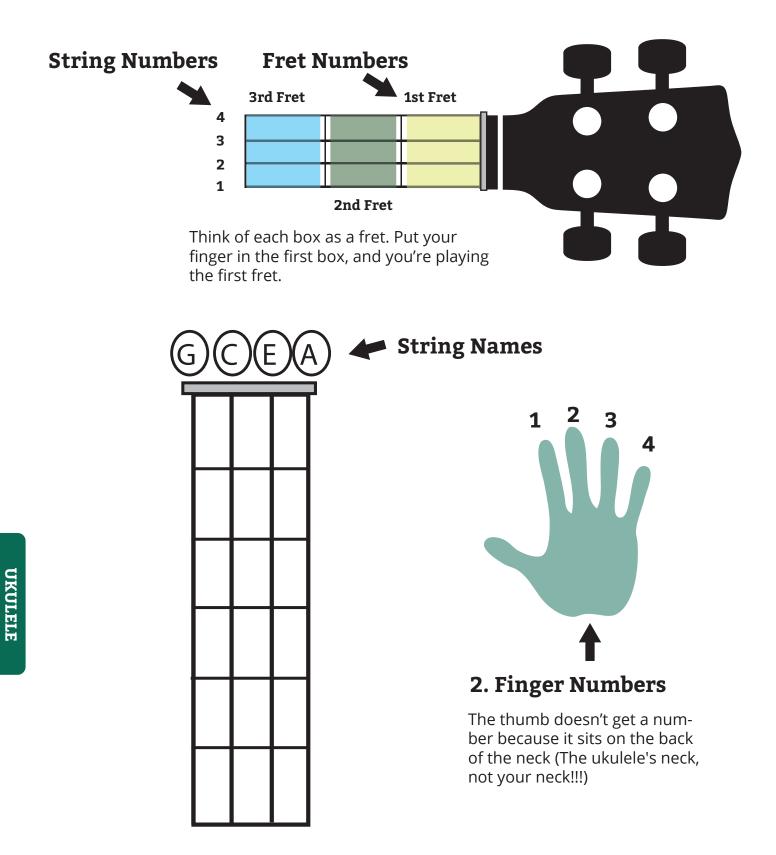
UKULELE
CONSUMABLES

Parts of the Ukulele
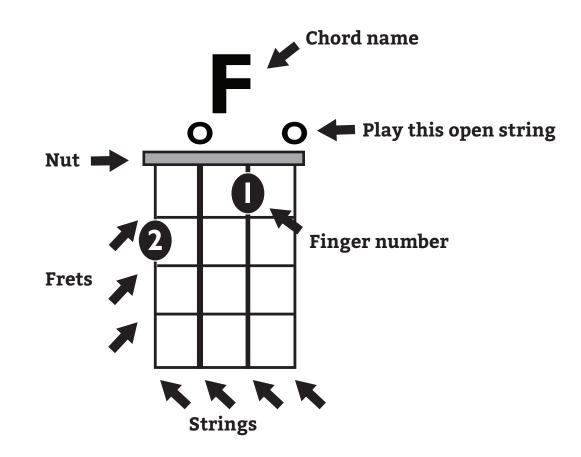
Headstock

Tuning Pegs

Nut

Frets

Neck

Body

Sound Hole

Strings

Bridge

Some of the Basics

String Numbers

Fret Numbers

3rd Fret

1st Fret

4

3

2

1

2nd Fret

Think of each box as a fret. Put your finger in the first box, and you're playing the first fret.

G C E A ← **String Names**

1 2 3 4

2. Finger Numbers

The thumb doesn't get a number because it sits on the back of the neck (The ukulele's neck, not your neck!!!)

Chord Diagrams

A chord diagram is just a drawing of what a chord looks like when you play it on your uke. Look at the chord diagram and key below.

Chord name

F

Play this open string

Nut

Finger number

Frets

Strings

Here are tips for Reading Chord Diagrams:
The black dots with numbers in them are where you place your fingers. The numbers tell you which finger to use. Play strings that have black dots.
Any string that has an "O" above it is supposed to be played, even though there is no finger on it.
Any string that has an "X" above it is NOT supposed to be played.

UKULELE

Tuning a Uke... ARGH!

By Ear:

Tuning the Ukulele by ear can take some time to get good at. The more you try it the better your ears will get so don't get frustrated if it doesn't sound good right away. Here is how you can begin to tune by ear:

1.Use a piano as a reference.

2. Use a tuning app such as Tuner Plus or Ukulele Tuner.

An Electronic Tuner:

Even though it is a good skill to be able to tune by ear, even professionals use electronic tuners. There are two kinds that we recommend.
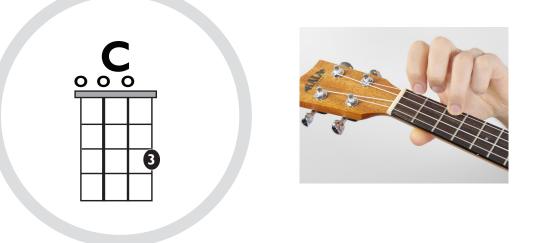
A headstock tuner. This tuner clips to your headstock and picks up the vibration of the Ukulele strings.

A microphone tuning app. These apps use the mic on your phone and tell you if the strings are in tune. Examples are Precision Ukulele Tuner, Simple Ukulele Tuner, or Tuner Lite.

UKULELE

The C Chord

This is the first chord that you should learn. All you need is one finger to play this chord! Try to use your third finger, which is your ring finger. Strum all of the strings and then play them one at a time to make sure they all ring out.

Tips for Chord Fingering

✓ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✓ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✓ Each finger touches just one string.

✓ Place fingers close to the frets.

✓ Press hard enough to get a sound.

The F Chord

Stretch!
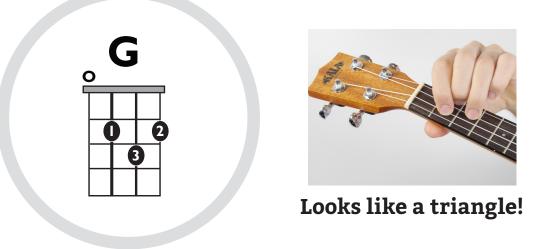
Use your first two fingers to play the F chord. If it is too hard with both fingers, just use the first finger and it will still sound good. With both the C and the F, you are on your way to playing so many songs! The tricky thing here is making sure that the two open strings still ring out, and that you don't touch them with your first and second fingers.

Tips for Chord Fingering

✔ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✔ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✔ Each finger touches just one string.

✔ Place fingers close to the frets.

✔ Press hard enough to get a sound.

UKULELE

The G Chord

Looks like a triangle!
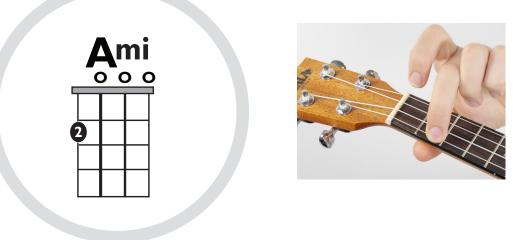
Even though this chord uses three fingers, they are all next to each other, so its not that hard once you get used to it! This shape is like a triangle. Strum all the strings and also play them one at a time to make sure they all ring out.

Tips for Chord Fingering

✔ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✔ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✔ Each finger touches just one string.

✔ Place fingers close to the frets.

✔ Press hard enough to get a sound.

UKULELE

A Different Mood: The A Minor Chord
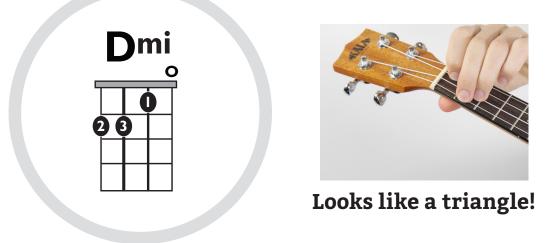
This chord is just as easy as the C chord! By this time you should be fine using your second finger. With the C, F, G, and A minor, you can play hundreds of songs. Practice these chords in different combinations and see what you like.

Tips for Chord Fingering

✓ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✓ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✓ Each finger touches just one string.

✓ Place fingers close to the frets.

✓ Press hard enough to get a sound.

The D Minor Chord

Dmi
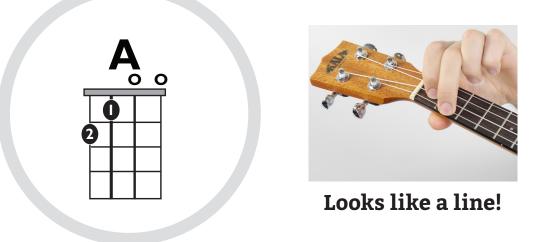

Looks like a triangle!

Like the G Chord, the D Minor Chord uses three fingers, but they're all very close together. If this chord is tough, look below at our tips for chord fingering and take your time.

Tips for Chord Fingering

✔ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✔ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✔ Each finger touches just one string.

✔ Place fingers close to the frets.

✔ Press hard enough to get a sound.

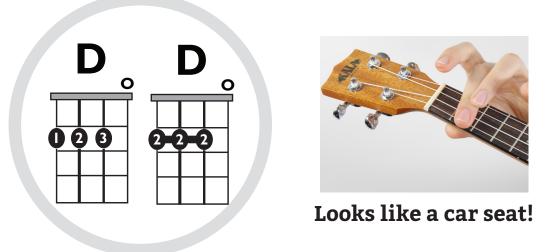UKULELE

The A Chord

Looks like a line!

The A Chord is very similar to its brother, the A Minor, but you just add your first finger to the first fret of the C string. How would you compare the A chord with the A minor? They obviously sound different, but how?

Tips for Chord Fingering

✓ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✓ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✓ Each finger touches just one string.

✓ Place fingers close to the frets.

✓ Press hard enough to get a sound.
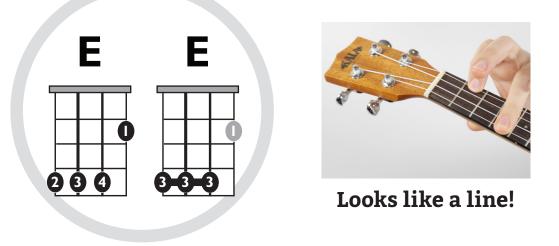
The D Chord

Looks like a car seat!

There are two ways to play the D chord. One is to use the tips of your first, second, and third fingers, and curve your fingers like cat claws. The other is to use just one finger and barre it across all three notes. Try both and see what works for you.

Tips for Chord Fingering

✔ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✔ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✔ Each finger touches just one string.

✔ Place fingers close to the frets.

✔ Press hard enough to get a sound.

UKULELE

451

The E Chord: A Movable Shape

E   E

Looks like a line!

Like the D chord, there are two ways to play the E. One is to use the tips of all four of your fingers, and the other is to barre your third finger across the fourth fret. You can also use your first finger on the second fret of the first string, but this chord will sound great even without that note.

Tips for Chord Fingering

✔ Curve your fingers like cat claws.

✔ Thumb is straight up and down on the back of the neck parallell with the frets

✔ Each finger touches just one string.

✔ Place fingers close to the frets.
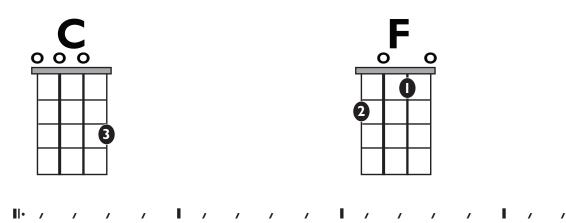
✔ Press hard enough to get a sound.

First Songs and Chord Progressions

A chord progression is just two or more chords played one after the other. Most pop songs are made up of three to six chords that repeat in some sort of a pattern.
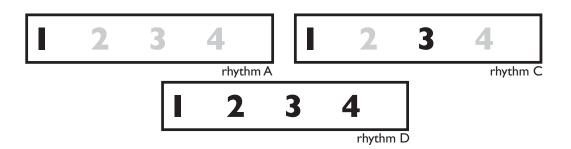
The chord progression below uses just two chords, "C" and "F." The ⫸ that appears at the end of the progression is called a repeat sign. It is there to tell you to start over again from the beginning of the progression. **When we write out a chord progression, it is called a lead sheet.**

❘ ╱ ╱ ╱ ╱ ❘ The bars to the left here are called a measure. Each measure gets four beats which we count as "1, 2, 3, 4." You will see that there is a four measure pattern in this song that gets repeated over and over.

Just a Little Bit by Paula Fuga

Play the above progression first by only playing on beat 1 of each measure. Then try strumming on beats 1 & 3, and last, try strumming on every beat.

Go to jamzone.littlekidsrock.org for a personal lesson from Paula, and to play along with her. Find the lyric lead sheet for this song on the next page.

UKULELE

Lyric Lead Sheet for "Just A Little Bit"

A lyric lead sheet is where you can read the lyrics, see what chords to play, and when to switch chords all at the same time. Remember to go to jamzone.littlekidsrock.org to play along with Paula in her videos.

C   **F**
Hold on just a little bit longer,
                  C   **F**
I know in time you'll feel a little bit stronger
C   **F**
Try just a little bit harder,
                      C   **F**
when you feel like quitting, time to give it your all

Chorus:
Just a little bit
C
Do, do do, do, do, do do, do
F
Do, do do, do, do, do do, do X 2

C   **F**
Dream just a little bit bigger,
                  C   **F**
If you can see it Hold on to that picture
C   **F**
Dance just a little bit crazier
                      C   **F**
Like no one's watching 'cause I'm a lover and a dreamer

Chorus:
Just a little bit
C
Do, do do, do, do, do do, do
F
Do, do do, do, do, do do, do X 2

UKULELE

454

C   F
Laugh just a little bit louder
                 C   F
Who cares if they think that there's something funny about her
C   F
Smile just a little bit brighter
           C   F
All your troubles will seem a little lighter

Chorus:
Just a little bit
C
Do, do do, do, do, do do, do
F
Do, do do, do, do, do do, do X 2

C   F
Sing just little bit sweeter
             C   F
Close your eyes it gets a little easier
C   F
Breathe just a little bit deeper
           C   F
Exhale the negative you'll feel a little freer

Chorus:
Just a little bit
C
Do, do do, do, do, do do, do
F
Do, do do, do, do, do do, do X 2
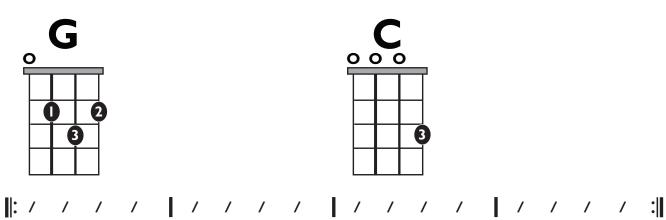
C   F
We can be just a little bit better
           C   F
Better than yesterday and even better tomorrow
         C   F
If we just Love just a little bit more
            C   F
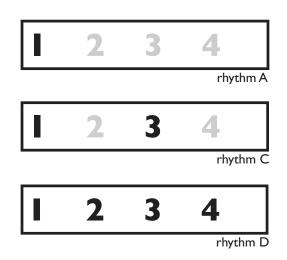Be true to yourself Give from your heart

UKULELE

455

Strumming Chord Progressions

When you're first learning to switch between chords, give yourself as much time as you need to switch. What will help is starting by only playing on the first beat of each measure, so that you have the rest of the beats to switch. Let's try it with Paula Fuga's song "Beautiful Face". After you've got the progression, check out the lyrics on the next page.

Beautiful Face by Paula Fuga

Play the above progression first by only playing on beat 1 of each measure. Then try strumming on beats 1 & 3, and last, try strumming on every beat.

rhythm A

rhythm C

rhythm D

"Beautiful Face" by Paula Fuga

Intro
G   C
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah
G   C

        G   C
Well I haven't seen you in a while, yeah yeah
     G   C
I miss the sight of your, your beautiful smile
G   C
I miss the feeling of your skin touching mine
G   C
I can't wait til Friday night

        G   C
I'll be going to your place, yeah yeah
G   C
I can't wait to see your beautiful face
G   C
All I want is to feel your embrace
G   C
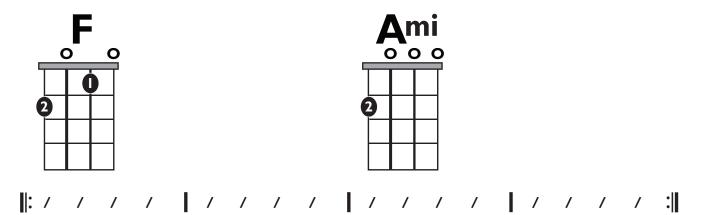I'll hurry baby, no time to waste

Interlude
G   C
   Yeah, yeah yeah
G   C

         G   C
When you come home, baby I'll be waiting there for you
G   C
Baby, baby please don't leave me blue
G   C
              I...
  G   C
I need you, I want you, I gotta have you by my side
  G   C
for you baby I'll bring peace of mind in times of strife
        G   C
but for now I'll be going to your place, baby
G   C
I can't wait to see your beautiful face

UKULELE

457

G   **C**
All I want is to feel your embrace
G   **C**
I'll hurry baby, no time to waste

Interlude
G   **C**
     Yeah, yeah yeah
G   **C**

G   **C**
All self control goes out the door
G   **C**
Can't hold back my feelings deep inside
G   **C**
      I...
G   **C**
need you, I want you, I gotta have you by my side
G   **C**
For you baby nothing I wouldn't sacrifice
   G   **C**
But for now, I'll be going to your place baby
G   **C**
I can't wait to see your beautiful face
G **C**
All I want is to feel your embrace
G   **C**
I'll hurry baby, no time to waste

Outro
G   **C**
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah
G   **C**
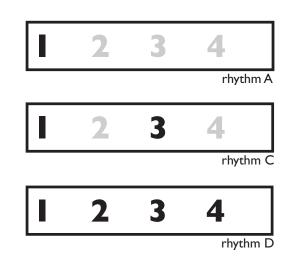
Adding a Minor Chord

This chord progression is going to be the easiest one yet. Keep your second finger down the whole time and simply lift up your first finger to switch from F to A minor. To make this progression more difficult, watch Paula Fuga's lesson where she adds hammer-ons to make the progression more interesting.

The Thought of You by Paula Fuga

Play the above progression first by only playing on beat 1 of each measure. Then try strumming on beats 1 & 3, and last, try strumming on every beat.

rhythm A

rhythm C

rhythm D

UKULELE

"The Thought of You" by Paula Fuga

```
F                                    Ami
There's something about the way I feel inside
F                    Ami
I'm in a daze you got me mesmerized
F                    Ami
I swear I never felt this way before
        F                    Ami
When you're away I want you even more


F                                    Ami
The way you walk, your smile, the way you talk
F                    Ami
I can't explain I'm feeling you
                    F    Ami
and no matter how I try
      F            Ami
I can't resist the thought of you
F                    Ami
Ooooooo
F                    Ami
Ooooooo
F                    Ami


F                    Ami


F                                    Ami
I just can't shake it there's no way I could
F                    Ami
I try in vain but it does me no good
F                    Ami
I think of you and I begin to face
F                    Ami
That all my world is just a cloudy haze


F                                    Ami
Your lips your touch your hands your skin your kiss
F                    Ami
I see your face and reminisce


and no matter how I try
        F            Ami
I can't resist the thought of you
F                    Ami
Ooooooo
F                    Ami
Ooooooo
F                    Ami
```
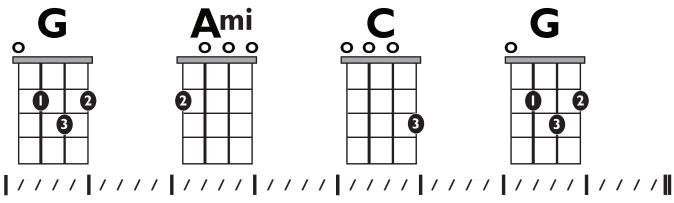
UKULELE
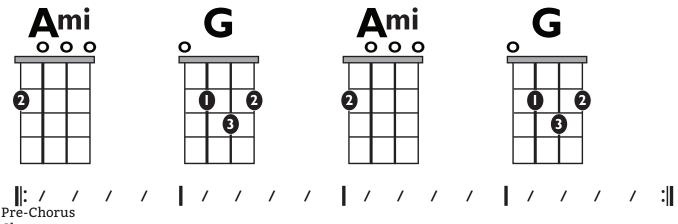
Three Chords and Two Sections

The next song we are going to learn features two different chord progressions. The first one, labeled verse, only happens once before going to the Pre-Chorus. The second progression is used for both the Pre-Chorus and the Chorus, and repeats multiple times. Be sure to play along with Paula by visiting the Ukulele section at jamzone.littlekidsrock.org.

The Sun Will Rise by Paula Fuga

G   **A**mi   **C**   **G**

| / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / /‖

Verse

Ami   **G**   **A**mi   **G**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

Pre-Chorus
Chorus
Outro

UKULELE

461

"The Sun Will Rise" by Paula Fuga

Verse
G   Ami
So many times I try to get ahead in life
C   G
But something always happens

Pre-Chorus
Ami   G
I'm back at where I began
Ami   G
I get so tired of trying that

Chorus
Ami   G
I wanna know when its gonna come
    Ami   G
Oh I want you to know where I'm coming from
            Ami   G
Through the dark I see the light and I know it'll be alright
       Ami   G
All I need is a little, just a little faith to get by

Verse 2
G   Ami
I know you're with me wherever I may be
C   G
I know you said you'd always be there

Pre-Chorus
Ami   G
Well lord knows I need you now
Ami   G
Upon my knees I pray that I

Chorus
Ami   G
Gotta know when it's gonna come
    Ami   G
Oh I want you to know where I'm coming from
            Ami   G
Through the dark I see the light and I know it'll be alright
       Ami   G
All I need is a little, just a little faith to get by

Interlude
G Ami C G x2

Verse 3
G   **Ami**
I have a dream that I'd like to share with you
C   **G**
I've had the same one all my life

Pre-Chorus
Ami   **G**
So please beleive in me
Ami   **G**
Sometimes it gets so hard, oh woah

Chorus
Ami   **G**
To keep beleiving in yourself
                Ami   **G**
But you must above all else you gotta hold your head up high
             Ami   **G**
I must beleive at dawn again the sun will rise
        Ami   **G**
All I need is just a little faith to get by

Chorus
Ami   **G**
Gotta know when it's gonna come
    Ami   **G**
Oh I want you to know where I'm coming from
            Ami   **G**
Through the dark I see the light and I know it'll be alright
        Ami   **G**
All I need is a little, just a little faith to get by
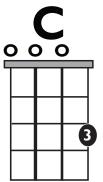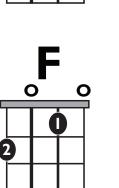
Outro
Ami   **G**
And soon the storm will subside
Ami   **G**
Again at dawn the sun will rise

The Key of C
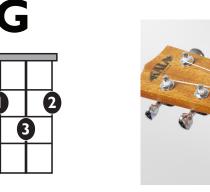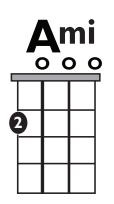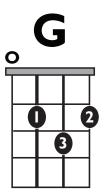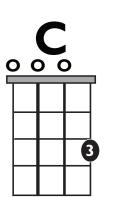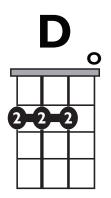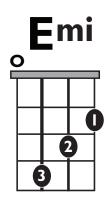
C

Curve your fingers like cat claws. ✔

F

Thumb looks like a fret on the back of the neck. ✔

Place fingers close to the frets. ✔

G

Each finger touches just one string. ✔

Ami

Press hard enough to get a sound. ✔

The Key of G

G

Curve your fingers like cat claws. ✔

C

Thumb looks like a fret on the back of the neck. ✔

D

Place fingers close to the frets. ✔

Emi

Press hard enough to get a sound. ✔

14 Rockin' Chords
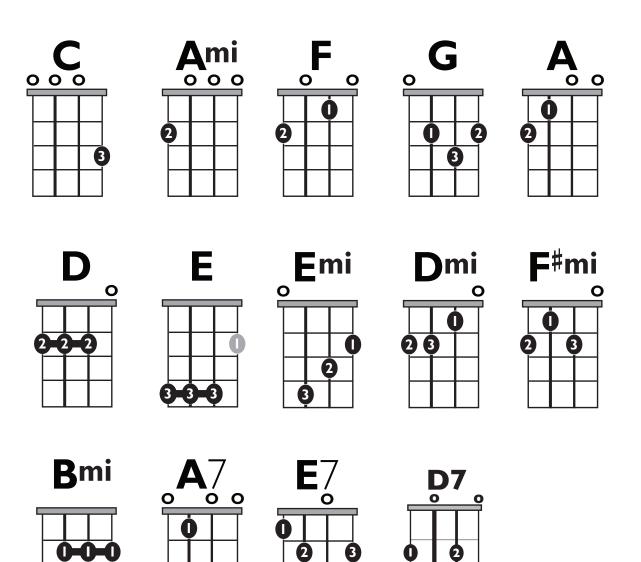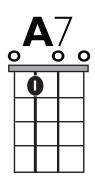
You have already learned eight of the chords below. Try learning the rest of these...you will be surprised by how much of the music you listen to will be within your reach once you have these chords mastered.

Blues in A
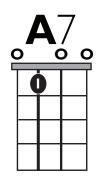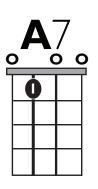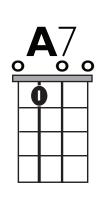
The chord progression below uses three chords, the "A," "D, " and "E" chords. This is one of the most famous progressions in the world and it appears in blues, rock, country, hip-hop, reggae...everywhere! This particular arrangement is a blues. People call it the "twelve bar blues" because it has 12 measures. Blues in A is really popular with guitar players, so find a guitar playing friend and jam with them!

The Key of C and G

Some super famous chord prgression "jams" in the key of C!

C   **F**   **G**   **F**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

Twist and Shout, Louie Louie, La Bamba, Angel, Wild Thing.....

C   **F**   **C**   **G**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖
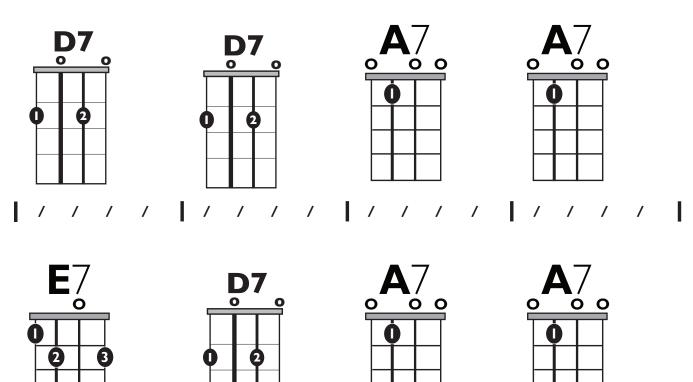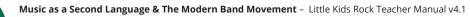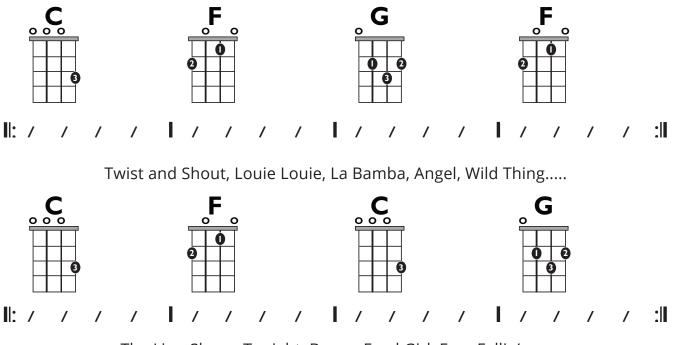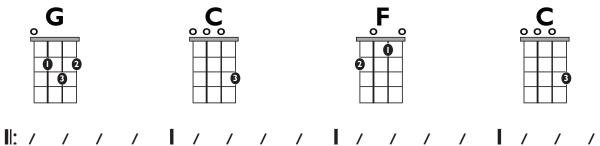
The Lion Sleeps Tonight, Brown Eyed Girl, Free Fallin'.......

Let's try another one in the key of G.

G   **C**   **F**   **C**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

What I Like About You, R.O.C.K. in the U.S.A., On the Darkside.....

Reggae in C

Reggae music has a very syncopated feel. Most of the emphasis is on the "up" beats. That is the opposite of rock where most of the emphasis is on the downbeats. Look at this rhythm:

1st rhythm:

| 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

rhythm W

Notice that all the strums are upstrokes. If you mute the strings after each upstroke, it will have a real reggae feel. Here's the progression with the rhythm written below. Be sure to squeeze both the "D" and "E" chords into the second measure.

C

F   G

||: / / / / | / / / / :||

| 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

rhythm W

| 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

rhythm W

The next rhythm is trickier. This strum pattern uses both "down" and "up" rhythms. Give it a try, keeping in mind that the arm swings "down" on the numbers, and "up" on the +. If the number is grey, your arm still swings down, but doesn't strum the strings. Getting good at this turn the arm into a sideways metronome, helping keep time with the steady up and down!
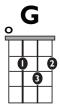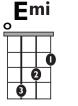
C

F   G

||: / / / / | / / / / :||

| 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

rhythm X

| 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

rhythm X

UKULELE

469

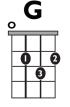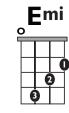# Easy Progressions in the Key of G

G   **C**   **G**   **C**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

In the style of Feelin' Alright, You Can't Always Get What You Want, Imagine, Friend of the Devil, My Girl, Take a Walk on the Wild Side, Waiting in Vain, etc....
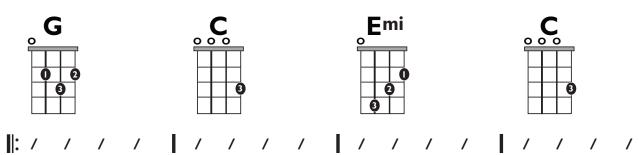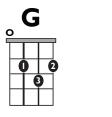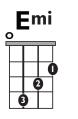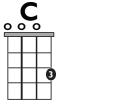
G   **E**mi   **G**   **E**mi

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

In the style of Shout, Wish You Were Here, Hang Me Up To Dry (Cold War Kids)

G   **C**   **E**mi   **C**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖

In the style of I've Got a Feeling (Black Eyed Peas), Without You (David Guetta)

G   **E**mi   **C**   **G**

‖: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :‖
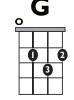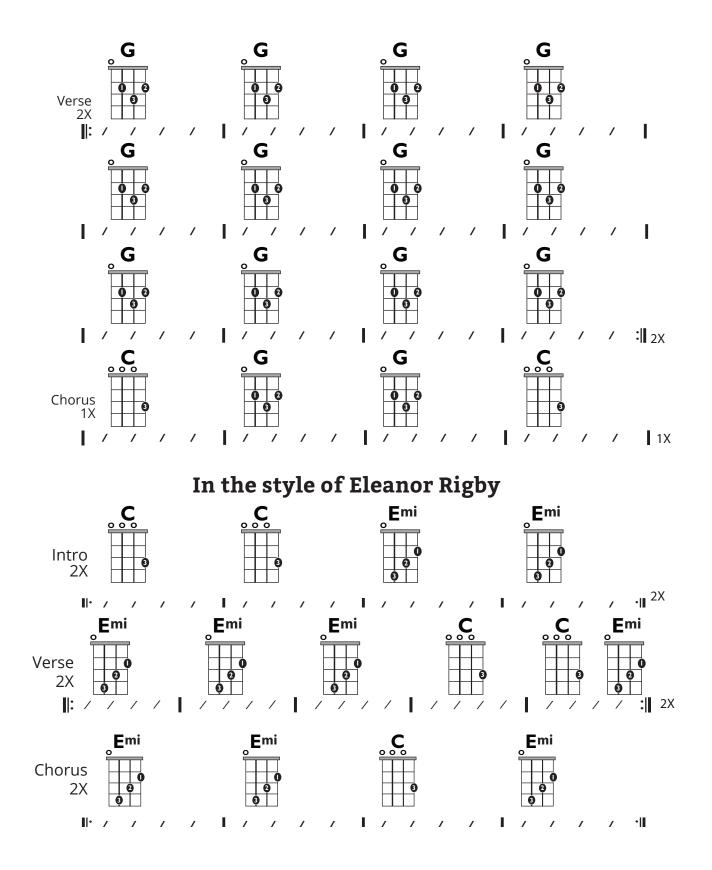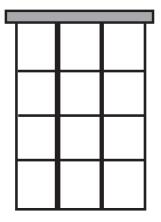
In the style of One by U2, Just the Way You Are by Bruno Mars

Easy Beatles Classics

In the style of Paperback Writer

Verse
2X

Chorus
1X

In the style of Eleanor Rigby

Intro
2X
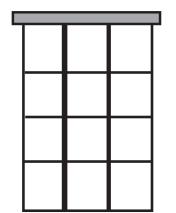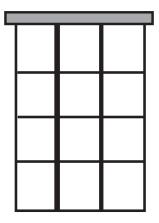
Verse
2X

Chorus
2X

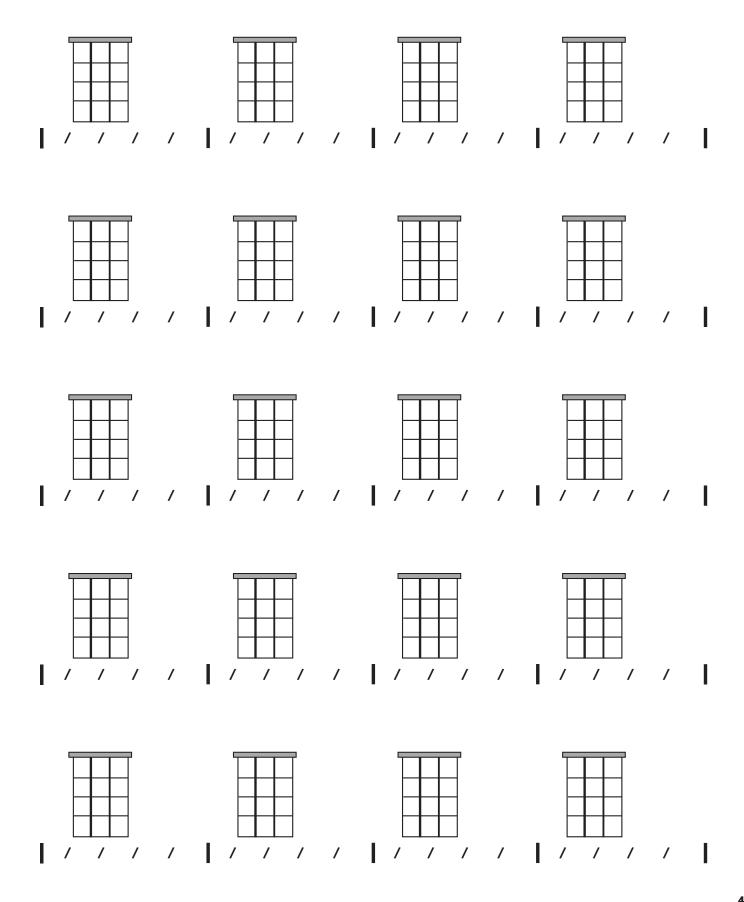UKULELE

471

Blank Chord Boxes

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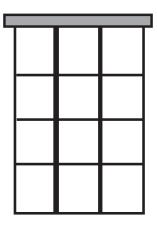
Blank Progressions

Modern Band Can Get LOUD

When using drum kits and amplified sound, it is important that both musicians and listeners are aware of the risks involved, and how to stay protected from hearing damage. We advise that you make earplugs available for all of your students, and that you also take the necessary steps to protect your hearing.

Below is a message from Kathy Peck, Co-founder and Executive Director of H.E.A.R., a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness of the dangers of noise exposure that can lead to permanant hearing loss tinnitus.

Listen Smart

We sometimes take this amazing gift of hearing for granted. As a fellow musician, I unknowingly did just that; unaware of the huge consequences I would suffer. My all-girl rock band, The Contractions, opened for Duran Duran at Oakland Coliseum during their MTV video-shoot concert tour in the '80s. For that particular show, I felt our rock trio needed to have more power, so I borrowed a friend's giant bass cabinet stack, prepared to pump out a wall of sound at the concert.

Little did I know that was the day my whole world would turn upside-down and my hearing damage would become permanent. It was this experience that led me to become a co-founder of H.E.A.R.® (Hearing Education and Awareness for Rockers) with the founding support of Pete Townshend of the Who and the H.E.A.R. board of directors, co-founder Dr. Flash Gordon, The Les Paul Foundation, The Bill Graham Supporting Foundation, NY/ Presbyterian Weill Cornell Medical and other caring people who support our mission.

The ear is not designed for repeated exposure to extremely high sound levels. Its defense mechanism is limited. A middle ear reflex action (a contraction of ear muscles that stiffens the system, reducing energy transmission) can protect against sudden increases in sound, but too slowly to protect against bursts of sounds like gunshots, loud drum hits, or walls of sound intensity that assault our ears and hit us in the chest.

Acoustic Foam Earplugs reduce the risk of hearing damage for many noisy occupations and at noisy venues, such as live music venues, music festivals, band rehearsals, DJ and dance music events, and other noisy public events.

Knowing the Risks

"It is important that we, whether musicians, technicians, or consumers, make efforts to protect our hearing and preserve our ability to enjoy music throughout the lifespan. Good hearing health is easy and developing the right mindset from childhood will reduce the risk of hearing loss and help preserve the joy of music." (Dr. Joseph Montano, Chief of Audiology and Speech Language

(Photo: Musicians Earplugs by H.E.A.R., (Etymotic, Westone Lab)

Pathology at New York Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center and H.E.A.R. Board of Director)

Think of your ears as if they were tiny organic batteries with a charge. The more exposure of the ears to loud noise or music, the more the ears will lose their charge. So if you are over your maximum daily dose of loud sounds, your ears begin to lose their charge. This is why people hear less clearly and/or have ringing in their ears after being exposed to music at a loud concert, band rehearsal or to other loud noises. Even worse, people who suffer with tinnitus (ringing in the ears) may hear just one specific tone that will set off the ringing in their ears. For some, even when things are completely quiet and there is no sound in their environment at all, ears may start to ring.

Exposure to continuous loud sounds can sometimes cause a temporary hearing loss (temporary threshold shift), and the ears may recover in a day or so. However, repeated exposure to harmful sounds eventually diminishes the ability of the sensory hair cells in our inner ear to transmit sound by flattening or disfiguring them, fusing them together, or breaking them off entirely. Sounds louder than 80 decibels are considered potentially hazardous.

The maximum exposure time for unprotected ears per day according to NIOSH- The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health is 8 hours at 85 dB, A-weighted, slow response. For every 3-dB increase in volume, the maximum exposure time is cut in half. (Chucri (Chuck) A. Kardous, MS, PE Senior Research Engineer, Hearing Loss Prevention-National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health)

• 88 dB - 4 hours
• 91 dB - 2 hours
• 97 dB - 30 min
• 103 dB- 7.5 min

Know the Signs
• Ringing in the ears
• Sensitivity to loud noises
• Asking people to repeat themselves
• Difficulty hearing speech with ambient noise
• The need for excessive volume when listening
• Seek advice of an audiologist or ear doctor if you are experiencing any of these warning signs

Using Caution
• Carry Earplugs with you.
• Have them available for your students.
• Always play at the lowest volume possible.
• Encourage your drummer to use "Thunder Rods" to reduce drumkit volume.
• Take breaks to allow your ears to rest.

Visit www.hearnet.com for more information.

> " *Good hearing health is easy and developing the right mindset from childhood will reduce the risk of hearing loss and help preserve the joy of music."*
>
> **– Dr. Joseph Montano, H.E.A.R. Board of Director**

Danger Zone

decibels	
150	Jet Take–Off
140	Gun Shot
130	Jack–Hammer, Rock Concert
120	Car Stereo, Band Practice
110	Dance Clubs, Headphones
100	Factory
90	Subway
80	Busy Street
70	Restaurant
60	Conversation